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THE IRISH QUAKER COMMUNITY AT CAMDEN

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Quakers appeared in South Carolina almost from the time of the colony's first settlement. Quite early a Friends meeting was established at Charleston, and a number of well-known individuals were attached to it at various points in the seventeenth century—such as Governor John Archdale,¹ Thomas Thurston,² William Fuller,³ and Mary Fisher Cross.⁴ Many members of the Bolton, Eames, Elliott, and Witter families were members of this meeting. Much has been written about that particular Quaker meeting, but very little study has been made of the small and short-lived Quaker settlement at Wateree in Fredericksburg township. This paper will show something of the life of this small group of Friends who left their homes in Ireland for life in the Carolinas.

Until the second half of the eighteenth century Quakerism had existed only in the Charleston area of South Carolina—with one small meeting in Charleston and sometimes another one outside the town. The number of Quakers in that colony, never large, was very small in 1750. As the second half of the eighteenth century got underway, however, the situation in South Carolina changed rapidly, and a number of new meetings came into being. This new development had its beginning in 1751 when a small group of Irish Quakers, intending to settle in North Carolina, were mistakenly landed in South Carolina—where they finally decided to locate rather than make the difficult overland trip to North Carolina. Most of these Irish Quakers came from Timahoe in County Kildare (within the compass of Dublin Monthly Meeting). James Gough, well-known Irish Quaker, noted that he and his wife visited Timahoe

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¹ Rufus M. Jones, *Quakers in the American Colonies* (Cambridge, 1911), pp. 340-350; Stephen B. Weeks, *Southern Quakers and Slavery* (Baltimore, 1896), pp. 50-69.

² Kenneth L. Carroll, "Thomas Thurston, Renegade Maryland Quaker," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, LXII (1967), 170-192.

³ Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 267; Kenneth L. Carroll, "Elizabeth Harris, The Founder of American Quakerism," *Quaker History*, LVII (1968), 96-110, especially 100-101, 104.

⁴ Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 26-29, 300; Mabel Richmond Brailsford, *Quaker Women, 1650-1690* (London, 1915), pp. 94-132; George Vaux, "The Descendants of Mary Fisher," *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, VI (1909), 163-168.

at the very time that many of these Quakers were about to leave for America:

In our way we spent the first-day among our friends at Timahoe, it being the last meeting there to many of them. For in a few days after, several of their families came to Dublin to embark for North Carolina, to settle upon my cousin Arthur Dobbs' lands there, who was their landlord at Timahoe, and who, upon my application, had offered to me for life, and after it to my son John and his heirs, one thousand acres of that land. Robert Millhouse, of Timahoe, was to choose land [for me] next to that which [he] himself should take, but the captain of the ship in which they went, not being well acquainted with the coast, ran too far to the southward, landed them at Charleston in South Carolina, and thereupon they settled in that province.⁵

Coming from Timahoe and receiving certificates of removal from Dublin Monthly Meeting on the 30th of 2nd Month, 1751, were members of the Milhouse, Wyly, Tomlinson, Kelly, and Russell families. Several other Irish Quakers, from the nearby Edenderry Monthly Meeting also formed a part of this Irish Quaker contingent that—for the most part—settled at Waterree (Camden) about one hundred and thirty miles from Charleston.⁶ Here they established their own Quaker community

⁵ James Gough, "Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experiences, and Labours in the Gospel of James Gough," in *Friends Library* (Philadelphia, 1837-1850), IX, 27-28.

⁶ Dublin Book of Removals and Certificates, 1683-1754, pp. 213-215, 240-241, and Edenderry Book of Removals and Certificates, 1732-1776, pp. 47-48, 53. Cf. Minutes of Dublin Monthly Meeting of Friends, XIX (1750-1754), 57, 62-63, 192, 197-198 and Minutes of Edenderry Monthly Meeting of Friends, I (1743-1765), for the 5th of 3rd Month, 1751 (no page number). All four of these volumes are found in the vault at Friends Meeting House, 6 Eustace Street, Dublin [where the Friends Historical Library and the Yearly Meeting Office are both located]. From Timahoe came Robert and Elizabeth Milhouse and their seven children (all under age), Samuel, John, Henry, Thomas, Robert, Joseph, and Sarah; Samuel Wyly, his wife Dinah, and three children [not named]; Josiah Tomlinson and his wife Elizabeth; Timothy Kelly; and Samuel Russell. From Edenderry Monthly Meeting came Samuel Kelly and John Furnass (a sixteen year old son of a Cumberland Quaker and apprenticed to Robert Milhouse). Perhaps there were other Irish Quakers who came in this 1751 group, but their names have not yet been uncovered. It is known that Isabel Martin of Timahoe and John Narney and his wife Susanah of Dublin received certificates from Dublin Monthly Meeting for South Carolina on 1st of 5th Month, 1753. Whether they joined the former Timahoe group is uncertain. Thomas and Isabella Sikes and two children, who arrived from Ireland on the 18th of 8th Month, 1753 (and received an Edenderry certificate for South Carolina in 1753), settled in Charleston where

and developed their own Friends meeting which lasted until about the end of the American Revolution. Robert Milhouse, who died in 1755, seems to have been the initial leader of this group. Samuel Wyly, a very gifted young Irishman, then filled the gap caused by Milhouse's death.

