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## Starrs Of Vandorf Have Long History In Quaker Clan

They loathe war, love simplicity, worship God in every act they perform—whether it's the preparation of a meal or the plowing of an acre—and worship together every Sunday morning in a remarkable service of silence shorn of all recognizable trappings of Christianity.

These are the people called Quakers, the Religious Society of Friends, and in all Canada there are only 700 of them, half in Ontario.

They have no formal creeds, no tight set of rules, but if any one text can be applied to them and to their brand of Christianity, it is Matt. 5:16 — "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Ask three Quakers a question about their faith and the chances are you'll get three different

answers. But about one thing they are unanimous: That there is an "Inner Light" in all men; "the Christ within." The Quaker aim is to exhibit that Light every waking hour. The good deeds that result are numerous enough to make the Boy Scout creed look a little pallid.

Guards Her Age  
Two of the oldest "birthright" Starrs in Canada are the Starrs of Vandorf. Elmer, 78, and Elma, who like any woman named after her husband and in her Quakerese plain talk said: "I'm not as old as that."

The silvery-thatched, blue-eyed farmer, who looks 15 years younger than his calendar age, is a Quaker because he doesn't like to worship any other way. From May to October, every year, the Friends open the old meeting house on Yonge Street near the Newmarket Rd. and the Starrs worship there regularly. In winter they go to the Newmarket meeting of another group, with occasional visits to Mennonite and other services.

The Starrs, who have two boys and two girls, are great believers in Bible-reading before breakfast. "The senses are more alert and the children were not so sleepy," said Mrs. Starr.

The last wedding at the old Yonge St. meeting house, that dates back to 1808, was a Starr wedding, in 1944, when their daughter, Hulda Louise was married to Raymond Stanley from Ohio. Theirs was the first wedding since 1833. Like every other aspect of their faith, Quaker wedding is a model of simplicity.

Marry Themselves  
In these parts there are few meetings with ministers or pastors, although in some states there are congregations where a full-time minister is employed, a choir and organ are featured and carpets cover the floor. Because they are law-abiding people, the Quaker meetings with-out pastors usually appoint two of their number to be licensed by Queen's Park for the performance of wedding ceremonies. The ceremonies, however, are performed by the couples themselves.

Earlier, their engagement had to be approved by the Monthly Meetings to which they belonged. Now, before Friends at the meeting place, they rise, join hands and promise through Divine Assistance to be loving and faithful "until it" shall please God to separate us. From that moment on, in the eyes of the Friends they are man and wife. Civil formalities are observed with the signing of the marriage certificate.

Trusted more, perhaps, than any other religious organization by the Russians, Quakers have taken food and fellowship to that country, sent radioactive vegetables in protest to Nikita Khrushchev, President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, sailed a tiny ketch toward the U.S. nuclear weapons testing area in the Pacific and maintained a Quaker lobby for peace at the U.N.

Command Respect  
Among all people the name Quaker commands instant respect and they are one of the few religious denominations about which bad things are rarely said. There are many illus-

trious Friends among the tiny band estimated at 180,000 around the world. One of the best known is Britain's chocolate king, Paul Cadbury.

Founded by George Fox in 17th-century England, the movement was a general display of dissatisfaction with the established church, its rituals and forms. The name Quaker, once a derisive tag for those Friends who experienced an overwhelming religious ecstasy that made them quake, was worn proudly like a badge until its jeering flavor was forgotten.

Violently Pacifist  
If these gentle people can be accused of fanaticism about anything, it's about peace. Violently pacifists, they are — if they will pardon the phrase — up in arms at the first mention of the word war. And yet, Cecil Evans, 33, general secretary of the Canadian Friends Service Committee, isn't sure that all Quaker young people would refuse to fight if World War III started tomorrow. The Friends' position is that each is led "according to his light."

"I have always taught that if someone is pulling your hair, let your head go back with the pull," said Elmer Starr. "Then it's no fun for him and he soon loses interest."

