



RICHARD WALL AND GEORGE SHOEMAKER

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THE RECORDS of Bristol, Cheltenham, and other parishes of that vicinity of Gloucestershire, England, are full of the names of the Wall family, never spelt Waln or Walln. The Quaker records after about 1655 also contain numerous references to the Wall family.

Richard, the emigrant, was probably the son of Thomas Wall of Hasfield, and possibly a great-grandson of Sir Hugh Walle, Rector of Hasfield in 1550, and if so was baptized,¹ March 15, 1631, (old style). The name of his mother is not known. He may have married Margery Fletcher of Avening Parish in 1654.² If so, Margery died, and he married some time in the summer of 1658, Joan Wheel.³

¹ Register of the parish of Hasfield.

² Avening Parish Register.

³ Records of Gloucester Monthly Meeting.

The children of this marriage were Joane, baptized March 19, 1659,⁴ Joseph, and Arthur, who died in 1659 and 1660, respectively.⁵ Joan may have been the Joan who died January 1676.⁶ Richard Wall, Jr., may very well have been the son of Margery Fletcher, since he was married to Joan Bubb (some records have it Elizabeth) of Tirly, Gloucestershire, in the summer of 1677. If he was the son of Joan Wheel, he was only 19 at the time of his marriage.⁷

The first certain record of Richard Wall that has been found is in the minutes of Stoke Orchard Monthly Meeting, which state that in 1672 he lived at Ashworth (Ashleworth) in Gloucestershire, England. At a Monthly Meeting held at the house of Richard Philpot at Aston the third day of First Month 1673 (March 13, 1673, new style), Richard Wall was appointed to be present at a marriage. The minutes of this Monthly Meeting later disclose that it was held at Richard Wall's house at Hasfield in 1676. On the 30th of Second Month 1677, these minutes record a proposal of marriage between Richard Wall, the younger, of Hasfield, and Elizabeth Bubb of nearby Tirly.⁸

As Richard Wall came to America with Tobias Leech, and took up land adjoining him in the township, they were the principal landowners, and named it Cheltenham from their home district in England. It is interesting to note their close association in England, as is shown by the minutes of Stoke Orchard Monthly Meeting of the 15th day of 10th Month, 1769, when the second application for approval to the marriage of "Tobias Leech the younger" and Esther Ashmeade of Cheltenham Meeting was considered.

The first Wall recorded in Hasfield is "Sir Hugh Walle," rector of the parish church of "Hassefeld." His name first appears as clerk to the rectory, August 10, 1547. September 15, 1547, he was inducted as rector upon the death of Robert Wellis, June 26, 1547. In that year, (September 16) he is recorded as "Sir Hugh Walle." Many mentions appear until

⁴ Hasfield Parish Register.

⁵ Gloucester Monthly Meeting records.

⁶ Records of Frenchay Meeting near Bristol.

⁷ Records of Stoke Orchard Monthly Meeting.

⁸ There is a discrepancy in the records as to the bride's name; it is given both as Elizabeth and as Joan.

his death in 1570. He may have been Richard Wall's great-grandfather.

Gloucestershire in England was strong in Quaker groups, built up largely through the powerful preaching of Christopher Holder, Josiah Coale, and Thomas Thurston, all of whom visited America and established Quakerism in Virginia and the Carolinas.

Stoke Orchard is about ten miles northwest of the town of Cheltenham; and Hasfield is a very small village about fifteen miles northwest of Cheltenham and seven miles from Gloucester.

This region is a charming, rural garden country of villages and farms watered by the Avon, the Wye, and the Severn, and flanked by the Cotteswold Hills. Cheltenham is a large town, a health and educational center today with its springs and its colleges for both sexes. It stands on the edge of the Vale of the Severn, which runs through the central west of England. The Shakespeare country and famous cathedrals and abbeys are close by.

In the Minutes of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting of Friends there appears this record of Richard Wall's arrival:

"Richard Wall, his certificate was read in the Monthly Meeting of Philadelphia and accepted, which was given him by the Monthly Meeting held at ye House of Edward Edwards of Stock Orchard in ye County of Gloucester the 26th Day of the 4th Month 1682, and subscribed by Charles Toney, Giles King, Edwd. Waters, Joseph Underhill and several others."

Richard Wall received a grant from William Penn of 600 acres in Cheltenham Township in the heart of the Cheltenham Hills. His son had an adjoining 100 acres.

On 10th Month 3rd, 1683, the Monthly Meeting of Friends "about Tookany and Poetquesink Creeks" passed this minute:

"Monthly Meeting at the house of Sarah Searys. At the request of some friends belonging to this Meeting; a meeting was settled near Cheltenham at the house of Richard Walln."

