

**Anti-Slavery Work In Prince Edward County:  
Jane Ellsworth Young and the Quaker Women of the  
West Lake Monthly Meeting 1800-1865<sup>1</sup>**

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In recent years, the subjects of slavery and abolition in the Canadian context have been the topics of research and discussion by historians. Studies have brought to light the presence of Blacks in the early history of British North America and the arrival of many during after the American War of Independence. Black History has documented the influx of self-emancipated and free blacks to BNA with the passing of the Fugitive Slave Laws in the United States, the founding of Black settlements in Ontario, as well as the experience of many of the settlers. It has also noted the work of individuals and organizations that supported the abolition of slavery.

Research has shown that “no denomination within the Judeo-Christian tradition could claim a heritage of out right opposition to slavery, with the exception of only a few pietistic sects, such as the Society of Friends or the Quakers.”<sup>2</sup> Despite this recognition of Quaker opposition to slavery, historians of the anti-slavery movement in Canada have not written much about it. In general, most historians discount Canadian Quakers and their involvement in the abolition of slavery. It is the contention of some that Quakers in Canada were not involved in the abolition of slavery either because they were rural, or because they were not members of the formal abolition societies, and because their names do not appear on the membership lists of these organizations. However, the Minutes of the West Lake Meetings contain new historical evidence that counters these theories.

The Minutes of the West Lake Monthly

Meetings of Friends residing in Prince Edward County, Upper Canada provide insights into the anti-slavery work of a small religious group, which previously has been overlooked by the wider scholarship. The minutes of Friends Meetings brings to the forefront the concern and commitment of the Quaker women of the West Lake Meeting in assisting those who were in bondage in the United States, as well as their ongoing efforts to provide relief to those oppressed by slavery. It emphasizes the participation of the Quaker women in both the private sphere of their religion and their public political activism. A feminist approach to this rich primary material relocates women of the West Lake Meeting from the periphery of traditional historical discussions to the center of the anti-slavery historical debate.

While the names of Friends do not appear on the membership lists of the formal anti-slavery societies in Upper Canada during the 1800s, nonetheless, they were committed to the cause of abolition long before the organization of formal anti-slavery societies in Canada. The West Lake women challenge the previous image of Quakers, or more specifically Canadian Quaker women, as quiet and rural, who were politically uninvolved in anti-slavery work.<sup>3</sup> As well, the long-term commitment of the West Lake Quaker women connects these women to the larger trans-Atlantic network of women who were working for the abolition of slavery.<sup>4</sup>

In 1761, the Yearly Meeting of Friends in London, England, “banned involvement by

British Quakers in the slave trade.”<sup>5</sup> Extracts from this Meeting were directed to Quaker Meetings in the British Colonies and North America and encouraged slave-owning members to emancipate their slaves. As well, Quakers immigrating to North America in the late eighteenth century who had subscribed to this policy brought these ideas with them.

Quakers in Britain were among those who petitioned the British Government to stop the importation of slaves, the slave trade, and to abolish slavery. The campaign for the gradual abolition of slavery that began in Britain spread to North America. In the United States, Quaker Meetings in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey steadily adopted the policy of gradual emancipation. Quakers immigrating to Upper Canada from England, Ireland, and the United States in the late 1700s and early 1800s brought these ideas with them.

Maintaining the links between Friends was an essential element in the abolition of slavery. Canadian Quakers residing in Prince Edward County remained connected to their 'home Meeting' through attendance at Yearly Meetings, Extracts they received from these Meetings, and through Epistles of support and encouragement from the various Monthly Meetings. Epistles from Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and the Yearly Meetings in New York and London, informed Quakers in West Lake of the oppressed conditions of the slaves in the United States. The West Lake Meeting fell under the leadership of the New York Yearly Meeting and attendance at Yearly Meetings reinforced the religious connection between Quakers on both sides of the border and the wider Quaker community. Emigrants kept in touch with family members through letters, frequent visits to their home Meeting, and through visits by Travelling Friends. Current ideas and philosophies were exchanged

through correspondence and personal visits. In addition, some Friends sent their children to be educated at the Nine Partners Boarding School, in New York State where children were exposed to the rhetoric of anti-slavery. Children encountered the anti-slavery message in abolitionist literature that re-iterated the philosophy that all people were created equal.

