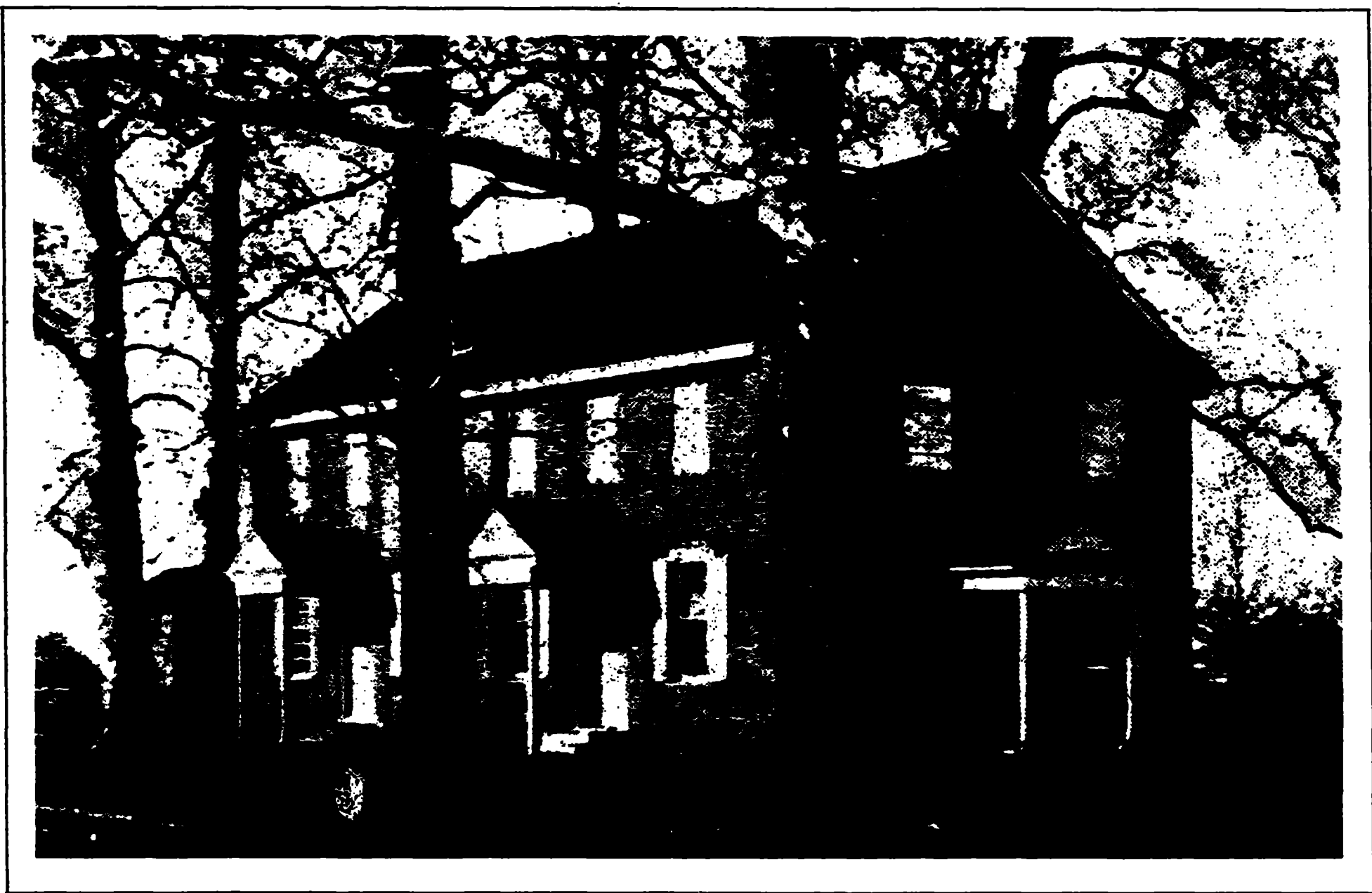


QUAKER MISCELLANY:

New Jersey



Alloways Creek Meetinghouse

Edited by Willard Heiss

Fourth Month, 1963, Indianapolis

\$3.00

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The *Centennial Exposition* (Philadelphia, 1876) probably did more than any other event, before or since, to interest Americans in their historic past and its preservation. In the following era countless works of historical and genealogical interest appeared in print. It was at this time that most of the county and local histories, which are now so invaluable, were written.

Friends needed but little encouragement to take pen in hand and write of the past. Many fine articles found their way into various Friends periodicals. As these publications are not readily accessible, it is the purpose of this series to make some of these accounts available. The information contained in some of them is even more valuable today, than it was at the time it was first published.

W. H.

SETTLEMENT OF MEETINGS IN NEW JERSEY

The Province of New Jersey being largely settled by Friends, their meetings were generally the first places of worship established in their neighborhoods, and in many of the Towns and Hamlets so settled, "the meetinghouse" was the only public building for many years, (except the school-house) and served a variety of purposes beside a place of worship, such as Town Hall, Court of Justice, and Legislative Hall, & c., or as the poet has expressed,

"One house sufficed for gospel and for law."

Around some of these, many historic facts and precious memories linger. In order to preserve these, and some account of the early establishment of meetings, in a somewhat connected form, the following compilations and extracts have been made, in the hope that they may possess some interest for the readers of THE FRIEND.

The history and early settlement of the Society of Friends in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and the establishment of their meetings, is so intimately connected with both Provinces, that it is not easy to separate them, although that of New Jersey preceded the latter by several years.

The first settlement made by Friends south of Long Island was at Shrewsbury, in 1664, or thereabout. One account says, "About 1670 a meeting was settled at Shrewsbury, being the first settled meeting in these Provinces. Near the same time a Monthly and General Meeting was also held there and they were soon regularly established. It is probable that meetings for worship were held at private dwellings prior to this date.

Their first meeting-house was built in 1672, which was replaced by another in 1719.

The first settlement of Friends in West New Jersey, was undoubtedly that made by John Fenwick's colony at Salem, in 1675; theirs being the first English ship to come so far up the Delaware River, or that landed passengers upon its shores.

They first held their meetings for worship at each others' dwellings, and a meeting was established at the house of Samuel Nicholson which was continued for some years; they sometimes joined with a few Friends at Upland, (now Chester, Pa.,) meeting at the house of Robert Wade, at or near that place.

The first meeting-house of Friends in West Jersey was at Salem. In 1681, Samuel Nicholson and Ann his wife, conveyed to the Trustees of Salem Meeting his sixteen acre lot, whereon stood his dwelling house, for the purpose of a meeting place for Friends; an addition was built to this house, making it when completed, 40 feet in length by 16 feet in depth, -- partly of brick, and partly frame, -- it was provided with a large open fire-place at each end, windows with 4 panes of thick "bulls eye" glass, 7 by 9 inches in size, benches or forms without backs, and "a good clay floor." It was thus used until about the year 1700.

In the early part of the year 1677. many Friends who had become proprietors in West Jersey, left the shores of old England to settle on their newly acquired possessions.

"The ship 'Kent' sailed from London with 230 passengers, consisting of two companies of Friends, one from Yorkshire, and the other from London; after a tedious passage the ship anchored safely in the waters of the Delaware, in the Sixth Month, 1677.

The Commissioners who were on board, and were also Friends, proceeded up the river to the place where the city of Burlington now stands. In order to treat with the Indians about the land; for, be it known, that not one foot of the soil of the State of New Jersey was ever taken from the Indians, except by purchase.

The number of Friends who emigrated to the new colony during this year and the following one, are said to be about 800; and up to the year 1681, at least 1400 persons had found their way to the Province.

Although the country was a wilderness, they did not forget the assembling of themselves together as was their wont in the land of their nativity, in order to worship the Almighty, whose protecting hand had followed them in the perils of the deep, and now delivered them from the savage people among whom their lot was cast.

The first account that we have of a place of public worship of Friends at Burlington, was of a tent made of the sails taken from the ship in which they had crossed the ocean. Under it they assembled for at least a year after their arrival, or until the house of Thomas Gardiner was built, which was the first dwelling house erected within the town limits, and although built of logs, it was more commodious than those of his neighbors. Meetings were regularly held here, and at the house of John Woolston and others, until the building of the meeting-house in 1685, when the meeting had outgrown the capacity of any private house.

The first Yearly Meeting of Friends in New Jersey which sat four days, was held Sixth Mo. 28th, 1681, at the house of Thomas Gardiner, aforesaid, as was also the Monthly Meeting. By a minute of that meeting, held 5th of Twelfth Month, 1682, we find "It is ordered that a meeting-house be built according to a draught of six square building, of forty foot square from out to out." This building was completed in 1685, and was called the "great meeting-house," which must have been very singular in appearance, being as indicated, hexagonal in form, with a roof of steep pitch, surmounted by a sort of cupola, corresponding in shape with the main building. It was a frame structure, and found to be too cold for use in the severe winters to which the settlers were subjected.

In 1696, an addition was made to it for a winter house, built of brick, 30 feet long, and of equal width and height with the other; provided with a large open fire place, and a "double wooden floor," wainscoted and plastered walls. This house stood for a century, and was replaced by the present substantial brick structure.

The house known as the "new meeting-house" was built for the better accommodation of the Yearly Meeting, in 1716, on ground given by Thomas Wetherill for that purpose.

Burlington Monthly Meeting was first organized "ye 15th of ye Fifth Month, 1678," and consisted of "Friends settled about the Falls (near Trenton, &c.,) and the Particular Meetings of Ancocas, Shackamaxon and Upland (Chester, Pa.); also the Hoarkills and New Castle, Del.," and the Friends on Long Island, who, in 1681, desired to be considered members of this Monthly Meeting.

In 1680, it issued an epistle to London Yearly Meeting, on the subject of certificates being furnished to the Friends who emigrated, &c. It was the first official communication received by that meeting from any body of Friends in America.

The Friends settled on the Rancocas or "Northampton River," very soon set up meetings for worship at their dwellings, as follows, viz: "A six weeks meeting was held at Joshua Paine's on Northampton River; a meeting was also held at the house of Daniel Wills, ('not that in the forks' of the river.")

"Meetings for worship on First and Fourth-days, were also settled at North-

ampton, to be held at the house of Thomas Harding," &c., as is shown by the following minutes of Burlington Monthly Meeting. "It is agreed that the meetings on Ancocas (or Ankokas) to be held at the house of Thomas Harding." - 1681.

"The meeting that used to be kept at Thomas Cline's, and John Woolman's, is now ordered to be kept at Daniel Wills' house, weekly." - 1687.

In 1703, a meeting-house was built upon ground given by John Wills, called Northampton Meeting-house; the meetings before alluded to were then discontinued. This house which stood quite near the present burial ground, was replaced by another upon nearly the same site, in 1722, which continued until the new brick house was erected in 1772, about half a mile north of it, which was enlarged as it now stands in the village of Rancocas.

