



**The Adolphustown Quakers:
Faith, Community, and Marriage Strategies
Among the Society of Friends in the Wilderness of Upper Canada**

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From early settlement in 1784, Quaker families were a strong presence in Adolphustown Township. Many of these families came as settlers and refugees from New York after the American Revolution and reached Adolphustown and the other surrounding townships in the summer of 1784 with the hopes of starting new lives in the wilderness of western Quebec. Situated along the northern shores of Lake Ontario, the Bay of Quinte area where the refugees settled had only been acquired by the British shortly before their arrival. It had

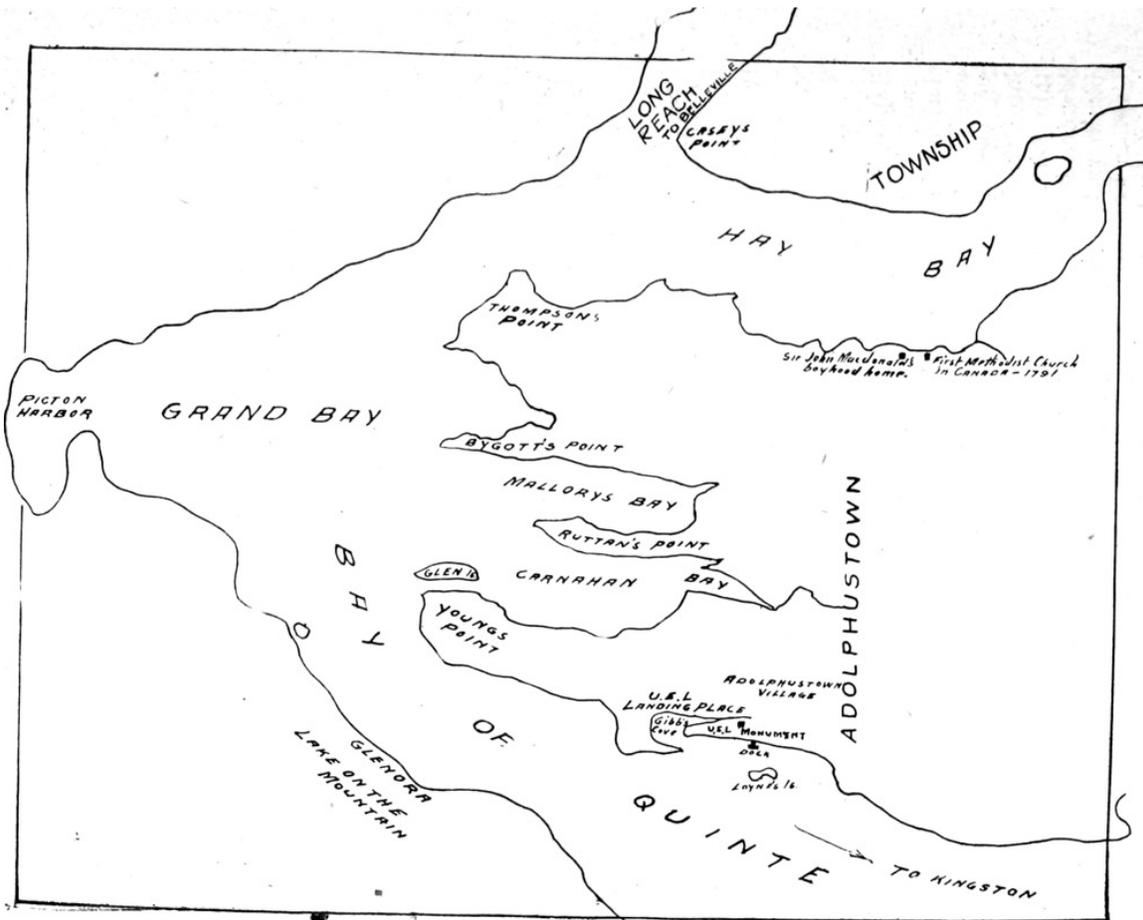
been purchased from the Mississauga First Nation in 1783 before the signing of the Treaty of Paris, although it is likely the meaning of land ownership and transfer differed between the two groups.² As the land was separated into two townships, the second group, known as the Cataraqui Townships, were first numbered, then named after the children of King George III; Adolphustown named after Adolphus, the Duke of Cambridge. The fourth township was relatively small compared to the others, with roughly 11,459 acres of

¹ The author gratefully acknowledges the CFHA Scholarship for funding, in part, the research for this article.

² Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, 2nd ed., (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 39.

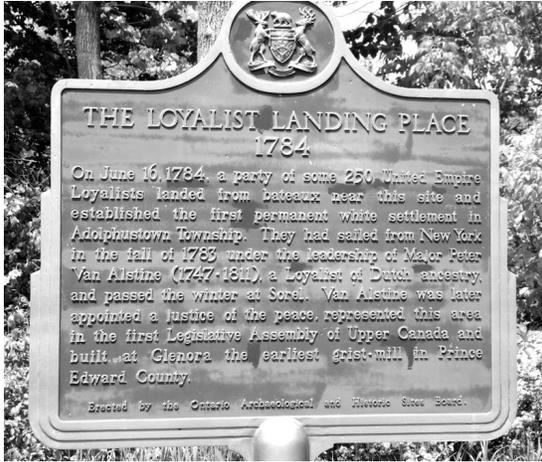
land surveyed to distribute between the arriving Loyalists.³ Though some of the land was difficult to farm due to the edge of the Canadian Shield reaching into Adolphustown, it soon became well populated by Loyalist settlers, notably by the company of Major Van Alstine. The party took ten months to reach Adolphustown after leaving New York in October 1783, finally arriving at Adolphustown in June of 1784, after stopping in the township of Sorel for the winter before continuing on.⁴ Among this group from New York were a number of Friends who planned to eke out a new existence in Upper Canada, most having lost their land and property in the chaos of

the revolution. A few were disowned Friends who had fought and subsequently been disowned from their meeting, while others were merely Loyalist sympathizers or family members who had refrained from fighting due to their emerging pacifist beliefs. These Friends were soon joined in Adolphustown and the surrounding areas by Quakers who emigrated from the United States in the following decades, creating and sustaining a distinct faith community on the frontier of Upper Canada. Within these Quaker families, certain patterns and family strategies emerged that add to our understanding of the Quaker experience in Upper Canada. First, though not unique to the frontier, Quakers continued to use



