

PENNSYLVANIA BIRTHS
Delaware County
1682-1800

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Humphrey Publications
Washington, D. C.
1995

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number
95-79084

ISBN 1-887609-09-1

Printed in the United States of America

PREFACE

This volume, eighth in a series of *Pennsylvania Births*, has been prepared as an aid for genealogical research in pre-1800 Protestant church records and Friends meeting records for Delaware County, Pennsylvania. Surviving Delaware County records reveal that the eighteenth-century population was predominantly Quaker—that is, ninety-four percent of recorded births appearing in this text were found in records for The Religious Society of Friends. The remaining records, covering only six percent of recorded births and baptisms, were found in Protestant Episcopal Church registers.

The earliest European inhabitants of Delaware County were not English. A group of Swedish settlers who were members of the an early colony, set out from Sweden on November 1, 1642 and in the spring of 1643 they established the first European settlement in Delaware County, Pennsylvania near Tinicum Island. Twelve years later, in 1655, these Swedish settlers capitulated to the Dutch who in 1664 succumbed to the English. English immigrants soon followed, among them, Robert Wade, a member of The Religious Society of Friends. In 1675 he erected Essex House which was located in the present city of Chester, then called Upland.

William Penn made his initial Pennsylvania landfall in October 1682 near the Wade home and shortly after his arrival he named the area Chester at the suggestion of several Friends whose origins could be traced to the English county and town of that name. County offices were later established in city of Chester, located on the banks of the Delaware River. In 1786, inhabitants of the towns and townships situated in the interior of Chester County, were successful in having the county seat moved to a more central location. In 1789, residents of those townships along the Delaware River who wanted to keep the county seat in the city of Chester succeeded in having twenty eastern townships of the then, Chester County, set aside to form the present county of Delaware.

A variety of sources were used for this compilation including manuscripts both handwritten and typed. The transcription for the Chester Monthly Meeting, that contained a number of questionable entries, was cross checked with a microfilmed copy of the original record.

As noted, the majority of records used for this county were Friends monthly meeting registers; these records follow a standard Quaker numeric form: July 4, 1776 was written "7mo 4 1776" or "4 Imo 1776." Non-Quaker registers used the more traditional method of recording births, employing months of the Gregorian calendar. Several ministers recorded in the Episcopalian Church registers the date of birth, in which

PREFACE

case that is the date included here. In other places, the recorded date was the date the infant was baptized, entered here with the notation "bp."

The format used for each birth record should be fairly obvious. Following the boldface surname, the first name listed is the child's given name. A notation "bp" following the child's name, as noted above, signifies that the date following is the date of baptism. Names following the date of birth or baptism are those of the infant's father and mother. The number in the extreme right column identifies the church record where that birth record can be found—as numbered at the conclusion of this Preface. A name in parentheses following the mother's maiden name is her unmarried surname. A sample entry including the above listed possibilities might read:

Infant	Date of Birth or Baptism	Father	Mother	Record
Thomas Ellin	13 4mo 1755	John	Elenor	2
Evan	bp 3 Jul 1703	Evan	Ellin (Jones)	5

Several question marks and other notations appear in the text. Most of the bracketed question marks indicate illegible text. In some instances the question marks and other notations appear in the typed or handwritten translations or in copies of the original document, placed there by the transcriber or translator to indicate a questionable transcription of difficult-to-read entries. Other bracketed references designate a record copied as found, though seemingly incorrect.

Other notations and abbreviations found in the original records include the designation for twin, shortened here to "tw," "ill" for illegitimate, and "dec'd" for deceased. Although researchers may find evidence for the birth of twins in some of these records beyond those identified by "tw," the twin designation appears throughout this text only when found as such in the source record.

The format for recording dates is not the only way in which Friends meeting records differ from their non-Quaker counterparts. Generally, when a child was baptized by a Presbyterian, Swedish Lutheran, or Episcopalian minister that event was recorded only once. In contrast, vital records maintained for members of Quaker monthly meetings were often recorded several times and in several ways. For example, John Townsend was recorded in the Chester Monthly Meeting with the birth date 2 12th month 1716. In this record John is identified as the son of Joseph and Martha Townsend and he was listed with four siblings. A later entry for John Townsend, born 2 12th month 1716 was found in the Concord Monthly Meeting record. Again John Townsend was listed as the son of

PREFACE

Joseph and Martha Townsend and he was listed with four siblings. Duplicate entries frequently occur because a family may have been members of one meeting and later they moved and joined another meeting or a more recent meeting was "set off" from a "parent meeting" and the records for these families are rerecorded in the new monthly meeting.

