

THE JOURNAL

OF THE

FRIENDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Golden Wedding of Longwood 1873

JN searching the poems of J. G. Whittier for the Quakeriana they contain, we became interested in his poem, "The Golden Wedding of Longwood," and through the kindness of various Friends, *per* Ella Kent Barnard, of West Grove, Pa., we have gathered particulars of this interesting event.

We are informed in the *Bi-centennial of Old Kennett Meeting House*, 1911 (page 44) that John Cox (1786-1880), fourth son of William and Lydia (Garrett) Cox, was born in Willistown Township, Chester County, Pa. He married firstly Phebe Hall and secondly, in 1823, Hannah Pennell (1797-1876), widowed daughter of Jacob and Hannah Peirce, of East Marlborough. "About 1827 they removed to E. Marlborough and their home, near Longwood Meeting, was a very important station on the Underground Railroad, and a place of entertainment for such reformers as William Lloyd Garrison,¹ Charles C. Burleigh,² Lucretia Mott,³ Fred Douglass,⁴ Theodore Parker⁵ and others."

The Golden Wedding celebration took place on the 11th of September, 1873. A record of the "exercises" has been furnished us. They commenced with the reading of letters from W. L. Garrison, John G. Whittier, and others, and also from Bayard and Marie Taylor,

then at Gotha, Germany. Poems were read by Simon Barnard, Chandler Darlington, Frances D. Gage [“not a Friend—a writer of some note”], and one by Bayard Taylor,⁶ entitled “A Greeting from Europe” (which is given here). Lucretia Mott and Mary Grew, President and Secretary of the Female Anti-Slavery Society, respectively, also took part. “Poem by John G. Whittier came too late to be read.”

A GREETING FROM EUROPE

I.

These German hills of evergreen
 No longer shall enfold me ;
 The ocean-wastes that intervene
 Are powerless to withhold me :
 Where'er the heart is strongly drawn,
 There speeds Imagination,
 And both, to-day, shall give to John
 And Hannah salutation !

II.

These pastoral vales of curds and cheese,
 And milk, and whey, and rennet,
 Have disappeared : I see the trees
 And rolling fields of Kennett !
 The dusty old Philadelphia road,
 And Longwood's place of meeting,
 And then—that cheery, warm abode,
 Which claims my fondest greeting.

III.

There, as a boy, my heart and mind
 Oft fed on gentler manna,
 For John was ever firm and kind,
 And motherly was Hannah ;
 And when with hopes of higher law
 The air of home grew warmer,
 How many a preacher there I saw !
 How many a famed Reformer !

IV.

The clumps of box beside the door,
The pear-tree in the garden,
The wax-plant, spreading more and more—
Each one is Memory's warden !
Around them cling the ghosts of years,
The breath of prayer and yearning,
Though, God be praised ! the darkest fears
Have passed beyond returning.

V.

Here Lowell⁷ came, in radiant youth,
A soul of fixed endeavor ;
Here Parker spake with lips of truth,
That soon were closed for ever ;
Here noblest Whittier, scorned and spurned,
Found love and recognition ;
Here Garrison's high faith returned,
And Thompson's⁸ pure ambition !

VI.

And finer souls like foliage grew
Beside the rugged timber ;
Here sat the mild-eyed Sarah Pugh,⁹
The clear-browed Abby Kimber ;¹⁰
And here, when serpent more than dove
Drew erring Man's indictment,
Lucretia Mott, with balm of love,
Allayed the rash excitement.

VII.

Nor these alone, though all the land
Gives praise where it upbraided :
There was a sad and silent band
Your Christian courage aided :
They came in fear, yet straightway found
Food, rest, emancipation :
Their "Cox's House" was underground—
A blessed railway station.

VIII.

Whatever hope gave cheer to man,
 Whatever thought uplifted,
 You welcomed, worked and watched the plan
 Still following as it shifted.
 You bore with windy vanity
 And theories mistaken,
 Content and glad, could you but see
 One slumbering soul awaken.

IX.

Lift up your hearts ! and let us give
 Our thanks as free libations,
 So rarely comes, while yet men live,
 The crown of Toil and Patience !
 And never Fate so sweetly swerved
 From paths she loves to tread in,
 As when she gave this long-deserved
 And Golden Year of wedding !

X.

Thank God ! the steadfast soul that strives
 Shall not be disappointed ;
 Earth's simple, quiet, earnest lives
 Are royalty anointed !
 Let Samsons come, of stronger thews,
 With firebrands and with foxes,
 But may our country never lose
 Its John and Hannah Cox's !

BAYARD TAYLOR.

Gotha, Germany.

Aug. 21st, 1873.

Whittier's poem is to be found in his collected works ;
 the following verses are of historical interest :

“ The fire-tried men of Thirty-eight, who saw with me
 the fall,
 Midst roaring flames and shouting mob, of Pennsylvania
 Hall ; ”

“ And they of Lancaster¹² who turned the cheeks of tyrants pale,
Singing of freedom through the grates of Moyamensing jail !

