

## E. H. Marion Cronk Fonds

*Randy Saylor*

It is rare that five generations of letters, business records, account books, diaries, photographs, genealogical writings and other ephemera are saved within one family. The Marion Cronk Fonds is just such a collection and in the spring of 2005 it became a permanent gift to the Archives.

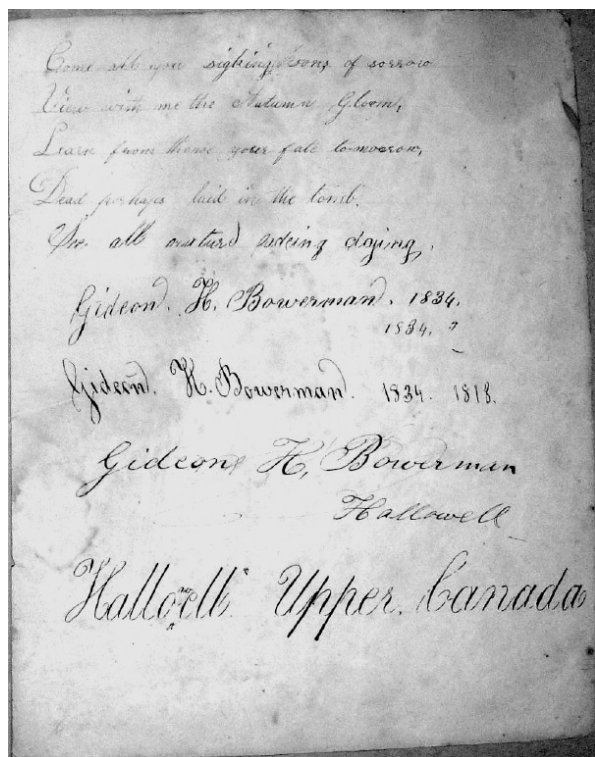
Archivist Jane Zavitz Bond knew Marion and visited her a number of years ago to see the papers that Jane knew the family had saved. Marion was an active Friend in West Lake Meeting and as the membership diminished she fell heir to meeting records including the cemetery. The meeting records and

family papers were never put in any order and Jane's efforts were frustrated at the time. The West Lake Meeting was in Bloomfield, Prince Edward County, Ontario.

During the recent effort to transcribe the West Lake records, Janet Kellough, one of the transcribers and a journalist, wrote an article in the local media about the project and mentioned that old records were being sought. Seeing the article, Gord Moran called Randy Saylor, the project coordinator, to say that he was the Power of Attorney for Marion and he knew that she wanted the old family records



**Stephen and Amy (Hughes) Bowerman**



The oldest document in the fonds from 1799.

to go to the archives. On Marion's behalf he made the gift of the material.

Two large plastic tote boxes full of old letters, personal business records, photographs, genealogical writings and some West Lake Meeting records plus a number of books relating to Quaker thought were given to the archives in her name. The fonds consists of six feet of boxed folders and the full inventory can be seen on the archives website at [www.quaker.ca](http://www.quaker.ca).

The material centres around the Hughes, Bowerman, Cronk (Cronkhite) and Ogden families. Samuel Hughes (1785 – 1856) had two sisters, Amy and Abigail, who married two Bowerman brothers, Stephen and Judah respectively. The fonds includes two journals by Samuel Hughes, letters between Samuel who was part of the Yonge St Meeting in Newmarket and his Prince Edward County sisters, poetry writings and business records.

Gideon Bowerman (1775 – 1811), brother of Stephen and Judah, was an active business man in the lumber trade between the Bay of Quinte and Montreal. He drowned in 1811 and his brother Johnathan spent years collecting his debts and business notes dated from 1799 to the 1840's survive in the fonds.

Gideon Hughes Bowerman (1818 – 1877) of next generation lived on the farm and a number of his account books and business notes form part of the fonds.

John Hughes Cronk (1833 – 1899), grandson of Abigail Hughes, married Marilla Ogden and their material forms about half of the collection. John Cronk's school boy work books, records from his training as a teacher and early letters give an interesting picture of life in the 1850's. In the 1860's John and his brother Judah join in the lumber business in Cobocok, Ontario and many mill records, drawings of projects, letters have survived. They had a bitter falling out in the later part of the decade and that is included as well.

There are many letters of the Ogden family between Marilla and her close family who were spread over Ontario and many who emigrated to the western United States. John Cronk and his brother-in-law, David Fairchild Ogden wrote many letters. David trained as a dentist and traveled and worked in South America, Japan and South Africa where he died in 1891. John Cronk was his executor and much material survives around these affairs.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a number of Bowerman descendants started to write genealogical accounts of the family. Most notably, a cousin, Dr. Albert C Bowerman (1850 – 1917), wrote several works and these and his notes have survived. Much was not published.

Wilford Cronk (1873 -1956), son of John and Marilla Cronk was the 4<sup>th</sup> generation to

