

Civil War and Iowa Friends

Following a difficult early half of the decade, Ohio Friends entered an era of growth in the latter half of the 1860s. Disagreements about Iowa and the Civil War dominated the first half of the decade. Thereafter, Ohio Friends concentrated on their expansion into Iowa, where Hickory Grove QM was established in 1867.

Ohio YM opened its initial meetings in Iowa in the early 1860s. In Second Month 1861, 27 Friends from six different MMs wrote to Pennsville MM and requested a meeting be established among them. The MM approved the proposal, and the request went to Pennsville QM. The situation at the QM was challenging, and the decision was made to hold off on making a decision until Chesterfield had considered the matter. The problem at Chesterfield was that several of its members were close relatives of people in Salem QM (Iowa Primitive), and they wanted the 27 Friends making the request to become members of existing MMs in Iowa rather than open new meetings. A joint committee at Chesterfield recommended that Friends hold off on granting a meeting in Iowa due to the "unsettled state of affairs of some of our members making the request." PQM acknowledged Chesterfield's concern when it met on 5/23/1861 but then directed Chesterfield to clear up these problems and report back. The committee on clearing up the problems did not know what to do, and it reported to Chesterfield on 8/17/1861 that "they do not know of anything" standing in the way. PQM granted Coal Creek Meeting the following week. A similar but less complicated situation took place in Stillwater and Plainfield MMs, which established the new meetings at Hickory Grove and Springville in 1862.

The establishment of the Iowa meetings precipitated the Primitive division in Ohio. The division was almost avoided. PQM appointed a committee on 2/20/1862 to review the minutes of its subordinate MMs for the past few years. The QM committee did its work and reported back on 5/22/1862 that some minor errors were found here and there but that the major problem was in the Chesterfield women's MM minutes. The

women at Chesterfield were in sympathy with the existing Iowa meetings and did not support opening new meetings there. The men appointed a committee to force the women to change their minutes, and when the women refused, the men's MM at Chesterfield directed their committee on 11/15/1862 to make the corrections in the minutes themselves. The women's MM clerk, Belinda Hobson, refused to be a party to such a scheme of allowing the men to rewrite the women's minutes passed months earlier. In Twelfth Month 1862, then, the majority of the Chesterfield women left the meeting along with a minority of the men. They formed the initial Primitive meeting in Ohio. A complaint was brought to Ohio YM in 1863 about the men's actions at Chesterfield; the YM did not approve of the process used but did not want to disband the Iowa meetings and start the process over.

In the midst of all the Iowa discussions, many Ohio Friends were suffering from mistreatment due to the Civil War. The Ohio Governor issued a call for all eligible men to register for the draft in the summer of 1862. The Ohio M4S sent the Governor an address objecting. Beginning in the summer of 1863, young Ohio men Friends were being drafted. They were taken to camps at Mansfield and Columbus, and some such as Barclay Stratton were shipped from there to Hilton Head, South Carolina. Friends contacted Edwin Stanton, the U.S. Secretary of War, who had many relatives in Ohio YM. Stanton replied that anyone who would not serve could pay a fine of \$300 instead. Joseph Edgerton and Asa Garretson were appointed to visit Stanton regarding some Friends who were not released from military prisons and secured their release.

Redstone QM was increasingly weak. With the collapse of Providence MM in 1869, RQM attached Providence PM to Sewickley MM. It asked Ohio YM to be laid down. The YM considered the complication of travel to southwestern Pennsylvania and decided not to send a committee. RQM was laid down in 1869 and held its last session in the fall. Information about Springfield QM is provided on the facing page.

1860 to 1870

