

# THE JOURNAL

OF THE

## FRIENDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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### Richard Smith and his Journal, 1817:1824

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ALL his business in Philadelphia being completed, and arrangements made for sending his goods by waggon, on the 28th of Tenth Month, 1817, R. S. set out on foot for Pittsburgh, Pa., a distance of 301 miles, which he accomplished in twelve days. His account of the journey is full and interesting—the soil, timber, crops and amount of cleared land all being remarked. After it had rained on the fourth day, the roads were “like a clay-pit,” and again, “bad beyond description.” On the fifth day he was obliged to take the stage from Abbotstown to Gettysburg—“the many creeks being mostly impassable by persons on foot”; the fourteen miles occupied three and three-quarter hours. Two days later he overtook the stage-passengers again, “impatient at being detained.” He passed many emigrant waggons, often in difficulties, several of them those of the “peaceable Germans,” an adjective he always uses; no doubt these were the Redemptioners, who had left Philadelphia many days before he did.

1817.

- 10 mo. 28. Farms 120, 150 to 200 Acres, price p Acre \$100, 120 or 150; produce in Wheat 20 to 25 Bushels p Acre.
- 10 mo. 29. The Tavern-keeper at Smokers Tavern quite a Young Man, a horse-Racer; his Servant a wicked Swearer, detained my parcel till I had paid my Bill.

1817.

10 mo. 30. 5½ miles eastward of Lancaster met with a Friend who said that Land in that Township<sup>6</sup> was worth from £100 to £200 sterling p Acre, fine grazing Land. The Dutch Language vernacular in the District. A Bridge over the Susquehannah [at Columbia] one mile long. Toll for a Waggon with 4 Horses \$1; Fine for exceeding a foot's pace \$20; taking a lighted Segar or Pipe \$50. Pd. 6¼ Cents. Arrived at a Dirty Dutch Tavern.

10 mo. 31. The Shops shut up this day at York to Commemorate the Reformation by Luther 300 years since its commencement. Before I arrived at Abbots Tavern was wet thro.' Went with my Linen to Wash to a poor Woman who supported 3 Children & a blind Mother. Her Grandfather (Abbot) once owned the whole of the District. Gave her some Meal, currants & coffee. The Tavern-keeper said: "The following remark will generally apply thro' most of these parts & others, viz: First Generation, industrious sober Economists (scraping too near), The Second often Spend-thrifts, the third very poor."

Lands in this District \$78 cash, \$100 credit.

11 mo. 1. Found unpleasant company in several rough Waggoners at the foot of the Mountain, who carried their Beds with them & lay upon the floor.

11 mo. 3. The last 19 Miles almost one continued Chain of Mountains; the roads very bad. An Emigrant Waggon had the Axletree broken when I came up, another had spent nearly all his Money and his Waggon fast, being 150 miles short of his intended Journey.

This night was spent at Householders Inn, Junietta Crossings. On this and the previous day, he heard that Wolves and Bears did damage to farmstock.

11 mo. 4. [23 miles to Schellsburg.] In the Inhabitants little appearance of religion. Felt much weakness of Body (being very sore).

11 mo. 7. [At Adamsburgh] where I first saw coals burnt in America.

11 mo. 8. [26 miles to Pittsburgh.] At the principal Inn there was denied Lodging. [Perhaps he looked much like a tramp after the wear and tear of the road.]

Total of computed Expenses of Journey, \$10.38½, exclusive of about \$1 for Shoe Leather.

R. S. stayed at Pittsburgh a little under two months, with the exception of a short visit to Brownsville. He was occupied in selling and exchanging a part of his stock, which did not arrive till eight days after himself. He makes no reference to Friends whilst in the City, though some of their books were in the Public Library. At Brownsville he called on E. and Caleb Hunt with letters of introduction, who gave him much information about this neighbourhood, and "suitable advice for the disposal

of my goods, and gave me a Letter to a respectable man in Smithfield." It was no doubt on their advice that he went to that place. At Brownsville, also, he "spent an agreeable time with Jno. & his Brother William Cock, English Friends profitably engaged in a boat-building and Iron Foundry Business."

On the 3rd of First Month, 1818, R. S. left Pittsburgh for Steubenville in Ohio, 80 miles down the Ohio river, in an "Ark Boat, much more comfortable and quiet than a Keel-Boat." On the following evening they stuck on a sand-bar, and remained there seventeen hours, only getting off after the boat had been unloaded and the owner, the two passengers and three other men had got into the water to push.

