

Germantown, the “Garden Suburb”
And the Golden Age of Germantown Meeting, 1815 - 1906
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The nineteenth century was very good to Germantown as it transformed itself into a highly desirable, wealthy suburb of Philadelphia. The century would turn out to be very good for Germantown Preparative Meeting (GPM) also, and indeed may be considered Germantown Meeting’s “Golden Age,” as measured by wealth and numbers. However, the century would not start that way, especially for Friends.

American Quakers generally, and especially in Philadelphia, had been devastated by the Revolutionary War, experiencing physical and economic privations and social hostilities that they were ill-equipped to deal with. Following the war, however, the worst of the hostility relaxed. Ironically, their only legal problems, were the post-war legal attacks by a group calling themselves “Free Quakers,” led by Timothy Matlack¹, most of whom had been disowned by their meetings for one reason or another (mostly related to Peace testimony) during the war. They now sued Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM), claiming a right to use Quaker buildings because they had been deprived of these rights by “unpatriotic” and “traitorous” Friends. Philadelphia Friends won these challenges mainly because the post-war government in Pennsylvania was no longer driven by the “patriots,” but more moderate Democratic-republicans and Whigs, such as their former member Thomas Mifflin, the first post-war Governor of the state. The judiciary, too, awarded Friends some recompense for unfair and immoderate fines levied during the war.

Thus, Friends were able, if a little cautiously, to begin to reassemble their former lives. Farmers returned to regular farming, understanding that everyone had to eat and their farms were safe. In the city, it took a little longer, but they rebuilt their houses and businesses—finding that they still had some of the Quaker business advantage, although not as much, perhaps as they had enjoyed before. Wealthy Friends were still wealthy. It was not long before the Shippens, Wisters, Deshlers and Haineses were summering once more in Germantown.

The Hicksite separation

The story of the reformation and the Hicksite separation is told in great detail in the essay *An Holy Experiment and the Hicksite Separation*, so I will discuss it only to a limited degree here—especially as our meeting was comparatively little affected by it.

After a difficult and chaotic Philadelphia yearly meeting at Arch Street in April 1827, the Hicksites organized a special yearly meeting, held at Green Street meetinghouse in October of the same year to which they invited all interested members of the Society of Friends. At this meeting they formed a parallel yearly meeting to that of the Orthodox. Both yearly meetings sent epistles to other yearly meetings, signing themselves “Philadelphia Yearly Meeting” without further identification. Indeed, they did this with all formal documents, creating problems for future historians, who had to read each missive to tell from its content whether it was Hicksite or

¹ This is not the Timothy Matlack mentioned in *The Germanification of Germantown*, Reuben Haines’ step-father, but his son (thus, Reuben’s step-brother). He was disowned for “marrying out” before the war.

Orthodox in origin.² Each yearly meeting thus addressed had to decide what to do about the twin epistles, and most decided to “accept” the one from the “orthodox” yearly meeting. This set up immediate confrontations within a number of yearly meetings, which led to further subsequent divisions in New York, Baltimore, Ohio and Indiana yearly meetings.

Following the Hicksite October yearly meeting, individual meetings in the PYM region followed suit. For the most part, each meetinghouse remained in the hands of its majority, leaving the minority faction to find its own meetinghouse. Each division was akin to a divorce, usually rancorous and painful. As a very general rule, rural meetings went Hicksite, while urban meetings remained orthodox. In PYM as a whole, roughly two-thirds of its meetings became Hicksite. However, there are very few accounts that tell just how these were accomplished. Hocker remarks, “*When the ‘separation’ in the Society of Friends occurred ... it affected the Germantown meeting, though here were none of the stormy scenes that resulted in some other places.*”³ One account, of Middletown Preparative Meeting in Bucks Quarterly Meeting tells us: “*During the first meeting of the Middletown Friends Preparative Meeting after the schism, Orthodox Quakers were forcefully escorted out of the meeting house by a newly invited member of the Hicksite Quaker branch. Startled and shocked by the sudden removal from their meeting house, Orthodox members quickly gathered in the meeting house yard and circled around the stone horse block (used to assist in mounting and dismounting a horse or carriage). Sarah Emlen, then a minister of the Society of Friends, petitioned everyone to join together to seek a solution to the horrendous actions caused by the Hicksite members. They were shocked and startled by the sudden actions of the Hicksite Quakers. ... Upon contemplation of the situation, Sarah Emlen led all of the Orthodox Middletown Friends Meeting members to her home located down a narrow road near the meetinghouse. The supporters of the Orthodox branch of Quakerism continued to use the Emlen family home as a meeting location, while their original structure was overrun by Hicksite supporters.*”⁴

In Germantown Preparative Meeting it took the form of individuals declaring themselves. They were subsequently reported in the GPM men’s minutes as follows:

In the minutes dated 11th month 15, 1827, “*Overseers inform that ‘Peter Robeson has separated himself from our religious society, and joined and attended a new association set up in contravention to the ancient and established discipline of the Yearly Meeting of Philadelphia. [The next three lines are stricken out, although still partially legible, and we will come back to them] ... Also that Samuel Mason has separated himself in transgressing similarly, with the addition of violating his trust as one of a committee in delivering to some individuals who continued together after the regular adjournment of the monthly meeting and without the concert [sic] or knowledge of the other members of the committee—a written report bearing the signatures of the whole of them. Likewise, that Joseph Livezey has separated himself from our religious society, in transgressing as mentioned in the case of Peter Robeson.’*” At the bottom of the page, in very small writing, is added: “*Note the charge which has been stricken out in Peter*

² Thomas Ambler, throughout his interview with Leanna Whitman, consistently referred to the yearly meeting as “Arch Street Yearly Meeting,” suggesting that this was an easier way to disambiguate PYM. See Meeting Interviews, Friends Free Library. November, 2013. The interviews can also be accessed through the GMM website.

³ Hocker, page 155.

⁴ Pistiner, Kevin, *The Great Schism: A Divide among Quakers and Its Impact on the Middletown Friends Preparative Meeting*. Thesis for a Master of Arts Degree, Penn State Univ, 2017. Chapter 4.

Robeson's case is applicable to the cases of Samuel Mason and Jos Livezey." The stricken lines were reprised: "He has also encouraged persons sitting in our meetings for discipline—who were regularly under dealing⁵ and some of them disowned by their respective meetings." In the next two months, four more names were sent forward to Frankford Monthly Meeting for Discipline with charges of "separating themselves from our religious society", George Knorr, Abraham Deavs⁶, George Warner and Clement Lukens. All were disowned by Frankford MM (O); with them went their wives and children.

Thus, GPM's meetinghouse remained in the control of its orthodox members. Although Frankford Preparative Meeting's division was much more closely divided (see below), and was thereby probably noisier, we lack information on how its separation was conducted, although the orthodox contingent retained possession of the Frankford meetinghouse. All of Frankford MM's Hicksites, from both Germantown and Frankford, went to Green Street Monthly Meeting at 4th and Green Streets (one block north of Spring Garden Street) in the city, which was one of the very few city monthly meetings that went Hicksite. Green Street's orthodox members retrenched at Philadelphia-Northern Division MM (O) at Pine Street meeting house. A year later, Green Street's Germantown members and a number of the former Frankford members purchased land on School Street in Germantown (now Schoolhouse Lane) where they built a Hicksite meeting house, then called School Street meeting house. While this meeting was a preparative meeting under the care of Green Street MM (H), it eventually became the tail that wagged the dog, and when the 4th and Green Street meeting house eventually closed about a century later, all of the Green Street MM (H) administrative functions were already housed in the School Street meeting house, which then retained the Green Street MM name. That a road named Greene Street was subsequently opened past their property was a coincidence, but accounts for the difference in spelling today between Green Street Monthly Meeting and its Greene Street Friends School.

Byberry Monthly Meeting (BMM), the home of John Comly, the principal Hicksite leader, was very strongly Hicksite, so BMM (H) remained in charge of its meeting house. The few orthodox members of BMM did not attempt to reorganize as a monthly meeting, but asked to come under the care of Frankford MM (O) as Byberry Preparative Meeting⁷. Thus, Frankford MM (O) now had three preparative meetings in its care: Byberry PM, Frankford PM and Germantown PM. Thomas Magarge, a member from GPM, was at this time clerk of Frankford MM (O). He asked several members to complete a survey of the FMM (O) membership to determine the outfall from the schism. This took two years and resulted in the 1829 membership lists now located in the Quaker Archives at Haverford⁸. Tucked into the Germantown list were two loose slips of paper. One is evidently a report by Jeremiah Comfort and A. McKinley on the state of Byberry's membership. It is undated and reads: "*There appears to have been about Four*

⁵ A member "under dealing" was a member in the process of being dealt with under the rules of discipline, that is, accused to monthly meeting for an infraction. Such people were usually not permitted to attend monthly meeting until they had been cleared.

⁶ More commonly written 'Dawes' and sometimes 'Davis'. Families of both names descended.

⁷ This was only a latest step in a typically complicated meeting history. Byberry started as Poquessing Meeting in 1682, became Byberry Preparative Meeting under the care of Abington MM, was switched to the care of Horsham MM, and in 1810 became a MM of its own. Like Byberry MM, both Abington MM and Horsham MM were very strongly Hicksite. Abington's few Orthodox Friends built a tiny meetinghouse a quarter mile away on Jenkintown Road where it is still in existence as "The Little Abington Meetinghouse."

⁸ The 1807 GPM membership list may be found in the Addenda of *The Germanification of Germantown*.

*hundred and eighty persons, members comprising to Byberry Monthly Meeting at the time of the separation twenty-five of which remained with Friends, the rest left the Society, about two hundred ten of which are adults, the remainder minors. There are eleven adults with Friends, the rest minors. [signed] A McKinley, Jeremiah Comfort”*⁹ These 480 adult members may seem a startlingly large number for a country meeting—and, indeed, it is. However, one of the problems that John Comly anticipated was that large numbers of non-orthodox members of Philadelphia meetings would be disowned; he provided for this by offering to accept, into Byberry Meeting, all those who wanted to transfer their memberships, even without proper certificates. A great many did in the month prior to the fateful yearly meeting, but I have no idea how many.

