



NEWSLETTER

Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society
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WRITING HISTORY

The end objective of CCHS is the historical depiction of our religious past. An important step toward this goal is the collection and preservation of materials that bear witness to the past. Yet the archival collection is but a means to the end of awareness and understanding. The writing of histories and the development of genealogies, by those who are members of the society and those who are not, are encouraged. The important thing is the writing. The historical society looks forward to drawing upon all such writing for its growing record of the Restoration in Canada. Following are examples of recent note.

Michael Mazzalongo has forwarded a copy of his 2005, "A Brief History of the Church of Christ in Quebec." The nicely prepared booklet contains Michael's account in English and French versions, and includes a graph of "Church Planting" history. The sixteen page work is packed with details of places, persons, and progress. (For copies, address Michael Mazzalongo, 503, 5th Ave, Verdun, QC H46 2Z2.)

Recently, with the encouragement of Ella Jones, Toronto, contact was made with Robert Jones, Hamburg, NY, grandson of S.M. Jones, evangelist and educator in the early 1900s in Ontario. Robert responded with a seven page reminiscence that is replete with memories of the preaching and church plantings done by his father, Harding Jones, and of recollections regarding his grandfather. This valuable letter will be preserved in the archives.

Verna Tallman, wife of Peter Tallman, of Mindemoya, for the past year has been researching the Tallman family history. This has included transcribing the diaries of Peter's great-grandfather, Arza Sheppardson Tallman (b. 1869) which he began in 1892. "Sheppie" regularly reports his attendance at churches of Christ in Smith-

ville and Beamsville and identifies speakers and events. His entry for Nov. 1, 1904, "Fine & warm. We all drove down to the Bible School opening [Beamsville Bible School], then home and picked apples...and then to prayer meeting in eve."

An oral history has been received from Gordon Tallman, Toronto, son of Sheppie Tallman. Gordon is now 94 and has memories of the church in Meaford and Toronto, including the Bathurst St. congregation.

Spurred by recollections experienced at the 100th anniversary of the Pine Orchard (Ont.) Church of Christ, October 2004, Dorothy Weatherall, granddaughter of Charles Petch, early preacher at Pine Orchard, set about to develop a genealogical record of Charles' family and a collection of items that chronicle his life. These she presented to the society on the occasion of its August 2005 meeting at Owen Sound.

Fred Whittington, Inglewood, is working on a history of his family's pioneer beginnings in Strong Township (the Sundridge area). He has learned of a "Disciples" influence that was present in the Pevansey community where his ancestors settled. We await his writings with interest.

These are samples of individuals pursuing church, family and personal histories that intersect with Restoration church history in this region. Linking with these enriches our collective insight. The society encourages all such activity and by members and non-members alike.

In this newsletter, three of our board members share their personal enthusiasm for family and church history.

-Geoff Ellis

A MOTHER'S DYING WISH

Why would Ernest Perry, at the age of 16, leave his home in Saskatchewan in 1909 to come to Beamsville, Ontario. His mother, Mary (York) Perry expressed her desire that her eldest son of seven sons and one

daughter (Pearl Orr) would attend the Beamsville Bible School.

Mary, born in Meaford, Ontario, in 1870 was part of a thriving congregation of Disciples of Christ. It was a time when James A. Harding held special meetings in Meaford and even held a debate on the subject of baptism. Mary and most of her siblings were baptized. It was also of time when the prairies were opening up for settlement. Her father, Frederick York, a teamster, had government contracts to help move the Northwest Mounted Police to Fort Gary (Winnipeg) in the early '70s and had brought back glowing reports of the good lands out there. Her grandfather, Henry York, moved out to the Carman area of Manitoba. One of his daughters and her husband, John Laycock, and family went to Rosebank, Manitoba, in 1879. Some of Mary's sisters also moved to the west to teach school, and finally her parents moved to Saskatchewan where their oldest daughter, Selina, homesteaded with her husband, Charles Perry. She had died with TB, leaving two young children in the care of the grandparents in Meaford. Mary York married Charles in 1892. Then overcome with consumption, she died in 1909. A number of young people from Canada attended the Nashville Bible School in the 1890s. Mary's brother, Stanley had spent two sessions there, and her sister, Maude had spent one session there. S. M. Jones of Tennessee was a student of the Bible School. James Harding was the co-founder and president of the school. He evidently persuaded Jones to come to Canada to start the Beamsville Bible School. Mary's sister Elizabeth was teaching some subjects in the school.

Hence my grandmother's dying wish that my father would attend Beamsville Bible School.

