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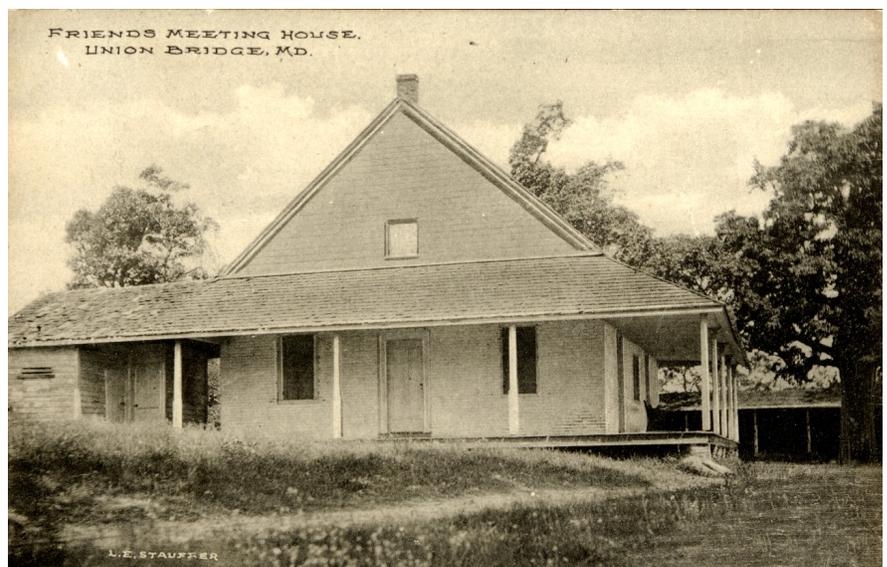
— THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CARROLL COUNTY, MD, INC. —

LIVING THEIR FAITH: THE QUAKERS OF PIPE CREEK MEETING

BY MARY ANN ASHCRAFT AND MARIBETH WELCH BRAINERD

At the 250th anniversary celebration of the Pipe Creek Quaker Meeting House, on a sunny Sunday in the fall of 2022, about 25 Meeting members and guests gathered at the historic building on Quaker Hill Road in Union Bridge. Completed and dedicated in 1772, it is the oldest house of worship in continuous use in the Maryland Piedmont.

Long-time Meeting member Frank Reitemeyer opened the gathering with a brief history of the Religious Society of Friends (also known as Quakers) as it related to the founding of the Pipe Creek Meeting. The Society of Friends, founded in England in the mid-17th century by George Fox, is a way of life based upon a set of six principles – Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and Stewardship (known as the “SPICES”). Quakers reject the rituals, formal creeds, and leadership by ordained ministers as practiced by most Protestants, instead believing each person can experience the light within, seeing “that of God in everyone.” Because of these fundamental differences, Quakers experienced persecution in England and America. However, when William Penn, a Quaker, established the colony of Pennsylvania in the 1680s, the Quaker movement gained strength in the American colonies, flourishing in



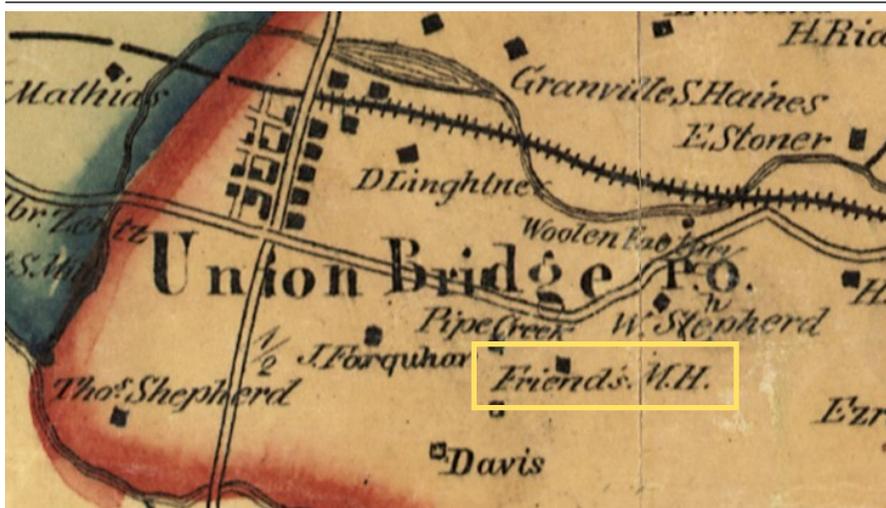
Postcard of the Pipe Creek Meeting House, c.1910. Note shed for horses and buggies on right. (HSCC collection)

southeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia.

BEGINNING OF THE PIPE CREEK SETTLEMENT

William Farquhar (1705 – 1778), founder of the Pipe Creek Meeting, immigrated at age 16 to Pennsylvania from Dublin, Ireland, with his parents and younger brother. Although his parents, Allen and Susannah, do not appear to have been Quakers, young William joined the Quaker New Garden Monthly Meeting in Chester County, Pennsylvania, soon after his arrival and in 1733 married Ann Miller, also a Quaker. In 1735 Allen Farquhar deeded William a 220-acre tract on

Little Pipe Creek, *Kilfadda*, in the Maryland Piedmont near present-day Union Bridge, “provided he would move from Pennsylvania to Maryland and occupy same.” William and his young family did so, travelling west by pack horse through wilderness frontier where the only roads were American Indian trading paths, and transferred their New Garden Meeting membership to Hopewell, in Virginia, approximately 65 miles away. Because travel was difficult, the family was granted permission to hold “first day” (Sunday) worship in their home.



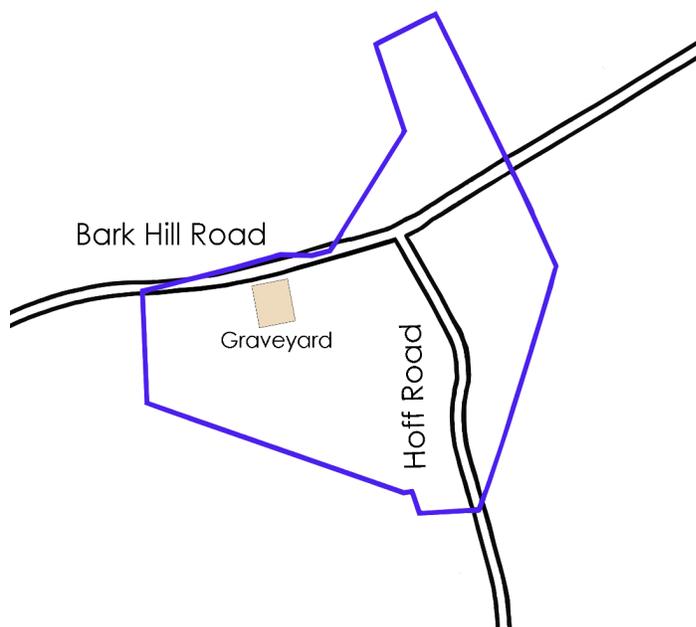
Detail from 1862 Martenet’s map of Carroll County showing site of second meeting house and properties of prominent Quakers, J. Farquhar and D. Lightner. (Library of Congress)

Before long other Quaker families joined the Farquhars, settling nearby where land was still available rather than continuing down the well-established route out of Pennsylvania to the Shenandoah Valley and North Carolina. By the 1760s Farquhar, a successful tailor and maker of buckskin britches, owned more than 2,000 acres, and the growing community became known as the Pipe Creek Settlement. In 1745 Quakers in Fairfax, Virginia, started a monthly meeting that was slightly closer, so the Farquhars transferred their membership there, but continued to hold services in their home. After William Farquhar died in 1778, his widow Ann gave testimony to her husband’s life of Quaker stewardship: “His house was much resorted to by travelling friends and others, both in that early period and since, to whom he was courteous and kind.”

