

*FROM FARMLAND
TO SUBURBIA:
WESTTOWN
TOWNSHIP*

A History of Westtown Township,
Chester County Pennsylvania

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A History of Westtown Township

Chester County, Pennsylvania

by

Arthur E. James

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MAP OF
 WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP
 CHESTER COUNTY, PA.
 1874
 (With a few additions)

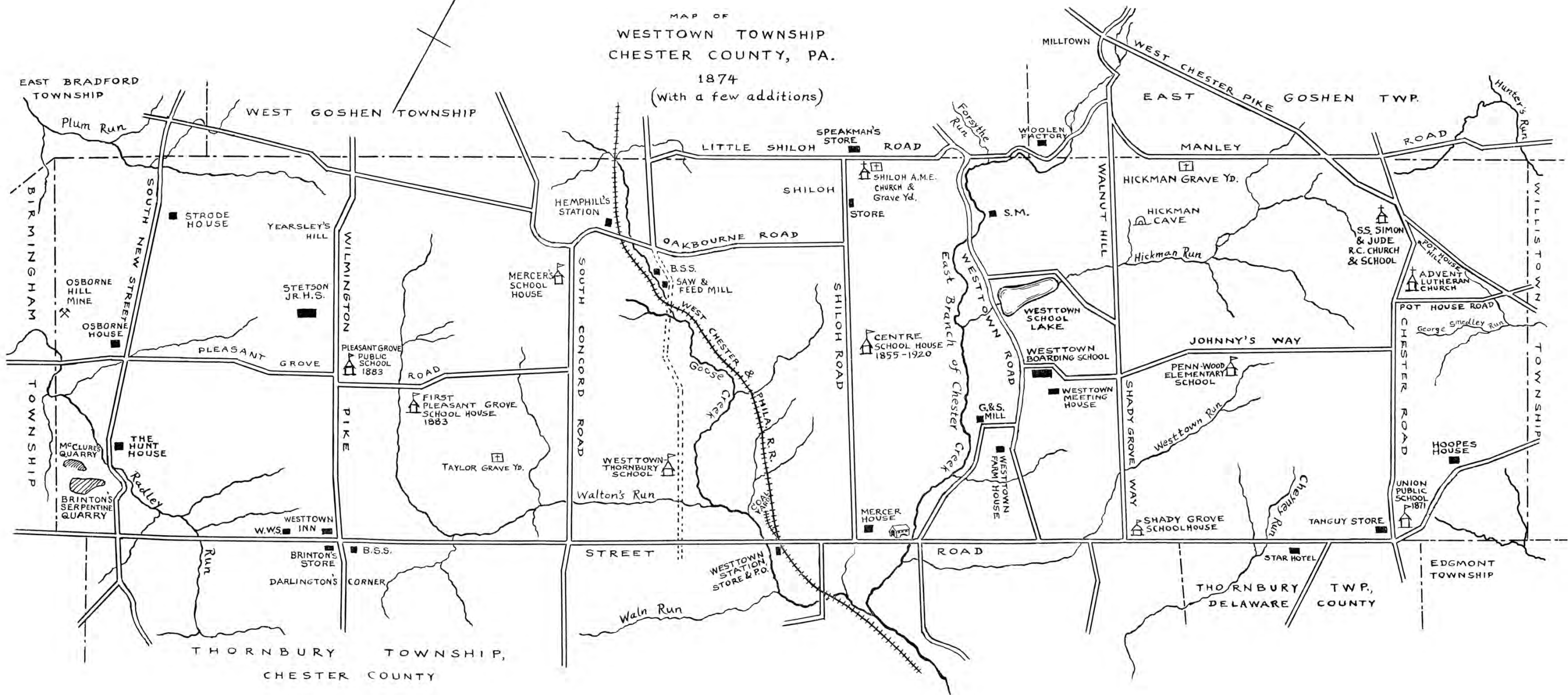


Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2019 EDITION	1
ARTHUR JAMES' 1973 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	2
ABOUT ARTHUR E. JAMES, ORIGINAL AUTHOR OF THIS HISTORY	3
ABOUT WESTTOWN	4
BEFORE WILLIAM PENN — RICH INDIAN LEGACY	6
WELSH/WELCH TRACT	8
SOME EARLY SETTLERS	9
McDaniel Farm	14
Maple Shade Farm/Marshall Jones Farm/formerly Taylor Farm/now Pleasant Grove	15
Wynnorr Farm	17
Faucett/Cheyney Farm	21
Westtown School Farm/Pete's Produce Farm	24
Bartram Farm	24
Crebilly Farm	25
NATURAL RESOURCES	26
A Well-watered Area	26
Township Sawmills and Gristmills	26
The Westtown School Sawmill of 1795	27
The Westtown School Gristmill and Sawmill, 1801–1914	28
The Hawley-Williams Mills near Oakbourne	29
Minerals and Construction Materials	30
Serpentine Quarries	30
The Osborne Hill Mine	34
Clay Deposits and the Westtown Pottery	35
TRANSPORTATION	38
Roads	38
Chester Road (Pennsylvania Route 352)	38
Street Road (Pennsylvania Route 926)	40
West Chester Pike (Pennsylvania Route 3)	41
Wilmington Pike (U.S. Route 202)	43
The Trolley Line Through Westtown	47
Railroads	49

The West Chester and Philadelphia Railroad	49
Westtown Station	50
Oakbourne Station	50
Chester Creek and Brandywine Railroad	54
MILITARY HISTORY	56
Revolutionary War	56
The War of 1812	59
Civil War	63
Camp Elder/Camp Parole	63
NOTEWORTHY EARLY DATED HOUSES	68
Oakbourne Mansion	68
The Smith Family Home	68
Oakbourne’s Architecture	71
The Water Tower	72
James C. Smith Memorial Home	72
Westtown Township’s Ownership of Oakbourne	73
The Baily/Goch House, now 1108 S. Chester Road	75
“Chestnut Hill” — The Schlaanstine House/Orvis Tree Farm	80
1084 Powderhorn Drive	85
The Mercer House	86
The Hunt House	88
The Osborne House	89
The Strode House	92
Another Strode House	93
Huey House	93
An Early-Dated House	96
Westtown School’s Stone House	96
Westtown School Farm House	97
Quarry House	98
TOWNSHIP BUSINESSES	99
Businesses at Yearsley’s Hill	99
First National Bank of West Chester	99
Darlington’s Corner	100
The Store at Darlington’s Corner	103

Blacksmith and Wheelwright Shops at Darlington’s Corner	103
Brinton Factory at Darlington’s Corner	105
Bartram’s Orchard & Farm Market at Darlington’s Corner	106
Darlington’s Dairy Bar and Restaurant	107
Colonial Motor Court	108
Stores at and Near Westtown Railroad Station	108
Taverns and Alcohol in and Near Westtown	109
Businesses at Shiloh	110
Few Artisans’ Complex	111
The Country Store at Tanguy	111
Eby’s Grocery Store	116
Pete’s Produce Farm	117
Dudas Diving Duds	119
Westtown Electric Company	119
Pipelines in Westtown	120
TOWNSHIP POST OFFICES	121
Thornbury Post Office, 1831–1900	121
Street Road — Westtown Post Office, 1859–Present	122
Oakbourne Post Office, 1883–1927	123
Tanguy Post Office, 1888–1927	123
The “Westtown Local”—The Westtown School’s Local 2¢ Stamps, 1853–1878	124
TOWNSHIP PLACES OF WORSHIP	125
The Friends Meeting at Westtown School	125
Shiloh Methodist Church/Shiloh African Methodist Episcopal Church	126
Saints Simon and Jude Roman Catholic Church, 1961–Present	142
Westminster Presbyterian Church 1892–Present	143
The Bible Baptist Church in Westtown Township, 1967–1970	145
Advent Lutheran Church, 1967–Present	145
The Church of the Loving Shepherd, 1971–Present	146
TOWNSHIP GRAVEYARDS	148
The Taylor Family Burial Ground	148
The Hickman Family Burial Ground	158
Members of the Hickman Family Still Interred in the Grounds	160
Members of the Hickman Family Reinterred to Bradford Cemetery	162

Neighbors and Others Interred at the Hickman Burial Ground	163
The Shiloh African American Episcopal Cemetery	166
Burials in the Shiloh A.M.E. Cemetery	168
Westminster Presbyterian Church Memorial Garden	197
PRIVATE SCHOOLS, PAST & PRESENT	197
The James Gibbons Classical School, 1780–?	197
Mercer’s School, 1806–1856?	197
Westtown School, 1799–Present	201
The Maplewood School for Boys, 1927–’29	208
Saints Simon and Jude School, 1962–Present	208
The John Knox Junior College and Bible Institute, 1966–1968	209
TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS	210
Union Independent School No. 3, 1839–1943	210
The First Pleasant Grove School, 1851–1883	212
Centre School House, 1855–1920	217
Shady Grove School, ca, 1863–ca.1916	219
Penn Wood Elementary School, 1966–Present	220
Stetson Junior High School, now Stetson Middle School, 1959–Present	222
Starkweather Elementary School, 1991–Present	223
Bayard Rustin High School, 2013–Present	226
SOME TOWNSHIP INSTITUTIONS	228
James C. Smith Memorial Home for Convalescent White Women, 1896–1971	228
Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm/Oakbourne Colony Hospital, 1896–1958	229
Oakbourne Hospital, 1958–1965	232
Gaudenzia House/ Gaudenzia Center for Addiction Treatment and Recovery, 1969–Present	232
PUBLIC SAFETY/WESTTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT	233
Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department	233
A 1900 Murder Most Foul	234
Some Unwelcome Township Visitors	234
TOWNSHIP RECREATION	236
Westtown Lake	236
Quarry Swimming Association	237
Wedgewood Swim Club	238

The Westtown Sports Center	238
The Hickman Hunt	239
SOME TOWNSHIP FARM, HOME AND PLACE NAMES—THEN AND NOW	241
TOWNSHIP NEIGHBORHOODS/HOUSING	245
EPILOGUE BY ARTHUR JAMES	257

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2019 EDITION

The Westtown Township Historical Commission (WTHC) was formed in 2013 with five members. It grew into seven experienced and interested history buffs (David Walter, Erica Reilly, Gail Guterl, Paul Mullin, Ray Sarnacki, Pam Boulos and Dan Campbell). One of their first missions was documenting the township's historic resources and finding out more about its history.

As members of the commission — particularly emeritus member Jonathan Hoppe — delved into township history, we realized we had access to a great deal of new information. Through research, we learned of the existence of a diary by a Hessian soldier that documents a skirmish on what is now Crebilly Farm property as soldiers moved toward the Battle of Brandywine on September 11, 1777. We discovered the names of Civil War African-American troops who are buried in a neglected cemetery amid the ruins of an African Methodist Episcopal church on undeveloped land. We read about a planned railroad spur that was to connect existing tracks to the line along the Brandywine. And who ever knew that the remains of an old depleted silver and manganese mine are in the township?

With all this new information, we decided an update of the township history was in order. A comprehensive history of Westtown, *From Farmland to Suburbia: Westtown Township*, was written in 1973 by the late township resident Arthur James. Published by the Chester County Historical Society, it was reprinted in 2000 by the Chester County Historical Society (CCHS) and Westtown Township. The Historical Commission decided, if we could get the copyright to this book, we could build on its information and expand the township history.

In late 2017, Westtown Township Historical Commission approached CCHS and the township and discovered both had no record of owning the copyright to the 1973 book. We then contacted the children of Arthur James, who are now in their 90s, and acquired the copyright from them.

The 1973 book was used as our base to expand on the township's history. So, at times you may find pieces of 1973 history, as you'll read in the 1973 introduction below, attached to updated 2019 information. Additionally, there may be some repetition of information in the book when

subject matter overlaps, such as Brinton's Quarry and the Quarry Swimming Association, or the Oakbourne Colony Hospital and Gaudenzia House.

Initially this updated history will be published online only. Once we feel we have gathered a substantial representation of Westtown's very rich past, we hope to publish this book in the traditional paper format.

Contributors to this updated history include many township residents as well as Jonathan Hoppe and WTHC members Dave Walter, Gail Guterl, Erica Reilly, Pam Boulos, Paul Mullin and Ray Sarnacki. Mary Brooks, archivist at Westtown School, reviewed and updated all information related to the school. We hope you enjoy our efforts to uncover Westtown's unique history.

ARTHUR JAMES' 1973 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the preparation of this booklet, three current Westtown Township residents have been especially helpful in sharing their knowledge of local history: Joseph Cope, Harry F. Sickler and Marshall L. Jones Sr.

Joseph Cope, who was in his mid-eighties at the time of this writing, was a resident owner of a farm on South Concord Road. In 1927, when he served as township assessor, he issued a small pamphlet, "1685—Westtown Township—1927 A Good Place to Live." This four-page illustrated pamphlet listed the then-current township officials, a brief account of township institutions, and a map showing roads and farm owners.

One of the oldest historically minded natives of the township was Harry F. Sickler, then of 907 Shiloh Road. He was born in 1893 in his present home, which was surrounded by his well-kept fruit trees, garden and beehives. His alert memory and enthusiastic sharing of his knowledge of local people and happenings of many years ago was particularly helpful in researching this book.

In 1913, the late Marshall L. Jones, Sr., originally from Haverford Township, Delaware County, PA, came to Westtown Township where he purchased a 249-acre farm on Shiloh Road. His skill as a farmer, dairyman, and potato grower, coupled with his penchant for acquiring Westtown farms, soon resulted in his being the largest individual landowner in the township. His son, Marshall L. Jones, Jr., who died in 1997 and lived at Maple Shade Farm, the first home of the

Jones family in Westtown, had an enthusiastic flair for local history. He contributed much colorful information found in this booklet.

ABOUT ARTHUR E. JAMES, ORIGINAL AUTHOR OF THIS HISTORY

Arthur E. James (1897–1989) was not a historian, but a chemistry professor with a real love for history and a devotion to teaching.

Born at Elmsley Farm in East Bradford Township, he attended Westtown School and graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1921. He taught chemistry and geology at Lincoln University for 16 years while occasionally coaching the soccer team. James earned a master's degree in education at the University of Pennsylvania in 1924 and a PhD in chemistry at Cornell University in 1933. In 1937, he joined the faculty at Temple University's School of Pharmacy, where he taught chemistry and later served as Chairman of the Chemistry Department. From 1955–1956, he was a Fulbright lecturer in chemistry at the University of Peshawar in Pakistan.

In addition to the monograph history of Westtown published by the Chester County Historical Society (CCHS), he also wrote histories of Birmingham and East Bradford Townships. His books on Chester County covered bridges, potters and pottery, clocks and their makers, and are still available.

James was an active member of the Society of Friends and past president of Friends Historical Association. He was president of the YMCA in West Chester and a member of the West Chester Rotary. He was also a member of the Westtown School Committee for 29 years and was chairman of its executive committee from 1948–1957.

According to James's daughter Barbara Stonestrom, her Quaker father believed in equality and fairness. She tells the story of her father taking a choral group from Lincoln University to New York City to perform and then trying to get them into a concert hall to hear another choral performance. "My father was told that the theater would not sell tickets to blacks," Barbara recalls. "He was especially upset when he was told he could sit in the orchestra section, but the students could not. He refused to see the concert if they couldn't. Through my father's insistence that they be seated, the group was given a private box to view the performance and had some of the best seats in the house."

ABOUT WESTTOWN

Westtown Township, founded in 1685, claims to be the second oldest of Chester County's 57 townships. Its neighbor Birmingham Township predates it by only one year. Westtown sits at latitude 39.92 and longitude 75.577 with an elevation of 374 feet, with boundaries forming a parallelogram about 5.5 miles long by 1.5 miles wide. According to *The History of Chester County Pennsylvania* by John Smith Futhey & Gilbert Cope, Westtown was probably named for its location relative to Easttown Township.

Westtown Township was surveyed and laid out about the year 1685 as part of William Penn's original land grant. It is one of the very few Chester County townships whose boundaries have not been altered since they were established. Township boundary lines form a rectangle measuring about 5½ by 1½ miles and contain about 5,000 acres. Tracts were divided up and sold to distant proprietors. One included a tract of 1,900 acres deeded to Richard Whitpain of London, a butcher by trade. Whitpain, who never set foot in America, purchased a large amount of land in Pennsylvania as an investment, some of which was located in what is now Montgomery County, where a township now bears his name.

According to the United States Census Bureau, the township has a total area of 8.8 square miles, of which 8.7 square miles is land and 0.04 square miles, or 0.23%, is water. Only three other townships in the county are bounded by only four straight lines (West Pikeland, West Whiteland and East Whiteland Townships). Westtown Township is bounded by Birmingham to the west and south; East Bradford to the north and west; East Goshen and West Goshen to the north; Willistown to the east, Edgmont and Thornbury townships, each in Delaware County, and Thornbury, Chester County to the south. Thus, about one half of Westtown's southern boundary is adjacent to Delaware County. The Chester County which William Penn established in 1682 was divided into Chester and Delaware Counties in 1789.

In 1810, the township population was listed as 790. One hundred years later, this figure dropped to 663, after reaching a high of 848 in 1880. Population data does not include non-resident Westtown School boarding pupils or township hospital patients. By 1950, the population had grown to only 992, an increase of 82 people since 1940. However, since 1950, home building has escalated at a rapid pace. The 1960 township population was 1,947. This figure grew

dramatically to 5,069 by 1970 and continues to rise at an increasing rate. In the 2010 census, Westtown had 10,827 residents. According to the latest voter information, more than 7,000 residents of the township are eligible to vote — an average of 3,000 votes in each election, according to county statistics.

The township has changed dramatically since Penn's time. Joseph Cope's pamphlet "1685—Westtown Township—1927" did not contain such terms as zoning board, township police, planned residential developments, townhouses, condominiums or garden apartments. It did contain, in addition to the map, a brief description of township schools and institutions.

Since 1927, much of the farmland has become building developments. A 1970s township map identifies 18 areas by name that have become housing developments since 1950. In 2019, there are 68 housing and apartment developments and two operating farms: Wynnorr Farm in the northeastern part of the township and Pete's Produce Farm in the south-central portion on the land belonging to Westtown School.

Despite concerns of rising taxes, larger school enrollments, traffic concerns, and water, sewage, flood and other ecological concerns; Westtown Township is still, as it was between 1685 and 1927, "A Good Place To Live." The majority of our residents happily live their entire lives here and many others relocate to Westtown from all across the country, attracted by a lower cost of living, access to public parks, fresh air and a sound economy with a median household income of \$85,049 in 2018.

The majority of our residents happily live their entire lives here. Many others relocate to Westtown — which had a median household income of \$85,049 in 2018 — from across the country, attracted by a lower cost of living, access to public parks, fresh air, a sound economy and proximity to metropolitan centers such as Philadelphia, New York City and Washington, D.C.

While the township never had what could be considered a main street, Darlington's Corner (at the intersection of U.S. Route 202 and Pennsylvania Route 926) was the closest to a town hub. In the early 1800s, the corner boasted a hotel, clock manufacturer, cotton factory, country store

(that sold DuPont explosives) and a farm of 110 acres. Darlington's Corner included farms and homes across the border in Thornbury Township, which is south of Route 926.

For most of its existence, the settlement was known as Darlington's Corner — singular, because Thomas Darlington's property occupied only one corner of the intersection. But as the automobile became ascendant in the early 20th century, early motoring began incorrectly referring to the intersection as Darlington Corners — plural without the possessive. Since 1979, the U.S. Geological Survey has officially designated the site Darlington Corners.¹

BEFORE WILLIAM PENN — RICH INDIAN LEGACY

Long before William Penn established Pennsylvania, the area that is now Westtown Township was part of Lenapehoking (*lanape haki-nk*), meaning 'in the land of the Lenni Lenape' (le-nē-'le-nah-pē), "the common" or "original people."

Archaeological studies suggest that Pennsylvania has been occupied by Native Americans for approximately 12,000 to 18,000 years. The period they likely first populated our state is known as the Paleo period, when Ice Age glaciers in Northern Pennsylvania were melting and the land south of the glaciers was dotted by small patches of forest and open grasslands, with giant bison, musk oxen, and even mastodons, mammoths, and caribou.

At the time of European contact, the Lenape, descendants of the Paleo people, had moved over thousands of years from being hunter-gatherers to mainly an agricultural group who depended on their crops of corn, squash and beans ("the three sisters"). The Lenape would travel seasonally to established camps away from their villages to hunt or fish.

The Lenape tribe is also known as the Delaware, a name given to them by English explorers. The Lenape in our area spoke the Unami dialect of the Algonquian language. Another band of Algonquian-speaking Lenape in northern Pennsylvania spoke the Munsee dialect.

The Lenape lived in bands of 20 to 30 people near rivers and creeks in our area such as the Brandywine (*Wauwaset*), and in Westtown Township the two branches of Chester Creek (*Meechoppenackhan* which means "the large potato stream") and their tributaries. Married men

¹ For the sake of historical accuracy, this publication will refer to the settlement as "Darlington's Corner."

lived with the band to which their wives belonged. The children were considered members of their mother's band (matrilineal descent). The Lenape lived in small huts called wigwams. William Penn described the Lenape wigwams as follows: “. . . their houses are Mats, or Bark of Trees set on Poles, in the fashion of an English Barn, but out of the power of the winds, for they are hardly higher than a Man . . .”

By the time of William Penn's arrival in 1682, the Lenape in our area were already accustomed to seeing Europeans, due to prior settlements by the Dutch, Finns and Swedes. After Penn arrived, he and his family purchased large areas of land from the Lenape.

Historical records, archaeological finds and local lore indicate there were many Lenape villages and camps in our general area. A documented Lenape village, Queonemysing (place of the long fish), was situated along the “big bend” of the Brandywine just east of route 100 where it crosses the Pennsylvania-Delaware line. Although no documented Lenape villages have been found in Westtown, there are several sites in the township where artifacts such as arrowheads and other stone tools have been found, indicating the Native American people had camps, or hunted in what is now our township. Arrowheads and sharpened stones were found on the old Orvis property in Westtown (now Arborview) many years ago. In recent years, several arrowheads have been discovered in Pleasant Grove and other developments.

In C.A. Weslager's unfortunately titled book *Red Men on the Brandywine*, he states that archaeological evidence supports the existence of villages or camps at Chadds Ford, Brinton's Bridge, Pocopson, Lenape Park, Wawaset, Northbrook, Embreeville, Coatesville, Glenmoore and Honeybrook.

The Great Minquas Path was mainly a fur trading route used by the Minqua or Susquehannock people. The trail led from the Susquehanna River near Conestoga approximately 80 miles to the Schuylkill River near Philadelphia. After crossing through West Chester, the trail passed through Westtown and eventually on to Philadelphia, bringing Native Americans from central Pennsylvania through the township. By the mid-18th century, most of the native people left the area for present-day Ohio and other Western lands, forced out by treaties with the Europeans who settled the original people's lands.

WELSH/WELCH TRACT

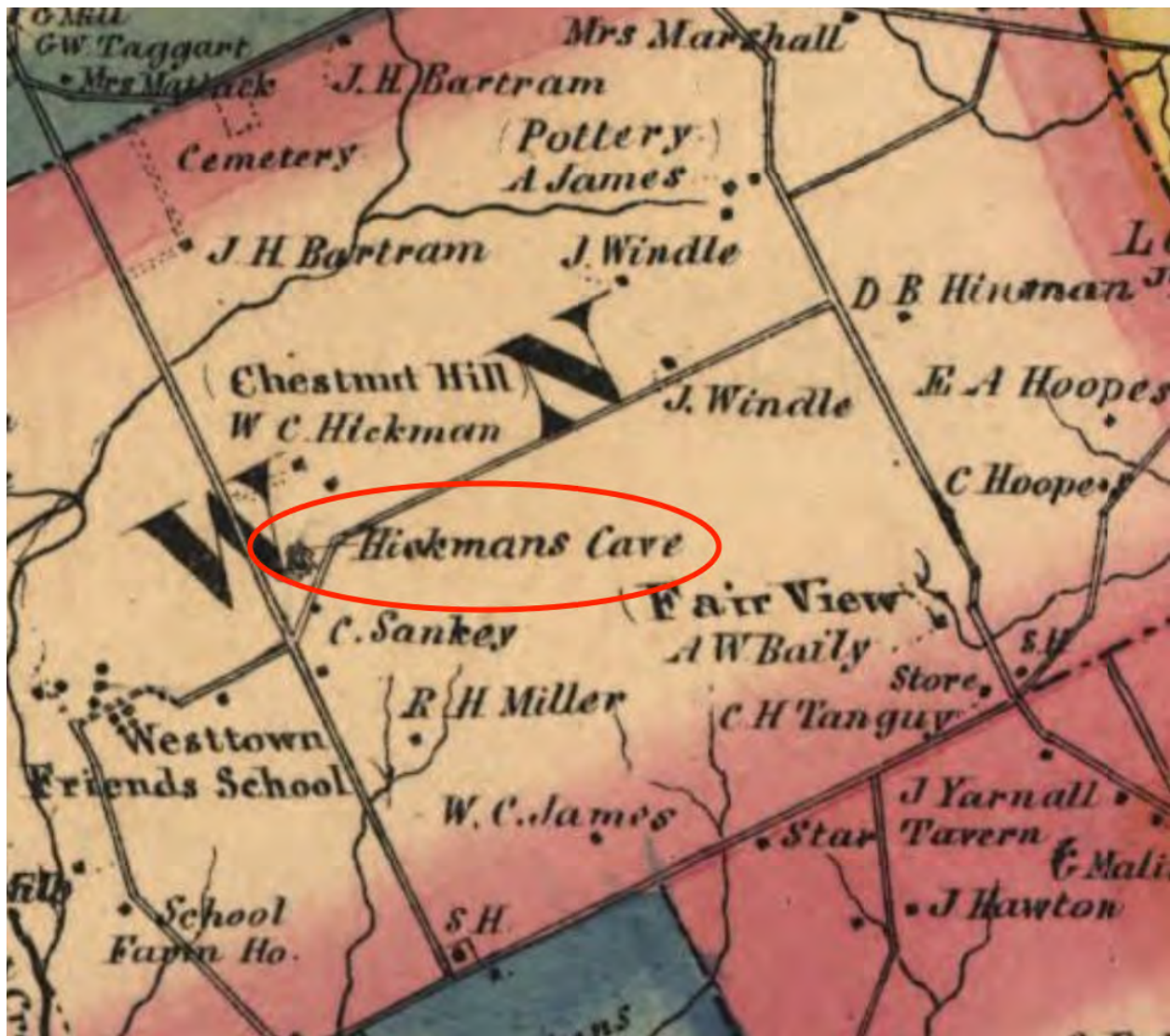
The founder of Pennsylvania, William Penn, was interested in enticing fellow Quakers to settle and monetize the land he had received by royal charter in 1681. The land was received in payment for a large debt King Charles II of England owed Penn's father, Admiral Sir William Penn. Lenni Lenape indigenous peoples and Swedish and Dutch settlers already resided in Pennsylvania.

Penn was approached by a group of Welsh-speaking Quakers led by John Roberts. They proposed that a Welsh (alternately spelled Welch) Tract, also called the Welsh Barony, be established in Pennsylvania as a separate county where the people and government could conduct their affairs in their own language. In 1684, Penn granted them 40,000 acres "upon the west side of the Schuylkill river, running three miles upon ye same and two miles backward, and then Extend the parallel with the River six miles and to Run westwardly so far as this said quantity of land be completely surveyed unto them."

This tract would have been eight miles square and constituted the present townships of Haverford, Radnor, Upper and Lower Merion, and a portion of Tredyffrin. To this day, Welsh place names such as Bryn Mawr, Gwynedd and Gulph Mills dot the map in this area. While the tract did not encompass what is now Westtown, Welsh settlers continued to purchase lands to the west, reaching into the Brandywine and Chester Creek watersheds. A Welshman named Griffin Jones is shown as owning property adjacent to Westtown in Willistown Township, according to the 1687 Holme's map shown below.

The Welsh Barony was never realized. By 1690, Penn had already created two counties—Chester (including today's Delaware County) and Montgomery — that included the Welch Tract. Townships, such as Westtown (formed in 1685), had already been plotted out.

(1869–1924), was the next owner of the property, which became known as Pine Hill Orchards due to its large acreage of apple trees.



Location of Hickman cave. *T.J. Kennedy's Map of Chester Co., Pennsylvania, 1860.* <https://www.loc.gov/item/2003627062/>

In 1924 G. Maurice (pronounced Morris) Bartram (1895–1943) took over the operation of his father's fruit farm. He, in turn, was succeeded by his son, J. Hibberd Bartram (1921–1993). Evelyn Bartram Dudas and her family live nearby. Today, most of the former Bartram Pine Hill Orchards property is a residential area known as Rollinwood. (For more on the Bartrams and their farm see **Township Farms**.)

In 1735, Benjamin and Ann Hickman's daughter Hannah married a neighbor, Joseph James. In 1700 Joseph's father, Aaron James from Staffordshire, England, settled on land in Westtown east of the Hickman property. Soon Aaron owned 688 acres of land extending from today's Route 3 to the Street Road.

Today, on a portion of the early James land, are the Saints Simon and Jude Church, Rectory, and School, and the developments known as Grandview Acres and Westover Farms. This land was sold to the Philadelphia Archdiocese by the McDaniel family around 1958 after farming it for almost 50 years. (For more on the McDaniels see **Township Farms**.) Following the death of Aaron James, Chester Monthly Meeting Minutes recorded the following statement: "Aaron James died 2-6-1752, one of the first elders of Goshen Meeting. He was a man of upright conversation, a peace maker, and serviceable on Truth's account in divers respects."

Joseph and Hannah Hickman James lived on a part of his father's land and had a family of nine girls and five boys. Subsequent generations of the family continued to be farmers and farm owners in the township until the 1860s. Plumly (Plumley) Farm, located west of Westtown School and the residence of the late Russell B. Jones, was owned by the James family from 1804 until 1855.

Daniel Hoopes, with his parents and a brother and sister, emigrated from Yorkshire, England, in 1683, and settled in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Daniel Hoopes and Jane WorriLOW, of Edgmont Township, were married in 1696 and, about this time, settled in the southeast corner of Westtown Township. Daniel and Jane had eight sons and nine daughters.

In 1700, Daniel began to acquire land in this area, owning also what is now 1639 East Street Road. (His eldest son Joshua the 2nd, added to the main house in later years.) Within a few years Daniel owned some 500 acres there as well as elsewhere in the county. Some of his land in Westtown remained in the Hoopes family for 200 years.

Daniel was elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly and was the first Justice of the Peace in Westtown. Three of his sons, Daniel, John, and Thomas, settled in Goshen Township on land given them by their father. A part of this land was within the limits of today's West Chester.

Many Chester County families bearing the surname Hoopes are descended from Daniel and Jane Worrilow Hoopes of Westtown.

Among other families which, by 1774, owned considerable land in the township were — Darlington, Davis, Eavenson, Entrikin, Gibbons, Hawley, Huey, Hunt, Mercer, Osborne, Sharpless, Strode, Taylor, Townsend, and Yearsley.

Of course, there are other names associated with the township's early history, including John Whitpain, who never set foot in this country, but owned many acres at the western end of the township, and surnames like Speakman; James; Osborne; Cheyney and Faucett.

Some of the stories of the early families of the township reveal more than births and deaths; they provide a window into everyday lives and beliefs. For example, research conducted by Westtown School archivists revealed two generations of the Gibbons family had slaves and/or indentured servants on their Westtown plantation, according to the wills and property inventories compiled upon the deaths of James (1686–1732) and his son, James (1710–1745).

While some Quakers were strong abolitionists, many did own slaves. The first petition to abolish slavery in the Colonies was to Germantown Friends Meeting in 1688. Some 75 years later, in 1758, the Yearly Meeting decided no one who owned slaves could have a leadership position in the Meeting, and in 1774, the Yearly Meeting agreed that Quakers who owned slaves would be disowned from Meeting.

Notably, the will of the third generation James Gibbons (1736–1823), who owned the land at the time of the sale to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting for a new school that would become Westtown School, did not list any slaves or indentured servants.

TOWNSHIP FARMS

From a strong agricultural history where the main occupation was farming, in 2020 there are only two active farms left in Westtown. They are Pete's Produce Farm at Westtown School and Wynnorr Farm, owned by the Stratton family on what was once the Hoopes property on East Street Road and Route 352.

There are very few farm records of the township's early years. The following data, which were gleaned from the 1850 Census Report, show that township activities were largely agrarian:

43 farmers	5 shoemakers	1 pump maker
78 laborers	3 potters	1 plasterer
14 laborers (domestic)	2 watchmen	1 tailor
17 schoolteachers	2 millers	1 gardener
10 stone masons	2 butchers	1 bookkeeper
7 carpenters	1 bricklayer	

Average monthly wages for men, including board, \$10; female domestic help, including board, \$1 a week; day laborers, without board, 75¢, with board 50¢; one sawmill and one saw and grist mill were listed. From June 1, 1849, to June 1, 1850, products sold in the township earned \$17,500 income at the flour and sawmills, \$1,500 from pottery; while 25,682 pounds of butter were sold. Major crops were Indian corn, oats, Irish potatoes, hay and orchard products. Livestock was reported as:

122 horses	401 other cattle	391 swine
292 milch cows	92 working oxen	79 sheep

Farming and dairying continued to be the major township activities until recent years. In 1926 there were 22 farms whose main operation was dairying. By late 1972, only one farm in the township, owned by Westtown School, was still in the dairy business. However by 2018, Westtown School no longer had a dairy operation. Today, Peter Flynn of Pete's Produce leases approximately 180 acres of the school's land for crop farming. A strong gardening program also keeps Westtown's students involved in the school's stewardship of the land.

McDaniel Farm

Gertrude M. Conley Riley McDaniel and David McDaniel purchased two properties of about 235 acres in Westtown along Route 352 and Route 3 in the mid-1920s, combining them into Sleepy Hollow Farms, where they raised horses and Angus beef. They owned property on both sides of Route 352 at one time. David and Gertrude had no children. It was a second marriage for Gertrude, who was widowed in 1919 and left with two sons. The couple built a stone house on the property around 1939. This house still stands as the rectory and offices for Saints Simon & Jude Church and School. They also owned several other houses on the property on what would become Johnny's Way and Woodcrest Road. In 1956, David died of a massive heart attack, and his step-grandsons, teenage cousins Thomas A. "Buck" Riley Esq. and Howard "Tuck" Riley (Chester County Court Judge), took over operation of the farm.



McDaniel Farm ca. 1920. *Courtesy of the Riley family.*

The family began to sell off portions of the property after Gertrude died in 1971 because of death duties. The first parcel, on the west side of Route 352, facing Chester Road and Johnny's Way, was sold to Jack Hoopes in the 1970s for single family homes. The property would eventually become Pennwood Park and Grandview Acres developments. Property on the north side of Route 3 in East Goshen Township was sold to Hankin Group for commercial offices on McDaniel Drive.

Maple Shade Farm/Marshall Jones Farm/formerly Taylor Farm/now Pleasant Grove

The current site of Bayard Rustin High School and the former farm of Marshall Jones, was previously hunting and fishing grounds for the Lenni Lenape ("Original People") hundreds of years ago. William Penn purchased land from the Lenape by treaty in 1683. This included what many years later would become Maple Shade Farm owned by Marshall Jones Sr.

Penn later sold the property to a fellow Friend (Quaker) Richard Whitpain, a London butcher who never came to the colonies. When Whitpain died, his heirs sold the land to John Townsend in 1724. Through the years, a succession of families owned and farmed the land: Eavenson, Hawley, Cox, James, Garrett and Twaddell.

In 1913, Marshall Jones Sr., of Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, bought the land from Edward Twaddell, who had operated the Westtown Stock Farm on the property, raising horses and mules for sale to other farmers.

The Jones family operated the 175-acre Maple Shade Farm as a dairy farm for the next 90 years. The farm included land that would later become the Pleasant Grove development. An original barn on the property was destroyed by fire in 1934. The replacement barn, which could house up to 100 dairy cows, was reputed to be the largest in Chester County and cost almost \$5,000 to build (equivalent to \$92,000 in 2018).

In the early days of the farm, raw milk was hauled in 10-gallon cans to Westtown Station and taken by the Pennsylvania Railroad's morning milk train to Philadelphia. Later, trucks picked up the milk cans from the farm and delivered them to a dairy in West Chester.

Between 1931 and 1947, the farm devoted several acres to growing potatoes. With most men in the military during World War II, Jamaican immigrants who were housed in Media, were hired to work the potato fields. Then in 1945, German POWs (prisoners of war), imprisoned at Fort Mifflin near the Philadelphia Airport, were brought each day to work on the farm. These prisoners proved to be hard workers and appreciated the hot meals the Jones family provided every day.

Marshall Jones III, only 7 years old at the time, remembers riding in the truck that went to Fort Mifflin to pick up the POWs. “My mom would give them a big dinner,” he remembers. “There were about 8–10 of them that worked in the fields.” The family forged a strong relationship with the POWs and letters went back and forth for many years after the men returned to their country.

During World War II, the Japanese captured the Indonesian island of Java, the only place in the world where kapok, a silky seed pod fiber used to fill life preservers, was grown. The U.S. War Department, partnering with the Department of Agriculture, set out to collect milkweed pods for life preservers. Marshall Jones was recruited to speak to the West Chester Lions Club about the importance of this program, which paid children 20¢ for each bag of pods they collected.

Marshall Jones and his heirs were always willing to embrace technology, including automobiles and airplanes. They purchased one of the first Cadillac touring cars in the area in 1915, which they could not drive in the winter because local dirt roads were impassable. The family gradually mechanized the whole farm and in 1947 retired the last pair of mules that had been purchased for \$200 each in 1936.

Marshall Jones Jr., who died in 1997, bought a rare two-seater Piper Vagabond airplane in 1946 — only 230 were built. Their only instrument was a compass. Marshall Jones III says he has no idea how his father learned to fly, but he took off from a small airfield on their property and stored the plane in a building near the field. Besides joy riding in the plane, he flew himself to many meetings of the Flying Farmers Association.

Elsie Mae Jones, wife of Marshall Jones Jr., was also a member of the Pennsylvania Flying Farmers and the Antique Home and Equipment Association. She died in 2002.

In the late 20th century, the Jones family signed an agreement of sale with the Westrum Development Co. to build a senior living center on the property, retaining about seven acres of the farm. In 2003, the West Chester Area School District stepped in and through eminent domain, purchased the property from that company to build Bayard Rustin High School. The school was completed in 2006. Then in 2015, the school district sold excess land from the purchase to a construction company to build “Rustin Walk” for residential houses.

Marshall Jones III still lives in one house on the property. His daughter Barbara Jones Menkins lives in another house and keeps horses on the property.

As recently as the 1970s, when most properties were farms, Barbara Jones Menkins remembers riding her pony from Maple Shade Farm over fences and through the fields and woodlands of their farm and adjacent farms. She would tie her pony to a tree at Bartram’s Market at Route 926 and Route 202, purchase a drink, and then cross at the traffic light at Route 202 and 926 on her horse.

“I would ride through Crebilly Farm, all the while looking for, and jumping, as many ‘jumps’ as possible, usually stacked telephone poles used by the foxhunts to navigate from field to field,” Barbara remembers. “Oh, the life of a farming family was like no other! We rode ponies and horses to herd cows, check pasture fencing for breaches, as well as foxhunting and recreation.”

Wynnorr Farm

Today’s Wynnorr Farm, one of the last working farms in the township in the 21st century, has been owned by the Stratton family for nearly 100 years. Located just east of Route 352 on Route 926 (East Street Road), the farm was owned by the Hoopes family for more than two centuries, from 1697–1908.

The original 200 acres were purchased by Daniel Hoopes who married Jane WorriLOW, and the family named the property Brooznoll, meaning Breezy Knoll, after the WorriLOW family home in England. In the early 1800s, the farm was divided into two tracts which were continuously owned by Hoopes’ descendants until the early 1900s.

John A. Stratton Sr., bought the western half of the property in 1924, making it eligible for a Century Farm in 2024. (This is a farm or ranch officially recognized as having been continuously owned by a single family for 100 years or more). In the 1920s, the western half of the Hoopes' tract included the original stone farmhouse built in 1723 adjacent to Street Road (sold in the 1940s) and a second farmhouse built in 1875 currently occupied by one of the Stratton family. The property also included a schoolhouse on the northeast corner of Routes 352 and 926, which was sold to become a private residence in the 1940s.



1875 datestone on main Hoopes farmhouse. *Photo by Jim Guterl*

Ironically, John Sr. was not a farmer, but a builder who wanted to try a different lifestyle. The farm was renamed Wynnorr for the original owners' birthplaces. It was a combination of Winona, Ohio for John Stratton Sr., and Norristown for his wife Isadora. Today, the farm has

about 50 tillable acres plus pasture and woods in several tracts owned by members of the Stratton family.

Like any property held by one family for a long time, there are many stories. “When our grandfather bought this property, his cousin Barclay Stratton and wife Elma moved their farm operation from Ohio, bringing the equipment and animals in by train to the Cheyney Station,” related Joseph Stratton. “The animals were then herded down the dirt country roads to the farm. Prior to the advent of modern cars and trucks, this was a common way to move livestock because all farm properties were fenced in and the roads were the only means of moving goods. You couldn’t go overland.”



Wynnorr Farm barn with 1864 datestone. *Photo by Jim Guterl*

Sadly, in 1928, just four years after moving to the farm, Barclay died from blood poisoning after a farm accident. He was only 35 years old. This was prior to the advent of antibiotics and tetanus vaccinations in the 1940s that could have saved his life.

Typically in farming communities, young people did not have to go far to find spouses. That was the case for John Stratton Jr., who married Katherine Stanton, the daughter of E. Dean and Esther Stanton from the farm next door on the eastern half of the Hoopes property. The Stantons had purchased the eastern half of the farm directly from the Hoopes family in 1916. The Stantons

were the maternal grandparents of the present owners. E. Dean Stanton was the business manager at Westtown School, a township supervisor, and a county commissioner at various times in his career.

Like many early residents of Westtown, the Hoopes, Strattons and Stantons were Quakers. In fact, the original Hoopes settlers belonged to the same Quaker meeting in Delaware County that the Stratton and Stanton descendants belong to today.

Today, family members living in various houses on the original Hoopes farm include members of the third, fourth and fifth generations of the Stratton and Stanton extended family. The family raises sheep and grows grain and hay on the property. In its heyday the farm included dairy and beef cows, more than 3,000 chickens, and grew grain, corn and produce, which was sold to farm stands throughout the area, including one at the Stratton farm. The Stratton roadside stand opened in the 1920s and operated seasonally for 90 years, selling fresh eggs, fresh-killed poultry, raw milk in earlier years, and sweet corn and fresh produce in later years. It also rents space to Deer Creek Malthouse, which makes malt barley and other grains for sale to distilleries and breweries in the state. (See **Local Businesses** for more on the malthouse.)

The oldest building on the farm is the springhouse that dates to the early 1700s. The three level 60 feet by 60 feet iconic red barn was built in 1864, with mortise and tenon joints secured with wooden pegs. On the third floor of the barn, the chutes to deliver hay and feed to the animals housed on the first floor are still evident.

One portion of the roof of this barn was ripped off in Hurricane Hazel in 1954 and was rebuilt. A 1950s corn crib for livestock feed still stands next to the barn.



Original 1723 Hoopes building at Wynnorr Farm. *Photo by Jim Guterl*

A stucco-over-stone Downing-style house with Italianate details and a wrap-around porch that overlooks the property was the second farmhouse built in 1874. Joseph Stratton said he heard the house was built as a summer home, although other family members do not recall this story. “Of course, they just lived right down the hill, so it was funny to imagine them saying this is a summer house,” he says.

Other former farmhouses on the original Hoopes property (one on East Street Road and another on Powderhorn Drive) have been sold off from the farm and are restored private residences.

The Strattons intend to keep the land open and operating as a productive farm for as many generations as possible. They say being “stewards of the land is a unique opportunity and a strong belief that continues to be held by many farm families who work hard to produce our food every day.”

Faucett/Cheyney Farm

George Faucett and his wife Isabella were the progenitors of most of the Faucett family in Chester County. Prior to the Revolutionary War, George Faucett purchased land in Westtown Township south of West Chester along the road leading to Wilmington.

George and Isabella had four children. John Faucett (1760–1846) was a Revolutionary War soldier. Their other children were Henry (1756–1826), Elizabeth Harlan (1765–1852) and Mary

Baliff (1778-?). Here, in colonial times, the Faucett family lived in a log cabin, part of which they converted into a country store. (For more on this business see **Some Township Stores**.) Years later, the cabin was replaced by a substantial stone house using some of the timber from the cabin in its construction. The location became known as Faucett's Cross Roads in their honor, comprised of land between Old Wilmington Pike and Route 202. Later, family members would be buried in the Taylor Burial Ground in what is now part of Pleasant Grove development.

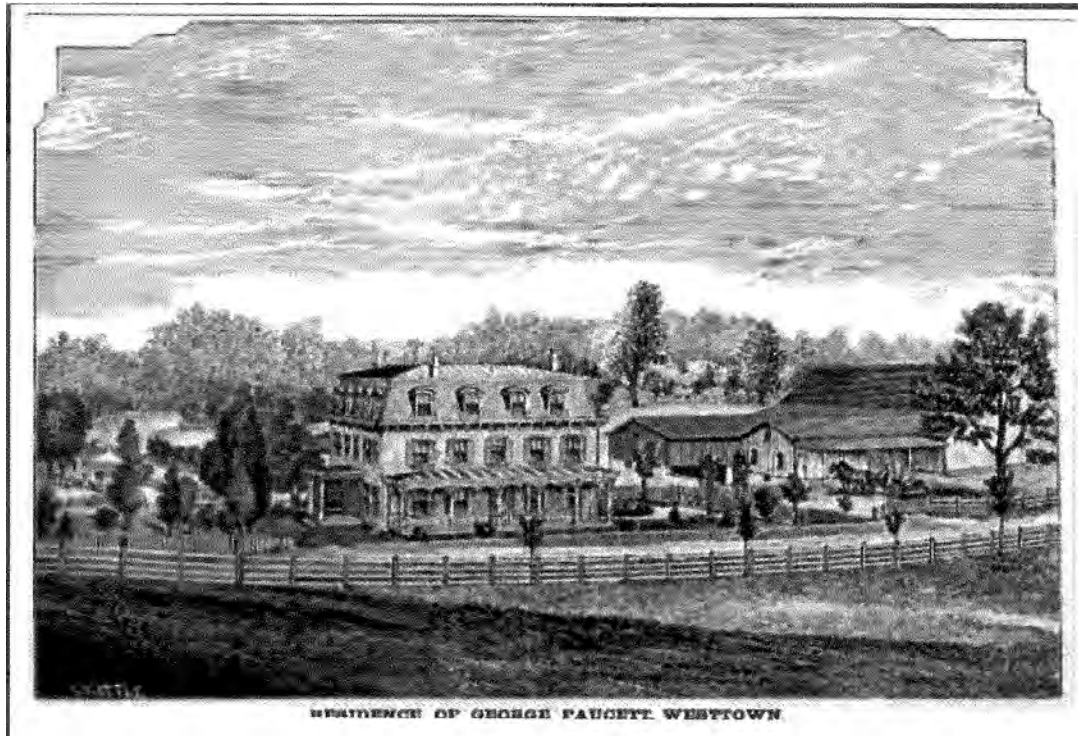


Illustration of Faucett House. The road pictured is the Wilmington Pike in its sleepier days. The house has since been demolished. From *Futhey & Cope's 1881 History of Chester County, Pennsylvania*

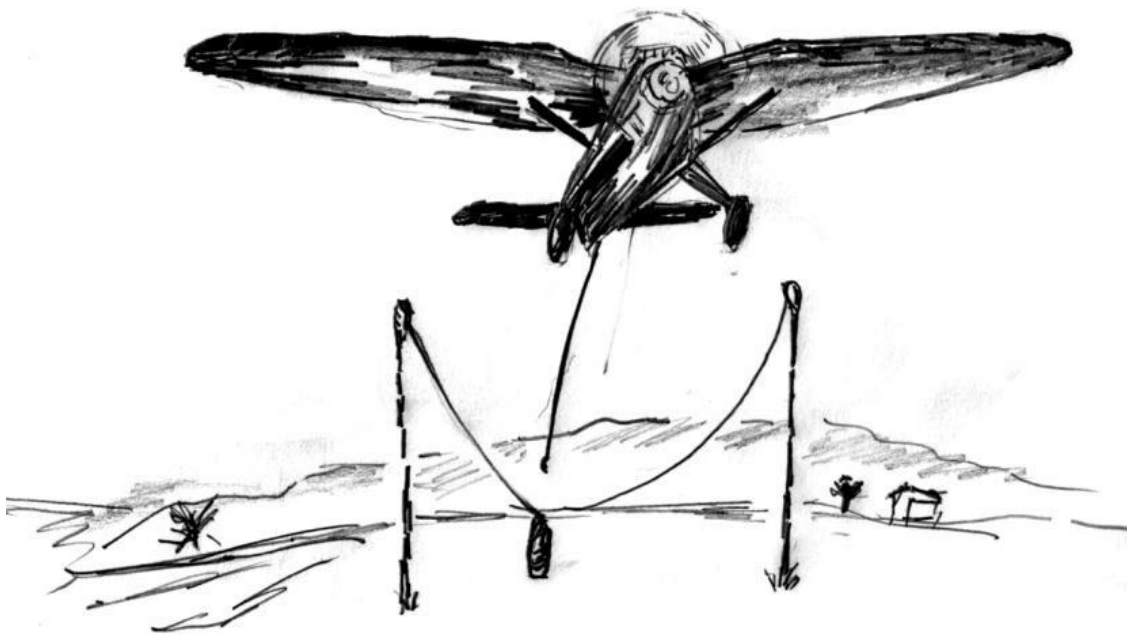
George Faucett, a grandson of George and Isabella, was born on the family homestead in 1786. He married Mary Yearsley whose family were prominent landowners. Thus, the Faucett family acquired the land previously known as Yearsley's Hill. Generations later, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, descendant George Faucett and his sons, Casper and Alexis, operated a creamery on the site.

Farmers from a radius of several miles brought milk to Faucett Creamery. In 1898, the Faucetts played a large part in convincing Pennsylvania state authorities to eliminate tolls on the Wilmington and West Chester roads.

In 1900, George Faucett and Sons were taxed for 441 acres of land in Westtown Township. Faucett's Creamery was still operating well into the early 20th century.

Just north of today's Stetson Junior High School is a commanding hill with a magnificent view to the south and west. On an 1847 map created by Painter and Bowen, the hilltop is listed as "Yearsley's Hill," depicted by a small cluster of crossroad buildings surrounded by the Yearsley and Faucett farmlands.