The second slip was presumably the meat of the report made to Frankford MM: “*An account of Members of Frankford, Germantown and Byberry meetings as they stood at the time of the separation. Now comprising Frankford Monthly Meeting:*

	Friends		Hicksites	
	Adults	Minors	Adults	Minors
Byberry	11	14	210	245
Frankford	70	55	52	51
Germantown	70	54	19	5 ”

Looking at this from an Orthodox point of view (which clearly this does), we can see that Byberry meeting lost nearly 95% of its members to the Hicksites, clearly inflated by the ingress of Hicksite immigrants from Philadelphia. Frankford lost about 45%, and Germantown lost about 16%. Of the three, Byberry was the most rural, mostly farmers. Byberry Township was located at the north-eastern tip of Philadelphia County, and in the 1783 census had a population density of just 33 persons per square mile. Frankford and Germantown were both much closer to the city center, but were rather different otherwise. Frankford Township’s density was listed as 81 while Germantown boasted 241 people/square mile¹⁰. As pointed out in the previous chapter, *The Germanification of Germantown*, Germantown had a highly skewed professional distribution, in which craftsmen (manufacturers) outnumbered everyone else. To the extent that this generalized demographic portrait reflects our meeting as well, they were mostly “haves” and their own bosses. A strong migration of Philadelphia wealth to Germantown was already under way: the Haineses, for instance, and the Morrises, had already become members.

Things settled down and everyone got used to the new order. For decades, individuals would switch their allegiance from one side to the other. For instance, Samuel Mason was reinstated into our membership in 1834, and later became an Elder of GPM. Further splits would occur in the future, and eventually, much later, the Society would seek reconciliation. But too much had been said and feelings were too raw; resolution of their differences would wait until deep into the twentieth century.¹¹

Interlude with Lafayette

⁹ At about this time Jeremiah Comfort became a member of our meeting.

¹⁰ Figures taken from Wolf, Figure 4, page 97.

¹¹ Eventual reconciliation is also covered in “*An Holy Experiment...*”

This piece has, really, little to do with either of our main topics—our Meeting and Germantown—and is just a bit of fluff by which I can introduce to you a young member of our meeting, Ann Johnson, aged 21, living in the Johnson mansion Upsala on Main Street, just opposite Cliveden, the Chew mansion.

General Lafayette (Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roche Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette) toured the United States in 1824-25, by which time he was the only still-living-general from the Revolution. As you may imagine, General Lafayette was the youngest general in that war. He spent nine days in Philadelphia, visiting Germantown on Wednesday July 20, 1825. Hocker tells us, “*The visit was the occasion of the greatest popular demonstration in the history of Germantown up to that time.*” Lafayette arrived at Loudon Mansion, at Naglee’s Hill, built by Thomas Armat in 1810¹². Lafayette was met by assorted dignitaries and military units at Loudon and escorted with great fanfare two miles up Main Street to Benjamin Chew’s mansion Cliveden, occupied now by Benjamin Chew, Jr.¹³ At Cliveden Lafayette was served breakfast and introduced to many members of the area. Among these was Ann Johnson. Hocker reproduces a part of Ann’s letter to her mother, summering in Saratoga:

“Last Fourthday morn I had the honor of breakfasting with Lafayette at Mr. Chew’s. I wish you had been there. The house, both up and down stairs, was crowded with men, women and soldiers—and around the house. Mrs. and two of the Miss Morrises¹⁴ and myself were the only invited ladies that sat down to breakfast. About sixteen sat down at first, and when they had finished others took their places, and so on, until I believe nearly all the soldiers had breakfast. Those that did not come in had something in the kitchen. I heard that they ate everything they had till at last the cook had to lock the doors.

I was introduced to Lafayette twice and shook hands with him three times. It was quite delightful to see anything so animated in Germantown. There was so much noise that I could not hear a word the general said. Every person seemed to want to see him eat that a centinal [sic] had to keep guard at the door with a drawn sword. It was very fine indeed.

When he departed the shouts of the multitude and the roaring of the cannon were almost deafening.”¹⁵

Lafayette’s tour continued. “*The next stop was at Wyck, the home of Reuben Haines, at Germantown Avenue and Walnut Lane, where a public reception was on the program.*” Reuben and his wife Jane Bowne had recently completed the remodeling of their home, converting it from two buildings into one. By this time, also, a half-century after the start of the Revolution, Quakers had long overcome their traitorous and unpatriotic labels. Still, I would imagine that a few Friends of our meeting might have muttered about the inappropriateness of celebrating a famous military man.

Becoming a Suburb

¹² Armat was a wealthy philanthropist who donated the land (which he had purchased from the wealthy Quaker Israel Pemberton family) for the Episcopal Church that was built in 1818 just opposite our meeting across Main Street

¹³ Chew’s father, a former Quaker and loyalist, had sold Cliveden after the Battle of Germantown, and then bought it back in 1797. The elder Chew was held in detention in New Jersey as a loyalist for a number of years, but after the war was forgiven his trespasses and served in the Pennsylvania judiciary until his death in 1810.

¹⁴ Most likely Ann Willing Morris and her daughters Elizabeth and Margaretta. The family was distantly related to the Quaker Morris family.

¹⁵ Hocker, page 154.

As discussed in the previous chapter, *The Germanification of Germantown*, the turn of the nineteenth century was best noted for the development of turnpikes in various directions from Germantown, in particular into Philadelphia, which dramatically altered the quality of transportation between the two. Prior to the turnpikes, surly road conditions made travel into the city difficult and uncomfortable. The firmer surface of the turnpike altogether transformed the experience. Now, suddenly, one could very sensibly plan a day's outing in either direction. A horse and buggy could manage the trip in an easy, leisurely and pleasant half hour. Shopping trips into the city could become a routine part of life.

It is not that Germantown instantly became a suburb, in the sense of a place where you could live and commute to your job in the city. Stagecoaches increased the frequency of their passages, but stages were not an appropriate mode for commuting; they could not ferry sufficient numbers to make that reasonable. Germantown was already a popular place for wealthy Philadelphians to have a second (summer) home; with good transportation, it became even more popular. The railroad made the first critical difference toward commuting.

Railed wagon-ways have a long history, for several centuries limited to mining applications. The first horse-drawn "train" for paying passengers was instituted in Wales in 1807. The first steam engine was built by Richard Trevithick in Wales in 1804, although an engine designed by Matthew Murray in 1812 was the first used commercially, and George Stephenson's soon followed. The Stockton and Darlington Railway in England was begun by Stephenson in 1825, once iron rails had been created that could withstand the weight of his engines. Germantown was not far behind in instituting the first passenger railroad in the United States.

*"The Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown (PG&N) Railroad Company was incorporated under the laws of Pennsylvania on February 17, 1831...It completed a line from 9th and Green Streets in Philadelphia to Germantown in 1832."*¹⁶ The rail ran along the southern border of Germantown to where it encountered Wingohocking Creek, and then turned and ran along the valley of the creek into Main Street, at the point where Price Street would later cross. (See Figure 3 below). One of the PG&N's founders was our meeting's Clerk, Edward Bonsall (see below).

The first trains, beginning in June 1832, were horse drawn, leaving either Philadelphia or Germantown roughly every two hours, and taking forty-five minutes. Fares were 25 cents one way. Five months later, in November, Matthew Baldwin's first steam engine, "Old Ironsides," was introduced, which cut the time to 28 minutes (see Figure 2). At least it did when everything went right. In the first years, riders got used to the risk of having to complete their trip on foot. Each day certain trains were engine-drawn, others horse-drawn, and in inclement weather the engine was not deployed at all. At first, a tavern on Main Street served as ticket office and waiting room, but a proper station was soon built. Omnibuses brought riders from the city station at 9th and Green Streets into center city.

¹⁶ Archives of the HSP on the GP&N RR.

