

**The Germanification of Germantown**  
**Germantown Meeting in the Eighteenth Century, 1705 - 1813**  
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The eighteenth century was of extraordinary consequence to the fortunes of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia, who began the century at the head of the Province's political and social structures, yet ended it wholly out of power and despised socially. Inevitably, the Society split asunder in 1827. All this is a story that I recount in *An Historic Experiment and the Hicksite Separation*. In order to reduce repetition, I will in this essay only briefly sketch in those parts given in more detail in *Experiment*, and try to focus on those aspects that directly affected Germantown. As far as our meeting is concerned, there is a sorry dearth of information, since we have virtually no records from the eighteenth century. Thus, my comments concerning our membership and our meeting are mostly speculative. The dates in the title are those of the stone meetinghouse.

**German Immigration**

Edward Hocker tells us, "*The German immigration by 1727 into Pennsylvania gained such proportions as to alarm the English authorities and cause the enactment of a law... requiring all males over the age of 16 who came from lands not in the domain of Great Britain to subscribe to a declaration of allegiance to Great Britain upon their arrival in Pennsylvania.*"<sup>1</sup> The law furthermore required shipping companies to register all immigrant passengers, making available detailed information about immigration from 1727 on. Thus, between 1727 and 1775, "*approximately 65,000 Germans landed in Philadelphia and settled in the region while some German immigrants landed in other ports and moved to Pennsylvania. The largest wave of German immigration to Pennsylvania occurred during the years 1749-1754 but tapered off during the French and Indian Wars and after the American Revolution.*"<sup>2</sup> Ben Franklin estimated that Germans made up a full third of the Pennsylvania population by 1775.

This enormous flow of Germans, aside from a small ingress of Dunkers, was NOT due to religious persecution. The Germans were mostly Lutheran or German Reformed<sup>3</sup>, and stayed that way after they arrived. They were economically driven and consisted primarily of farmers escaping European famine due to land devastated by centuries of brutal war, both religious and secular, and further handicapped by escalating land prices. They sought cheap but fertile land, available, so they understood, in plentiful amounts in Pennsylvania, where the land was described as "wild and fat." Many arrived as indentured servants, for them the only means of paying for their trip. They had first to work off their period of indenture, usually about six years, before they and their families could proceed to find land, mostly further west. Even then,

<sup>1</sup> Edward Hocker, *Germantown 1683-1933*, Self-published, Germantown, 1933. Page 63.

<sup>2</sup> *German Settlement in Pennsylvania, An Overview* Historical Society of Pennsylvania, [www.hsp.org](http://www.hsp.org)

<sup>3</sup> The Protestant Reformation (of the Catholic Church) began with Luther and Lutheranism, but quickly divided into numerous strands. The most significant competitor to Luther in Western Europe was John Calvin and Calvinism, and this latter strand wound up being called "Reformed," as in "German Reformed" and "Dutch Reformed," as well as the Puritans in England and the Huguenots in France. A third strand, Anabaptism was altogether more radical than either Lutheranism or Calvinism, and was the source of Mennonism, and later, the Amish.

Germantown land was priced beyond their means. These Germans, in aggregate, make up what are called the “Pennsylvania Dutch.” In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were again waves of German immigration into the United States, but by this time Pennsylvania land prices had risen to the point where the newcomers were bypassing Pennsylvania in favor of the Mid-western states.

These German farmers, then, in their tens of thousands, mostly thrived, for the land was indeed good, and crops were plentiful. Still, while they could grow much that they needed and plenty besides, they had many needs they could not grow, and for these they had to trade. However, roads were few and poor, and transportation difficult. Furthermore, their crops tended to have a short shelf-life; gristmills could convert grain to flour, which lasted a lot longer, but it was even challenging to transport flour in a timely fashion. What made isolated rural farms economically feasible was the fact that grains could be converted into a very durable product much in demand: whiskey. Virtually every farm more than a few days out of the city turned excess grain into whiskey, which in turn became farmers’ money, in a barter economy where whiskey was a fundamental unit. When first the British and then later the new American government attempted to tax whiskey, rebellions ensued—these taxes constituted an attack on the basis of the farming economy. In general, the German farmers were not politically active. Two other ethnic groups of farmers populated the hinterlands with them, the Scots and the Irish, who came into Pennsylvania in numbers approximately half that of the Germans. They seemed to take to politics as naturals. When rebellions ensued, the Germans were seldom much involved. On the other hand, they credited Quakers with giving them the opportunity to immigrate, and responded to that debt by voting loyally for the Quaker party candidates in such numbers as to keep them in office far longer than might have been the case otherwise—helped, no doubt, by political negotiations with Quaker party representatives in the 1740s. (The Scots, mostly Presbyterian, and the Irish, mostly Catholic, would not dicker with Friends.)

### **Dunkers**

About the time that Francis Daniel Pastorius died in 1719, the last of the German oppressed religious groups came to Germantown: the Schwartzenau Brethren, more commonly known as “Dunkers.” Like the Mennonites and others before them, Dunkers rejected infant baptism in favor of adult<sup>4</sup>, but their adult baptisms were more emphatic than the Mennonite, requiring three complete immersions (for the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost). The sect had formed in the recent past in Germany, in 1708, under the leadership of Alexander Mack. The group was emigrating down the Rhine to the Netherlands and came through Crefeld. There they divided into a larger group that went, with Mack, to the Netherlands as planned, and a smaller group of 20 families who came with Peter Becker to Germantown in 1719. In 1722 they inducted six new members, baptizing them in the Wissahickon Creek, and using the ceremony as a way formally to establish their existence in America. In 1729 Alexander Mack brought another group of them from Holland, 126 people in 59 families. Using Germantown as a hub, the Dunkers distributed themselves around the region, forming some fifteen congregations. One of their number, a Germantowner named John Pettikofer, built a log cabin in 1732 on Main Street and allowed Dunkers to hold meetings there. Later, a more permanent stone structure there became

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<sup>4</sup> Rejection of infant baptism was a central tenet of the more radical anabaptist strand of Reformation in the sixteenth century, and was considered by Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists to be extraordinarily heretic, and therefore severely repressed by all.

the first Dunker Church. The various branches did well, attracting new members. Like the Mennonites, there arose a strong tendency to migrate to the west.

One problem they had was a major schism in 1728; Charles Beissel, a very charismatic and mystical Dunker formed what in effect was a monastery in Ephrata, in Lancaster County, devoted to piety and requiring celibacy. After Beissel's death in 1768, membership dwindled and the last celibate celebrant died in 1813, after which the Ephrata Cloister was taken over by a Dunker offshoot, the German Seventh Day Baptists, and is today easily the best known of the historical Dunker centers.<sup>5</sup>

One other anabaptist sect, the Amish, is also associated with the Pennsylvania Dutch, and like Friends, Mennonites and Dunkers, emigrated from Germany in the 18<sup>th</sup> century for reasons of religious persecution. However, they appear to have mostly bypassed Germantown, going directly to Berks and Lancaster Counties, as well as further west, where they continue to have a strong presence. Unlike Dunkers, Mennonites and Quakers, the Amish practice, as best they can, complete separation from the World.

### **Germans in Germantown**

While it is not likely that all these inflowing Germans—or even a majority of them—came to Germantown, plenty of them did. So many, in fact, that they changed the nature and the size of land-holdings in the township. At the beginning of the century, the average holding in town was more than twenty-five acres in size. In response to the incomers, residents very quickly began to break up their lots into very much smaller 1-to-2-acre plots, which they could either sell or—they quickly discovered to be even better—rent to the newcomers, many of whom were just marking time until their period of indenture was completed. Many of these rentals began to sprout up the side streets off Main Street. John Johnson, Dirck Jansen's oldest son, plunged into properties, buying all he could, becoming the town's number one landlord and its wealthiest year-round resident by mid-century.

Many observers at that time commented on the fact that, walking down Main Street, what you heard being spoken around you was German, on the street and in the stores. German was the language of the Lutheran and German Reformed Churches, by 1750 the largest churches of the town. German was also the language of the principal newspaper, published by Christopher Sauer.

Sauer was born around 1695 in Baden, Germany. He, his wife Christina and their son Christopher Jr came to Germantown in 1724, where he first worked for a tailor. They moved two years later to Lancaster, where he bought a farm. Rather embarrassingly, Christina joined Charles Beissel's celibate Dunkard cloister in Ephrata in 1731. When it became apparent that this change was permanent, Sauer and his four sons sold their farm and returned to Germantown.<sup>6</sup> There he built a home on Main Street and Queen Lane (on the East side of Main), where he dispensed medicine (having had some medical training in Germany). At the suggestion

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<sup>5</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the church underwent a three-way split into Old German Baptist Brethren, the Brethren Church, and Church of the Brethren, this being the most centrist and largest of the three. Today the Church of the Brethren has around 125,000 members in about 1000 churches in every state and eight foreign countries, with headquarters in Pennsylvania. Remarkably, in 1958 they stopped doing trinitarian total immersion baptisms.

<sup>6</sup> They did not divorce, as this was strictly illegal in Pennsylvania after 1700. The most they could do was to live apart (as the Sauers did), but of course could never remarry. Later, when divorce was allowed, no Friend ever did in the Colonial period.

and encouragement of friends, despite having no experience in printing, he acquired a printing press from Germany in 1738 and set out to publish a quarterly journal. The first issue was "...a venerable half-sheet of four pages, measuring 9 by 13 inches, and entitled *Der Hoch-Deutsch Pensilvanische Geschichte-Screiber (The High-German Pennsylvania Historiography)* ...issued August 20, 1739."<sup>7</sup> It offered a little world news (of war in Europe), a short article on an official proclamation by the Royal Governor of Pennsylvania, and a little local news—a murder and robbery in Falckner’s Swamp. This quarterly was so well received that Sauer quickly made it a monthly, and then in 1744 a weekly, the *Germantown Gazette*. His *Gazette* was not the only German newspaper in the Philadelphia area--there were at least three others--but it had the widest circulation; some issues were sent regularly to Europe, and it was considered very influential with German communities both here and abroad. It contributed markedly to Germantown’s mid-century German identity. Aside from the newspaper, Sauer also published religious and educational tracts, including the first US publication of the Bible in 1743--in German, of course. These were priced cheaply and made available for free to the needy; Sauer thought the churches, which sold their own Bibles, charged too much. His Bible was mildly controversial, especially in the eyes of the competing churches, for including sections of Ephemera favored by the Pietists. Sauer also established the first type foundry in the US. Becoming frail, Sauer turned his business over to his son Christopher Jr in 1744, who enlarged the operation into a complete book manufactory. He republished the Bible in new editions in 1763 and 1776.

But it all ended badly. Christopher Jr and his son Christopher III were declared to be "tory traitors" in 1777 by the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, their property seized, confiscated and sold for the benefit of the Continental Army. This may have been within reason for the younger man, who was a frank loyalist who left with the British when they departed Philadelphia in 1778, but Christopher Sauer Jr was really no more than neutral.

### **Wistars and Wisters**

The brothers Wüster were another pair of German immigrants--but no farmers, these boys--who had an outsize effect on both Philadelphia and Germantown. The elder, Caspar, was the first to come in 1717, arriving in Philadelphia with, according to legend, nine cents in his pocket. He anglicized his name as WISTAR--not by choice, but through the agency of an impatient clerk. He became, rather quickly, quite wealthy, trading in a number of endeavors, including glassware, which he made in a New Jersey factory. He joined Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (PMM) in 1726 and married that same year a Germantown girl named Katherine Johnson—the daughter of Dirck Jansen and Margaret Millan, all three members of Germantown Meeting (GM)<sup>8</sup>. As was customary, the wedding took place in the bride’s meetinghouse. Caspar and Katherine Wistar lived in Philadelphia and raised a large family, where the generations to come proved important to that city. They spent their summers in Germantown, in a second stone house adjacent to Dirck and Margaret’s home. Caspar died in 1752; his in-laws, Dirck and Margaret Jansen followed him quickly, and in 1755 the newly widowed and orphaned Katharine

<sup>7</sup> Naaman Keyser, et al., *History of Old Germantown*, Horace F McCann, Germantown, 1907. Page 428.

