



Yonge Street Meetinghouse, built between 1810-1812, from the south-west. The entrance, added in 1975 when the meetinghouse was raised and a basement added, replacing the women's conveniences built in 1822. Photograph credits Andrew Cresswell.

The Yonge Street Quakers **The story of "The Friends" in the early days** **of York County, Ontario**

by Ethel Willson Trehwella

Ethel Willson Trehwella (1882-1959), born in August 1882 in the Township of East Gwillimbury, York County North, was the daughter of Robert A. & Sarah J. (Barker) Willson. Her family was of Quaker ancestry and she was a member of the Society of Friends in Newmarket, Ontario. After the death of her husband in 1937, she took up the task of writing of local Quaker history. Mrs Trehwella was among those who established the Sharon Burying Ground Association in 1952 and was its first secretary. In June 1952, she was made an honorary member of the York Pioneer & Historical Society. She died in

Newmarket in April 1959 before completion of her last work, *A History of the Town of Newmarket* [from Ethel Willson Trehwella, "Job Hughes, Friends' Minister of Yonge Street, 1805-1807," *The Canadian Quaker History Journal* 71 (2006): 75-92]. This booklet on the Yonge Street Quakers was originally published in 1937.

Introduction

This account of the Yonge Street Quakers was prepared by Ethel Willson Trehwella, whose Quaker forbears come to York County, Upper Canada in the early



The meetinghouse porch looking east towards the men's half. Unlike the women, whose conveniences were accessible from within the meetinghouse, men's conveniences were, up until the renovations in 1975, a separate back house structure at the north-east corner of the meeting house.

days.

The subject is one in which the author has maintained a constant and devoted interest. Its preparation is a contribution to the annals of the people called "Quakers" who settled in York County in the early days of the last century, (1800-1840).

The author had not anticipated the great interest which has been manifested in the subject. So much discussion, reminiscence and interest have been aroused that it has been decided to publish it in a more permanent form. This is done in the hope

that it will create a new and deeper interest in the Friends, their lives and principles. That will be an ample reward to both the author and publisher.

The part taken by the Friends in the pioneer settlements and their influence in the affairs of state, society and religious life is worthy of being known by all.

The appendix compiled by the publisher is a concise, though incomplete, chronology that will be of interest and value to those whose wish it is to know more of the Religious Society of Friends, and it is hoped that it will stimulate an earnestness in the deeper study of the history of the Quakers and their beliefs.

J.M. Walton
Aurora, Ontario
29th day 9th month, 1937
A Snowy Day

(An incident witnessed by the author in the life of his aged father.)

A Quaker sat in his big arm chair,
With his grey locks clustering low,
Looking anon through the window pane
Where the storm beat wild o'er a pathless plain
Of wind, of sleet, and of snow.

The old clock ticked on the mantel shelf
To the hearth-fire blazing warm,
And he bowed his head in thoughtful mood
And thought how great and wise and good
Is the One Who rules the storm.

The storm beat on till the landscape looked
Like the surf of a foaming sea,
Then he raised his eyes with a smile and said,
Though the storm beats wild and the world
seems dead
'Tis a beautiful day to me.

Oh could we all when the storms of life
Beat with a dreary sound,
Leave all our cares and fears behind,
And seek with a sincere heart and find
The peace that the Quaker found.

Athens, Ont.
Ephraim Robeson.

The Yonge Street Quakers
By Ethel Willson Trehwella

Looking backward at the passing of a war-torn century, and to the incoming of another laden with the allure of liberty and possession, one is reminded of a grey old mother as she stands with feet upon a threshold which she may not cross, and with hand still in the clasp of much that lies behind, she peers down the glimmering vista to the land of promise in the young century of 1800, and upward points to the slogan, "Onward." Now the kaleidoscopic scroll of more than a century has unrolled since the grey mother's eagle eyes scanned the horizon to the north, and the now county of York in the then Home District, in the province of Upper Canada, received its influx of settlers from across the border.

The purchasing of all this territory from the Mississauga Indians, and known as the Toronto Purchase involved about 250,000 acres.

After all these years a cloud of picturesque romance crowns this transaction. It was on September 23, 1787, that three Indian chiefs met the government's representative, Sir John Johnson at the Carrying Place on the Bay of Quinte, and bargained for all this land. Eighteen years later, in August, 1805 the government representatives again met with the Indians on the bank of the River Credit. This time there were eight Indian chiefs,



One of four windows along the south facade. The windows are glazed with 15 small panes, a significant number of which are original. Windows on the north and south of the meetinghouse are comprised of six over 9 panes, while the remaining windows are eight over twelve panes.

and the deed of purchase was confirmed.