Born on what was once the Faucett Farm is Barbara Cheyney Bentley, the granddaughter of Wilmur Edwin Cheyney and Anna Lloyd Henry, who married in 1914. She recalls that while growing up on the family farm a bag containing mail would be attached to a large pole. A small airplane would swoop down and pick up the mail, Westtown Township's own version of "air mail," and a typical way of mailing letters to go a long distance. This location is now a part of the current Starkweather Elementary and Stetson Middle Schools.



Rendition of air mail pickup on Faucett's Hill, now site of Stetson Middle School and Starkweather Elementary School.

Illustration by Jim Guterl

Westtown School Farm/Pete's Produce Farm

Today, Peter Flynn of Pete's Produce leases approximately 180 acres of the school's land for crop farming; and runs a farm stand on Route 926 between Westtown and Shady Grove Roads. A strong gardening program also keeps Westtown's students involved in the school's stewardship of the land. This program is not connected to Pete's Produce.

Originally Peter Flynn ran his produce stand on the edge of a 160-acre farm off nearby Shiloh Road, but vacated the property when the owners, the family of Marshall Jones, sold the land to a Bucks County developer. (In 2003, the West Chester Area School District took over the property for the new Rustin High School.)

Bartram Farm

Since 1857, Bartram farm has been owned by six generations of Bartrams, descended from naturalist John Bartram of Philadelphia's Bartram Gardens. Originally a 140-acre farm (now five residential acres), situated east of Westtown School and north of Johnny's Way, it was purchased from the Seals just before the Civil War by John Hibberd Bartram, the fourth recorded owner of the land. (The Hickman family were the first owners of the farm through a Penn land grant. The property went from Hickman father to son to brother, who eventually sold it to the Grays, who then sold the property to the Seals.) Bartram had fruit trees and raised asparagus, which he sold in Philadelphia. He also ran an extensive dairy and livestock operation.

In a 1980s history John Hibberd Bartram, a descendant of the original John Hibberd, writes: "When my great grandfather . . . purchased this farm, there were three houses, plus the current springhouse, a sheep barn, with unusual square support pillars, and a sheep shed near the tenant house. One house was near what is now Nectar Lane," Bartram wrote. "I believe this was the first house built by the Hickmans."

From 1988–89, at the request of a township group gathering the histories of old houses in the municipality, John Hibberd Bartram (1921–1993), recorded his memories of the farm. Bartram wrote about the death of his grandfather. "At that time [1924] my grandfather, George Hibberd Bartram, died from a fall from a 20-foot ladder while picking cherries." Three-year-old John Hibberd witnessed the accident. His great-grandfather, with a broken neck, was transported by

buckboard wagon to West Chester Memorial Hospital, where he died several days later. In this history, John Hibberd does not relate that in 1943, just 10 days before he married Marion Reynolds, his father, George Maurice (pronounced Morris), was crushed by a tractor while working on the farm and died.

In 1971, John and Evelyn Bartram Dudas purchased one of the houses on the property from her father John Hibberd and operated Dudas Diving Duds from a barn on the property. Evelyn Dudas had made history in 1967, when at age 22 she became the first woman to successfully dive to the wreck of the *Andrea Doria*. In 1982, John Dudas died in a scuba diving accident while exploring the torpedoed wreck of the Sommerstad, sunk in World War I near Fire Island. In 2016, the diving supply business on the property closed its retail shop.

Crebilly Farm

What is now the more than 300-acre Crebilly Farm was originally granted to Richard Collett by William Penn in the 17th century. Collett apparently died without ever traveling to the Colonies, though his son may have emigrated to Philadelphia. In 1696, what would become Crebilly and hundreds of surrounding acres was superintended for its distant landlord by John Radley — for whom Radley Run, a small tributary of the Brandywine and later a housing development and country club in East Bradford township — is named.

Kennedy's 1860 map of Chester County shows parts of what is now Crebilly Farm being owned in the main by E. Baker and some parts by M. Ingram and called "Willow Lake." Breou's atlas of 1883 shows the property being owned by David McClure and John McClure. The Robinson family purchased the property around 1948. A certificate of search shows Sara Gyger conveying some property in Westtown to James K. Robinson in 1948. Sara Gyger owned several parcels of the land beginning in 1908. James K. Robinson's brother, Samuel, was the co-founder of Acme Markets, a supermarket chain, and James was vice president and general manager of the business in the 1940s. James later became president of the Devon Horse Show and was credited with bringing coaching to the Devon competition.

The Robinson family were avid coach and carriage collectors and drivers. After James died in 2001, his collection of more than 100 carriages was sold at auction and drew bidders from

around the world. The collection included an 1893 private park drag built by Brewster & Co. of New York, which was originally intended to be exhibited at the 1894 World Columbian Exposition in Chicago; a roof seat carriage built for the Philadelphia Drexel family; and colorful mail coaches called the Nimrod and the Tantivy, built in 1885, among others.

NATURAL RESOURCES

A Well-watered Area

The township is generally characterized by gently rolling hills and well-watered valleys, whose waters powered many township businesses. In the northwest corner is a tributary of Plum Run that enters the Brandywine Creek just south of Lenape Park. Radley Run flows through the southwest corner of the township before entering Birmingham and there enters the Brandywine below Pocopson Bridge.

Westtown's largest streams are the east branch of Chester Creek and Goose Creek. They join in Thornbury Township about a quarter of a mile south of Street Road. Where Street Road (Route 926) crosses the east branch of Chester Creek, a picturesque wooden covered bridge was in service from 1831 until 1937. Walton's Run enters Goose Creek a short distance north of Westtown Railroad Station. Chester Creek's east branch has two tributaries in the township. Forsythe Run, a small stream, joins it east of Westtown Road after flowing under Westtown Way. The other tributary, Hickman Run, flows through the Westtown School lake and then joins Chester Creek. Several generations of the Hickman family owned the land drained by Hickman Run. Two small streams in the southeastern part of the township, Westtown Run and Cheyney Run, flow under Street Road before joining Chester Creek. Another noteworthy stream is a branch of Hunter's Run. It starts in the eastern area of the township and flows in a northeasterly direction, joining Ridley Creek in Willistown Township.

Township Sawmills and Gristmills

Most of the lumber from the early sawmills was used locally. Prior to 1850, county sawmills used vertical saws which were powered by water wheels. About 1850, circular saws came into use and soon replaced most of the vertical ones. The early gristmills ground grain for local use

and flour for both local use and for export. Large tonnages of flour from Chester County mills were hauled to Wilmington and shipped to various foreign markets in sailing vessels.

The Westtown School Sawmill of 1795

In 1794 James Gibbons' 600-acre farm was purchased to establish Westtown Boarding School. One of the first actions included setting up a sawmill in 1795. This mill was located along Chester Creek near the northern border of the school property. The mill headrace came from a dam whose site was obliterated when the concrete road was built from Westtown Road to Milltown.

A miller's house was built near the sawmill. Westtown School used the miller's house primarily for employee housing until 1962, when it was sold to John J. and Jane Watt; Jane was principal of the Lower School. The school purchased the house back from Jane Watt in 2003 and — known as the Pine Forest House — this original miller's house still serves as a faculty family home.

Using trees from the school property, this sawmill supplied most of the lumber used in the first school building which opened in 1799. Soon after this the 1795 sawmill lost its importance and was abandoned.

The Westtown School Gristmill and Sawmill, 1801–1914



The large chimney in this 1895 photo indicates it was taken after a steam engine was added to the 1839 sawmill. This was added to the 1801 gristmill (the stone building). The steam engine, most likely in the corner of the mill, was replaced with water power in 1895. *Photo courtesy Westtown School Archives.*

In 1801, a stone gristmill was built on the Westtown School property. A sawmill was added to this building in 1839. The major purpose for the gristmill was to supply flour for the school from wheat grown on the property. Initially, this mill was owned by a stock company comprised of 12 men: Cheyney Jefferis, Philip Price, Jr., Abraham Sharpless, Nathan Sharpless, Charles Shoemaker, John Shoemaker, Richard Strode, Jesse Reese, John Roberts, John Talbot, Caspar Wistar and Eli Yarnall. With one exception, each of these men were members of the Committee that had charge of the school.

Shares of stock in the company could not be sold without the approval of the school committee. Over a period of years, the school gradually obtained the stock by purchase or gift. The mill incorporators were permitted to use timber and stone from the school property to build the mill and a house for the miller.

The mill got its power from a dam built on Chester Creek. The old dam is still intact, just a short distance below the 1795 sawmill site. Although the dam was only a half mile from the mill, the headrace, a watercourse that feeds water into a mill, had to be a mile long due to ground levels. When Westtown Lake was built in 1912, the headrace entered it at the northwest corner and left it at the southwest corner. This eliminated the upkeep of nearly a half mile of headrace. However, by this time the heyday of country mills was almost over. The Westtown gristmill ceased operations in 1914.

In 1924, the mill was remodeled and converted into a community center for use by local people. After a few years, enthusiasm and participation for this project waned and the building was again idle. It was next used as a storage place for apples from the Westtown School Orchard. After some years, this usage ended when workers installed modern refrigeration facilities at the orchard.

The mill building was razed in 1989, but the miller's house on Westtown Road still stands and is owned by Westtown School and serves as a home for a school faculty or staff family. The original section of the onetime miller's house bears silent witness to the skill of the stone masons who built it in the early 19th century.

The Hawley-Williams Mills near Oakbourne

An 1816 Chester County map shows a "Saw Mill" on Goose Creek southeast of the later site of Oakbourne Station. Later maps indicate the dam from which this mill got its power was near the mill and therefore had a short headrace.

In 1783, a property in this area comprising 142 acres was sold by Robert Yearsley to William Hawley. An 1847 map lists "Hawley's S.M." (Saw Mill) at the site of the 1816 mill.

In 1847, Abraham Williams purchased the former Hawley property and moved his family there. The 1850 census reported that Abraham Williams had sawed 50,000 feet of lumber at his sawmill during the previous year. A newspaper item in 1853 reported the Williams sawmill had burned but the water wheel had been saved by starting it up. It was reported that several water wheels in Chester County mills were saved from fire in this manner.

Abraham Williams died in 1861 and was succeeded in the farm and mill operations by his son, Enoch Williams (1814–1870). Enoch appears to have been a versatile person who filled the role of farmer, sawyer, blacksmith and miller. Among items listed in the inventory of his estate were “desk and tools in the saw mill . . . smith bellows, vice, anvil and tools.” Witmer’s 1874 “Atlas of Chester County” lists “Estate of E. T. Williams, B.S.S., Saw & Feed Mill;” it seems that a gristmill had been in operation prior to this date.

Abram S. Williams (1849–1919), a son of Enoch, succeeded his father in the ownership and operation of the farm and mills. On a limited scale he ground grain at the gristmill for his neighbors. Activity at the sawmill very soon waned and by the early 1900s, the gristmill was made obsolete by the internal combustion engine. These engines made it possible for farmers to grind their grain at home.

Abram Williams was known for the spirited and handsome driving horses he owned. He had a dairy and took milk produced on his farm to Faucett’s Creamery on Wilmington Pike, a short distance south of West Chester. In 1917, the Williams’ family moved to West Chester and the farm was sold to William B. Rhoads (1873–1954).

Dairying continued to be the major activity of the farm under William Rhoads’ ownership. A regional map issued in 1860 identified either the farm or the hill nearby as “Ashland.” The name, Ashland Farm, was used to identify it during the period that it was owned by the Rhoads’ family. For many years there were several large ash trees here. Recently, the attractive farm house and a small adjacent area were owned by the Gregory Hill family.

Minerals and Construction Materials

Serpentine Quarries

In the southwestern corner of the township there is an extensive and unusual outcrop of serpentine stone. Serpentine rock occurs in only four states: Pennsylvania, Maryland, Oregon and California. Laid down as igneous rock more than 600 million years ago, serpentine rock is based on three hydrous magnesium silicate minerals — antigorite, lizardite and chrysotile. Serpentine rock is almost always found in association with rocks that contain mica, feldspar, tourmaline and quartz. These rocks can be seen at the two quarries in the corner of the township.

The serpentine rock from these two quarries contains the mineral olivine which gives it that distinctive green color. The rock was used in building early houses and barns. Between 1730 and 1888 it has been estimated that 500,000 cubic yards of serpentine were taken from the two township quarries in close proximity to each other.

The common identification of the major quarry as “Birmingham Serpentine Quarry” is misleading because it is in Westtown, not Birmingham, Township. For many years this quarry was owned by the Brinton family and is generally known as “Brinton’s Quarry.” The heyday of this quarry was between 1870 and 1888 when the late Joseph Brinton, of Thornbury Township, Chester County, owned and operated it.

In these years, the Quarry produced 500,000 cubic yards of serpentine, according to a history of the Quarry published in 2002 by the Quarry Swimming Association, which now owns the quarry and operates it as a private swim club. At peak periods Brinton employed 40 men at the quarry in addition to those involved in hauling dressed stone to the railroads at Westtown and Pocopson.

A railroad line connecting these stations and the quarry was planned and actually started but was soon abandoned. In addition to stone shipped by rail, considerable tonnages were sold and delivered locally. In its prosperous years Brinton sold \$30,000 worth of stone a year. The scarcity of skilled stone dressers led Brinton to collaborate with Henry Disston, the well-known saw manufacturer. They perfected a saw which was used to dress the stone. This accounts for the even surfaces exhibited by some serpentine buildings within a few miles of the quarry.

On April 6, 1887, a fire at Brinton’s Quarry destroyed the pine buildings and quarrying machinery. This compromised the ability of the pumps, which kept the pit from filling with water, to do their job. Rain and natural springs in the rock soon flooded the quarry with about 40 feet of water. The Quarry Swimming Association has operated on the site as a swim club since the early 20th century. See **Quarry Swimming Association in Township Recreation** for more information.

The Brinton family tried to keep the business going even though the demand for serpentine stone had fallen once it was discovered that serpentine is less durable than other stones. After the fire, only limited amounts of stone were taken from the quarry walls above the water line. According

to the U.S. Geological Survey, the quarry was briefly worked in the 1930s to harvest a locally occurring silicate mineral called jeffersite, when there was a considerable demand for a bronze-gold-colored paint pigment that was produced by calcining the mineral. Several railroad carloads of that vermiculite mineral were said to have been extracted.

Between 1870 and 1890, serpentine from Brinton's Quarry was extensively used for building churches and other buildings. Some of these structures may be seen in West Chester, Philadelphia, Wilmington, Harrisburg, Cleveland and Chicago. Also, two buildings at West Chester University are constructed of serpentine stone from the quarry.



Early photo of Brinton's Quarry, after quarrying operations ceased. *Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.*

As time passed it became apparent that the stone seriously weathered, even more so in cities where sulfur dioxide accelerates the problem. For this reason, the use of serpentine has been

banned in some cities. West Chester's Holy Trinity Episcopal Church was built in the late 1860s with stone from Brinton's Quarry. Later, a majestic tower at Holy Trinity was built with stone from the same source. Keeping the church and tower walls in good condition was a challenge — too great, in fact. The tower was demolished due to the weakened condition of the stone and replaced with an octagonal narthex in 1981.

A sidelight activity at Brinton's quarry was its role as a source of ice. Before the availability of electricity, many farmers had ice houses which they filled with ice during the winter months. After 1888, several local farmers cut ice from the quarry with which they filled their ice houses. The high purity of the quarry water made this ice desirable.

Another facet of Brinton's Quarry history has been its importance as a source of mineral specimens for professional mineralogists and "rock hounds." The late Hugh Exton McKinstry, PhD, a native of West Chester, and Professor of Geology at Harvard University from 1945 until his death in 1961, published an article in the 1916 issue of the *American Mineralogist* entitled "The Minerals of Brinton's Quarry, Pennsylvania." At this time Hugh was only 20 years old and a student at Haverford College.

In 1963, in memory of Dr. McKinstry, his widow gave permission for the Chester County Historical Society to issue reprints of the 1916 article describing 26 different minerals found at Brinton's Quarry. As a memorial to her husband and his parents, Mrs. McKinstry made possible and personally supervised the installation of a mineral exhibit in the basement of the Chester County Historical Society Museum.

Since then, the collection has moved; most of Dr. McKinstry's geology collection is now displayed in Room 145 at West Chester University's Geology Museum in the Schmucker Science Center. The exhibit can be visited at the Schmucker Science Center Link, 750 South Church Street (corner of South Church Street and Rosedale Avenue), from 10AM to 2PM, Monday through Thursday during the spring and fall semesters. The part of the collection that is not on display may be seen by making an appointment with the curator.

In 1967, a 15-year-old student from Unionville High School, Colin McLarty, discovered a rare stone specimen at the quarry containing the mineral lizardite. The specimen is now part of the

Smithsonian Institute's national mineral collection, according to an article from the *Daily Local News*.

Regarding the two quarries, which were in close proximity to each other: In the early 1870s David McClure opened a serpentine quarry a short distance northwest of Brinton's Quarry and adjacent to that quarry. At that time, he owned a 157-acre farm nearby. The McClure Quarry was worked, on a limited basis, for about 10 years. In 1892 McClure sold his Serpentine Green Stone Quarry to Timothy and Michael Farrell who were contractors in West Chester. They, in turn, quarried building stone from there for a few decades.

Quarry soil is significant. An area of barrens above the quarry has serpentine soils that are generally thin and contain high levels of nickel and chromium, thereby inhibiting most plant growth. Serpentine barrens are rare ecosystems globally, with unique, prairie-like vegetation, according to the U.S. Geological Survey and have been called a "botanical Noah's Ark." Many rare and endangered species of insects, grasses and other plants thrive here, such as prairie grasses like *Sorghastrum nutans*, big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*).

In April 2017, the U.S. Geological Survey proposed to name the barrens above the Quarry as Brintons Quarry Barrens and the name has been adopted.

The Osborne Hill Mine

On or about the year 1768, a silver mine was opened on the farm of Samuel Osborne (sometimes spelled Osbourne) on the extreme western end of Westtown Township. Only a minute amount of silver ore was obtained, and the venture was abandoned for over 60 years.

However, in the late 1820s there was renewed interest in the mine when natural scientist George Washington Carpenter (1802–1860) made additional discoveries there on a prospecting tour. Writing in 1828, in *On the Mineralogy of Chester County, with an Account of Some of the Minerals of Delaware, Maryland, & Other Localities*, Carpenter noted that he had discovered in Westtown:

“[e]arthy and ferruginous oxide of manganese, of excellent quality, for employment in the arts and manufactures. I presented a sample to Mr. Abraham Miller, an ingenious potter of this city [Philadelphia], who made use of it in his manufacture, and pronounced it equal to the imported. It occurs on Joseph Osbourne’s farm, three miles south of West Chester. It has not yet been worked, but its position and external appearances render it probable, that it is abundant.”

In the end it was not Abraham Miller that would make use of the manganese deposit, but local potter Enos Smedley. Born in Willistown, Smedley learned the trade from Westtown potter Aaron James, his neighbor across the township line, and in fact was his last apprentice (see **Clay Deposits and the Westtown Pottery**). James died in 1823. After living briefly in Philadelphia and then Westtown, Smedley moved his business to West Chester in 1831 and achieved great success.

Smedley opened his manganese mine in the face of the hill 1,350 feet northeast from the Isaac Sharpless homestead (now listed on the National Register of Historic Places) along Radley Run, according to Richard Foote in *Manganese Minerals of Pennsylvania* published in 1945. A four-foot high drift (i.e., a near-horizontal passageway) eventually extended 150 feet into the hill and connected to a 91-foot deep shaft that was still producing ore into the late 1830s, Ronald L. Sloto notes in *The Mines and Minerals of Chester County* (2000). He used the ore to produce a brilliant black glazing for his pottery. According to Gilbert Cope’s *Genealogy of the Smedley Family*, Smedley was so skilled in decorating his pottery with manganese dioxide glaze produced from the ore he mined at Osborne Hill that the Franklin Institute awarded him a medal of merit.

By 1889, the mine had been abandoned and has been mostly filled with rubble. By 1940 it was noted that “the old drift has long since caved and there is only a shallow swampy area roughly 12 by 14 feet to mark its position.”

Today, the location is a clump of trees behind Birmingham Township’s Hamilton Place development.

Clay Deposits and the Westtown Pottery

In the northeastern area of the township were clay deposits suitable for making bricks and utilitarian pottery items. In the late 1790s, prior to the opening of Westtown School, a brick kiln

was erected on the property. Using local clay, 500,000 bricks were made with which the first school building was built, When Westtown School opened in 1799 it purchased pottery ware from Westtown Pottery.

Aaron James (1763–1823), a skilled potter, had learned this art by serving an apprenticeship with John Curtis of Philadelphia. In 1793, Aaron bought a 126-acre farm for £900 on which he soon established Westtown Pottery. Ironically, Aaron’s farm was a part of the 688 acres which his great-grandfather Aaron James owned in the early 1700s.



An Aaron James pot inscribed “11th Month 28th / A. James 1820.” *From the collection of the Chester County Historical Society*

The James Pottery Farm was located on today’s Route 352, south of the present Saints Simon and Jude Church, rectory and school. The part of Route 352 just south of Route 3 was known as Pot House Hill in the 1800s. Today’s Green Lane, leading from 352 to what was then the Westtown Sports Center, was known as Pot House Road as late as 1940.

Aaron James did not rely solely on local clay in the production of earthenware. Extant records show that occasionally he hauled loads of clay from Philadelphia. At least eight boys learned the pottery trade under Aaron's tutelage at the Westtown Pottery. In addition, Aaron's sons, Abraham and Aaron Jr., worked at their father's pottery. The main products of the pottery were utilitarian red earthenware, but there were occasionally more ornate articles such as flower pots.

Entries in the financial ledgers of Westtown School shortly after it opened in 1799 show payment to Aaron James for "sundry earthenware." The school's historical collection includes three earthenware pie plates attributed to James.

The oldest Chester County dated piece of pottery is a two-gallon black glazed crock on the bottom of which is inscribed "AARON JAMES 1805." Marked and unmarked specimens of pottery from Westtown Pottery are on exhibit in the Philadelphia Museum of Art and at the Chester County Historical Society Museum.

The 1820 Census Report noted that Aaron James had sold \$863 worth of "Common Earthenware" during the previous year. After his death in 1823 his estate was appraised at \$29,483 (equivalent to \$700,000 in 2018) indicating that he had been a successful farmer-potter. His son Abraham and others continued to run the pottery on a small scale until the 1860s.

In 1850, it was run by Isaac Esbin who reported having sold \$1,500 worth of earthenware the previous year. By 1860, most Chester County potteries were being displaced by machine-made pottery.

By the 1930s, students at Westtown School were making objects out of clay, learning the mechanics of this art form. Ellen Baily Brown (1919–2011), an artistic and skilled modern potter, was among the many adults who encouraged an interest in pottery at Westtown School during the 20th century. The products coming from her electrically driven wheel and electrically heated kiln had as their objective a creative expression of beauty and aesthetic qualities rather than utilitarian function.

TRANSPORTATION

Roads

Westtown's early roads were roughly parallel to its major axis. Street Road (Pennsylvania Route 926) constitutes the township's southern boundary with the exception of a short distance at the southeast corner. It is parallel to the township's major axis. Other roads in this category are Pleasant Grove, Oakbourne, Johnny's Way, and Little Shiloh. The main roads closely parallel to the township minor axis are — South New Street, Wilmington Pike (U.S. Routes 202 and 322), South Concord, Westbourne, Shiloh, Westtown, Shady Grove Way, Walnut Hill, and Chester Roads (Pennsylvania Route 352).

Johnny's Way was named in honor of Johnny Fitzpatrick, who succeeded his father as Westtown School's shoemaker. Their shop was located a short distance from the school's east entrance. While not a major road, Pot House Road, leading from Route 352 to Route 3, at the eastern end of the township, was so named because of its proximity to the Westtown Pottery. In recent years it has been renamed Green Lane.

The earliest roads in Westtown were trails traveled through the forests by the Lenni Lenape Indians. One of the largest and most travelled trails was the Great Minquas Path, which ran roughly along the line of today's Strasburg Road, and passed just north of Westtown and crossed South High Street at Giunta Lane in West Goshen Township, then ran roughly along Goshen Road and down Route 352 toward Middletown. This route was the Lenape's primary fur-trading path with the Susquehannock people in the West.

When European colonists first settled on the land, they laid out their first roads largely along the lines of these paths. These early roads were dirt and mud, and difficult to traverse for man and beast alike. It was not until the 20th century that the roads in Westtown were kept in good order.

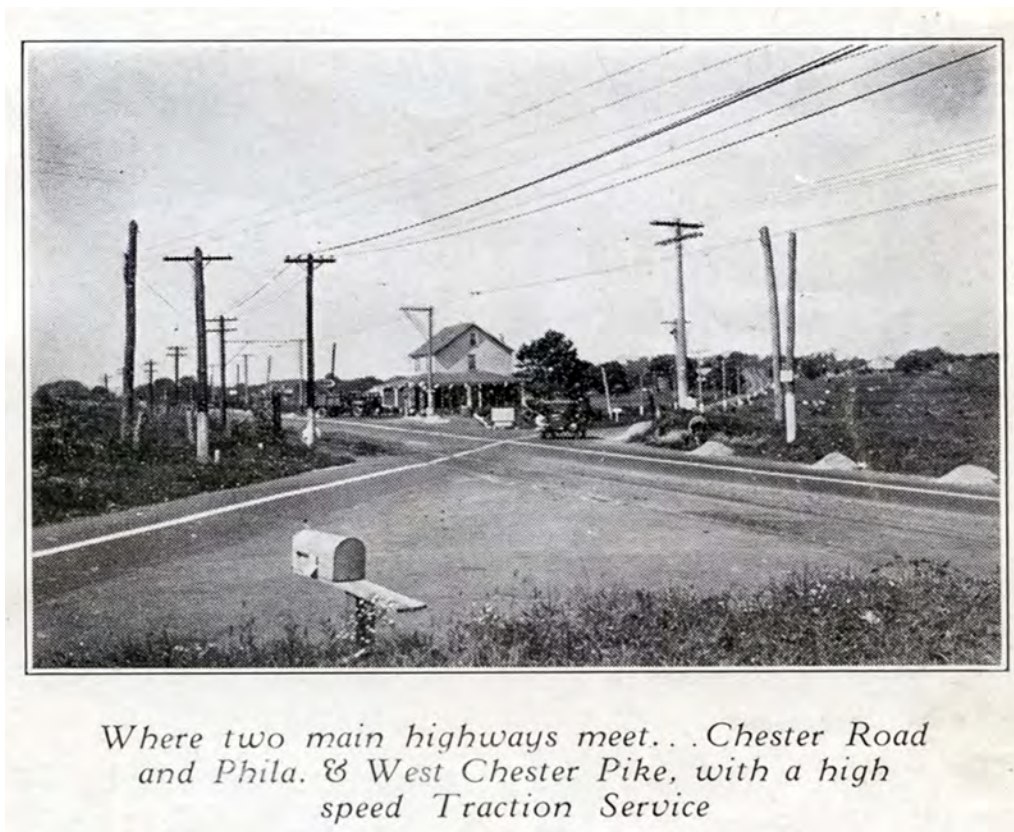
Chester Road (Pennsylvania Route 352)

Chester Road, also known as the Middletown Road, was laid out early in the county's history, and for years was a primary route out of the Great Valley to the Delaware River waterfront in Chester. It is best known for the role it played during the American Revolution.

Four days after the Battle of the Brandywine, on September 15, 1777, the British Crown Forces led by Lord Cornwallis were encamped at what is now the Village Green, near Chester. Washington's army was encamped in the Great Valley, near what is now Route 30 and Swedesford Road.

The next morning, in rainy weather, the British marched up Chester Road through Westtown Township. They moved past the Goshen Friends Meeting to a point on the South Valley Hill in order to meet the American Army. Brief skirmishes left a few dead on both sides.

Before both armies could become fully engaged in combat, torrential rains ruined many powder cartridges. Forced to give up the fight, Washington retreated to Yellow Springs. The Crown Forces, bogged down in the muddy quagmire, opted not to follow and instead encamped in place. These skirmishes became known as the Battle of the Clouds. Washington later moved his army towards Warwick Furnace, and the British, following the Battle of Paoli, occupied Philadelphia.



*Where two main highways meet... Chester Road
and Phila. & West Chester Pike, with a high
speed Traction Service*

Chester Road and Route 3 around 1927. Photo from a 1927 Westtown Township newsletter. Courtesy Chester County Historical Society

Street Road (Pennsylvania Route 926)

Because of “[t]he earliest system of trails, and extension thereof along with fording creeks,” notes the *History and Progress of Chester County*, “progress on improved roads was slow. Real progress began when Court Orders were issued compelling every person within the period of two months, to make good and passable ways on his lands for neighbors to use.”

Toward that end, an unrecorded agreement was made with Proprietor William Penn and adjacent landowners, ca. 1704, to lay out a road running the length of the newly organized Marlborough Township in 1728. The nearly straight road ran east from the Red Lion Inn on the border of that township and Kennett Township to the Marlborough Friends Meetinghouse. Penn, conveniently enough, named the road “Marlborough Street.”

In 1815, the Pennsylvania legislature authorized a new state road to be laid out from the foot of the Market Street Bridge, in Philadelphia, to McCall’s Ferry, near the present site of the Holtwood Dam on the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County. According to an account by Ziba Darlington, one of the route’s original surveyors, the surveying team, in laying out the route, made no change to the existing roads through to Marlborough. From there, an almost entirely new route was made.

This new road from Market Street took its name from the old “Marlborough Street,” and became known as the “Marlborough Street Road,” which was eventually shortened to just “Street Road.” It later became Pennsylvania Route 926.

In Westtown Township, Street Road crosses both branches of the Chester Creek. On the East Branch, a 63-foot wooden covered bridge was built in 1831 by contractor Wilson Buffington of Unionville. In spite of local opposition, the State removed the bridge in 1937 and replaced it with a steel grate bridge. This bridge, which became known as the “Singing Bridge” due to the sound traffic made when driving over the grates, was itself replaced in the early 2000s by a modern concrete bridge. Today, this bridge — located just west of the intersection of Westtown Road — is named in honor of former Westtown Supervisor L. Charles Scipione.

County Bridge No. 148 spans Goose Creek just west of Westtown Station. It was built of cut stone in 1911 by the McCormick Company of West Chester, builders of many other stone arch

bridges in Chester County. It has changed little over the years and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988. Its deck was heavily damaged during a hurricane in October of 1999 and was repaired soon after at a cost of \$20,000–\$40,000, due to the fact an eight-inch public water main had to be shored up before repairs could be done.

West Chester Pike (Pennsylvania Route 3)

The Philadelphia and West Chester Turnpike Road Company was authorized by an act of the Pennsylvania legislature on March 20, 1848 to build a toll road along the existing path of the West Chester Road from the William Penn Hotel at 38th and Market Streets in Philadelphia to Beaumont’s tavern at the 11th milestone at Newtown Square. Like the later West Chester and Wilmington Plank Road Company, the company was authorized to sell stock to raise funds. While the Delaware County sections were tolled — and thus, much improved — the section beyond Newtown Square to West Chester remained a dirt road.

The Turnpike Road Company was granted a charter to collect tolls along the route and periodically set up toll gates. In the original usage of the phrase, “turnpikes” were weapons with a steel or iron point on the end of a long wooden pole. They would be held by guards in such a manner as to block or defend passageways. Later, the term was applied to any spiked barrier fixed in or across a road or passage as a defense against sudden attack. In either case, the pikes would be turned to permit traffic to proceed. Hence, the earliest toll roads, with their periodic gates to stop traffic, became known as turnpikes.

One of the interesting parts of the Philadelphia and West Chester Turnpike Road Company’s 1848 charter specified that “[a]ll drivers and conductors of carts, wagons, and carriages of all kinds, using said road, except when passing by a vehicle of slower draft, keep their horses and carriages on the right hand side of the road, in the passing direction, leaving the other side of the road free and clear for other carriages to pass and repass.” These same basic traffic laws are in force today.

The road was initially constructed as a plank road. Plank roads were a modern innovation of the time, consisting of plank boards laid over the roadway on log foundations. There were several plank roads in the area. They resembled boardwalks, but were wider to accommodate wagon

traffic. Ditches were dug on each side to keep mud and water from accumulating on the surface of the boards. This way, loaded wagons and their animals could enjoy a smooth ride free of mud and ruts once they reached the plank road. But they were difficult to maintain, and in the 1880s the road was paved with crushed stone. Crushed stone, now covered in tar, is what is used to pave roads today. In 1918, the State took over the road that would become Pennsylvania Route 3 (West Chester Pike) and freed it of tolls.

Late in 1898, the Philadelphia and West Chester Traction company inaugurated electrified trolley service along West Chester Pike. One could catch a trolley from West Chester for a ride all the way to 69th Street Terminal in Upper Darby, where one could connect to the Traction Company's other suburban trolley routes, to the Philadelphia and Western Railway's interurban cars to Strafford and Norristown (now the Norristown High Speed Line), and to the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company's Market Street Elevated railway, now SEPTA's Market-Frankford Line. (See **The Trolley Line Through Westtown.**) For most of the route, trolleys ran on a single track with the occasional siding for passing. The trolleys, which later became part of the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company's Red Arrow Lines, passed through Westtown making stops at Pot House Road (now Green Lane), Chester Road, and Manley Road.

An extension to the trolley line that was never built would also have traversed Westtown Township. The proposed branch line would have replaced the stagecoach that ran from Westtown School to the Pennsylvania Railroad's Westtown Station. The Traction Company asked the school to put up most of the construction money, but they declined as there was little chance of this extension ever being profitable.

When the state proposed widening West Chester Pike in the early 1950s to accommodate increased vehicular traffic, the trolley company was given the opportunity to decide if they wanted to construct an additional track to West Chester. However, the view was that substituting trolleys with buses would be a better option. The last trolleys ran through Westtown June 4, 1954, and service was truncated to Westgate Hills near Manoa, Delaware County. Today, the same route is served by SEPTA's Route 104 bus, which still stops at Manley Road.

When West Chester Pike was widened through Westtown Township, one of the old stone mile markers near the intersection with Chester Road (mile marker 23) was removed to Oakbourne Park.

Wilmington Pike (U.S. Route 202)

Most of the roads in Westtown Township were once dirt and mud paths. Following the lead of the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike Road in 1795, a private company obtained a charter from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to construct an improved turnpike road from West Chester to Wilmington in 1811. However; this road was never built.

January 17, 1812, George Ashbridge, Thomas Hoopes, Philip Price, Joseph H. Brinton, Joseph Taylor, Thomas H. Brinton, John Painter, Nathan Sharpless and Thomas Speakman obtained a charter from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Great Valley and Wilmington Turnpike Road Company. The company was authorized to lay down an improved road from the 26th milestone of the Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike Road in the Great Valley “through the borough of West Chester, and passing by or near Darlington’s Inn and Dilworth’s town to the line of the state, in a direction towards the borough of Wilmington in the state of Delaware, so as to communicate with a contemplated artificial road.”

The charter authorized the Turnpike Road Company to erect toll gates and collect tolls from travelers and their conveyances and livestock for every five miles of road they travelled, “*provided*, that no toll be demanded or taken from any person passing or re-passing from one part of his or her farm and to lands they occupy; provided that the distance be not more than one mile, or to and from any place of public worship, or funeral, or from officer or private belonging to the militia, going or returning from any company, battalion or regimental training, on days appointed for that task.” Tolls could be raised or lowered to permit the company to realize no more than a 9 percent dividend on its stock per annum.

This early effort, however, never came to fruition, evidently because the Delaware portion of the road was not authorized by that state. It was not until the 1850s that the mantle would be taken up again.

On March 3, 1853, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed a law authorizing the “West Chester and Wilmington plank road company . . . to construct a plank road on the bed of the present public road, leading from the borough of West Chester . . . by Darlington’s Corner Dillworth’s town and Painter’s cross roads to the city of Wilmington in the State of Delaware.” The road would begin at Union Street in West Chester and extend to the state line at the northern terminus of Delaware’s Concord Turnpike.” This latter distinction — that of two companies meeting at the Delaware line — is why the Pennsylvania section of this road is, to this day, called Wilmington Pike, while the same road on the Delaware side is called Concord Pike.

Like the Philadelphia and West Chester Turnpike (today’s Route 3), the Wilmington and West Chester Turnpike (today’s Route 202) was a plank road. Roads like this were costly to construct, and the West Chester and Wilmington Company was authorized for an initial stock issuance of 2,000 shares at \$25 per share — provided they began construction within two years after their charter was granted. By November 1854, the planks were laid from Dilworthtown to within a half mile of West Chester, and soon the little toll house at Union Street was collecting fares.

Tolls were charged by the type of transportation and the distance one traveled and were often collected on the honor system. Initial tolls, set in 1854, were as follows:

	For 1 horse & sleigh	For 1 horse & wheeled vehicle	For horse & sled
Toll house	½ cent	1 cent	½ cent
Eachus's Road [now Rosedale Avenue]	½ "	1 "	½ "
Goodwin's [now Oakbourne Road]	1 "	2 "	1 "
Osborne's [no longer extant]	1 "	2 "	1 "
Hannum's [now Pleasant Grove Road]	2 "	3 "	1 "
Darlington's Corner	2½ "	3 "	2 "
Dilworthtown	4 "	5 "	3 "
Termination	4 "	5 "	3 "

A fixed fee was charged for oxen, mules and horses, so a wheeled vehicle pulled by three animals, would cost the same rate for each animal for the length of the toll road. Each score (group of 20) of livestock were charged at a mileage rate.

One will note there was only one toll house in West Chester. Tolling was done on the honor system, and fare evaders were occasionally brought before the courts. A case from April 1882 mentioned in the *Daily Local News* was typical:

A young man from Cheyney's Shops passed over the Plank road between here and Darlington's Corner a day or two ago. He paid the toll gatherer below this borough

three cents, stating that he intended to turn off at Faucett's [Oakbourne Road]. The collector of tolls believed that the young gentleman was endeavoring to beat the company, and 'kept his eye on the splinter.'² He found that he had used the road to the amount of two cents more than he had paid for and had him arrested. He was brought before the magistrate in this borough, and paid \$10 and costs of suit for the pleasure of beating the company out of the two cents aforesaid.

Fare evaders had a convenient method of evading the toll by coming down Walnut Street to Rosedale Avenue. To counter the use of this "shunpike," as such routes were called, the company erected a new toll house south of the borough line in 1879, which only caused more complaints. First, the new toll house was tipped over; later it was burned. The toll-taker, of course, was an easier target. Longtime toll keeper Reese Pratt noted in 1886 that he was not responsible for the existence of the toll gate, but that did not stop people from heaping abuse upon him. "Some parties whom you would suppose were intelligent gentlemen have called me all sorts of names, as if I could help it."

The plank road did not last long, and in 1858 was converted to a crushed stone MacAdam surface in 1858. This surface often required repair. For 25 years, from West Chester to Darlington's Corner, maintenance fell to William Cuff, an Irish immigrant to Westtown, and a proud follower of Father Matthew's temperance movement in Ireland before immigrating to America. He was well-remembered for his horse. During the summer months, he attired his horse with billowing white pantaloons to protect it from flies, which often frightened other animals and travelers alike.

² That is, he watched him closely, like one would check for infection if you had a splinter in your hand.



Houses along Wilmington Pike in Westtown when it was a much quieter thoroughfare. *Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society*

Though Cuff's efforts were thorough, after his death, the road was not usually well maintained, and it became notoriously bad. In 1885, the Borough of West Chester purchased the section of the turnpike from Union Street to Rosedale Avenue, freeing it for public use. Finally, in 1898, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania bought out the remainder of the company and dissolved it, and the road became a public thoroughfare.

The Trolley Line Through Westtown

As the 19th century came to an end, the West Chester Road (now State Route 3, West Chester Pike), west from Newtown Square, was described as "merely a muddy lane" by historian Ronald DeGraw. Westtonians could go to Philadelphia to transact their business via the Pennsylvania Railroad's service from Oakbourne or Westtown stations. West Chester was a growing town of 10,000 people, with 26 daily trains to choose from between there and Broad Street Station, Philadelphia. Transit time was about an hour at a cost of about 75¢ each way.

However, less expensive public transportation was on the way in 1898 in the form of the Philadelphia and West Chester Traction Company (P&WCT), which began extending its trolley

line west from Newtown Square, alongside the West Chester Road (Route 3), at a cost of \$400,000. Where the trolley line passed through Westtown Township, a car stop was located at Manley Road, and another at Chester Road, where a passing siding was installed (approximately in front of today's Jaguar dealership and Marketplace Shopping Center on Route 3).

The first trolley ran through to West Chester December 17, 1898, and regular service commenced after a huge snowstorm January 4, 1899. Six new interurban trolley cars, costing \$4,700 each and seating 40, provided half-hourly service — a standard that existed through most of the line's existence, as did the dark red color scheme. While transit times were longer than via the Pennsylvania Railroad (1½ hours to 63rd and Market St. where a change had to be made to Philadelphia street cars) the cost was lower by more than half (25¢ plus 5¢ for the Philadelphia cars.) Regular commuters continued to favor the trains but those living along the West Chester Road now had a lower-priced option.

The trolley line's president was A. Merritt Taylor, a native of Burlington, NJ, who had attended Penn Charter and Westtown School. Only 24 and ambitious, Taylor soon expanded the P&WCT in all directions: to Ardmore, Sharon Hill, and Media.

Sometime around 1900, Taylor approached his alma mater, Westtown School, with a proposal to create an extension off his West Chester line to the school. He wanted the school to pay for the majority of the construction costs. Most likely, the tracks would have followed present day Green Lane and Johnny's Way from the West Chester Road to the school. Satisfied with their stage coach that met the trains at Westtown station, the school turned Taylor down.

With the coming of the trolley, dairy farmers in Westtown had a new option for getting their milk to market in Philadelphia. Beginning in 1899, the trolley line provided a 7a.m. "milk run," starting at Milltown³, which picked up cans from platforms along the line and delivered them to 63rd and Market and the waiting wagons of various Philadelphia milk companies. The cost, in 1918, was only 9¢ per 20-quart can. In 1924, however, the principal milk buyer, Supplee-Wills-

³Milltown is located at the present junction of West Chester Pike and Westtown Way. Settled in the 18th century, it was named for a gristmill located there. At one time, it contained an inn, sawmill, post office, and later the West Chester borough waterworks, built in 1923. Much of the village was torn down in widening West Chester Pike.

Jones, began running its own trucks along an improved West Chester Pike, and the trolley line was forced to suspend milk and freight service.

New, speedy trolleys were on hand by 1932 and transit time from West Chester to 69th St. Terminal was reduced to 57 minutes. The Traction Company, later the Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company (“The Red Arrow Lines”), rolled on through the Depression and then boomed during World War II. After the war, real estate development soared along the West Chester Pike, and the Commonwealth resolved to make it into a four-lane highway all the way to West Chester. The side-of-the-road trolley line tried to negotiate for running room in the median, but Harrisburg said no; it argued bus service was more efficient and less expensive. The last day of service was June 4, 1954, and the clang of the trolley was gone from Westtown forever.

Railroads

The West Chester and Philadelphia Railroad

In 1832, a railroad first reached West Chester, the growing county seat of Chester County. Merchants decided to connect West Chester with the “Main Line of Public Works” (the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad) which had bypassed West Chester through the Great Valley. These businessmen connected West Chester with the Main Line, at what is today’s Malvern, by building a horse-drawn railroad line.

Within a decade, other business interests, especially those on the south side of West Chester who weren’t efficiently served by the line to Malvern, decided that competition was needed in order to provide better and less expensive service to the markets in Philadelphia. They joined with Delaware County manufacturers, merchants, and farmers, to incorporate and build a railroad from the Schuylkill River at Chestnut Street in West Philadelphia to West Chester via Media, Glen Mills, and Westtown.

In the spring of 1848, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania granted a charter for the construction of a railroad from Philadelphia to the borough of West Chester via Media. In 1851, the Philadelphia & West Chester Railroad was officially organized and the whole of the line surveyed and placed under contract in 1852. Construction began on the line in 1854. A carved stone “1854” marker along the tracks in Westtown is still in place. Financial difficulties led to

bankruptcy and reorganization, and the railroad was not completed until 1858. The first train into West Chester on the new line signaled the commencement of operation November 11, 1858. The huge Pennsylvania Railroad (the “Pennsy”) effectively acquired the line in 1881.

The railroad was electrified beginning in the 1920s, and all-electric commuter service began December 2, 1928.

With the Eastern railroads in serious decline, the Pennsy merged with the New York Central in 1968, becoming the Penn Central Railroad. When that railroad failed, it became part of the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) in 1976. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) acquired the line in 1983. The decline in passengers continued, and SEPTA abandoned service beyond Elwyn in 1986. For more than 10 years, the rails through Westtown were quietly rusting away. Then, in 1997, Four States Railroad Service, Inc. leased the tracks from SEPTA and began excursion trains between West Chester and Glen Mills. The popular excursion trains continue to this day, under the volunteer efforts of the West Chester Railroad Heritage Association (www.westchesterrr.com). Once again, the honk of the engine’s air horn and rumble of the train can be heard echoing along Goose Creek in Westtown.

Westtown Station

The station called “Westtown” has always been in Thornbury Township, just south of Street Road. Here, north of Street Road, Westtown School had a siding built for the delivery of coal and another siding existed for general freight. The station featured a number of amenities, including a post office, waiting room and a double outhouse. Today, it houses an art gallery.

Oakbourne Station

In 1859, the railroad company established a small station on the Chester Creek, about two miles south of the Borough of West Chester, near the home of R. Coleman Hemphill, son of six-term Congressmen Joseph Hemphill. *The American Republican*, writing in July of that year, noted that

“Our readers no doubt are familiar with this name [referring to the infamous Lecompton Constitution in Kansas, which featured prominently in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858], but they may not know that we have a celebrated picnic ground near West Chester

which bears this cognomen. [. . .] A large platform has been laid down in a beautiful grove belonging to Mr. Coleman Hemphill, and a spring of water is near by. We always look pleasantly at Lecompton as we fly along the railroad . . . “

But the name didn't stick, possibly owing to the outbreak of the Civil War and the rather onerous associations of that name with Bleeding Kansas. For a time, the railroad flirted with the idea of calling the station Belmont, after the palatial country residence of Philadelphia industrialist John Hulme up the road (later the James C. Smith Mansion, and now Oakbourne Park). But that didn't take either and the station soon became known as “Hemphill's Station” in R. Coleman's honor.

For a number of weeks, after the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, the railroad carried materials and supplies to the Union Paroled P.O.W. camp alongside the track and Goose Creek. (See **Camp Elder/Camp Parole**) Private Warren Freeman of the 13th Massachusetts Infantry, one of the parolees, wrote in a letter to his father, “We have moved camp since I wrote you last; we are now about a mile and a half from the town, on the West Chester and Phila. Railway; the cars run about as often as they do at West Cambridge, and I can lay in my tent and see them pass by — the prospect is quite pleasant.”

In 1868, a young man named Chalkley Speakman, Jr. was appointed the station agent. Ten years later he married Ellen Jane Van Winkle. Ellen Jane was a member of the illustrious Van Winkle family (the same Van Winkle family that had come over to the New World when New York was still New Amsterdam). Together with her husband and two young children, they moved to the small station house in Westtown Township. It was to be a happy life, although it had an inauspicious start. Soon after his appointment, Chalkley Speakman's father paid a visit to his son. Waiting on the porch for his train, he promptly dropped dead from a sudden and massive heart attack.

By the early 1870s, the station was handling the fewest passengers of any on the line — but that did not stop the company from investing in a number of improvements to the building and grounds.

Meanwhile the Speakman family settled into a nice routine; Chalkley worked as a carpenter and as the station agent, while Ellen tended to the children. But in 1875 two benefactors would come

into their lives. Wealthy Philadelphia industrialist James C. Smith and his wife Heloise Drexel Smith bought John Hulme's palatial country home after his death in 1874, and began to convert it and its grounds into a fashionable Victorian mansion house, complete with manicured grounds, artificial lake, lookout and water towers, which they named "Oakbourne."

The Smiths had no living children of their own, and so they bestowed their generosity upon the local community, including the Speakman family, for whom they provided renovation and landscaping of their station house.

Later that year, after petitioning from the surrounding community, the government established a post office at the station. Mrs. Speakman was appointed the postmistress on December 12, 1883.

In 1885, the post office was officially named "Oakbourne," after the Smith's mansion.

The Smiths died in the 1890s, leaving their mansion to the Episcopal City Mission as a convalescent home for women. Shortly thereafter, the Oakbourne Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm was established next door. With the increased business brought on by these institutions, the station saw its headiest days.



Oakbourne Station, ca. 1902. *Courtesy of Jonathan Hoppe*

In 1897, Mrs. Speakman boldly faced an armed robber who came into the station asking for change for a \$20 bill. She told him she didn't have that much but did have change for a \$5, which the young man handed to her. As he did so, he pulled out a revolver and demanded the contents of her cash drawer. Unfazed, she faced him down. "Shoot if you dare," she said stonily. The man balked, and Mrs. Speakman shouted to her daughter to grab the rifle. With that, the man took off down the track with Mrs. Speakman chasing after him. He was eventually caught in Willistown and hauled off to prison. Turned out, his revolver was not loaded.

The Speakman family lived in the station for the next 30 years. Chalkley Speakman died at Oakbourne in 1926 at the age of 77. Ellen Jane Speakman officially resigned as the postmistress of the Station at the end of 1928, having served in that capacity for 40 years. Upon her retirement, the office was closed — its proximity to West Chester had rendered its services

obsolete. Thus, Ellen Jane has the notable distinction of being the first and only postmistress of Oakbourne.

Ellen suffered a stroke the year of her retirement and moved in with her daughter in West Chester. She died six years later and was buried next to her husband in Greenmount Cemetery. The station house itself survived until 1961, when declining revenue necessitated its closure. The building was demolished shortly thereafter. In its honor, the West Chester Railroad has affixed a small “Oakbourne” station sign to a nearby catenary pole in the style of those made by the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Chester Creek and Brandywine Railroad

Other railroad lines were proposed to run through Westtown Township. An 1854 map depicting the proposed WC&P included a branch off the line from Westtown to Oxford in southern Chester County. This branch was eventually built from Wawa to Oxford and on to the Susquehanna River, but the idea for a branch line at Westtown Station was not abandoned. August 9, 1873, the Chester Creek and Brandywine Railroad company was organized to construct a railroad to connect the West Chester and Philadelphia Railroad with the Wilmington and Reading Railroad. Starting at a point just north of Street Road Station in Westtown Township, the railroad would extend westward five miles, past Darlington’s Corner through the lands of Henry Whale, past Brinton’s Quarry and down into the Brandywine Valley through Birmingham Township, connecting with the Wilmington and Reading near the mouth of the Pocopson Creek.