1818.

1 mo. 7. [At Steubenville, the county town of Jefferson County; a person] spoke very lightly of my Pins, which caused me to call him a liar, after which I felt uneasy in my Mind, but became more reconciled after sitting in silence an hour or more in the Bed Room at Night.

1 mo. 8. Took of my Pins to S. Page's store & had them weighed; & found No. 4½ of mine half an ounce heavier than his No. 5. Went to J—— with them, who would not be convinced thereof.

There is no notice of his meeting with any Friends at Steubenville.

On the 16th of First Month he went over to Smithfield, where his letters were of such service that he at once got into touch with Friends at their houses. The first reference to the Meeting calls it "Smithfield (late Plymouth)." He engaged a store at \$5 per month, fetched his goods from Steubenville and was able to write to his father on the 23rd of Third Month that though "this disposal of my Goods by retail is a slow way of Selling, yet I have done Business generally to my satisfaction, I believe to a Degree exceeding my expectation," and on the 13th of Seventh Month to send a similar assurance to Toft Chorley.

1 mo. 29. Stuck up behind the Door of the Store six religious Tracts.

On the 17th of Second Month a very unpleasant incident occurred which was destined to give him much trouble and perplexity of spirit. An old drunken man

“ came into the Store and pocketed [various articles.] I was threatened to be prosecuted if I did not proceed against him.” The account of the proceedings at the Sessions at Steubenville does not give a pleasant view of the Grand Jury. In the course of the Sessions, information was laid against the Judge and the lawyers attending the Court for gambling, *viz.*, playing at cards contrary to law! The Case was not finally disposed of till the Fourth Month of 1819, when a small fine was inflicted on the culprit.

1818.

- 2 mo. 25. Felt a confirmation on my Mind from perusing the Ohio Yearly Meeting Extracts to settle near the Indians on the Tuskarawa River at Greentown or Jerometown.
- 3 mo. 6. Interview with old Sarah Jenny [Janney] whose G<sup>t</sup> grandfather from Cheshire came over with William Penn.<sup>8</sup>
- 3 mo. 16. John Grimshaw informed me that Chesnut Rails would last 60 years, Oak Rails 15, & Locust Posts 100 years.

The letter to his father of the 23rd of Third Month has some paragraphs of interest :

It is very lamentable to observe the sad effects that are produced from the excessive use of spirituous Liquors in this Western country. Whisky distilled from Rye is sold for 2s. and under p Gallon, & is drank, I believe, as common as Ale in England.

The following quotations are given :

Good wheat  $3/4\frac{1}{2}$  sterling p bushel of 60 lbs.  
Oats  $1/1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1/5$   
Rye  $2/3$ .

The same letter contains a pitiful appeal for news from home, as he had not had a single letter in the eight months since he left :

Dear Father, I repeat the request which I made in a former Letter, entreating thee to write to me the first favourable opportunity. Altho' I have been preserved *in much patience* . . . yet judge, Dear Father, what acceptance a Letter (however short) wd have with me from one who is the nearest and dearest Tie I have in this World, & whose tender solicitude & paternal care I have so much cause to remember.

- 4 mo. 3. A muster of the Trained Bands and much intoxication amongst them.

[This is an entry that appears periodically.]

- 4 mo. 18. [At Pittsburgh.] Much exercised in mind concerning my future prospects & was at a stand for some time whether to purchase [goods] or not, witnessing many turnings & overturnings.

1818.

4 mo. 19. My future prospects seem gradually settling for a continuance at Smith Field.

5 mo. 9. A Day of Sickness & drowsiness to me, occasioned by chewing a little Opium not larger than a pea; alas, what poor Creatures we are at best.

In Seventh Month he wrote to T. Chorley that he had "been preserved in contentment of mind & health of body, although I have had to experience various outward & deep inward exercises." This letter contains an admirable general review of agriculture in Ohio, and refers with interest, and the promise of a subscription, to a proposed Bible Society at Leek, of which he had heard.

7 mo. 29. [At Meeting] Jacob Ong<sup>9</sup> preached. "Linsey Woolsey Garments forbidden under the Law."

