

Joseph Hill (1761-1833)

The Story of One of the Founders of the Quaker Settlement at Yonge Street, Newmarket, Ontario, including Hill Family History

Sandra McCann Fuller and Heather Hill-Gibson¹

The Hill Family in Pennsylvania and New Jersey

In the eighteenth century, several generations of the Hill family lived in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. They were members of Falls Meeting and Buckingham Meeting of Friends. The earliest known John Hill was married to Sarah Brackett. Among the descendants of John Hill and connected by marriage, were a number of distinguished persons.

John Hill II (1695-1748) m 1719 Sarah (Canby) Hill (1695-174?)

John Hill II (1695-1748), son of John Hill and Sarah (Brackett) Hill of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, married on 19 September 1719, at Falls Monthly Meeting, Sarah Canby, eldest daughter of Thomas and Sarah (Jarvis) Canby. His father-in-law, Thomas Canby (1667-1742), had business interests in Solebury, Buckingham Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on the Delaware River where he ran mills with partner, Anthony Morris of Philadelphia. Buckingham Monthly Meeting of Friends was established in 1720 with Thomas Canby as the first clerk, a position he held

until 1739. Canby also served as minister amongst Friends. In 1739, John Hill, Canby's son-in-law, replaced him as clerk. In addition to his successful business pursuits and religious duties, Thomas Canby was involved in community activities. He was a justice of the peace for Bucks County from 1719 until 1741, and was elected four times to the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

A significant link to the later undertaking of great-grandson Joseph Hill is the fact that Thomas Canby's son, Benjamin (1704-1748), inherited his father's mill property which he owned jointly with Anthony Morris. After Benjamin Canby's death, his second wife, Sarah Yardley, married in 1751 David Kinsey who continued to operate a ferry on the Delaware River that had been owned by Benjamin Canby. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, James Kinsey, a relation of David Kinsey, was involved in milling with Joseph Hill near Yonge Street, Upper Canada.

John and Sarah (Canby) Hill had ten children between 1720 and 1739. There were nine sons, with almost twenty years difference in their ages, and one daughter, Hannah (1723-1751) who died young. They were the grandparents of Joseph Hill.

¹ Fuller, a descendant of Quakers who settled there in 1803 and a lifelong resident of Newmarket, is investigating the apocryphal story of Joseph Hill. A detailed genealogy of the Hill family can be found in Heather Hill-Gibson and Allan McGillivray, "Joseph Hill, a Founder of Newmarket, Ontario (Including some Ancestors and Descendants)" (ISBN 978-0-9949275-0-7).

Family of John Hill (1695-1748): William 1720, Thomas 1722, Hannah 1723, **John 1725**, Joseph 1727, Benjamin 1729, James 1731, Samuel 1734, Moses 1736, Aaron 1739.²

John Hill (1725-1806) m 1756 1- Elizabeth Smith (1730-ca. 1775)

In the 1760s there was a migration of Friends who departed from Bucks County, crossed the Delaware River to settle first at Kingwood in Hunterdon County, and later at Hardwick in Sussex County, New Jersey.

John Hill Sr (1725-1806), father of Joseph Hill, son of John and Sarah (Canby) Hill who lived in Buckingham Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 1756, married Elizabeth Smith of New Jersey. With the permission of Chesterfield MM, Burlington, New Jersey, on 15 December 1756, John Hill of Buckingham MM, Bucks County married at Windsor, Elizabeth Smith, daughter of Ezekiel and Margaret Smith, of Windsor Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey. Elizabeth (Smith) Hill was active in the Buckingham Friends Meeting. On 4 December 1775 John Hill requested a certificate of removal for his two daughters, Deborah and Hannah, to live with Benjamin Clark in Chesterfield, New Jersey. Perhaps Elizabeth had fallen ill or had died and John felt unable to care for the little girls. Evidently, Elizabeth (Smith) Hill died a couple of years after the birth of her tenth child in 1773, probably between September 1774 and December 1775.

Children (10) born to John and Elizabeth (Smith) Hill in Buckingham Twp,

Bucks County, Pennsylvania, were:

1. Ezekiel Smith Hill (1758-1759),
2. Ezekiel Hill (1759-18??),
3. Joseph Hill (1761-1833),
4. Deborah Hill (1763-1852),
5. Margaret Hill (1765-1817),
6. John Hill Jr (1766-1814),
7. Benjamin Hill (1768-1845),
8. Moses Hill (1770-18??),
9. Elizabeth Hill (1772-1859),
10. Hannah Hill (1773-1843).³

The American War of Independence from Britain broke out in April 1775. At an early period of the War, in 1776 John Hill joined the British Standard at Long Island under General Howe, and took his protection. With other Loyalists, he embarked on board the *Swan* man of war, then lying at Long Island. He was afterwards taken prisoner to New England, but exchanged; in the meantime his property was destroyed. From his 1796 Petition for grants of land in Niagara, Upper Canada, John Hill states that during the American War he suffered much from his Loyalty to Britain.

With the concurrence of Buckingham MM, John Hill spent a couple of years “transacting business” in New York, and with “difficulties removed” received a recommendation from Flushing MM, Long Island NY, 4 March 1778, to return to his family.⁴ Immediately after British Troops evacuated Philadelphia, his teen-aged son, John Hill Jr, went to New York for protection having first experienced the affects of persecution. In 1780 he entered

² PA Bucks County, Buckingham MM of Friends, Family Book, 5; PA Bucks County, Buckingham MM, Births, Burials, Marriage Certificates, 1748; PA Wills Vol. 1-2, 1713-1759, #613.

³ PA Bucks County, Buckingham MM, minutes 1756, 318; NJ Burlington, Chesterfield MM, minutes 1756, 737; Chesterfield MM minutes 7 3mo 1776, 527.

⁴ Archives of Ontario (AO): Upper Canada Land Petition LAC “H” Bundle 2, Petition No. 121, October 12, 1796; NY Flushing MM, minutes 4th 3mo 1778, pp26, 4.

in Captain Oliver Templeton's Company of City Volunteers in NY where he served almost three years until the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783.⁵

John Hill Sr (1725-1806) m 1782 2- Hannah Doughty (1747-1834)

Approximately six years after the death of his wife Elizabeth (Smith) Hill, John Hill Sr married again. Usually, men in the Hill family found wives in New Jersey or Pennsylvania. During the American Revolutionary War, John Hill found his second wife during his sojourn in New York. John's second wife, Hannah Doughty Jr, was niece to his brother, Benjamin Hill. At Kingwood MM, New Jersey, in 1753, Benjamin Hill (1729-), had married Martha Williams, sister of Hannah (Williams) Doughty. With a certificate from Buckingham Monthly Meeting of Friends, 7 January 1782, to the Monthly Meeting of Friends at Flushing on Long Island, John Hill was permitted to proceed in marriage with Hannah Doughty Junr. On 11 April 1782, John Hill married Hannah Doughty, born in 1747 in Flushing NY, daughter of Benjamin and Hannah (Williams) Doughty. Benjamin Doughty, son of Charles Doughty of Rocky Hill, had married 2 February 1738, at Cow Neck (Manhasset), Hannah Williams, daughter of Jeremiah Williams of Nassau NY.⁶

At the time of their marriage, John Hill was fifty-seven and Hannah Doughty was thirty-five years of age. This marriage brought him into important circles of affluent society and linked him to Quaker élites. The 1782 marriage record of John

Hill and Hannah Doughty at Flushing, Long Island NY reveals that the Doughty family belonged to a group of wealthy Quaker families with prominent connections. As was the custom, the wedding guests signed the marriage document as witnesses: Bowne, Burling, Farrington, Field, Hicks, Lawrence, Thorn, Townsend, Underhill, Wistar, families. Many of them were intermarried. Amongst the names of witnesses to this marriage, both Bowne and Lawrence are tied to Joseph Hill's business dealings approximately twenty-five years later in Whitchurch Township, York County, Upper Canada.

The Doughty and Bowne homes are important historic sites in New York. Kingsland Homestead built ca. 1785 by Charles Doughty, son of Benjamin Doughty, a wealthy Quaker of Flushing, New York is located near the seventeenth-century Bowne House in Murray Hill, Queens, New York City. The John Bowne historic home built in 1661 is the location of the first Quaker meeting in New Amsterdam. Robert Bowne (1744-1818) founded Bowne and Company, financial printers, now the oldest company in USA.

John and Hannah (Doughty) Hill had two children: Sarah 1786-1807, Charles 1788-1864.⁷ John Hill's two children from his second marriage were approximately the same ages as his grandchildren, children of Joseph and Anne (Hull) Hill.

Joseph Hill Sr (1761-1833) m 1783 1- Ann Hull (1763-1790)

Joseph Hill (1761-1833) was born 16

⁵ AO: Upper Canada Land Petitions LAC "H" Bundle 1, Newark, Petition No. 47, July 11, 1794; Petition No. 53, September 5, 1794.

⁶ Hinshaw, W: *Encyclopedia of Quaker Genealogy*. Westbury MM NY, 407; Kingwood MM minutes, 2mo 1753, 5mo 1766.

⁷ AO: MS303, C-3-54 UC Pelham MM.

April 1761 and received his education amongst Friends at Buckingham MM, Bucks County PA. Just over a year after his father John Hill married his second wife in April 1782, twenty-two year old Joseph Hill married his first wife Ann Hull, 19 July 1783, the daughter of Benjamin and Anne (Duer) Hull, born in 1763 in Morris, New Jersey.⁸

The Duers, Ann's mother's family, were members of Friends, but her father, Benjamin Hull, was not a member of Friends. Ann Hull's mother, Ann (Duer) Hull (1731-18??), was the daughter of Joseph and Sarah (Paxson) Duer of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Joseph Duer (1705-1777), a well-to-do yeoman who resided on a highway near Newtown, New Jersey, died at Bordentown, New Jersey.

Ann Hull's father, Benjamin Hull (1702-1792), was a son of Joseph and Hannah (Stapely) Hull of New Jersey. Benjamin and Ann (Duer) Hull married in 1748 and had fourteen children between 1749 and 1773. At the date of her marriage, Ann Duer was about eighteen years old, considerably younger than her husband, aged forty-six. Benjamin Hull was the owner of two large farms.

The following year, 5 June 1784, Joseph Hill was disowned by Buckingham Monthly Meeting for having "accomplished his marriage with a woman not of our Society." David Gilbert and Thomas Hill, blacksmith, were appointed to prepare a testimony against him.⁹ Joseph Hill's marriage in July 1783, just before the September 1783 close of the Revolutionary War, heralded a period

of many changes and dislocations. After having been disowned by the Meeting, perhaps the young couple wanted a new start. Almost certainly, they joined Joseph's uncle, William Canby Hill (1720-1811) who lived in Vermont; another uncle, Aaron Hill (1739-1827) lived at Saratoga, New York.¹⁰

Census records confirm that Joseph and Ann (Hull) Hill's two sons, George 1784 and Joseph Jr 1786, were both born in Vermont.¹¹ Through his uncles William and Aaron Hill, Joseph Hill may have become acquainted with Timothy Rogers and members of his family while living in Vermont. However, either Joseph or his wife, Ann, preferred to live back home in New Jersey where their two daughters were both born: Sarah Hill, born 1 August 1788, and Lavinia Eunice Hill, born 30 September 1790. Ann (Hull) Hill died in 1790, aged twenty-seven years, shortly after the birth of her fourth child, in New Jersey. The will of Benjamin Hull Sr of Newtown, Sussex Co. NJ, written 6 April 1790, mentions the children of his daughter, Ann, deceased, one share divided between them.¹²

Understandably, when Joseph Hill lost the mother of his children, he needed a second wife to care for him and to help raise his young family of four children under the age of six years: – in 1790, George six years, John Joseph Jr four years, Sarah two years, Eunice baby. Perhaps Anne Hull's sisters were looking after the four Hill children? Or perhaps Joseph's sister, Deborah Hill, was sharing the responsibility?

Although what was happening in the life

⁸ New Jersey Colonial Documents: Marriage Licenses, 181.

⁹ PA Bucks County, Buckingham MM, 1784, 310-11.

¹⁰ Williams, J.C. *History of Danby Vermont*, 1869; Eastman, Revd H. *The Towns of Rutland County, Vermont*, 1891; PA Bucks County, Buckingham MM Minutes 1787, 350-354; NY Wills and Probate Records, 1827 Sept 29, Vol. 8, 98.

¹¹ 1851 Census Canada West, York County, Twp North Gwillimbury, 7.

¹² New Jersey Post-Revolutionary Documents, Calendar of Wills, 1791-1795, Proved August 27, 1792, 190.

of Joseph Hill in the early 1790s is not known, the economy of the new republic has some interest, especially to those making decisions to migrate. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Quakers, especially in Philadelphia, had shed much of their inward-looking character, and had developed into well-to-do élites who dominated economic and political life in Pennsylvania. Later in the eighteenth century, New York was surpassing Philadelphia in trade. Unfortunately, by the 1790s, many persons over-extended their credit, and business failures forced the new republic to fall into severe economic depression.

Some business ventures extended past the boundaries of western New York State and entangled persons north of the border, with some far-reaching consequences. Oliver Phelps (1750-1809) and Nathaniel Gorham (1738-1796) represented a large group of land speculators connected with the purchase in 1788 of Massachusetts lands in western New York. Samuel Street (1753-1815) of Thorold became involved and acted as agent, purchasing shares for persons in Niagara.

Massachusetts re-sold the land to Robert Morris, signer of the Declaration of Independence, financier of the American Revolutionary War, and wealthiest man in the United States of America. In 1792, Morris's agent in London, England, William Temple Franklin (grandson of Benjamin Franklin) sold twelve million acres, known as the Phelps and Gorham Purchase, to the Pultenay Association, a small group of British investors. Robert Bowne (1744-1818) also invested in Pultenay Purchase or Genesee Tract. He was intrigued with the possibilities of improved

commerce with newly-settled land to the west. In 1791, he helped to organize an inland navigation company which paved the way for the Erie Canal completed in 1825 during the administration of New York Governor DeWitt Clinton.

In 1794, Samuel Street also acted as agent for the land settlement project of William Berczy's German Company, a group who had become disenchanted with life in the Genesee Tract and found a colony in Markham Township, York County UC. Street also formed a partnership with Elijah Phelps (1740-1843) to supply the Berczy venture.¹³

The Hill Family in Upper Canada

In 1787, about the same time that Joseph and Ann (Hull) Hill decided to return to New Jersey, Joseph's father, stepmother, brothers, sisters, decided to remove to Niagara, British North America (BNA).

Canada came under British rule in 1763 with England's victory over France in the Seven Years' War, also known as the French and Indian War. After the American War of Independence from Great Britain began in 1775, families started leaving their homes in the New England colonies. Immediately after the close of the war in 1783, a great influx of Loyalist refugees travelled through the wilderness to points in British North America.

Loyalists began to come into the Niagara district in large numbers. Convoys of immigrant wagons crossed the Niagara River and made their way to Fort Niagara with the security of a British garrison. In 1783, fewer than one hundred persons lived at the settlement with about fifteen heads of families attached to the British military

¹³ Bruce Parker, "Samuel Street (1753-1815)" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (DCB) Vol. V (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 781.

post.

