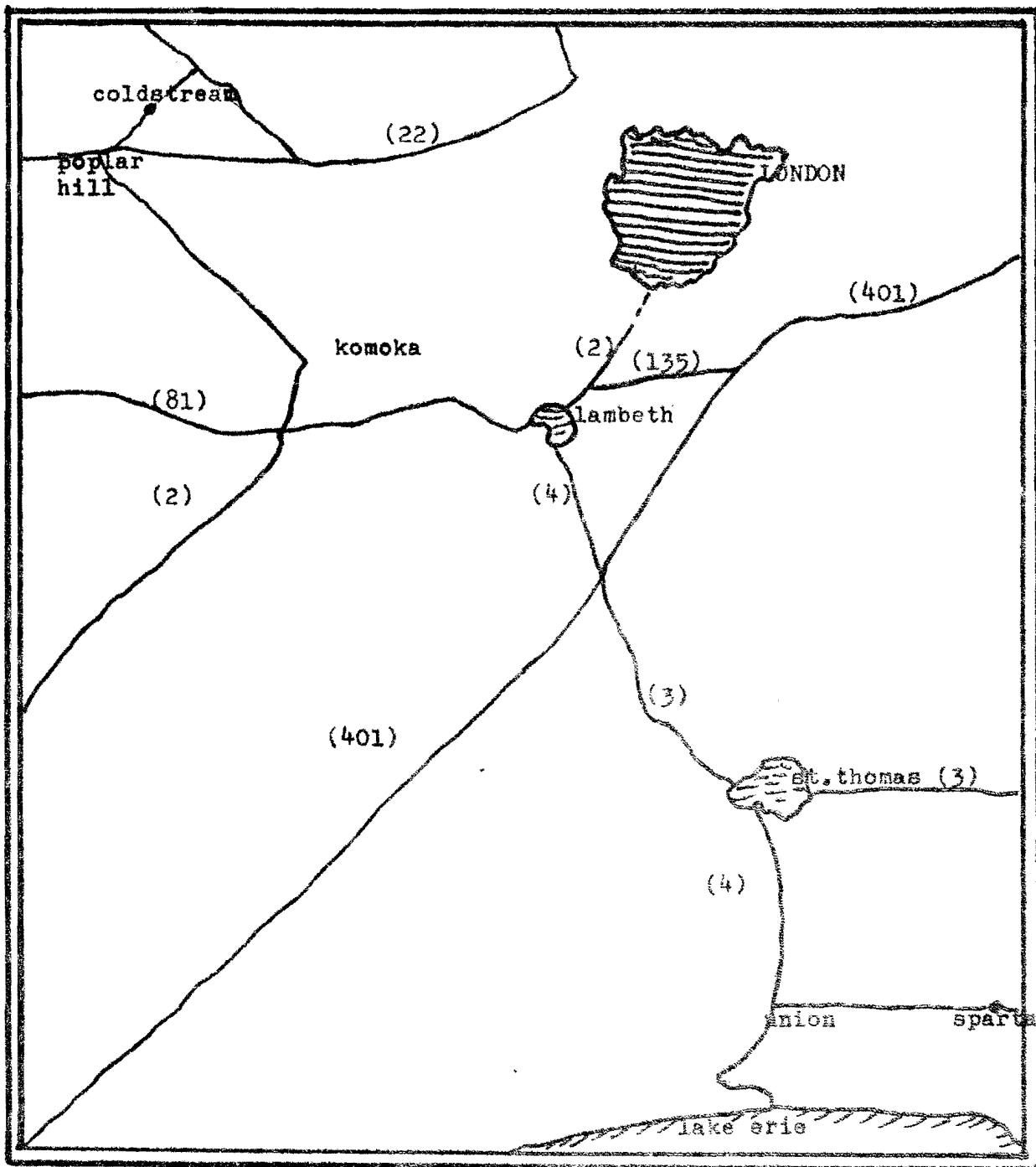


CANADIAN FRIENDS HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Coldstream Meetinghouse — 1859

Sixth Month, 1976



ISSN 0319-3934

Sixth Month 1976

NO. 16

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" A HISTORY OF SPARTA "
by Charles Buck

This article is a much condensed version of part of a more expansive, unpublished manuscript by Charles Buck, which he wrote in the late 1920's. Copies of the manuscript are to be found in the Regional Collection, D.B. Weldon Library, University of Western Ontario, and in the London Room, Elsie Perrin Williams Library and Art Gallery, London, Ontario. Mr. Buck, now retired after a teaching career in London schools, is still very active in pursuing his longtime interest in art.

Sparta is a village, situated in the south-eastern part of the Yarmouth Township, Elgin County; it is six miles east of Union on the old road called 'The Sparta Road'. The level country lying west and south of the village has a quiet charm. It was settled principally by the natives of New York and Pennsylvania. As change came slowly in this region, there are still to be seen clapboard barns, stores with fan-shaped windows in their gables and Colonial houses with broad chimneys and dormered roofs.

In the early part of the 19th century members of the Society of Friends visited the North Shore of Lake Erie and when they returned to the States they brought reports of the flat, beautiful and fertile country. This gave the first impetus to settlement. Friends asked Jonathan Doan, a Quaker settled near Sugar Loaf in the Niagara District, to have a look at the land.

Jonathan Doan, with his wife and son Elijah, four months old, had left Pennsylvania in 1789 and settled in the Niagara District. Then in 1813, having been asked by Friends to explore the land on the North Shore of Lake Erie, Jonathan Doan, accompanied by his grandson Jonathan Steele, seven years old, left the Niagara District and came to South Yarmouth. They came in a small boat up Lake Erie to Kettle Creek, present day Port Stanley. Having landed safely and stored their boat, they walked through a level stretch of woods until they came to some rising ground. A mile south from the ridge, not far from where the village of Sparta now stands, Jonathan Doan made his first shelter of boughs and brush. For two years he laboured to make a clearing and to erect a log house for his family by the Sparta Road. He is said to have settled just west of what is now the Friends' burying ground.

Likely he returned to Niagara in the winter of 1813 to visit his family and to induce others to return with them, for in 1814 Jacob Pfeffer, Calvin Witt, Isaac Minor, Jesse Page, Thomas Millard and William Parker arrived. A year later others came: Jesse Zavitz, Asa Fordger and Captain Smith. In 1816 Finlay Grant and William Shall took up land nearby and William Harvey, Samuel Scott, John Mills and others.

Moses and Mahlon Doan followed later. Elias and John Moore and James Brown, the first man to drive a team through the Grand River swamp, settled later. Among later arrivals were Christian Zavitz and Ebenezer Turrill (1819), and in 1820 William Phalam, Reuben Haight, Richard Bailey and George Lawton brought their families to the settlement.

For the purpose of locating the incoming settlers Jonathan Doan became the agent of a large estate to sell the land; he had the pleasant task of dividing the huge grant into farms for his Quaker brethren. To supply the needs of these settlers and of others who had promised to come, he built a tannery; also he had one of the Zavitzes, who were millwrights, erect for him a grist mill by the creek which ran through his farm. These were the first industries that were established in Sparta.