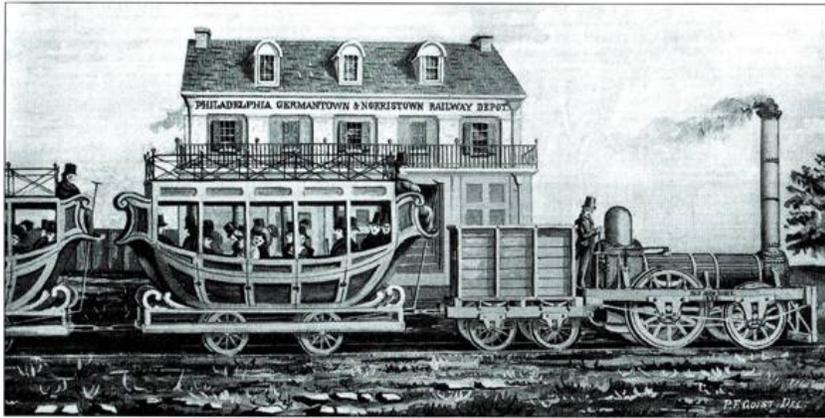
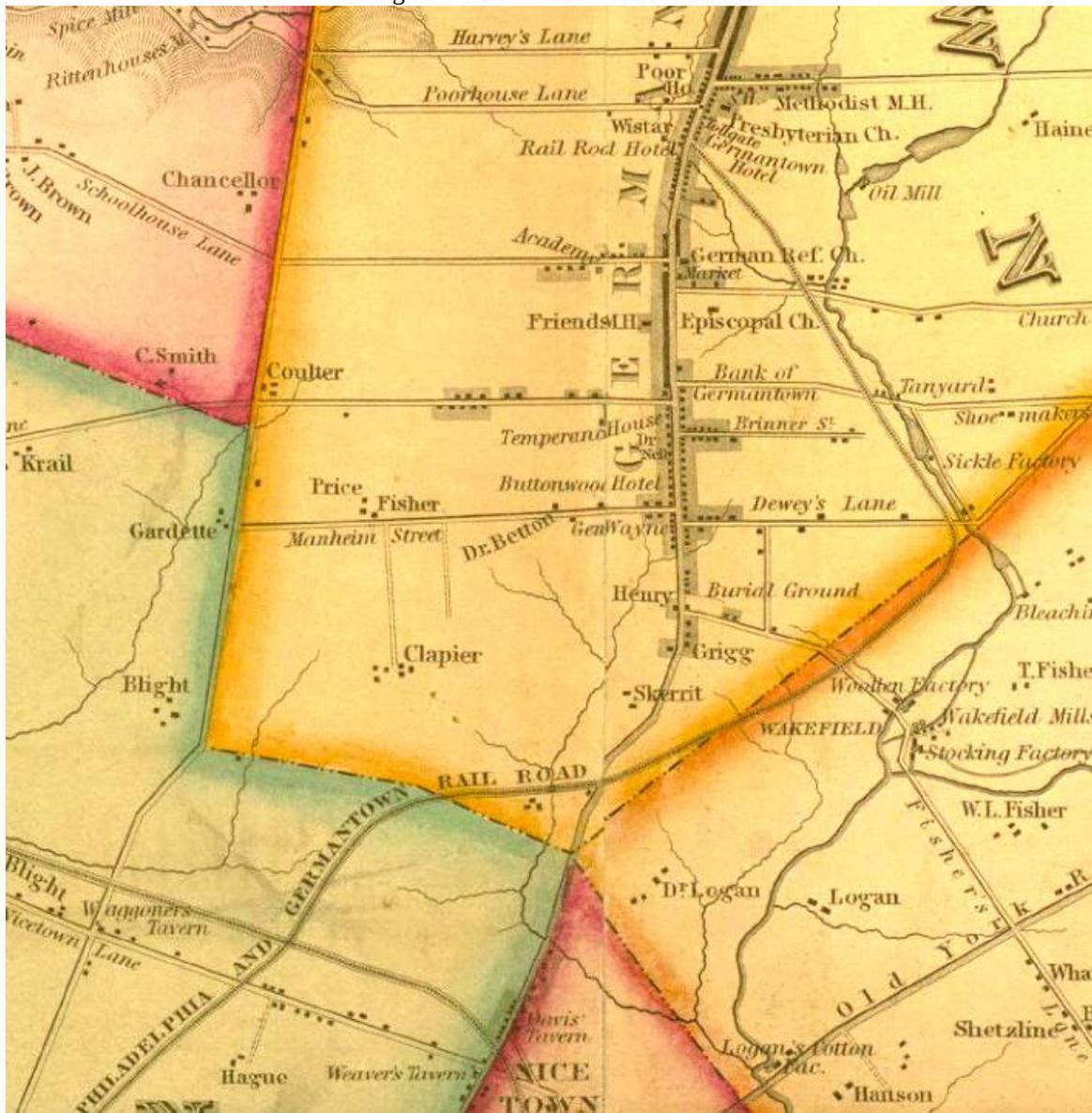


Figure 2 PG&N Locomotive and cars¹⁷



¹⁷ From *Philadelphia Railroads*, Meyers, Allen and Joel Spivak, Arcadia Publishing, Charleston, SC, 2010, Page 13.

Figure 3. The Philadelphia, Germantown & Norristown RR¹⁸



Fig. 4 Horse-drawn Streetcars, c1880

After a fair number of good years, the PG&N began to struggle, coming close to bankruptcy on several occasions, despite successive reductions of the price of a ticket, which dropped at one point to ten cents. In 1858, serious competition arrived as the Germantown Passenger Rail Company was chartered, and the much more popular horse-drawn streetcars began operating on steel rails right up the recently-renamed Germantown Avenue (see Fig. 4). Much of the streetcars' popularity was their convenience. Streetcars could make the trip in 40 to 50 minutes, depending on how many stops they had to make. Homes in Germantown continued mostly to be right on Germantown Avenue, which meant that commuting for many meant traveling from their own front doors. Rather amazingly, while Germantown had grown considerably in size in that time, its character as a linear city had hardly changed at all, as you can see from a glance back at the map, Figure 2, dated 1843, when there were only a few more crossing streets than at the end of the settlement period. The trams continued to be horse-drawn until 1894, when electric engines came into use.

The Development of Germantown

Germantown was also a serious business center. A town meeting in the King of Prussia Tavern in January 1814 resulted in an application to the Pennsylvania State Legislature for a charter for the Germantown Bank, which was granted. The Board appointed a committee: "*Resolved that Richard Bayley, Charles J Wister and Samuel Johnson be a Committee to procure and fit out a house suitable for a Banking house in the village of Germantown.*" Other members of the board included members of our meeting Peter Robeson and John Johnson, Samuel's father.

*"The committee...report that they have leased from Dr. George Bensell [another member of the board] ...at a rent of \$300 per annum, payable quarterly, a three-story stone house."*¹⁹ I doubt that anyone then thought twice about the propriety of a member of the board leasing his own house to the bank; relationships were anyway still always close within the community, as can be exemplified by George Bensell marrying Peter Robeson's sister Mary. The house and new bank was on Main Street, just below Shoemaker Lane (now E. Penn St.) (see Fig. 5).

The commissioners to organize the bank included several members of GPM, William Logan Fisher and John Conrad, and when the first directors were appointed, they included our

¹⁸ From an 1843 map by Charles Ellet, held in the Map Collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

¹⁹The house had been built by Dr. Charles Bensell, George's father. Naaman Keyser, et al, History of Old Germantown, Horace McCann, Germantown. Page 338.

members Peter Robeson, John Johnson and Samuel Johnson. This would suggest that Friends in Germantown, at least, were recovering from their images as unpatriotic traitors and returning to being seen as sober and trustworthy businessmen.



Fig. 5 Old Germantown Bank (undated sketch by John Richard)

In the earliest days of our Republic, the concept of a national bank was hotly political, and the First Bank of the United States had a rocky course, and its charter was not renewed in 1811. Five years later, James Madison approved the charter of the Second Bank of the United States, with its main office in Philadelphia, but this institution also fell victim to politics, losing its charter in 1836. One of the bank specialists involved in tying up its affairs was a Philadelphia Quaker named Lloyd Mifflin.

Mifflin's connections to Germantown were, initially, familial. In 1823 Lloyd, a member of Philadelphia-Southern Division MM (PSDMM) married Hannah Hacker, a member of the recently-formed Philadelphia-Western Division (PWDMM). She was the sister of Jeremiah Hacker and Isaiah Hacker, both of whom were very well-to-do and had summer homes in Germantown.²⁰ Lloyd and Hannah Mifflin lived in Philadelphia, and maintained their memberships in PSDMM until he completed his job of winding up the Second Bank. Among his rewards for that work was a "cottage" in Germantown, located at 5 Shoemaker Lane, across the street from the famous "Shoemaker Mansion".²¹ He took possession in 1841, and he and Hannah joined her brothers in Germantown as summer folk. From his vantage point in their cottage, Lloyd could watch his neighbor George Henry Thomson, as he bought up the Shoemaker property and razed the mansion in 1842. Then Thomson developed the whole north side of Shoemaker Lane.

*"This was a very active time in suburban development in Germantown. West Walnut Lane was opened in 1849-1850, West Tulpehocken Street in 1850, and a development called 'Linden Place' was being laid out on East Locust Street and Church Lane in 1850."*²² Lloyd Mifflin recognized a good idea; he could do the same with his side of Shoemaker Lane. On the other

²⁰ Jeremiah Hacker was married to Beulah Morris, first cousin of Samuel Buckley Morris of our meeting. Jeremiah and Beulah built their summer home in 1837 and would eventually change their residency to Germantown and become members of GPM in 1864. Isaiah Hacker and his wife Anna Brown would make their move to GPM in 1859.

²¹ See *The Settlement of Germantown*.

hand, he could not oversee such a project very well as a summer resident. Lloyd and Hannah sold their Philadelphia house and transferred their memberships to GPM in 1845. He got a day job with the Germantown Bank next door.

Mifflin bought the entire length of the south side of Shoemaker Lane to a depth of 25 feet. Realizing he needed a further depth of another 25 feet, he purchased the entire back lot behind the Germantown Bank by 1852, cleared the whole and laid out lots. The first two lots he sold were to relatives--William Hacker and Ann Mifflin. Purchasers were required to “*build a substantial building ... within one year.*”

Lloyd and Hannah Mifflin built their own home on the site of their cottage, moving in around 1850. Hannah died there in 1863, the tenth person buried in our “new” burial ground, but Lloyd continued to live there until 1876, when he sold it to Marmaduke Cope, a first cousin of Alfred and Henry Cope. The house is now designated the Mifflin-Cope House (Fig. 6), the address 47 E. Penn Street.



Fig 6. The Mifflin-Cope House

The development of Germantown rapidly obliterated the old linear character of the town, still notable in 1843 (see map Fig. 2, page 8 above), creating the more familiar city grid. The homes being built were mostly “substantial;” upper-middle-class buyers flocked in from center city.

The Borough of Germantown

In 1844, Germantown renewed its identity as a borough. Our member Thomas Magarge, now no longer clerk of Frankford MM, was the borough treasurer. But this would not last very long, as Philadelphia’s growth was now lapping at its border. In 1857 the city would formally absorb into its municipal authority the entirety of Philadelphia County, including, of course, Germantown, which became Philadelphia’s twenty-second ward. Just about the last thing that Germantown did as an independent borough was to rename Main Street, now Germantown Avenue.

Boom times

²² Nomination of 48-62 E [The Mifflin-Cope House]. Penn Street to Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, www.phila.gov/historical/Documents/48-62-E-Penn-St, Page 22.