Chesterfield

A meeting for worship, held on First-days, was continued from the first settlement by the English (1677) at the house of Thomas Lambert, until the building of the Meeting at Chesterfield, about 1680, at which time the Monthly Meeting was established, but it was not always held there as is shown by the following minute:

"At our Monthly Meeting at Francis Davenport's house, near Crosswicks Creek, the place now called Chesterfield, ye 2nd of ye 8th month, 1684. It is agreed that a week day meeting be kept every 4th day of ye week at ye house of Matthew Watson."

The meeting-house at Crosswicks was built in 1692, and the first Monthly Meeting held in it 6th of Eighth Month, 1693. Meetings were held here until 1706, at which time a new and more commodious house was erected near the former one. This house was of brick, and enlarged in 1753. Another account says, "About 1738-9, it was found desirable to have a larger meeting-house, and a large brick building was built upon land given by Samuel Bunting; this house was enlarged in 1773." This building occupied as barracks by the American troops in 1778, and a cannon-ball was lodged in its walls. On First-days, however, the benches were arranged and meetings held in it as usual.

In 1831, a frame meeting-house was built near this, which was occupied until 1853, when a brick structure succeeded it.

Old Springfield

1682. -- "It is ordered that Friends at Esiskunk Creek have a meeting at the house of Thos. Barton, on First-days, for the winter season."

1687. -- "A meeting for worship was set up at Esiskunk Creek, and held by turns at the houses of Thomas Barton, John Day, and John Curtis."

"A three weeks meeting for worship was established to be held circularly at Old Springfield and at Burr on the Rankokas."

1694. -- "It is agreed that the meeting-house of Springfield be built on the hither side of Mattacopany bridge."

The meeting-house was built in 1698, on ground given by Richard Ridgway.

Mansfield

1731. -- Mansfield Meeting was settled in 1731, and a meeting-house built the

same year on ground of Francis Gibbs. It was a long narrow frame building, and was replaced by a more modern brick structure, upon the same site, in 1812.

Mansfield Neck

1753. -- A meeting was allowed to be held near William Folwell's on First-days, once in three weeks during the winter. In 1783, it was established with the privilege of a Preparative Meeting.

Upper Springfield

As respects the origin of this meeting we find the following minute:

"A meeting for the winter season hath been for several years past, held in part of Upper Springfield, at a house provided for the purpose, nigh Shreeve's Mount." In 1728, the meeting of Upper Springfield was established, and their meeting-house built the same year upon ground of Joshua Shreeve.

In 1783, the Monthly Meeting was organized, being parts of Burlington and Chesterfield Monthly Meetings, and was composed of the Meetings of Mansfield, Arneytown, Upper Freehold and Upper Springfield.

Mount Holly (or Shreeve's Mount)

In 1704, a Meeting was settled at Restow Lipincoats (Restore Lippincott's) to be held for the winter season, which was discontinued as the following minute of Burlington Monthly Meeting shows.

1716. -- Whereas there was one little meeting kept at two places, one at Restore Lippincott's, and one at Daniel Wills'; which hath been for a considerable time; but now there is a meeting-house built at Mount Holly for the accommodation of those two meetings."

The Mount Holly meeting-house was built upon ground given by Nathan Cripps, on the northern slope of the mount, and on the site of the Cemetery on Wood Lane. It was standing in 1776, and used by the British troops as a stable.

1742. -- "The Friends at Mount Holly, alias Bridgeton, requested of this meeting to hold a First-day evening meeting in Bridgeton, for the winter season, which is allowed by this meeting." (Burlington M.M.)

1743. -- "The Meeting having considered the application of sundry Friends belonging to the upper part of Mount Holly Meeting, do consent that they hold a meeting according to their request." (B. Mo. Meeting)

In 1762, a new meeting-house was built in the more central part of the town, for an afternoon meeting. It was used by the British during the Revolutionary war, as the head-quarters of their Commissary department, and the benches for cutting meat upon; the hacks and marks of both cleaver and knife are still to be seen upon them, as well as the marks of the British musket barrels upon the floor.

Mount Holly Monthly Meeting was constituted in 1776, by a division of Burlington Monthly Meeting, and was composed of the Meetings of Mount Holly, Shreeve's Mount, Old Springfield and Upper Springfield.

Vincent Town

1765. -- "A written proposal from sundry Friends, for keeping an afternoon meeting during the summer at a school-house lately erected near William Bishop's, was now read and agreed to." (Min. Burlington Monthly Meeting.)

A meeting was afterwards established at Vincent Town, and a meeting-house built; but the meeting has been discontinued some years.

Stony Brook

1710. -- This was a meeting indulged by Chesterfield Monthly Meeting, to be held once in three months, and it was afterwards at the house of Joseph Worth and others.

In 1724, a committee for the purpose, reported that "a (meeting) house may be built of stone, 34 by 30 feet."

In 1726, the meeting-house was built on ground given by Benjamin Clark for the use of Friends, and the Meeting was established there the same year.

The Preparative Meeting was laid down in 1878, and the members joined to Trenton Meeting.

"Trent Town"

1734. -- We find the following minute of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting; "Our Friend Isaac Hanam, with other Friends, requested liberty to keep a meeting for worship settled there. The week-day meetings were established in 1756, and the Preparative Meeting opened in 1786, but was closed for some time, and re-opened in 1797, and again laid down in 1836, and re-established in 1848.

Bordentown

The Meeting at "Bordens Town" was settled in 1740, and a meeting-house built the same year on ground given by Joseph Borden.

The week-day meetings were established in 1759, and the Preparative Meeting set up in 1804.

Amwell

In 1727, a meeting was allowed to be kept every First-day, at the house of John Stephenson, at Amwell, which appears to have been discontinued in 1786.

About this time (1727) there was also a meeting held at Allentown, under the direction of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting. The Preparative was opened in 1797, and called "Robins' Meeting." In 1804, it appears in the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting as "East Branch." It was laid down in 1833, and the members joined to Crosswicks Meeting.

Upper Freehold

1739. -- From the minutes of Chesterfield Monthly Meeting we learn that Isaac Foreman, Joseph Arney and others, requested liberty of this Meeting to keep a meeting

every First-day at Joseph Arney's house, and this meeting gave consent that they have liberty to keep a meeting for one year."

1740. -- "This Meeting gives liberty to the inhabitants near Thomas Woodward's to make application to the Quarterly Meeting for a meeting-house, according to their request."

The Meeting at "Woodward's" held at Joseph Arney's house was settled in 1742, and the meeting-house built the same year on ground given by Joseph Arney.

Bethlehem

In 1746, the meeting-house at Bethlehem was built, but a meeting for worship was settled there some years before, and the Monthly Meeting was first held in 1744. The meeting-house being accidentally burned; it was rebuilt in 1752.

Great Meadows

The meeting-house at the Great Meadows was built in 1751; but their meetings for worship were held at each others houses from the time of Friends first settling there, about 1740.

A meeting for worship was held at Amboy from 1680 to 1689, during which time a Monthly Meeting was established there.

A meeting was held at Woodbridge, and alternated with that at Amboy, every third First-day, until 1704, when, by direction of the General Meeting at Shrewsbury, it was ordered to be held at Woodbridge, where the meeting-house was built in 1709.

A Meeting was early settled at Manasquan; Friends met at each others' houses until 1730, when their meeting-house was built: it was of frame with shingled sides, and stood until about 1885.

A meeting-house was built at Freehold about the year 1683; but the meeting being chiefly established through the influence of George Keith, who then resided there, by the same influence it ceased upon his defection from Friends.

Upper Freehold

"In 1739-40, a small number of Friends being seated together in Upper Freehold, built a meeting-house nigh Moses Robins, where a meeting was sometimes held."

Plainfield

"A meeting was held at the house of Nathaniel Fitz Randolph, in Woodbridge, Ninth Month 16th, 1704, and continued to be held there until 1713, when reference is made to a meeting-house."

In 1721, John Laing of Plainfield, on behalf of himself and the Friends settled near him, requested leave of the Monthly Meeting of Woodbridge to hold a meeting for worship among themselves at his house, which was granted them for three months.

In 1725, they had liberty to hold a meeting weekly, which was thence continued till 1731, when they built their meeting-house on land given by the said John Laing. "Said house not to exceed 24 foot square and 14 foot between joyns." Which was occupied until 1788, when the house was replaced by another, which is still standing.

About 1750, the Monthly Meeting was transferred from Woodbridge, and held alternately at Rahway and Plainfield.

Meetings were held at Rahway, at the house of William Robertson, in 1707, and in 1742 at the request of Friends of Rahway, leave was given by the said Monthly Meeting (Woodbridge) to hold a meeting for worship on the first days of the week, at the house of Joseph Shotwell, for three months in the year, which was continued till 1745, when it was ordered that a meeting should be held on First and Fourth-days for the winter season.

Little Egg Harbor

Egg Harbor Meeting was first settled in 1704, at Tuckerton. In 1708, Edward Andrews conveyed to Friends two acres of land, on which a meeting-house was built, and completed the following year (1709), and stood for over 150 years; it was hip roofed, with shingled sides, there were four windows about four feet square, with nine panes of glass 7 by 9 inches. The original windows were imported from England, the panes were small, and diamond shaped, and the sash was of lead; during the Revolutionary war the windows were concealed to prevent their appropriation by the army, and the lead being run into musket balls. This venerable structure was taken down in 1863, and replaced by a more modern building. It was believed to have been the first meeting-house along the Jersey coast, and was known far and near as "the Egg Harbor Meeting-house."

In 1714, the Preparative Meeting was opened, and in 1715, the Monthly Meeting was established.

The Yearly Meeting was first held there in 1729, and continued for some years. John Churchman, in his journal, speaks of attending it in 1772, where he says there was a large concourse of people.

A Meeting was settled at Barnegat in 1767, and a meeting-house built the same year.

At an early date Friends built a meeting-house in Bass River Neck.

Burlington Quarterly Meeting was established Ninth Month 29th, 1681-2. The first meeting was held at the house of William Biddle at "Mount Hope" on the Delaware River, opposite Biddle's Island, and near what is now Kinkora. It continued to be held there until 1712, when it was removed to Burlington, and after a few years held alternately at Burlington and Chesterfield (now Crosswicks). In time it was settled permanently at Burlington.

In 1681-2, Shrewsbury Monthly Meeting, which had previously belonged to Long Island, was annexed to Burlington Quarter.

In 1681, a number of Friends settled on Newton Creek, in Gloucester County, near Arwamus, or what has since become Gloucester City.

In the same year, a meeting was allowed by the Burlington Friends, to be held at Pine Point on the Delaware, (now the City of Camden), as appears by the following minute: "At a Monthly Meeting held at the house of Thomas Gardiner, the 5th of Seventh Month, 1681, -- It is ordered that Friends at Pine Point have a meeting on every Fourth-day, to begin at the fourth hour, at Richard Arnold's house."

In 1682, there was a meeting set up, and kept at the house of Mark Newbie, on Newton Creek, which soon increased so much that a meeting-house (of logs) was built in 1684. In 1715-16, a meeting-house was built at Gloucester.