In 1793 the opening up of this vast wilderness began on of the first active moves being the surveying and building of roads. One of the main arteries leading out of the little settlement of York on the banks of Lake Ontario and extending as far north as Lake aux Claies, now Lake Simcoe, so named by Governor Simcoe in memory of his father, was the historic Yonge Street. One of the very earliest roads in the province of Upper Canada, originally it was an Indian trail.

It received its name from Sir George Yonge, secretary of war, in 1791, and in 1794 Governor Simcoe ordered it made a bush road. It extended through dense untracked forests of pine and ash and maple, and its depths resounded to the howl of the wolf and secreted the prowling bear. It was so rough that incoming settlers

were forced to take their canvas covered wagons apart and drag the several sections up the steep hills by strong ropes passed around the stems of saplings. In 1828 it became a stage route to Lake Simcoe, and in 1847 it was macadamized as far as Holland Landing. Now it is an ultra-modern highway, a throbbing artery pulsing with the enormous traffic of two countries, and where now stretches the unbroken panorama of beauty may be traced remnants of transaction, sites of pioneer

first hopeful sowing of meagre corn.

It was to these people who bravely faced the risks, and endured the hardships and privations of pioneer immigration and to this garden which they planted in this wild Canadian bushland, that our thoughts turned as we luxuriously rolled along old Yonge Street, to the Spring Meeting on the last Sabbath morning in May. Reverently we recalled the lines from Mrs. Hemans:



An early twentieth-century image of the meetinghouse from the south-east where the driveway approached the building. Two doors are found on the south facade, providing separate entrances for men (east end) and women (west end). The doors are double-leafed, with three panels to each leaf. Canadian Yearly Meeting Archives, Pickering College.

settlements, primitive buildings that marked the beginnings of this vast new province, their histories hidden in old obscure documents or gradually becoming the story of tradition.

Sometimes the picture is so magnificent that the more modes links with a pregnant past lie forgotten in the pressure of modern hurry. Though remote and neglected they lie, still their establishment as a beginning of civilization in the wilderness stands as a symbol to the generations, of the years that rang to the rhythm of the woodsman's axe, and which were planted deeply with the

"The air was fraught
With noble memories
They that had toiled, watched,
struggled to secure
.... Worship, free and pure,
Reigned there, the o'er shadowing
spirit of the scene."

A picture of entrancing spring loveliness unfolded, that refreshed the eye and gladdened the heart, as Mother Nature in one of her happiest moods, thrilled anew to the miracle of resurrection, coaxing leaf and bud into beauty and fragrance, and

wooing ones thoughts to the harmonious calm and benedictions of a primitive Quaker Meeting House that nestles among the trees a short distance out from Newmarket, and in the heart of that which was once an almost wholly Quaker Settlement.

Brooding peace and a Sabbath stillness pervaded the silent acre, and the bird's lilting song, and the rustling of tender leaves seemed to recall the mystic communion of other far-off spring gatherings in this quaint old meeting place of simple worshippers. It emphasized the realism that it has become but another of the historically interesting though slowly disappearing shrines in the province of Ontario. It stands as a tangible link with the past early century, for it was the first building for worship north of Toronto, or York. It was also the centre in the beginning of that which rapidly developed into one of Ontario's thriftiest, wealthiest and most historic communities.

And here, this sunny Sabbath day, the air heavy with lilac and young hemlock, once again was to be gathered a remnant of the descendants of those plain, frugal folk, who used to gather, in oxen-drawn wagons, from the isolated clearings, to meet beneath this sturdy roof for this quiet inward waiting upon God, and whose forefathers, while the red man bivouacked within sight of its peaceful walls, had called to imagination no vision of this pressing and preoccupied age, as it surges and beats within sound of the humble worshipper.

The ancient Meeting House appeared to radiate its welcome to newcomers, companioning in a wistful camaraderie with the new faces crossing its threshold communing with spirits of other far-off days – the gathering of the young men and maidens, those in the middle activities of life, and the hoary crowns and knotted

hands of those, who in the glow of eventide, were nearing the shadows – all names that answer now but to memory's roll call.

The Meeting on Yonge Street was established in 1804. According to minutes recorded in the first book, we read the following:

“Agreeable to a minute of the Yearly Meeting held in Philadelphia in the fourth month, 1804, granting and establishing a meeting for worship, and also a preparative meeting at Yonge Street, (our Monthly Meeting of Pelham uniting therewith, and leaving Friends at liberty to open the said preparative meeting when they think most convenient). Friends now met a Yonge Street in the capacity of a preparative meeting this 21st day of the sixth month, 1804. The minute of the Yearly Meeting being produced and read is as follows:

“Philadelphia Yearly Meeting’

“16th of 4th month 1804.

