

Redstone Quarterly Meeting

The decade of the 1790s opened on a low note for the western outposts of Baltimore YM. Just as Mary England was coming forth in the ministry, her husband was disowned. Soon after George Washington became President, David England wrote to the British general then occupying Detroit and asked for assistance in obtaining a tract of land in Canada for the Quakers, explaining that Friends did not support the US government. Westland Friends objected to his unprompted actions and eventually reached the difficult decision to disown him.

The spiritual needs of the new Friends settlements continued to be nurtured by travelling Friends. Thomas Scattergood visited in 1787. Elizabeth Nichols of Kennett Meeting, Philadelphia YM, had a concern to visit disowned Friends and descendants of Friends who lived in the Redstone settlement, and she spent several months in the area on these travels. In 1793, Nichols moved to Westland MM to maintain these connections and died there in 1798.

Martha Routh of England was a landmark minister of her time who visited here in 1795. She had modified the straw hat that Quaker women wore in the 18th century, introducing the bonnet to Friends. Routh's headgear was an item of comment among Quakers everywhere in North America. Older Friends did not approve of it, but younger women adopted it with near unanimity and made it one of the distinguishing features of Quakers in the 19th century.

Attendance at worship increased dramatically during the 1790s. In the first half of the decade, new meetings were set up at Sandy Hill (1791, near Henry Beeson's mill) and Pike Run (1793). A new preparative meeting was established in 1793 at Fallowfield, and later that year Westland MM was divided. Westland and Fallowfield PMs (with their subordinate meetings for worship) continued as Westland MM; Redstone and Providence PMs (with their subordinate meetings for worship) became the new Redstone MM. Westland MM discussed the creation of a new Quarterly Meeting in the area in

1794. Baltimore YM, meeting at the Aisquith Street Meeting House, granted Redstone QM in 1797. It was first held on 3/5/1798, with Joseph Townsend as the men's Clerk and Rebecca Dixon as the women's Clerk. Other new meetings established in the second half of the decade included Centre (1797), Richland (Va., c. 1797), Head of Wheeling (1800), and Stewart's Crossing (c. 1800). The map to the right shows the increased size of Redstone QM as of late 1800.

Concord Meeting in the Northwest Territory

In 1798, Benjamin Townsend, a minister at Westland, had a concern to visit North Carolina YM. The QM appointed his brother Joseph Townsend to serve as his companion. On their journey, Benjamin Townsend told southern Friends about the Northwest Territory, soon to be opened for settlement with a ban on slavery. Many North Carolina Friends disapproved of the effort to lure young Friends away, and his minute was not endorsed in North Carolina. However, three Friends from Contentnea QM in NCYM were appointed to review the lands soon to be available for settlement. Joseph Dew, a minister of Core Sound MM, was one of these Friends, and while travelling in the uncharted hills just across the Ohio River, he had a vision of "the seed of God sown in abundance" there.

Several dozen North Carolina Friends moved from Trent and Core Sound MMs to Westland and Redstone in mid-1800, where they spent several months waiting for the opening of lands in Ohio. Future US President William Henry Harrison was the Delegate from the Northwest Territory to Congress, and in 1800 he introduced a law which enabled the settling of eastern Ohio. A land office was opened in Jefferson County. North Carolina Friends found the area Dew and others had visited a year earlier in Belmont County and settled there in late 1800. Their first meeting for worship was held in Jonathan and Ann Taylor's log cabin. Hannah Trimble, a travelling minister from Concord Meeting in Pennsylvania, attended this first meeting, and the new meeting was named "Concord" because of her visit.

1790 to 1800

