

CHAPTER SIX ~

ESTABLISHING ROOTS

"The country life is to be preferred...."
William Penn, 1683

ESTABLISHING ROOTS

In the years following the creation of West Bradford, the township began to be populated by residents who came from other, more crowded areas of Chester and Philadelphia Counties—including Darby, Thornbury, and Upland. A few of the new arrivals, such as the Cope and Woodward families, left land to their sons. A few acquired land from speculators and first purchasers. Edward Clayton and Thomas Arnold both obtained small sections of land from Edward Beeson in 1713. As newly married young men, both Clayton and Arnold were representative of the male, married landowners who comprised ninety percent of Chester County's taxables in 1715, the first year such records are available. The other ten percent of landowners were nonresidents, single, male landowners and female landowners who were typically widows. As land became less available and farms smaller, the Claytons and Arnolds of Chester County became part of a minority, with an increase in the number of freemen (tenant farmers) and inmates (landless workers). This change reflected the emergence of a non-agricultural labor force as the County's villages began to grow and demand a diversity of trades.¹

From 1780 to 1798, the number of married landowners comprised only fifty-five to sixty percent of the total taxables in Chester County. In West Bradford, the decline in the number of married landowners began earlier, after 1770.² By 1791, only one percent of the County's male landowners were single. Freemen, or non-property owners, were typically the sons of landowners who were given a small tract to farm. In some parts of Chester County, it was observed that the ratio of freemen went up when land was not available.³ In West Bradford and other townships in central Chester County, the ratios were fairly equal, falling within the county average. This suggests that West Bradford was a harmonious land with fathers and sons living peacefully on adjoining properties, and that there were enough industries to occupy those sons who were not given land. Another category

Old-time Methodist

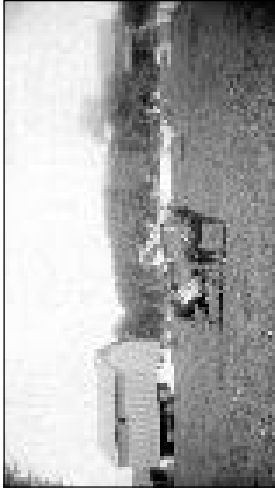
"thunder" was noticeably absent. Above, the original Marshallton Methodist Church, 1868. Below, residents remained in log homes. A 1910 postcard of Echoff's cabin off what is now Callagherville Road.



of resident, the inmate, or unmarried man who did not own property, appeared for the first time on tax lists in 1739.⁴ Depending on the township, the number of these residents rose and fell dramatically from year to year. Still, it is difficult to trace many of these landless workers, largely because their income was often too small to be taxed. They were men whose surnames often show up in the ledgers of artisans such as John Buffington, Jr., a shoemaker. He kept meticulous accounts in 1772 and 1773. However, only 17 percent of the names listed in his ledgers also appear on the tax lists for those years.⁵

The tax records during those middle years of early settlement show West Bradford as a place where a rural industry was important, with an emergence of artisans such as weavers, shoemakers, and tanners. Those non-property owners were a fairly transitory group. In 1760, the tax collector counted 16 freemen and 28 inmates. Two years later, the tax rolls list 65 landowners, 5 freeman, and 21 inmates.⁶ Families and individuals moving in a search for better terms as tenants continued to be part of the Township's history well into the 1700s. John Sugar noted in his diary in 1793 that April 1 of that year was "remarkably favorable for Flitting families" and that thirty wagons were said to have passed through the area and on to West Chester. The "Flitting" families were the sharecroppers—renters of their day, working successive farms.⁷

While artisans and transients were one part of the Township's character, the prevalence of prosperous farmers indicates how successful West Bradford residents were in growing their own food and engaging in the region's market agriculture. James T. Lemon and Gary B. Nash write



The homestead of John & Mary (Miller) Shofstall, 1899. Their large truck farm, Andara, was named a state "Century Farm" in 1997.

that no point of Chester County was "remote from markets or transshipment points. Although overshadowed by Lancaster County after the Revolution, Chester County was a prosperous rural area, partly because of its accessibility to water and markets, but also because of a growing season (more than 170 days) long enough to grow successfully many crops and the high quality of land-well-drained loamy soils, derived mostly from crystalline gneisses and schists, but also from limestone (especially in Chester Valley), shales, and coastal sediments." Lemon makes an extensive study of the two counties in his book, *The Best of Poor Men's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972). In the book, Lemon examines how the rich got richer in Chester County and how the "lower-middle income people" such as small farmers and craftsmen were more likely than the very poor to possess a wagon. They were therefore likely to be crossed off the tax lists, the words "gone" in place of their names.

In 1762, these prosperous farmers included Richard Baker, Humphry Marshall, and Samuel Worth. They all paid more than ten shillings for their properties. Residents such as Richard Woodward, the father of eleven children, contributed to West Bradford's growth in the manner in which they handled their long-term investments. In buying land, Woodward and other English Quakers took care in selecting good sites and seeing that neighboring properties were also purchased. They had the mutual goal of setting up their sons, even daughters and first-born grandsons, with farms long before their own deaths. Woodward wrote his will at his home in Marshallton in 1748. It was probated in the county seat of Chester in 1752. Typical of many Quakers, Woodward took care that his widow would be not displaced from her own home after his death. He also arranged that funds be left to support her. The family patriarch of the Buffington family, who left behind thirteen children, went so far as to describe the exact room ("the one at the northeast corner of the house with the Cellar under it") where he expected his widow to dwell after his death. He also left her the following:

