



Friendly Influences on the Prairies: The Quaker Settlement of Halcyonia, Saskatchewan, 1904-1913

*Leona Crabb,
Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

In 1904, the William Cronyn McCheane family was the first of five Quaker families to emigrate from England and settle in the area around Borden, Saskatchewan. Between 1904 and 1913, the McCheanes were joined by members of the Crabb, Wake, Saunders and Hinde families. Their motivation to immigrate to Canada was primarily economic but they also wanted to

“form the nucleus of a town where Friendly influences are likely to predominate.”¹ This small group of conservative Friends established Halcyonia Monthly Meeting and, together, overcame a number of big and small challenges as they made the difficult transition from their old lives as well-to-do professionals in England to their new lives as immigrant farmers in

¹ William Cronyn McCheane, notebook, July 1903, Ward Papers. The Ward Papers are the research notes compiled and used by the late Betty Ward to write *A Community of Friends: The Quakers at Borden* (Regina: Hagios Press, 2004). These research notes were generously donated to the author by Betty's son, Donald, in 2010. For a more thorough account of the life of William Cronyn McCheane, see Leona Crabb, *Faithful Friend: William Cronyn McCheane, 1841-1923* (Ottawa: Imprimeurs PRO Printers, 2013).



Western Canada.

Born in Birmingham, England on 28 January 1841, William McCheane apprenticed as a chemist and grocer. When he was twenty-one years old, he became convinced of the truth of Quaker principles and practices and began to attend Quaker Meetings. At about this time, William also met and became close friends with John Grant Sargent, a Quaker who had become increasingly concerned that the growing evangelical and progressive tendencies exhibited by London Yearly

Meeting were moving the Religious Society of Friends further and further away from the original doctrine, practices and disciplines that were essential to the Quaker life.² Between 1862 and 1869, William attended a series of conferences organized by Sargent that brought together like-minded conservative Friends for worship and discussion. Then, on 6 May 1869, William and fifteen other Friends who met regularly for worship at the Cottage Meeting House in Fritchley, Derbyshire established Fritchley Monthly Meeting with Sargent as its first Clerk.³ The

Meeting was set up without first seeking permission from the appropriate Quaker body but, as Sargent pointed out, it did not make sense to seek authorization from an organization to which they were establishing an alternative.⁴

In January 1870, Fritchley General Meeting was formed as a separate Yearly Meeting in complete independence of London Yearly Meeting. It stood opposed to the recent evangelical innovations in doctrine and the liberalizing changes to Quaker discipline. It also adopted the Rules

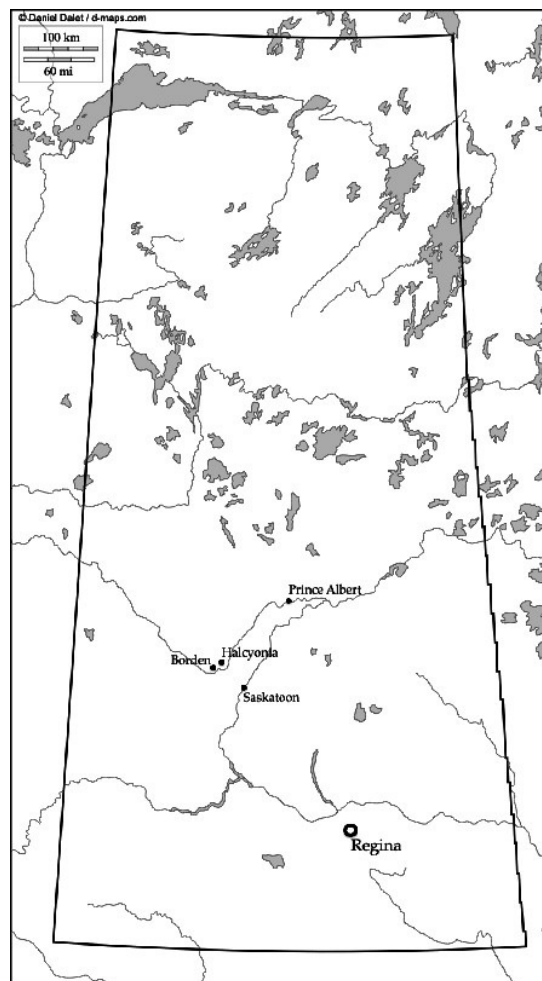
² Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 12.

³ Walter Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley* (Belper: Tom Brown Printers, 1986), 15.

⁴ *Selections from the Diary and Correspondence of John G. Sargent* (Newport: John E. Southall, 1885), 130.

of Discipline as laid down by the Religious Society of Friends in 1802, especially as these Rules pertained to matters of plain speech, plain dress and marrying from within the Meeting. For example, Fritchley Friends employed the familiar forms of “thee” and “thou” when speaking to higher-ranking persons rather than the more formal “you,” women wore bonnets and simple dresses, men wore wide-brimmed hats and collarless coats and Fritchley Quakers who married outside the Meeting were disowned. The acceptance of the 1802 Rules of Discipline by Fritchley Friends distinguished them from other English Quakers but it also tended to isolate them from the life of their village and the wider society.⁵ Nevertheless, they were never discouraged by their peculiarities or their small size, as they genuinely believed that they were the chosen remnant, “a tiny elite, preserving the banner of primitive Quakerism through a time of apostasy.”⁶ As the century progressed, Meeting membership gradually increased through application and birth. By the end of the nineteenth century, Fritchley Monthly Meeting had an active membership of about seventy Members and was at the height of its strength.⁷

On 24 March 1870, William married twenty-nine-year-old Caroline Mettam in the first marriage solemnized at the Cottage Meeting House.⁸ Like William, Caroline was one of the sixteen original Members of Fritchley Monthly Meeting. After their marriage, William and Caroline settled in



Birmingham, forty-eight miles southwest of Fritchley. To support his family, William opened his own grocery and provision store. Between 1870 and 1883, their family grew to include three sons and three daughters: Willie, Lydia, Katie (died 1894), Hannah Mary, John and Edward. In early 1903, William and his family decided to explore the possibility of immigrating to Western Canada. By this time, all of William’s children were well into adulthood, unmarried and living at home in Birmingham. William himself was sixty-two

⁵ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 173-174.

⁶ Elizabeth Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 59.

⁷ Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 44.

⁸ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 24, 198.

years old and ready to retire from business (Figures 1 and 2). The driving force behind the family's desire to settle in Canada was overwhelmingly economic.⁹ At the turn of the twentieth century, agricultural and economic depressions, high unemployment, urban crowding and lack of social mobility made it difficult for English citizens to achieve the "full life."¹⁰ John and Edward McCheane in particular were "restless and dissatisfied" with their limited career prospects.¹¹ In this context, Canada and the provisions of its Dominion Lands Act were very attractive, promising free quarter sections of one hundred sixty acres each to any man over eighteen years of age or to any woman heading a household who paid a ten dollar registration fee and "proved up" their homestead claim by living on the land for at least six months in each of at least three years, cultivating at least thirty acres and building a permanent dwelling worth at least three hundred dollars.¹² And, as it turned out, there were a number of other Members of Fritchley Monthly Meeting who were interested in joining the McCheane family in the move to Western Canada.

On 3 July 1903, William published a notice in *The Friend* in order to inform readers that a number of Friends wished to

immigrate to Canada and request that other interested Friends contact him. The notice read as follows:

Several Friends intending to secure a Tract of Land in Canada, and go there shortly to settle, would be glad to hear of any Friends disposed to emigrate. – Apply to W.C. McCheane, Tyseley, Birmingham.¹³

While William corresponded with English Quakers disposed to immigrate to Western Canada, he did not work alone but in close partnership with William Spiers Kennedy. Originally from Stirling, Scotland, William Kennedy was a successful Quaker merchant who in 1903 also owned a confectionary business in Belper, Derbyshire that manufactured chocolate and cocoa.¹⁴ Kennedy had already travelled to Canada on a number of occasions and was among the English Quakers who had helped organize the settlement of the Doukhobors in Canada in 1899.¹⁵ Based on this previous experience, Kennedy seemed to be in a particularly good position to communicate with the Canadian government about the immigration process.