The number of Pipe Creek Quakers was sufficient by 1756 to petition for a monthly meeting of their own—a “preparative meeting” –to be held under the auspices of the Fairfax Monthly Meeting. In 1757 William Farquhar conveyed 25 acres of his property named *The Unity* to Nathan Haines and Solomon Miller, two fellow trustees of the preparative meeting. The transfer of the land was “to suffer and permit the people called Quaker inhabiting within the said County of Frederick to erect and build such and so many meeting houses, schoolhouses, and yards or places of burial as they from time to time shall deem necessary and convenient for the worship of God, the instruction

of youth, and the burial of dead.” A log meeting house replaced Farquhar’s home for worship gatherings by 1764.

According to oral history, the meeting house occasionally housed travelers seeking shelter as they passed south along the much-used Monocacy Road from Pennsylvania toward Virginia. No record suggests that any building other than the meeting house existed at *The Unity* site.



The Unity plot map from 1757 deed, superimposed over present day map. (Bill Powel research)



East side view of Meeting House showing two entrances, formerly separate doors for men and women. (HSCC photo, 2023)

THE 1772 PIPE CREEK MEETING HOUSE

In 1771 William Farquhar offered his fellow Quakers a site for construction of a new meeting house to replace the log one – two acres of his land called *Forest in Need* on the edge of present-day Union Bridge. The new 1½-story meeting house was built of locally made brick, laid in Flemish bond, three bays wide, and three bays deep, with a porch on two sides. The roof overhung the porch on the east side. That building style was frequently used in Maryland’s Tidewater region, but occasionally adopted in the Piedmont as well. It fit with the Quaker emphasis on simplicity in all aspects of life. The only decorative elements on the exterior were the wooden headers over the windows and doors. The windows had rough wood shutters and the doors were wood slats battened together. On the interior, a pair of sliding wooden doors divided the space into separate rooms for men and women, the way Quakers worshipped.

The Pipe Creek Meeting also established what is known as the Friends Cemetery behind the new meeting house. Its rows of small headstones and footstones

reflected Quaker simplicity, although over time larger markers were erected. The earliest ones usually had little more than the family name.

J. Thomas Scharf’s *History of Western Maryland* provides an excerpt from the minutes of the first meeting held in the new brick meeting house:

At a meeting on the 19th of the 12th month, 1772, the representatives present on behalf of the Preparative Meeting were William Farquhar, William Ballenger, Richard Holland, and William Farquhar. Allen Farquhar was chosen clerk.

The second appearance of the name “William Farquhar” apparently referred to a son of the Meeting founder William. Minutes from the following month noted the first marriage, that of Samuel Cookson, a widower, and Mary Haines, the widow of Daniel Haines.

In 1774 the Pipe Creek trustees sold the 25-acre *Unity* property with its log meeting house to Philip Englar, with the exception of a “small piece of the aforesaid land called the Grave Yard containing about two perches in length and two perches in breadth which is hereby

reserved for a Burial Ground.”

This small parcel southwest of Hoff Road, now known as the Bark Hill Road Cemetery, was reserved for use by the nearby community of free Blacks, later known as Middletown, since it is halfway between Union Bridge and Uniontown.

Minutes of the Pipe Creek monthly meetings from the 1770s mention many worshippers who played vital roles in the flourishing Quaker community. The following surnames appear as witnesses at a Quaker wedding in 1779:

Farquhar, Wright, Owings, Miller, Benedum, Plummer, Wood, Clemson, Cookson, Rinehart,



Window with wooden header and shutters with hand-forged hinges. (HSCC photo, 2023)

Haines, Pidgeon, Shepherd, Thomas, and Hibberd. Some of these appear on headstones in the cemetery behind the meeting house, as well as on streets in the town of Union Bridge and roads of the surrounding area.