"...five pounds a year and firewood sufficient for one fire brought convenient, and one Milch [milk]-cow reasonably kept without cost to her, one feather bed the one I now lieeth on with Suitable furniture as now is, one Case of drawers [a bureau] that stands in the Said room and one Walnut chest that stands in the House and fourty Shillings worth of furniture as before mentioned forever."⁸

Another interesting example of familial concern is seen in a memorandum written by Joel Baily, who lived near Northbrook, close to the birthplace of his wife, Elizabeth Marshall. Recorded on April 25, 1786, the paper outlined the duties of Joel's son, John, who was taking over the family farm. It describes the "conditions that Joel Baily Lets his son John have his place to work which is as follows:

"John is to have the prophets [profits] of the whole place Except the Sawmill, Meadow and other privelidges that is hereafter Mentioned which Joel is to have Captein [except] the Summer Season 2 horses, 2 cows, 6 sheep, Ceph. [except] Joel is to have the wool and John the increase and 2 hogs Cept [except] until their fit to put up to fatten and 1 Quarter of Beef and tallow. Now concerning the grain. Joel is to have 1 third of Spring and Winter grain, delivered to him and a half bushel of flax seed. John is to be accountable for all the tax Laid on the place for the above date."⁹

West Bradford's early settlers accumulated wealth and established a Quaker culture in the region by having children. The Marshall family alone did much to increase the local Quaker population. Louise Conway Belden suggests: "All of the children of Abraham Marshall and Mary Hunt married members of Meetings not far from West Bradford. All of their grandchildren married Quaker neighbors and all save two settled in southeastern Pennsylvania."¹⁰ The Quaker propensity for looking after their children and saving for their future is apparent in the early tax

records. Between 1715 and 1718, the total tax rate of Bradford Township had jumped from 5 pounds, 7 shillings, and 2 pence to 14 pounds, 19 shillings, and 9 pence. Compared to other townships such as Darby, which had 60 inmates, 7 freemen, and no nonresidents, Bradford appeared to be a rather quiet township, with little trade or industry. However, this was deceiving as Bradford Township in 1715 had only 19 inmates, 2 freemen, and 4 nonresidents. Whereas nearby Goshen Township had a similar population with 14 inmates, 2 freemen, and 4 nonresidents. Yet, its tax rate was only 2 pounds, 18 shillings, and five pence.

WEST BRADFORD'S "MIDDLE" CLASS

While many townships had a substantial difference between the wealth of its nonresidents and its married landowners, Bradford Township had more of a level field. Four nonresidents are found on the 1715 tax records, for instance, including Daniel Smith, who had obtained a 1,000-acre tract of what later became Marshallton in 1690. In 1715, he paid 8 shillings and 4 pence, the same as Abiah Taylor, although it is uncertain whether he owned a mill at that time.¹¹ Non-resident William Wanton paid 6 shillings and 8 pence while John Corwell paid 4 shillings and 2 pence. The least taxed nonresident was Jacob Taylor, who paid 1 shilling and 8 pence. The year before, Taylor had received a patent for a diamond-shaped tract above the Forks. His neighbor to the south was Richard Buffington's business partner, William Vestale. At the time, Vestale owned only a small portion of land he originally purchased with Buffington from the estate of John Loftus. The original tract extended from below the Forks and close to Strode's Mill above

Lenape. In 1715, Vestal paid 2 shillings and Buffington, 4 shillings, and eight pence. At the time, Vestal seems to have owned only a 125-acre tract east of Shaw's Bridge. Richard Buffington owned more than 500 acres of land intersected by the 1717 Road (Marshallton-Thornedale Road).

Buffington's immediate neighbors to the south were Edward Clayton and Thomas Arnold. Clayton is perhaps best known for giving part of his land to the Friends who built Bradford Meeting. Arnold owned one of Chester County's earliest fulling mills, preparing cloth for local residents.¹² He established his mill sometime after his second marriage to Ann Rattew in 1729. It was still a fulling operation, according to the 1873 map, where it was described as "Dr. Temple's Fulling mill."¹³ Arnold's daughter, Sarah Arnold, takes her place in history as one of three women on the 1774 tax rolls. Sarah was the sole heir of a property willed to Arnold's wife, Ann, in 1763. In 1774, Sarah is taxed for 4 acres, along with 1 cow. Her fellow landowners included Mary and Sarah Woodward, George Martin, Humphry Marshall, and Jonathan Buffington.¹⁴

Buffington, a blacksmith, was taxed in 1774 for "mills" and 70 acres located at what now is Copesville. The operation may have included a tilt mill, where tilt hammers hammered metal into shape as well as a carding mill [a carding mill was used to detangle fibers, such as wool, before spinning —Ed.] and grindstone works.¹⁵ That year, Buffington was also taxed for 2 horses, 2 cows, and 6 sheep. John Carpenter was established as a "disuiler" with 200 acres, 3 horses, 3 cows, and 8 sheep. Joseph Martin, who was still operating the Centre House, was credited with 70 acres, 2 cows, and 6 sheep.

SERVANTS AND OTHER TAXABLES

Among the families with servants in West Bradford, the Buffington family presents an interesting social history of the times. The second Richard Buffington, as he was sometimes called, instead of junior, was a farmer who may have had an indentured servant as early as 1713. The name of one servant, Thomas Hayward, appears on a list of services including "weaving a Coverlid" dated in June of that year. There was also a 15-year-old servant named James Elwood, whom Buffington seems to have sponsored while he worked at a Philadelphia patent office. On the 1760 Provincial tax rolls, the first year the government began to list property including "Negros" and horses, Joseph Buffington is one of the township's 28 inmates (there were 16 freemen). He was assessed seven shillings and six pence for one servant and one horse.¹⁶ Among the property owners, John Buffington, (who formerly had Irish servants) was taxed two shillings, eighteen pence for one "negro" aged 35. On the 1774 tax rolls, Richard Buffington is no longer listed as a slave owner while several of his neighbors are. The majority had one slave, including Richard Woodward, who also had 200 acres, 2 horses and 2 cows but no sheep; Joel Baily; John Battin, Sr., and Richard Baker.