“For the preservation and help of Friends residing in Upper Canada, ... the committee having recently paid them a visit, unite in a belief that it might be safe to establish a meeting for worship and also a preparative meeting, and that the business of the meeting be transacted by men and women in an united capacity. Which are fully deliberated on, and the sentiments of many Friends freely exprest.

“This meeting under the present apparent necessity of affording relief to those distant members, is

easy in granting such an establishment, with this addition, that the said preparative meeting have authority to take cognizance of presentation on account of marriage, and make due appointments for their orderly accomplishment – that they keep regular records of the certificates of those marriages, and fair minutes of the proceedings on such other business as is proper to a preparative meeting.’ Jonathan Evans, clerk to the meeting.”

And at Yonge Street preparative meeting held the 19th of 7th month, 1804, Nathaniel Pearson was appointed clerk. Representatives to attend Monthly Meeting were Timothy Rogers, Theodor Winn, Sarah Rogers and Lydia Rogers.

Though tradition tells us the first meetings were held in the cabins of the settlers, on the 21st of 11th month, 1805, is a minute indicating that previous to the erection of the present building a temporary building must have existed, for Isaac Phillips, Rufus Rogers, Amos Armitage and Nathaniel Pearson were appointed “to provide boards and make necessary repairs to the Meeting House, and present their accounts.”

The present Meeting House was built in 1808-1810. It is a plain, one-storied structure, 60 by 30 feet. Its architecture is typical of the lives of those who planned it, simple, rugged, and scorning frivolous ornamentation. But the years have written their story, nails are loosened and prominent and rusty eaves trough follows the sagging edge of the low porch, that with its shingles warped from the sun and rain, totters on its rotting sills, and which, projecting two entrances, extends entirely across the south front where some

thoughtless persons had autographed their initials in the pine walls. These doors are low and carefully panelled, and together with solid shutters that swing from enormous hinges, when close permit no light to enter.

The building is in a good state of preservation, and is divided by a wooden partition, one side originally having been used for women’s meetings, and the other for those of the men, while the partition was made removable to permit of joint meetings. The interior walls are strong and crude, and guilty of no adornment except a glistening coat of white paint that is veined and mellowed by Time’s artistry. The rude forms are empty now as a mother’s arms when she has watched the last fledgling fly the nest. The rusty box stove was designed to hold rough chunks of wood and flames within which today crackled in cheery warmth, and from the age-mottled pipes was exhaled a homey fragrance of low-hung smoke. Through the old time windows, set with miniature panes, and framed with narrow sills, golden sunbeams caught the gleam of the verdure outside and transformed the colorless shadows within.

Thus the meeting place of those forefathers of seven generations ago! To tread these floors where those pioneer feet once trod, to sit in these primitive forms that provided rest for those toilworn bodies, and to breathe the atmosphere fragrant still from that sweet odour of sanctity – of this a deservedly proud community’s earliest landmark, erected in loyalty and thanksgiving – was to be inspired with a hope that in justice to the memory of those men and women of those long ago years, soon would be established a grateful and prominent recognition that it was owing to their bitter privations, their almost overwhelming struggles, and their

breaking homesickness offset by their isolated helplessness and their sturdy faith, that the new land's perils and horrors were conquered, and there laid the foundation for the wealth and comfort and culture abundant today.

Entering the building one felt the holy benediction that hovered over the quietness, when, as of yore, with reverent steps, serious faced women, crowned with the dignity of the Quaker bonnet, noiselessly, turned to the forms on the left, followed to the right by grave and silent men, while expectantly facing this hushed gathering were the ministers and elders on the raised seats.

With no pre-arranged order of service, the meeting began in reverent silence, and a time of inward stillness and tender communion uplifted the individual to a sense of the responsibility in the sureness of the Inner Light. Worldly thoughts had no place in this quiet gathering; the silence was pregnant with that mysterious inward stillness that surrounds those who are in touch with the Infinite.

Then, out from the silence, expressed in restrained language of the Friend, once again, ringing clear and true above the clamour of modern stress, came the old, sweet message, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden."