In Upper Canada, a sympathetic Lieutenant Governor, John Graves Simcoe proposed a bill to Parliament, which called for an immediate end to slavery. Although Simcoe's bill to Parliament met resistance, in 1793, a compromise was reached and a system of gradual abolition was established within the British colony. In 1807, the British government abolished the slave trade, thereby, eliminating the importation of new slaves into the British Empire. By 1833, abolition in the British Empire was a fact and British North America became a safe haven for many self-emancipated people escaping slavery in the United States.<sup>6</sup>

The abolitionist activities of American Quakers have received attention from historians in the last quarter century. Monographs, journal articles and conferences have made them the focus of many inquiries. Historians have documented the activities of the Underground Railroad and the Quakers who were an integral part of this network. The efforts of influential individuals who spoke out against slavery or were members of anti-slavery societies have been chronicled. The authors of children's books have emphasized the good deeds of Quakers, Quaker values, and its principle of equality for all people. As well, historians have documented the activities of Quakers who quietly assisted fugitives who were following the Northern Star. The same attention has not been given to the efforts of

Canadian Quakers.

By the 1800s, many Quaker families had settled in Prince Edward County in Upper Canada. Here Quaker women helped to clear the land, build their homes, grow the crops and fulfilled their roles as wives and mothers.<sup>7</sup> Women actively participated in the Worship Meetings held in their homes and in Meetinghouses and they held Monthly Meetings of Women Friends. While the written accounts about the lives of Canadian Quaker women and their experiences are few, the Minutes of the various business Meetings conducted in West Lake between 1800 and 1865 do survive as an historical record. The minutes of the Business Meetings, and especially those held by Quaker women, offer insights into the social, political, and religious world of the women of the West Lake Monthly Meeting of Friends. These minutes prove useful for reconstructing the everyday lives of these early Quaker women.

The West Lake Quaker community was located in Hallowell Township in Prince Edward County. Early Canadian Quakers gathered in their homes for Worship Meetings and the West Lake Meeting was the first established in the county. This Meeting was under the jurisdiction of the New York Yearly Meeting, which granted permission for the establishment of Preparative Meetings and Meetings for both Worship and Discipline. Although there were Meetings in Adolphustown, Leeds, Kingston and in other areas of Prince Edward County, West Lake remained the dominant Meeting and became the location of the Monthly Meeting—the West Lake Monthly Meeting of Friends.

Feminists determined that an essential element to Quaker women's autonomy was their independent Business Meeting that were separate from those of men. In these Meet-

ings, women planned the agenda, chose which causes to support and determined the extent of their financial commitment. More importantly, for the purpose of this paper, Quaker women kept minutes of their Business Meetings, which contain a wealth of information in regards to their concerns and their actions on both religious and social issues. Friends who immigrated to British North America continued the tradition of conducting separate Business Meetings for men and women and recording the minutes of their Business Meetings. As a valuable primary source, the minutes of the West Lake Meetings of Women Friends provide a voice to women's history and contribute to the history of the Canadian Quaker women living in West Lake.

The recovery of Quaker women's history is a subject that has long been dismissed by scholars. The annals of Canadian history focus on the accounts of male activities of conquest and expansion, ignores the contributions of most religious groups, and seldom records the activities of Quakers let alone those of women. The most recent publication marketed for Canadian history courses at the University level includes one sentence about the role of Quakers as peacemakers in the 1960s. More telling is the preceding volume that excludes Quakers altogether from its pages.<sup>8</sup> There are few autobiographical narratives written by Canadian women during the eighteen hundreds and few by Canadian Quaker women. The absence of source material reveals a major problem for women's history in general, that "Legend is abundant, trustworthy record is scanty,/ Only a few facts can be rescued from oblivion. Anon."