The company hoped, in a later phase, to extend the line all the way down into Maryland via Unionville to make a through route from Baltimore to Philadelphia in direct competition with the Philadelphia and Baltimore Central Railroad; while in the meantime, the line would offer a direct connection between agriculturally rich south central Chester County and the markets of Philadelphia.

A preliminary route was surveyed across both townships and construction began late in September. Workmen’s shanties were erected at Street Road Station and a crew began to build up an embankment for the roadbed. Curving gently northwestward, the earthwork would carry

the line to the Chester Creek where a stone bridge would take it over the water and onward to Pocopson.

But the company could not have picked a worse time to begin construction. Financial troubles in Europe that summer were spreading to the United States' banking sector, pushing many firms over the brink. One of the country's largest lenders, the brokerage house of Jay Cooke and Company in Philadelphia, had overextended itself in what were proving to be worthless railroad investments. It could not survive the additional economic pressure brought on by the turmoil of the European market.

The firm collapsed, declaring bankruptcy on September 18, 1873. The fall of the banking giant sent shockwaves rippling through the economy of the United States. By November, many railroads, now without their financial backing, had failed and many more were in dire straits. The Panic of 1873 was at hand.

The Chester Creek and Brandywine Railroad was not spared. By December, local merchants and farmers around the construction site at Street Road were complaining of unpaid bills for board and for horse feed left by the railroad's laborers. Work seemed to have come to a halt.

Company officials claimed they were getting their financial affairs in order, and that any delays on paying the workmen's bills were from the company having to pay out compensatory damages to the landowners through whose properties the line would pass. They blamed the weather for the work stoppage, and stated that they were waiting on the stone for the bridge over Chester Creek to be shipped in before work could resume. It was noted in the press that in spite of official reassurances, the company's bonds were selling for mere pennies on the dollar in Philadelphia, and that no one was buying.

The stone for the bridge never would arrive; the dream was over. Work on the railroad was officially suspended in early 1874, and it never would again be taken up. The Panic of 1873 triggered a global depression with effects lasting a decade or more. The railroad bubble had burst for good. The line was never built, but the short embankment that was started can be seen today extending westward from the tracks north of Westtown Station and terminating in the backyard of a private residence on Westbourne Road.

MILITARY HISTORY

Revolutionary War

On the morning of September 11, 1777, a thick fog covered the ground in Westtown and surrounding areas. Residents awoke to begin daily routines on their township farms and the surrounding townships of Thornbury and Birmingham. One of the local militia companies had been practicing drills on the land that is now the Pleasant Grove neighborhood. On this day, the local militia was stationed with other battalions of Pennsylvania militia along the Brandywine Creek near Pyle's Ford.

British General William Howe's army had sailed up the Chesapeake Bay and landed near the Head of Elk (near Elkton, Maryland) little more than a month earlier. The British and Hessians were camped at Kennett Square. Word has it that General Howe was intending to cross the Brandywine at one of the many fords in the area and continue to Philadelphia to capture the city. Around nine o'clock in the morning, as the local farmers continued their work, they suddenly heard the faint sound of gunfire.

What they were hearing started in the morning in Chadds Ford when Hessian General Wilhelm Reichsfreiherr von Innhausen und Knyphausen had begun the feint, allowing Howe to begin his flanking movement around Washington's right and the American position near the John Chad house. Later in the afternoon, Howe completed his flanking march and rested his tired soldiers for about half an hour at Osborne Hill in Westtown Township, accessed off the Birmingham Road. After the troops were rested, around 4 p.m., the British and Hessians advanced toward Birmingham Meeting.

The extreme left flank of this advance consisted of approximately 300 Hessian Jaeger troops led by Lt. Col. Ludwig von Wurmb and Captain Johan Ewald. Current research reveals this advance crossed the western edge of today's Crebilly Farm east of South New Street. Some of the British Light Infantry were advancing at the same time along the western side of the road that would become South New Street toward Street Road where Continental Army skirmishers were waiting for them.

Author Michael C. Harris and Digital Map-maker Sean Moir have said the Hessian troops were very likely engaged just before leaving Crebilly Farm. This is based on von Wurmb's diary. Moir asserts the Americans were driven from a site on the Crebilly property, which suggests they were fired upon. Moir's research indicates the Hessians likely fired small artillery called amusettes at the Americans on the Crebilly Farm property.

The Americans lost the battle but put up a good fight against the British. After several days encamped in the Dilworthtown vicinity, Howe moved some of his troops to Chester. On September 15, Howe discovered that Washington was marching along Lancaster Road (Swedesford Road today) only 10 miles away. Howe's troops once again marched through Westtown along Old Wilmington Pike. They passed near the present eastern part of Crebilly Farm property towards the Boot Tavern (Boot Road and Phoenixville Pike).

Lord Cornwallis was marching through the east end of Westtown along Chester Road (Route 352) towards the White Horse Tavern (Swedesford Road near Planebrook Road). The short-lived Battle of the Clouds, so named because it occurred in hurricane-like conditions with heavy rains, soon commenced; much of it occurring at what is now Immaculata University.

Soon after, the British captured the capital at Philadelphia. Residents of Chester County survived the storm of musket balls, grapeshot and cannon balls from these battles, but had no idea of the suffering that would plague them for years to come.

Westtown Township did not suffer as greatly as its neighbor Birmingham in the War for American Independence. Heavily populated by pacifist Quakers, most Westtown residents did not take a side for or against the war. Because of their pacifist positions, many Quaker residents did not file for war damages. The two local townships that suffered most were Birmingham and Tredyffrin, where the British camped the longest.

For years after the battle, Chester County residents were recovering from the damages (referred to as "depredations" in official county documents) that the British had wreaked from their commandeering of animals, food, crops, clothing and other items. It is important to note that this was harvest time, and troops descended at the same time crops were being harvested.

Among those experiencing losses was the Gibbons family who lived off Street Road (current Westtown School). They were cleaned out of livestock by several foraging parties. Damages were claimed by Westtown residents and recorded in the *Chester County Register of Revolutionary War Damages* compiled in 1782. The original spelling or misspelling is used, totals are in pounds sterling and pence.

The following deprecations were recorded:

Thomas Taylor (deceased), submitted by his mother, Phebe totaling £82.14.0:

1 Gray Mare, 1 Brown Horse, 1 Riding Saddle, 29 Geese, 1 Red Heiffer, 2 Coverlids, 1 Pewter Tea pott, 1 Warming Pann, 8 Shirts, 1 Camblet gown, 1 Pair of fine Linen Sheets & Pillows, 1 Pair of Shoes & Buckles Silver , 6 Silver Teaspoons, Sundry Caps & Handkr., 14 pairs of Stockings, 1 Sell of Home Spun Curtains, 1 Hollon apron, 1 pair of thread Mittons, 1 Cambrick apron, 3 Fine Linen Sheets.

Note: Phebe Taylor is said to have attributed the deprecations above to the Hessians who marched in the left wing of the British forces that swept across what is now Crebilly Farm.

Name Unknown, totaling £23.16.10:

1 New Saddle, Cash taken out of my chest £20 Continental 3 to 1 Hard, Cash in Hard Money, 1 New Beaver Hatt, 1 New pair of Breeches, 1 New Demascus under Jacket, 3 Skirts almost New, 3 pairs of Stockings of Sundry sorts, 1 Mislin Stock & Stock buckle Plate, 1 Pair of Knee Buckles Silver, 1 Cotton Handkerchief.

John Hunt, totaling £30.0.0: 1 Brown Mare 7 Years old.

Caleb James, totaling £32.10.0:

1 Mare about 8 or 9 Years old, 1 d. [ditto] about 18 months old, oats in the Sheaf
Supposed worth £1.5.0, 1 Pewter Quart

These are the only recorded deprecations for Westtown in the register since the populace was mostly Quaker. Many Quakers, such as the Gibbons family, did not claim war damages due to

religious beliefs. Depredations were recorded by the Quakers themselves and were kept in the Birmingham Meeting minutes or are recorded in the *Great Book of Sufferings*, housed at Swarthmore College. The true toll likely will never be known.

Unfortunately, none of this money was ever paid out due to the conditions agreed upon in the Treaty of Paris. The residents of Chester County, which at the time included present day Delaware County, took many years to recover from the short battles of 1777. Some of them likely never recovered the prosperity that they enjoyed before that fateful September.

There were some Quakers who believed that independence was worth risking war. A prominent Westtown Quaker named Thomas Taylor became colonel of the local battalion of the Chester County militia. His sons Titus and Thomas, Jr. joined him in the militia. For this, they were dismissed from Quaker meeting.

The militia mustered and trained on the Taylor farm (present day Pleasant Grove residential community). Some were undoubtedly present at the Battle of Brandywine to try to stop General Howe's army from capturing Philadelphia.

Some suffered disenfranchisement due to their support of the war. No longer permitted to use the Birmingham Quaker Burial Ground because of their involvement in the militia, the Taylors established their own burial ground on their farm in Westtown. The three Taylor militia men, along with neighbors John and Henry Faucett, are buried there.

In a later conflict, Titus Taylor was a Captain of Militia during the War of 1812 and led his company to Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania in 1814, when the British attacked Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Havre De Grace, Maryland.

The War of 1812

The Philadelphia region played a critical role supporting the American war effort during the War of 1812. "People from the Philadelphia area," noted historian Paul Campbell, "operated war-related businesses, helped build fortifications, and traveled far from home to fight on land and sea."

Many Chester County residents served during the war. Cromwell Pearce, of Willistown Township, for example, commanded the 16th Regiment, U.S. Infantry and served with distinction in the Battle of York, taking command of the action after the mortal wounding of Brigadier General Zebulon Pike.

The militia of Chester County was not called into service until it was feared the British would march on Philadelphia. August 24, 1814, the British occupied and burned Washington, D.C. “It was very much feared that the British would attempt to enter Philadelphia,” noted Futhey and Cope, “and extensive preparations were made to prevent such a disaster.” Pennsylvania governor Simon Snyder issued a proclamation:

“Harrisburg, August 27, 1814.

The recent destruction of the Capitol of the United States, the threatened and probable conflagration of the metropolis of a sister State [referring to Baltimore, which would be attacked September 12–15], and the general threatening aspect of affairs warranting the opinion that an attack is meditated by the enemy on the shores of the Delaware, the Governor, to guard against surprise and to have ready an efficient force of freemen to repel the enemy in case of such an event, orders and directs the militia generally within the counties of Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware, Chester, Lancaster, Dauphin, Lebanon, Berks, Schuylkill, Lehigh, Northampton, and Pike (in addition to those drafted and designated for the service of the United States, under orders of the 22^d of July, who are already held subject to the orders of General Bloomfield), to be held in readiness to march at a moment’s warning to such place as may be named in subsequent orders that will issue if the exigencies shall require. The several Brigade inspectors within their respective brigade bounds are commanded to execute promptly this order. The Generals and other officers are urged to assist in providing of equipments for the men. Those for whom arms cannot be found within the respective brigade bounds will, it is presumed, be furnished by the United States at the place of rendezvous. It is confidently hoped the ardor and love of country, which pervades the hearts of Pennsylvanians at the present alarming crisis, will induce many to form themselves into Volunteer Corps, and immediately march for Philadelphia. It is thus a proper spirit to resist an intolerant foe

will be evinced and many difficulties obviated. The Governor promises himself the satisfaction of meeting there on host, nerved with resolution to live freemen or die in defense of their liberties and their country. He will act. with them in any capacity for which his talent shall fit him.

Simon Snyder

Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

N. B. BOILEAU, *Aide-de-Camp.*”

Most of the companies responding to this call were volunteers, for by oversight of the state legislature of 1814, the governor could not legally draft troops between August 1 and October 24 of that year.

Prominent West Chester doctor William Darlington noted in his diary that, “a Volunteer Corps called the ‘*American Greys*’ which was raised in the Borough of West Chester and its vicinity, immediately organized themselves, and on the 8th of September marched from West Chester, completely equipped, for the Cantonment at Bush Hill, near the City. The officers of the Company were *Titus Taylor* Captain—*Isaac Darlington* First Lieutenant, *Joseph Pearce* Second Lieutenant — and *William Darlington* Ensign. The Company consisted of Eight non-commissioned officers, and Forty one privates; comprizing [sic] some of the most wealthy and respectable Citizens of Chester County.”

Titus Taylor was a prominent Westtown farmer whose father and brothers had served in the Revolution, and his “American Greys” was comprised of many men from Westtown and the vicinity. The following is the muster roll of the company taken on September 16:

“*Sergeants*: William H. Taylor, Thornbury; Ziba Darlington, Birmingham; John Painter; John Hall, West Chester. *Corporals* John Logan, West Chester; Russell Vibber; Eber Worthington; Henry Myers. *Fifer*, Jacob Burkess. *Drummer*, George Davis (colored).

Privates

Bailey, Hiram, Westtown.	Keehmle, Jacob.
Brinton, Joseph H.	Lindsay, John, West Chester.
Brinton, Ethan, Birmingham.	Marshall, Stephen, West Chester.
Brinton, William, Birmingham.	Matlack, Jonathan, Goshen.
Brinton, James.	Matlack, Nathan, West Chester.
Brinton, John, West Chester.	Morrow, Hiram.
Brinton, Thomas H.	Myers, Henry.
Brinton, Joseph.	Nelson, Joseph.
Black, Robert, West Chester.	Nichols, Isaac.
Cox, William.	Pierce, Myers.
Darlington, Amos, Goshen.	Parry, Caleb.
Dailey, William.	Pearson, Harper, West Chester.
DeWolf, Thomas.	Pearson, George, East Caln.
Ehrenzeller, Jacob.	Rice, Thomas, East Whiteland.
Evenson, Eli.	Sweeney, Thomas, West Chester.
Frederick, William.	Shields, William, Westtown.
Gamble, Robert.	Townsend, Wm., East Bradford.
Greer, James, Goshen.	Townsend, Granville S.
Gardiner, Archibald, East Caln.	Taylor, Vernon.
Hall, Lewis, East Bradford.	Yearsley, Nathan, Thornbury.
Iddings, Joseph.	

Evans, Thomas B., West Chester, appointed surgeon's mate.

The company first set out to Camp Snyder at the Philadelphia City Hospital at Bush Hill. There, Titus Taylor's volunteers were organized as the Second Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, Light Infantry, and William Darlington was elected a major in the regiment. On October 3, the regiments marched to and encamped at Camp Marcus Hook. As the threat of invasion wound down, the regiments were disbanded December 2, 1814; the "American Greys" were mustered out and the men returned to their homes.

Civil War

When Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina April 12, 1861, President Abraham Lincoln sent out a call for volunteers to put down the rebellion. Northerners flocked to the colors. The volunteers included a dozen Westtown and Thornbury men who joined the 29th Pennsylvania, including Westtown's Jesse Millison, a Quaker carpenter.

Millison rose to the rank of major in the 97th Pennsylvania, Chester County's three-year regiment. Two of the Baily brothers, John and James, left their father's, Abram Baily's, farm on South Chester Road and served with the Union forces. Daniel Corbit, a graduate of Westtown School, served in the 7th Delaware. Isaac J Winters, a free black Westtown resident and a farm laborer, served in the 43rd U.S. Colored Troops (USCT), and was wounded at the Battle of the Crater, Petersburg, Virginia in 1864; one of several Westtown African-Americans to do serve..

Camp Elder/Camp Parole

In the summer of 1863, Confederate General Robert E. Lee led his Army of Northern Virginia into Pennsylvania to refill their provisions and hopefully win a great victory on northern soil to gain independence for the seceding Southern slave states. The great clash came at Gettysburg July 1–3, and Lee was soundly defeated by Gen. George G. Meade's Army of the Potomac.

Lee had managed to capture about 6,500 Union soldiers; however, his army could not handle that many prisoners during his retreat to Virginia. Under an existing parole agreement, about 2,000 Union soldiers were allowed to remain behind and were to be kept under guarded confinement until formally exchanged for captured Confederate soldiers.

After marching the paroled prisoners to Harrisburg, the Federal War Department sent them to West Chester by train. They were to be kept at a new camp that had been leased for the purpose of training USCT, freed African Americans and former slaves, who the Lincoln administration had finally decided to enroll as soldiers.

In June 1863, Capt. James Elder had been ordered to find a suitable campsite in the West Chester area. He first leased a site on the George Faucett farm along the Wilmington Pike in Westtown, in the vicinity of today's electronic billboard.

Elder tore up the lease when he found an even better site on the Enoch Williams' farm. Here, at the intersection of South Concord Road, Oakbourne Road and the West Chester & Philadelphia Railroad, were a grist mill, sawmill, water in Goose Creek and direct rail service to the large army supply depots in Philadelphia. This site was unused for training at the time of the battle of Gettysburg, since it was decided that Camp William Penn in Cheltenham, Pennsylvania, would be the USCT (United States Colored Troops) training camp. It became a perfect temporary site to house the prisoners at a new Camp Elder/Camp Parole.

On July 12, 1863, a trainload of prisoners descended on West Chester and were marched to the new camp site in Westtown. The camp muster rolls show that 1,861 prisoners from more than 100 regiments and 14 states were on hand to be guarded by a small contingent of rookie Union soldiers. A tent camp was quickly erected, and contracts let for food and other supplies. The men and women of the surrounding area became regular visitors, bringing baked goods and sweets for the lonely men.

Some of the parolees arrived sick or wounded. The most seriously wounded were sent to military hospitals in Philadelphia. Less serious injuries were treated in a new hospital set up at the camp. Dr. William Goodell, a West Chester physician, was commissioned as surgeon for the new hospital. Due to red tape insisted upon by the Medical Commissary in Philadelphia, Dr. Goodell and the pharmacists and good folks of West Chester were forced to use their own funds for several weeks to buy medicines and other supplies for the hospital.

Dr. Goodell's meticulous hospital records still exist in the Special Collections Department at West Chester University Library. He treated more than 200 soldiers during the Camp's short

existence. A few minor surgeries were performed, but most of the illnesses he treated were poison ivy, diarrhea and even drunkenness.

Contrary to widespread tales heard after the Civil War, his records and the official camp muster rolls show no parolees died while the Camp was in operation. Local legend stated that a number of soldiers had died at the camp and were buried in unmarked graves at Green Mount Cemetery on Westtown Road.

With little to occupy their time, parolees snuck away from Camp to drink in the taverns of West Chester or roam the countryside. At Westtown School, some would hang around the Girl's Section until the Head of School forbade the girls from talking to them. Others in the community organized religious services: It was reported that a Quaker speaker had an audience of 1,000 at one service. One letter writer told his father back in Massachusetts that he had found the area very pleasant and that the merchants in West Chester were charging fair prices for anything the parolees wished to purchase.

With many of the local lads away in the Union Army, farmers needed assistance to bring in their crops. A number of prisoners took advantage of short-term employment opportunities to bring in the harvest. Lasting friendships were forged by some parolees with farmers they worked for. Several came back in later years to visit and others kept up correspondence with the friends they had made; at least two parolees married local girls they had met.

One of these marriages constituted a real "Westtown Love Story" that, if one encountered it in a Hollywood script, would hardly be believable. Corporal Thomas Nolan was born in Ireland in 1832 and immigrated to the United States. He ended up in Steubenville, Ohio, when the Civil War broke out in 1861. Nolan enlisted for three years in the 25th Ohio and went off to war, fighting in all the major battles in the east.

On the first day at Gettysburg, his regiment was overrun and Nolan, along with 14 others in his company, was captured. Sent to Camp Elder, he was one of those looking to make some pocket change by hiring out to a farmer. Anthony Kirk hired Nolan for his farm off Shiloh Road.

Imagine Nolan's surprise when he arrived at the farm and discovered that Kirk's wife, Ellen, was a girl he used to date back in Ireland! Nolan went back to his regiment when the Camp closed

but later learned that Anthony Kirk had died in December 1863. Nolan refused to re-enlist and headed for Westtown where, in 1864, he rekindled his romance with the newly widowed Kirk and married her. They raised four girls on the farm (in the house which still stands on Shippen Lane) until he died in 1885.

The War Department ruled that the paroles given by General Lee were invalid under the terms of the exchange agreement and, in August, all the soldiers were ordered back to their regiments. By then, the muster rolls indicated that more than 900 of them were absent without leave from Camp Parole and had to be rounded up from all over the Mid-Atlantic States by the provost marshals. Camp Parole ceased to exist by September 7 and the episode was quickly forgotten by most local historians.

Through the efforts of Westtown Township Historical Commissioner and founder David Walter, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission erected a historical roadside marker along Oakbourne Road in 2013 (Westtown's first marker). Walter became aware of the records of Dr. Goodell in 2014 and found that the camp's muster roll had been posted on the internet.

Many local African American men joined the USCT. Ten have been identified as buried in the old Shiloh A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) graveyard on Little Shiloh Road, including a Westtown resident, Isaac Winters.

Westtown men and women have served in their country's military in all subsequent conflicts.



Photo courtesy Dave Walter

NOTEWORTHY EARLY DATED HOUSES

Oakbourne Mansion



Oakbourne Mansion. *Courtesy Westtown Township*

The Smith Family Home

In 1882, a wealthy Philadelphia lawyer named James Charles Smith and his wife Heloise Drexel Smith purchased 143 acres of land on the west side of what is now South Concord Road in Westtown Township.

Mr. and Mrs. John Hulme, a Philadelphia industrialist, had owned the estate, which at that time was named Belmont. The property included a 2½-story Italianate grey granite farmhouse, the

outline of which can be seen today from the front of Oakbourne Mansion. It was five bays wide and had a center entry door and five garret windows along the top half-story.

By 1884, Mr. and Mrs. Smith had renamed their homestead Oakbourne after the many oak trees on the property. They had also enlarged and renovated the farmhouse into a High Victorian/Queen Anne Revival-style mansion. This style is characterized by the use of multiple materials and textures to produce elaborate and asymmetrical ornamentation.

According to a December 1893 article in *The Philadelphia Times*, at the time of Mr. Smith's death his estate was worth \$5 million and Mrs. Smith, still living, was worth \$8 million. Using the Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI index, \$13 million in 1893 is equivalent to \$369,710,000 in 2019, presumably making the Smiths the richest people to ever live in Westtown.

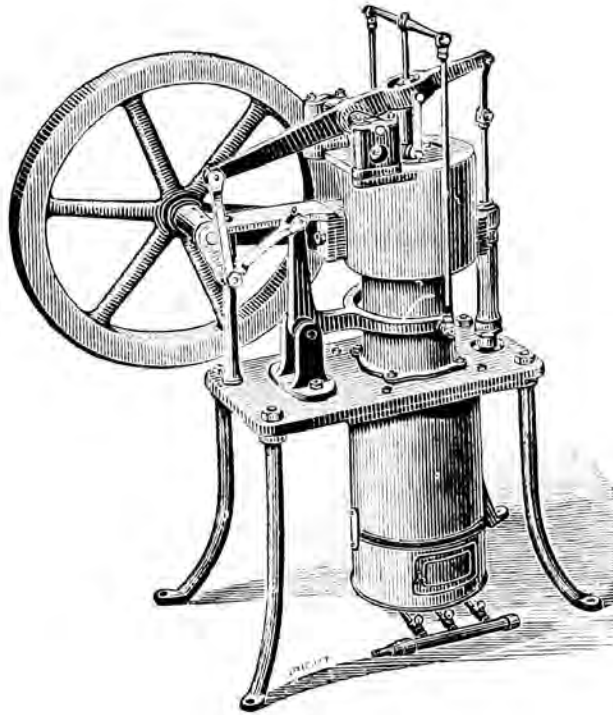
James Charles Smith was born January 6, 1827 to Quaker merchant Jacob Ridgway Smith and Rebecca Shoemaker Wharton. Jacob Smith's father was a partner in an incredibly prosperous international shipping firm, Smith & Ridgway of Philadelphia. Jacob Smith had been named in honor of his father's business partner, Jacob Ridgeway. Both had become fantastically wealthy from the venture, which earned Jacob Ridgway the moniker of "Merchant Prince."

James C. Smith's mother was Rebecca Shoemaker Wharton, daughter of Isaac Wharton, one-time director of the Bank of the United States.

James C. Smith's wife was Heloise Drexel Smith, a daughter of Francis Drexel Sr., founder of the extremely successful Drexel banking dynasty in Philadelphia. While James C. Smith was ostensibly a merchant, most of his money was inherited wealth from Mrs. Smith's family. She and her husband were millionaires from "private banking" interests, according to one source.

The Smiths spent more than \$225,000 to improve the Oakbourne property with such features as stables, guest homes and a 27-acre park with fountains, miniature lakes and rustic bridges. Even the estate's hen house was built to resemble a "country villa." The pump house located at the head of the lake to direct water to the house was in the shape of a decorative summerhouse. It fed water through a pair of terracotta pipes up to the landmark water tower to the southwest of the mansion house, which in turn fed water to the mansion and a decorative garden fountain.

A metallic overshot water wheel that was fed by the lake water ran the first pump. About 1891, an addition was put on the pump house to hold a small hot air engine. This engine, powered by chestnut coal, ran for many years until it too was superseded by an electric pump.



A typical hot air engine. Popular Science Monthly, 1880.

Today, the pump house sits in ruins beneath the dam and lake. Coal can still be found where the engine house once stood, and the two pipes feeding the water tower can be seen in places where breaks have washed out the soil above.



Lake and pump house at Oakbourne Mansion. *Photo from collection at Chester County Historical Society. Photography and coloring by the late C. Edwin Smith (1859–1936)*

Heloise Drexel Smith had three brothers: Anthony Joseph, a prominent financier who founded Drexel University and was a partner of J.P. Morgan; Joseph William; and Francis Anthony, whose daughter, a Roman Catholic nun, was canonized Saint Katherine Drexel in 2000. She was the first United States citizen born in this country to be canonized a saint.

Oakbourne's Architecture

The architecture of the new Smith mansion is attributed to Thomas Roney Williamson (1852–1896) of West Chester. Among many other changes, his 1884 renovation included 18 rooms and a tall, round observation tower.

Today, the existing original copper embellishments on the house have oxidized to green verdigris. Above the door on the north side is a decorative copper letter “S” with smaller letters “JC” on the left and “HD” on the right.



Photo courtesy Westtown Township

Later around 1917, when the Episcopal Church owned and operated the building as a hospital for women, it engaged institutional architect Walter U. Thomas (1876–1948) to design an addition to, and modernization of, the structure in a neo-Gothic style. The expansion would have enlarged the home considerably. For whatever reason, it was never built.

The Water Tower

At the same time, a picturesque 65-foot tall water tower was built on one of the highest points of the estate in the same style as the renovated mansion. It housed a 1,000-gallon twin-tank water reservoir that supplied running water and fire protection for the home. In 1995, the water tower was adopted as the official symbol for Westtown Township.

At the northern end of their property, along the current Oakbourne Road, the Smiths established a 27-acre park among the trees, which included a summerhouse and a pond with a gazebo. Remnants of a stone wall and an entry gate still exist there. The Smiths enjoyed raising livestock such as cows, horses and chickens.

James C. Smith Memorial Home

Mr. Smith died in 1893 and Mrs. Smith in 1895. They had no living children. After her death, Mrs. Smith willed the property to the Philadelphia Protestant Episcopal City Mission to be used as a retreat for sick and convalescing white women aged 21 and older.

The mansion was renamed The James C. Smith Memorial Home and a trust fund was established to provide for its maintenance. The home usually housed 25-30 residents, and served thousands of patients during its tenure. It was attended by local physicians, such as West Chester general practitioner Dr. Robert Poole.

In 1946, a 50th anniversary of the home was held. At this celebration it was reported that 15,600 women had been guests at the home since it opened.

During the time it was used as a retreat for women, significant changes were made to the mansion. An early 20th century English Gothic-style wing was added on the south side and a large meeting room was attached to the western end. The observation tower was removed as a result of its deteriorating condition. Inside, a small chapel was created.

Westtown Township's Ownership of Oakbourne

In 1971, lack of funds forced The James C. Smith Memorial Home to close. The mansion sat abandoned for several years, during which time vandals stole several stained-glass windows as well as a decorative newel post in the foyer.



This ornate newel post at Oakbourn Mansion was stolen, along with two stained glass windows (the center two windows on the stairs), when the mansion was unoccupied for a short time in the 1970s. *Photo courtesy Westtown Township*

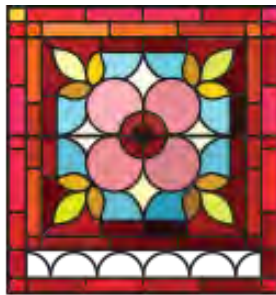
In 1974, the Westtown Township Board of Supervisors voted to purchase the 47-acre property. The original plan was to tear down the mansion and accompanying structures, but an astute planning commissioner opposed the idea and was successful in saving the historic buildings.

Portions of the 96 acres of the original estate that were sold were either purchased or donated to Westtown Township, creating the current 93-acre Oakbourne Park.

In 2000, the mansion was used as the set of an independent movie, *Killer Instinct*, starring Corbin Bernsen and Dee Wallace.

Today, only Oakbourne Mansion's first floor is open to the public. Part of the second floor is used as full-time living quarters for a caretaker. The upper floors have not yet been restored. The mansion buildings include the recently renovated water tower, a carriage house/garage and the gate (tenant) house.

In addition to public events such as Westtown Day, the mansion is available to rent for weddings, showers and special events.



THE
OAKBOURNE
MANSION

The Baily/Goch House, now 1108 S. Chester Road

The three-story stone house on the west side of Route 352, several hundred yards north of the intersection of Street Road, was built in 1855. A marble stone between the middle windows on the second and third story indicates the date and the owners: "A.W. and M.H. Baily." An 1861 map show Abram and Mary Baily owned the property designated "Fair View;" however, the house and property passed through many owners over the decades.



The Baily house, later owned by J. W. Nivin. Illustration from *Futhey and Cope's 1881 History of Chester County, Pennsylvania*

The earliest owner of the property seems to have been John Bond, as indicated on the 1687 Holmes map that was prepared for William Penn. Edgmont farmer Daniel Hoopes and his wife, Jane, began acquiring parcels amounting to more than 500 acres, beginning in 1700, and it is believed the Baily property was purchased at some time from a Hoopes. In 1861, C. Hoopes and E. Hoopes owned the land on the east side of South Chester Road.

Abram Baily's "Fair View" estate was about 300 acres. It is assumed that Baily had some financial difficulties as he offered 166 acres in 1859 in a private sale. The portion of the estate to be sold included 23 acres of timber, two apple orchards, cherry, pear, plum and peach trees, a "two-story dwelling house with kitchen attached and running water within," a large stone barn, a spring house suitable for a dairy, wood house, ice house "and other necessary out buildings," including a tenant house.

It was reported in a November 1887 article in the *Daily Local News*, that Baily's estate had attracted the attention of those wishing to establish Swarthmore College. The article, commenting several years after the fact, said the committee saw Baily's 300 acres as a perfect spot to place their new college. They offered Baily \$180 per acre; he held out for \$200. The committee then looked elsewhere and found what they required in the Delaware County town of Westdale. They founded Swarthmore College in 1864 and changed the town name to Swarthmore. Had the parties negotiated their \$20 difference, Westtown would today be the home of the nation's third-highest ranked liberal arts college.

The 1860 Federal Census shows Abram Baily, 44; wife Mary, 40; sons John, 19, and James, 17; and a "domestic," 13-year-old Malvina Sprouts. Both sons served in the Union Army during the Civil War. James' unit is not known; John served in Co. K, 124th Pennsylvania Volunteers, and fought at Antietam and Chancellorsville.

The Baily financial problems must have continued as a public sale of their personal property and household goods was announced for March 7, 1871 at the property "near the 'Star Tavern' on the Street Road." Included in the sale were four "good horses, one pair of full Devon Oxen . . . parlour furniture." The 1873 Witmer Atlas no longer showed Baily as Fair View's owner; it was W. B. Hoopes. By 1883, according to the Breous Farm Atlas, the owner was J. Wilkin Nivin, and the property had shrunk to 194 acres.

Nivin had apparently acquired the property by 1881, as there is a beautiful illustration (reproduced above) of the house and outbuildings in Futhey & Copes' 1881 *History of Chester County*.

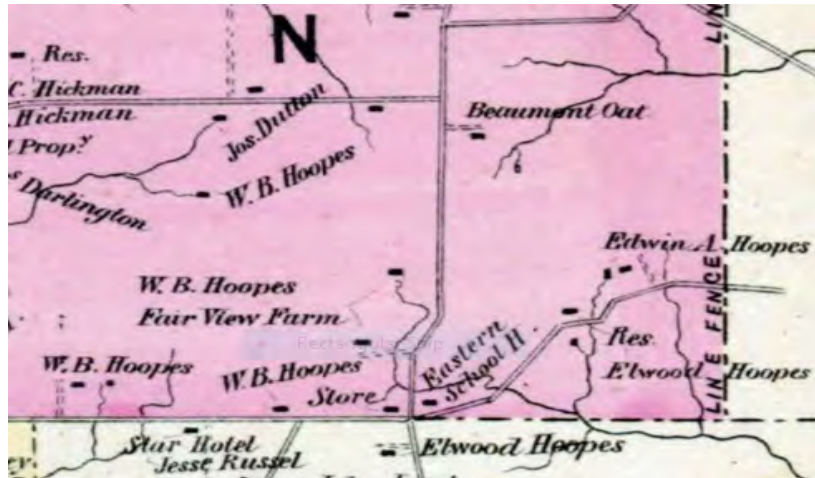
The 1912 Pennsylvania Railroad Atlas of the Main Line shows the property is now called "Primrose Dairy Farm," had grown to 220 acres, and was owned by one Jacob Paxson Temple. A 1927 map in the Arthur James book lists the owner as James Wilson.

The house's current owners, Marty and Deb Goch, have conserved much of the original exterior and interior features. The porch ironwork, shown in the 1881 book illustration, was found in the basement and may be re-installed. A large ginkgo tree, seen in the illustration, still grows in the front yard. There is an outside hatch through which ice blocks could be conveyed to the interior

walk-in icebox, which still has original shelving. The basement has numerous hooks and pulley holders, and a room with a trough that appears to have been a butchering area. The owner previous to the Gochs discovered a brick beehive oven concealed behind plasterwork in the basement. The original newel post and dramatic stair rails run from the first to the third floors. The Gochs added an addition in 2002 that blends perfectly with the original 1855 house. They were awarded the Township's Historic Preservation Award in 2018 for their efforts to preserve the Baily Estate. There are three other residences in the immediate vicinity believed to be structures from the original Baily estate.



Holmes' 1687 map



Witmer's 1873 Atlas



Breous' 1883 Farm Atlas



Mueller's 1912 map

“Chestnut Hill” — The Schlaanstine House/Orvis Tree Farm

Before 1795, Nathan Atherton and his wife built a house that would later become known as the Schlaanstine House at 401 W. Pleasant Grove Road/1074 Wilmington Pike. It was built on a hill on 25 acres of land near the site of a spring used by the Lenni Lenape when they inhabited the area, as evidenced by cut stone and arrowheads, later found at the site.

By 1807, the land contained a frame barn, garden and an orchard. The property passed through a number of owners throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries before it was sold to Dr. Alden Eugene Bartlett and his wife Jane S. Bartlett in 1928. Dr. Bartlett extensively remodeled the house in 1930.

Dr. Bartlett sold the property to Raymond F. and Jess Schlaanstine, March 5, 1945. The Schlaanstines extensively improved the landscaping around the property, adding a grove of Chinese chestnut trees along the Wilmington Pike, and according to an undated article in the *Daily Local News*, three healthy pawpaw trees. The chestnut trees suggested the name which the Schlaanstines gave to the house—“Chestnut Hill.”

In her 1982 book *A History of Our Land 1681–1981*, Jess Schlaannstine recalled a time when a man pulled into their driveway and asked if they were selling chestnuts, as he had boys roasting and selling them along the road — a scene reminiscent of Andrew Wyeth’s *Roasted Chestnuts* of the same period. The trees thrived until they were cut down when Wilmington Pike was widened, and the road then became U.S. Route 202.

The Schlaanstines also cultivated the property with a variety of ornamental trees and shrubs, including an orchard and an arbor. Their most notable change to the property was the construction of a pond behind the house where a number of springs made the land swampy. They had the pond filled to a depth of 12 feet and stocked with game fish.



Composite photo of Jess and Raymond Schlaannstine standing outside their house in the 1960s and as the house appeared in 2018. The house was razed in May 2019. Rendering by Jonathan Hoppe

The property was left to their daughter Ruth and her husband Harold Orvis. In the early 2000s, most of the property was sold to the Greenstone Development Corporation to build the Arborview neighborhood. The house, with the new address of 1074 Wilmington Pike, was left

vacant as a number of development proposals failed. The house was used for illicit activities, as well as SWAT team training by local police departments.

When the Historical Commission was permitted to document the property in October 2018, a number of items were found in the attic. These abandoned papers: A bank book, calendar, photograph dated May 30, 1945 and several pieces of V-Mail were found. During World War II, instead of using valuable cargo space to ship whole letters overseas, microfilmed copies were sent and then printed as small photographs before being delivered to military personnel or their families. The items were all related to Sergeant Fred Schlaanstine, who was killed in 1944 in action in France. He was only 19.

The story of the photograph was revealed in Jess Schlaanstine's book:

“Fred's body lies buried underneath a white cross in the American Military Cemetery in Epinol [Épinal], France.

We received a letter from Marguerite and Jan Meyerowitz in [Épinal], and she told us that she visited Fred's grave and kept fresh flowers on it. We corresponded with them and they came to visit us. He was a fine musician, and she was an accomplished singer. They gave a musicale while visiting us in Kennett Square, and our friends brought clothing to send to France. We sent trunks of clothing and received many appreciative letters from the people of [Épinal].”



Jan Meyerowitz laying flowers on the grave of Fred Schlaanstine May 30, 1945. *From the collection of Jonathan Hoppe*

Jan Meyerowitz (1913–1998) was a German composer of Jewish ancestry who studied music throughout Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. When the Second World War commenced, he went to southern France where he was hidden from the Germans with the help of the French Resistance. One member of the Resistance was a singer named Marguerite Fricker, whom he married after the war. In 1946, they emigrated to America where he worked as a composer (with pieces often starring Marguerite) and taught at City College of New York. The couple retired to France where he died in Colmar in 1998.

Brooznoll/The Hoopes House/1639 East Street Road

As previously mentioned in an earlier section on settlers in Westtown, Daniel and Jane WorriLOW Hoopes were married in 1696 and settled in the southeast corner of the township. About a half mile northeast of Tanguy Cross Roads on the north side of Street Road, there is a spacious two-story serpentine stone house. In the west gable end of this house is a datestone inscribed “D H 1723.” The initials identify Daniel Hoopes.

The western side of the house was built first in 1723 as a one-room plan. As Daniel Hoopes and his wife had 17 children, they soon needed a larger home. A two-room eastern-facing addition was built in 1740, nearly doubling the size of the original house. This addition is so well blended with the first part of the house that they appear to be one. A datestone in the east gable end of the house is inscribed “1740.”



The 1723 (left) and 1740 (right) datestones. *Library of Congress*

At a later period, a substantial two-story stone addition was added to the north side of the structure. The Hoopes original home in Yorkshire, England was called “Brooznoll.” This name, meaning Windy or Breezy Hill, was used to identify the early home in Westtown. Later, another Hoopes home, built north of the early house, was also sometimes identified by the name “Brooznoll.” It is one of the most attractive and noteworthy of Westtown’s early homes.



Brass company logo found on property. Courtesy of Jen Ehlers

Artifacts, like the Hoopes brass insignia above were found recently in the yard of the house when the present owners were building a swimming pool.

1084 Powderhorn Drive

The other house in the township connected to the Brooznoll name is a stone farmhouse at 1084 Powderhorn Road. Originally named Brooznoll, a Welsh word meaning Windy Hill, this double front door stucco-over-stone farmhouse was built in 1816 with an addition in 1950. A unique feature of the house has one front door leading to a “working half” of the house comprised of a large family room with a cooking fireplace and large beamed kitchen with a walk-in fireplace. The other front door, sometimes called the “Sunday door,” led to the formal part of the house that included a parlor and formal dining room.

The property was originally part of a 1,000-acre William Penn land grant to Daniel Hoopes. Two fourth-generation Hoopes brothers divided the farm in 1814, with brother Ezra building this second home on the property. The Hoopes family farmed the property until 1922. From 1972 to 1974, it was developed into Edgewood Chase.

Between 1950 and 1972, the house was owned by L. Stuart Rose (1899–1975), an editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*, who was married at the time to movie star Humphrey Bogart’s sister, Frances, nicknamed “Pat.” It is believed many literary figures, including “Bogie”, visited the house for fox hunting weekends.

The Mercer House

At the northeast corner of Shiloh and Street Roads, about a half mile east of Westtown Station, is a dignified two-story stone mansion that overlooks the Chester Creek valley. In the south wall of this house, some four feet above ground level, is a stone inscribed “1734.”

In January 1700, Thomas Mercer, an immigrant from Northampton County, England, bought 230 acres of land. His son, Thomas, inherited this land and built the 1734 house in which he lived until his death about 1758. Among his 10 children were two sons, Daniel and David. Near the stone marked “1734” there is another one on which is inscribed “D ♥ M.” It seems likely that this identifies either Daniel or David Mercer and that it was the handiwork of an ambitious boy.

The Mercer family owned several hundred acres of land in Westtown Township. In early deeds the property with the 1734 stone is sometimes referred to as “the mansion tract.” This remained in the Mercer family until 1860. Between 1875 and 1896 it was owned by William Cronin. His ownership is reflected by an inscription “W C 1876” which is painted in the south gable of a carriage house built in 1876.

Enos H. Barnard purchased the property in 1896 and continued to live here until his death in 1935. Years later, it was the home of Dr. and Mrs. Wilbur G. Dunning, the latter having been the daughter of Mr. Barnard. After Mrs. Dunning’s death in 1954, Dr. Dunning’s daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Chandler Blarper, shared the home with him.

Several decades ago, a frame addition was added on the north side of the 1734 mansion. This happily coupled modern conveniences to the skilled craftsmanship of the original house.

Darlington’s Inn/Westtown Inn/Darlington’s Hotel

Today on the northwest corner of Routes 926 and 202 (West Street Road and Wilmington Pike) at Darlington’s Corner, there is an attractive two-story serpentine private dwelling, which for many years was an inn and a drover’s tavern. The east gable end has an 1823 date stone. This serpentine structure replaced an earlier building, a log cabin built in 1803, that had been a tavern operated by William Warton. It was named the Sign of Count Powlaskey in 1806 and then the Sign of The King of Prussia in 1807.

Thomas Darlington operated the hotel beginning in 1810 and built a new stone building in 1823. He operated it as Darlington's Inn for the next 20 years. As a number of his patrons were drovers who were taking cattle to Philadelphia, his inn was sometimes referred to as a drover's tavern.



Circa 1980 photo of what was the Darlington's Corner Inn, now a private home. *Photo Gifford Studio*

In 1843, the property was sold to David Taylor who was an ardent Whig politically and something of a sculptor. Indicative of his political loyalties, in 1844, when Henry Clay was the Whig presidential candidate, Taylor chiseled Clay's profile on a serpentine stone in the south wall of the inn. This stone is near the southeast corner a few feet above ground level. In 1854, he sold the hotel to John Clark, but Taylor again operated it from 1856 through March 1865.

Taylor further demonstrated his skill in 1860 when he chiseled a likeness of his black dog, adjacent to the Clay profile. The dog was named Lincoln after Abraham Lincoln, then the presidential candidate. Although considerably weathered, these so-called works of art in serpentine are still discernible. Between 1854 and 1871 the hotel used the name “Westtown Inn” in its application to the County Court for a license to operate a public house. The proprietors between 1854 and 1871 were John Clark, Marshall J. Taylor, Joseph Dilworth, Richard Speakman, and John K. Bugless.

In 1879 the application for a license identified the business as “Darlington’s Corner Hotel.” In the mid-1880s the application for a license was denied by the court. A high turnover in proprietors in its last years suggests the hotel was not a financial success.

In 1908 the hotel property, involving a few acres of adjacent land, was sold to a new owner who converted it into a private dwelling. More recently the house was completely modernized. One can still see evidence of the location where former penteads were attached to the sturdy serpentine walls. In recent years the 1823 house has been owned by the Robinson family, who own Crebilly Farm adjacent to it.

The Hunt House

On the east side of South New Street, about a quarter of a mile north of Street Road, is a substantial two-story serpentine stone house. It is on today’s Crebilly Farm property and is a short distance from the former Brinton’s and McClure’s quarries. The upper south wall of this house has a date stone inscribed, “H J L 1805.” A study of deeds relating to the ownership of the property shows that it was built and owned by Joshua Hunt and his wife Lydia.

A Barn with Two Date Stones

Among later owners of the 1805 Hunt house and farm were David McClure and Willard H. Smedley. It is unusual for Chester County barns to have date stones showing the owner’s name. The former Hunt property barn now located on what is Crebilly Farm has two such date stones.

In the west wall of the barn one date-stone is inscribed “D McCLURE 1886.” Nearby, another date stone is inscribed “W. H. SMEDLEY 1922.” Shortly before Mr. Smedley purchased the

McClure property the barn burned. However, the McClure date stone in the stone wall was not damaged and the barn now has two date stones.

The Osborne House

On the west side of South New Street, about three quarters of a mile north of Street Road, is a stately three-story serpentine mansion and barn, whose stone was quarried just down the street at Brinton's Quarry. The date stone over the east porch of the house is inscribed "J H & K OSBORNE 1855" for Joseph and Joanna Osborne.



Osborne House at 1066 South New Street. Photo by Jim Guterl



Osborne House date stone. *Photo by Jim Guterl*

Between 1755 and 1871, this farm of about 500 acres was owned by four generations of the Osborne family. Osborne land ownership extended westward into Birmingham Township.

However, even before the Osbornes owned the land, John Collet received a grant of 1,000 acres from William Penn. Collet never came to the Colonies and in a bill of indenture discovered at the Chester County Historical Society, he instructed that all proceeds from the estate revert to his daughter and not her husband. It is assumed Collet, a Quaker and a vintner, had a falling out with his son-in-law, who was a cooper (barrel maker).

For a short time, the property was owned by John Salkold before the Osbornes purchased the land. Samuel Osborne owned the land during the Battle of Brandywine, which took place on September 11, 1777, where history tells us the British stopped to reconnoiter and rest at Osborne Hill. His son Peter inherited it and, in turn, willed it to his son Joseph.

Joseph H. Osborne, son of the above Joseph, inherited the 198-acre farm in Westtown Township from his father. It appears that Joseph H. did not wish to have the letter “J” twice on the date

stone. Accordingly, he used the initial of his wife's middle name, Katherine, rather than that of her first name, Joanna.

In 1871, Joanna, the widow of Joseph H. Osborne, sold the property to Townsend Walter. He named it "La Grange Farm," perhaps because one of the earliest grange organizations in the county was formed here. Walter served for some years as county treasurer and was the first elected Republican in Chester County.

From 1908 to 1926, the property was owned by John Dulles, uncle to the Dulles brothers, John Foster and Allen, Secretary of State and director of the CIA respectively in the Eisenhower administration. According to two of John's daughters, their cousin John Foster was an occasional visitor to the West Chester farm.

John Dulles was a gentleman farmer with a curious mix of progressive and conservative ideas. According to one article in the Chester County Historical Society, he created a reading room upstairs in his carriage house so his field hands could improve themselves in inclement weather. But according to a story passed on through one of those hands, Mr. Dulles thought if you could make money with three field hands, you could make more with two. Consequently, come harvest time, the neighboring farmers would have to pitch in to help him save his crops.

An uncle of John Dulles was a Presbyterian missionary credited as first translating Christian scripture into the Tamil language. Dulles took a Tamil word "dwita", loosely translated as the "unseen through the seen", as the name for the farm. One of the stencils he used to label equipment is on display in the barn on the property. The barn is now the house of worship for the Church of the Loving Shepherd.

J. Niel Adam purchased the property in 1926 and lived there until his death in 1964. Mr. Adam brought electricity to the farm by paying to have electric poles placed all the way down New Street from West Chester Borough. The Adam family named the property "Dunvegan Farm," taken from Dunvegan Castle in Scotland, which was the home of the McLeod clan. Both Mr. and Mrs. Adam were descended from this clan. Much of this former dairy and fruit farm has become the planned development known as South Hills, which includes Dunvegan Drive.

Following Mr. Adam's death, one of his five sons, Sinclair A. Adam, a registered architect, and his family moved to Dunvegan Farm. In 1972, the family then moved into a modern home recently built on part of the former farm on the east side of South New Street. The 1855 mansion house and barn has become the home of the Church of the Loving Shepherd, a 20-acre property purchased between 1971 and 1974 from C.W. Moore, who briefly owned the property.

No old house is complete without a ghost story. In the early 1970s one of the Walter daughters, who purchased the house in 1871, was making a trip east for a reunion and stopped by the church to see the room in the house that had been hers. She shared a story that a brother had been crushed by a horse and was carried to the house where he died.

"This might explain the occasional footsteps heard in the house, or the young man in Victorian formal dress and top hat who appeared in the wedding photos of a couple married here some years ago," a member of the church staff said. "They were taking wedding photos in the parlor."

The Strode House

On the east side of South New Street, about a quarter of a mile north of the 1855 Osborne mansion at 949 South New Street, is another large three-story serpentine house. Richard Strode bought the property from the Huey estate in 1823. Then Francis Strode purchased the property from Richard Strode in 1837 and he and his wife, Thomazine built the Federal-like, five-bay center-hall plan house with four rooms on the first floor. In the east wall is a date stone inscribed "F & T STRODE 1843."

Later owners and residents here were Francis and Thomazine's son, Oliver J. Strode, and his wife Jane. They, in turn, were followed by their daughters, Clara T. and Josephine Strode, who sold the property around 1927 and moved to West Chester.

A 1927 Westtown Farm and Road Map shows J. Chauncy Shortlidge owning the property. The 1912 map, "Atlas of Properties on Main Line Pennsylvania Railroad from Devon to Downingtown and West Chester," published in Philadelphia by A. H. Mueller, which includes Westtown Township, indicates the house was once the site of the Maplewood School for Boys.

Other owners of the property have included Gwendolyn and John Slagen, whose estate sold it in 1990 to Elizabeth and Kane Bender. They in turn sold the house in 1998 to Keith and Kristin Alardi, who sold it in 2002 to Donald and Deborah Asplen. The present owners are Charles and Betsy Swope, who purchased the house in 2016.