Newton

In 1801, Friends removed from the old meeting-house on Newton Creek to the present location; the brick house was built upon land given by Joseph Kaighn. The old Newton Meeting-house was burned in 1817.

"At a General Meeting held at Salem in the Province of West Jersey, the 11th of Second Month, 1682, it was ordered that Friends at Arwamus and those at Shackamaxon do meet together once a month; the first meeting to be at William Cooper's at Pine Point, at Arwamus," to which were joined the Friends settled on Woodbury and Cooper's Creeks.

The Friends of Salem and Newton Monthly Meetings constituted a Quarterly Meeting in 1686, as is shown by the following minute:

"At a Yearly Meeting held in Burlington the 8th of Seventh Month, 1686, -- Friends of this meeting ordered that the Monthly Meeting of Salem, and the Monthly Meeting of Newton make up one Quarterly Meeting, called Gloucester and Salem Quarterly Meeting, to be held at Gloucester and Salem alternately."

The Monthly Meeting of Gloucester or Newton, was held alternately at Newton, and at the house of Thomas Shackle, (near Haddonfield) from 1695 to 1721. In that year Elizabeth (Haddon) Eastaugh, procured from her father John Haddon, (in England) a deed for one acre of ground for the use of Friends, on which the meeting-house was built in the early part of that year. It was of logs, and stood near the King's Road.

In 1732, John and Elizabeth Eastaugh conveyed one and a-half acres of land adjoining the meeting-house lot to Friends.

In 1760, a brick meeting-house was erected upon the same site, and the old log house removed across the "Ferry road," and used as a stable.

After nearly a century of service, that house was taken down, and the bricks used to enclose the burial ground. It was very inconveniently arranged, especially so for holding a large Quarterly Meeting. It had probably been built at two different times.

The present commodious meeting-house at Haddonfield was erected upon an adjoining lot, in 1851.

Chester

In 1685, a meeting was established with the consent of Burlington Friends, at the house of Timothy Hancock, at "Penisauken," which was held on alternate First-days with one at the house of John Kay, on the north branch of Cooper's Creek, for the accomodation of Friends at Penisauken and Evesham, and those on Cooper's Creek.

Chester (at Moorestown)

About the year 1700, the Meeting at Chester was established, and was called the Adam's Meeting from its being located upon their land.

By a deed of James and Esther Adams, dated 9th of Fourth Mo. 1700, we learn that a meeting-house already stood there, viz: "To the Trustees of the Religious Society of Friends, for one acre of land lying and being on the west side of the King's highway, with all that house or building now erected, and being upon said acre of land, called the Quaker Meeting-house." It was of logs, and was destroyed by fire. In 1721, a house built of stone succeeded it, and was located in what is now the burial

ground near the large buttonwood tree on the north side of Main Street, in Moorestown, (or Chester Town, as the place was formerly called.)

The present substantial brick structure, on the south side of the street, was built in 1802.

The frame building in the same yard, built in 1839, and enlarged in 1884.

Chester Monthly Meeting was established with the consent of Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting, First Mo. 1st, 1804, composed of Chester and Westfield Preparative Meetings.

Westfield

This was an indulged meeting for some years, and held in a school-house from 1794 to 1801, at which time the large stone meeting-house was built, which was destroyed by fire in 1859, it has been succeeded by a substantial brick building.

The frame building standing about half a mile south of the above, and occupied by our Friends, was built in 1848.

Evesham

The first account we have of meetings at Evesham, is of one held at the dwelling of William Evans, in 1694 -- his wife Elizabeth was a minister.

A meeting-house was built in 1698, which was replaced by another, in 1760, of stone, this was enlarged in 1798, and formed the present venerable-looking structure, which stands as a monument to the liberality of Friends of that day.

The Preparative and Monthly Meetings were established in 1760, as appears by the following minute: "Agreeable to ye direction of ye Quarterly Meeting held ye 3rd day of ye 9th month, 1760. Friends of Evesham and Chester held their meeting at Evesham on ye 9th of 10th month, 1760." Evesham and Chester composed one Monthly Meeting until 1804.

In the Third Month, 1793, the Monthly Meeting of Evesham proposed to the Quarterly Meeting held at Salem, that there be a division of that Monthly Meeting, viz: that Friends of Upper Evesham and Cropwell Particular Meetings become a Monthly Meeting, which was united with, and the Monthly Meeting of Upper Evesham organized First Mo. 1794.

Cropwell

The Meeting at Cropwell was first established in 1786, as appears by the following minute of that year.

"A request by direction of the Preparative Meeting of Evesham in favor of holding a meeting for worship in a school-house lately erected near Cropwell Creek, was united with." The present brick meeting-house was built in 1812.

Easton

1803. -- "Friends who live in the vicinity of Easton school-house request that two meetings a month be held at that place, which is allowed." The Meeting was regularly established; and the Preparative Meeting organized in 1810, and the meeting-house built the same year. It is a branch of Evesham Monthly Meeting.

Great Egg Harbor

"The first conviction of Friends about Great Egg Harbor was about 1702. Since which time Meetings have been settled and houses built." Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting established.

The first Yearly Meeting held at Egg Harbor was in 1754.

Haddonfield Quarter

In 1794, Gloucester and Salem Quarterly Meeting proposed to the Yearly Meeting to constitute two Quarterly Meetings in their limits; one of Evesham and Haddonfield, Great Egg Harbor, and Cape May, called Haddonfield Quarterly Meeting; to be held at Haddonfield and Evesham alternately, which was approved, and meetings held accordingly from that time until 1838 when the meeting circulated more generally, and was held once a year at Haddonfield, Evesham, Upper Evesham, (Medford) and Chester, (Moorestown) as at present.

Salem

The original meeting-house at Salem, that was formed by an addition to the hewn log dwelling of Samuel Nicholson, on "Wharf Street," now Broadway, and noted as being the first meeting-house of Friends in West Jersey, and probably the second one in the State (1681) has already been described.

In 1698 a committee was appointed to have a new meeting-house erected, of brick, and to be 30 by 40 feet in size. It was completed in 1700, and is believed to have stood nearly upon the site of the old one, or a few rods east of the great oak tree now standing in the burial ground on Broadway.

In 1772 a much larger brick house was built on Fenwick Street, where it now stands.

About 1830 a smaller brick house was built on Broadway, not far from the former location, but on the opposite side of the street.

The first Yearly Meeting held in Salem 15th of Second Month, 1684.

In 1678 a number of Friends settled about Alloways Creek (or Monmouth River) and held meetings at John Denn's (or Dennis') house, until 1685, when a meeting-house was built on the north side of the creek, on ground given by Edward Champneys and John Smith.

About 1717 another house was built on the south side of the creek, near the first location, on ground given by Joseph Ware. It continued here until about 1755, when the house was built in the village of Hancock's bridge, on ground given by William Hancock. This house was enlarged in 1784.

Pilesgrove

A meeting was established by David Davis and others at Woodstown, and called Pilesgrove Meeting.

By a minute of Salem Monthly Meeting, held in the Eighth Month, 1719, we learn that "Friends of Pilesgrove did request that they should have a First-day Meeting at the house of Roger Higgins, which was allowed for the winter season only. In the

Third Month following, leave was given that the Friends of Pilesgrove have a meeting every other First-day during the summer time. And again in the Eighth Month, leave was given to hold a First-day Meeting at Aquilla Barber's house this winter time."

A week-day meeting was established the 25th of Fourth Month, 1722.

A frame meeting-house was built in 1725, on land bought of Joseph White, for a burial ground, &c.

In the Eighth Month, 1735, a Preparative Meeting was appointed to be held at Pilesgrove, and in the Ninth Month, 1737, it was concluded that they have liberty to keep their meetings every First-day, both winter and summer.

On the 25th of Seventh Month, 1785, Pilesgrove Friends "informed Salem Monthly Meeting they had engaged in building a meeting-house, agreeably to the advice and consent of that meeting, and as it was large, requested some assistance from that meeting." The house was completed, and with some improvements or additions, is standing at the present time, now over a century old.

Pilesgrove Monthly Meeting was established the 24th of Fourth Month, 1794, as is indicated by a minute of the Quarterly Meeting, viz: "At a Quarterly Meeting held at Haddonfield, 21st of Third Month, 1794, Salem Monthly Meeting proposing for consideration, the dividing of that meeting, and holding one at Pilesgrove, it is approved."

In Second Month, 1789, "Report was made that meetings had been held in Upper Penn's Neck, and leave was granted to continue them under the care of Elihu and Isaac Pedrick. In the Eleventh Month they were again continued for three months."

The indulged meetings had been held at Upper Penn's Neck since 1789, but in 1796 the meeting was regularly established, and a meeting-house built at Pedricktown, and the Preparative Meeting opened the same year. The house has since been rebuilt.

The meeting at Woodbury was first held at the house of John Wood, in the Sixth Month, 1696, and a meeting-house built soon after; another was erected in 1715-16, and the present one in 1783, which has since been enlarged. The first Monthly Meeting was held the 11th of First Month, 1785.

Upper Greenwich

About 1740 a small frame meeting-house was built on a lot of ground granted for the purpose, by Solomon Lippincott, and a Preparative Meeting was established there in 1775. It was a branch of Haddonfield Monthly Meeting until 1785, when it became one of the branches of Woodbury Monthly Meeting.

In 1798 a large brick meeting-house was erected about one and a half miles east of this, and called Upper Greenwich Meeting, and the old site abandoned.

The lot is still well enclosed and used as a burial ground for the neighborhood.

In 1797 "liberty was granted to Friends of Woolwich to hold a meeting in the School House at Mullica Hill, to commence on First-day, the 11th of Eleventh Month, 1797," which was continued until the meeting was regularly established and the meeting-house built. The Preparative Meeting was established Eleventh Month 17th, 1800, and joined to Pilesgrove Monthly Meeting.

Friends settled very early at Greenwich, or Cohansey, as it was called, and held meetings as early as 1684. In 1694 a meeting was established there. Through the influence of Mark Reeve and others, a meeting-house was built in 1698. It stood facing the Cohansey, quite near the site now occupied. A frame structure, upon the same ground, was burned about 1810.

The present substantial brick house was built soon after.

In the Eighth Month, 1735, a "Preparative Meeting was appointed to be held at the last weekly meeting before the Monthly Meeting. And in the Ninth Month, 1737, "it was concluded that Friends at Pilesgrove and Cohansen may have liberty to keep their meetings every First-day, both winter and summer."

The Monthly Meeting organized the 27th of First Month, 1770, and was composed of the Preparative Meetings of Greenwich and Alloways Creek, and held alternately at the above named places. Afterwards, Maurice River and Cape May were attached to it.

Maurice River

"A meeting was established at Port Elizabeth, on Maurice River, about 1760." A meet-house was built about 1791.

"In the early part of this century a large tract of meadow land lying on Maurice River, was banked in, (and reclaimed) and a number of families of Friends settled there, by which the meeting of Port Elizabeth was greatly increased. In the Ninth Month, 1819, a terrible storm and great swell of the ocean, swept away miles of the tide banks along the bay shore, and the inhabitants barely escaped with their lives. This disaster nearly broke up the little settlement, but the meeting was kept up a number of years."