In an attempt to rescue historical facts from oblivion, especially those about Quaker women, this inquiry employed the surviving

Meeting Minutes of the numerous West Lake Monthly Meetings from 1803 to 1865. It examined the minutes of Women's Meetings, Ministers and Elders, and the Monthly Meetings. These documents proved useful for reconstructing the everyday lives of the early Quaker women in Prince Edward County. They revealed that the Quaker women in Canada were interested in the condition of the enslaved and the self-emancipated slave in the nineteenth century. Moreover, these documents illustrate that Quaker women were contributors to the anti-slavery movement in North America and the women of West Lake were not separate from but directly connected to a larger trans-Atlantic network of women through Quaker tradition, their wider kinship groups and their religious community. This research adds a new dimension to the scholarship of Canadian women's history and specifically to that of Quaker women. It turns old arguments around and illustrates the broad network of women who participated in the cause of anti-slavery.

The early West Lake Meeting Minutes provide several examples of Quaker intolerance to slavery and the Meeting's support for anti-slavery activities. In 1831, Friends in West Lake and those belonging to the Canadian Meetings were called upon by the Half Year Meeting to raise funds through voluntary subscriptions for two urgent requests.

Preparative Meetings to open voluntary subscriptions the purpose of repairing Nine Partners Boarding School and its accommodations and also to open subscriptions in order to remove the people of colour from North Carolina to free governments...<sup>9</sup>

The minutes of this Meeting demonstrate

that the West Lake community was connected to a larger Quaker organization through Extracts and their association in Yearly Meetings. Although their regular Yearly Financial obligation to the Half Year and Yearly Meetings consistently supported anti-slavery work in the United States, by contributing additional money through voluntary subscriptions, the Meeting demonstrated that it supported the anti-slavery movement. Even though the West Lake Quakers were removed from the immediate location of slavery, the politics of abolition was not beyond their understanding, or their realm of social activism. The Meeting's decision and the women's commitment to emancipation was a profession of their faith.

In January of 1832, the Meeting was informed by its treasurer that

The accounts from the Preparative Meeting inform their portions of called for is raised and forwarded. Voluntary subscriptions in removing the people of colour four pounds eleven shillings.<sup>10</sup>

In 1833, slavery was abolished in the British Empire and Canada had become a free country. The focus shifted from abolition of slavery in Canada to abolition in the United States. The need for a Canadian anti-slavery society became more important for the work that it engaged in outside of the country. However, The Anti-Slavery Society of Canada was not established until 1851. In the meantime, Quakers at West Lake carried on the business of raising funds. As well, it appears that the West Lake Quaker women were actively involved. In 1835, the West Lake Preparative Meeting received Extracts from the Yearly Meeting that gave advice regarding schools and slavery.<sup>11</sup> Directives from Half

Year and Yearly Meetings instructed the Meeting to conduct “voluntary subscriptions,” to raise money to “help the blacks,” or “to afford them some relief.” In most cases, the amount of money donated by Friends for this purpose was never recorded, although the clerk of the Women's Meeting did record the amount raised by the women and that the “subscriptions were accomplished.” In all instances, the Clerk did not provide the names of the recipients or details about how the money was distributed. The minutes rarely provided explicit details for any entry regarding assistance or relief provided to the “poor and suffering,” and the recipients name was never recorded. The minutes commonly stated that “assistance was provided” and “advice was given.” While “ruralism” may be an argument for the absence of Quakers in formal anti-slavery organizations, it is more likely that “ruralism” was a contributing factor in their ability to do the work necessary without being observed.