Many of the 80 or more who worship silently at the Toronto meeting on Lowther Ave. are "attenders" and not Quakers; friends with a small "f" if you like. To become a capital "F" Friend requires a written application to the local meeting.

Two members are dispatched to visit the applicant and to make recommendations. Their decision is in no sense a judgment; rather they decide whether or not the meeting will meet the religious needs of the applicant.

Evans, a Britisher who has been in Canada six years, was formerly a Congregationalist, a Methodist and a Church of England Sunday school teacher before he became a Friend. The Quakers' visit with him lasted four hours.

"The main question in their minds is always, 'Is our friend's face set towards the Light?'" Evans said.

No Hymns, Sermons  
The Friends hold no services of Holy Communion or baptism. All outward symbols of the sacraments are dispensed with as distractions.

"Every move in life is a sacrament to a Quaker," Evans said.

On Sundays at the Toronto meeting, the service begins silently with the arrival of the first Friend; it ends with a general shaking of hands all round. In between there is no emotion, no hymns, no sermon; just a silence shot through with expectancy and broken only when one of the members feels moved to speak or pray quietly.

Mary Needler, Yearly Meeting secretary, editor of the Canadian Friend, and a Quaker by "convincement," said she had been at meetings where not a word was spoken for an hour.

While it is impossible to tar all Friends with the same brush, generally they are against capital punishment, divorce and racial segregation. Their terms for excommunication, a rare event, are "read out" or "dis-

owned." In the old days, if you married out you were read out.

Rev. James Finlay of Carlton Street United Church, himself a pacifist of wide reputation, has nothing but praise for the Friends, with whom he has worshipped and whose business meetings he has addressed.

### VICTORIA SQUARE

On Tuesday evening of last week, the annual Community Party of the Sr. Women's Institute was held in the Victoria Square Community Hall, with a good attendance, despite the inclement weather outside. Several musical numbers were given by the "5 Squares", a group just recently organized, which is composed of Mrs. Alan Orr, Mrs. Jack Rummy, Miss Marjorie Barber, Mr. Harry Barber and Mr. Carl Walker, accompanied at the piano by Mrs. Jim Barker. Mr. Charlie Milstead of Gormley played two numbers on his musical saw, which were very much enjoyed.

A number of contests were held followed by several rounds of square dancing, with Mr. Wm. Brodie playing the violin and Mrs. R. Cowie at the piano. The committee — Mrs. Earl Empingham, Mrs. Harold Hill and Mrs. Leslie Hart are to be congratulated for arranging such a fine programme.

The Euchre Party at Buttonville on Monday afternoon, Feb. 23, at 2 p.m., sponsored by the Buttonville Women's Institute, has been cancelled.

The February meeting of the W.M.S. was held on Wednesday afternoon of last week, at the home of Mrs. J. McKendry at New Gormley, with 18 ladies in attendance. The Worship period was led by Mrs. McKendry; several ladies gave reports of the Second Annual meeting of the York Presbytery held at the Richmond Hill United Church in January. Mrs. Nicklin, Mrs. Brands reviewed a chapter from the W.M.S. Study Book. Mrs. McCague, the president, took charge of the business part of the meeting.

A number of ladies from here attended the 'World Day of Prayer service held in the Headford United Church on Friday afternoon of last week. Mrs. A. F. Binnington was the guest speaker. Mrs. George Hooper was the guest soloist.

Despite the snow around us, the Brownies are witnessing articles of Nature. Glenda Jones presented an abandoned Oriole's nest and told about its construction and the building habits of this bird.

Boy Scout and Girl Guide week begins on February 16 and is brought to a close on Sunday, February 22, when Thinking Day — the birthdays of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell are celebrated. Brownies, Cubs, Scouts, Girl Guides, Rangers and Rovers all over the world observe this day by attending church services.