9 mo. 17. I have been deeply exercised of late respecting my future prospects; felt some relief after seeing Benj: Ladd.<sup>10</sup>

On the 25th of Tenth Month, while on an expedition to the northward, he met at Kendal Friends' Meeting with Thomas Rotch, one of the Friends appointed by Ohio Yearly Meeting to attend the Commissioners for the Indian Treaty. "A Settlement of Wyandots, at or near Wappaconata, requested Friends to send out a person to instruct them, which was not promised, tho' likely was intended."

12 mo. 22. I was under considerable exercise this day, finding my Way somewhat closed in. . . . Thomas Ford came into the Store and spontaneously treated with me for the purchase of my Stock in Trade.

Of this first year in Ohio, George Crosfield's sketch has the following remarks:

Though an entire stranger he met with many friends & received great kindness, both in this place & during his travels. His simplicity, meekness & humility gained their esteem & love; & for the kindness received he felt grateful, & was at all times desirous to return it; he was often so engaged by rendering to his friends assistance in various ways.

Throughout 1818, however, the way to the Indians was dark and he found no opening for fulfilling his concern. He was drawing more closely to Friends:

7 mo. 15. The Coat that was rent in the Ship went to be new Buttond, and the Collar taken off,

but recognised that their practice was somewhat short of their principles—a matter which often engaged the attention of the local Ministers and of visiting Friends. Waiting for guidance, he carried on his Store, boarded first with one neighbour and then with another, helped them with their crops and chores, and worked his two days on the public highway according to the law of the State. The Store contained a general assortment; thirty-four different articles are mentioned in one place or another—hardware, glass, groceries, drapery, etc., ranging from scales and stilliards to tobacco, vestings and kid gloves.

12 mo. 30. Christopher Healy from New York State<sup>11</sup> preached in a very zealous, powerful, baptizing manner, so that tears were shed by different persons present (myself for one). Towards the latter part of the sermon he was led out in an extraordinary manner to speak to the states of some of the Youth present on their Deviations from plainness & primitive simplicity, etc.

1819. 1 mo. 1. [A public meeting.] The M. house was very full and yet quiet. C.H. preached 2 hours or more; he was much led out on doctrinal points, particularly on Election, etc.

In the early part of the year 1819 there are many signs that R. S. was identifying himself with the Society of Friends. It is not easy to decide who among the various neighbours named belonged to the Society, and who did not; but from the beginning of this year there is constant mention of one with whom R. S. was on terms of very great intimacy—a young Friend named Joseph Watson, whose mind was turned, like his own, towards the Indians. They were probably not very different in age; many were the discussions they held together, and when the concern was formally put before Friends, it was the joint concern of the two young men.

The maturing of this exercise of mind was closely bound up with the application of R. S. to be received into membership in the Society; the two matters run side by side and overlap, giving the impression that only by membership could he get to the Indians, though it would not be right to say that he joined Friends on this account.

1 mo. 24. Jos. Watson informed me that W. Wood,<sup>12</sup> a Minister & Elder in this Meeting, informed him that Friends had an attachm<sup>t</sup> towards me, & w<sup>d</sup> be glad for me to request to be received a Member, but I have not clearness to do it, etc.

On the 17th of Second Month, 1819, the Indian concern was formally put before Benjamin W. Ladd and William Wood. "After sitting about an hour under a considerable degree of exercise, the Business was opened by reading a written 'account of our exercise.' W. Wood queried about being received into membership; 'I stated that I should go to instruct the Indians on principle, & Wages were not my object.'" Two days later, at the Monthly Meeting at Mount Pleasant they laid the matter before the Indian Committee. "Horton Howard<sup>13</sup> expressed the inconsistency in sending a Person out, not of Friends Society, that we are poor Creatures, and, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall, with other discouraging Language towards myself. Jonathan Taylor<sup>14</sup> expressed a few words to the same effect, but I thought more Charitably."

2 mo. 21. Went with J.W. to B.W.L.'s, when J.W. conversed privately with B.W.L., the result of which, as respected myself, J.W. stated to be unfavorable, on account of my not being a Member of Friends Society.

2 mo. 23. Ever since the Opportunity on the Evening of the 19th at Jonathan Taylor's it has been a gloomy season to my poor tossed & not comforted soul. The Divine presence & life-giving power of the Holy Spirit have been in a great degree withheld, so that which ever way I have looked there has appeared to be no resting-place; till this morning the holy seed has arisen with victorious power & peace, and there appears to be a prospect of my joining the Society of Friends.