The house, therefore, became one of the very earliest meeting houses for Friends, who then met in the homes of members, as no meeting houses had yet been built, and it seems

to be one of the oldest still standing in America. The meeting held there was sometimes called Cheltenham and sometimes Dublin, but eventually became Abington, after John Barnes made his bequest of the present location, and the first meeting house was built there between 1699 and 1702.

Arriving in mid-summer, 1682, with his wife who was Joane Wheel, his son, Richard Wall, Jr., and probably the latter's wife who was Elizabeth or Joan Bubb, and his granddaughter, Sarah, he probably built a house before the winter set in, as there was ample stone at hand.⁹ This appears to have been the two-story stone structure of two rooms, without a cellar, which now forms the northwest corner of the present house at the corner of Old York Road and Church Road in Elkins Park, formerly Ogontz, formerly Shoemakertown, Cheltenham Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

This is the opinion of R. Brognard Okie and Edwin Brumbaugh, two architects distinguished in knowledge of early Pennsylvania houses. It is now (1945) owned by the township and surrounded by "Wall Park" for recreational activities along the Tacony Creek. The house was added to about 1725, and the larger portion was built about 1800.

Early Friends Meetings were held at the most commodious house of a member. In 1685, the Monthly Meeting was held in rotation at Wall's, at Oxford (now Frankford), and at John Hart's in Byberry Township. Townships being the first named localities, the meetings usually took their names.

The Meeting in Germantown was soon attached to this Monthly Meeting, and to it was addressed the first protest against slavery written by Francis Daniel Pastorius, the Clerk, and approved by Germantown Meeting "ye 18 of the 2 Month 1688, to be delivered to the monthly meeting at Richard Warrels."

The marriage of many of the prominent Friends of the district took place in Richard Wall's house during the time that the Monthly Meeting used it. Through the marriage of his grand-daughter and heiress, Sarah Wall, to George Shoemaker, 12th Month 14th, 1694,¹⁰ the house became the home of the progenitor of that important and numerous family

⁹ Also included in the family was probably William Bubb, no doubt a relative, possibly a brother, of Joan-Elizabeth.

¹⁰ This would be February 24, 1695, new style.

which gave its name to the village that sprang up around the adjacent mill built by Dorothy Shoemaker, John Tyson, and Richard Mather in November, 1746.

The name was changed to the meaningless name of Ogontz in 1889, and is now called Elkins Park after the late traction magnate.

Richard Wall, Jr., died 2d Month 6th, 1689, and his father, 1st Month 26th, 1698. Joan Wall died 12th Month 2d, 1701, and the grand-daughter, Sarah, became heiress to the estates of her father and grandfather. The former had 100 acres and the latter 600. Where Richard Wall, Jr., lived is not known. His career is obscure.

Richard Wall bequeathed six acres to Abington Meeting which was used as a graveyard, "lying and being at the southwest end of my plantation." There is a tradition that there also was a wooden meeting house erected, but there is no proof of this.¹¹ A wooden shed to shelter the mourners in inclement weather might have been built.

The land is on what was originally Graveyard Lane, then Cheltenham Avenue, and now is called Ashbourne Road. It is the first property owned by Abington Meeting. So many Shoemakers were buried there that the plot came to be known as the "Shoemaker Burying Ground." There have been no known burials since 1852.

In 1847, the Wall House and mill passed from the Shoemaker family to Charles Bosler, one of the employes. The mill was in active operation by three generations of that family, and was torn down in 1927.

Richard Wall was a concerned Friend, a prominent and large land owner, and may be considered the founder of Abington Meeting of Friends. The marriage of his grand-daughter, Sarah, to George Shoemaker, a neighbor from an adjoining farm, at the Wall house in 1694 was the foundation of the numerous Shoemaker family that gave its name to the neighborhood settlement.

The parents of George Shoemaker, George and Sarah, came from Cresheim, now Kriegsheim, in the Palatinate on the lower Rhine River not far from the border of Holland. They

¹¹ Not only no proof, but no evidence whatever, and most improbable.—Editors.

had married in Heidelberg in 1662, and brought with them seven children on the *Jeffries*, Thomas Arnold, Master, arriving in Philadelphia, March 20, 1686. George was one of the converts to the Society of Friends, and had suffered persecution and fines in Cresheim for his conscience sake. He died from smallpox on the voyage, but his resolute widow, Sarah, and her large family kept on into the wilderness, and settled upon a tract of 200 acres in Cheltenham Township extending across it, as did the others, between the lands of William Frampton and Richard Wall, at about where Elkins Park now stands. They attended the Friends Meeting at Richard Wall's house, and George married Sarah Wall, daughter of Richard, Jr., as related above.