In the first place, Kennedy arranged for himself, William McCheane and William's

⁹ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 257. Isichei, *Victorian Quakers*, 59. Lawrence Crabb, interview with Betty Ward, 10 May 1972, Ward Papers. Margaret Wake Saunders, interview with Betty Ward, 23 April 1973, Ward Papers. William O. Wake, *Life! Food for life and heart and mind* (Borden: Self-Published, 1950), 11. Patrick A. Dunae, "Promoting the Dominion: Records and the Canadian Immigration Campaign, 1872-1915", *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-85): 73-93.

¹⁰ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 257.

¹¹ Joseph Edward Hinde, 'Account of the Life of Joseph Edward (Bob) Hinde', 11 April 1974, 23, courtesy Roberta Hinde Rivett.

¹² Joshua Kelsall Wake, 'Brief History of the Halcyonia Meeting of Conservative Friends who came to Canada from England between 1904 and 1913', 1970, Ward Papers. Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 258. Mabel Saunders Crabb, interview with author, 2 June 2003.

¹³ *The Friend*, 3 July 1903, copy in William Cronyn McCheane, notebook, Ward Papers.

¹⁴ Joshua Kelsall Wake, diary, 19 May 1902, Ward Papers.

¹⁵ Ward, *A Community of Friends*, 29. W.T.R. Preston, letter to James A. Smart, 23 October 1903, Ward Papers.

son, John McCheane, to travel to Canada to meet with Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, to discuss a suitable settlement location in Western Canada, inspect the agreed upon location and then return to England to report their findings. In that context, there was a strong desire among the Fritchley Quakers to settle near a community of Doukhobors.¹⁶ In order to seek more information about the Doukhobors and the feasibility of setting nearby, William wrote Joseph Elkinton, a prominent Philadelphia Quaker who had visited two of the three government-sponsored Doukhobor reserves in Western Canada and written about his experiences in a book entitled *The Doukhobors: Their History in Russia, Their Migration to Canada*.¹⁷ In response, Elkinton expressed a personal preference for an area of land within the Saskatchewan Colony that was located north of the North Saskatchewan River and locally referred to as “The Elbow” because it was where the river, coming from the northwest, bent around to the northeast (Figure 3).¹⁸ Finally, on 10 November 1903, William McCheane, John McCheane and William Kennedy set sail for Canada on a Canadian Pacific Railway steamer to explore for themselves just what kind of settlement opportunities Canada might have in store for them.

On 19 December 1903, in follow up to a cordial face-to-face meeting with Clifford Sifton in Ottawa just a few weeks earlier, William Kennedy received a formal

settlement offer from John Turriff, Commissioner of Lands, on the authority of Sifton. Referring to Township 40, Ranges 7 and 8, West of the Third Meridian, Turriff wrote that these two townships, “which are in the Doukhobor Reserve on the Saskatchewan, will be held for your Friends in so far as it is possible for us to do so, that is, no entries will be granted to settlers other than the Doukhobors and your friends.” Turriff also pointed out, however, that there were already “some squatters on the homestead lands in these townships.”¹⁹

One month later and still in Canada, William Kennedy wrote back to Turriff.²⁰ First and foremost, Kennedy expressed his sincere appreciation for the concessions given to them by the Canadian government. He also indicated that he or his designate would forward homestead entry fees to the government in anticipation of the arrival in Canada of a considerable number of English Quakers later that year. Furthermore, Kennedy conveyed his understanding that the squatters mentioned by Turriff in his earlier letter had been warned off the homestead land in the two townships. With the benefit of hindsight and without knowing exactly what was said during their meetings with government officials, it is evident that what William Kennedy thought he and William McCheane had been promised by the Canadian government and what the Canadian government had actually offered

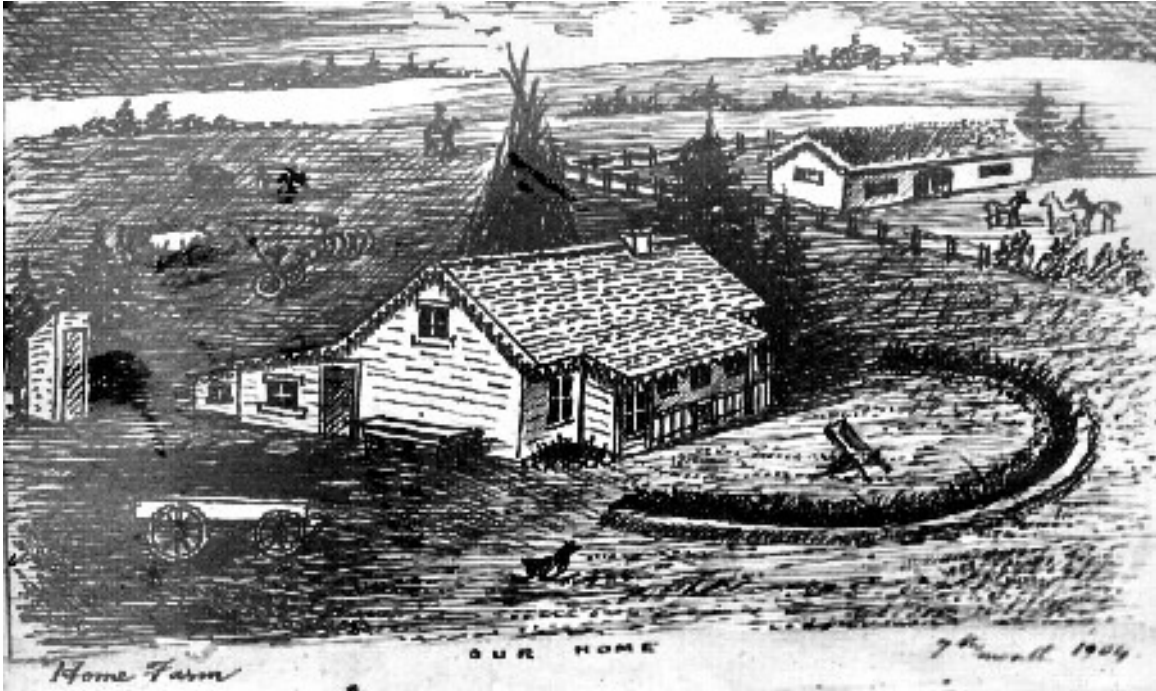
¹⁶ William Cronyn McCheane, letter to T.W. Pask, July 1903, Ward Papers.

¹⁷ Joseph Elkinton, *The Doukhobors: Their History in Russia, Their Migration to Canada*, (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, 1903).

¹⁸ Joseph Elkinton, letter to William Cronyn McCheane, 29 July 1903, Ward Papers.

¹⁹ J.G. Turriff, letter to William Spiers Kennedy, 19 December 1903, Ward Papers.

²⁰ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to J.G. Turriff, 19 January 1904, Ward Papers.



them were two very different things.²¹ For his part, Kennedy believed that the Friends he represented were entitled to exclusive and indefinite access to all quarter sections in Township 40, Ranges 7 and 8 that had not been otherwise applied for by Doukhobors or reserved for special purposes under the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act. Moreover, Kennedy believed that he or his designate had the authority to determine which Friends could settle in these townships and on which quarter sections they could establish homesteads. In reality, while the government wanted to encourage and assist the English Quakers in their efforts to settle together and secure land entries in the two townships, Friends were still expected to respect and abide by the same policies and procedures as any other interested settlers.

