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04 Miscellaneous Notes on the History of Religious Activities in Chester County

James Jones

West Chester University of Pennsylvania, JJONES@wcupa.edu

David Flogaus

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Kelly Kulp-Bosler

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Mike Wolford

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Bob Gialanella

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

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Miscellaneous Notes on the History of Religious Activities in Chester County

This file contains assorted facts from Chester County history collected by students in the HIS480 "Computer methods of historical research" class at West Chester University. Each fact consists of specific information, a reference note to its source, and a date. The "facts" are organized in chronological order.

This file has not been completely proofread, nor have the sources been verified, so use this material with caution.

Collected by Jim Jones, David Flogaus, Kelly Kulp-Bosler, Mike Wolford and Bob Gialanella (Spring 1995). Last edited by Jim Jones (spring 1995).

1650s Source: Haverford College Library, Pennsylvania,
Introduction to QUAKER NECROLOGY, VOL. I, A-K (G.K.
Hall & Co., Boston MA, 1961), i.

The Friends Societies began to keep meticulous birth and death records in mid-17th century England because they were outside of the Church of England, so there were no other "official" records kept.

1678/0715 Source: "Guide to Genealogical Resources at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (photocopy, n.d.), F1.

The Burlington (NJ) meeting was founded 1678/07/15. In 1810, the West Chester meeting was founded from its descendants.

1681 Source: "Guide to Genealogical Resources at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (photocopy, n.d.),

F3.

The Chester meeting, founded in 1681, was descended from the Burlington (NJ) meeting (founded 1678/07/15). In 1810, the West Chester meeting was founded from its descendants.

1682 Source: Norma Jacob, editor, QUAKER ROOTS: THE STORY OF WESTERN QUARTERLY MEETING OF PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Kennett Square, Pa.: Graphics Standard, Inc., 1980), 1.

The first Quaker settlement in Pennsylvania was at Upland, a Swedish settlement on the banks of the Delaware River where modern Chester is located. The town was renamed in 1682 by William Penn when he arrived.

1684 Source: "Guide to Genealogical Resources at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (photocopy, n.d.), F5.

The Concord meeting, founded in 1684, was descended from the Chester meeting (1681) and the Burlington (NJ) meeting (founded 1678/07/15). In 1810, the West Chester meeting was founded from its descendants.

1686 Source: Norma Jacob, editor, QUAKER ROOTS: THE STORY OF WESTERN QUARTERLY MEETING OF PHILADELPHIA YEARLY MEETING OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Kennett Square, Pa.: Graphics Standard, Inc., 1980), 1.

The records of the Kennett Square Meeting go back to 1686.

1694 Source: "Guide to Genealogical Resources at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (photocopy, n.d.), F7.

The Birmingham meeting was founded in 1694, which was in turn descended from the Concord meeting (1684), the Chester meeting (1681) and the Burlington (NJ) meeting (founded 1678/07/15). In 1810, members of the Birmingham meeting founded the West Chester meeting.

1780s Source: Darlington, William, DIRECTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF WEST CHESTER, FOR 1857: CONTAINING A COMPLETE HISTORY OF THE BOROUGH FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME ... (West Chester, PA: Wood & James, Publishers, E.F. James, printer, 1857), 25.

In the 1780s, the nearest Quaker meeting houses to West Chester were at Bradford, Birmingham and Goshen.

1793 Source: Charles William Heathcote, HISTORY OF CHESTER COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA (West Chester, PA: Horace F. Temple, 1926), 98.

A Roman Catholic congregation was established in West Chester in 1793.

1800 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 374.

The Friends School of West Chester was founded in 1800.

1800s/early Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 376.

Joshua Hoopes (12-2): "at one time principal of a boarding school at West Chester, and a distinguished authority on botanical subjects." He was educated at the Friends School of West Chester.

1810 Source: "Guide to Genealogical Resources at the Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College" (photocopy, n.d.), F9.

Josiah Hoopes' church, the West Chester meeting, founded in 1810, was descended from the Birmingham meeting (founded 1694), which was in turn descended from the Concord meeting (1684), the Chester meeting (1681) and the Burlington (NJ) meeting (founded 1678/07/15).

1810 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 753.

The first Friend's meeting was established in West Chester in 1810. They met in a private home, but began to build a regular meeting house on North High Street in 1812 and used it for the first time in 1813. It was enlarged in 1868.

1812 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 753.