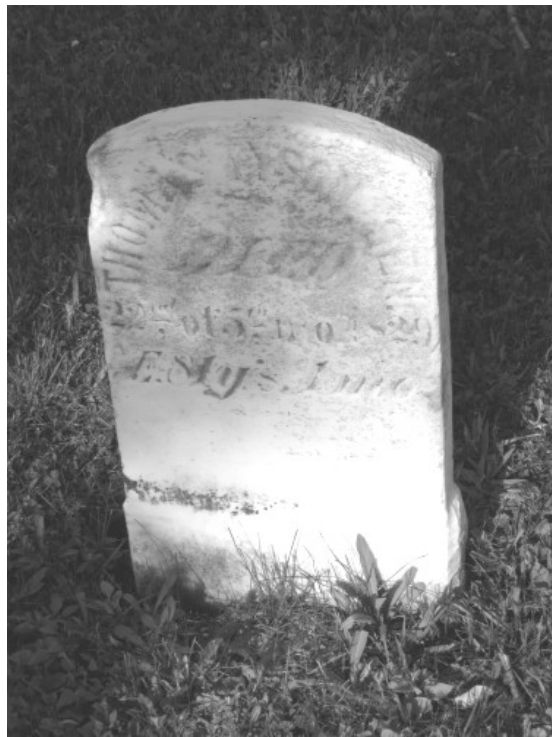
One called to mind another far-off Friends' Meeting House beautiful Jordans in England, the setting for the inspiring painting by J. Doyle Penrose, "The Presence in the Midst," with the shadow of the cross in the background. This picture might so aptly have been inspired here.

From the peace of green pastures, and the refreshment of still waters, Whittier feelingly has touched the depths of an old-time Quaker Meeting:

"And so I find it well to come

For deeper rest to this still room.
For here the habit of the soul
Feels less the outer world's control.
The strength of mutual purpose pleads
More earnestly our common needs,
And from the silence multiplied
By these still forms on either side,
The world that time and sense have known,
Falls off and leaves us God alone."

Plain, unobtrusive meeting houses such as this on Yonge St. lie scattered throughout England and faithful to the simplicity of form and quietness of worship these replicas of the old land meetings in the early days of this young country left their impress upon the community in which they were established. Looking back through the years, reviewing the records and contributions of these visionary settlers, men who have touched life in its depths, and who have marvelled at its heights, have



The burying ground south of the meetinghouse was purchased from Asa Rogers in 1807 for \$18 an acre. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, graves were left unmarked, or used wooden planks or field stones to indicate internments. It was not until the 1820s that small, simple marble tablet markers were permitted.

said with reverent sincerity, "The old-time Quaker was as near Heaven's pattern as one could hope to meet in this world."

Magnificently beautiful trees guard the Meeting House, trees that towered, straight and strong, among many, before the settlement was born. To the west stretches the fresh green of a fertile rolling country. In a minute of the 16th of 1st month, 1806, appears the item that land for a burying ground was procured from Asa Rogers, at a cost of \$18 an acre for the clearing. And to the south of the Meeting House lies this little green-turfed burying ground misted with the mellow glow of summers long gone by, where uneven rows of plain low stones, some cracked, some lying in fragments, others slanted to the east or tipped to a western angle, mark the earthly resting place of many of the pioneer Quakers.

A few are remembered only by common field stones, the inscriptions on which summer's bleaching suns and winter's drifting snows have wholly obliterated. Deeply here has Time's pencil etched its lines: bunches of crispy grass springing from that of yesteryear, entangling carpets of bronzing vine, fill the hollows and hide the unevenness, to provide a pitfall for the feet of the unwary. Now, where the squirrels scamper unmolested, and the bird thrill to the mating song, in the shadow of the place where they were wont to worship, "they lie, while daily the throbbing tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them." There in their dreamless sleep, they rest, the winds chanting a requiem and the stars that guided them in the wilderness still keeping watch over the marble names.

As one wanders here and there, brushing aside a vine, or trying to erase a smudge of mildew from off the headstone, one notices the names of Cody, Rogers, Hollingshead, Huntly, Lloyd, Clark, James,

Webb, Botsford, Millard, Lewis, Heacock, Watson, Kitley, Stephens, Appleton, Stokes, Lundy, Lount, Mowder, Phillips, Simpson, Pilmoor, Hustler, Coats, Gorham, Terry, Pearson, Brock, Wallis, Webster, Edwards, Eastman, Doan, Murray, Howard, West, Curry, Srigley, Davis, McGarney, Tyson, Moore, Evans, Brothers, Allen, Borden, Hambleton, Willis, Charles, Baker, Trent, Grimshaw, Ashton, Burnie, Williams, Walton.

Beneath its noble elm, in the corner of this little God's acre stands a modern monument erected a century later, 1908 to the memory of Ebenezer Doan, by his descendants. On this monument is inscribed the Doan crest, "Omnia Mei Dona Dei."