CONFLICT BETWEEN WAR AND THEOLOGY

The American Revolution presented a formidable challenge to Quakers, because as a matter of faith they opposed war and refused to swear oaths of allegiance. Marylanders who would not take an oath were subject to fines. Those who joined the militia to fight for independence faced sanctions and even disownment from the Society of Friends. Friends who refused to pay taxes imposed by the colony of Maryland to fund the war had property seized to the value of the unpaid taxes or fines.

Minutes of a 1777 Pipe Creek Meeting show a complaint brought against John Moore, Jr., for “joining and going out with the militia in the military service.” Several months later that complaint became more serious: “We hereby disown him the said John Moore from being a member of our Society till he makes the necessary acknowledgement for his misconduct.” The Friends tried to convince another member, Jesse Lawrence, to “avoid military service,” but he evidently did not appreciate their counsel. The



West side view with 1890 stone wall and cemetery.
(HSCC photo, 2023)

minutes record he did not “desire friends to continue care over him any longer,” and presumably was willing to be disowned, as Moore had been. It is interesting to note, however, that William Farquhar’s grandson, William P. Farquhar, served as a captain during the War of 1812, and the sons of several prominent Quaker families took up arms for the Union during the Civil War.

The 1780 Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting minutes include an account from its “Committee appointed in Suffering Cases” regarding property seized from Pipe Creek members who refused to pay Maryland’s taxes or fines to support the war. In one instance 29 Quakers lost property valued at £922.12.4. In 1781 that Committee “produc’d an account of property taken by destraint from the members ... for Taxes and fines for military purposes amounting to two hundred and sixty pounds, sixteen shillings.” (Destraint is the legal term for seizure of property.) Since taxes were based on a family’s real and personal property, it appears from the amount that some Pipe Creek Quaker families were very well-to-do by the 1780s.

In the decades following the American Revolution, even as the Quakers enjoyed relative peace in their communities, theological divisions arose. Some shifted their focus to the discipline of members whom they thought were not adhering to their principles. For example, marriage outside



Typical early gravestone in the Friends Cemetery. The Hibberd name appears in many Quaker records.
(HSCC photo, 2023)

the Society of Friends or marrying before a priest were serious transgressions. Other transgressions included being seen worshipping in a non-Quaker church, failing to attend Meetings, incurring debts, drunkenness, brawling, and fornication. All these charges were grounds for disownment from the Society and resulted in an erosion of Society membership. Many of those espousing strict discipline, later known as Orthodox Quakers, further embraced a more Protestant emphasis on atonement and the privileged authority of the Bible.

The message of abolitionist Elias Hicks (1748 – 1830) became another source of division. Hicks began his itinerant ministry in 1779, primarily traveling between Vermont and Maryland, advocating the manumission of enslaved persons as well as a return to the founding principles of Quakerism. In addition, Hicks favored working alongside non-Quakers to abolish slavery. Orthodox Quakers, on the other hand, remained insular, communing only with fellow Quakers and not involving themselves in “the politics of men.” By 1828 Hicks’ followers, self-described as the “Liberal Branch,” split with Orthodox Quakers, a move that impacted meetings throughout the United States and Canada. Four-fifths of Maryland’s meetings, including Pipe Creek, cast their lot with Hicks. For the Pipe Creek Meeting, and the Baltimore Yearly Meeting to which it belonged, this schism lasted until 1968.

LIVING THEIR FAITH

From their earliest arrival on the banks of Little Pipe Creek, the Quakers lived the six principles (the SPICES) that set them apart from other Protestants. The founders’ and their descendants’ commitments to these principles were demonstrated in many settings and multiple ways, but four areas stand out: living in peace with Indigenous peoples, equality of women, manumission and abolition of slavery, and equal education of all.

Living in Peace with Indigenous Peoples

Kilfadda and the land to the west in the colony of Maryland was considered the frontier when William Farquhar arrived. Although American

Indians remained a threat to frontier settlers, Farquhar was regarded as a conciliator, friend, and counselor. Settlers farther west often did not share such good relations and occasionally fled east to the Pipe Creek Settlement for protection. The danger continued until the Treaty of Lancaster in 1744 and the building of Fort Frederick west of Hagerstown which offered settlers greater security and the ability to push farther west.