3 mo. 16. John Hoyle did not much encourage visit to the Indians, principally on the ground of being removed from Friends.

On the 17th of Third Month he applied to the Overseers to be received into membership: "Robert Lesslie said he believed it was at the right time, he had been wishing it for some time. J. Hoyle likewise received the request favourably. R. L. urged Friends principles—being smitten on the right cheek to turn the other also." [It is possible that R. S.'s temper was rather peppery.]

On the 18th of Fourth Month he met the Committee appointed to visit him on his application:

After about half-an-hours silent waiting, B. W. Ladd queried of me whether I understood Friends Discipline? afterwards whether ever I had failed in Business in England? what were my Motives in making

the request to be received a Member? I gave them a little outline of my history from the first time of my going amongst Friends, & offer'd to produce or fetch Documents to convince them about my not having failed in Business. David Way expressed himself perfectly satisfied with my word. Lewis Carey said I must not be discouraged if it lay over for some time, which was common in these cases.

1819.

5 mo. 15. [At Q.M. at Mount Pleasant.] Jonathan Taylor gave a discouraging advice relative to J. Watson & myself visiting the Indians. A letter had been received stating the appointment of a Man to settle with the Indians at Lewis-town.

On the 17th of Fifth Month R. S. had another interview with four Friends on his application :

It came with force upon my Mind to ask them whether Black People were admitted into Friends Society. The answer they returned was that some of their Members were opposed to it, but those only that were prejudiced against them by Education. It was concluded to pass my application over this Monthly Meeting, being most easy to myself.

The following entry is marked in the margin, "Extraordinary Exercise," possibly by T. Chorley :

5 mo. 19. *The North has now given up*, saith my Soul, and it is a long time since the *South* kept back. All the influence of fixed Northern *points* of attraction and prospects of time of my own fixing, I hope, are given up, which for so long time have accompanied me ; and I trust I am made willing to wait the Lords time (however long) before I proceed to the Indians. My Mind has been greatly refreshed this morning from the time I awoke in meditating on these things, & the nearness between Jos. Watson and myself, & my following of him from place to place without any premeditation of my own. A memorable day this has been to my soul. Yea, as Water to a dry & thirsty soil after a long drowth. Long has the Heaven been to it as Brass and the Earth as Iron. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed. Man's extremity is Gods opportunity, and my Mind appeared to be at its utmost extreme or stretch.

On the 2nd of Sixth Month he met the Committee again : " Wm. Wood said he had much satisfaction with my conduct since I came amongst them." On the 18th of the next month he was asked if he wished his request continued, and the next day the Monthly Meeting at Smithfield admitted him into membership.

At Ohio Y.M. on the 10th of Ninth Month, " the report of the Committee on Indian Affairs was so generally satisfactory as to occasion fervent Desires for the continuance of further aid and attention."

9 mo. 13. I find myself almost at a standstill respecting my future prospects . . . as the Indian Committee give me no encouragement at present to prosecute my prospects towards them.

11 mo. 20. [At Q.M. at Short Creek.] On Indian affairs M. Mt<sup>rs</sup> are to report to next 8<sup>th</sup> Mo's Quarter the subscriptions.

which makes it probable that finance was an obstacle preventing Friends from accepting R. S.'s concern more heartily.

The story of these matters has been entered into at length; they bulk largely in the Journal of the year 1819. It is only too evident that R. S., with his sensitive mind, was often sorely discouraged and oppressed. In this matter, as in another to be noticed presently, Friends seem to have suspected the ulterior motive of earning a livelihood. For this suspicion, though doubtless groundless, they were not without some small justification from a worldly point of view, as R. S. would appear to them to be a man without any definite occupation at this time, which, in a newly-settled country without a leisured class, could not but raise the question. He had closed his Store on the 9th of First Month, and, with the exception of schoolmasterships, which he held intermittently, he must have been supporting his financial needs, small as they were, from his capital, and perhaps from money or board and lodging earned by helping his neighbours.

It will help us to an estimate of the powers of perception and judgment of the leading Friends of the district to remember that it was in 1819 that William Flanner<sup>15</sup> was liberated for service in England and that it was the Quarterly Meeting within whose limits R. S. was living that liberated him. Such minds might not find it easy to understand the purity of the motives that animated R. S.