### Jane Ellsworth Young

Jane Ellsworth was born in 1812, the fifth child born to Quakers Arthur and Abigail Ellsworth. Arthur Ellsworth immigrated to Upper Canada in the 1790s and settled in Athol Township, in Prince Edward County. *The West Lake Monthly Meeting's Registry Book* lists his wife as Abigail Richmond and has a notation beside her name, “by request”. The Ellsworth's held an Indulged Meeting in their home in Athol for many years.<sup>12</sup> In 1817, when Jane was five, the Ellsworth's signed a request “for their children to come under the care of friends.”<sup>13</sup> Jane's name first appears in the records of *The West Lake Monthly Meeting Registry Book*, along with the names of her parents and the ten Ells-

worth children.<sup>14</sup> Raised in a Quaker home, Jane attended First Day Meetings, as well as the Quaker school with her brothers and sisters. She married Daniel Young during Meeting in front of family and Friends. The newly married couple moved to their farm in Hallowell Township.<sup>15</sup> Jane and Daniel attended Meetings at the West Lake Meeting House and she was a member of the Women's Meeting. On June 16<sup>th</sup> 1848, Jane attended the wedding of Levi Varney and Eliza Hollingsworth Jones in the Quaker Meeting House at West Lake.<sup>16</sup>

The Census record for 1851 provided further information about the family of Daniel and Jane. The Young family was entered in the record as being “OQ” or Orthodox Quakers, Daniel age 44 was registered as a farmer, along with Jane age 40, and one child Hulda E., age 13. Jane and Daniel had three more children whose names did not appear in the census.<sup>17</sup> An analysis of the Census record observes that their neighbours were farmers and labourers, and included a blacksmith, and one basket maker. The community that they lived in was an eclectic group that consisted of Methodists, members of the Church of England, Presbyterians, and one Roman Catholic family. The Ellsworths were the only Quakers on this particular census page. Most of their neighbours were immigrants who came from New York, England, Ireland, and Lower Canada, while a few others, like the Youngs, were Canadian born.

In 1851, Jane's life changed when Friends at the Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders and at the Monthly Meeting acknowledged her as a Minister in the Society. Once she was recognized, Jane's name appeared more frequently in the Meeting's Minutes. At the West Lake Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, she along with Eliza Brewer, Jo-

seph Brown, and James Haight were appointed to attend the next Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders.<sup>18</sup> The Yearly Meeting took place shortly after the implementation of the Fugitive Slave Laws in the United States and this subject was on the agenda for discussion at the Meeting in New York.

As a Minister, Jane became a central figure in keeping the connections alive between American Abolitionists and the West Lake Quakers. In 1852, the minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting disclose the particulars of a request by Jane at the Monthly Meeting.

Our esteemed Friend Jane Young opened in this meeting a prospect that had accompanied her mind for a length of time, of visiting in gospel love, the Meetings belonging to Pickering and Yonge Street, Pelham and Norwich, and the Meetings of some parts of Michigan. This Meeting unites with her in that prospect and leaves her at liberty to pursue the same as truth may open the way she being a minister in good esteem.<sup>19</sup>

Jane presented her proposal for a missionary visit to the Meeting and after a time of deliberation, the Meeting recorded its decision in the minutes. The "Travelling Minute" that was issued to her verified that the Meeting endorsed her suggestion for a missionary visit. However, the minutes of the Meeting do not provide specific details about her travels. The Clerk for the Meeting did not record Young's intended destination in Michigan. In subsequent Meeting minutes, the Clerk did not enter the return of Jane's "Travelling Minute". There is no comment about the quality of her gospel work in the minutes and

it is unclear how long Jane was absent from West Lake. The lack of information regarding her trip inspires the historian to search for these answers.

Although the West Lake minutes are not complete, the records about African-American settlements in Ontario provide some answers. Many settlements were along the route that Jane travelled. There was a community near Yonge Street and there were several smaller settlements in the Niagara region near the Quaker community of Norwich. To the west of Norwich was Wilberforce and on the route across Canada West to Michigan, there were other settlements in Dresden, Chatham, Sandwich, Colchester, and Amherstburg. Also at this time, the settlement at Puce was in operation.<sup>20</sup> Established by Laura Haviland, Puce was a refuge for those who Haviland had helped escape from slavery. Quaker Elizabeth Chandler was also involved in anti-slavery work in Michigan. It is very likely that Young privileged some of these settlements with a visit. It is conceivable that while she was in Michigan, Jane visited with Laura Haviland or Elizabeth Chandler. Later requests by Jane helped to fill in some of the details that are missing from the minutes.