The first glimpse which we receive of this transplanted Quaker community at Mulberry on the Wateree comes to us from two traveling Friends who visited them at the very end of 1753 (after having spent a considerable period of time in the Charleston area). Catharine Payton, an English Quaker who later became Catharine Phillips, records in her *Journal* that at Wateree on December 1-12, 1753,

we attended Friends' meetings as they came in course, both on the first, and other days of the week, and paid a religious visit to every family of Friends in the settlement; in which service we were evidently owned by our Master; or at least my companion was so, who had most of the service in this place. The state of the Friends settled here was mostly low, as to religious experience; but some of the youth were under a divine visitation, which afforded us some comfort. Some people not professing with us attended our meetings and behaved very soberly; but in general, the people in this part of the country were lamentably ignorant and wicked; indeed they had very few opportunities of religious instruction, no place of worship being near; perhaps not nearer than twenty miles. Seldom, if ever, any clergyman came amongst them oftener than once a year to sprinkle their children.⁷

The material situation of these Wateree Friends appears to have been quite difficult in the period immediately following their arrival in this area. Mary Peisley (1717-1757), who had known Robert Milhouse

they remained until 1765, when Thomas and Isabel and their children George and Rachel returned to Ireland (leaving seven other children in the Friends burial ground at Charleston). Thomas Sikes [Sykes] later returned to Charleston in the last part of the eighteenth century and apparently lived out his life there. Arthur Dobbs, later to become Governor of North Carolina, wrote a letter to Matthew Rowan in April, 1751: "This I hope will be delivered to you by Robert Milhouse who with Mr. Samuel Wyly and their families, and several other of my tenants, neighbors, and friends go to settle in North Carolina, and have freighted a ship from Dublin to land them in Cape Fear River at Brunswick, it is to them and their ancestors [sic] I have disposed of one of the 12,800 acre tracts. . . . I want you to befriend them and assiste them in their settlement and advise them for the best." See Desmond Clarke, *Arthur Dobbs, Esquire, 1689-1765: Surveyor General of Ireland, Prospector and Governor of North Carolina* (London, 1958), p. 96.

⁷ Catharine Phillips, *Memoirs of the Life of Catharine Phillips; To Which are Added Some of Her Epistles* (London, 1797), pp. 71-72.

and others of the group back in Ireland, noted that sickness was widespread in South Carolina—so that every home which they had entered since leaving Charleston had someone ill. So bad was the situation in Wateree, where every family had experienced illness, that both Robert Milhouse and one of the Kellys had just buried their wives.⁸ In spite of this, Robert Milhouse and Samuel Kelly were free to accompany Payton and Peisley on to Pee Dee where they had heard that a small settlement of Friends had recently been made.⁹ Milhouse and Kelly accompanied the two visiting Friends from Pee Dee on to New Garden in North Carolina.¹⁰

Shortly after this time Wateree Friends began their correspondence with London Quakers. In 1754, in a letter signed by Robert Milhouse and Samuel Wyly, they reported that

There are at present but two Settled Meetings in this Province, One in Charles Town and the other in Fredricksburg Township, near the Wateree River, where several Families of Friends from Ireland settled about two years ago, where also is held Monthly Meetings for the Discipline of the Church. . . . We may also Inform you that there are several Familys lately Convinced near Peedee River, who are preparing to build a Meeting-house, whether they are in This or North Carolina Province, is not known, the Line not being run, however they are under our Care, And we have sent them One of the Printed Epistles, which was read amongst them. There appears great openness to hear the Testimony of the Truth declared.¹¹

This same 1754 epistle recorded that meetings for worship were "pretty well attended, especially on a First-day, and we have some reason to hope that things will mend in this respect," for recently they had taken "some pains . . . to rouse up the negligent to that great Duty of attending Week-day Meetings." They also reported that they had recently received "The Sufferings in Two Volumes"¹² and that they hoped "the perusal of them may have the desired Effect" of encouraging them to greater faithfulness. Finally they noted that they were not at the moment ex-

⁸ Portfolio 4, 60. These manuscript records are at Friends House Library, London.

⁹ Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-77.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 77-81.