Germantown, at midcentury, was entering a major boom. It was not just our meeting that was growing. Koons writes, “*Philadelphia was a confident city in 1858, in the first bloom of its industrial heyday, and not even the growing storm clouds of the Civil War dimmed the city’s booster spirit. Population soared 38% in the 1850s to 565,529 inhabitants. The consolidation of 1854 [sic] brought more efficient government and promised an even brighter future. Germantown, especially, was prospering. Public transportation was transforming [Germantown] ...into a commuter suburb.*” “*Horse-drawn trolleys...also connected the suburb to the city. In the trolley’s first month of operation...2500 passengers made the commute.*” “*The little Friends School and Meetinghouse stood right at the center of this growing suburb.*” “*New, and expensive, homes were being built by the affluent middle-class commuters.*” “*Webster characterizes this new Germantown as a ‘garden suburb.’ It was a most desirable area of the city.*”²³

Growth of Germantown Preparative Meeting

All the above—a thrusting economy and development—could not avoid having an impact on the character of Germantown Preparative Meeting (GPM). Perhaps the most telling comment on the nature of our meeting is John Comly’s journal entry following a rare visit to our meeting on January 25, 1818:

“1st day, 25, Attended Germantown meeting. It was an exercising time. Testimony was borne to the necessity of our looking to the rock whence we were hewn and to the hole whence we were digged. I hope the pure mind was stirred up some. Oh! That our religious society would stand on the elevated ground of our profession and to which we are called as lights in the world. But, alas! Easy wealth, and splendor in the world, how they are idolized ... Thus when the standard of truth is lowered to suit the circumstances of the times ... it must make hard work for the faithful. To those was dropped a word of encouragement at Germantown.” Our evident materialism was not to the taste of this arch-mystic, and he was likely not surprised that we remained with the Orthodox contingent at the time of the separation.

Throughout the previous century, there had been some movement of Friends between Germantown and the city, aside from the continuing investment of Philadelphia wealth in Germantown summer homes. Probably the best documented is that of Caspar Wistar Haines’ family in 1797, previously recounted (see *The Germanification of Germantown*, page 5). Another is Edward Horne Bonsall, who with Lydia, his wife of three years, and one son transferred from Philadelphia MM to GPM in 1819. A conveyancer by training, within three years he was appointed clerk of our meeting, and held that position for nine years, through the Hicksite upheaval, asking for relief from the position in 1831²⁴. His remaining ten children (of whom only five lived into adulthood) were all born into membership in our meeting, although all wound up moving on to other parts as they grew up. Edward was one of the founders and a president of the Philadelphia, Germantown and Norristown railroad for a number of years.

²³ Koons, *Ibid.* Page 29.

²⁴ Remember that a Preparative meeting and a Monthly meeting were administratively different identities, and through the preparative meeting era the two had different clerks. Thus, during the period of the schism, GPM was clerked by Bonsall while FMM was clerked by Magarge, both of our meeting.

Bonsall was followed as clerk by Ezra Jones, then 24 years old, the son of our members Thomas and Lydia Jones. In 1832 Ezra married Jane Woolman, a member of Frankford Preparative meeting, in our meetinghouse. They had one daughter, Ezraetta, in 1835. Ezra asked to step down in 1833, probably because of illness--as he died aged 29 in 1836.

I found it a little curious that Edward Bonsall had been appointed clerk so quickly after his arrival, but the clerk who replaced Ezra Jones in 1833, Hughes Bell, was appointed the same year of his arrival from Gwyneth Meeting with his wife Sarah Comfort and three young children; their fourth, James, was born in 1834, a birthright member of our meeting. Now it always takes some time for Quaker processes to work, and his application for membership might have occurred a year or so before his transfer certificate arrived from Gwyneth. But I can also imagine that GPM waited impatiently for that certificate to arrive, allowing them to shoehorn Bell into the clerkship. I have no other evidence to suggest that GPM was having difficulty finding members who were willing to become clerk of the meeting, but that is what I think, blaming the great unsettledness of the Hicksite split.

The next clerk following Bell is the man who will begin the transformation of our meeting, but I will introduce him in a roundabout way, through his house. Germantown has many houses with stories to tell, but none can rise to the riches of the one at 5442 Germantown Avenue, the immediate northern neighbor of our meeting.

David Deshler came to Philadelphia from Germany with his uncle, John Wister (see *The Germanification of Germantown*) in 1727, and joined him in business, later branching out on his own in the hardware business. He married a woman of French Huguenot descent, Marie LeFevre in 1739, and both soon became Friends, members of Philadelphia MM. In 1752, following his uncle, Deshler bought a two-acre lot in Germantown, on Main Street immediately opposite the marketplace, and built a four-room summer house towards the back of the lot. Also like his uncle, he retained his membership in PMM and his principal residency in Philadelphia. In 1772, he enlarged his summer house with the addition, on Main Street, of a nine-room three-story Georgian house, connected to the original building. During the Revolutionary War, following the Battle of Germantown, British General Sir William Howe occupied the Deshler house for a few weeks before deciding to return to Philadelphia. Mary Deshler having died of scarlet fever in 1774, David, his two daughters and their families continued to spend summers there until David's death in 1792. Deshler's will instructed that the house be sold, and it was bought that year by Colonel Isaac Franks, a former member of General Washington's staff. When yellow fever threatened Philadelphia in the summer of 1793, Colonel Franks offered the use of the house to Washington, who wound up spending the two weeks of November 16-30 there. His cabinet joined him there on at least four occasions to conduct national business, thus justifying the epithet "the Germantown White House." Still, Washington liked the house so much that the following summer he and his family and their slaves and servants took their vacation at this house, this time a slightly longer residency: July 30 – September 20, 1794. Colonel Franks then continued to live in the house until his death in 1822.

Frank's house was bought by the brothers Elliston and John Perot. They were born in Bermuda into a Huguenot family, but the brothers came to Philadelphia subsequently. In 1766 at the age of 19 Elliston sought membership in Philadelphia MM. Twenty years later, Elliston married Sarah Sansome, a member of Banks Preparative Meeting (in Philadelphia-Northern

District MM) who duly transferred her membership to PMM, where all their children were born into membership. Their eldest daughter Hannah married Samuel Buckley Morris; this is our guy.

Elliston Perot was a wealthy and weighty Friend by this time, but the Morrises were even more so, having a reasonable claim on the title of First Friends of Philadelphia--of course, no such title could possibly exist among Quakers, but *IF*... The New World Morris progenitor, Anthony Morris (1654-1721) started as an orphan at age six in London, became a Friend in London at the age of 21, and then with his new wife Mary Jones and one-year-old son Anthony traveled to Penn's New Paradise in 1682, arriving even before Penn did. Since Philadelphia was yet only a dream, the Morrises continued to Burlington, NJ, a thriving Quaker community, where they lived until 1685, when Anthony Morris decided that Philadelphia, population now 600, was ready. They built a home on Front Street. He established the Anthony Morris Brewhouse in 1687. Mary died--in childbirth--the following year, and Anthony married again, Agnes Bom, the widow of Germantown's Cornelius Bom. Agnes, too, died in childbirth, as did his third wife Mary Coddington; his fourth wife, Elizabeth Watson broke the jinx and lived to the age of ninety.

Transferring his membership to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Anthony became its clerk very quickly. In 1688 he was Clerk of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting (PQM). He was one of the founders in 1689 of the first public school of Philadelphia—what would become Penn Charter School in the end. While he made his fortune from his brewhouse, he made a career in politics, becoming a Justice of the Peace in 1692, and was elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in 1694. He was also Mayor of Philadelphia for one term.

His son Anthony, Jr (1681-1763) was no less vigorous and talented. He instituted a second brewery, the Morris Brewery, before eventually taking over his father's brewery as well. He married Phebe Guest with whom he had nine children. He also became a notable figure in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania politics, serving his own term as mayor.

His son, Anthony III (1705-1780) inherited the breweries and a good part of the lands, along with the Morris gusto for commerce and politics. He married Sarah Powell in 1730; they had a son named Samuel, who inherited the breweries in his own turn, and started his own businesses in the energetic fashion of his forbears. Samuel, however, broke with the family's Quaker tradition, and got himself disowned in 1776 for joining a military regiment and serving with considerable distinction in the Revolution. Still, long before disownment, Samuel married PMM member Rebecca Wistar, daughter of Caspar Wistar (see *The Settlement of Germantown*).²⁵ They had a number of children, including two, Sarah and Luke, who would both exercise the Friends community. In 1782 Sarah would marry her first cousin Richard Wistar. Both were disowned. Nine years later Luke would marry Elizabeth Buckley, his first cousin. They, too, were both disowned. All four had been birthright members of PMM.

In general, easily the most common reason for being disowned by your meeting was marrying a non-Friend. In a period like the Colonial years when local Quaker clans were numbering in the hundreds, and difficult transportation meant you couldn't travel all that far routinely, it wasn't always that easy to find a Friend to marry. The social ambit young adults were routinely exposed to was dominated by family. With very large families, an individual had literally scores-to- hundreds of cousins of various kinds, and these were the ones you saw all the

²⁵ It appears that while Samuel was disowned, Rebecca and the children remained members of PMM.

time. And they, at least, were mostly Friends. It's not surprising that throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was very common to marry a relative—and maybe not so easy to find a Friend who wasn't a relative. Still: **NOT A FIRST COUSIN**. The Rules of Discipline were firm on that: *That the marriage of persons too near akin may... be prevented, this meeting concludes, that no marriage between first-cousins ... shall be permitted among us; and that, where any person or persons so circumstanced shall intermarry, their so doing shall be considered as a relinquishment of their connection with the society, and they be accordingly disowned by the monthly meetings of which they are members. And it is further concluded, that, if any such persons shall afterwards apply to the monthly meeting which disowned him or her for reinstatement, the said meeting is not to accede to the proposed, until the case shall be represented to the quarterly meeting, and its consent obtained, after being well assured that the parties are brought to a due sense of their transgression, manifested by uprightness of life and conversation.*²⁶

Consanguinity restrictions in canon law as well as secular law vary widely. Virtually all known cultures, religions and nations agree that very close family blood relationships—brother/sister, parent/child--constitute unacceptable closeness for marriage or bearing children. Beyond these, however, lie variations.

In early Christian law, marrying anyone closer than fourth cousin²⁷ was forbidden, but by the 11th century or so it was becoming increasingly difficult to find a permitted spouse, and the restrictions were slowly and progressively relaxed.