The meeting-house was standing in 1881, though in a very dilapidated condition. It has since been removed; the burial ground is still kept enclosed.

Maurice River Monthly Meeting was established in 1805, and laid down many years since.

Samuel Smith says: "The first convincement of Friends about Great Egg Harbor, was about 1702, since which meetings have been settled and meeting-houses built."

For many years there seemed to be a great openness on the part of the inhabitants to receive the doctrines of Friends, and a number of Friends settling along the shore at various places, several meetings were established, viz: Egg Harbor, Gallo-way, Tuckahoe and Cape May. These formed Great Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting. Friends having died and others removed, none were left to sustain the meetings, and they have all been laid down or abandoned, with a single exception, that of Cape May, near Seaville, in that county. The meeting was established soon after 1700, and the meeting-house built in 1716, by the Townsends, Leamings and others. It was rebuilt some years ago on a much smaller scale than formerly, and is still kept in repair, but like the others mentioned, it has no congregation. The old burial ground is still kept up.

It is a melancholy reflection, that where less than a century ago there existed so many prosperous settlements of Friends, and such thriving meetings, where the pure doctrines of the Christian religion were promulgated and faithfully upheld, there is now nothing left of their once teeming congregations but their nameless graves.

Seeing a notice that some of the old records of one of the Monthly Meetings of Philadelphia have been mislaid or lost, has reminded me of the careless way in which such records are frequently kept, especially in country places, and of the importance of having some place where all such, as are not in use, may be deposited for safe-keeping.

Their custodians too often look upon them as old and nearly worthless, and store them carelessly among rubbish in out-of-the-way corners of their houses, where

the mice may gnaw them, or where they may be forgotten, or where, in case of fire, they are almost sure to be consumed.

Some years since, having occasion to consult the early records of the Rahway and Plainfield Monthly Meeting, I found them in a small, frame house, piled away on the floor in a dark closet, under the stairs.

In order, so far as possible, to avoid the danger of the records of marriages, births and deaths from being entirely lost, I made an abstract of the first, and copied the others, and sent the whole to the New York Genealogical Record for publication.

As a sort of introduction the following sketch of the origin of the Meeting and of some of its members was prepared. This, with some little modification, I have thought might not be uninteresting to the readers of "The Friend."

As will be seen by the dates given, the two hundredth anniversary of the first establishment of the Monthly Meeting will occur the coming month.

Santa Barbara, Tenth mo. 4th, 1886.

- HUGH D. VAIL

EARLY HISTORY OF RAHWAY AND PLAINFIELD MEETINGS

The Rahway and Plainfield Monthly Meeting of Friends is one of the oldest in New Jersey. Exactly at what date the first Friends settled within its limits is not known. As early as 1669, there were several English Friends, or Quakers, living on the opposite side of the Raritan, at Middletown and Shrewsbury. In 1672 these were visited by George Fox, the founder of the Society, who came there, as he relates in his "Journal", from a Dutch town called New Castle, across that wilderness country since called West Jersey, where he travelled "a whole day together without seeing a man or woman, house or dwelling-place."

As neither George Fox nor William Edmundson, who visited Shrewsbury about three years later, makes any mention of other members of their Society in New Jersey. it is hardly probable there were any such at that time; though as early as 1679, Nathaniel Fitz Randolph, who in 1678, had been fined as a Quaker by the Plymouth magistrates, removed from Barnstable to Woodbridge.

In 1683, after East Jersey had come under the control of the "Proprietors", Robert Barclay, the author of the "Apology", was appointed Governor for life, and through his influence many of his friends and relatives, a number of whom were of the same religious Society as himself, emigrated from Scotland to New Jersey, and settled near Amboy. Among these were John Reid, George Keith, and John Barclay, the Governor's brother.

The precise date of the first meeting at Amboy we do not know; but in 1686 a Monthly Meeting was set up there, as a branch of Shrewsbury Quarter, of which John Reid was clerk.

The first entry in the "Minute Book" is the following:

"The 3d of the 8th month, 1686, Friends at Amboy agreed to have a Monthly Meeting there, and that upon the second 4th day of each month, and the first to begin the second 4th day of November, 1686.

The next entry is:

"At the Monthly Meeting held in Amboy the 19th day of the 9th month, 1686. Agreed that all Friends belonging to the Monthly Meeting bring Minutes of y^r Births and Burials (since they first come into this place) that they may be recorded."

Whether this was done or not, the Minutes do not state; but no such records of this date have been preserved. On a blank part of a page among the Minutes the following entry is made in a different hand from that of the clerk's:

"Mary Forster, Daughter of Miles Forster & Rebeckah Forster, was born the 18th day of the 8th month, 1687."

The earliest regular registry of births and deaths begins in 1705, at which time the meeting, after having been suspended a number of years, was re-established at Woodbridge.

There appears to have been no early record of marriages. The oldest date of a recorded certificate of marriage is 1712, and this must have been copied into the records long after that time. But as all the members of the Society were then required, before marriage, to declare their intention publicly in the Monthly Meeting, the fact of the marriage, and the approximate date of it can be obtained from the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting.

The following is the first record of this kind:

"At the Monthly held in Amboy the 12th of the 11th month 1686(7), Miles Forster

& Rebeca Laury proposed to the meeting their Intention of Marriage. The Meeting apoynts John Mill and Wm. Bethell to Inquire into the Matter to see if all things be clear with these persons in order to there marriage and to make Report thereof against the next Monthly Meeting."

"At the Monthly Meeting held in Amboy the 9th of the 12th month 1686(7). Miles Forster & Rebeca Laury came the second tyme to the Meeting expecting friends answer. The Meeting being satisfied had nothing to object against there Marriage & y^rfore allowed them to apoynt a meeting of Friends wherein to Solemnize the same."

These minutes are in the handwriting of John Reid, who remained clerk until December, 1687, when he makes the following minute:

"At a Monthly Meeting held at Amboy the 14th of the 10th month 1687. John Reid who hitherto kept the book for this meeting being now removed with his family to another County, desired friends to order another in his stead. Whereupon the Meeting apoynt'd Ben: Griffith to keep the book and receive the contributions."

Soon after this the troubles caused by George Keith occurred in the Society, and we find no entry in the minutes from the Ninth Month, 1688, to the Eighth Month, 1689, and then only this single one:

"At a Monthly Meeting in Woodbridge the 17th day of the 8th month 1689. It was agreed that the monthly meeting should be kept the third fifth day in every month at Benjamin Griffiths in Woodbridge."

After this there is no further entry until 1704, when it is:

"At a Monthly Preparative Meeting at Nathaniel FitzRandolphs in Woodbridge y^e 16th day of the 9th mo 1704;" with the following memorandum on the opposite page, apparently in the hand of Benjamin Griffith, who was still clerk:

"The above said Monthly Meeting fell from y^e year 1689 to y^e year 1704, by reason by George Keith's Separation, which was 15 years: there was appointed to be kept at Woodbridge a Preparative Meeting, and about 2 years after kept a Monthly Meeting."

In a subsequent minute we are informed that the "Yearly Meeting held at Shrewsbury the 29th day of the 8th month 1706," changed the Preparative Meeting at Woodbridge to a Monthly Meeting.

The scattered residences of the members of this meeting, who were mostly farmers, rendered it difficult for many of them to attend it in winter, and, for the convenience of these, small meetings were allowed to be held, during part of the year, at the dwellings of some of the more prominent Friends. Among these was one "at the house of Wm. Roberson at Rahway," in 1707; and one "at John Shotwell's on Staten Island," in 1710, and another at the house of John Laing, near Plainfield, in 1721.

In the course of a few years the Rahway and Plainfield Meetings were made permanent ones; meeting-houses were built, and about the middle of the century, the Monthly Meeting itself was transferred from Woodbridge, and held, alternately, (as it now is,) at Rahway and Plainfield.

Besides these two meetings, there was also, for a number of years, a small one at Mendham, in Morris County, that was a branch of the Woodbridge Meeting.

Although this Monthly Meeting was, until quite recently, wholly subordinate to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, it is a singular fact, indicating a different origin of its members, that very few of their names are to be found among the Friends of West Jersey and Pennsylvania.

The most common names in the records are, -- Laing, Shotwell, Vail, Fitz-

Randolph, Marsh, Thorn, Webster, and Pound.

The Laings are all, or nearly all, descended from John Laing, of Craigforth, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, who came over with his family in 1635, and settled near Plainfield.

The ancestor of the Shotwells was Abraham Shotwell, one of the original settlers of Elizabethtown, who, in consequence of too freely expressing his opinion of the ruling powers, was banished the province, and his land at Elizabeth confiscated. In 1683, after his death, the property was restored to his son, John, who married Elizabeth Burton, in New York, in 1679, and who was, for a number of years, a prominent member of the Woodbridge Meeting.

The Vails belonging to this meeting were originally from Westchester County, New York, and are the descendants of two brothers, Samuel and John Vail. The latter came with his mother into New Jersey when quite young, became a minister in the Society, and died in 1774, at the age of 89. He left a large family; very few of whom, however, remained with Friends, or in that section of the province.

Samuel Vail, who was a member lived and died at Westchester. But two of his sons, John and Stephen, settled near Plainfield, married members of the Woodbridge Meeting, and became the progenitors of all, or nearly all, of the name to be found among Friends in that section, or in Ohio, or in Iowa.

The Fitz Randolphs, F. Randolphs, or Randolphs, as the name is variously written by themselves, are the descendants of Edward Fitz Randolph, of Barnstable, Massachusetts, who, in 1637, married Elizabeth, the daughter of Thomas Blossom, one of the elders of the Plymouth church.

Nathaniel, the eldest son of Edward, who was born at Barnstable in 1642, in 1662 married Mary, the daughter of Joseph Holley, and, it is probable, about the same time joined the Society of Friends. He came to New Jersey, with his family, in 1679. After the establishment of the Monthly Meeting at Woodbridge, he appears to have been one of its most active members. For a number of years prior to the completion of their meeting-house, in 1713, the meeting was held at his house. It is believed that he and his descendants are the only persons of the name who were Friends.

The Marshes are descended from Samuel Marsh, senior, one of the original "Associates" in the settlement of Elizabethtown, who came there from New Haven, Connecticut. His grandson Samuel, the son of Joseph, is the first of the name mentioned in the records.

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF FRIENDS NEAR CAMDEN

The subjoined account is copied from an old volume of records belonging to Haddonfield Monthly Meeting of Friends. The settlement at Newton was located on the headwaters of the creek of that name, about three miles south of the ferry at Market street, in Camden, and a mile south of the present meeting-house of Friends, in the outskirts of the City of Camden. The old burying ground on Collings Road still marks the spot where the meeting-house originally stood. It has long since been removed. Mark Newby's house where the first meetings were held, as stated in this narrative, was near the place. Did the "zeal and fervency of spirit" which T. Sharp says abounded among these poor emigrants, inducing them "immediately" to set up a meeting for worship, prevail among those who now occupy their place of settlement and its vicinity, there would be a brighter prospect than is now seen for the maintenance of those principles and practices which these godly men strove to plant as a good seed in the then wilderness of New Jersey.