<sup>8</sup> In 1728 PYM authorized all particular meetings to have a preparatory meeting to prepare for the coming monthly meeting, and GM became Germantown Preparative Meeting (GPM), which it remained until 1906.

inherited the two houses and continued to use them as her family's summer home. Her daughter Margaret soon married Reuben Haines in 1760 (in Arch Street Meetinghouse), and the two of them, plus their growing family, joined Katherine in Germantown in the summers, now using both houses.

Reuben Haines came from a large New Jersey family; he had come to Philadelphia as a minor with his mother and step-father, Timothy Matlack, a brewer from whom Reuben learned the brewing business. In the 1740s Matlack's brewery was floundering and he borrowed money from Caspar Wistar. Reuben attained his majority in 1749, and joined PMM promptly. At that point, when the brewery's fortunes failed to improve, Wistar required that Haines be put in charge. This step seemed to work. Wistar died in 1752, and Matlack followed in 1755, leaving the brewery to his step-son, now 27. The brewery became the Haines family's mainstay for two generations.

Yellow Fever was a recurring problem in Philadelphia, but a major epidemic in 1793 sent Philadelphians reeling in panic to its outlying suburbs, including especially Germantown, which had a reputation for salubrious airs. The Haines family, remaining in Philadelphia, suffered the deaths of Reuben, Margaret and her mother Katharine Wistar in quick succession that summer. Their oldest son Caspar Wistar Haines inherited the Germantown houses and the Philadelphia brewery. He was said to have had repetitive disagreements with PMM and finally, in a huff, moved his family to Germantown permanently in 1797, selling the Philadelphia brewery and building a new one on the Germantown property--roughly 50 yards to the north of the house. He also transferred the family's meeting membership to Germantown Preparative Meeting (GPM)<sup>9</sup>.

Caspar energetically renovated the houses by connecting the two buildings, which had been separated by an 18-foot-wide carriageway. Caspar built a connecting bridge at the second-story level so that the second story was continuous, and the carriageway was now covered. He put the new brewery on their property some 50 yards north of the homestead. Caspar died all too soon in 1801, and his widow Hannah Marshall quickly moved the family back to Philadelphia, retransferring memberships back to PMM, evidently having not been as enthusiastic about the move to Germantown as her husband.<sup>10</sup> Her oldest son Reuben III, 15 years old when his father died, was too young to take on management of the brewery, so Hannah leased it out to an outsider. Reuben III married Jane Bowne in 1812, and the two would return to Germantown to live permanently in the house. In 1824, Reuben III enclosed the carriageway, resulting in a single large building. About this time, they renamed the property Wyck.

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<sup>9</sup> Technically, they became members of Abington Monthly Meeting (AMM), which held GPM in its care.

<sup>10</sup> Hannah was a very remarkable woman. When she moved her family back to Philadelphia, she included the six-year old girl Ann Haines, born to Caspar Wistar and Sarah Randall around 1795, according to the official Haines family genealogy. Nothing else can be found about Ann's mother. Ann was raised in the household, sent to Westtown for her education, and remained in the family until her death in 1867, at this point apparently living in Wyck with her great-niece Jane Bowne Haines, who never married.. A member of our meeting, Ann never married. She is buried in our new burial grounds in John Smith Haines's area, but without a headstone. The burial grounds book, however, has a unique entry in the 'parents' section: the single name "Reuben Haines" is written, and then the "Reuben" is partially erased. This suggests that the Burial Grounds Committee was first told the father was Reuben, but later told "maybe not." Ann's photograph, framed nicely, is on display at Wyck today, and the docent says she was the illegitimate daughter of Caspar.

Returning to the brothers Wüster, the younger brother John arrived in Philadelphia in 1727, ten years after Caspar, anglicizing his name WISTER. The two families, both large and important to Philadelphia, have sparred for centuries over which spelling is “right.” This contentious issue has spread into botany, as to whether wisteria should be spelled as such, or as wistaria. The botanist, Thomas Nuttall, who conferred the name, spelled it with E, but said, in an interview, that he named it after Dr. Caspar Wistar. There you go, and now “wistaria” is an accepted “alternate spelling” used especially by the Wistars.

Back to our story. As quick as his brother was to make serious money, although Caspar was undoubtedly the richer, John made a bundle in the wine business. Like his brother, he settled in Philadelphia; but in 1731 he discovered Germantown, and next door in Bristol Township, Anna Catherina Rubenkam, whom he married in 1737. Anna’s mother Margarethe was a redoubtable woman widowed in 1725 with ten children in Germany. They emigrated the following year, settling in Bristol Township where they did well.

John bought various plots of land in Germantown and finally he and Anna built in 1744 what was then called “John Wister’s big house,” on the east side of Main street at Queen Lane, next to Christopher Sauer’s home (on the right in Fig. 1). The decision to build in Germantown was no doubt influenced by his older brother’s summer residence 1 ½ miles up Main Street. Later a tenant house was added (on the left).<sup>11</sup>



Fig. 1 John Wister’s Big House (next to Christopher Sauer’s) in 1744, by Grant Miles Simon, 1955

The significance of Wister’s Big House is that John built it as a summer residence only, continuing to reside in Philadelphia, as did his brother Caspar. The two brothers may have been the first to do this, but many followed, as it became fashionable among the wealthier Philadelphian Friends to have a summer place to go to, and Germantown was a very popular

<sup>11</sup> Much later, a grandson named Charles Jones Wister conferred the name *Grumblethorpe* upon it, taken from a contemporary novel that featured family squabbles.

locale in this respect. The summer home was distinct from the country estates of Philadelphia's richest Quaker "grantees,"<sup>12</sup> such as James Logan's Stenton Mansion, built by 1730. Logan was exceptionally wealthy and maintained a residence in the city as well for convenience. Logan also maintained his membership in Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, although attending services at Germantown Meeting when he was in residence. The idea of the summer home was an important part of being affluent in Philadelphia, but it had a marked impact on Germantown as well.

The real extent of summer visitors only truly becomes apparent when you read Elizabeth Drinker's Journal.<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Sandwith was born in 1734 in Philadelphia in her Jervis grandparents' house at High and Second streets, a neighbor of the main meeting house. A Quaker, she began her diary at the age of 24, her first entry reading, "*October 8 [1758], First day. Drank tea at Jos. Howell's; called to see M. Foulke*". This entry is exactly typical of most of her entries; she had a vigorous social life, she named names, and didn't say too much else. On November 6<sup>th</sup> of the same year, "*Stayed at home all day. H. Drinker drank tea with us.*" Thus she met her husband-to-be, the two-years widowed Henry Drinker, a wealthy member of Philadelphia MM. He would be mentioned often, as an apparently frequent visitor, especially after he returned from a trip to England in June of 1760. Suddenly, her entries began to hint at some specialness, giving personal details that were rarely seen elsewhere in the diary:

*"July 4 [1760], H. D. [all familiars are usually identified by their initials] came at 10 o'clock, stayed till past 11—unseasonable hours; my judgment don't coincide with my actions —'tis a pity, but I hope to mend."*

*"July 26 Betsy Moode came this evening. She stayed till after supper. H.D. (who I thought was gone to Burlington) came after she was gone. This evening I shall never forget, for 'tis a memorable one."*

*"Nov. 28 H. D. breakfasted with us. Went to monthly meeting this morning ... declared my intentions of marriage with my Friend H. D."*

They married Jan 18, 1761, shortly before Elizabeth's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. She made no diary entry that day, and no more until the following May.

Between the summer homes of the Philadelphia rich and the country estates of the even richer, Germantown began its transformation into a two-class town, especially in the second half of the century. This is where Elizabeth Drinker's diary can give us a sense of the dimension of the Philadelphia incursion. The Drinkers rented a house in Germantown in 1791 for an extended summer visit, lasting more than two months.

*"June 20, [1791] There are a number of Philadelphians at Germantown—Pattison Hartshorne's family, John Perot's family, Jeremiah Warder's, Jesse Waln's, etc. etc."*

Her social life in Germantown was very like that in Philadelphia: she visited often and was visited often, and she named every one she could. In all, she named 97 individuals, and I confess I am able to identify firmly only 60% of them. Of those, 18 were members of the Drinker family and their servants, 33 were members of 21 other Philadelphia Quaker families, whereas 6 were local (Germantown and Bucks County environs). Of the Philadelphians, I assume that

<sup>12</sup> "Grantee" was a term used by Frederick Tolles in *Meeting House and Counting House* for the super-rich Quakers of Philadelphia. See *An Holy Experiment*.

<sup>13</sup> Biddle, Henry, *Extracts from the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker 1750 to 1807*, J B Lippincott Co, Philadelphia, 1889.

most, like the Drinkers, were summer visitors themselves, although some may have been just day visitors (but remember, this was still a time when travel from Philadelphia to Germantown was unpleasantly challenging). In 1791 we don't know how many families belonged to Germantown Preparative Meeting, but eighteen years later there would be 84 adults, in about fifty families listed as members. Most of the visitors were observant Friends, who would go to meeting in our meeting house as they ought. The Drinkers did.

*“July 17. First Day. Rumford and Abijah Dawes, their nephew Harvey and little son, Captain Somebody, and Henry D. Jr. called before meeting. S. Emlen and daughter, and Joseph Drinker dined with us. ... Old Isaac Zane and Charles Williams preached this morning at Germantown meeting.”*<sup>14</sup>

Their numbers would have stuffed the old stone meetinghouse noticeably—it was already small even for GPM alone.

The Drinker's rented house, owned by another Philadelphian named Matthew Clarkson, was strategically located, hardly 100 yards from the meetinghouse, on the southeast corner of what was then Shoemaker Lane and Main Street (now Penn and Germantown). Just across Main Street from them lived Justus Fox, in 1791 a very elderly man, possibly the oldest living original resident of the town, who had purchased the lot (#6 West) as a young man before 1714. Elizabeth visited him and his wife at least twice, and toured their gardens. Two houses south of the Drinkers' resided Sally Wister along with her summering parents Daniel and Lowry Wister (in John Wister's house Grumblethorpe). Just across Main Street from the meeting was the large estate belonging to Israel Pemberton's family (Elizabeth had visits from two Pemberton sons: James and John, both weighty potentates of PYM). When she needed a doctor (which did happen), she called upon either Dr. Charles Bensel or his son Dr. George Bensel, two doors down Main or just up the street at the corner of School Street (now School House Lane), respectively. Among her more illustrious visitors was Nicholas Waln, the clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting since 1789. Waln had been a very successful 30-year-old lawyer (an occupation held by most Quakers at that time to be largely unQuakerly) who had electrified Meeting for Worship in February, 1772 when he suddenly and dramatically knelt in prayer and renounced his life and mode of living, gave up his law business and *“committed himself to a life of devotion to God and service to his fellow men...”* Even more surprising (and upsetting to his young wife of less than a year, who was quite accustomed to living well), he actually did it. He became a traveling minister; *“Waln was to become one of the leaders in the period of evangelical piety ... that followed the American Revolution.”*<sup>15</sup>

Virtually all of her identified visitings and being-visited involved Philadelphia Friends. Of local visitees, she visited Justus Fox and his wife, across the street (they probably became nodding neighbors early on), but otherwise all her 6 mentions of local resident were non-social, e.g., a professional call on Dr. Bensel, or riding in a sulky owned by (and probably rented from)

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<sup>14</sup> Rumford Dawes and Abijah Dawes were brothers; Job Harvey was their younger brother-in-law, all three from Philadelphia, perhaps sharing a house in Germantown. Samuel Powel Emlen was himself a Philadelphia minister of great sobriety; his daughter Elizabeth, after his death, became widely known as a “Gay Friend,” marrying Philip Syng Physick, her father's physician. Joseph Drinker was Elizabeth's father-in-law. Isaac Zane was a well-known Philadelphia MM minister, whose wife Sarah Elfreth Zane visited another day. Charles Williams, I'm sad to confess, I cannot identify.

<sup>15</sup> Tolles, *Ibid.* Pages 238-9.



John Fry. Notably absent were any mentions of Johnsons or Joneses, or other leaders of GPM. I found it interesting, too, that there were some whom she did not mention, such as Daniel and Lowry Wister or Caspar and Hannah Haines, both families of Philadelphia meetings with Germantown summer homes.

Then, two summers later, Elizabeth Drinker was back again, but this time as a part of the wave of Philadelphians escaping the Yellow Fever epidemic mentioned before. Her family stayed in a house a little further out, in Mount Airy, and her notes reflected the general chaos of uncertainty with very many deaths. Indeed, her diary entries combined visits and deaths in an eerie juxtaposition.