First cousin marriage, however, is today allowed in much of the world: specifically, in England and the European states. It is both allowed and indeed recommended in Muslim law and custom; the most auspicious contract for a young man is his father's brother's daughter. Thus, in Muslim countries more than a third of all marriages are to first cousins. In the US, there is no federal statute; this is left to each state. More than 30 states²⁸ forbid marriage to a first cousin, and some of these even refuse to recognize such marriages contracted in another state where it is legal.

It was common for someone being read out of meeting to write an apology, condemning their action, and request readmission. This was often granted, although the *Rules of Discipline* grumbled that these reinstatements were coming too easily. I have no information about Captain Samuel Morris' being reinstated, but I suspect that he would have been far too proud of his esteemed military service to condemn it. He could certainly attend meeting for worship with his family²⁹. Richard, Luke and Elizabeth (no information at all about Sarah's membership is available) all died in the bosom of Philadelphia MM, and Luke's and Elizabeth's reinstatements occurred somewhere between the births of their first and second children, for their firstborn, Samuel, was not a birthright Quaker, while the second was. Samuel had to apply for membership in 1812 when he turned 21. We can only guess at the meeting pressures put on Rebecca Wistar Morris, complicated, no doubt, by the fact that Captain Samuel Morris was still in Friends' dog

²⁶ *Rules of Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of Friends*, 1806.

²⁷ 1st cousins share grandparents, second cousins share great-grandparents, 3rd cousins share great-great-grandparents, etc

²⁸ First cousin marriage is legal in Pennsylvania.

²⁹ If all they wanted to do was to attend meeting for worship, they had no need of reinstatement. Former members were welcome to attend, but could not attend meeting for discipline, or serve on sensitive committees.

house. It was bad enough that she allowed her daughter Sarah to marry her first cousin; but then nine years later she did it again with her son Luke!

We return now, after that long digression, to Luke Wistar Morris, son of war hero Samuel and Rebecca Wistar Morris. Luke joined with his brother Isaac in starting yet another brewery, Luke W. Morris & Co., at Dock and Pear Streets in Philadelphia. After this, Luke joined in other successful commercial enterprises. He bought, in 1817, a house at 225 South 8th Street, which came to be known as the “Morris Mansion.” His marriage to his cousin Elizabeth Buckley produced a single child in 1791, our member Samuel Buckley Morris.

Samuel was born, as they say, with a silver spoon (see Fig. 7). He was raised to engage in mercantile pursuits, and did so with the enthusiasm of his ancestors. He married Hannah Perot in 1825, and they began summering in the Deshler house in Germantown, owned by Hannah’s father and uncle. There all four of their children were born—Hannah would retire to Germantown for the end of her confinement, whatever time of year it might be. The last of their children, Elliston Perot Morris, was born May 22, 1831. Hannah died there of a lingering postpartum infection some seven weeks later. Samuel was devastated. Although just 40, he never remarried. He sold his mercantile interests and his Philadelphia home, and retreated permanently to Germantown to raise his children, finally purchasing the house from Hannah’s father and uncle in 1834. He educated the children himself in the house (along with other children), eventually sending each one to Westtown School, of which he was on the School Committee.



Fig. 7. Four-year-old Samuel Buckley Morris by Rembrandt Peale, 1795

He also requested a transfer of membership for himself and his children, all birthright members of Philadelphia-Southern District MM (PSDMM), to Germantown Meeting in 1837. By this time, they would have been attending meeting regularly for a number of years, hardly a five-minute stroll from their doorstep. Indeed, it is quite likely that PSDMM had been nagging him to acknowledge the permanence of his move, since the *Rules of Discipline* required that

members who moved to another meeting's catchment area should transfer their membership to that meeting in a timely manner.

GPM rewarded this transfer by appointing Morris Clerk. I don't know just when this appointment was made, but I suspect it was as soon as they could manage it. When Morris became Clerk, Germantown Preparative Meeting stepped into a new era.

Germantown Friends School³⁰

Following the Hicksite split of 1827, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) quickly realized that they had an unanticipated serious problem. *"In 1830 the Committee on Education of the Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) reported that 'Many of the schools formerly under the care of monthly and preparative meetings, are now under the control of the Separatists and are chiefly taught by persons of that description'."*³¹ These schools had been created largely to provide a "guarded education," to protect Friends' children from the undesirable influences of public education; now, even worse, they were perceived as a direct threat to Friends' orthodoxy. Today many Friends find great joy—and perhaps even unQuakerly pride—at the reputations that many Friends schools, especially Germantown Friends School, have for academic excellence. 19th Century Friends, both Orthodox and Hicksite, on the other hand, would be absolutely appalled at this; academic excellence was totally contrary to their concept of guarded education. Marietta describes their attitude toward education in this period: *"Quakers ... believed that formal, liberal education did not necessarily serve religious ends; that the subjects taught in colleges and universities especially were superfluous and distracting. Elementary education should be 'utilitarian and vocational'."*³² The Query on education up to 1830 issued by PYM asserted the need *"to encourage youth to come up in Plainness of Habit and Speech, also to endeavor to promote the readings of Scriptures and to advise against hurtful books and Company."*³³ "Hurtful books" were books that did not tell Truth, and included all fiction, by definition. The kind of education that produced men like Pastorius and Penn, who could converse in Latin, was far from guarded³⁴. A guarded education taught no languages, no philosophy, no mathematics beyond simple arithmetic, no science, little history. Reading was encouraged, to be able to access Scriptures, but reading other texts was not, unless spiritual, and of the right kind.

PYM had always communicated to regional meetings through formal Queries, including one on education. Prior to the Split, this had focused on whether or not meeting children were receiving a guarded education, and answers typically involved a list: *"24 children of the Meeting are of school age, 5 are being educated at home, 8 at select schools..."* and so forth. *"In 1830, the query was changed. Meetings were asked not if children attended school, but if the Meeting operated a school. By 1840 the Yearly Meeting was expressing 'serious concern' about the lack of Meeting schools and urging Friends 'to make every effort and incur all sacrifices' to start*

³⁰ Much of the information in this section comes from the untitled and undated text of a history of Germantown Friends School (GFS) by William Koons, member of GFS' Department of History. See Archives of GFS.

³¹ Koons, *ibid.* Page 7.

³² Marietta, Jack, "Quaker Family Education in Historical Perspective," *Quaker History*, Vol 63, 1974, Page 10.

³³ Cited in Koons, *Ibid.* Page 3.

³⁴ According to Pastorius' biographer, MD Learned, he felt the philosophical bent of his education was impractical and wasted. His school, described in *The Settlement of Germantown* fit the description of "guarded."

schools.”³⁵ PYM (O) was definitely not relieved of their anxieties by the passage in 1834 of Pennsylvania’s first public school act, which resulted in the opening of a number of public schools in Pennsylvania in the early 1840s. Public education was not an answer for PYM of either stripe, who largely regarded public education as antithetical to religion generally, and in particular a major threat to the future of Friends education. “*The Yearly Meeting established a special committee to study the impact of district [public] schools and in 1844 it returned a report...a scathing attack on the public schools. ‘Whatever may have been the intent of the framers of [the Public School Law of Pennsylvania], the actual operation of its provisions...has been to break down the private schools and to replace them by others seldom equal and in most cases inferior to them.*”³⁶ PYM (O) copied and distributed this report to all its constituent meetings, coupled with renewed exhortations to create meeting schools.

Morris had responded initially by creating a meeting Education Committee shortly after beginning his clerkship, and in 1841 responded to the increased urgency by changing the committee to a School Committee, and assuming its leadership himself. But Morris had as yet been unable to achieve traction. I suspect that the bulk of GPM simply did not share PYM’s alarm. After all, the Split had hardly disturbed them. And at the same time, they were very aware of the enormous costs accruing to the establishment of a school. In any case, when the above report came to Germantown Preparative Meeting in July 1844, Morris had just acquired an essential ally, Alfred Cope.

When Morris joined GPM in the previous decade, he most likely was the meeting’s richest member. At the same time, his passions and energy had been sapped by his wife’s death; he was retired in more than one sense. Alfred Cope, on the other hand, was many times richer, still running his company and not at all retired. Let me step back a bit and set his context.

His father, Thomas Pim Cope, was the son of a German farmer who settled in Lancaster County. Somewhat unusually for ethnic Germans, they became Quakers. At the age of eighteen, Thomas elected to seek his fortune off the farm and came to Philadelphia in 1786. After apprenticing in his uncle’s store for four years, Thomas set out on his own, marrying Mary Drinker in 1792, on his way to making and then losing a fortune, mostly through selecting unqualified (or worse) business partners. Picking himself up in 1806, he restarted, this time building a ship, the *Susquehanna*, and then a second, the *Lancaster*, gaining the experience he needed to finally form in 1817 his own shipping line, Thomas P. Cope & Son, with his eldest son Henry, then aged 24. Ten years later, his youngest son Alfred, age 21 years, joined the firm, now called Thomas P. Cope & Sons. In 1829, their father turned the business over to his two sons, who then operated under the name H & A Cope. Henry and Alfred both had been raised on a Quaker ‘guarded education’, first with home schooling and then through a Friends boarding school in Plymouth Meeting. Neither had gone to college.

At this point their father Thomas was the second richest man in Philadelphia, after Stephen Girard. Henry and Alfred continued their shipping line until 1855, when they turned it over to Henry’s sons. Henry and Alfred were both by this time extremely wealthy.

³⁵ Koons, *ibid.* Page 6.

³⁶ Koons, *Ibid.* Page 10.

Alfred, in the meantime, had met, courted and married Hannah Edge of London Grove MM in Chester County. They wedded in the London Grove meetinghouse in 1838, when Alfred was 32.³⁷ Hannah transferred her membership to Alfred's Philadelphia-Southern District MM, and they had three children born into PSDMM. In 1842, the family moved to Germantown, transferring their membership to Germantown Meeting (technically, to Frankford MM) early the following year. Their fourth child, Mary Anna Cope, was born April 10, 1843, a birthright member of our meeting; Hannah died of a postpartum infection nine days later.