In effect, the government supported the settlement of Fritchley Friends but it was not in a position to provide them with any special considerations.

At the end of January 1904, William McCheane and William Kennedy returned to England while John McCheane remained in Western Canada to prepare for the arrival of Fritchley Quakers. In February 1904, William McCheane wrote the Canadian government and enclosed sufficient homestead entry fees to reserve two sections of land in Township 40, Range 8.²² One month later, William Kennedy submitted two more applications for homestead entry and again expressed his concern about squatters in the two townships.²³ Kennedy indicated that Fritchley Friends were more than willing to pay the squatters for any improvements

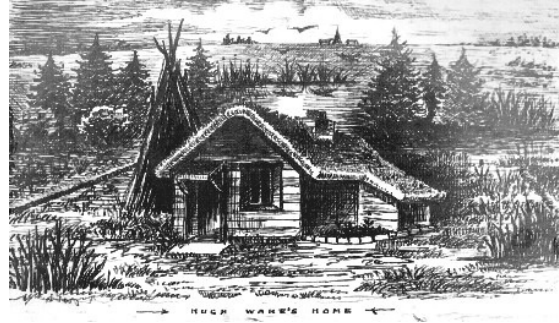
²¹ Edith Mary Hinde McCheane, 'Early Friends in the Borden District', c. 1957, courtesy Roberta Hinde Rivett.

²² William Cronyn McCheane, letter to J.G. Turriff, 13 February 1904, Ward Papers.

²³ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to P.G. Keyes, 19 March 1904, Ward Papers.

they may have made on the land but he also expected that the Canadian government would continue to keep the land in reserve for their exclusive use until such time as all interested Quakers were able to get clear of their business commitments in England. "We feel we got this land in trust for Friends," Kennedy explained. On its part, in response to receiving the homestead applications and entry fees from William McCheane and William Kennedy, the Canadian government asked the homestead inspector from Prince Albert to visit the appropriate quarter sections at his earliest convenience and to "report whether they have been improved by anyone, and if so, by whom, and the nature of the improvements."²⁴

On 22 April 1904, William Kennedy wrote to Clifford Sifton directly to once again convey his concern that the presence of squatters in the two townships might leave insufficient vacant land available for the settlement of English Quakers.²⁵ For Kennedy, the matter was made that much more urgent by the imminent arrival in Western Canada of the first wave of Fritchley Friends, including William McCheane and his family, Hugh and Joshua Wake and Kennedy's own son, Harry. The response from the Canadian government was swift and to the point.²⁶ Perley Keyes, Secretary to Clifford Sifton, told Kennedy straight away that it was always the intent of the government to respect the rights of all



squatters. At the same time, Keyes reassured Kennedy that the government would do everything it could to help Quakers who arrived in Western Canada to secure homestead land. And, as far as the status of William McCheane's quarter sections was concerned, Keyes said that a final decision concerning all the Fritchley applications for homestead entry would be made only once the report of the homestead inspector had been submitted.

Therefore, on 12 May 1904, when William McCheane and his family set sail for Canada, they had no guarantees that there would be any land available on which to settle once they arrived at their final destination.²⁷ There were eight people in their party: William and Caroline McCheane, newly-married Lydia McCheane and her husband, David Crabb, Willie McCheane, Hannah Mary McCheane, Edward McCheane and David Crabb's fifteen-year-old brother, Philip. Bruce, the family collie, also made the trip. The journey to Western Canada took over three weeks. They travelled by steamship from Liverpool to Montreal and then by

²⁴ P.G. Keyes, letter to Thomas Borthwick, 17 March 1904, Ward Papers.

²⁵ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to Clifford Sifton, 22 April 1904, Ward Papers.

²⁶ P.G. Keyes, letter to William Spiers Kennedy, 13 May 1904, Ward Papers.

²⁷ Edward Cronyn McCheane, 'Notes From Diary Dated From Our Start From Liverpool 12/5/1904', c. August 1904, Ward Papers. Unless otherwise noted, the information in this article about the McCheane family settlement experience between May and August 1904 was drawn from this diary. See also Joshua Kelsall Wake, 'The McCheane Family's Immigration to Canada', n.d., courtesy Roberta Hinde Rivett.



passenger train from Montreal to Saskatoon. Arriving in Saskatoon on 30 May 1904, the McCheane party had no choice but to get off the train at the top of a high bank on the south shore of the South Saskatchewan River. During the previous winter, the region had experienced very heavy snowfall followed by a rapid thaw, leading to floods that had washed out the wooden railway bridge on 15 April 1904.²⁸ Undaunted, the family carried all of their settler's effects down to a government ferry barge where they were taken across to the north side of the river and the train station. Much to their delight, John McCheane was there to greet them, looking "remarkably well" after spending the winter in a little shack at "The Elbow." With John at the ferry was Harry Kennedy, son of

William Kennedy. Harry had immigrated to Canada earlier in the year and was hoping to settle near the McCheanes. Eighteen-year-old Joshua Wake also came down to the ferry to meet them. Joshua and his father, Hugh, had arrived a couple of weeks previous and had opened up a small shop in Saskatoon. Hugh Wake was a joiner by trade and still owned an ironmonger shop back in Birmingham. The McCheane family remained in Saskatoon for four days, primarily due to the heavy rains. During that time, William purchased some provisions, a wagon, a buggy, a team of horses, a team of broncos and a cow. He also rented a wagon and team of horses to haul the load of lumber that he had purchased for the construction of a house. Finally, on 3 June 1904, they set out to

²⁸ William P. Delainey, 'The South Saskatchewan River and the Development of Early Saskatoon 1881 – 1908: A Historical Narrative', Community Development Branch, City of Saskatoon, 23 April 2007, 33. John McCheane, letter to William Cronyn McCheane, 22 February 1904, Ward Papers. Lila McDermid Pope, 'Of Days Gone By', *Our Treasured Heritage: Borden and District*, (Altona, Manitoba: Friesen Printers, 1980), 2.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS. 962249

Meetings for Worship

AFTER THE MANNER OF FRIENDS

WILL BE HELD

Every First-Day ("Sunday") Morning at 10.30, and in the Evening at 6.30 o'clock; also on Fourth-Day ("Wednesday") Morning at 10.30 o'clock, at the

House of W. C. Mc.CHEANE,

**THE HOME FARM
HALCYONIA,**

Lovell Post Office, SASK, N. W. T. CANADA.

There is a Library of Books which can be lent and exchanged Free.

MANNER OF WORSHIP IN THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

We sit down together in silence, not knowing whether anything will be spoken by way of prayer or preaching.

We have no one appointed to preach or pray for us, but depend entirely upon what our Heavenly Father may send us through any of His children worshipping with us, under the call and guidance of the ever-present Holy Spirit.

We endeavour to wait patiently, with our thoughts directed to God, for whatever message or ministration may be thus granted to us.

If nothing is spoken, we at times find in this silent engagement of soul, that our hearts are made so conscious of the presence and love of God in Christ, that we feel something better than mere words, however beautifully sung or eloquently spoken.

This form of worship becomes formal and lifeless if we do not keep our hearts open to the Holy Spirit, but it affords an opportunity for real communion with God our Father, which is edifying and refreshing to our souls.

JOHN E. SOUTHALL, Printer, Newport, Mon., England.



travel the thirty miles northwest along the Saskatoon-Battleford trail to their new homestead land in the Doukhobor reserve just north of the North Saskatchewan River, a journey that would take them almost two days to complete.

