

Haddonfield Monthly Meeting

A Brief Chronology regarding Quakers, Slavery in Philadelphia and South Jersey, and Meeting Relationships with local African-Americans

The Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice and Equality wishes to thank the Benson History Museum, the Haddonfield Historical Society, the Quaker Collection at Haverford College, and the Lawnside Historical Society for providing information and insights for this research project.

George Fox challenged slave-holding Friends in Barbados in 1676:

And so now consider, do not slight them, to wit the Ethiopians, the blacks now, either any man or woman upon the face of the earth; in that Christ died for all, both Turks, Barbarians, Tartarians, and Ethiopians; and for you; and tasted death for them as well as for you; and hath enlightened them as well as he hath enlightened you; and his grace hath appeared unto them as well as it hath appeared unto you; and he is a propitiation for their sins as well as for yours: for he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

Recalling the Old Testament rule that bondsmen should be set free after a limited term, Fox concluded:

It will doubtless be very acceptable to the Lord, if so be that masters of families here would deal so with their servants, the Negroes and blacks, whom they have bought with their money, to let them go free after a considerable term of years, if they have served them faithfully; and when they go and are made free, let them not go away empty-handed. This, I say, will be very acceptable to the Lord.

A commentator later noted: “the very moderation of the Quakers slowed an initial opposition to slavery. Since many Quakers owned slaves, especially in Barbados, there was an inhibition against criticizing fellow Friends... Even (Fox’s) mild instruction angered men holding large slave contingents. When Quakers were accused of encouraging slaves to rebel against their condition, Fox was at pains to say he had no such thing in mind.”

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1677 The Lenni Lenape (named Delaware by English settlers) sold all their land between the Rancocas Creek (Burlington County) and Timber Creek (Gloucester County). A deed was made in this same year dividing Carteret’s holdings in Northeast Jersey from those of Quakers in Southwest Jersey. Previously, Major John Fenwick, “A recent convert to the Quaker faith” bought Lord Berkeley’s land in Southwest Jersey for 1000 pounds, acting on behalf of Edward Byllynge, a London brewer. Three prominent Quakers were named as Trustees to manage his property: William Penn, Gawen Lawrie and Nicolas Lucas. Byllynge and the three Quaker trustees decided to divide West Jersey into 100 shares and offer them for sale.

1677 Quaker proprietors of the province drew up a constitution Penn later used as a model for his “utopian Philadelphia.”

1682 William Penn first stepped foot in the New World in New Castle. Newton colony (now Camden) was founded by devout Quakers from London, Yorkshire and Ireland. They were assisted by indentured servants; a small number of enslaved Africans helped with the largest plantations. Quaker farmers begin to settle along Cooper’s Creek. This included area that later became Haddonfield.

1684 The first Friends Meeting House in Newton Township was built on Newton Creek, in what is now West Collingswood. (The structure burned down in 1817.)

1685 Samuel Carpenter, who helped to finance construction of the Salem meeting house and used slaves to work a 1,100 acre plantation, represented Salem at the large Burlington assembly. Another significant businessman at that time, William Evans, settled in Evesham; his plantation was worked by a dozen enslaved Africans.

1686 Quakers continued to acquire enslaved people. William Penn himself owned enslaved persons and bequeathed some to his widow. When indentured white immigrants made trouble for the overseer of his manor, Penn told him to get Africans instead, “for then a man has them while they live.”

1688 Germantown Quakers began to challenge slavery: What would Quakers, as professors of peace, do if these Africans revolted? “There is a liberty of conscience here which is right and reasonable, and there ought to be likewise liberty of the body... to bring men hither, or rob and sell them against their will, (this) we stand against.” Quarterly and Yearly Meetings in the area justified their silence so as not to discredit Friends elsewhere.

1690 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting adopted the following minute: “It is the advice of this meeting that Friends be careful not to encourage the bringing in of any more Negroes, and that such that have Negroes be careful of them, bring them to meetings and restrain them from loose and lewd living, and from rambling abroad on First days or other times.”

1693 To maintain harmony, the managers of the Quaker press refused to give authors permission to print divisive literature. That is why the first Quaker--inspired attack on slavery was issued by dissident followers of George Keith, who had been disowned.

1698 The growing number of enslaved people raised fears of rebellion. Philadelphia Meeting asked Friends in Barbados to “forbear sending any Negroes to this place, because they are too numerous here.”

1700 At the recommendation of William Penn, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting instituted religious meetings for enslaved Africans.

1701 Elizabeth Haddon arrived in South Jersey to administer the lands owned by her father, John Haddon, a wealthy English businessman; she called it Haddonfield in his honor. John’s papers included a reference to “our Guinea ships” suggesting he may have been involved in the slave trade.