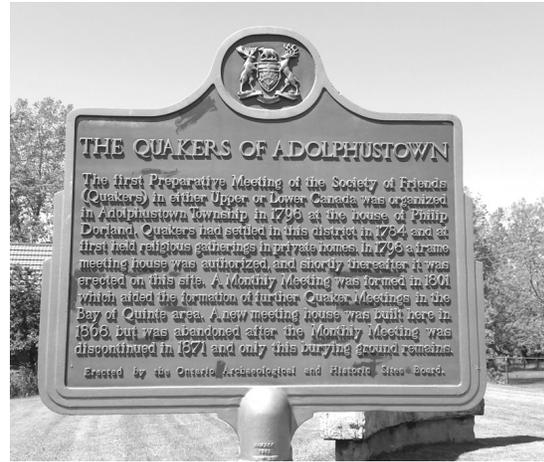
³ William Canniff, *Settlement of Upper Canada, With Special Reference to the Bay of Quinte* (Toronto: Dudley and Burns Printers, 1869), 448.

⁴ John Dorland Cremer, *Records of the Dorland Family in America: Embracing the Principal Branches Dorland* (Washington, DC: Byron S. Adams: 1898), 95.



On June 16, 1784, a party of some 250 United Empire Loyalists landed from bateaux near this site and established the first permanent white settlement in Adolphustown Township. They had sailed from New York in the fall of 1783 under the leadership of Major Peter Van Alstine (1747-1811), a Loyalist of Dutch ancestry, and passed the winter at Sorel. Van Alstine was later appointed a justice of the peace, represented this area in the first Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada and built at Glenora the earliest grist-mill in Prince Edward County.

intermarriage between prominent Quaker families to strengthen both family and faith ties; this is seen with multiple siblings from one family marrying into another family. A second, and uniquely gendered strategy among women Friends, was the pattern of young Quaker women marrying out of the Society of Friends to men within the Adolphustown community or surrounding areas and later acknowledging their discretion in order to be accepted back into membership. Though men within the community followed this path as well, the number of instances of women marrying out of order then acknowledging their behaviour afterwards recorded in the early Adolphustown Monthly Meeting minutes suggests that Quaker women faced societal norms that constrained them from finding a Quaker spouse outside their geographic community. Additionally, it indicates the



The first Preparative Meeting of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in either Upper or Lower Canada was organized in Adolphustown Township in 1798 at the house of Philip Dorland. Quakers had settled in this district in 1784 and at first held religious gatherings in private homes. In 1795 a frame meeting house was authorized and shortly thereafter it was erected on this site. A Monthly Meeting was formed in 1801 which aided the formation of further Quaker Meetings in the Bay of Quinte area. A new meeting house was built here in 1868 but was abandoned after the Monthly Meeting was discontinued in 1871 and only this burying ground remains.

importance of meeting membership for women living on the frontier where options to have a voice in their local community would have otherwise been limited. In contrast, it was possible for male Friends to look outside their immediate community for a partner, such as returning to their former meeting in New York to bring back a wife or travelling to another meeting in Upper Canada. The third and final strategy examined is the larger family size of the Quaker families who settled in and around Adolphustown. On the frontier, not all Quaker families appeared to have adhered to the family limitation pattern that historian Robert Wells' argued Friends were practicing in the United States.⁵ The possible explanations imply that these

⁵ Robert V. Wells, "Family Size and Fertility Control in Eighteenth-Century America: A Study of Quaker Families," *Population Studies* 25 (1971): 74.

families were growing in size both for the benefit of their farms but also their faith community, as more children meant more birthright Quakers and, thus, a flourishing Society.

By July of 1784, a total number of 2,194 adults, 1,492 children and 90 servants had been divided into their townships in Upper Canada along the lines of army unit or race and religion; the Royal Townships were inhabited by Catholic Highlanders, Scottish Presbyterians, German Calvinists, and Anglicans. The Cataraqui Townships were divided by disbanded army units, thus joining together a diverse group of people with equally diverse religions. Canadian historian Gerald Craig indicated that the exodus of Loyalists from America into Canada's frontier is seen as an "epic in Canadian history", and indeed has been mythologized in the retelling as well as in the memory of the descendants of these pioneers. Craig further argues that these refugees, viewed as public enemies by the revolutionary governments, faced many trials as they began their new lives in the wild, far from their previously pleasant dwellings in the colonies.⁶ Even so, the identities and motivations of those who first settled Upper Canada were decidedly mixed. Historian Norman Knowles argues that Regimental Loyalists, civilian Loyalists, and Associated Loyalists all migrated to the province for various reasons, from those ideologically dedicated to the British Empire, to those who saw the transition as an opportunity for themselves, and even some who had begrudgingly become caught in the crossfires of the conflict and had been left with little choice but to leave their

homes.⁷ Additionally, the resettlement process was difficult in itself; the journey there characterized by "discontent, disappointment, and division," where Loyalists became uneasy about land division, their accommodation, as well as supplies.⁸ Once arriving at their destination, Knowles maintains the settlers harboured feelings of anger and resentment due to the incompleteness of surveys and lack of proper provisions.⁹ Adolphustown was certainly no exception. John Dorland Cremer's 1898 family history book, *Records of the Dorland Family in America*, claims that the party had to live in canvas tents along the shoreline for quite a while until the government surveyor completed his work.¹⁰ Despite any notion that their experiences might have unified them, Knowles argues that the Loyalists did not exhibit the spirit of cooperation and community that has been attributed to them; instead, they continued to act as individuals focused on their own interests, to the point where officers of the Loyalist regiments complained they had little influence over those whom they had once led.¹¹ Regardless of the rocky start to life in Upper Canada, settlers were quick to establish not only their homes but also their faith communities. Among this diverse group in the unbroken wilderness, those who adhered to their Quaker family similarly began to come together for purposes of worship and fellowship. In her study of the Yonge Street Friends, Robynne Rogers Healey argues that the Quakers of small Upper Canadian communities not only helped construct a pluralistic society that would later emerge, but Quakers maintained and formed their communities

⁶ Gerald M. Craig, *Upper Canada: The Formative Years 1784-1841* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), 6.