In 1853, Jane Young again "claimed the attention" of the West Lake Monthly Meeting with another request to travel. The Meeting minutes recorded her request as follows.

Our esteemed Friend Jane Young laid before this meeting a prospect that had accompanied her mind for a length of time of visiting in gospel love, the most part or all of the meetings belonging to North Carolina Yearly Meeting, the subject of which is left for next meetings consideration.<sup>21</sup>

At the next Meeting, the minutes record the Meeting's decision to support Young's request.

The subject of Jane Young's certificate as set forth in last month, again claiming the attention of this meeting, is fully united with and she left at liberty to pursue her prospect as truth may open the way.<sup>22</sup>

The above entries indicate that Jane's request was not granted immediately by the Meeting. The subject was one that the members felt needed to be considered very carefully. Once the Meeting decided to support her, it was "fully united" in its endorsement. For this particular visit, Hannah Tyrrell and Edward Cronk were also given permission to travel to North Carolina with Jane.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, the Clerk did not record their return, a report from the group, or any details about their activities in the United States. It is unclear how much time they spent in the United States. However, it was not until the fall of 1853 that Edward Cronk's name reappeared in the minutes.<sup>24</sup>

The recorded requests by Jane Young were the most detailed examples of a proposal for a missionary visit in the West Lake Meeting minutes, even though they are clearly a summary of the actual plan. It has been suggested that the Clerk intentionally omitted many of the details of Jane's numerous missionary visits. The nature of her work required a certain degree of confidentiality necessary for her safety, that of her companions and those they would have met with in the United States. Her verbal proposals to the Meeting were more detailed and informed the Meeting about the intent of her missionary visit, so that the Meeting's members were

well aware of the purpose of the visit. The unanimous endorsement of Jane's visit, and its entry in the minutes, demonstrates the ongoing support of the West Lake Quakers for anti-slavery activities and abolition.

Previously, in 1831, the West Lake Meeting received a request "to open subscriptions in order to remove people of colour from North Carolina to free governments."<sup>25</sup> In response to this request, the women of the West Lake collected and forwarded money to the Half Year Meeting specifically for anti-slavery work. In doing so, the Women's Meeting connected itself to the wider network of Quakers who were involved in abolition. Previous appeals established a link between West Lake and abolition, and Jane's visit to North Carolina was a continuation of the bond between the women and their work. The visit by Jane Young and her companions to North Carolina illustrates that the West Lake Meeting was connected to the wider network of Quakers in the United States who were involved in the anti-slavery network. The minutes of the Business Meetings of the West Lake Friends mirrors other written accounts of anti-slavery activities. Often, names, dates, and locations were omitted and it can be argued that the nature of the work was responsible for the absence of written documentation and the gaps in the historical record.

The last entry for Jane Young was found in *The West Lake Monthly Meeting Registry Book*. It reads, "Jane Young aged 46 years, deceased 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 9<sup>th</sup> day, 1858."<sup>26</sup>

Although Jane Young had died, the evidence demonstrates that the West Lake women continued to support anti-slavery activities. On the morning of November 13<sup>th</sup>, 1864, Quaker women residing in the Upper Canada community of West Lake, in Prince Edward County, gathered to attend a Prepara-

tive Meeting of Women Friends. An examination of the minutes of the Women's Meeting revealed that the women discussed the ongoing business of their religious community. On the agenda was attendance at Meetings for Worship and Discipline, the care of the children in their community, as well as reports regarding infractions by members for not keeping plainness in speech and dress. All of these issues were discussed and deliberated in the Women's Meeting, and after a period of silent reflection, the women determined their own course of action for each issue in a "spirit of unity". At this particular meeting, the women also considered an issue from outside their religious community.