1702 The marriage of Elizabeth Haddon to John Estaugh was attended by various Quakers, including the Haines and Wills families who used many slaves and indentured servants to work their farms.

Elizabeth Haddon Estaugh had several (though less than others in her circle) enslaved Africans working on her property, including Primus Marsh, who lived into his 90's. Elizabeth Woolman, sister of John Woolman, was EHE's neighbor and a close friend; it is assumed EHE was exposed to anti-slavery discussions through Elizabeth Woolman and others.

Early 1700's -

- Slaveholding was commonplace in West Jersey. Enslaved Africans and indentured European servants worked the plantations of prominent Quaker families in Old Gloucester, Salem, and Gloucester counties. One Quaker enslaved two Native Americans. Those "owning" the largest number (9-12) included Samuel Cole; William Evans; William, Joseph and Daniel Cooper, and John Hugg.
- East Jersey Friends noted a growing mulatto population; this was seen throughout the colonies where slavery was permitted.

1711 William Southeby was disowned for trying to write against slavery. Later, John Farmer and Ralph Sandiford were also disowned for their anti-slavery writing.

1712 Because of fears about rebellions, the Quaker-controlled PA Assembly imposed prohibitive tariffs on the importation of enslaved people, however, the Privy Council in London vetoed this action to keep up the lucrative slave trade.

1716 Salem Quarter said: "It is desired that Friends generally avoid buying such Negroes as shall be brought in, rather than offend any Friends who are against it, yet this is only caution and not censure." In response, PYM reiterated the Yearly Meeting's opposition to participating in the slave trade and urged Friends to treat Negroes with a Christian spirit.

1721 After meeting in a home for more than a decade, the Quaker meeting was formally established in Haddonfield when Elizabeth Estaugh convinced her father John Haddon to donate land for the meeting house. For almost 100 years it was the only place of worship in the village of Haddonfield. It was also the first public building.

1730 PYM minuted: "This Meeting recommends it to the care of the Monthly Meetings, to see that such who may be found in this practice may be admonished."

1733 Sarah Norris opened a dry goods store in Haddonfield, with labor of several enslaved Africans.

1734 The first significant conspiracy by enslaved people in present-day New Jersey was uncovered in Somerville; others followed in subsequent years.

1737 Salem Quarterly Meeting, at the direction of the Yearly Meeting, "recommends to each Monthly Meeting... make an answer to our Next Quarterly Meeting" on the issue "relating to Negroes." On September 15, 1738, it was reported that the monthly meeting members were "mostly clear of buying Negroes."

1743 John Woolman began to express concerns about slavery, leading to the 1754 publication, "Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes." He emphasized the Golden Rule and Christian

brotherhood to all men. No one could be held in servitude. He said, "Oppression in the extreme appears terrible, but oppression in more refined appearances remains to be oppression."

1751 Friend Daniel Cooper and his cousin Benjamin provided space at their respective ferries for slave auctions, through 1762. (By 2019, three historical markers had been placed at former auction sites in Camden, along the Delaware River.)

1754 PYM minuted: "We entreat you seriously to weigh the cause of detaining them in bondage."

1758 After several decades of minutes, quiet discussions and the bold actions of Lay and Sandiford, PYM directed Meetings to disown those members who bought or sold Africans, and encouraged slave-holders to set them free. PYM appointed Woolman and others to visit members who enslaved Africans or were involved in trading.

1761 John Woolman wrote: "I went to Haddonfield Meeting...I felt encouragement and so crossed the River. In this visit I was at two Quarterly and three Monthly meetings, and in the love of Truth, felt my way open to Labour with some noted Friends who kept Negroes and as I was favoured to keep the Root, and Endeavored to discharge what I believed was Required of me, I found inward peace therein from time to time, and thankfulness of heart to the Lord, who was graciously pleased to guide me."

1763 Haddonfield Meeting minuted: "Isaac Horner had been spok with for selling one Negroe, buying several, two of which were new Negroes. Therefore Josiah Albertson and Joseph Bell are appointed to treat further with him as they may be directed in the Wisdom of Truth and report to next meeting. " Later: "they had visited Isaac Horner who seemed to justify the purchasing his slaves. He is therefore Disunited from the Society in manner of Yearly Meeting." (1758)

1764 Haddonfield Meeting proposed to print George Fox's journal, in January. The minutes also noted that Isaac Andrews inherited a "Negroe." He requested advice to "deliver the Negroe to another person or pay money to free him at a suitable age." A committee including Josiah Albertson, David Branson, Nathaniel Lippincott, John Gill, Josua Stoaks [Joshua Stokes], James Cooper, James Whitehall, Joshua Lord, and Isaac Bellengo could not reach consensus after several meetings and returned the matter to the full Meeting. The Meeting later decided Andrews could keep the Negroe. If he behaved himself faithfully as a good servant, and paid his master 5 pounds per year for 5 yrs, then the Negroe would be freed and receive the saved funds plus interest.