The history of these people, the Society of Friends in Canada, who converted the wilderness of this section of North York into its abundant prosperity, is the outgrowth of much that had gone before, and is linked to that of the old land by the name of William Penn, whose remains rest in the quiet Jordans burying ground. In 1643, while Hampden on the field of carnage was waging a struggle for England's civil liberty, George Fox was urging a concern for the freedom to worship as England's conscience directed. Enduring every form of indignity, oppression and cruelty, it appeared that a way always opened through which they might go forward. Impelled by the persecution of many of his compatriots, the thoughts of William Penn were turned toward that great enterprise of founding a colony in the new world. In lieu of the esteem merited by his father, Vice Admiral Sir William Penn, and an inherited claim for 16,000 pounds owed to his father by the British government, the king favoured his petition and purpose, and the tract now known as Pennsylvania was given in settlement. This venerable



In the south-west corner of the burying ground is a large memorial to Ebenezer Doan, erected by his descendants in 1908, one hundred years after leading his family's migration north to Upper Canada from Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Ebenezer died 21 November 1818, at eighty-five.

document received the king's signature, March 4, 1681, and William Penn was made "absolute proprietary, yielding and paying to the king two beaver skins annually, and one fifth of the gold and silver ore found within the territory."

Associated with this new liberty were the names of the scholarly Robert Barclay, John Woolman, the saint who by example struck resounding blows to break the

coloured man's shackles, and Stephen Grellet, French aristocrat, and preacher of peace. One of the treasured memories connected with the ancient Meeting House on Yonge Street is that of a visit to this meeting of Stephen Grellet, in August, 1828, and quoting from his biography re the country at that time he says:

"The country has much improved since I was in these parts; dense forest, deer,

wolves and bears still abound. We came to Yonge Street and had several meetings. There was a large concourse of people, even from distant parts.”

Then came the revolutionary war. War and oppression they considered contrary to the Gospel. Because of their loyalty, or their declared neutrality, through the heat and rage of war many of these Friends suffered severely. They were non-combatants, and as subjects of England were by special law exempt from military service. Now that the war was over it was a foreign government which they were called upon to acknowledge: thus they had no assurance that their covenants would be maintained.

Their hopes turned toward the land lying to the north, Canada. Although in 1785 the principles of these people had been carried across the border to embrace a spontaneous growth on the Bay of Quinte, and later, in 1794, Mr. Berczy had brought in his 64 families to this section, it was in 1801 that the door of opportunity opened wider still to Timothy Rogers, a Friend from Vermont, and a man of experience and vision, and possessed of a profound concern to assist these distressed Quakers. He made an agreement with Lieut.-Governor Hunter at York to take 40 farms of 200 acres each, and secure the necessary settlers. All along Yonge Street, from Aurora to Holland Landing, also the north-western part of Whitchurch Township and the south-western part of East Gwillimbury Township were almost entirely settled by pioneer Quakers.

In a letter received from the Ontario Archives, James J. Talman expresses regret that only 27 of the names of these settlers can be supplied. Continuing:

“The petition of Timothy Rogers was read by the land committee of

the Executive Council on April 8, 1801.

“In the minutes of the committee for that day, preserved in Land Book D, pp. 629-630, the following is found:

“Timothy Rogers, Obadiah Rogers, James Rogers, Rufus Rogers, Wing Rogers, Jr., Asa Rogers, Isaac Rogers, Bethuel Huntly, Henry Proctor, Obadiah Griffin, Nathaniel Gager, Isaac Griffin, Zebulon Smith, William Huff, Obadiah Huff, Henry Crones, Ephraim Talbot, Bela Clark, Theodore Winn, William Howard, Nathan Farr, Humphry Finch, Nehemiah Hide, Stephen Howard, Joel Bigalow, Jacob Johnson, Abraham Lepard.

“ ‘N. B. A number of families more on the way, which will not come forward in some months but Mr. Rogers expects possibly about 20 good families next winter.’

“Then among the early names are listed the following coming with Timothy Rogers:

“Armitage, Collins, Chapman, Doan, Gould, Hilborn, James, Kester, Lundy, Millard, Phillips, Dennis, Haines, Hughes, Widdifield, Willson (Robt.), with the families of Heacock, Webb, Hollingshead, Pearson, Starr, Cody, Lewis, and Toole, coming at about the same period. This latter list is believed to be correct, but it is difficult at this late date to obtain records to verify all the names, and probably, also, some have been omitted.”

Claimants of those untrod fertile acres of unknown dangerous wilderness, these new settlers were all well fitted for the venture by experience in pioneer life in the

wilds of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Descendants of co-workers with William Penn, some tracing lineage to the best English families, most of them, for the times, were possessed of good education and culture, and they early began their endeavors to promote education in the new province.