Most of the early settlers about Sparta were Quakers. In 1819 the colony had grown so large that the Friends of Yarmouth applied to the Norwich Monthly Meeting for permission to establish a Preparatory Meeting at Sparta. Thereafter, until 1821, the meetings were held on First Days alternately at the homes of John Kipp and Elias Moore. In 1820 Jonathan Doan sold to the trustees of the Society of Friends about an acre of ground as a site for a meeting house and cemetery for 'the sum of 5 shillings lawful currency'. Upon this ground Friends erected a log meeting house and began to use it in 1821. Also in 1821 settlers in Sparta heard one of the first temperance lectures delivered in Canada, it was given by David Burgess in the home of Elias Moore. Temperance sentiment in Sparta was always rather strong.

At Sparta there still stands one relic of those days of 150 years ago. It is the mud blacksmith shop. No one knows with certainty which one of the many smiths, who have set up forges in the village, erected this building. It may have been even Jacob Pfeffer, who came in 1814, or Thomas Millard, who came a little later, although it has been said that John Oille put up its cob walls about 1830. The building stands to day as it was built except for a new roof and new floor. There too, it is said, the Yarmouth rebels met in 1837 before they marched to the unsuccessful Duncombe Rising. Now it serves as a Women's Institute hall and museum.

With two blacksmiths shops, a distillery, a tannery and two grist and flour mills, for in addition to Jonathan Doan's mill, another one was built by Jesse Zavitz west of Sparta, at a very early date, the settlers were much more fortunate than their neighbours some miles away.

The experiences of the Reuben Haight family in establishing themselves securely on a farm near Sparta contain the elements of a humble pioneer epic. Reuben and Sarah Haight and their nine children (later there were twelve) came first to Otterville, in Oxford county in 1817. In 1820 they decided to move to the Quaker community in Yarmouth Township. Reuben's friends, Elias Moore and Isaac Minor exhibited true pioneer hospitality in allowing him to use part of their log houses while he was building his own. He had to bring his floor-boards and window frames along bush roads from Norwich forty miles away. Sarah Haight, his wife, was the pioneer minister of the Friends' Meeting at Sparta. She belonged to an old Quaker family. Although as the mother of twelve children, Sarah Haight was a very busy woman, still she found time to visit the families in the settlement, getting new members for the Society.

Their log-meeting house served the Friends for several years. Then a frame building was erected in its place. A few old residents can faintly remember the second meeting house as it stood along the drive way on the western half of the burying ground. Its length of forty feet faced

the road, covered with clapboards, as plain as the picket fence in front of it, and entered by the usual two doors, one for the women and one for the men. Inside were long pews, and at the front the high seats for the elders and the preachers. A partition, a part of which could be moved up and a part down, separated the men's from the women's meeting, and a big box stove stood on the women's side. For some time the log house may have been used as a school, but the frame building was later removed to a neighbouring farm, where it was used as a pig-pen.

The group of buildings that had risen about the store and the meeting house since 1813 marked a settlement that was generally referred to as 'The Corners'. However, on the 1st of December 1834, the landowners of the district held a meeting and decided to call the village by the name of Sparta. Why Sparta? The explanation is that a settler called Yarwood, who had come from a Sparta in one of the Northern States, proposed to call this place Sparta too, and in the voting which followed, this name won the most support. Another explanation is that the farmers were simply echoing a sentiment then rather common in Upper Canada and in the Western New York State in favour of classical names. A town nearby - it is now Aylmer - had been named Troy. Corinth was another village not far away.

Several mills and shops were springing up about this time. Christian Zavitz, a millwright, who had moved up with his sons from Sugar Loaf in 1819, had begun to build mills in Yarmouth Township.

In the division which occurred among the Quakers of North America in 1828, Sparta Friends joined the Hicksite Group. This may explain a local nick-name of 'Hickory Quakers' applied to them at that time.

In the 1830's many who lived in these frontier communities began to express discontent towards the numerous self-seeking officials who dominated the government of Upper Canada. The Friends of South Yarmouth declared that their chief grievance was the pressure of Tory officials to make them depart from their peace principles. According to the Militia Act of 1793, the Friends were exempted from serving in the military forces of the Province. But for this privilege they were to pay a fine of twenty shillings a year in time of peace and five pounds a year in time of war. Quakers in some districts objected to paying money which went into a fund for military purposes and suffered a considerable loss of property from the last clause of the Act, i.e. that failing to pay the fine, they might have their goods or chattels sold to obtain the sum.

The South Yarmouth settlers were principally from the northern States, where they had experienced more democracy in their government than they found at that time in Upper Canada. They disliked the dictatorship of the Councils and the Governors, which often defeated the will of the people. Moreover, there were two men living near Sparta, who were continually pointing out the benefits that might be expected from responsible government, one was George Lawton and the other Dr. John T. Wilson. Not the least of George Lawton's 'achievements' had been the difficult task of making young Quakers forget that they were devoted to peace and of leading some of them to war in the 1837 Rebellion.

In 1836 a temperance society had been founded in Aylmer by some Americans, who were supposed to be against the Government of Upper

Canada. This rising temperance movement and the Quakers of Yarmouth had their origins in the United States and were therefore under suspicion. Differences between Tories and Reformers were so sharp that Yarmouth electors went armed with clubs to the polls in 1836. For the election they had to go to London where the Tories were armed with similar weapons. People from Sparta were well known for their liberal sympathies and many different tactics were used by their opponents to prevent them from voting.

Elias Moore, who lived near Jesse Page's farm west of Sparta, was one of the two Reform candidates from Middlesex in 1836. He has been described as a man 'of courtly mien, well pointed in affairs, opinionated, but of good judgement and intellectually much above the average'. Along with Thomas Parke, his reform colleague, he led the poll in 1836 inspite of vigorous efforts of the Tories to defeat him.

After the election, in which the Reformers suffered a bad defeat, leaders of the extreme radical faction agreed among themselves that the ends they and their followers desired, could only be obtained by an armed rebellion. According to a village tradition they held meetings and stored their arms in the old mud blacksmith shop at Sparta.

It has usually been said that the Yarmouth men, sometimes called the 'Spartan Rangers', were led by tanner Joshua Gillam Doan, but he was probably only a subordinate officer. Elias Moore, Sobieski Brown and Jonathan Steele all confirmed that the company was under David Anderson's command.

The descendents of the Friends remember many stories their grandfathers used to tell of the worries they had at that time. The soldiers were looking for men, lately rebels, who lived in Sparta and had friends and relatives there. The capture of Joshua Doan, for instance, would have given the authorities a great deal of pleasure. At one time he was concealed at Ephraim Haight's farm in a log granary. The militia came to the house and inquired if anyone had seen Doan. Ephraim Haight, remembering the sight of his friend running to hide in the barn, answered 'I saw him running west'. This truthful answer sent the pursuers onto another track. Samuel Mills had taken part in the late rising and had managed to get home safely. To conceal him, his father-in-law, Abner Chase, fixed up a hiding place behind the stairway next to the chimney and hid him there until the hue and cry was over. Dr. John T. Wilson was being looked for too. Sammie Haight, who was only a boy, was told to lock him up somewhere and to tell no one the place. The two of them decided upon a cubby-hole in a house for which Sammie had the key. The Tories asked the elders of the settlement where the doctor was, but they shook their heads and said truthfully that they did not know. No one asked any questions of the innocent looking Sammie.

The authorities knew the names of all rebels in the district after the St. Thomas volunteers had found a wooden chest, buried in a field near Scotland: it contained many papers and among them was the muster roll of the insurgents. The government immediately issued a proclamation offering awards ranging from £ 500 to £ 100 for the capture of Duncombe, Anderson, Joshua Doan and others. These leaders and several of their more important followers believed that they would have to go to the scaffold if they were so unlucky as to be caught. They went into hiding until they could get to the boarder and then to the States.