*“Aug 23 [1793], This afternoon we were agreeably surprised by the arrival of H.D. My husband informs of the death of Reuben Haines, who died this morning rather suddenly—many have gone off these few days.”*

As the epidemic continued, her lists of the dead increased in length. Ultimately, the epidemic kept them out of Philadelphia fully four months until November 16 when her husband allowed her to return. *“William and myself left Germantown with some of our luggage—the roads but middling. We arrived at home between 2 and 3; found things in status quo. H. D. with Nancy, her little one and Molly, came half an hour after in our carriage; Sam drove Betsy Hardy in the chaise. We are all through mercy (tho’ not in perfect health) highly favored. Most of the Philadelphians are returned to the city.”*

Elizabeth’s Drinker’s time in Germantown ended on the same day that President Washington arrived for his two-week stay. I find it remarkable that she made no comment about his sojourn there. Perhaps it was held secret.

Stephanie Grauman Wolf notes, *“The real difference in private life-styles, and, in fact, in the profile of the town as a whole was made by the advent of the summer visitor.”*<sup>16</sup> Wolf notes and quotes an editorial by Christopher Sauer Jr in 1755, *“Poor people are not able to let their children be boarded, nor can they clothe them properly to go to school with those of high rank, so that this privilege belongs only to the rich and to the English.”*<sup>17</sup> When locals and summer folk disagreed on something—such as the location of roads, as they did at the end of the century—the summer people usually had their way, having better connections to the sources of political power. But most of these changes due to incoming wealth from the city would really take place after the beginning of the next century, and we will take them up again later.

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<sup>16</sup>Wolf, Stephanie Grauman, *URBAN VILLAGE, Population, Community, and Family Structure in Germantown Pennsylvania 1683-1800*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 1976. Page 51.

<sup>17</sup> Wolf, *Ibid.* Page 51.



Fig. 3. Philadelphia and environs, by N. Scull and G. Heap, 1750<sup>18</sup>

### Germantown's identity in Export Crafts

Even by midcentury, Germantown was evidently a place of considerable significance. A 1750 map (see Fig. 3 above) by Scull and Heap immediately pulls your attention first to the busy rectangle of Philadelphia, and second to the long double line of houses representing Germantown. No other town is presented in this way.<sup>19</sup>

Although the advent of huge numbers of Germans changed the milieu of the township, and significantly changed the land-use of the region, it is even more important how they contributed to the evolving genius of Germantown. The town had entered the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a relatively small collection of craftsmen dedicated principally to weaving, mostly as a cottage industry, a monoculture pretty much as it had been in Crefeld, but here backed up by Rittenhouse's paper and Isaac Shoemaker's nascent leathersgoods business. Almost every home had a spinning wheel and a loom. When in mid-century John Johnson was recognized as the richest man in town, enriched by the transient immigrants, two followed close behind: John Gorgas and Joseph Paul (a fellow member of our meeting), both mill owners<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> In the Zebooker Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia

<sup>19</sup> It's nice to see, too, that our meeting is singled out for identification, although there were at least four other churches established there at this time. Scull is a Quaker family, and Nicholas Scull, Jr is listed as married to Abigail Heap. He was Surveyor General of Pennsylvania at the time he made this map together with George Heap, Abigail's brother.

<sup>20</sup> Wolf, *Ibid.* Page 126.

Through the first half of the century, more and more mills were built, in and near Germantown on the Wissahickon and the Wingohocking Creeks, and the mills transformed the crafts they served. Germantown continued to be a major center for weaving, but the mills took the industry out of the cottages, vastly expanding them. By the end of the century, all of the hand looms were relics of a long-gone time, stored in barns and attics gathering cobwebs.

As indicated previously, the majority of the German immigrants were farmers, who moved on to the west, as Germantown land was too expensive for farming. But craftsmen made up as much as a third of their numbers, and many of them stayed in Germantown, broadening the range of the town's crafts tremendously. An excellent example is Jacob Knorr, who arrived in the 1750's and purchased land on Main Street in Germantown in 1761, establishing himself as a carpenter and builder with his sons Jacob and George. His big break came in 1763 when Benjamin Chew commissioned Knorr to build Cliveden, his country manor, which Knorr completed four years later. Three more of his buildings remain today, all tourist attractions: the John Johnson House (1770), the Mennonite Meeting House (1770), and the Concord School (completed in 1789). Aside from building, he made furniture and coffins. When he died in 1805, he was buried on the grounds of the Concord School. His sons took over the business, but when Jacob Jr died in 1812, George sold the business to William Johnson, the youngest son of John Livezey Johnson, owner of the Johnson House, and the new Clerk of our meeting that same year. The intertwining tale is not done: five years later, William married Catharine Knorr, George's daughter and Jacob's granddaughter. She was not Quaker, so William had to relinquish his membership. His line would return to the meeting, however: his descendant Rebecca Johnson Weisberg is living, breathing proof. In 1830 Johnson sold the business to John Nice, who concentrated on the coffin end of the trade and ultimately established Kirk & Nice, still part of Germantown today.

By the time of the Revolution the listed occupations (according to the tax rolls of 1783) included 209 artisanal craftsmen, working in fabric, leather, wood, metals, transportation (e.g., coachmakers) and "general" (e.g., paper, clockmakers, printers, etc.), as compared to food production (20), tradesmen (24), "professionals" (e.g., doctors, schoolteachers, etc.) (8), farmers (28) and laborers (52).<sup>21</sup> Germantown had become an unusually artisan-dominated town, a town which made things, which only served to attract more craftsmen.

This all gave Germantown a very unusual, if not unique, demographic identity. In most communities, the labor force is the largest population and the most poorly paid. In Germantown laborers were indeed poorly paid, but as you can see from the list above, they were dramatically outnumbered by artisans. Beyond its identity as a burgeoning community of artisans, Germantown enjoyed the special fruit of manufacturing: exports. More to the point, Germantown had a positive export/import balance, making more money than it spent, and became wealthier in the process.

It is certainly not the case that Germantown's craftsmen all became rich at it. Wolf says, "The view of Germantown as an increasingly urban community is further supported by a growing unevenness in the distribution of wealth," which she illustrates with a distillation of the 1773 tax rolls (see Table 1). Here her point is that the distribution is skewed very similarly among farmers and craftsmen: "8 percent of each could be found among the richest people in the

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<sup>21</sup> Wolf, *Ibid.* Page 106.

community, 40 percent of each among the poorest of the taxpayers.” Furthermore, “Among the various crafts, a hierarchy of wealth was slowly emerging” with, by 1780, the tanners leading, closely followed by coachmakers and then millers, with fabric makers—especially linen weavers—trailing sadly<sup>22</sup>. Indeed, the makers of linen, who had started it all, disappeared as a category from the tax rolls completely by 1793.

Table 1 Distribution of Germantown Wealth, 1773<sup>23</sup>

	Assessed Value in pounds			
	<u>&lt;£1</u>	<u>10 to</u>	<u>20 to</u>	<u>30</u>
	<u>0</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>±</u>
Craftsmen	124	75	10	9
Farmers	18	9	3	3
Laborers	3			
Professions	10	14	4	7
No listed	25	16	5	9

In the last line of Table 1, “no listed profession” reflects the lack of any requirement that the tax filer must state his business. Among those who failed to do so were two of the three richest men in town: John Gorgas and John Johnson.

### **Germantown as a commercial hub**

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Germantown became a commercial hub connecting Philadelphia to the towns of the north and west—in particular, Bethlehem and Reading and beyond to Lancaster and the West. This seems to have happened despite the common agreement that the road from Philadelphia to Germantown, often called the Great Road, was “the worst road in the United States.”<sup>24</sup> It was awful because it was very heavily trafficked, especially with commercial freight wagons, and at the same time no one had or took responsibility for its upkeep. The heavy use, combined with no maintenance, made the road to Germantown especially dusty when dry and impossibly muddy when wet, making travel from Germantown into Philadelphia exceptionally difficult at wetter times of the year and unpleasant year-round. Wolf writes, “Ironically, there was one way in which the poor quality of the Great Road played a positive role in the development of Germantown as an urban area, for it made the job of reaching Philadelphia from up-country so great that many rural dwellers had no urge to try. Therefore, ‘great stores’ were opened along the Germantown stretch of the road, often in association with an inn, where farmers from the north and west could trade their loads of produce in return for salt, fish, seeds and other groceries and dry goods.”<sup>25</sup> The two principal ‘great stores’ were those of Leonard Stoneburner in Germantown and the Rex brothers in Chestnut Hill. This latter store they put up at the junction of the roads to Bethlehem and Reading.

Transportation, in the form of stage coaches, had already made Germantown a regular stop between Philadelphia and outlying destinations. Early in the 1760s Jacob Coleman ran

<sup>22</sup> Wolf, *Ibid.* Page 120.

<sup>23</sup> Abridged from Wolf, *Ibid.* Page 122.

<sup>24</sup> Hocker, *Ibid.* Page 137.

<sup>25</sup> Wolf, *Ibid.* Page 26.

coaches two or three times a week from Philadelphia's George Inn at Second and Mulberry (now Arch) Streets to the King of Prussia Inn in Germantown, which had opened in 1757 on Main Street a little north of School Street (now Schoolhouse Lane). Its owner ran the following advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*: "Andrew Weckeser begs leave to inform the Publick, that he has opened a House of entertainment in Germantown, at the sign of the King-of-Prussia, near John Jones's, Esq., where all Gentlemen, Ladies, Travellers, etc. may depend on the best usage."<sup>26</sup> Keyser says, "For many years the King of Prussia was the most popular hotel in Germantown. It was a favorite stopping place for driving parties from the city."<sup>27</sup> George Kline's stage-coach went once a week to Bethlehem, departing Philadelphia on Thursdays and returning from Bethlehem on Mondays. "But what between bad roads and cold and springless stage-coaches the travellers of early days had a disagreeable and tedious time of it."<sup>28</sup>

One of the consequences of the execrable roads was the development of the "Germantown Wagon." (See Fig. 4) This vehicle was much lighter in weight than the standard ox-drawn freight wagons, such as the Conestoga wagons, and was made by companies of both John Bringhurst and William Ashmead, both of whom claimed to have invented it, although neither attempted to patent it. While their families intermarried, they remained competitors, and the wagon made both men rich.



Fig. 4. The Germantown Wagon

Improvements to Germantown's Main Street would wait until the end of the century and would come not because of City, County or Provincial government intervention, but as the result of private enterprise: the formation of private companies to build turnpikes. Four such turnpikes were initiated around the turn of the century (to Reading, Perkiomen, Bethlehem and most importantly, to Philadelphia), and the road from Germantown to Philadelphia was finally paved. The first of these, incorporated and initiated in 1799, was the Germantown and Reading Turnpike Road, followed quickly by the Perkiomen Turnpike. This company had as its president Benjamin Chew, and John Johnson, Jr its treasurer; Reuben Haines III championed it. The fourth

<sup>26</sup> Naaman Keyser, et al., *History of Old Germantown*, Horace F McCann, Germantown, 1907. Page 343. I suspect that the "John Jones" mentioned was a member of our meeting.

<sup>27</sup> Keyser, *Ibid.*, pg 343.

<sup>28</sup> Keyser, *Ibid.*, page 113.

was the Bethlehem Turnpike, which opened for business in 1804. The names of the stockholders of the Germantown and Philadelphia Turnpike Company of 1800 contains upwards of 300 names, including “John Johnson, Sen., John Johnson, John Johnson, jun., Samuel Johnson, Klincken Johnson, Justus Johnson...”<sup>29</sup>--all members of our meeting--suggesting the strong support the family gave to the enterprise, even to the extent of the continuing support of John Johnson Sr, six years dead.

Hocker describes the new turnpike: “A width of eighteen feet was macadamized. Stones in large chunks were hauled to the roadbed and broken with hammers. Then the fragments were leveled and covered with dirt. That constituted the pike...”<sup>30</sup> It was expected that traffic, especially freight wagons, would serve to compress the road surface suitably. Larger wagons bearing more than 2 ½ tons were required to use wheels four inches wide. Tollgates were set up at intervals, including one on Main Street at Rittenhouse. Tolls were assessed by vehicle size, the minimum being six cents for a two-wheeled one-horse chaise, and twenty cents for a four-horse wagon.