Alfred was no doubt deeply distressed by this event. However, more than a year passed between Hannah's death and the July 1844 meeting for business when the letter from the Special Education Committee of PYM was read. *"The clerk [Morris] reported, it 'brought over us feelings of increasing anxiety and concern.' The result was a minute to the School Committee to make plans to start a school. At the same meeting, Alfred Cope was added to the committee and named its clerk."*³⁸

Cope threw himself into the cause with great determination. I think that where Morris lacked the energy to overcome resistance, Cope was an effective bulldozer. Within a year his committee recommended that the meeting contract with GPM member Charles Jones, a matriculate of Haverford College who was running a small school for boys on East Haines Street.³⁹ His school would now be described as "under the care of Germantown Meeting."⁴⁰ Jones' school still only took boys, but another GPM member Ann Magarge⁴¹--whom Jones would later marry--taught girls at a parallel "dame school;" which the school committee supported with some scholarships. Once a week in 1845-46 the boys marched half a mile down Main Street from Haines Street to the meetinghouse for meeting for worship, sitting decorously in the youth gallery above.

All went very satisfactorily for 18 months. *"What seems to have impressed the committee most was the behavior of the boys at meeting for worship ... There they sat in respectful silence, probably outnumbered by Meeting members who could be expected to frown on any squirming*

³⁷ Hannah was the eldest of five daughters of Thomas and Edith Pusey Edge of London Grove MM in Chester County. Thomas died in 1831; his widow never remarried. After Hannah came to GPM in 1838 as Alfred Cope's wife, her sisters drifted, for reasons I do not understand, over the course of the next decade to GPM themselves, Jane in 1844, Susan in 1847, and finally Ann and Frances, together with their mother Edith in 1850. Jane, Susan and Frances would all marry GPM men (Samuel Mason in 1856, Edward Comfort in 1849, and Josiah Jones in 1867, respectively), and Edith, Ann (who remained a spinster) and Susan would become elders of the meeting. It quite likely is something to do with Thomas and Edith being members of GPM in the period 1819-1826, when Jane, Susan and Frances were born into our meeting, all transferring to London Grove around 1827. Sort of a female spawning run, returning to your birthplace to find a mate...but I find the notion somewhat edgy (heh-heh, sorry).

³⁸ Koons, *Ibid.* Page 11

³⁹ Charles was the son of John and Mary Shoemaker Jones discussed in *The Germanification of Germantown*, p 11.

⁴⁰ This is the school that is the basis for the official start of GFS in 1845.

⁴¹ Ann was the daughter of Thomas Magarge, a weighty GPM member, for many years the clerk of Frankford MM, and on the school committee.

or squiggling. There were no complaints."⁴² Then, in October 1846, Jones suddenly announced he had been offered the headship, effective immediately, of Friends Select School in the city, a post he would hold for 11 years. He suggested that the meeting purchase his school buildings and continue under Jones' assistant, which suggestions they followed⁴³. However, in the new leadership the school's direction appeared to shift in a way the school committee did not like, and when enrollment dropped in 1849 the school committee cancelled its contract with the school, which then closed.

In 1851,⁴⁴ Cope's school committee recommended starting anew, but this time building their own school on meeting property. This proposition would take a great deal of money which GPM simply did not have. Cope set about raising the money required.

"In 1857 Cope finally saw 'the way open' to launch a new beginning...He had learned that the property adjacent to the meetinghouse owned by George W. Rose was available for \$6500. The lot, which fronted on Germantown Avenue (where the Friends Free Library now stands), contained two buildings, one of which he thought could be converted into a school and the other used as a boarding house. He estimated the cost of conversion at \$1500..." The meeting had nothing like \$8000, of course, so *"Cope offered to advance the full amount and take a mortgage on the property for 20 years at 5%."*⁴⁵ Payments would come to about \$400 a year. It is likely that members of meeting would be reluctant to take on even such a lesser commitment, but Cope argued that instead of paying a salary to the new head, they would offer a contract under which the new head would pay \$400 a year to the meeting in order to lease the school from the meeting, and making his or her money from fees charged directly to the students, more or less the same arrangement that had been worked out with Charles Jones, except that Jones owned his school, and GPM owned this one. Thus, the meeting would get a school under its care, break even on the mortgage, and the prospective new head/lessor would take much of the risk. They had several applicants for the headship, but only one who was willing to accept their terms: 23-year-old Sarah Haines Albertson, whose mother Amy Haines Albertson, recently widowed, would oversee the boarding house. The Albertsons were members of Philadelphia MM, but the whole family transferred to GPM in 1859.

The school committee had wrestled with the idea of making their school "select," that is, accepting only Quaker children, but in the end decided that such a limitation was economically too risky. School would be open to all payers, boys and girls. Under the terms of her lease, Sarah must accommodate any Quaker children applying, but had discretion over accepting other children. Germantown Friends School opened September 1, 1858, and within a year was running at capacity, with 54 students.

In 1862, Alfred Cope stepped down from the school committee which he had clerked for more than fifteen years—he had to go to England for some time on business. Its new clerk was Samuel Emlen, newly arrived with his family from Philadelphia-Northern Division MM.⁴⁶ Over the next few years the school committee and Sarah Albertson got along on a slowly worsening

⁴² Koons, *Ibid*, Page 15.

⁴³ Jones transferred his membership at this point to Philadelphia Northern District MM, which held Friends Select School under its care. A few years later, he married Ann Magarge (in the Germantown Meetinghouse), and she joined him at Philadelphia ND subsequently. When he left Friends Select in 1857, he and Ann transferred back to GPM, where they remained the rest of their lives. They named their oldest son Samuel Morris.

⁴⁴ In 1851 Cope may have been re-energized by remarriage to Rebecca Biddle in 6th Street meetinghouse. They built a home called Fairfield in Olney, several miles to the east. They would have but one son, James Canby Biddle Cope (1852-1929), who would distinguish himself by becoming the only known actual aristocrat of PYM—although, of course, after resigning his membership—as Marquis of the Holy See and Baron di Valromita.

⁴⁵ Koons, *Ibid*. Page 21.

curve, mostly relating to the increasing number of non-Quaker children enrolling in the school. In 1860, 34 out of 54 children were non-Friends. Furthermore, some members of the school committee were not sure that the scriptures were being taught in a proper, that is, orthodox way. In addition, Sarah kept demanding stuff: “*new desks, new blackboards, fresh paint for the classrooms...The committee did agree to convert an old shed on the property into a play area; and, in 1860, it spent \$700 to enlarge the school building to reduce crowding.*”⁴⁷

In 1863, Alfred Cope returned from England. One of the first things he did was to cancel his mortgage on the school, in effect, forgiving the loan, thus freeing the meeting and the school committee from financial anxiety. Suddenly the issue of risk associated with a select school virtually disappeared. The school committee changed the financial arrangement: instead of leasing the school to her (in which arrangement Sarah made more money by admitting more children), Sarah would be paid a salary, but the salary the school committee offered, \$470 per year, was well below the \$1200 she insisted on. At an impasse, the school committee finessed Sarah by announcing in May 1864 that the school would close and that it would reopen in September as a select school. A very disgruntled Sarah and her mother resigned, having run the school for six years, and the whole Albertson family, Sarah, her mother and three brothers subsequently left GPM to join a Hicksite meeting.

September 1, 1864 saw GFS reopening, now a select school, and under the salaried direction of 22-year-old Susanna Sharpless Kite, a birthright member of our meeting, who would remain at the school forty years, although not as its head (more on that below). Nine students enrolled, but the student numbers quickly went up. The school never closed again.

Civil War

It seems a little strange to me that, flitting in the background to these developments of the school, the Civil War was going on. The first four years of the war were the last four years of Sarah Albertson’s problematic six-year governance; Susanna Kite in her first year would have been the one to discuss with her pupils the welcome news of Lee’s surrender at Appomattox Court House.

Koons quotes a reminiscence, *Sixty Years Since*, written in 1924 by our member George Williams Emlen, whose father Samuel Emlen came to Germantown Meeting in 1862. George, seven years old, was promptly enrolled. This was Sarah Albertson’s fourth year in charge. Emlen wrote, “*My first connection with the school was during the winter of 1862-1863. The country was then in the turmoil of civil war. The martial spirit was very apparent even in our Quaker school. The attendance was not then confined to members of the Meeting and the boys who were not Friends wore soldier caps, and military suits with red stripes on their trousers. This was rather hard on the little Friends, who would gladly have served with equal zeal, but being under some restraint in the matter of dress, found relief in building forts, making arms and ammunition, a patriotic display of flags and illuminations.*”⁴⁸ This surely would not have gone

⁴⁶ There is good reason (mostly Rootsweb entries with citations) to believe that this Samuel Emlen was in fact born into our meeting, along with three sisters in the 1820s, but that the family apparently moved out shortly after Samuel was born in March 1829—that is, before they started compiling the 1829-1830 list of members (which does not include any Emlens).

⁴⁷ Koons, *Ibid.* Page 31.

⁴⁸ Koons, *Ibid.* Page 27. Koons in turn cites the GFS Archives “Centennial folder”. George Emlen is also the grandfather of our member Henry Scattergood, who would be later headmaster of GFS for sixteen years, 1954-1970.

unremarked, and suggests that the School Committee members did not very often make personal inspections of the school or, perhaps, without due warning. In any case, it is clear that the school children themselves felt some of the impact of the background war.

The Revolution had been a terrible time for Philadelphia Quakers, who were despised and reviled as traitors generally, and in many cases suffered civil and judicial penalties—even, for some, imprisonment (see *The Germanification of Germantown*). Curiously enough, the Civil War was nowhere nearly so painful for them. At least not in the north, where Quaker abolitionism now counted much in their favor. In general, abolition societies were almost all Quaker-run.

Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793-1880), almost certainly the best-known female Quaker of the nineteenth century, came to Philadelphia as a teenager, where her family joined Philadelphia-Southern Division MM in 1810. She married James Mott in 1811 in the Pine Street meetinghouse. They had six children, all born in Philadelphia between 1812 and 1828. In 1828 the family joined PMM (Hicksite), where she became a minister, earning a name for herself as a potent speaker and spokesperson for abolition--along with women's rights, with her close friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton. When her ministry brought her to Germantown, it was always to the Hicksite School Street Meeting. Hocker writes, *On the last Sunday in November, 1859, Lucretia Mott came to School Lane Meeting and delivered a stirring sermon. With her was a tall, spare woman, whose face bore traces of distress. It soon became known that Mrs. Mott's companion was the wife of John Brown, then imprisoned because of his 'raid' on Harper's Ferry, On learning of the capture of her husband, the wife had come to Philadelphia from her home in the Adirondack Mountains, intending to go to Virginia, but she was persuaded to stay with Mrs. Mott for some days before proceeding. On December 2, John Brown was hanged at Charlestown, Va., and the body was delivered to his widow.*⁴⁹

Abolition's finest story, however, has to be the tale of the "Underground Railroad," and the Johnsons—in particular Samuel Johnson and his wife Jennett Rowland, as well as their children—have a prominent place in it. The Johnson House was a station on it, and a place for abolition meetings, as well. It goes a little deeper than that, however. While the Hicksites were intensely abolitionist, the orthodox were less involved. Samuel and Jennett, both members of our orthodox meeting, had nine sons and three daughters. The sons uniformly, as they reached their majority, elected to become Hicksites, very likely due to its abolitionist stance. The daughters did not. Samuel died in 1847, leaving the Johnson House to his wife during her lifetime, and to his daughter Elizabeth thereafter. Nonetheless, in the 1850s his widow Jennett with both her Hicksite sons and orthodox daughters operated their home as a station on the underground railroad. You will recall that the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 wielded significant penalties on those who aided escaped slaves, and that bounty hunters were active in the search for escaped slaves and those who harbored them. The Johnsons escaped detection.

If abolition made life a little easier for anti-war Friends in Philadelphia, it certainly had the opposite effect on their southern brethren, where anti-war sentiments were bad enough to start with, and abolitionism added on top made for an exceptionally toxic brew. In North

⁴⁹ Hocker, *Ibid.* Page 227.

Carolina, many Friends simply left, unable to cope; Bates writes that of the state's some 15,000 Quakers before the war, 13,000 left, most to western states.⁵⁰ Few returned.

Aside from the popular benefits of abolitionism, PYM (O) was at the same time less militant about punishing members who participated in the war effort. I suspect that this hesitancy was in part a residuum of the Hicksite Split. The Hicksites were, of course, very intensely abolitionist, and many Hicksite meetings were torn between the anti-war testimony and the urge to fight against slavery. In all, abolition seemed to have a very protective effect, and those who claimed to join the war effort to save slaves were frequently forgiven and not disowned. If PYM (O) were to demand greater militancy in disowning orthodox Friends for joining the war effort, they might see the extremely undesirable result of driving more Orthodox young men into the Hicksite tents. In any case, Quaker historians throughout the north recount very many instances of young Friends joining the fight without consequent disownment.⁵¹

Germantown, on the other hand, supported the war effort in many ways, as documented by Hocker.⁵² In 1883 a memorial was raised in Market Square to those who lost their lives in the Civil War, with a list of the names so lost; none listed were members of our meeting.⁵³ Reading the list of names on the memorial, I was struck by the very large proportion of obviously German names; the 18th century influx of Germans had evidently left an indelible mark on Germantown's ethnic demographics.

I have found little to suggest much of an impact on our meeting of the war. Probably our members were quite distracted by planning the new meetinghouse, although all construction of both meetinghouse and school would follow the war.

New meetinghouse

In 1863 the meeting also faced the reality that its "old" meetinghouse was bulging. When it was built in 1813, the adult membership had been 84, modestly larger than the 50-60 it had been in 1706. Following the Hicksite Split of 1827-29, our adult number was even somewhat smaller, at about 70. But between 1829 and 1862 our numbers had more than doubled to 192 adults, and membership was growing rapidly. With some 250 children to accommodate as well, when everyone was in attendance, which was still expected at that time, they needed a little under 450 seats, and the 50-year-old meetinghouse sat about 350, even including the balconied "youth gallery," which sat 60. On the other hand, the meetinghouse was in good shape, and thrift dictated not wasting it. Plans for an addition that would add more seats were costed. But it was quickly realized that, first of all, they needed more seats than the redesign could provide, and more importantly, reconstruction would take away the use of the meetinghouse for its duration. Where would they worship? *"After more careful consideration it was determined that a new meeting house could be built at a cost not far in excess of that required to alter the existing house. A new structure, built on the adjacent lot, would allow the Friends to continue to use the current meeting house, and would 'ultimately give more satisfaction.' The new building was to be of the same 'general character' as the old."*⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Bates, Doris McLean, *The Quakers and Their War of Resistance*; www.ncpedia/quakers-and-their-war-resistance.

⁵¹ I could find no record of a GPM member who made this choice, however. Nonetheless, there appears to have been a marked increase in our meeting in the 1850s and 1860s of members going over to the Hicksites.

⁵² Hocker, *Ibid.* Pages 227-241.

⁵³ I compared that list with the 1862-1903 list of members.

A building committee was formed, which included Alfred Cope, his nephews Thomas and Francis Cope, and Samuel Morris' son Elliston, the meeting's treasurer. The committee set out to raise the necessary funds—and itself provided a substantial portion of the total, which in the end came to about \$18,500. They gave the contract to a Philadelphia Quaker architect named Addison Hutton (or Hooten, as his family's Dutch name is sometimes spelled), who was well known to the Copes.⁵⁵ Hutton designed the meetinghouse we know, to sit over 550. It is claimed that it was built with such a lofty interior (about 23 feet high) so as to make it possible to add a balcony, as at Arch Street meetinghouse, should additional seating be required in the future. Nothing of this is mentioned, however, in the plans or the minutes, so it is probably not true. The high ceiling of the meetingroom, on the other hand, is very much in line with nineteenth century ecclesiastical architecture generally, and probably better fit the image that the Copes and Morris had of appropriate space for worship. The construction was managed by a building company called Yarnall & Cooper; Hibberd Yarnall, master builder, was the father of Stanley Yarnall, who would later become headmaster of the school.

In 1869 the meetinghouse was finished. *“The new meeting house, while at a quick glance outwardly resembled the old, was a significantly larger, more urbane form. Its design more closely resembled mainstream religious architecture than the typical Friends meeting house of that era. At the same time, its wrap-around porch, large ornamental brackets, over-sized windows, and neatly stuccoed finish blended well with the new residential architecture springing up around it. The interior plan was also a marked change from the old. It relinquished the former house's partitioned meeting room for an attached Committee Room and its youth's gallery for a more spacious interior plan. Moreover, the fact that its distinctive design was the work of a professional architect, as opposed to a committee of meeting members, reflected the rising affluence and "worldliness" of the Germantown Friends.”*⁵⁶ As worldly as it was, it retained old traditions of use. The facing benches, for instance were reserved for ministers, elders and overseers, the collective senior tier (by ‘weight’) of the meeting, with ministers in the highest set of benches.

Rather than face Germantown Avenue, as had all its predecessors, the new meetinghouse was served by the newly opened Coulter Street, which provided access, with driveways as they remain today (see Fig. 8). A shed and a carriage house can be seen behind. View of the school buildings is blocked by the two meeting houses.

⁵⁴ Historical American Buildings Survey (HABS No. PA-6654), National Park Service. Germantown Friends Meetinghouse. 1999. Page 14.

⁵⁵ Addison Hutton and his sister Rebecca married siblings named Rebecca and William Savery, respectively; William and Rebecca Savery and their family later joined our meeting.

⁵⁶ HABS. Ibid, Page 16.



Fig. 8. New meetinghouse, with the older meetinghouse beyond it. Circa 1869.

At this time, the genders were segregated; men and women did not sit together. In the new meetingroom, as you face the facing benches, where the meeting leadership then sat, women were on the left, men on the right in meeting for worship. Such segregation persisted into committee work, with men's and women's committees, but none combined. Thus, there were both men's and women's preparative meetings for discipline. While women had the right of ministry, and were assumed to be authoritative on issues relating to the spirit, they were also assumed to be authoritative on issues of the home, hearth and marriage, but not on finance and building, reserved for men. Thus, the content of the two preparative meetings might differ. Where meeting closers sit today, there is a fold-down writing surface. During women's meetings, this is where the recording clerk sat, taking notes.⁵⁷

The old meetinghouse was retained temporarily and used for men's meetings, while women used the new meetingroom. An addition to the new meetinghouse was then recommended, that would become the "committee room," where men's meetings could be held, while women's meetings would continue to be held in the meetingroom.

Not wishing to waste the old meetinghouse, it was thought it might be converted to school use, as the school also needed enlargement. "*A builder was consulted, and as before, it was discovered that the construction of a new building could be accomplished for little more than would be required to remodel the old meeting house.*"⁵⁸ With some regret that suitable use could not be found for it, once the new committee room had been added to the meetinghouse the old meetinghouse was torn down to make room for the school. "*The school committee, once*

⁵⁷ Thomas Ambler described the meeting as he recalled it, as a child of six years, in 1924. Oral interview, November, 2013. See Meeting Interviews, Friends Free Library. The interviews can also be accessed through the GMM website.