Another Strode House

Set back from South New Street at what is now 807 General Howe Drive is another Strode-owned house. This second home was built by Francis Strode. The farmhouse, said to be built in 1865 with significant additions in 1915, was a full-scale farm, with cows, pigs and a fruit orchard. The house was built on a serpentine stone foundation with three brick chimneys. It is rather plain for a Victorian home, possibly because it was built in wartime when materials and skilled workmen were in short supply.

In 1870, Francis Strode sold the house and most of the farmstead to his son Oliver. He sold the remaining land, more than 46 acres, in 1875 to Charles C. Oat of Philadelphia for \$12,500. Oat bought the farm for his son D. Beaumont Oat, who had married Mary E. Strode, Francis' daughter in 1869. Mary and Beaumont had three sons: George R., Joseph H. and Charles F., who became a veterinarian in West Chester.

There is a story that Beaumont and his son Charles mortgaged the house in the early 1900s to buy a racehorse for \$10,000. The horse died the night before its first race. Beaumont died in 1908 and the house sold at auction for \$1,475 to settle his debts. The story claims that it took Charles 15 years to pay off the balance of his and his father's debts.

The property remained an active farm through three owners — George Brownback, William and Betty McKay and John W. McCoy until 1963, when it was sold and became part of the Osborne Hill section of the Radley Run development.

Huey House

Sadly, not all historic homes remain intact. On the west side of South New Street (950 South New Street), on the corner of General Howe Drive, stand the ruins of a stone building, believed to have been built around 1730. The ruins sit on what is now a half-acre parcel owned by

Westtown Township, but was once part of a 125-acre farm owned by William and Gemet (alternatively known as Genet or Jane) Huey. According to a deed dated April 22, 1730, they purchased the land from Mordecai Maddock.

William, believed to be a native of Ireland, and his wife, Gemet from Wales, arrived in this country sometime in the early 18th century and settled in Westtown. Together, they had two children, Mary (born in 1733) and James (born in 1737).

William was a yeoman or small farmer. He died in 1754 and the inventory of his estate indicates that he operated a small dairy farm with eight milk cows and several head of cattle, along with 35 sheep, 19 lambs and one breeding sow. As for crops, he had 23 acres of wheat, six acres of poor rye and one acre of barley oats & flax in ground at the time of his death. Excluding the value of the 125 acres, his estate was valued at £217, 6 shillings and 9 pence as appraised for probate by his neighbors, Samuel Osborne and George Entrikin. Gemet inherited the farm until her son James reached the age of 21.

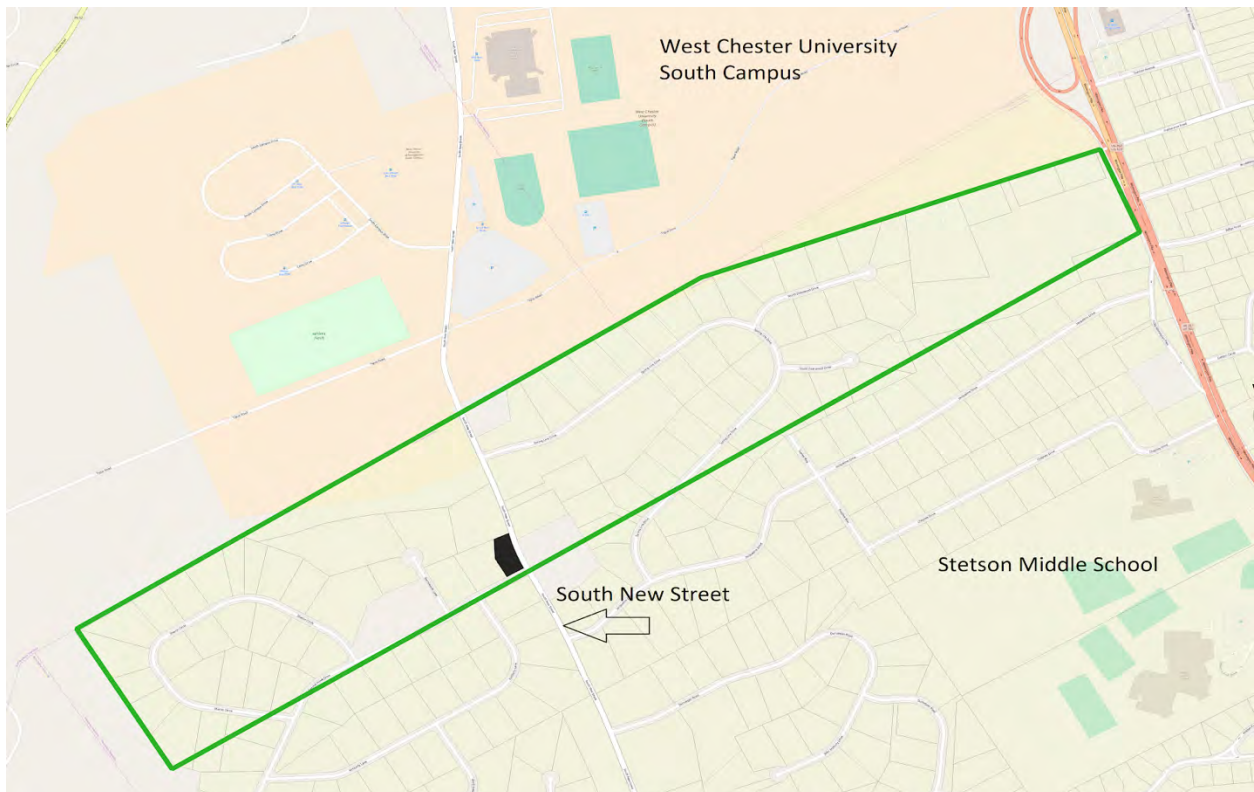
When Gemet died 13 years later, on October 1, 1767, her son, James had already taken title to the plantation. As a result, Gemet had only her personal property to bequeath. In her will, on which she made her mark, she gave clothing and household items to each of her granddaughters. To her son and grandson, she left her riding horse and £50 English, respectively. To her daughter, Mary (Huey), who had married Samuel Entriken, she left clothing:

“I give and bequeath unto my Daughter Mary Enterken [sp] two gowns, the one black & the other striped, and also one part of a piece of camblet [cambric — a lightweight, closely woven white linen cotton fabric] sufficient to make her one long cloak & the remainder or residue of my wearing apparel.”

James married Alary Miller (date unknown). He ran into financial difficulty and after mortgaging his property twice in the late 1760s, placed it in trust to pay off his creditors. Later, the trustees sold 30 acres off the eastern end of the tract to Joseph Curtain. That must have satisfied James's creditors because he retained the remaining piece of the tract until his death in 1822. He died intestate and the administrators of his estate sold the land at public auction to his neighbor

Richard Strode, for “the sum of five thousand three hundred thirty-four dollars and two and one half cents lawful money of the state.”

The Huey property encompassed parts of several of today’s neighborhoods in the northwest corner of Westtown, including the Snow Drop Hill development (Spring Line Drive, South Deerwood Road, North Deerwood Road and a portion of Jacqueline Drive) and parts of Radley Run development on General Howe Drive. The ruins of what are believed to be the original farmhouse are all that remain.



Approximate location of the original 125-acre Huey tract (highlighted in green) as it looked in 1769 when James & Mary Huey granted a deed of trust to their creditors. The present half-acre parcel is highlighted in black. Plot plan by Ray Sarnacki



Ruins of the Huey structure in 2019 at 950 South New Street. Photo courtesy Ray Sarnacki

An Early-Dated House

In 1927, the late T. C. Van Phillips purchased a 13-acre property located near the northeast corner of Little Shiloh and Westtown roads from Arnold Brown. Today, the entrance to the property is listed as 1119 Chateau Drive. On this property is an unusual two-story stone house which is built with very large stones. On one of these stones, adjacent to the front door, the date “1718” is inscribed. According to tradition, a part of the house was once used as a school.

Westtown School’s Stone House

Westtown School’s campus includes two noteworthy stone houses. One of them, formerly known as “The Stone House” and renamed Guerster House in 2016, is located east of the Meeting House. Its north wall has a date stone inscribed “BUILT IN 1803 — REBUILT 1873–1919.” This well-built structure has had several roles. It was originally designed as an infirmary to separate sick children from the dormitories, but during much of the 19th century it housed faculty and staff families.

In 1873, it was remodeled into two homes for teachers, and in 1919, it was remodeled again to serve as a dormitory for younger boys. For many years, it also housed the elementary school in its basement.

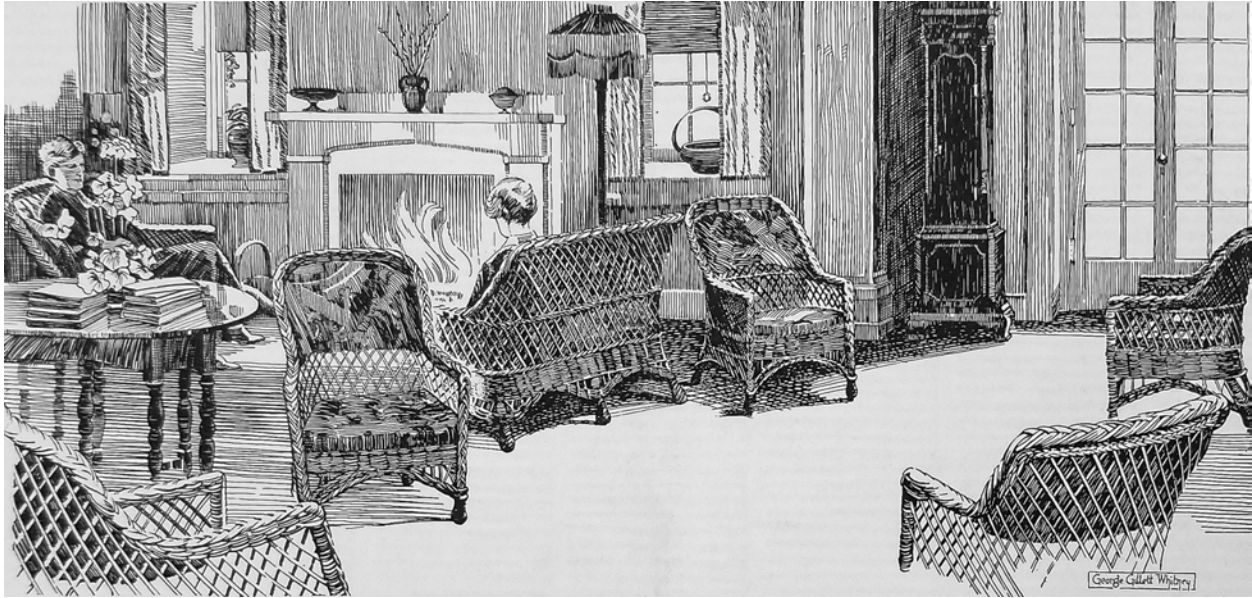
In 2000, the old construction was reconfigured by architects Philip and Edie Johnston to serve as two faculty apartments, with new construction on the south side serving as a freshman boys' dormitory.

Westtown School Farm House

The other dated house on the Westtown School campus is known as the Farm House, with its east wall displaying a stone bearing the date 1850. This three-story stone structure, which cost \$6,500 to build, replaced the Gibbons' Mansion (as it was known).

The 1850 structure was built to replace the old Gibbons family farmhouse which had, since the purchase, served the school as a residence for its farmer and a guest house for school visitors, including members of the Yearly Meeting Committee who would often visit from Philadelphia. When the school first opened in 1799, it was the responsibility of the farmer and his family to provide hospitality for visitors when they visited the school.

In the early part of the 20th century, when automobile travel was becoming more common, the use of the Farm House for overnight school visitors was no longer needed, and it began operating as a country inn. Phebe T. Hall became the first official manager of the Farm House in 1906, and was followed by several others.



A view of the interior of the farmhouse in an engraving by noted illustrator George Gillett Whitney. From a publication by the Westtown Farm House. Courtesy of the Chester County Historical Society.

Its dining room served the general public, and it became known as an “Old Fashioned Country Inn Famous for its Dinners,” according to one advertisement. As one informational book noted: “Removed from all the main highways, its isolation gives it the unique and peaceful charm that appeals to all who are seeking the true stillness of the open spaces. . . . The spirit of unostentatious courtesy and hospitality will welcome you and will make you feel at home.” The same booklet gave information for how to reach the Farm House (“By Train. Take the electric train at Broad Street Station, Philadelphia, for Westtown Station. The ride takes about one hour. Auto will meet you on advance notice.”) and by auto (“Go out Market Street, Philadelphia, and the West Chester Pike. Follow the West Chester Pike to the Milltown Water Works, Here turn left on concrete road, and follow the signs to the Westtown Farm House.”) The inn closed in 1965. Since that time, it has undergone several renovations and houses multiple apartments for Westtown School faculty and staff.

Quarry House

Built between 1880 and 1899, this two-story Queen Anne, multi-gabled serpentine stone structure at 1150 South New Street, is sometimes referred to as the Quarry House. Some maps give that name to a smaller serpentine house a few hundred feet north on South New Street, formerly the Hunt house.

TOWNSHIP BUSINESSES

As the western part of the township is near West Chester, it was possible for early settlers to this area to go there for many of their needs. This proximity had an adverse effect on the establishment of retail businesses in Westtown. Stores worthy of listing will be treated geographically rather than chronologically.

Businesses at Yearsley's Hill

As noted earlier in **Township Farms**, George Faucett and his wife Isabella purchased land in Westtown Township south of West Chester along the road leading to Wilmington (now Route 202). Here, in colonial times the Faucett family lived in a log cabin in a part of which they ran a country store.

Years later, the cabin was replaced by a substantial stone house using some of the timbers from the cabin in its construction. With longevity on one site, the location became known as Faucett's Cross Roads, which today is along Old Wilmington Pike and Route 202. In the 19th century, the cluster of houses around the store was known as **Yearsley's Hill**, after a nearby landowner.

In the mid-20th century, the village hosted the Blue Spruce Motel, which was located at 1036 Wilmington Pike, beginning in the 1950s. On March 8, 1963, the Talk-O-Town Delicatessen opened at 1030 Wilmington Pike, next door to the motel. This is now known as the Westtown Meat Market and Deli. After the Blue Spruce Motel closed, since 1981 the property has been occupied by the Abbey Green Irish Village gift shop, operated by Thomas and Adeline McDaniel, since 1981. That property is now for sale.

First National Bank of West Chester

In mid 1964, the First National Bank of West Chester received approval to construct a branch office at 1039 Wilmington Pike (Route 202). The decision to construct the branch was based in part on the fact that it was "an extremely rapidly growing residential area," and that it was foreseeable that "shopping centers will be developed within the service area." The branch, faced with stone in a colonial style, opened February 19, 1966 and featured "a spacious, free parking lot" and "two drive in windows, safe deposit, [and] checking and savings facilities" and was the

first branch in the county to offer banking services to residents in the area south of West Chester. Robert R. Gotwals was the first branch manager. Shortly after the First National Bank of West Chester changed its name to the First National Bank of Chester County in 2000, the branch was closed. It was subsequently purchased by Westtown Township and is now, after some alterations, the township building.

Darlington's Corner

Westtown, like the neighboring town of Exton, does not have a main street. In its heyday, Darlington's Corner, the confluence of Routes 926 and 202, was the closest the township had to a main business thoroughfare. Throughout the years, the Corner held an inn, a factory, a farm stand, a post office and a blacksmith shop

A log cabin tavern built in 1803 on the northwest corner of the intersection — named the Sign of Count Powlaskey in 1806 and then the Sign of The King of Prussia in 1807 — was replaced in 1823 by a serpentine stone house owned by Thomas Darlington, who insisted the intersection be named Darlington's Corner.

The structure was a drover's inn for many years under many names, including the Westtown Inn and Darlington's Corner Hotel. (It is ironic that for years the Thornbury Post Office was in Westtown at this intersection, and the Westtown Post Office was in Thornbury, east on Street Road/Route 926. By 1843, the post office had been moved to Darlington's Inn.)

On the east side of Wilmington Pike was the Westtown Factory, a cloth manufactory which opened in 1810 and employed 11 men, five women and, well before child labor laws, five boys and girls. It was first operated by Benedict Darlington and Jess Otley, who years later made and sold Beaty's "celebrated washing machines," according to their advertising, from this same building. The cloth factory replaced a manufacturing plant and wooden clockworks business in the same location.

Around the 1820s, a general store near the factory sold hats, shoes, groceries, liquor and DuPont's gunpowder by the keg.

In 1854, Wilmington Pike became a plank road made of long wooden boards to make it easier to transport goods via wagon across the region. Within a few short years they were replaced with a surface of crushed stone.

By 1873, a map of the intersection shows Brinton's Store, Westtown Inn, and surrounding properties, both residential and commercial, owned by McClure (of what is now Crebilly Farm), Woodward, Taylor, Darlington, Cobourn, Cannon and "the Misses Few," African American landowners in the area. The Fews were buried in the Taylor Burial Ground across Route 202 on the site of what is now the Pleasant Grove development.

Benedict Darlington's Factory and Store

In March 1969, a Westtown member of the West Chester Area School Board informed a group of township property owners who were concerned about escalating taxes, that it cost \$900 a year to educate a student in the school district. It was claimed that each new family with children who came into the community raised taxes for each property owner and that no significant alleviation of the problem was in sight.

As a possible source of help, it was suggested that Westtown seek to attract income-producing enterprises to the township. Although this had an appeal to economists, it was not pleasing to ecologists. The proposal that an effort be made to bring industry into the township is reminiscent of the Westtown Factory, which operated in a period when school taxes were not a critical issue.

Benedict Darlington (1786–1864) operated the Westtown Factory on the east side of Wilmington Pike, a short distance north of Darlington's Corner, from the early 1820s until the late 1830s. A native of the township and one of a family of 12 children, he was both ambitious and versatile. In his early life he worked as a carpenter. Two of his brothers became attorneys and another, Thomas, built and operated a hotel at Darlington's Corner.

Benedict was married in 1807 and bought a property on the east side of Wilmington Pike north of Darlington's Corner. In 1810, Benedict and a neighbor Jesse Otley advertised that they were making and selling Beaty's "celebrated Washing Machines."

Between 1812 and 1814, Benedict had hired three Connecticut Yankees to aid him in making clocks with wooden works — Jonathan N. Hatch, Thomas De Wolf, clockmakers, and Russell Vibber, carpenter, bringing with them, it was said, the clock faces and mechanisms from Connecticut. “One explanation for the coming of the Yankees to Benedict Darlington’s Community,” notes Arthur James in his *Chester County Clocks And Their Makers*, “was that they had served in the American Greys” under Captain Titus Taylor in the latter part of the War of 1812; Vibber was a corporal, De Wolf a private. Taylor owned and lived on a farm located immediately east of the Darlington home.

This short-lived activity was followed by the establishment of a cotton factory, which, in 1820, made the following report to the census enumerator:

Westtown Factory, August 7, 1820

Westtown Township, Chester Co. Penna.

Raw Materials	Cotton Yard	Costing \$6,239.88
Employed:	11 men, 5 women, 5 children	\$5,000 Capital
		\$3,120 Annual Wages
		\$3,700 Contg. Exp.
Equipment:	10 Looms in use	
Products:	Shirting, Check Stripe, Ticking, Tabling Shawls, Counterpane, etc. (sold for) \$10,900.	

Other operations at the Darlington establishment involved the manufacture of fans for cleaning grain, a 110-acre farm and a country store which sold domestic and foreign woolen goods.

In 1822, Benedict opened a store near his factory and advertised hats, shoes, “groceries & Spiritous Liquors,” DuPont powder by the keg, and other articles for sale. In some of his advertisements he noted “Will sell or barter.”

His one-time Connecticut Yankee clock-making partner Jonathan Hatch was apparently part of a factory venture, for he began running the Franklin Cotton Works in East Goshen Township in 1822. Three years later Hatch purchased the former George Antricum cotton mills on Crum Creek in Edgmont Township, Delaware County, which he enlarged extensively and manufactured cotton yarn in great quantities. Darlington invested heavily in the cotton mill in Edgmont — an unfortunate choice, because the mills were destroyed by fire in 1838 and were not insured. Losing virtually everything in the disaster, Darlington had to start over in Cecil County, Maryland. He later retired to the Fallowfield area in Chester County.

The Store at Darlington's Corner

Early in the 19th century, Joseph H. Brinton built a store at what is now the site of the CVS pharmacy. Although this store was actually in Thornbury Township it is listed here as it served many Westtown residents. Brinton rented the business to a number of storekeepers. In 1827, John B. Richardson announced that he had opened a dry-goods and grocery business in the store “lately occupied by Mr. [William H.] Taylor.” In 1831 Thomas W. Stevens occupied the store.

Mrs. Issac Vernon was operating the store before she moved to the Tanguy store with her husband in 1881, and the stand was rented to Jason Taylor. In 1883, Taylor moved to a farm in East Goshen and the store was rented out by Jane Yearsley, who conducted a grocery and dry goods store there. Harvey R. Duey also operated a butchering business out of the building at that time. By 1886, Mrs. Yearsley discontinued the store and it was rented to Stephen M. Taylor; by June 1887 he gave it up, advertising that the contents and fixtures, including “Scales, Coffee Mill, Soaps, etc., Store Stove,” were all for sale at public auction.

Blacksmith and Wheelwright Shops at Darlington's Corner

The busy crossroads at Darlington's Corner allowed wheelwrights and blacksmiths to ply a lucrative trade in the village. John Quincy Taylor built and rented a small wheelwright shop on the north side of Street Road in Westtown Township, west of the Inn property at Darlington's Corner. In 1882, John Perry rented the shop after William Montgomery moved to West Chester to work in the carriage factory of Alfred McClear.

This small shop was modest in comparison to that owned by Joseph H. Brinton. Though it was in Thornbury, it and other businesses served the residents of Westtown. In 1827, Joseph H. Brinton advertised that a “Store and Wheelwright” shop were to let on the Thornbury side of the village on the southwest corner. He noted that “The smithing business is well carried on, near to these buildings.” The blacksmith at that time was Daniel Graham. By 1830, the wheelwright shop was rented to William Highfield, who advertised that he was seeking a journeyman wheelwright “of good moral character and industrious habits” as well as an apprentice to be taken in to the business, “a lad between 16 and 17.”

A number of wheelwrights occupied the combined blacksmith-wheelwright shop over the years, including Caleb Watson, who departed the shop in 1881. Later, Joseph H. Brinton’s son, also named Joseph H. and founder of the quarrying business, rented out the shop. In the spring of 1859, he sold the blacksmith shop to Darwin Ritchie “Daddie” Highfield, son of William Highfield, who would operate the business for more than 50 years.

In 1879, Brinton built a new wheelwright and blacksmith shop for Highfield at the southeast corner of the village at what is now the site of the shuttered Lukoil gas station; one half of the shop was leased to Highfield while the other half was rented to wheelwrights like Caleb Watson.



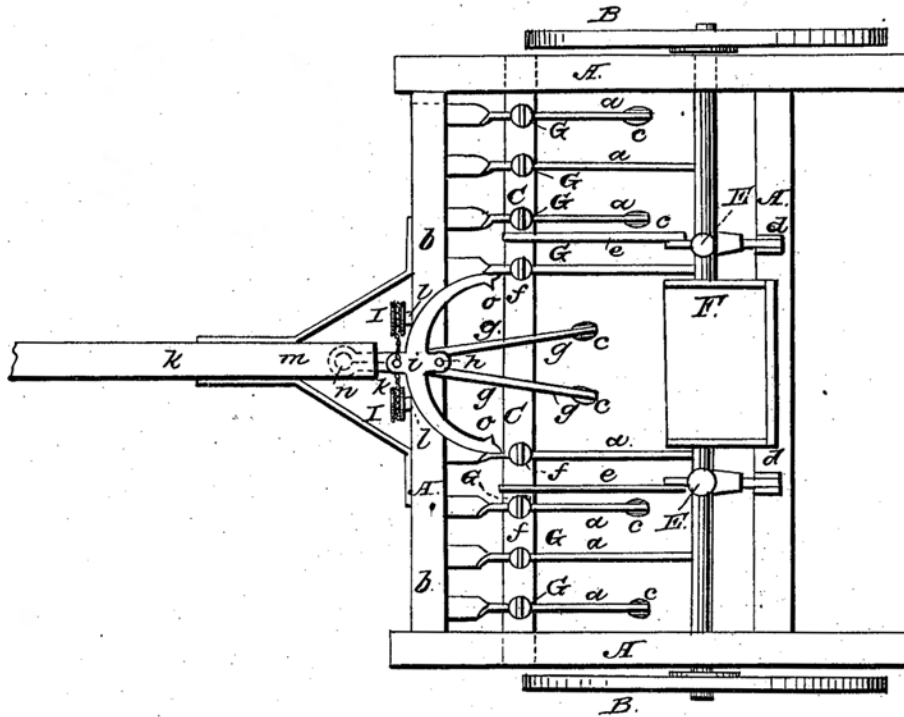
Darwin Highfield in his blacksmith shop. Date unknown. Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.

There is an anvil among the collection at Chester County Historical Society attributed to Darwin R. Highfield, but accession papers are not definitive, according to the Collections Manager at CCHS.

Brinton Factory at Darlington's Corner

In 1881, Joseph H. Brinton remodeled the old blacksmith-wheelwright shop on the southwest corner in Thornbury township by tearing away the partition and fitting up the interior as a manufactory for his patented corn cultivators.

A few years later, Brinton added a 40-horsepower steam engine to the building to power the factory's belt-driven machinery; for additional business, he also fitted up part of the building as a grist mill, adding two runs of stones to grind feed.



Joseph H. Brinton's patented corn cultivator. U.S. Patent Office.

Bartram's Orchard & Farm Market at Darlington's Corner

In 1937, the late G. Maurice (pronounced Morris) Bartram, proprietor of Pine Hill Orchards in Westtown Township, opened a fruit stand, featuring home-grown produce, at the southwest corner of Darlington's Corner, which was actually in Thornbury Township, now the site of a CVS drug store. After the death of Mr. Bartram in 1943, the business was continued by his son, J. Hibberd Bartram.

For a short period, it is reported that this business was conducted at the southeast corner and then, in 1952, it moved to the northeast corner of Routes. 202 and 926. Allan H. Johnson, of West Chester, was employed at the Bartram fruit market in 1955. The next year he was joined by his brother Stanley W. Johnson. Under management by the Johnson brothers, the business rapidly expanded.

In 1966, they rented the business, which had grown to include a well-stocked general grocery store that sold high-quality fruits and locally grown vegetables. This place of business became a great convenience for the escalating population of the Darlington's Corner area.

When the Johnson brothers took over the operation of the market it retained the Bartram name. According to Stan Johnson, 88 years of age in 2019, who worked at the farm stand for 17 years, the brothers changed operation of the business to be year-round rather than seasonal. This was despite the lack of insulation and heat in the building.



A painting of Bartram's Market from a 1980 photo. *Courtesy Roger Steward, Jimmy John's.*

Stan remembers when there were only four places of business on Route 202 between West Chester and Route 1. Bartram's Market was one of them.

In the 1980s, the business closed, and the property was sold. An Acme Supermarket was built on the site in what is now known as the Westtown Village Shopping Center. The supermarket closed in 2014 and an Amish Market and Planet Fitness gym now occupy what was the supermarket building. In addition to the anchor store, there are smaller shops including a dance studio, pizza/sandwich shop, nail salon, a fishmonger and a bank.

Darlington's Dairy Bar and Restaurant

September 29, 1953, Darlington Pollock opened a roadhouse at 1161 Wilmington Pike just north of Bartram's Farm Market. Open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., the shop had a soda fountain and lunch counter. In 1960, the business was sold to John E. McBratnie and the name changed to Darlington's Gift Shop and Restaurant. Today, a TD Bank branch sits on the site.

Colonial Motor Court

While the Blue Spruce Motor Court, at 1036 Wilmington Pike, was the only motel located in Westtown itself, the Colonial Motor Court, 1201 Wilmington Pike, just on the Thornbury side of the township line, was the far more prosperous location. Opened in 1952 by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Delmer Miller, this location initially opened with just 13 units with private tile baths and hot water heat and was a member of the Superior Motels Association. As the location prospered, 14 more rooms were added, as well as a swimming pool. The main office was located in the old stone house that now houses a dentist's office — though it looked quite different then. A new front entrance was constructed at the rear (south side) of the building beneath a large pediment supported by columns. Today, the site is occupied by a Lukoil gas station and the Commons at Thornbury shopping center.

Stores at and Near Westtown Railroad Station

The railroad through Westtown Township was completed in 1858. It was first named “Street Road” for the road where it was located. In 1880, its name was changed to “Westtown.” The station is actually located in Thornbury Township.

In 1859, a post office was established in the station building. The following year, a new dry goods and grocery store was opened in the station building by Marshall J. Taylor. Taylor filled the roles of postmaster, stationmaster, storekeeper and local coal merchant until the mid 1870s.

At the northeast corner of Street Road and today's Westbourne Road, the Yearsley family operated a store into the late 1880s. In 1887, Jane Yearsley sold the store property to Wilbur Yearsley. In 1891, he advertised it for sale, stating that the store was “doing a good trade in general merchandise, dry goods, groceries, notions and shoes.” That year, Wilbur Yearsley built a blacksmith shop on the site for George Heighley, who moved to it from West Chester. The next year Yearsley sold his store, message and blacksmith shop to H. Sherwood Baker of Gradyville, Delaware County. The new owner ran the store until 1898, when he leased the store to Clarkson L. Faddis, who had run a small store at Locksley Station in Thornbury Township, Delaware County.

In 1899, Miller M. Boyd (1863–1928) bought the Baker property including the store, blacksmith shop and messuage for \$3,500. As he was a graduate of West Chester State Normal School with experience in teaching in the township schools and as a local business man, Boyd was a logical choice to serve as president of the Township School Board.

In 1914, he gave up the store business and commuted from West Chester to Philadelphia for several years to work for the Internal Revenue Service. The blacksmith shop underwent renovations and was operated as a tea room for several years.

Westtown's shortest-lived business operated for a very brief time in March, 1887. The Union News Company established a newsstand at Westtown Station, but profits for the two weeks it was in operation were meager, the stand was closed and business was continued at another facility in West Chester.

Taverns and Alcohol in and Near Westtown

The most well-known public house in Westtown was Darlington's Inn at the northwest corner of Street Road and the Wilmington Pike (see **Darlington's Inn/Westtown Inn/Darlington's Hotel**). However, within the collections of the Chester County Historical Society are several petitions for another tavern. William Johnson and his neighbors petitioned to keep a "porter ale and cider house" where he resided on what is now Little Shiloh Road, east of the Shiloh A. M.E. Church. Signed by many prominent members of Westtown, a license was granted in 1851 and the township officially had a second tavern. It is not known if the license was subsequently renewed, for a petition from the following year (like today's liquor licenses, they had to renew annually) does not appear to have been granted.

Though located across from the Shady Grove schoolhouse in Thornbury Township, Delaware County, at 252 East Street Road, the Star Tavern was an important part of the lives of many Westtown residents. Opened in 1829 by John Henderson in an old house built in the early 1700s, the tavern, also known as the Thornbury Star, was operated by a number of owners until 1876. It was then sold to the Yearsley family who operated the building as a hotel until 1973. The building was lovingly restored to its 18th-century glory by John McElhenny, retired park historian for the Fairmount Park Commission in Philadelphia.

Liquors were also sold outside of public houses; Benedict Darlington sold “spiritous liquors” out of his store on the Wilmington Road during the 1820s. After the closure of Darlington’s Inn in the late 19th century, Westtown Township became, first unofficially, and then by ordinance, a “dry” township. Following the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the only alcoholic beverages one could acquire in the township was through the State Liquor Store in the Marketplace at Westtown shopping center.

In 2018, a voter referendum was passed that would permit sales of alcohol within the township. Accordingly, in June 2019 Township Supervisors approved an ordinance “to establish a procedure for the administration of applications for the intermunicipal transfer of a liquor license into the Township and issuance of a license for economic development.”

Businesses at Shiloh

Painter & Bowen’s 1847 map shows only two stores in the township. One was at Tanguy; the other was located on the east side of Shiloh Road, a short distance south of today’s Little Shiloh Road. The site of this store was the one-time home of Harry F. Sickler at 907 Shiloh Road. The store appears to have closed by 1860.

Just on the other side of Shiloh Road, in West Goshen Township was Speakman’s store. Operated for most of the 19th century out of what is today’s John Forbes House, it was sometimes known as Bugless’ Store, named for George and Lydia Bugless who lived next door.

In addition to the stores, a small blacksmith shop was also operated in Shiloh. An item in the March 12, 1881 edition of the *Daily Local News* noted that:

“Joseph Chandler, blacksmith, of Bishop’s Hollow, Delaware county, will, on the 1st of April, remove to Bugless’ Store, in Westtown township, where he will occupy a new smith shop, erected expressly for him. The old one at that place, occupied by [William] Hall, will be torn down and removed by Mr. Hall, and taken by him to Downingtown . . .”

It was noted that Hall’s removal would “necessitate his many customers traveling a considerable distance to get their smith work done.”

Few Artisans' Complex

The Richard and Jacob Few complex, now 131 East Street Road, has a long history of hosting businesses at the convenient location along Street Road in addition to farming.

On April 1, 1792, John Taylor of Westtown sold a five-acre property inherited from his father Thomas Taylor to Richard Few of Birmingham Township for £5. In the 1800 federal census, Richard is listed as a free African American; 1799 and 1807 tax records indicate that he was a cooper or barrel maker.

Richard's son Jacob was born in 1790 and by 1807 was likely helping his father make barrels. After Richard died, Jacob continued operating a business out of the Street Road property by venturing into the butcher business.

In 1826, Jacob purchased an additional 16 acres from Benedict Darlington for \$518. The 16 acres formerly belonged to Job Taylor. With that purchase, the property grew to 21 acres.

After Jacob died, his brother Ephraim owned the land and continued with the butcher business. After Ephraim's death, his family continued in the butcher business for 20 years until the property was sold to Eli Bullock in 1864. He was in the mercantile business. Two years later in April of 1866, Eli Bullock and his wife sold the property to Stephen Taylor, a retired farmer. Stephen and his family became millwrights and carpenters after retiring from farming.

In 1903, the property changed hands once again and the long history of business being conducted at the complex came to an end. A new era began with the property becoming residential.

It should be noted that Jacob and Elizabeth Few were buried in the nearby Taylor Burial Ground which is now located in the Pleasant Grove development.

The Country Store at Tanguy

The second store shown on the 1847 map was located at the northwest corner of Street (Route 926) and Chester (Route 352) Roads. This store was in business longer than any other one in the township.

The James family first acquired the original 190-acre property around 1775 and it was passed down to Caleb James after the death of Joseph James. In the 1820s, Caleb James was taxed for two stone houses, a frame barn and a stone spring house. These are shown in Chester County Tax Assessment records for 1820, 1823 and 1826. The buildings were located along Route 352 up the hill from and north of the lot where the store was eventually built.

In 1837, Caleb James sold 96 perches of land (one perch equals 16.5 feet) to his son Curtis at the location noted above. The 1850 census listed Curtis James as a “merchant.” In fact, he was the only person in the township listed in this category. In January 1854, Curtis James advertised his store for sale. The advertisement noted that he handled “dry goods, spices, drugs, boots, shoes, earthenware, tin ware, shovels, glass, hardware, etc.” Later in 1854, the property was sold to Charles H. Tanguy (1824–1898) for \$2,900.

From 1854 until 1868, the Tanguys owned the store, and it was at this time that the name “Tanguy” came to identify the location. The name has persisted despite the Tanguy family leaving the area more than a century ago. Tanguy operated the store until 1869 when he sold it to Abraham Baily, a local farmer.

A date stone at 1104 S. Chester Road indicates the Baily house; so the property still extended well north of Route 926. In 1870, Baily sold the property, including the Tanguy Store, to William Hoopes. For the next 60 years the store appears to have continued in business. It was managed mainly by tenant shopkeepers like Isaac Vernon, not the owners of the property.

In 1882, J. Wilkin Nivin sold the Tanguy Store on 106 square perches of land to the Tamened Tribe Number 192 Improved Order of Red Men of Westtown. The Tamened Lodge moved into their new hall, which by then was known as Register’s Store, one month after purchasing the property.



Township entertainment, in what is believed to be the Tanguy Store, is publicized. *Poster courtesy Westtown School Archives.*

From 1882 to 1892, the lodge made numerous improvements to the hall. The building included the hall, the store and a residence. In 1894, the Red Men decided to add another story by turning the side-gable roof into a mansard roof, which is the present profile of the building. The meeting rooms on this third floor are accessible by a covered exterior staircase.

An attempt by the organization to change the name from Tanguy's Store to Tamenend Hall never stuck. The U.S. Post Office further solidified the Tanguy name in March 1888 when it established a post office named Tanguy Post Office at the site, with Hannah Yearsley as postmaster. She was succeeded by her daughter Sarah Y. Crosley in 1906. When Sarah retired as

postmistress in 1927, George A. Harmon took over the job for less than a year. Eula L. Smith took the job in December 1927 and in March 1928, the Tanguy Post Office closed for good.

As late as 1924, a newcomer to the area reports that the store was carrying “a stock of groceries, pitchforks and everything that a country store should carry.” The John Crosley family appears to have been the last proprietors of the Tanguy store. It went out of business in the late 1920s or early 1930s.

In 1937, the lodge was in debt and owed back taxes. It was sold to a succession of owners, including the National Bank of Chester County and Trust Co., Harvey L. and Helen G. Vance, Mary L. Sutherland, Fred E. Brumble and James R. Buck.

In 1972, the property was sold to its present owner, Stephen B. Maguire. When the Maguire’s purchased the property, the original store counter was still in place inside the front double doors. The counter held an unusual wooden cash drawer that needs the correct finger placement under the front edge to open it, a security feature. The counter was moved to the “den” as a bar, which still holds the cash drawer. There is evidence the property had a gas station, which was discontinued around the time of the Depression. Remains of the concrete island that held the pump were still there when the Maguires purchased the property and found a Texaco sign in the backyard.

The original house basement has a root cellar off the back, which projects into the backyard about six feet and has a floor about four feet lower than the basement floor, with steps to that level. At the western edge of the property, there is evidence of an old carriage shed. Stones from the foundation are still there, and old maps show a carriage shed building at that spot.

A fire in 1973 destroyed the roof and some of the third floor of this house, causing extensive water damage to floors below. According to the Maguires, when the building was repaired post-fire, a great deal of attention was paid to keeping repairs as original as possible. All water-damaged ceilings were replastered correctly (no drywall) and the original slate roof was also repaired correctly. They took great care to have the new flooring match the original yellow pine.



The Tanguy Oak before it was felled in a storm in the 1980s. *Courtesy Steve Maguire.*

In the 1980s, a very large oak tree, which Maguire believes was a Penn Oak that sat between his driveway and Route 352, came down in a tornado that ripped through the township. It was so large that it closed Route 352 for several days.



Tree across Route 352 after the devastating 1980 tornado. *Courtesy Steve Maguire.*

Eby's Grocery Store

In 1951 Graham Eby and his wife Florence; residents of Morton, Delaware County; bought a half acre of land on the east side of Chester Road, south of Green Lane. By 1957, they built and opened a small grocery store and a gas station with two pumps on one gas island.

The store is still there and is now called Valley Market. Their Facebook page describes it as a restaurant, deli and market. However, one day in the early 1950s, the store almost burned down.

Thomas A (Buck) Riley Jr. Esq., the grandson of David and Gertrude Conley Riley McDaniel, who owned the property where Saints Simon and Jude parish now sits, worked on his grandfather's farm as a young man. Buck and his cousins lived in houses on the property. One July day in 1950, Buck remembers driving a tractor to Eby's store for gasoline. He was about 12 years old at the time.

Buck had been working across Route 352 that morning mowing alfalfa at the Julius and May Blosenski farm. "The John Deere D tractor, it was a big one, ran on kerosene, but it started on gasoline, so there was a small, three-gallon gas tank on the tractor just above the distributor," Buck remembers. "Because I only needed a little gas, I didn't turn off the tractor when I filled

the tank, which quickly overflowed. Gas dripped onto the distributor and sparked. Before I knew it, the tractor was on fire.”

Buck jumped off the tractor and people came running out of the store. They called the newly formed Goshen Fire Co. which was nearby. “I will never forget Wilmer Supplee, who lived closest to the fire company, coming around the curve on Chester Road (Route 352) in the fire truck, jumping off the truck toward the fire with a great big chemical fire extinguisher and putting out the fire. He had more nerve than I could imagine.”

The tractor was almost totally destroyed; but was restored after insurance paid for repairs. “That is a day I will never forget,” said Buck, a retired local attorney.

Luckily, Eby’s, now Valley Market, survives and thrives today.

Pete’s Produce Farm

Westtown Township’s beginnings revolved around farming and agriculture, but that changed in the late 20th and early 21st century. John Peter Flynn’s produce business on Route 926, just west of Shady Grove Way, is a great example of modern agricultural entrepreneurship.

Pete’s Produce Farm leases farmland from Westtown School and surrounding municipalities to grow crops, which are sold to local stores and at the farm store located on Route 926. Pete raises sweet corn, many types of vegetables, flowers, pumpkins and gourds, hay, soybeans and field corn. He employs about 50 people throughout the year.

Pete Flynn, a Westtown resident, got hooked on farming when he was 12 years old and was hired at Baily’s Dairy Farm in Unionville. “They stuck me on a big tractor and I thought this was the greatest thing in the world. I wanted to be a dairy farmer,” he remembers.

Pete graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in animal husbandry and dairy science and went back to work for Baily’s, where he got paid “partially in cows,” he said.

In 1986, he rented land from Marshall Jones Jr. on Shiloh Road and Route 926 to raise dairy cows. Then in 1989 he grew a quarter-acre of sweet corn and sold it “out of the back of my pick-

up truck at the end of the drive, kind of where the road to Rustin High School is now.” The corn truck did so well he grew more corn the next year and the next and the next.

“When you hear people say how wonderful your produce is, that is so satisfying,” Pete says now and laughs. “When I first sold sweet corn, people were so keen to buy my corn. No one had ever told me my milk was wonderful, so I began growing more vegetables. It’s magical to put seeds in the ground and see them turn into this wonderful stuff.”

Around 1997, he began farming on Westtown School property. “Evans Hicks, a dairy farmer on Westtown School grounds, was retiring,” he says. “We knew the Jones farm was going to be for sale and I’d have to find another farm to lease, so Evan introduced me to people at the school and we began a partnership.”

Thomas Farquhar, headmaster of Westtown School at the time, supported farming the property. “He wanted the farm to be more of something students could relate to; he wanted students involved in agriculture,” Pete explained. Westtown School students are involved in their own gardening program, which has developed significantly over the past 20 years as part of the school curriculum and is separate from Pete’s Produce Farm.

Pete’s Produce Farm leases 175 acres of Westtown School land, as well as about 45 acres in Thornbury Township and elsewhere in Westtown Township. “We have two greenhouses where we start seeds,” Pete says. “For instance, in February we plant about 30,000 onions.”

Besides selling his produce from March to October, Pete plants about 10 acres of vegetables specifically for the Chester County Food Bank. “I was inspired to do this by State Senator Andy Dinniman, who started a gleaning program, and by having several farms I leased in the area sold for development. I thought, ‘I’m going to take [the equivalent of] a two-acre building lot and show people what you can do with it.’ We have such rich farmland around here and we’re using it to grow houses.”

The magic of planting a seed and watching it grow isn’t always easy. Pete is facing problems that plague many other farmers. During the 2018–’19 growing season the problem was voracious deer and unusually wet weather. However, this has not dampened his love of farming and of

educating people on supporting and preserving local agriculture, hearkening back to the township's historical agricultural roots.

Dudas Diving Duds

Located at 101 Bartrams Lane, Dudas Diving Duds was opened by Evelyn Batram Dudas and her husband John Dudas in 1967. Evelyn, at age 22, was the first woman to successfully dive to the wreck of the passenger liner *Andrea Doria*, sunk in a collision with the motor vessel *Stockholm* July 25, 1956. Providing a number of scuba diving related services, including supplies, repairs, and tours, the store also houses a small museum of objects recovered from the shipwrecks they have dived to, including the *Andrea Doria*'s bridge compass and binnacle. The retail store closed in 2016.

Isabelle's Ice Cream and Luncheonette

Late in 1952, Isabelle E. and Harold E. Speight opened a small ice cream counter and sandwich shop at the northwest corner of Routes 352 and 3, with a small portion of it in Westtown Township, in what had been the Sunnyside Tea Room. Offering "Hoagies—Steak Sandwiches—Hot Dogs—Hamburgers ———in fact ——— Sandwiches of All Kinds." Surrounded largely by open fields, the venture was evidently not a success. In later years, an Exxon gas station was built on the site; this later became the site of a Green Drop donation center after the gas station closed. A PNC bank now occupies the site.

Westtown Electric Company

Late in 1911, it was announced that a corporation called the Westtown Electric Company was intended to be chartered by Philadelphians Edward E. Manderville, Matthew F. Maury, and Austin G. Maury, and solicitor Layton M. Schoch, with the object of supplying "light, heat, and power by means of electricity to the public in the township of Westtown." The charter, capitalized at \$5,000, was granted in March 1912 on behalf of the West Chester Public Service Company, whose coal-fired power plant was located at East Chestnut and North Walnut streets in West Chester and with whom the men were connected. The company previously had extended its lines to Malvern. By October 1912 work had progressed to connect the Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm at Oakbourne to the grid, which eliminated the need for the

batteries supplied by the Electric Storage Battery Company of Philadelphia which had supplied light to the institution since 1902. From there, electric service was extended to neighboring farms and Westtown at large.

In 1928, at the same time the Pennsylvania Railroad electrified the rail line, the Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO) built a high-tension electric line along the northeast side of the railroad line through Westtown to a substation at Niels Street in West Chester. Though this power line has since been removed, bases of some of the steel pylons and strings of discarded electrical insulators can still be found along the route.

Pipelines in Westtown

While the economy of the township in the early 20th century remained agricultural, in 1930 another type of enterprise began to develop underground — pipelines to transport petroleum products across the state. There are now five pipelines running north to south through Westtown Township.

Two closely parallel pipelines bisect the township just east of Shiloh Road and west of Westtown Road, both operated by TE Products Pipeline Co., Houston, Texas. East of that are two more pipelines operated by Interstate Energy Co. of Pottstown, Pennsylvania. These two lines are not laid side by side but lay parallel east of Walnut Hill Road and west of South Chester Road (Route 352), with one of the lines just west of Chesterville Way. The two lines become closely parallel around Penn Wood Park. The fifth line is now operated by Sunoco Pipeline (Energy Transfer), headquartered in Texas, with offices in Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania. This pipeline runs along South Chester Road (Route 352).

When the pipelines were constructed they carried petroleum products from ports on the Delaware River to Pennsylvania and beyond. Today the flow of product goes the opposite way.

It all began in 1930 and 1931 when components of an 8-inch pipeline were built by the Susquehanna Pipe Line Co. and the Keystone Pipe Line Co. to transport petroleum products to western Pennsylvania from ports on the Delaware River. The lines were later purchased by Sunoco Logistics, which is now Sunoco Pipeline (Energy Transfer). It was Sunoco who reversed the flow on this line after renaming it the Mariner East pipeline, and shipments of the natural gas

liquid ethane began leaving the Port of Philadelphia for Scotland in 2016. This natural gas is extracted from the Marcellus Shale in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania and the Utica Shale in Canada, Ohio and New York.

Controversy arose, especially in Pennsylvania, around 2016 when Sunoco announced it would build two 24-inch diameter lines parallel to Mariner East 1, called Mariner East 2, through 2,700 properties in Ohio and Pennsylvania, including Westtown Township. In March 2018, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission halted the installation of these pipes when the experimental horizontal directional drilling ruptured a fault line and created sinkholes in nearby West Whiteland Township.

As events unfold in the proposed construction of this pipeline, Westtown Township Historical Commission will update this history.

TOWNSHIP POST OFFICES

There have been two main post offices in the township, Oakbourne and Tanguy. However, two others should be mentioned as they served township residents for many years. Thornbury Post Office at Darlington's Corner and Street Road and Westtown Post Office on the south side of Street Road were in Thornbury Township. It appears the Thornbury office was on the Westtown Township side of the road for a few years. And the Westtown Post Office is still in Thornbury Township, next to the old Westtown Train Station.

Thornbury Post Office, 1831–1900

The small settlement at Darlington's Corner was initially known as Thornbury. The buildings here on the south side of Street Road are in Thornbury Township, but those on the north side are in Westtown. The name Thornbury was given to the township by an early settler whose wife had come from Thornbury in Gloucestershire, England.

In 1831, Thomas W. Stevens opened a general store at the southwest corner of the village of Thornbury. At this time, he became the first postmaster and had the office in his store. By 1843, he was succeeded as postmaster by Thomas Darlington. Darlington had been operating a drover's hotel at the northwest corner of Thornbury, near what is known today as Westtown Inn

or Darlington's Inn. It seems likely that Thomas Darlington had the office in a part of his hotel for a few years. Therefore, it was located in Westtown Township.

Thomas Darlington succeeded in having the name of the village officially changed to Darlington's Corner. The name Darlington Corners is its official designation according to the U.S. Geological Survey, but is rarely used locally. However, the name of the post office continued to be Thornbury until it was closed in 1900.

Eighteen postmasters have run the Thornbury Post Office. Darwin R. Highfield served as final postmaster from 1894 until 1900. In Chester County postal history, it is unusual to have a post office in a wheelwright or blacksmith shop.

Street Road — Westtown Post Office, 1859–Present

Street Road Post Office was opened in the Street Road Railroad Station in 1859. This office appears to have served more Westtown Township residents than any of the offices in the township. In 1880, the name was changed to Westtown Post Office, despite its location in Thornbury.

In 1978, the post office moved out of the railroad station and into a new building next door owned and maintained by Thornbury Township, where it continues to operate to this day. A part of the old railroad depot building continues to be used as a private residence and a pottery studio and store.

Witmer's 1874 map of Westtown Township listed "Marshal J. Taylor, Merchant and dealer in Coal, also Postmaster at Street Road P.O., and Agent for the West Chester & Phila. R.R. Co." Taylor was the first postmaster and served in this role for 14 years.

In 1880, the name of the railroad station was changed from Street Road to Westtown. Soon thereafter, the post office made a similar change. A major reason for the change in name was the presence of Westtown Boarding School some two miles northwest of the railroad station. In its early years most of the letters handled by this post office involved letters written to or by students at Westtown School. Noteworthy postmasters at the Westtown Post Office included Miller Boyd (1893–1897), Jesse J. Hickman (1897–1903) and Hettie C. Taylor (1903–1933).