11 mo. 20. [At Q.M. at Short Creek.] W. Flanner stated his reasons for his early return from England, and produced a written paper which was addressed to S. Cr. M.M. It was signed by a select Council of Liverpool Friends, men and women.

Unfortunately we are not told what the Quarterly Meeting said about it!

JOHN DYMOND CROSFIELD.

*Savernake, Marlborough, Wiltshire.*

*(To be continued).*

*The following notes have been written by the Editor ; further information respecting any of the Friends mentioned would be welcomed.*

<sup>6</sup> In Toft Chorley's transcript, which, unfortunately, is as far back as we can go, there is an unfilled space left for the name of the Township.

<sup>7</sup> In the transcript the name of the traducer of Richard's pins was first written, but now all we can read is "John," while over the crossed-out surname are the words "a person."

<sup>8</sup> This was Thomas Janney (1634-1696).

<sup>9</sup> Jacob Ong (c. 1759-1849, see Minutes of Ohio Y. M. 1849) was a member of Smithfield M.M. His wife was Mary (c. 1763-1852); of their daughter, Mary McGrew (c. 1802-1829) there is a Testimony in *Memorials concerning deceased Friends of Ohio Yearly Meeting*, Phila. 1868. [The copy in **D.** was presented in 1914 by Elwood D. Emmons, of Whittier, Ia.]

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin W. Ladd (d. *circa* 1856) was a Minister of Short Creek M.M. and was also a clerk of Ohio Y.M. He travelled in the ministry as far east as Nantucket. His Testimony was presented to Ohio Y.M. 1856.

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Healy (1773-1851) was a prominent Minister of this period. He visited the British Isles in 1831. See **THE JOURNAL**, iv. 89.

<sup>12</sup> In the Minutes of Ohio Y.M., 1844, there is a reference to William Wood, "a minister and member of Smithfield M.M." who died that year in his 87th year. There is in **D.** a sheet, brown and worn, containing a Testimony of Smithfield M.M. concerning Mary Wood, daughter of William and Mary Wood, who died in 1819, "not having reached her twentieth year." It is signed by Benjamin W. Ladd, clerk, 19. vii. 1819, and countersigned by his wife, Elizabeth Ladd, and others.

<sup>13</sup> The minutes of Y.M. for 1826, 1835, etc. were printed by Horton J. Howard, a Friend, of St. Clairsville, O.

<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Taylor (1768-1831) was "one of the earliest emigrants of the Society of Friends to this part of the western country (Testimony of Short Creek M.M. in *Ohio Memorials*). He was born in Pennsylvania, and shortly after his marriage to Ann Schofield in 1789, he settled in Virginia. In 1800 they went west. He died in Ireland, while on a religious visit. See *The Friend* (Lond.), 1847; *Annual Monitor*, 1833; *Iowa Journal*, xii. 421; **THE JOURNAL**, iv. 88, 96; etc. Extracts of a letter from B. W. Ladd, describing the receipt of the news of J. Taylor's death, are in **D.**

<sup>15</sup> William Flanner (1766-1837) was born of humble parents, non-Friends, in North Carolina. He joined the Methodists and later the Friends. His first wife was Peninah Parker and his second Catharine Patterson. In the years 1801-1808 he travelled through many of the Eastern and Southern States. In 1808 he went west. In 1819 he arrived in Liverpool and "after travelling a short time, diligently visiting the meetings of Friends, to their satisfaction as appears by their certificate, seeing no way to proceed further, he returned to his native land." In 1828-9 he was again in England and Ireland (*Ohio Memorials*). But Flanner will be remembered principally in connection with the strictures of Sarah Greer in her book *Quakerism; or the Story of my Life*, Dublin, 1851, wherein she described "James Flannil" as "six feet four inches high, large boned and coarse looking in the extreme," and devoted most of chapter vi. to very highly coloured picturings of him and his uncouth ways. Her statements are criticised by Sandham Elly in his *Ostentation*, Dublin, 1853, p. 44, but the late Samuel Alexander in **THE JOURNAL**, iv, writes of "his very tall and rather uncouth form . . . and his apparent total ignorance of what were then, as they are now, recognised as the ordinary amenities of civilized society." See *The American Friend*, 1907, p. 501.