

Mennonite Journal

Total Allegiance

By Mahlon W. Shantz



The morning sun shone brightly into her bedroom when she awoke. Anna was alone, her husband had been in jail for a month. Before the end of the day she and the children would be separated and scattered among friends. Her possessions would all be gone, sold to the highest bidder in a sheriff sale. She would make a big breakfast for her family and pack a lunch for each of them to eat later in the day because when it is all over she will not have a cup of flour or a pinch of salt, no stove on which to cook something nor a spoon to eat it.

This was the fourth family to be stripped of everything they had. There were seven in all; four were Mennonite and three were Quakers. They all lived in the same county, about 25 miles north west of Philadelphia. It was in 1778 during the time of political instability and anarchy while the leaders of the American revolution were forming a government and writing a constitution. Among the top ranking officers in Washington's army was a lawyer who was given the appointment of County Judge and he was having sweet revenge on these people who would not fight with him against the English. His reign of power was cut short when some sympathetic neighbours managed to get word of the proceedings to the leaders in Philadelphia and the orders were reversed, the judge had his wrist slapped, a token restitution was made to the families and everybody tried to forget the whole affair.

There was at the same time a large exodus of people to Upper Canada (Ontario) who were still loyal to the English King and they, with many soldiers left behind were treated as

enemy aliens. They were called United Empire Loyalists. At the same time several large tribes of native Indians, who had joined the English against the rebel forces, also were forced to move north of the Great Lakes and make a new start.

In contrast to this large movement of political refugees, the Mennonites were alienated from the official revolution for other reasons. One of them was a simple matter of honour. Less than a century had passed since their grandfathers, on coming to America from Europe had made a solemn promise to be peaceful, law abiding citizens in the English colonies. They had the promise of the King that they would have total freedom of religion and would never be required to serve in the Army or in any civil office where there was conflict with their religious convictions.

Space does not permit even partial coverage of the historical background of these people of the "Peace" churches. The reader is referred to the January and February installments of this journal for a fuller coverage of the subject. Among the several issues that separated the Mennonites from the state and the state controlled churches was the inconsistency of the use of violence, and warfare on the one hand and the example and command of Jesus Christ, who is recognized by all Christians as the head of the church, to love all men and do harm to none. To take the oath of Allegiance to any earthly ruler or government was a severe conflict of loyalties for these people of simple faith and absolute ethics. Like the apostles in the 1st century they stated their position. "We must obey God

rather than men." Like their fathers, they were willing to suffer loss of property and even life if necessary, and the saga of a separate people seeking to serve God in a hostile world continues to be written.

While most of the Mennonites in Pa. stayed there and expanded their settlements into almost every state in the union since that time there was some fear among them for the future of their religious freedom. There were several factors that moved them to action and eventually brought many families to Ontario.

One question they continued to ask as they were being admitted to British territory, "will we have religious freedom?" The answer had been consistently the same as their ancestors in Europe were given by the land agents from England and on a few occasions by the King himself. As early as 1808 these promises were written into Canadian law to be followed by revisions and repeat legislative action in no less than 8 occasions before 1906. The general terms of this provision in the law was that Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren (Tunkers) were to be allowed freedom of religion and conscience in the matter of violence, and warfare, and were to be allowed exemption from military service.

When Canada became involved in war in 1914-18 and again in 1939-45, this special legislation was tested in an atmosphere of high emotion and strong public sentiment. Whatever may be said about it now, history does tell us that the Canadian government did honour the promise to a minority group made by this country more than a century earlier.

The story of the struggle of a people caught between conflicting loyalties was:

experienced and is recorded mostly in negative terms the needy, both friend and foe, frequently risking their lives to prove that God loves all men would fill an equal number of books if they were written. In this time of material prosperity and the absence of persecution, the Mennonites of this century have been concerned about the positive aspect of the "Peace Witness". They have rallied around this idea in an activity of goodwill to all men simply named "Mennonite Central Committee", which had its earliest small beginnings in 1920. Most of the divisions of Mennonites have found a common interest where they can work together in local and world wide areas of need. People, young and older who won't attend each others church services are working shoulder to

shoulder in very difficult conditions learning in a new way to love and appreciate each other, while helping relieve suffering in disaster areas and among the needy in many countries around the world.

With this demonstration of good will sent out under the slogan "In the name of Christ", has gone a sincere desire to see all people become acquainted with Jesus Christ the "Prince of Peace". As a direct result of this practical mission the Mennonite people have been able to come out of isolation while retaining their identity as a "Peace people" in a world so badly torn by strife. Today, instead of a few communities of prosperous farmers living to themselves there are nearly a million Mennonites in about 40 countries around the world.



Clara Wells, shown here with her son Clifford Holmes, celebrated her 90th birthday last week. Mr. Holmes came all the way from Saskatchewan to help celebrate this milestone.