Oakbourne Post Office, 1883–1927

In 1858, the railroad station between Street Road and West Chester was named Hemphill's in honor of former Chester County Congressman Joseph Hemphill, who owned a farm adjacent to the railroad station. When a post office was established here in 1883, the Post Office Department was prevailed upon by James C. Smith, a local landowner, to name it Oakbourne. This name was suggested by a choice stand of white oak trees nearby on Smith's land. The railroad soon changed the station name to Oakbourne to eliminate confusion.

When the Oakbourne Post Office was established, Ellen J. Speakman and her husband Chalkley were living in the house at the railroad station. Mrs. Speakman was appointed postmaster and filled this role until the post office closed 44 years later. She took the first bag of mail from the train into the post office on December 21, 1883.

In 1928, when the office closed, she handled the last bag of mail to leave the office. Mrs. Speakman's service as postmaster was not only noteworthy for its length but also for the quality of service she gave post office patrons. With dwindling railroad patronage, Oakbourne Station became only a flag stop some years ago. More recently the old frame house here was demolished, leaving both the station and the post office completely relegated to the past.

Tanguy Post Office, 1888–1927

A post office known as Tanguy was established in the country store at Tanguy on March 31, 1888. This crossroads settlement was named for Charles Tanguy who ran a store here for some years prior to 1871. It appears the post office was always in the store, which was located at the northwest corner of the crossroads at Tanguy. As this office was in the southeast corner of Westtown Township, it also served nearby residents of Willistown Township and of Edgmont and Thornbury Townships, Delaware County.

Hannah M. Yearsley and her daughter Sarah Y. Crosley served as two postmasters of the Tanguy Post Office for nearly all of the 39 years the office was in operation. Mrs. Yearsley served from March 31, 1888, until March 10, 1906. Sarah served from this date until April 27, 1927. The office closed December 10, 1927, with most of its business being transferred to the post office at Glen Mills, Delaware County.

The “Westtown Local”—The Westtown School’s Local 2¢ Stamps, 1853–1878

One of the more curious notes in the history of philately is Westtown School’s imposition of 2¢ stamps for its outgoing mail. Being a boarding school in what was then the country, it was not uncommon for stays by pupils and teachers alike to exceed a year without a visit home. “One solution,” noted Arthur B. Gregg in his writeup “The Westtown Local” of April 1992 *The Penny Post*, “was to write frequently to family and friends and anticipate receiving both letters and packages.”

Until the coming of the West Chester and Philadelphia railroad in 1858, the only way to get mail to the school was by stagecoach — and with bundles of mail for the school’s many students and faculty, it was a considerable sum. To recoup the costs, the Westtown School Committee (i.e., overseers) charged a 2¢ fee for each letter mailed out of the school in addition to the required postage, the purpose being to defray the wages of the wagon driver who ran the mail the eight miles to West Chester. The change took effect November 1853, and thereafter lithographed paper stamps bearing “West town” or “West-town” had to be affixed to the letters mailed by students and staff alike. Even after the school’s mail delivery and pickup was made at the Street Road Post Office on March 4, 1859, the 2¢ stamps were still used.



An envelope from Westtown School to Ohio displaying the small Westtown stamp and US postage, cancelled from the Street Road Post Office (Westtown PO). Courtesy Westtown School Archives

Finally, the school's staff had enough. During the winter session of 1877-'78, a meeting was called to resolve the issue once and for all, and the 2¢ stamp was discontinued by November 1878.

Today, "Westton Local" stamps are highly collectible.

TOWNSHIP PLACES OF WORSHIP

In its early days, Westtown's proximity to churches in West Chester, Friends Meetings at Goshenville and at Birmingham, to the Goshen Baptist Church, and later, to the Presbyterian Church at Dilworthtown, meant there was limited need for churches in the township. However, as the character of the township changed from farmland to suburbia, this situation changed.

The Friends Meeting at Westtown School

A Friends Meeting was started when Westtown School opened in May 1799. Meeting for Worship was held three times a week (including twice on Sunday) with all students and teachers in attendance. These gatherings may have been the first regular religious services in the township. This meeting for worship at the school was an "indulged meeting." It meant that the school community was allowed to gather on its own under the care of a nearby established meeting.

In 1920, Westtown Monthly Meeting was established within the organization of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends to serve the school and area residents.

Meeting for worship for students and teachers was held in rooms designed for that purpose in both the first school building, opened in 1799, and the second, current, main building completed in 1888. The room in the latter building included a gallery, benches, and segregation of the sexes on either side of the center aisle, reminiscent of meeting houses of the time.

A new meeting house, designed by Philadelphia architect Walter F. Price (1857-1951) and the gift of Arthur and Emma Perry of Massachusetts, was built on the school's campus in 1929. It was dedicated on Alumni Day that spring with surprise guest U.S. First Lady Lou Henry Hoover in attendance. (The First Lady was Episcopalian, but she often accompanied President Herbert Hoover—who was Quaker—to Meeting for worship in Washington, DC.)

The date stone located in the west gable end of the meeting house is inscribed: “WESTTOWN MEETING HOUSE MCMXXVIII” (1928).



Westtown Friends Meeting. Library of Congress.

In the early years, meeting for worship at times lasted up to 2.5 hours. Sunday afternoon meeting for the school was discontinued in 1904. All Westtown students were Quaker until 1933, but even as the student body has become more diverse from the 1930s to the present, each school division (Lower, Middle and Upper) has continued to gather during the school week for meeting for worship, an integral part of the Quaker school experience. Required attendance for Upper School boarding students at Sunday morning meeting (under the care of Westtown Monthly Meeting which currently has 90 members independent of the school) has evolved so that students may choose other worship or spiritual experiences on Sundays.

Shiloh Methodist Church/Shiloh African Methodist Episcopal Church

The land at 1004 Little Shiloh Road, once the site of an African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church, has a storied history. Westtown Township was surveyed and laid out about the year 1685. From William Penn’s original land grant, tracts were divided up and sold to other distant proprietors, including a tract of 1,900 acres deeded to London butcher by trade, Richard

Whitpain, who purchased it as an investment. His land in Westtown extended westward from the lands of Barnabas Wilcox — the present property of Westtown School — to a tract owned by Richard Collett, now in the more western portion of the township. Whitpain died in 1689, whereupon his creditors assumed the care of his lands in Pennsylvania.



Shiloh A.M.E. Church, ca. 1920. *Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.*

The surviving creditor conveyed the land to William Aubrey in trust in 1712, and he conveyed the tract to Rees Thomas and his wife of Merion, Pennsylvania; and Anthony Morris, Jr., of Philadelphia, the following year. Morris was a brewer to whom a patent was granted by the commissioners of the property July 10, 1718. It appears, however, that on May 28, 1718, Rees Thomas and Anthony Morris conveyed a one-third interest in the land to John Whitpain, of Philadelphia, grandson of Richard Whitpain.

Upon Whitpain's death, his widow Ann Whitpain and his executors disposed of his interest in the land, by deeds of lease and release, to settlers and homesteaders. March 30 and 31, 1719, she sold an undivided third part of 400 acres to James Gibbons, son of John Gibbons, who settled

500 acres of the neighboring Wilcox tract. On the same dates, R. Thomas and A. Morris conveyed the other two-thirds' interest.

James Gibbons, in a will dated January 15, 1732, deeded the 401 acres to his son Joseph, who in turn willed 280 acres to his son James September 10, 1780. James, with his wife Deborah, by deed of April 7, 1783, conveyed the parcel to Jacob Gibbons, though by this time it was about 271 acres. Jacob Gibbons and wife Jane sold the property in 1792 to Joseph Shippen, Esq.— a member of a prominent Philadelphia family then of Westtown, and an associate judge of the Chester County courts. That property consisted of two tracts of 187 acres and 67 acres, 96 perches, part of the 400 acres which had belonged to Joseph Gibbons, father of James and Jacob.

The Shippens were wealthy slave owners and were prominent Loyalists during the Revolution. Joseph Shippen, an uncle of Judge Shippen, built a large summer house upon the Westtown tract, later torn down by George Rhoads. Tradition says it was the finest house in its neighborhood in its day, with wide halls and high ceilings. On March 15, 1794, Judge Shippen leased the property to Joseph Gibbons, Jr. for three years, reserving:

“out of the same for his own Convenience, use and Benefit, his stone Dwelling House & Garden he now occupies, with all the young Orchard & Ground inclosed with it, behind the same; the new frame stables, for the accomodation [sic] of his own Horses & Cows, . . . and also for the accomodation [sic] of the Horses belonging to his Friends when they come to him on Business, or a visit to himself or Family.”

April 9, 1805, shortly after a long and costly legal scandal involving Thomas Shippen's uncle and unrelated to this Westtown history, Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Edward Shippen IV, Joseph Shippen conveyed by a deed recorded in Chester County Deed Book Z-2, Vol. 48, pp. 9–10, a tract of woodland at the northwest corner of his property to James Henderson, joiner, for a sum of “three hundred pounds of Good and Lawfull [sic] Money.” This sum would be about \$5,000 today.

April 3, 1812, Henderson, now described as a cabinetmaker, and his wife Judith conveyed to Samuel Hannum, Isaac Meredith, Isaac James, Samuel Lewis, Samuel Wood and their successors, trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church by a deed recorded in Chester County

Deed Book F-3, Vol. 54, pp. 486–487, the same tract containing 84 perches for a sum of \$42, with the stipulation that “they shall meet and Build or cause to be erected and Built thereon a House or place of Worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.” Trustees in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church legally governed the local church, being responsible for its financial wellbeing. This was distinct from the clergy, who supervised spiritual affairs.

Though this deed specifies a house of worship “shall be” erected, a structure appears on the site on the road papers of 1809, and local tradition states that a building was erected in 1807. Whether this structure represents a temporary wood structure, or the fieldstone structure that stood until the 1960s, is not known.

Curiously, the 1812 deed of trust notes that the church “shall always allow [sic] the coloured people the privilege of Occupying the Seats on the South side of said House to the centre its north the Gallery on said South side without interruption during divine Worship in said House.” Basically that is the seats from the wall to the aisle. This was accomplished, according to a later account, by a movable or sliding partition between rooms in a manner similar to the partitions found in many Quaker meeting houses such as the meetings at Romansville and Marlborough village.

Such explicit wording within the deed would seem to indicate an attempt to stave off conflict between black and white congregants. If this was a deliberate wording, it would not be without precedent. Racial conflict had been brewing within Philadelphia’s Methodist Episcopal Church since the 1780s. As Bishop Richard Allen related in his journals, black members of the Methodist church,

“. . . were considered as a nuisance. A number of us usually sat on seats placed around the wall, and on Sabbath morning we went to church, and the sexton stood at the door and told us to go in the gallery. He told us to go and we would see where to sit. We expected to take the seats over the ones we formerly occupied below, not knowing any better. We took those seats. Meeting had begun, and they were nearly done singing, and just as we got to the seats the elder said, ‘Let us pray.’ We had not been long upon our knees before I heard considerable scuffling and loud talking. I raised my head up and saw

one of the trustees, H——— M———, having hold of the Rev. Absalom Jones, pulling him off his knees, and saying, ‘You must get up; you must not kneel here.’ Mr. Jones replied, ‘Wait until prayer is over.’ Mr. H——— M——— said, ‘No, you must get up now, or I will call for aid and force you away.’ Mr. Jones said, ‘Wait until prayer is over, and I will get up and trouble you no more.’ With that he beckoned to one of the other trustees, Mr. L——— S———, to come to his assistance. He came and went to William White to pull him up. By this time prayer was over, and we all went out of the church in a body, and they were no more plagued by us in the church. This raised a great excitement and inquiry among the citizens, insomuch that I believe they were ashamed of their conduct. But my dear Lord was with us, and we were filled with fresh vigor to get a house erected to worship God in. Seeing our forlorn and wretched condition, many of the hearts of our citizens were moved to urge us onward; notwithstanding we had subscribed largely toward furnishing St. George’s Church, in building the gallery and laying new floors; and just as the house was made comfortable, we were turned out from enjoying the comforts of worshipping therein. We then hired a storeroom and held worship by ourselves. Here we were pursued with threats of being disowned and read publicly out of meeting, if we did contrive to worship in the place we had hired; but we believed the Lord would be our friend. We got subscription papers out to raise money to build the house of the Lord.”

Allen and other members of the African-American community in Philadelphia converted a blacksmith shop into a house of worship, and leaders opened the doors of the Bethel Church July 29, 1794. At that time, although “Mother Bethel” was still affiliated with the larger Methodist Episcopal Church; congregants had to rely on white ministers to receive communion in what was often a contentious relationship. However, in recognition of his leadership and preaching, in 1799 Allen was ordained as the first African-American Methodist minister by Bishop Francis Asbury.

In 1815, after a court battle to officially declare themselves independent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Allen united four African-American Methodist Church congregations in Philadelphia, Salem, NJ, Delaware and Maryland. These formed the independent denomination

of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME), the first fully independent African-American denomination in the United States. On April 10, 1816, Allen was elected their first bishop.

Back in Westtown, white members of the Methodist Episcopal church were preparing to move to West Chester. The borough at that time was not much more than a crossroads village, and besides Westtown the closest Methodist meeting was at Grove, in Whiteland Township.

Rev. William Hunter became the first Methodist to preach in West Chester, in the old Courthouse (the only churches in the borough with their own buildings at that time were the Society of Friends and St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church). In 1812 that same courthouse became a regular preaching appointment. A Methodist Society was formed in 1815, under the leadership of Thomas Ogden, whose house on the Strasburg Road (later the Brinton homestead of O'ermead) became home to the first-class meeting. George Hannum, one of that class' original members, was recalled as being "from the little church at Westtown" in Howard N. Reeves Jr.'s *Methodism In and Around West Chester*. In 1816, the Methodists erected a new stone meetinghouse on the northside of Gay Street east of Darlington Street.

On November 22, 1817, with the move complete, the lot and "House of Worship thereon erected" in Westtown was deeded in trust, recorded in Chester County Deed Book O-3, Volume 62, pp. 470–472, to William Johnson (who had purchased land nearby from William Speakman), Samuel Collins, Richard Few, Richard Harvey, and John Smith trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in America, for a sum of \$400 (equivalent to about \$6,000 today).

By the time Shiloh A.M.E. was formed in early 1817, Westtown had already become a hub of the African-American community in this part of Chester County. Bolstered not only by demand for tenant farmers, but also by surrounding industries and support staff for the Westtown School, a large number of African Americans had settled in Westtown and nearby East and West Goshen townships. By 1820, there were at least 16 property-owning African-American families in Westtown alone, among them two bulwarks of the fledgling church, Jeremiah Miller and William Henry.

Under their leadership, Shiloh would become one of the leading A.M.E. Churches in this area and would give rise to a small village that would at various times house two stores, a

blacksmith's shop, and other tradesmen, in addition to a number of properties owned wholly by black families.

William Henry was born in the South (sources vary whether in Delaware or Maryland) about the year 1790 as the son of John Henry. He came to Chester County in or before 1813, when a marriage notice appeared in a local West Chester paper.

Alexander W. Wayman, in his *Cyclopaedia of African Methodism* (Baltimore, MD: Methodist Episcopal Book Depository, 1882), described Henry as one of the founders of the A.M.E. Church in southeastern Pennsylvania. Henry lived in Westtown in the following decades, and for a time in the 1820s appears to have taken care of his niece and nephew. Elizabeth and Mary Ann Henry came under William's care in 1825, according to the Poor School Children records at the Chester County Archives. In other years, they are listed as being charges of Thomas Henry in West Goshen. William Henry became a deacon about the year 1830.

Also living in Westtown was another important member of the Church, Jeremiah Miller. Born a slave in Kent County, Maryland, Miller made his way to Pennsylvania as a young man about the year 1820 and purchased his freedom. Jeremiah was a nephew of another Jeremiah Miller, a pioneering member of the Church who helped found the circuit on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Jeremiah the Younger followed in his footsteps becoming a licensed preacher and settling in Westtown, and on March 20, 1824, together with William and Thomas Henry, William Lewis, and George Grigus, became a trustee of Shiloh Church by an instrument recorded in Chester County Deed Book Y-3, Vol. 71, pp. 311–313 in the Chester County Archives.

Though Henry and Miller were perhaps the most visible members of the church during the 1820s, a number of itinerant preachers also visited, including two early female preachers of note. Jarena Lee (1783–1855?) was born in New Jersey, and in 1819 became the first female preacher authorized to preach in the A.M.E. church. "The oppositions I met with," she notes, "were numerous — so much so, I was tempted to withdraw from the Methodist Church." But she did not, and throughout her long life traveled throughout this country and Canada.

In 1849, she recalled in her self-published *Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee* that about the year 1823 she travelled to Downingtown, giving 10 sermons while there.

Elsewhere, she spoke to groups of whites and blacks alike. People drove in from the country in carriages to hear her speak. “Pride and prejudice were buried,” she would later write with satisfaction.

In 1825 she left Philadelphia for a journey through Pennsylvania. She spoke first at “Weston” [Westtown]; “we had an elder [there] on West Chester Circuit, named Jacob Richardson. We had buried a young Christian before preaching the sermon, and gave me the sacrament sermon in the afternoon. I spoke from Matt. 26 chap. 26–27 ver. I felt as solemn as death; much weeping in the Church, tears stole down the faces of the people.” This young Christian to which she refers may have been a servant girl working for Jesse Mercer who died in May 1825.

Lee returned again in 1827, “stop[ing] first at Westtown and speke in our own connexion Church, and then at West Chester in the old Methodist Episcopal white connexion. We had a large congregation of quiet hearers . . . I had several meetings in different places, visiting the sick.” She returned one last time in 1836, when she “left for West-town and visited some aged friends, such as could not get to the church, and two remarkable ones in particular, which were regarded as pillars of the church.” It does not appear she ever returned again.

Lee’s positive experience at Shiloh contrasts remarkably with that of Rebecca Cox Jackson, who felt a calling to preach though she was never confirmed as a minister of the A.M.E. church. As recounted in Jean McMahan Humez’s *Gifts of Power: The Writings of Rebecca Jackson, Black Visionary, Shaker Eldress* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press), in the summer of 1834, she undertook an itinerant preaching tour from her home in Philadelphia, from “Marcus Hook up through the country, Chester, Thornsursy [sic], West Chester in the Valley, Uwchland, Bush Hill, Spartansburg, Yellow Springs, Mernel Springs, Gulliverville, Coatesville, East Goshen, West Goshen, Downingtown, Pottsville, Chestnut Hill, and so from place to place.” Where not too many years before Jarena Lee had been warmly welcomed, Jackson was met with vitriol. “[T]here was three Methodist ministers that said I ought not to live,” she wrote of William Henry, Isaac Lowers and Jeremiah Miller of West Chester.

“These three appointed what death I ought to die. One said I ought to be stoned to death, one said tarred and feathered and burnt, one said I ought to be put in a hogshhead, driven

full of spikes and rolled down a hill. These men called themselves preachers of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

“The Methodist ministers told the trustees not to let me speak in the church nor in any of the houses. And nobody must go to hear me—if they did, they should be turned out of the church. One of the trustees got up and said he would go 20 miles to hear me. So the minister turned him right out, and said he hoped he would never be taken in again.

“They published me in three Quarterly Meetings—at Bush Hill, West Chester, and West Town. [In this context, “published” probably refers to the act of speaking out against a person or broadcasting to the assembly via the pulpit. An example of this appears in the autobiography of Richard Allen, in which he says that “he published from the pulpit of St. George’s Church, that Richard Allen and his adherents were no longer members of the M. E. Church.”]

“He said he would stop me. He would go as far as his horse would travel, and then he would write, where he could not go.

“The friends stopped him in Downingtown and told him they would stop him or me. So they took his horse, and told him they would take care of it, and him too, until he proved Rebecca Jackson to be the woman he said she was. . . .

“They said it was a shame, a set of men ariding through the country, persecuting a poor, strange, lone woman. In these three Quarterly Meetings, he said he could prove me to be the woman that he said. But when the friends gave him a chance to do so, he said he knowed [sic] nothing about me So they made him give a libel, and let him go with a promise to trouble me no more. He never did to my knowledge, but he has opened his church for me to speak.”

Such lively times were not uncommon at Shiloh, which held numerous camp and quarterly meetings. Camp meetings were large, evangelical services where attendees from throughout the region would camp out, listen to itinerant preachers, pray, and sing hymns.

“On these occasions,” reads one account published in the *Daily Local News* September 2, 1905, “everybody who wished was allowed to sell lunch and soft drinks, providing they kept a certain distance away from the church building, and it was not an unusual sight to see a long string of small tables on the roadside stretching back a half-mile west of the grounds. Some of these vendors sold strong drink on the sly, which naturally caused trouble . . .”

Church members were undoubtedly aware of such troubles. In 1830, the *Village Record* published a notice of “Seasonable Warning” that,

“The Westtown Methodist African Church have heretofore suffered much inconvenience from intrusions at their Quarterly Meetings. And they hereby give public notice, that at their Quarterly Meeting, to commence on Saturday, the 7th day of August, and continue on the Sunday following, — they will prosecute all those who intrude on their worship — or are guilty of a breach of the laws. And they hereby forbid all sutlers or others bringing liquors or other refreshments on the ground. By order,

JEREMIAH MILLER,
One of the Trustees.
July 16, 1830.”

“Intrusions” applied to white and black alike. One onerous note in the history of nearby Bethel A.M.E. in West Chester published in the *Daily Local News’ 1899 West Chester, Past and Present: Centennial Souvenir with Celebration Proceedings* notes that churchgoers were “frequently interrupted in their worship by boys and young men, who behaved in an unruly manner.” The account fails to mention physical attacks on parishioners outside the church that occurred shortly after its founding.

But overall, the camp meetings were a time of celebration. A rare account of a camp meeting near West Chester survives, indirectly, thanks to Laban Wright. Wright was a Westtown resident who worked as a laborer at the Westtown School. He informed the students of the school, including Benjamin Leedom, of the meeting held in the woods in West Goshen, about the year

1817. As Leedom would recount in his *Westtown Under the Old and New Regime* (Würzburg, Germany: Bonitas-Bauer, 1884):

“In looking over my youthful experience at Westtown, I can well recall one eventful day that made an indelible impression upon my memory. Leban [sic] Wright, our colored factotum, conveyed the intelligence to us that there was a colored camp meeting being held in the woods near West Chester and about four miles from the school. It was our usual Seventh-day holiday, and the boys, ripe for anything that might turn up in the way of fun. When the news reached us a grand council was immediately called in the woods below the boys’ gardens, to consider what was necessary for us to do in the premises, as no one present had ever been at a camp meeting. [. . .] The proposition was made that we visit the camp in a body, which was carried almost unanimously . . .

“Accoutered as we were, we started down through the boys’ woods, about one hundred boys, of all ages, from ten to eighteen . . .

“The camp meeting was held in a dense woods about half a mile east of West Chester. A large space was cleared of the underbrush, a rude platform about six feet high, of unplanned boards, was erected at one end of the camp, partly enclosed with a wooden rail in front for the speaker to give force to his exclamations, and roofed in with loose boards to protect it from the weather. On the back was a bench running the length of the platform, where the ministers were seated in a solemn row, whilst another was expounding the gospel in loud accents to the congregation, consisting of several hundred males and females arranged on benches in front, and who responded with an occasional shout of ‘glory!’



Aquatint engraving (c1819) of a Methodist Camp Meeting in America by Jacques-Gérard MilbeRoute. *Library of Congress.* <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsc.00267>.

“As we emerged from the underbrush and entered the opening between the tents, a wild refrain greeted our ears from a portion of the congregation who were marching round the camp, passing each corner to blow a tin horn in a blast that rung out in anything but melodious accents upon the summer air; the meaning of which we could not understand, and thought perhaps it might be intended to represent Joshua’s chosen men marching around the walls of Jericho, blowing the rams’ horns and shouting, until the walls fell. It might have been the intention on this occasion to throw down the walls of sin and permit the prophets of the Lord to have a clear sweep. The refrain, as near as we could make it out, was a monotonous continuation of a few lines from a hymn—

‘We’re traveling to Immanuel’s land,
Glory! Halle-lu-jah.’

“Around the camp were spread a large number of tents, in which were temptingly displayed all manner of eatibles in the shape of cakes, pies, candies, melons, etc., showing that the owners thereof were mindful to mingle with their religious ceremonies a small matter of private gain. To me the whole arrangement seemed so strange that I could

not comprehend it and found it difficult to convince myself of the intention being a religious performance. Having from my birth instilled in me the simple doctrine of silent worship, I could scarcely realize that those I beheld were really sincere, and their loud and declamatory mode, to my youthful mind, had more of a tendency to excite the risibles than to impress it with any degree of solemnity; and when one of the ministers exclaimed, in a loud, piercing voice, “Dis is de hous ob de Lord,” one look at my companions led to a hasty retreat without the circle of the camp. [. . .]

“We spent our time in wandering around the camp, getting rid of our small change in the surrounding tents, and ere the sun’s decline we were homeward bound, but little of the hilarity of the morning accompanying us, and conscious that in all probability the termination of the day’s sport would bring its consequent punishment, and our feelings were far from remote from that of ‘Traveling to Immanuel’s land.’”

These antebellum years were the halcyon days for the Church, and Shiloh became a community center. When not used for services, it was used as a schoolhouse for both white and black children, though classes were segregated with the movable partition. Several teachers were noted as having taught there in a *Daily Local News* article from September 2, 1905, including Eliza Lungern, John Moore, and a man named Davis. Many longtime members of the community attended classes there, including Richardson Pierce, Samuel Henderson, David Millison, Giles S. Bady, and Isaac Winters. But as this generation came of age, the founding generation was passing away. William Henry — who was made a deacon in 1830 — died in 1854, and his death caused a profound outpouring of grief.

After the Civil War, the Church began to fall into decline. Many African-American families were attending the more prosperous and centrally-located Bethel church in West Chester, and the number of congregants at Shiloh began to decline. As the *Daily Local News* noted December 11, 1879, with the church being in continuous use for over 70 years, a renovation was arranged by its then 40-odd members.

The little stone church with its high-backed wooden pews was reopened November 30, having been reroofed and remodeled inside by a contractor named Speakman (possibly neighbor and master carpenter Chalkley Speakman) at a cost of \$475. But renewed interest in the church was

only temporary, and the congregation continued to dwindle. As the 19th century came to a close, the older families of Westtown began to fade or move away.

The *Daily Local News* noted November 19, 1889, that brickmaker John Sickler of Philadelphia bought the home of James Mauldin — whose family had long occupied the eight acres of land adjoining the church and were longtime congregants of Shiloh — at a sheriff's sale. Sickler immediately began building a two-story kitchen addition and a front porch.

Mauldin sued Sickler in court to declare the sale null and void and to reclaim ownership of the parcel, but was defeated. For years, he had bitter feelings against the Sicklers, which eventually led to Mauldin's arrest for assault and battery against the family as noted in a *Daily Local News* article October 16, 1894. That the Sickler family came into possession of the land has great bearing on the current fate of the church property.

As the new century dawned, Shiloh was left in the care of a few dedicated individuals like Isaac J. Winters, a Civil War veteran, who was born on a neighboring farm just across the township line in West Goshen. Until his death in 1911, Winters, who according to a deed search of local properties owned land on Shiloh Road near the church at one time, acted as the sexton for the church. Winters recalled in 1905 that he had attended services at Shiloh for nearly seven decades. With its painted shutters now peeling, the church was closed in 1902 after regular membership had dwindled to about four active members.

On July 6, 1905, The *Village Record* noted as the church approached its centenary, renewed interest led once again to its reopening and renovation under the leadership of Rev. Richard Thomas of Downingtown. Contractor Darlington Beebe, as noted in the February 12, 1906 *Daily Local News*, installed new window sashes and doors, among other repairs to the church. Evangelist Malinda Cotton, a daughter of William Henry, reopened Shiloh as a Sunday school according to an announcement in the *Daily Local News* April 16, 1906. By April, the class had grown to about 24 and the church grew to 10 or 12 congregants under Rev. Thomas. But the resurgence was short-lived. The *Daily Local News* of September 14, 1912, finds the last notice of church activity at Shiloh when Rev. C. A. A. Greene announced he was pastor of the church.

For the rest of the 1910s, Shiloh's graveyard continued to be used by local families for interments and by the county to bury some indigent African-American individuals. A *Daily Local News* article September 2, 1905 described the cemetery as having "hundreds" of graves, rough and uneven, with some marked by fieldstone, others by sawed-off and rounded planks.

The last recorded use of the church came in 1920, when a November 11 fire destroyed the nearby Centre School. After considering their options, the Westtown Township School Board decided to evaluate Shiloh for use as a temporary school. At a meeting at the church November 17, the board spoke with the pastor — just who is not noted — finally agreeing to rent the church for \$20 a month, as noted in the Minute book of the Westtown Township School Board, c1908–1903. Box 216, School Records Collection, Chester County Historical Society.

Classroom furniture was supplied by the Westtown School. Under teacher Russell Baldwin of West Chester, 44 pupils received instruction there until the autumn of 1922, according to the *Daily Local News*, December 17, 1922. In the succeeding term, the displaced students were sent to West Chester, and Shiloh was left to quiet dilapidation.

In April 1943, the Wayne Title & Trust Co. contracted the Reid Title Plant of West Chester to examine the chain of title of the Shiloh property from the trustees of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in America to Dr. J. Clifford Scott, according to the *Certificate of Search against Trustees of African Methodist Episcopal Church in America, Westtown Township, Chester County, Pa.* (West Chester Pa: Reid Title Plant: 28 April 1943) in the Reid-Gordon Title Search Collection #2370C, Chester County Historical Society.

Scott was the son of the elder Dr. J. Clifford Scott, who lived at Oakbourne for 30 years serving as Superintendent of the Oakbourne Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm. Like his father he became a psychiatrist, and after graduating from Haverford College and establishing himself in practice, it appears he wished to return to the neighborhood of his youth. However, the title search conducted revealed that no power of sale was granted in the deed of trust to the A.M.E. Church and that if any sale were to occur court-appointed trustees would have to convey the land and apply the proceeds of the sale. The document does not indicate who initiated the conversation, but the sale did not occur.

By 1945, according to a *Daily Local News* article that year, the now-abandoned church had lost most of its roof, though some neighbors recalled that members of the A.M.E. Church would still come out in a bus from Philadelphia to decorate the graves on Memorial Day, and that as late as the 1930s a trustee was still living in the city.

As time passed, the ruinous church became a curiosity to local children. One local resident who grew up in the Hummingbird Farm development remembered exploring the remains of Shiloh in the early 1960s. Its roof was mostly gone and its floor had rotted out in places, though a red carpet still led from the front door to the pulpit. Another neighbor recalled finding an old Bible in one of the pews. It is said that this Bible is still in the possession of a local family.

Trespassing by local children caused concern for Harry F. Sickler and family, who owned the land adjoining the church property. About the year 1963, fearing that the walls would collapse in on a child, they used a bulldozer to push the stone walls down and into the center of the structure. Some stone and wooden beams were salvaged by builder Jim Lees to be used in a home at 1142 Johnny's Way in Westtown Township.

In the 1973 edition of Arthur James' *A History of Westtown Township*, it was noted that Harry Sickler and family,

“. . . authorized their attorney to offer \$2,000 for the former church property. The Sicklers owned the property adjacent to the onetime church and graveyard. The offer of purchase was predicated upon the issuance of an acceptable deed from those representing the former church. No deed was produced. In the search for this it was found that the Sicklers already were owners of the land. When it had been given for use by the church and as a graveyard, the deed of gift specified that, should the land ever cease to be used for these purposes, it would then revert to the owners of the property from which it had been taken in 1807. When Mr. Sickler cleared the lot, only one gravestone was left. Carefully, he left this and planted the area with fruit trees.”

We now know this account is incorrect. No specification for returning the land exists in any of the deeds to the parcel, and the land was never planted with fruit trees. Harry F. Sickler was the son of John Sickler, who was a son-in-law of longtime township resident John Bugless, and had

lived all his life in the house neighboring the church. A retired carpentry contractor and at one time Westtown's oldest resident, Bugless was a member of one of Westtown's most prominent families. His son was police chief and also postmaster at Westtown Station.

Whatever the case may have been, the church and graveyard were acquired, if not by quitclaim, then by adverse possession by the Sickler family, and the land was cleared of almost every trace of the church. Unfortunately for Westtown Township, the destruction of church cemeteries was a common occurrence for that time period. Within the span of a decade, the two other long-established cemeteries in the township, the Hickman and Taylor burial grounds, were partially relocated and became housing developments.

In 1977, the half-acre property, 1004 Little Shiloh Road, UPI 67-2-15, was sold by Harry F. Sickler's widow Ethel Sickler to another family for \$1,000, and they have owned it ever since.

Today, a small plot of partially overgrown land is the only remnant of Shiloh and its long history.

Saints Simon and Jude Roman Catholic Church, 1961–Present

In 1957, 13 acres of land located at the southwest corner of Chester Road and the West Chester Pike were purchased as the site for a new parish that became known as Saints Simon and Jude. This pleasantly situated land was sold by Gertrude McDaniels for \$38,350. On the property there was a substantial stone house that later became the church rectory.

The new parish of SS Simon and Jude, of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, was founded on May 31, 1961, with the Rev. Joseph A. Cavanaugh as its pastor. It is composed of former parts of the parishes of St. Agnes, West Chester; St. Patrick, Malvern; The Blessed Virgin Mary, Media; St. Anastasia, Newtown Square; and St. Thomas, Chester Heights. The first Mass in the new parish was held June 11, 1961 in the hall adjacent to the Goshen Fire House in East Goshen Township.

After careful study and planning, a combination church and school, with an all-purpose room under the school, was built and a convent were erected. The new parish buildings, consisting of the church, school and convent, cost around \$425,000. They were ready for occupancy by 1962.

When the parish entered its new church, some 350 families were parishioners. By 1973 this number grew to 950 families. The Rev. Joseph A. Cavanaugh was no stranger to the area. He had attended St. Aloysius Academy, a boys' boarding school located in West Chester at that time.

Saint Maximilian Kolbe Roman Catholic Church, 1986–Present

In 1986, John Cardinal Krol authorized the Philadelphia Archdiocese's first entirely new parish in a decade. The new parish was named St. Maximilian Kolbe in honor of the Polish priest who gave his life for another inmate at Auschwitz in 1941. Maximilian Kolbe was denied any food for three weeks before dying from a lethal injection. This final sacrifice — taking the place of a young father who was scheduled to be executed — led to his canonization in 1982.

The parish began with a 20-acre lot on East Pleasant Grove Road and 670 families from the nearby parishes of St. Agnes and SS. Simon and Jude. Construction of the church began in January 1988 and construction of the rectory followed in February 1991. The cornerstone of the church contains soil from outside St. Maximilian's Auschwitz cell. A plaque was given by Pope John Paul II to Cardinal Krol for the church, after learning it was being named for the Polish saint.

In December of 1990, Franciszek Gajoniczek, the prisoner who St. Maximilian took the place of, visited the parish. Franciscan Brother Jerome Wierzba, Kolbe's friend and secretary before his arrest, also visited the parish in 1992 and again in 1994.

The parish celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2011. In addition to the church, it now includes an elementary school for children from preschool to grade 8.

Westminster Presbyterian Church 1892–Present

By 1990, the Westminster Presbyterian Church, established in West Chester in 1892, found its membership of 1,200 had outgrown their facilities on Church Street in West Chester Borough. After much discussion and prayer, the majority of the congregation voted to look for another site.

Dr. Robert Poole, who was familiar with Westtown as a visiting physician at the Smith Home for Convalescent Women, asked James and Gay Robinson, two members of the congregation, to donate a parcel of land for the construction of a new church. The gift of land was part of the

Robinson's Crebilly Farm and eventually included 10 acres. It was located at the intersection of West Pleasant Grove Road and Route 202.

The church architects, Crothers Daley Jalboot, proposed a simple and functional stone design that blended with the fields and woodlands of Chester County. The architects proposed a four-building structure around an open internal courtyard, at a cost of \$5.3 million.



Westminster Presbyterian Church on a winter's night. *Photo courtesy Lynn George.*

Groundbreaking took place September 27, 1992, in a driving rainstorm, as congregants and local officials watched the pastor, Rev. Robert Young, turn the first spade of soil. Construction progressed through 1993 and the new sanctuary was formally dedicated January 9, 1994.

The new Westtown location attracted new congregants and the church counted more than 2,000 members at the start of 2019.

The Bible Baptist Church in Westtown Township, 1967–1970

From January 1967 until February 1970, the Bible Baptist Church held services in one of the buildings at 1030 South Concord Road. This had been the former Oakbourne Hospital property (what is now Gaudenzia House). The church then moved into its attractive new building at 1237 Paoli Pike in West Goshen Township.

Advent Lutheran Church, 1967–Present

Advent Lutheran Church was organized on Palm Sunday, March 19, 1967. For some months prior to this, church services had been held in the Goshen Fire House in East Goshen Township. Services continued to be held there until a new church was built at the northeast corner of Chester Road and Green Lane in Westtown Township. The new church was dedicated July 19, 1970. The building and ample acreage surrounding it cost about \$100,000.

The Rev. William L. Hauser was the church pastor when it came to Westtown Township and the congregation consisted of 204 adult members and 127 children. From 1973 to 1995, the Rev. Ralph Peterson served as Advent's pastor, during which time a second building was constructed, including the current worship space. Dedicated in 1981, the stonework of the new building was laid by members of the congregation.

The church saw further growth in 1995 with a third building, which houses a social hall, youth room, and kitchen. Expansion to the church's facilities was accompanied by an expansion of the church's outreach; during these years, the church saw the growth and the addition of small group ministries, youth groups and church retreats. Further developments to the church included a Boy Scout troop, preschool and men's softball team.

In August 2003, Pastor William Mueller took up the leadership of the church, ushering in even more expansion. New members joined, and younger members became more involved in the church. Children's musicals were staged, and a more rigorous curriculum was implemented in

the preschool program to better prepare children entering kindergarten. A new playground and outdoor chapel were constructed during Pastor Mueller's tenure, which extended until 2010.

After a series of interim pastors, the church welcomed Rev. Christopher Franz January 15, 2012. He continues to lead the church to this day. Under his leadership, Advent has grown by nearly 50 percent, with 100 new members added. The church's Sunday School has grown by more than 25 percent, and it has generously opened its doors to support community groups such as Fit4Mom, Bent on Better, Soccer Shots, West Chester Rugby Club, Upward Basketball, Condo Association Meetings and the Pinewood Derby for several Boy Scout troops. As a result of their immense efforts and continued outreach, Advent Lutheran Church has fully integrated with the community of Westtown, even for those residents who are not members.

The Church of the Loving Shepherd, 1971–Present

In 1972, the Church of the Loving Shepherd moved from Delaware County to 1066 South New Street in Westtown. The church purchased its new home on some 20 acres of the former Adam property in 1971. The congregation worked on the grounds and in the barn through that fall and winter and took occupancy in April 1972. The former owners, Sinclair and Margaret Adam, stayed on the property as tenants until their new house at 1001 South New Street was completed.

One of the first changes made was in the mansion house, where what had been two large rooms on the first floor were converted to a space for religious services. The first service was held on Sunday, June 4, 1972.

The church was once owned by four generations of the Osborne family and then John Dulles prior to being purchased by J. Neil Adam. Today, the property consists of the 1855 serpentine mansion and the barn with two date stones, a 1792 small stone to the left of the lower level entrance and an 1848 one high on the east wall.

While the property and buildings were consecrated for religious use in 1975 by the Right Rev. Herbert Spaugh, a Moravian bishop who took the congregation under his care, its barn was dedicated for use by the congregation and community in October 1998. In attendance were the then-Chester County Commissioners, Karen Martynick, Andy Dinniman and Colin Hanna, as well as then-West Chester Mayor Clifford DeBaptiste.



Osborne farm barn converted to worship space by Church of the Loving Shepherd. Photo by Jim Guterl.

As a name for its new home this pioneering religious group selected “Bournelyf,” Middle English for “stream of life.”

From its beginnings, the church planned additional activities including retreats. For example, Bournelyf Special Camp was started in 1980 as a mission project to serve children and youth with mild to moderate intellectual and developmental disabilities. Today it offers summer programs, as well as twice-a-month activities throughout the year for campers ranging in age from 8 to 26 and older in some programs. In the late 1980s, the camp was incorporated separately, to be governed by its own board. Programs are staffed by college students with qualifications in special education or adaptive physical education, or by college students studying in these areas.

Music has always been important to the church’s identity. From the 1980s into the early 1990s, the congregation held an annual music festival, which has been replaced by a chamber music series of six to eight concerts annually, varying from classical, jazz and folk music.

Over the years several community-based groups and organizations have used Bournelyf for worship, retreat or other activities, including the Boy Scouts, Beth Chaim Reform Congregation, the Willow Branch Sangha and West Chester University.

Initially, the church anticipated that small numbers of people would reside at Bournelyf for short periods, during which they would participate in religious workshops and a search for individual and collective answers to some of the problems of our contemporary world. However, a formal, residential retreat program has not been established. The church does offer workshops, including some focused on spiritual life and occasionally hosts individuals who are asking for time in a place of quiet. The physical setting at Bournelyf, with its large trees, a small stream and the beauties of nature, offers an atmosphere and climate conducive to an awareness of the presence of God. Its outdoor labyrinth hosts a group which walks for peace twice a month from March through the fall, weather permitting.

In 2019, the Church of the Loving Shepherd's congregation consists of 80 families. Through the years the congregation has been served by Elwood Bailey, his son, Mark W. Bailey (who died May 2011), and by The Rev. Dr. Debra Sutton, who served as a part-time associate pastor for Education and Pastoral Care from 2012 to 2016, and John Woodcock.

TOWNSHIP GRAVEYARDS

The Taylor Family Burial Ground

The Taylor graveyard was located a little less than a half mile northwest of the intersection of South Concord and Street Roads. Prior to 1850, the farm here was owned by several generations of the Taylor family.

The Taylor family was largely disowned from the Society of Friends for serving in the military during the Revolutionary War. Unable to be buried at Birmingham Meetinghouse, Thomas Taylor Sr. established a cemetery on his own property. His family members and other non-Quaker neighbors were buried here. Painter and Bowen's 1847 township map lists the graveyard as "Taylor's Burial Gr," but it was also known as the Faucett Burial Ground for other neighbors who were buried there.

In the 20th century the graveyard had fallen into ruin. Nathan Y. Faucett had the stones of his ancestors removed to the Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery. When Marshall Jones bought the property, he appropriated some of the gravestones for erecting stairs or door steps in a nearby house — the original Taylor family homestead — some of which led to the springhouse beneath the house. The site of the cemetery was largely cleared for a landing strip for Mr. Jones' airplane which he kept in a shed on the property.



Faucett family headstones that were moved to Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery. *Photo courtesy Jonathan Hoppe*

In 1972, with development of the Pleasant Grove neighborhood looming, Dr. M. Joseph Becker, Professor of Anthropology at then West Chester State College, and his students conducted ethnological studies at the Taylor Graveyard. Several skeletons and tombstones were recovered and removed to the college. Remains were later moved to the University of Pennsylvania for analysis and storage.

Two houses were later built on top of the cemetery. A marker, erected by the Taylor family in 2001, sits on nearby common ground. An attempt by the Westtown Township Historical Commission to mark the cemetery with veterans' markers and the returned stone of Valentine Kirgan were met with great resistance by the Pleasant Grove community. The attempt was

abandoned, and the stones were removed. Through the efforts of WTHC founder David Walter, the Kirgan tombstone was placed at Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery in 2019.

The following is a list of those thought to or known to have been buried in the Taylor Cemetery.

William Buck (b.? – d. August 1819)

His death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, Chester County Historical Society (CCHS). Cabinetmakers like Darlington were woodworkers. In addition to building furniture, they also made coffins. Darlington, based out of West Goshen Township, kept meticulous records of deaths and the coffins he made for local families, and his account books contain some of the only burial records for this portion of the county during the early part of the 19th century. The family of James Buck is noted on the decennial federal census as living in Westtown in 1820. His relationship to the Taylor family and further information is not known at this time.

Elizabeth “Betty” Cooper (b.? – d, 1868)

She is thought to have been one of the last, if not the last, burial in these grounds. When her grave was dug initially, the graveyard had become so full that the gravediggers found a portion of a skeleton from an earlier burial. The skeleton was carefully laid back in place before Elizabeth herself was buried. Elizabeth once owned Hartshorne Farm in Westtown.

Jane Dixon, née Gamble (b.? – d. October 1831)

Jane Dixon was the wife of Phineas Dixon, a stone mason in Westtown. Her death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Child of Phineas Dixon (b.? – d. September 1825)

This child’s death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, Cabinetmaker, MS 3185, Chester County Historical Society. The Dixons had several children, including George Washington Dixon (1820–1896). G. W. Dixon is noted to have been a member of the Society of Friends at the time of his death.

Ann Faucett (b. 1801? – d. July 30, 1830)

The Faucett family were neighbors of the Taylor family and lived on a farm near Darlington's Corner. One branch of the family lived in Dilworthtown in what was the oldest structure in the settlement — a log cabin that was recently torn down. During the Battle of Brandywine the family was in the midst of the fighting, and suffered depredations at the hands of Crown Forces.

They may have been Episcopalians; several members of the Faucett family are buried at St. John's Episcopal Church, Concord, Delaware County.

Ann Faucett was the daughter of Henry and Hannah Faucett. In the late 19th century her gravestone was moved to Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery.

Ebenezer Faucett (b. January 28, 1783 – d. December 14, 1846)

Ebenezer Faucett was the son of Revolutionary War veteran Henry Faucett and Hannah Faucett and brother to George and Ann Faucett. In the late 19th century his gravestone was moved to Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery.

George Faucett (b. 1717? – d. April 29, 1810)

George Faucett was the husband of Isabella Faucett.

George Faucett (b. October 15, 1786 – d. July 4, 1840)

George Faucett was the son of Revolutionary War veteran Henry Faucett and Hannah Faucett, and brother to Ann and Ebenezer Faucett. He was named for his grandfather George Faucett. In the late 19th century his gravestone was moved to Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery. It has since been stolen or has otherwise gone missing.

Hannah Faucett (b.? – d. September 10, 1830)

The wife of Revolutionary War veteran Henry Faucett and mother to Ebenezer, George, and Ann Faucett, Hannah's gravestone was moved to Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery in the late 19th century.

Henry Faucett (b. 1756? – d. June 29, 1826)

The brother of John Faucett, Henry's gravestone, moved to Birmingham Lafayette Cemetery in the late 19th century, reads "Departed this life June 29, 1826, aged 70 years."

He appears as "Henry Fossett" on the 1780 rolls with the East Bradford Militia.

Isabella Faucett (b.? – d. November 1819)

She was the wife of George Faucett and inherited his estate after his death in 1810.

John Faucett (b. 1760? – d. October 2, 1846)

A number of the members of the Faucett family of Westtown were buried in the Taylor family cemetery. Those stones of the Faucetts that survived into the 20th century were moved to the Birmingham-Lafayette cemetery around 1907.

John Faucett was the son of George Faucett (1717?–1810) and Isabella Faucett (b. ?–1819). At a young age he volunteered for the Pennsylvania Militia in or before 1777. It was said he was taken prisoner at the Battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777. It appears he was later released, for in 1781 he was listed as being part of Captain Charles Reed's Company, 1st Class, Chester County Militia as "John Fossett."

John Faucett died in Westtown Township at age 86.

Joseph Faucett (b. 1818? – d. June 20, 1848)

He died in Westtown at the age of 30.

Mary Faucett (née Yearsley) (b. April 30, 1803 – d. March 1, 1842)

She was the daughter of Nathan Yearsley and Elizabeth Worrall and wife of George Faucett (1786–1840). They were married in Philadelphia on November 7, 1822.

Sarah Faucett

She was the wife of Ebenezer Faucett. In the late 19th century her gravestone was moved to Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery.

Elizabeth Few, née Nixon (b. 1790? – d. January 20, 1852)

She was the wife of Jacob Few, whose father Richard Few first purchased a portion of the Taylor land from Thomas Taylor Sr.'s son John Taylor. The Few family were said to be mulattos, of Indian and African ancestry, and lived for many years in Westtown.

Her tombstone was noted as being present in the late 19th century, and a rubbing exists in the archives of West Chester University.



Rubbing of Elizabeth Few's headstone. From West Chester University collection.

Jacob Few (b.? – d. November 1, 1838)

Jacob Few was a farmer and butcher in Westtown Township, tenancing for several years until he bought the land from Thomas Taylor's son John Taylor at a sheriff's sale, and, also later, a tract from Benedict Darlington.

Child of Joseph Hanthorne (b.? – d. August 1824)

Joseph Hanthorne was a weaver who lived in Westtown in the 1820s. Other members of the Hanthorne family also lived in and around the township as tradesmen. One, wheelwright Isaac Hanthorne, married into the Faucett family. They may have been Baptists, as Isaac Hanthorne was married in Philadelphia by a Baptist minister.

Sidney John, née Taylor (b. 1783 – d. April 29, 1868)

Sidney Taylor was the daughter of Thomas Taylor Jr. She married Seth John. It is said she was among the last burials in the Taylor cemetery, although it is not certain if she or Betty Cooper, who also died in 1868, was the last to be buried in the grounds. Interestingly, when her son Thomas John died in 1876, they initially attempted to bury him in the Taylor Burial Ground; however, he was buried in Oaklands Cemetery, perhaps because the Taylor Burial Ground was full.

Deborah Kirgan (Hawley), née Taylor (b.? – d. November 17, 1824)

Deborah Kirgan was the daughter of Thomas Taylor Jr. and sister to Sidney John. She married her first husband, William Hawley Jr., a Baptist, in Philadelphia in 1817. He died not long thereafter, and she married stonemason Valentine Kirgan February 15, 1823. She died 17 days after giving birth to their only child, Deborah Hawley Kirgan.

Valentine Kirgan (b. August 5, 1771 – d. July 22, 1831)

Kirgan was a prominent builder in his day, a son of Hugh Kirgan, a weaver of Bradford township, who is buried at Birmingham Meeting. Originally from Chester County, he was one of the lead masons on the construction of the first Pennsylvania capitol building in Harrisburg from 1819 to 1822. He moved to Chester County after its completion in 1823 and married the widow Deborah Hawley. His tombstone was recovered by Dr. M. Joseph Becker in the 1970s from the abandoned Taylor Family Burial Ground and taken to West Chester State University. It was

returned to Westtown Township in 2016 and is now installed at Birmingham-Lafayette Cemetery next to the burial site of his daughter Deborah (engraved Debbe Hunt on her gravestone) and granddaughters C. Aurelia Hunt and Besse Hunt.