Joshua Doan succeeded in escaping to the United States and it is quite likely that he participated in the various engagements of the rebel army along the Detroit boarder.

In November and December 1838 groups of Canadian refugees were gathered near the boarder. Their commander had promised to lead them in a great invasion of Canada beginning at Windsor. But the invaders had little success and survivors either tried to regain the American shore, or fled into the woods. Joshua Doan was spotted with two other men eleven miles south of Windsor trying to get a canoe out of the ice, so that they could cross over to the Michigan shore. When called upon to surrender the three men submitted quietly and were led off to jail in Sandwich.

In December 1838 Lieutenant Governor Arthur ordered a Court Martial to be held upon the rebels in prison. Joshua Doan and Amos Perley were convicted and executed in London on February 6th, 1839. Following their execution their bodies were given up by the sheriff to Isreal Doan, a brother of Joshua. He took them on a sleigh down to Yarmouth to be buried side by side in the burying ground at Sparta. The funeral service was held in the frame Meeting House in the same grounds and the sermon was preached by Sarah Haight. During the service Joshua's brother walked up and down the lane before the door, sorrowing for the death of his youngest brother. Some Friends regarded Joshua a martyr. The late A.F. Butler, a school inspector of Elgin County, wrote of Joshua Doan in 1877: "Those who knew him speak of him as a brave, true-hearted man, and then add the remark that if his execution had been delayed a few weeks, he would have received a full pardon! Fifty years after these events, a son of Reuben Haight said "Yes, I knew Joshua Doan, and a splendid sample of a man he was!" He was a manly fellow and there was great sorrow at his death. When the sermon at the Meeting House was over the two bodies were carried into the burying ground and laid side by side. A simple stone marks Joshua's grave. He was born the 7th day of the 11th month in 1811, when he died he was twenty-seven years old.

The Doan farmhouse was beside the cemetery a bit to the west. Today all trace of Jonathan Doan's home has disappeared, but residents recall that the house stood rotting away years after the Doan family had left it. On the other side of the road was a very tall tree, which the older people called 'Doan's Tree'. Many years ago Dr. Shannon of Sparta heard that while Joshua Doan was hiding near his home, he had used this high tree as a look-out to see if any of the pursuing militia were in sight.

The Doan family of Sparta had been tragically broken up, since the rebellion had caused the death of one son and the exile of another. The mother, Jane Doan died, three years after her son and was buried near him in the Quaker burying ground at Sparta. The father, Jonathan Doan, lived until 1847, when he was laid beside her. Before he died the younger people had looked at him with awe, because he was a man who had walked long journeys. Several times he had gone to Genesee Yearly Meetings at Farmington, near Rochester, New York State. He walked there and back, removing it is said, the stones along the road, so that they would not injure the horses' feet, that might tramp the road later. Also, until his death, he had gone regularly to Pelham in the Niagara District, to attend Friends' Half Yearly Meeting. He used to boast that he maintained a pace of four miles an hour throughout the journey.

Joel Doan returned to Sparta when an amnesty was granted to the rebels. He married Joshua's widow, Fanny, became interested in medicine and went West to practice as a physician.

Benjamin, an older brother, lived north of Sparta on a farm on the 5th concession of Yarmouth. He died in 1882 and is buried in the Seminary graveyard on the Sparta Road. His daughter, Maria, Mrs. W.H. Edgecombe, who died in London in 1931 in her 84th year, said that as long as she could remember, she never heard her father refer to his brother Joshua.

Israel, the brother who had brought to Sparta the bodies of Joshua Doan and Amos Perley, lived in the village. He too, born a Quaker, had married a Quaker girl, Sarah Mills, in the English Mission in St. Thomas in 1825. Israel was a sort of handyman at Sparta, working at masonry and other trades, but he always had a steady job as the caretaker of the Quaker Meeting House and its burying ground. He frequently spoke of Joshua's death and was always bitter towards those responsible for it. He cried whenever he spoke of Joshua. Israel died in 1880. He and his family lie together in the graveyard he used to tend.

A description of Sparta as it appeared about this time is given in Smith's Canadian Gazeteer published in 1846. It is as follows: "A settlement situated near the south-east corner of the township of Yarmouth, six miles east from the plank road. It contains about sixty inhabitants, two stores, one tavern, chair factory and blacksmith. There is a Quaker Meeting House and a Baptist chapel about midway between Sparta and the plank road." But old residents claim that this summary of the village is incomplete. They say that in very early days there was a grist mill, a saw mill, an axe factory, and a tannery near the corner.

The older generation of Quakers were faithful to their church. But many of the children and more of the grandchildren withdrew or were expelled from the Meeting. Many were disowned because they "married outside". The Mission register of St. Thomas has in it under the entry 'marriage' the names of many apostates from the Meeting at Sparta. This, for instance, is the record for two, Jonathan Doan's grandson and John Kipp's daughter:

"St. Thomas, 2nd April, 1828, Jonathan Steel of the Township of Yarmouth, yeoman, and Maria Kipp, of the same Township, spinster, were this day married by me by banns.
Witnesses: James Brown, Harvey Kipp, Benjamin Doan, Jr."

Before the St. Thomas Mission was begun in 1824, some Friends believed that the Quaker form of Marriage in the Meeting was a greater ordeal than a long journey by bush trails to Long Point or to Port Talbot. At the latter place Colonel Talbot exercised in the early days his magisterial right of performing the marriage ceremony, and, since it was nearer, some of the Yarmouth Friends who were departing from the customs of their people, went there to be married. Yet, because the Colonel was gruff and his temper uncertain, his office hours were only of the morning and he was often away from home, this journey might end awkwardly. Some people had to wait for a day or two for him to return from a spree or from business elsewhere, and then wait still longer for him to sober up. Thus many decided it was better to go to Charlotte -

ville, at Long Point even though it was twice as far.

A wedding in pioneer communities was not an affair of great social importance and no extensive preparations were made. On the wedding day the groom tied a blanket with a bark girth on his horse and called at the lady's home. She got from a stump to a seat on the blanket behind her suitor and the journey to the altar had begun. One swain of South Yarmouth, said to have been the handsomest man along the road on the morning of his wedding day, started off in this manner with his bride to Port Talbot, but because the girl mounted behind him was the prettiest in the settlement, and he turned to kiss her so frequently on the road, he came back in the evening with his head awry on his shoulders. It was said that he was never again able to get his head straight for the crick in his neck.

Even at a later date when the roads had been improved so much that carriages could be driven upon them, there were risks attending the wedding journey. Before Sarah Gurney Carman married James Haight, she got ready a beautiful silk cape and bonnet. They were married in the Friends' Meeting House in Norwich and then departed in a democrat for Yarmouth. Mrs. Haight was sitting alone in the back seat, while her husband and her brother, who was driving, sat in the front. Suddenly the rear wheels dropped into a mud-hole, and the back-seat and the bride with all her finery were bounced out of the carriage into the mud. As an old lady she used to recall that incident, smile and remark: 'And there I was with my new cape and my silk bonnet all mired in the mud on my wedding day'.