⁷ Norman Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 15.

⁸ Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 17.

⁹ Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 18.

¹⁰ Dorland Cremer, *Records of the Dorland Family in America*. 95.

¹¹ Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 18.

in these remote places by means of kinship and family life.¹² Indeed, many of her observations of the Yonge Street Friends also ring true for the Quakers of Adolphustown.

Though Quakers were part of Adolphustown since its initial settlement, it was not until 1798 that a preparative meeting was established in the home of Philip Dorland. Before this, meetings for worship were held regularly, as noted by Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in their recorded minutes.¹³ Both Philip Dorland and his younger brother, Thomas Dorland, had been involved with the British cause and were in service of the Loyalist Provincial militia on Long Island.¹⁴ Additionally, Thomas Dorland had served in the British army under Major Peter Van Alstine.¹⁵ The brothers had been members of the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in Dutchess County, New York, though Philip had been disowned in 1779 for a multitude of ills, including fornication, waging money on a horse, carrying a pistol, and neglecting meetings.¹⁶ Thomas was disowned a year later in 1780 for also betting on horse races as well as marrying a non-friend.¹⁷ Though Thomas never returned to his faith, there is evidence that Philip Dorland still remained adherent to Quakerism, suggested by

Daniel Nelson in his paper on the family.¹⁸ Once in Adolphustown, Philip Dorland had been elected, in 1792, as a member of the first Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada for the riding of Prince Edward County and Adolphustown; he was unable to take the oath of office due to his Quaker beliefs and Major Van Alstine was elected in his place.¹⁹ This demonstrates that despite not being an actual member of a meeting, Philip Dorland would have still self-identified as a Quaker. In December of 1792, Dorland wrote an acknowledgment of his behaviour that was read at the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, and, after being declared sincere, he was accepted back as a member soon after.²⁰ Years later, in 1798, Nine Partners sent a committee to establish a preparative meeting in Upper Canada. They met in Philip Dorland's home and the Adolphustown Preparative Meeting was established under the care of Nine Partners, being given special privileges not usually held by preparative meetings such as the ability to admit marriages and accept back disowned members due to the great distance between the two meetings.²¹ In 1801, Adolphustown became its own Monthly Meeting, with roughly twenty-three per cent of all Adolphustown households identifying as Quaker.²²

¹² Robynne Rogers Healey, *From Quaker to Upper Canadian: Faith and Community Among Yonge Street Friends, 1801-1850* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 4.

¹³ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1790-1797, 19 August 1795.

¹⁴ Gordon Thompson and Randy Saylor, "New Light on Philip Dorland: Prodigal Son to Patriarch," *Canadian Quaker History Journal* 97 (2014): 58.

¹⁵ 61 Victoria Sessional Papers (No. 32) A.1898, Willet T. Casey's Personal Notes on Adolphustown, 55.

¹⁶ Nine Partners Digest: A Book of Testimonies, Marriages, Births, Deaths, Removals and the Manumission of Slaves, 1769-1798, 21 May 1779.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 19 May 1780.

¹⁸ Daniel Arthur Nelson, "Faith Enough to Move Mountains: The Dorlands and the Quakers of Upper Canada, 1784-1955", M.A. Thesis, Trent University, 2002.

¹⁹ Thompson and Saylor, "New Light on Philip Dorland", 46.

²⁰ Nine Partners Monthly Meetings, 1790-1797, 19 December 1792, 20 March 1793.

²¹ Nine Partners Women Monthly Meetings, 1794-1811, 14 November 1798.

²² Gregory Finnegan, "People of Providence, Polity and Property: Domesticity, Philanthropy and Land Ownership as Instruments of Quaker Community Development in Adolphustown, Upper Canada, 1784-1824" in *Faith, Friends and Fragmentation: Essays on Nineteenth Century Quakerism in Canada*, ed. Albert Schrauwers (Canadian Friends Historical Association, 1995), 19.

An early identifiable trend in the Adolphustown community is the frequent intermarriage of siblings between prominent Quaker families. Healey has argued that the combination of kinship and faith connections resulted in “interwoven communities where religious beliefs were supported by blood relations.”²³ This reinforcement of family and faith is a Quaker strategy that was unquestionably not limited to a frontier setting, as Quakers had been using family and faith ties long before their settlement in Upper Canada. The customs of marriage were heavily controlled by a meeting, as a couple had to first present itself in front of the women’s meeting, then later the men’s meeting, as well as gain parental consent from both families.²⁴ If one of the intended was from another meeting or had recently moved, a certificate had to be produced from their former meeting that proved their clearness to marry; once these steps had been accomplished, a committee of weighty members would investigate to ensure there were no previous engagements on either side, and that they were both members in good standing, until a final appearance before the meeting would take place in which the couple again declared their intentions to marry.²⁵ In this way, the Quaker community itself was heavily involved in the marriage process. Edwina Newman has argued that wealthier Quakers married for dynastic ties and business capital connections, though farming

Quakers on the frontier also sought marriages in which they would be well matched and suitable for one another.²⁶ Newman further stated that “[l]eading Quaker families effectively created a family archive that served to preserve extensive bonds of kinship...”²⁷ In Adolphustown, there are many instances of multiple siblings marrying into the same family, creating extremely tightly linked family ties in the wilderness that bolstered and solidified their faith community. Not only did they intermarry with other prominent families, there is also evidence that they married families that had ties to their original homes as well, such as the large community that came from Dutchess County, New York.