Considering that West Bradford had many prosperous residents in the 1700s, none appear on the 1780 registry of Chester County slaveholders. According to an account by J. Carroll Hayes, the township's Quaker heritage and its proximity to places of commerce such as West Chester made it a safe haven for many former slaves after the Civil War. Hayes' account is reprinted in Frances Cloud Taylor's 1995 book,

The Trackless Trail Leads On. Hayes, whose family homestead was near Embreeville, writes that one "ex-slave" befriended the family. "He was a bright, kindly old man, and we came to like him as a near friend. When he walked with us boys, he would always keep about two paces behind us, a habit of his slave days. If we would pause for him to catch up, he would stop too, pretending not to notice our action."¹⁷

West Bradford had its share of indentured servants. A *Pennsylvania Gazette* notice dated December 28, 1774, indicates that Joel Baily sponsored particular tradesmen. James Woodburn, "a whip maker," and his wife, Margaret, placed the notice announcing that they "desired to call on Joel Baily" to "discharge their redemption money." On the 1760 tax rolls, Richard Woodward had the most servants — four "bound" or indentured servants — although he didn't pay the most tax. That honor went to Richard Baker, who paid one pound and nine shillings for his 155-acre farm and one servant. The 1765 tax list also reports several servants. These include those owned by Abel Griffith, John Carpenter, and Stephen Harlan, whose assets included 280 acres, five horses, and a "negro woman." Harlan paid three shillings for his servant while Richard Baker, paid two shillings, three pence for his servant.¹⁸ It is not known whether Baker's servant was Irish, but it would have been an interesting case of upwardly social mobility, since Baker himself had Irish roots. Along with Humphry Marshall, he was one of West Bradford's wealthiest residents. In 1765, the same year Baker was appointed a County Commissioner, he was assessed at 407 acres and one servant.¹⁹ Baker is credited with several

dwellings including a log stable that was assessed at \$110 and an 18 by 18 foot log house.²⁸ They were described as being rented to a man named Samuel Finley, Baker's home and four outbuildings that included a stone kitchen, a smokehouse, and log "shop" were assessed for \$1,100.

RICHARD BAKER: AN IRISH SUCCESS STORY

Richard Baker's rise to prominence as a landowner and magistrate seems all that more remarkable considering his humble origins. He was born in Delaware in 1721, the ninth child of a family of thirteen children. Much like the Trimble family, the Bakers can be traced through documents related to their Quaker heritage. Fudthey and Cope determine the arrival of Richard's parents, Joshua Baker and Margery Knight Baker, as follows: "They bought a certificate of membership from Friends of Waterford, Ireland, dated 2, 13, 1712 and probably lived for a few years in Philadelphia. Some time prior to 1728, they settled in what was known as the Christina Hundred in New Castle County."²⁹

Richard Baker was probably the only member of the family to settle in West Bradford.²⁸ His wife, Rachel, whom he married on November 11, 1754, may have prompted this move.²⁸ She was the widow of Abraham Marshall, Jr. and the daughter of the East Bradford mill owner George Carter. They had five children and numerous grandchildren, many of whom stayed in West Bradford for generations, marrying into the Harlan, Woodward and Buffington families. Despite the many family connections, tracing Baker's life is confusing since there were two Richard Bakers, whose lives intersected. Both were public officials who left a trail of documents connecting them to

various prominent West Bradford residents. They were present at marriages and deaths. They made appearances at community events, including elections and auctions, many held at the Centre House. The elder Richard Baker was elected County Commissioner in 1765. At that time, the Commissioner's main job was to determine a tax rate based on the amount of money they needed to run the government and to repair or build bridges and roads. The job also required the Commissioners to travel to the countryside to inspect bridges or to hear appeals from local residents who thought their assessments were too high. When the county seat was still based in Chester, the commissioners typically held these meetings in areas that were closer to the geographical center of Chester County. Two such meetings were held in 1767 and 1768 at the Centre House.²⁴ Perhaps, Baker had something to do with that location. Richard's youngest child and namesake was a circuit judge who no doubt saw his share of taverns. His travels can be traced in the expense records submitted to the Chester County court. In 1813, when the election district was based in Marshallton, Baker's name appears on a bill that also lists three other judges, though they are not named. The judges (riding "one day each" @\$4.50) along with two clerks and two "inspectors," cost the court a total of \$12. For his part, Richard Baker, a "riding judge," clocked in 15 miles at 10 cents a mile, or \$1.50.

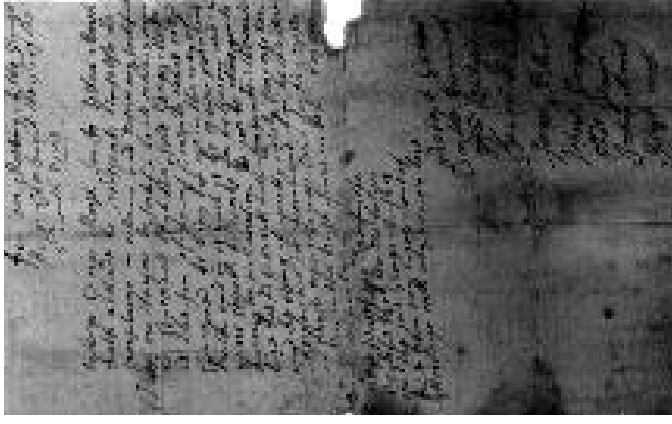
The Baker family's intimate role with the community is even evident in their appearance in the diaries of young residents. Sarah Seeds, a member of Bradford Meeting, took time to record the family's births and deaths in her diary sprinkled with accounts of weather and her daily activity.