The Meeting House built in 1865 in the grove north of Sparta is the one in use today. Like all Friends' Meeting Houses, it is plain but neat, resembling a big, low white house with an ample porch around it. There are two doors at the front, one opening to the women's side, the other to the men's, for the interior may be divided by the sliding panel in the middle. The seats are painted benches made of pine. After a meeting Friends would go to the porch, sit on the benches there, or stand in little groups talking until the men brought the buggies and democrats to the front of the building. At one time the sheds were too small to accomodate the great number of horses and rigs, so the fences and trees had to be used as hitching-posts. When the Half Yearly and Yearly Meetings were held, there were so many horses and carriages that the grove, it is said, resembled a fair. Commodious as it seems now for the slender congregation, the present Meeting House is not as large as it was for many years after 1872. In that year an annex was built on the west side to hold the overflow of crowds that came for the Yearly Meetings. Even at the regular meetings on First Day and Thursday mornings, the house was well filled.

Until after the beginning of the twentieth century the Yearly Meetings were the great religious events at Sparta. It was one of the three places at which sessions of the Genesee Yearly Meeting were held. Quakers came from far and near: from Lobo, Pelham, Norwich, Bloomfield and New York State and their gathering was impressive. They arrived in buggies, wagons, democrats, carry-alls, or on foot. Their plain gray habits contrasted strongly with the brighter clothes of those, who, though not themselves Quakers any more, were the descendants of Quakers and had come to this meeting as to a family re-union. All these people

were fed and housed by the Friends of Sparta during the five or six days the meeting lasted. Squire Hunt, who attended a Yearly Meeting in 1890, spoke of the cordial treatment he received and the invitations he heard, 'Will thee come to dinner?'. He accepted the invitation of David Harvey where he found, he said, 'in his parlours about twenty of the prominent farmers of the county with their families'.

For a long time one of their ministers was Serena Minard, wife of John Minard, a farmer and chair-maker of Yarmouth. It is said of her that whenever she passed, children and older people turned to gaze at her placid and lovely face. There were others, men and women whose work was that of pioneer farmers rather than that of ministers, but they rose in turn in Yearly Meeting and spoke to their fellows in an earnest and often practical way of their duties to their brothers and to God.

THE YARMOUTH PREPARATIVE MEETING
OF FRIENDS
(Sparta)

by Jane Zavitz

Sparta's third, and present meetinghouse, built in 1865, stands north of the village among the trees, simple as a Greek temple in proportion and balance. Its site had been changed from the earlier spot beside the cemetery on the Sparta Road. The Elgin County Atlas for 1878 shows on its plat of Yarmouth Township sites of the homes and holdings which can be matched with the meeting's membership record for the monthly meeting and explains the move north. More Friends, all of whom walked or rode in horsedrawn conveyances, were closer to meeting. Since the monthly meeting records include several preparative meetings, we have to use land records, preparative meeting minutes and cemetery headstones to identify Friends who lived in this vicinity. Identification of early Yarmouth Friends presents some problems: early graves are not marked; the Norwich Monthly Meeting register is not as old as the meeting and not all early members are listed; some Friends failed to transfer their membership from another meeting. No child could be recorded as a member unless both his parents were members. Thus Reuben and Sarah Haight appear in the register as parents to the youngest of their twelve children! Some early members had no children to be recorded so we search for older record books. The earlier recordings appear sporadic and without notations as to what meetings sent the membership certificates for transfer.

Yarmouth Preparative Meeting, established in 1823, was part of Norwich Monthly Meeting, which had grown out of the indulged meeting held 3rd mo., 4th, 1812, at Pelham area's Black Creek Meeting. By 1833 Pelham Half-Yearly Meeting was held alternately at Pelham and Yarmouth. This witnesses the rapid growth of the meeting in Yarmouth. By 1873 the Yearly Meeting was held in Yarmouth every third year. In 1893, when Norwich (Pine Street Meeting at Otterville) was laid down, the name was changed from Norwich to Lobo Monthly Meeting. The new name represented the shift of activity among Friends in the monthly meeting. Today Lobo Monthly meeting has three components: Yarmouth (Sparta), Lobo (Coldstream) and the new preparative meeting in the city of London. Over the 150 years several other meetings rose then discontinued.

Since its beginning as an allowed meeting for worship in 1819, the meeting at Sparta has met continuously. Its history is a significant example of the development of Quakerism in North America. The long line of Quaker history is represented by the Samuel Haight (Hoyt) family. He became a member of the first generation of Friends on this continent. That family's moves from Connecticut, to New York State, to Norwich, Ontario, to Sparta, and from there some family members went west to Kansas and on, show the migration and transfer of Quakerism on its northern route. Today, in one of the meeting house window panes, we can see the diamond cut signature of a younger 'Samuel Haight' -- a symbol of this tie to history.

The flame of life in Sparta meeting never flickered out, but it burned lowest after 1910 when Henry Schooley maintained the meeting. In those years many Sparta Friends were away: some had gone to Texas or the Canadian West, others were too elderly to attend regularly, some had married out, and the deaths of a strong generation of earlier Friends had also taken its toll. But soon new life began to sprout. Several Friends returned to the area, the next generation showed renewed interest, and the meeting revived. The son of Henry Schooley came again, as he had in boyhood. Once he told how his mother put on her bonnet and shawl to sit with her children beside her ever so quietly at home so they would learn to sit still for worship. Over the years other families were drawn back to the center. It matters that we keep our meetings on a regular basis that life may fill the vessel.

Why did THIS meeting survive? Many meetings did not. What was the difference? I believe that a number of factors contributed to this 'miracle'. First, it seems important that historically there was a solid setting up of the meeting which gave it support from the net-work of Friends nearby and from the wider Quaker community, both physically and spiritually. The membership record shows that Sparta was never a large meeting; the total numbers have always been about the same. Not all members were active; not all were resident; but there was always a nucleus of support. At times there was more activity in the meeting, which may have given it the added stimulus to survive and revive. In the late 1880's the meeting supported the 'St. Thomas Mission School', with a resultant increase in membership for the meeting. Tryphena P. Way reported in the Young Friends Review a mission school attendance of 74. In the winter of 1888 a Literary Society was formed for families of Yarmouth Friends and in 1896 a Young Friends Association came into being. They met every two weeks. The first meeting was at Edgar Haight's home and Anna Jane Cornell was secretary.

The register records another spurt of growth in the meeting membership when the same Edgar Haight returned from the west with his family to 'retire' in 1918. He held regular meetings in Union on First Day afternoons in the 1920's and 30's. He continued his ministry until his death in 1949 in his nineties.

During the 1950's and '60's there were midweek meetings for special discussion, study and meditation which added to the life of the meeting. For a farming community these gatherings were added social times as well. Over the decades good fellowship and sharing of hospitality has always been a part of this meeting. It is representative of the sub-culture which grew up among Friends in the middle-west, and which one still feels when visiting among them today.

Over the generations new life came into the meeting when the young men brought their brides from other Quaker communities. In the earliest days Reuben and Sarah Haight's sons, Samuel, Ephraim and James, all brought their school teacher wives to Yarmouth. Such enrichment was easier when the meeting ceased disowning members for marrying out just before 1880. Serena Minard, well educated and a convinced Friend, also came to the meeting from New York when she married.

Over the years the meeting has always had new life: Friends came into the meeting by birth, by transfer, or by convincement and requested membership. Some went away to work; others went away to school at Woolman Institute, George School, to Swarthmore and other colleges. A few returned to stay; others came back to visit. While some made their contribution in the wider world, those remaining kept the life of the meeting going. Among those who spent most of their adult lives away, but always felt the urge to return, were Dr. John Oille of Toronto, A Jane Cornell at George School, and more recently Paul Zavitz at Barnesville School.