Joel Wright (1750-1829), a Pennsylvania Quaker who married Farquhar’s daughter Elizabeth and was one of Pipe Creek’s most respected members, was named clerk of the newly formed Baltimore Yearly Meeting Committee for Indian Affairs in 1796. The first official meeting was held at Pipe Creek that same year. The committee’s charge was to administer funds contributed by Quakers in England, Maryland, and Virginia to compensate Indigenous peoples for the lands taken from them, and to offer “provisions, instruction in farming, as well as implements of husbandry and farming utensils.” In 1798 Wright led a small group of “worthy citizens under the auspices of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting to ... pay a visit to the Delawares, Shawanese, Wyandots, and other nations northwest of the river Ohio in giving encouragement to the civilization of the Indians; in the promotion of a good system of agriculture; in supporting schools; in building small mills for grinding Indian corn, and in endeavoring to discountenance the hard servitude of their women.”

During the first half of the 19th century, Pipe Creek Quakers shifted their concerns from the plight of American Indians to the issue of slavery, but by the 1870s, Quakers once again found themselves defending Indigenous peoples being forced from their homelands in the West.

President Ulysses S. Grant changed oversight of the newly created tribal reservations from the U.S. military to various Christian denominations, assigning the Nebraska reservations to the Quakers. Grant’s successor, Rutherford B. Hayes, appointed Isaiah Lightner of the Pipe Creek Meeting to serve as the Indian

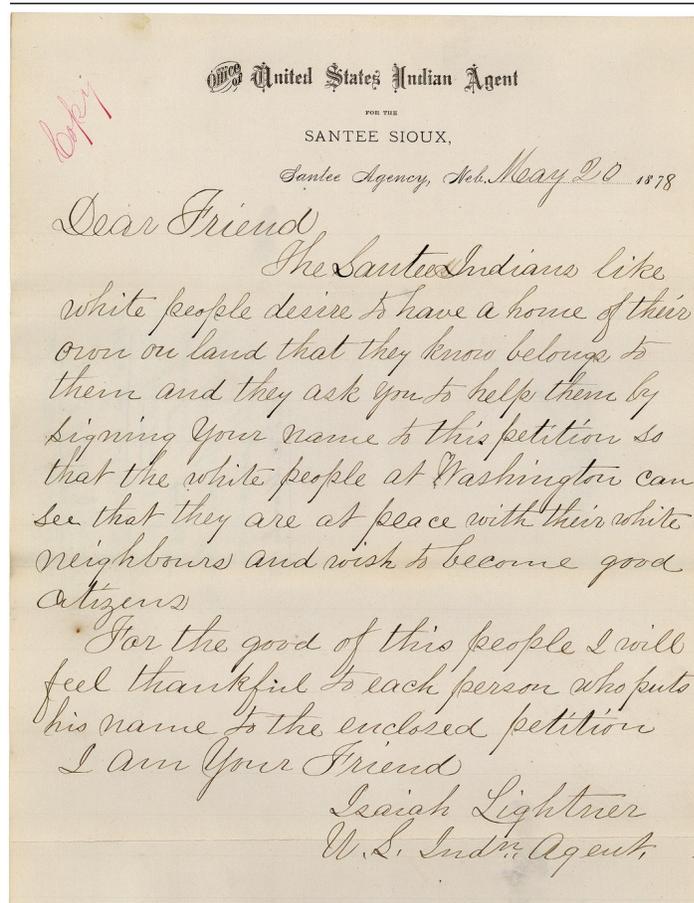
agent on a Sioux reservation in northeastern Nebraska. Lightner moved his family there and spent from 1877 to 1885 administering the affairs of the reservation, and advocating for better treatment of those in his care. In a letter to the Bureau from August 22, 1881, Lightner wrote: "But as I have told the Santee Indians, with my hands uplifted, that I would stand by them until they received a more lasting title to their homes ... the same as a white man, and I think it wicked in the first degree for us as a nation to withhold any longer such a sacred right ... In the name of the power that rules cannot we bring force to bear that will make right prevail."