The first Pennsylvania capitol building burned in 1897 and when the cornerstone was retrieved from the northeast corner of the building later that year, a bottle containing documents was discovered behind the cornerstone, according to a July 25, 1897 article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. It revealed the cornerstone was set May 31, 1819 and that the building's masons were Samuel White and Valentine Kirgan. The April 17, 1937 *Evening News* in Harrisburg revealed Kirgan was paid \$2,623.34 for his work on the building.

Wentworth Kirgan (b.? – d. 1831)

It is possible this name is a misreading of the stone of Valentine Kirgan. No other information can be found at this time.

Mary “Polly” O’Neal (b.? – d. 1820)

Mary O’Neal was the wife of Charles O’Neal, of Goshen, who died in 1806. She is listed as “Polly O’Neal” in Amos Darlington’s account books, MS 3185, CCHS.

Child of Francis Steward (b.? – d. September 1825)

Very little is known about Francis Steward or his family. This child’s death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, Cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Elizabeth “Betsey” Strode (b.? – d. July 1805)

“Betsey” Strode was the teenage daughter of Jonathan Strode and Mary (Taylor) Strode, and granddaughter of Thomas Taylor, Sr. Her death at age 17 or 18 is noted in the diary of Benjamin Hunt. Her gravestone, as “E. Strode/1805,” is noted as being extant in the late 1800s.

Elizabeth “Betsy” Taylor, née Beeson (b. December 3, 1781 – d. July 1823)

She was the daughter of David Beeson and Margaret Vandever, wife of William Hunt Taylor and daughter-in-law of Titus Taylor. Her death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Lydia Taylor, née Richards (b.? – d. March 11, 1823)

Second wife of Anthony Taylor and daughter-in-law of Titus Taylor, her death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Col. Thomas Taylor, Sr. (b. 1732 – d. 1782)

Colonel Thomas Taylor was born May 15, 1732, on his father's 200-acre farm in Westtown Township. Thomas took an early interest in politics; his grandfather had served in the Colonial Assembly in 1715 and 1728. Thomas himself was a county tax assessor from 1768 to 1770 and was elected a County Commissioner in 1774.

On December 20, 1774, at the Chester County Courthouse, then in the city of Chester, Thomas was appointed to a Committee of Safety from Chester County, with Anthony Wayne as chair. In 1777, he was appointed as the Register of Wills and the Recorder of Deeds, serving in that capacity until his death in 1782. That same year, he was commissioned as a colonel in the Pennsylvania Militia, commanding the 6th Battalion, and Caleb John acted in his stead beginning in 1778. It is noted in the county records that in 1780 or before he was responsible for transporting the County records from Chester to the Great Valley "out of the enemy's way". For his military service he was disowned by the Birmingham Meeting.

Thomas Taylor married Martha Woodard at Birmingham Meeting in 1753 and had among other children three who served in the Revolution: Thomas Taylor, Jr., Titus Taylor, and Caleb Taylor. Col. Taylor died in Westtown, March 22, 1782, and was buried in his family cemetery.

Capt. Thomas Taylor, Jr. (b. 1757 – d. 1811)

Captain Thomas Taylor, Jr. was born on the family farm in Westtown Township in 1757. He is reported to have enlisted in the militia in 1777, when in August of that year Birmingham Preparative Meeting brought a complaint against him for entering military service. He was later disowned for doing the same in December of that year.

From 1780 to 1782, Taylor, Jr. captained the Eighth Company of the Seventh Battalion, Westtown Township. Serving under him as a private was his older brother, Titus Taylor.

After the revolution, he served as a tax collector. In 1794, Taylor probably captained a company of Light Dragoons under Major Joseph McClellan against the Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania. The service was brief, lasting from October 20 to December 20, 1794. He joined the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery in 1796 and is noted to have freed at least one African-American person — a man named Simon — in 1800. From 1784 through at least 1793, he was a jailer of Chester County.

In 1802, he served in the Pennsylvania legislature as a Democratic Republican, and in 1803 was the Chester County treasurer. From 1807 to 1810 he was the sheriff of Chester County. It is said that during discussions of the coming war with England before the War of 1812, he was considered for an officer's commission in the militia, but his health became delicate and he died "of a decay" in Westtown, March 29, 1811, and was buried in the Taylor family cemetery.

Capt. Titus Taylor (b. November 21, 1755 – d. April 3, 1825)

Titus Taylor was born on the family farm in Westtown Township November 21, 1755. He married Rebecca Hunt in 1779 contrary to Quaker discipline and was likely disowned by the Society of Friends for it later, although both were Quaker. This could mean they married without their parents' permission or were married by a secular official or by a clergyman outside their faith.

Taylor served in the Revolution as a private under his younger brother in the Eighth Company of the Seventh Battalion of the Pennsylvania Militia from 1780–1782.

After the war, he returned to farming and politics, and continued to serve actively in the Militia through at least 1793. He held county offices including treasurer, commissioner and sheriff. In private life, he was a stonemason, and built, among other things, an oven for the first jail in West Chester in 1793 and a bridge over the Brandywine the same year.

In 1813, prominent citizens of the borough of West Chester organized a volunteer regiment called the "American Grey"— the Second Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteer Light Infantry. It

was gradually filled with both young and middle-aged men, under the command of Titus Taylor, “a worthy old gentleman of the vicinity.” The company drilled through the autumn of 1814, when the burning of Washington, D.C. forced the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to invite the company to assemble in Philadelphia to defend that city. The company departed West Chester on September 8, 1814, and was commissioned into service as part of the Second Light Infantry Regiment of the Pennsylvania Militia. The company served at Camp Marcus Hook until they were mustered out of service that December.

Child of William H. Taylor (b.? – d. February 1824)

William Hunt Taylor (1780–1841) lived in Thornbury and was a steward of the Chester County Poorhouse in the 1820s. The identity of this child is not known at this time. His death is noted in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Amy Worthington, née Underwood (b.? – d. August 21, 1807)

She was the wife of William Worthington, who she married at the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia October 15, 1787. She died early on the morning of August 21 1807. Burial information from Sarah Pratt’s burial register, MS. 1726, Chester County Historical Society.

William Worthington (b.? – d. March 21, 1818)

William Worthington was the founder of West Chester’s Cross Keys (later the White Hall) Tavern and a prominent county official. A son of Isaac Worthington and Martha Carver, he was elected Justice of the Peace for Easttown, Goshen, and Willistown townships in 1792, was elected sheriff October 13, 1796, and resigned that position in April 1801. He was subsequently elected county treasurer for the 1804–1805 term, and in 1807 was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

The Hickman Family Burial Ground

The Hickman family was one of the earliest European families to settle in the area that would become Westtown Township. Like many families at that time, the Hickmans are said to have lived in a cave (likely a dugout shelter in a hillside) until construction of a more permanent dwelling. For generations the tract of land remained within the Hickman family.

The Hickman family cemetery was laid out in a deed of 1828 on the grounds of the family farm. It was to remain as a cemetery under the care of the Hickman family and its trustees in perpetuity.

By the late 19th century, the grounds had fallen into disuse. In 1882, Rebecca Hickman Jefferis, daughter of Benjamin Hickman, had the grounds beautified and a 20-inch stone wall, built by contractors John Garrett and John Burns, enclosed the cemetery.

Following Jefferis's death in 1889 — she was the last interment in the ground — the graveyard fell into neglect. The land passed to the Bartram family, who operated a dairy farm and apple orchard there until the 1970s.

In 1972, Westtown Township historian Arthur E. James noted that “[i]t is now surrounded by a broken-down stone wall and is filled with briars and undergrowth. From 1857 until recent years the land adjacent to the graveyard was owned by the Bartram family. In 1973, a lone pine tree stands sentinel at the southern edge of the graveyard.” Shortly thereafter, the land was sold for development to the Mayfield Construction Company.

During construction, workers found several of the tombstones and approached the anthropology department of West Chester State College for advice and/or resolution. They were directed to county officials, and by the urging of The Honorable Ralph. W. Kent, judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Chester County, the Mayfield Co. hired the Joseph E. Boyd Funeral Home to

disinter and re-inter “an estimated five persons” to Bradford Cemetery, Marshallton.



Five tombstones of the Hickman family near the line fence at Bradford Cemetery. *Courtesy Jonathan Hoppe*

Accordingly, in late July of 1974, the Boyd Funeral Home removed five bodies whose stones they could find and placed them in new modern coffins. They were re-interred August 1 in Bradford Cemetery, in Potters’ Row, along the eastern line of the cemetery fence. The other bodies still remain buried at Hickman Family Burial Ground.

Though the grounds remain surrounded by the stone wall, the land has since been developed and a house now occupies the site. The cemetery stands apart as a separate parcel.

Members of the Hickman Family Still Interred in the Grounds

Benjamin Hickman (b. July 25, 1749, Chester, PA – d. March 25, 1826, Milltown, Chester County, PA)

Obituary, *Saturday Evening Post*, April 1, 1826: “On the 25th Ulto. [a Latin term referring to an occurrence from last month] in Westtown Twp., Chester Co., Pennsylvania, Benjamin Hickman at the advanced age of about four score years. In the several relations of society as a parent, neighbor, friend, he fulfilled his duties in an exemplary manner; and with reference to him, it may with propriety be said in the language of the psalmist “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright for the end of that man is peace.”

Richard Riley Hickman (b. 1799, Milltown, Chester County, PA – d. August 13, 1866, St. Louis, MO)

Born on the family homestead, R. R. Hickman moved to St. Louis, Missouri in October 1840. He died there of cholera in 1866 and was returned to his home to be buried. Husband of Martha Cheyney Hickman.

Elizabeth Walker Hickman (b. October 21, 1821, Chester County, PA – d. June 10, 1851, Westtown, PA)

American Republican, June 17, 1851. “In Westtown, on the 9th inst., Elizabeth W. Hickman, in the 30th year of her age.”

She died unmarried with no children and was the daughter of Cyrus and Phebe Hickman and granddaughter of Benjamin Hickman.

Rebecca Hickman Jefferis (b. December 22, 1796, Milltown, Chester County, PA – d. March 10, 1890, Grubbs Landing, New Castle County, DE)

Described as a woman of “remarkable memory,” Mrs. Jefferis was the daughter of Benjamin Hickman and a great-aunt of Rev. George M. Hickman of Wilmington. She had a great passion for history, particularly that of the Hickman family, and took great pains to preserve the ancestral family graveyard located on the original Hickman homestead in Chester County, placing it in good order and paying for its upkeep. Upon her death, she was interred per her request in the family graveyard, the last such interment made in the burial grounds.

Phinley Hickman (b. 1849, New Castle County, Delaware – d. July 24, 1850)

He was the son of Francis R. Hickman and Phoebe Hickman [Temple] of Wilmington, whose direct relation to this branch of the Hickman family is not known. Phinley (also spelled Finlay) and his sister Phoebe Jr., were living at the home of Eber and Elizabeth Hickman in Milltown (see entry for Eber Hickman below) at the time of Phinley's death. Francis Hickman and Phoebe Temple married in Wilmington May 14, 1848. It is not known what happened to them, other than that Phoebe died May 10, 1849 at about 25 years of age, in the same year Phinley was born.

Members of the Hickman Family Reinterred to Bradford Cemetery

Francis Hickman (b. February 16, 1794 – d. June 24, 1875)

A shoemaker, son of Benjamin Hickman and Lucy Cheyney, he married Priscilla G. Matlack. Francis died June 24, 1875, "in the 81st year of his age."

Tombstone Inscription: "F. H."

Hannah Hickman (b. November 8, 1779 – d. November 19, 1843)

She was the daughter of Benjamin Hickman.

Tombstone Inscription: "Sacred to the memory of HANNAH HICKMAN, who departed this life, 11-19, aged 64 years, 11 days."

Ann Hickman (b. October 23, 1783 – d. July 2, 1864)

She was the daughter of Benjamin Hickman.

Tombstone Inscription: "ANN HICKMAN Born Oct. 23rd 1783. Died July 2nd 1864."

Eber Hickman (b. July 1, 1787 – d. May 22, 1862, West Chester, PA)

Eber Hickman was the son of Benjamin Hickman, husband of Elizabeth Buffington Hickman. They had no children of their own, but were guardians of Phoebe and Finlay Hickman at one time. According to a 1907 *Daily Local News*, article, "[Eber Hickman] lived in what was then the finest house in the neighborhood of Milltown, and afterward he died on South High Street, West Chester, in a house afterward renovated by Davis Bishop, and now the home of Dr. S.

LeRoy Barber. . . . He was a man of rather eccentric views, it is said, but loyal to his friends and to the cause of justice.”

Tombstone Inscription: “EBER HICKMAN Born July 1, 1787. Died May 22nd 1862.”

Martha Cheyney Hickman (b. September 28, 1803, Thornton, Delaware County – d. September 7, 1834, Milltown, Chester County, PA)

She was the daughter of “Squire” Thomas Cheyney and wife of Richard Riley Hickman. Martha died in Westtown, Sunday morning September 7, 1834, after a short illness.

Tombstone Inscription: “Martha G., wife of R.R. Hickman, born Sept. 28, 1803. Died September 7, 1834 in the 31st year of her age.

If death my friend and me divide
Thou dost not, Lord, my sorrows chide,
Or frown my tears to see.
Restrain from passionate excess,
Thou bidst me mourn in calm distress
For them that rest in thee.”

Neighbors and Others Interred at the Hickman Burial Ground

Rosanna Blaney (b.? – d. May 20, 1838)

Nothing is known of her.

Son of Thomas Cox (b.? – d. July 1837)

In the early to mid 1830s, the Cox family, with father Thomas, is listed in the records of poor schoolchildren of Chester County, moving throughout the Goshen-Willistown-Westtown area. Four children are listed, viz.: Mary, William, Milton, Jane. This may be Milton.

Joseph Dring (b.? – d. October 12, 1833)

Son of Thomas Dring, who died in England sometime after 1799, Thomas Dring married Hannah Griffith c. 1770, daughter of Nathan Griffith and Rachel Williamson. She was born March 3, 1750 in Willistown Twp., Chester Co., PA, and died August 24, 1799, in Willistown Township.

Thomas was a clockmaker, and after collecting a considerable sum of money from his neighbors, with which he was supposed to acquire clockworks, he fled with the money to England and never returned. One of his creations, a beautiful barometer, is in the collection of the Chester County Historical Society.

His wife and children were left indigent after he disappeared, and for many years they were in and out of the county almshouses. Joseph Dring, who knew the Hickman family and remained in the area, was buried here upon his death, his only other option being Potter's Field in Embreeville. His brother Jephtha was buried in Delaware County's potter's field in Lima, and their sister, Sarah, died and was buried at Blockley Almshouse in Philadelphia

Hannah A. Millis (b. 1805?, Chester County, PA – d. September 24, 1883, Philadelphia, PA)

Hannah Millis was born in Chester County, and married John H. Millis (b.? –d. 1849). They had one daughter, Sarah Lavinia Millis (April 1834–August 25, 1836), buried in Philadelphia's Second Baptist burial ground.

Hannah returned to Chester County and in 1880 worked as a servant in the household of Ann Paschall in West Chester. She died in Philadelphia at age 78.

George Pharaoh (b. 1831 – d. August 29, 1851, West Chester, PA)

George Pharaoh, son of William Pharaoh (1800? –1877) and Susannah Boyd (b.? –d. 1880), both buried at Goshen Friends Meeting, was one of Chester County's most infamous murderers. While out gunning on September 28, 1850, he shot 19-year-old Rachel Sharpless, a teacher at the Rocky Hill School, off today's Route 352 near Goshen Road, East Goshen Township, with a shotgun. His motive was probably robbery. Rachel carried a gold watch and chain on her person.

His case was brought to trial early in 1851, and was prosecuted by D.A. Paschall Morris; his defense team was William Butler and Joseph J. Lewis, Esq. The sensational trial ended in a guilty verdict, and he was sentenced to hang February 12, 1851.



George Pharaoh. ca. 1850: Engraving made from a now-lost photographic portrait. Illustration from *Side Lights on the Bench and Bar of Chester County* by Wilmer W. MacElree

On August 29, 1851, he was led to the gallows erected in the yard of the Chester County Prison on Market Street in West Chester and hanged. The site today houses the Chester County Justice Center.

His body was taken down after half an hour and placed in a walnut coffin. It was subsequently removed from the prison and given to his parents for interment. He was buried in this graveyard at the behest of Eber Hickman, who buried him at midnight and stood guard over the grave for several nights to deter any curiosity seekers.

Thomas Pharaoh (b. ? – d. June 7, 1851, Rocky Hill⁴, East Goshen Township, Chester County, PA)

He was a relative of George Pharaoh, whom George was listed as living with in 1850, and husband of Anna Warluch Pharaoh (1816–1897) and father of Mary A. Manley (1836–1919), both buried in Goshen Baptist Cemetery. He died at age 46.

Benjamin Hickman’s diary entry for June 8, 1851 notes that “Thomas Pharaoh interred Hickman’s graveyard.”

Lewis Pike (1825? – September 1840)

Son of Ann Pike, he lived in Willistown Township in the 1830s, and was listed on the record of Poor School Children who received benefits from the county to pay for his schooling.

Mary York (b.? – November 1841).

Nothing is known of her.

The Shiloh African American Episcopal Cemetery

As mentioned in the section on Shiloh African Methodist Church in this history, initially this church was established by white Methodists, but was soon turned over to a group which became known as the Westtown African Methodist Church. It is thought that the white Methodists took up their dead to rebury in West Chester, but this has not yet been proven. An 1847 map lists “Col^d. Meth. M.H. & G.Y^d.” The letters “M.H.” designate a meeting house, a term often used over a century ago, to identify places of worship by other than Friends.

For most of the 19th century, Shiloh’s cemetery was well-tended. By the 1910s, Shiloh’s attendance had dwindled, but the graveyard continued to be used by local families for interments and by the county to bury some indigent black individuals. A 1905 article described the cemetery

⁴ Rocky Hill is a village located on a high, rocky ground at the crossing of the Strasburg and Chester Roads in East Goshen township.

as having “hundreds” of graves, rough and uneven, with some marked by a fieldstone, others by a sawed-off and rounded plank.

By the 1950s, what was left of the graveyard — “some 40 or 50 stones” — was overgrown. A neighbor remembered shooting rabbits in the old, overgrown graveyard, and could clearly note where the graves were located by the sunken ground.

Around 1963, when Harry F. Sickler, a neighboring property owner, cleared the land around the church, many more tombstones remained. These headstones, it was said, were removed and stored in a nearby barn, the ground leveled off, and the land returned, in part, to farmland. It is reported that some stones were used in the construction of a patio, and some were stored in another neighbor’s barn. It is possible the stones were discarded. In April 1963, West Goshen police officer Tom Flick discovered the tombstone of “John Cooper, 24th U.S. Colored Troops, died May 2, 1911 aged 81 years” in a field near South Concord Road just south of the West Chester bypass in what was then, and is still part of Rolling Green Memorial Park. The stone was taken to the West Goshen Township building; its current whereabouts is unknown.

Today, the cemetery remains overgrown and untended. A single tombstone, that of Alfred Bye, was found broken in half on the site some years ago.



Tombstone of Alfred Bye. Photograph courtesy David Walter.

Burials in the Shiloh A.M.E. Cemetery

Johnathan Alender (b.? – d. July 1826)

He lived in Westtown and was noted as “Poor” in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

George Anderson (b.? – d. December 30, 1893, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, January 1, 1894: “Suddenly, in West Chester, on December 30, George Anderson. . . Interment at Westtown Burying Ground.”

John Wesley Anderson (b.? – d. August 16, 1852, West Chester, PA)

He was the 2-year-old son of Wesley Anderson and Mary Ann Johnson.

Lillian Elizabeth Bailey (b. March 4, 1909 – d. 20 October 1909, West Chester, PA)

She was the infant daughter of Benjamin and Anna Bailey.

John Bennett (b.? – d. 1877)

He was noted in an early 1900s listing of tombstones as “a pastor of the adjoining church.” This may be a misreading of the stone of Rev. John Brown who died in 1877.

Julia A. Berry (b.? – d. September 4, 1890, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, September 4, 1890: “In West Chester, on 3d inst., Julia A. Berry, in the 81st year of her age. . . .[F]uneral from the residence of her son, William L. Berry. . . . Interment at Westtown.”

Ruth Ann Berry (b.? – d. September 11, 1884, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, November 12, 1884: “In West Chester, on the 11th inst., Ruth Ann Berry, in the 44th year of her age. Funeral from her late residence, No. 614 E. Miner Street, on Friday, the 14th inst., to meet at the house at 1 and leave at 2 o’clock. Services at the house. Proceed to Westtown Burying Ground.”

Jane “Aunt Jane” Black (b.? – d. April 6, 1917, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, April 7, 1917: “Jane Black, aged 90 years, one of the best-known colored women in this place, died yesterday at the home of Mrs. Callahan, on Poplar Street, after suffering for a long time with the infirmities of old age. She had been in fair health recently, but her death was rather sudden. She had not been serious for some time, but had a relapse on Saturday and her death followed yesterday. Coroner John S. Garrett made an investigation and gave the certificate of death.

“‘Aunt Jane’ as she was familiarly known about many sections of the borough was a favorite in the homes of many prominent residents, where she had been employed on special occasions for years, and she enjoyed the friendship of the people of the borough to a great extent.”

Daily Local News, April 11, 1917. “Although she was well-known in every section of the borough and had been employed during her long life in several leading families, ‘Aunt Jane’ Black, an aged colored woman, has no claimant for her remains and they will be interred tomorrow in Chestnut Grove Cemetery [Death certificate says burial in Shiloh; obituary notes

Chestnut Grove] after services at the chapel of J. B. Smith & Son. The expense of the interment will be paid by the county, no relatives having assumed the responsibility.”

William H. Bolden (b. 1854 – d. April 4, 1882, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, April 7, 1882: “In West Chester, Pa., on April 4th William H. Bolden, aged about 27 years. . . .To proceed to Westtown Shiloh Church.”

Daily Local News article, April 7, 1882: “William Bolden . . . came to his death from blood poisoning.”

Althea Boyce (b. 1844 – d. April 3, 1899, West Chester, PA)

Per *West Chester Morning Republican* obituary, September 4, 1899: Daughter of Henry and Priscilla Boyce, she died in the Chester County Hospital at age 55 from a strangulated hernia. Funeral was held at her North Matlack Street house, with interment in Shiloh.

The Boyce Family lived at Shiloh and assisted Westtown School for many years. Althea worked there in 1873 as did her parents for 20 years, starting in 1879.

Elvira E. Boyce (b. October 29, 1909 – d. January 13, 1911)

Daily Local News obituary, January 14, 1911: “On the 13th inst., Elvira, daughter of Paul W. and Lydia R. Boyce, aged 13 months.”

Henry Boyce (b. Maryland, 1837 – d. February 27, 1900, West Chester, PA)

He was the butcher at the Westtown School for many years, and was known as an “honest and industrious” man. Henry died of dropsy.

The Boyce Family lived at Shiloh and assisted Westtown School for many years. Henry and his wife Priscilla worked there from 1879–1899.

Viola Bernice Boyce (b. August 4, 1906 – d. March 27, 1907, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, March 22, 1907: “On the 21st inst., Viola Bernice, infant daughter of Paul and Lydia Boyce, aged 8 months.”

Paul and Lydia Boyce lost at least six children to stillbirth or in infancy. As seen below, some were named and some did not live long enough to receive a name.

Infant Boyce (d. January 13, 1913, West Chester, PA)

She was the premature stillborn daughter of Paul and Lydia Boyce.

Stanley Boyce (d. February 17, 1915, West Chester, PA)

He was the stillborn infant son of Paul and Lydia Boyce.

Infant Boyce (d. March 4, 1916, West Chester, PA)

He was the stillborn son of Paul and Lydia Boyce

Boyce, No Name, Stillborn (d. May 29, 1918)

He was the stillborn son of Paul and Lydia Boyce.

Infant Boyce (d. August 6, 1919, West Chester, PA)

He was the premature son of Paul and Lydia Boyce.

Joseph M. Boyce (b. June 4, 1852, Westtown, PA – d. May 6, 1924, West Chester, PA)

He owned and operated a small farm near Shiloh A.M.E. for many years. He was survived by his wife and several children. Funeral services were conducted at Shiloh with honors by the Knights of Pythias, No. 62, of which he was a member.

The Boyce Family lived at Shiloh and assisted Westtown School for many years. Joseph worked there in 1884.

Daily Local News obituary, May 7, 1924: “On the 6th inst., Joseph M. Boyce, in his 72d year. . . .[S]ervices at Shiloh A.M.E. Church, Westtown . . . Interment in cemetery adjoining.”

Lealia May Boyce (b.? – d. July 21, 1892)

Nothing is known of her.

Priscilla Boyce, née Samon (b. 1841, Delaware – d. December 10, 1914, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, December 15, 1914: “On December 10, 1914, Priscilla Samon, widow of the late Henry Boyce, in her 74th year. . . . Service at Shiloh A.M.E. Church, Westtown . . . Interment at Shiloh Cemetery.”

The Boyce Family lived at Shiloh and assisted Westtown School for many years. Priscilla and her husband Henry worked there from 1879–1899.

Russell Henry Boyce (b. Feb. 11 1920, West Chester, PA – d. June 9, 1923, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, June 11, 1923: “On the 9th inst., Russell Henry Boyce, infant son of Russell and Bertha Boyce, in his 4th year.”

Elizabeth Brice (b.? – d. November 30, 1886, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, December 6, 1886: “Elizabeth Brice, a colored woman, died at her home in Westtown on Tuesday, after a long illness. She was about 48 years of age.”

Alice S. Brown, née Jones (b.? – d. April 3, 1913, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, April 4, 1913: “In Westtown, on April 3d, Alice S. Brown, aged 87 years. . . .[F]uneral . . . from Shiloh A.M.E. Church. . . . Interment in cemetery adjoining.”

Emanuel Brown (b. March 10, 1853, Delaware City, DE – d. September 27, 1917, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, September 27, 1917: “Emanuel Brown, colored, aged 65 years, died yesterday afternoon, at the home of his brother, Arnold Brown, of Westtown township, after a lengthy illness. He was not married and had been working as a farm laborer for years. He was born at Delaware City and came to this section, some time ago, after being taken sick. His body will be interred at Shiloh, Westtown Township.”

He was the son of Westley Brown and Alice Jones, of Maryland.

George B. Brown (b.? – d. May 30, 1879, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, May 31, 1879: “Yesterday a colored man named George Brown, in the employ of Wm. Hoopes, Westtown township, died very suddenly . . . in the 25th year of his age.”

Rev. John Brown, (b.? – d. March 2, 1877, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, March 6, 1879:

DECEASE OF THE REV. JOHN BROWN.—This aged and very respectable colored citizen, of our borough, died on last Friday, in the 78th year of his age. During nearly all his life he devoted himself to the service of his Lord and Master, and in which he was never found lacking. He was brought to Chadd’s Ford when in his 11th year, and was placed under the care of Eli Harvey, with whom he lived for several years. For a period of 34 years he served Anthony Bolmar as steward in his popular school in [West Chester], and for a long term was pastor of the old Zion church, the building which yet stands at Everhart’s grove, but is now used for dwelling purposes [Editor’s note: it still stands today as a private home at the corner of West Miner Street and South Bradford Avenue]. He also preached in Bethel church for a time and in many ways was instrumental in establishing the cross of Christ among the people in this section. His wife survives him at the good old age of 71 years, and his descendants are 14 children, 17 grandchildren, and one great grandchild. . . . Peace to the old man’s ashes.

Daily Local News, March 9, 1879:

Yesterday the remains of the Rev. John Brown (colored) were interred in the burying ground at Westtown, the services of which were conducted at the Bethel church, of [West Chester]. The turn out was large, whit and black being represented in goodly numbers. . . . Among the prominent white citizens were P. F. Smith, C. H. Kinnard, E. P. Needles, Wm. Shields, and Maj. Wm. B. Darlington.

Lizzie May Brown (b.? – d. February 3, 1888, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, February 4, 1888: “In Westtown, on February 3, Lizzie May, daughter of John and Sadie Brown, aged 1 year. . . . funeral from the residence of her parents, on Homer Eaches’ farm, in Westtown Township.”

Rebecca Brown (b.? – d. April 11, 1856, Westtown, PA)

Village Record obituary, April 15, 1856: “Suddenly, on the morning of the 11th inst., in Westtown Township, Rebecca Brown, aged about 65 years.” Not yet confirmed as being buried in Shiloh.

Private Alfred Bye, USCT (b. 1841 – d. January 23, 1911, Philadelphia, PA)

Alfred Bye served in the Civil War, mustering into Company A, 32nd Pennsylvania Regiment, U.S. Colored Troops. He moved to Philadelphia late in his life, and died there at age 73.

Anna Elizabeth Bye (b. 1849 – d. March 31, 1909, West Chester, PA)

She was the wife of Richard Bye.

Daily Local News obituary, March 5, 1909: “At the Chester County Hospital yesterday, Annie Bye, a middle-aged colored woman, died after a short illness. She belonged to the Court of Calantha [a women’s auxiliary to the Knights of Pythias, a fraternal organization], which will look after her funeral. Her full name was Anna Elizabeth Bye, and she made her home with Hannah Jane Spriggs, 13 South Worthington Street, during the past 14 years.”

Ellen Louisa Bye (b. 1829 – d. December 18, 1881, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, December 19, 1881: “BYE.—On the 18th inst., 1881, Ellen Louisa, wife of Richard Bye, in the 52d year of her age. Funeral on Wednesday, on the 21st inst., to meet at one and leave at two o’clock, and proceed to Westtown A.M.E. Church.”

Former residence: 304 East Miner Street, West Chester.

Margaretta Bye, née Johnson (b. February 9, 1846, Westtown, PA – d. February 13, 1925, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, February 14, 1925: “Mrs. Margaretta Bye, 79, a well-known colored resident of this place, died last night at the Chester County Hospital after a lengthy sickness, due to the infirmities of old age and a complication of troubles. She was born in Westtown Township

and had resided all her life in this section. Her husband died a number of years ago and she has a daughter, Mary Bush, living at 418 Hannum Avenue, this borough.”

Private Richard Bye, USCT (b. 1828 – d. July 20, 1899, West Chester, PA)

Bye was a “well-known, quiet and industrious citizen” of West Chester. A veteran of the Civil War, Co. E., 32nd U. S. Colored Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers, he mustered in February 24, 1864, and mustered out with the company August 22, 1865. He lived a long life, only to be severely injured in a runaway accident in West Chester. He died in the Chester County Hospital after suffering for two weeks.

His funeral at the Bethel A.M.E. church was attended by a detachment of the Grey Invincibles, of Philadelphia, as an honor guard, as well as members of the George F. Smith Post No. 130, G.A.R. He was buried with full military honors.

He was the brother of Gibbons Bye, who served alongside him in the war, and Alfred Bye.

Baby Boy Chance (b. February 6, 1923 – d. February 16, 1923, West Chester, PA)

He was the Infant son of James Chance and Julia Berry.

Eliza Colwell (also spelled *Caldwell*) (b.? – d. 1900)

Daily Local News obituary, September 15, 1900: “COLWELL.—On the 13th inst., Eliza Colwell, aged 21 years. Relatives are invited to attend the funeral from the residence of her mother, Rachel Colwell, No. 248 South Matlack street, on Sunday, the 16th inst. Leave the house at 1 o’clock. Proceed to Westtown Church, where services will be held at 2 o’clock. Interment in Cemetery adjoining.”

Rachel A. Colwell, (also spelled *Caldwell*), née Boyce (b. 1858 – d. July 24, 1920, West Chester, PA)

She was the wife of Robert Colwell.

Daily Local News obituary, April 24, 1920: “In her 58th year, Rachel A. Boyce Caldwell, of West Chester, died yesterday, at the residence of Mrs. Mary Mauldin, 405 East Barnard Street. She leaves a son and one brother to mourn her loss.”

Private Robert Colwell, USCT (also spelled *Caldwell*), (b. 1839 – d. June 10, 1888, West Chester, PA)

A veteran of the U.S. Civil War, Company A, Third U.S. Colored Troops, he was buried under county expense, as he was as indigent at the time of his death.

Elizabeth A. Cooper, née Jones (b? – d. July 24, 1880, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, July 26, 1880. “In West Chester, on Saturday, July 2th, Elizabeth A. Cooper, daughter of the late Wm. Jones, and wife of John H. Cooper, in the 28th year of her age. . . . Interment at Westtown Burying Ground.”

Private John H. Cooper, USCT (b.? Maryland – d. May 2, 1900, West Chester, PA)

John Cooper, Pvt., Co. E. 24th U.S. Colored Troops, died May 2, 1900, aged 81 years.

As mentioned earlier, his tombstone was found in a field by West Goshen Township police in 1963, and moved to the township building. Its current whereabouts is unknown.

Ann Cork, née Cuff (b. 1797, Easton, MD – d. February 3, 1884, Westtown, PA)

Born in Maryland, she was employed by a Dr. and Mrs. Martin, wealthy residents of Easton, for a child’s nurse. She remained there three years, during which time she met future president General William Henry Harrison, and Charles Carroll, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

In 1808 she moved to Birmingham, Chester County, and was hired by Agnes Cook, where she remained for 23 years. With her employer Ann met the Marquis de Lafayette during his visit to West Chester in 1824 or 1825.

She was the wife of Empson Cork, and a sister of William Cuff, of West Chester.

Empson W. Cork (b. 1801 – d. April 9, 1869, Westtown, PA)

He is not yet confirmed as being buried in Shiloh.

Thomas Crosby (b. January 23, 1908 – d. 28 January 1908, Westtown, PA)

He was the infant son of William Crosby and Mary Weather.

Elizabeth Cuff (b.? – d. 1840)

Her tombstone was listed on an early 1900s survey of the cemetery.

Esther Cuff (b.? – d. 1829, West Chester, PA)

She is listed in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Lived in West Chester.

Sarah Ann Curry (b.? – d. February 7, 1853, West Goshen Township, PA)

She was the daughter of Thomas & Louisa Curry. Aged 28 years.

Private Eli Davis, USCT (b.? Virginia – d. 1893, West Chester, PA)

Son of Daniel Davis, Eli fought in the Civil War in Company B, 41st Regiment, U.S. Colored Troops. He died in 1893 from lockjaw brought on by tetanus.

He was a member of the Zion A.M.E. Church and was indigent at the time of his death. The law permitted \$35 to cover his burial expenses, as he was a veteran.

Mary E. Davis, née Smith (b. August 20, 1846, Pennsylvania – d. December 31, 1917)

Daily Local News obituary, January 1, 1918: “In West Chester, Pa., on December 31, 1917, Mary E. Davis, in the 73rd year of her age. Relatives and friends are invited to attend the funeral without further notice from her late residence, 503 E. Barnard Street, on Thursday, January 3, 1918. Services at the house at 2 o’clock p. m. Interment at Chestnut Grove Cemetery.”

Note: On her death certificate, Chestnut Grove is overwritten by Westtown. Her tombstone was listed as being in Shiloh in the 1930s.

William S. Derry (b. October 19, 1852 – d. February 18, 1853)

He was the son of Sarah Miller (Derry) and the grandson of Rev. Jeremiah Miller. Sarah was buried in West Chester Methodist Cemetery, but later moved to Oaklands Cemetery.

Adam Dill (b. 1818? – d. December 10, 1908, Goshenville, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, December 10, 1908: “On the 9th inst., Adam Dill, aged 90 years. Funeral on Friday from the undertaking parlors of J. B. Smith [West Chester], at 11 o’clock. Interment at Westtown Burying Ground.”

Ellen Dill (b.? – d. February 13, 1893, Westtown, PA)

She was the wife of Adam Dill.

Daily Local News obituary, December 15, 1893: “In Westtown township, on Monday, February 13th, Ellen Dill, wife of Adam Dill, aged about 78 years. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend the funeral, on Thursday, February 16th. To meet at the house at 2 o’clock. Also, the Star of the West Tent, No. 6 [an African American women’s community service organization in West Chester] will please attend in a body. Interment at Westtown.”

Henry Dunlap (b.? – d. 1824)

He was noted as being buried in Shiloh in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Probably poor, Henry was buried on account of “Directors” [of the Poor]. Lived in West Chester.

Ella Durnall (b. 1858 – d. August 21, 1893, Westtown, PA)

Wife of James Durnall, Ella died at her home in Westtown, where the funeral was held. She was 35 years old.

John Faucett (b. 1800? – d. October 17, 1884, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, October 18, 1884: “John Faucett (colored) aged eighty-four years, died at his home on East Market Street, this borough, Friday evening, of old age. He was well known in this borough for his doing chores of various kinds. His remains will be interred at 2 o’clock to-morrow afternoon in the Bethel Church burying ground at Westtown.”

Emma Fisher (b. July 5, 1915 – d. July 6, 1915, West Chester, PA)

The infant daughter of Reba Fisher. she died of a congenital heart defect.

Warren Garnet (b. March 7, 1905 – d. July 23, 1907, West Chester, PA)

He was the illegitimate son of Elsie Mae Garnet.

Abraham Grant (b.? – d. January 1829)

He was listed as being “Poor” in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, Chester County Historical Society. Lived in Westtown.

Child of Abraham Grant (b.? – d. March 1829)

Listed in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS, he lived in Westtown.

Daniel C. Green (b. 1843, Caroline County, Maryland – d. December 8, 1917, Westtown, PA)

He died aged 74 years on the Ogden farm in Westtown, where he occupied a tenant house for several years. Daniel was well-known for his farm work.

Hilda Hardcastle (b. July 1, 1919 – d. July 2, 1919, West Chester, PA)

She was the premature infant daughter of George Hardcastle and Elsie Mae Clarkson.

John C. Hardy (b. January 10, 1849 – July 18, 1852, Chester County, PA)

He was the son of David and Eliza Hardy, aged 3 years, 6 mos.

Child of James Hathowday (b.? – d. July 1826)

His burial information is in the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

He lived in Pennsbury.

Solomon Hazard (b.? – d. 1859)

He was on an early 1900s listing of tombstones.

Hasadiah Henry (b. 1775, Pennsylvania – d. 1852)

The wife of Rev. William Henry, her headstone was on a listing of tombstones in the early 1900s.

Her maiden name may have been Martin, though that has not yet been confirmed. The will of Jacob Martin, Westtown Township, lists a daughter Hasadiah, and the Martins were neighbors of William Henry. Hasadiah's possible sister, Sophia, married Jonathan Munt.

Louisa Henry (b.? – d. June 16, 1879, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, June 17, 1879: "At the residence of her son-in-law, John L. Shirley, in West Chester, on Monday, the 16th of June, Louisa Henry, in the 57th year of her age. Proceed to Westtown burying ground."

Private Thomas Henry (b.? – d. November 20, 1895, West Chester, PA)

He was buried at county expense. Private, Co. B. 3rd USCT.

Deacon William Henry (b.? – March 16, 1854)

He was once the preacher at the Shiloh A.M.E. Church and a prominent Deacon within the A.M.E. Church. According to A. W. Wayman's *Cyclopaedia of African Methodism* (Baltimore: Methodist Episcopal Book Depository, 1882, 78): "HENRY WILLIAM, a local deacon of West Chester, Pa., was one of the founders of the A. M. E. Church in that part of the state, and in her lived and died."

He was the husband of Hasadiah Henry, who preceded him in death, and Catharine Gardiner, who he married only a year before his own death.

Wife of Israel Hill (b.? – d. August 1826)

Her burial information is from the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS. She lived in East Bradford.

Frances S. Hilson, née Whines (b. February 12, 1898, Maryland – d. October 24, 1893, West Chester, PA)

The daughter of William Whines, she lived on Pyle's Court, West Chester.

Stillborn Hilton (d. February 28, 1919, Westtown, PA)

She was the infant daughter of Elisha Hilton and Frances Collins.

John Hudson (b.? Georgia – d. November 8, 1906, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, November 9, 1906: "John Hudson, aged 35 years, a colored man living in the tenant house of Albert Pierce, Westtown township and working on the farm of Mr. Pierce, died very suddenly late yesterday afternoon. He and his employer were husking corn. Hudson was walking towards a corn shock when he suddenly put his hand to his breast and exclaimed:—'Oh, what a pain!' Before Mr. Pierce could get to him he was dead. His employer says the deceased was a most excellent farm hand and a kind, mannerly and obliging man, as well. He hailed from Georgia. [. . .] He leaves a wife."

Daily Local News, November 10, 1906: "On the 8th inst., John Hudson, aged 35 years. Services at Shiloh Church. . . .Interment in cemetery adjoining."

Annie M. Irons (b. February 2, 1889 – d. April 16, 1892)

Daily Local News obituary, April 18, 1892: "In West Chester, Annie M. Irons, daughter of Ida Irons, aged 3 years, 2 months, and 2 weeks . . . Proceed to Westtown."

Mildred Irons (b. April 20, 1923 – d. April 23, 1923, West Chester, PA)

She was the infant daughter of Robert Segars and Elizabeth Irons.

Abraham “Abram” Jackson (b.? d – September 24, 1879, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, 25 September 1879: “JACKSON .—In Westtown Township, on Wednesday, September 24th, Abram Jackson, aged 61 Years. Funeral on Friday; meet at the house at ten o’clock; leave at eleven. Interment at Westtown A. M. E. cemetery.”

Elizabeth Jackson, née Durnell (b.? – d. February 25, 1889, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, February 26, 1889: “ELIZABETH JACKSON An aged colored lady named Elizabeth Jackson died on South Matlack Street. She was the mother of Irvin Jackson, who works on a farm near West Chester.”

Also from the *Daily Local News*, February 26, 1889: “On the 25th instant, Elizabeth Jackson, aged 76 years. Funeral Thursday, the 28th instant; services at Union M. E. Church at 10 o’clock: interment at Westtown.”

Elizabeth was from Wilmington, Delaware. She married Abraham Jackson in 1876.

John Worth Johnson (b. 1883, Dilworthtown, PA – d. April 28, 1907, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News, obituary, April 29, 1907:

“Early Sunday morning John Worth Johnson, a young single colored man aged about 25 years, was struck by a special car on the Downingtown extension of the West Chester Street Railway near Veit’s slaughterhouse and killed. He had lain down on the tracks and the car came along and took the top of his head off, from which injuries death must have ensued almost instantly. The body was lifeless when found. The young man is one of the eldest of twenty-one children of Bartley [sic; Barclay] Johnson, who lives on a small property near Kane’s sanatorium, East Bradford. All are living except the one killed and another brother.

“The young man had resided at home and worked in the woods with his father, who is a sober and industrious woodsman and fence builder. On Saturday young Johnson came to

West Chester to assist a farmer, as usual on Saturday afternoon, to unload some brewers' grains at the P. R. R. station. He was paid by his father on Friday evening, and it is supposed imbibed freely. He had done so before and was in the habit of not returning home until his father was in bed. Nothing was thought of the matter at home and his parents and family were much surprised when they received word that he had been killed. It is said that he was seen about midnight in the western section of West Chester apparently on his way home. His movements after that are uncertain. His father says he supposed his son fell on the tracks and concluded to rest, not knowing of the special car which came along probably while he was asleep. He does not blame the trolley employes [sic].

“On Sunday morning Deputy Coroner S. B. Russell was notified of the fatal accident. The remains of the dead man were taken to the morgue of an undertaker on East Gay street and thence the Coroner and his physician went to investigate the affair. The testimony of witnesses was heard, and the Coroner decided that there was no need to empanel a jury, as it was apparent there was no foul play and the accident was evidently the result of the young man's own indiscretion.

“The elder Johnson was sent for and came to West Chester at once to make arrangements for the funeral.

“A singular coincidence in connection with the accident was that when the body was taken to the undertaker's, Mr. W. B. Smith mentioned in his home that there was a dead young colored man brought in whom no one seemed to know. Susan Johnson, who works for the family of Joseph B. Smith went in to see the remains and at once recognized the man as her brother. An aunt also works at this place. The sister took the sad news to her parents in East Bradford.

“John was a quiet, inoffensive man, with the one fault. The funeral will take place on Tuesday, and interment made at Shiloh, in Westtown township. As already stated he is one of 21 children. His father is about 72 years of age.”

Lillian Johnson (b.? – d. January 19, 1911, West Chester, PA)

Apparently an orphan about 11 years of age in the care of the Children's Society of Philadelphia, Lillian was burned in an accident and died at the Chester County Hospital.

Margaret A. Johnson (b. September 11, 1867, Westtown, PA – d. December 29, 1911, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, December 30, 1911: "Friday morning, just before daybreak, a useful and helpful life was brought to an earthly conclusion by the death, after a prolonged and wearisome illness, of Margaret A. Johnson, at her home on Poplar street, this borough. While her sphere was humble, her standard [w]as high, honest, industrious, and unassuming. She was ever faithful to the interests of her employers, comforting those in distress and constant in her endeavors to lead others to a higher and better life, she wielded an elevating influence among her associates who will sadly miss her cheering presence."

Samuel Johnson (b. 1833, Virginia – d. March 15, 1907, Philadelphia, PA)

Samuel Johnson was a veteran of the American Civil War. He may have been with Company E, 19th USCT. He was listed in the 1890 Veterans Census in Media, but he was unable to verify his war service then, due to lost enlistment papers. Not listed on official records as being part of that company he may have enlisted under an alias. He was a member of the Bethel A.M.E., where he was also the janitor. He was also a member of the George F. Smith Post of the G.A.R.

Samuel died in Philadelphia Hospital after a brief bout of pneumonia. His funeral was held three days later. He was buried at county expense at Shiloh.

Sara E. Johnson, née Watkins (b. March 23, 1844, Chester County, PA – d. February 16, 1917, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, February 19, 1917: "The death is announced of Sarah E. Johnson, colored, of 102 South Poplar street, this place. She was 72 years of age and leaves two sons who are employed in the Sharples plant. Her husband died a number of years ago. On the 16th inst., Sarah E. Johnson, in her 72d year. . . . Interment at Westtown."

Sylvester Johnson (b.? – d. May 15, 1884)

Daily Local News obituary, May 15, 1884: “Died of Hemorrhages.—Last night SYLVESTER JOHNSON, a colored man who has been attending the masons and bricklayers about West Chester for a long time, died from hemorrhages of the lungs after an illness of short duration.”

Daily Local News, May 17, 1884: “JOHNSON. — In West Chester, on Thursday, May 15, SYLVESTER JOHNSON, aged 30 years. Funeral from the residence of his aunt, Mrs. LIZZIE JONES, East Gay street, on Sunday, to leave the house at 2 o’clock p.m. Interment at Westtown Cemetery.”

David E. Johnston (b. January 29, 1849, Manhattan, New York City – d. December 21, 1853, Chester County, PA)

He was the son of Enoch & Rosanna Johnston.

Lydia Jones (b. 1806? – d. Jan 13, 1887, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, January 15, 1887: “In West Chester, on January 13, 1887, Lydia Jones, aged 80 years. . . .Interment at Westtown Burying Ground.”

Private Nathan C. Jones, USCT (b.? – d. August 4, 1888, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, August 6, 1888: “Saturday night, Nathan Jones, an aged colored man, who did his service for the Union in the late war, died at his residence on East Gay Street [106 E. Gay], West Chester, of heart failure and dropsy. For a long time he suffered from acute rheumatism, contracted in the war, and for which he drew a small pension. He leaves a wife and two children. He did odd chores around town, taking care of offices, etc., and did his duty honestly and faithfully.”

“In West Chester, August 4, 1888, Nathan C. Jones, in the 54th year of his age. Relatives and friends are invited to attend the funeral from his late residence on East Gay street, West Chester, on Tuesday, August 7, to meet at 2 and leave at 3 o’clock to proceed to Westtown Shiloh Church, where services will be held.”

Private, Co. A, 6th USCT. Absent, on furlough, at muster out.

William Jones (b.? – d. August 15, 1878)

Daily Local News obituary, August 16, 1878: “In West Chester, on August 15th, William Jones, in the 84th year of his age . . . proceed to Westtown Burying Ground.”

Ann Elizabeth Laws (b. January 3, 1851, Chester County, PA – d. July 9, 1852, Thornbury Township, PA)

She was the infant daughter of Charles P. Laws and Anna Maria Laws.

Deacon John Laws (b.? – d. May 5, 1902, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News, December 4, 1893: “[John Laws] is a well-known figure to many of West Chester’s residents. John has lived in the same house for twenty-five years, and he has been a deacon in the Shiloh A.M.E. Church, Westtown, for more than twenty years. He is a post and railer by occupation and there are few fences in his township that have not been erected by him.”

Daily Local News, January 16, 1901: “[John Laws] expects to die in the home where he has lived for fifty years, just north of Westtown School, on the Forsythe farm.”

Daily Local News obituary, May 7, 1902: “Died on the 5th inst., John Laws, aged 81 years. . . . Services at Westtown Church. . . .Interment in adjoining cemetery.”

The Laws family served Westtown School for 75 years going back to 1825. John and Margaret were working there as of 1855 in the laundry.

Margaret Laws (b.? – d. April 8, 1902, Philadelphia, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, April 10, 1902: “On 8th inst., Margaret Laws, of Philadelphia, wife of John Laws, formerly of Westtown, in her 78th year. . . .Interment at Shiloh Burying Grounds, Westtown.”

The Laws family served at Westtown School over a period of 76 years. John and Margaret were working there as of 1855 in the laundry, and Margaret continued working there until 1901, just a year before her death.

William Laws (b. January 4, 1851, Chester County, PA – d. September 12, 1852, Thornbury Township, PA)

He was the infant son of Charles P. and Anna Maria Laws.

Joseph Lewis (b.? – d. November 23, 1884, East Goshen Township, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, November 26, 1884: “In East Goshen, Sunday November 23, Joseph Lewis. . . .Interment at Shilo [sic] Church, Westtown.”

Daily Local News, November 28, 1884: “The remains of Joseph Lewis, the well-known colored man who died in East Goshen, a few days ago, were buried Thanksgiving at Shiloh Church, Westtown. Rev. Lewis Hood, pastor of the Bethel A. M. E. Church, officiated at the funeral and spoke at the house of mourning.”

Jacob Martin (b.? – d. June 2, 1815)

He was listed as having died and was buried in the Gilpin Register, Chester County Historical Society. Further verification that he is buried in Shiloh needed.

“MARTIN, JACOB. Westtown. (colored).

May 27, 1815. June 13, 1815.

To wife Sarah all estate, real & personal, during life.

To dau. Hazadiah Martin, after wife’s Decease, all estate,
she paying to dau. Keziah Berry £5, and to my gr.chil.