An example of strong intermarriage is seen in the family of John Dorland, brother of prominent community members Philip and Thomas, and weighty member of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting. John Dorland came to Adolphustown later than his brothers who had arrived in 1784, and first shows up in the return of inhabitants of Adolphustown in 1796 with a household size of eleven.²⁸ Two of his daughters married into the Haight family, with Mary Dorland marrying Daniel Haight and Bathsheba Dorland marrying Daniel’s nephew, Joel Haight. Mary Dorland married Daniel Haight in New York in 1789, as Daniel was originally from Nine Partners Monthly Meeting and Mary from the Oblong Monthly Meeting, both in Dutchess

²³ Healey, *From Quaker to Upper Canadian*, 53.

²⁴ J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 173.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Edwina Newman, “Quakers and the Family”, in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 435.

²⁷ Newman, “Quakers and the Family,” 435-436.

²⁸ Annual Return of the Inhabitants of Adolphustown, April 6, 1796, in the Consensus for the Township of Adolphustown, 1794-1822, Appendix to the Report of the Ontario Bureau of Industries, 1897, Warwick Bro’s and Rutter, Toronto, 1899.

County.²⁹ Canniff Haight, grandson of Daniel Haight, has suggested that Daniel Haight followed his father-in-law John Dorland to Canada and that his nephew Joel accompanied him, later marrying into that same family.³⁰ Of his grandfather, Haight has also written, “Though a Friend he was a Loyalist at heart and preferred to be under British rule.”³¹ There was further intermarriage between the Dorland and Haight families, notably between the children of Daniel Haight and Philip Dorland. Before his marriage to Mary Ricketson Dorland, Daniel Haight had been married to Mary Moore, and their one son Philip D. Haight married Anna Dorland in 1808. Anna was the daughter of Philip Dorland, cousin of Daniel Haight’s second wife Mary. This meant that Philip D. Haight married his first cousin once removed, though by his father’s second marriage and not by blood. This close connection likely led Philip and Anna to be married by a priest—despite the fact they were both members of the Adolphustown Meeting—because they knew it would have not been allowed if it was brought forward in the Meeting.³² The pair quickly produced acknowledgements for their marriage and were accepted back into the meeting soon after.³³ Philip’s younger half-brother John Dorland Haight also married a daughter of Philip Dorland, Betsey. Betsey would have also been John’s first cousin once removed, though this time by blood through John’s mother Mary. However, their marriage was accepted by the meeting after it was put forth and they wed in 1826.³⁴

The Hights quickly established themselves in Adolphustown as an illustrious Quaker family that intermarried with other such families. Two of Daniel Haight’s other children married into the prominent English Quaker family, the Mulletts. Arriving from England with eleven children, William Mullet and his wife Mary Clothier Mullett landed in Quebec in 1821 but soon settled in Adolphustown.³⁵ Though once prosperous, the family had fallen on hard times in England after the depression following the end of the Napoleonic Wars and subsequently immigrated to Upper Canada with the help of their relatives in hopes of bettering their lives.³⁶ As a number of their children were nearing adulthood at their arrival in Upper Canada, many were quick to marry into well-known Quaker families in the area. Their son, John Mullett, married Bathsheba Tabitha Haight, the ninth child of Daniel and Mary Haight in 1823, and in 1828, their daughter Deborah Mullett married the eighth Haight child, Consider Merritt Haight. Both sisters were members of the Adolphustown Meeting as well as their spouses. Canniff Haight wrote that John Mullett “moved to Adolphustown Village, within a stone’s throw of the place where his wife’s father [Daniel Haight] began life.”³⁷ The Haight children, part of a weighty Amer-Canadian Quaker family, married predominantly into other prominent Quaker families within their community, creating incredibly interwoven families connected by both faith and blood. Not only did they create strong ties in

²⁹ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1783-1790, 18 March 1789.

³⁰ Canniff Haight, *A Genealogical Narrative of the Daniel Haight Family by his Grandson Canniff Haight*. (Toronto: Roswell and Hutchinson, Printers, 1899), 48.

³¹ Haight, *A Genealogical Narrative of the Daniel Haight*, 20.

³² Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 15 September 1808.

³³ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 20 October 1808.

³⁴ West Lake Monthly Meeting “Book C”, 1824-1837, 16 November 1826.

³⁵ Healey, “I am Getting a Considerable of a Canadian They Tell Me’: Connected Understandings in the Nineteenth-Century Quaker Atlantic” *Quaker Studies* 15 (2001): 30.

³⁶ Healey, “I am Getting a Considerable of a Canadian They Tell Me’”, 30.

³⁷ Haight, *A Genealogical Narrative of the Daniel Haight*, 46.

Upper Canada, they had links back in New York. The Haight and Dorland families also intermarried with the Clapp family from Dutchess County. In Adolphustown, Benjamin, Gilbert, Joseph and Paul Clapp owned land, and the Clapp name appears frequently in the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting minutes. Back in Dutchess County, Mary Dorland, sister of John, Philip, and Thomas, married Elias Clapp, cousin of the Clapps in Adolphustown.³⁸ Their son, Gilbert Clapp, found a wife in Adolphustown. Gilbert Clapp's wife, Elizabeth Bedell, appears to have been a weighty member of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, though she was a daughter of Reuben Bedell and Letty Dorland. Letty Dorland was also part of the pioneer Dorland family, sister to the aforementioned Mary, Thomas, John and Philip, making Elizabeth and Gilbert Clapp first cousins. Letty Dorland Bedell was reinstated back into membership by the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in 1803 after moving to Upper Canada and becoming an active member in the Adolphustown Meeting.³⁹ Though Letty did not regain membership until 1803, she had been living in Adolphustown with her husband for many years prior. Undoubtedly, the extent of intermarriage within these families created extremely interrelated connections between prominent families, both in Adolphustown and across the border, but it proved an issue for children of these families who struggled to find an appropriate spouse who was not related to them in some way.