There was a concern come before this meeting of women regarding the sufferings of the freed blacks and we unite in affording them some relief and appoint Eleanor Bowerman and Lydia Stinson to collect and forward such relief and report when accomplished.<sup>27</sup>

For the women of nineteenth-century West Lake, and for Quakers today, the term "united" meant that everyone in attendance at the Meeting was in harmony with the proposal and agreed with the decision to participate in this action—assisting the refugees from slavery. While the condition of the refugees may not have directly affected the lives of the women, their religious mandate demanded that they investigate the circumstances of the immigrants. The impoverished condition of the former slaves and their well-being met the criteria for intervention under Quakerism's religious mandate. Issues of poverty and social welfare spoke to the overall condition of the society that surrounded them, and the improvement of that society

was of utmost importance for Quakers and most certainly for the women of this Meeting. The Queries and Answers recorded in the Meeting Minutes document the obligations and responsibilities that informed their actions and motivated them to wider social activism.

Although the minutes substantiate the fact that the women were motivated by a religious impulse, I contend that they were more than just members of an isolated religious community as has been suggested by many historians. As citizens of Upper Canada, they were concerned about the underprivileged and marginalized residents of the society at large in which they lived, and in particular the refugees who had escaped slavery and fled to Canada. As an autonomous group, the women consciously decided to provide assistance, contributed financially to the project, and actively worked to achieve their purpose. For these women, their Meeting's decision to provide assistance demonstrates that they were concerned with more than the religious state and personal welfare of their immediate religious community. The public and social issues of slavery and abolition, as well as the interests of the inhabitants of the extended community were equally important to the Quaker women of West Lake.

In 1864, the women again responded to the latest concern that came before their Preparative Meeting, and provided assistance for "the suffering of the freed blacks." Moreover, the Women's Meeting was united in its decision to "provide relief". The Quaker women of the West Lake Monthly Meeting continued Jane Young's work, maintained their connection in the broader Quaker network, and kept the Quaker legacy alive.

The Quaker women of West Lake in Upper Canada participated in the formal organi-



zations of their religion, as well as its spiritual aspects. Evidence from the West Lake business Meetings challenges the notion that Quakers were “peculiar” folk who removed themselves from secular society and lived in isolated rural communities. The Quaker women of West Lake engaged with the wider North American religious community, as well as, in the social and political concerns of the international Quaker community. They responded to the appeals in the Extracts forwarded by the Yearly Meetings, and opened “subscriptions in order to remove people of colour from North Carolina to free governments.”<sup>28</sup> Visits by Travelling Ministers and missionaries from Britain and America shaped ideas and opinions about slavery and human rights. Quaker women supported African-Americans by establishing churches and schools. They took care of the physical, social and spiritual needs of the men and women they helped to free.

The minutes of the Meetings in West Lake reveal that the connections were maintained with Quakers in Britain and North America. The religious work of the West Lake women is evidenced in the requests and travels of Jane Young and her companions. It was determined that at the same time that Jane was travelling across Canada West to Michigan, Laura Haviland and Elizabeth Chandler were active members of the anti-slavery society in Michigan and in Puce in Canada West.<sup>29</sup> The minutes reveal that throughout the period from 1800-1865, the West Lake religious community was united in its financial support of the anti-slavery work of the Society of Friends. Its members conducted religious visits and maintained the links with American Quakers who were engaged in abolition. Thus, the community linked itself to the transatlantic network of Quakers who were

committed to abolishing slavery.

The contributions of Quaker women, and in particular those of the West Lake Monthly Meeting of Women Friends, have been ignored in part because their activities were achieved in silence. As a small religious community in the midst of mainstream Protestant denominations, Canadian Quakers conducted their Meetings out of the “public” view. Their meetings were conducted in private and were not the subject of social conversations. What they did and how they did it was reserved for deliberation amongst themselves in their Business Meetings. Because they were not a dominant mainstream religious organization, and were few in numbers, their actions have remained obscure.