¹¹ Epistles Received, III, 343, found in Friends House Library, London. The meeting at Pee Dee ended up in South Carolina when the border was finally settled, but the meeting ended up under the care of Cane Creek (N. C.) Monthly Meeting in 1755.

¹² Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers* (London, 1753).

periencing any suffering but reported that "some are threatened by the Captains for not appearing in Arms on their Muster days."¹³

Wateree Friends in their 1755 epistle reported that their meetings for worship were "pretty well attended," both on Sundays and week days. They also noted that four traveling Friends had been with them since their 1754 letter: Thomas Mills of North Carolina, Israel Pemberton and Thomas Carleton of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Fothergill of England, with Fothergill and Pemberton also visiting all the Quaker families in the province.¹⁴ Fothergill found Wateree Friends to be much more acceptable than those at Charleston: "South Carolina hath only two meetings; one at Charleston where there are few who bear our name, and fewer who deserve it; . . . the other is one hundred and thirty miles distant; a pretty settlement of Friends, mostly from Ireland."¹⁵

By the time of their 1756 epistle to London, Wateree Friends had been visited by Joshua Dixon from Great Britain and William Ferrill from Cape Fear in North Carolina (where a new Friends meeting had appeared only a few years before). Their growing concern for "discipline and church order" made these South Carolina Quakers aware of the weaknesses in their midst—"We See a Libertine Spirit too prevalent amongst our Small number, which are a stumbling block to the weak, and serve as a foundation for the Scoffers to build upon." In this very year which saw Pennsylvania Friends withdrawing from the Assembly (because of the growing conflict between the pressures and problems of the French and Indian War and their Quaker peace testimony), South Carolina Quakers were beginning to experience an increasing tension because of the war which was then racking the American continent. They also sensed the approach of possible suffering:

We know of no Friend Amongst us but what keeps his place as to the Bearing of Arms; there has been several Warrants to Levy on friends goods for Refusing to bear Arms, but as yet none of them put in Execution; nor as yet have we Suffered anything by the Indians; and we hope that Providence will preserve us from their Savage fury, if we trust to that Arm that is mighty to Save and mighty to Deliver, and truly Confide therein.¹⁶

¹³ Epistles Received, III, 344.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 368. This letter was signed by Robert Milhouse and Samuel Wyly.

¹⁵ Samuel Fothergill, "Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labours of Samuel Fothergill," in *Friends Library*, IX, 190. Fothergill apparently thought Pee Dee Meeting was in North Carolina. Already by 1755 it appears that some others had joined the original Irish contingent at Wateree.

¹⁶ Epistles Received, III, 403-404. This letter was signed by Samuel Milhouse (son of Robert) and Samuel Wyly.

Thomas Gawthrop, well-known British Friend, was engaged in religious labor among Wateree Friends late in 1756 or 1757.¹⁷ In 1758 William Reckitt¹⁸ of England and William Ferrill had an "in depth" visit with Friends—attending meeting for worship and the monthly meeting for worship, as well as visiting the various families of the meeting.¹⁹ Other 1758-1759 visitors were Samuel Spavold and John Storer of England, Samuel Emlen of Philadelphia, and some unnamed North Carolina Friends.²⁰

In 1759 Samuel Milhouse, clerk of the monthly meeting, was able to report that the peace testimony was still being observed: "Friends bear their testimony against bearing Arms & paying Trophy-Money; and are clear of being concerned in Privateers, Letters of Marque or dealing in Prize Goods."²¹ As the French and Indian War continued, South Carolina Friends at Wateree (and Charleston) escaped suffering at the hands of both the local authorities and the Indians. Other Friends who had just recently moved southward and settled on the South Carolina frontier, however, were not so fortunate—with some being killed by Indians and other being taken captive.²² A 1760 letter to Philadelphia reports

The Judgments of the Lord Seems to hover over this part of the Land, the Indians having Committed great Mischief in the Back Settlements having killed and Carried off Great numbers of people; and Some of our Friends who were settled at Reburns Creek were either killed or Carried away Captives, two are Judged to be killed and three taken away beside some Children—the Consideration of which we hope will induce us who are spared to a Consideration of our Ways and Cause us to See of how Small value the things of this World are, of which we may be deprived in a Short time; the knowledge whereof ought to engage us to seek Treasure of a more lasting nature.²³

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, III, 432-433.

¹⁸ William Reckitt, "Some Account of the Life and Gospel Labours of William Reckitt" in *Friends Library*, IX, 63.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, IX, 64.

²⁰ Epistles Received, IV, 21-22, 33. These North Carolina Friends were probably George Matthews and Thomas Branson.

²¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 21-22.