In the late 1780s, Quakers were part of the larger migration. They left their homes in the newly-formed republic and sought new homes in British North America north of the Great Lakes. They had close ties with one another, came from southeastern Lancaster County, eastern Bucks County in Pennsylvania, and from Sussex County, New Jersey. These pioneers must have returned favorable accounts of the country for, in a few years, they were joined by many of their old friends and neighbours. Families from Bucks County generally settled near Niagara Falls and Lake Ontario in what is now Lincoln County. A few unmarried young men migrated but usually in company with older parents, married sisters or brothers. Settlers' families often included a Loyalist, usually a brother or brother-in-law disowned for taking up arms in defence of King. Over a period of years, Friends were enabled to locate or relocate Crown grants side by side in major settlements. Tradition played a large part in holding the Friends together in community.

The Hill family was part of a large group of settlers who arrived in the late 1780s. John Hill was one of the earliest settlers in Bertie Township. According to information contained in his petitions for land, John and Hannah (Doughty) Hill and children had come into BNA in 1787 and with direction by Col. Hunter of the 60th Regt, he had purchased lands on Black Creek where he cleared a small farm. John Hill's children, some with their own families and in-laws, also settled in Niagara: Margaret (Hill) Bradshaw and family, John Jr, Elizabeth, Hannah, young Sarah and Charles.

Benjamin Hill and his family soon settled; Deborah arrived later, as did Joseph Hill. Ezekiel Hill and Moses Hill may have migrated later, as well.

Also in the first wave of migration were Samuel and Elizabeth (Canby) Birdsall, and Benjamin Canby who found land and a mill-site on Twelve Mile Creek in Short Hills, near that of John Hill whose mother was Sarah Canby. Asa Schooley (1739-1815) and wife, Sarah, with a certificate of removal from Hardwick Township in Sussex County, New Jersey, dated April 1788, following their married daughter to Niagara. Asa Schooley, John Hill, Joseph Havens, and others, owned adjacent farms on the Humberstone line. Enoch and Mary (Skelton) Srigley, with six children, members of Buckingham MM, Bucks County PA, arrived in October 1788.¹⁴

These early settlers suffered a great deal. Heavy frosts in the summer of 1789 destroyed the crops and when winter set in, famine was inevitable. Food was so scarce that it came to be known as the Hungry Year. Settlers managed to subsist on roots, herbs, and bark from the woods. Several years later, in July 1792, a terrible hurricane which passed through Thorold Township did considerable damage; however, it assisted them in clearing the land and the road track that was made in order to remove the debris came to be known as Hurricane Road.¹⁵

Soon after the province of Upper Canada was established in December 1791, Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe arrived at Newark, Niagara, in 1792. In 1793, Joseph Moore, a Quaker minister, and five other Friends including Jacob Lindley,

¹⁴ Richard MacMaster, "Friends in the Niagara Peninsula 1786-1802," in ed. Albert Schrauwers, *Faith, Friends and Fragmentation: Essays on Nineteenth Century Quakerism in Canada* (Toronto : Canadian Friends Historical Association, 1995), 1-11.

¹⁵ Colin K. Duquemin, "St Johns, Short Hills" in *Villages in the Niagara Peninsula*, Brock University, April 1980.

came to Niagara as official representatives from the Society of Friends to offer their services to the Indians of the NorthWest in drawing up the proposed Treaty of Sandusky between the Indians and the governments of the United States and Great Britain. In his Journal of travel to Canada, Moore mentions his visit to John Hill and son Benjamin.¹⁶

In 1789, Lord Dorchester, Governor-General of British North America, issued a proclamation granting families who had defended the unity of the British Empire the right to qualify as United Empire Loyalists (UELs) and also granted the right to obtain land. As pacifists, the Quakers' refusal to bear arms for the rebel cause had led to their suffering the same sort of persecutions during and after the Revolutionary War as the United Empire Loyalists. Individuals such as Quakers and Mennonites who had supported the British cause but had refused to take up arms for religious reasons were considered Loyalists and their names appear in official records. Often, as in the case of the Hill family, a settler's family included a UEL who had taken up arms in defence of the King.

In the years 1795-96, John Hill presented a number of petitions to the British Government requesting grants of land. These petitions contain information about the Hill family. For these transactions, Hill consulted Robert Hamilton JP at Queenston on the Niagara River, a rising place in the area which was still a wilderness, thinly-settled, connected by a few Indian paths, and no roads. John Hill Sr. satisfied the Justices in Session that he had adhered to the Unity of the Empire

and the Royal Standard in America. Although John Hill was a life-long Quaker, he had joined the British side during the Revolution. In this way, John Hill came into Canada as a United Empire Loyalist, and his sons and daughters qualified as UELs.¹⁷

– § –

About a decade after his father had settled in Niagara, in 1797 Joseph Hill decided to join the Hill family in Upper Canada. In addition to family relationships, the fact that families of UELs were granted the right to obtain land might have persuaded Joseph Hill that removal was a good idea. As the father of young children, 36 year old Joseph needed better prospects to be found in Upper Canada. There were also Quaker connections encouraging migration – Samuel Lundy and Isaac Phillips from New Jersey, and Timothy Rogers from Vermont.

Hill's two journeys to Niagara in 1797 and 1799 seem to have coincided with the religious visits of the committee of Friends from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) appointed to visit Indians on Buffalo Creek NY and Friends in Niagara. Jacob Lindley, reported that meetings were held at Asa Schooley's, John Hill's, and John Taylor's. In the fall of 1797, Joseph Hill made a trip to Niagara for the purpose of applying for a grant of land, but was prevented from bringing forward his application at that time because the office had removed to York. Lt-Gov. Simcoe, had moved the capital of the newly-established province of Upper Canada from Newark to York in 1793, but government offices were not moved until

¹⁶ Arthur G. Dorland, *The Quakers in Canada, a History* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1968), 77; Journal of Joseph Moore, *Friends' Miscellany*, vol. vi., 289.

¹⁷ AO: UC Land Petitions LAC "H" Bundle 2, Petitions No.14, 17, 44, 121; W.D. Reid, *The Loyalists in Ontario: Sons and Daughters of the American Loyalists of Upper Canada* (Lambertville NJ : Hunterdon House, 1973), 149.

after 1796.¹⁸

Several months after his 1797 trip to Niagara, on 5 March 1798, Hill began the process of becoming re-instated as a member of Friends in order to be joined in marriage, and to be accepted in Quaker communities in Upper Canada. It was necessary for Joseph to acknowledge his wrong-doing to be again received into membership with Friends.

At Buckingham MM 5th of 3rd mo 1798, it was reported that Joseph Hill, who some time ago was testified against by this Meeting, offered a paper of acknowledgment and condemnation of having accomplished his marriage out of unity, with a woman not in membership, and Aaron Phillips, Aaron Paxson, Thomas Carey, and John Kinsey are appointed to visit him and report their Judgment of his Disposition to next meeting.

The Friends appointed to treat with Joseph Hill reported they had a solid opportunity with him and united in Judgment that he was in a good measure sensible of his misconduct, and he appeared and presented a Certificate signed by several Friends of his neighbourhood in his Behalf, which was satisfactory, and his acknowledgment being also read, and a general Concurrence appearing in the Meeting, he is again received into membership.

Joseph Hill requested a certificate to

Hardwick MM, and it appearing his circumstance requires one before next Meeting, And the remote Situation of his Residence being also taken into Consideration, a Certificate suitable to the Occasion was prepared and signed in Behalf of the Meeting, and delivered to Jonathan Pickering.¹⁹

Joseph Hill (1761-1833) m 1798 2nd Grace Brotherton (1766-18??)

Fifteen years after his first marriage in 1783 to Ann Hull (1763-1790), and one year after his 1797 trip to Niagara, Joseph Hill took a second wife in September 1798, again a lady from New Jersey but also a Quaker. Joseph Hill of the Township of Mendham, County of Morris, and State of New Jersey, and Grace Brotherton of the same County and State, having declared their Intentions of Marriage with each other before several Monthly Meetings of the People called Quakers, at Hardwick and Mendham, and having Consent of Parents, their proposal of Marriage was allowed and they appeared in a publick meeting of the said People at Mendham, the 13th day of the 9th month 1798. Grace Brotherton was born April 22, 1766, in Burlington County, New Jersey, daughter of Henry Brotherton (1724-1794) and Mercy Schooley (1731-1810) of Morris County NJ who had married in 1752 at Woodbridge NJ. In addition to the Hill and Brotherton families, witnesses attended from Dell, Shotwell, Hance, Willson, Randolph, Moore, families.²⁰ At the time of his second marriage in 1798, the ages of his children

¹⁸ AO: RG 1, L3, Vol. 225 UC Land Petitions, H Bundle 6 1801. In support of his son's petition for a grant of land, John Hill Sr personally appeared before Robert Hamilton, Justice of the Peace for the District of Niagara, at Queenston on November 16, 1801 and affirmed that his son, Joseph Hill, had come to UC in the fall of the year 1797.

¹⁹ PA Bucks County, Buckingham MM, 20 4mo 1798, 255.

²⁰ NJ Morris County, Mendham MM, 13 9mo 1798, 39.

were George fourteen years, John Joseph Jr twelve years, Sarah ten years, and Eunice eight years.

Realizing the necessity of acquiring some land where he could re-locate his family, Joseph Hill made another trip to Niagara in the summer of 1799. Possibly, he travelled in company with a family member or more probably again with the PYM committee. With the favourable report from the 1797 committee, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was induced to send another committee in summer 1799 with powers to set up Friends Meetings at Niagara. On 1 October 1799, Pelham and Black Creek were opened as Preparative Meetings, and Pelham Monthly Meeting was established. Abraham Webster, Asa and Sarah Schooley were the first overseers for Black Creek Preparative Mtg.²¹ Most who came in 1787 had rights of membership when Black Creek Meeting was established in 1799 but some were compromised by wartime activities.

In a petition, dated 16 July 1799, before R. Hamilton JP at Queenston, Joseph Hill requested indulgence, as the son of a Loyalist, in his application for a grant of land in Upper Canada.²² Before setting out for Upper Canada, some Quakers were able to sell a profitable farm or mill so that they could purchase in a new location. On 25 December 1799, Joseph Hill purchased from Andrew Heron 250 acres, Lots 222 and 223, Thorold Twp, including broken fronts (A17 Reg #475 Feb 15 1803). These two lots in Thorold Twp, Welland County, were not full lots as they were beside the Welland River which created uneven broken fronts. They were a short distance south

and west of Port Robinson.

Upper Canada 1800

Timothy Rogers (1756-1834), born in Lyme Connecticut in 1756, became a leading light in Quaker settlements. He had pioneered farms in Saratoga NY, Danby and Ferrisburgh VT before he found a vision to settle in the wilderness of Upper Canada. In 1798-99, Timothy Rogers, a Quaker living in Vermont USA, experienced "many very great trials." While he was waiting on the Lord . . . "it appeared if I would make ready and go immediately to the westward, the Lord would make way for me to settle in the wilderness, where no others were settled. And that both me and my children might settle there, and that the place should soon settle, and that it should open a door for a Meeting of Friends in that place."²³ Following his leading, in 1800, Rogers journeyed to Upper Canada and travelled up Yonge Street to look at the land available for settlement. After staying overnight where Newmarket is now located, he returned to York (Toronto), and arranged with government officials to have grants of forty farms on which he would place Quaker settlers.

In June 1800, in anticipation of their removal from New Jersey to Upper Canada, Joseph Hill and Grace his wife received a Certificate of Removal from Hardwick and Mendham MM NJ, dated the 5th 6mo 1800:

To the Monthly Meeting of Pelham
in uper Canady / Dear Friends /
Joseph Hill and Grace, his wife, being
about to move within the Compass

²¹ Dorland, Quakers in Canada, 81.

²² AO: RG1, L3, Vol. 225 UC Land Petitions, "H" Bundle 5, 1799.

²³ *The Journal of Timothy Rogers*, eds. Christopher Densmore and Albert Schrauwers (Canadian Friends Historical Association, 2000), 103.

of your Meeting, Requests our Certificate. These may Certify that on inquirey they have settled their business, as far as appears. as Members of our Religious Society we Recommend them to your Christian care and oversight. / Signed in and on behalf of a Monthly Meeting held at Hardwick Meeting House for Hardwick and Menom, the 5th day of the 6th month 1800, by Levi Lundy, Edith Laing, Clerks. Recorded at Hardwick pg 20 by Joseph Lundy, Recorder.

At a Monthly Meeting at Pelham held the 1st day of the 10th mo 1800, Joseph Hill produced the certificate from Hardwick and Mendham Monthly Meeting in East Jersey for himself and wife Grace. A similar certificate for Massey/Mercy Brotherton (Grace's widowed mother) was accepted.²⁴

In 1800, on his return trip from York to Vermont, Timothy Rogers visited the two Friends' Meetings in Niagara where he crossed paths with Joseph Hill. Rogers found out that he was not the only agent for settlement. Two Quakers, Samuel Lundy and Isaac Phillips, originally from New Jersey, had already come from Muncy PA and had arranged with the government at York grants for twenty families adjoining land on Yonge Street which Rogers had agreed to settle forty families. Rogers returned home to Vermont, and early the next year, came back with his family. In January 1801, Timothy Rogers with families and possessions loaded on seven sleighs, started out from Vermont and arrived at Yonge Street at the beginning of May where he began to carry out his plan to create a Quaker Settlement.²⁵

Joseph Hill had purchased land in Thorold Twp, Niagara, in December 1799 but he had not yet received a grant of land as the son of a Loyalist. From the time of their arrival in Niagara, over the next two years, 1801-02, Joseph Hill of Thorold continued communications with government officials in order to obtain a grant of 200 acres of land from the Crown. His petition for land, dated at York, 20 January 1801, stated that the Hill family consisting of a wife and four children arrived in Upper Canada in summer 1800.

Towards the end of the same year, on 16 November 1801, Joseph Hill of Thorold submitted another petition for land in Upper Canada. This time, additional supporting documents were also presented and all were affirmed before Robert Hamilton JP at Queenston. Joseph Hill's petition 16 November 1801 was similar to the petition which he had submitted at York on 20 January 1801. His Loyalist father affirmed that Joseph Hill had come in the fall of 1797 for the purpose of applying for a grant of land in Upper Canada.

Quaker settlers from the United States who were heading for Yonge Street presented their certificates at the Pelham Monthly Meeting. In December 1801, Timothy and Sarah Rogers and families presented their certificates from Danby MM Vermont to be recorded at Pelham MM, Niagara. If not before in Vermont, certainly at Niagara in autumn 1800 and autumn 1801, Joseph Hill became acquainted with Timothy Rogers and his settlement project. Very likely, in his capacity as agent for settlement, Timothy Rogers encouraged Joseph Hill to join Rogers's group and settle on the upper section of Yonge Street. Knowing that an

²⁴ UC Lincoln County, Pelham MM, Minutes, 1800, 31.

²⁵ Journal of Timothy Rogers, 107.

important necessity of new settlement was the establishment of mills, Rogers enlisted Joseph Hill who had the wherewithal and the talent necessary for that task. Timothy Rogers appended a note to Hill's November 1801 petition for land which stated that he believed the applicant to be worth two thousand dollars. Joseph Hill was a man of some means. In December 1799, he was able to purchase property in Thorold Township, without a mortgage, but possibly with a promissory note.

In December 1801, Pelham Friends Meeting also appointed a committee to visit, advise, and report on the progress of Friends who were settling at Yonge Street.

At a Monthly Meeting of Pelham 2nd day, 12 month, 1801: The present state of Friends at Yonge Street coming weightily before this Meeting we think it might be needful to appoint a Committee to visit and advise them and make report to this Meeting. This Meeting appoints [9 men, 6 women] for that service and report monthly.