With the turnpikes, travel into the city became a great deal easier and faster, coaching became more common, and the days of the “great stores” came to an end, as now outside commercial business continued through Germantown into Philadelphia. More to the point, Germantown’s identity as an outside hub—an exurb—rapidly developed into a new relationship to Philadelphia, that of a suburb, which will be a major theme of the essay on the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Quaker colonial political fortunes**

If the eighteenth century was generally characterized by the inundation of Germans tiding into Pennsylvania, the most dramatic events were the two wars that punctuated it and totally altered Pennsylvania’s political landscape. When William Penn started the colony, he wanted a utopia devoted to religious freedom, and invited Quakers from England and Europe to attend upon it, intending that they would run it. And from the outset, he got just that. Today we may be surprised at how easily Friends took to politics. Indeed, they had, for about 75 years, a political party named “the Quaker Party.” It had two branches, one rather conservative and rural, the other made up of wealthier Philadelphia merchants. Among their relatively faithful supporters were the German farmers in the hinterlands. The strength of the Quaker dominance can be seen in the fact that for much of the period 1682-1755, the Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly, the legislative body, was also the Clerk of Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting. Philadelphia Friends, then, were politically and socially at the top, and by the end of the two wars they had utterly, crushingly lost all of their political and most of their social station. Nonetheless, there is little of this dramatic change that can be seen in Germantown. I tell the story with as much detail as I can in *An Holy Experiment and the Hicksite Separation*, and prefer to avoid repetition through retelling it rather sketchily, here.

### **French and Indian War**

England and France, perennial enemies on the European scene, allowed their conflict to spill over into their American colonies. Both sides recognized that the terrain belonged to the indigenes, and sought for allies among the various Indian tribes. Most of the tribes joined the

<sup>29</sup> Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, Notes and Queries, Vol 23, 1899. Page 538.

<sup>30</sup> Hocker, Ibid. Page 138.

French. This set the stage for war fought according to both European traditions and Indian, who refused battle, marauding instead, attacking homesteads and taking scalps.

Pennsylvania was caught utterly unprepared for war on any scale. By mid-century Friends were only one-fifth of the Philadelphia populace, but tradition and good will kept the Quaker Party being elected, so they continued to hold a majority of the Assembly even into the mid-1750s. When war—especially Indian-style war—broke out in the Ohio valley in 1754, it exposed pitilessly their philosophic dilemma: they could not in conscience vote to support armed defense but in practice they absolutely had to vote for it. Moderates were able to put together and pass measures to support the military effort up to 1756.

In 1756, however, everything changed. The Legislature, with the help of two Friends, who were quickly disowned, asked the Proprietors to declare war on the Delaware Indians. This they did, including a bounty on Indian scalps: \$130 for males over the age of 12, \$50 for females. Six Quaker assemblymen resigned their seats immediately in revulsion. Nonetheless, some Quaker candidates ran in the fall election and despite the fact that most Quakers refused to vote at all, 12 Quakers were still elected assemblymen--out of the total of 36--that October, the first time since the Assembly was formed that Friends were not a majority. Of these twelve, four were pressured to resign. These losses essentially removed Friends from the center of the political arena. Nonetheless, the Quaker Party continued to put up Quaker candidates, and some were elected even up to 1774. Withdrawal from government was mostly voluntary, not mandated by the Yearly Meeting. But in 1774, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting finally was able to unite in a decision that no Friend should serve in either an elected or appointed position in government.

### **The Paxton Boys**

The Treaty of Paris of 1763 ended the war. In the five years before 1763, Quakers formed the “Friendly Association” and turned to benevolence toward the Delaware Indians, whom they regarded as victims of the war. Unfortunately, everyone else did not; in the public’s eyes the Indians were all murdering savages. The benevolent efforts had little practical effect, but public opinion about Friends was harsh; a popular refrain was, “...many things change but the name/ Quakers and Indians are the same...”. After the Peace of 1763, the Ottawa Chief Pontiac led a rebellion against the British in the Ohio Valley and Western Pennsylvania, raiding east of the Allegheny Mountains that summer. The Delawares were part of the raid. As frontiersmen, especially the Scots and Irish, from the raided areas fell back into the east, they took out their rage on those Indians who lived in the more eastern counties, who fled wherever they could. Some who took shelter in Lancaster were killed by a mob. Another group took shelter in Philadelphia.

A group of men calling themselves “Paxton Boys,” probably mostly of the Scots-Irish background among the western settlers, marched on Philadelphia, swearing to kill the Indians there. Benjamin Franklin was put in charge of the city’s defense. Franklin’s defenses ranged up the Schuylkill River as far as the Schuylkill Falls, but the Boys crossed well upstream of this at Swede’s Ford, and marched down towards Germantown. Hocker wrote, “*All along their line of march they were sympathetically received by the inhabitants, who were incensed by the pacifist policy of the Philadelphia Quakers...Most of the men were garbed in hunting shirts and blanket coats, and they wore moccasins. They were armed with rifles, pistols and tomahawks.*” “From



*the diary of the Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg [Patriarch of the province's Lutheran Church] it is possible to obtain glimpses of the scene in Germantown. Muhlenberg...was concerned because many Germans...sympathized with the Scotch Irish in their antagonism toward the Quakers. As he was just recovering from illness, Muhlenberg sent...Reverend Paul Bryzelius out to Germantown to appeal to the Lutherans of that place not to join the invading mob and also to Germans in the mob not to commit overt acts."* Riding out, Bryzelius found Germantown quiet and continued up Main Street another couple of miles before encountering the lead group of Paxton Boys. *"They questioned the clergyman and required him to return with them as they marched toward Philadelphia. At a tavern in Germantown all dismounted, and Bryzelius talked with the leaders of the party. They declared they intended harming no one, but they insisted the...Indians must be expelled [from Pennsylvania]. They recited many complaints against the inactivity of the government. Bryzelius told them of the military preparations in Philadelphia, begging them not to proceed."* *"Bryzelius counted 250 men in the party, and a second detachment was expected to arrive at midnight. A rule was in force, Bryzelius found, that no one should fire a gun without orders, and if the rule was violated the man nearest the ranger who fired the shot was to shoot down the culprit."* The Reverend returned to Philadelphia to report that few Germans were in the party.

The next day Franklin led a small group of city spokesmen to Germantown, where he was successful in persuading them to stop their march and instead *"submit a statement of their grievances and demands to Governor [John] Penn."*<sup>31</sup>

### **Return to Royal Government?**

The net result? Nada. The Paxton Boys presented their petition and went home, the Indians went home and nothing changed at all. Well, maybe not completely nada. Philadelphia's political leadership was entirely unhappy with Thomas and John Penn's version of proprietorship. In 1767, at the request of the Legislature, Benjamin Franklin led a group of citizens to England with the intention of persuading the Crown to rescind the proprietorship and replace it with a direct Royal governorship. A letter to Franklin held by the American Philosophical Society is representative (if also rather surprising) of supportive Friendly response to this mission.

*Roxbury Township Philada. County*

*Novr. 18, 1767*

*Respected Friend*

*Tho' I have not the happyness of an Intimate Acquaintance with thee, yet time I hope will alter that Circumstance, and bring us better acquainted; I only know thee from Some of thy Writings, the Author of which I Greatly Esteem.*

*As thou art one of the Agents for this Province in Great Britan, I Sent a Dozen of American wine by Captn. Falconer, the Last time he went from hence to London; which I am pleas'd to hear, was Safely Deliver'd. It was Made by my Self, from our Small wild Grape, which Grows in Great plenty in our Woodland. And as I have Some of the Same Sort Now on tap, which I think Rather better, I have Sent a Dozen more; with the Assistance of our Mutual friend Thomas*

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<sup>31</sup> Hocker, *Ibid.* Page 90.



*Wharton; by the Same Honest Captain—Six bottles of which, are Somthing paler than the others —I heartely wish it may arrive Safe, and warm the harts of Every one who tastes it, with a Love for America. And would it Contribute towards bringing about a Change of Government but one month Sooner, I would Gladly Send all I have.*

*However, I do not Dispair of the Change yet, for Some of their wisdoms and Betternesses allow it will take place, at the Death of Thomas Penn, but at the Same time Say, it will not be Sooner.*

*If this be Really the Case, I Do not know whether Some people in this province, wilnot be in the Same Condition, that, a German's Wife in my Neighborhood Lately was—Who Said, nobody Could Say, She wished her Husband Dead, but Said, She wished, She Could See, how he would Look when he was Dead. I honestly Confess, I do not wish him to Die against his will, but if he Could be prevail'd on, to Die for the Good of the people, it might perhaps make his Name as Immortal, as Samsons Death Did his, and Gain him more applause here, then all the acts which he has Ever done in his Life.*

*I hope thou will Excuse me for taking up So much of thy time, and permit me to add, that, I am with Great truth, and Regard, thy Sincere Friend*

*THOS: LIVEZEY*

*To Dr. Benjamin Franklin*

The Thomas Livezey who wrote the above letter was the grandson of Quaker Jonathan Livezey who emigrated from England around 1685. He came to Oxford Township about the same time as did Joseph Paull (see *The Settlement of Germantown*, page 14) and became a member of Dublin MM, which after 1687 held Germantown Meeting in its care. Jonathan's son Thomas, the father of our letter-writer, built a mill on Pennypack Creek. Our Thomas learned milling from his father, but then expanded the family business by acquiring a larger mill on Wissahickon Creek in 1747 and moved to Roxborough. It is likely that at this time our Thomas transferred his attendance to GPM (his membership in Dublin MM, now called Abington MM, would not have changed), although also hosting meetings for worship sometimes in his house. He was very wealthy and he and his wife Martha Knowles built a large house on the Wissahickon named Glen Fern, which remains today one of the area's historic homes. It was presumably grapes from this property whose juice became the wine he sent to Franklin. Livezey's support, in any case, turned out to be a minority position among Quakers, limited generally to the Philadelphia meetings. In the Yearly Meeting that year a very strong turn-out on the part of the Bucks and Chester County meetings made it clear that the rural meetings were not at all in favor of Franklin's mission. The yearly meeting concluded that it would not be appropriate for it to favor either side. In the end, Franklin's embassy did not succeed, and he returned to Philadelphia in 1768.

### **Revolutionary War**

If the French and Indian War seriously reduced Friends' credibility and reputation, and their benevolence to the Indians further damaged them, the Revolution completely trashed them. Perhaps as a result of having compromised their anti-war testimony a little too much in the earlier war, Friends were very careful not to do so in the later. Thus, Friends were firmly against any support of the Continental Army or the war effort. Not satisfied with this, Philadelphia

Yearly Meeting firmly insisted that Quakers must be loyal to the King, as representing established order. Public opinion turned heavily against Quakers, who were reviled as being only a short half-step above traitors.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Revolution in Germantown**

Friends, Mennonites, Dunkers and Pietists--whoever were left on the ground--were, of course, not in tune with the patriotic response of the rest of Germantown's citizens. Some substantial Friends, such as Benjamin Chew, by now a former Friend by choice, and Thomas Livezey, of the letter above, were frank Loyalists. Most were not, but were cramped by their Meetings' insistence on hewing to the anti-war testimony. Some few joined the patriots, and most of these were disowned by their Meetings. Christopher Sauer Jr, now publisher of the *Gazette*, while himself a member of the German Reformed Church, was very sympathetic to the "peace" churches; his son and co-worker Christopher III was more frankly supportive of the British. On July 3, 1776 they reported, without headline, the following piece of news on an inside page, in German, of course: "Yesterday the Continental Congress declared the united colonies to be free and independent states." Nevertheless, the senior Sauer, the editor, was careful never to publish anything frankly hostile to the patriotic side.

The war effort was led by the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety, under which local committees of safety were organized. The Germantown Committee was headed by Joseph Ferree, of French Huguenot descent, a Lancaster Assemblyman of more than a decade, who moved to Germantown in 1770, where he married Sarah Delaplaine, grand-daughter of James Delaplaine, one of the early settlers.