Rhoda, Phebe, Martin & Sophia Munt £5, to be divided when 21.

Executor: Dau. Hazadiah Martin.

Wits: Titus Taylor, Jesse Mercer.”

Sarah Martin

She is not yet confirmed as being buried at Shiloh. Wife of Jacob Martin.

Frances Ann Mason (b. June 30, 1845, Dover, DE – d. January 24, 1906, Westtown, PA)

She died in extreme poverty.

Rachel A. Maston, née Mauldin (b. September 29, 1844, Pennsylvania – d. December 21, 1923, Westtown, PA)

She was the daughter of Amos Mauldin and Sarah Walker.

Daily Local News obituary, December 22, 1923: “Mrs. Rachel A. Matson, 78, colored, died last night at the home of her daughter, Mrs. John Brown, of near Shiloh, Westtown Township, following a long sickness. Her husband died a number of years ago.”

Daily Local News, December 24, 1923: “Services for the late Mrs. Rachel A. Maston, who died a few days ago in this place, will take place this afternoon at Shiloh Church, Thornbury [sic: Westtown] township, and the interment will be made in the cemetery near the church, of which she had long been a member.”

Rebecca Maulden (b. 1828 – d. Mar 21, 1921, Radnor, PA)

She was the wife of Civil War veteran James Maulden, who was buried at Hampton National Cemetery, Virginia.

William McDola (b.? – d. July 4, 1919, West Chester PA)

Daily Local News obituary, July 7, 1919: “William McDola, aged about 53 years, a laborer, died in the Chester County Hospital late Saturday night after a short sickness with valvular disease of the heart. His former home was near Unionville, in which section he had worked for some time.”

Franklin McGaw (July 6, 1915, Pennsylvania – March 29, 1923, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, March 30, 1923: “In West Chester, on March 29, Franklin, son of Albert McGaw, in the 8th year of his age . . . Interment at Shiloh Cemetery.”

Lillian May McGaw (b.? – d. May 23, 1905, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, May 24, 1905: “In Westtown, on May 23d, Lillian May McGaw, in the 5th year of her age. . . . Interment at Shiloh.”

Maggie Bailey McGaw (b. April 3, 1876, Milltown, DE – d. May 25, 1919, Paoli, PA)

She was the wife of Albert McGaw, daughter of Jacob and Annie Bailey.

Rev. Jeremiah Miller (b. 1767, Kent County, MD – d. ?, West Chester, PA)

He is not yet confirmed as being buried at Shiloh.

MILLER, JEREMIAH, a nephew of Rev. Jeremiah Miller, was born a slave in Kent County, Maryland. He left there when he was a young man for Pennsylvania, where he got someone to assist him in purchasing his freedom. After he obtained the freedom of his body he thought it was time for him to seek for the freedom of his soul. He then obtained it and was licensed as a local preacher, and settled in the town of West Chester, Pa., where he spent his days. On returning from church one Sunday he was taken ill. and lying down upon the bed said to his friends 'My work is done.' He then fell asleep."

Source: A. W. Wayman, *Cyclopaedia of African Methodism*. Baltimore: Methodist Episcopal Book Depository, 1882. 107.

Wife of Mingo Powell (b.? – d. July 1829)

Burial information from account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS. She lived in West Goshen.

Wilma Prisbury (b. May 16, 1928, Pennsylvania – d. October 27, 1928, Westtown, PA)

She was the infant daughter of William and Lenora Prisbury who died of rickets.

Sarah Rebecca Raymond (b. 1853? – d. January 10, 1894)

West Chester Morning Republican obituary, January 11, 1894: "In Westtown, on January 11, 1894, Sarah Rebecca Raymond, aged 41 years."

Robert H. Ricks (b. May 23, 1910 – d. August 5, 1910, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News, August 8, 1910: “The funeral of Robert H. Ricks, a child aged two months, was held yesterday at Shiloh Church. Rev. J. C. King, of St. Paul’s Baptist Church, conducted services.”

Private Ephraim John Roberts (alias John E. Roberts) USCT (b. ? – d. April 27, 1890, Westtown, PA)

Pvt., Co. A, 127th USCT.

Daily Local News obituary, April 29, 1890: “Ephraim Roberts, aged 76 years, colored, was found dead in his little room over an old unused spring house on [William] P. Thomas’ creamery farm, Westtown, yesterday morning. He was last seen the evening previous feeding pigs on the place, a chore he loved dearly to attend to. He did not appear at the troughs as usual the next morning, and Frank Thomas, a brother of the owner of the farm, went to see what detained the old man. On entering the room he discovered the dead body of Ephraim, reclining half-dressed on the settee, showing, that he must have died while in the act of dressing. There was no one with him, his wife having gone to the Chester County Home several weeks ago, owing to sickness and general debility. The old man was once a soldier in the war and carried to his grave at Shiloah [sic] Church to-day the mark of a bullet which grazed the top of his head. He was a quiet old man and had lived for twenty years or more around the farm where he died. He has a sister, Joanna Watkins, living in West Chester.”

Daily Local News, April 30, 1890: “Old man Ephraim Roberts, the colored soldier who died suddenly on W. P. Thomas’ farm, Westtown, was given a military funeral yesterday at Shiloh Cemetery, that township.”

John Robinson

Estate notice, *American Republican*, January 22, 1850. He is not yet confirmed as being buried at Shiloh.

Clara May Sewell (b. November 29, 1906 – d. September 19, 1907, Westtown, PA)

She was the daughter of Joseph Sewell and Emma Brown.

Ann Grubb Smith (b. 1791 – d. March 1, 1884, Westtown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, March 1, 1884: “On March 1, at the residence of her son-in-law, George Faucett, Westtown, Ann Grubb Smith, relict of Isaac Smith, in the 92nd year of her age.”

Charles B. Smith (b. 1805 – d. December 3, 1877, West Chester, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, December 4, 1877: “SMITH. — In West Chester, on the 3rd inst., Chas. B. Smith, aged 72 years. Funeral from his late residence, East Barnard street, on Thursday, 6th inst., to meet at the house at 1 P.M. Interment at Westtown.”

Dianna Smith (b.? – d. 1848)

She was listed in a census of tombstones in the early 1900s.

Earl Willard Spangler (d. October 17, 1914, West Chester, PA)

He was the stillborn son of Charles James Spangler and Irene Estelle Thorn

Elizabeth Virginia Stewart (d. November 10, 1915, West Chester, PA)

She was the infant daughter of Albert Stewart and Ada Denby.

Elizabeth Vanleer (b.? – d. December 24, 1912)

She was a widow, aged about 36 years.

Elizabeth Warn (b.? – d. 1816)

She was listed among tombstones present in the early 1900s. This may be a misreading of Elizabeth West.

John Wesley Watson (b.? – d. December 20, 1908, Westtown, PA)

He died of tuberculosis, aged 54 years.

Elizabeth West (b.? – d. 1819)

She was listed among tombstones present in the early 1900s.

Mary J. West (b.? – d. 1860)

She was listed among tombstones present in the early 1900s.

Charles Wheatley (b.? – d.?)

He was a U.S. Civil War Veteran, Private, Co. D., 4th USCT (Baltimore, Maryland). While in USCT, Charles was reduced in rank from corporal to private for laziness and bad conduct and transferred to Naval Service April 18, 1864 in the rank of Landsman. He served aboard the schooner USS *Matthew Vassar*, which served in the blockade of the Confederacy, and the store ship USS *Wyandank*. Charles was discharged from the Naval Service on July 1, 1865.

He married the much younger Eliza Parker after 1880. Eliza was widowed by 1900 and died in 1955 after living in West Chester for 60 years. The commencement of her widow's pension in 1894 may indicate that this is Charles's date of death, and the date of his death listed in the Chester County files (1930) is inaccurate. No other information is provided.

Anna B. Williams

She was listed among tombstones present in the early 1900s.

Private Joseph L. Williams, USCT (b.?, Maryland – d. February 17, 1889, Norristown, PA)

Daily Local News obituary, February 18, 1889: "Joseph Williams, an aged colored hod carrier of West Chester, died at the Norristown Hospital on Sunday, aged 68 years."

Daily Local News, February 20, 1889: "Joseph L. Williams, of West Chester, whose death at the Norristown Hospital was mentioned in the News of Monday, was a member of the Union A.M.E. Church, of this place. . . .The interment will be at Westtown burying ground."

He was a veteran of the Civil War, Co. K, 2nd Regiment Cavalry, United States Colored Troops.

Rebecca Williams

She was listed among tombstones present in the early 1900s.

Amelia E. Winters (b. 1871 – d. April 22, 1889, West Goshen Township, PA)

She died young. Her funeral was held from the residence of Isaac Winters.

Private Isaac J. Winters, USCT (b. May 25, 1828, West Goshen Township, PA – d. April 7, 1911, West Chester, PA)

Through research, the Westtown Township Historical Commission learned more about the life of Isaac Winters buried in the Shiloh AME cemetery. He served in the 43rd U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) Infantry “F” Company during the Civil War.

Born May 25, 1828, Isaac was the second youngest child of free African-American farmers Jesse and Margaret Jackson Winters in West Goshen Township. He and his siblings, Mary Ann, Rebecca Jane, Malinda, Lydia and John received aid for school supplies and fees to attend school in West Goshen, according to the 1835 Poor School Children records in the Chester County archives.

The 1850 census says Isaac worked as a farm laborer in Westtown for John Ingram, and later for an African-American resident in the township, Richard Bye, possibly related to Alfred Bye, whose broken tombstone was found in the Shiloh cemetery many years ago. He also worked for Westtown resident Truman Forsythe and, according to a June 28, 1864 local newspaper article, Isaac was boarding with Forsythe when he was drafted.

Isaac married Margaret P. (her surname is not known at this time), who lived near Westtown Station, but the exact date is unknown. According to the 1870 census, his children Eliza, 14; Charles, 10; Anna, 7; Clara, 3; and Lewis E., 1, were living at home. By 1880 only Clara and Lewis E. were listed.



Civil War weapons attributed to Isaac Winters. Collage by Jim Guterl; photos of armaments courtesy Gettysburg College.

African-American men were not allowed to serve in the Union Army until after the Emancipation Proclamation. Enlistment of African-American soldiers rose sharply after the Confederate army rampaged through the Gettysburg area in 1863, capturing and enslaving many free men. However, Isaac was not among those who enlisted. He was drafted into the Army and his military records say he was 5'9" tall and 35 years old at the time of conscription.

We do know from a document from the National Archives that Isaac failed to report for service and was arrested April 1863 by a John Winterbotham. Another document states he joined the 43rd U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) F Company Aug. 8, 1863 and trained at Camp William Penn, in what is now Cheltenham Township. Wounded in the shoulder on July 30, 1864 at Cemetery Hill at the Battle of the Crater, Petersburg, Virginia, Isaac was hospitalized, returned to service, and mustered out in Brownsville, Texas, October 20, 1865.

Soldiers were not allowed to retain their arms when they mustered out unless they purchased them outright. Isaac must have had the means because his rifle, scabbard, bayonet, and belt buckle were found in a closet in Westtown years later and were purchased by a Civil War collector, Angelo Scarlato, in Gettysburg. For a time these items were on display at the Gettysburg College Museum.

For 68 years, Isaac served as sexton at Shiloh A.M.E. Church. As far as is known, Isaac did not suffer permanent disability from his wartime shoulder injury because two years after the war, on June 1, 1867, he won a first prize of \$2 for being the fastest corn husker at the Chester County Fair, held on what is now part of West Chester University grounds.

Isaac died April 7, 1911 of myocarditis at Chester County Hospital, at “82 years, 10 months and 7 days,” according to an obituary in the *Daily Local News*. The Liberty Cornet Band played at his funeral, held at the home of his nephew John Williams in West Chester. Isaac was buried at Shiloh A.M.E. Cemetery with full fanfare from the GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) George F. Smith Post No. 130, whose members were African-American Civil War veterans. He was buried next to his wife Margaret, who died in 1897 at age 62, and Amelia Winters, who died in 1889 at age 18. (It is not known what relation Amelia was to Isaac. Her obituary did state her wake was at the home of Isaac Winters.)

Margaret Winters, née Jackson (b. 1794 – d. September 27, 1890, Westtown, PA)

She died at the home of her son Isaac in Westtown at age 96.

Margaret P. Winters (b.? – d. February 12, 1897, Oakbourne, PA)

West Chester Morning Republican obituary, February 13, 1897: “Yesterday morning at three o’clock Mrs. Winters died at the late residence of her husband, after an illness of several months with a complication of diseases. A few month [sic] ago the deceased was treated at the Chester County Hospital. She was about fifty years of age and was known to nearly everyone in the section where she died.”

Mary Ann Young (b. 1830 – d. 1850)

The daughter of Richard Young, her tombstone was noted as being present in the early 1900s.

Unknown Servant Girl (b.? – d. May 1825)

An unnamed servant girl of Westtown landowner Jesse Mercer, she was buried at Shiloh according to the account books of Amos Darlington, cabinetmaker, MS 3185, CCHS.

Six Unknown Civil War Soldiers

According to a Chester County Veterans' Schedule prepared in the 1930s as part of a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project, there were eight unknown veteran burials in Shiloh. Two, Ephraim Roberts and Nathan C. Jones, were later identified, leaving six unidentified. All known veterans' burials are after 1882. An 1882 article noting that graves of veterans in the cemetery were decorated by the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) would indicate additional veterans' burials before 1882, but more information is needed to determine who these unknowns are.

Veteran's Burials Listed in Error

On the previously mentioned Chester County Veterans' Schedule, a number of soldiers were listed as being buried in Shiloh that proved to be in error for one reason or another. In the interest of clarity and for those who may wish to do further research, those errors follow below.

William A. Alexander (b.? – d. 1864)

His widow, Marjory J. Alexander lived in Westtown, and died in 1921 and was buried in Zion Cemetery. Mrs. Alexander was white; it is unlikely her husband was buried in Shiloh.

Private George Derry, USCT (b. June 20, 1848, Pennsylvania – d. June 27, 1930, Concordville, PA)

Derry, of Co. K, 24th Regiment, USCT, is actually buried at the Thornbury A.M.E. Cemetery, Thornbury Township, Delaware County.

Daniel C. Green

The Daniel C. Green buried in Shiloh is not a veteran. Daniel G. Green, to whom the County records mean to refer and with whom the veterans' schedule confuse Daniel C. Green, died in 1890 and is buried elsewhere.

Private James Maulden, USCT (b.? – d. November 22, 1913)

A private in Co. K, 45th Regiment, USCT, he is actually buried in Hampton National Cemetery, Hampton, Virginia.

Sergeant Evan Simmonds , USCT (b.? – d. January 29, 1908)

Sergeant Simmonds is buried at the Hayti Church Cemetery, Marple, Delaware County.

Westminster Presbyterian Church Memorial Garden

The Westminster Presbyterian Church, 10 West Pleasant Grove Road, has cremains of more than 100 people in its Memorial Garden located at the northeast corner of the church building. As of late 2019, the church is looking into a future expansion.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS, PAST & PRESENT

The James Gibbons Classical School, 1780–?

James Gibbons was born in 1723 on the Gibbons Plantation in Westtown Township. In 1794, he sold 600 acres of his land for the establishment of Westtown School. Prior to this at his home he had conducted a classical school for boys, with emphasis on French, Latin and Greek. As he and his wife Eleanor had six boys and six girls, potential candidates for his school were near at hand.

In 1780, James Gibbons ran a classical school on Pine Street in Philadelphia but, because he didn't enjoy city life, he soon returned to his former role as schoolteacher and farmer in Westtown.

Mercer's School, 1806–1856?

Listed on Painter and Bowen's 1847 "Map of Chester County, Pennsylvania," is "Mercer's S.H." near the southwest corner of the intersection of today's South Concord and Oakbourne Roads.

Westtown residents Thomas and Lydia Mercer donated the land on which this little schoolhouse was built in 1806. The 1806 deed found in the Chester County Archives indicates that Thomas Mercer donated approximately one-quarter acre of ground to his heirs and William Hawley, Abel Otley, Titus Taylor, and Thomas Burnett and their heirs “ . . . to and for the use benefit and convenience of a school lot and no other intent or purpose whatsoever and the said Thomas Mercer and his heirs the said lot or piece of land above described.”

The earliest records that confirm the schoolhouse being in use is the Chester County *Poor School Children’s Teacher’s Bills 1805–1837*. These records contain bills submitted to the County Commissioner’s Office by teachers seeking reimbursement for teaching and providing supplies to poor school children. There are several records for the year 1813 from Jesse Mercer’s schoolhouse. Jesse Mercer was Thomas Mercer’s son.

In 1819, the “Subscribers” to the school enacted a resolution that only “Subscribers” can benefit from the school and families had to indicate how many children would be attending. A subscriber was a parent who paid a monthly tuition fee to the teacher. Subscriber’s names included Thomas Henderson, George Matlack, John Forbes, Joseph Matlack, James Hannum, Jesse Mercer, Obed Otley, Benedict Darlington, James Henderson, Robert Yearsley, Isaac Hall, John Davis, James Faucett, Titus Taylor and others. The school seems to have been supported by local farmers interested in the education of their children.

From subsequent newspaper accounts, all did not go well with Mercer School. *The Village Record* of May 31, 1826 carried an advertisement: “60 DOLLARS REWARD” to anyone who could “ . . . identify the person, or persons, who had broken into Mercer’s School on two occasions and had destroyed school property.” The advertisement was signed by Abel Otley and Jesse Mercer, two local farmers.

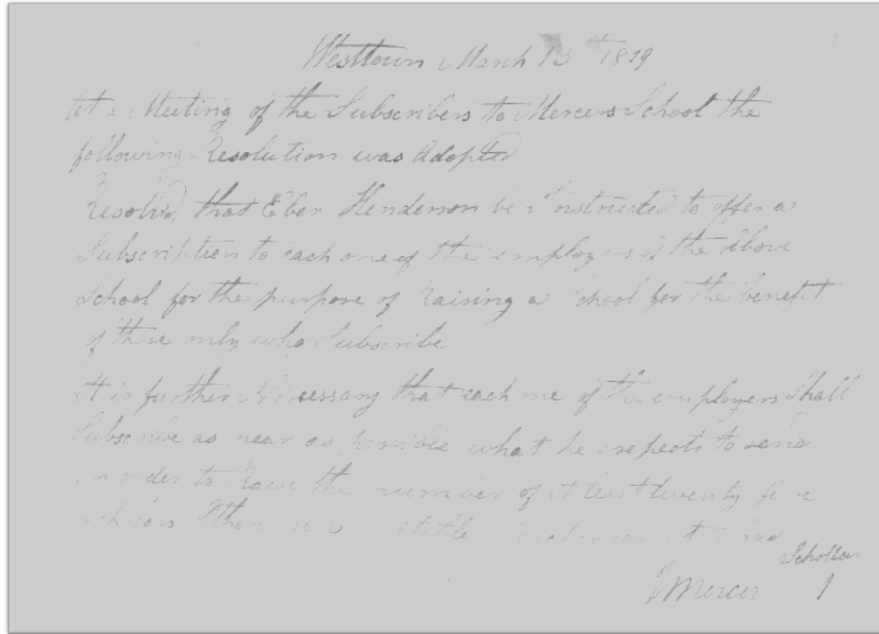
An 1856 map of Chester County is the last record found of the schoolhouse still located on or very near to the Oakbourne Mansion gatehouse. In September of 2018 the Westtown Township Historical Commission inspected the interior and exterior of the gatehouse to attempt to determine if it was the schoolhouse or part of the schoolhouse, but did not find definitive evidence to prove or disprove this theory. Was the school torn down or was it incorporated into another building in the vicinity?

In 1857, the property where the school likely was located and the surrounding property was sold to John Hulme. The deed contains the names of some descendants of the families listed in the original deed of the school property, as well as some of the names of subscribers to the school noted above, but no mention of the school.

In 1882, James Charles Smith, a wealthy Philadelphia lawyer, and his wife Heloise Drexel Smith purchased 143 acres from Hulme. A newspaper article published that year, found in the Chester County Historical Society finally provided the proof that the Oakbourne mansion gatehouse/tenant house was once the Mercer Schoolhouse. The article reads in part:

“More Improvements: James Smith, of Philadelphia, who recently purchased . . . farm in Westtown township, besides improving the buildings which we have already noted, he is now cleaning out the decayed trees, underbrush, etc., from the woods, grading the grounds and will make it a beautiful grove, and is also widening the public road in front of the grounds. Mr. Smith will also put an English clock on his stable, and is fitting up the old school house on the property which is one of the oldest in this section, in elegant style for a tenant house.”

This was the beginning of the beautiful Oakbourne Park that we all enjoy today.



Meeting notes of Mercer School subscribers (transcription below). *Chester County Historical Society.*

“Westtown March 19, 1819

At a meeting of the subscribers of the Mercer School, the following resolution was adopted. Resolved that Eber Henderson be instructed to offer a subscription to each one of the employers of the above school for the purpose of raising a school for the benefit of those only who subscribe.

It is further necessary that each one of the employers shall subscribe as near as possible what he expects to send in order to raise the number of at least twenty-five scholars. Otherwise a suitable teacher cannot be had.”

Scholars

<i>Thomas Henderson ¼</i>	<i>J. Mercer 1</i>	<i>James Henderson ½</i>
<i>George Matlack 1</i>	<i>Jonathan Millison ½</i>	<i>Abel Otley ½</i>
<i>John ? ½</i>	<i>Gideon Miles 1 ½</i>	<i>Robert Yearsley ¼</i>
<i>Joseph Matlack ½</i>	<i>James Walton 1</i>	<i>John Hickman? ½</i>

<i>James Hannum ¼</i>	<i>? Otley 1</i>	<i>William Wickersham ½</i>
<i>Francis Hickman 1</i>	<i>Benedict Darlington 1 ½</i>	<i>? Eachus ¼</i>
<i>Isaac Hall ½</i>	<i>John Davis ¼</i>	<i>Robert Anderson ¼</i>
<i>James Faucet ⅓</i>	<i>William Slaughter ½</i>	<i>Samuel ? 1 ½</i>
<i>Titus Taylor ½</i>	<i>William Yearsley ½</i>	

Westtown School, 1799–Present

Westtown Boarding School was founded by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) for the education of children who were members of the Society. The founders envisioned a guarded education, one that emphasized spiritual formation in the manner of Friends while offering useful knowledge and skills to the students, in a setting characterized by simplicity and frugality.

In 1794, after careful search and study for several years, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends bought a 600-acre farm in Westtown Township from James Gibbons for \$16,359, the same land that comprises the school’s campus today. The Gibbons’ farm, or “plantation” as it was sometimes called, had many advantages as a site for the Yearly Meeting’s school. It was largely wooded with trees suitable for building purposes; it had sites suitable for using water power for saw and gristmills; it had clay deposits from which bricks were made to build the first school building; and it was some 20 miles from the temptations of city life in Philadelphia, then a full-day’s travel.

Travel to and from Philadelphia was by horseback or by horse-drawn vehicles until 1833 when a railroad was completed connecting West Chester and Philadelphia via Paoli. In 1858 the Media branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad came to within less than two miles of the school. Street Road, the first name of the railroad station, was changed to Westtown in 1880. The “high speed” trolley line from West Chester to Philadelphia was opened in 1899. Milltown, on this line, was within a mile and a half of the school. The automobile and hard surfaced roads significantly reduced the travel time between the school and Philadelphia.

The first students admitted (boys and girls ranging in age from 9 to 20 years old) were all Quaker and had to board. They arrived from parts of Chester County and surrounding areas: Philadelphia, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

When it first opened on May 6, 1799, Westtown Boarding School admitted 20 girls and 20 boys. They were housed in the large multi-purpose brick building which had just been completed at a cost of \$26,431. By January 1, 1800, the number of boys and girls enrolled in the school each reached 100 making a student body of 200 students.

Over the years enrollment has sometimes fluctuated, but in more recent years the school's total enrollment (Lower, Middle and Upper Schools) averages 650 students. According to school records, an estimated 28,000 students have attended Westtown from 1799 to the present, and the school currently has close to 6,500 living alumni. With this long history, Westtown School is believed to be the oldest continuously operating coeducational boarding school in the country.

In the early 1920s, the school admitted students who had only one parent who was a Quaker, and in 1933, the school opened to non-Quakers. Over 200 years later, Westtown School is an independent coeducational pre-kindergarten through 12th grade Quaker day and boarding school with a diverse student body. In recent years, Upper School students have come from 20 or more different states and more than 25 countries. In 2018-'19, 8 percent of students at Westtown were Quaker.

Given its longevity there are many notable stories connected to the school. One concerns a president of the United States. On a crisp November morning in 1967 former President Dwight D. Eisenhower was scheduled to speak at the School Assembly. Neither of his granddaughters, then students at the school, knew he was coming. The teacher in the Lower School, in which one of the girls was enrolled, took her class to the playing field to see a helicopter land. As Eisenhower exited the helicopter the delighted granddaughter rushed up and kissed him.

Boys and girls were carefully segregated in the early years, but the curriculum was much the same for both. Subjects taught included grammar, reading, arithmetic, writing, geography, bookkeeping (for boys and girls), surveying (for boys) and sewing (for girls). The school

archives includes a large body of needlework — samplers and embroidered globes — made by Westtown girls.



World globes sewn and embroidered by female Westtown School students as part of the geography curriculum in the 1800s. *Photo courtesy Westtown School Archives.*

Botany, astronomy, drawing, and gardening were explored outside of class time. In 1875 history classes made history by becoming coeducational, and five years later girls and boys began to eat together in the dining rooms. Soon after this all classes became coeducational.

The school issued its first diploma in 1862 after the curriculum was reorganized to include a specific course of study leading to a diploma. Prior to this it was common practice for girls and boys to spend one or more years at Westtown with no thought of completing a particular curriculum. The first graduating exercises were held in 1863 at which time three girls and four boys graduated. The school's current college-preparatory curriculum is set in an environment in

which students are empowered to discover their unique gifts and guiding purpose. The school's mission is to inspire and prepare its graduates to be stewards of a better world.

Today's main building was completed in 1888 at a cost of \$321,000. With alterations and renovations over the years, it houses the Upper School including classrooms, the dining room, library, and dormitories. Other buildings on campus include Middle School, Lower School, the Meeting House, Guerster House and Balderston House (both dormitories), the Center for the Living Arts, the Science Center (a LEED Gold certified building expanded and renovated in 2013) and the Athletic Center, completed in 2007.

Friends were slow to include art, drama and music in the school's curriculum, choosing in the early years to emphasize more academic subjects and activities. But art classes were added to the curriculum in 1920, and from that time forward the fine arts and performing arts have grown to have major roles in the life of the school.

George G. Whitney (1891–1979), Westtown's first director of fine arts from 1920 to 1956, left a legacy of paintings and drawings of the school and campus, many of which are in the school's collection today. Whitney was a friend and colleague of well-known American artist, N.C. Wyeth (1882–1945), of nearby Chadds Ford. None of Wyeth's children attended Westtown School, but the early works of both Carolyn and Andrew were exhibited at the school; daughter Ann gave a piano recital for Westtown students, and Wyeth himself judged a student art contest at the school for many years. One of N. C. Wyeth's best-known murals, *The Giant* (1923), hangs in the school's dining room, a memorial from the Class of 1910 to William Engle, a classmate who died in 1916. Engle was an artist who had studied with Wyeth.

While the arts were late in coming to the school, outdoor recreation was emphasized from the earliest days, and skating, sledding, swimming, canoeing, camp suppers and camping were noteworthy features of Westtown School life. In 1866 a swimming pond was built adjacent to an earlier skating pond. The sites of these activities were obliterated when the Westtown Lake was opened in 1912. The picturesque Lake House at the edge of the lake had been completed the previous year.



Westtown Lake House. *Photo courtesy Westtown School Archives.*

The 14.5-acre lake continues to be a place of recreation for the school community as well as a site for environmental studies. The campus also includes playing fields, stadium tennis courts, and an all-weather track for athletic competition and recreation.

The Westtown Arboretum was started in 1896 and considerably enlarged in 1921. It is noteworthy for the number of species of trees. The eight-acre Pine Forest located northeast of the Old Dam was started in the early 1900s and adds to the natural assets of the school. (The Old Dam was part of Chester Creek, built north of what is now Westtown Lake and east of Westtown Road.) With the exception of a few trees in the South Woods, the last original timber had been

lumbered by 1900. Over the years several botany teachers were responsible for protecting these and extending the natural beauties of the school. Fortunately, both the North Woods and the South Woods have been carefully tended for many years.

Some of Westtown's 600 acres have been farmed since the school first purchased the land in the 1790s. Either by arrangement with tenant farmers or self-management, the school has benefitted from the land as a source of food as well as revenue for the school. Students have often been involved with the farm, and agricultural studies were part of the curriculum for a time. School records show that in 1943 — with the help of the students, particularly at harvest — Westtown produced fully one-half the food the school family needed. A school-run dairy operation supplied milk for the dining room, and for sale to local dairy suppliers. It closed in the late 1960s. Westtown School Dairy milk bottles are popular collector's items.



Glass milk bottles marked Westtown School Farm. *Photo by Terence Roberts, courtesy Westtown School Archives.*

The farm continues to provide an educational opportunity for today's students. The one-acre student-run organic farm helps students learn about food sovereignty by building an intact food shed through composting, planting, harvesting, and seed saving for the school's kitchen. School-grown produce is often served in the dining room.

In 2000, Peter Flynn moved his farming business to Westtown School where he leases 180 acres. Pete's Produce stand is found along Route 926 (East Street Road), while the produce growing on surrounding acreage (including Pete's well-known sweet corn) continues the long tradition of farming at Westtown School. Each year, he sets aside some acreage to be planted in crops that are harvested by the Chester County Food Bank.

The continuing quality of Westtown's educational program and the beauty of its physical setting have been maintained by several factors. Among these factors is the attention given to the school by the committee under whose direction it operates, the dedication and ability of the school staff and the loyalty and financial support of the alumni and of other interested persons.

Westtown School's long history is well-documented in several publications from the 19th and 20th centuries. These histories (and catalogs listing students, teachers and staff) are available at the Westtown School Library or Archives. One such publication, *Centennial History of Westtown Boarding School, 1799–1899* by Watson W. and Sarah B. Dewees (Westtown Alumni Association, 1899), is available on Google Books.

The Maplewood School for Boys, 1927–'29

In 1927, the opening of the Maplewood School for Boys was announced at the former Oliver Strode farm on South New Street. Formerly this school had operated at Chester Heights and, prior to that, at Concordville. The school was under the management of the late J. Chauncey Shortlidge (sometimes spelled Shortledge). However, the school in Westtown Township lasted only two years.

Saints Simon and Jude School, 1962–Present

Saints Simon and Jude School, located at the southwest corner of Chester Road and the West Chester Pike, was opened in September of 1962. The parish was started by Rev. Joseph A. Cavanaugh. At that time, 327 girls and boys were taught in eight attractive classrooms. Since this auspicious beginning, it has been necessary to double the number of schoolrooms and both a library and a gymnasium have been added. Unlike some of the public elementary school buildings which have been built in recent years, this is a two-story building.

The school is attached to the church, thus making it possible to go from one to the other without going outdoors. On the south side of the school and gymnasium, well protected from the winter winds, is a large hard-surfaced playing area.

In summer 1970, eight new classrooms were completed. By November 1970, the two-story building had 16 classrooms. In January 1973, school enrollment was 504 girls and boys

distributed among grades 1 to 8, taught by 16 teachers. Construction of a new wing for school and parish use was started in September 1990. In 2005 a new church was built, and the former church was renovated to include a cafeteria and meeting rooms.

Today approximately 350 students attend grades kindergarten through 8. The SS Simon and Jude School has added significantly to the educational facilities and opportunities of Westtown and its surrounding townships. According to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia 2017 Report on the Parish School, the parish consists of approximately 3,825 households. The current pastor is Rev. Michael J. Gerlach and the school principal is Sr. Regina Elinich, IHM.

St. Maximilian Kolbe School, 2000–Present

In 1986, Cardinal John Krol authorized the Philadelphia Archdiocese's first entirely new parish in a decade. The new parish was named St. Maximilian Kolbe in honor of the Polish priest who gave his life for another inmate at Auschwitz in 1941. He was starved for three weeks before dying from a lethal injection. He had volunteered to take the place of a young father who was scheduled to be executed; this earned him canonization in 1982.

The parish began in 1988 with a 20-acre lot on East Pleasant Grove Road and 670 families from the nearby parishes of St. Agnes and SS. Simon and Jude.

St. Maximilian Kolbe School, which opened in 2000, educates students from preschool to 8th grade. It was awarded the National Blue Ribbon of Excellence by the US Department of Education in 2017.

The John Knox Junior College and Bible Institute, 1966–1968

In 1966 the John Knox Junior College and Bible Institute was opened at 1030 South Concord Road, using some of the buildings of the former Oakbourne Hospital. This organization began near Wilmington, Delaware. In their Westtown setting they had a limited number of both day and boarding students. However, the project failed to win sufficient support to continue. In June 1968 the Institute's furnishings and equipment were sold at public sale.

TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Union Independent School No. 3, 1839–1943

The site of this school was at the northeast corner of Street and Chester Roads (Rts. 926 and 352), at what is now 1131 South Chester Road. For the past century this area has been known as Tanguy.

In 1797 Ezra Hoopes, a local farmer-blacksmith, and his wife deeded one acre to 16 of their neighbors for \$45. The deed specified the land was to be used for “educational and no other purposes.” The land was deeded to residents of Westtown, Willistown and Thornbury Townships, Chester County, and Thornbury Township, Delaware County. This explains why the school was called “Union Independent.” It is interesting to note that two of the 16 grantees were women, Edith Cheyney of Thornbury, Delaware County, and Susanna Smedley of Willistown. No evidence has been found that the grantees succeeded in getting a school started.



Union Independent School No. 3

Photo of school students from a 1927 Westtown publication. *Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.*

By July 1839 Levi Garrett was the only survivor of the above-mentioned grantees. At this time, for \$1, he granted the “School House Lot” to 14 men who resided in the following townships — Westtown and Willistown, Chester County, Edgmont and Thornbury, Delaware County. Apparently, the new group got a schoolhouse built very soon. This schoolhouse was used until 1871 when it was replaced by a two-story structure which is still standing. The datestone on this building is inscribed “UNION PUBLIC SCHOOL 1871”. In 1889, 45 pupils attended this school.

In the late 1920s the Methodist Episcopal Crossroads Church held services in the building. In 1892 Miller Boyd began teaching at the Union Public School. Here, as well as elsewhere in a Westtown public schoolhouse, Miller had a role in starting a Sunday School. In the late 1920s religious services were held in the Union Public School House by the Methodist Episcopal “Cross Roads” Church.

By 1927 enrollment had dropped to 37 of whom only 17 came from Westtown Township. The Union Public School District was dissolved in 1945. Soon after this the school building was converted into a private dwelling and continues to function in this role. In recent years the building has served as the photography studio of David Gifford. The original school bell is still housed in the structure’s bell tower.

The First Pleasant Grove School, 1851–1883

In 1850 Curtis James, president of the board, and six other Township School directors bought a half acre of land from Ralph Brown for \$100. This lot was on the south side of today’s East Pleasant Grove Road, some three-tenths of a mile east of the Wilmington Pike at what is now 112 East Pleasant Grove Road, now owned by Amy and Michael McLucas. It appears that a one-room schoolhouse was built here by 1851. Even before the era of automobile traffic, it seems that someone had the foresight to build this schoolhouse at a safe distance from the road. At other early schoolhouses, the public road was close to the school.

The identification of this school as “The First Pleasant Grove School” is not entirely true. On Witmer’s 1874 map the school is identified as “Shady Grove School H.” This is an obvious error as the map gives the same listing for another school in the township. The mapmaker must have intended to list the school here as Pleasant Grove. The school was so well patronized that it had to be replaced by a larger building in 1883. The new school was built along the Wilmington Pike three-tenths of a mile west of the 1851 school building.

As happened with three other township schoolhouses, the 1851 school building was converted into a private dwelling. In 1972 the dwelling was the home of the Joseph Nichols family.

Pleasant Grove Public School, 1883–1955

In 1882, school directors had the township buy one acre of land for \$300 from the George Faucett farm at 1081 Wilmington Pike. At this period two local farmers, George Rhoads and Joseph Williams, served on the school board as president and secretary respectively. The educationally ambitious school board let a contract to Nathan Y. Jester, the well-known carpenter and builder of Dilworthtown, for the erection of a two-story building, measuring 34 by 41 feet. The contract specified it was to be built of stone from the McClure Serpentine Quarries and was to cost \$3,200.

The second story of the new building was planned for use as a hall for public and other meetings. A marble date stone in the upper west wall of the building carried the inscription "PLEASANT GROVE SCHOOL HOUSE 1882." At this time there were other two-story schoolhouses in the township, Union Independent and Shady Grove. This was a period when most Chester County townships were content to struggle along with their one-room schoolhouses. Not so the denizens of Westtown who were very educationally minded.

Classes began in the new Pleasant Grove School House in 1883. For several years the second story was used for public meetings, for a Sunday School, and sometimes for preaching services.

An article on October 25, 1906 in a local newspaper reported that the school, whose teacher was Elizabeth Dougherty of Lyndell, was closed because one child had scarlet fever. This was a serious illness in those days because there were no antibiotics to treat the disease. Due to the fact that scarlet fever spreads rapidly, the school was closed by Director Casper Faucett. Faucett visited the West Chester health office and made arrangements with Health Officer R. O. Jefferis to have the "school rooms thoroughly fumigated."

In 1927, the teachers were Mrs. Anna T. Aspinwall and Mrs. Ethel M. Pierson, who had 84 pupils of whom 70 came from Westtown and the others from Thornbury Township, Chester County. School costs were shared, with Westtown paying eight-elevenths and Thornbury the balance.



Class from Pleasant Grove School, ca. 1904. See notation from back of photo below. Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.

Pleasant Grove School
Westtown Township
Chester Co., Pa.
Emma Lippincott Higgins - Teacher

(Child in center, in dark dress, with long hair and
hair ribbon, is the Teacher's daughter!)
(She was a favorite of all the other pupils.)

Donor: Elinor Bye Harney, 1997.9.1



1903 photo taken for National Educational Exhibit, St. Louis, Missouri, as an example of a “model rural school. Inscription from back of photo is below. Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.

Pleasant Grove School
Westtown Township
Chester Co. Pa.

Property of
Emma Lippincott Higgins
Teacher

This picture was taken for the
National Educational Exhibit at
St. Louis, Mo. - as the picture of
"A Model Rural School" in 1903.

Companion to the large picture
which I have framed - of the outside
of the building.

On extreme right of picture - with long
hair and hair ribbon - Teacher's daughter.

Donor: Elmer Bye Harry, 2-1997-4,1

In 1928, due to increasing enrollment, a one-story stone addition was added on the west side of the 1882 structure. The new addition had a basement which furnished additional space. A date stone on the addition carries interlocking letters "P. G. S" and "1928."

By 1953, all of Westtown's elementary school pupils were centered at Pleasant Grove. Four teachers were then handling grades 1-8. At this time, the future of the small consolidated township schools was rapidly becoming outmoded by current patterns and pressures in

education. The Pleasant Grove School was closed in December 1955, with the pupils going to the new Westtown-Thornbury Joint Elementary School at the beginning of January 1956.

For some years, the Pleasant Grove School property at 1081 Wilmington Pike was leased to Chester County for use as a child development center for children with special needs. In 1972, the 1928 addition at Pleasant Grove was used as the headquarters for the Westtown and Thornbury Township Police. The 1882 part of the building was used by a local Boy Scout troop to house township records and as a base for the township roadmaster.

In 2001, Westtown Township renovated the former First National Bank of West Chester branch at 1039 Wilmington Pike for its township headquarters and held its first meeting in the Township Assembly Hall December 17, 2001; 1081 Wilmington Pike was then used exclusively by the Westtown East Goshen Regional Police Department (covering Thornbury Township in Chester County as well). The police moved into their new building at 1041 Wilmington Pike, June 14, 2005, behind the Westtown Township building.

The old Pleasant Grove School/township building/police station was demolished in 2010 and in late 2019 a Malvern School daycare center was to be constructed on the site.

Centre School House, 1855–1920

In 1855 Richardson Peirce, who owned a large farm on the east side of Shiloh Road and south of Little Shiloh Road (1109 Shiloh Road), sold the township a half acre of land for \$100. Some years later the school lot was increased by the purchase of additional land. However, in 1855, or soon thereafter, a one-room schoolhouse was erected here and became known as the Centre School House. There is no record of why the British spelling of “Centre” was used.

The location was not far from the center of the township. The first schoolhouse was replaced in 1895. At this time Darlington Beebe, a local carpenter and builder, tore down the old structure and built a new building on the same site for the modest sum of \$1,777.

Like the other school buildings in the township, Centre School was used for Sunday School classes and for occasional church services. The first Sunday School was organized here in 1887.

On a cold Saturday morning early in November 1920, as a fire was being built in the schoolhouse, the roof caught fire and the building burned. Classes were transferred to the nearby Shiloh African Methodist Church and continued here until the autumn of 1922, when they were transferred to a public school in West Chester. At first the pupils were driven to West Chester in the Westtown School Orchard truck. This was followed by a more comfortable Ransom E. Olds (REO) school bus.⁵

The desolate stone walls of the former Centre School House stood idle for some 10 years. Then, around the walls, an attractive private dwelling was erected at what is now 1029 Shiloh Road.



Centre School class 1913, with names of children below. Although all records indicate school was spelled Centre, the photo ID spells it Center. Note the integrated class long before Brown vs. Board of Education made desegregation the law of the land. *Photo courtesy Chester County Historical Society.*

⁵ The Ransom E. Olds Motor Co. — known also as the REO Motor Car Company — out of Lansing, Michigan, produced automobiles and trucks from 1905 to 1975. They also built buses on their truck platforms. One popular light truck model was the Speed Wagon, from which the band REO Speedwagon took its name. Founder Ransom E. Olds had previously founded the Olds Motor Works, which produced the Oldsmobile line.

CENTER SCHOOL, WESTTOWN, PA. - 1913						
Viola Magraw	Violet Garris	Millard Boyd	Gladys Davis	Miss MacFarland	Justin Burns	Howard Tayson
Albert Magraw	?	Myra Webster	Earl Thomas	Sargh Thomas	Ross Stern	Josephine Sharp
Leon Magraw	?	Frank Garris	Everett Hoopes	Lloyd Davis	Phoebe Hoopes	Leslie Vancannon?
Lee Tayson	Jennie Magraw	Eleanor ?	Leyman Rotes	Leroy Thomas	Frances Garris	

Shady Grove School, ca, 1863–ca.1916

This school was located at the northeast corner of Street Road and Shady Grove Way. The origin of the name “Shady Grove” is still clearly evident by the presence of giant white oak trees. However, some of them are now showing the effects of storms and the erosion of time.

In 1916, the School District of Westtown Township sold the Shady Grove School property to Mrs. Katherine T. Phillips. The deed recording the sale notes that the original Shady Grove lot had been “in use for more than fifty years” and that title was claimed by “prescription through use and occupancy.”

At that time, the schoolhouse at Shady Grove was a two-story structure resembling the 1871 Union Independent School House at Tanguy in size. It appears that the first schoolhouse here was a small one-roomed structure located near the intersection of Street Road (Route 926) and Shady Grove Way. The later schoolhouse at Shady Grove was used for some years as a place to hold Sunday School. Unlike the Centre and Tanguy schoolhouses, which were non-denominational, this one was under the Methodist Episcopal Church. Also preaching services were occasionally held in the Shady Grove School House.

After the Phillips family acquired the property in 1916, the two-story school building was remodeled into an attractive private dwelling.

Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School, 1936–Present

This school was built under the direction of the Westtown-Thornbury Joint School Board and the Westtown-Thornbury School Authority. The members of the School Board were Burton C. Willis, President; J. Hibberd Bartram; L. Boyd Gentry; Raymond L. McCarthy; Lloyd C. Mitchell; Floyd M. Rundle; Mabel M. Schlimme; George D. Stiteler; W. Lee Tyson and Marie R. Williams. The School Authority was composed of Henry A. Rothrock, Chairman; Richard W. Fairbrothe; Malcolm C. Graham; Richard M. Manganaro; E. Dean Stanton and Jack E. Williamson. Willis was still board president in 1966 when Penn Wood Elementary School opened. It was in 1966 that all local schools became part of the West Chester Area Joint School System, now the West Chester Area School District.

The West Chester Area Joint School System was established in 1949. It included the borough of West Chester and seven surrounding townships. The system had jurisdiction of only the junior-senior high schools until 1966, when all elementary schools in the area also came under its aegis.

On a 12-acre tract of land located on Westbourne Road, three-tenths of a mile north of Street Road, a modern school plant was opened early in January 1956. It consisted of six classrooms, an all-purpose room and complete kitchen facilities. The initial enrollment, grades 1–6, was 183 pupils with a faculty of seven teachers. On the evening of June 8, 1956, dedication ceremonies were held at the school and 24 pupils were graduated officially from the sixth grade.

A full-time principal was employed at the school in 1958. A growing area population soon made more room necessary. Schoolrooms were added to the plant on two occasions within the next few years.

In the autumn of 1972, the school had a full-time staff of 18 people with part-time people in art, music, instrumental music, physical education and a nurse and librarian. From kindergarten through sixth grade there were 422 pupils taught by 14 classroom teachers and a full-time teacher in reading.

Penn Wood Elementary School, 1966–Present

To meet the demands of a rapidly growing township population, a second elementary school was opened in Westtown Township just 10 years after the Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School was opened in 1956.

Sixteen acres of wooded land located on the south side of Johnny's Way, six-tenths of a mile west of Chester Road, were acquired as a site for the new school. It was named "Penn Wood" as this was the name of two building developments in the immediate vicinity. The school was built under the direction of the Westtown-Thornbury School Board and the Westtown-Thornbury School Authority. Members of the Board at this time were Burton C. Willis, President; Lemuel A. Conn; William R. Davidson; Paul J. Dukes, Jr.; Joseph W. Geiger; Celia F. Hoeli; Clifford L. Holt; David J. Knauer; Raymond L. McCarthy and Victor C. Sandham, Jr. The members of the Westtown-Thornbury School Authority were Raymond W. Loomis, Jr., Chairman; Harold F. H. Johnson; Lawrence H. Snyder; William E. Wimble, Jr.; Charles L. Young and Lewis E. Young. It is of particular interest to note that Charles L. and Lewis E. Young represented a son and father on the School Authority.

Penn Wood Elementary School opened in January 1966. At that time William D. Buffington was supervising principal of the Westtown-Thornbury School District. He then became principal of Penn Wood Elementary.

In the summer of 1966, the two elementary schools came under the jurisdiction of the West Chester Area Joint School System. Formal dedication exercises were held at Penn Wood School on the afternoon of Sunday, June 15, 1966.

In 1972 there were 533 pupils, from kindergarten through sixth grade, enrolled at Penn Wood. The staff was composed of some 25 full-time persons and, in addition, part-time people in art, music, instrumental music, physical education and a librarian and nurse. The school plant has 18 classrooms as well as an all-purpose room, kitchen facilities, a library and offices, playgrounds, a soccer field and a woody environment.

Stetson Junior High School, now Stetson Middle School, 1959–Present



Stetson Middle School, 2018. Photo courtesy Jim Guterl.

This school was known as South Junior High School from the time of its opening in 1959 until July 1, 1962. When Dr. G. Arthur Stetson retired as Superintendent of the West Chester Area Joint School System, the name of the school was changed to Stetson Junior High School. Naming the school in Dr. Stetson's honor was especially appropriate as he had a major role in planning both its physical plant and its pioneering educational program. The South Junior High School was the first junior high school to be built under the direction of the West Chester Area School District Board.

After several years of careful planning, the school was built on a 25-acre tract of land in Westtown Township, located on the west side of Wilmington Pike, about a half mile south of the West Goshen Township line. This location is on a gently rolling hillside with a commanding view to the southeast, to the south and to the southwest. The South Junior High School opened early in September 1959 with some 650 students. These girls and boys had the privilege of entering one of the most modern and complete junior high school plants in the United States at that time. The school building is a one-story structure with wings extending in several directions. Thus, classrooms, shops, library, music rooms, gymnasium and other rooms have an abundance of sunlight.

An unusual feature of the Stetson Middle School is its cafetorium — a combination auditorium and cafeteria. As an assembly room, it has good acoustic qualities and as a cafeteria it has practical utility. Adjacent to the cafetorium are the food service room and music rooms.

Dedication exercises were held Sunday, December 6, 1959. The featured speaker at this occasion was Dr. Herold C. Hunt, Professor of Education at Harvard University. The well-attended dedication exercises were followed by an open house which offered an opportunity to see the new school plant. It was generally felt that “beauty and practicality of design” had been achieved in the new school. Its ultimate cost for a 1,000-student capacity was about \$1,840,000.

In January 1973, the enrollment at Stetson Junior High School was 1,058 students. There were 73 classroom teachers and two administrators. The total staff at the school was 94 people. This number included teachers, librarians, nurses, music teachers, building caretakers and others. Students were being transported to and from Stetson by a fleet of large buses numbering 21 or more.

In 1977, the junior high school became Stetson Middle School, when the district reorganized to a K–5 (elementary), 6–8 (middle) and 9–12 (high school) structure.

Starkweather Elementary School, 1991–Present

Dramatic enrollment growth in the late 1980s spurred by rapid economic development along the Route 202 corridor forced the West Chester Area School District (WCASD) to consider options to accommodate new students, particularly at the elementary school level. The school district’s goals included retaining an average class size of 25, providing separate classrooms for art and music, a computer laboratory, and classrooms dedicated to special education.

On March 16, 1987, superintendent of schools Dr. William P. Deighan issued a report to the WCASD recommending a new elementary school be opened by the 1991–92 school year. The school board, then led by officers Patricia O’Neil (President), Harold Zuber Jr. (Vice President), Donald R. Howland (Secretary), and Edward Ward Jr. (Treasurer) approved the report March 23.



Sarah Starkweather School, 2018. *Photo courtesy Jim Guterl.*

The school district wasted no time. By July 27, 1987, the board approved an agreement of sale for 37.9 acres just north of the Stetson Middle School property for the price of \$1,050,000. DK Architects and Planners served as the lead designer for what would become Sarah W. Starkweather Elementary School. With construction costs coming it at just over \$6.5 million, the school features an airy central atrium crowned with a large skylight. The school sits atop a hill, which cascades down to a series of athletic fields and affords a breathtaking view to the west.