²² *Ibid.*, IV, 58-59. Samuel Milhouse on November 2, 1760, wrote that "notwithstanding Friends belonging to this Meeting have been so preserved, some Friends who came from North Carolina and were settled on the Branches of Broad and Saluda Rivers, were obliged to fly from their Habitations, Four being Killed, and one taken Captive, Vizt. Samuel Pearson and his Wife killed, his Daughter taken Captive, who is since released, Robert Comer and Mary Matthews killed."

²³ Epistle from Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 7th month 15th, 1760. This letter is found in Box 11 in the vaults of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Arch Street Meetinghouse, Philadelphia.

Early in 1762 Friends of Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting at Wateree reported that two of their own members had been taken into custody for refusing to bear arms but were soon set at liberty without any imprisonment. Two other members had their goods seized, although it was soon restored to them. Most disturbing, however, was the fact that "One Friend a lad named Cadwallder Heaton as he was about his Father's business near the Cherokee Nation was killed and scalped."²⁴ No further information about Quaker suffering in this period has been discovered.

Several important developments took place in the life of Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting at Wateree in the 1760s. First of all there was a continuing growth, largely from the migration of Friends into the area. Some of these Friends remained in the Wateree area, while others gravitated towards the Bush River section of Newberry County. The minutes of Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting appear to have been lost nearly two centuries ago, so that today there is no way to judge this increase by migration (as well as that which probably also took place by conviction). Yet minutes of Virginia and North Carolina monthly meetings show a number of certificates directed to Wateree. As early as 1757 Zebulon Gant requested a certificate for himself, his wife, and children in order to settle at Wateree.²⁵ Issac Pidgeon, who had dwelt at Wateree for some time, left for Pennsylvania in 1758.²⁶ In April 1760 certificates for Isaac Cook, William Smith, and Abel Thomas and their families were sent to Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting.²⁷ A number of certificates came in 1764-1767, although most of these appear to have been for the Bush River area (which did not have its own monthly meeting until later, so that Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting—as the nearest one—received these certificates).²⁸

²⁴ Epistles Received, IV, 87-88.

²⁵ Minutes of New Garden (N. C.) Monthly Meeting, I, 20. This request, made known by Uriah Woolman (brother of John Woolman, with whom he had traveled south), was presented August 27, 1757. These records are on deposit at the Quaker Room, Guilford College, North Carolina.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, I, 28. He still had his membership at New Garden Monthly Meeting. He must have returned to Wateree, however, for in 1762 he and his family took their certificate from Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting to South River in Virginia. Cf. South River Monthly Meeting Minutes I (1757-1797), 21.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 44. Cf. *Ibid.*, I, 47, 61, for George Pierson who went down to Wateree in 1760 and returned to North Carolina in 1761.

²⁸ Minutes of Hopewell (Va.) Monthly Meeting, I, 142, 159, 189, 203, show certificates for Robert Bull, his wife, and four children and stepchildren; William O'Neal and his wife, and two children; Patience Perkins and her children; Elizabeth Rees (wife of David); William Bull; Isaac Hollingsworth (son of George).

Although no mention of a certificate for William Ferril (Ferrell) was found, since there are no extant records for Cape Fear Friends for that period, it is known that he was a member of Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting for a time. The presence of this ministering or "public" Friend must have been a real blessing to this group, even though he seems to have spent most of 1761 away from home in religious labor in Virginia and North Carolina.²⁹ Other "public" Friends whose membership for a time was in Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting were Rachel Wright and Mary Stedham who visited Charleston Friends in 1768.³⁰ Both of these probably lived in the Bush River area but were active in the life of the whole monthly meeting.

A second factor of importance was the opening up of lands to the west, with migration of Friends there from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Migration into Newberry County (where Bush River Meeting was eventually set up) was especially important for the Wateree Friends group. Their 1763 epistle noted that "many Friends removed from the Northern Provinces and settled in the Back Parts of this Province, and expect many more will soon: the Indians have been quiet for some time Past."³¹ As the number of Quakers in Bush River area (some sixty to seventy-five miles from Wateree) continued to grow, Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting reached out to include them. By 1768 the monthly meeting was actually being held at Bush River.³² Late in 1770, however, it was decided to establish a new monthly meeting at Bush River and to return Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting to Wateree.³³

Minutes of Fairfax Monthly Meeting (Va.), I, 245, records a certificate for Thomas Lamb, his wife Alice, and six children. Minutes of Western (Cane Creek) Quarterly Meeting (N. C.), I, 51, show the certificate for Rachel Wright had been recalled from Wateree in 1766.