The remoteness of Adolphustown coupled with its small community presented a unique challenge to its young people of a marriageable age. As Quakers insisted on

endogamy, this was particularly tough for Quakers who had to find a partner within their faith. In *The Quaker Family in Colonial America*, Jerry Frost argues that, after 1755, the revival of the discipline resulted in a severity of dealing with improper marriages, or marriages that took place outside of the faith. This was due to the belief that the allowance of out of order marriages would encourage others to follow suit, resulting in children raised outside of the faith and thus splintering the community.⁴⁰ In her article, *Quietist Quakerism*, Healey argues that the Society of Friends shifted their focus of discipline onto the issue of endogamy in a quest for purity but also in its hope for the future of Quakerism.⁴¹ Unfortunately for the Adolphustown Friends, the pool of eligible partners was considerably smaller than the one they would have had access to in areas such as New York, and the growing number of disowned Friends due to improper marriages demonstrates that this was a very real issue in the frontier settlement. However, it appears that male Friends had a slightly greater chance of finding a Quaker partner outside of Adolphustown from nearby meetings or from their previous home. It is likely these connections were made from knowing an eligible Friend through family members or other connections. In this manner, women Friends faced a distinctive gendered disadvantage in their inability to travel and find a spouse. Though women were considered spiritual equals to men in the Quaker faith and able to travel in ministry, the higher number of disowned women Friends in the early years of the Adolphustown Meeting compared to men suggests that travel might have been limited

³⁸ *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte: Including Genealogies of Old Families and Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens* (Toronto: Rolph and Clark, Limited, 1904), 195.

³⁹ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1798-1813, 19 May 1803.

⁴⁰ Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America*, 159.

⁴¹ Robynne Rogers Healey, "Quietist Quakerism, 1692-c.1805" in *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 54.

to ministry alone and not for reasons of finding a spouse. For example, from 1798 to 1799, Edward and James Barker were the only male Friends disciplined for marrying out of the unity.⁴² Comparatively, four Quaker women in Adolphustown married out of order in the same two year time period.⁴³

In further examining the ability of Adolphustown male Friends to find spouses outside of their community, Thomas Bowerman proves an excellent example. Originally from Dutchess County, Bowerman came to Adolphustown in 1784 and selected a farm for himself before returning to Dutchess County to marry fellow Quaker Sarah Vincent and bring her back to Upper Canada.⁴⁴ After his wife's early death soon after giving birth to their first child in 1791, Bowerman again returned over a year later to Dutchess County and married the daughter of another prominent Quaker family, Maturah Bull.⁴⁵ Thomas Bowerman was not a member in good standing at the time of their marriage, and Maturah was subsequently disowned after their wedding.⁴⁶ Although Thomas was not an active member, his desire to marry within his faith reveals an adherence to Quakerism despite his lack of membership. Supporting this is the fact that both Maturah and Thomas were accepted back as members

soon after their marriage and eventually became weighty members of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, together having ten children.⁴⁷ Similarly, two of Thomas's younger brothers, Stephen and Judah Bowerman, both members of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, went to the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting and found suitable wives there. In 1809, Judah married Abigail Hughes; Hughes was a member of a weighty family, and the two returned to Prince Edward County after their marriage and settled within the limits of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting.⁴⁸ Two years later, Stephen Bowerman travelled to the Yonge Street Meeting and married Abigail Hughes's younger sister Amy Hughes.⁴⁹ Just as the Bowerman brothers left the Adolphustown community to find a spouse, so too did Philip Dorland. Records show that Dorland married Lydia Shotwell, his second wife, from the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, though the two married at the Rahway and Plainfield Monthly Meeting in Union, New Jersey, in 1808.⁵⁰ Dorland brought his wife back to Adolphustown with him where she became an elder at the women's Monthly Meeting, a representative at various half-yearly meetings, as well as part of multiple committees.⁵¹ Healey, in her study of the Yonge Street Friends, confirms that male Friends were able to travel to other

⁴² Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 28 November 1798, 25 December 1799.

⁴³ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 28 November 1798, 24 December 1798, 26 June 1799, 24 July 1799.

⁴⁴ Albert C. Bowerman, *The "Bowerman" Family of Canada Descendants of Ichabod Bowerman of Dutchess CO. N.Y. 1683-1796* (Bloomfield, ON: Canadian Quaker Archives, 1904), 54.

⁴⁵ Bowerman, *The "Bowerman" Family of Canada*, 58.

⁴⁶ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting 1790-1797, 17 July 1793.

⁴⁷ Bowerman, *The "Bowerman" Family of Canada*, 68.

⁴⁸ Healey, *From Quaker to Upper Canadian*, 107.

⁴⁹ Healey, *From Quaker to Upper Canadian*, 60.

⁵⁰ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1794-1811, 18 June 1807.

