

QUAKERS IN BERKS COUNTY

1718 - early 1900's

by

John E. Eshelman
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The first settlement of Friends within the present area of Berks County was made in the township of Oley in the year 1718, while that territory was then a part of Philadelphia County. Anthony Lee, a native of near Mansfield, in Nottinghamshire, England, and his family were the first Quaker arrivals, taking up a tract of 440 acres along the Manatawny Creek west of the present village of Pleasantville. They were soon joined by other Friends families from North Wales in Philadelphia County. George Boone, Sr., George Boone, Jr., Squire Boone and John Webb arrived in 1720, and Samuel Whitacre, John Longworthy, Benjamin Longworthy, Derrick Clever, John Huges, Ellis Huges and Thomas Ellis followed shortly thereafter. They were all members of Gwynedd Monthly Meeting of Friends near North Wales.

These early Friends, who came after the Indians released their rights to the territory, were the third class of settlers in the county, the Swedes and Germans having preceded them by a few years.

Meetings for worship were first held at the home of George Boone, Sr., who settled in western Oley and occasionally at the home of Anthony Lee. The Ellis and Hughes families settled in eastern Oley also along the Manatawny Creek.

Five years later, with more arrivals in the new settlement, the Gwynedd Friends granted the Oley Friends a preparative meeting, which was first held fifth month, 27th, 1725. The following year they erected a small log meeting-house on an elevated position near the northwestern limit of the Swedes tract they called Amity; and it is this meeting-house which is named in a petition presented to the Court of Philadelphia in 1727, "for a high road to be laid out, beginning at the Lutheran Meeting-House at Tolpehocken, to end in the high road at ye Quaker Meeting House, near George Boone's Mill in Oley."

In the twelfth month, 24th, 1736, George Boone, Jr., and his wife, Deborah, deeded one acre of their tract of land to Anthony Lee, John Webb and Squire Boone for a consideration of twenty shillings. The same day, the latter conveyed said tract to Ellis Hughes, Thomas Ellis and James Boone, in trust, "for a house of religious worship for meeting for the people called Quakers, within the same township of Oley and shall permit and suffer the said piece of land whereon ye said messuage stands, and is erected . . . to be and remaine a burying place, for ye burying and interring of all such persons as the people called Quakers within ye said township shall allow of, and to no and for no other use and service whatsoever."

The following year, Friends having increased in the Oley settlement, the first meeting-house was felt to be too small and inconvenient and a larger log meeting-house was erected on the same site. At the same time after a request to Gwynedd Monthly Meeting had been granted, a Monthly Meeting was established with the consent of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting. It was first held sixth month, 25th, 1737, and

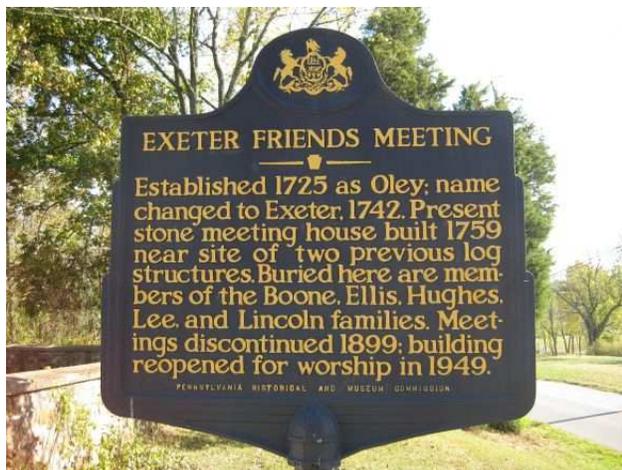
called Oley Monthly Meeting at which time George Boone, Jr., was appointed the first Clerk; Anthony Lee, Richard Lundy and Thomas Ellis the elders; and Ellis Hughes, Sizemore Wright and James Boone the overseers. At the same meeting, Jane Ellis, requested a certificate to travel in the ministry with "a concern" to visit the Meetings in eastern Maryland and Virginia. It was granted to her.