“ And haply with them, all unseen, old comrades, gone before,
Pass silently, as shadows pass, within your open door—

“ The eagle face of Lindley Coates,¹³ brave Garrett's¹⁴ daring zeal,
The Christian grace of Pennock,¹⁵ the steadfast heart of Neal.¹⁶”

There is an account of J. and H. Cox, with portraits, in Smedley's *History of the Underground Railroad*, 1883.

Longwood was the centre of the activities of “ Progressive Friends.” In 1853 “ a number of persons, largely of the Society of Friends, deeply impressed with the need for more active exertions in the cause of humanity and morality, began to hold meetings for the propagation of their views, in which they were assisted by prominent philanthropists from other parts of the country. . . . The name of ‘ Progressive Friends ’ speaks at once of their origin and of their central idea of progress in whatever could benefit humanity. From the farm of John Cox in East Marlborough [called Longwood Farm], a piece of ground was donated by the owner and here they erected Longwood Meeting House. Since 1853 a Yearly Meeting has been held, at which have gathered such well-known humanitarians as Lucretia Mott, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Theodore Parker, Frederick Douglass, Oliver Johnson¹⁷, Charles C. Burleigh, Mary Grew, Abby Kelly Foster¹⁸ In connection with the meeting a cemetery was laid out. . . .” (Futhey and Cope, *History of Chester County*, 1881, p. 242.)

The meeting-house was dedicated by a sermon from Theodore Parker. Mrs. Chace writes of these Friends in 1867 as “ old Garrisonian Abolitionists, formerly Hicksite Friends ” (*Elizabeth B. Chase*, 1914, i. 302). Conferences on philanthropic subjects have been held annually, except

in 1861; for the 1916 meeting see *Friends' Intelligencer*, 1916, p. 428. *Proceedings of the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends* have been issued from 1853 to 1904-1905 (many in D); the report for 1891 gives the early history of the movement, written by Edith Pennock.

NOTES

¹ William Lloyd Garrison (1804-1879), one of the foremost anti-slavery workers in America; editor of *The Liberator*. He was born at Newburyport, Mass. and died in New York City. There is a portrait of him and many references in *Elizabeth B. Chace*, 1914, and *James and Lucretia Mott*, 1896.

² "Charles C. Burleigh was a prominent Garrisonian. He had a long beard, and he wore his auburn hair in womanish ringlets. Mobs hooted at his appearance, but, really, had it not been eccentric, it would have been extremely handsome. He was a very eloquent speaker." (*E. B. Chace*, i. 138.)

³ Lucretia Mott (1793-1880) was the daughter of Thomas and Anna Coffin of Nantucket. Her mother was a daughter of Peter Folger. Lucretia married James Mott, Jr. (1788-1868), in 1811. They attended the great anti-slavery convention in London in 1840. Mrs. Mott may be seen in Haydon's great picture of this historic gathering. Her religious views underwent some change as time passed, but her long life was spent in doing good. See *Life and Labors of James and Lucretia Mott*, 1896, and other literature.

⁴ Frederick Douglass (1817-1895), "greatest of all colored Abolitionists . . . one of the most marvelous personalities I have ever known. He was an embodied miracle" (*E. B. Chace*, i. 143). He escaped from slavery in 1839 and was a notable passenger on the Underground Railroad. See his *Autobiography*.

⁵ Theodore Parker (1810-1860), preacher and social reformer, Unitarian, but of liberal views. Died at Florence, Italy.

⁶ Bayard Taylor (1825-1878), traveller, lecturer, writer, was born in Kennett Square, Chester Co., Pa. "His career began in humble circumstances, and ended in splendor. He was raised in a Quaker atmosphere." Intro. to *Works*, 1907. In his Quaker stories "the curious crotchets and fads of the Quaker community are ridiculed and rebuked," *ibid.* In 1878 he was appointed minister to Germany, and died in Berlin. Cedarcroft was his Pennsylvanian home.

⁷ James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), poet, of Boston, Mass. Author of *Biglow Papers*. Professor at Harvard, Conn.

⁸ George Thompson (1804-1878), Anti-Slavery speaker and Spiritualist. Mentioned in association with Friends in *James and Lucretia Mott*, 1896, and in *Elizabeth Buffum Chace*, 1914, where is his portrait. Before passing to America, he was of Edinburgh, where in 1837, he wrote an Introduction, etc., to a reprint of Angelina E. Grimké's *Appeal to the Christian Women of the Slave States of America* (in D.). He was in America in 1834 and 1851. See also *D.N.B.*

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⁹ Sarah Pugh was a prominent anti-slavery worker with Lucretia Mott and is frequently mentioned in her *Life and Letters*. With L. Mott, Mary Grew, Abby Kimber and Elizabeth J. Neall, she was a delegate to the World's Convention in The Freemasons' Hall, London, in 1840, but this band of noble women were relegated to the gallery as "rejected delegates."

