

# *The Canadian Friend* — Connecting Us for 100 Years

By Jane Zavitz-Bond

In 1905, just a century ago, the first issue of *The Canadian Friend* (CF) arrived in mail boxes. It asked what Friends wished, and requested suggestions. Sound familiar? As their second century began, modern presses, railway mail cars, and financial support from increased membership made this publication possible for Canadian Friends.

Why then? Settlements in Manitoba and at Swarthmore, Saskatchewan, as well as isolated homesteading, created a 'home mission' field. They, and established Meetings in Ontario, needed a communication link. As well, new members from revivals and young Friends also wanted news of other Friends, announcements, and nurture in their spiritual lives.

Although publication began in 1905 by the Home Mission Board of Canada Yearly Meeting (Orthodox), key Friends in Genesee Yearly Meeting (already part of Friends General Conference) and Canada Yearly Meeting (Conservative) also subscribed.

The editor's modest pay and volunteers have been a pillar of support throughout *The Canadian Friend's* history. Postage, paper and printing costs followed the economy, and the initial subscription price was 50¢ per annum.

Except for a few years in the 1920s, a half-folded 8 1/2 by 11" page was the standard size — until the 1990s when computers brought it to full page size. This was preceded by standard typewriter font with set spaces per line and lines per column, which was a challenge to writers. Today many of us are computer literate, or can call on someone who is. We scan and send e-mail articles and photographs. However, in 1905, photo plates of significant sites and persons were prepared, filed, and reused. Line drawings were often used as illustrations.

Simplicity has always been a key note. *The Canadian Friend* remains a black and white publication, though the cover presents a gentler Quaker grey, our approach

to life ... most of the time.

Originally, it was printed on lightweight paper; next came glossy stock; then after WWII, heavier finished paper. At present, partially recycled paper is used. Such changes are decided by Home Mission and Advancement Committee (HMAC) according to the circumstances and needs of the times. Since the 1990s, with copy sent 'print ready' to Argenta Friends Press, production spans the continent, and has been done electronically for three years now.

Each editor brought his/her perspectives. Frank Cornell, the first editor (from 1905–1907), was a minister at Newmarket Friends Church, and of pioneer stock from New York. As an example of the international aspect of Canadian Quakerism, we note that he had ties to England, as well as having been a pastor in Indiana.

The next editor, John R. Webb (1907–1914), was also a minister of the Newmarket Friends Church. He continued with the same format for *The Canadian Friend*. Obituaries told the Quaker story of the 1800s; Pickering College news and mission reports increased.

WWI loomed, bringing the Peace Testimony to the fore. Clarence Pickett (1915–1917), who had been raised in Kansas, became pastor of Toronto Meeting and the next CF editor. He spent valuable years in Canada, developing pacifist responses through Friends Ambulance and Relief work. In 1918, he returned to Iowa, later serving American Friends Service Committee.

After thirteen years of male editors, Phebe J. Wright, longtime Foreign Mission editor, became the next CF editor (1917–1927), predating society's shift in attitudes towards women's roles. Quakerly activity slanted toward Toronto, the city. The automobile entered the scene.

The next editor was Elwood A. Garratt (1927–1936). Except for guest editors in 1976, he was the last male editor. Louise Richardson Rorke succeeded him and remained (1936–1949) through WWII. A teacher and author, Louise brought excellent writing and editing skills, as well as interpersonal ones. The pages became filled with poetry, books, letters from members of CFSC serving abroad, NeeKauNis Young Friends activities, including camps for inner-city mothers and children, and news of Meetings. Eventually, Louise's illness brought Dorothy S. Starr (1949–1957) to the editorial desk. Dorothy came to us from Iowa, via India and Francis Starr. *The Canadian Friend* was a factor in the 1955 Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) reunification.

The next editor, Mary C. Needler, aka Mary Needler Hinde (1957–1962), brought talent, keen perceptions,

and interest in people. Marriage and a move west took her closer to new Meetings there.

**E**lizabeth Oxlade Hopkins (1962–1974), resident at Friends House, Toronto, with an interest in music and the arts, was the next appointed editor. Later moved to Ottawa, *The Canadian Friend* represented the growing edge of the new urban Meeting.