⁵⁸ HABS. Ibid, Page 15.

again prompted by Alfred Cope, decided to construct a new, modern school building to match the splendid new meetinghouse. The old school [the buildings that housed the school Sarah Albertson ran] would be retained for the primary grades, but Intermediate and Upper classes would be housed in the new building, and would also be entered from Coulter Street.”⁵⁹ This is the center section of the present Main Building. It cost just under \$18,000 and Cope paid for more than half of it, raising the rest. William Koons quotes one of his fund-raising letters: “When necessities come upon us we begin to look for our friends—understanding that a friend in need is a friend indeed. Therefore I, as one of the Germantown Friends School committee, was set in a rather cogent manner to looking about me for friends and who should I spy looming up conspicuously and pleasantly but thy own open-handed self.”⁶⁰

Alfred Cope had one more proposal concerning the school: “He would contribute \$500 per year for an unspecified number of years towards the principal’s salary—if that principal were a man. He was not unhappy with Susanna Kite, but a modern school needed a male principal. His view was old-fashioned, of course, but the School Committee shared it and accepted his proposal.”⁶¹ Cope also had a candidate in mind, Samuel Alsop, Jr, a long-time teacher at Westtown School and who, as it happens, had in 1863 married Esther Kite, Susanna’s sister. Again, the Committee acquiesced; Susanna was demoted from Principal, which post she had held for four years, to teacher, but the Committee sweetened it for her with a raise to \$700 a year. Alsop arrived in the fall in time to inaugurate the new buildings and was installed at a salary of \$1200 per year. Alsop and his wife transferred to GPM, and their next two children, Mary and William were born into our meeting. The new head would not stay all that long; Alsop would move on in 1873 to a position at Haverford College. Alsop made one interesting change to the curriculum in his tenure: he taught a required class of Latin. How he got this clearly unguarded subject past the School Committee is not clear (but possibly by saying that Westtown had a Latin class). Alsop would be replaced with another man, Henry Hoxie, a New England Quaker, who would remain as head twenty-three years. There would be no more female heads until Dana Weeks.

Alfred Cope was not done. While the school was now secure, its library was not. He proposed building a separate library—that is, separate from the school—and said he would fund most of it. “As with so many of Alfred Cope’s gestures, this one had strings attached. The library was not to contain fiction.”⁶² Cope, evidently, had never moved past “guarded” education. As usual, the School Committee accepted his proposal and its string. Cope donated two-thirds of the \$20,000 cost. The library opened, more or less where it still is today, in 1874. The following year, Cope died.

The Copes and their Friends

It wasn’t just Alfred Cope; by the 1860s our meeting must have gotten used to a great influx of Copes, most of them summer residents in the familiar pattern through the 1850s, and all of them really wealthy. These were Alfred’s brother Henry and his family. Henry was a dozen years older than Alfred and the senior partner at H & A Cope Company, and thus probably even richer than his brother. Henry married in 1818 Rachel Reeve, a member of Green Street MM, and they resided in Philadelphia, members of Philadelphia-Southern District MM, but eventually bought a summer home in Germantown. Henry’s sons, who also worked in H & A Cope, were Francis Reeve and Thomas Pim Cope. Francis married in 1847 Anna Stewardson Brown, and

⁵⁹ Koons, Ibid. Page 36. Coulter Street was very recently put through south of the meetinghouse.

⁶⁰ Koons, page 37.

⁶¹ Koons, Ibid. Page 37.

⁶² Koons, Ibid. Page 39

they had four children, all born in their own Germantown summer house, but born into PSDMM. Thomas married in 1849 Elizabeth Waln Stokes. Their six children likewise were born in their Germantown summer home, again, as birthright members of PSDMM. Henry's oldest was a girl, though, named Mary Drinker after her grandmother. Mary married in 1850 a member of our meeting, John Smith Haines, son of Reuben Haines III.⁶³ At just this time Henry Cope invested in a large chunk of land, about 55 acres, in east Germantown. Mary and John Haines built the first home there, but made this their permanent residence. Shortly after, by 1852, Henry and Rachel Cope built a summer home there, which they named "Awbury," the name later being generalized to encompass the entire area. The third house, built by their son Francis Cope, was completed by 1862. Between 1862 and 1864, Henry, Francis and Thomas all abandoned the summer home pattern, transferred their memberships from PSDMM to GPM, and became permanent residents of Germantown.

With a new—and dramatically larger—meetinghouse planned, a new growing and thriving school, GPM became a magnet for other wealthy Quaker families. Thomas Garrett transferred to GPM in 1860, with his wife Frances R Biddle and children. Samuel Emlen transferred from Philadelphia-Northern Division MM with his wife Sarah Williams and their five young children in 1863, and had two more born into GPM. John Stokes joined in 1863, transferring from PNDMM. His oldest daughter married Thomas Pym Cope Jr⁶⁴, and they transferred to GPM in 1864. Francis Stokes and his family followed in 1865. J Wistar Evans and his wife Eleanor Stokes came in 1868; Thomas Wistar and his wife Priscilla Foulke, Daniel Burlington Smith and his wife Esther Morton, Samuel Shipley and his family, James Evans and Margaret Ely Rhoads, Isaiah and Anna Brown Hacker, Jeremiah and Beulah Morris Hacker all joined in the 1860s. By 1869, with the grand new meetinghouse in place, if anyone was making this sort of computation, the per-capita concentration of wealth in GPM must have skyrocketed.

These exuberant physical and social changes were not universally welcomed. There were some members of GPM who were distressed at the frank upsurge of wealth and class, and perhaps disturbed by the meeting's treatment of Sarah Albertson, as well. It is a great irony that Thomas Magarge, who as clerk of Frankford Monthly Meeting at the time of the Separation oversaw the disownment of so many Hicksites from the monthly meeting, and who served as treasurer of our meeting for a decade later—and who even served on the school committee that started GFS, should be among those who deplored the resulting changes in the fabric of our meeting. Thomas and his whole extensive family—with one exception—resigned to join the Hicksites in the middle 1860s.⁶⁵ The exception was Thomas' daughter Ann, who had married Charles Jones, who was now head of Friends Select School. Should Ann have joined the exodus, Charles' position as head of Friends Select would almost certainly have been terminated. She remained loyal to her husband rather than follow her father and the rest of her family.

The adult size of the meeting swelled rapidly to 225 by 1870 and 252 by 1880. By this time, if everyone and their children all came to worship on first day, they would exceed the 550 the meetingroom could seat, and I suppose it may have happened from time to time. The attraction of wealthy Friends would continue well into the next century.⁶⁶

⁶³ Reuben III and his wife Jane Bowne did not follow the pattern I am describing. They continued their residency in Philadelphia and their membership in PMM, whole summering in Germantown, for the rest of their lives.

⁶⁴ The first to respell Pim with a y.

⁶⁵ All would return, but only to be buried in the new burial ground. None came back to GPM as members.

⁶⁶ These numbers are derived from the GPM membership book maintained from 1862-1903, held at the Quaker Archives, Haverford College.

GFS continued on, essentially unchanged through Henry Hoxie's tenure, although the lack of change should not be attributed to his conservatism. The School Committee made all decisions, even to "*the purchase of a desk or a piece of science apparatus, or the need for fresh paint in a classroom ... Although Hoxie tried his best to prod them into action, the Committee liked the school the way it was and resisted change.*"⁶⁷ In the 1880s, with Philip Garrett now clerk of the School Committee, they began to discuss again the financial limitations imposed by admitting only Friends. Also, by this time, the perceived need for a "guarded education" was likely much diminished. In 1884, the School faced its first deficit—not a large one, but a shock nonetheless. In 1885 the school committee recommended admitting non-Quakers. "*The Meeting demanded and the Committee agreed that any non-Friends admitted should be in sympathy with Quaker principles and follow Quaker rules.*"⁶⁸

Hoxie resigned in 1886 to take an administrative position at Haverford School, and the School Committee appointed Davis Hoopes Forsythe, a teacher in the school, in his place. The number of non-Friends increased fairly rapidly, and by 1891 outnumbered the Quaker students, 63 to 50.

Forsythe was extremely outgoing and an exceptional mediator, and would in time become Clerk of PYM. "*These qualities served him well in his relationship with the School Committee.*" Forsythe stressed in his reports to the Committee that the non-Quaker students made GFS a very important part of the Meeting's outreach, and that "*the School's greatest attraction to non-Friends is the appeal of its religious principles.*"⁶⁹ The School Committee, becoming more confident in his judgment, loosened its control and began to let Forsythe make other alterations. The whole tenor of GFS began to change. Recitations and memorization gave way to reading and research. He instituted languages in addition to Alsop's Latin course: French, then German. He increased the science and history components; mathematics and philosophy—but not yet art. Some sports were authorized. Students began to continue on to college: in 1895 five boys graduated to Haverford, and two girls to Bryn Mawr. The 'guarded education' was by now clearly a matter of the school's past. "*Davis Forsythe's major achievement was the adoption of what he called 'the individual system'.*" This was based on an experimental program in Colorado that sought to change the lock-step practice in every school. "*A school circular described it: 'It is not the policy of the school that all the pupils of one class should be doing the same work in any subject at the same time Each one is carefully examined by his teacher daily, and his advancement is made to depend on himself and is not influenced by the standing or progress of any other pupils in the school.'*"⁷⁰ These changes sound better than he was actually able to implement, but the important thing is that he schmoozed the School Committee and the meeting into accepting the concepts of this new education.

Huge changes lay in store for GFS, and the architect of these changes would be Stanley Rhoads Yarnall, a Haverford grad with an M.A. in education from Harvard, who was appointed headmaster in place of an ill Forsythe in 1906, the same year Yarnall joined our meeting. Far from being a schmoozer, Yarnall was another bulldozer, and took on the School Committee—and the meeting—frankly and aggressively. He doubled the size of the school (in student numbers, faculty and buildings) in his first fifteen years. However, it is not my intention to carry this story forward through the thirty-five Yarnall years into our present.

⁶⁷ Koons, Ibid. Page 44.

⁶⁸ Koons, Ibid. Page 46.

⁶⁹ Koons, Ibid. Page 47.

⁷⁰ Koons, Ibid. Page 49.

About the only thing that persisted of the “old ways” was the *no fiction* stricture on the Friends Free Library.

One last milestone remained for Germantown Preparative Meeting: in 1906 Philadelphia Quarter decided to make it a monthly meeting, probably the largest and the wealthiest of the yearly meeting, a jewel of the garden suburb of Germantown. The new monthly meeting and Germantown would face major social changes in the coming century, but I will not take this history further.