⁵¹ Adolphustown Women's Monthly Meeting, 1808-1824. Lydia S. Dorland's certificate of removal is presented at the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting on 17 November 1808. Soon after, her name appears in the Women's Monthly Meeting in May of 1809 as being appointed to committees. She is appointed to attend the Half Years Meeting in July of 1811, 1812, and is made elder in May of 1813.

meetings or their meeting of origin to seek a spouse.⁵² Though female Friends did occasionally marry outside their community, it was never a result of them specifically travelling with the express purpose of finding a partner. Travel with the intention to marry is seen in the Adolphustown Meeting Minutes, where Judah Bowerman requests from the meeting a marriage certificate just before he leaves for the Yonge Street Meeting.⁵³ It is likely that Judah Bowerman had not known his wife before travelling to Yonge Street, though his brother Thomas would have undoubtedly heard about his future spouse from his brother and sister-in-law before he left for Yonge Street. Hugh McMullen is another Friend who appears to have travelled out of Adolphustown to wed. In the summer of 1806, he requested a marriage certificate for clearness directed to the Queensbury Monthly Meeting in New York.⁵⁴ Queensbury Monthly Meeting records indicate that on 8 January 1807, Hugh McMullen, son of Hugh McMullen of Sherman, Washington County, New York, married Lydia Southwick.⁵⁵ It also appears that McMullen did not stay in Queensbury but returned with his bride to Upper Canada, as he is back in the Adolphustown meeting minutes as part of a committee in March of 1807.⁵⁶ This was not the first time McMullen had travelled; he requested certificates demonstrating his membership in 1804 and 1805 when he travelled to New York.⁵⁷ It is highly probable that McMullen either met Lydia Southwick during his travels or knew someone with a connection to her that might have suggested McMullen return for their union later on.

For women Friends who did not have the privilege of travelling for a spouse or were unable to find an appropriate partner within their own meeting, options in Adolphustown and the surrounding areas could be quite scarce. Out of this reality emerged a pattern among the Adolphustown women Friends in which they would marry out of their faith and acknowledge their mistake afterwards, a “marry first, apologize later” trend. Though male Friends were also using this strategy, it appears more frequently with female Friends in the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting. If a suitable Quaker spouse was not an option, some Friends married non-Quakers who lived in their community, were their neighbours, and even those who were expressly of a different faith, such as those who attended the Hay Bay Methodist Church just a few minutes walking distance from the Adolphustown Meeting House. Between 1808 and 1812, there are nine instances of female Friends marrying out of order, six of whom acknowledged their behaviour and were accepted back as members.⁵⁸ Comparatively, there were only two male Friends who married out of order within that period, and both were not accepted back in the records of the Adolphustown Meeting Minutes up until 1813. Although in earlier years, such as between 1798 and 1807, there is evidence that at least eighteen male Friends married out of order, only six acknowledged and were accepted back as members. However, that number may be inflated by those who had married out previously and only acknowledged their indiscretion years later. In those same years, ten female Friends married outside the Society, though nine of

⁵² Healey, *From Quaker to Upper Canadian*, 67.

⁵³ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 20 April 1809.

⁵⁴ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 21 August 1806.

⁵⁵ Josephine Frost, *Quaker Records: Chatham, Columbia Co. and Queensbury, Warren Co., N.Y.* (New York: 1910), 14.

⁵⁶ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 19 March 1807.

⁵⁷ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 19 January 1804, 17 October 1805.

⁵⁸ Adolphustown Women's Monthly Meeting, 1808-1824.

them acknowledged and were received again as members.⁵⁹ After 1813, the number of male Friends marrying out of the Society of Friends is hard to decipher with a gap in the minutes, though the women's meeting recorded sixteen out-of-unity marriages of female Friends between 1813 and 1821, with twelve admissions of acknowledgement and reacceptance.⁶⁰ Undoubtedly, the distance between the Adolphustown community and other Quaker meetings made the prospect of marrying a non-Quaker within the town more appealing to men and women alike.

Though Friends married non-members for various reasons, the high rate of acknowledgements and reacceptance by female Friends raises a few possibilities distinct to the frontier setting. Firstly, it suggests the importance of marriage on the frontier for women, as quite a few of the disowned and reaccepted members were from weighty Quaker families, notably from the Haight, Dorland, Bowerman, Bull, Barker, and Hubbs families. Many of them were accepted back quite quickly after they were disowned, which indicates that their faith remained important to them even in a marriage decision that was going against it. Additionally, the high number of female Friend acknowledgements suggests that female Friends might have felt the sting of non-membership more than their male counterparts did on the frontier. Although disowned Quaker women were allowed to attend meetings of worship and were not shunned, their exclusion from meetings of business served to isolate or disadvantage those who did not acknowledge their behaviour and become recognized members again. In this sense, their marriage might have done little to support their faith community, but nonetheless was a strategy

used by a number of women Friends to gain a spouse but also be able to return to the fold of the meeting later on. Healey has suggested that the geographic isolation of early Upper Canadian Quaker communities led to "the value of membership in the meeting [taking] on increased importance."⁶¹ This reveals why so many of these disowned women sought reacceptance back into their young meeting instead of adopting the faith of their spouse. Acknowledgement was not for reasons of reconciliation with family members either. In Philip Dorland's will, despite the fact that his daughter Catherine, called Caty, had married out of order at the time of writing and was not a member in good standing, she still is present in his will: "It is my will and I order That my son D. Bedell and Arnoldi and my Daughters Anna[,] Caty[,] Betsy[,] and Margaret each Receive out of my Estate a sum to the amount of the two Hundred acres of Land that my son Philip improved on..."⁶² Clearly, her choice to marry outside the faith had not resulted in a break from her family. Eventually, Caty Dorland Booth was accepted back into the meeting, though seven years after the writing of her father's will.⁶³

The family of David Barker and Lydia Shove Barker, adherent Quakers, also fall into the category of marrying out of order yet returning back to the faith afterwards. Their family further proves an interesting study of a Quaker family that had continual links back to New York and Massachusetts, as well as a son travelling to find a spouse at another meeting. There are discrepancies in the story of how the Barker family came to Upper Canada, as earlier records maintain that the family patriarch, David Barker, settled in Adolphustown in 1784 with

⁵⁹ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813.

⁶⁰ Adolphustown Women's Monthly Meeting, 1808-1824.

⁶¹ Healey, *From Quaker to Upper Canadian*, 54.

⁶² Estate File of Philip Dorland, Archive of Ontario Estate Files, 5.

⁶³ Adolphustown Women's Meeting, 1801-1824, 18 March 1820.