Their wedding certificate is preserved at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and has been mentioned in many accounts and reproduced in some, notably in the books on the Shoemaker family by Thomas H. Shoemaker and by Benjamin H. Shoemaker. None of these, however, have given a full and correct list of the signers, nor has the spelling of their names been correctly reproduced.

The records of Abington Meeting, under whose care the wedding was solemnized, have two mentions of it — one in the minutes of the Monthly Meeting, which is the original unit in the organization of the Religious Society of Friends, and the other the fragment of the marriage records of that early time which is still preserved. The latter is as follows:

George Shewmaker & Sarah Wall both of ye Township of Cheltenham: Haveinge proceded according to ye order of ffreinds in Declareinge their intentions of Mariage; Did upon the fouretenth day of ye twelf mo. 1694 At A meeting of Richard Walls; Accomplish their said mariage; maney freinds beinge present to wittness the same.

George Shewmaker
Sarah Wall

Rich Wall:
Jacob Shewmaker
Isaak Shewmaker
Peter Shewmaker Sen
Peter Shewmaker Jun
Samuel Cart

now Shewmaker
Rich Townsend
Jo: Barns
Joseph Phips
Edw Eaton
Wm Bubb

Everard Bolton wth many freinds
more both men & weo'm.

And the minute:

Minutes of Monthly Meeting "ye 28 11 mo. 1694"
(January 1695 new style)

Whereas George Shoemaker and Sarah Wall having declared their intentions of marriage ye second time, Enquiry being made by persons appointed & found clear on ye account of marriage from all others: did accomplish their marriage in ye unity of friends as is signified by their marriage Certificate.¹²

The first record did not include a copy of the certificate, as later became the custom when paper and books were no doubt more easily available. It appears, therefore, to have been the account of an observer who noted what he saw, and is interesting because it adds the names of six prominent Friends¹³ to those who appear as signers of the certificate—one of them the grandfather of the bride in whose house the marriage was held!

The certificate follows—

"Whereas George Shewmaker & Sarah Wall, both of the Township of Cheltenham, in the Countey of philldelfia, Haveing declared theyre Intentions of takeinge each other as husband and wife; before severall publique men & womens meetings of the people of God called Quakers; accordinge to the good orders used Amongst; them whose proceedings therein; After deliberate consideration thereof, & consent of parteys & Relations Concerned & Approved by the said meetings: Now these are to all whom it may concern; that for the full determination of their sayd Intentions This fourteenth day of the Twelf month one thousand six hundred ninety & four they the sayd George Shewmaker & Sarah Wall Appeared in A sollemne Assembly of ye Aforesaid people mett together at the house of Richard Wall, in the Towneship of

¹² Why the Monthly Meeting in January reported the marriage "accomplished" when it did not take place until the 24th of February (new style) must remain a mystery.

¹³ These six were Richard Wall, Jacob, Isaac, and Peter Shoemaker, Jr., John Barnes, and Edward Eaton.

Cheltenham aforesaid Accordinge to the example of the Holy men of God Recorded in the scriptures of truth. He the aforesyd George Shewmaker takeinge Sarah Wall by the Hand openly declared as followeth, Friends in ye presence of God and you His people; I doe take Sarah Wall to be my wife promisinge to be a faithful husband till death doth Separate us.

And then & there in the sayd Assembly the sayd Sarah Wall did in like manner as followeth, Friends in ye presence of God & you his people, I doe take George Shewmaker to be my husband promiseinge to be a faythfull Loveinge wife till death doth separate us. And the sd. George Shewmaker & Sarah Wall as A further confirmation thereof did then and there to these presents sett thereunto & we who where present at the sollominizinge of their Marriage, did with our hand subscribed our names the day & year above written."

William Bubb	Georg Shumacher
Peter Schumaker	Sarah Shewmaker
Johannes Kusters	
Peter Cassell	Susanna Schumacherin
Samuel Richardson	Sara Sumaker
Toby Leech	Elizabeth Kuster
Richd Townsend	Elizabeth Lind
John Russell	Maria Margaret Schumaker
Samuel Cart	Margtt Waterman
Thomas Canby	Sarah Canby
Everard Bolton	Joseph Phipps
William Loutledge	Joseph Richardson
Joseph Phips	Jacob Harker
Thomas Potts	Georg Shumacher
_____?	Sarah Shewmaker
_____?	Sara Schomaker
_____? ¹⁴	Sarah Eaton