ites.²⁶ She writes that Baker's wife, Rachel Carter Baker, was born on August 30, 1719, and died on Oct. 2, 1799. Their oldest son, George, married Hannah Harris in Ireland; another son, Thomas, married Sarah Woodward, and a daughter, Rachel, married Richard Buffington. Not surprisingly, given his position as magistrate, Baker lent his services to local residents such as William Baldwin, and Abraham and Humphry Marshall. Baker's signature appears on numerous documents, from wills to certificates of indenture. Although his political standing may have prevented him from signing tavern or bridge petitions, his name often crops up on descriptions of local properties, perhaps because he owned many large tracts.²⁶

Another Irish Quaker family who helped dilute West Bradford's English-dominated population—the Trimbles—arrived nearly a decade earlier, in 1744. Not unlike the Bakers, they were part of a second wave of settlers who were still able to find prime real estate in West Bradford and stayed for generations. The Trimbles settled in the area specifically for its waterpower and its longstanding mill; owned by William and Elizabeth Marshall. The 1798 Class Tax rolls show that James Trimble and his family of nine children lived in substantial prosperity. He is assessed \$600 that year for a two-story stone house with an attached frame kitchen, a log "well house," a stone barn, a frame gristmill, a sawmill, and a log tenement.

RUNAWAYS

With the exception of the Bakers and Trimbles, the majority of West Bradford's Irish residents—along with a handful of French, Dutch, and black



Irish passport. This rare document, dated May 22, 1728, outlines the typical support given to George Marsh, "having an inclination to go to America."

servants—lived in the township as indentured servants or farm hands. They make brief appearances in the expense columns of farm account books or, more frequently, as runaways in the "Wanted" columns of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. A brief reading of the wanted columns of the mid-1700s reveals countless items relating mostly to Irish workers in West Bradford. Fairly descriptive, these runaway notices typically appeared

with news items about stolen horses and robberies. At a time when a majority of men wore powdered wigs, the runaways were typically described as “wearing” their own hair. In January of 1753, John Buffington offered a forty-shilling reward (or “a reasonable charge”) for the return of an “Irish servant man” named Richard McManen. Buffington gave a detailed account of his servant including that he “talked good English,” and wore “his own light coloured hair.” He was last seen wearing “old leather breeches, pale blue woolen stockings, and a new cloth jacket of a walnut brown colour,” with metal buttons and the “button holes worsted.” The Irish servant also had an English hat valued at 20 shillings, and “not half worn.”⁷⁷

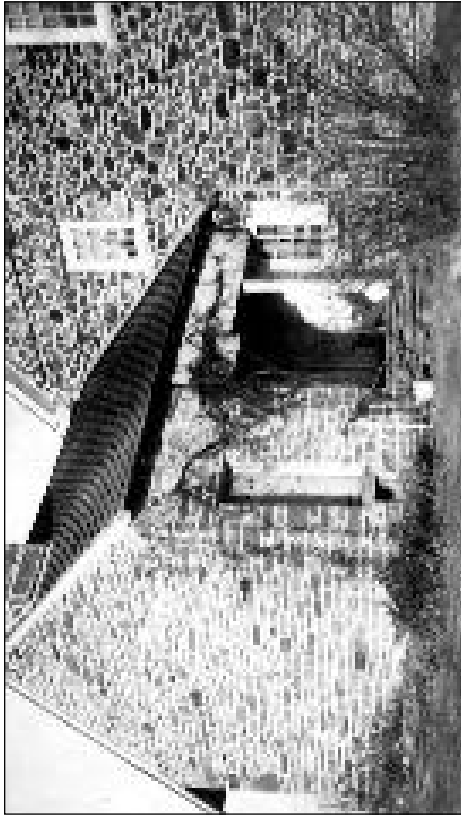
On June 21, 1770, James Bruce of West Bradford placed a want ad in the *Gazette* requesting the return of his Irish “runaway,” named Patrick Wood, who “wears his own brown hair.” After describing his servant, Bruce added a curious postscript: “He is a tolerable good writer,” he said of Wood, and perhaps he may forge a pass.” The postscript is perhaps typical of many runaway notices that often mention particular escape tactics. A West Bradford resident named John Welsh offered a hefty three-pound award for James Johnson, who had only “arrived from Ireland about three weeks ago.” Welsh warned that his servant “is suppose to be a shoemaker by trade and as he came lately to this country, it is likely he will change his name.”

Numerous other *Gazette* notices suggest that runaways were neither limited to the Irish, nor were English and French servants treated any better. On May 18, 1738, George Stroud, offered a twenty-shilling award for a “servant man named

Ephraim Callender, American born, age about 30.” A West Bradford “subscriber” named Thomas Sheward offered a twenty-shilling reward (an extra 10 shillings if the runaway returned in person) for an “English servant boy,” 14 to 15 years old, named John Hunt. While wanted notices generally described attire, Sheward only noted that his servant ran away without a hat and was wearing “old” shoes. He also was “pretty much pitted with smallpox, had white hair, walks hobbling.” Thomas Sheward concluded his notice that “all masters” be forewarned. If they planned to “harbour or carry him off,” they should do so at their own peril.

On the run, the servants were often described as wearing numerous articles of clothing, perhaps because they understandably took all their possessions with them. They wore felt slouch hats or straw boaters, linen breeches and leggings. While some servants were described as wearing “new” clothes—pin-striped jackets and red vests, among them—the majority had mismatched clothes, old shoes tied with string, and battered leather breeches.