The Ist Gormley Brownie Pack have accepted an invitation to join with the Cubs, Scouts and Guides of Unionville for a special church parade on

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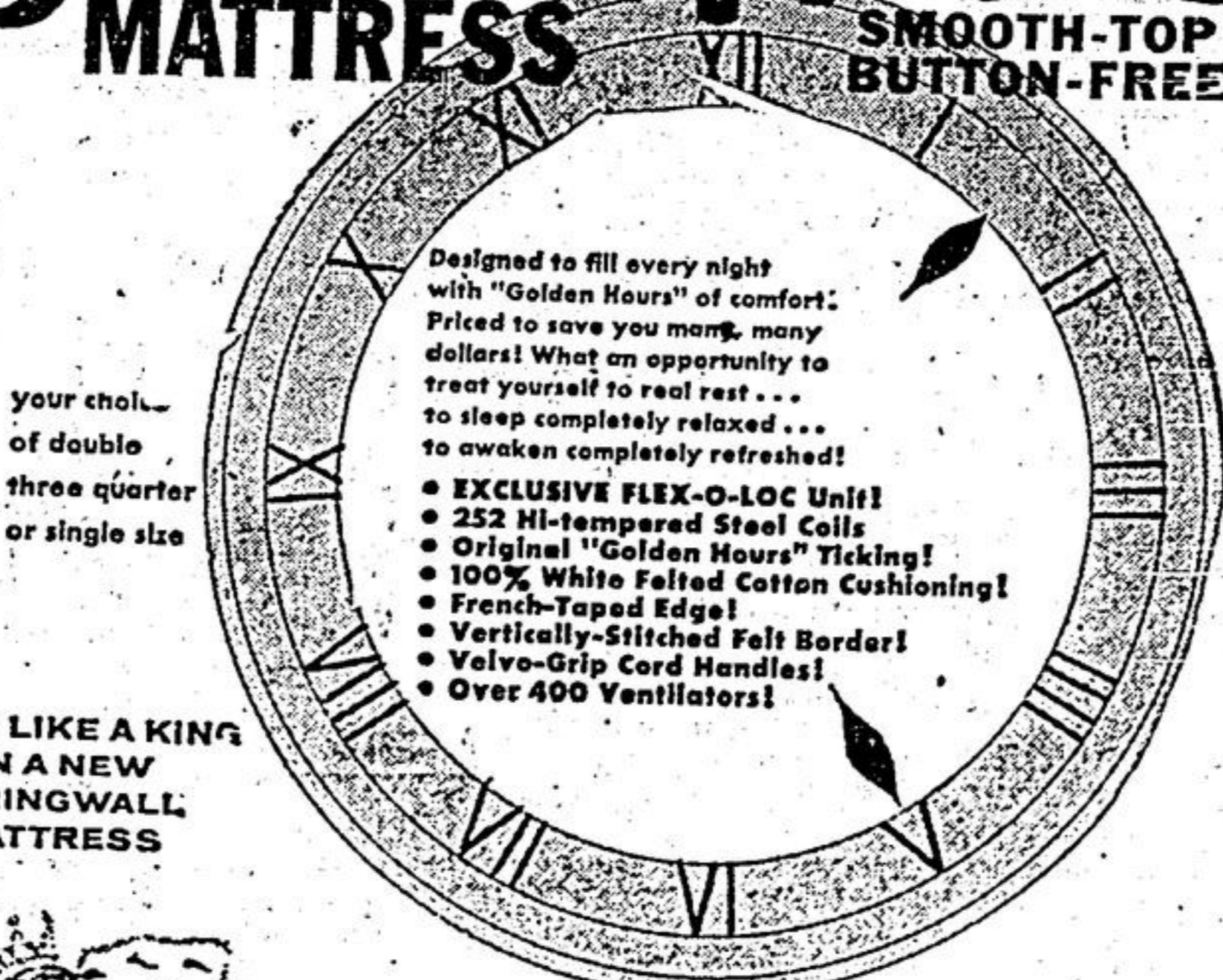
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