In the year 1742, by a division of the township of Oley, the meeting property fell into Exeter, and the name was consequently changed to Exeter Monthly Meeting, which name it has since borne. The first meeting under the new title was held fourth month, 24th, 1742.



Exeter Meetinghouse

Friends continued to increase in number in Exeter and Amity townships, and in the year 1758, there was need for a greater meeting-house, and the following year, the neat, plain and substantial stone building was built which still stands on an eminence overlooking the fertile Monocacy Valley. It was erected on a plot of ground to the east and just across the roadway from its log predecessor. This stone meeting-house has been used continuously for a period of one hundred and seventy-five years by the Exeter Friends.



About the year 1732, Irish Friends from Chester and New Garden in Chester County, following the Schuylkill river northward to the mouth of the Maiden Creek, decided to settle along its fertile banks, as this territory measured up to their ideals for homesteading. Large tracts of land were taken up by these early Friends: Moses Starr, Isaac Starr, Francis Parvin, John Wily, Joseph Wily, Sizemore Wright, Laurence Pearson, Jacob Lightfoot, Samuel Shaw, Richard Lundy, Robert Penrose, Joseph Penrose,

Nehemiah Hutton, John Houlton, John Gracy, Nathaniel Houlton, William Penrose and John Fincher.

The Maiden Creek colony was the second settlement of Friends in the county, and was twenty miles north of the Oley settlement. Gwynedd Meeting granted them a preparative Meeting in 1735, and in that year a log meeting-house was built on land then owned by the Lightfoot family. Meetings were first held at the home of Moses Starr, who lived in the central part of the Quaker settlement.

A portion of the diary of John Wily - one of the early Friends to settle along the Maiden Creek - is still in existence. In its crumbling and faded pages this entry can still be deciphered: "Hannah Dent (from England) was with us at our meeting of Maiden Creek the fifteenth day of 2nd month, anno 1734."

When the Monthly Meeting was established at Oley in 1737, Maiden Creek Friends came under its care, Monthly Meetings being held alternately at both meeting-houses until the schism occurred in the Society in 1827.



Probably the Last Meeting at Maiden Creek Meetinghouse in 1927

Maiden Creek Friends paid ground rent for their property prior to 1759. In that year, Benjamin Lightfoot, noted surveyor of his day, granted a small tract of four acres and five perches from his farmland including the Meeting-house property, to Joseph Penrose, Richard Penrose, Thomas Wright and William Tomlinson. In the same year, they erected the stone meeting-house which stood for a period of one hundred and sixty-seven years until its removal, unfortunately, in 1926 to another site on the west side of the Maiden Creek to make way for the city's impounding reservoir.

Nearly the whole of Maiden Creek township was owned by friends when Berks County was erected in 1752, and it is traditional that seventy families were members of the Maiden Creek Meeting at that time, their settlement extending into what are now Windsor and Richmond townships.

The third settlement of Friends was in Robeson township, on the west side of the Schuylkill River about the year 1740. Moses Embree, Owen Humphray, John Scarlet, Sr., John Scarlet, Jr., Thomas Thomas, Robert Long, Peter Marsh, Richard Moor, Evan Thomas, David Cadwallader, David Jenkins, John Wells, David Morris and Ephraim Jackson were the earliest Friends in this territory.



Maiden Creek Meetinghouse at Original Location in 1927

In the fifth month, 1740, they petitioned the Monthly Meeting at Exeter for a separate Meeting which was granted them. A preparative Meeting was then instituted at Robeson and first held sixth month, 1741. In

that year a committee was appointed to choose a place upon which to build a meeting-house, and in the Fall a log house was erected in the central part of Robeson township which was the most convenient meeting-place for worship for Friends residing in the Hay Creek and Allegheny Creek valleys.

The Meeting at Robeson was long known as "the Forest Meeting," being situated in the great tract of almost unbroken woodland called "the Forest", which extended from Flying Hill, south, beyond the Hopewell Hills. Friends residing as far south as the Welsh Mountains were frequently driven home by the Indians while on their way across the hills to attend First-day meeting. John Griffith, an eminent minister in the Society of Friends, from Chelmsford, England, says in his journal, "ninth month, 9th, 1766 - Next day we crossed the Schuylkill and had meetings at the Forest, Nantmill, Pikeland and so on through Chester County."