"A book wherein is recorded the births of Friends' children belonging to the three meetings that make up the Monthly Meeting now held at the new meeting-house in Haddonfield, in the township of Newton, county of Gloucester, and western division of Province of New Jersey. With the account of burials; as also some account of the settlement and beginning of Newton, and the Friends that were the first concerned in the same."

"Let it be remembered, -- It having wrought upon the minds of some Friends that dwelt in Ireland, but such as formerly came thither from England; and a pressure having laid upon them for some years which they could not get from under the weight of, until they gave up to leave their friends and relations there, together with a comfortable subsistence, to transport themselves and families into the wilderness land of America; and thereby expose themselves to difficulties which, if they could have been easy where they were, in all probability might (not) have been met with; and in order thereunto sent from Dublin, in Ireland, to one Thomas Lurtin, a Friends of London, commander of a Pink, who accordingly came, and made an agreement with him to transport them and their families into New Jersey, viz: Mark Newby and family, Thomas Thackara and family, William Bates and family, George Goldsmith, an old man, and Thomas Sharp, a young man, but no families. And while the ship abode in Dublin harbor, providing for the voyage, the said Thomas Lurtin was taken so ill that he could not perform the same, so that his mate John Dagger undertook it. And upon the nineteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and eighty-one, we set sail from the place aforesaid. And through the good providence of God towards us, we arrived at Elsinburg, in the county of Salem, upon the nineteenth day of November following; where we were well entertained at the house of the Thomson's who came from Ireland about four years before; who by their industry were arrived to a very good degree of living; and from thence we went to Salem where were several houses that were vacant of persons who had left the town to settle in the country, which served to accommodate them for the winter. And having thus settled down their families, and the winter proving moderate, we at Wickacoa, among us, purchased a house of the Swanson's, and so went to Burlington, to the commissioners, of whom we obtained a warrant to the Surveyor-General, which then was Daniel Leeds; and after some formidable search in that then called the third, or Irish tenth, we at last pitch upon the place now called Newton, which was before the settlement of Philadelphia, and then

applies to the surveyor, who came and laid it out for us. And the next spring being the beginning of the year 1682, we all removed from Salem, together with Robert Zane, that had been settled there, who came from Ireland along with the Thomson's before hinted; and having an expectation of our coming, only bought a lot in Salem town, upon the which he seated himself until our coming; whose proprietary right and ours being of the same nature, could not then take it up in Fenwick's tenth. And so began our settlement, and although at times we were pretty hard bestead, having all our provisions as far as Salem to fetch by water, yet through the mercy and kindness of God, we were preserved in health, and from any extreme difficulties. And immediately there was a meeting set up, and kept at the house of Mark Newby, and in a short time it grew and increased; unto which William Cooper and family, that lived at the Point, resorted, and sometimes the meeting was kept at his house, who had been settled some time before, Zeal and fervency of spirit was what in some good degree abounded among Friends, in commemoration of our prosperous success, and eminent preservation, both in our coming over the great deep, as also that whereas we were but few at that time and the Indians many, whereby it put a dread upon our spirits, considering they were a savage people; but the Lord, that hath the hearts of all in his hands, turned them so as to be serviceable unto us, and very loving and kind: which cannot be otherwise accounted but to be the Lord's doing in our favor, which we had cause to praise his name for.

"And that the rising generation may consider that the settlement of this country was directed by an impulse upon the spirits of God's people, not so much for their ease and tranquillity, but rather for the posterity that should be after, and that the wilderness, being planted with a good seed, might grow and increase, to the satisfaction of the good Husbandman. But instead thereof, if for wheat it should bring forth tares, the end of the good Husbandman will be frustrated, and they themselves will suffer loss. This narrative I have thought good and requisite to leave behind, as having knowledge of things from the beginning. Thos. Sharp."

EARLY FRIENDS OF PLAINFIELD MEETING

Among the earliest pioneers who composed these first English speaking colonies on New Jersey soil, were ardent followers of the two despised sects first called in derision "Quakers and Anabaptists". They had always been foremost as advocates of free opinion and independent thinking on religious subjects. Persecuted together in Old England for conscience sake, they had sought the shores of New England for freedom to worship God. But trial and imprisonments meeting them there, and exiled from Massachusetts, they at last came to the peaceful plantations of this province. The Baptists made Piscataway their nucleus of a settlement, and the Quakers settled mostly in Woodbridge township. South of the Raritan the Baptists selected Middletown as their headquarters, and Shrewsbury settlement was made up almost entirely of the Quaker element.

Of those who were the earliest planters along this salt water frontage from Amboy to Elizabethtown Point, and whose descendants a generation or two after pushed inland, it is only proposed to make reference at this time to those who were members of the Society of Friends. This class of people from the earliest settlement of the colony, embraced the opportunity of securing permanent homes within the jurisdiction of the Jerseys. When West Jersey was set off in 1676, that province was bought for 1,000 Pounds by two devout Quakers, and became the asylum for other persecuted Friends who emigrated thither in ship-loads from England. Burlington, on the Delaware, was their headquarters where, in 1678, the first monthly meeting was settled on the 15th of May of that year. During the year following, Sir George Carteret, sole owner of the eastern division of New Jersey, died, and in the settlement of his estate East Jersey was sold at public auction in 1682. The purchasers were a syndicate of twelve Quakers headed by William Penn, and the price paid under the auctioneer's hammer in London was 3,400 Pounds. The same year twelve others invested in equal shares with the original buyers, making 24 proprietors in all, who became the sole owners of the province. There was a population of 3,500 at the time living in the towns of Shrewsbury, Middletown, Piscataway (including Amboy), Woodbridge, Elizabeth, Newark, Bergen, and Hoboken. On scattered plantations outside there were probably 1,200 more, making some 5,000 men, women, and children claiming title to about 300,000 acres. For all the rest of the land in East Jersey, these Quakers held a deed conveying to them from royal patents an undisputed ownership. In August, 1684, the proprietors living in the province organized themselves into a "Board of Commissioners" for the better management of their concerns. The organization exists to this day, though there remain only 50,000 acres undisposed of out of the two and a half millions owned by them two centuries ago.

The Quakers in large numbers were now possessors of a kingdom of their own. Their migration by thousands to the shores of the Jerseys, their occupation of the soil and management of government affairs became one of the most notable events in the closing years of the seventeenth century. The chief incentive for populating East Jersey from the beginning, in 1665, was the perfect religious tolerance allowed by the Lords Proprietors, without any interference, which great privilege was frequently reassured to the inhabitants and all new comers by the Quaker proprietary government. Robert Barclay, the distinguished advocate of the doctrines of Quakerism, was appointed governor, and Thomas Rudyard, an accomplished lawyer and friend of Wm. Penn, was made first deputy governor. Gawen Laurie, a noted and wealthy member of the Society of Friends, succeeded Rudyard, whose headquarters were at Elizabeth Town and Perth Amboy, and Samuel Groome, a prominent Quaker, was designated the Receiver and Surveyor-General.

The governor's council and legislative assembly were, by a large majority, of the same creed; and for several years they had complete control of all civil affairs, and for a full generation afterward they held the predominant power in all governmental matters. Their liberal principles and tolerant laws induced multitudes to settle in the province, including many of other persecuted sects embraced in the Baptist denomination and Scotch Presbyterians.

Under their peaceful dispensation the province greatly improved in commercial and agricultural advancement, as well as in its civil government. During this period the colony was divided into four counties - Bergen, Essex, Middlesex, and Monmouth. Courts for the trial of small causes were established by the authorities, and county courts were erected and other legal processes adopted for the better governing of a growing province. Laws were at once passed for improving the interior sections of the country by laying out and opening highways of travel and making bridges and ferries, appointing public markets and fairs for the development of general trade, and enacting other statutes for the peace, prosperity, and general good order of the inhabitants.

The Quaker proprietors were mainly active in soliciting emigration, especially from Scotland, from whence many new comers of their persuasion were induced to move to East Jersey. Prior to their purchase of the territory, in 1682, there were several families of Friends who had quietly bought farms and settled within the "verge of this meeting" and become identified with its establishment.

Prominent in the early beginnings of the Society in this vicinity was Abraham Shotwell. Though himself not a Quaker, he was warmly in sympathy with the common people in their contentions with the Lords' Proprietors government about titles to the land. His property in Elizabethtown was centrally located, being on the east side of present Broad St. and extending from the creek westerly to where Christ church is now located. On account of Shotwell's independent and outspoken opposition to the official requirement, the new patents to be taken under Governor Carteret's rule, his land was confiscated and sold from him in 1675, and he himself compelled to leave the province. Shortly after his death, two sons, Daniel and John Shotwell, succeeded, under the Quaker management during 1683, in having their fathers' property restored to the family.

In the meanwhile Daniel was living just across the sound on Staten Island, and John, having married in 1679 Elizabeth Burton, soon after obtaining possession of the land, made his residence in this region. For generations since their descendants have lived on plantations in Union county within a few miles of this house. By intermarriage with the Thorns, Laings, Websters, Vails, Marshs, Pounds, and other pioneer settlers, they have given the State some of its most useful and prominent citizens. The Society of Friends has always had among its worshippers, as consistent and valuable helpers, many devoted and influential members of the family. Their number in this meeting was far in excess of any other family, unless it be the Vails. At the opening of this century there were found on the records the names of eighty-six Shotwells.

The first mention of this locality as Plainfield is noticed in connection with the register of the birth of one of John Shotwell's grandchildren. His daughter, Elizabeth, had married John Laing in 1705, and their daughter, Elizabeth, the record states, "was born at Plainfield ye 11th of ye 10th month 1707." Earlier references to this place had been made as the "Quaker settlement on the Plains" to distinguish it from the still earlier planting of a small colony known as Scotch Plains, near by.

The first marriage ceremony solemnized in this meeting-house after its final completion, was Amy Shotwell to Charles Brooks. Here within these hallowed enclosures as well as elsewhere, have the sweet voices of the gentler sex bearing the name of Shot-

well been heard, and often have the members of this meeting heeded the kind words of advice and counsel from faithful speakers of this family name.

Among the very first settlers in the same locality was Samuel Marsh, one of the original associates of the Elizabethtown grant. Though a strict New England Puritan himself many of his descendants formed other religious associations. Their homesteads were in the vicinity of Rahway, and by reference to the early records of the Friends' meetings the name is frequently found. The progenitor of the family line in this State died 1683, leaving three sons, Samuel, John, and Joseph, and four daughters, many of whose offspring were prominently identified with this Society. The original ancestors of the Marsh family in the United States were three brothers born in England, who came to America the first half of the 17th century, viz: John Marsh settled in Connecticut in 1639; George Marsh made a permanent settlement at Hingham, Massachusetts; and Samuel Marsh, after a short stay in New Haven colony moved to this section of New Jersey where he became the owner of several hundred acres of land and the progenitor of most of those in Union county bearing his name. Though the family was never represented by a very large number among the Friends, the few connected with the Society were active and influential in sustaining the authorized meetings and maintaining the high standard of discipline and morals for which the Quakers have always been distinguished.