Along with other members of the Pelham Friends Meeting, Joseph Hill and his wife Grace were appointed as members of the Pelham Committee to visit Friends at Yonge Street.²⁶ In this connection, Joseph and Grace Hill had opportunities to travel north to the new Quaker Settlement. Several trips to the Yonge Street settlement may have been necessary in 1802 in preparation for their removal in 1803.

With the contemplated move to settle in the wilderness of upper Yonge Street, Joseph Hill felt that it was important to

strengthen their Quaker connections for his two daughters. Early in 1802, Joseph requested that his two daughters become members of Friends. Because grandmother Ann (Duer) Hull had married out of Meeting, their mother Ann (Hull) Hill was not a member of Friends, and consequently her daughters, Sarah and Eunice, were not members. At a Monthly Meeting of Pelham held 7 April 1802, Joseph Hill's daughters, Sarah and Eunice, were received into membership with Friends.

In spring 1802, the township of Whitchurch was surveyed by John Stegman (1754-1804). The plan of Whitchurch shows the various concessions, lots, reserves, as well as rivers, streams, and hills. Across the Township of Whitchurch lie ridges of land which form the watershed between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe. From this moraine, currents of water flowing northerly create the sources for the branches of the Holland River which pass through Newmarket.

On Stegman's map of Whitchurch, on the Holland River, there are two "mill places" marked either by Stegman ca1802 as potential for future mills, or inserted at a later date when mills were established. One "mill place" is marked at the northeast corner of Lot 93 close to reserve Lot 33 [Hill]. The other "mill place", to the north of Lot 93, is marked in the middle of the east boundary of Lot 94 where it meets Lot 34 [Millard].²⁷

Quaker visits to Yonge Street with the Pelham Committee in 1802 gave Joseph Hill opportunities to discuss the project of a future mill site with Timothy Rogers. The two Quakers explored the area and identified a good location for a prospective

²⁶ AO: RG1, L3, Vol. 225 UC Land Petitions, "H" Bundle 6, 1801; UC Lincoln County, Pelham MM 2 12mo 1801.

²⁷ AO: Whitchurch Twp B38 #2325, D26.

mill site for the settlement. The place chosen for the pioneer mill was Lot 93 Concession I Whitchurch Township. A mile or so to the east of the Yonge Street trail, near its eastern end, this lot was crossed by the Holland River which provided an ideal site for a dam and mills. By damming up the river and conveying the water to a steep bank on the river, sufficient water power could be obtained for a mill. The Crown had granted Lot 93, on 17 May 1802, to Joseph McMurtrie. About six weeks later, on 3 July 1802, McMurtrie sold Lot 93 to Timothy Rogers, (registered #343 July 6, 1803). The mill on the Holland River was to be located at the junction of an Indian path or trail which was travelled between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe. Indian burial mounds were nearby. Missionaries had journeyed through this area in the eighteenth century and earlier. The Yonge Street lot which Rogers and Hill selected was near the northern boundary of Whitchurch Township, where it adjoins both East Gwillimbury Township to the north and King Township to the west. The lot was located at a point about thirty miles north of York, and was also a few miles south of the Holland Landing.

In his diary, Ely Playter (1776-1858) son of George and Elizabeth (Welding) Playter, mentions Quakers at York in June, July, and also September 1802. George and Elizabeth Playter were Quakers who had married in 1765 at Chesterfield MM NJ.²⁸ Both Joseph Hill's mother, Elizabeth Smith, and his

second wife, Grace Brotherton, were members of Chesterfield Meeting NJ. In summer 1802, government correspondence, 25 June, 29 June, ascertained that the father of the petitioner, Joseph Hill, was on the U.E. list and that the petitioner himself had not hitherto drawn his lands. Finally, 3 July 1802, Joseph Hill was approved for 200 acres as the son of a U.E. only, by Peter Hunter, Lt-Governor at York. Shortly thereafter, Hill received a grant of land in York County.

Timothy Rogers, agent for bringing settlers to the Quaker settlement at Yonge Street, had embraced finding land for Joseph Hill. From several documents, it is evident that Rogers was involved as agent, both with the grant of land in the Township of East Gwillimbury, and with the lease of land in the Township of Whitchurch, York County. At York, 12 July 1802, Rogers arranged for Hill to receive Lot 8, Concession 2, East Gwillimbury, just north of the future site of Newmarket. Timothy Rogers reported that because Jesse Haines had notified him by letter that he did not intend to remove into this Province, he requested leave to rescind the location of Jesse Haines on Lot No. 8 in the second concession of Gwillimbury East and to locate thereon Joseph Hill. On 12 July 1802, Hill was granted 200 acres, Lot 8, Concession 2, Twp of East Gwillimbury, north of Whitchurch Township.²⁹ According to their plan, it is not likely that Hill did any work on this lot before selling

²⁸ NJ Burlington, Chesterfield MM minutes 12mo 1765, 311; minutes 9mo 1784, 734; PA Montgomery, Horsham MM minutes 2mo 1803, 184. George Playter (1735-1822) married Elizabeth (Welden) Playter (1748-1824) in December 1765 at Chesterfield MM NJ. Their request for Certificate of Removal to Horsham MM PA was given 7th 9mo 1784 to Elizabeth Playter and children, but George Playter was testified against because of his involvement in military. John Hill Jr of Niagara, in his petition for land, July 1794, stated that his services to military were known to Mr Playter in the settlement. In 2nd month 1803, a Certificate of Removal to Pelham MM UC was given to Mrs Playter and minor children who had settled in UC with her husband, George Playter. AO: F556 Journal of Ely Playter (1776-1858).

²⁹ AO: RG1, L3, Vol. 225 UC Land Petitions, "H" Bundle 6, 1802; AO: Land Record Book Settler No. 11, 1305.

it to Timothy Rogers in February 1804.

On 29 June 1802, Joseph Hill petitioned the Government for the lease of Lot 33, Concession 2, Whitchurch Twp, a Crown Reserve with a stream running across it. In the summer of 1802, Joseph Hill's petition dated at York, was submitted by his agent Timothy Rogers. Hill's June 1802 petition for the lease of Lot 33, Con II, Whitchurch stating that he was of Whitchurch received a reply, dated 13 July 1802, agreeing that Joseph Hill should have the lease of the Crown Reserve. Quakers often experienced difficulties in obtaining title to land. Joseph Hill was bothered by the fact that his lease was slow in being set up. Two months later, at York on 10 September 1802, he wrote a reminder to John Small, Clerk of the Executive Council, asking to have his lease prepared. Approximately one month after his letter of 10 September, the order for Joseph Hill to lease this lot was issued on 8 October 1802.³⁰

In September 1802, Quakers were in York for business and religious meetings. Ely Playter recorded in his journal that on Friday 10 September 1802, A. Miles and Philip Cody came in and later they all went to a Methodist meeting. The Cody family were Quakers who lived on Yonge Street in King Township near the future location of the Yonge Street Quaker Settlement. The following week, on Sunday 19 September 1802, the Friends held a Meeting at George Playter's house in order to receive Quaker travellers on the occasion of their visit to their remote situation. In 1802, Anna Mifflin was one of a small party of Quakers who visited the Indians in western New York and Upper Canada. Mifflin gave a

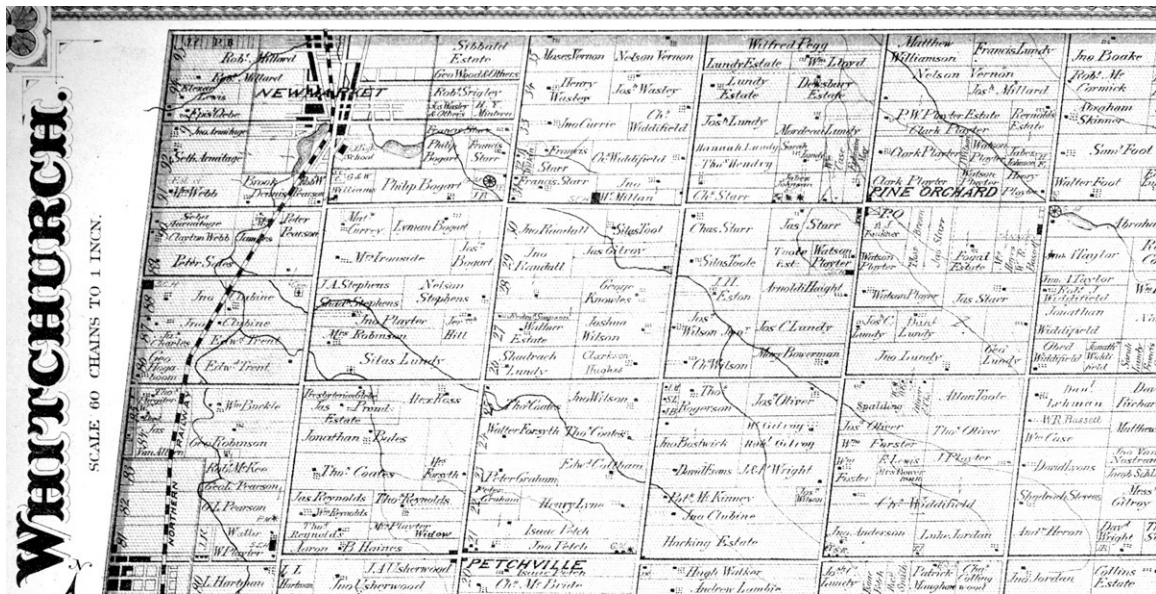
lecture on incurring divine displeasure by selling strong liquor to the innocent and ignorant Indians. The male Friends who accompanied them from Niagara to York were Mr Paxton, and Thomas Hill.³¹

When John Hill (1725-1806) made his will in August 1802, he left 100 acres of land in Bertie Twp to his oldest son, Ezekiel Hill. In his will, John Hill did not include his son, Joseph, but did mention Joseph's four children. Clearly, in 1802, Joseph Hill's decision to settle in York County was taken into account.

Joseph Hill and his family lived at Thorold in the Niagara area for three years, from the summer of 1800 to the summer of 1803. During this time, Hill and Rogers had been transacting business to meet their plans for establishing mills at the Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street. In June 1803, in preparation for moving to Yonge Street, Joseph and Grace Hill sold most of their property in Thorold Township. On 21 June 1803, Joseph and Grace Hill sold to William Shotwell 153 acres in Lots 222 and 223, Thorold Twp. including broken fronts for £184 3sh (A124 #5654). Joseph Hill kept 97 acres to be sold at a later date. This 1803 transaction was not registered until 9 August 1819. By summer 1803, they already had a grant of 200 acres and a lease of Crown Lands in the Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street. Quaker minutes confirm that in the summer of 1803, Joseph Hill and family moved from Thorold Twp in Niagara to Whitchurch Township, York County. At a Monthly Meeting of Pelham held 2 August 1803, it was recorded that Joseph and Grace Hill, having removed to Yonge Street, they are released from that

³⁰ AO: RG1, L3, Vol. 250 UC Land Petitions, "H" Bundle, Leases 1799-1838; AO: RG 1 L3 Vol. 252 UC Land Petitions, "H" Bundle Misc., 1799-1821; AO: Whitchurch Township Papers.

³¹ AO: F556 Playter op. cit. Anna (Morris) Mifflin (1755-1815) of Philadelphia, was daughter of Morris and Elizabeth (Mifflin) Morris, wife of Thomas Mifflin, and younger sister of Sarah (Morris) Mifflin (1747-1790), wife of General Thomas Mifflin, first Governor of Pennsylvania from 1790 to 1799.



committee of Friends appointed to extend care to Friends at Yonge Street.³²

Joseph Hill and the Yonge Street Quaker Settlement

In 1793 Lt-Gov. Simcoe decided to abandon Newark as capital of Upper Canada and remove it away from Niagara on the US frontier to a safer location at York on the north shore of Lake Ontario. Immediately, his attention turned to the necessity of opening military roads, not only east and west, but also north of York. The object of opening a road to the north was to create an overland route to the upper Great Lakes, and to avoid the Detroit and St Clair River route in case of seizures and the possibility of war with Americans. This road would function not only as a military supply route to the Upper Great Lakes but also as a commercial route. Merchandise could be transported between Montreal and Michilimackinac in less time and with less expense. Yonge Street, laid out by Augustus Jones in 1796, was a trail from York on Lake Ontario to the boat landing where the

Holland River reaches Lake Simcoe.

Timothy Rogers was not the first man, nor the first Quaker, who ventured into the wilderness in order to investigate the lands available on either side of Yonge Street north of York in Upper Canada. Prior to 1800, a few hardy fellows had made trips to York and scouted into the woods north of that town.

In the 1790s, Quaker families, notably, the Ashbridge family to York, and the Cody family to upper Yonge Street, had migrated to Upper Canada.

In 1794, William Berczy brought a colony of sixty German families from the Pultenay Estate settlement in western NY state to the Berczy Settlement in Markham Twp, York County, north of York. By 1796, they had encountered financial difficulties.

In 1797-98, Count de Puisaye brought French Royalists to settle on Yonge Street at Bond Lake at the south edge of the Ridges in Whitchurch Twp but the colony soon disbanded. Laurent Quetton de St Georges (1771-1821) established a successful mercantile business at York and his family continued to live at his home

³² AO: MS303 UC Lincoln County, Pelham MM 2nd 8mo 1803, 98.

farm, "Glen Lonely," at Willcock's Lake, Whitchurch Twp.³³

Migrations not only solved political problems, they eased pressure on land. Quaker migrations frequently happened in two stages. Many families moved at least once in the colonies or states before relocating in Upper Canada. Friends from Bucks County PA and Sussex County NJ went to the upper Susquehanna River valley in PA in the 1780s and 1790s, establishing meetings at Catawissa, Roaring Creek, Muncy, and elsewhere. Some of them later moved to Canada joining kin in Pelham and Yonge Street Meetings; others moved to Ohio. The early Quaker settlers who came from Pennsylvania to the Home District were motivated by obtaining land, establishing new communities.

In 1800, Samuel Lundy and Isaac Phillips had made arrangements for a group of settlers from Pennsylvania and New Jersey to find locations at Yonge Street. Samuel Lundy (1740-1826) and his wife Sarah Webster married at Kingwood MM NJ and moved to Muncy MM, on the upper Susquehanna River, Northumberland Co. PA. Likewise, Isaac Phillips (1755-1815) and his wife Edith Eves also married at Kingwood MM and removed to Muncy MM. In 1800, Phillips settled on Lot 89 Con I King Twp, west side of Yonge Street, York County. Lundy settlers found lots in Whitchurch Twp, east of Yonge Street, York County.

Notwithstanding the fact of previous settlers, Timothy Rogers (1756-1834), a man of prodigious energy and force of character, is generally credited with being the first to establish a Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street north of the Oak Ridge Moraine, the height of land which divides

the watershed between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe. Knowing that there was one Friends meeting under New York Yearly Meeting, at the Bay of Quinte at the eastern end of Lake Ontario, and a second Friends meeting under Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Pennsylvania, in Pelham at the western end of Lake Ontario, Rogers set out to establish a Friends meeting half way between the two already-established meetings. On 24 April 1800, Rogers started and kept minutes, but left writing in his journal from 1798 until 26 August 1804, leaving the years of early settlement unrecorded.