When the school opened in September 1991, under the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Thomas Kent, School Board President George Zumbano Esq, and Principal Donald S. Pitt, it had a capacity for 600 students, boasted 20 regular classrooms, two kindergarten classrooms, two special education classrooms, and computer, science, art, music, gym, cafeteria, and library rooms. By 1994, growing enrollment necessitated the addition of three modular classrooms to the west side of the school. A permanent addition of four classrooms was constructed on the east side of the classroom wing in 1998.

The namesake of the school, Sarah Starkweather, was the first superintendent of West Chester Schools. While her official tenure extended from 1881 to 1889, she was often referred to as “superintendent” as early as 1866. She began her career in West Chester public schools as an assistant principal at the Church Street School in 1864. There, she taught astronomy, English, Latin, modern languages and higher mathematics. When Principal A.A. Meader left in 1866, Starkweather stepped in as principal after just two years of teaching within the district. She was known as a strict but fair disciplinarian and a highly competent educator.

Starkweather introduced what could be considered an early special education program, designed for students “unable to study advantageously with the regular classes.” In Starkweather’s words, “scholars assigned to these classes are not degraded, but placed where they can pursue just those studies which are absolutely necessary for transacting ordinary business without adhering strictly to the course of study prescribed for the other scholars.”

Another major contribution Starkweather made to the school district was the establishment of an Industrial Education Department. At that time, public opinion held that boys did not need a thorough education unless they planned on having a professional career. In an effort to retain male students until high school graduation, Starkweather implemented a series of vocational and industrial training courses, including mechanical drawing and woodworking. Under her thoughtful leadership, enrollment in public schools increased from 938 to 1,151.

Starkweather resigned from her post in June of 1889 to marry Maj. William Streeter, a businessman and Civil War veteran from Rochester, New York. In a resolution by the school board after her resignation, she was praised for her “ability, fidelity, earnestness and efficiency.”

The United States Department of Education recognized Starkweather Elementary as a Blue Ribbon School during the 1998–’99 school year: An honor bestowed upon public schools displaying exemplary high performance or exemplary achievement-gap closing. Today, Starkweather Elementary is under the leadership of Principal John Meanix. It offers full-day kindergarten and teaches students up to the fifth grade.

In January 2019, the school garnered national media attention due to letters written by a second-grade class to Philadelphia Eagles wide receiver Alshon Jeffery after he missed a fourth-quarter pass from Nick Foles in a divisional playoff game. One of the letters, penned by Abigail Johnson, read: “When I watched the play last night, I was crying. It’s okay to lose a game. You don’t always have to win a game. We couldn’t have won the Super Bowl without you last year. I think you are an awesome player no matter what.” In response to the letters, Jeffery made a surprise visit to the school to thank the second grade class, delighting the students and warming the hearts of fans everywhere.

Bayard Rustin High School, 2013–Present

As development has expanded in Westtown and surrounding communities, the West Chester Area School District (WCASD) realized it needed a third high school to accommodate a growing student population. In 2002, Westtown land that had originally been in the Taylor family and years later in the Marshall Jones family, would become the property of the West Chester Area School District.

The 175-acre tract along East Street Road at Shiloh Road was purchased for \$16.5 million from the Westrum Development Co. Westrum had bought the land from Marshall Jones intending to build a retirement community.

Located at 1100 Shiloh Road and named for famed Civil Rights leader and West Chester native, Bayard Rustin, groundbreaking began November 14, 2003 for the 288,000 square-foot school. Designed by Gilbert Architects, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the building cost \$63 million and is constructed of stone-like materials, brick and sloping roofs to blend with existing local rural architecture.

The school holds 1,350 students with 40 classrooms, 11 science classrooms/laboratories, four art classrooms, three music rooms, two technology education rooms, a library, a gymnasium that seats 1,000, fitness rooms, an auditorium that seats 850 people, and a cafeteria among other amenities. The school has a lighted outdoor stadium that seats 1,500 and 11 athletic fields, including tennis courts.

Bayard Rustin High School's alma mater song was written by acclaimed composer and West Chester schools graduate Samuel Barber (West Chester High School Class of 1926). The school's mascot is the Golden Knight and school colors are blue and gold.

The school's name chosen early in the development process was not without controversy. Famed Civil Rights leader Bayard Rustin (1912–1987) was born in West Chester and attended West Chester schools. Rustin a gay man, was raised as a Quaker by his grandparents and refused to register for the World War II draft or to perform alternative service. (Quaker beliefs hold that even a small act like providing a blanket to a soldier or giving directions to a battle is aiding and supporting the conflict.)

Rustin worked with A. Philip Randolph in 1941 to organize a march on Washington to protest racial discrimination in employment. He was a chief organizer of the 1963 March on Washington, during which the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., made his “I Have a Dream” speech. During the 1970s and 1980s, Rustin served on many humanitarian missions, such as aiding refugees from Communist Vietnam and Cambodia. At the time of his death in 1987, he was on a humanitarian mission in Haiti.

Upon his death, President Ronald Reagan issued a statement praising Rustin’s work for civil rights and “for human rights throughout the world”. Then on August 8, 2013, President Barack Obama announced he would posthumously award Rustin the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest award in the United States.

Soon after the WCASD Board announced the name of the new school, some in the community objected because of Rustin’s refusal to serve in World War II and his membership in the Communist party. Others said his humanitarian work and his dedication to the Civil Rights movement were his more important contributions to the country.

According to a December 11, 2002 article in *Education Week* (volume 22, issue 15, p.2) Hugh B. Price, president of the National Urban League at the time, said Rustin and others, who experienced oppression in America, had looked to Communism for the freedom that eluded them at home and that Rustin’s anti-war activities represented a commitment to nonviolence, and were not an act of disloyalty.

After discussion and public comment, the school board retained the Bayard Rustin name for the school.

A corner of the 175-acre Rustin High School tract was intended for a new elementary school to replace two other schools in or adjacent to Westtown Township. When residents objected to closing the schools the WCASD dropped the plans in 2015. Instead the district submitted a plan to sell 50 acres to Flintlock Associates, for a 50-lot housing development along Shiloh Road, with 30-acres of dedicated open space. The new development is called Rustin Walk.

In 2018, Westtown Township Historical Commission placed a historical marker in the school and along the trail at Rustin Walk that recounts the history of the land and farm on the property before the school was built.

SOME TOWNSHIP INSTITUTIONS

James C. Smith Memorial Home for Convalescent White Women, 1896–1971

In 1882 James C. Smith of Philadelphia, purchased 143 acres of land on the west side of South Concord Road from John Hulme. At the northern end of this property, on the south side of today's Oakbourne Road, the Smiths established a 27-acre park amid large trees and a small stream. A summerhouse and pond were built in the park and a fancy stone wall was erected along the Oakbourne Road boundary.

The highest area of the Smith property has an extensive view to the southeast overlooking the rolling hills of Westtown. Here the previous owners, Mr. and Mrs. John Hulme, had built a handsome granite mansion. By 1884 the Smiths had enlarged and refurbished the mansion for use as their summer home.

Just above the door on the north side of the mansion there is an ornate outline of the letter "S" with smaller letters on each side. On the left side are the letters "J C" and on the right side "H D." Although Mrs. Smith's maiden name was Drexel, she signed her married name as Heloise C. Smith. In addition to their elaborate home in Westtown, the Smiths had a home in Philadelphia which was their legal residence.

Mr. Smith died in 1893 and his wife three years later. According to her will the Westtown property was left to the Philadelphia Protestant Episcopal City Mission with the stipulation that it be used as a retreat for sick and convalescent white women 21 years of age or older. In addition, Mrs. Smith established a trust fund, the income from which was to be used to help maintain the convalescent home which opened May 7, 1896.

For more than 70 years, the James C. Smith Memorial Home was used by women guests — from 25 to 30 at a time. Here they greatly benefited from rest and quiet amid rural beauty, wholesome

food, and dedicated caretakers. The home celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1946. At this celebration it was reported that 15,600 women had been guests since it was opened.

The home was operated as a “Division of Episcopal Community Services of the Diocese of Pennsylvania”. Notwithstanding financial support from the diocese, from concerned individuals, and gifts by will, the cost of keeping the home going became so great that it was forced to close in 1971. It was anticipated the Smith Memorial Home property might become a building development. However, Westtown Township purchased the property in 1974 and it became a township park with the mansion for meetings and weddings and forms the core of today’s Oakbourne Park.

Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm/Oakbourne Colony Hospital, 1896–1958

The Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital and Colony was chartered in 1896 to provide for the care of men, women and children afflicted with epilepsy. The colony was not a state institution, but it did receive an annual subsidy from the state. It was primarily supported by private donations, as wealthy donors contributed beds for patients. A Board of Managers ran the colony with the support of a Ladies Aid Committee.

The institution was founded by a merger of the Pennsylvania Colony Farm for Epileptics and the Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital. The name of the latter institution was changed to the Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital just before the above-mentioned merger, having been previously the Hospital and Dispensary of St. Clement’s Church of Philadelphia, which itself was incorporated in 1886.

A brother and sister, Rebecca Coxe and Eckley Coxe, Jr., donated 10 acres of land in Westtown Township to the new venture, which also purchased an additional 96 acres of the former James C. Smith property. The location was ideal; with good land and water, freight, visitors, and patients could easily reach the site from Philadelphia via the Pennsylvania Railroad at Oakbourne Station. Construction began later that year.

The hospital began with three buildings: an administration structure, women’s cottage and men’s cottage. The colony officially opened February 3, 1898 with 30 patients — 12 men and 18 women. The staff consisted of a superintendent, Dr. J. F. Edgerly; a matron; two nurses; two

night attendants; an engineer; a farmer and his assistant; a night watchman; laundress; cook and maid.

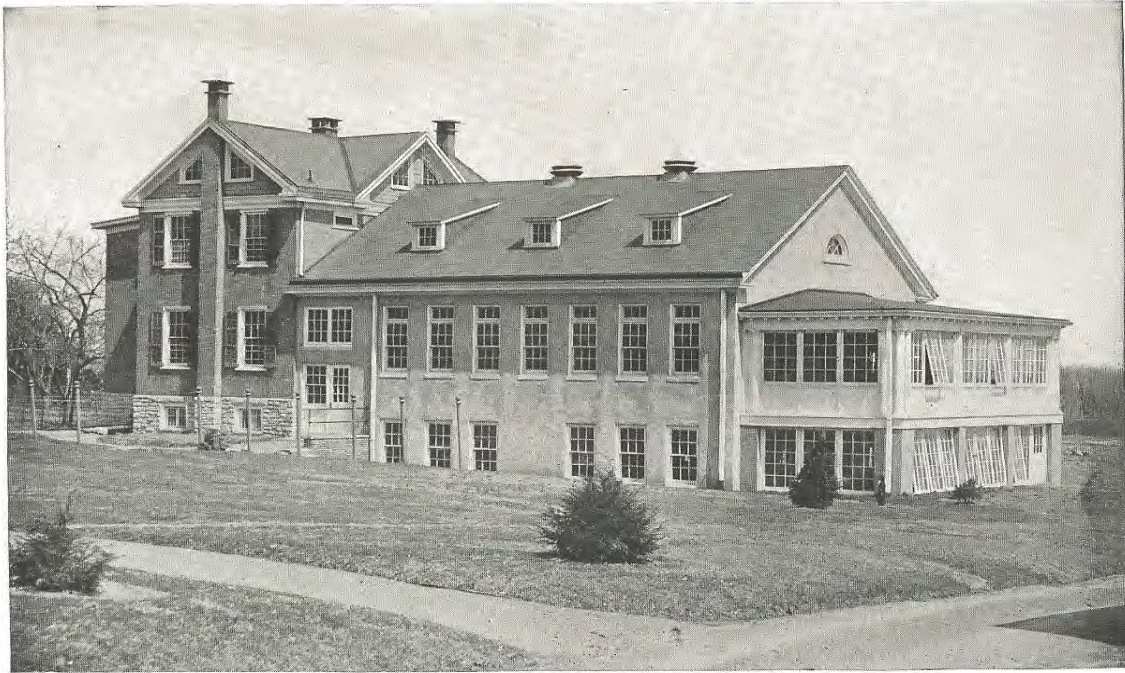
The hospital was in high demand. There were not many institutions catering to epileptics at the time. During the early 1900s, more than six times the number of candidates applied to live at the Colony than spaces were available. Applications came from as far away as New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. In 1901, three additional buildings accommodating 20 men and 22 women were erected. Other structures were later built, including a children's cottage⁶, a laundry, a coal-fired power plant, a central kitchen, farm buildings, a dairy, an industrial building and an assembly building.

As the number of patients at the hospital increased, additional acreage was acquired as many of the men were able to assist with work on the farm. The colony also raised sheep as a way to bring in money. The campus would eventually encompass over 140 acres.

In 1916, author Henry Mills Hur visited the colony grounds and reported there were 115 patients. Male patients worked on the farm and helped build additional structures, while the females did the housework and gardening. This reduced the number of needed employees considerably. Children attended school until eighth grade. By 1927 there were 127 patients at the hospital. Some years later this figure had grown to 150.

Between 1901 and 1926 the institution was under the direction of Dr. and Mrs. J. Clifford Scott. For some years after 1937 their son, Dr. Kenneth S. Scott, served as superintendent of the hospital. His brother, Dr. Clifford Scott Jr., was also associated with the hospital for several years.

⁶ In 1912, the children's cottage, which housed 23 patients, was destroyed by fire.



Women's Cottage No. 2

Women's Cottage No. 2 at Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital and Colony, date unknown. *From an annual report of the Oakbourne Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm.*

An annual report written in 1940 stated that the colony admitted 39 men, 73 women and 23 girls. Of those, two died and 131 were discharged. There was no reason given for the deaths. The report indicated that since inception, 843 patients had been treated at the facility. That year, they had established a Colony Press newspaper for the hospital and were attempting to organize an orchestra for patients. A modern infirmary was also built with a “state of the art X-ray room.”

By the mid-1940s medical treatment for epilepsy was undergoing radical change. The colony had been experimenting with a wide range of treatments, including rattlesnake venom injections, sodium diphenyl hydantoinate and phenobarbital. The use of vitamin C was also closely monitored. These controversial treatments were considered extremely “avant-garde” for the day. However, the use of new forms of medication were making it possible for those suffering from epilepsy to be treated at outpatient clinics. This meant they could live at home and be gainfully employed.

On September 15, 1947, the Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm's name was changed to the Oakbourne Colony Hospital. No new epileptic patients were admitted after 1953, and by 1958 the last of the epileptic patients had been released.

Oakbourne Hospital, 1958–1965

The Oakbourne Colony Hospital's board decided to change the hospital charter and voted to convert the colony into a hospital for severely mentally ill children. By 1958, the last epileptic patients had been discharged. They renamed it the Oakbourne Hospital, where the grounds served as a home for children with serious emotional problems.

Some \$300,000 was spent in renovating some of the buildings for the pilot project in juvenile mental care. With Dr. Richard L. Cohen in charge of the Oakbourne Hospital, the first patients were admitted in May 1958. Daniel R. Goodwin, a local resident of Westtown Township who had been interested in agencies treating mental illness for many years, was president of the hospital board.

Although the hospital received financial support from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare and other sources, the new project proved to be very expensive. In 1962, 20 children were receiving treatment at the hospital. Three years later in 1965, with its second and final director, Dr. Ora R. Smith at the helm, the hospital was closed and the patients were transferred to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic.

In 1966, 62 acres of the property were bought by Sproul Lees Company, which leased them to John Knox Junior College and Bible Institute. This private school did not succeed and closed in 1968. See **The John Knox Junior College and Bible Institute** earlier in this book.

Gaudenzia House/ Gaudenzia Center for Addiction Treatment and Recovery, 1969–Present

In 1969, the grounds were again sold, this time to Gaudenzia House for use as a rehabilitation center for people suffering from drug addiction. Around this time Pennsylvania Governor Raymond P. Shafer, created a State Council of Drug Addiction. He was seeking to find ways and means to rehabilitate drug addicts "in a humanizing community." February 19, 1970, Governor Shafer was present and participated in dedication exercises held at Gaudenzia House.

Only those patients are admitted who have a determination to overcome their addiction to drugs. Gaudenzia House in Westtown Township is largely under the direction of Gaudenzia Inc. of 1832 West Tioga Street, Philadelphia. Early in 1973, some 40 patients lived at Gaudenzia House in Westtown Township.

As of 2019, Gaudenzia Center for Addiction Treatment and Recovery, continues hosting those in need of treatment. A few of the original buildings remain from the days of the Oakbourne Epileptic Hospital and Colony Farm. The farmhouse and creamery, privately owned, still stand on the south side of East Pleasant Grove Road, and the foundation of the former hospital barn contains a public basketball court by Westtown Township's athletic field parking lot.

PUBLIC SAFETY/WESTTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department

The first police officers to patrol Westtown Township were Lindbergh Pullen and Anthony Polito, who were hired in the 1960s. They were originally part-time officers for West Chester's Special Police Force. According to Polito, Supervisor Milton Stokes wanted an officer to patrol Westtown exclusively, so Pullen was brought over as chief and Polito worked part-time at West Chester and part-time at Westtown.

They worked out of their own cars and Pullen's home until finding space at the building on 1081 Wilmington Pike. Henry Sickler took over for Pullen and additional police officers were added. Their main jobs were directing traffic, investigating accidents and helping stranded motorists. Sickler was succeeded by Wayne Grunwell as police chief.

In 1981, the Westtown-East Goshen (WEGO) Regional Police Department was formed. The department included 12 officers, one police chief and one administrative personnel. It was headed by Chief Charles W. MacIntyre until his retirement in 1996.

MacIntyre was succeeded by John M. Dumond until 2012. Chief Gene Dooley, the police chief of East Whiteland at the time, was the interim chief for six months until a permanent replacement was found. That happened in March of 2013, when Chief Brenda M. Bernot was

sworn in as chief of the WEGO Department. As of 2018, the WEGO Department had 30 patrol officers, four criminal investigators, three traffic safety officers, and a community service officer.

In 1992, the department began a contract to protect and serve Thornbury Township. The contract is renewed every few years.

A 1900 Murder Most Foul

In 1900, an unsolved murder occurred in Darlington's Corner in Thornbury Township, on the south side of Route 926. Around 4 p.m., May 23, 1900, Stella Morrison, 26, wife of Washington Morrison, was found dead in the sitting room of her home by her father in law, James Morrison. Her skull had been crushed by a heavy object, which was eventually identified as a shoe block belonging to her father in law. The room was a mess and her clothing disheveled, showing a struggle had occurred. Her death was pinpointed at between 1:30 and 2 p.m. that day.

Possible suspects included tramps in the area or someone she knew. For a time her father in law was suspected, but no one was ever arrested and her death was listed as "by the hands of person or persons unknown."

Stella is buried at Greenmount Cemetery, and very quickly the house where she was killed fell into neglect. By November the walls of the house had tumbled down, and neighbors reported sightings of what they considered to be ghosts prowling around the house.

Some Unwelcome Township Visitors

Note: This information was included in the original history of Westtown, written by Arthur James. Times and attitudes have changed, but we did not remove this section in the interest of preserving this bit of township history to gain an understanding of the cultural morés of those times.

The Jeffersonian newspaper of October 26, 1876, reported "a band of gypsies took up their camp on the farm of John Hulme," what is now Oakbourne Pak. The location of this encampment appears to have been in a wood southwest of what was, at that time, Hemphill Railroad Station. At this location, as late as the early 1900s, gypsies continued to camp for a few days in the autumn, as they were going south, and in the spring, as they were headed north. Their presence

brought unsubstantiated fears of kidnapping farm children and fear of the loss of property on the part of the children's parents. Some people who had unpleasant experiences with gypsies identified them as "worthless nomads."

Another gypsy camp site was in the woods on the north side of today's West Pleasant Grove Road. The *Daily Local News* of October 3, 1890, carried the following query:

"Is there no law to drive Gypsies away. They encamped in George Faucett's woods, Westtown [what is now the site of Route 202 and Starkweather and Stetson Schools], and blocked up the public road. There were 13 wagons of them and they are a public nuisance."

In a more relaxed mood, the same newspaper November 27, 1891, reported:

"The band of gypsies, which were encamped in the Faucett's and Cobourn's woods at Westtown yesterday, started for Conowingo this morning. . . . They are going south for the winter."

The following April the gypsies who camped here had horses, mules and ponies, some of which they sometimes traded with those local farmers who were willing to deal with them. The advent of the automobile was a factor in freeing Chester County from its gypsy visitors.

In former years, another type of unwelcome visitors were homeless men known as "tramps" who stopped at farmhouses asking for food and/or permission to sleep in the barn. The *Daily Local News* of May 15, 1885, noted there were 13 tramps in John C. Heed's woods in Westtown. Some of these men had been working in the local nurseries. The story is told of a tramp who asked a farmer's wife for food, but she asked that he cut some wood before she fed him. However, he left without coming back for the food. On the chopping block in the wood house he left a note saying, "You saw me, but you didn't see me saw."

In discussing unwelcome township visitors of years ago we cannot leave out hoboes. Not being clear as to the difference between a tramp and a hobo, recourse to a dictionary led to the following—"A hobo is an idle, shiftless wandering workman, ranking scarcely above the tramp." In asking Marshall L. Jones, Jr, about township hoboes, he recalled Hobo Camp, or

Hobo Den which it was sometimes called, located on his father's farm. The site of this camp or den was along Chester Creek in the woods west of the railroad tracks, between Westtown and Oakbourne Stations. Often train passengers, if they were interested, had a good view of the hoboes and their lack of concern for sanitary living. The hoboes sometimes walked the tracks but more often travelled by hopping freight trains. In fact, to many people the term "hobo" suggests travel by jumping freight trains.

The advent of the automobile was somewhat responsible for ending the hobo and tramp chapter of local history. Perhaps a more cogent factor in this has been the growth and improvement in our tax-supported agencies which care for indigent citizens.

TOWNSHIP RECREATION

Early settlers had little time for recreation. Work was their main pattern of life. Hunting for rabbits and squirrels, and more recently for ringed-necked pheasants, was enjoyed by gunners until the farms gave way to suburbia.

On July 22, 1898, under the caption "Dam Seined," the *Daily Local News* reported that 40 dozen good fish had been taken from the Williams' dam in Westtown using a seine. This dam was located on the farm east of Oakbourne Railroad Station. To offset a fisherman's temptation to exaggerate, the news item noted that small fish were thrown back and not counted in the numbers reported.

Since the State Game Commission began in the late 1800s the practice of stocking streams with trout, the lower parts of the two branches of Chester Creek in Westtown have been popular with trout fishermen for a few weeks in the spring. During the summer months, the Westtown School 14.5-acre lake is a favorite haunt for serious fishermen.

Westtown Lake

When Westtown School is in session, this lake is extensively used by its students for canoeing, skating, swimming and environmental studies. For many years, the lake was open to the public during the summer months for a small charge, but that program was discontinued in 2003.

In 2016, the school undertook a major restoration project, so that the lake might continue to be used by the school community and because it is an important ecosystem for local wildlife and a wetland habitat for the surrounding area. Improvements included dredging the lake, building a new dam spillway and replacing the culvert under Westtown Road. A half mile east of the Westtown Lake, the development known as Penn Wood North has an attractive pond used for swimming and skating.

Quarry Swimming Association

The oldest swimming club in the township is the Quarry Swimming Association; it is touted to be the oldest dues-paying swim club in the country. Over the years the facilities for swimming at the former Brinton's Quarry have been well kept and modernized, while retaining the bucolic nature and stone of a quarry. With crystal clear water, the quarry became a favorite summer swimming hole for neighbors and friends. They built diving boards and bathhouses. In 1902, the Quarry Swimming Association (QSA) was established and members joined by invitation only, leasing the property from the Brintons for \$50 a year. Two of the very active participants in this aquatic club were the late Miss Christine Biddle of Birmingham Township and the late H. Lindlay ("Lin") Sproat of Thornbury Township.

This arrangement worked until 1962 when members got together and raised money to purchase the property at a cost of \$8,817 through \$100 membership certificates. Today, the Quarry has a membership of 475.

Legend has it that in 1899, a foreman at the Brinton Quarry was fired for being drunk, yet again, on the job. He took his revenge by returning to the quarry and cutting the heavy wooden boom — which helped pull the stone out of the pit — loose from one of the machines. It fell into the quarry pit where it would become a floating log that is still there today.

In 1964, the *Daily Local News* reported a 1940 Packard Eight was pulled out of the quarry; research discovered it had been reported stolen in 1941. It took divers, two tow trucks and an underwater recovery rescue unit three hours to raise the rusty sedan from the water. The car quickly deteriorated once it hit the air and had to be junked.

As the years have gone by, the swimming hole has seen improvements, such as a sandy beach, concrete walls on three sides, railings to facilitate entering and exiting the water and modern water purification/filtration systems.

Wedgewood Swim Club

In May 1958, the late Cecil C. Goodwin sold 17 acres of his farm to the Wedgewood Club. On its attractive hilltop site, located on the east side of South Matlack Street north of Oakbourne Road, this club soon established modern swimming facilities.

In addition to three swimming pools and a wading pool, a multi-level picnic pavilion was erected. From this location there is an extended view over the Chester Creek valley. The Wedgewood Swim Club is composed of a large and robust group of families with a waiting list for new members.

The Westtown Sports Center

On the south side of the West Chester Pike, near the northeast corner of the township, the Westtown Swim Club was established in the early 1960s. It was located adjacent to and west of the Hunters Run Apartments. For some 10 years the swimming facilities here were widely patronized during the summer months.

In 1972, some nine acres of land, including the area of the former swimming facilities, were purchased by Blue Line Hockey, Inc. to develop the Westtown Sports Center. Early in 1973, a building measuring 240 by 110 feet housed an all-year skating and ice hockey rink. Adjacent to this is a clubhouse-office building that overlooks diving and wading pools. Near the southeast corner of the Sports Center property there are several tennis courts.

(Note: In the future, sections will be added to Township Recreation on Oakbourne Park, Tyson Park/Larchbourne Park and an acre parcel set aside as part of the Battle of Brandywine on South New Street.)

The Hickman Hunt

Note: With diminishing open space and more houses being built in the township, fox hunting has died out in Westtown, although foxes can be seen in yards, fields and wooded areas around the township. Below is an account from the original James' history of Westtown.

Jesse J. Hickman (1832–1907) was one of the numerous descendants of Francis Hickman who emigrated from Wiltshire, England, to Chester County, in the 1680s. Jesse was born in Thornbury Township, Chester County, where he lived until 1894 when he purchased the Thomas Yearsley farm in Westtown Township. This farm was located north of today's Westbourne Road and northwest of the Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School.

Jesse Hickman is credited with having a major role in the development of the Chester White breed of pigs. Since his son, Mifflin, helped in operating the farm, Jesse had time for some outside activities. For a time, he served as postmaster of the Westtown Post Office. Later he served as county Register of Wills and, following this, as a county commissioner.



Miff Hickman releasing a fox. *Photo from original Arthur James Westtown book.*

One of Jesse's major recreations was fox hunting. He shared this enthusiasm with his son, Miffin Hickman (1858–1934). They kept a pack of hounds which, upon Jesse's death, along with the farm, became the property of "Miff," as the son was locally known. Miff told his friends that he "lived to fox hunt." For some years he served as township roadmaster, but he refused to start repairing the roads until the fox hunting season was over. On a Saturday morning in the late winter he announced there would be a "drop hunt" at his farm at 10 a.m. He had invited the

Baldwin Hunt of East Goshen to bring their hounds and join in the drop hunt. When the time came, the Baldwin hounds had not arrived, and Miff, noted for his punctuality, let the fox out of a bag and the hunt was on. In its heyday there were 60 or more hounds in the Hickman pack.

In 1926 Miff Hickman sold his 83-acre farm to the late Marshall L. Jones. Following this, he moved to a small property on the west side of South Concord Road and, of course, took some foxhounds with him. In the transition from farmland to suburbia, Westtown offers progressively less cover for foxes and fox hunting. Even the West Chester Hunt no longer meets at Crebilly Farms in the southwest part of the township.

SOME TOWNSHIP FARM, HOME AND PLACE NAMES—THEN AND NOW

Advent Lutheran Church	Cornerwood	Hickman's Cave
Ashland Farm Belmont	Crebilly Farm	Hickman's Graveyard
Station Birmingham	Darlington's Corner	Homestead Farm
Serpentine Quarries	Dunvegan Farm	Hummingbird Farm
Bournelyf	Earnley	Hunter's Run Apartments
Boyd's Corner	Edgewood	James Pottery Farm
Brinton's Quarries	Edgewood Park	La Grange Farm
Brooknoll Farm	Elm Manor	Larchbourne Park
Brooznoll	Fairview Farm	McClure's Serpentine Quarries
Chestnut Hill	Faucett's Creamery	Maple Shade Farm
Centre School House	Faucett's Cross Roads	Meadow Brook Farm
Church of the Loving Shepherd	Grandview Acres	Mercer's School House
	Hemphill's Station	

Munglow Park	Salt Kill Hills	Taylor's Graveyard
Oakbourne Park	Serpentine Acres	Triple Oaks Farm
Oakbourne Station	Serpentine Stone Quarry	Tyson Park
Oakbourne Trees	Serpentine Hills	Union Independent School
Osborne Hill	Shady Grove School	Valley View Farm
Pennsylvania Epileptic Hospital & Colony Farm	SS Maximilian Kolbe Church & School	Wakefield Manor
Penn Wood Elementary School	Shiloh Methodist Church	Walnut Hill
Penn Wood	Saints Simon & Jude Church & School	West Hills Farm
North Penn Wood	Snow Drop Hill	Westminster Presbyterian Church
South Pine Hill Orchards	South Hills	Westtown Acres
Pleasant Grove Farm	South Hills Park	Westtown School
Pleasant Grove School	Spring O'Shiloh	Westtown Cabin
Plumly (Plumley) Farm	Sarah Starkweather Elementary School	Westtown Country Estates
Pot House Hill	Stetson Junior High School	Westtown Factory
Pot House Road	(now Stetson Middle School)	Westtown Farm
Quarry House	Strawberry Dale	Westtown School Farm
Red Man Hall	Tanguy Cross Roads	Westtown Farm House
Rollinwood	Tanguy School	Westtown Grove
Bayard Rustin H.S.		Westtown Hillside

Westtown Lake

Westtown Pottery

White Oak Park

Westtown Lake House

Westtown Stock Farm

Willow Lake

Westtown Old Dam

Westtown-Thornbury

Windswept

Westtown Park

Elementary School

Woodcock Farm

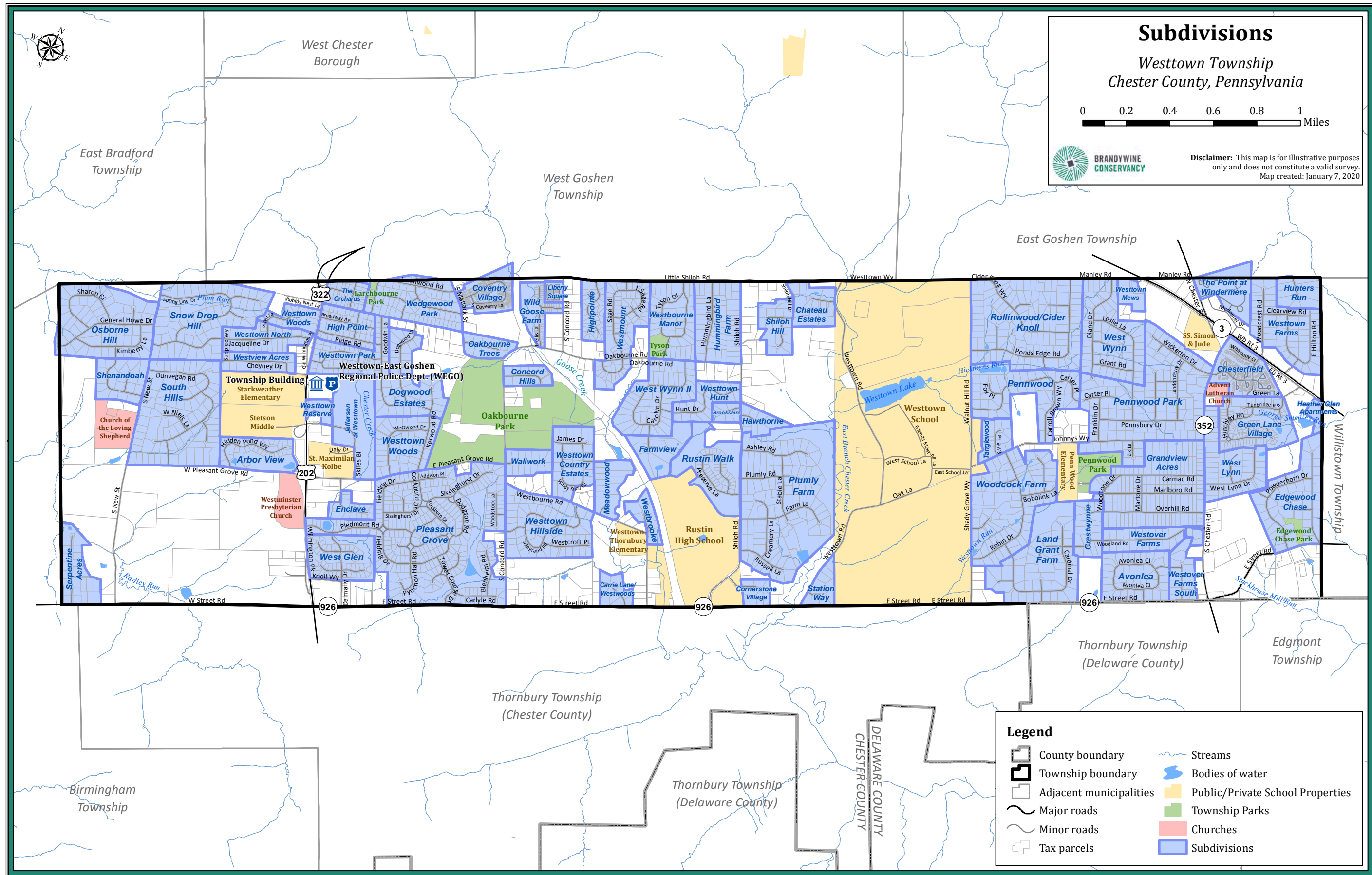
Westtown Pine Forest

Westtown Woods

Yearsley's Hill

Westtown Plantation

West Wyn



Subdivisions

*Westtown Township
Chester County, Pennsylvania*

0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1
Miles

BRANDYWINE CONSERVANCY

Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only and does not constitute a valid survey.
Map created: January 7, 2020

Legend

	County boundary		Streams
	Township boundary		Bodies of water
	Adjacent municipalities		Public/Private School Properties
	Major roads		Township Parks
	Minor roads		Churches
	Tax parcels		Subdivisions

TOWNSHIP NEIGHBORHOODS/HOUSING

Arbor View

(Street: Hidden Pond Way)

Avonlea

(Street: Avonlea Circle)

Brookshire

(Street: Kilduff Circle)

Chateau Estates

(Street: Chateau Drive)

Chesterfield

(Streets: Chesterfield Drive, Stafford Drive, Cumbrian Court, Durham Court, Evesham Court, Costwald Court, Winchester Court, Halifax Court, Newmarket Court, Eton Court, Leeds Court, Bideford Court, Whittleby Court)

Concord Hills

(Street: Gages Lane)

Cornerstone Village

(Street: Dunning Drive)

Coventry Village

(Streets: Coventry Lane, South Coventry Lane)

Crestwynne

(Streets: Part of Overhill Road, Woodland Drive)

Darlington's Corner (Darlington's Corner)

(Streets: U.S. 202 and PA 926)

About two and a half miles south of West Chester on Route 202 is the crossroads village of Darlington's Corner. The early name of the village was Thornbury. When Thomas Darlington succeeded Thomas W. Stevens as postmaster of Thornbury in 1831, the place was renamed Darlington's Corner. Darlington ran the post office for more than 12 years until August 31, 1900. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, however, it is officially known as Darlington Corners.

Dogwood Estates

(Streets: Dogwood Lane, Goodwin Lane, Kerwood Road, Westwood Drive)

Edgewood Chase

(Streets: Edgewood Chase Drive, Powderhorn Drive, Ramrod Lane, Musket Lane)

Enclave

(Street: Kolbe Lane)

Farmview

(Street: Farmview Drive)

Green Lane Village

(Streets: Edinburgh Drive, Hinchley Run, Tunbridge Road, Bracken Court, Arden Court, Braeburn Court, Stockton Court)

Grand View Acres

(Streets: Carmac Road, Marlboro Road, Overhill Road, Woodtone Road, Martone Road)

John J. McLaughlin had considerable difficulty thinking of a suitable name for a real estate development until one day he took a friend to the intersection of Chester and Wellington roads on the eastern edge of Chester County. “What a grand view!” his friend exclaimed. Without much ado McLaughlin christened the place Grand View Acres. The tract was subdivided into building lots in 1951.

Harding Heights (Gable End-Town)

“Gable End-Town,” as it was originally known, was a small cluster of half-a-dozen houses built immediately north of Darlington’s Corner during antebellum era around what is today’s Trappers Run Road. The houses were built with their gable-ends to the Wilmington Plank Road, most likely to take advantage of the southerly exposure afforded by their location on the hillside, and so the houses earned their sobriquet. By the 1920s, the little suburb of West Chester was served by a bus stop. In 1923, following the death of President Warren G. Harding, the village was named “Harding Heights” in his honor. All of the houses have since been torn down.

Heather Glen Apartments

High Point

(Streets: Broadway Avenue, Oakbourne Road, Ridge Road, South Walnut Street [ex-Gifford Avenue])

High Point was the name Wesley Pennoyer, a native of Norwalk, Connecticut, who had moved to West Chester in 1918, gave to 150 building lots laid out on his farm near the intersection of Westtown Road and Wilmington Pike. Unlike most developers, the 64-year-old Methodist sold all the lots in 1925 to successful bidders at a public auction. But not all lots were immediately developed. By 1933 only four families had settled there. In recent years the area has been built up considerably as a result of the housing boom.

Highpointe

(Streets: Thorne Drive Springview Court)

Hummingbird Farm

(Street: Hummingbird Lane)

Hunters Run

(Street: Pheasant Run Road)

Every autumn, a group of hunters headed for the banks of the small stream flowing into Ridley Creek in Willistown Township which inspired the name.

Jefferson at Westtown

Land Grant Farm

(Streets: Penns Grant Drive, Cardinal Drive, Favonius Way, part of Overhill Road)

Liberty Square

(Street: Bowers Drive)

Meadowwood

(Street: Wood Lane)

Oakbourne

When the railroad line was laid from Media to West Chester, railroad officials named a station there for Joseph Hemphill, a former Chester County congressman. But when a post office was established there in 1883, the name was changed to Oakbourne because of nearby oak trees. The ending “bourne” is an old English term for boundary.

Oakbourne Trees

(Street: Jeroma Lane)

The Orchards

(Streets: South Walnut Street, Stanton Avenue)

On Dr. Bayard Kane's former homestead, Orchard, on the east side of Route 202 heading from West Chester to Wilmington, George R. Reinhart laid out 100 building lots in 1927 and Harry F. Taylor some more in 1937. The residential development was on both sides of the line between West Goshen and Westtown townships. The original name came from fruit trees on site in earlier days.

Osbourne or Osborne Hill

(Streets: General Howe Drive, Kimberly Lane, Sharon Circle, Barnsworth Lane)

Penn-Wood

(Streets: Carroll Brown Way, Fox Place, part of Carter Place)

Penn-wood, which comprises 47 homes on a 64-acre tract of land, originally the Otho-Lane Estate, in Westtown Township at Carroll Brown Way and Walnut Hill Road, was named by Westtown Development Corp. in 1958.

Pennwood Park

(Streets: Part of Cater Place, Franklin Drive, Pennsbury Drive, part of Leslie Lane, Chesterville Way, Londonderry Drive, Loffling Place, Freemont Drive, Wickerton Drive, Woodstock Lane)

Pleasant Grove

(Streets: Cockburn Drive, Fielding Drive, Addison Place, Sissinghurst Drive, Dodgson Road, Piedmont Road, Pynchon Hall Road, Swinburne Road, Tower Course Road, Baywood Road, Carlyle Road, Blenheim Road)

Plumly Farm

(Streets: Plumly Road, Ashley Road, Farm Lane, Russell Lane, Stable Lane)

Rollinwood

(Streets: Cider Knoll Way, Ponds Edge Road, Nectar Lane, Appleberry Way, Lees Link Lane, Bartrams Lane, Rollinview Drive)

Rustin Walk

(Street: Preserve Lane)

A corner of the 175-acre Rustin High School tract on East Street Road and Shiloh Road was intended for a new elementary school to replace two other schools in or adjacent to Westtown Township — Westtown Thornbury School and Penn Wood School.

When residents objected to closing the schools, the WCASD dropped the plans in 2015. Instead, the district submitted a plan to sell 50 acres of the original Rustin tract to Flintlock Associates, for a 50-lot housing development along Shiloh Road, with 30 acres of dedicated open space. This new development is called Rustin Walk.

Serpentine Acres

(Streets: Lake Drive, Serpentine Drive)

A development of one acre lots began in the mid-1950s, in the southwest corner of the township adjacent to Brinton's Quarries. In 1972, 18 choice homes had been built here. Appropriately, this development is known as "Serpentine Acres." Among the delights of this area is the blooming of mountain pink (*phlox subolata*) each Spring. In many locations scattered over Chester County the blooming of native stands of mountain pink indicates soil derived from weathered serpentine.

Shenandoah

(Streets: General Greene Drive, Jennifer Lane)

Shiloh

(Streets: Shiloh Road, Little Shiloh Road)

On the boundary between Westtown and West Goshen townships, nearly three miles from the county seat, lies Shiloh. The name is of Biblical origin and is said to mean tranquility. In addition to being used for the Methodist Church, erected in 1807, the name is also used for the farmhouses which have grown up around the church.

Shiloh Hill

(Streets: Shiloh Hill Drive, Centre School Way, Shippen Lane)

Snow Drop Hill

(Streets: Spring Line Drive, North Deerwood Drive, South Deerwood Drive, part of Jacqueline Drive)

These 44 homes were built in the 1970s by several builders, the final one was Ernie Basile.

South Hills

(Streets: Dunvegan Road, John Anthony Drive, Niels Lane)

Station Way

(Street: Station Way)

Tanglewood

(Street: Evie Lane)

Tanguy

Streets: Chester Road [Route 352], Street Road [Route 926])

Tanguy, a small group of houses at the intersection of Routes 352 and 926 on the dividing line between Chester and Delaware Counties, was named for Charles Tanguy, an early storekeeper. Tanguy, whose surname was sometimes spelled Tanguay, was born in 1824 and came to Westtown Township at an early age to open a general store. He sold the business in 1871 and moved to Seal, Birmingham Township, where he died March 24, 1898. The Tanguy Post Office was established March 7, 1888, with Hannah M. Yearsley the first of two postmasters and continued in service until March 31, 1928. The other postmaster was Sarah Y. Crosely, her daughter.

Wedgewood Park

(Streets: Larchwood Road, Maplewood Road, Norwood Road, Beechwood Road)

Wedgewood Park, a 60-acre development near the intersection of Matlack Street and Oakbourne Road in Westtown Township two and a half miles south of West Chester, was named Norview Farms in 1952 when George D. Stiteler, ex-chief statistician for Lukens Steel Co., first subdivided part of the land around his home into building lots. But he and his wife renamed it Wedgewood Park in 1958 after Wedgwood Club, opened a swimming pool, with a membership of 75 families, on a 17-acre tract of land on the other side of South Matlack Street from the development. A resident of Thornbury Estates, Mrs. Robert E. Doan, coined the name of Wedgewood because the sides of a pool the members of the non-profit swimming organization first considered but rejected were arranged like a wedge. When the Stiteler family purchased Dr. Snyder's farm in 1947, the place was called Fairbairn (Scottish, meaning good barn) and is still referred to occasionally by that name whenever Dr. Snyder's name enters the discussion.

West Glen

(Streets: Dalmally Drive, Kirklay Drive, Lockerbie Lane, Androssan Avenue, Macroom Avenue, Knoll Way)

West Lynn Farms

(Streets: West Lynn Drive, Louise Lane)

West Lynn Farms, a 24-home community on Route 352 between West Chester Pike (Route 3) and Route 926 in Westtown Township, was started in 1960 when Francis Schorn, a 30-year-old builder from Philadelphia, purchased 28 acres of the 90-acre Blosenski farm. It took its name from a former owner.

West Wyn I

(Streets: Diane Drive, Leslie Lane, Charles Road, Grant Road)

West Wyn I, situated on Manley Road, off West Chester Pike, in Westtown Township, was laid out in 1959 by Daniel J. Bove (Bovan Inc.), who had previously built Glen Wyn in Delaware County. During the next two years the development grew into a prosperous community of 65 split-level homes. The name is said to have no special significance except that the builder from Springfield liked to stick to similar names.

West Wyn II

(Street: Carolyn Drive)

West Wyn II is the second development of split-level homes designed by Daniel J. Bove, of Springfield, in Westtown Township on Oakbourne Road, one and a half miles east of Route 202. Located about two miles from West Chester, it was planned in 1961 for 52 homes.

West Bourne Manor

(Street: Tyson Drive)

West Bourne Manor, originally part of the A. Walter Phillips farm in Westtown Township, is largely a community of individually built homes on sites one-acre or more in size. When John McWilliams, a home builder from Broomall, purchased 46 acres of land from A. Walter Phillips in 1959, he asked the members of the Phillips family to pick out a name for the planned community between Oakbourne and Little Shiloh Roads. Several days later the seller's

granddaughter, Roberts Leary, suggested the name of West Bourne Manor because the land was between Westtown and Oakbourne; and John McWilliams accepted the name. The remainder of the Phillips farm was subdivided into two other developments, the 52-home West Wynn II, across Oakbourne Road, and the 37-home Hummingbird Farms which adjoins West Bourne Manor.

Westbrooke

(Street: Barnview Lane)

Westmount

(Streets: Sage Road, Sassafras Circle)

Westover Farms

(Street: Woodland Road)

Westover Farms was laid out in 1959 by James L. Stradley for 21 houses at Woodland and Chester Roads in Westtown Township.

Westover Farms South

(Streets: Butternut Road, Apple Tree Road)

Westtown Country Estates

(Streets: Windy Knoll road, James Drive)

Westtown Country Estates, off Oakbourne Road near Route 926, was first started ca. 1960 by the Fisher Construction Co. Houses were built in three different styles and later finished by Smedley Enterprises, Inc.

Westtown Farms

(Streets: Woodcrest Road, Clearview Road, Lakeview Drive, Hilltop Road)

When F. Williams and Thomas James, who had been partners in the construction business for seven years, planned Westtown Farms in 1954, they selected the name of the township in which it was located. To be exact, the residential development is located at West Chester Pike and Oak Hill Road more than a mile east of Milltown.

Westtown Hillside

(Streets: Oaklea Lane, Talleyrand Road, Ashford Lane, Westcroft Lane)

Westtown Hillside owes its name to two brothers, Russell E. Jones and Marshall Jones Jr., who, in 1956 decided to develop a 58-acre tract of land they owned at the southeastern corner of South Concord Road and Westbourne Road in Westtown Township. They wanted a name with Westtown in it, and when the first home built on the tract fit into a hill, Russell Jones suggested the name Westtown Hillside. Built by Nicola A. Mantes, the development has between 40 and 50 farmhouse-type homes, each surrounded by an acre or more of natural landscaping in the beautiful rolling hills of Chester County, three miles from West Chester. Homes were priced starting at \$27,500.

Westtown Hunt

(Street: Hunt Drive)

Westtown Mews

(Street: Manley Road)

Westtown North

(Street: Jacqueline Drive)

Westtown North was so named in 1962 by Albert P. Mandes who built 25 homes in four different styles in the northwestern part of Westtown Township at Jacqueline Drive and Route 202.

Westtown Park

(Street: Garden Circle)

Wesley Pennoyer, who had subdivided a farm of less than 24 acres into 89 building lots, died before he had a chance to name the real estate plot. Fourteen years passed. Then 34 lots were sold to Howard W. Shoemaker, a builder, for construction of homes. When the builder took the plan to the supervisors of Westtown Township for approval, he confessed he had not decided on a name. "Why not call it Westtown Park?" suggested Westtown Supervisor Chester A. Supplee. Shoemaker agreed.

Westtown Woods

(Street: Woodview Drive)

Westview Acres

(Street: Cheyney Drive, Supplee Way)

Westview Acres, with 19 one-acre lots on high, rolling ground adjacent to Stetson Middle School, was laid out in 1957 by Howard Shoemaker, but developed by Walter A. Crowe, Joseph J. Abel & Sons, Albert R. Hubbs, and Raymond A. Ficciolo Jr., and took its name from its location in Westtown Township and its view off Route 202.

Westwoods

(Street: Carrie Lane)

Wild Goose Farm

(Streets: Picket Way, Trellis Lane)

Wild Goose Farm, on the northwest corner of Oakbourne and South Concord roads, was begun as Westtown Village in 1992 by the firm of Concord Court Inc. The project was taken over by builder Dwight E. Wagner, CCIM, in 1994 and renamed Wild Goose Farm, for the nearby Goose Creek. Fifty-six lots with three styles of homes were constructed in phases over the next several years. Project manager David A. Sinclair lived in an old yellow-sided house in the development at 910 S. Concord Road with his three-legged dog, as he superintended construction of this neighborhood. Both it and another old house were demolished and replaced with new construction. Homes began at \$159,000.

The Point at Windermere

(Streets: Windermere Road, Manchester Court)

Woodcock Farm

(Streets: Robin Drive, Wren Lane, Bobolink Lane, Chickadee Lane, Thrush Lane, part of Cardinal Drive)

Dr. Edgar W. Wallwork subdivision

(Street: East Pleasant Grove Road at South Concord Road)

EPILOGUE BY ARTHUR JAMES

An editorial in the *Daily Local News* on March 12, 1973, referred to Westtown Township as a “snug little island . . . a residential community blessed with open space and lacking in industry which other townships regard as signs of progress.” The editorial further stated that the township “has succeeded in holding the line against the inroads of change and progress.”

Perhaps it would have been more realistic to say that, in considerable measure, concerned residents and township officials have been able to direct and control the changes that have taken place. The township continues to be characterized by an enjoyable rural atmosphere. This has

been achieved not so much by resisting change as by guiding and controlling it. Change is inevitable. We would not have it otherwise. Progress has been defined as “steady improvement” but the term “inroads” suggests “a hostile invasion.”

The conservation and preservation of open spaces, of keeping floodplains free from houses and of retaining wooded hillsides can immeasurably help to keep Westtown “A Good Place To Live.”