Another active and prominent Quaker of this section of East Jersey, antedating the year 1682, when the province was bought and governed by members of this religious sect, was Nathaniel Fitz Randolph, the oldest son of the largest and most influential family in this part of the colony before the Revolution. The founder of this distinguished family in America was Edward Fitz Randolph, of England, who came to America in 1630, settling at first in Scituate and afterward at Barnstable, Massachusetts, where Nathaniel was born in 1642, the eldest of ten children. He and his immediate descendants were the only members of this prominent family belonging to the Society of Friends, which society it is thought he joined at the time of his marriage, in 1662; for the same year he was punished by the Plymouth court for marrying contrary to their law. In 1670, he was fined for refusing to contribute towards the support of the Barnstable minister. After most of the diabolical devices for converting heretics had fallen into disuse in Massachusetts, there still remained this unjust law enjoining payment of church tithes. It was not till 1724 that the statute was repealed. In the meantime scores and hundreds left Massachusetts, some as soon as they could dispose of their property and others because their property had been confiscated already in 1677. Nathaniel F. Randolph exchanged his house and lot at Barnstable for John Smith's property in Woodbridge township, and as quickly as possible thereafter moved with his family to New Jersey. Just before leaving his native place, he with three other influential Quakers signed, in 1678, a remonstrance to the general court at Plymouth against being taxed to support the established ministry. This protest contained these mild words: "It's well enough known we (called Quakers) have never been backward to contribute our assistance in our estates and persons for the civil government's expense where we could act without scruple of conscience, until this late contrivance of mixing your preachers' support therewith. If the court will please to distinguish between the country rate, and the preachers' maintenance, our consciences will be eased and we will cheerfully contribute our proportionate share for the promotion of governmental affairs." But such sensible and tolerant views had not yet possessed the ruling spirits of New England. The following year, 1679, found Nathaniel on his plantation in Middlesex county, a few miles westwardly from what was afterwards known as the Blazing Star Ferry on Staten Island Sound. For years previous his aged parents and other members of his family had moved into the adjoining township of Piscataway. Nathaniel

Fitz Randolph had all the intellectual endowments and moral qualities combined with an executive ability which were necessary for establishing and maintaining an independent society for religious worship. It was chiefly by his firmness, wisdom, and commanding influence in the community, that the Friends were able to overcome the rebellious disaffection caused by Keith's departure from the faith in 1689. Nathaniel's usefulness and importance in the commonwealth are manifested by his prominence in the colonial government, being a member of the legislature for several terms. His public life is full of noble deeds done for the good of the province. He filled all the local and county offices as well, from the overseer of the highway of Woodbridge township to the high sheriff of Middlesex county.

Any one familiar with the early records of the Quakers in this section, will remember that in 1704 the house of Nathaniel Fitz Randolph was opened for weekly meetings of Friends. As long as he lived his hospitality was unlimited and his zeal for the spiritual welfare of all members of the society never diminished. When he died, in 1713, he left a large number of descendants to follow his footsteps and imitate his pious example, scores and hundreds of whom adhered to the faith and practice of their great progenitor. By their intermarriage with the Hulls, Kinseys, Hartshorns, Hamptons, Marshs, Vails, Laings, Websters, Shotwells, and Smiths, besides other pioneer families, some of the very best communicants of the Quaker society are found.

The Laing family composed a prominent part of the first permanent dwellers of this surrounding neighborhood. The progenitor of the long line in East Jersey was John Laing, a Scotch farmer from the county of Aberdeen. He came over from Craigforth in August of 1685, landing at Amboy, near which place for a few years he lived with his wife Margaret, and children John, Abraham, William, Christiana, and Isabel. During the latter part of 1689 he moved inland, purchasing a farm on the fertile plains and rolling hills not far from where New Brooklyn is now located. His son John married, in 1705, Elizabeth Shotwell, a direct descendant of the original Abraham Shotwell. His daughter Isabel, in 1700, married Joseph Fitz Randolph, son of Nathaniel, and both families were always active and energetic members of the Society of Friends. John Laing took practical measures to encourage the development of the Society, and in 1721 and after, urged upon the Quaker authorities the propriety of Friends living near him gathering at his house for religious worship. In 1725, by his urgent solicitation, week-day meetings were established at his house. The location was so easy of access to a wide circle of Friends living on farms along Green Brook, Cedar Brook, and vicinity, that by 1731-6 a meeting-house was built, which was the beginning of what subsequently became this Plainfield society.

From that primitive day to this, more than a century and a half, the descendants of John Laing have been among the foremost supporters of the gospel of peace. From the completion of the little meeting-house in the woods, originated by his forethought, till increasing congregations, generations after, required a larger meeting-house on the plains, where we gathered to-day, the name of Laing has been a pleasant and welcome household word. No more befitting memorial to the name could be erected than suitably enclosing and guarding the sacred spot donated by John Laing in 1728 as a burying ground for the Society and consecrated by the dust of generations. It would be an appropriate and affectionate recognition of the valuable services of one who may be considered the founder of Plainfield meeting as well as the progenitor of a large and important family.

The Webster name has always been a familiar one in East Jersey from its primitive settlements. Among the first land-holders in Woodbridge township when title was taken in 1666 for that patent, was Nathaniel Webster, from Newbury, Mass. In 1668,

when Piscataway township was settled, the name of Robert Webster is found on the list of pioneer freeholders. These were of English ancestry and identified with the English church.

The Webster family, connected with the Society of Friends and so constantly and closely identified with all their history down to the present time, was of Scotch origin. William Webster, its founder, emigrated to these hospitable shores of the Jerseys during the persecutions of non-conformists and dissenters from the established religion. He settled a few miles east of Plainfield about 1685, on a farm, where he raised a large family whose descendants have always lived here and on adjacent territory. William was scrupulously sincere in his religious convictions, which regulated all his secular actions as well. For this reason he strenuously opposed contributing towards the support of the Puritan preacher in Woodbridge. He took the first step in the colony towards resisting a taxation started to pay the minister's salary. As long as the preacher's maintenance had been by voluntary and free-will offerings, there was no objection raised. But since a recent change had been made and other religious bodies were required to assist in keeping up the "New England worship", as it was called, a great dissatisfaction was caused. This evil of union of church and state had been experienced in Old England, and a decided resistance was now made in 1695 by this member of the Webster family. The important transaction is thus referred to in the old town book: "William Webster, pretending that it is contrary to his conscience to pay anything toward the maintenance of a minister, Captain John Bishop hath engaged in open town meeting to free the said Webster from the said charge, and to pay the said Webster's part so long as the said Bishop shall live." At the beginning of the year 1700, Woodbridge township appointed a committee and empowered them "to make a final end of the difference between ourselves and our dissenting neighbors, the Quakers, concerning the payment of a general tax for sustaining the public ministry of this town." The result of this interview was a victory for the Quakers and other anti-tax men.

The oldest son of this worthy sire was William Webster, Jr., born 1692. He married Susannah Cowperthwait and soon after, about 1718-20, commenced house-keeping not far from this spot, on a large farm through which Cedar Brook coursed its way. This pioneer home was located on the south side of the stream near where Prospect Ave. now crosses the brook. In this home, one of the earliest inland settlements, were eleven children born, and here the Webster homestead remained for generations. The first child was John, born 1718, who married, 1743, Anna Taylor, a granddaughter of Richard Hartshorn, of distinguished Quaker stock. He lived on the Cedar Brook plantation, after his father's death, till the day of his own death in 1800. He and his younger brother, Hugh, who married Sarah Marsh in 1753, were discreet counsellors in the administration of discipline, and devout worshippers in all the meetings of this Society. They were prominently instrumental in 1788 in locating this meeting-house on the three-acre lot where it stands to-day, being part of the original Webster farm. As the historian has recorded, this movement was wise and timely. For more than a score of years previous, the settlers had been pushing nearer the mountains and many permanent homes were built along Green Brook. The old Plainfield Meeting-house (referred to in the records of 1739 as in the woods) was no longer a convenient place for a majority of the members worshipping there. It had ceased to accommodate the Friends to the fullest satisfaction ever since 1760, at which time an effort was made to remove from Short Hills to these Plains.

The Websters were mainly instrumental in laying out and opening this roadway in 1763, which was known then, and for half a century afterwards, as the road to Rahway. Only a few years previous they had built the first grist-mill on the bank of Green Brook,

at the head of this present Peace St., just beyond where it crossed the old stage road, now Front St., surveyed and opened several years earlier as the road from Scotch Plains to Piscataway. This mill right has existed ever since, and the grain of the pioneer planters was ground at this original site till 1782, when Taylor Webster, a son of the builder, was granted by his father the privilege of constructing a race-way from the pond to the new mill erected on the mountain road, now Somerset St., where the City mills stand at present. As a grist-mill and a meeting-house were generally the earliest measures taken to locate a permanent settlement, the Webster family may properly be credited with localizing the town of Plainfield, since they were prominent in securing both of these original means of civilization.

There is no family name more honorably and continuously associated with the welfare of the Friends in this immediate locality than that of the Vails. From very early records of the meeting it is learned that a conspicuous and important part was always taken by some one of this family from the very beginnings of the Society. In 1687 mention is made of John Vail as an active member of the Society of Friends meeting the first time at Amboy the year before. He is regarded one of the early founders of the Quaker meeting at that place. His name is found first in the primitive annals of Salem, Mass., about 1650, and subsequently in Westchester county, New York, from whence he moved to East Jersey about the time of large accessions in this colony in 1685. The most reliable information concerning his family acquaints us with two prominent sons, John Vail, Jr., born 1685, and Samuel Vail. John married in 1712, Martha Fitz Randolph, of Woodbridge, and in 1732 bought a plantation of 619 acres from Peter Sonmans, one of the proprietors of East Jersey. This was part of the large tract of 2,500 acres surveyed for the Dutch landlord by Keith, in 1685. The farm of John Vail extended from near present Richmond St., on both sides of Green Brook to the vicinity of Netherwood Ave. In 1737 an action of ejectment was brought against the peaceful planter by Elizabethtown Associates, which was one of many similar lawsuits instituted by them to recover proprietary title since the date of their parent.

John Vail was a useful preacher among the Friends of that remote period and lived to the advanced age of 89 years. At his death, in 1774, he left a large family, most of whom were not identified with the Quakers. His descendants moved into Morris county and the British provinces and became distinguished in political life and scientific attainments.

Samuel Vail, son of the original John, married Sarah Farrington, 1725, of Westchester county, New York, where he lived and died. He was a Friend, and purchased a large plantation about the date of his marriage, on Green Brook, near where Dunellen is now situated. This land was occupied by his two sons, John and Stephen, who were the progenitors of the Vail family in this vicinity. His property has been in the possession of some of the descendants ever since, being over one hundred and fifty years.