Timothy Rogers received from the government a deed of lots numbers 94 and 95, and thus became the first individual owner of all the land upon which Newmarket was first built. From an historical sketch which appears in *The Newmarket Era* about 1880 appears the interesting item:

“The first white man known to have slept at Newmarket was Timothy Rogers, who in the year 1800, while on a prospecting tour between Toronto and Lake Simcoe, camped for a time upon a hill about where the North York Registry Office now is, and fed his horse upon the rushes that grew on the low land nearby.”

By old tradition, as Friends they had direct access to the king and the most important item discussed at the first Monthly Meeting in the new settlement, on the eighteenth of ninth month, 1806, was the preparing and presenting of an address of loyalty to the governor, Francis Gore, and concluding with: “Hoping thy administration may be such as to be a terror to the evil-minded, and a pleasure to them that do well; then will the province flourish under thy direction, which is the earnest desire and prayer of thy sincere friends.”

This document, in its quaint language characteristic of its authors, was presented by Timothy Rogers and Amos Armitage. We find also the name of Jacob Lundy among the leaders of the Quaker settlement.

From early minutes are noted interesting items and names.

From 1806 to 1861 the clerks appointer were Nathaniel Pearson, David Wilson, Enos Dennis, Thomas Linville, Joseph Doan, Cyrus Dennis, Nathan Dennis, Levi Hughes, Elias Hughes, Geo. Edwards, Joseph Pearson, Joseph Penrose, Elias Rogers, Augustus Rogers, Thomas Lewis, Ira Webb.

Among the earliest overseers are the names of Abraham Webster, Asa Rogers, Amos Armitage, Ann Pearson, Martha Armitage, Sarah Lundy, John Doan.

On the 17th of 7th month, 1806, books were received from Philadelphia for us in a school and Amos Armitage, Charles Chapman, Abraham Webster, Samuel Lundy, Isaac Phillips, Nathaniel Pearson and Asa Rogers were appointed to take charge of the books, and to have oversight of the school. James Hilborn was appointed teacher.

Ontario teems with these historic and precious treasures and landmarks. They reveal the story of hope and faith and courage; they picture the development from the peril of the redman's grim wilderness to the fair fruitful province that is the birthright of the present and coming generations. Preserved in archives and libraries, or sometimes discovered in surprisingly unexpected corners, are old records, and the carefully kept minutes of primitive transactions. Some of the writing is now more than Quaker grey. A wonderful chapter of Canadian history! These Friends meetings records are fully authentic of the period. And what stories they recall!

Then like a whiff of rosemary comes the breath of romance from old marriage books, as the yellowed pages record the beginnings of new homes. No haste among early Friends in those important matters. “The young man and the young woman having laid their intentions of

marriage with each other before two Monthly Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, held at Yonge Street, in the township of King, in the Home District, province of Canada West, they having consent of parents, and nothing appearing to obstruct, their proposals of marriage were allowed.”

Then the young man, clad in the plain costume of the Friend, and the demure young woman wearing her flowing gown of grey, arose in public meeting, and each taking the other by the hand, separately repeated the solemn vows, - “Promising through Divine Assistance to be unto her (or him), a loving and faithful husband, (or wife), until it shall please the Lord to separate us.”

In the minute book of Yonge Street meeting are recorded the following intentions of marriage: 1804, William Pearson, Hannah James; 1806 Robert Willson, Mercy Chapman; 1807, Enos Dennis, Sarah Hughes; Benjamin Kester, Elizabeth Chapman; Ezekiel James, Ruth Lundy; James Varney, Hannah Ray; 1809, Mordecai Widdifield, Ann Lundy; James Willson, Mary Widdifield; 1810, George Vernon, Leticia Kinsey; Cyrus Dennis, Barbary Brooke; Asa Rogers, Sarah Dennis; Isaac James, Deborah Wisner; John Merrick, Mary Penrose; 1811, Samuel Hughes, Sarah Webster; Stephen Bowerman, Amy Hughes; 1812 Nathan Dennis, Elizabeth Phillips; William Phillips, Hannah Dennis; 1813, Joseph Widdifield, Christiana Wilson; Henry Wasley, Ann Toole; Eliazer Lundy, Euphemia Playter; Benjamin Widdifield, Matilda Rogers; 1814, William Doan, Esther Bostwick; Joel Hughes, Sarah Phillips; 1815, John A. Haight, Mary Howard; William Ray, Martha Lundy; 1816, John L. Hogson, Ann James; Seth Armitage, Anna Phillips; 1817, Charles Hambleton, Margaret Penrose; 1818, James