In the second month, 24th, 1785, Thomas Lightfoot and his wife, Rachel of Pikeland, Chester County, deeded eighteen acres of land in Robeson township for a consideration of fifteen pounds and eighteen shillings in gold and silver coin, to David Jackson and Edward Bonsall, both Friends of Robeson township. This tract included the land upon which the Robeson Friends had built their log meeting-house and laid out their burying-ground. John Scarlet, Sr., and William Scarlet were appointed additional trustees, for the title to the acquired property for which Friends had previously paid ground rent.

A monthly meeting was established at Robeson in 1789, the first meeting for business being held seventh month, 28th, 1789, and in the same year, a sandstone meeting-house was erected to accommodate the growth in Friends in that territory. Meetings for business and worship were held at Robeson continuously until the fall of 1872, in which year Friends had decreased in such numbers that the Quarterly Meeting advised them to discontinue their business meetings. Meetings for worship, however, were held until the year 1880, when Friends became almost extinct in that locality.

The same year the entire property including the Meeting-house, with the exception for the burying-ground, was sold by the trustees to Jacob Kurtz for eight hundred dollars. The Meeting-house for some years was used for the housing of farming implements, but afterwards fell into a state of dilapidation. Finally in 1925, it was converted into a poultry-house, which caused much resentment among the descendants of Friends who formerly worshiped there. Robeson Meeting originally belonged to Philadelphia Quarterly and Yearly Meetings until the year 1800, when it was made a branch of Caln Quarterly Meeting in Chester County. When the Monthly Meeting was discontinued in 1872, the remaining members attached themselves to Caln Preparative and Bradford Monthly Meeting in Marshallton, Chester County.

Friends were living in Bern Township near the forks of the Tulpehocken Creek before the year 1744, for in the second month, 5th, 1745, Richard Peters deeded two acres of a tract of one hundred and eighty, belonging to him, "to John Eleman, to be laid out in an oblong where there are some graves already, made in consideration of one shilling currency which I acknowledge to have received, to have and hold the said 2

acres of land to the said John Eleman and his heirs for the rise of the congregation of the people called Quakers in that neighborhood."

In the eighth month, 26th, 1749 appears this minute in the Exeter Monthly Meeting records: "Friends living in and near the forks of the Tulpehocken Creek request for the winter time to have a meeting amongst themselves by reason of the length of the way and difficulty of the waters, and it is agreed that a meeting be kept at John Eleman's the first and third First days every month." The following winter they were granted a meeting every first day to be held at John Eleman's.

As no further mention is made in the minutes of Exeter Monthly Meeting in regard to the Tulpehocken Friends, it is very evident they soon became extinct and it also appears a meeting-house was never erected on the plot deeded to them in 1745. John Eleman, James Taylor and Samuel Wilkenson and their families removed to Virginia in 1758, and the Embrees and Woolesons other early Friends of this settlement moved to the town of Reading about the same time.

Members of the Society of Friends have been inhabitants of the town of Reading since the earliest days of its foundation, though their number has never been numerous. It has been stated by early historians, that Reading Friends had a meeting-house erected as early as 1751, but they give no evidence for their statement. If a meeting-house had been erected at that time, its location is not now known. The early minutes of Exeter Monthly Meeting are silent in regard to the Reading Friends until twelfth month, 30th, 1756, when there is a minute showing that a meeting was held in Reading every third day of the week, at the eleventh hour, the year round, which "though approved by the meeting had not yet been on the minutes." It is generally supposed these meetings were held at the homes of members.

John Churchman, of Nottingham, Maryland, an eminent minister of the Society of Friends, states in his journal of 1757, that he held a meeting in the Reading Court House in that year, but this is not to be taken as proof that a meeting-house did not exist in Reading at that early date. Usually, in ancient times, when a visiting minister was expected at a Friends' Meeting, notice was given, and many of the townspeople, who were not connected with the Friends attended. As a rule the meeting-houses could not accommodate this number of people, and so larger places of assembly were used.