¹⁰ Companion of Sarah Pugh in the Old World and the New. Richard D. Webb, of Dublin, wrote of them, "We have enjoyed with unabated relish the company of Sarah Pugh and Abby Kimber" (*J. and L. Mott*).

¹¹ The burning of Pennsylvania Hall by a pro-slavery mob in Philadelphia in 1838 was an outstanding event. The Hall, erected at a cost of \$43,000, was opened by a Convention which was to have lasted three days, but on the second day the Hall was a ruin. Whittier and others had narrow escapes (see *James and Lucretia Mott*; and lives of Whittier).

¹² In earlier editions "and Christiana's sons." This refers to the Christiana (Pa.) riot of 1851, following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill of 1850. Joseph Scarlett, Elijah Lewis of Cooperville, and J. Castner Hanway (all Friends) were arrested and imprisoned and the last named tried for treason, but all were acquitted. For a full account, see Still's *Underground Rail Road*, 1872, pp. 343-368, and Smedley's *Underground Railroad*, 1883, chap. viii.; etc.

¹³ Lindley Coates (1794-1856), of Sadsbury, Lancaster Co., Pa., was noted for his clearness of thought, soundness of judgment, and steadiness of nerve. In 1840, he became president of the American Anti-Slavery Society and was followed in the office by W. L. Garrison. (Smedley, *Underground Railroad*, 1883, many references; see *Genealogy of the Coates Family*, 1906, pp. 148-150.)

¹⁴ There is a sketch of the life of Thomas Garrett (1789-1871) with picture in Smedley's *Underground Railroad*. From 1822 he resided at Wilmington, Del. "His house being a Southern station of the Underground line was the scene of many startling and even amusing experiences. One summer evening when there was a collection of old plain Friends at the house, he was called to the kitchen, where he found a greatly terrified poor woman who had run away. . . . He took her up stairs, dressed her in his wife's clothes, with plain handkerchief, bonnet and veil and made her take his arm. They walked out of the front door where she recognised her master, as she passed. He was eagerly watching the house at the time" (*ibid.*).

¹⁵ In Jones's Abolition Rhymes Abraham L. Pennock is described as "a grave overseer."

¹⁶ Daniel Neall was a Friend, a well-known abolitionist and President of the Pennsylvania Hall Association. During the rioting which destroyed the Hall, he was tarred and feathered, though an old man. He was a large contributor to the funds of the U.R.R.

¹⁷ Oliver Johnson of New York was a signatory of the original "Call for a General Religious Conference" in 1853 and he acted as a Clerk to the Y.M. of Progressive Friends in 1856 and later.

¹⁸ Abby Kelly (-1887) was a prominent preacher of the anti-slavery gospel. In Mrs. Chace's volume of *Anti-slavery Reminiscences*, printed in 1891, she states that "Uxbridge Monthly Meeting disowned

Abby Kelly for anti-slavery lecturing although they did so, ostensibly, on some frivolous charges, which had no real foundation in fact" (*E. B. Chace*, chap. xxviii., where see portrait). She married Stephen Symonds Foster, who had, apparently, also been a Friend. Of Abby Kelly Benjamin S. Jones writes :

"Miss Kelly of Lynn,
Some esteem it a sin
And a shame that thou darest to speak,
Quite forgetting that mind
Is to sex unconfined,
That in Christ is nor Gentile nor Greek,
Abby K.
That in Christ is nor Gentile nor Greek."

New England Records

The best collection of New England Quaker records, the minutes of the New England Yearly Meeting and of the Rhode Island Quarterly, are in the library of the Moses Brown School at Providence. Others may be found at the Newport Historical Society, the New Bedford Meeting House, and the Meeting House at Lynn. All have been used again and again for local and genealogical purposes, but rarely for any general study. In every case they show so close a connection between the Quakers of Massachusetts and those of England that the records of the London Yearly Meeting and the London Meeting for Sufferings are essential for a clear understanding of what the New England Quakers of the early eighteenth century were doing.

From *Church and State in Massachusetts, 1691-1740*, by Susan Martha Reed, Ph.D., 1914.

In his efforts to protect the rights and redress the wrongs of colored people, Friend Hopper had a zealous and faithful ally in Thomas Harrison, also a member of the Society of Friends. . . . He was a lively, bustling man, with a roguish twinkle in his eye, and a humorous style of talking. Some Friends, of more quiet temperament than himself, thought he had more activity than was consistent with dignity. They reminded him that Mary sat still¹ at the feet of Jesus, while Martha was "troubled about many things."

"All that is very well," replied Thomas, "but Mary would have had a late breakfast, after all, if it had not been for Martha."

Life of Isaac T. Hopper, 1853, p. 122.

¹A transposition in the Revised Version of these two words shews the incorrectness of above exegesis, often used by Friends.