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**CHRIST CHURCH ANGLICAN**  
254 Sunset Boulevard  
Sunday, Nov. 13  
TRINITY XXIII  
9:30 a.m. — "Said Service" of Morning Prayer led by Mrs. M. Britton, Church School — Remembrance Day presentation by Mr. Vic. Golman  
11 a.m. — Morning Prayer  
Joint service with United Church congregation as guests  
SERMON: Rev. J. Carder  
NURSERY SERVICES PROVIDED

**STOUFFVILLE UNITED CHURCH**  
Rev. J. L. Carder  
B.A.B.D.  
Sunday, Nov. 13, 1977  
11 a.m. — Worship at Christ Church Anglican (nursery provided)  
You will be welcome

**ST. JAMES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Rev. Ted Green  
640-4195  
Sunday, Nov. 13, 1977  
10 a.m. Morning Worship: Guest speaker, Rev. E. J. Briard. Nursery facilities.  
11:15 Congregational Meeting  
11:15 Church School, classes for all children and teens.  
Come and Join Us For Worship

**BLOOMINGTON CHRISTIAN GOSPEL CHURCH**  
Rev. C. W. Sorley  
Sunday, Nov. 13, 1977  
9:45 — Sunday School  
11:00 — Morning Worship  
Tues & Fri. 7 p.m. — Pioneer Girls  
Wed. 8 p.m. — Prayer — Bible Study

**MCCORMACK MEMORIAL CHURCH**  
Highway 48 at Vivian  
Rev. C. W. Sorley Pastor  
9:45 a.m. — Morning Service  
11:00 a.m. — Sunday School  
7:30 p.m. — Evening Service  
Thurs. 8 p.m. — New Life Hour

**BAKER HILL BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Pastor-James Shantz  
Sunday, Nov. 13, 1977  
9:50 a.m. — Sunday School  
11 a.m. — Morning Worship  
Wed. 8 p.m. — Prayer — Bible Study

**STOUFFVILLE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH**  
SERVING GOD, THE CONGREGATION, THE COMMUNITY  
REV. PAUL RIPLEY — PASTOR  
PH. 640-5696

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**  
9:45 a.m.  
FOR FREE BUS SERVICE CALL 649-3342  
MORNING WORSHIP  
NOTICE - Time change for Morning Service 10:30 A.M.

**GREAT GOSPEL RALLY**  
7 P.M. COMING  
SAT. NOV. 19  
ISRAEL NARVAEZ  
Former N.Y. gang leader  
SUNDAY, NOV. 20  
9:45 a.m. — PROFESSOR RUDOLPH Gospel Magician

**'WHOSOEVER WILL MAY COME'**

**CHURCHILL BAPTIST CHURCH**  
(Aurora Sideroad & 9 Conc)  
Rev. Paul Hope, B.Th. — 640-5629  
9:50 a.m. — Sunday School Bus Ride Available  
11:00 a.m. — Morning Worship Special Music "The Faith Heirs."  
7:20 p.m. — Evening worship Billy Graham film "Time to Run"  
Wed. 7:30 p.m. — Family Night & Pioneer Girls  
Friday 7:30 p.m. — Young People  
"We warmly welcome you"

**BETHEL ASSEMBLY OF GOD**  
Hwy. 48 just north of 47  
Rev. Howard Minaker Pastor 640-5555  
NOVEMBER 13, 1977  
9:45 a.m. — Bible School  
11 a.m. — "The Missing Ingredient"  
7 p.m. — "Gideon's Peculiar Commission"  
"All Roads Lead to Bethel— Just Minutes from Where You are"

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A NAME, A TITLE, A PROMISE KEPT.

Bahá'u'lláh  
The Glory of God

At key points in history, humanity's fortunes have been revolutionized by the appearance of a unique individual whose influence and character far exceeded human capacity. Such have been the Prophets — Moses, Buddha, Christ, Muhammad, and in the last century, Bahá'u'lláh, Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. Through them God has directed the course of human development, and revealed His purpose for man. Their revelations have impelled mankind through successive stages of spiritual and moral evolution in much the same way as an individual passes through infancy, childhood, adolescence and maturity. The promise of mankind's eventual arrival at the age of maturity is to be found in the Sacred Scriptures of all the world's religions. "The New Jerusalem", "The Kingdom of God", and the "Garden of Allah" all refer to the same God-given promise when after a period of unparalleled conflict and suffering, mankind will complete its transition from adolescence to maturity and enter an age of justice and peace. Through the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, God has set in motion those forces through which mankind will ultimately attain maturity. The promise has been kept.

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Something for all at York Symphony

Something for everyone describes York Symphony Orchestra's concert series program for the 1977-78 season. Nearly 200 subscription tickets have been sold already. However, there are still plenty available according to ticket chairman Arthur Craig. Subscription tickets are available for \$10., students and senior citizens \$7. a bargain for the price of three, from Mr. S.A.H. Craig, 118 Avenue Road, Newmarket or phone 895-8713.

Beginning on December 2 in Trinity United Church, Newmarket, the Contabile Choral will join with the orchestra to present excerpts from the Nutcracker, traditional carols and other seasonal selections.