Equality of Women

One of the first principles articulated by the Religious Society of Friends was the equality of men and women before God. In a Quaker marriage, both sexes recited identical marriage vows. Women were recognized as ministers from the beginning of the Quaker movement and encouraged to speak during worship services and business meetings. Initially, to ensure that women would be able to speak without being talked over by men, their business meetings were held separately.

In 1772, the Pipe Creek Meeting recognized member Ruth Holland as a minister. She and Elizabeth Robinson traveled in the "Southern Provinces" to spread the Quaker message during 1774. Holland's journeys visiting Friends in the backwoods from New England to Georgia continued until the end of the 18th century. Both Joel Wright and his wife, Elizabeth, were recognized as ministers. While Joel stayed at the Pipe Creek settlement in the 1780s and 1790s, Elizabeth and a companion journeyed on horseback "traveling in the ministry" to western parts of Pennsylvania. Each night they attempted to reach a home where a welcome would await them. Using this method, they helped maintain contact between Quaker settlements on the frontier and those firmly established in the cities of Philadelphia, York, and Baltimore.

Nevertheless, the ideal of the equality of the sexes was not always lived out in practice,



Isaiah Lightner's 1878 letter pleading for Santee Sioux land rights. (Copy, National Archives and Records Administration)

paralleling the status of women in the home. For instance, the separate women's meetings were rarely equal in authority to the men's, and their actions were subject to final approval by the men who also controlled the congregation's finances and property.

In the 19th century some Quaker women rose to prominence in the antislavery, women's suffrage, and temperance movements, but there is no evidence in the minutes that women from the Pipe Creek Meeting were significantly involved.

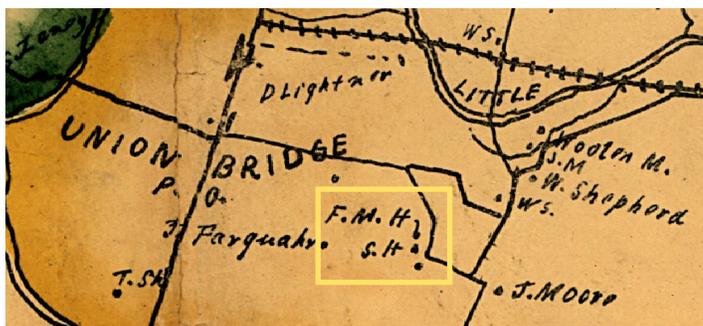
Manumission and Abolition of Slavery

Prior to the mid-18th century, despite the Quaker principle of equality of all peoples, many Friends in the southern colonies and some in the North owned enslaved persons. John Woolman, a merchant, joined other concerned Quakers convinced of slavery's

immorality and travelled throughout colonial America preaching against the trading of enslaved people and the “owning of Negroes,” including two visits to the Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting. He noted in his journal the Meeting was very receptive to his message. By 1775, 20 years after the start of his itinerant ministry, every yearly meeting in America had passed prohibitions of some kind against the practice.

Minutes of a Pipe Creek Meeting in 1775 reflect the effort to convince local members to free their enslaved persons: “Friends appointed in the case of those who hold slaves report, they have (since their last report) spoke to ‘em again that there continues to be a willingness in most to set them at Liberty but none have got it fully accomplished.” By 1777 the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, to which Pipe Creek belonged, concluded that any members enslaving people were to be disowned.