The Rogers family settled on Yonge Street at the north ends of both Whitchurch and King Twps. Rogers's settlers were located in East Gwillimbury Twp. Unmistakably, the list of Quakers settled on Yonge Street by Timothy Rogers does not contain Joseph Hill's name nor that of his miller, James Kinsey, who both received land patents after 1803 in East Gwillimbury, several concessions east of Yonge Street. Later arrivals from Catawissa, Muncy, and Bucks Monthly Meetings in Pennsylvania or from Vermont either obtained grants on their own or purchased land closer to the Yonge St Mtg.³⁴

When the Hill family arrived in Whitchurch Twp in 1803, in order to assist with establishing a new settlement among Friends, the entire area was covered with unbroken virgin forest. From 1801, Quaker settlers had been arriving. Both the Lundy-Phillips settlers from Pennsylvania and the Rogers settlers from Vermont were busy working at making clearings in the wilderness, making improvements to their lots, sleeping in covered wagons while building log cabins for shelter, and planting crops for food.

³³ Sister Annette, *Salute to Canada*. (Winnipeg: Canadian Student Yearbooks, 1967).

³⁴ Journal of Timothy Rogers, 105-107.

In October 1802, Hill had received the lease of Reserve Lot 33 Con II Whitchurch which extends from the east side of the Holland River eastward for 1¼ miles to the 3rd Concession Road. A stream flowing northward could be dammed to provide water power. This lot was closer and more accessible from Yonge Street than lot 8 Con 3 East Gwillimbury. It was also contiguous with Lot 93 acquired by Timothy Rogers earlier in July 1802. No doubt, Hill had decided that his family would live on leased Lot 33 where he could build a log house dwelling for his family when they removed to Whitchurch in summer 1803.

In the time after Timothy Rogers came into possession of Lot 93 in July 1802, it is possible that Rogers and Hill may have been able to commence work at developing the property into the mill site over 1802-1803 interval before Hill finally came into possession of it in January 1804. However, in the intervening year, late 1802 to mid-1803, Hill must have been busy making Lot 33 sufficiently habitable for his family's arrival in summer 1803.

Near the stream on leased Lot 33, Hill built a tannery which was operated by his older son George Hill. In 1804, twenty year old George Hill married his first wife, 16 year old Lucy [surname?] (1789-1830), whom he might have met as a teenager during the family's sojourn in Niagara. The young couple joined his father on Lot 33 Whitchurch Twp.

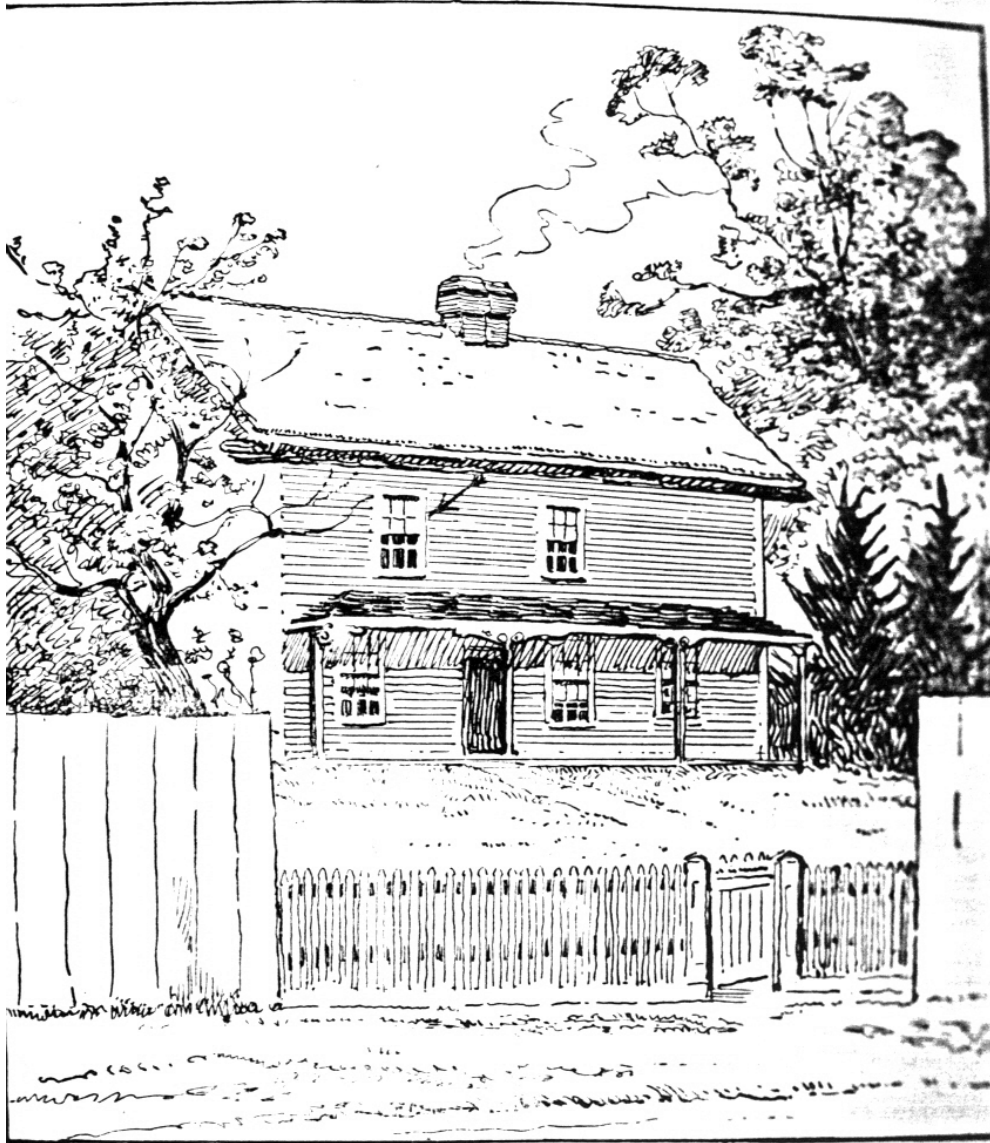
In 1803, Joseph Hill brought his friend James Kinsey (1761-1848) from Pennsylvania to operate the mill. Joseph Hill and James Kinsey were the same age, both born in 1761 and brought up as

members of Buckingham Meeting of Friends in Bucks County PA. James Kinsey, son of Joseph and Hannah (Yeats) Kinsey, married 15 October 1788, Mary Hunt at the Plumstead Quaker Meeting, Bucks County. By the 1790s, with other Quaker families on the trek northward, Kinsey and his family had reached the temporary settlement at Catawissa, Columbia County PA.

James Kinsey, Mary his wife and seven children received a certificate of removal from Catawissa MM PA dated 27 August 1803 addressed to Pelham MM UC. At the same time and place, Ezekiel and Keziah James and family received Certificates of Removal. The two families travelled together to the Quaker Settlement at Yonge Street. By happenchance, they encountered a group of Quakers, including Isaac Bonsall, Isaac Coates, with authorization of the Indian Committee of PYM to travel to western NY state in September-October 1803 in order to assist Allegany Senecas with agricultural pursuits. After having visited Friends at Niagara UC, members of the committee stopped at one Beech's in the wilderness near Buffalo Creek where they met two families from Catawissa, one of which was Ezekiel James's, who were moving to Yonge Street. They all lodged in this cabin, being twenty-three of them besides the family. James Kinsey, Joseph Hill's miller, probably arrived at Yonge Street towards the end of the year 1803.³⁵

By 1803, the lands negotiated by Rogers for settlement had been taken up. As late as 27 December 1803, Rogers was still requesting to have the deed promised from government in July 1802 made out to Joseph Hill for lot 8 in 2nd Concession of

³⁵ PA Columbia County, Catawissa MM minutes 1803, 161-163; Christopher Densmore, "Early Quaker Visits to the Niagara Region of Canada in 1799 and 1803: The Journals of Isaac Coates of Pennsylvania, 1799 and 1803," *Canadian Quaker History Journal*, 68 (2003): 65. Originally published in *Friends Intelligencer*, Philadelphia, 1887.



Hill-Robinson house, ca1806, Newmarket

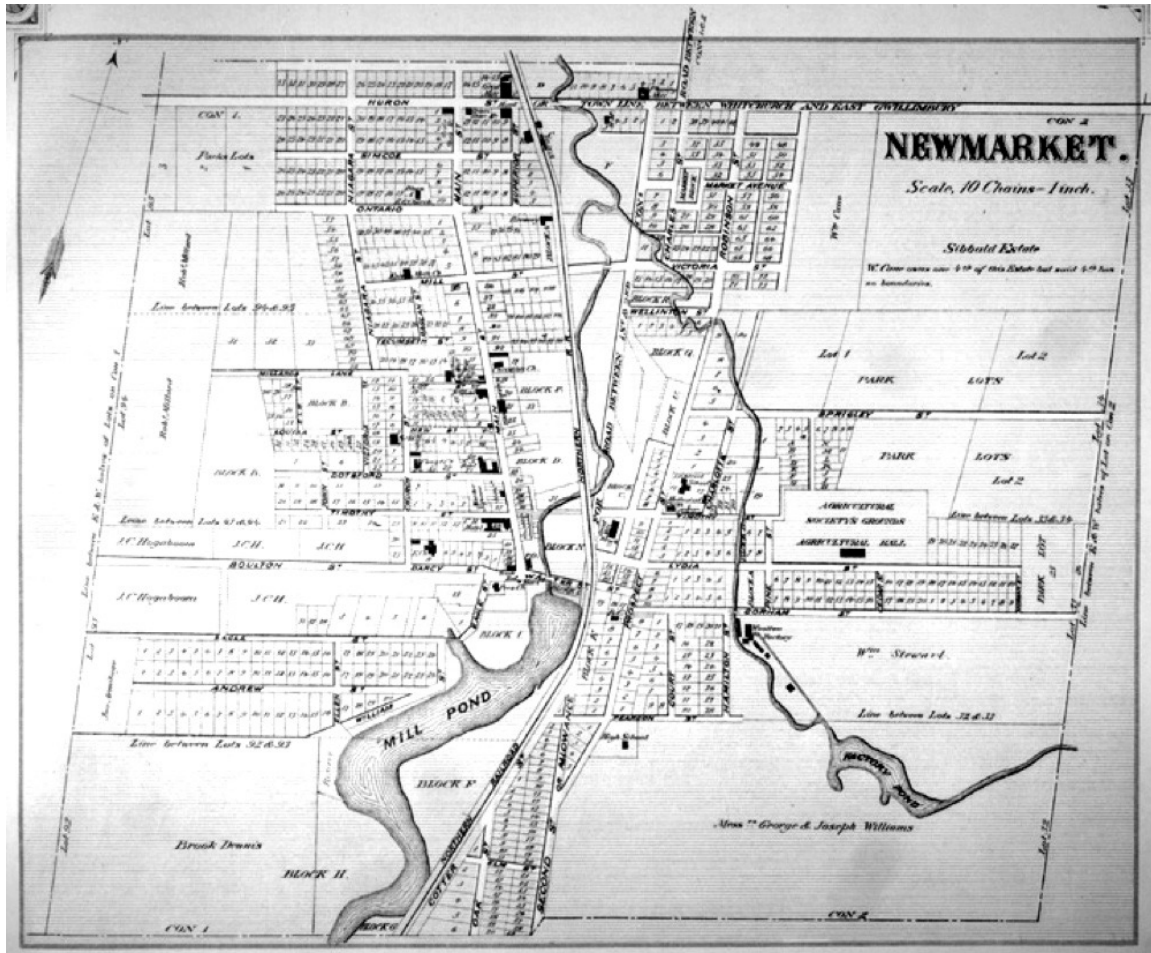
East Gwillimbury Twp. Rogers and Hill had already decided on Lot 93 Whitchurch for the mill site, but Joseph Hill still needed the grant in East Gwillimbury as part of the negotiation for the better location in Whitchurch close to the Quaker Settlement. Although Rogers acquired lot 93 in summer 1802, it could not be deeded to Hill until after Hill's grant for East Gwillimbury came through from government. After having

been given the run-around by government officials, finally Quakers Rogers and Lundy visited Lt-Gov. Peter Hunter in York to complain that they could not get patents to their lands. When Hunter found out that it was Secretary Jarvis who was responsible for the delay of over a year in issuing patents, he declared, "If they are not forthcoming and placed in the hands of these gentlemen in my presence in two

days, by George, I'll un-Jarvis you!"³⁶ On 29 December 1803, Timothy Rogers was given a statement signed by Lt-Gov. Peter Hunter, declaring that he had completed settlement to the satisfaction of government.

Early in 1804, when Hill finally received title to his land, he and Rogers were able to proceed with the exchange of Hill's

February 1804 Joseph Hill sold to Timothy Rogers, his original land grant, Lot 8, Con. 2, East Gwillimbury, 200 acres (registered #528 January 11, 1805). With Rogers's assistance, by an early date in 1804, Hill had acquired a large tract of land in Whitchurch Twp which extended east from Yonge Street for two concessions 2½ miles.



Map of early Newmarket showing location of Hill mill pond.

property in East Gwillimbury for Rogers's property in Whitchurch. On 30 January 1804, by Deed Poll, Timothy Rogers conveyed to Joseph Hill Lot 93, Con. 1, Whitchurch, 190 acres (registered #527 January 11, 1805). One week later, on 6

For almost half of 1804, Timothy Rogers was away in USA. Having cleared himself of the settlement responsibility at the end of 1803, at the beginning of 1804, Rogers received permission from Pelham MM in January 1804 to make a visit to

³⁶ F.R. Berchem, *The Yonge Street Story 1793-1860*, (Dundurn, 1996), 56.

Vermont in order to settle some outward affairs, and also to attend Yearly Meeting at Philadelphia. His trip to USA in 1804 was endorsed by Monkton MM, Vermont 21 March 1804, by Ferrisburg PM 22 March 1804, and by PYM April 1804. Rogers's attendance at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) was important because at this PYM, Yonge Street was established as a Preparative Mtg under Pelham MM. Rogers also attended Philadelphia QM May 1804. Rogers' son, Timothy Jr was admitted to Westtown Quaker Boarding School in PA. Towards the end of May, Rogers had reached Muncy MM PA 23 May 1804 on his return trip to UC.

By 1803 when Hill arrived, ownership for lots on Yonge Street, Concession I, Whitchurch Twp had been granted to others. Lot 93 had been acquired by Timothy Rogers, but Lot 92, originally a Crown grant to Simon McMertrie in May 1802, was available. At York, Elisha Beman heard about Quaker plans for a mill in Whitchurch from his neighbours, the Playters. Their son, Ely Playter (1776-1858), was a frequent visitor to the Beman-Robinson house, and married Sophia Beman in 1806.

A few months after Joseph Hill's arrival in 1803, Elisha Beman turned up in Whitchurch. Despite the fact that he was very deeply in debt, Beman was prompted to purchase Lot 92 up-stream from the Quaker mill site. Beman purchased 190 acres, Lot 92 Whitchurch Twp from James McMertrie (reg #355, 23 Sept 1803). After his purchase of Lot 92, in autumn 1803 Beman might have been able to commence work at creating a mill centre on his property. At any rate, in 1803-04, both Hill and Beman were working at mills in close proximity to one another. In the northeast corner of Lot 92, Beman is said to have built a small log cabin and also erected a

mill. This explanation of Beman's accomplishments on Lot 92 may have come from Gorham's Journal, but is one of the tales of the Hill-Beman controversy which is open to dispute. If Elisha Beman took possession of Lot 92 in September 1803 and built a mill, this "mill place" was not shown on Stegman's 1802 map of Whitchurch, or later. Possibly, in the nine months between his purchase and summer 1804, Beman had not been able to erect and establish a working mill, but his mill dam Lot 92 further up-stream from the mill which was being established by Joseph Hill, could have blocked the flow of water to Hill's mill, Lot 93. On Lot 93, JH built a dam creating a mill pond that would have backed up to the south towards Lot 92. Hill discovered that Beman's mill dam interfered with the flow of water to his mill. Hill and Beman soon found themselves in competition with one another for water power. There is an old saying which has often been repeated for over a century in Newmarket, "Water doesn't flow uphill".