The West Chester Friends meeting opened a permanent stone meeting house in 1812.

1817 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 385.

Joshua Hoopes opened the "Downingtown Boarding School For Boys" in 1817, moved it to West Chester in 1834 and closed it in 1862 when he became too old to operate it.

1827 Source: Haverford College Library, Pennsylvania, Introduction to QUAKER NECROLOGY, VOL. I, A-K (G.K. Hall & Co., Boston MA, 1961), i.

The Hicksite and Orthodox split began in Philadelphia in 1827 and spread throughout the USA and Canada. The Orthodox Friends began to publish "The Friend" in 1828 and the Hicksite Friends started the "Friends' Weekly Intelligencer" (under various titles) in 1844.

1827 Source: Samuel T. Wiley, BIOGRAPHICAL AND PORTRAIT CYCLOPEDIA OF CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, COMPRISING A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE COUNTY (Philadelphia, Richmond IN & Chicago IL: Gresham Publishing Company, 1893), 95.

A short history of the Society of Friends. The Hicksite division took place in 1827 when a group of Quakers led by Elias Hicks decided to take a more activist stand against slavery.

1830 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 753.

The Hicksite division affected West Chester as well, and the Orthodox Friends separated from the original meeting in 1830. They built their own meeting house at the corner of Church and Chestnut Streets, and opened it on 1830/12/26. In 1844, they built a stone meeting house on the northeast corner of that intersection.

On page 760, the author added that The Hicksite Friends continued to meet at the house on North High Street.

1831 Source: Gerald R. Fuller, June Markus Hoopes & Lillian Fredsall Webster, compilers and editors, THE HOOPES FAMILY RECORD, Vol. I, The First Six Generations (Houston, Texas: The Hoopes Family Organization, Inc., 1979), 329.

Pierce Hoopes (#1361) married Sarah Andrews (1798/01/21-1887/10/10) at Darby meeting. Pierce was a lumberman, while Sarah was a prominent teacher and served as a Quaker minister for more than forty years until her death in 1887. Pierce was born, raised and died on his father's farm (Abner and Hannah). Their children included Josiah (#3183), Abner (#3184), and James Andrew Hoopes (#3185), who lived only from 1838/11/17-1838/12/27.

1834 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County
Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York:
The Union History Company, 1898), 385.

Joshua Hoopes opened the "Downingtown Boarding School For
Boys" in 1817, moved it to West Chester in 1834 and closed
it
in 1862 when he became too old to operate it.

1843 Source: Futhey, J. Smith and Gilbert Cope. "History
of Chester county, Pennsylvania, with Genealogical and
Biographical Sketches" (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts,
1881, 279.

In 1843, a new Episcopal Church was finished in Downingtown.
It was called St. James Episcopal Church. The first
proposal to build the parish came in 1842, and after this
suggestion, twelve men were elected as vestrymen. J.
Dutton Steele (maternal uncle of Loraine Stone McKinstry,
Loraine S. McKinstry (A3-1) was elected one of these men.
There was also a John D. Steele elected. His relationship
to Loraine S. McKinstry (A3-1) is unknown.

1850 Source: Samuel T. Wiley, BIOGRAPHICAL AND PORTRAIT
CYCLOPEDIA OF CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, COMPRISING A
HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE COUNTY (Philadelphia, Richmond IN &
Chicago IL: Gresham Publishing Company, 1893), 95.

The Progressive Friends (anti-slavery) founded a single
congregation prior to 1850 at Longwood.

1857 Source: Darlington, William, DIRECTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF
WEST CHESTER, FOR 1857: CONTAINING A COMPLETE HISTORY OF THE
BOROUGH FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME ...
(West Chester, PA: Wood & James, Publishers, E.F. James,
printer, 1857), 99.

There were two Friends Meetings in West Chester. One met at
North High Street and Lafayette under pastors Stephen
Paschall, Anna Jackson and Sarah Hoopes. The other met at
Chestnut Street between High and Church under Ministers John
Wood and Hannah Gibbons.

1857 Source: William Darlington, DIRECTORY OF THE BOROUGH OF WEST
CHESTER, FOR 1857: CONTAINING A COMPLETE HISTORY OF THE
BOROUGH FROM ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME.. .
(West Chester, PA: Wood & James, Publishers, E.F. James,
printer, 1857, 99.