A handful of notices placed by West Bradford residents advertise unusual opportunities. A 1767 sales notice placed by Edward Bartholomew, listed one “Negro man” who apparently came with a 200-acre property containing two log dwellings and “edging the plantation of Rev. Abel Griffin.” The servant was believed to be twenty-seven years old and described as knowledgeable in the tanning trade as well as being an “excellent” carrier.⁷⁸



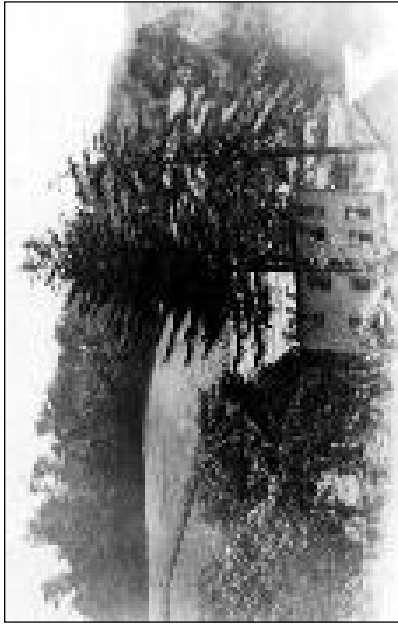
The kitchen wing at Humphry Marshall's home. Marshall, a farmer, miller, and mason, turned to horticulture at the age 51.

MOVING UP: LOG, “MIDDLING,” STONE AND BRICK HOMES.

Reading the colonial tax records today, it would seem that progress was slow. Residents remained in log homes. Properties shrunk in size. And social distinctions were limited. Regardless of one's social standing—whether one was a poor renter or gentleman farmer living on his father's farms—both men fell into the same tax category. Both single male landowners and freeman were required to pay a lump sum called a head tax. That could be anywhere from six to nine pence per person to several shillings.⁷⁹ On the 1765 tax roles, it appears that West Bradford only had three bachelor landowners who each paid a head tax of 15 shillings. These men were Joseph Millis, who had 40 acres of cultivated land and 25 acres of woodland, William Woodward, “a carpenter” who owned a 100-acre farm with one horse and 59 acres of woodland, and Robert Woodward,

who owned a 30-acre lot along with one horse and 20 acres of woodland. That year, freemen who had a horse paid a flat rate of 16 shillings while all other freeman paid 15 shillings, including John Whippo, Archibald Young, and Simon Carns, who was listed as on “appeal.”

Colonial property taxes are difficult to explain today, largely because they were based, not on income, but on a system that allowed the government to demand money according to need. Typically, a flat tax rate of two shillings per pound of property was levied on landowners. That was complicated by the fact that property assessments were not determined by market value, but on a complex system based on a scenario that gave the property owner seven years to pay off a debt.



A large stone house "occupied." The former Wilbur Baldwin homestead.

That said, most of the taxes based on assessments paint a visual portrait of an individual's property, such as Richard Buffington's "middling stone house" and Richard Baker's "large brick house." The 1799 tax records, in particular, show a number of outside investors. Hadley Baldwin of New London, was credited as owning a lime quarry and kiln in West Bradford.

While one might assume that farmers were improving their properties, a log house in West Bradford did not always mean that the owner was poor. Indeed, the 1799 tax returns often cite "old log" houses or "old stone and log" houses. This suggests, perhaps, that Quaker modesty prevailed—West Bradford farmers did not go about tearing down old outbuildings just to keep up with more flamboyant residents of nearby townships. In 1799, Aaron Clayton, was credited with both a small log house "occupied" and a "new brick house in building." His good "frame barn"

was also "cellared." His assessment placed him among what could be viewed as the second tier landowners who were assessed in the two thousand dollar range. Other such landowners included Marshall Battin, Joseph Hawley, John Carpenter, William "Hoops," and Samuel Marshall.

Moses Marshall, Humphry's nephew, also falls in this category. Evidently, his property was previously rented by Jonathan Buffington, since his name is scratched out on the tax rolls and Moses is credited with an old log house, a frame barn, and a "gristmill and sawmill," among other assets. The 1799 taxables also suggest that appearances could be deceiving. An assessment might be high even if that resident lived in a log house because the agricultural value of the land was considered.

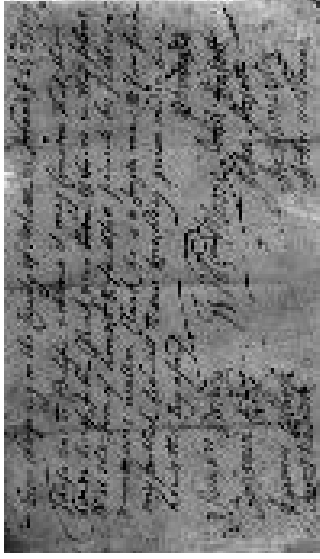
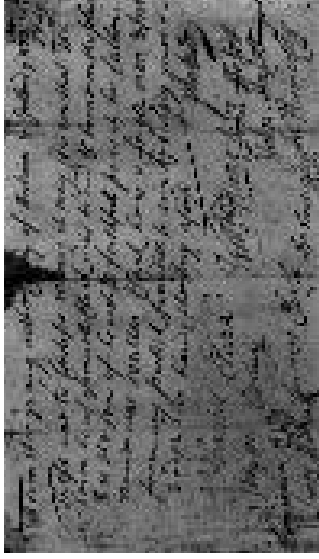
For instance, two of Humphry Marshall's relatives, Joshua and David Marshall, had almost identical assessments, around \$2,500. Joshua lived in a "good" brick and stone house and had a large stone barn and David had a "middling house" built of stone and logs, and a frame barn. While the majority of West Bradford residents lived on agriculturally rich properties assessed from \$10 to \$16 per an acre, numerous small tracts fell into the \$5 to \$8 range. Such "poor" properties are those typically owned by residents who had other occupations such as Daniel