Another key factor in the ongoing life of the meeting was the presence of ministers as part of the meeting from the beginning. The first of whom, Sarah Wright Haight, and her family bought clergy reserve land, when local Friends encouraged them to come to Yarmouth from Norwich. As soon as they were settled, the meeting applied for preparative meeting status, often not granted until a recorded minister was part of the resident group of worshippers. In the latter 1800's William Cornell and Serena Minard were recorded ministers, and in this century Edgar Haight, a grandson of Sarah's, was the last to be so recognised. Practice has changed now, so that none are recorded specifically, but the ministry is encouraged among all those present. Travelling ministers came faithfully through the years as they were called and led. Isaac Wilson, John J. Cornell, and Sunderland Gardiner made many religious visits to Yarmouth Friends. Sunderland Gardiner referred to Sparta Friends in his journal, reporting when he stayed at Samuel and Phebe Haight's, or at the Schooley's, where Elizabeth was a lovely daughter, and young Asa as 'blithe as a bird'. The annual address at Canadian Yearly Meeting is a memorial to this long - faithful minister.

More recently Bernard Walton came from Philadelphia and knew all in the families by name. Within Canada, Fred Haslam and Burton Hill came and still come. So the support net-work continues. The representatives to the business meetings who came faithfully through the years, also gave support and strength. However, it is not right to infer that all leadership was in the vocal ministry, others in the meeting quietly carried responsibility. The spirit of worship is shared by each person in the meeting.

An additional factor in the meeting's continued existence has been its economic base. The meeting was never wealthy, but the farming community, once beyond the rigorous settlement days, had sufficient support from the meeting, because Friends chose to give it. From the beginning to the present this included giving time and energy for the upkeep and responsibilities of the meeting. In recent years some repair has been contracted, but members do the general maintenance of house and grounds. The simplicity of the building helps. It is easy to clean.

In my first years in Sparta I was struck by the realization that neither Sparta (1810) nor Goldstream (1853) had experienced the Quaker

separations, or the accompanying loss of energy in their communities, which greatly weakened many other Friends' meetings. An account by Samuel Haight tells us that Sarah Haight and one of her sons attended the 1829 New York Yearly Meeting at which that tearing separation took place. Elias Hicks was present and spoke, as did others. He was probably already known to Sarah for he had visited in Canada in 1819, while the Haight family still lived near Norwich. There are no 'rumblings' in the reports or records from that earlier visit. It is likely that when she returned home Sarah Haight had some influence on the Yarmouth meeting. Further the Friends, who had met and heard Elias Hicks speak, chose to stay as a body. This choice may also tell us something about the solidarity of this pioneer community of Friends bonded together by necessity and desire. If the meeting had been 'older' and more established, the history might have been different. More recently, members of Lobo Monthly Meeting (Coldstream and Sparta) who had not felt the rancors of separation within their home meetings, were among those Canadian Friends who first drew together on committees for Camp Nee-Kaw-Nis, for the Canadian Friends Service Committee, and for joint sessions of the early meetings, which became the Canadian Yearly Meeting of Friends.

Through the years the Sparta meeting lost members for a variety of reasons: there were a few who left to join the Baptists over theological differences in the 1860's. At that time other Friends meetings were suffering the second separation in Canada, roughly a twenty year period in the 1860's to the 1880's. There were also membership losses from those who were disowned, or those who left when they found Friends' practices too demanding or constricting. Many of these people remained in the community and have had some impact on the area, as persons with similar sets of values.

A meeting can not look simply to itself and survive; Sparta Friends have always had interests and involvements beyond themselves. However, the response to Friends by the outside community was not always as laudatory as we, in the present, might be led to think! Accounts concerning the Rebellion of 1837 by Elgin County historians, such as Edward Ermatinger, hold the Doan brothers and George Lawton in low esteem. They were rabble rousers from the 'States'. "They were a species of Foxites in religion and craftiness called 'hickory' Quakers, a portion of this quiet fraternity were not recognized as such,...but it is a notorious fact, that in the work of sedition and treason, the spirit moved them to pull together as one man." (Ermatinger pp.74-75) Many other inhabitants of the area, including the Scotch in west Elgin, did not think rebellion against the Family Compact government of Upper Canada to be either safe or desirable.

The Quaker support for change was consistent with their beliefs in religious freedoms, equality of men, fair representation in government, all principles which undergirded the American Revolution. Most of the Yarmouth Friends 'hailed from' the eastern United States, and although they opposed war and did not fight in the Revolutionary War, or they could not have immigrated to Canada, the same Quaker principles still permeated the pioneer settlers of Yarmouth.

As in the history of the 'Underground Railroad' prior to the United States' War between the States, no reference was made in official minutes to activities of individuals. Business meetings held on consensus basis could not agree to concerted radical actions, nor, even, to law-breaking while keeping a 'higher' law, but individual members

felt led to act. Support from the meeting was not, indeed could not, be spoken. When Joshua Doan was convicted of treason and hung, the meeting grieved. If Friends has been split over 'right action', this loss drew them together. Quiet support for escaping rebels had been given by Friends in Sparta. The fellow victim, a black rebel from Dresden, Amos Perley, who had no such support and no one to claim his body, was buried in the Sparta cemetery beside Joshua Doan.

Life went on and the meeting carried interests in other concerns throughout the years. The importance of education was real from the first school in the log meetinghouse, and Friends continued to support activities that raised horizons for their youth. Articles in the Young Friends Review reflect these ideas and other interests in prison reform, work with the Indians and for temperance activity. These, along with ideas on peace, and faith as the well spring for action and base for our lives, are still with us providing threads of continuity in the Quaker community. In the Review I found accounts of Serena Minard's trip to London, England, for a conference of the W.C.T.U.--in installments. Summaries and whole sermons delivered in Sparta and elsewhere show us the ideas and outlooks to which members were sharing. Larger gatherings of Friends conferences and yearly meetings were reported in considerable detail.

One Review article deals with the role of women. The writer was responding to an article he had read somewhere else lamenting the lack of women in the ministry of the Church and suggested that the author had not considered Friends in his overview. Our Friend then proceeded to name prominent Quaker women ministers. All through its history the role of women in sharing leadership of Sparta meeting was evident. When I read that Black Creek, established in Niagra area in 1799, decided shortly thereafter not to have separate men and women's meetings for business, due to small numbers and the same concerns arising in each meeting, I could imagine the impact of this decision on meetings that grew out of Black Creek, as Sparta did via settlement patterns and Pelham Half-Yearly Meeting relationships. However, this equality may simply spring from necessary cooperation in farming life or from Friends worship together, for the wooden partition between the men and women's sides was always raised.

To summarize the reasons for the continuance of Yarmouth preparative Meeting, as drawn from its own history, we find: a 'solid' setting up of the meeting; the continued support of ministry; a membership which accepted its spiritual and physical responsibilities; a continuing continuity without major schisms within the meeting; and, an interest in the world beyond themselves.

They lived their faith. Existence was never easy nor a foregone conclusion of the meeting, and I don't hear local members today either bemoaning its end, or accepting the on-going meeting automatically. May the same Spirit that has been in the meeting throughout its span continue to nourish and encourage its growth. As I sit in gathered worship in the meetinghouse the sense of God's presence is there. His Peace and His Continuity is there.