When the McCheanes arrived at their final destination, they found that practically all the good land was either taken up by squatters or reserved for the Doukhobors. They had no choice but to make the best of it.²⁹ William chose to settle his family on Section 14, Township 40, Range 8. It was reasonably good farmland, being relatively flat and full of prairie grass with a couple of small hills and several bluffs of poplar trees. William and his sons agreed that William would settle on the northwest quarter, Willie on the northeast quarter, John on the southwest quarter and Edward on the southeast quarter. It was also decided to build the house on William's quarter section. Until the structure was habitable, the family stayed with Ben Saloway, a Baptist neighbour who lived a couple of miles northwest of the McCheane homestead. One of the first things William did was plough a fire guard

around his property and possessions in order to protect them from the prairie fires that regularly swept over the region. A fire guard was made by ploughing two or three furrows all the way around, ploughing a few more furrows at least twenty feet further out and then burning in between, creating a natural barrier to the spread of any common fire.³⁰ By the end of July, after five more trips to Saskatoon to purchase sufficient lumber and provisions, the family had built a wooden house made of cedar, spruce and pine, dug a well just over thirty feet deep, erected a sod barn, planted a circular flower garden in front of the house surrounding a lawn, ploughed ten acres of land and constructed a pole-fenced pasture. They also assembled a thirty-foot-high tepee of dead trees for use as firewood during the winter and a visible landmark all year round.³¹ The construction process was relatively uneventful except that the roof was not yet finished when a severe summer storm, including strong winds and plenty of thunder and lightening, passed over the area on the night of 14 July 1904. By the morning, the tepee had collapsed and rain had soaked one of the rooms over which the roof had not yet been shingled. Realizing that there was nothing they could do about it, the McCheanes took the event in stride and "those who found themselves surrounded by water on awaking soon swam ashore and took quarters in a less sloughy section of the room." That morning, they had only managed to get one side of the roof shingled before the storm returned, blowing a large piece of tarpaper

²⁹ Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 25 November 1971, Ward Papers.

³⁰ Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 25 November 1971.

³¹ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 258.



off the roof and allowing the rain to pour in through the ceiling of the front room “like a stream from a watering can.” Fortunately, the storm quickly blew over and the rains held off for the rest of the day so that the shingling of the entire roof was completed later that afternoon. William now owned the first house in the district. He named his residence “Home Farm.” He also named the area “Halcyonia” which meant “calm, peaceful and tranquil” (Figure 4).

The construction of the McCheane homestead was well under way when Hugh and Joshua Wake arrived at Home Farm on 9 July 1904. They had left their shop in Saskatoon on foot the previous day with the intent to choose some land nearby and build their homestead. After looking at the available land, Hugh and Joshua chose to settle on two quarter sections about two

miles south of Home Farm. The land itself wasn’t too stony and the soil seemed fairly good. Hugh and Joshua constructed a sod house that was sixteen feet long and nine feet wide with a five square foot pump house adjoining it. The walls of the house were two feet four inches thick and, to prevent cold drafts in the winter, Hugh plastered the inside walls six inches off the sods using plaster made from the clay that had been removed during the digging of the well. The homestead was surrounded by trees that formed an effective windbreak. There was also a small lake northwest of their home (Figure 5). Once they had built their new home, Hugh and Joshua Wake returned to Saskatoon to work there over the winter.

In the meantime, the McCheanes and Crabbs continued to adapt to their new environment. In order to put meat on the

table, everyone took turns using a small rifle to shoot ducks, prairie chickens and so on. One day Edward McCheane shot a female bald eagle with a wingspan of over five feet.³² He felt terrible when he inspected the nest and discovered that she was mother to three young chicks, two females and one male. Not wanting to leave them motherless, Edward brought the chicks back to Home Farm where they were raised as pets. The chicks were very tame and very demanding of food. The McCheanes would feed them gophers, meat, whatever they could get. Bruce the collie also brought them whatever he caught. Rarely, however, did these offerings seem enough and the chicks would make an awful screech around the house if they felt they were being neglected. One night they came to the back door of the house where the milk pails were hung and caused a huge racket by knocking all the pails down. The McCheanes knew that something needed to be done about the young birds when they went outside one morning only to find that two of the eagles were trying to fly off with their little puppy, Floss. One of birds then managed to lift the frightened puppy about twelve feet in the air. The McCheanes yelled and yelled at it, finally scaring the bird enough that it let go of the puppy. Given that the McCheanes also had a kitten and their neighbours had chickens, they decided to shoot the young eagles so that they would not become a general nuisance as time went on.

The trail to Home Farm passed next to the Doukhobor village of Tambovka. Established in 1900, Tambovka was home

to nine Doukhobor families.³³ The McCheanes visited their Doukhobor neighbours on a regular basis, finding them on the whole to be very friendly, generous and hard-working if rather independent in their thinking and behaviour. At one point Edward McCheane and Harry Kennedy stopped at Tambovka on their way back from Saskatoon. After thirteen hours of trekking, they asked their host for a wash. In response, the Doukhobor woman gave them each a cup of water which they gladly drank. When she refilled their empty cups, Edward and Harry drank them too as they were very thirsty. Assuming that the Doukhobor woman did not understand English, they explained again that they wanted soap and towels in order to wash. The woman brought them soap and towels and another cup of water each. Making the best of it, one of the Quaker guests poured the water from the cup while the other rubbed his hands. Only afterwards did Edward and Harry learn that the Doukhobors washed by taking a mouthful of water from the cup and then slowly letting it out into their hands while simultaneously rubbing their faces and hands. While Edward conceded that “the idea of washing in this fashion is very ingenious from an economical point of view” he admitted that he much preferred “the old English method.”

David and Lydia Crabb and John McCheane also experienced Doukhobor hospitality first-hand one day when John was injured while hitching the oxen to the wagon on their way home from

³² Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 20 April 1972, Ward Papers. Joshua Wake tells a slightly different version of this story than the one that appeared in Edward's diary. This version combines information contained in both of them.

³³ “The Village of Tombowka”, *Our Treasured Heritage*, 3.

Saskatoon.³⁴ The oxen had become frightened and moved sideways without warning, pinching John's shoulder between the wheel and the wagon. John was winded for several minutes and Lydia was very concerned that his injuries were serious. David went to nearby Tambovka to inform the Doukhobors that they needed some help. The Doukhobor response was immediate. Three or four of the Doukhobor men carried John into one of their cottages and the head man, Big Fred, brought fur coats and blankets for John to lie on and be wrapped in. Fortunately, John's injuries were not as serious as originally feared and he was able to continue on to Home Farm the following day. In appreciation for all their care and concern, the McCheanes gave the Doukhobors some parting gifts though they themselves left the village laden with a generous supply of vegetables. As their Doukhobor hosts explained to them in broken English, "You not plant this year, we got plenty. Someday you have plenty."

While the McCheanes and the Wakes managed to settle together on good farmland, squatters remained an issue in the Doukhobor reserve as David and Lydia Crabb soon found out. On 10 June 1904, David and Lydia inspected their quarter sections, putting up the corner posts to secure the land from squatters and doing some seeding. Nine days later, a squatter appeared and laid claim to the land. William went to see the man and explained to him that corner posts had already been put up, that some of the land had been cultivated and that the Doukhobor reserve had not



yet been thrown open for settlement by anyone other than Doukhobors and Quakers. The squatter remained adamant and vowed to seek clarification from a higher authority than William McCheane. In the meantime, David and Lydia borrowed a tent, a plough and a team of oxen from their neighbor, Ben Saloway, and proceeded to their land where they set up the little tent and began to plough both quarter sections. At four o'clock one morning, much to their surprise, several hundred cattle belonging to a local rancher made a number of raids on their tent.

They would have soon have had the tent over had not David fortunately got Harry [Kennedy's] gun there, and as they made five charges on the tent, David gave them five charges of shot in exchange. They did not appreciate this but making off to a fair distance they made raid on raid upon the little tent.