Lenard, a carpenter whose land was assessed at \$8 per acre and Arthur Linden who was both a weaver and tenant. He lived in an old log house on 50 acres assessed at only \$5 per acre.⁹¹

DEATH AND TAXES

Among the early taxes, the 1765 provincial tax is a good source for researching the emergence of a rural industry and non-agricultural pursuits. Although dwellings were not described (a piece of property "with a building" was a typical reference) the 1765 tax was the first to describe a landowner's assets in terms of the amount of cultivated land, woodland, and livestock he owned.⁹² A landowner's occupation was also mentioned if it required a building such as a tavern or smith "shop." The 1765 tax rolls show that Joseph Martin paid one pound, 16 shillings, and nine pence for a property that included the newly established Centre House on a three-acre plot. He was also assessed for 120 acres of cultivated land and 40 acres of woodland. William Cooper is credited with a fulling mill and James Trimble with a "grist and sawmill," along with 80 acres of land "with a building," ten acres of woodland, four horses, and four cattle.

The 1798 Federal tax known as the Glass Tax is particularly helpful in describing properties. This was the first direct tax of the United States government that provided such details as



Two certificates of approval for John and Samuel

Clark, who were probably brothers. The certificates generally testified that Irish immigrants were "honorable," capable of "working for a living" and "free from any engagements of marriage with a woman."

the enumeration of slaves and the number of glass panes or "lights" in each dwelling including stables and tenant houses. That year, Humphry Marshall, was given a fairly steep assessment. His house and outbuildings were valued at \$1,400 and his barn and sheds at \$1,580. The following year, he was assessed for 115 acres, three horses,



Long silent. Two contemporary views of lime kilns ruins on the Marshallton-Thorndale Road.

four cows, and a log and frame barn. The total value of the property was \$2,298. The younger Humphrey Marshall was credited with a 110-acre farm that included a frame barn, a hay house, a cow house, and log wagon house. The total assessment came to \$1,980. Humphrey Marshall also had a tenant farm in East Bradford occupied at one time by Joshua Marshall. The property, including a smokehouse, was assessed for \$1,000. Among the top taxpayers in 1798 was Thomas Worth, described as a “tanner,” who was credited with a two-story brick house with a log kitchen, a shop, a log springhouse, a shed, and a stable. Worth was assessed for \$1,100 while another

craftsman, James Woodward, whose property included a smith shop and smoke house, was assessed for only \$300. Another craftsman, a tanner named Robert Hawley, was assessed for \$1,320. His property included a “curran [currier] shop” (for dyeing leather), a barn, a stable, and two small houses, all made of logs.

In addition to craftsmen, the 1798 Glass Tax tracks those individuals who might otherwise have slipped through the cracks, such as the working poor and renters. They are found on a general list that included the name of the renter and type of buildings he rented. In West Bradford, the landlords of several properties included Humphry Marshall, James Trimble, and Richard Baker. A handful of landlords lived elsewhere. These included John Hannum (a West Chester tavern keeper), Abiah Taylor (an East Bradford miller), John B. Bordley (the noted agricultural experimenter), and a land speculator named Dennis Whelen.

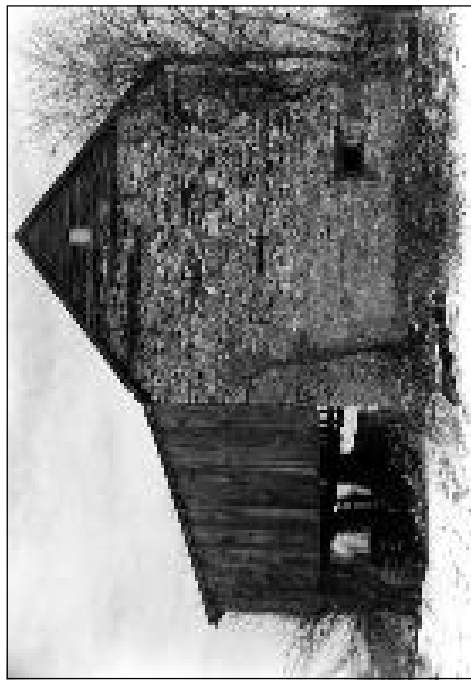
Abiah Taylor rented a stone barn and log stable on 28 acres in West Bradford to Joseph Hawley, a sawmill owner. John Bordley rented to a man named Adley Brown, who may have farmed Bordley’s entire 500-acre property—the Como Farm. Presumably, the farm was property managed, since the land earned a high assessment. Most area farms fell within the \$7 to \$10 per acre range, but Como Farm was assessed at \$24 per acre. Its buildings included two log barns (44’ by 25’ and 52’ by 21’), a frame hay house and a frame wagon house. Whelen is credited with a log house with six lights, as well as log springhouse and smokehouse, all of which were rented to Thomas Gordan.³⁸ In 1799, two other lots were assessed, including “Gheen’s Place.”

believed to be owned by Edward Gheen (containing 292 acres and no buildings), and a 99-acre lot called “Ramsey’s Place.”³⁹ Whelen’s total assessment on his West Bradford property was \$2,541. Whelen also rented to Emos Bolten, as did James Trimble.