From a section of "Statistics on Churches": One Friends'
Meeting met in West Chester at North High and Lafayette

streets. Meetings were held every First Day, and every fourth Day, except Monthly Meeting week, which is held the last Seventh day preceding the last First day, all commencing at ten o'clock, A.M. The ministers were Stephen Paschall, Anna Jackson, and Sarah Hoopes.

A second Friend's Meeting met at Chestnut Street, between Church and High - Meeting 10 o'clock. AM, First and Fifth day. Monthly meeting - Fourth Day following the last second day. Ministers - John Wood, Hannah Gibbons.

1859/08/21 Source: J. Smith Futhey and Gilbert Cope.
"History of Chester county, Pennsylvania, with
Genealogical and Biographical Sketches"
(Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881), 279.

On Aug. 21, 1859, the first services were held at Church of the Trinity in Coatesville. This was an Episcopal Church. The services were held in what was then a school house. A parish was organized in 1868, and vestrymen were elected, even though there was still no church building. John Stone (father of Loraine Stone McKinstry, A3-1) was one of these vestrymen. In 1871, a small chapel was built in a new location. At the time this book was written (1881), a current vestryman was Newton H. Stone, of unknown relation to Loraine S. McKinstry (A3-1).

1860-1865 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 345 & 347.

Chester County underground railway agents included Norris Maris (perhaps B53-3 in FBS) of West Vincent Township.

(p347) In West Chester, George Maris (perhaps B53-11) acted as

the local underground railway agent when he was a young man: "who, as a lad, drew many a map of the road from there to Elijah F. Pennypacker's place" (near Phoenixville).

1862 Source: W. W. Thompson, editor, County Pennsylvania and its People (Chicago and New York: The Union History Company, 1898), 385.

Joshua Hoopes opened the "Downingtown Boarding School For Boys" in 1817, moved it to West Chester in 1834 and closed it in 1862 when he became too old to operate it.

1871/08/17 Source: Article II of the "Constitution of the Friends Burial Society" (17 August 1871), in Chester County Archives, Corporation Book 1, 372-374.

Directors of the FBS were Pierce Hoopes (B19-4), Edward H. Hall (B71-2), Caleb E. Chambers (B3-3), William P. Marshall (B21-2), Enos Smedley, James Powell (A21-1), Philip P. Sharpless (C2-5).

Article V: regulations on grave markers that specified they must lie flat, be made of white stone, be no larger than 18" x 16" and contain nothing other than the person's name, their birth date and death date.

1871/09/09 Source: Futhey, J. Smith and Gilbert Cope.
 "History of Chester county, Pennsylvania, with
 Genealogical and Biographical Sketches"
 (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881), 271.

On Sept. 9 and 10, 1871, a new Baptist Church was dedicated at Green Valley in Newlin. It had gone through various stages of planning and construction since it was decided to build a new congregation in 1866. Hugh E. Steele (maternal grandfather of Loraine Stone McKinstry, A3-1) was among 27 patrons who together paid for the development of this church. He pledged \$300, which put him in a group of 6 out of those 27 who pledged \$300 or more. The highest amount was \$320. The lowest was \$1.

1871/12/09 Source: "Marriage Announcement of Sharpless and
 Annie Maguire" in "Daily Local News," (West
 Chester: December 9, 1871)

Sharpless M. Paxson and Annie Macguire were married at a Friends meeting in Wilmington.

1879/11/13 Source: copy of hand written wedding invitation:

Mrs. Jane T. Wilson requests your presence at the marriage of her daughter Cornelia to R. Jones Monaghan, Thursday Evening, Nov 13th 1879 at half past six o'clock. First Presbyterian Church, West Chester.

1887/10/15 Source: Sarah Hoopes, death notice in "Friends
 Intelligencer," vol. XLIV, nø42 (10 month, 15,
 1887), 664.

Sarah Hoopes died at home in West Goshen. She was a minister of the Birmingham meeting, and the mother of Josiah Hoopes.

1887/10/22 Source: Sarah Hoopes, death notice in "Friends
 Intelligencer," vol. XLIV, nø43 (10 month, 22,
 1887), 678.

Josiah Hoopes' mother Sarah was a prominent and respected member of the Friends community. There is a glowing eulogy, extolling her moral character and personality, in the Friends newspaper after her death.

1888/08/25 Source: Pierce Hoopes, death notice in "Friends Intelligencer," vol. XVI, n0813 (8th month, 25, 1888), 536.