In July 1804, Elisha Beman was involved in a couple of court actions for debt, both involving substantial sums of money. On 4 July 1804, Elisha Beman of York, merchant, was taken to court by Plaintiff, Allan McDougall, York, who received judgment for £417 and damages. In the second action, some three weeks later, Elisha Beman, late of Whitchurch, was taken to court by Plaintiffs John Blackwood Sr, John Blackwood Jr, and John Patterson, and on 23 July 1804, they received judgment for £5,544 5sh 6p and £2 10sh costs.

John Blackwood (17??-1819) was an English merchant involved in import-export trade in Montreal and Quebec, Lower Canada. His business led him to lend money to various individuals for various sums. He had little compunction in having the sheriff seize and sell assets of debtors

who failed to honour their obligations, and took advantage of sheriff's sales to purchase land. He belonged to a close circle of people who held prestigious offices through which they benefitted from government favours. One of his business interests in Upper Canada was as agent for Count de Puisaye, leader of the ill-fated colony of French Royalists near the southern border of Whitchurch Twp. He used several different companies, including Blackwood Sr, Blackwood Jr and Patterson.³⁷

Upon his return from USA in summer 1804, Timothy Rogers discovered that there were problems with the establishment of the Quaker mill on the Holland River. After Beman's debt crisis of July 1804, in need of money to pay large debts, Beman may have seen an opportunity to re-imburse Blackwoods and Patterson by selling Lot 92 to Hill, but not without acquiring some advantages to himself. Beman soon convinced Hill to enter into negotiations for an exchange of land which culminated in the Hill-Beman land transactions of October 1804. By the time of the sale, Beman had owned Lot 92 for one year from end of September 1803 to beginning of October 1804. Perhaps, in that short space of time, he had only worked at accomplishing the construction of a mill dam, but probably had not managed to get a mill up and running. In order to be situated to better advantage, on 13 October 1804, Joseph Hill purchased from Beman 190 acres, Lot 92 Con I Whitchurch (registered #926 September 4, 1807).

Although Rogers and Hill had probably worked at the mill site on Lot 93 in 1803, because of delay in ownership, Hill had

actually owned Lot 93 for ten months from January 1804 before he entered into the transactions with Beman. Some weeks after the Beman-Hill transaction, on 30 October 1804, Joseph Hill sold to Beman 95 acres, the north half of Lot 93 (registered #571 8 April 1805). The Hill-Beman Instrument #571, dated 30 October 1804, described Beman's property as being "composed of the northerly part of Lot 93, reserving to the said Joseph Hill, his heirs and assigns, the liberty at all times to cut or make a race across the east end of this northerly half of said Lot No. 93, and extending from the mill now occupied by the said Joseph Hill, on the east side of the creek into Lot No. 94, and to occupy and enjoy the said race at all times hereafter, it being well understood that the race allowed to be cut is to be on the flat ground on the east side of the mill creek."³⁸

Hill had purchased Lot 92 from Beman without mortgage. Hill's sale of half of Lot 93 to Beman should have provided Hill with some extra money. Hill may not have received full payment for the N½ Lot 93 from Beman whose finances were obviously in a precarious state. In early April 1805, two transactions on Lot 93 disclose Beman's increasing debt. After having sold, on 2 April 1805, one acre to Peleg Underwood (registered #594 April 18, 1805), on 5 April 1805, Beman took out a mortgage on 94 acres N½ Lot 93 and other land with John Blackwood (registered #574 April 10, 1805). Records in the York County Land Registry Office reveal that Beman's purchase of N½ Lot 93 in October 1804 had been registered about six months later in April 1805 when he was arranging mortgage money with

³⁷ AO: RG 22-131, Court King's Bench, Blackwood vs Beman, 23 July 1804; Jean-Pierre Wallot, "John Blackwood" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (DCB) Vol 5.

³⁸ AO: MS 658 R516, Whitchurch Twp Papers #000148.

Blackwood; yet, Joseph Hill's purchase of Lot 92 from Beman in October 1804 was delayed for almost three years, not registered until 4th September 1807. In the meantime, on 2 March 1805, Hill had sold fifty acres of Lot 92 to Benjamin Brooke (registered 23rd October 23, 1807).

The Hill-Beman transaction at the end of October 1804 created a trail or settlement road between the north and south halves of Lot 93 by which travellers along Yonge Street could gain access to the mill site; it was later named Eagle Street. In the early years of settlement, it was thought that the village would drift out Eagle Street to Yonge Street, but those who anticipated profits in land values in that direction were disappointed as the business section of the town went north instead of west.

Since Elisha and Esther Beman and their families continued to live on Lot 93 for many years after Hill's departure, it is important to know their backgrounds. Elisha Beman was an enterprising man who married his widowed neighbour, Mrs Esther Robinson, 5 September 1802, at the Anglican Church at York. Newly-married in 1802 with a large family, his own children plus the Robinson stepchildren, Beman had many responsibilities. Esther (Sayre) Robinson was the daughter of Reverend John Sayre, Loyalist clergyman, who had served at Fairfield Connecticut for several years before the American Revolution. British raids in 1779 forced the Sayre family to flee in 1781 to Flushing, Long Island NY, where Sayre promoted the exodus of Loyalists in 1783 from New York to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. At St John NB, Revd Sayre acted as government agent to locate lands for Loyalists. The stress of war

and relocation taxed his strength and he died August 1784. In the same year 1784, Esther Sayre married Christopher Robinson of Virginia. Christopher Robinson (1763-1798) served under Col. John Graves Simcoe in the American Revolutionary War. At the end of the war, his regiment was evacuated to NB where it was disbanded in 1783. Through his connection with Lt-Gov. Simcoe, Robinson received the appointment as Deputy-Surveyor of Crown Lands in UC. Shortly after their removal to York in 1798, Robinson died leaving Esther with a young family of six children born between 1785 and 1797.³⁹

A couple of days after his purchase from Beman, on 15 October 1804, Hill sold the west 100 acres of Lot 92 Con I Whitchurch Twp to Amos Armitage (registered #8755 May 7, 1807). Amos Armitage, his wife Martha (Doan) Armitage, and four children received a certificate of removal from Catawissa MM PA dated 26 May 1804 addressed to Pelham MM UC, and arrived at the Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street in summer 1804. In a letter, probably written circa 1805, that Amos Armitage of Whitchurch wrote to his friend, Charles Chapman, who was still living at Catawissa, Pennsylvania, Armitage mentions his work at constructing Hill's mill at the Quaker Settlement. He wrote,

Almost ever since Jud Hughes left there I have been fitting up a mill for merchant work for Joseph Hill, and it will take me some time yet to finish it, then I shall have recourse to sugar trough making, etc. / But we are hard to get boards fast enough. As yet we have but one saw mill in our

³⁹ Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto* Vol. 3, 395; Thomas B. Allen, *Tories Fighting for the King in America's First Civil War* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2010), 305,294,328.

neighbourhood. Next spring there is another to be erected.⁴⁰

At the east end of the dam on the Holland River, Hill erected a saw mill. With Armitage's carpentry work, Joseph Hill's grist mill at the west end of the dam must have been built and was in operation by 1805 or 1806. The mill was a small building of primitive architecture, the timbers of which had been hewn by hand with an axe. Although a crude affair, with a run of two stones, it answered the purpose for some time, and pioneer settlers came from long distances to get their grists ground here. Previous to the arrival of Joseph Hill, early settlers had to make their winding way through the bush, down Yonge Street, on horseback or on foot, carrying such quantity of grain as they could. They waited at York for the grain to be ground and then returned to their farms.⁴¹

To the rear of the mill, Hill erected a store, the first in Newmarket; this store may have been operated from his mill or his house, or it may have been in a separate building. Very likely, he got supplies from a merchant like Quetton St George in York. At some point, ca1806, to the west of the mill, Hill built a two-storey house, a fine wooden residence. The Hill-Robinson House was moved in the 1870s a short distance to the west where it still survives on Eagle Street (2016).

The year 1806 heralded difficult times ahead; it ushered in the death of his father, the arrival of Monis/Morris Lawrence, and increasing debts. It was a decisive year which led to critical consequences.

In 1806, both Joseph Hill and Elisha

Beman found themselves being drawn into court actions by creditors who were collecting on debts. On 8 January 1806, Andrew Heron brought legal action against Joseph Hill, yeoman, in debt on promises, with judgment for Heron, 31 July 1806. It harkened back to Hill's purchase in December 1799 from Andrew Heron, of land 250 acres in Thorold Twp, Welland County, Niagara.⁴² To satisfy the Heron debt, on 15 January 1806, Hill sold fifty acres, the southwest quarter of Lot 93, Concession 1 (registered #485 June 5, 1807) to Isaac Penrose who arrived in the settlement later in 1806. Isaac Penrose, Rachel his wife and six children received a Certificate of Removal from Catawissa MM PA dated 24 May 1806 addressed to Pelham MM UC. Rachel (Wiggins) Penrose was the daughter of Isaac Wiggins, Clerk of Catawissa MM who arrived at Yonge Street a year later, in 1807.

Likewise, in January 1806, Elisha Beman of Yonge Street, again found himself in court for debt. On 30 January 1806, Plaintiffs Robert Bowne and Richard R. Lawrence received two judgments 1) £152 damages, and 2) £368.16sh.11p damages and £350.10sh.9p costs. Robert Bowne (1744-1818) and Elizabeth (Hartshorne) Bowne, were the parents of Robert H. Bowne (1776-1843) of New York, who married at Rahway NJ 26 November 1807 Sarah Hartshorne, daughter of Richard and Jane Hartshorne of Essex County NJ.⁴³ Richard R. Lawrence (17??-1822), the son of Richard Lawrence, a prosperous merchant and member of the New Jersey legislature, removed from New Jersey and entered mercantile life with wealthy Robert

⁴⁰ Sharon Temple Museum Archives: Doan Family Papers.

⁴¹ *Newmarket Era*, January 22, 1897, 1.

⁴² AO: RG 22-125 Court King's Bench Termbook 1794-1806 p296; RG 22-131 1796-1849, judgment docket book.

⁴³ NJ Union County, Rahway and Plainfield MM, Register of Births, Marriages, Deaths, 20.

Bowne in New York. Over the course of many decades, Quaker families, intermarrying and forming business partnerships, became some of New York's most prominent commercial families. Notably successful in business, they also gained income through holdings of property, land speculation, and money-lending. What is interesting here is that Bowne and Lawrence, successful Quaker money-lenders, through an agent in UC, had business dealings in York County prior to 1806, and with persons other than Joseph Hill.

In August 1806, Joseph Hill's father, John Hill seventy-seven years old, died in Niagara. According to his will, he then owned hundreds of acres of land in Thorold, Pelham, Bertie, and Burford Townships. On 10 August 1801, John Hill had received the Crown Patent for Lots 15 and 16, 200 acres in the Twp of Thorold. Approximately a year later, on 20 September 1802, Hill sold fifty acres to John Hoover (registered #437, October 16, 1802). In his will, written 30 August 1802, John Hill remembered his four grandchildren, children of Joseph Hill, giving his two grandsons John Hill and George Hill the east lot 100 acres in Thorold Township on the Ten Mile Creek to come into their possession at the expiration of four years from his decease [1810] and after a legacy of twenty pounds New York currency to each of their sisters Sarah and Eunice Hill.⁴⁴ Approximately one year after the death of their grandfather, on September 10, 1807, John Hill and George Hill sold fifty acres west part of Lot 15 to John Hoover (registered #1351, February 1, 1808). After this 1807 sale, the two grandsons still owned fifty acres of Lot 15

in Thorold Twp, Niagara.

Joseph Hill, with a Quaker reputation for being able and honest, appears to have possessed sufficient enterprise and ambition to begin a mill business in Whitchurch. Just when he was becoming established in business, a man by the name of Morris Laurence arrived at the mill-site. In looking at everything that happened to Joseph Hill, one must start with unanticipated arrival of Morris Lawrence. On the whole, the question, 'Who was Morris Laurence?' has mostly gone unanswered.

The 1782 Hill-Doughty marriage at Flushing NYMM created connections with the Bowne and Lawrence families. Because of the similarity in names, it is tempting to make a connection between Norris Lawrence Jr (1769-1790) one of the guests, to Morris Lawrence (1764-1852), business partner of Joseph Hill. No doubt, there was a link, likely through the Pell family, but Norris Lawrence Jr, son of Norris and Ann Ferris (Pell) Lawrence and grandson of Richard and Hannah (Bowne) Lawrence, who was apprenticed to Robert Bowne in 1786 died in 1790. Witnesses to his will were Robert Bowne, Lawrence Embrée, Richard R. Lawrence. Executors were uncle Elijah Pell and Edmund Prior, merchants, NYC.⁴⁵

With regard to the Hill-Lawrence partnership, there were other alliances which supplied answers to questions. Who else besides Lawrence might have arrived? What brought them to York? How did Lawrence know to reach Joseph Hill in the wilderness? Why was Hill willing to take him on as a business partner?

The arrival of Mrs Lawrence at York in spring 1806 is recorded by Elizabeth Russell

⁴⁴ AO: MS638 John Hill 1806.

⁴⁵ New York Wills and Probate Records, will October 20, 1790, probate December 20, 1790, 430.

(1754-1822) an older, unmarried, intelligent, upper-class woman who noted social events in her diary and correspondence. She lived at York with her half-brother, Peter Russell (1733-1808), Administrator of the Province of Upper Canada from 1796 to 1799 in Lt-Gov. Simcoe's absence, and member of the Executive Council. The Russells had lived at Newark, Niagara, before officials moved to York in 1796. Extracts from Elizabeth Russell's Diary for Saturday 31 May 1806, reveal that "Mrs Playter came to call with a Mrs Lawrence. She is a niece to Mrs Hill, a Quaker of Yonge Street. Her name was Crone. She has been married to Mr Lawrence between 2 or 3 months." Mrs Playter wished to introduce Mrs Lawrence who was desirous of making the acquaintance of the Russells. President Russell joined them for cake and wine.⁴⁶

The disclosure that Mrs Lawrence was a Crone and a niece to Mrs Hill created the tie. Joseph Hill's wife, Grace (Brotherton) Hill, had a sister, Elizabeth Brotherton (1755-1789), who married William Crone.⁴⁷ In February 1806, their daughter, Frances/Fanny Crone (ca1781-1850) became the third wife of Judah Monis Lawrence (ca1764-1852) son of Judah Monis and Rachael Lawrence Sr of Spencertown, Columbia County NY.