In the eleventh month, 29th, 1759 a Committee reported to Exeter Monthly Meeting that they had selected lots 402 and 403 in the plan of Reading, as a suitable site for a meeting-house. The Committee was authorized to purchase the lots and they subsequently reported a deed thereof. On these lots (where the present meeting-house is located on North Sixth Street) forest trees were cut down, and were used in erecting a small building in which meetings were held in the year 1760. This meeting-house, undoubtedly, was a very small and temporary building, for in the twelfth month, 30th, 1762, a report was presented to the Monthly Meeting, that, "the Friends of Reading are in need of a better house to meet in, and have thoughts of beginning to build one next Summer and desire this Meeting should take same under consideration. The present

ground is only large enough for a burying place, and accommodation is wanted for a meeting for traveling Friends."

A special committee reported favourably first month, 27th, 1763, but desired the advice of the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting. This was held in Philadelphia eleventh month, 1764, when the matter was referred to a committee of thirteen, who reported at the Exeter Monthly Meeting twelfth month, 27th, 1764, recommending a Monthly Meeting and a new Meeting-house.

The Philadelphia Meeting held fifth month, 6th, 1765, recommended the erection of a "Meeting-house of round logs at present," as more desirable to their needs and Exeter Monthly Meeting of fifth month, 30th, 1765 concurred in this action.

In the year 1765, ground was rented at the corner of Queen and Thomas Streets (now Fourth and Washington) and the building, of "round logs" was erected on this plot. After the lower logs had partly decayed, the building was repaired by the erection of a brick wall extending upward from the ground a few feet.

The property was purchased from the Penn family through their attorney, John R. Coates, of Philadelphia and was deeded in the eleventh month, 27th, 1800, to Thomas Lightfoot and Thomas Lee for the consideration of three pounds and fifteen shillings. While the Hessians captured at Trenton in 1776 were prisoners in Reading, this meeting-house was used as a hospital for the care of those among their number who were sick. Friends worshiped in this second meeting-house continuously from 1765 till 1868. Among its earliest members were: Benjamin Pearson, Benjamin Parks, Richard Lewis, Samuel Jackson, John Mears, Benjamin Lightfoot, Isaac Wickersham, John Parvin, William Iddings, Issac Clendennon and William Chandlee. In the women's meeting were these interested members: Sarah Lewis, Mary Jackson, Ann Jackson, Hannah Iddings, Susanna Mears, Jane Wily, Mary Wickersham, Mary Pearson, Barbara Parks, Sarah Pearson and Elizabeth Lightfoot.



Reading Meetinghouse

In the year 1867, at a monthly meeting held at Maiden Creek, Henry Tyson, Samuel E. Griscom and John H. Reid were appointed a committee to devise a plan and means to build a new meeting-house, either on the Sixth Street plot or at their present place of worship. They recommended that a new building be erected on the former site, and consequently the Washington St. lot 60' x 230' extending from Fourth Street to Ash, was disposed of at a public sale eighth month, 21st, 1867, to Daniel Miller and Giles J Wilson for nine thousand and fifteen dollars.

In 1868, the present stone meeting-house which has been in constant use by the Society of Friends to the present day, was erected on North Sixth Street. About the year 1908, Reading Friends were threatened with extinction; at that time the membership was reduced to but two resident members: John B Bowers and his wife, Ruth Smedley Bowers; and it was through their deep interest and concern for the welfare of the Meeting that it was prevented from being discontinued. In a few years, Friends from other localities removed to Reading and the membership was further increased through individuals convinced of Friends' principles. Today there are fifty-one members, some of them non-resident and a few direct descendants of worthy ancestors who struggled for the cause of Quakerism in America. The fact that a small group of the sixth and seventh generations are active in Meeting and church matters shows that the work of the pioneers was not in vain.