Over the decades before unification, *The Canadian Friend* pages had reported on Quaker outreach in Canada, and to the world. For example, *The Canadian Friend* kept readers in touch with Gurney and Elizabeth Binford, who were in Japan for over forty years (1893–1936). Their monthly letters, and visits while on furlough made Canadian Friends feel they were indeed 'family.' The time spent by Ed and Vivien Abbott and



Chain Lakes, Manitoba 1928 Junior Sunday School The Sunday School class met in a country meetinghouse beside the Chain Lakes in Hartney, Manitoba, where a number of Friends settled in the 1880s. That meetinghouse was later moved two miles to the village of Dand. It is now the United Church, which the Meeting had joined in 1925. Front Row: Alberta Gallaway, Jean Godfrey, Eva Hamblin, Cameron King, Eva Godfrey, Hazel Day, unidentified child, Erma Tiernan, Harold Hodgson, Clint Whetter, Bill Chapin, Orville Agnew. Second Row: Ethel Reynolds, Verna King, Kathleen Hogle, Verla Gallaway, Marguerite Manshreck, Jack Godfrey, Rowena Hodgson, Richard Dann, Roberta Black, Victor Hodgson, Bernice Agnew, Allan Dickie. Third Row: Viola Hamblin, Evelyn, Annie (later Mrs. Whetter), Edith Dunning, girl (later Mrs. J. Dickie), girl (later Mrs. Elwood Hodgson), Bernice Tiernan, Grace Day, Ralph Manshreck. Back Row: George Hodgson, Ross Day, Keith Douglas, Bob Hodgson, Jim Dickie, George Manshreck, Bruce Dickie, Alvin Tiernan. (Photo from *Golden Memories: A History of the Dand Community in Manitoba, Canada*, compiled by the Women's Institute, 1968)

their family in India and, later, the Harkness' term at Rasulia, are our more recent experiences of this bond. Alma Dale also sent letters stating her ties to Friends in Canada and the world through *The Canadian Friend*. (Today, the CF reports of Friends around the world arrive mostly via reports from Friends World Committee for Consultation, the Quaker United Nations Office, and various individual Friends.)

Times changed after WWII. The urban movement continued; many rural Meetings closed; the new Meetings practiced silent worship. Growth came to Friends through the Peace movement, as well, and through postwar immigration, swelling during the Vietnam years, with arriving conscientious objectors.

There was no regular editor from the summer of 1974 until Dorothy Chapman began in 1977. In 1979, she began using her maiden name, Dorothy Parshall. She served as editor (1977–1994) for a record of 18 years! Working from her retreat and studio in Bancroft, Ontario, Dorothy used the CF to keep communication lines open — from Atlantic Friends in the east to Victoria Friends in the west. It was a time of transition for the form and the content of *The Canadian Friend*.

Caroline Balderston Parry, of Ottawa, was next to serve as editor, during the last half of 1994.

In 1995, Anne-Marie Zilliacus (1995–2001), based in Ottawa, again moved the hub of the CF from Toronto. She brought her gifts and dedication to the CF, encouraging Friends to write on announced topics, such as prayer, forgiveness and denial, the ministry, etc. During

this period, a balancing humour entered in with Granny Rat sketches. The Persian Gulf War began. Anne-Marie encouraged Friends to contribute their thinking. That, along with desktop publishing, and the decision by HMAC and CYM to send the publication free of cost to all Canadian Friends, were important services that expanded the CF impact. The issues became larger, and it went out five times a year, rather than monthly.

At the beginning of 2002, June Etta Chenard became editor, bringing her own gentle approach as she encouraged Friends to share their thoughts and experiences, and as she sought increased Francophone participation.

The CYM Archives at Pickering College, which contain the complete collection of *The Canadian Friend*, were a major resource for this article. I have read the CF since 1949, and find each issue to be a time capsule. Burton Hill passed a treasure trove to the CYM Friends' Archives, from William Harris' attic in Rockwood, Ontario, where he had saved every issue from 1905 to 1955.

*The Canadian Friend* continues to connect and strengthen the cause of the Religious Society of Friends in Canada. Through its pages, we continue to seek that of the Infinite God in each other, better prepare ourselves to minister in today's world, and keep in touch with each other. It has connected us for a full century now. We are grateful to each and every one who has shared in this endeavour. ♥

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## Reflections on Finding a Contemporary Quaker Peace Query

By Dick Preston

Friends whom I have known very well for many years are unable to find unity on the matter of permissible levels of violence in preventing greater violence, and responding where prevention is too late. Of course people will see things differently. Things and events

really do look different from different points of view.

This diversity of views has a spiritual source — consider the great variety of perspectives we are privileged to share with actors, musicians, painters, writers, theologians,

philosophers, and the everyday folks we meet and exchange ideas with. And with people of other cultures. Our lives may be enriched by this.

But this diversity is also a source of violent perspectives and actions, of contempt or hatred that is destruc-