In addition to providing descriptions of property, the early tax records also typically give occupations for non-property owners or freemen over the age of 21. In West Bradford, these included Francis Carpenter, a “hatter” and “tenant.” He was assessed in 1799 for the following property: A new frame house (\$200); a “Hatters shop” and stable (\$50); “a lot near the Centre Tavern” (\$70) one horse (\$40); one cow (\$12). Other residents assessed that year include Abraham Martin, a “shop Keeper,” who was credited with a “new frame store and dwelling room on a small lot near the Centre Tavern.” The total assessment was \$150. In contrast, Abraham Mar-

shall, a “tavern keeper,” had several assets that bumped his total assessment up to \$1,322. He was credited with “a good stone house, occupied as a tavern” (\$800); sheds and stables (\$1,500), 20 acres assessed at \$16 per acre, two horses, and one cow.

Other entries suggested that numerous West Bradford residents eked out a living in log cabins, farming very small lots. The tax man often provided descriptions of those residents, who were either widowed or lived alone. In 1799, the “poor and old” Hugh Kergin, who lived in an “old” log cabin, had his property assessed at \$90. He only had one cow, presumably kept tethered on his five-acre plot. The tax records for that year show that Mary Lewis, “a poor widow,” also had an old log house built on 40 acres of land, and a log barn, one cow, and one horse. Elizabeth Kerl was also credited that year for an old log house and “stable” (assessed for \$40) and 24 acres at \$3



East side, 1804 Barn. Historian Ned Coode took this photo in 1939 as part of effort to document Chester County’s remaining old barns and homesteads.

per acre as well as one cow. Her total assessment was \$122. The year before, she had a higher assessment—\$210—for a 30-acre property at \$7 per acre “near William Coates.”

On the 1799 tax rolls, several of the same West Bradford family members are still involved in certain occupations. Only inmates and freemen, who had to pay a head tax, are listed with their occupations. While the list of freemen includes a number of laborers, weavers and farmers, the list suggests that West Bradford had room for a number of new occupations. A man named Patrick McQuirer, is listed as hostler, while James Embree, is described as an auger maker. These professions respectively took care of horses and made instruments for boring through wood.

Other freemen included Thomas John Baldwin, schoolmaster; Richard Buffington and Samuel Hopkins, both masons; Isaac Clayton, a cooper (barrel maker); John Carpenter, a hatter; Merrick Embree, maltster; Theodore England, smith; William England, saddler; Isaac Hawley, laborer; and Joseph Ingram, shoemaker. No less than seven Woodwards are listed, including James Woodward, a weaver.

The inmates’ list also includes a number of laborers, farmers, and at least six shoemakers. Only two inmates—Moses Marshall and Abraham Baily—were not listed as having trades. They might be described as professionals today, but were then considered gentlemen pursuing acceptable but modest jobs. Moses was described as an esquire although he was also a doctor. His cousin Baily was listed as a physician. Both men studied with the eminent Wilmington doctor, Nicholas Way, although Futhey and Cope have written that Baily “took no degree.” During the American

Revolution, “Dr. Baily went as a surgeon in a private vessel-of-war,” and upon his return, he set up a practice in Marshallton until about 1789, when he became “engaged in the iron business” in New Jersey. He was involved in the Whisky Rebellion in 1794, again returning to practice in Marshallton “until the year 1800, when he opened a store in Marshallton and continued a limited medical practice for a number of years,” Futhey and Cope write.⁵⁸

The inmates’ list includes several curious entries including one for Peter Ingram, listed as a “laborer and fiddler,” and William Ingram, who was credited with one cow and two horses—but was not taxed for any item in 1799. Although William’s name is crossed out, he is described as a “huntsman, jockey and whatnot.”



NOTES

¹ The rise in the number of freemen and inmates, or married non-property owners, occurred during a prosperous time span from 1754 to 1760. West Bradford was perhaps typical of many areas of Penn’s colony where growth significantly slowed with the outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1756.

² Duane E. Ball, *The Process of Settlement in 18th Century Chester County, Pennsylvania: A Social and Economic History*, an unpublished dissertation for the University of Pennsylvania, 1973. West Bradford was not specifically studied. However, Ball examined the Township as part of what was called the middle region of Chester County.

³ *Ibid.* Ball writes that the ratio between the number of freemen and inmates generally changes as a township develops and settlements grow larger. “In the early days of plentiful land, a freeman could expect to receive enough land for a farm from his father even before the death of his father,” Ball writes, “therefore it is uncommon for him to remain a freeman for very long. There are more freemen as land becomes scarce as the men wait for land. Many marry and fall into the inmate category.”

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 86. Ball suggests that the term inmate was not used in earlier years: “In 1739, for the first time, one township reports inmates in its tax lists. In 1740, three townships report inmates.”

⁵ John Buffington accounts, CCHS. Also West Bradford tax lists, 1771, CCA.

⁶ Tax lists, 1763. CCA. In contrast, East Bradford had 15 freemen and 24 inmates.

⁷ Diary of John Sugar, 1793-1801. CCHS.

⁸ Buffington’s will, probated in 1752. CCA.

⁹ Baily, misc. papers. CCHS.

¹⁰ Louise Conway Belden, Humphrey [sic] Marshall: American Quaker Botanist, p.37.

¹¹ Futhey & Cope list mills by the dates “when first mentioned” in early records. They cite the year 1719 for Taylor’s Mill.

¹² Interestingly, other townships that share West Bradford’s abundance of water power generally had their share of paper mills. Filling mills tended to be found in more populated areas. Indeed, the existence of an early filling mill, which deened and prepared cloth through moisture, heat and pressure, points to the Township’s thriving economy.