Brown, Mary Phillips; 1820, Zenus Rogers, Elizabeth Gager; 1821, Joseph Moore, Anna Rogers; 1823, Asa Rogers, Susanna Pearson; Owen Phillips, Elizabeth Rogers; 1824, Asa Rogers, Lydia Ray; 1826, Peter Doyle, Phebe Winn; John Rorke, Elizabeth Bostwick; 1828, Elias Rogers, Sarah Pearson; 1831, William Smith, Jr., Deborah Harris, Jr. 1833, Gideon Phillips, Eliza Pearson; 1834, Johnathan Ferris, Mary Rogers; Theodore Huntly, Huldah Winn; 1838, Hiram Bond, Elizabeth Cruse; 1841, Jonathan H. Rogers, Hannah Cody; 1842 Wing Rogers, Edith Cody; 1846, Arnoldi Haight, Rachel Webb; 1847, Thomas Moore, Lydia Phillips; Alfred Knight, Martha Luton; 1848, Harris Knight, Ann Luton; Amos Bowerman, Mary Lewis; Benjamin Cody, Susan Rogers; 1855, Samuel Rogers, Achsah Cody.

The forest shadows have long ceased to be; many suns, have risen in the eastern splendor to sink again into the gloriously changing wonders of the western horizon. Many times the flowers have bloomed and faded, and breathed their story of peace and immortality. Now these human flowers are at rest, awaiting the voice of the Gardener. Though the voices now are muted, and the toil-hardened hands folded, yet clear and compelling, form the forefather's rude cabin in the summers long gone by, sacred, silent and on spirit sings, soaring above life's bewildered clamor, comes the forceful challenge from this garden of peace, planted in the wilderness by those pioneer Quakers who had glimpsed the vision, - a challenge to help humanity prepare for the higher goal towards which she is struggling, and which belongs the most humble by right of kinship with the lowly Carpenter of Galilee. And from which was born an inspiration that has been passed on by men whose “Thee” and “Thou” clasped hands with

courageous truth, and scorned the paltry and insincere, - whose “Yea” was “Yea” and whose “Nay” was “Nay”.

In the gathering stillness of late afternoon, as we came thoughtfully away from the ancient Meeting House, and looking back from the noisy highway, it seemed, as its shutters were again closed, and the nun-like peace descended upon it, to be content to withdraw to into communing with the past, and keep its tryst with the robins and the orioles, the sighing trees and the whispering wind, and resolved to keep alive the remembrance of those fine old Quakers, whose lives made possible this rest for body, and refreshment for tired spirit, and taught the visitor it was a privilege to sit in one of these old-time meetings.

(These records may not be complete. The thanks of the writer are due Mr. Chas. Lewis, Mr. N.L. Rogers and Mr. J.M. Walton for help received, loaning documents and references as well as the Ontario Archives.)

Appendix

Chronology

These dates in Quaker history are compiled for ready reference. This could easily be enlarged and improved. In the small space of this booklet we give you the following:

General

- 1624 George Fox born, England. Died 1690.
- 1644 William Penn born, England.
- 1653 Quakerism planted in Wales.
- 1656 Quakerism planted in American Colonies.
- 1657 Quakerism planted in West Indies.
- 1672 George Fox visited the Quakers in America.
- 1682 William Penn came to Pennsylvania to found colony.
- 1780 Slavery abolished in Pennsylvania.

- 1783 New England Quakers (Loyalist) founded settlement at Pennfield, N.B. and prohibited slavery.

Education

- 1806 Yonge Street School opened.
- 1811 Pelham School opened.
- 1816 West Lake School opened.
- 1817 Uxbridge School opened.
- 1841 West Lake Boarding School opened.
- 1842 Pickering College founded.
- 1850 Rockwood Academy founded.

(Schools were started by the Friends at Schomberg and many other places, 1806-1850, before any public schools were established.)

Local

- 1795 Timothy Rogers, Yonge St. colonizer, made 2,200 mile missionary tour through Quebec, P.E.I., N.S., N.B.
- 1792 Philip Dorland elected to Upper Canada Assembly and disqualified for not taking oath.
- 1798 First Quaker Meeting at Adolphustown at Philip Dorland's house.
- 1799 Pelham Monthly Meeting established.
- 1800 Timothy Rogers of Vermont explores Yonge St. for settlement.
- 1801 Timothy Rogers brings in settlers from Vermont.
- 1801 First Monthly Meeting at Adolphustown.
- 1802 Yonge St. Quakers apply for privilege of Monthly Meeting.
- 1803 First Preparative Meeting at West Lake.
- 1803 Elias Hicks visits Upper Canada Meetings.
- 1805 Large emigration to York County from Penn. by wagon.
- 1805 Whitchurch (Pine Orchard) Meeting started.
- 1805 Uxbridge Meeting started.
- 1807 Queen Street (Sharon) Meeting started.
- 1807 Yonge St. Meeting buys 2 acre site.
- 1808 York County Quakers fined for non-attendance military training day. Cattle seized for non-payment.
- 1808 Typhus Fever epidemic causes many deaths.
- 1810 David Willson donates site for Quaker Meeting at Sharon.
- 1810 Timothy Rogers brings settlers to Pickering

from Penn.