²⁹ His certificate from Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting was dated December 14, 1760. He attended Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting (Va.) on February 13, 1761, Symons Creek Monthly Meeting (N. C.) on April 2, 1761, and Western (Cane Creek, N. C.) Quarterly Meeting on May 9, 1761. Ferril and his family withdrew to South River Monthly Meeting in Virginia in 1762—cf. South River Monthly Meeting Minutes, I, 21. Their records are now at Haverford College.

³⁰ Minutes of Charleston Monthly Meeting for 1768, as printed in Mabel Webber, "The Records of the Quakers in Charles Town," *The South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XXVIII (1927) pp. 176-178.

³¹ Epistles Received, IV, 111.

³² Western (Cane Creek) Quarterly Meeting Minutes, I, 62 (February 13, 1768). These records are now at Guilford College.

³³ *Ibid.*, I, 74-75.

Another factor worth noting about Wateree Friends in the 1760's is the presence of such an outstanding person as Samuel Wyly (1721-1768). He undoubtedly served the Society of Friends in many ways and positions, although the loss of the monthly meeting records leaves us in doubt as to the extent of these contributions. He also served the larger society, being a justice of the peace. He was especially interested in the nearby Catawba Indians and so won their hearts that they "paid him the utmost deference, revering him as their friend and Guardian." When their constantly shrinking lands were to be surveyed in 1762, it was Wyly himself who did the surveying, completing the task in 1766.³⁴ The Catawbas would sign no treaties or agreements without obtaining Wyly's advice. No wonder, then that the entire Catawba nation went into mourning when Wyly died! The Charleston newspaper recorded his death:

Samuel Wyly, Esq., a native of Ireland, and one of the principal of the people called Quakers. A Gentleman well known in this Province and universally esteemed for his Probity, Hospitality, Urbanity, and for every Social Virtue. The Tribe of Catabau Indians in this neighborhood paid him the utmost deference, revering him as their friend and Guardian.³⁵

A number of visits were received from Quakers traveling in the ministry in the early 1760s. Among those were Robert Willis of East Jersey, Susanna Hatton of Ireland, Alice Hall of England, and Ann Nuland (Newlin), Daniel Stanton, and Phebe Trimble all of Pennsylvania.³⁶ Stanton, who was accompanied by four Pee Dee Friends in his 1760 visit, reports "We had a tender broken meeting at the meeting house, much to satisfaction, and a pretty good time at the house of a Friend who was indisposed; also a solid time with a number of Catawba Indians, and then returned to Pee-dee."³⁷

³⁴ Chapman J. Milling, *Red Carolinians* (Columbia, S. C., 1969), pp. 252, 254; W. L. McDowell, Jr. (ed), *Documents Relating to Indian Affairs 1754 1765* (Columbia, S. C., 1970), pp. 89, 92, 95, 96-97, 485-486, 501, 502; *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, VI, 786-787; VII, 414, 438.

³⁵ Mabel L. Webber, "Death Notices from the South Carolina and American General Gazette and its Continuation the Royal Gazette," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XVI (1915), 86-87. Concerning Quakers and Indians, see Rayner Wickersham Kelsey, *Friends and the Indians, 1655-1917* (Philadelphia, 1917).

³⁶ Epistles Received, IV, 87 (1762).

³⁷ Daniel Stanton, "A Journal of the Life, Travels, and Gospel Labours of a Faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, Daniel Stanton," in *Friends Library*, XII, 169. Cf. Thomas J. Kirkland and Robert M. Kennedy, *Historic Camden* (Columbia, 1905), pp. 50-51, 56-57. Samuel Wyly had already become chief adviser to the Catawba Indians by this time.

In 1763 South Carolina Friends at Wateree wrote to London Yearly Meeting that they had received an epistle from Pennsylvania and New Jersey Friends advising them to join the Quarterly Meeting of New Garden in North Carolina. They reported that

[this] we declined doing (choosing rather to continue as usual under your Care) and acquainted them in answer to their Epistle, that we did not think it practicable, the Distance being too great. Since which time we recd another Epistle from them pressing their former Advice, to which we returned Answer that we accounted ourselves a Branch of your Meeting, and would therefore acquaint You with it for your Advice; tho' we incline much rather to correspond with You, than join with a Meeting we could not attend, it being two Hundred Miles from this Place.³⁸

Friends of Wateree, perhaps hoping to strengthen their case in the eyes of English Friends, also noted the recent growth of Quakerism in South Carolina: "We hope there will be a sufficient Number of Friends in this Province to hold a Quarterly Meeting, there being many Friends removed from the Northern Provinces and settled in the Back Parts of this Province."³⁹

London Yearly Meeting wrote to South Carolina Friends that they observed "with some Satisfaction the Account . . . of the Christian Sympathy" extended to them by the Yearly Meeting of Pennsylvania and New Jersey in their suggestion that these South Carolina Quakers join New Garden Quarterly Meeting in North Carolina. London's advice was "tho' it does not seem practicable to you at present, Yet we exhort You to wait for the counsel of Truth, and act as your way may be opened therein, not doubting that the above Yearly Meeting is concerned for your good."⁴⁰