Judah Monis Lawrence Sr (1735-1810), son of Joseph and Hannah (Marrett) Lawrence, was born in 1735 in Litchfield County, Connecticut. Hannah's sister, Abigail Marrett, married Judah Monis (1683-1764) the first Jew to receive a college degree in the New England colonies. After converting to Christianity, he taught

Hebrew at Harvard University. Austerlitz or Spencertown was first settled around 1750 by migrants from Connecticut. Amongst the first settlers were the Lawrence and Spencer families who arrived in 1754.⁴⁸

Another family with a connection to Spencertown and Jewish ties came to Yonge Street in 1803, a few years earlier than Monis and Fanny Lawrence. Alexander Montgomery (1758-1841) was the son of Alexander and Sarah (Lockwood) Montgomery of Greenwich, Fairfield County CT. Around 1770-75, the Montgomery family was part of the group who migrated to Spencertown NY. At the time of the American Revolution, after making his way to Long Island Sound, Alexander Montgomery married Judah Myers (1759-1821), daughter of Benjamin and Rachel Myers, members of the Jewish Synagogue in Newport RI. In 1803, Alexander Montgomery arrived on Yonge St from Nova Scotia with wife and eight children. In 1805, Abigail Montgomery (1790-1855), daughter of Alexander and Judah (Myers) Montgomery, married at Anglican Church, York, William Hill (ca1781-1849) son of Thomas and Hannah Hill.⁴⁹

Soon, Hill and Lawrence entered into a business partnership. Lawrence had no interest or share in the mill property, nor in any other real estate belonging to Joseph Hill. The first child of Monis and Fanny (Crone) Lawrence, Judah Monis Lawrence Jr (1807-1888), was born at York in 1807. Their next two children were born at Newmarket – Joseph Hill Lawrence 1808 and Grace Bethelone Lawrence in 1810. Of

⁴⁶ Edith G. Firth, *The Town of York 1793-1815* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 262.

⁴⁷ NJ Union County, Rahway and Plainfield MM births, marriages, deaths, 1789.

⁴⁸ Captain Franklin Ellis, *Settlement of Austerlitz, Columbia County NY*, 1878.

⁴⁹ Betty Hinman Paull. "Alexander Montgomery" in *Researching Yonge Street* (Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, Toronto Branch, 1996).

some interest, their second daughter born at York in 1813 was named Ann Mifflin Lawrence.⁵⁰

The Crone family played a pivotal role in relation to the Hill family, especially to Joseph Hill and his daughter, Sarah. Henry Crone received the Crown Patent for Lot 94, Con I Whitchurch, 190 acres, dated 7 August 1804. A few months later, on 17 December 1804, Henry Crone sold Lot 94 to Timothy Rogers (registered #553, 19th February 1805). (Later, in 1812, Rogers sold Lot 94 to Timothy Millard.) In 1804, on 31 May, Stephen Barbaree sold the west half of Lot 91 100 acres to Henry Crone. Later that year on 12 November Henry and Margaret (Straley) Crone sold the west half of Lot 91 to Job Hughes. Benjamin Crone, son of Henry Crone and Margaret Straley, was born in UC on 17 December 1802. The family seems to have moved to Ohio. Sarah Hill's husband, John Crone, might be related to this family. There might also have been some relationship to Fanny (Crowne/Crone) Lawrence, wife of Monis Lawrence, who arrived spring 1806.

On 15 October 1807, YSMM reported that Joseph's daughter, Sarah Hill, had married John Crone who was not a Quaker; therefore, they prepared a testimony against her. John and Sarah (Hill) Crone lived for a number of years on Lot 33 according to the obituary of their son, Joel Crone; it states that he "was born on April 22, 1812, near the old Gorham Woollen Mills, Newmarket, and resided there some time until the family moved to the farm north of Newmarket. Nelson Gorham was also born there in 1812. Both Sarah and John were accepted later as members and are buried in the Hicksite Friends Burying Ground, Yonge

Street – Sarah 1788-1854 and John 1783-1862."⁵¹

By 1806, membership of Yonge Street Preparative Meeting (YSPM) had grown large enough that in September 1806 Yonge Street was set off from Pelham as a Monthly Meeting (MM) but was to remain under the jurisdiction of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. One of its first acts as a MM was a dutiful address to Lt-Gov. Francis Gore, stating the loyalty of Friends but pointing out their testimony against war. Timothy Rogers and Amos Armitage were appointed to present this address in person at York.

In 1805, Job Hughes, with his third wife Elenor (Lee) and three minor children, had arrived in the settlement, having received a certificate of removal from Catawissa MM PA dated 25 May 1805 addressed to Pelham MM UC. During the early years, Job Hughes (1740-1807) was the leading minister at Yonge Street and took a dominant part in the Meeting. There was soon a Select Meeting of Ministers and Elders charged with overseeing the Meeting's ministry. Rogers evidently thought himself worthy of being on the Select Committee, but did not belong. In 1807, Job Hughes, Jacob Winn, and Timothy Rogers, made a visit to Adolphustown MM on the Bay of Quinte, Lake Ontario, and requested that the three MMs in Upper Canada be united with the establishment of a Quarterly Meeting. Hughes died in April 1807 on a return trip from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. In 1807, Rogers and wife visited Vermont, New York, Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Their son Timothy returned with them in order to keep school for Friends, but he was not

⁵⁰ Internet: Ancestry.com, Lawrence genealogy.

⁵¹ Internet: Ohio records, ancestors of Walter Richard Motz; UC York County, Yonge Street MM 15th 10mo 1807; *Newmarket Era*, April 27, 1906, 6; *Newmarket Era*, March 29, 1895, 3.

accepted. As a result, Timothy Rogers Jr went to train in military and was disowned December 1807 by Yonge Street Friends.

What seems to have occurred is that when Morris Lawrence moved in to Hill's business, both Rogers and Kinsey moved out and relocated elsewhere. Rogers might have been recalling a business venture back in Vermont and reckoned that similar misfortune might be looming in the life of Joseph Hill. In the late 1780s, more than a decade before his removal to Upper Canada, Rogers had been involved in business dealings with wealthy Quaker merchants and land speculators from New York. With George Bowne, his brother-in-law Joseph Pearsall, and Richard Burling, Rogers had undertaken to develop the waterfalls at Vergennes by building a dam with sufficient water power for a sawmill, gristmill, and clothiers. Rogers had also found himself in trouble with creditors. For Rogers, one divide was created by Lawrence, but another divide was created by difficulties with persons at Yonge Street MM. In 1807 Rogers bought a mill place on Duffin's Creek at Pickering on Lake Ontario where he built a sawmill, a grist mill, and had a store. Rogers believed that this second Quaker colony which he started, located about the centre of Friends in UC, would produce a yearly meeting in time. His prediction was realized when Canada Yearly Meeting was established there in 1867.⁵²

Land Abstracts for East Gwillimbury Township show that in 1807 James Kinsey of Whitchurch acquired 100 acres of Lot 2, Concession 2. Also, on 7 February 1807, he received the patent for Lot 10 Concession 8, East Gwillimbury near Mount Albert.

James Kinsey died June 14, 1848 and his wife Mary (Hunt) Kinsey on 25 January 1834.

In 1808, Joseph Hill must have been in pretty good standing in the community. In the Report of the Quarter Sessions for 1808, Joseph Hill and John James were listed as having been appointed Constables for Whitchurch Township.⁵³ Although at first Joseph Hill seemed to be doing well, soon, troubles began. Everything started going wrong. The business was struggling to make a profit. As early as 1808, it became clear that Hill was sinking in debt. Creditors started to hound him. Hill and Lawrence became mired in debt and legal battles.

On 19 April 1808, Elijah Phelps of Pelham, Niagara, received judgment against Joseph Hill, yeoman, of Whitchurch, for debt on bond £87.10sh and £4.7sh.10p costs. Elijah Phelps (1740-1843) settled in Niagara in 1782 and was husband of Anne Hull (1765-1843) of Sussex County NJ. In the well-known court case of 1818, Robert Randall brought action for damages against Phelps.

Within the span of a month, in June-July 1808, there were three actions against Joseph Hill and Monis Lawrence, merchants, both of Whitchurch, by three different creditors:

- 1808 June 13. William Allan received judgment for £155.5sh.1p damages and costs.
- 1808 June 13. Robert Bowne received judgment for £502.13sh.7p damages and costs.
- 1808 July 9. John H. Townsend and Wm W. Fox received judgment in a plea of Debt on Bond for

⁵² Journal of Timothy Rogers, 9,16,18, 109,111.

⁵³ Alexander Fraser, 21st Report of the Department of Public Records and Archives of Ontario 1932 (Toronto: King's Printer, 1933), 120.

£1,032.13sh.11p Debt and £2.14sh. 11p costs.⁵⁴

William W. Fox (1783- 18??) was the son of George Fox and Esther Shotwell of NJ. His grandfather, Jonathan Fox was prominent in the history of the Society of Friends. WWF was in partnership with John K. Townsend in a dry goods store, Townsend and Fox. After the death of Townsend, in 1807 Fox became partner with Thomas Leggett with firm name Leggett, Fox and Co. In 1808, Fox married Leggett's daughter Charlotte. The Fox estate was located at West Farms, now in NYC.

In response to the three actions in June-July 1808, three real estate transactions in early July 1808 reveal that Joseph Hill was indeed short of money. The need to discharge his debts forced him to sell six acres, and take out two mortgages on Lot 93. First, on 7 July 1808 (reg #1143 Aug 10, 1808), Hill took out a mortgage on the fifty acres of the land in Lot 93 Concession I for £931.00 with Robert H. Bowne (1776-1843), the wealthy New York merchant who had already been involved in lending money to Elisha Beman. Several members of the Bowne and Lawrence families were witnesses to the 1782 marriage of Joseph Hill's father, John Hill, at Flushing New York Meeting of Friends. Through force of circumstances, Hill negotiated the mortgage with Bowne in July 1808, but evidently, Hill's mortgage money was not secured as a special family favour through his step-mother. Despite the fact that Joseph Hill's stepmother Hannah (Doughty) Hill (1747-1834) was closely related to the Bowne and Lawrence

families, there is no indication that Quaker family loyalties played any part in Hill's business dealings in Upper Canada.

Second, the next day, 8 July 1808, Hill sold six acres of Lot 93 to Benjamin Brooke (reg #1175 September 13, 1808). Three days later, on 11 July 1808, Hill took out a mortgage for \$1405.72 on forty acres of his land in Lot 93 with Quetton St George, a merchant and trader with a large business at York. This mortgage was registered #1156 August 22, 1808 on both Lots 93 and 92 Whitchurch.

Towards the end of the same year 1808, both on the same date, 16 November, there were two more actions against Joseph Hill and Monis Lawrence in favour of York merchants: Quetton St George received judgment for £505.1sh.7p damages and costs; and Alexander Wood received judgment for £202.16sh.11p damages and costs.⁵⁵

That year 1808, Hill's mill business took another shift in direction when Eli Gorham arrived in Newmarket. Probably Lawrence had some connection to Eli Gorham, both having come from the migration of families from Connecticut to New York; otherwise, how did Gorham know to transport wool carding machinery to the tiny mill-site in the wilderness of Whitchurch? Small machines could be cranked by hand. Larger machines could be harnessed to a horse or driven by water power. In 1808 Eli Gorham brought four wool carding machines into Upper Canada. He sold two machines to Mr Hatt at Dundas and brought two machines to Newmarket. Because of trade embargos, textiles were in short supply. In 1809, Gorham set the machines up in the mill on the Holland River then operated by

⁵⁴ AO: RG22-131 Court of King's Bench, judgment docket books.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Messrs Hill and Lawrence.⁵⁶

Of some interest is the fact that in the same year 1808 Robert and Jane (Heacock) Srigley moved to the Quaker Settlement at Yonge Street. Robert Srigley (1777-1836) was a son of Enoch and Mary (Skelton) Srigley who were part of the group of Quakers from Bucks County PA, including Joseph Hill's parents, who had settled in Pelham Twp in 1788. Robert Srigley purchased Lot 34 Concession 2 Whitchurch, the lot to the north of Lot 33 leased by Joseph Hill. Lot 34 was also contiguous with Lot 94 Con I owned by Timothy Rogers. The Quakers may have been making plans for a second mill a little further north on the Holland River. Robert and Jane (Heacock) Srigley did not share Hill's antipathy to members of Family Compact as they named their third child born in 1811, Elisha Beman Srigley, following a trend observed by some Quaker families to name children after colonial officials.⁵⁷

By 1808 there was a war scare largely due to British impressments of American citizens to serve in the British navy, and especially after the *Leander* and *Chesapeake* affairs when British naval forces killed American sailors. There was a parallel to this outrage when in 1809 American soldiers in pursuit of deserters killed Isaac Underhill, an American pacifist who was teaching school in Elizabethtown (Brockville) UC on the St Lawrence River border. Because of the Napoleonic Wars, Britain tried to limit American trade with European ports. The embargo 1807-1809 created cross-border incidents.⁵⁸

The government exempted religious pacifists from militia but they had to pay annual fines of £5 per man, and had to provide draft animals, wagons, carts, and sleighs on military demand. On 5 March 1808, officials at York received a petition from several Quakers of the Home District against imprisonment for failure to pay militia fees.⁵⁹ Life in Upper Canada appealed to Quakers and Mennonites because British promised to leave them alone. They kept to themselves in distinctive communities scattered through immense forest. Ironically, about half the Quakers and other pacifists in Upper Canada lived north of York along or near Yonge Street, a major military thoroughfare used by the British to move supplies. Their strategic location put them in harm's way. Quakers suffered a heavy demand for their animals, and encountered frequent conflict with military officers. They also feared looting on their properties on the Yonge Street military road.

Not only did threat of impending war hover over, but plague also raged through the Yonge Street community. On a return visit to Yonge Street in 1809, Timothy Rogers found that in a few months in the year 1809 about thirty persons had died, members of his own family, friends, and acquaintances. The 1809 plague on Yonge Street was revisited in 1812-13 when a great death went through the Home District UC.⁶⁰

Joseph Hill was not saved from the ravages of financial disaster which had commenced in 1808 and finally claimed him as their victim in 1812. Previous to the War

⁵⁶ *Newmarket Era*, March 11, 1881, 2.

⁵⁷ A.M. Srigley and N. Jolly. Robert Srigley (1777-1836) and Jane Heacock Srigley (1787-1867), June 1977.

⁵⁸ Harvey Strum, "A Most Cruel Murder: The Isaac Underhill Affair, 1809," *Ontario History*, 80, no. 4 (1988): 293-310.

⁵⁹ AO: RG 5 A1 Upper Canada Sundries, 2917-20.

⁶⁰ *Journal of Timothy Rogers*, 117.

1812, the merchants with largest businesses at York were Quetton St George, Alexander Wood, and William Allan, all of whom received judgments against Hill and Lawrence. There were also, a number of wealthy Quaker business men from New York with investments in Upper Canada, including kinsmen Bowne and Lawrence. In the end, it was Robert Bowne who seized Hill's mortgaged property, and Quetton St George who seized Lawrence's property.

Upper Canada, a cash-poor province without its own currency, used British pounds and American dollars. The economy of the province was based upon credit-debt relationships. A reputation for 'respectability', which Quakers insisted upon, indicated a person's ability to pay his debts. Merchants extended credit, but a few years later, would start demanding payment. Those in possession of promissory notes could sue at any time. Once sued, other creditors quickly followed suit while the debtor still had property left to seize. The losing debtor was liable for court costs which frequently exceeded the debt itself. The court could order that the debtor's property be seized and sold at a Sheriff's auction to pay the debt. Often, debtors could find that their property sold at a Sheriff's auction fetched a price far below its value, at discounted prices in order to pay debts and legal fees of lawyers. If the amount from a Sheriff's sale was not adequate, the creditor could have the debtor imprisoned indefinitely. The situation of the debtor was appalling.⁶¹

In Upper Canada, the district was the primary unit of local justice and administration. With advice from the Executive Council, the Lt-Gov. appointed local magistrates who conducted the Court

of Quarter Sessions in each district. Major trials involving large sums or felony crimes fell to a circuit Court of King's Bench conducted by the chief justice and two associate judges. After a judgment had been obtained in a legal action for debt or damages, a court order or writ of execution gives the sheriff the right to take the person's property in order to pay the debt.