David, who was inside, waited till they would get their heads close up to him and as one of them lowered his

³⁴ Terry Lydia Crabb, 'David Ernest Crabb, 1883-1949', Centennial Scrapbook, 1967, Author's Collection.



horns to charge at him, he fired, shooting him square between the eyes with No 4 shot. This was more than he expected for it must have blinded him for as he closed his eyes he turned a backward somersault and dropped on his feet, and then made a rush in the opposite direction, half mad with pain. All the others cleared off after him, much to the satisfaction of David and Lydia who were stopping day and night on the land till the squatter cleared off, and did not bargain for this sort. However, they did not trouble them after that.

A couple of days later, the squatter came to see William at Home Farm. Conceding now that he was not in a position to apply for homestead entry in the reserve, the squatter informed William that he was going to move on. He then asked if William was interested in buying his load of lumber

that he had brought from Saskatoon. In the end, William negotiated to not only buy the squatter's lumber but his wagon, plough and team of oxen as well. According to William, he was "glad to help him out of his load since he had acted so honourably." Later that fall David and Lydia abandoned their homestead without having made any improvements on it and moved to the nearby town of Radisson where David worked as a machinist.

With the farm animals and implements purchased from the squatter, William now owned two wagons, two oxen, two ploughs, a buggy, a team of horses, a team of broncos and a cow. William then bought a second cow and rescued a young calf that had become separated from the same herd that had raided David and Lydia's little tent.³⁵ But owning a farm and knowing how to farm are two very different things and the McCheanes had no farming experience whatsoever. That first summer they relied heavily on Elam Bond, a farming Friend from Nebraska who hoped to settle near the McCheanes.³⁶ Elam stayed at Home Farm and, among other things, helped the McCheanes learn how to handle the animals, plough the fields, gather wood for fuel, select poles for fencing, cut sods for building and gather hay to feed the animals. He was particularly gifted when it came to handling the oxen. "He seems to hold some magic influence over them," Edward McCheane marveled, "Now they will respond to the lightest touch of the whip and be guided simply by the 'Gee' or 'Aw' of the driver." It was a slow learning

³⁵ Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 24 April 1973, Ward Papers.

³⁶ E.H. Clarke, 'A Brief Account of the Migration of Adam Clarke and Family from Alviston, Ontario to Assiniboia, Saskatchewan in 1905', December 1967, 12, Ward Papers. McCheane, 'Early Friends in the Borden District'.

process but even Edward could feel himself gradually adapting to the farming lifestyle. "I find this life very healthy and enjoyable," he admitted, "And I am getting to like farming more and more as I get into it though I admit it seemed a little strange at first." Unfortunately for William and his family, Elam did not find land to suit him and soon left the area.³⁷

In April 1905, the McCheanes, Crabbs and Wakes were joined by widower Nathan Saunders and his son, Eddy.³⁸ A successful grocer in Birmingham who had learned the trade from William McCheane, Nathan Saunders was big and stout with a round face, bushy eyebrows and straggly beard. Upon his arrival in Saskatoon, Nathan bought a wagon, a small herd of cattle, an Aberdeen Angus bull, two young oxen and two untamed broncos. He loaded his settler's effects into the wagon, hitched up the oxen, tied the broncos on the back and started out along the trail to Halcyonia. The party had travelled only about fifteen miles when one of the young oxen got tired, lay down and refused to get up. In desperation, they hitched up the herd bull and, much to their surprise, he proved to be an even tempered animal and settled in for the rest of the journey. On the morning of the second day, one of the broncos broke loose and disappeared over the horizon. Nathan and Eddy searched for the missing bronco but had no luck. They continued on. Then, as evening approached and they neared the

North Saskatchewan River, they heard a horse whinnying in the distance. They stopped to listen and the bronco still tied to the wagon also started to whinny. Soon the stray bronco came running over to the wagon and happily rejoined the group without needing to be tied. When they reached the river, the ice was starting to break up and travel across looked treacherous as there was a foot of water flowing over the ice in places. Some workmen building a nearby railway bridge advised them to keep moving and not wait until morning to cross. So they began to cross. At one point, the wagon broke through the ice and dropped eighteen inches to a sandbar. Fortunately, after some anxious moments, they were able to get the wagon onto thicker ice and make it across safely.

Nathan Saunders filed on a quarter section of land two miles west of Home Farm, paying the original settler for his improvements, while his son, Eddy, filed on some land another mile and a half south.³⁹ Nathan and Eddy decided to live on Eddy's quarter where they built a house and a small barn with a board fence surrounding the yard. Nathan had brought with him from England four tons of settler's effects, including a cheese press and other cheese making equipment. So Nathan moved his cattle onto Eddy's land and milked them, making and selling cheese to other settlers in the area throughout the summer of 1905.

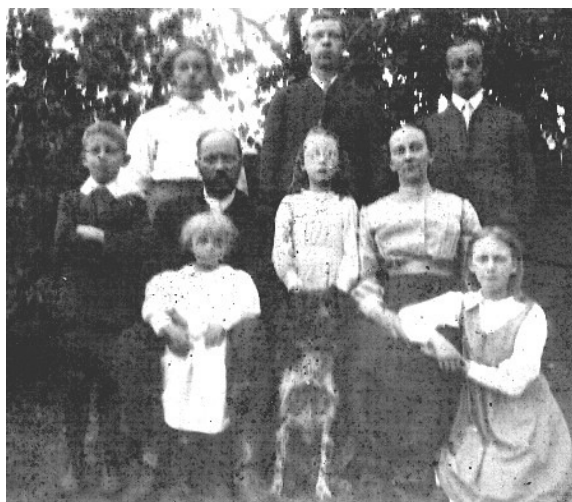
³⁷ Pope, 'Early Days'.

³⁸ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 210. 'Nathan Saunders and Family', *Our Treasured Heritage*, 275. McCheane, 'Early Friends in the Borden District'. Mary Saunders McCheane, interview with Betty Ward, 24 April 1972, Ward Papers. Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 24 April 1972, Ward Papers. Ruth McCheane Chamness Bergman, 'Jemima Mary McCheane', 18 January 1991.

³⁹ McCheane, 'Early Friends in the Borden District'. 'Nathan Saunders and Family', *Our Treasured Heritage*, 275. Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 24 April 1972, Ward Papers.

With permanent dwellings built, Halcyonia Friends turned their attention to cultivating the land. By the end of the summer of 1904 and with the help of Elam Bond, the McCheanes had gathered more than fifteen tons of hay, enough to feed their farm animals over the winter.⁴⁰

They had also ploughed about ten acres with oxen and horses so there was a small crop to thresh in 1905 but because the closest threshing machine was eight miles away, most of the crop was fed to the cows. In 1905,



Hugh Wake was working at a sash and door factory in Saskatoon in order to finance the farm⁴¹ so William hired his son, Joshua, to help John and Edward break the land. William paid Joshua twenty-five dollars per month plus room and board. That summer, John, Edward and Joshua broke another eighty acres on the McCheane land with oxen and horses and thirty acres on the Wake farm. More significantly, William and Nathan Saunders both hired a steam plough outfit that had come into the district. It used a steam tractor to pull a plough in place of a team of oxen or horses and its greater efficiency meant that the McCheanes were able to break another hundred acres that summer and Nathan was

able to break his first hundred acres. It was Joshua's job to keep the steam tractor operating and so he spent the summer of 1905 gathering and cutting several cords of firewood and hauling water. The hundred acres that was steam ploughed for the

McCheanes was done in one large block that intersected each of the four McCheane quarter sections in such a way that sufficient land was cultivated on each quarter section to satisfy the homestead requirements under the provisions

of the Dominion Lands Act. The following year, 1906, the same hundred acres yielded an impressive eighteen hundred bushels of Number 1 hard wheat while Nathan's hundred acres yielded an even more impressive nineteen hundred bushels of wheat.⁴²

In spite of the number of challenges inherent in immigrating to Western Canada, the new Quaker arrivals remained very intentional about making time for worship. As one of the first Quaker settlers in the area and the owner of the first house in the district, William McCheane hosted weekly Meetings for Worship at his residence at Home Farm.⁴³ The first Meeting at Home Farm was held on Sunday, 26 June 1904,

⁴⁰ Wake, 'The McCheane Family's Immigration to Canada'.