Wateree (and Charleston) Friends, independent from the time of their founding, were not yet willing to cut their tenuous relationship with London. Their letter of January 3, 1765, replied, "In relation to our joyning the Quarter Meeting of New Garden in North Carolina (after mature consideration) it appears to be the mind of Friends that it will be best for us to remain in the same relation to you we now stand in."⁴¹ Nearly five months later, on May 27, London Friends once more wrote,

³⁸ Epistles Received, IV, 110-111 (March 13, 1763).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, IV, 111.

⁴⁰ Epistles Sent, IV, 204. These manuscript records are at Friends House Library, London.

⁴¹ Epistles Received, IV, 152.

we are persuaded you would find advantage if the advices we before offered you to unite with the Quarterly Meeting of New Garden in North Carolina had been by you complied with, and therefore we again earnestly recommend you to take the same under your Fresh and Solid consideration, that you may go from strength to strength, and in your wilderness Country be made as Light to those you live amongst.⁴²

London Yearly Meeting finally persuaded Friends in South Carolina to attach themselves to North Carolina, so that on January 1, 1767, Samuel Milhouse (as clerk of the monthly meeting) wrote to London, "We have, agreeable to your desire, again duly considered your Advice relating to our joining the Quarterly Meeting of New Garden in North Carolina, and have concluded to comply therewith and join the said Meeting as soon as we conveniently can."⁴³ Shortly after this the Monthly Meeting at Fredericksburg, held at Bush River, requested to be joined to Western Quarterly Meeting of North Carolina Yearly Meeting. This request was approved by the quarterly meeting.⁴⁴

Two well-known English porcelain makers developed some connection with South Carolina and with Wateree. One was a Quaker minister, William Cookworthy (1705-1780) who had long been working with Cornish clays.⁴⁵ The other was Cookworthy's younger friend and fellow Quaker Richard Champion (1743?-1791), who at the age of twenty-one inherited a Bristol-based shipping business trading with Charleston. About 1764 Champion received samples of a clay called "unacre" which came from the Cherokee country of South Carolina, leading him to experiment with porcelain also.⁴⁶ Cookworthy, whose main efforts were in England at Plymouth, appears to have set up a branch of his pottery works in Camden but does not seem to have gone to South Carolina himself. Champion, however, did remove to South Carolina in 1784 and died there in 1791.⁴⁷ How much these developments affected Wateree (Camden) Friends is open to real question.

The decision of South Carolina Friends to affiliate with North Carolina Yearly Meeting soon brought about the end to their reports to London Yearly Meeting, so that our information concerning the Quaker

⁴² Epistles Sent, IV, 235.

⁴³ Epistles Received, IV, 183.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, IV, 291. Cf. Epistles Sent, IV, 279, 342, and Western Quarterly Meeting Minutes, I, 62.

⁴⁵ John Penderill-Church, *William Cookworthy, 1705-1780: A Study of the Pioneer of True Porcelain Manufacture in England* (Truro, 1972), p. 56.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 73. Cf. *Quaker History*, LIII (1964), 58, for a note on the Camden pottery works based on a recent article in the Charleston newspaper.

community in the Camden area becomes quite sparse for the 1770s and 1780s. Only a few glimpses into the life of this meeting and its members are available, coming from the journals of visiting Friends and occasional minutes of other Quaker bodies.

A number of traveling Friends must have visited Camden in the period 1770-1785. Today, however, only a few of these are known and even fewer have left accounts (and the accounts themselves tend to be less informative than were the earlier ones which have already been cited). In 1771 Joseph Oxley of England and Samuel Neale (who had married Mary Peisley) of Ireland arrived in South Carolina in January, and Oxley, who had injured his leg and who was also somewhat feverish, spent most of his short stay at Wateree. His brief account simply reports:

First-day, the 13th, had a meeting with the few Friends hereabout seventy miles distant from any other meeting of Friends. I think it a great favour from the Lord of mercies, to remember these few of his poor servants in this lonely wilderness, who, through wordly desires, have scattered and separated themselves from their brethren, to their loss both temporally and spiritually. They were well advised [by us] and seasonably recommended, in that love which wisheth life and salvation to all men. The meeting was mixed with other professors [non-Quakers], and I thought it an open good meeting: in the evening had a meeting in the family which tended to edification.⁴⁸