James Delaplaine had also been born of a French Huguenot family, but when his father Nicholas moved to New Amsterdam--later New York City--in 1664, he joined the Dutch Reformed Church, and all his children were baptized into that church. James, Nicholas' eldest son, relocated to Germantown in 1686, where he purchased lot #10 East. He very soon joined Germantown Meeting, becoming very active both in meeting and in the new borough after 1691. He married Hannah Cock in 1692; they built a large stone house in Germantown, called the Delaplaine House, on the north side of the new Market Square<sup>33</sup> (see Figure 5). Their granddaughter, Sarah Delaplaine eventually inherited it. She was probably born into GPM, but must have given her membership up, when she married Joseph Ferree in 1775, as he was pretty clearly not a Friend. Thus, the old mansion, associated with Quakers for most of a century, became central to the plans of the Germantown Committee of Safety as a storage place of materials essential for the war effort: including sulphur and saltpeter—essential for making gunpowder in particular.

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<sup>32</sup> This grossly oversimplifies the long train of mishaps and miss-steps on the part of Friends in the 15 years leading up to the war, all spelled out in more detail in *An Holy Experiment and the Hicksite Separation*.

<sup>33</sup> This house would remain an imposing Germantown landmark until it was torn down in 1885, but there is still signage on the north-east corner of Schoolhouse Lane and Germantown Avenue that recalls the Delaplaine House.



Fig. 5 Delaplaine House, 1883 photo by Marriott C. Morris

### **The Battle of Germantown**

The war was not going well. Following the disastrous loss of New York City in the summer of 1776, Washington withdrew the Continental Army to the region of Bucks County west of the Delaware River, the better to defend the rebellious colonies' capital city, Philadelphia. The British did not pursue them, choosing instead to consolidate their position. Emboldened, Washington took the opportunity to cross the Delaware again, successfully attacking British detachments at Trenton and Princeton. Again, the British took no action, and Washington spent the rest of the 1776-77 winter in northern New Jersey waiting to see what they would do next.

In June, 1777, a British army under General John Burgoyne started marching south from Quebec, intending to split the colonies along the axis of the Hudson River. At the same time, General William Howe in New York loaded his army aboard 250 ships and took them south. Uncertain just where Howe would land his forces, Washington brought the Continental Army to a point just outside Germantown, from which place he could maneuver equally well to east and west. In other words, he came to Germantown for pretty much the same reasons it had become a commercial hub. Howe ultimately debarked his army in upper Chesapeake Bay, planning to march on Philadelphia from the south.

At this point, Philadelphia was evacuated of officialdom, first to Lancaster, then York. A number of wealthy families joined the exodus, including that of Daniel Wister, which moved out to Gwynedd for the duration. This is the point at which 16-year-old Sally Wister's Diary opens.

Once he learned of Howe's landing, Washington moved his army west and south, interposing it between the British army and Philadelphia a little north of Wilmington, offering battle from a defensive position on the Brandywine Creek. This battle, in early September, 1777, is considered the largest (in numbers involved) of the war, with both sides being similar in size, the British having a small advantage in size (15,500 to 14,500). Washington was frankly out-generated, being surprised by a successful flanking maneuver by his opponent, and Howe's

victory was unambiguous. Washington was forced to retreat to his previous position above Germantown, while Howe took possession of Philadelphia. However, rather than rest and consolidate, Howe promptly sent a good portion of his force, about 9000 men, out to Germantown, where they took up position more or less along the line of School House Lane and Church Lane, occupying our meeting grounds.

Along their way, the British Army passed the Norris estate, Fairhill, and burned it down. You would assume that General Howe would be aware of the fact that Philadelphia Quakers were officially on the British side. Burning Fairhill, however, was not a mistake. Isaac Norris Jr died in 1766, and—rather shockingly—he died intestate. John Dickinson, a lawyer and close friend of the family, worked to help Norris's two daughters Mary and Sarah (Polly and Sally) sort out the estate. The two sisters were now alone, as their mother had died giving birth to Sally. Then Sally died of smallpox in 1769, leaving Polly by herself, aged 29. She married Dickinson the following year. Since he was not a Friend, they married in a very private civil ceremony<sup>34</sup>, and then lived in Fairhill. Dickinson was active in politics and a patriot. Thus, seven years later when the British Army came by, Fairhill had long lost its identity as the home of a Quaker, but was rather the home of a known patriot.

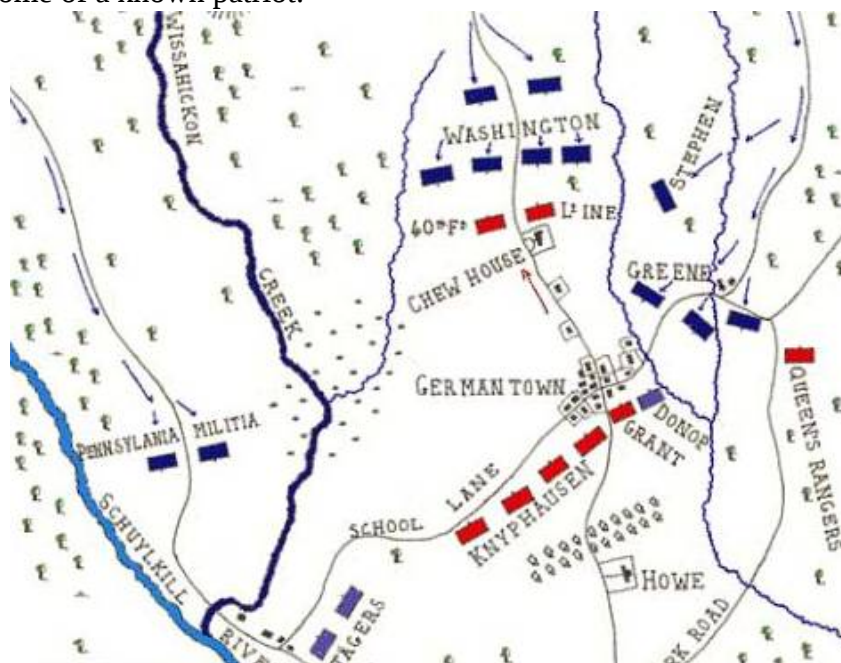


Fig. 6 Battle of Germantown, at beginning

Understanding that he was now facing a smaller force, Washington decided on a dawn attack on October 4, and ordered his army to march most of the previous night in four columns so as to attack in the center and both flanks simultaneously (see Fig. 6). It might have been brilliant, as the American movements were not detected by British forward pickets. Unfortunately, most of the approaches were poorly executed, so that no flanking attacks

<sup>34</sup> Mary Norris Dickinson quickly wrote a letter to Philadelphia MM apologizing for her marriage to a non-Friend. PMM forgave her and spared her disownment. Some years after the war John Dickinson possibly (this is very uncertain) became a member of PMM, as both he and Mary were given certificates of removal to Wilmington MM in 1790. Both died early in the next century and were buried in Wilmington MM's burial ground.

developed, and heavy fog made problems for both attackers and defenders in the center. American troops were initially successful attacking down the line of Main Street, and cut off a British detachment. Its commander, Colonel Musgrave, ordered his roughly 120 men into a large mansion just off Main Street--Cliveden, Benjamin Chew's former estate--a good position overseeing Washington's line of attack.

Washington and his artillery commander General Knox agreed they could not continue their attack with an enemy-fortified position in their rear, and held up that attack, although in the fog and confusion many of the attacking elements could not be informed of this change. Thus, the attack in the center became chaotic while Cliveden was put under siege. Meanwhile, Howe mobilized his left flank troops to advance, swing around towards Main Street and flank the attackers. Pretty shortly, having been unable to dislodge the British from Cliveden, Washington had to order a general retreat.

Inexplicably, Howe did not pursue Washington, who retreated only a short distance to Whitmarsh. Howe remained in Germantown, staying at the David Lesher house (which would be Washington's "Germantown White House" fifteen years later). They engaged in desultory movements and a few minor skirmishes, but eventually Howe decided to return to Philadelphia, and Washington took his troops to Valley Forge for the famous winter encampment.

The gloom produced by the occupation of Philadelphia and the military defeats of Brandywine and Germantown would have been seriously depressing to the American cause were it not for the nearly simultaneous huge victory October 2 over General Burgoyne's army in upstate New York. Furthermore, historians contend that even in its loss, the Battle of Germantown impressed the French with the fact, so soon after the major loss at Brandywine, that Washington and his troops were still willing and able to fight at all, demonstrative of an essential *esprit de corps*. The French joined the cause that winter, and were essential to the eventual final victory over the British.

General Howe resigned his command that winter and was replaced by General Henry Clinton, who was ordered by London to return with his army to New York, which was now seen as more vulnerable to French naval attack, and more strategically important than Philadelphia. Indeed, there was probably a certain amount of disappointment that capturing Philadelphia did not lead automatically to American surrender, as might have been expected in a more civilized European war. Clinton evacuated Philadelphia in June, and led his army overland to New York, harried by Washington along the way, an experience greatly encouraging to the American troops. Notably, about 1000 loyalists, including Christopher Sauer III of the *Germantown Gazette*, were also evacuated from Philadelphia at the same time.

Sally Wister wrote on June 18, 1778, "*We have had strange reports about the British leaving Philadelphia. I can't believe it.*" Then, the following morning, "*We have heard an astonishing piece of news! That the English have entirely left the city! It is almost impossible!*" And later that day, "*A light horseman has just confirmed the above intelligence! This is charmante! They decampd yesterday. He (the horseman) was in Philad'a<sup>35</sup>. It is true They have gone! Past a doubt! I can't help forbear exclaiming to the girls, "Now are you sure the news --is*

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<sup>35</sup>A very common abbreviation of the period.

true? Now are you sure they are gone?” “Yes, yes, yes!” they all cry, “and may they never, never return!”<sup>36</sup>

Following the Revolution, Germantown was politically and economically important, probably ranking second in the state only to Philadelphia, the nation’s capital. In 1793, when President Washington had to vacate the capital due to Yellow Fever, he went to Germantown. There was even a brief moment (very brief) in those years after the War that Germantown was considered a candidate to become the nation’s capital. A similar move of the Pennsylvania state capital from Harrisburg to Germantown was contemplated, but squashed by western Pennsylvania political interests.

### Quakers in Germantown

By the end of the settlement period in 1720, two-thirds of the original Crefeld members (see *The Settlement of Germantown*) had moved on, but the adult members of Germantown Meeting were still mostly Dutch-speaking, although by now they and especially their children could speak and understand English to a degree. A small number of English settlers, such as Isaac Deavs, pronounced Davis, and often written as ‘Dawes’, had by this time been added to their number, and one or two, such as Thomas Potts and Griffith Jones, both Welsh, had joined them through marriage--Potts married Martha Kurlis in 1699, and Jones wed Elizabeth Cunard in 1709. But the main influx into Germantown was of ethnic Germans, of which extremely few, if any, became Quaker.

After Pastorius’s 1705 list of Germantown Meeting contributors to the building of the new 1705 stone meeting house, we have no records relative to the Meeting at all until the 1798 first entry of Minutes of Men’s Meeting for Discipline, held in the Quaker Archives of Haverford University, which reads: “*At a preparative<sup>37</sup> Mg held in Germantown by appointment ye 16<sup>th</sup> of 3<sup>rd</sup> mo 1798, the Book of Discipline being present, John Johnson requests it till next Mg.<sup>38</sup> The Treasurer has paid the money as directed at last Meeting. Joseph Jones and John Johnson are app[ointed] Represent[atives] to our ensuing Mo[nthly] Meetg [for Discipline].*”<sup>39</sup>

Obviously, references to previous instructions and a “last” meeting suggest the existence of a previous book of men’s minutes, but such a book has never come to light as far as anyone now knows. It may someday turn up, one hopes accompanied by other missing records of our history, but for now we do without.

The minutes of a preparative meeting are very limited in their scope, since they relate only to what needs to be brought to Monthly Meeting for Discipline (later to be called Business): issues relating to membership (infractions or applications, births and deaths), to spending

<sup>36</sup> Sally Wister Journal, [https://archive.org/stream/sallywistersjour00wistrich/\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/sallywistersjour00wistrich/_djvu.txt). Page 183.

<sup>37</sup> In 1728 PYM authorized all meetings under the care of a particular MM to engage in a once-per-month “preparative” meeting to prepare for the next Monthly Meeting for Discipline, that is, to sort out which matters needed to be brought forward from their particular meeting to the MM. At the same time, Germantown Meeting became Germantown Preparative Meeting (GPM). Most meetings probably did as GPM did, men and women meeting for separate preparative meetings.