1810 Yonge St. Meeting House built (Orthodox).

1810 Yonge St. Meeting buys 2 acre cemetery site.

1812 David Willson separates from Friends and starts "Children of Peace" at Sharon.

1816 Circulating Library started at Yonge St.

1828 Hicksite separation.

1829 Hicksite Meeting House built Yonge St.

1834 Pickering Meeting House. Burned 1876.

1840 Tecumseh (Schomberg) new Meeting House built.

1844 Uxbridge new Meeting House built.

1881 Second separation (Progressive vs. Conservative).

1893-7 William Allen, minister at Newmarket. A slave till 29 years old. Then started to school, became great scholar and preacher, filling Meeting Houses and starting 37 young men in ministry.

1937 World Friends Conference in Philadelphia, 23 countries send delegations, 50 Yearly Meetings represented.

Sufferings and Martyrdom

1657 Law passed in New England imposing a fine of 100 pounds sterling on any ship master bringing a Quaker to America. Quakers publicly scourged in Boston, Mass., with 30 stripes and until women spectators fainted at the bloody sight. Victims further imprisoned and whipped twice a week if they did not recant. One received 357 lashes in two weeks.

Massachusetts law imposed on Quakers, if found in that state, the cropping of one ear; if found twice, both ears. If found a third time the tongue was burned with a hot iron.

A Quaker and his wife were fined until all they had was gone: thrown into jail and and their two sons ordered to be sold into slavery.

1657 First Quaker woman publicly whipped.

1658 Death sentence imposed on Quakers

1659 Quaker books and literature seized and burned.

1659 Quaker ministers scourged and branded "R" on the shoulder with red-hot irons.

1659 William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, Mary Dyer and Patience Scott (11 year old girl) apprehended as Quakers in Boston. The adults were banished on pain of death. On Oct. 19 of 1659, Mary Dyer, Marmaduek Stephenson and William Robinson were condemned, led to the scaffold, bound and and foot; both men were hanged. At last moment the woman was unbound and reprieved.

1660 Mary Dyer again arrested, condemned and hanged in Boston because she would not recant.

1660 Eight Quakers transported from Mass.

1661 Laws passed in New England "that all Quakers and such like vagabonds shall be whipt with rods and transported." Any person harbouring Quakers to be fined £5 and whipped. Any person attending a Quaker Meeting to be fined 40 shillings. Any person allowing any Quaker in his house to be fined 40s. A criminal offence to furnish a Quaker with a horse.

1661 Law passed in New England, men and women branded on left shoulders. Quaker women stripped, lashed to cart tails and whipped through the streets.

1661 William Leddra the last Quaker to be hanged in Boston.

1677 Whipping posts still used for Quakers.

1689 Act of Toleration passed by King Wm. and Queen Mary on protest of Quakers.

1724 Laws passed forcing Quakers to pay taxes for support of other clergy.

1724 Quakers in America carry petition to England "under sufferings for conscience sake."

1725 King William and Queen Mary ordain liberty of conscience and worship in American colonies.

1743 5,000 Friends attend Rhode Island Yearly Meeting.

1747 John Woolman, the Quaker, first to denounce slavery.

N.B. - No notation is here made of persecutions of

Quakers in England, which were many. All the mentions herein is of persecutions in America where the first emigrants came to secure for themselves civil and religious liberty - yet they denied it to others.

The scaffold erected on Boston Common for the execution of the Quakers inspired James Russell Lowell to pen these lines:

“History’s pages yet record
One death grapple in the darkness,
“Twixt old systems and the Word;
Truth forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne;
Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above his own.”

A Quaker Burial Ground

There’s a place I love to wander,
In a churchyard though afar;
Thoughts of Friends of yesteryears,
Fill our eyes with welling tears,
As we linger where the spreading
Maples are

There we find the Christians’ hope,
Like a bright and morning star;
Faith and Hope henceforth increase,
Forever they will rest in peace,
Resting sweetly where the spreadings
Maples are.

A holy calm and peace abounds,
A peace no earthly car can mar;
And we slowly turn and go,
With our voices hushed and low
From the quiet, where the spreading
Maples are.