Major Van Alstine's party as a Loyalist sympathizer who had lost his land for selling cattle to the British.⁶⁴ However, investigation into these claims by a descendant of the family has demonstrated that it is likely the Barker family came in the 1790s as late Loyalists, and that the story of them being original settlers was more of an embellishment or perhaps a misunderstood interpretation.⁶⁵ Out of David Barker's twelve children, eight actually settled or were born in Upper Canada, though nine altogether lived in Upper Canada at some point. Before joining the Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, Barker and his family were from the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting in Massachusetts, and a certificate of removal for David Barker and his children was presented at Nine Partners in June of 1781.⁶⁶ The third child of the family and eldest son to come to Canada, Edward Barker, was disowned from Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in 1789 for marrying out of order.⁶⁷ He was accepted back in 1800 by Nine Partners and at that point was living within the territory of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting. Interestingly enough, in 1804 he requested from Adolphustown Monthly Meeting a certificate of his clearness for marriage directed to the Galloway Monthly Meeting, meaning his first wife died sometime before this.⁶⁸ After marrying Sarah Gould, a certificate of removal for the now Sarah Barker was presented in Adolphustown from the Galloway Monthly Meeting in

New Jersey dated 20 March 1805.⁶⁹ The two returned to Adolphustown shortly after their marriage, both becoming weighty members later on. The eldest Barker daughter, Phebe, only settled in Upper Canada after her marriage to Cornelius Blount from the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting. Both widowers now on their second marriage, Blount travelled to New York to marry Phebe Barker before bringing her and the children from her first marriage back with him. Blount was accepted as a member of Nine Partners Monthly Meeting in 1796, along with his then wife, Lydia Bowerman Blount.⁷⁰ Meanwhile, Phebe Barker had married out of order to Timothy Stevenson, yet was accepted back by Nine Partners in 1797.⁷¹ After settling and having children with her husband in Dutchess County, Phebe was widowed, and Cornelius Blount also became a widower in 1811.⁷² Around 1815, Cornelius Blount returned to New York to wed Phebe Barker Stevenson, as the name Phebe Blount appears in the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting in 1815.⁷³ After her marriage, Phebe was living close to her other siblings in Upper Canada and was on various committees, married to a weighty Friend who had previously been connected to the Bowerman family, many of which were also Friends. The seventh child of Daniel and Lydia Barker, sister to Phebe, was Elisabeth Barker. She married against the Society to Abraham Cronk, though she offered acknowledgement at the

⁶⁴ *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*, 150.

⁶⁵ R. Stearns Hicks, "A historical and biographical sketch of the late David Barker" in *Herbert Clarence Burleigh Fonds – Family Film Series – Barker*, Queens University Archives, 183.

⁶⁶ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1779-1783, 22 June 1781.

⁶⁷ Nine Partners Monthly meeting, 1783-90, 18 February 1789.

⁶⁸ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 15 November 1804.

⁶⁹ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 18 July 1805.

⁷⁰ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1790-1797, 16 November 1796.

⁷¹ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1790-1797, 18 January 1797.

⁷² *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*, 152.

⁷³ Adolphustown Women's Monthly Meeting, 1808-1824, 2 July 1815.

Adolphustown Monthly Meeting in 1798, and the two settled in Sophiasburgh.⁷⁴ Abraham Cronk's younger brother Reuben Cronk, a Quaker, married Elisabeth Barker's younger sister, Lydia.⁷⁵ Unfortunately for Lydia, her husband Reuben passed away without the two having any children, and she re-married Richard Solmes, a child of early settler Nathaniel Solmes and his wife Lydia Ricketson Dorland. Her second husband was not a Quaker, and the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting disowned her in 1815, though accepted her acknowledgement in 1817.⁷⁶ The Barker family and their children demonstrate a number of patterns examined in this paper. They travelled outside the meeting to find a spouse, married out of order and acknowledged soon after, and the extended family maintained continual links between America and Upper Canada.

The final trend examined in this paper is the seemingly larger-than-average family size exhibited by the Quaker families in Adolphustown in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century. In his paper on the Adolphustown Township, Gregory Finnegan argued that the Quaker's need for labour reproduction on their remote farms coupled with "their equitable devotion to economic prosperity and the attainment of spiritual fulfillment" led to larger family sizes.⁷⁷ This argument is fairly at odds with the evidence that Robert Wells put forth regarding Quaker fertility and family size limitation. Wells found in his study of 276 Quaker families from New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania that there was a distinct decline in births by

Quaker women born between 1731 and 1755, the 'revolutionary' group, as well as between 1756 and 1785, the 'pre-revolutionary' group.⁷⁸ This demonstrates that perhaps in a frontier setting in Upper Canada, the Adolphustown Quakers were an anomaly. Finnegan found that in Adolphustown, Quaker household size grew fairly steadily from 1794 to 1820; the average size being 5.6 in 1794, rising to 7.4 in 1804, then peaking at 8.2 in 1820.⁷⁹ Comparatively, the non-Quaker households generally were lower; in 1794 the average household size being 5.5, rising to 6.7 in 1804, then down to 5.9 in 1820.⁸⁰ Although these numbers are helpful in establishing an overall trend, they do little to explain who these Quakers were, what their level of adherence to their faith was, or why they chose to have such large families when other Quaker families were intentionally limiting their own. In regards to the Barker family, the eight siblings who settled around Prince Edward County had an average of 6.8 children each. They would all fit within Wells' identified 'post-revolutionary' group as the women giving birth were born between 1756 and 1785, their childbearing years ending by 1830. While two siblings had only four children each, fitting into the average fertility rate of the post-revolutionary Quakers Wells studied, others such as adherent Quaker Phebe Blount (née Barker then Stevenson) had eight children between her two husbands; her sister Elisabeth Cronk had nine children, and younger sister Sarah Hill had ten.⁸¹ All three of the sisters were on committees for the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, making house visits, preparing testifications,

⁷⁴ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 28 November 1798.