1767 Aaron Aaronson, "whose plantation was out Grove Street, on the other side of Coopers Creek," made his will this year. "My three Negroes I give and bequeath in manner following, that is to say my Negro man Anthony to my daughter Mary, my Negro man James to my daughter Keziah, and my Negro girl Margaret to my daughter Rebecca to serve them until my said Negroes shall severally arrive at the age of thirty-five years, at which age them and each of them shall be set at their own liberties as free persons. Rebecca Aaronson married Abel Nicholson and her sister Mary married Abner Woolman, a brother of John Woolman.

1770 Following two meetings (7/9 and 9/19), "The minute respecting slaves from last Quarterly Meeting being now considered, which requires (a) report be made what progress hath been made there-in, the Clerk is directed to return for answer in our Reports, That the matter hath been under consideration, but way hath not yet opened to proceed therein."

1774

- Petition advocating emancipation for all enslaved people in NJ - circulated by Quakers and signed by 3000 people - was presented to the NJ Assembly. Action was not taken because of concerns that such a threat to property was intended to encourage general resistance to the king's will.
- The Continental Congress adopted a nonimportation policy against Britain and its possessions; this halted the slave trade until later action by the Confederation Congress following the Revolution.
- PYM minuted: "Where any members retain slaves without such reasons as shall be sufficient and satisfactory the cases shall be brought forward to next Yearly Meeting for consideration."

1776

- Following the Declaration of Independence, some enslaved Africans from New Jersey and other states fled, and in some cases presented themselves as free.
- Several African-Americans crossed the Delaware River with Washington on 12/25 and took part in the Battle of Trenton, a turning point in the war. Most Friends remained neutral during the Revolutionary War.
- A new PYM query: "Are Friends clear of importing, purchasing, disposing of, or holding mankind as slaves? and do they use those well who are set free and necessarily under their care... Are they careful to educate and encourage (Negroes) in a religious and virtuous life?" Those who failed to live up to Friends' testimonies were disciplined.

1777 In March, a Haddonfield Meeting Committee, including James Cooper, John Tatum and Benjamin Swell/Swett, was appointed to visit Friends who still held Africans in bondage. They later reported that 28 slaves were manumitted. Jacob Jennings, William Cooper, Isaac Horner, Joseph Morgan, John Barton, Hannah Ladd and Elizabeth Mickle had not complied but "appear uneasy"; Richard Matlack, Jacob Stokes, Marmaduke Cooper, Joseph Nicholson and Elizabeth Iredell "seem not disposed to set theirs' free." Once freed, the African Americans were usually given a small plot of land so they could become self-sufficient. In August, the Women's Meeting minutes mentioned that PYM's advice on the question of slavery was now solidly under consideration; "Friends are desired to proceed without any more unnecessary delay... which the Clerk is desired to notify the Quarter in the reports."

Over the next year: James Cooper and John Tatum updated Haddonfield Meeting: Isaac Ellis had freed 5; Hannah Cooper manumitted a man; Isaac Horner did not free a man and woman; Hannah Ladd freed a male and female but reversed her decision.

1778-79, PYM urged local meetings to appoint committees to look after the temporal and spiritual welfare of those who were previously enslaved; this included pecuniary compensation.

1779 In another report by Haddonfield Meeting: Marmaduke Cooper, Isaac Horner, Joseph Nicholson, and Jacob Stoaks [Stokes] refused to free their enslaved Africans. Horner and Cooper were later disowned by the Meeting. Also, Haddonfield began to raise funds educate the Black children. (Dana Dorman has noted that either PYM or Haddonfield Meeting recommended a subscription of 100 pounds for the schooling of negro children, the buying of books, &c.)

At least "200 Negroes" attended a Quarterly Meeting in Haddonfield, at which James Cooper, William Jones, John Reeves and Benjamin Swett were speakers.

By 1780, New England, New York, and Baltimore Yearly Meetings had all made membership in the Society contingent on compensating one's former slaves. In that year, PYM minuted: "It is the earnest desire of this Yearly Meeting that Friends may proceed to complete the releasement of the few slaves remaining in bonds with any of our members." Slavery became illegal in Pennsylvania.