Friends from Berks County were among the early pioneers of that vast wilderness beyond the Blue Mountains known as Northumberland County, and were the organizers of these Meetings: Catawissa, Roaring Creek, Muncy, Fishing Creek, Elklands and the Half-Moon settlement. These meetings were all under the care of Exeter Monthly Meeting until 1796, when they effected a separate Monthly Meeting known as "Catawissa Monthly Meeting." Friends came to this territory as early as 1774, and many of them endured great hardships not only from the menace of wild beasts, but also because of the hostile bands of Indians in the wilderness. These early settlers were led by Moses Roberts, a Quaker Minister from Oley township and were principally his neighbors in that region: - Job Hughes, William Hughes, Jesse Lee, Nathan Lee, Edward Hughes and a few Maiden Creek Friends: Merrick Starr, Richard Penrose and Moses Starr, Jr.

In the eleventh month, 1797, an indulged meeting was established at Pottsgrove (now Pottstown). Although this meeting is located in Montgomery County, some of its members lived within the area of Berks County. This Meeting grew from a small one held at the home of Jacob Thomas in Coventry as early as 1756. The Pottstown Meeting of Friends has never been a large group, and has always been of the Orthodox branch. Meetings were discontinued in 1934, owing to but few members remaining in that locality and the frame structure on King Street was sold a few years later. The active members of earliest times were: William Ives, Jacob Thomas, Isaac Potts, Hugh Jones, John Wilson, Joseph Potts, Jesse Ives. And in the women's meeting: Mary Garrett, Sarah Potts, Rebecca Ives, Martha Potts, Rebecca Thomas, Ruth Anna Rutter, Martha Rutter, Sarah McClintock, Sarah May, Grace Potts, Sarah Wheelan, Anna Leonard, Hanna Jones and Phebe Wilson.

When the division occurred in the Society in 1827, the majority of Friends in Berks County took sides with the Orthodox branch. The Exeter Monthly Meeting, thereafter held in Exeter Meeting was composed of members of the Orthodox division and controlled the Exeter and Pottstown Meetings. The Exeter Monthly Meeting afterwards held at Maiden Creek Meeting was composed of the Hicksite members residing within its limits. They controlled the Maiden Creek, Reading and Pottsville Meetings. About 1880, when the membership of Maiden Creek Meeting was greatly reduced, the Monthly Meeting was transferred to Reading where it is still held.

The Hicksite members of Exeter Meeting were so few in number as not to warrant the building of a separate meeting-house. The small group of Orthodox Friends residing in Reading were thereafter attached to Maiden Creek Preparative.

The Orthodox Friends being in the minority at Maiden Creek, they held Meetings for twenty-six years in a log-house, formerly a dwelling, on the west side of the Maiden Creek, long known as the Reber farm. As soon as they were financially able, they built a small brick meeting-house on the land of Thomas Willits, a member, and first occupied it in the Spring of 1853. This small plot of seventy-two perches was deeded to Thomas Willits and his wife, Susanna, to Jacob Parvin, William Smith and William L. Bailey, on first month, 15th, 1856, in consideration of fifty dollars. Meetings were held here continuously for sixty years, and then, since the worshipers were few in number, they were later held at the homes of members: first at the Pearson home; later at "Ivy Lodge" where lived the Kirk family and in more recent years at the old Parvin home at Berkley. The Meeting is composed of only six members: Carrie J. H. Parvin and two daughters and the Benjamin Parvin family. The brick Meeting-house was sold in 1934, and is now the summer residence of the Parvins.

Some of the well-known members who worshiped at the Brick Meeting-house of Orthodox Friends, were: Thomas Willits, John S. Pearson, Jacob Parvin, William Smith and Mordecai S. Parvin.

And the women Friends: Margaret Penrose, Rebecca Lee, Huldah Starr, Eunice Starr, Deborah Parvin, Susan P. Willits, Ellen Smith, Susan Pearson and Sibilla Parvin.