**Antiqueshow**  
The Toronto Antique Show is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year and holding the show at the Toronto Harbour Castle Hilton Convention Centre on November 16, 17, 18 from 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Tickets are on sale at Bob Dart Real Estate office, 12 Main St. East, or call Pat Daniel 640-2433.

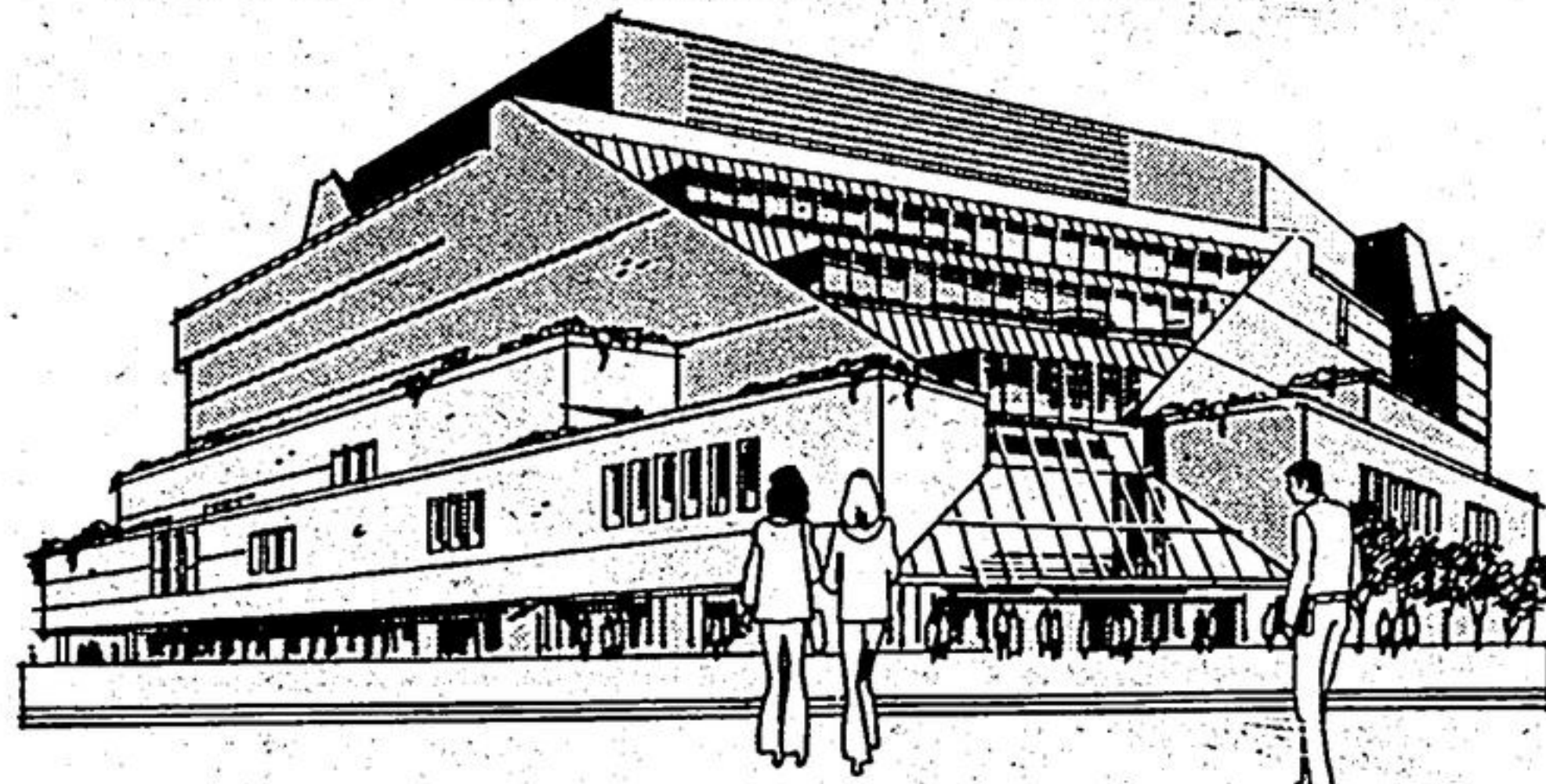
The final concert of the season features soloists from the orchestra: Hazel Boyle, oboe; Colleen Young, French Horn; Stephen Clark, clarinet; Richard Lloyd, bassoon and John Taylor, English Horn. The other featured work of the evening will be Bach's Double Concerto for two klaviers performed on the piano accordion by Frank Baggetta and John Torcello. These two virtuosos have collected countless awards and acclamations in Canada and throughout the world. York Symphony Orchestra is York

Region's Community Orchestra made up of eager, dedicated, talented amateur players who rehearse regularly under the experienced baton of Clifford Poole. Judging by the two recent wine and cheese concerts and the rehearsals Poole's fourth season with the symphony promises to be the best yet.

For more information contact Beverly Hall at 478-4449.

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