Neale's *Journal*, which contains only abstracts of his manuscript original, notes that he left Wateree on January 15th for Bush River and was accompanied by Samuel Milhouse (who now appears to have become the most prominent Wateree Friend) and "J.T." (Josiah Tomlinson?) and "W.L." On the twenty-third he rejoined Oxley at Wateree and they "had a good encouraging meeting, which greatly refreshed my mind and the minds of several honest travelers who were there."⁴⁹ Patience Brayton (1733- 1794), who had traveled as far south as Georgia, may have visited Wateree Friends on her way south and certainly did so as she came northward in 1772. Other than mentioning holding meetings and including the name of John Colley (Kelly?), she offers no information on the size, makeup, or state of this group.⁵⁰

It seems rather clear that the meeting at Wateree was not large in the 1770s. Oxley in 1771 was already speaking of the "few" Friends

⁴⁸ Joseph Oxley, "A Journal of Joseph Oxley's Life and Travels," in *Friends Library*, II, 456-457. Cf. P. 458.

⁴⁹ Samuel Neale, "The Life of Samuel Neale," in *Friends Library*, XI, 49-50.

⁵⁰ Patience Brayton, "A Short Account of the Life and Some of the Religious Labours of Patience Brayton," in *Friends Library*, X, 448, 450.

who were there,⁵¹In the 1760s some of its members had begun to move into the Bush River area—with Samuel Kelly and Robert Evans being among the first.⁵² A number of other Wateree Friends followed Kelly and Evans, although we can not today tell which ones and at what dates (for the minutes of Bush River Monthly Meeting do not begin until 1772 and those of Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting do not exist). The minutes of Bush River Monthly Meeting, however, do show the presence of such former Wateree families as Furnas, Kelly, and Milhouse.⁵³

Also it is known that some of those who lived at Wateree decided to move farther north—especially to North Carolina and Virginia. The earliest known departure to the north was that of William and Martha Terrell and their children who removed to South River Meeting in Virginia in 1762.⁵⁴ John Rudduck, who had come to Wateree from North Carolina in 1774, returned to New Garden Monthly Meeting in 1775.⁵⁵

Much of the migration out must have taken place before 1773 when a committee from Western Quarterly Meeting (N.C.) visited the area and reported that the situation at Bush River was satisfactory but “not so satisfactory . . . as is desired” at Fredericksburg.⁵⁶ The low condition of Camden Friends must have drawn visits of a number of ministering Friends after 1772,⁵⁷ but the only one I have come across before 1781 was in 1777 by Lea Sanders of Perquimans Monthly Meeting in North Carolina.⁵⁸

⁵¹ Oxley, *op. cit.*, II, 456.

⁵² Weeks, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

⁵³ Bush River Monthly Meeting Minutes, *passim*. These records are now at Guilford College.

⁵⁴ Douglas Summers Brown, *A History of Lynchburg's Pioneer Quakers and Their Meeting House, 1754-1936* (Lynchburg, 1936), p. 69.

⁵⁵ New Garden Monthly Meeting Minutes, I, 243, 251. These records are now at Guilford College.

⁵⁶ Western Quarterly Meeting Minutes, I, 92. This “low state” is also reflected in their last epistle to London (1773) when John Kelly, clerk, notes that although some members have formerly bought slaves, most have been convinced of the evil of that practice and are discouraging others from it—cf. Epistles Received, IV, 355.

⁵⁷ Bush River Monthly Meeting Minutes, I (1772-1783), *passim*, record visits from David Ferris and Robert Valentine in 1772, Mehetabel and Sarah Jenkins (1773), Robert Walker and Morris Birkbeck (1773), Comfort Hoag, Elizabeth Southwick, and Benjamin Hough (1774), David Brooks and John Uthank (1774), Jesse Pugh, Martha Mendenhall, and Hannah Pickering (1774).

⁵⁸ Minutes of Perquimans Monthly Meeting, II (1736-1774), March 5, 1777. No account of her visit has been discovered. These records are now at Guilford College.

There were several transfers of membership to Wateree early in the Revolutionary period. Samuel Tomlinson came from New Garden Monthly Meeting in 1776 (receiving a second certificate in 1777).⁵⁹ Isaac Kelly produced a certificate of removal from Bush River Monthly Meeting in 1778.⁶⁰ Probably the movement out equalled or excelled the new arrivals.