The Maiden Creek Hicksite Friends became extinct in 1910 with the death of James M. Meredith and his wife, Deborah L. Meredith. The active members belonging to this branch of the Meeting were: Isaac Penrose, William Willits, James Starr, Thomas Pearson, Ephraim Penrose, Jacob Lightfoot, Thomas Lightfoot, Eleanor Penrose, Esther Willits, Eleanor Starr, Phebe Pearson, Mary Lightfoot, Sarah Ann Lightfoot, Eunice Bright, Elizabeth Lightfoot, Mary P. Lee and Ellen Penrose.

The Exeter Monthly meeting of the Orthodox Friends was discontinued in the eleventh month, 1899, and the members attached themselves to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting held at Fourth and Arch Sts. However, a small "indulged" meeting was held each First and Fourth days at the Lee home in Stonersville until the year 1932 when there were but two members surviving, Charles Lee and his sister, Martha Lee, both of whom died shortly thereafter. An annual meeting is held in the old Exeter Meeting-house each summer, by the Friends' Extension Committee of Philadelphia, and occasionally appointed Meetings are held in the rebuilt stone meeting-house at Maiden Creek.

At the time of the separation of Robeson Monthly Meeting, only seventeen members united with the Hicksite Friends. They held their meetings at the home of Elizabeth P. Scarlet at White Bear until their number became extinct. The surviving members of the Orthodox Meeting in 1880 were: James Scarlet, James Scarlet, Jr.,

Mersey Riter, Sarah Dickinson, Rachel Ann Scarlet, Sarah Fawkes and Emma Jane Fawkes.

Exeter Monthly Meeting had for its ministers during its long history these Friends: Ellis Hughes, Moses Roberts, Samuel Embree, James Iddings, William Iddings, Abraham Griffith, Abel Thomas, Isaac Potts, Amos Lee, Enos Lee, Jane Ellis, Deborah Boone, Mary Lightfoot, Abigail Wily, and Dr. Henry Tyson. Those who ministered to the Friends of Robeson were: Peter Thomas, Judah Thomas, Rebecca Newlin Scarlet, Mary Jackson and Hannah Morris.

Friends established schools in their various settlements, either on their meeting-house plots or on a nearby tract of land. Exeter Friends' school was situated a half mile west of their meeting-house. It was organized in 1790 and closed in the year 1860, the property being sold to the township for a public school, and the building later erected there was officially known as "The Friends' School." Some of its earliest teachers were: Joshua Boone, James Lee, John Lee, Thomas Cherington, Sarah Boone, John G. Lewis and Ellis Lee.

A log school-house erected on the maiden Creek property in 1784, had as its first teacher, Thomas Pearson. This building was replaced by one of stone in 1807. It was closed in the year 1870, and was still standing in 1926, being then used as a private dwelling; and it has since been rebuilt on the new site of the Maiden Creek Meeting-house property. Other instructors were, Jessee Willits, Mordecai Wright, Jessee Lightfoot, James M. Meredith, Rachel Griscom, and Martha Lewis.

The oldest Robeson Friends' school-house was situated a mile south of Scarlet's Mills. It was of sandstone construction and was used continuously from 1795 till 1844. A later school-house conducted in this territory for Friends' children was located one mile West of Scarlet's Mills close by the public road leading from White Bear to Gibraltar. This school-house was used but a few years due to lack of pupils. These properties have long since been disposed of by Friends and the school-house obliterated. The only teachers know were, Valentine Carberry, Levi Scarlet and John G. Lewis.

The Friend's school-house in Reading had for its instructors, Barbara Parks, Caleb Johnson, Abner Williams, Benjamin Davis, Joshua Davies and Rachel D. Griscom.

Only a partial record remains of the many hundreds who lie in Friends' burying ground at Exeter, and this might be said of all the burying grounds of Friends within the limits of Berks County. In the year 1817, Exeter Friends' burying-ground was entirely filled with graves and as no additional land could be purchased at that time, from the neighboring property owners, ground was hauled and filled to a depth of four feet over the older portion of the burying-ground, and a second tier of graves was begun. In this portion of ground 175 persons have been buried since the year 1817. Some of the interments prior to that date have been recorded in Friends' registers, and others have come to light in private family records. The first interment known at Exeter Meeting is

that of John Hughes, who died tenth month, 10th, 1736, in his 84th year. He came from Merioneth, Wales, in the year 1698 with his family, and was one of the early settlers of Gwynedd, being an elder of that meeting for a number of years before coming to Exeter to reside with his son, Ellis Hughes, the Friends' minister.