What does the experience of this meeting say to other Friends? Take care before you close the doors of a meeting permanently, some may be led to carry on. The structure can take on life again. Be conscious of the long span and present life of the meeting, for all who join us are fully and equally the spiritual descendants of our faith and its past. Work together to maintain the meeting and value it as significant in your lives. Each meeting is like an individual, unique, and

yet each is part of the wholeness of that procession seeking to bring the Kingdom of God more fully on earth.

And so the Sparta Friends Meetinghouse waits for you among the beech and maples as it has since 1865. Its beauty continues with the cycles of the seasons. Some have asked how such a structure could spring up in this pioneer Ontario farmland. To me the meetinghouse is the embodiment of the basic Quaker principles of simplicity and practical idealism. When followed they create beauty and truth.

* * *

Footnotes to History

The time spent on this essay has drawn together much that Friends have shared with me in the twenty-five years since I came to the meeting. Marguerite Haight Zavitz, my mother-in-law, has shared much with me. The process of piecing together for wholeness will go on. The writing itself required time and focus, and 'forced' the growth of my thinking, which, I hope, did not distort the truth. A good historian is sure of his data, and I tried to use only what I could validate. At the same time the intuitive combining, almost as revelation, occurred. I trust this is not 'unquakerly', even in an amateur historian.

My reliance on Arthur Dorland's work has been great. The use of some of the same sources leads me to value his scholarship all the more. The Charles Buck manuscript also relies heavily on Arthur Dorland's work and Charles Buck values the courses he took with Dr. Dorland at the University of Western Ontario. The Quaker records for the Sparta meeting study are in the regional history room in the Quaker collection, at the D.B. Weldon Library on London's University of Western Ontario's campus. All books currently in use are in the safe at our recorder's home. Edna Wilson shared her warm hospitality when I worked there. Vincent Zavitz gave his bound volumes of The Young Friends Review, which contain extensive coverage for the years 1885-1898, a storehouse of history. The local history materials for Elgin County included: The Life of Colonel Talbot and the Talbot Settlement by Edward Ermatinger; Ella N. Lewis', East Elgin Place Names, the County Atlas for 1878; the Journals by Sunderland P. Gardiner (Memoirs), John J. Cornell and Elias Hicks all refer to Canadian Friends in Sparta. Then I went to the cemetery and read all the stones.

For many years I participated in the meetings for worship and sat through meetings for business that were regular everyday affairs, and some that were the most important days in the lives of those present.

Recently, as my daughter and I stood on the porch of the meetinghouse during spring cleaning for the summer reopening, she commented on how beautiful it is and how much it means to her. Friends are not supposed to have 'sacred buildings'. We don't, for I know the spirit can fill any vessel, anywhere, - but it comes easier here.

COLDSTREAM
A Quaker Settlement
by Elsie Cutler

It is not disclosed where Coldstream got the name, but at one time it had been known as 'Cutlers'. Probably this was because the first mill was operated by Benjamin Cutler, and the first store by Mrs. Wood at Cutlers' corner at the 9th Concession. But in those early days the stream which flows through the village was a vital part of its economy.

Coldstream is located on the 9th Concession of Lobo Township, Middlesex County between Coldstream side-road and Poplar Hill, and is fifteen miles south-west of London, Ontario and about forty miles north-west of Yarmouth.

Few communities the size of Coldstream can, over the years, claim so much industry. In its time Coldstream has had two sawmills, a flour mill, chopping mill, a furniture factory, a carding mill, a tailor, a telephone system and a telegraph service, two threshers, a bee yard, a public library, a tile yard and a store that supplied more goods and services than any modern supermarket.

The first settlers in Lobo Township had to hew their homes out of the forest as this district was extremely heavily wooded. Daniel Zavitz, for example, who came to Lobo in 1843 purchased one hundred acres of land at four dollars an acre on which not a tree had been cut. During the first year he managed to clear seven acres, which he sowed with wheat only to have his promised crop caught by the late frost and ruined. Undaunted however, he chopped his way into the forest adding field by field and the work of clearing and cultivation progressed. At the end of four years he went to New York State to secure the hand of a companion and helpmate in the person of Susan Vail, who returned with him to the home in the clearing that he had prepared.

While the Middlesex atlas claims that Lobo was settled by the Scotch, this particular area was taken up mostly by United Empire Loyalists and Quakers. They had left their land in New York and Pennsylvania States following the American Revolution of 1776. They crossed into Ontario and settled in Bertie Township and the Niagara area of Welland county. Favourable reports must have reached Bertie of the area, as John Harris took up land in Coldstream in 1834, Benjamin Cutler in 1837, John March in 1839 and Daniel Zavitz in 1843 and settled there.

Some of this land had already been surveyed by Colonel Mahlon Burwell and patents of land were obtained as early as 1820. With the exception of part of Lot 8 and 9, concession 9 and Lot 7 in concession 8, the entire area was taken up from the Crown by Elijah and Van Court - land Secord. The Secords were United Empire Loyalists. Some of this land had traded hands two or three times, but it was not until 1838 that Van Courtland Secord sold five hundred acres to John Marsh. John Marsh sold fifty acres of this holding to his brother-in-law Benjamin Cutler. Benjamin Cutler acquired the two hundred acres across the side-road from the Crown. In the meantime other small holdings were being sold

to the labourers who were coming in.

By 1849 on the banks of the stream, which gives rise to the Sydenham river, the most compact group of the Quakers had assembled.

In those days the Indians liked to camp on the flats along the Sydenham river to renew their supplies of hickory and ash for basket and handle making. They were recipients of much hospitality among the people of Coldstream and many a cold and stormy night they were housed in homes nearby. But a special favourite was the Marsh home, as there were two fireplaces in the house and they could sleep on the floor with feet stretched toward the warmth. It was not an uncommon thing for the family to rise in the morning and find several figures lying prone across the dining room floor. John Bycraft had a very fine collection of Indian relics which he had collected in the area. Most of these are now at the Centennial Museum of the London Public Library.

In 1837 Benjamin Cutler had built a saw mill on the Cutler sideroad (now Coldstream road) at the Sydenham river, and after finishing his mill he started a grist mill. He realized the need for a mill as it was a long journey to the grist mill in Kilworth through woods and muddy trails, and the settlers frequently had to carry the grain on their backs to have the wheat ground into flour.

In the frontier settlements of Upper Canada logging bees, barn raisings, weddings, funerals and public sales were often occasions for hard drinking. As whiskey was cheap, drunkenness was part of these gatherings. Friends were among the first to set their faces against this custom.

When Benjamin Cutler was about to raise the frame of his grist mill, he told the people that there would be no whiskey supplied. A delegation of settlers came to protest and on failing to make an impression, they threatened not to come. He replied that the timbers could lie and rot where they were. The majority evidently decided that a mill would be more useful to the community than a drinking bout and, it is said, the frame was raised in record time.

The exact date of the beginning of the Marsh mill is not known, but from Daniel Zavitz' diary we learn that he worked in the mill when he came to Coldstream in 1842, and in 1847 worked at the saw-mill on a share basis. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that the mill was built first to supply John Marsh's thriving furniture business and later the chopping mill was added. The Marsh mill was one quarter of a mile downstream from the Cutler mill. The road into the mill, now known as Mill Lane, was through the Marsh Property and was built and maintained with sawdust until it was taken over by the township. There was no rivalry between the two mill operators, as the settlers were using the products of both mills as fast as they could be turned out, and as Benjamin Cutler had married John Marsh's sister.