¹³ Unlike other types of operations such as paper mills, which were often converted from grist mills, filling mills were not so easily re-adapted. Their gear included pestles, or stampers that beat and pressed cloth.

¹⁴ The 1774 tax rolls do not include Susanne Thornbury, although she appears on the Brinton map as having obtained a land patent on April 9, 1751.

¹⁵ Other members of the Buffington family may have run the carding mill, where wool was combed and prepared. See the industry chapter of this book.

¹⁶ A handful of freemen and inmates were credited with land. They include John McCoy, taxed seven shillings for 50 acres and William White, who owed two shillings and six pence for 24 acres. Several property owners had servants including “nonresident” Jon Parke, who had a 200-acre farm and two “negroes,” aged 45 and 16. James Jeffers had 258 acres and one “negro” aged 20. Evans Jones had a 150-acre farm as did Susanne Thornbury. Jones, however, also had one “negro” aged 24.

¹⁷ Frances Cloud Taylor. *The Trackless Trail Leads On: an exploration of conductors and their stations* (Kennett Square, Pa.: self-published, 1995), p. 59.

¹⁸ Baker was also credited with 155 acres and a building, 40 acres of woodland, 160 acres with a building, 52 acres of woodland, four horses, six cattle, ten sheep and a tenant dwelling for which he paid three shillings, one pence.

¹⁹ Baker’s appointment was made 44 years after the first county commissioners were named in 1721.

²⁰ In addition to recording the number of lights in the main homestead, the glass tax was the first to itemize other tenant dwellings, stables, barns and outbuildings.

²¹ Futhley & Cope probably trace the family's stay in Philadelphia to Quaker meeting minutes. Joseph Baker requested a certificate of removal from Philadelphia meeting on Nov. 1, 1727, to Newark Monthly Meeting (that later oversaw the establishment of Bradford Meeting in 1726). Joseph and his wife Margery were officially accepted on Feb. 1, 1728.

²² R. Baker, *Clipping Files*, CCHS. A 1939 newspaper article described the Baker homestead, where the family lived for more than half a century, as located on the crest of a hill leading up from Wawaset. The family also gave their name to a nearby school where many residents received their education. It closed when the Unionville School District was created.

²³ When Richard was married, he was said to have been still living in the Christina Hundred. However, in addition to his father, Joseph (1678-1732) and two unmarried sisters, Sarah and Lydia, the signatures of several residents of West and East Bradford appear on the marriage certificate. They include members of the Worth, Trimble, Jeffers and Marshall families (such as Humphry and Eliza Marshall) as well as John Baitin, John and Nathan Coope, James Gibbons, Joseph Parke and Abiah Parke.

²⁴ Douglas R. Harper, *West Chester to 1865: That Elegant & Notorious Place* (West Chester, Pa.: Chester County Historical Society, 1999), p.129. Harper writes that the central location of the meetings was a "tacit admission by the commissioners that Chester was no longer a sensible place to do business."

²⁵ Seeds Diary, CCHS. Among other items, Sarah Seeds mentions the death of Richard Baker, Jr. in 1814.

²⁶ Baker's land is mentioned on a 1799 document describing the Marshall homestead that included "a road leading to John Baitin's [land], then along the same road that leads from Trimble's mill towards Wilmington, and along the same, and the line between me and Joel Bailly and Richard Baker... to the corner of Samuel Marshall."

²⁷ The description of clothes suggests that Buffington outfitted his servants fairly well. Many notices routinely use the word "old" or "worn" to describe articles of attire. In a *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Aug. 12, 1755, notice, for instance, Stephen Harlan describes his Dutch servant man named Francis Stemans as wearing "an old blue coat" that had "the skirts cut off it" and had "neither cuffs or no lining." Perhaps understandably, the Dutch servant (who also spoke French) escaped his West Bradford home with "three handmade flaxen linen shirts, almost new," as well as other articles "too tedious to mention," in Harlan's words.

²⁸ James Bruce's notice continues in its description, noting that the "Irish servant man," was thirty-five years old, five foot eight and "had on, or took with him, a new fur hat, a light colored cloth coat, most of the buttons off the breast." He also had "a jacket, black and white homemade Bengall breeches" and "a large silk flag handkerchief." The item concludes by mentioning an eight dollar award "so that his master may have him again."

²⁹ A currier was more often used to describe someone who carries, or grooms, horses. However, it also applied to a person who dresses or "colors" leather after it is tanned.

³⁰ Ball, *op. cit.* Ball believe that the tax was an unspoken penalty of a man's unmarried status.

³¹ Of course, there were exceptions to the rule that many artisans and non-farmers lived on poorly valued lots. Isaac Marshall, a "pump-maker," lived in a small log house on 25 acres valued at \$16 per acre. David Lewis, a "tailor," had 28 acres assessed at \$12 per acre.

³² The 1765 provincial tax was based on a law passed on May 30, 1764, that called for "an act granting to his majesty the sum of \$5,000 pounds and for striking the same in bills of credit in the sinking of the said bills of credit by a tax on all estates, real and personal, and taxable within this province...."

³³ Harper, *op. cit.*, p. 239. West Bradford was not the only place where Dennis Whelen owned property. He was said to be one of the principle investors of a town named Bath that failed as a resort. One hundred lots at \$250 each were sold in what is now the village of Yellow Springs in West Pikeland Township.

³⁴ The Gheen name comes up infrequently in local history. Futhley & Cope write that the name was once pronounced "Cabagan." Edward Gheen married twice, each time to sisters, as did his father, John Gheen (he married Sarah and Hannah Hicks). Thomas Gheen appears on the township books in 1776 for supporting the "pauper" Edward Osborn.

³⁵ Futhley & Cope, p. 469.