The Quaker women revealed their spiritual commitment by expanding their religious activities to include causes outside the boundaries of Upper Canada. In demonstrating their commitment to the values espoused by Quakerism, the women of the West Lake Women's Meeting integrated themselves into the transatlantic network to end slavery.

It has been noted that the goal of abolishing slavery required a certain degree of secrecy by its advocates. The task of assisting the self-emancipated would have required a similar level of confidentiality. The gaps in the Meeting Minutes can be attributed to both the need to protect the anti-slavery workers as well as the fugitives. In addition, because these tasks undertaken by the West Lake women were considered a part of their religious duty, they did not record work that they considered a normal part of their daily lives.

Letters, diaries, and memoirs by women have proven to be useful sources for the recovery of the historical record and aid in the process of recovering women's history, however, in most instances, very few of these

sources have survived. The gaps in the historical record about women and their activities require that feminists and historians revisit the sources and look for the women hidden in the records. Because the historical records fail to mention *women* or *Quaker women* does not mean that they were not involved. The minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting clearly demonstrate that the Quaker women of the West Lake Monthly Meeting supported the abolition of slavery, as well as the work of anti-slavery societies long before formal anti-slavery societies were established in Canada. Jane Young is an example of West Lake's link to the American and British Quaker network—the transatlantic network of women.

The experiences of holding women only meetings, and the subject of this particular meeting, are prime examples of traditions kept by Quaker women. The sufferings of the enslaved also had a prominent place in the Meetings of British and American Quaker women in the late 1700s and throughout most of the 1800s. This tradition was one in which Quaker women participated fully, and Canadian Quaker women were no exception, as they followed in the footsteps of their British and American ancestors. Through their actions, the women of West Lake connected themselves to an international community of British and American women Friends. A trans-Atlantic network of women that was committed to assisting the enslaved achieve their goals, of freedom and equality with their fellow man, through the abolition of slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

#### Notes:

1. This subject of this essay is from the M. A. Thesis THE QUAKER WOMEN OF THE WEST LAKE MONTHLY MEETING 1800-1865: "Well behaved women rarely make history" by Margaret L. Green,

University of Windsor, (2006). The quote is borrowed from Laurel Thatcher Ulrich.

2. David Roediger and Martin H. Blatt, eds. The Meaning of Slavery in the North (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 79.

3. Cecelia Morgan, "Gender, Religion and Rural Society" Quaker Women in Norwich Ontario," in Ontario History, Volume LXXXII, no.4 (December 1990): 273-287. This article is only about the Norwich Quakers and relied on the records of the Norwich Meetings. Unfortunately, these minutes did not record events similar to those found in the West Lake minutes. The absence of details about Quaker involvement in abolition does not necessarily mean that the women were not supportive. Written documentation was often forgone to protect those involved.

4. Claire Midgley, Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns 1780-1870. (London: Routledge, 1992). The trans-Atlantic network consisted of Britain, Canada and the United States. The argument has been accused of supporting the myth that all Quakers were united.

5. Midgley, 15.

6. William Renwich Riddell, "The Imperial Act of 1833, 3, 4, William IV, c. 73." Cited in An Official Record, 7. The law passed the House of Commons Aug. 7, 1833 and received Royal Assent, Aug. 28<sup>th</sup>.

7. Susanna Moodie, Roughing it in the Bush Or Forest Life in Canada reprint (Toronto: Prospero Canadian Collection 2000).

8. Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkle, History of the Canadian People: 1867 to the Present, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Volume II (Toronto: Pearson Education Canada Inc., 2006), 353.; Margaret Conrad, Alvin Finkle, and Cornelius Jaenen, History of the Canadian Peoples: Beginnings to 1867 (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1993).

9. Minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting held the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, 1831. B-2-63, R. 23. Canadian Friends Historical Association, microform, Courtesy of the Quaker Archives held at Pickering College, New Market, Ontario and its Archivist Jane Zavitz-Bond.

10. Minutes of the West Lake Meeting held the 1<sup>st</sup> month, 1832. B-2-63, R. 23. Calculations based on other monetary citations in the minutes for this time determine that four pounds eleven shillings was probably equal to sixteen or seventeen dollars.

11. Minutes of the West Lake Preparative Meeting held the 9<sup>h</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, 1835. C-3-70, R. 44.

12. Arthur G. Dorland, A History of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada. (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1927), 86.

13. Minutes of the West Lake Preparative Meeting held the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month, 1817. B-2-57, R. 22. The Ellsworths appear in The West Lake Monthly Meeting Registry Book, 26. B-2-62, R. 23. In order they are the parents Arthur & Abigail, followed by their children Huldah E., Phillip, Caleb, Arthur (jr.), Jane, Abigail,

Syrus [Cyrus] Richmond, Sarah, Lydia Margaret, and David. Abigail Richmond Ellsworth died 7<sup>th</sup> month, 1825, and Huldah in the 8<sup>th</sup> month, 1825, also Sarah, n.d. Arthur Sr. was disowned sometime in 1827-1828?. Entries in The Registry Book were entered after the 1828 separation in about 1830 and listed Arthur (18 yrs), Abigail (14), Lydia Margaret (8), Cyrus (12), & David (5 yrs.). Arthur jr.(?) and Abigail (1834) were disowned.

14. The West Lake Monthly Meeting Register. n.d. Quaker Archives, microfilm, B-2-62, R. 23.

15. "1815 Census of Prince Edward County, Ontario, Canada," Enumeration District 1, Sheet No. 43, (23 & 24) 64. Courtesy of Seventh Town Historical Society in Prince Edward County.

16. "Marriage Certificate," in Registry Book B, Belonging to the West Lake Monthly Meeting, Quaker Archives, microfilm. B-2-60, R. 23. Jane's signature appears on the document along with those of the other guests. Levi Varney was a member of the Sandwich Monthly Meeting in New Hampshire and was hired by the West Lake Meeting as a teacher for the Quaker school. Levi and Eliza taught in Quaker schools in both the U.S. and Canada. They returned to West Lake where Eliza was acknowledged a Minister by the West Lake Meeting in 1863.

17. Miscellaneous Documents, "Some of the several YOUNG Families in the Quinte District," 41. The Seventh Town Historical Society. GEN. YOU. 000.1. Genealogical sources list Jane Ellsworth, born in 1812. According to these records Jane and Daniel had four children Sarah Marie, Ella Diana, Huldah E. and David Conger Young, 2nd.

18. Minutes of the West Lake Quarterly Meeting of Ministers and Elders held the 10<sup>th</sup> month, 7<sup>th</sup> day, 1851. B-2-59, R 22.

19. Minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting held the 18<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month, 1852. B-2-64, R. 24.

20. Daniel G. Hill, The Freedom Seekers: Blacks in Early Canada, (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1995), 46-55.

21. Minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting of Friends held at West Lake on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month, 1853. B-2-64, R. 24.

22. Minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting of Friends at Ameliasburgh held the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1853. B-2-64, R. 24

23. Minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month, 1853. B-2-64, R. 24.

24. Minutes of the West Lake Monthly Meeting held the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month, 1853. B-2-64, R. 24.

25. Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, 1831. B-2-63, R. 24.

26. The West Lake Monthly Meeting Register of Members for 1837. B-2-62, R.23.

27. Minutes of the West Lake Preparative Meeting of Women Friends held the 13<sup>th</sup> day, 10<sup>th</sup> mo. 1864. C-3-80, R. 45.

28. Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, 1831. B-2-63, R. 23.

29. Daniel G. Hill, The Freedom Seekers: Blacks in Early Canada, (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1995), 75-76, 131.