In 1781 Wateree Friends were visited by Abel Thomas and Amos Lee of Pennsylvania at a time when the nearby fighting between the British and Americans was very heavy. They were taken prisoners by the American army while at Camden and kept prisoners there for a time. After being freed Abel Thomas and his companion received permission from General Nathaniel Green (who had been brought up in a Quaker home) to pass and repass through the area as they continued on to visit Georgia Friends.⁶¹ Abel Thomas and his companion left no account of the Friends at Camden, so that we have no picture of what that meeting was like as it stood on the threshold of collapse. A number of Friends left the area in 1782 and 1783, going into North Carolina. Among these was Josiah Tomlinson (one of the original Irish settlers) who presented his certificate to Deep River Monthly Meeting in 1782.⁶² Other Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting Friends who removed to Deep River early in 1783 were John Burns, his wife and three children, Stephen Vidito, and Isaac Pidgeon, his wife and three children, and Samuel Tomlinson, his wife and son.⁶³

At the beginning of 1783, after the departure of these eight adults and seven children to Deep River (and possibly other members in other directions) Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting ceased to exist, so that the few remaining Friends in the area were to be a preparative meeting under Bush River Monthly Meeting. The minutes of Fredericksburg Monthly Meeting were turned over to Bush River.⁶⁴ By the end of 1783 a committee from Bush River Monthly Meeting was appointed to "visit the meeting at Fredericksburg to inspect into their capability of holding a meeting for worship to the honour of truth."⁶⁵ Part of the committee

⁵⁹ New Garden Monthly Meeting Minutes, II (1775-1782), 7, 16.

⁶⁰ Bush River Monthly Meeting Minutes, I, 106 (September 26, 1778).

⁶¹ "A Brief Memoir Concerning Abel Thomas, A Minister of the Gospel of Christ in the Society of Friends," in *Friends Library*, XIII, 474-478.

⁶² Deep River Monthly Meeting Minutes, I (1778-1801), 47. These records are at Guilford College.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, I, 55, 58.

⁶⁴ Bush River Monthly Meeting Minutes, I, 164 (January 25, 1783).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, II (1783-1794), 8 (November 29, 1783).

met with the few remaining Friends in the Camden area and expressed their belief that these were not capable of holding a meeting. The final decision, however, was left to Western Quarterly Meeting which in mid-1784 united with this decision to lay down the meeting at Camden.⁶⁶

The end of Quakerism in Camden must have come almost immediately after this, for very little is heard of it after that time. It is true that Zechariah Ferris did visit Camden in October 1790 and held a meeting there;⁶⁷ however William Savery, on a visit through South Carolina in 1791, appears to have passed up Camden—as did Thomas Scattergood in 1793.⁶⁸ By this time, it would seem, that all that remained of Quakerism in the Camden area was the memory of the old Irish Quaker community that had once lived there and whose members were now either underground or scattered in North and South Carolina and Virginia.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, II, 12 (January 31, 1784) and 20 (August 28, 1784).

⁶⁷ Leon DeValinger (ed), "Journal of Zechariah Ferris' Visit to Southern Friends Meetings," *Bulletin of Friends Historical Association*, XXII (1933).

⁶⁸ William Savery, "The Journal of William Savery," in *Friends Library*, I, 327-333; "Memoirs of the Life and Religious Labours of Thomas Scattergood," in *Friends Library*, VIII, 44.

BUILDING THE SOUTH CAROLINA RAILROAD

DONALD A. GRINDE, JR.*

In the 1820's, Charleston was threatened by an economic depression. The city appeared to be losing its rank as the trading and shipping center of the southeastern United States. Import trade decreased 51.7 per cent from 1815 to 1825.¹ Domestic exported goods suffered a drop from \$11,000,000 in 1816 to only \$7,475,747 in 1826, and Charleston was losing its retail trade to a number of upland towns along the fall line.² Cotton shipped through the port of Charleston was the only bright spot since the number of bales increased from 146,959 in 1820 to 209,528 in 1830 or an increase of 42.6 per cent.³ However, the total cotton production for the southern states more than doubled during the same period so Charleston still was not enjoying the increased trade in cotton that the annual production would justify.⁴ The condition was graphically stated in a report of the special committee of the Chamber of Commerce.

Charleston has for several years past retrograded with a rapidity unprecedented. Her landed estate has within eight years depreciated in value one half. Industry and business talent driven by necessity have sought employment elsewhere. Many of her houses are tenantless and grass grows uninterrupted in some of her chief business streets. This may be a melancholy picture, but it is nevertheless true.⁵

With the invention of the cotton gin, the Piedmont produced ever increasing amounts of cotton each year. It was becoming the most prosperous part of the state and yet this wealth seemed to by-pass Charleston.

The key to tapping the trade of the interior and rejuvenating the commercial life of Charleston was better transportation. Canals, turnpikes, and steamboats had transformed other cities into commercial emporiums—Why not Charleston? Swamps, lack of a large river system

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¹ Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1826), p. 168.

² *Ibid.*, p. 162.

³ *Debow's Review*, September, 1850.

⁴ M. B. Hammond, *The Cotton Industry* (New York, 1896), Appendix.

⁵ *Charleston Courier*, March 13, 1828.