John Vail, the oldest son of Samuel, married, 1730, Margaret Laing, daughter of John and Elizabeth Shotwell Laing, and had eight sons who lived to grow up to manhood, to each of whom he gave a farm -- four at Green Brook, to John, David, Abraham, and Joseph (a son by his second wife, Mary Laing), and four farms he bought in Passaic valley, near Baskingridge for Daniel, Isaac, Jacob, and Benjamin.

Stephen Vail, the other son of Samuel, married 1733, Esther Smith, and their children were Thomas, Benjamin, Stephen, Abigail, Abraham, and Sarah.

From these ancestors of this large and prosperous family descended numerous progeny who have been useful and industrious citizens and helped to make the history of

this meeting for generations past, and here at this centennial anniversary are present as honored and worthy descendants.

The early representatives of the Thorns, Pounds and Fields, who connected with this meeting, came from Long Island. For nearly a generation previous these and other Quaker families had lived under the Dutch government which had extended an earnest invitation to all "Christian people of tender consciences" to settle among them. Exiled from the Puritan commonwealth, many Friends took up their abode at Hempstead, Gravesend, Flushing and Jamaica, and had special privileges granted them at first in religious matters. But after the English occupied the territory, the established church was the controlling religion, and disagreeable and obnoxious rules induced the Quakers to seek other and more tolerant governments. Some came to New Jersey. The Fields of Piscataway are descended from John Fields, who came from Flushing about 1690-5 and settled on a large plantation along the Raritan river. His grandfather, Robert Field, was one of the patentees of the town of Flushing in 1645. Their original ancestry were extensive landholders in Lancashire, England. All of the members of this prominent family were not connected with the Society of Friends. A large number were faithful disciples of John Calvin and prominent members of the Presbyterian church.

The Thorns of colonial New Jersey had their immediate ancestry from Flushing, Long Island. Joseph and Mary Thorn of that place had a son, Jacob, born 1700, who married, 1723, Susannah Shotwell and settled in Middlesex county, near here. Their descendants were mostly of the faith of George Fox and always took an active interest in the prosperity of the Friends. Their occupation was that of their fathers and the same as most of the pioneer settlers of this section of the country. The tilling of the soil and clearing of the forest engaged the time and energies of those who first sought permanent homes.

The ancestor of the Pounds of New Jersey was John Pound, an early settler in Piscataway township, whose son, Elijah Pound, born 1712, was a prominent and influential member of this meeting in its early history. The representatives of this family antedating the American Revolution were all interested and active in the secular and religious affairs of this neighborhood. From the first beginnings of settlement on the Plains, this family and the Thorns were identified with the Quaker meeting, and among the oldest names on the records of this Society their names are found. From generation to generation their descendants have been continuously attendant upon its weekly and monthly appointments and at its yearly meetings.

Shortly after the Quaker purchase and occupation of East Jersey, there settled in the vicinity of Woodbridge a representative of the Kinsey family who have always held an enviable position in the best society, socially, politically and religious. It was at his house, in 1709, that a monthly meeting was established for the convenience of Friends in the immediate locality. His career in public life gave him a name for successful statesmanship which is not forgotten in colonial history. Being a conscientious and earnest disciple of William Penn, he used his influence in behalf of such measures as were directly beneficial to the Society of Friends. It was mainly through his suggestion that the Quaker affirmation act was passed in 1713, and afterwards made perpetual. He was Speaker of the House of Assembly in 1716, and a member of that branch of the legislature in 1721-23 and again made speaker of the sessions of 1728 and 1733. During this last connection with the colonial government he was chiefly instrumental in having the term of assemblyman's service extended, and also started the idea of having a separate government for New Jersey distinct and independent from New York, which became an accomplished fact by 1738. In 1774, James Kinsey was a member from New Jersey of the first Continental

Congress assembly in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia. While himself occupied in advancing the public policy of the colony, his relations and immediate descendants were closely allied to the government and welfare of the religious Society of which all of them were devout and consistent members.

The early records of this meeting mention the names of Bloomfield, Dunham, Cowperthwaite, Moore, and Smith as regular families attendant upon religious services. The Bloomfields were among the earliest settlers in Middlesex county. Ezekiel married, 1680, Hope Fitz Randolph, a sister of Nathaniel. His great-grandson, Joseph Bloomfield, was Attorney-General of New Jersey in 1783, and Governor of the State from 1801 to 1812, beginning the long line of Democratic rulers.

The Dunhams of Quaker faith were of different ancestry from the Baptist family of that name who settled in Piscataway. The founder of those who were connected with the Friends was Jonathan Dunham, who came from Massachusetts and settled in Woodbridge, and was an active citizen and faithful member of this Society.

The Cowperthwaites connected with this meeting were descendants of Hugh Cowperthwaite, who was born in the north of England in 1648 and came to America with his wife Elizabeth about 1674, settling at Flushing with other Quakers of that locality. By marriage of some of his granddaughters with the Shotwells, Websters, and Copelands, the family name was perpetuated in Christian titles, if not by the surname.

In the colonial history of Middlesex county, no less than in the early annals of the Society of Friends, the Moore family held an enviable and important position. Though the founder of the family was not a Quaker, his grandchildren and their multitudinous descendants became worthy and exemplary disciples of the faith.

Last in the list mentioned of earliest pioneers connected with this meeting of Friends, was the family of Smiths. Their number was as countless as the sands of the sea. The progenitor of this remarkable patronymic was John Smith, who himself was a citizen of Barnstable, Mass., and did not live in Jersey but a little while. He was a lay preacher and an outspoken defender of the Quakers against the persecutions from the Puritan courts. His grandson, Shobal Smith, was the most prominent member of the family belonging to the Society. In 1716 he married Prudence Fitz Randolph, granddaughter of Nathaniel, and located on a farm between here and Rahway, the property now of George Hartshorn.

These are the names of most of the Quaker families who one hundred years ago or more bought land, cleared the forests, built houses and sojourned in this locality. They have peopled it with men and women who lived here and wrought and died and many of whose descendants are gathered here to-day. There are others of the same peaceful persuasion whose names might be mentioned among the pioneer Friends of Plainfield and vicinity, "whose virtues refined by adversity, and piety invigorated by persecution in other lands, blended with a love of liberty, gave to this rising commonwealth a character which the centuries have not effaced." If time permitted it would be pleasant and profitable to make reverence to other brave spirits who, in conjunction with the Friends, took an active interest in establishing this settlement. But only a passing mention of names can be given at this time: The Mannings, Drakes, Randolphs, Stelles, Runyans, Coriells, Dunns, Dunhams, Suttons, Woodens and others were included among the early settlers of this neighborhood who toiled for themselves and their posterity.

Most of these original settlers, whose names have been recited, moved inland after the last distributions of the common lands made from 1734 to 1738. Previously but few pioneers ventured beyond the town lots of Woodbridge and Piscataway. But the increase of settlers in those places and the attractions of new fields of husbandry and homes,

induced many to push towards the interior and occupy the fertile farms awaiting them. So gradually one plantation after another was taken possession of from 1730, which may be called the beginning of permanent settlements on this plain.

One hundred years have passed away since the completion and first occupancy of this meeting-house. Then, at a date indicated by the figures 1788 on the venerable shingles of this building, the number of Friends in this locality greatly overshadowed all other religious worshipers for a wide extent of territory. At that time no other Christian congregation existed in this neighborhood; the Baptist church at Scotch Plains, organized in 1747, being the nearest public place for religious gathering.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE MEETINGHOUSE AT PLAINFIELD

In the year 1684 the seat of government of the Province of East Jersey was removed by direction of Governor Barclay from Elizabeth Town to Perth Town, now known as Perth Amboy. Gawen Lawrie was then Deputy Governor. He had been a London merchant and was a member of the Society of Friends, as were likewise several of his official associates, notably among them being Miles Forster, who married a daughter of the Deputy Governor, the first marriage recorded in the book of minutes of the Society in these parts, and who held the appointment of Receiver of Customs; John Barclay, a brother of the Governor; John Reid, at one time Surveyor-General, and as such the author of a survey entitled -- "A map of the Raritan, Millstone, and Rahway rivers, and of Bound, Green, and Cedar brooks, with the plantations thereupon," a fac-simile of which is in possession of the Historical Society of New Jersey; and George Keith, an active member among Friends, who also filled the office of Surveyor-General and in 1687 ran the division line between East and West Jersey. George Keith was a man of collegiate education, literary attainments, and strong natural abilities but, unfortunately, possessing an overbearing disposition and given to unwise controversy, he sowed seeds of discord which ripened into bitter fruit. He antagonized individuals, evinced hostility to the Society, and influencing other members of prominent standing to follow him, finally became an avowed apostate. The course pursued by Keith and companions disrupted the meeting and virtually suspended it for the period of fifteen years.

Notwithstanding such untoward circumstances the religious principles and observances of the Society survived the ordeal and lived to flourish anew, for the records inform us that Friends assembled in a meeting capacity at the house of Nathaniel Fitz Randolph, in Woodbridge, Ninth month 16th, 1704, and that meetings continued to be held thereat until Ninth month, 19th, 1713, when reference is made to a meeting-house.

The minutes of the meeting thus established at Woodbridge omit mention of Lawrie, Barclay, Forster, and Keith, once so conspicuous in the affairs of society at Amboy, but in lieu thereof speak of Fitz Randolph, Hadden, Smith, Brotherton, Thorn, Pound, Webster, Shotwell, Vail, Laing, and others, names still familiarly known and respected in this section of New Jersey.

At a monthly meeting held at Woodbridge Ninth month 16th, 1721, John Laing, one of the most prominent members, on behalf of himself and other Friends, asked permission to hold a meeting at his house, which request was soon thereafter granted and carried into effect. The residence of John Laing was in the Township of Piscataway, County of Middlesex and not far from the boundary line of the present city of Plainfield. On the farm then owned and occupied by him can be located an ancient burying place.

At an adjourned monthly meeting held at Woodbridge, Third month 27th, 1731, the following minute was approved: "The Friends belonging to the meeting held at John Laing's, deceased, desire liberty to build a meeting-house on the land given by the said John Laing for that purpose, this meeting grants their desire and orders that John Kinsey should pay the money given by John Shotwell, deceased, to that use."

At the next monthly meeting, Fourth month 17th, "Abraham Shotwell and Benjamin Smith were appointed to manage the building of the meeting-house near John Laing's, deceased, the said house not to exceed 24 foot square and 14 foot between joyns."

Such recited action brings us down to a newly erected meeting-house in the Township of Piscataway, which was designated and always known as Plainfield meeting, and which became the immediate predecessor of the building wherein we are now convened.

After the lapse of twenty-nine years, a proposition to remove Plainfield meeting-

house, so called, from the Laing locality, was introduced at monthly meeting held Eighth Month 21st, 1760.