1786

- Enslaved servants from the South could still be brought to Philadelphia for conventions and Congress but risked investigation by the Abolition Society, of whose efforts George Washington complained bitterly.
- During this year the Haddonfield Friends School was founded.

1788

- Haddonfield Meeting records state "no Negroes held in bondage among us." This was achieved either by manumission or expulsion of members who were still enslaving people.
- New Jersey Quakers helped secure a law prohibiting slave ships from being outfitted in the state, and no enslaved persons living in the state could be removed without his or her consent.

1792 Enslaved persons held by Marmaduke Cooper, a former member of Haddonfield Meeting, were freed, and his membership was reinstated.

1793 At the Constitutional Convention, approval of the Constitution and protecting the Union were given more importance than slavery. A federal fugitive slave law was also approved.

1793 Haddonfield Meeting minutes note that it was holding meetings "with the black people" by this year and regularly for the next two years.

1795 Haddonfield Monthly Meeting appointed a committee "to attend to the care of Becky a poor Black woman." Care was also provided to support of one or more Indian women and children.

1796 Quakers taught former slaves to read and write and helped them get established. PYM agreed to accept Negroes and mulattos as members. A few mixed marriages were also recorded.

1797 The editor of *After Freedom*, (1987) M.M. Pernot, described Quakers' view of free Blacks living near them in Salem: "The perceptions of blacks by Quakers were, it should be remembered, adversely prejudiced by the narrow racial views of that era. Although Friends were far ahead of other white Christians in advocating the end of slavery and assistance to the free, they were nonetheless contributors to the reduction of the worth of African peoples. And when Quakers favorably commented on blacks, they usually recognized traits expected of whites. In short, paternalism shaped their thinking on the cultural and social characteristics of the blacks in their midst." (p. 63).

1800 New Jersey population was 211,149 including 12,422 still held in bondage. A Haddonfield Meeting document from around this time listed 21 Quakers and the people they freed, as well as 16 black families listed as "free negroes not on record."

1804 NJ's first law passes providing for gradual abolition: "The birth of every child must be registered and is to be "free but to remain the servant of the owner of the mother until the child was 25 years old if male and 21 years old, if female."

1804 "Quakers had advocated educational elevation for blacks since the 1770's; they became all the more interested in that reform as the emancipation of hundreds of blacks drew near. As the report [of the Committee of Publication, New Jersey Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery in 1804] shows, the Committee encouraged abolitionists to 'promote private associations in compact neighborhoods in which the people of colour' could be educated in the evening or in Sunday Schools. It also called for the admission of black children to established schools, apparently without separation, 'especially those who evince favourable dispositions and the promise of genius.'"

1806 Hannah Conn, a black woman, is received into membership in the Haddonfield Monthly Meeting. Although others may have preceded her, she is the first documented black member of the meeting. She had been a "faithful servant" to Hannah Hopkins, who mentioned Conn in her 1837 will.

1806-7 Elias Hicks urged others to boycott products of slave labor (rice, sugar, cotton) to weaken businesses dependent on slavery. Later, stores would sell "free" goods.

1807 Attee Leeman, a black laborer, owned the land where the Haddonfield library is now. Free blacks lived and worked in Haddonfield from an early date.

1809 The first public school for Haddonfield opened. Little is known about the school's early years, but it was probably not free to attend and most likely was only for boys. The school certainly would not have welcomed black students.

1811 Cuffe, a Friend of mixed Negro and Indian background, travelled to Sierra Leone to see conditions of those Negroes who had gone there. Upon return to the US, he encouraged American Negroes to become colonists for Sierra Leone.

During this period, African American Friends in numerous Meetings, including Haddonfield, were required to sit in the balcony, under the stairs, or in the back bench. Some Friends, of African and European background, sought to end this practice. In 1837, the Grimke sisters sat beside Grace Douglass at Arch Street meeting "believing that God required us to identify ourselves with her and bear a silent testimony against the wicked prejudice that existed in our society." They were elderd by the Meeting's leaders.

1821: Haddonfield Meeting member John Gill 3rd manumitted an enslaved man named Franklin Howard. It is unclear why Gill was enslaving a man at this late date; perhaps Howard had been a minor and was held until he qualified for freedom under NJ law, or Howard was purchased with the express intent of manumission.

1837 The Wilburite, Gurneyite, Hicksite split, coming after the Hicksite/Orthodox split, led many meetings to focus internally and to emphasize unity rather than further disagreements relating to slavery. Some Western Quarter (south west of Philadelphia) and other Friends denied use of their meetinghouses to outside lecturers on abolition, temperance, women's rights and other reform topics. In 1842, Caln Quarterly Meeting appointed several who wrote: if antislavery activities disturbed the unity of Quakerism, something must be wrong with the Society of Friends.