The Quakers served the growing community in many other aspects as well. They filled such necessary roles as being the first postmaster at Coldstream, they taught school, operated a carriage factory, a shoe and harness making shop, a blacksmith shop and a watch repair and jewellery shop.

Jacob Marsh (second son of John Marsh) and his wife Louisa lived with Louisa's widowed mother, who kept a small store and post office on the north-east corner of Concession 9 and the Coldstream side-road. After Louisa's mother died, it was decided to move the store to the corner of Mill Lane and 9th Concession, near to the mills. It would appear the dwelling house was moved and the larger part of the building added later, probably about 1869-70.

After moving to the present location Louisa and Jacob led very busy lives. He ran the mills, and built a woolen mill, and was postmaster for the post office located in the store. It operated there until early in the 1920's when rural mail service began. The store housed the community library from 1887 to the mid 1950's, when it was moved to its present site in the community hall. The community's telephone system operated out of the store starting in 1908, when Jacob Marsh bought an abandoned eight mile telegraph line between Komoka and Coldstream. This line was purchased by Alex G. McKenzie of East Williams in 1921. Among its many functions the Marsh store also served as township council chambers (on the second floor) from 1920 to 1925, while the Town Hall was being used as a continuation school for grades 9-12. The store also housed the office of the Lobo Mutual Fire Insurance Company, of which Jacob Marsh was its long time secretary.

The store closed in 1955 when Jacob's son Ray died, but reopened again for a short while and was used as a flea market. It is now in a state of disrepair. A project is under way at the present time to raise funds to buy the store property, and to restore it to its original condition. The Ontario Heritage Foundation and Wintario are expected to finance the restoration.

In the autobiography of Daniel Zavitz we read the following entry written on November 23, 1896: " When I first came to Lobo in 1843, there was no Friends' Meeting and no meetinghouse of any kind, except a school house (opposite Muma's farm, near Cutler sideroad). That was used by all that wished to hold meetings. The Methodists and Baptists held meetings which I often attended. Soon after I married, we felt the need of meeting together for mutual worship as there were several families of Friends moved in. We met at our house and after a short time of solemn silence, we talked over the necessity we felt of holding a meeting for worship and were united in continuing holding the meetings on each first day, and met at Benjamin Cutler's house which we did for some time. Then concluded to build a meetinghouse ." A small frame meetinghouse was built on a half acre of land donated by John Marsh in 1850. Benjamin Cutler also donated one acre of land for the meetinghouse and the burying ground.

Friends were granted an indulged meeting in 1849 and from the minutes taken from Norwich Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Pine Str. 11th of 3rd Month 1857, Lobo indulged meeting became a preparative meeting.

The frame meetinghouse soon became too small, since the families were large, and many new families moved into the area. Consideration had to be given to a new building.

On the 5th of 10th Month 1859 Lobo preparative meeting of Friends received a communication from Norwich Monthly Meeting held 14th of 9th Month 1859 and reading as follows: " Our preparative meetings are directed to raise by quota the sum of twohundred dollars by the first of first month next and a further sum of fourhundred dollars by first of first month 1861 and to pay it to the Monthly Meeting treasurer for the purpose of building a meetinghouse in Lobo. The meetings share for the first installment \$40 and the second \$80 ." Norwich Monthly Meeting at that time comprised of five preparative meetings, namely: Norwich, Pine Street, Yarmouth, Malahide and Lobo.

From Norwich Monthly Meeting minutes held at Lobo 12th of 12 Month 1860: " The building committee of Lobo meetinghouse report they have finished the building and find they have exceeded the funds placed at their disposal by \$87.13, with which report the meeting is fully satisfied and direct the preparative meetings to raise \$104.00 and pay to our treasurer within one year from date to cover balance and other contingencies."

This made the total cost of the meetinghouse about \$700.00 but a great deal of voluntary labour had been supplied.

It was the usual type of Quaker meetinghouse made of brick without ornamentation or architectural pretensions of any kind. There were two doors at the entrance, one for men and one for women, since the men and women at this time sat on opposite sides of the meetinghouse and held their business meetings separately. It was divided by a partition which slid up during joint sessions of business. The plain wooden benches provided seating accommodation and on the front of the room were similar benches facing the meeting on which the ministers and elders sat. The practice of holding men's and women's meetings separately was discontinued in 1885 as noted in a minute of Pelham Half Yearly Meeting of women Friends held 22nd of 8th Month 1885: " The proposition from the yearly meeting in regard to holding our meetings for business hereafter in joint session was considered in company with men Friends and under a feeling of renewed interest wherein much unity was expressed, we adjourn to meet in joint session at Pelham in 2nd Month next".

An interesting venture sponsored by Lobo Friends was a literary and debating society. It was established in the winter of 1875 and was called the "Olio" society. It provided the literary and intellectual society for the whole community, as well as providing an opportunity for social gatherings and innocent amusement. It was also responsible for the establishment of a public library and a lecture club in 1882, which brought many eminent men to the community as lecturers. It also organized one of the first Farmers' Institutes in Ontario. Out of this group came Charles A. Zavitz, Professor of Field Husbandry in the agricultural college at Guelph, Ontario, who by his scientific attainments and skill in the field of agriculture has contributed materially to the food production of Canada.

Lobo Preparative Meeting was concerned by the need of a First Day school. A First Day school was founded in 1880 and was held in the meetinghouse seven months of the year beginning the first of April, with Samuel P. Zavitz as superintendent. There were eighty-seven children on the roll at that time with an average attendance of forty-seven. By 1883 there were onehundreden-and-five on the roll with an average of sixty-two. This was one of the first day schools in the area. In 1866 an appreciation was expressed: "The uncertainty which may have existed in some minds among us as to the propriety of the First Day school when it was first established, has we believe almost without exception been dispelled, and we feel that God has blessed our efforts and is giving the increase. An increase which is manifesting itself by a deeper interest shown by all in Religious matters, an increased interest in our society and a great advance in spiritual growth amongst our young people".

As Friends had not had any music in their services, it was decided in 1923 to purchase an organ and hymn books to add music to the First Day school. First Day school is still held at the meetinghouse ninety-six years after its beginning, although the numbers are considerably smaller.

Friends had settled north of Lobo in Warwick and Bosanquet townships and Norwich Monthly Meeting allowed them a preparative meeting in 1882 called Arkona Preparative Meeting. In 1887 Samuel P. Zavitz, superintendent of Lobo First Day school, was asked to go to Arkona to organize a First Day school. Albert Cutler was appointed superintendent. This school was active until Arkona Preparative Meeting was laid down in 1908.

In 1886 a most enterprising adventure was launched in the publication of a monthly periodical called the Young Friends Review. This modest paper was made a forum for frank and courageous discussion on many different questions relative to the Society of Friends and to current affairs in religion and politics. The Review was published from 1886 - 1898. It was given up or transferred to Friends in New York and after a few years merged into the Friends Intelligencer of Philadelphia. After the laying down of Malahide Preparative Meeting in 1883 and of Pine Street in 1893 it was decided, that since Lobo Friends were by far the most active group in the monthly meeting, the name of Norwich Monthly Meeting should be changed to Lobo. Accordingly in 1893 it became Lobo Monthly Meeting.

The Friends in Lobo also took an active part in starting a continuation school, since young people had to board in a town or city to get their education. A school building was erected at Coldstream in 1926 and continued for years. It is now used as a community hall.