A notice of Sheriff's Sale, dated 23 May 1809, was placed in the *York Gazette* by Miles Macdonell, Sheriff of the Home District:

By virtue of a Writ of fieri facias issued out of His Majesty's Court of King's Bench, and to me directed, against the goods and chattels of **Hill and Lawrence**, at the fait of **William Allan** Esq., I have taken in execution one dark bay stud horse, one sorrel mare, and three pair of oxen, all of which property I shall sell at Public Auction on Tuesday the 13th June 1809, at the House of Mr John Campbell. – Sale to begin at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

For some months after the June 1809 sale of horses and oxen for debt, Hill and Lawrence continued to manage their business, but they may have encountered difficulty in receiving payments due to them from creditors.

In autumn 1809, at Whitchurch, Joseph Hill and Monis Lawrence, merchants and co-partners, Whitchurch, were involved in a couple of suits with Abijah Mack. The judgment on 29 September 1809, was for £50 debt and £104.18sh.7p damages and costs, and on 8 November 1809 for £10.7sh.2p damages and costs. A month later, at York, on 5 December 1809, Joseph's son, George Hill, and Henry Bonnel were also involved with Abijah Mack who received judgment for £102.11sh.11p

⁶¹ Internet Wikipedia: Imprisonment for Debt in Upper Canada.

damages and costs.⁶²

In an attempt to solve the problem of debts, on 1 October 1809, Hill and Lawrence dissolved their partnership; the notice of dissolution was advertised in the *York Gazette*.

NOTICE: "The Co-Partnership of Joseph Hill and Monis Lawrence, under the firm of Hill and Lawrence, was dissolved on the first day of October past by mutual agreement: - The business, in future, will be conducted by Monis Lawrence who is authorised to collect all Debts that are due to that Firm.

New Market 1st December 1809
JOSEPH HILL MONIS
LAWRENCE."⁶³

In 1810, John Williams brought suit against Joseph Hill, administrator of Abijah Jones, deceased. Damages were assessed at £56, and a jury was drawn and sworn: William Troyer, John Evans, David Pattinson, Andrew Clubine, John Rush, Thomas Lloyd, John McKay, George Patterson, Frederick Smith, John Bostwick, John Crone, Martin Bogart. On 12 November 1810, costs and damages assessed by the jury were £69.1sh.8p.⁶⁴ Abijah Jones, thirty-one years old, came from New York state, settled in Markham Twp, and took oath of allegiance March 1806.

In 1810, the two mortgage holders, Quetton St George and Robert H. Bowne, who had held Hill's mortgages for two years since July 1808, pressed Hill and Lawrence for payment of their large accounts, threatened legal action, and expected to

take real estate in lieu of payment.

In December 1810, calamity struck when properties belonging to both Hill and Lawrence were seized to pay debts. Two notices of Sheriff's Sales, both dated 15 December 1810, were placed in the *York Gazette* by John Beikie, Sheriff of the Home District. Both properties were to be sold the highest bidder at Roche's Hotel in the Town of York on 18 March 1811, at ten o'clock in the forenoon. Quetton St George took Lawrence's property:

By virtue of a writ of fieri facias issued out of His Majesty's Court of King's Bench and to me directed, against the Lands and Tenements of **Hill and Lawrence** at the fait of **Quetton St George**, I have seized and taken in Execution all that tract of Land known by Lot Number Twenty-three in the first Concession of the Township of York, East side of Yonge Street, containing one hundred and ninety acres, more or less, of which there is about fourteen acres cleared and a small log house thereon.

There is an interesting history attached to Lot 23 Con I York Twp east side of Yonge Street, in 1810 owned by Monis Lawrence. The original owner, Isaac Hollingshead (1766-1813), came from Nova Scotia where, in 1790, he married Mary Hill (ca1770-1813), daughter of Thomas and Hannah Hill, both families having come originally from New Jersey and Pennsylvania. In 1797, Hollingshead received a grant of land, Lot 23 Con I York Twp, 190 acres on the east side of Yonge

⁶² AO: RG-131 Court of King's Bench.

⁶³ *The York Gazette*, York UC, Saturday, December 1, 1809.

⁶⁴ AO: RG22-134 Assize Minute Books, Home District 1810, 272.

Street (North York ON) which he sold in November 1802. Hollingshead then received a grant for Lot 88 Con I King Twp, 210 acres on the west side of Yonge Street, beside Lot 89 Isaac Phillips, where he operated a sawmill in the Quaker Settlement at Newmarket. Isaac and Mary (Hill) Hollingshead were members of the Yonge Street Meeting of Friends. After 1803, land records for Lot 23 York Twp list John Titus, Morris Lawrence, William F. Pell, and others.⁶⁵ In 1811, wealthy Quaker businessman, William Ferris Pell (1779-1840), son of Benjamin and Marianna (Ferris) Pell of Westchester County NY, purchased Lawrence's property.

Robert H. Bowne took Hill's property:

SHERIFF'S SALES Home District
To Wit

By virtue of a writ of fieri facias issued out of His Majesty's Court of King's Bench and to me directed, against the Lands and Tenements of **Hill and Lawrence** at the fait of **Robert H. Bowne**, I have seized and taken in Execution all that parcel or tract of Land, being the east end of Lot Number Ninety-three, East side of Yonge Street, in the Township of Whitchurch, bounded easterly by the line between the first and second concession of Whitchurch, northerly by land belonging to Elisha Beman Esq., southwesterly by lands sold to Isaac Penrose, and southerly by the limit between Lots Numbers 92 and 91; containing 40 acres, more or less, on which said premises there is a **good Grist Mill and Saw Mill, a dwelling house two storeys high, a good frame Barn, and other out**

buildings. All of which property will be adjudged the highest bidder at Roche's Hotel in the Town of York on the eighteenth day of March next [1811], at the hour of Ten o'clock in the forenoon. Any persons who may have any claim to the above premises, either by Mortgage or otherwise, are requested to make the same known to me before the day of sale. Sheriff's Office 15th December 1810 JOHN BEIKIE, Sheriff⁶⁶

Just five days before the Hill-Lawrence sale on 18 March at Roche's Hotel, York, an Act regarding Quakers and land rights which was passed on 13 March 1811 was printed once on a large page in the *York Gazette* and not carried over for several weeks, as usual.

A couple of months later, 1 July 1811, another notice from the Sheriff's Office, York, was published in the *York Gazette*:

Whereas many persons have obtained Leases of the Crown and Clergy Reserves, as well as Licences of Occupation of Glebe Lands in the Home District, for which they are in arrears of Rent, / Notice is hereby given, that unless they do make immediate payment of such Arrears of Rent to the Subscriber, they will be returned as defaulters, and legal steps will be taken to recover the same. JOHN BEIKIE, Sheriff

In 1811, along with George and Lucy Hill, and John and Sarah (Hill) Crone, Eli and Letitia (Hambleton) Gorham were living on Lot 33 Con 2 leased by Joseph Hill. Gorham built a mill dam and at the

⁶⁵ Thomas, Morley. "The Hollingsheads and Hills of Yonge Street" in *Researching Yonge Street*.

⁶⁶ *The York Gazette*, York UC, December 26, 1810.

south end of the dam, built a mill into which he moved his machines. When he set up his woollen mill, he took care to establish his business on his own property. On 9 September 1811, Eli Gorham purchased five acres in the west half of Lot 32 from Martin Bogart (reg #1832 September 11, 1811). Later, Gorham Street, a road which runs east and west through the middle of this lot connected up with Water Street where the Hill-Robinson mill was located. With expansion in the 1830s, Gorham Woollen Mill became one of the well-known businesses in Newmarket and surrounding area for most of the nineteenth century.

On 20 April 1812, by Sheriff's Deed, Sheriff John Beikie sold Joseph Hill's lands in Lots 92 and 93, Concession 1, Whitchurch Township, to Peter Robinson (registered #2091 14th August 1812). The purchase price £2,000 for 45 acres, 3 rods, 20 perches, and other lands, included **the saw mill, grist mill, house, and store business**. Peter Robinson (1785-1838) was the eldest son of Christopher and Esther (Sayre) Robinson, and a stepson to Elisha Beman. He was best known as superintendant of the project from 1823 to 1825 which brought poverty-stricken Irish emigrants to settle in the Newcastle District and the founder of Peterborough. For many years, he was Commissioner of Crown Lands for Upper Canada. In 1812, his younger brother John Beverly Robinson (1791-1863), a young man of twenty-two years, was appointed Acting Attorney-General of Upper Canada, and presided over the infamous 'Treason Trials' in 1814. The Robinson family became one of the most powerful loyalist families in the

province.⁶⁷

The 1812 purchase price of £2,000 for Joseph Hill's property in Whitchurch consisting of 45 acres, 3 rods, 20 perches, and other lands, including a saw mill, grist mill, house, and store business can be compared with the value of similar property belonging to Timothy Rogers in Pickering. According to a statement dated March 1813 made by Thomas Hubbard, town clerk of Pickering, Rogers was "a man of veracity and property that consists of nigh five thousand dollars, and clear of debt."⁶⁸ There is no doubt that Hill thought that the seizure of his property and sale to a member of the Robinson family was an act of gross injustice or judicial robbery. Joseph Hill was a man able to be deceived by men more designing than he. Unable to gain control over his adversaries, he became a martyr to their greed.

Although it is not clear whether any of these transactions constituted a collusive endeavour to dispossess him of his property, the little-known case of Joseph Hill may be a similar example to the cases of Robert Randal and Henry Ausman, two cases of the abuse of laws that were taken up by reformers after the War. Robert Randal (ca1766-1834) a businessman and entrepreneur from Maryland, ran afoul of strategies pursued by those who controlled legal and judicial system in Upper Canada. Henry Ausman had leased a Crown Reserve lot in Markham Twp but ran into difficulties because of arrears in rent. Accountability was at issue.

The connections of Revd John Strachan, John Beverly Robinson, and the Boultons, were certainly in place before the War of 1812, but later, after the close of War, they

⁶⁷ Wendy Cameron, "Peter Robinson (1785-1838)" in *DCB* Vol. VII 1836-1850 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

⁶⁸ *Journal of Timothy Rogers*, 117.

emerged as leading members of the Family Compact. The problem of big business and Loyalist prosecutors using legal process to despoil persons of their commercial undertakings was used by reformers, a number of years later, as examples of abuse by members of Family Compact and led to the Rebellion of 1837.

With raised status by 1810, Yonge Street Meeting was attempting to deal with increasingly difficult problems. As a result of their 1807 request, a joint delegation from New York and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings had visited in 1808, and concluded to establish Canada Half Yearly Meeting in 1810 under the care of New York Yearly Meeting. Friends Meetings in Canada were connected to USA until the establishment in 1867 of Canada Yearly Meeting.

In the years following the war scare of 1808, families along Yonge Street suffered great hardships and did not escape conflict. Quakers balked at contributing to anything that promoted bloodshed. When a man refused to pay his fine or deliver up draft animals, the government jailed him for a month or seized sufficient property, usually livestock, to cover the fine and the costs of the sheriff. Cases of sufferings reported in 1810 – that property taken from forty-eight Friends from 1808 to 1810 amounted to £243.11sh.6p NY currency for a military demand of \$4 per annum, and that eight Friends had each suffered one month's imprisonment on the same account.⁶⁹ Any public show of disaffection had serious consequences. Because of their defeat and loss of colonies in the American War of Independence, British officials treated recalcitrance as sedition.

In November 1810, religious principles

clashed with Joseph Hill's business and family requirements in leasing Lot 33 Whitchurch: "The committee appointed by YSPM are united in believing that it is inconsistent with our religious principles for any member of our Society to lease such lands as is set apart or reserved by Government for the sole use and maintenance of a Protestant clergy. Signed David Willson, Amos Armitage, William Shotwell, Timothy Rogers, Isaac Phillips, Edward Barker, Samuel Taylor, Hugh McMullin."⁷⁰ Crown Reserves of land provided the provincial executive with a source of revenue which was administered directly by the Crown, and not under the control of the elected Assembly.

Hill was caught in a double bind, not only in legal process but also in religious process. In spring 1811, Yonge Street Quakers, not happy with his debts and mortgages, and the fact that he had sworn an oath with a magistrate, began the process of disowning Joseph Hill. The minutes of a Preparative Meeting of the Yonge Street Quakers in April 1811 contained the following accusation:

At Yonge Street preparative meeting held the 11th of the fourth month 1811. An overseer informs that Joseph Hill having failed in performance of promises and in payment of his just debts, also has given a mortgage on a piece of land that he had a few days before sold and conveyed a deed, which has since been sold on said mortgage by virtue of an execution which is directed to the monthly meeting.

At the Monthly Meeting held a few days

⁶⁹ AO: MS303, O-11-6, UC York County, YSMM minutes 17.01.1810.

⁷⁰ AO: MS303 UC York County, YSPM 8th 11mo 1810, 14.

later on 18 April 1811, the above information was presented, and the meeting appointed Isaac Wiggins, Thomas Linvill, William Reid, David Willson and Asa Rogers to visit [Joseph Hill] and report their sense in this case to next meeting.

The minutes disclose that the case of Joseph Hill was brought up at several meetings between April and August 1811, but those who were investigating were not yet prepared to report.

Then, on 5 August 1811, a new charge against Joseph Hill was alleged: "Reported from Yonge Street Preparative Meeting that Joseph Hill has taken an oath before a Magistrate, which is referred to the Committee in his former case, and they to report to next Monthly Meeting." On 12 March 1812, there was a report from the investigative committee: The committee in Joseph Hill's case reported in writing as follows:

We have several times attended to the case of Joseph Hill, and find it difficult to come to the true state of his affairs so as to give full satisfaction respecting the particulars of the charge alleged against him, but are united in believing that from a want of punctuality in fulfilling his contracts and paying his just debts, he is involved in difficulties which is to his own disreputation and that of our Religious Society, and that it does not appear to us that his business is likely soon to be ended, we believe that no profit will arise by continuing his case any longer, which is deferred for consideration of next meeting under the care of the committee.

On 20 April 1812, Hill's property was sold at Sheriff's auction to Peter Robinson. The following month, on May 14, 1812,

Joseph Hill was disowned by the Yonge Street Friends Meeting:

At Yonge Street Monthly Meeting held the 14th day of the 5th mo 1812 The Friends appointed in Joseph Hill's case informed, they had no opportunity with him, he not being in the Parts – they produced an essay of a Testimony against him which was read, approved and signed. Nicholas Brown and Amos Armitage are appointed to offer him a copy thereof, acquaint him of his privilege of appealing and report to next meeting. The Testimony is as follows: Joseph Hill having had a Right of membership amongst Friends, but he having failed in the fulfilling his contracts and paying his Debts became entangled under Embarrisments to his own disreputation and Reproach of our Religious Society, and also Deviated from our Testimony against swearing so far as to take an oath before a Magistrate, on which occasion he hath been Treated with in order for his Restoration but without the desired effect. Therefore we have no further unity with him as a member of our Society, until by amendment of Life and condemning his past misconduct he makes satisfaction to this meeting – which he may be concerned to endeavour to do is our desire –Signed in and on behalf of Yonge Street Monthly Meeting held the 14th day of the 5th mo 1812 by Thos Linvill, Clerk.

On 17 September 1812, Friends who were to inform Hill of his disownment had not yet been able to complete their task, "on account of his having left the parts."