<sup>38</sup> This *Rules of Discipline* was of special interest because it was the first edition ever to be printed. Others will ask to look at it in ensuing Preparative Meetings for Discipline.

<sup>39</sup> Men’s Minutes of Germantown Preparative Meeting, Continued. 1798-1860. Quaker Archives, Haverford College Libraries. March 16, 1798. Unfortunately, Haverford does not have a copy of the Women’s Minutes, nor prior minutes.

authorized by Monthly Meeting, or to proposed changes in worship. At this time, they also must forward to monthly meeting their answers to PYM queries, and for many GPM minutes these Query-answers are the only items in that month's entry—and in the absence of answers to queries, many more minutes have only a date, signifying there was no content at all to bring forward. After 1710, all such Monthly Meetings for Discipline were held in Abington Preparative Meeting's meetinghouse, located where it is today.<sup>40</sup>

Very useful are three membership lists of GPM, also held at Haverford, dated 1807-12, 1829-31, 1862-1900. All these records make an appreciation of the goings-on of Germantown Preparative Meeting in the nineteenth century easier, but don't do very much in elucidating the previous century.

As frustrating as a lack of records is, occasionally tit-bits simply pop up out of nowhere. One such is the following extract from Ben Franklin's *Pennsylvania Gazette* dated June 5, 1735:<sup>41</sup>

*Wednesday Morning died suddenly at Germantown Meeting, of an Apoplectic fit, Isaac Norris, of Fairhill, Esq; He had been many Years one of the Council, was often chosen a Representative in Assembly, had born several other Offices of Honour and Trust, and was esteemed one of the most considerable Men in the Province.*

Isaac Norris was everything Franklin said and more; he was one of the wealthiest of Philadelphia's citizens, a "Quaker Grandee" with an estate, Fairhill, on the road to Germantown (see above). Other aspects of the extract need some explanation, however. "Wednesday" would have been June 1; Norris's official death-date is Saturday, June 4. I suspect he had his "apoplectic fit" on the Wednesday morning at our meetinghouse, and was immediately brought home to Fairhill, where he died on Saturday. Many of us think that an apoplectic fit is an instance of extreme rage, and might wonder what our meeting did that brought this about. However, "apoplexy" is a medical term that started with the Greeks and came to us via Latin, and has always meant "stroke." A well-trained physician then would have recognized it and used the term *apoplexy*. In 1735, however, were there any? Maybe not in Germantown. It turns out that one such physician, Dr. John Goodson, arrived in Philadelphia in 1682. There was a Welsh doctor, Dr. Griffith Owens, in the later 1680s, and as soon as there was money for it, settlers' sons were being sent to England and Europe for their educations, and some came back doctors. By 1735, then, there were a good six or eight qualified physicians in Philadelphia, and I think one of them was called out that Wednesday to come to Fairhill and see to Norris, and it was he who made the diagnosis. Still, an exciting event for our meeting; I wonder what he was doing there. An exceptionally weighty Friend, Norris had been clerk of PYM from 1711 to 1729, and might well have been out visiting on Yearly Meeting business.

### **GPM members**

I will begin this section by discussing certain families that are believed to have played significant roles in our meeting's business during the 18th century.

### **The Wisters**

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<sup>40</sup> Jenkins, Arthur H and Ann R, *A Short History of Abington Monthly Meeting*, Abington, Published Privately, 1929.

<sup>41</sup> See [www.accessible-archives.com](http://www.accessible-archives.com)



Some assert that John Wister also became a Quaker. I think it certainly possible that his brother Caspar (who had joined Philadelphia MM) might have recommended it, arguing that Friends were the dominant social and political force in Philadelphia, and becoming a Friend made all kinds of commercial good sense. But the evidence for John's joining is weak, while the evidence against is stronger and we may just leave it as unresolved. What is clear is that his oldest son Daniel applied for membership in PMM, as soon as he attained his majority, and was accepted into membership in 1760. That same year--quite probably not a coincidence--he married PMM member Lowry Jones, daughter of two weighty Welsh Quaker families. It was written in PMM minutes that both Daniel and Lowry were *reported to have married out of unity*, a state that often led to being *disowned for having married out of unity* without some fancy stepping on both their parts to prevent such an outcome. It was uncommon that any explanation might be forthcoming as to just exactly what they might have done wrong, and there are a number of possibilities, of which most could be "cured" with contrite letters to the meeting. At any rate, they were apparently not disowned.

Daniel Wister had grown up summering in the "Big House" in Germantown and after his marriage to Lowry they resided in Philadelphia, at 325 Market Street,<sup>42</sup> while continuing to spend summers in the Big House. I presume that the family attended GPM on First Days during the summer. Interestingly, all of Daniel and Lowry's children are said to have been born in Germantown, suggesting that as birthing approached, Lowry migrated to the Big House, perhaps to take advantage of the "more salubrious air" of Germantown at this vulnerable time. But because Daniel and Lowry continued to reside in Philadelphia, their memberships and their children's birthright memberships were in PMM.

After John's death in 1789, Daniel inherited the Germantown property, and is said to have moved there, although no evidence indicates that he transferred his membership from PMM, suggesting in turn that his move was not a complete move. In any case, their son Charles Jones Wister was disowned by PMM in 1803 (for having paid the militia fine in lieu of serving), an event indicating his continued membership in PMM until he attained his majority that same year. Lowry and Sally both died in 1804, followed by Daniel in 1805, and while Sally appears to have been buried in Germantown Meeting's old burial ground (OBG), both Lowry and Daniel were buried in Arch Street's BG. Sally, who never married, became an adult in 1782, and I think it is likely that of them all, she may well have been the only member of her family to transfer her membership to GPM, especially if her residence there was more permanent than her parents'. When the first GPM membership list was worked up between 1807 and 1812, no Wisters were left to be included.

### **The Johnsons**

In that first entry of the men's minutes in 1798, John Johnson is mentioned twice. What is not possible to say here is just exactly who "John Johnson" was. Dirck Johnson's son John Sr died in 1794 at the age of 86, so it certainly wasn't him. But he had a son, John Jr (1748-1810); he is said to have served as clerk of the meeting during his life, and in turn had a son John

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<sup>42</sup> This house is noted for being one of the first homes to be equipped with Ben Franklin's lighting rods. The apparatus was connected to a bell so as to give an alarm whenever the atmosphere was supercharged. The bell went off frequently enough to annoy Lowry, who ordered it disconnected.



Livezey (1782-?). John Sr had another son Joseph who had a son John (1774-1825), who built Upsala mansion, and all of these three John Johnsons alive in 1798 are likely to have been birthright members of GPM. Of the three, John Livezey was just 16 years old in 1798, and most likely too young to attend such a meeting, so we are left with John Jr, son of John Sr, and John, son of Joseph. All three Johns are listed in the membership tally of 1807-12.

Furthermore, there is no reason to suppose that the two mentions of John Johnson had to be about the same individual. The members there at that meeting that day would not have been confused if one John were getting the book of discipline and another were being appointed to attend the Monthly Meeting for Discipline a week or two later; they knew who they were dealing with and likely gave no thought to readers of a distant future who might wonder about it.

The Johnsons, both collectively and individually, are the most likely named people to have been members of Germantown Preparative Meeting in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Dirck Jansen, you may recall (from *The Settlement of Germantown*) married Hans Millan's daughter Margaret in 1700. I believe the newlywed couple moved into Hans' stone house with him on lot #17 West, which Hans built in 1690. The house was set about fifty feet from Main Street, with its front door opening to the south, rather than to the east, towards Main Street. This placement of the front door is typical of the Dutch, who generally did not have their main door facing the street. Dirck and his father-in-law could practice together as weavers. Dirck and Margaret had at least six children, who were sent to be schooled by Daniel Pastorius, and all would have walked the 0.7 miles to the Meetinghouse on First-days. Hans died fairly early in the new century, and Dirck and Margaret inherited his house.

A certain amount of confusion surrounds the building of the second stone house, directly between the first house and Main Street. The two houses were about 18 feet apart, the separation serving as a carriageway between them. Some claim that Hans Millan built it for Dirck and Margaret to live in, which would certainly make sense--anything to get them and their children out from underfoot--but for the likelihood that Hans died well before it was built, which event would also have made it superfluous to Dirck and Margaret's needs. Others say Dirck built it for his daughter Katherine and her husband Caspar Wistar, who married in 1726 in Germantown Meetinghouse. It would be unusual—but not especially improbable—for a Dutch landholder to build a house for his daughter--much more likely for a son, of course--and her husband, except for the fact that they had no plans to reside there. Furthermore, Caspar was vastly wealthier than Dirck. I think that Caspar and Katherine most likely built it with her father's willing permission and perhaps even the gift of the land, intending to use it as a summer home, which is exactly what they did. Furthermore, this scenario well suits the building date of 1736, which is cited by several sources, in particular, the "official" history of the Wyck House on line. When Dirck died in 1755, his daughter Katherine, already a widow of three years, inherited the complex, and at Katherine's death, it would go to her daughter Margaret, married to Reuben Haines in 1760 (see *The Settlement of Germantown*). The Haineses would later give the estate its name "Wyck."

Dirck's son John (whom I call "John Sr" here) married Agness Klincken, a granddaughter of settler Aret Klincken, and they had three sons, all most likely born into GPM: Anthony (1746-1823) who married Sarah Rubicam; John Jr (1748-1810), who married Rachel Livezey, a Roxborough Quaker who may already have been a member of GPM; and Joseph (1750-1797), who married Elizabeth Norton, a member of Philadelphia-Northern District MM.

Both Anthony and John Jr and their sizable families are listed in the 1807-12 list of GPM members; Joseph, as you can see, died ten years before that list was started, but his wife and all their numerous children are there too. Between the three families, Johnsons occupy a very large chunk of the 1807-12 meeting list.<sup>43</sup>

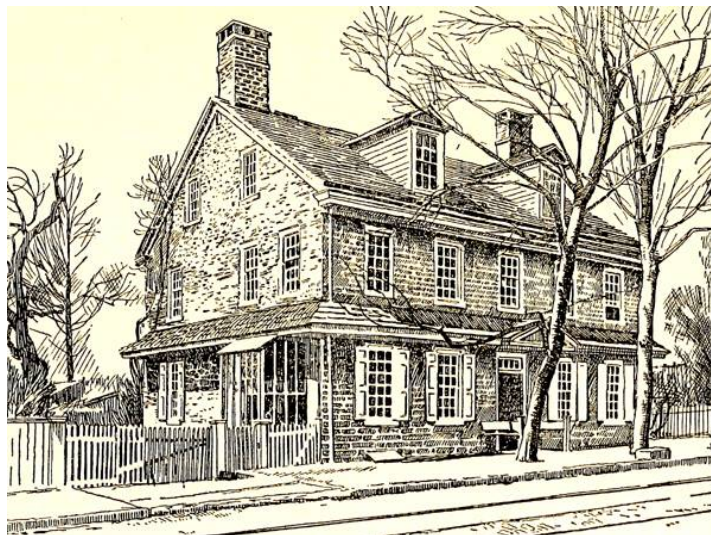


Fig. 7 Johnson House, artist not known, date not referenced

So what were the Johnsons doing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century? As already mentioned, John Sr made himself the number one landlord of the town, renting properties mostly to transient Germans. John Sr is thought to have been the richest full-time resident of Germantown by mid-century. John must have been delighted at the match made by his son John Jr with Rachel Livezey, daughter of Thomas Livezey of Roxborough, a wealthy mill-owner—who wrote the letter to Benjamin Franklin previously discussed. John Sr had a house built in 1768-1770 for the affianced pair, hiring Jacob Knorr, a well-known architect (for more on Knorr, see above, page 8). The house was ready by the time the two married in the Germantown Meetinghouse in 1770, and they moved in immediately. This is the house on Main St and Abington Rd (today Germantown Ave and Washington Lane) known as “The Johnson House” (see Fig.7). John Jr made a living as a tanner, operating a tannery on their property.