⁴¹ Margaret Wake Saunders, interview with Betty Ward, April 23, 1973, Ward Papers. McCheane, 'Early Friends in the Borden District'.

⁴² Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 19 April 1972, Ward Papers. Wake, 'The McCheane Family's Immigration to Canada'. Bergman, 'Jemima Mary McCheane'. Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 263.

⁴³ Wake, 'The McCheane Family's Immigration to Canada'.



and was attended by the McCheane, Crabb and Wake families.⁴⁴ In May 1905, three Members of Fritchley Meeting left England to travel in the ministry, meeting with other Quakers in different parts of Canada and the United States.⁴⁵ The visiting Fritchley Friends were Jesse Darbyshire, uncle of Joshua Wake, and Lydia Barclay Sargent and Catherine Doubell Smith, daughters of John Grant Sargent (Figure 6). In September 1905, the Fritchley Friends arrived at Halcyonia and stayed with William McCheane and his family. On the Sunday following their arrival, the first public Quaker Meeting for Worship in the district was held at Home Farm. There were almost thirty people present.⁴⁶

In addition to taking the opportunity to share in worship, the Fritchley Friends visited Halcyonia in order to help the new Quaker settlers form a Monthly Meeting

that was closely associated with Fritchley General Meeting.⁴⁷ In that context, William was appointed the first Clerk of Halcyonia Monthly Meeting. While they were far away from Friends in Fritchley, Halcyonia Friends were adamant that they would "maintain in our worship the original doctrines and disciplines that we had shared in our meetings in England."⁴⁸ Therefore, Meetings for Worship were held at Home Farm twice on Sundays, at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm, and every Wednesday morning at 10:30 am, following the same format as they had in England (Figure 7). Members of Halcyonia Meeting also worked together with Fritchley Friends over time to formulate Rules of Discipline that were similar to the 1802 Rules of Discipline which applied at Fritchley, including the disciplines of plain speech, plain dress and marrying from within the Meeting.⁴⁹

Once per month, after the Meeting for Worship on Wednesday morning, a Meeting for Worship for Business was held. As Clerk, William oversaw and facilitated the business meeting, recorded the minutes of the Meeting and kept the record of births, deaths and marriages. Halcyonia Quakers also held Western Canada Yearly Meeting during which time they received, read and answered letters from other Yearly Meetings in England and the United States who were in unity with them.⁵⁰ In time, membership in Halcyonia Monthly Meeting gradually

⁴⁴ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 258.

⁴⁵ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 63, 258.

⁴⁶ Newspaper clipping with no identifying information, c. Summer 1905, in William Cronyn McCheane, notebook, Ward Papers.

⁴⁷ Wake, 'Brief History of the Halcyonia Meeting of Conservative Friends who came to Canada from England between 1904 and 1913'.

⁴⁸ Joshua Kelsall Wake, cited in Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 263.

⁴⁹ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 63.

⁵⁰ Jemima Mary Saunders, diary, 25 August 1909.

increased as interested people in the area applied to become Members and as children were born to the original Quaker settlers from England.⁵¹

In spite of maintaining close ties with England, Halcyonia Friends were not immune to many of the harsh realities of settler life in Western Canada. The year 1904 was a particularly bad year for mosquitoes.⁵² Heavy rains and flooding caused by the rapid spring thaw meant that there was water everywhere. To make matters worse, the water did not seep into the unbroken ground but ran off into sloughs, leaving extended pools of standing water in which mosquitoes would breed. Worse yet, it was almost impossible to get away from them. Edward McCheane

discovered a temporary solution to the problem when he took a break from digging the well at Home Farm and decided to stay below ground, sitting on an upside down bucket to write a letter, because he noticed that there were no mosquitoes at a depth of twenty-six feet. Some Quaker women resorted to wrapping newspapers around their legs under their stockings as protection against the pesky insects. Unfortunately, the farm animals did not fare much better. At one point, Joshua Wake found the mosquitoes “so thick on a grey horse we had that you’d take your hands and wipe them off and leave a long red smear of blood on the horse.”⁵³ To try to ease their suffering, Edward and John McCheane made smudge fires for their



⁵¹ In May 1912, Edward Cronyn McCheane wrote the following: “It is gratifying to note that our numbers at Borden are increasing, there were twenty present at meeting in the evening [of May 21, 1912,] quite a company for our present accommodation. We have about 28 attenders if all were present that are living in Borden district”. Edward Cronyn McCheane, ‘The Borden Gleaner’, 21 May 1912, courtesy Roberta Hinde Rivett.

⁵² Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 18 April 1972, Ward Papers. William O. Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 17 March 1975, Ward Papers.

⁵³ Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 4 April 1974, Ward Papers.

cattle and horses whereby they lit bonfires and then placed fresh cut sods and manure on top of the burning wood to create large amounts of smoke. In response, the cattle and horses would rush madly towards the smoke in an attempt to get some relief from the mosquitoes.

Especially in the early years, water quality was always a concern as sloughs and wells provided settlers with drinking water and outhouses were the only form of sanitation available. As a result, water-borne diseases were common, affecting humans and animals alike. In late 1905, Lydia Crabb got typhoid fever, probably from drinking bad water. She was very sick and had to be watched day and night. Her sister, Hannah Mary McCheane, went to Radisson to nurse her. Soon after, Lydia's husband, David, came down with it too. And it was not long before Hannah Mary was sick. William McCheane arranged for a neighbor who was trained as a nurse to look after all three patients. Joshua Wake, who was working for William at the time, drove the nurse from Home Farm to Radisson, a total of nineteen miles, and then checked in on them once a week to see how everyone was getting along. Hannah Mary was the first to improve so it was decided to bring her back to Home Farm. In preparation for the journey, Joshua covered a bob sleigh with binder canvasses and in it placed a small stove in front, a thick layer of straw on the floor, a mattress on top of the straw and a chair for Caroline McCheane to sit in. He and Caroline set out for Radisson early one morning and soon had Hannah Mary in the sleigh and the stove lit with Caroline sitting

by her side. The terrain was fairly rough and Hannah Mary did not stand the return trip very well so Joshua drove the horses hard to get her home as quickly as possible. They made good time and got Hannah Mary into a warm bed as soon as they arrived at Home Farm. Nevertheless, Hannah Mary had a relapse and, at one point, it was not certain that she would recover but she eventually did. In the meantime, the nurse who was taking care of David and Lydia was exhausted and a replacement was needed as both David and Lydia were still very sick and required constant nursing care. Even though it was Christmas day, Joshua managed to find a woman who lived ten or eleven miles away from Home Farm who was willing to go to Radisson right away and take care of the patients. In the end, it was at least a month before David and Lydia were in the clear and started to improve but they gradually recovered from the typhoid.⁵⁴

Frequent prairie fires during the summer could be particularly destructive as Nathan Saunders found out the hard way. In 1906, Nathan and his son, Eddy, were gathering hay on Nathan's land when a prairie fire went through Eddy's quarter section. The fire destroyed their house, barn and most of their personal belongings, including their cheese-making equipment and ripening cheeses. Nathan and Eddy had plowed a fireguard around the homestead early in the spring but they did not plow over the dirt road that led to their homestead because there was still some snow on it. This break in the fireguard later allowed the fire to enter along the dry grass that grew between

⁵⁴ Wake, 'The McCheane Family's Immigration to Canada'.