- Donald Perry

IN MEMORIAM: E. JEAN ELLIS, 1916-2002

Jean took many opportunities to travel, but the St Vincent and Meaford area was home. Her formative years were difficult; her mother died when Jean was two, and she boarded with various farming families throughout St Vincent for most of her grade school years, until her father re-married when in his fifties to his former wife's sister. Her brothers [cousins?] are over 23 years younger. At about 6, she began her reading

quest, soon developing an appetite for 6 to 8 books per week and kept this pace to the end. Her formal education was as a Registered Nurse, but her reading carried her to much broader fields of learning.

In 1939 she married Charlie Ellis, and became a member of the Church of Christ - moving her pew one block up the street. Jean and Charlie were a strong team. They enjoyed water, swimming and fishing [having one of the first outboard motors]. They made it a quest to explore the waterways of Grey and Bruce Counties, discovering over 100 small lakes in each county.

They were noted for their service to the Meaford congregation: Jean, teacher and leader with ladies activities and Charlie, first a deacon and then an elder.

Jean took on the role of parent to David and Mary. She developed simple but powerful rules for the family to follow, e.g. kids allowed to wander anywhere, including rivers and the Georgian Bay, but be home a six o'clock or experience pain - 6:02 not acceptable - ouch.

While at home raising her family, she volunteered for activities in the evening. She became one of the first chairpersons of the autistic society and actively sought a building for the Kay Butchard School. Jean was also the first chairperson of the Meaford Museum, and actively worked for its present location. Another one of her quests for the family was to visit all the museums in Ontario. [We did accomplish quite a few.] But a more popular quest was to camp at all Provincial Parks [we succeeded]. Another side note: we would go on vacation only after the trip was researched for historical interests, ethnic backgrounds, ability for a daily swim, and some social interest. E.g. Going to Ottawa, to listen to PM John Diefenbaker giving his historical speech on Bill of Rights.

When the kids were off to Great Lakes Christian College, Jean then pursued the role of Meaford Librarian. She developed children's programs; she audio-taped seniors of Meaford, giving a personal history for Meaford and area. She was very diligent in obtaining local records, and helping people find their family roots. Jean went beyond recording facts of births, marriages, deaths, and sought out their personalities as well. Jean was noted for being a local historian and was sought out by many for her keen

grasp of history and her own sharp memory of the past. She was a CCCHS member. She was instrumental, along with Jim and Pauline Ford, in preparing the records of the Meaford Church of Christ for publication: "The Meaford Journals 1848-1998". From family diaries of the 1870's to 1880's, she wrote interesting excerpts for the local newspaper, the Meaford Express. These diaries also give interesting glimpses of the Meaford Church of Christ. One of the most unusual aspects of her role as librarian was in sending books to shut-in seniors to read. She would send books to match their reading styles, and very rarely would send the same book twice - she did this from memory and kept no notes. To keep up with the demand for books, she would pre-read; she took on five different speed reading methods. [The weekly 8 books, escalated beyond 20 - but after a year or two she stopped this as she wanted to get back to enjoying reading.]

After retiring from the library, she took on scouting out cemeteries for historical information [and catalogued many varieties of snakes at old tombstones!], and continued helping people with family roots. She and Charlie expanded their exploration of the countryside. They would get a compass out and follow a set direction - quite often to dead-ends, but this was often a two or three-day project.

Upon the passing of Charlie with a marriage of 46 years, Jean travelled through the Elderhostel organization and explored more of Canada, England, Finland, and Europe, and enjoyed the companionship of Eileen Dale and her neighbour, Marguerite Solomon on these trips. At home she would visit the elderly with a Scrabble game in hand. She also took on Bridge, and was a sought-after partner, playing about three evenings a week. Jean was also a storyteller, and gave speeches throughout the area to many organizations, and wrote excerpts for the grandchildren. She would watch CNN and CPAC, and you better come prepared with political, religious and social opinions. People, who knew Jean, quite often only knew one of her capacities, e.g. librarian or Bridge player, or historian, or church member. With this brief glimpse, one can see Jean as dynamic force, in all the roles she pursued.

- David Ellis

MY PERIODICAL COLLECTION

My mother, Grace Perry, was what is often called a "pack-rat". As a result, many things that others would throw away were saved. This was especially true of books and magazines. Since she was especially interested in the spread of the gospel and in the building of character and values, much of what was saved were religious periodicals. As a busy farmer's wife and mother of eight she did not find time to organize these items. They accumulated in piles and boxes in a room that sometimes seemed to be full of disorder.