The house was built in time for the Battle. Hotchkin comments, “*The battle of Germantown was fought six weeks before the birth of [their third child] Samuel...The bullet holes still remain, and the splintered doors...tell a sad tale. During the battle the family wisely retreated to the cellar. After it closed, the English soldiers cleared the house of eatables.*”<sup>44</sup>

Property that John Sr bought in 1766 across Main Street from Cliveden, less than a quarter mile up Main from the Johnson House, went on his death in 1794 to his son Joseph (who died in his turn in 1797), whose son John (on the GPM membership list in 1807-12) built his own mansion there in 1798. John named it Upsala, today still one of the important historical mansions of Germantown. John married Sally Wheeler in 1801 (in the meetinghouse of

<sup>43</sup> The 1807-1812 membership list of GPM is in the Addenda.

<sup>44</sup> Hotchkin, S. F, *Ancient and Modern Germantown*, P. W., Ziegler and Co, Philadelphia 1889, pg 165.

PNDMM). Sally would have transferred her membership to GPM that same year, and they raised nine children in Upsala, all listed as birthright members of GPM.

It is more difficult to be sure about the home that Anthony Johnson, John Sr's oldest son, lived in, but there is some indication that Anthony and his family lived on lot #20 West, first owned by his settler great-grandfather Aret Klincken, and passing down through Aret's granddaughter Agness, John Sr's wife. Aret Klincken is said to have built the first two-story log house in Germantown, which house was said still to be standing (along with two other stone houses built later) at the time that Justus Johnson, Anthony's son, inherited it in 1823.<sup>45</sup>

All these Johnsons and their families will continue to be members into the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and we will see them again.

### **The Joneses**

One other name is mentioned in that first minute of 1798: Joseph Jones. This is likely to be the same Joseph on the 1807-12 list of GPM members, the adult son of members Jonathan Jones and Hannah Coles, and brother of another member, Solomon Jones, who has the distinction of being the first member buried in our New Burial Grounds (NBG) in 1860. However, this lineage does not appear to have led to any living members of our meeting.

Another Jones family on the 1807-12 list, that of Priscilla Hallowell Jones (widow), does lead to one living descendent, Phoebe Jones Schellenberg. It turns out that Phoebe, too, is descended from an original settler. Priscilla's husband turns out to have been named John Jones, and he was the grandson of a Thomas Jones of Merion who came to Germantown to marry Katherine Arets, daughter of settler Leonard Arets. Thomas was a brother of Griffith Jones, who married another settler daughter, Elizabeth Kunders. While Griffith stayed in Germantown with his new wife, and sired two generations of GPM members in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Thomas took Katherine back to Merion, and produced Jones grandchildren who would return to GPM by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Well, at least one: John who married Priscilla. But John is likely to have been brother of our member Jonathan Jones, who married Hannah Coles. Furthermore, one website indicates John was born in Germantown, so it is possible that both brothers were born into our meeting around the midcentury.

### **The State of Germantown Meeting**

The 1807-1812 GPM membership list contains 84 adults and 73 children, indicating that over the course of the century it had grown modestly from the estimated 50-60 adults in 1706. Whoever compiled this list did so over a four-year period. Regrettably, the compilers, who listed male names on the left side of the page and female names on the right, made very little effort to link husbands to wives and parents to children, so assembling the membership list into families was like putting together a jig-saw puzzle: but the results may be found in the addenda.

The list of the 33 family names (see addenda) includes the names of three families derived from Germantown settlers: Conrad, Johnson, and Keyser. Of the rest, twenty families can be traced to immigrants from England (12), Wales (6), Scotland and Ireland (1 each), sixteen of which were Quakers from their source. Only one family, Himmelwright, is apparently German. The seven remaining I could not determine--but most sound English, for what it's worth. From this we can see that the eighteenth century was one of transition in our meeting

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<sup>45</sup> Hotchkin, *Ibid*, pg 323.

from Dutch to English, both in ethnicity and language, while not sharing much at all in the German boom of Germantown.

### **The third meetinghouse**

On February 21, 1812, Preparative Meeting minutes noted, *“It having been observed that our meeting house is frequently very much crowded, there not being room enough for the comfortable accommodation of gatherings...it is therefore proposed that a committee be appointed...providing for the better accommodation of meetings in future. Peter Robeson, William [Logan] Fisher, Abraham Deavs, Joseph Paul, Joseph Jones & Samuel Johnson.”* At some later point, John Livezey Johnson was added.

The committee reported back just one month later, March 27, that it would be *“best to build a new Meeting house of a larger size & at a greater distance from the public road than the present one. & they further report that sufficient funds to defray the expense can be obtained.”* This was approved, and the committee was asked to move forward.

By April, *“The committee report...they have agreed on the plan of a house 56 feet by [tear in page] and that they have engaged workmen...”* Construction proceeded over the next six months, and on October 23, 1812, *“The committee...inform that they have nearly completed the same & find that the funds subscribed will be inadequate to the object.”* The committee proposed using rental income from meeting properties for the purpose; this was approved. *“The committee further inform that the money will not be sufficient...further propose the sale of the ground rents & the application of the principal to completing the meeting house.”* This also was approved. This puzzling sequence of approving the use of property rental income and then approving the sale of the rental income made me wonder if it represents meeting decisions as they occur, or if it is better characterized as a summary of decisions made—in preparation for reporting to Meeting for Discipline. Either way, in October they are coping with having run out of money with still a little to go. Winter must have slowed them down more, for another six months intervenes before April 16, 1813 when the committee reports that the Meetinghouse is “nearly completed” and that they recommend *“dismantelling [sic] present meeting house to use the lumber for needed carriage houses.”*

What lumber? This had been a stone meeting house. A clue is found in a memorandum written in at the bottom of the page: *“The old Meetinghouse was built in the year 1705, as appeared by a stone walled in over the front door, having stood 109 years.”* Clearly, as it was dismantled, walls, presumably of lumber covering the stones were taken down, and it was only then that the stone marked “1705” was revealed. If the lumber was on the inside surface, this would mean that the “1705” faced inward, not outward.

*“The new meeting house was constructed of stone, and contained two apartments separated by a partition. It was two stories in height and contained a youth's gallery, which was partitioned in 1821.”*<sup>46</sup> It had a porch facing Main Street, which was later extended around the sides.

In the first Preparative Meeting held in the new Meeting House on May 28, 1813, Samuel Johnson asked to be released from his duties as Clerk; he had been clerking for the last ten years. A committee was appointed to find a new clerk; they recommended, a month later, his brother

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<sup>46</sup> Historical American Buildings Survey (HABS No. PA-6654), National Park Service. Germantown Friends Meetinghouse. 1999. Page 13.

William Johnson. Samuel and William were sons of John Johnson and Rachel Livezey. William married Catherine Knorr, daughter of the architect Jacob Knorr; their family leads to our member Rebecca Johnson.

On Sept 23, 1814, sixteen months after completing their job, “*The committee appointed to build the meetinghouse, report that service performd: and that the expence [this is how it is always spelled here] for the meeting house, sheds, graveyard walls, paving &c. is five thousands, two hundred & fourteen dollars & fortyfour cents; which is all paid. –And that it was raised in the following manner, viz:*

\$ 3171.05 subscribed by friends of Germantown  
 164 “ “ Abington  
 843 “ “ Philadelphia

\$ 1036.39 by the sale of ground rents]

[Signed] 9-19-1814 Peter Robeson, Joseph Jones, Joseph Paul, John Johnson, Wm L Fisher, Samuel Johnson.

The new meetinghouse was located further back from Main Street, roughly where the Commons parking lot now is. Its front door faced Main Street however; there was no Coulter Street then, still half a century away; and its carriage-way approach came from Main Street, as can be seen in this detail from an 1851 map (Fig.8) of Germantown.

(Please note that the maker of the map below assigned the name “S. B. Morris” to the wrong house; it should be the house above it, immediately below Ch. Spencer. )

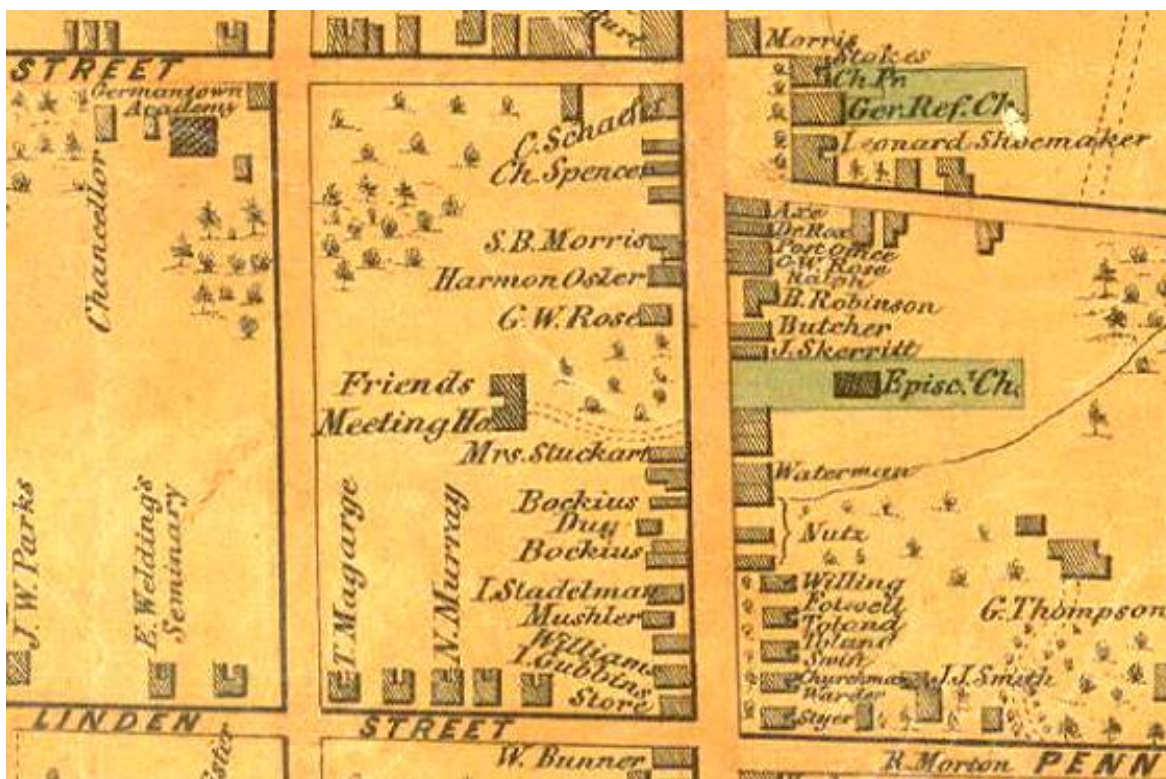


Fig. 8 Detail of 1851 Map of Germantown

We should note one final administrative change that occurred at the end of 1815, to accompany their start in the new meetinghouse. Abington Quarterly Meeting (AQM) had decided to split Abington Monthly Meeting (AMM) into two entities, AMM and Frankford Monthly Meeting (FMM). FMM would consist of two preparative meetings: FPM and GPM. All members of both preparative meetings were then considered “charter members” of FMM. Furthermore, FMM would not be part of AQM, but would report to Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting (PQM) henceforth. The GPM men’s minutes for December 22, 1815 reads, “*This was the last Prep.v Mg held in connection with Abington Mo Mtg. The following Preparative Mg will be the first held before the Mo Meeting of Frankford Friends and comprised of Germantown & Frankford Preparative Meetings.*”

Note, by the way, that St Luke’s Episcopal Church sits across Main Street. In 1811, as Friends were beginning to feel cramped in their old quarters, Thomas Armat welcomed eleven celebrants to his house Loudon, on Naglee’s Hill on the Germantown Road. They determined to establish an Episcopal church, and a few years later purchased land and began to build. In 2018 they celebrated their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Up the street, the German Reformed Church on Market Square was still, in 1813, holding its services in German. By this time, however, they were fighting a rearguard action; the Germanness of Germantown, so evident by the middle of the century, was fading into the past.