⁷⁵ *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*, 211.

⁷⁶ Adolphustown Women's Monthly Meeting, 1808-1824, 15 October 1817.

⁷⁷ Finnegan, "People of Providence," 16.

⁷⁸ Wells, "Family Size and Fertility Control in Eighteenth-Century America", 74.

⁷⁹ Finnegan, "People of Providence," 19.

⁸⁰ Finnegan, "People of Providence."

⁸¹ *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*, 152.



reports, and even attending some of the Half Years Meetings.⁸² It could be that these women did not limit their fertility to the same degree as other Quaker women in the post-revolutionary period due to frontier related reasons. Though having children to help around the farm may have been a small factor, it was more likely a way to grow the Quaker community by raising large families of birthright Quakers in the area.

James Noxon and his wife Elizabeth Dorland are another example of a large Quaker family in Adolphustown. Though apparently quite non-religious in his early life, James married his first wife Lanor DeLong in Dutchess County, New York, before making the trek to Upper Canada; Lanor would die a year after the birth of their first child.⁸³ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting recorded that James Noxon had removed to Adolphustown some time ago, thus at some point between the death of his first wife and around his second marriage he was accepted into the Society of Friends.⁸⁴ The Adolphustown Monthly Meeting accepted his second wife, Elizabeth Dorland, in 1798: Elizabeth was the child of Gilbert Dorland, brother to the Upper Canadian pioneers John, Philip and Thomas Dorland, though Gilbert stayed in

New York.⁸⁵ Born in 1774, James Noxon's wife Elizabeth Dorland Noxon falls within the post-revolutionary age group mentioned earlier and was likely raised a Quaker. They proved to be a rather fruitful couple and together the pair had nine children together.⁸⁶ Both James and Elizabeth Noxon were weighty members of the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting and prominent members within their community. James held the paid position of path-master for the years of 1797 and 1798, was recommended as a minister in 1800, and made quite a few religious visits to other meetings.⁸⁷ In the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting minutes, he proposed to make a religious visit to the townships above the Bay of Quinte and his proposal



⁸² Adolphustown Women's Monthly Meeting, 1808-1824.

⁸³ *Pioneer Life on the Bay of Quinte*, 76.

⁸⁴ Nine Partners Monthly Meeting, 1769-1897, 18 March 1799.

⁸⁵ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 26 September 1798.

⁸⁶ "Noxon Family Bible, an account of the descendants of James Noxon who came to Canada in 1794", available online at <http://www.biblerecords.com/noxon.html>

⁸⁷ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 24 February 1800.

was accepted.⁸⁸ Later that same year, he proposed to make another religious visit to parts of New York as a minister and it was agreed in unity for him to go.⁸⁹ Elizabeth also became a weighty member, as she was on many committees as well as being appointed the role of elder in 1811.⁹⁰ During this time, Elizabeth cared for a large household, having nine of her own children as well as caring for her husband's daughter from his first marriage, though her eldest son died before he reached his tenth birthday.⁹¹ As weighty members of the Adolphustown Meeting and active community members, it is clear that James and Elizabeth Noxon chose not to limit their family size but instead continued having children over an almost two decade time period.



As a frontier town settled by Loyalists of various religions and then by subsequent immigration influx from the United States until the war of 1812, Adolphustown stands as a unique community. From initial settlement in 1784, there was a strong Quaker presence, as we know that in 1790 at least two Quaker preachers came to the town and held services of worship for the Quaker inhabitants in the area.⁹² With strong ties to their home in New York and the other colonies, the Quakers forged an existence in the township by means of intermarriage to other prominent families where ties had existed before settlement. Many also chose to grow their families instead of limiting them, with a great deal of Quaker families well surpassing the family size averages laid out by Wells.⁹³ Other gendered strategies have emerged, such as male Friends finding a spouse outside of the immediate community, whereas women Friends often chose to marry outside of the faith then ask for forgiveness afterwards. All of these patterns were approaches used to build and sustain a faith community in the wilderness. Despite

⁸⁸ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1798-1813, 20 May 1802.

⁸⁹ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 21 October 1802.

⁹⁰ Adolphustown Monthly Meeting, 1798-1813, 17 August 1811.

⁹¹ "Noxon Family Bible, an account of the descendants of James Noxon who came to Canada in 1794."

⁹² Walter S. Herrington, *History of the County of Lennox and Addington* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada, 1913), 150.

⁹³ Wells, "Family Size and Fertility Control in Eighteenth-Century America," 82.

this, questions still remain about this distinct community. Though this paper offers suggestions as to why certain behaviours were exhibited in Adolphustown, such as the magnification of intermarriage among Friends, there is much left to examine. Edwina Newman argues that up until the mid-nineteenth century, Quaker families were “uniquely identifiable, the basic building block of a coherent and self-conscious community.”⁹⁴ In a remote setting with strong intermarriage, large families, and high numbers of out of order marriages, it becomes harder to identify the devout from the barely adherent. Without attendance lists, it is difficult to decipher who still attended meetings of worship and identified as Quaker although no longer a member. Despite this, the Quakers of Adolphustown grew their faith community and were active in the life and leadership of the town in the early nineteenth century.⁹⁵ Due to shifts within the community such as access to land and changes in immigration, the Adolphustown Monthly Meeting was reduced to a Preparative Meeting in 1821 and the role of monthly meeting was transferred to the neighbouring area of West Lake where there was a greater Quaker population at that time, as Adolphustown Preparative had only 64 identifiable members by 1824.⁹⁶ Once a pioneer town with a strong minority population of Quakers, the Adolphustown Quakers prove to be an interesting study of the strategies used by the Friends to construct and grow their own faith community.

⁹⁴ Newman, “Quakers and the Family,” 443.

⁹⁵ Finnegan, “People of Providence,” 18.

⁹⁶ Finnegan, “People of Providence.”