Josiah Hoopes' father, Pierce Hoopes, died at home in West Goshen. He was an elder of the Birmingham meeting.

1890 Source: "Obituary of E.L. McKinstry" in "Daily Local News" (West Chester, March 30, 1951).

E.L. McKinstry, was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of West Chester, where he served as a Sunday School teacher from 1890.

1892/late Source: "Obituary of Sharpless M. Paxson" in "Daily Local News," (West Chester: May 5, 1930)

During the Homestead Riots near Pittsburgh, PA in the early 1890s (JJ: the strike at the Homestead Coal mines began June 20, 1892), Sharpless M. Paxson led the members of company I, 6th regiment National Guard of Pennsylvania in the coal districts of the state and remained on duty throughout insurrection.

1896 Source: "Obituary of Sharpless M. Paxson" in "Daily Local News," (West Chester: May 5, 1930)

Sharpless M. Paxson, a prominent West Chester Quaker, served as the commander of the "Old Wayne Fencibles" Company I, Sixth Regiment. He showed continued interest in the unit even after he became too old to remain active. During the Spanish War, Company I went to field as a part of the US infantry. Sharpless M. Paxson organized company M of the PA reserve guard "in order that the neighborhood might have protection while the gallant young men, many of whom he had trained, were out of town".

1900 Source: Haverford College Library, Pennsylvania, Introduction to QUAKER NECROLOGY, VOL. I, A-K (G.K. Hall & Co., Boston MA, 1961), i.

The Hicksite yearly meetings joined the Friends General Conference in 1900, and the two groups were reunited in Philadelphia and the two journals merged to form "The Friends' Journal" in 1955.

1916/07/22 Source: Obituary for Cornelia W. T. Monaghan-
widow, age 63 at CC Hospital.

Cornelia W. T. Monaghan was the daughter of Joseph P. and Jane T. Ellicott Wilson. Her father was a leading member of CC Bar Association, Burgess of West Chester 1855 - 1857, President, Philadelphia Baltimore Central RR. She married R. Jones Monaghan on 11-13-79 and he died in 1897. They had two children who died as infants and two who survived-- Frances E., a patient at CC Hospital with "badly sprained ankle" and Walter E., employed in Philadelphia. The family were all members of First Presbyterian Church of West Chester.

1919/08/21 Source: "Notice of Sharpless Jr. acceptance into
the Army" in "Daily Local News,"(West Chester:
August 21, 1919)

Sharpless Jr., who was living in Schnectady NY at the time, sent word to his father that he had been accepted into the "National Army from the empire state". He mentioned that his employers were not pleased with losing him, but he was willing to go. However, he was sorry that he would not be going with the Pennsylvanians.

1919-1951/12/28 Source: "Obituary of Sharpless M. Paxson Jr."
in "Daily Local News,"(West Chester: December
28, 1951)

Sharpless M. Paxson Jr served in World War I and was injured. He was confined to a veteran's hospital from that time, until his death in 1951! It does not tell of his injuries, but he must have been extremely immobile.

1926 Source: Charles William Heathcote, HISTORY OF CHESTER COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA (West Chester, PA: Horace F. Temple, 1926), 31.

There is an excellent public school system, one of the best in the state. The Friends maintain well-organized schools. There is also a fine parochial school system organized from the grades to the high school inclusive. One of the best State Normal Schools in the United States is located here, having a student body of twelve hundred.

1926 Source: Charles William Heathcote, HISTORY OF CHESTER COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA (West Chester, PA: Horace F. Temple, 1926), 31.

There are fifteen churches in West Chester representing various denominations.

1940 Source: "Obituary for L.S. McKinstry" in "Daily Local
News" (West Chester, March 13, 1940).

L.S. McKinstry was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of West Chester, where she was a Sunday School teacher. She was also a member of the Brandywine Grange, Patrons of Husbandry, New Century Club, Children's Aid Society, and the Treasurer of Wentworth Home.

1972/04/23 Source: Gerald R. Fuller, June Markus Hoopes & Lillian Fredsall Webster, compilers and editors, THE HOOPEs FAMILY RECORD, Vol. II, The Seventh and Eighth Generations (Houston, Texas: The Hoopes Family Organization, Inc., 1979), 250.

Josiah Morgan Hoopes, son of Josiah Hoopes, (#5582) (1899/04/14)-1972/04/03) is buried in St. Agnes cemetery in West Chester.
