

Revised Discipline

The decade of the 1920s was a time of loosening of the strong hedge that Ohio YM had valued so much. The Discipline was republished in 1922, including some minimal changes, but additional changes made at YM that year and in the next few years meant that the Discipline was already outdated.

The Committee to Distribute the Approved Writings of Friends had two items of note in its report to Ohio YM in 1921. First, it was working on a list of the Approved Writings. The list took two years to complete and received the stamp of approval in 1922. Second, the committee reported that the earlier printing of the Discipline was exhausted and that it was time to reprint.

Unlike earlier reprintings of the Discipline, the 1922 edition took time. Some Friends wanted to make changes to the text, so the YM referred the matter to the M4S. That body appointed a committee that typed the entire Discipline on a typewriter, streamlined some processes, and incorporated all the printed slips of amendments. The committee felt that minor changes were appropriate but did not have unity to recommend major changes. The text of the 1922 Discipline was re-organized into a more logical pattern (replacing the earlier alphabetical arrangement). It was the first Ohio Discipline to allow tombstones, and it was the first to ban the use of tobacco among members.

The Fiduciary Trustees were established by Ohio YM in 1922. Several YM funds had already been established, and the Fiduciary Trustees assumed management of all those funds. This represented a streamlining of the business. For example, one committee reported every year on the amount of money generated by the Robert Miller Fund, and another committee reported every year on where the proceeds of the Robert Miller Fund were spent. Henceforth, all these small reports were rolled into the Fiduciary Trustee report.

After receiving visits by a YM committee for two decades, Pennsville QM was laid down in 1926. Pennsville Meeting was last regularly held in

1920, although the preparative meeting was held until 1923. In 1922, Pennsville QM requested to merge its men's and women's sessions on the QM level; Ohio YM was not at all in agreement but reluctantly agreed to do so in the hopes it would help the QM to survive. The visiting committee recommended that the QM be laid down in 1926, and the YM granted the request.

Two changes took place in the late 1920s that should have been included in the 1922 Discipline revisions. When the M4S committee was working on the revision, it was comprised entirely of men (there were no women on the M4S because it was a committee of the men's YM). In 1929, the men chose not to fill four vacancies in the M4S and instead gave the women's YM the opportunity to fill the vacancies for the first time. The second change came the following year. Fairhope MM asked the YM for permission to lay aside the holding of a PM if a MM only contained a single PM. The YM was reluctant to take the step, but surviving PM minutes from that time demonstrate that very little business was taking place on that level. The YM decided in 1930 that PMs could be discontinued if the QM was in agreement, which resulted in the disappearance of most PMs in the next decade.

Ohio YM discussed the issue of epistles throughout the 1920s. In 1921, Germany YM sent an epistle to Ohio YM. This unexpected epistle was warmly greeted by Ohio Friends, and for the first time, a return epistle was sent to a YM not in fellowship with Ohio YM. The correspondence with Germany YM was sporadic throughout the decade, and eventually Ohio gave up on Germany for not sending replies. In 1922, Ohio began to send joint epistles to Conservative YMs that were holding joint session YMs and also sent an epistle to Philadelphia YM, which had been considered its "twin sister" for half a century. Fritchley General Meeting in England occasionally sent epistles to Ohio Friends. In 1928, Ohio YM appointed a committee to deliberate on whether to welcome Fritchley into the Conservative correspondence. The following year, Ohio officially welcomed Fritchley into the fold.

1920 to 1930

The meeting in Barnesville was laid down in 1926. Throughout its 40-year history, it had the reputation of being the most progressive meeting in Stillwater QM. The building was demolished in 1949.

The final Pennsville MH (laid down 1923)

The original Fairhope MH was built in the 1910s. When the existing MH was constructed, the old MH was converted into a school house.

Robert H. Smith served as treasurer of the men's YM from 1893 to 1940. (His grandfather Robert H. Smith had served as men's Assistant YM Clerk.) In the 1920s, Macy Stanton talked Smith into sitting in front of an artist, who drew a likeness of the earlier Stillwater Meeting House (demolished 1878) based on his recollections. Smith served on the Boarding School committee for many years and also served as Clerk of the Men's Stillwater QM for several years.

Mary M. Smith was a minister successively at Coal Creek, Fairhope, and Stillwater.