the wagon tracks on the road. Not having any other choice, Nathan and Eddy moved

into the fourteen by sixteen foot shack on Nathan's quarter section that had been part

of the improvements made by the original settler (Figure 8).⁵⁵

Likewise, the bitter cold of prairie winters could be very dangerous, especially in the early days of settlement when there were few settlers, fewer visible landmarks by which to navigate and no telephones with which to communicate in an emergency. In the winter of 1906, William McCheane and Joshua Wake got caught in the middle of a cold and snowy blizzard on their way back to Home Farm from the nearby town of Borden. They were travelling by horse and wagon and the storm had gotten so severe that they couldn't see past the horses' heads. Complicating matters further, there were no roads or fences, every landmark had disappeared and all the trails were covered with snow. They stopped at a creek to get their bearings. William asked Joshua, who was driving, "Does thou know where thou is?" Joshua responded, "Oh yes" because he knew they were at the creek. Unfortunately, Joshua was not as sure about where to go next. But he knew that the creek flowed northwest which meant that the McCheane farm was northeast of their current location. He also knew that the McCheane house was right in the corner of the furrow they had ploughed along the property line so that if they could reach the furrow, they could follow it right to the house. With this information, Joshua pointed the horses in the right direction, noticed the exact angle

at which the wind struck his face and started off, keeping the wind exactly right on his cheek. As they slowly moved along, Joshua had to constantly pull the horses around to keep them going in a northeasterly direction as it was instinctual for the horses to want to turn so that the wind was behind them. By continuously pulling the horses around and feeling the angle of the wind, Joshua finally struck the furrow, just a quarter mile south of Home Farm. Joshua followed the furrow north and he and William arrived at the house safe and sound.⁵⁶

Cold winter weather outside often meant uncomfortably cold temperatures inside as well. Home Farm was attractive both inside and out but it was only one board thick, had low ceilings and was considered to be "generally makeshift."⁵⁷ Part of the rationale for building the structure out of wood was that it would be cleaner and cooler during the summer. However, it also meant that the place was terribly cold and draughty during the winter. Indeed, "in the winter, it was so cold in the house, the pee pot would freeze over."⁵⁸ Fortunately for the McCheanes, the thirty-foot-high tepee of dead trees in the farmyard provided a plentiful supply of firewood that first winter.⁵⁹ In the Wake home, it was below zero in the bedrooms during the winter in spite of the thick walls. It would get so cold that the nail heads on the ceiling would have an inch of frost hanging from them.

⁵⁵ Jemima Mary Saunders McCheane, interviews with Betty Ward, 25-25 April 1972, Ward Files. 'Nathan Saunders and Family', *Our Treasured Heritage*, 275.

⁵⁶ Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 18 April 1972, Ward Papers.

⁵⁷ Ward, *A Community of Friends*, 43. Hinde, 'Account of the Life of Joseph Edward (Bob) Hinde', 81. Pope, 'Early Days'.

⁵⁸ Kenneth John Crabb, interview with author, 12 March 2013.

⁵⁹ Wake, 'The McCheane Family's Immigration to Canada'.

To keep warm at night, the Wakes would pile everything they had on their beds, including coats, but then they would be cramped with all the weight.⁶⁰ The Saunders family had the Doukhobors to thank for teaching them how to keep warm in winter. One day, a Doukhobor came to their door and knocked. He could see steam coming out from under the eaves of their house and knew that they must be cold inside with that much heat escaping from the structure. So the Doukhobor taught them how to chink the cracks with a plaster made of straw, local clay and manure.⁶¹

In spite of the fact that William McCheane was able to secure land on which to physically settle his family, he spent a good deal of time between 1904 and 1906 attempting to resolve homestead entry issues on behalf of himself, his sons and fellow Quaker settlers. In late 1904, referring to the applications for homestead entries he had submitted to the Canadian government on behalf of English Quakers back in February 1904, William wrote to John Turriff, Commissioner of Lands, to find out when the settlers could expect their entries to be granted.⁶² According to William, the homestead entries were necessary in order for them “to feel properly and securely settled”, a psychological reassurance important even to William who had already spent almost three thousand dollars on Home Farm. Perley Keyes, Secretary to the Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, responded to

William on 7 December 1904 with some very unexpected news. First, he announced that the Doukhobor reserve was being thrown open for general settlement on 15 December 1904. Second, Keyes informed William that he and any other Quakers on the ground could secure their homestead entries on that date only if they were eligible and the first to submit applications to the local Land Agent in Prince Albert. And, finally, Keyes asserted that the government never intended to hold certain lands in the Doukhobor reserve for English Quakers for an indefinite period of time and that Fritchley Friends would not be able to place any special reservation on the available land in Township 40, Ranges 7 and 8 after 15 December 1904.⁶³ In spite of the short notice, William travelled the eighty-three miles to Prince Albert on 15 December 1904 in order to secure his land as well as the homesteads of the other Friends. Unfortunately, he was informed that he could not act for others and that he would have to pay his ten dollar homestead entry fee again as there was no record in the Prince Albert office that William had already submitted fees on behalf of himself and other Fritchley Friends earlier that year.⁶⁴ William repaid his homestead entry fee but serious concerns were raised over whether or not his sons Willie and Edward would be able to secure the quarter sections they had taken up because Willie was not well enough to travel to Prince Albert and Edward was working in Winnipeg over the

⁶⁰ William O. Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 17 March 1975, Ward Papers.

⁶¹ Jemima Mary Saunders McCheane, interview with Betty Ward, 25 November 1971, Ward Papers.

⁶² William Cronyn McCheane, letter to J.G. Turriff, 22 November 1904, Ward Papers. William Cronyn McCheane, letter to J.G. Turriff, 13 February 1904, Ward Papers.

⁶³ P.G. Keyes, letter to William Cronyn McCheane, 7 December 1904, Ward Papers.

⁶⁴ J. Obed Smith, letter to J.W. Greenway, 21 December 1904, Ward Papers.

winter.⁶⁵

William McCheane kept William Kennedy informed of these developments. Kennedy, who had immigrated to Canada in the fall of 1904 and was living in Winnipeg, was shocked by what he heard and proceeded to express his disappointment with the Canadian government in letters to the Deputy Minister of Immigration, the Commissioner of Immigration and his Winnipeg Member of Parliament.⁶⁶ Internal government correspondence pertaining to the matter acknowledged that “there has unfortunately been a good deal of trouble and dissatisfaction in the arrangement with Mr. Kennedy.”⁶⁷ Still, government officials consistently maintained that the reservation for English Quakers in the two townships was conditional, that the land entries for Friends could not be granted as long as the Doukhobor reserve existed, that the Homestead Inspector found most of the lands selected by Kennedy to be stony and unfit for cultivation and that without a definite Quaker reservation, the squatters were entitled to recognition. Moreover, government officials were adamant that Kennedy was fully aware of the situation all along.⁶⁸

Regardless, the government moved swiftly in an attempt to resolve the situation once and for all. Perley Keyes sent Kennedy a statement of the entry fees already received by the Department and requested Kennedy to confirm which Quakers had secured which homesteads and what lands the remaining Quaker settlers still wished to secure.⁶⁹ Keyes promised that once this information was received, and provided that the land was still available, every effort would be made to grant the desired entries and issue a cheque for any outstanding balance. In the end, this process secured homestead entries for eight settlers, including William, John and Edward McCheane.⁷⁰

In the meantime, William’s oldest son, Willie, had not yet been granted homestead entry for his quarter section. As a young child, Willie had contracted meningitis which left him mute, epileptic and dependent on others for his daily care.⁷¹ Therefore, because Willie was not physically well enough to travel to Prince Albert and apply in person on 15 December 1904, William tried to submit a solemn declaration to the Land Agent in Prince Albert instead.⁷² Unfortunately, over a year

⁶⁵ William Cronyn McCheane, letter to unknown, 8 February 1905, Ward Papers. Edward Cronyn McCheane, letter to unknown, 19 January 1905, Ward Papers.