The question of such removal appears to have engaged the prolonged attention of Friends, as their recorded proceedings attest. Committees were appointed from time to time to consider the matter, but no definite conclusion was reached until Eleventh month, 15th, 1787, when, at a monthly meeting held at Rahway, a committee consisting of John Webster, David Vail, John Vail, Isaiah Shotwell, John Webster (3rd) Isaac Laing, Jacob Laing, Samuel Pound, Josiah Dunham, John Haydock, Benjamin Shotwell, Joseph Stackhouse, Joseph Shotwell, Wm. Smith, Hartshorn F. Randolph, Ambrose Copland, and Samuel Marsh, appointed the previous month to take into consideration the renewed request for a new meeting-house at Plainfield, and a proper site therefor, reported as follows:

"The Committee all agreed that a lot of land containing three acres, near the house of John Webster, the third, would be suitable place for said house to be built on, and proposed that the size of the house should be about 34 x 48 feet. They have promoted a subscription and it appeared there was upwards of three hundred pounds subscribed."

After deliberating thereon, the meeting agreed to the place proposed, also to the dimensions of the building, and appointed as a committee, with authority to purchase the land, agree with some persons to undertake the building, as might be judged best, and to call upon subscribers for the money -- William Shotwell, Hugh Webster, William Webster, David Vail, Ambrose Copland, Edward Moore, William Smith, and Edward Fitz Randolph.

At subsequent monthly meetings liberty was given said committee to use the timber on the lot where the old meeting-house stood, and also to decide as to the expediency of appropriating any part of the old house towards building the new one.

Thus we have the authorization to purchase the site and to rear the identical edifice whose Centennial anniversary we are now met to commemorate.

On the 20th of Eighth month, 1788, a monthly meeting was for the first time held in this, the then new meeting-house at Plainfield which today, dating from such occupancy, is one hundred years old.

The final report of the Building Committee was presented to a monthly meeting held at Plainfield, Fourth month 21st, 1790, and read as follows:

"We the committee appointed to have the care and oversight of building the new meeting-house at Plainfield, report they have performed the service, and that the expenses of the house if four hundred and seventy-four pounds, seven shillings, and ten pence, exclusive of what stuff was got from the old meeting-house:

Expenses of the house	474,07,10 Pounds
Cost of land and fencing the same	47,14,03
	<hr/>
	522,02,01 Pounds
Money subscribed	510,04,09
Land and old meeting-house sold to Joseph Laing	08,13,06
Old stable, etc., sold for	04,18,00
	<hr/>
	523,16,03 Pounds
Due the meeting	01,14,02 Pounds
William Shotwell	
Edward F. Randolph	
William Webster	
Edward Moore	
David Vail	

Ambrose Copland
Hugh Webster "

We have thus summarily reviewed the salient points connected with the erection and first occupation of this old meeting-house. As far back as 1769 the monthly meeting was designated as that of "Rahway and Plainfield", a name it continues to own.

The early concern of Friends regarding Slavery is evidenced by the following report of a committee made to Plainfield monthly meeting in 1775:

"We the committee appointed to inspect into the circumstances of the negroes belonging to Friends who are members of our monthly meeting, have agreed to report that we have inquired into their situation, and we find that some of them are old and incapable of procuring a comfortable subsistence were they to be set free by their masters, and that some are under age. Encouragement was given that they should have learning, and when of age should be manumitted, and that there is one we judge proper for freedom whose master can not be prevailed with to set him free.

Joseph Shotwell
John Webster
John Haydock "

A living concern was also manifested at an early date against the sale and use of intoxicating liquors by members of the Society.

The storms of a hundred winters have beaten upon this venerable pile, and yet, shingle-sided and wrought-nailed, with the exception of a portion of one end damaged by fire and repaired in 1873, it stands outwardly as of yore, while within, its massive frame timbers, richly browned, not by artistic brush, but by the mellowing hand of time, clearly show the marks of implements wielded by the sturdy forefathers of 1788. It may be interesting and not entirely inappropriate here to speak of an incident which personally associates the erection of this house with a memorable event in national history. During the contest for American Independence, when the British forces held possession of Perth Amboy and the adjacent country, General Washington and staff called at the farm residence of John Vail, grandfather of the late Jonah Vail, and requested to be guided to some prominent spot on the mountain from whence a good view of the plain below and the movements of the enemy could be obtained. There was a man at Friend Vail's house at the time who, being acquainted with the mountain paths, at once volunteered his services and piloted the Continental Commander to an over-look eminence which bears the historic name of "Washington Rock". The guide was Edward Fitz Randolph, a member of the committee charged with the building of Plainfield Meeting-house, and who, as a mechanic, gave to its construction manual labor.

The great and distinguished history of this old house is interwoven with the sacred and vitally important cause of religion. For years it was the only place of public worship in this vicinity, the surrounding country being settled principally by Friends. Here thronged congregations met to engage in silent adoration or listen to words of earnest exhortation. Residents of Plainfield, now far advanced along the journey of life, remember with pleasurable emotions those long-passed days when in the bloom of youth they here attended meeting. From yon raised seats the most eminent ministers of the Society have proclaimed with demonstration and power the glad message of gospel truth and love, and borne valiant testimony against worldly evils and human wrongs. Generations have come and gone. The years have performed a hundred circuits. Still the protecting wing of Ancient Goodness remains outstretched, and numbers weekly assemble within these age-tinged walls to partake of spiritual communion after the plain and simple manner of Fox and Penn.

HADDONFIELD QUARTERLY MEETING.

HADDONFIELD QUARTERLY MEETING, is held on the Fifth-day immediately following the second Second-day in the Third, Sixth, Ninth and Twelfth Months, at 10 o'clock. At Haddonfield in the Third and Ninth, and at Evesham in the Sixth and Twelfth Months. Meeting of Ministers and Elders the day preceding at 11 o'clock.

It is composed of Five Monthly Meetings, viz.

Monthly Meetings.	Meetings for Worship.	
EVESHAM, The Sixth-day after the first Second-day in the month.	Evesham	5th day
	Easton	5
UPPER EVESHAM, The Seventh-day after first Second-day.	Upper Evesham	5
	Hopewell	5
	Cropwell	6
HADDONFIELD, The second Second-day in the month, at 10 o'clock.	Haddonfield	5
	Newtown	5
CHESTER, On the Fifth-day following the first Second-day, at 10 o'clock.	Chester (Moore's Town)	5
	Westfield	5
GREAT EGG HARBOUR, The first Second-day in the month.	Upper Great Egg Harbour	5
	Lower Great Egg Harbour	4

SALEM QUARTERLY MEETING.

SALEM QUARTERLY MEETING, is held on the Fifth-day after the second Second-day in the Second, Fifth, Eighth and Eleventh Months. At Woodbury in the Second and Eighth, and at Salem in the Fifth and Eleventh Months. Meeting of Ministers and Elders the day preceding.

When the Quarterly Meeting is held at Salem, and in the Eighth Month at Woodbury, there is a Youths Meeting held on Sixth-day.

Five Monthly Meetings compose this Quarter, governed by the last Second-day in the month, and held as follow, viz.

Monthly Meetings.	Meetings for Worship.	
WOODBURY, The Third-day before the last Second-day.	Woodbury	5th day
	Upper Greenwich	5
PILES GROVE, Fifth-day before the last Second-day.	Piles Grove	5
	Upper Pen's Neck	4
	Woolwich	4
SALEM, The last Second-day in the month.	Salem	4
GREENWICH, The Fourth-day after the last Second-day. At Alloway's Creek in First Month, at Greenwich in Second Month, &c.	Greenwich	4
	Alloway's Creek	5
MAURICE RIVER, Sixth-day following last Second-day. At Maurice River in First Month, at Cape May in Second Month, &c.	Maurice River	5
	Cape May	5

SHREWSBURY AND RAHWAY QUARTERLY MEETING.

SHREWSBURY and RAHWAY QUARTERLY MEETING, is held on the Fifth-day preceding the third First-day in the Second, Fifth, Eighth and Eleventh Months. At Rahway in the Second and Eighth, and at Shrewsbury in the Fifth and Eleventh Months. Meeting of Ministers and Elders the day preceding.

It is composed of four Monthly Meetings, held as follow, viz.

Monthly Meetings.	Meetings for Worship.	
SHREWSBURY, On the first Second-day in the Month.	Shrewsbury	5th day
	Squan	4
	Squancum	4
RAHWAY & PLAINFIELD, Held at Rahway the third Fifth-day in First Month, at Plainfield the third Fourth-day in Second Month, &c.	Rahway	5
	Plainfield	5
	Mendham	5
KINGWOOD, The second Fifth-day.	Kingwood	5
HARDWICK & MENDHAM, The first Fifth-day in the month. At Mendham in First Month, Hardwick in Second Month, &c.	Hardwick	4
	Mendham	
	<i>Randolph</i>	

BURLINGTON QUARTERLY MEETING.

BURLINGTON QUARTERLY MEETING, is held the Third-day after the last Second-day in the Second, Fifth, Eighth, and Eleventh Months. At Burlington in the Second and Eighth, and at Chesterfield (Crosswicks) in the Fifth and Eleventh Months. Meeting of Ministers and Elders the day preceding, and both begin at 10 o'clock.

Burlington Quarter consists of five Monthly Meetings, viz.

Monthly Meetings.	'Meetings for Worship.	
BURLINGTON, Held the first Second-day in the month, at 10 o'clock.	Burlington*	5th day
	Rancocus	5
	Old Springfield	5
	Lower Mansfield	4
CHESTERFIELD, Held at Crosswicks the Third-day after first Second-day.	Chesterfield	5
	Stony Brook	5
	Trenton	5
	Bordentown	4
	East Branch	5
UPPER SPRINGFIELD, The Fourth-day after first Second-day.	Upper Springfield	4
	Upper Freehold	5
	Mansfield	4
MOUNT HOLLY, The Fifth-day after first Second-day.	Mount Holly	5
	Mount Meeting	6
	Vincent Town	5
EGG HARBOUR, The second Fifth-day in the month.	Egg Harbour	5
	Barnegat	4

* Meetings at Burlington begin at 10 o'clock, and on First-day afternoons, at 3 o'clock in winter, and 4 in the summer season.

AN ACCOUNT
OF
THE TIME OF HOLDING
THE
YEARLY, QUARTERLY, AND MONTHLY
MEETINGS OF FRIENDS,
ON THE CONTINENT OF AMERICA.

EXHIBITING ALSO,
THE PARTICULAR MEETINGS THAT CONSTITUTE THE
SEVERAL MONTHLY MEETINGS, AND THE DAY ON
WHICH THE MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP ARE HELD
IN OR NEAR THE MIDDLE OF THE WEEK.

BY EMMOR KIMBER.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY KIMBER AND CONRAD,

NO. 93, MARKET-STREET.

Sold also by Samuel Wood, New York; Abraham Shearman, jr.
New Bedford; Samuel Jefferis, Baltimore; and Richard
Williams, New Garden, North Carolina.

MERRITT, PRINTER.

[published 1812]

