

Carroll County Times "Carroll's Yesteryears" Articles

"A Friends Wedding in 1779"

Carroll County Times Article for 18 June 1995

By Jay A. Graybeal

More than two centuries ago, a young couple appeared before the members of the Pipe Creek (now Union Bridge) and the Bush Creek Quaker Meetings and declared their "Intentions of Marriage." Having the "Consent of Relations and parties concerned, their said proposal of Marriage was allowed by the said Meeting." The details of the 1779 Quaker marriage of Solomon Shepherd and Susanna Farquhar (pronounced "Forker") were recorded on a handwritten document unique to this religious group. Known as a "Cirtificate of Marriage", the original was given to the wedding couple and a copy was recorded in the Register of the Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting. The Shepherd's c.1800 brick home, now known as

"Hard Lodging," was donated to the Historical Society by the late Mrs. Thelma Walden Littlefield Shriner in 1983.

The document begins with a description of the wedding and is signed by the members who witnessed the ceremony:

Solomon Shepherd, son of William and Richmonda Shepherd of Minalllen in the County of York and Province of Pennsylvania, decd. and Susanna Farquhar daughter of William Farquhar of Pipe Creek in the County of Frederick and Province of Maryland, decd. and Ann his wife, having declared their Intention of Marriage with each other before the several Monthly Meetings of the People called Quakers, one of which was held at Pipe Creek & the other at Bush Creek in the County of Frederick aforesaid, according to the good Order established among them & having Consent of Relations and parties concerned, their said proposal of Marriage was allowed of by the said Meeting.

These are to certify whom it may concern, that for the full accomplishing their said Intention this Twenty seventh day of the tenth Month in the Year seventeen hundred seventy nine, they the said Solomon Shepherd and Susanna Farquhar appeared in a publick Meeting of the said People at Pipe Creek Meeting House, and the said Solomon Shepherd taking the said Susanna Farquhar by the hand did in a solemn manner openly declare, that he took her the said Susanna Farquhar to be his wife, promising with divine Assistance to be to her a Serving & faithful Husband till death shall separate them. And then & there in the presence of the same Assembly the said Susanna Farquhar did, in like manner, declare, that she took him the said Solomon Shepherd to be her Husband, promising as aforesd. to be to him a faithful & and Loving Wife till death should separate them. Moreover they the said Solomon Shepherd & Susanna Farquhar (she according to the Custom of Marriage assuming the Name of her Husband) as full Confirmation thereof did & there to these Presents at their Hands.

Solomon Shepherd
Susanna Shepherd

And We whose names are under written being present at the solemnization of this Marriage & Subscription as Witnesses thereunto have also to these presents our hands this day and Year above written.

Nathan Haines, Samuel Cookson, William Pidgeon, Thomas Plummer, Samuel Hutton, John Maulsby, Robert Hunt, William Bollinger, junr., John Willits, Isaac Plummer, Thos. Matthews, Gideon Gipson,

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William Kenworthy, William Kenworthy, Samuel Coale, Thomas Ellis, Jesse Plummer, John Clemson, Abigail Hunt, Mary Poultney, Sarah Harris, Rachael Pidgeon, Jesse Hughes, Lydia Coale, Hannah Russell, Rachael Willits, Sarah Elliot, Sarah Yarnell, Mary Elliot, Thos. Carson, William Elliot, Mary Kenworthy, Mary Cokson, Elizabeth Miller, Lydia Miller, Mary Miller, Sarah Miller Junr., Solomon Miller, William Farquhar, 3, William Wood, Thomas Farquhar, John Elliot, Samuel Peach, Robert Miller, Elizabeth Farquhar, Rachael Farquhar, Ruth Farquhar, Mary A. Farquhar, Robert Farquhar, Sam'l Farquhar of Allen, Senr., Jane Farquhar, , Ann Farquhar, Hannah Owings, William Farquhar, Allen Farquhar, Mary Wright, Samuel Farquhar, Elizabeth Wright, Moses Farquhar, William Shepherd, Sarah Farquhar, Phebe Farquhar, Sarah Farquhar, Sarah Farquhar, Hannah Owings, Mary Owings, Joseph Wright, Joel Wright, and Mary Owings.

The signatures at the end of the document symbolize the bond between the married couple and the rest of the Quaker meeting. The certificate of marriage document was carefully preserved by the couple throughout their lifetime. The signature's of the witnesses served as a reminder of those who were present at the couple's union. For the researcher today, the document provides a "who's who" of the Quaker settlement on Pipe Creek. It also reveals the levels of education and status achieved by women in a Quaker society.

Photo caption: "Certificate of Marriage" of Solomon Shepherd and Susanna Farquhar who were married at the Pipe Creek Friends Meeting House on October 27, 1779. Historical Society of Carroll County Collection. Photograph courtesy of Porterfield's Photography.