Perhaps a word about some of the signers may be of interest. Richard Wall has been described. William Bubb

¹⁴ These three illegible words, probably names of witnesses, cannot be clearly made out, although experts of the University of Pennsylvania and of the Carl Schurz Foundation have tried.

was probably the brother of Sarah's mother, Elizabeth (or Joan), and, if so, her only relative to sign the certificate. Jacob and Peter Shoemaker are believed to have been the uncles of George. Jacob, a bachelor, came in 1683, and Peter with five children in 1685. Jacob gave the ground for the Friends' Meeting at Coulter Street, Germantown. Peter became a prominent Friend and citizen in Germantown. Samuel Cart, Richard Townsend, Joseph Phipps, Edward Eaton, Everard Bolton, John Barnes, Toby Leech, John Russell, Samuel Richardson, Thomas Canby, and Thomas Potts were prominent Friends in the community.

Sara Sumaker was the mother of George; Sarah Eaton, nee Schumacher, and wife of Edward Eaton, was the cousin of Peter, and came to America with him; Susanna Schumacherin was George's sister, who married Isaac Price; Sara (Hendricks) Schomaker was a sister-in-law of the groom, and the wife of Isaac.

Many books have recited what was then known as to the nationality of the Shoemaker family, believed to have been German from the place of their origin. However, recent diligent research by the late Dr. William I. Hull, the distinguished Professor of History at Swarthmore College, which he recorded in his "William Penn and the Dutch Quaker Migration to Pennsylvania" and in "The Dutch Quakers," has shown that they were Dutch people, persecuted in Holland and living across the border in Germany, but still under the rule of a Dutch nobleman.

Their persecutions and fines for their Quaker faith in their supposed retreat are recited, and "Jorg Schumacher" was so treated in 1663, '64, '66, and '70.

On August 16, 1685, "George" Schumacher and one Hendricks received a deed from Derick Sipman, one of three purchasers of 5000 acres from William Penn on March 10, 1683, in which Sipman agreed with Gerhard Hendricks and George Schumacher to become cotenants or associates with Herman Isacks op den Graeff. The agreement or deed to Schumacher for 200 acres in Cheltenham was in the Dutch language.

Dr. Hull goes on to give at length ample proof that Germantown was founded by Dutch Quakers, and not German Mennonites. He shows that they wrote and spoke Dutch, and

not German. He thinks that Germantown should have been called Dutchtown.

Their able agent arranging for and leading in the settlement was Francis Daniel Pastorius, a German, which no doubt caused the emphasis upon the Germans who came later. These emigrations were the results of the visits to Holland and Germany by William Penn, George Fox, William Caton, Robert Barclay, John Stubbs, William Ames, Humble Thatcher, George Rolfe, John Higgins, George Keith, Benjamin Furley, and other leading Friends. Penn, Ames, and Rolfe were particularly concerned with the "opening" at "Creisheim," whose name was changed in 1752 to Kriegsheim. Of his visit there in 6th Month, 1677, Penn writes from Worms:

" . . . , which being done, and refreshed ourselves, we returned that night by the Rhine to Worms, from whence we the next Morning (being the First Day of the Week) Walked on Foot to Crisheim, which is about six English miles from Worms. We had a good Meeting from the Tenth until the Third Hour, and the Lord's Power sweetly opened to many of the Inhabitants of the Town that were at the Meeting; yea, the Vaught or Chief Officer himself Stood at the Door behind the Barn, where he could hear, and not be seen; who went to the Priest and told him, that it was his Work, if we were Hereticks, to discover us to be such, but for his Part, he had heard nothing but what was Good, and he would not meddle with us. In the Evening we had a more retired Meeting of the Friends only, very weighty and tender; yea the Power rose in an high Operation among them, and great was the Love of God that rose in our Hearts at the Meeting to visit them; and there is a lovely, sweet and true sense among them. We were greatly comforted in them, and they were greatly comforted in us. Poor Hearts, a little Handful surrounded with Great and Mighty Countries of Darkness: 'tis the Lord's Great Goodness and Mercy to them, that they do so finely keep Natural in the Seed of Life. They were most of them gathered by dear William Ames."

Kriegsheim is less than a mile from Mannheim. In George Shoemaker's lifetime, it undoubtedly was a very small village with the houses on each side of the one main road, perhaps very like Shoemakertown on the Old York Road which George's son founded in the New World.

The Friends Meeting, the Grist Mill, and the residences of the principal people in the Township made this place a distinguished one, and the first center for many miles about. Both the American and British Armies passed the house in the Revolution more than once. Unfortunately, the Wall House is the only dwelling in the quaint old village that remains.