The custom of giving a copy of the Meeting's Testimony against him to the person being disowned, and to notify him of his right to appeal, was not feasible in Joseph Hill's case because, unable to protect his interests, by May 1812, it was reported that he had left the area.⁷¹

The generally-accepted explanation has been that Hill went to the United States when the War of 1812 was getting underway in order to avoid militia duty. US President James Madison, himself the husband of a Quaker lady, declared war on Great Britain on 18 June 1812. Britain found itself simultaneously at war with France and the US, two nations which had recently gone through revolutionary upheavals. When war was declared in 1812, Hill was fifty-one years old and didn't want to get involved with military service. However, his brother John Hill Jr served with the Lincoln Militia and in 1814 was killed in the battle of Chippewa at Niagara.

Ordinary folk were loyal to Britain so long as the colonial government left them alone to raise their families and tend their farms, but were revolted by the demand for their service in the militia. Colonial officials viewed them as unreliable or disaffected. Most disliked having to fight against their former countrymen. British officials mistook their predicament for disloyalty; Americans misunderstood it as longing for the republic. Caught in the middle, the benefits of British protection appealed more than speculative promises from the American republic.

In 1812, all males sixteen to sixty years of age were liable for militia duty, and were subject to military justice. Those who had refused to take up arms were deemed to be enemy aliens. If the government considered

that pacifists posed a threat to national security, they could be locked up as prisoners of conscience. Inhabitants accused of being disloyal began to flee the province in large numbers. Many left land in Upper Canada which they might never reclaim again. In May-June 1814, "Lists of Persons from the Home District who went to the USA after July 1st 1812 without License from the person administering the Government of the Province of UC" were submitted by a number of officials, including Sheriff Beikie of the Home District.

The Quaker Settlement on Yonge Street was far from being a peaceful community. In 1812, members of the Yonge Street Meeting of the Society of Friends became caught in a double bind which cut through their lives – both with outer conflict (distress of war) and with inner conflict (schism in Meeting). Because of strong disagreement on several questions, two Elders, Isaac Phillips and Isaac Wiggins, stopped David Willson from speaking in Meeting. Some of Willson's ideas might have been acceptable with modifications, but conservative thinkers, like Thomas Linville, opposed any measure to which they had not been accustomed.

For the first quarter of the nineteenth century, four Elders (two couples) dominated the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting of Friends: Amos and Martha (Doan) Armitage, and Thomas and Martha (Wiggins) Linville. Both Armitage and Linville had emigrated from Catawissa Friends Meeting, PA – Armitage in 1804 and Linville in 1807. After their arrival in 1804, Amos and Martha (Doan) Armitage had assumed important roles in YSMM, appointed to important posts and serving

⁷¹ AO: MS303, C-3-98, UC York County, Yonge Street Meeting, YSPM 11th 4mo 1811, 15; 5th 8mo 1811 p20; YSMM 14th 5mo 1812, 27; YSMM 17th 9mo 1812, 48.

on many committees. They lived near the Meeting House which Armitage, as carpenter, helped to construct after 1810. There were some very strong feelings on both sides; Linville and Armitage could not resolve their differences. Opposing reactions brought about a division in the local Quaker group, a Schism in Meeting.

By August 1812, drawn by his charismatic ministry, David Willson (1778-1866) had led eighteen families in breaking away from YSMM and forming a sect called the Children of Peace. Timothy Rogers reported that the Friends who left Yonge Street Meeting gathered at David Willson's Queen Street Meeting, and soon after that at the shop of Amos Armitage (1764-1847) near the Yonge Street Meeting House.

After the departure of the Armitages in 1812, Linville was left to lead the conservative group. Both Isaac Phillips and Isaac Wiggins died in the 1813 epidemic. With the loss of so many families to the Children of Peace, and with the War of 1812 raging around them, Linville continued to prefer disownments as a solution to problems.⁷²

The decade of Joseph Hill's sojourn in Newmarket were chaotic years, both personally and communally, with challenges and hardships of settlement, business failure, financial ruin, humiliation and disownment, distress of war, and schism in Meeting. On top of his original misfortune of coming to trial and having debts proved against him, Hill suffered the additional abuse of social condemnation. To be judged in legal and religious courts with

little or no hope of appeal is a life-shattering experience. Yet, a person has to proceed, keeping his mind not on what he has lost but on what has enriched him and his community.

What became of Joseph Hill? Immediately after his business failure, disownment from YSMM, and departure from Whitchurch, records of inhabitants of York for 1812 disclose that Joseph Hill was living in York (Toronto) either with or near Morris Lawrence, but Hill is listed only for the year 1812. Why was it necessary for Joseph Hill to flee but safe for Morris Lawrence to stay? For many years, Monis/Morris Lawrence and his family lived at York where he kept an inn. Between 1815 and 1825, Fanny and Monis Lawrence had five more children. By the time of their deaths, they were living with or near their youngest son in Bolton, Albion Twp, Peel County CW.⁷³

In January 1812, Timothy Rogers's fifty-three year old wife, Sarah (Wilde) Rogers (1759-1812) had died suddenly, probably at the beginning of the second epidemic which struck in 1813. Then a widower living in Pickering, in 1812, Timothy Rogers sold Lot 94 Con I Whitchurch to Timothy Millard who had Quaker connections. Millard established a mill on the Holland River, just to the north of the Hill mills.

In 1813, with permissions from Thomas Linville, Clerk of YSMM, William Graham, Justice and Col. of Militia, of upper Yonge St, and Nathan Coffin, Col. of Militia at Kingston, Rogers set out in April to make the trip to NYYM. Rogers's journal ends in 1813. He did not record the events of his

⁷² Albert Schrauwers, "The Politics of Schism: The Separation of the Children of Peace, 1812," in *Faith, Friends and Fragmentation*, 69-82; Albert Schrauwers, "Consensus Seeking, Factionalization and Schism in the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting," in *Faith, Friends and Fragmentation*, 83-87.

⁷³ Christine Mosser, York, Upper Canada, Minutes of Town Meetings and Lists of Inhabitants. Toronto: Metropolitan Toronto Library Board, 1984; Internet: Ancestry.com; 1851 Census Canada West, Peel County, Albion Twp, 93.

trip to US or his second marriage to Anna Harned (1780-1846), a woman twenty-four years younger than he. It is noteworthy that Rogers found his second wife in New Jersey where Hill men usually found their wives. It is easy to conjecture that Hill and Rogers could have travelled together to USA in 1813. Timothy Rogers of York County, Canada, son of Timothy and Mary Rogers, married at Rahway Friends Meeting, 28 October 1813, Anna Harned of Wood, daughter of Jonathan and Sarah Harned.⁷⁴

Chroniclers have supposed that when Joseph Hill left Canada, he went to live in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. In the decade 1813 to 1823, there is not yet any factual information about his location, the death of his second wife, Grace, the identity of his third wife, or date of their marriage.

After 1812, when Joseph Hill vanished from Whitchurch, he became the subject of much controversy. The local perception of Hill's business failure was that he became associated with scoundrels. Because he left under the dark clouds of debt and war, Hill's brief tenure has been discounted. Was he irresponsible? Or was he more sinned against than sinner? Questions about his business partnership with Monis Lawrence and his whereabouts after his property was seized in 1812 are questions which have dogged his story ever since. In the historical record of Newmarket and York County, the contribution he made in his decade of settlement has only survived in apocryphal stories, either invented by speculation, or motivated by bias. Nevertheless, his experiences have a broader cultural significance in the political evolution of the province. By 1812, the ingredients were in place for the Separation of Friends 1828, and the Rebellion of 1837.

Although Joseph Hill departed for USA at the start of the War of 1812, three of his children and their families remained in UC. Both older son George Hill (1784-1863) and older daughter Sarah (Hill) Crone (1788-1854) and their families stayed in York County, Home District UC. Joseph's younger daughter Eunice (Hill) Chapman (1790-1872) and her family lived in the Niagara District. His younger son John Joseph Jr (1786-1839) and his family lived across the Niagara River in Erie County NY USA. After 1812, Joseph Hill's children must have known where their father was living. Joseph also had brothers, sisters, and other relations living at Niagara.

After 1812, because of the Hill – Hambleton – Gorham family relationships, Eli Gorham and his family probably knew where Joseph Hill was living. Eli Gorham (1787-1867) was close in age to Joseph Hill's son, Joseph. In 1811, Eli Gorham married Letitia Hambleton (1790-1830), the daughter of Joseph Hambleton (1756-1825) and Margaret (Sampsel) Hambleton who lived in Solebury, Bucks County PA.

A couple of years later, ca1813, Joseph Hill's younger son, Joseph Jr (1786-1839) married the sister of Letitia (Hambleton) Gorham, Elizabeth Hambleton (1788-1840). Their daughter Elizabeth Hill (1814-1899) was born in Philadelphia County PA in 1814. About 1823 the Hill family moved to Erie County NY where the Hambleton family lived. In 1840, Elizabeth Hill married Samuel Hambleton, son of Aaron and Hannah (Kester) Hambleton. Curiously enough, some 40 years later, in 1880, this Elizabeth (Hill) Hambleton married James H. Willson (ca1815-1903) of Newmarket.⁷⁵

The sister of Eli Gorham's wife lived in

⁷⁴ NJ Union County, Rahway and Plainfield MM, Register of B-M-D 1687-1871, 22.

⁷⁵ *Newmarket Era*, May 14, 1880.

Erie County near Buffalo NY. The Gorham family maintained close connections with relations in western New York. Son Nelson Gorham (1812-1895), born on Lot 33 Whitchurch, was educated at Aurora Academy, Cayuga NY. Although Newmarket was the home base of Gorham's woollen mill, he also managed a woollen mill in Chatauqua NY where in 1863 he married Miss Bull. A few years before his death, he moved from Newmarket to NY State and died at Fulton in 1895.⁷⁶

Members of the Hambleton family were closely connected to Quaker settlements in Bucks County PA, Erie County NY, and York County UC. Jonas Hambleton (1760-1846) son of Stephen married in 1782 Annie Kester, daughter of Samuel and Susannah Kester. In 1797 they moved to Muncy Twp, Lycoming County PA, and in 1809 they settled in Hamburg, Erie County NY. In 1807, a younger brother of Jonas, Moses Hambleton (1768-1850) and wife Abigail Coates moved to Upper Canada and settled in the Quaker community at Uxbridge, thirty miles north of York. On 5 October 1809, Joseph Collins of Uxbridge recorded in his journal that Moses Hambleton had been working at mill stones there for three days. When the War of 1812 was underway, Moses and his eldest son Aaron were pressed by British authorities to join the military. Young Aaron (1790-1813) was put in jail in York where he died 6 January 1813. After the war, Moses and family moved to Hamburg NY where they purchased a farm near brother Jonas. Another brother, Aaron Hambleton (1770-1829) who had married in 1794 Hannah Kester (1773-1815) sister of Jonas' wife Annie, moved to UC to join his

brother Moses in 1809. In 1815, after the death of his wife, Aaron also moved to Erie County NY.⁷⁷

In 1823, the same year that some of the Hambleton and Hill families moved to join relatives in Erie County near Buffalo NY, Joseph Hill moved to Attica, Genesee County NY, where he spent the last decade of his life. The town of Attica, established in 1811 and now situated on the north border of Wyoming County, has its north part within the adjacent town of Alexander in Genesee County. With his third wife, Elizabeth, Joseph Hill lived on a farm in the town of Attica containing about forty-five acres of land deeded to him by John and Hannah Stone, 11 July 1823. He also owned a piece of land adjoining the farm, two-and-a-half acres part of section number 9 in the town of Alexander conveyed to him by David and Sarah Churchill by deed dated the 16th April 1832.

Near the time of his death in the fall of 1833, Joseph Hill made his will, dated 14 August 1833. He remembered his property in Newmarket. It must have been a bitter memory. He had either become estranged from family and friends to such an extent that he clung to the mistaken belief that he still owned property in Newmarket, or he was trying to absolve himself from the problem and make amends, or at least cover all contingencies. In his will, he gave and devised unto his sons John Hill and George Hill, and his daughters Sarah Crone and Eunice Chapman, all the real estate with buildings and appurtenances which he owned in the town of Whitchurch, County of York and Province of Upper Canada, his land there being known as New Market. He added that in case there were any debts or demands against him in favour of any

⁷⁶ *Newmarket Era*, March 29, 1895, 3.

⁷⁷ *The Hambleton Family: descendants of James Hambleton of Bucks County, Pennsylvania*.

person or persons residing within the Province of Upper Canada at the time of his death, he authorized his executors to sell and dispose of so much of his real estate situated in the said County of York as would be sufficient to satisfy and pay off such demands, and the residue given to his two sons and two daughters.⁷⁸

Joseph Hill (1761-1833) died at the age of seventy-two, and is buried in Attica, Genesee County NY. With time and distance, Joseph Hill might have been able to step back from crisis, realize that he had been living in an unjust world from which he could not expect fairness, and see the tragedy in the context of life in the first decade of nineteenth-century Upper Canada.

In Newmarket, from 1812, the Hill property with house and mill was owned by Peter Robinson until 1827 when ownership passed to his brother William Benjamin Robinson (1797-1873); they managed a large store and had considerable trade in the area. In 1837, the mill property came into the possession of Col. George Sackville Cotter.

When young William Roe (1795-1879), hero of the American invasion of York in 1813, arrived in Newmarket in 1814, there were two frame houses, one belonging to Peter Robinson and the other to Timothy Millard, and several log buildings.⁷⁹

What happened to Lot 33, the Crown reserve leased by Joseph Hill in 1802? An Order-in-Council dated 31 May 1820, addressed to the Surveyor General, and signed by John Beikie, stated that “at the expiration of the lease of the Crown Reserve Lot No. 33 in the second

concession of the Township of Whitchurch containing 200 acres in the name of Joseph Hill, the lease shall be renewed in the name of Elisha Beman Esq. of said Township of Whitchurch, subject to the payment of such rent as shall be adopted when the present lease expires.”⁸⁰

Elisha Beman died 14 October 1821. In his will, dated 7 October 1821, Beman directed his executors to “dispose of Lot No. 33 in the second concession of Whitchurch, originally leased to Joseph Hill and purchased by me.”

The pioneer settlement which began to be established in 1801 with the arrival of Timothy Rogers and other Quaker agents for settlement became a thriving hamlet which grew and progressed rapidly. From the date of the erection of the mills by Joseph Hill and his Quaker associates - Rogers, Armitage, and Kinsey, the prosperity and success of the adjoining settlement was assured. Settlers enlarged clearings and raised themselves from precarious existence to secure positions. The hamlet was rapidly converted into a busy and prosperous village. In 1822, it became an early post village, in 1853 a station on the route north after the arrival of the railroad, and in 1857 was incorporated as the village of Newmarket. In the nineteenth century the Newmarket area had a very high population of Quakers. In 1909, it became the location of Canada's Quaker boarding school, Pickering College.

While it is generally conceded that the earliest settlers were substantial natives of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Vermont, there were other pioneers, equally worthy of notice, who sought homes here and

⁷⁸ NY Wills and Probate Records: Genesee County, 1833, 1835, 312-317. The last will and testament of Joseph Hill, deceased, was legally proved in Surrogate Court, County of Genesee, 11th November 1833, and was then admitted to probate, certified at Batavia, NY 18th day of May 1835.

⁷⁹ *Newmarket Era*, January 22, 1897, 1.

⁸⁰ AO: Whitchurch Township Papers.

contributed to the early population of this town. Some are lost to memory, but descendants of some are still in town and identified with its present history and progress.

The improvements made by Joseph Hill did much to invite and encourage colonization of the region south of Lake Simcoe. The community which grew up around the mills built by Hill became the hub of York County and the County town.

The mill dam on the Holland River continues to function as the heart of the community. Newmarket owes a great deal to the enterprise of Joseph Hill who was certainly one of the first persons to develop the site of the future town of Newmarket.