1840 Philadelphia Quaker and abolitionist, Ralph Smith, bought land and divided it into lots which were sold at a low price to free blacks. Originally called Free Haven, the development was next to

another free black community, Snow Hill. (In 1907, Snow Hill and Free Haven were renamed Lawnside.)

1847 William Still, from Medford area, began working in Philadelphia with the PA Society for the Abolition of Slavery; he became an important figure in the Underground Railroad. Peter Mott, who lived in present day Lawnside, was the “station master” for the Underground Railroad in this part of South Jersey. He worked with Quakers from Haddonfield, Mt. Holly, and other local Meetings.

1863 The Emancipation Proclamation goes into effect. President Lincoln’s main motive was winning the war; indeed, the Proclamation only freed enslaved Africans in Confederate states.

1865 New Jersey was the last Northern state to free slaves. The 13th Amendment to the US Constitution abolished slavery. 18 persons in NJ were recorded as still being enslaved.

1868-1875, women from Haddonfield Meeting participated in a "Mother's Club" that taught and supported women in Snow Hill, providing information on running a home and handling money, reading Scriptures together, and providing some material goods.

1870

- For many years, the education of African American children had not been a high priority of the Haddon District Trustees. One year after holding classes at the Odd Fellows Hall, with a black teacher, the Grove School (Grove & Lake Streets) Haddonfield, became the black school when a new white school opened. Mt Pisgah AME Church also met there. Black children had to walk from Newton and Rowandtown districts to attend the Grove Street school; these districts paid Haddonfield so that the children could go to school there.
- One out of every eight American families had domestic help – either a black or white female.

1875 330 African Americans and 2,211 whites lived in the old Haddon Township. Most of the African Americans who lived outside of Haddonfield rented homes on their employers’ properties.

Between 1890 and 1900, Haddonfield Friends established and then supported the Snow Hill Industrial School in Lawnside to train African American youngsters to repair harnesses and shoes, and later, to make hammocks and cane chairs, so that they - and the school - could be self sufficient. However, the school did not prepare students for high school or college.

1904 A new school was built for black students. Known as School #4, it was located at 230 Douglass Avenue. It had no indoor plumbing, and was quickly outgrown. Space was then rented in Mt. Olivet Baptist Church to house some grades until a new school was built in 1923.

1910’s Blacks began attending Haddonfield High School.

1911 Haddonfield Friends, local Presbyterians and others presented Mt. Zion Sunday School, in Lawnside, with books for their library.

1916 African American families came to live in the area called “The Point” on Potter Street, renting houses without heat or toilets, for \$8-10. These homes were owned by the Horters, later passed on to the Clements. Some African Americans worked in the big Victorian homes of Haddonfield. African American families also lived on Douglass and Lincoln Avenues in the late 19th and early 20th century.

1923 The Lincoln School, a larger segregated elementary school, was built at 325 Lincoln Avenue. It replaced School #4.

1948 The State of New Jersey ordered integration of all NJ public schools. The Haddonfield school system closed the all-black Lincoln School. Older students already attended the same (and only) high school.

1950 African American homes at “The Point” were demolished. Residents were assured their houses would be replaced, but new houses were never built. The land eventually became ball fields. Seven homes in Stokleytown were owned by African Americans.

1950’s The lunch counter on Kings Highway was desegregated. Until this period, Haddonfield was a “sunset town” in which African Americans were expected not to be present after nightfall.

Up until the 1970’s, many African-American women and men continued to work in the homes of Haddonfield and as gardeners, window washers, and handymen. For women, this was made visible by a regular New Jersey Transit bus that carried them from Lawnside each morning and returned them home each night. A few men walked home via the railroad tracks to Lawnside or rode bicycles to work carrying their window washing equipment. During the period 1957—59, one of the elderly men was run over by a train while he was walking home – somewhere between the old railroad water tower (Reillywood Avenue and Railroad) and Scouts (Little League Ball) Field.

2015 Friends including members of Haddonfield Meeting participated in a large gathering at Arch Street Meeting House committed to increasing their consciousness about the intersection of privilege and race, and integrating anti-racism work into the overall activities of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

2019 A third historical marker was placed along the Camden waterfront, each noting a location where enslaved Africans were once sold into bondage. This included sites previously owned by Daniel and Benjamin Cooper.

This document was initially prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice, Peace and Social Concerns Committee, Haddonfield Meeting and presented to the meeting in a dramatic reading on February 17, 2008. Since that time, it has been updated periodically by Linda Lotz.

Dana Dorman, with the Haddonfield Historical Society, has kindly shared additional information for inclusion in this chronology.