## ADDENDA

### GPM Membership list 1807-1812)

BUCK	Benjamin	H	1	
BUCK	Rebecca	W	1	
deBENEVILLE	Elizabeth	A	1	
BUNBY	Sarah	A		disowned, date unsaid
CARMALT	Jonathan	H	1	
CARMALT	Hannah [Phipps]	W	1	
CARMALT	Susanna	ch d of J&H	1	b 1790
CARMALT	Caleb Jr	ch s of J&H		b1792, transfer out 1812
CARMALT	Isaac [P]	ch s of J&H		b 1794
CARMALT	Rebecca	ch d of J&H		b 1797
CARMALT	James	ch s of J&H		b 1800
CARMALT	Marian [Mary Ann]	ch d of J&H		b 1803
CONRAD	John	A	1	
DEAVES	Abraham	H, s of Abe	1	
DEAVES	Jemima	W	1	
DEAVES	Abraham Jr	ch s of A&J		
DEAVES	Margaret	ch d of A&J		
DILLWORTH	Jacob	A	1	d 1809
FISHER	William Logan	H	1	
FISHER	Mary [Rodman]	W	1	
FISHER	Thomas Rodman	ch of W&M		[b1803]
FISHER	Sarah Logan	ch of W&M		[b1806]
FISHER	Elizabeth Rodman	ch of W&M		b 1810
FORBES	Mary	A	1	
FRENCH	Mercy [Coxe]	A	1	d 1807
FOULKE	Samuel	A	1	
[HALLOWELL	Joshua]			Not listed Prob d<1807
HALLOWELL	Hannah [Trump]	Widow	1	d 1809
HALLOWELL	John	s of Hannah		[b1792]
HIMMEL[W]RIGHT	Hannah [Dickerson]	A	1	

The JOHNSONS were listed inchoately, so I have reorganized them into families.

They all apparently derive from Dirck Johnson & Margaret Millan, children of settlers.

Dirck's son John Sr & Agness Klincken were the parents of Anthony, John Jr and Joseph

JOHNSON	Anthony	H Widower	1	b 1746
[JOHNSON	Sarah Rubicam	W]		Not listed Prob d<1807
JOHNSON	Justus	A s of A&S	1	[b 1778]



JOHNSON	Klincken	[A s of A&S]	1	[b1777]	
JOHNSON	Agness	d of A&S		[b1780]	cf THOMAS
[Agness above is listed below as W of Daniel Thomas]					
JOHNSON	John Jr	H	1	b1748, d1810	
JOHNSON	Rachel [Livezey]	W	1		
JOHNSON	John Jr [III]	died infant		b1774[-1775]	
JOHNSON	William	A s of Jjr&R	1		
JOHNSON	Rachel	A d of Jjr&R	1	[b1785]	
[John and Samuel below are the sons of John Johnson Jr]					
JOHNSON	John L[ivezey]	H	1	[b1782]	
JOHNSON	Sarah [Ridgway]	W	1	b1788	
JOHNSON	Joseph [Livezey]	ch s of JL&S		b1806	
JOHNSON	Abigail [Ridgway]	ch d of JL&S		b1808	
JOHNSON	John [Ridgway]	"son of John L"		[b1811]	
JOHNSON	Samuel	H s of JohnJr	1	b1777	
JOHNSON	Jennett [Rowland]	W	1		OBG
JOHNSON	Rowland	ch s of S&J		b1806, d1808	
JOHNSON	Samuel Jr	ch s of S&J		b1809	
JOHNSON	John [Rowland]	ch s of S&J		b1810	
JOHNSON	Joshua Rowland	ch s of S&J		b1812	
[JOHNSON	Rowland]	[ch s of S&J]		[b1816]	
[John below is the son of Joseph Johnson and Elizabeth Norton]					
JOHNSON	John	H	1	b1774	
JOHNSON	Sarah [Wheeler]	W	1	[1780-]	
JOHNSON	Elizabeth	ch d of J&S		b 1802	OBG
JOHNSON	Hannah Haworth	ch d of J&S		b 1803	
JOHNSON	Ann	ch d of J&S		b 1805	OBG
JOHNSON	William Norton	ch s of J&S		b 1807	OBG
JOHNSON	Margaret	ch d of J&S		b 1809	OBG
JOHNSON	Charles [Norton]	ch s of J&S		b 1810	
JOHNSON	Benedict	unassigned		b 1810	

The Jones were listed with little effort to collect them into family groups; I have reorganized them into three families, the first of three generations; the third, John and Priscilla, are more tentative, John probably the grandson of Thomas Jones of Merion.

JONES	Jonathan	H	1		
JONES	Hannah [Coles]	W	1	[b1745] d1807	
JONES	Hannah	d of J&H		b1792	



JONES	Solomon	H s of J&H	1	NBG
JONES	Mary [Comfort]	W	1	NBG
JONES	Moses	ch s of S&M	b 1807	
JONES	Jonathan C	ch s of S&M	b 1808	
JONES	Joseph	H s of J&H	1	1771-1835G Overseer
JONES	Elizabeth [French]	W (his 1st)	1	d 1811
JONES	Joseph	ch s of Jos	1	transferred by 1812
JONES	Jonathan	ch s of Jos	b 1797	
JONES	Robert	ch s of Jos	b 1800	
JONES	Mercy	ch d of Jos	b1803	

Thomas and John below are apparently unrelated to each other and to Jonathan

JONES	Thomas	H	1	[1750-
JONES	Lydia	W	1	[1766-1843G]
JONES	Thomas Jr	ch		
JONES	Rachel	ch	b 1799	
JONES	Isaac	ch	b 1801	
JONES	Asa	ch	b 1804	
JONES	Ezra	ch	b 1807	
JONES	Hannah	ch	b1807	
JONES	Hannah	ch	b 1808	
JONES	Lydia	ch	b1809[-1830]	
JONES	Elizabeth	ch	b 1810	
[JONES	John	H]		Not listed Prob d<1807
JONES	Priscilla [Hallowell]	Widow	1	[c1751-1831]
JONES	John	s of Pris	1	[b1790]
JONES	Priscilla Jr	ch d of Pris		
JONES	Martha	ch d of Pris		
JONES	Mary	ch d of Pris		
JONES	Anna	ch d of Pris		
JONES	Margaret	ch d of Pris		

KEYSER	Abraham	A	1	
KEYSER	Mary (1793-1870)	A	1	
LIVEZEY	John	H	1	
LIVEZEY	Abigail [Ridgway]	W	1	[b1763NJ]
LIVEZEY	Joseph	ch s of J&A		
LIVEZEY	John Jr	ch s of J&A	b1798	
LIVEZEY	Thomas	ch s of J&A	b1800	
LONGSTRETH	David	A	1	[b 1786 br of Eliz
MATHER	Richard	H	1	[b 1783]

MATHER	Elizabeth [Longstreth]	W	1	[b 1783]	sis of David
[MATHER	David	ch s of R&E]		[b1810]	not listed
MORTON	James	H Widower	1	[1780-]	
[MORTON	Jemima Walters]	[W ]		[d1807]	not listed
MORTON	Samuel	A	1		
PAUL	Joseph	H	1	b 1770	OBG
PAUL	Elizabeth F [Wheeler]	W	1	b 1776	OBG
PAUL	Mary	ch d of J&E		b 1802	OBG
PAUL	Samuel Wheeler	ch s of J&E		b 1805	OBG
PAUL	Jacob	ch s of J&E		b 1806	OBG
PAUL	Rebecka				
RANDALL	Nicholas	H	1		
RANDALL	Rachel	W	1		
RANDALL	George	ch s of N&R			
RANDALL	Mary	ch d of N&R			
RANDALL	Mercy	ch d of N&R			
The Roberts are another big Welsh family I had to organize.					
ROBERTS	Thomas	H	1		
ROBERTS	Susannah [Kirk]	W	1		
ROBERTS	Mary	ch d of T&S	1		
ROBERTS	Thomas Jr	ch s of T&S	1		
ROBERTS	Daniel	ch s of T&S	1		
ROBERTS	John	ch s of T&S	1		
[ROBERTS	Sarah	ch d of T&S]			
I cannot find a family link between Thomas and Amos					
ROBERTS	Amos	H	1		
ROBERTS	Margaret [Thomas]	W	1		
ROBERTS	Mary	[d of A&M]	1	[b1778]	
ROBERTS	Andrew	[s of A&M]	1	[b 1784]	
ROBERTS	Hugh	[s of A&M]			See below
ROBERTS	Phebe	[d of A&M]		[b 1788]	
ROBERTS	Margaret Jr	[d of A&M]		[b 1790]	
ROBERTS	Deborah	[d of A&M]		[b 1792]	
ROBERTS	Hugh	H	1		
ROBERTS	Sarah [Spencer]	W	1		
[ROBERTS	Lydia]	[ch of H&S]			not listed
[ROBERTS	Caroline]	[ch of H&S]		[1809-	not listed
[ROBERTS	Spencer]	[ch of H&S]			not listed
ROBERTS	Jesse	A	1		
ROBESON	Peter	H	1		
[ROBESON	Martha [Livezey]	1stW]		d1790	Not listed

ROBESON	Jonathan	ch s of P&M	1	[b 1783]	
ROBESON	Andrew	ch s of P&M		[b 1787]	
ROBESON	Sarah Ann	ch d of P&M		[b1789] transfer[1808]	
ROBESON	Elizabeth [Shoemaker]	2nd W	1		
ROBESON	Martha	ch d of P&E		d1807	
SMITH	Mary	A	1		
SPENCER	Nathan	H	1		
SPENCER	Rachel [Pim]	W	1		
SPENCER	Thomas Pim	ch s of N&R	1	b 1776	
SPENCER	Sarah	ch d of N&R		b 1788	m H Roberts
SPENCER	Hepzibah	ch d of N&R		b 1793	
SPENCER	Maria	ch d of N&R		b 1794	
SPENCER	Joseph	ch s of N&R		b 1798	
STREET	Robert	H	1		
[STREET	Rachel [Sims]	W]	1		Not listed
STREET	Jane	ch d of R&R		b 1790	
STREET	Thomas	ch s of R&R		b1791-[1874]	
STREET	Samuel	ch s of R&R		b 1798	
STREET	John	H	1		
STREET	Mary	W	1		
STREET	Robert	ch s of J&M		b 1796	
STREET	John Jr	ch s of J&M		b 1798	
STREET	Abraham	ch s of J&M		b 1807	
STREET	Mary	ch d of J&M		b 1807	
THOMAS	Daniel	H	1		OBG
THOMAS	Agness [Johnson]	W	1	[1780- ]	OBG
THOMAS	Daniel Jr "s of above"	ch s of D&A		b 1794	
THOMAS	Anthony	ch s of D&A		b 1796	
THOMAS	Susanna	ch d of D&A		b 1799	
THOMAS	Ann	ch d of D&A		b 1804	
THOMAS	Martha	ch d of D&A		b 1807	
THOMAS	Robert	ch s of D&A		b 1809	
WILLSON	Samuel Jr	H	1		
WILLSON	Margaret [Buck]	W	1		
WILLSON	Benjamin	ch s of S&M		b 1803	
WILLSON	Thomasin	ch d of S&M		b 1806	
		Total adults	83		

H husband, W wife, ch child, A adult

I have included as Adult all children born by 1790, as they would turn 21 by 1811.

[ ] indicates added information; that is, not found on the membership listing

I have inserted the maiden names of wives where I could find them.

Some of those not listed were dead, and I inserted them for familial completeness;

Others may have left, without due certification, or were not remembered by compilers.

OBG: has headstone in Old Burial Ground

NBG: buried in New Burial Ground

### 1807-12 Membership List SOURCES

	indetermin	
Buck	ate	
deBeneville	Eng	Fr Huguenot
Bunby	indeter	
Carmalt	indeter	
Conrad	Settler	Q
Deaves	Eng	Q
Dilworth	Eng	Q
Fisher	Eng	Q
Forbes	indeter	
French	Eng	Q
Foulke	Wales	Q
Hallowell	Eng	Q
Himmelwri ght	Ger	
Johnson	Settler	Q
Jones	Settler	Q
Jones	Wales	
Jones	Wales	
Keyser	Settler	Men
Livezey	Eng	Q
Longstreth	Eng	Q
		Purita
Mather	Eng	n
Morton	Ire	
Paul	Eng	Q
Randall	Eng	Q
Roberts	Wales	Q
Roberts	Wales	Q
Robeson	Scot	Luth
Smith	indeter	
Spencer	Eng	Q
Street	indeter	
Thomas	Wales	Q
Willson	indeter	

32 families: 4 settler;

20 England, Wales, Scot, Ireland;