The burial records of Maiden Creek and Robeson Meetings are very incomplete. In the former Meeting there are about four hundred names on the burying-ground chart, while the City is said to have disinterred nearly seven hundred bodies in 1926, for removal to the new burying-ground on the west side of the Maiden Creek. In all of these burying-grounds are many persons who were residents of the Friends settlements from the earliest days, but not of the Quaker faith. There is a record of 216 burials at Robeson Meeting. Samuel J. Lewis, late of West Chester, Pa, who died in 1934 in his 90th year, was a descendant of the Scarlet family of Robeson who settled there in 1739. He lived in his early manhood on the old Scarlet farm at Scarlet's Mills and he told the writer that there existed in his time an old Friends' burying-ground on that property in which, his ancestors had said, were interred the earliest Friends of Robeson who died in that locality. It was surrounded by a stone wall which has long since disappeared and the ground has been plowed over. This burying-ground was situated in the orchard, in the rear of the dwelling on the farm later known as the McLenegan property.

In the Reading Friends' burying-ground on North Sixth Street, in the rear of the meeting-house, lie many of the ancient inhabitants of the City, but not one marker has ever been erected to their memory. Friends were opposed to grave-stones until recent years, but now low head-stones are permitted. The last burial in the Reading plot was that of Edgar D. Reid, a young Friend who died in 1879 at the age of 13.

It has been frequently misstated by some historians that the Lincoln family of Exeter township were members of the Society of Friends. They were of the Congregationalist faith, but many of their family have been interred in the Exeter Friends' burying-ground and one, Thomas Lincoln, was buried in the Reading Meeting ground.

However, Sarah Lincoln, daughter of Mordecai, requested to become a member of the Society of Friends just prior to her marriage to William Boone in 1748. After having been accepted in membership, the marriage was reported in the Monthly Meeting by the overseers on third month, 26th, 1748, as having been "orderly accomplished." Sarah Lincoln Boone retained her membership with Friends until her death in 1810, at the age of 83.

Anne Boone, daughter of James Boone, married Abraham Lincoln a brother of Sarah Lincoln Boone, "out of meeting" in 1760, but she acknowledged her error for this breach of Friends' discipline, and was reinstated one year later. Her husband never became a member of the Meeting at Exeter.

Maria Lincoln, a member of Robeson Monthly Meeting was the daughter of Thomas and Margaret Jackson of Robeson township. In 1835, she married Samuel

Lincoln, a son of James and Elizabeth Lincoln and her membership with Robeson Meeting was retained, although her husband did not join.

Daniel Boone, the Kentucky pioneer, was a Friend in his youth, having been born on his father's farm in what is now Exeter township, but he left this territory in 1750, at the age of 16, when his family moved to North Carolina.

Charles Evens, founder of the cemetery in Reading which bears his name, was a member of the Reading Meeting for several years until 1794, when he was "disowned for marrying one not in membership with Friends." He bought a certificate of membership in the ninth month, 26th, 1792 from the old Pine Street Meeting of Friends in Philadelphia.

Francis Parvin, Moses Starr, Benjamin Lightfoot, James Boone, Anthony Lee and George Webb were prominent in their respective sections as justices of the several courts of Berks County.

Jacob Lightfoot, John Hughes and Richard Lewis served as commissioners; Benjamin Lightfoot and William Boone as sheriffs; and Benjamin Parvin, William Boone and Samuel Jackson as coroners, all holding office prior to 1770.

From the time of the settlement of Reading until after the Revolutionary War the administration of public affairs was chiefly in the hands of Friends, then, probably because of the decrease in their numbers, they gradually declined in power and influence in the county.

1/30/46.