Redundant records are noted because these duplications sometimes furnish conflicting data—possibly for example different dates of birth for the same person. A typical case in point can be found in the two entries for Isaac Taylor: Issac Taylor, son of Isaac and Sarah Taylor appears in the Chester Monthly Meeting with a 6 2month 1690 date of birth; a second record for the same individual can be found in the same record with a 28 6month 1690 date of birth. Both entries were copied as found in the original record. Therefore, where duplicate conflicting entries appear, the researcher will have to check the original records to verify the correct birth date for his or her ancestor.

As previously noted, Quakers maintained family registers wherein each family member was identified by family name. This identification by family name sometimes included the mother's surname at birth. Given the format of *Pennsylvania Births*, wherein children are linked to a surname by birth rather than by marriage, listing birth records for these women in the main body of the text would be misleading. For example, if a Sarah Edge, wife of Jacob Edge, born 25 7th month 1690, were listed in the main text, she would be entered as follows:

Infant	Date of Birth	Father	Mother	Record
Edge Sarah	25 7mo 1690	not given	not given	1

Seeing this entry, someone working on the Edge family would naturally assume that this Sarah, born 25 7month 1690, was the daughter of an unidentified father with the surname Edge. The researcher might further assume that this Sarah was a member of the Edge family by birth when, in fact, she is an Edge by marriage—that is, not an Edge blood relative. To be properly entered in the main text, her surname at birth would have to be known even though her parents' first names might be unknown.

A separate section following the main text lists the married women for whom these kinds of records have been found, but it must be remembered that the linkage for women listed in this section is to the husband, not the parents. If the maiden surname for any of these women was recorded in the meeting record, then that surname also appears in the list presented here. Thus, someone working on the Edge family, for example, will find in

PREFACE

the last section of the book that Sarah (Jones) Edge, wife of Jacob Edge, was born 25 7th month 1690. In turn, a search in the main body of the text for Sarah Jones, born 25 7th month 1690, will show that Sarah Jones was the daughter of Reece and Hannah Jones.

Another section of this book, labeled "miscellaneous," contains birth records for persons whose surname was unknown.

Three additional elements of critical concern to genealogical researchers must be considered:

First, this book is not offered under the pretense of being a "complete" Delaware County birth record; it is complete only to the extent that records were available for research in 1995. Records are missing for some Delaware County churches. John Jordan's 1914 *History of Delaware County* notes that St. Martin's Protestant Episcopal Church was established in Brimingham Township in 1722. If extant baptismal records for this congregation exist, they were not located by the time this volume of *Pennsylvania Births* was completed. Jordan's History also notes a Presbyterian Congregation was established in the mid-eighteenth century in Middletown Township. No records for this church were found. Another history notes that St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church was founded in Concord in 1729. Again, no extant records for this congregation were found.

Second, Delaware County boundaries have not changed since the county was established in 1789, but given the number of Quaker Meetings in the adjacent counties of Chester, Montgomery, and Philadelphia, researchers may find information on families who lived in Delaware County in church and meeting records of adjacent counties or even adjacent states.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind this book is not intended as a substitute source for Delaware County church and meeting records; rather, it is intended to facilitate access to those records. Family historians who are able to determine that one or several of their ancestors were born in Delaware County should consult the original record or a transcription of that record to verify information obtained from this text and to gather any additional information.

PREFACE

Church Records

The year each meeting was established is given in the list that follows; however, Friends meeting records frequently have vital information for members that occurred prior to the date the meeting was begun.

1. Chester Monthly Meeting, Chester.
established 1681.
2. Concord Monthly Meeting, Concord Township.
established 1684.
3. Darby Monthly Meeting, Darby.
established 1684.
4. Radnor Monthly Meeting, Radnor Township.
established 1684.
5. St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church, Chester.
established 1702.
6. St. David's Protestant Episcopal Church, Radnor Township.
established 1700.