The women Friends were active in the first Women's Institute organized in North Middlesex. It was called Coldstream Women's Institute and had for its motto "For home and country". Mrs. Emily Muma was chosen president, Mrs. John McPherson vice-president, and Miss Mabel Zavitz secretary-treasurer. The first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Edgar Zavitz, August 4th, 1903. Three of these ladies were members of the Society of Friends. One of the important projects of the Institute has been the Tweedsmuir History, which is a collection of clippings and articles concerning the history of the community. It has been from this Tweedsmuir book that Maxwell McLean obtained some material for his book "The Coldstream Story".

The Society of Friends as a body faced the crucial test of World War I. Friends never wavered in their testimony that war is a denial of Christ's way of life. A few young men had joined the Canadian or British army, three or four the Military Red Cross, and one entered the air service. However, English Friends had demonstrated the possibility of performing alternative service consistent with the Quaker peace testimony, which was undertaken by several Canadian Friends. George Bycraft and Pearson Brown of Coldstream meeting entered the Reconstruction Unit in France, serving under American Friends Service Committee. Some young farmers, though liable to military service, were in many cases granted exemption by the local Tribunals, because they had to carry on the basic industry of the country. One young Friend, George Mabley, was granted exemption from combatant service by the Tribunals, but not from non-combatant service in the army. On his refusal to engage in any form of non-combatant service under the military, he was sentenced to a term of hard labour in Kingston penitentiary.

During World War II there were few young men of military age in the meeting. Earl Muma, a farmer, was called up and refused to serve. He was allowed to stay on the farm, provided he paid the government a specific amount each month. Another Friend, Chester Brown, also refused to serve when called up. He was sent to Banff to work in pest control for the Department of Forestry.

In 1931 the Canadian Friends Service Committee was formed "To unify and expand the concerns of Friends in Canada for peace witness, peace education, international service and social concern". Coldstream Friends actively supported this Friends organization, both during the war and the years following it.

At the present time the numbers of Friends who attend Coldstream meeting are small. Many young Friends have settled in other areas, to which their occupations have taken them.

Coldstream Preparative Meeting is a member of Lobo Monthly Meeting together with London and Yarmouth Preparative Meetings. They alternate their monthly meetings between the three areas.

Meeting for worship at Coldstream is held each Sunday at 11.15 a.m. and is preceded at 10.30 a.m. by First Day class for junior and a discussion group for adults.

(Material for this essay was obtained from Records of the Lobo Preparative Meeting and Norwich Monthly Meeting; Coldstream Story by Max McLean, Arthur Dorland's History of the Society of Friends in Canada and verbal reports of some of the members concerned.)

NEWS AND NOTESSPARTA/COLDSTREAM AREA BUS TOUR, July 29, 1976, 1:30 - 7 pm.

This tour will start from and end at Alma College, St. Thomas, during the week of Canadian Yearly Meeting. You will be receiving a flyer with full details. Cost \$3.00. Box lunch supper free to those in residence, \$2.75 for non-residents.

NEWS FROM THE WEST

Margaret McGruther of Calgary Monthly Meeting, in Toronto for a May 1st meeting, brought news of the Quaker records deposited in the Rare Book Room of the University of Calgary. Ernie Ingalls, the librarian, has almost completed an inventory of them. The collection includes a number of files of correspondence as well as a collection of old Quaker books.

Western Half-Yearly Meeting at its meeting on Victoria Day at Sorrento, B.C. appointed a committee to draw up an agreement with the University of Calgary for the custody and microfilming of western Friends meetings. The records of Western Half-Yearly Meeting and its predecessors will be collected and deposited at the University of Calgary.

FAMILIES (magazine)

The Spring 1976 issue of this magazine contains three articles of Quaker interest. First "Irregular Marriages of Yonge Street Friends 1806-1828", by William Britnell. Some of the people involved were disowned and some reinstated. Accompanying notes, the result of painstaking research, includes additional information on both the Quaker and non-Quaker partners to the marriage. The second one is a background article by Joyce M. Scott, entitled "Danby, Vermont: Setting for an Exodus". Timothy Rogers lived at Danby for several years. A list of other migrants from Danby is included. The third article, by Ken Totten with introduction and notes: "Phoebe Winn's Diary of a Journey from Danby, Vermont to Upper Canada in 1804". Phoebe Winn's son Theodore accompanied Timothy Rogers when the latter was organizing the Yonge Street Settlement in 1801. Theodore returned home on a visit and persuaded his parents to join the new settlement. Their Canadian farm was in East Gwillimbury. The diary, now in the Quaker Collection at the University of Western Ontario was sent in by Mrs. Bessie Orvis of Codrington, Ont. "Families" magazine is edited by George Hancocks and published quarterly by the Ontario Genealogical Association.

INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE OF QUAKER HISTORIANS AT RICHMOND, INDIANA, July 2-11, 1976.

Barbara Curtis, Quaker Bibliographer, of the Quaker Collection at Haverford College, Pennsylvania told us about this. We look forward to hearing the results of their deliberations.

RESTORATION OF THE QUAKER BURIAL GROUND AT BEAVER HARBOUR, N.B.

Olive Magowan of the Charlotte County Historical Society has written to us about their recent activities. (For additional information on this project see our Newsletter no. 9, October 1974, page 6). She writes: "The plaque was blown down by the severe gales of last winter. However with the help of a committee enlarged by 'native people' of the village and physical labour promised by the Kiwanis much progress has been made. The plaque has been restored; a fence to keep the property intact has been arranged for, and government help in grading is likely". We are most grateful for what these folk in Charlotte County are doing and have done for this Quaker site. Donations are still needed. Send to Olive Magowan, St. George, N.B. B0G 2Y0.

PRESIDENT HOOVER'S ANCESTORS

Patricia Starr has sent us the following item of interest pertinent to the write-up of our Norwich Historical Bus Tour, which appeared in our Newsletter no. 14, December 1975. She is referring to the "Pioneer Cemetery" on Quaker Street.

In the first cemetery we visited, where the earliest meeting-house stood, about a quarter of a mile from the "Old Brick" Meeting-House, are buried the pioneers. Among them are the stones at the head of the graves of Herbert Hoover's great-grandfather and great-grandmother, Henry and Anne Toole Wasley, inscribed 'Henry Wasley, Died 21st Sept. 1864. Aged 76 Yrs. 5 Mo.' and 'Anne, Wife of Henry Wasley, Died Sept. 11, 1872.' The name of Wasley is listed in the distinctive plaque at the entrance to the cemetery.

The Wasleys had come to Canada from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1806, and had first settled in Uxbridge Township and later in Whitchurch Township. They were members of the Yonge Street Meeting, where Henry Wasley and Anne Toole were married. Among the first of the Wasleys to come to Norwich was Lydia Wasley Cohoe, about 1823. Another sister of Henry's, Elizabeth, and her husband John Gillam, came from near Newmarket at about the same time. In 1841, Henry's daughter, Mary with her husband, Theodore Minthorn, with their two eldest children, moved from near Uxbridge to settle on the first concession of North Norwich, to be near her mother and father, who had already been there some years, and her brothers Henry and Abner. Their daughter Huldah Randall Minthorn, the mother of Herbert Hoover, was born at Norwich and was received into membership at the "Old Brick" Meeting-House the 12th of 1st Mo., 1859.

In June of 1859, the Minthorns removed to Iowa. Their Certificate of Removal was addressed to "Red Cedar Monthly Meeting of Friends" and was dated 13th of 7th Mo., 1859.

ARE	YOUR	FEES	FOR	1976	OVERDUE?
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