



Rev. Ruggle

CAS history written

A History of Children's Aid in Halton by Richard E. Ruggle, published by the Children's Aid Society of the Regional Municipality of Halton, 1978, \$2.50.

This 48-page paperback by Rev. Ruggle of Glen Williams comes at a time when the relationship between society and her destitute children is under increasing public scrutiny.

The booklet covers the founding of the Halton society (Feb. 15, 1914) and the period proceeding it to about 1891 when Ontario's first Children's Aid Society was founded in Toronto. The name of the society's first president J.M. Denyes, still lives on in a school's name in Milton and besides a photograph of him, Mr. Ruggle has also obtained a copy of the handwritten minutes of the first minute book wherein are the six objectives of the society.

And as well as the men and women who were instrumental in the society's beginnings, Mr. Ruggle has also sketched in the roots of the issues that are still blown today.

Reading reports of the society's first inspector, Charles Norton, who worked from 1914 to 1919, one realized things haven't changed much. Among the inspector's reports lifted by the Reverend for the book were these:

"An eight-year-old boy whose step-parents beat him and had left his body covered with bruises;

"A fifteen-year-old who kept running away was examined at a hospital clinic for 'feeble-mindedness' and then encouraged as he took up a trade;

"A child whose mother was a 'drug fiend' and had left home to lead a 'questionable life' was taken into care."

But although the life sketched in by these brief reports appears as a harsh one, the society's pioneering officials approached it as a mission and pinpointed what they thought were the causes of the situation.

The society's second inspector, William H. Stewart, left his job as principal at the Acton public school to serve from 1919 to 1929. Mr. Ruggle, who has been a member of the board of directors writes that Stewart attributed neglect to "unnatural parents who fail in their duty, ignorant parents who do not know their duty, and parents who are financially unable to care for their children."

Those are but two examples of the work in the booklet which ends its chapters with the growth of the society to this day.

Mr. Ruggle spent two years researching the society's files, private correspondence, local newspapers and conducted interviews in some cases as late as November, 1977, to put together the history. He has also published a book on Norval, a booklet on St. Alban's church and has the history of Glen Williams coming but soon his home for the past decade.

But this little history of children's aid in Halton would be a valuable addition to the library of anyone interested in local history, society, government and development.

Roads condition discussed

Halton Hills works committed members commended town road crews last week for their efforts after Mayor Tom Hill said roads in Halton Hills were in better shape before the town took them over from the old township of Esqueping.

"If I was the people on the 8th Line from 20 to 25 Sideroad, I wouldn't be paying one penny of taxes," Mayor Hill said. "It's a bloody disgrace." He added that the roads in the days of Esqueping Township were in much better condition.

"I've heard that so many times I'm getting sick of it," works chairman Pat McKenzie said. "I think staff are doing a terrific job."



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