In 1826 area residents met at the Pipe Creek Meeting House and established their own Anti-Slavery Society. The same year, an organization “of a kindred nature, but less radical ... called the Pipe Creek Protection Society” was formed to protect “free colored people against wrongs of any kind, practiced by unprincipled whites.” The signers of its constitution, who included Quakers and non-Quakers, were Robert Hatton, Robert Dods, Solomon Shepherd, Moses Farquhar, John Moore, Jesse Slingluff, Job Haines, Nathan Zimmerman, Joel Pusy, Allen Hibberd, Silas Hibberd, Samuel Cookson, Moses B. Farquhar, Evan McKinstry, Jacob Stem, William Shepherd, Isaac Wright, William. P. Farquhar, Henry Willis, Evan Webb, Joseph Wright, and Caleb Ogborn.



1863 Civil War Military map of Carroll County showing Friends Meeting House (F.M.H.) and adjacent schoolhouse (S.H.). (Library of Congress)

When the Civil War ended, Friends responded to the overwhelming needs of the newly freed enslaved persons for food, clothing, and education and also aided Quakers whose lives were severely impacted by the war, particularly those in North Carolina. According to 19th-century Union Bridge historian Joshua Switzer:

In the darkest period of the time when our country was afflicted with the terrible curse of human slavery, our people here were always fearless and outspoken in their opposition – and no human was ever held in slavery on the soil of the town of Union Bridge.

Equal Education of All

William Farquhar mentioned the possibility of building not only meeting houses, but also schools, in his 1757 deed of land to the Pipe Creek Quakers—evidence of the importance the Friends placed on education. Quaker children would ideally be educated in Quaker schools where they would learn Quaker values. Though it appears the school was established in 1772, it wasn't until 1779 that the first reference to a Pipe Creek school appears in a report submitted to the Western Quarterly Meeting in Baltimore: “Within Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting, a lot of school ground purchased, a school built and school kept under the direction of a committee appointed for that purpose.”

Joel Wright served as the sole teacher at the Pipe Creek Quaker school for the last 30 years of the 18th century, in addition to serving for many years as clerk of the Pipe Creek Meeting and as a Frederick County Justice of the Peace. The Meeting furnished a house for Wright who was responsible for boarding students coming from a distance. An 1863 military map shows the school standing beside the meeting house, the only documentation of the school's location.

During Wright's tenure, the school earned an excellent reputation which spread to other communities and drew more students—boys and girls, Quaker and non-Quaker—to the school. Jacob R. Thomas, inventor of the earliest reaping machine, and world-renowned sculptor William Henry Rinehart spent time at the Quaker Hill

School. Wright eventually moved to Warren County, Ohio, where he died in 1829. A fire in 1864 destroyed the school, forcing its students to go elsewhere for an education.

There was no Quaker school in Union Bridge proper until 1877 when Isaiah Lightner, his wife, Fannie, and several other Quakers formed the Friends Seminary Company of Pipe Creek. They purchased two lots in town, built a school, and began classes. Even though the Lightner family moved to Nebraska the same year, they stayed involved in the affairs of the Pipe Creek Meeting and the new school. In 1883 the Seminary Company sold the building but continued to successfully operate the school until 1889 when it closed due to low enrollment. The building was later converted into a private residence and still stands at the corner of Locust Street and Buttersburg Alley.

THE 1800s: A CENTURY OF CHANGE

The area originally known as the Pipe Creek Settlement grew steadily through the period of the Revolutionary War, dominated by Quaker families with substantial farms raising wheat, corn, flax, and sheep, and supporting the Pipe Creek Meeting. But by the end of the 18th century, some Friends began moving west to land opening in the Ohio Valley, and the early 19th century became one of significant change for the Little Pipe Creek area. According to historian Daniel Wolfe, George Cox started a huckster route and general store in Union Bridge, where he “took butter, eggs and other produce in exchange for goods” and “from the abundance of butter, or the superior quality of it, the place was dubbed ‘Buttertown’ or ‘Buttersburg.’” Meanwhile, the Little Pipe Creek area with its swampy borders presented a challenge to the increasing traffic throughout the area, so William P. Farquhar, a grandson of the original settler, brought together landholders on both sides of the creek to construct a new bridge and better road to join their lands.