⁶⁶ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to James A. Smart, 19 December 1904, Ward Papers. J. Obed Smith, letter to J.W. Greenway, 21 December 1904, Ward Papers. William Spiers Kennedy, letter to D.W. Bole, 6 January 1905, Ward Papers.

⁶⁷ Unknown author, letter to D.W. Bole, 13 April 1905, Ward Papers.

⁶⁸ F. Fitz Roy Dixon, memorandum to J.W. Greenway, 31 August 1904, Ward Papers. F. Fitz Roy Dixon, memorandum to unknown, 25 January 1905, Ward Papers.

⁶⁹ P.G. Keyes, letter to William Spiers Kennedy, 18 April 1905, Ward Papers.

⁷⁰ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to P.G. Keyes, 5 May 1905, Ward Papers. F. Fitz Roy Dixon, letter to J.W. Greenway, 18 May 1905, Ward Papers.

⁷¹ Joshua Kelsall Wake, interview with Betty Ward, 17 March 1975, Ward Papers. Mabel Saunders Crabb, interview with author, 3 June 2003. David Lawrence John Crabb, email to author, 15 March 2013.

⁷² William Cronyn McCheane, letter to unknown, 8 February 1905, Ward Papers.

later, the entry still had not been granted.⁷³ Letters went back and forth in order to determine the best way to solve the problem.⁷⁴ The matter was finally resolved on 16 November 1906 when Willie was authorized to complete and return a statement to the Department of the Interior and then submit his application for homestead entry to either a visiting Homestead Inspector, the local Land Agent in Prince Albert or the Sub-Agent of Dominion Lands in the nearby town of Rosthern.⁷⁵

William Kennedy was bitter about the relatively few homestead entries granted to English Friends and blamed the government for it, claiming that “all the remaining applicants have abandoned the idea [of securing land] owing to the promise of the reservation not being carried out.”⁷⁶ In addition to the English Quakers, Kennedy maintained that he was in contact with so many Friends in Scotland, Iowa, Nebraska, New York and Ohio who were interested in settling in Western Canada that “the two Townships [on the Doukhobor reserve] would not hold them all.”⁷⁷ Indeed, if the government had not broken its promise to only grant

homestead entries to Doukhobors and Friends in these townships, Kennedy estimated that he could have arranged for between two hundred and four hundred Quakers to settle in the area.⁷⁸ In reality, and for whatever reason, between 1904 and 1913, only thirty-one Fritchley Friends immigrated to Canada and settled in the Halcyonia district, a group that was comprised entirely of members from the McCheane, Crabb, Saunders, Hinde and Wake families.⁷⁹ John McCheane became the first permanent Fritchley Quaker in the district when he did not return to England with his father and William Kennedy in 1903. One year later, William McCheane arrived with the remaining members of his family, including David Crabb and David’s younger brother, Philip (Figure 9). Nathan and Eddy Saunders came out in 1905 and were later joined by Nathan’s three daughters, Mary in 1907, Lucy in 1913 and Eliza in 1915 although Eliza returned to live in England with her new husband in 1919 (Figure 10).⁸⁰ In 1907, David and Philip’s mother, Alice Crabb, arrived in Canada with her youngest children, Ruby, Laurie and Winnie. Alice opened a dressmaker shop in Radisson which was in great demand at the

⁷³ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to R.E.A. Leech, 25 March 1906, Ward Papers.

⁷⁴ R.E.A. Leech, letter to J.W. Greenway, 4 April 1906, Ward Papers. R.E.A. Leech, letter to Secretary, Department of the Interior, 24 August 1906, Ward Papers.

⁷⁵ P.G. Keyes, letter to William McCheane, 16 November 1906, Ward Papers.

⁷⁶ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to P.G. Keyes, 5 May 1905, Ward Papers.

⁷⁷ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to James A. Smart, 29 October 1904, Ward Papers. William Spiers Kennedy, letter to D.W. Bole, 6 January 1905, Ward Papers.

⁷⁸ William Spiers Kennedy, letter to R.E.A. Leech, 26 June 1908, Ward Papers. William Spiers Kennedy, letter to Minister of the Interior, 27 March 1918, Ward Papers.

⁷⁹ Wake, ‘Brief History of the Halcyonia Meeting of Conservative Friends who came to Canada from England between 1904 and 1913’. Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 271.

⁸⁰ Jemima Mary Saunders McCheane, interview with Betty Ward, 24 April 1972, Ward Papers. ‘Nathan Saunders and Family’, 274-277. Hinde, ‘Account of the Life of Joseph Edward (Bob) Hinde’, 23

time (Figure 11). In 1912, Alice, Ruby and Winnie moved to Winnipeg to live with Philip who had recently gotten a job in the city at a new branch of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.⁸¹ Her youngest son, Laurie Crabb, remained in Halcyonia and farmed. Also in 1912, Joseph Hinde immigrated to Canada with his wife, Martha Wake Hinde, and their five children: Bob, Winnie, Harry, Elsie and Daisie. Their two oldest children, Edith and Leonard, had immigrated one year earlier in order to work for Nathan Saunders who had advanced them the money for their second-class passage (Figure 12). Joseph Hinde and his family originally farmed homestead quarters but later acquired additional land in the area which they named and operated as Valley Springs Ranch.⁸² After a few years in Canada, Hugh Wake went back to England in order to sell his ironmonger shop in Birmingham. In 1913, he returned to his Halcyonia homestead with the rest of his family which consisted of his wife, Margaret Kelsall Wake, and five children: Henry, John, Margaret, Jr., Bill and Lavinia (Figures 13 and 14). One married daughter, Lydia, remained in England while another son, Arthur, had immigrated to Canada and homesteaded near Hugh and Joshua in 1905.⁸³ Ironically, for all of his efforts to assist other Quakers to settle in Township 40, Ranges 7 and 8, West of the Third Meridian, William Kennedy never homesteaded there himself nor did any of

his sons, including his son Harry. He had intended otherwise but ended up becoming engaged in business in Winnipeg and could not get away.

The McCheane, Crabb, Wake, Saunders and Hinde families were five Quaker families who settled in the area around Borden, Saskatchewan in order that they might form a community based on the principles and values of conservative Friends and to take advantage of the Canadian government promise of economic prosperity. Between 1904 and 1913, they established Halcyonia Monthly Meeting and, together, carved out new homes and new lives for themselves in Western Canada (Figure 15). Today, more than one hundred years later, a few descendants of the original Quaker settlers still meet for worship at Halcyonia on a regular basis. And while Fritchley Meeting in England asked to become a member of London Yearly Meeting in 1968, Halcyonia Meeting remains faithful to its conservative roots and completely independent of Canadian Yearly Meeting.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Dorothy Harrington Crabb, 'Alice (Wells) Crabb 1861-1917', *Reflections of Radisson, 1902-1982* (Altona, Manitoba: Friesen Printers, 1982), 291. Winifred Crabb Kennedy, 'My Early Life in the West as I Remember It, Especially in the Town of Radisson', *Reflections of Radisson*, 300.

⁸² Roberta Hinde Rivett, 'Joseph Hinde Family', n.d. Elsie Hinde Ingram, 'The Joseph Hinde Family', *Our Treasured Heritage*, 143-145. Hinde, 'Account of the Life of Joseph Edward (Bob) Hinde', 37.

⁸³ Joshua Kelsall Wake, 'The Wake Family', *Our Treasured Heritage*, 323. William Oliver Wake, 'Bill Wake', *Our Treasured Heritage*, 326. Rivett, 'Joseph Hinde Family'.

⁸⁴ Lowndes, *The Quakers of Fritchley*, 115, 264.