When I left home in 1942 she made sure that I received the Gospel Herald monthly. This and my recollection of that room of stored items probably contributed to my decision to write my Master's Degree thesis on the subject of publications in the Restoration Movement in Canada. This thesis has recently been published in the form of a 320 page paperback book entitled, "A History of Religious Periodicals in the Restoration Movement in Canada". It records the sacrificial dedication and often unappreciated efforts of the various editors and publishers over a period of some 140 years and at the same time provides a sort of overview of the history of churches of Christ in Canada during the period. This book is recommended reading and may be ordered from the Gospel Herald Bookstore at \$21.95.

Much of the materials collected and researched for this thesis remain in my collection. They include the 1848 volume of "The Christian" published in St. John, New Brunswick; most of David Oliphant's periodicals published from 1845 to 1865, and beyond under a variety of titles; an incomplete collection of the "Bible Index" published in Toronto from 1873 to 1893; a microfilm copy of the "Christian Worker," 1881-86; Gospel Messenger, 1894-96; "The Bible Student," 1904 to 1913; "Christian Monthly Review," 1918 to 1933; and "Gospel Herald," 1936 to the present. Along with this collection of the major, longer-lasting periodicals, I have scattered copies of other less enduring publications. A good portion of this collection is also on microfilm. All of it awaits processing for future addition to the archival collection.

- Eugene C. Perry

PROCESSING PROGRESSING

Work on processing the CCCHS archival collection is moving ahead. The transfer of our items to acid-free files and storage boxes is progressing with the help of society member, Eileen Dale who spends several hours each Tuesday working on our holdings. Meanwhile, Eugene Perry in Beamsville is cataloguing his personal collection of periodicals. An index of the collection is being prepared by Dave Ellis and Ron Knight for posting on our web site so that, soon, interested researchers will be able to determine the society's materials that are available for examination. (Our web address is ccchs.ca—in lower case.) The temporary location of the CCCHS collection is at 120 Moccasin Dr., Waterloo, Ontario N2L 4C3. This is also the official address for our corporate location. Inquiries concerning the collection may be directed to this address, or forwarded by e-mail, to ghellis@golden.net.

REPORTING: DEC. 3 BOARD MEETING

The CCCHS board of directors met on Saturday, December 3 at 120 Moccasin Dr. to conduct the business of the society. Officers for the 2005-2006 year were voted upon, giving chairman, Geoff Ellis; vice-chairman, Ron Knight; secretary, Donald Perry; treasurer, Eugene Perry; historian, Dave Ellis. E. Perry gave a financial update: balance, Aug. 27, 2005, \$2,023.76; income (memberships) \$627.96; expenses, (bank charges and supplies) \$1,144.49; balance on hand: \$1,507.23. No advance was reported on the location of a permanent repository for the collection. (The current location and setting of the collection at 120 Moccasin Dr. was examined by the directors.) Several possibilities were identified for further consideration. The upgrading of our website was discussed. Dave Ellis and Ron Knight are providing leadership in the improvement of this site. A focus for the activity of the society was identified: "The Year of the Churches," in which a special effort will be made to collect church records. The 2006 annual meeting will take place in Hamilton, August 26, location and schedule to follow. The next meeting of the board of directors will take place in Waterloo, February 24.

WEB SITE: www.ccchs.ca (note lower case)

2005 ANNUAL MEETING

Approximately 50 members and friends met at the Grey Roots Heritage & Visitors Centre in Owen Sound, August 27, for the sixth annual meeting of the historical society. The setting, including the museum and a theatre were ideal for the gathering. During a brief business meeting, changes to the by-laws were approved, board members elected (including David Ellis, Meaford, and Eugene Perry, Beamsville), and a financial report given. Following lunch, the group reassembled to receive a presentation by Ron Knight on the Restoration movement in the Georgian Bay area. His power point program utilized the full screen and was particularly moving and informative. Donald Perry gave personalized material on some roots of the Restoration movement in Meaford that reached to the Carman, Manitoba area, linking the York family, James A. Harding, the Nashville Bible School, S. M. Jones, and the Beamsville Bible School. Geoffrey Ellis presented a 44 page research that consisted of items drawn from the periodicals reporting on the planting and growth of fifteen Georgian Bay Restoration churches. Copies of this research, "Restoration in the Georgian Bay, 1853-1884: Items from the Periodicals," are available, \$8.00 + plus postage and handling. CDs containing Ron Knight's power point presentation, "Restoration in the Georgian Bay," are also available, \$5.00 + postage and handling. Order, C/O CCCHS, 120 Moccasin Dr., Waterloo, ON N2L 4C3.

MEMBERSHIPS DUE, YEAR 2005-2006

Forward your \$25.00 annual membership to Eugene Perry, Treas., 4904 King St., Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6.

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