About 1820, when the U.S. Postal Service decided to locate a post office to serve the area between the towns of Westminster and Frederick, some suggested naming the location “Farquharville” in

honor of the settlement founder. Farquhar declined the honor, proposing instead the name “Union Bridge” for the bridge they built together. “Union Bridge Post Office” was adopted as the village name, later shortened to Union Bridge. For decades, the Quakers and other townspeople worked to bring a railroad to town, and in May 1862 the Western Maryland Railroad arrived in Union Bridge, its western terminus for six years. By the time Maryland’s General Assembly granted the town a charter in 1872, there were at least 65 dwellings plus hotels, boarding houses, schools, and general stores serving a population of over 550.

Membership in the Pipe Creek Meeting likely peaked in 1850 when there were 111 members. Once the last Quaker school closed in 1889, the final significant undertaking by the Pipe Creek Meeting was enclosure of the cemetery with a stone wall in 1890. As the 20th century dawned, membership stood at 97, and Quakers were no longer a driving force in the community.

A fire destroyed the Farquhar homestead located on land later bought by the Tidewater Portland Cement Company (now Heidelberg Materials) taking with it “many valuable deeds and papers.”

SURVIVAL OF THE MEETING IN THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES

If the 19th century presented challenges to the dwindling Quaker community in Union Bridge, so did the 20th. In 1934 a fire began in a shed attached to the meeting house, destroying the roof and the interior. Only a few of the original benches survived. Stewardship, however, remained an important Quaker principle, and rebuilding the meeting house with some modifications began in spite of the Depression. The shingle roof was replaced with a tin one and the pitch of the roof over the east-facing porch altered. The wooden porch on the east and south sides was replaced with a concrete one. Inside, a solid wall replaced the sliding wooden doors which had separated the worship areas for men and women for over 160 years. The new arrangement created a large room for joint



Above: Pipe Creek Meeting House after the 1934 fire. (HSCC collection)

Below: Meeting House with replacement roof and concrete porch. (HSCC photo, 2023)



worship heated by a wood stove and a smaller room primarily for social activities. The chimney on the north side was removed.

Membership in the meeting stood at about 20 by the 1970s, and at times has dwindled to as few as two, but historian and member Amos Davidson ensured the survival of the meeting house by nominating it for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. He researched the meeting's history over a period of many years and deposited a wealth of his findings at the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College and the Historical Society of Carroll County. As the 20th century drew to a close, Pipe Creek members such as Bill Powel continued to follow the Quaker

SPICES—opposing war, championing equal rights for minorities, supporting women's health, caring for the earth, donating the produce from their organic garden to the local food bank, and other important concerns. Before his death in 2022, Powel urged recognition of the 250th anniversary of the meeting house itself and supplied the authors with significant resources for this article.

Today, stewardship is a major concern of the Pipe Creek Quaker Meeting members. They recently hired restoration specialists to offer advice on work to ensure the meeting house will stand for many more years. They persist with making their lives testimony to the core values of their faith despite their low numbers. With continued support, in 12 years the Pipe Creek Meeting will celebrate the 300th anniversary of the arrival of its founder, William Farquhar, on the banks of Little Pipe Creek in 1735.

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Editor's Note: The HSCC Publications Committee is seeking new members to edit the *Carroll History Journal*. A love of history and a basic knowledge of grammar and punctuation are all that's required. Authoring articles is optional. If interested, please contact Curator of Collections Cathy Baty at Cathy@hsccmd.org.



Interior view with wood stove as main source of heat. Note the simpler, darker-hued benches salvaged from the 1934 fire, across from and to the left of the stove. (HSCC photo, 2023)

Our thanks to Amos Graham Davidson (1906 – 2001) who ensured that both the Meeting House and the Quaker presence in Union Bridge and the Maryland Piedmont would not be forgotten. Thanks also to Bill Powel (1936 – 2022) for graciously sharing his years of research and collected materials of the Pipe Creek Monthly Meeting with the authors.

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