



CAROL STUART WATSON

*The Beall-Dawson House, c. 1815  
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## A HISTORY OF THE FAIR HILL BOARDING SCHOOLS

by Dorothy Pugh

The first Fair Hill Boarding School came into being in 1815, when the Baltimore Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, feeling a need to provide quality education for its children in the Sandy Spring area, purchased Fair Hill Farm in Mechanicsville (now Olney), Maryland. The Society of Friends, active in America since 1656, has always considered a proper Quaker education of primary importance. An early Quaker writer has been quoted as stating that almost every local meeting at some period had its school "for training up our youth in useful learning, under the tuition of religious, prudent persons, suitably qualified for that service," who would teach "the nurture and fear of God, accustoming them frequently to the reading of the Holy Scriptures; Restraining them from vice, wantonness, and Keeping company with such as would induce them into vain fashions and corrupt ways of too many in this world, to their misspending of their precious time and substance."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bliss Forbush, A History of Baltimore Yearly Meeting of Friends (Sandy Spring, Maryland: Baltimore Yearly Meeting of Friends, 1972), p. 53.

The early Quaker schools were generally small, locally supported, day schools, open to all children regardless of religious affiliation. One of the earliest Quaker schools was opened by Isaac Briggs in Sandy Spring in 1797 in a log cabin.<sup>2</sup>

The Friends were among the first to offer equal education to both boys and girls. In 1825 a Quaker educator wrote, "There does not appear any reason why the education of women should differ in its essentials from that of men."<sup>3</sup> In practice, the early schools were mostly "separate but equal," actual coeducation being frowned upon. Violent punishment, although common in many other schools, was not used in schools run by Quakers. The high principles of the Friends were instilled in the children, and they were expected to have good self-discipline. Because of the dispersion of the population in rural areas, later schools were often boarding establishments and were generally of a high quality.<sup>4</sup> Practical subjects were emphasized, science and mathematics being stressed more than the arts.<sup>5</sup>

When the Baltimore Yearly Meeting decided to open its boarding school in the Sandy Spring area, the supporting Monthly Meetings contributed generously to its founding, pledging \$25,013 by 1816. The Fair Hill Farm, containing 358 acres and several buildings, was purchased at the cost of \$22 an acre from Whitson Canby, operator of a pottery business at Mechanicsville.<sup>6</sup>

Fair Hill's history goes back to 1720, when James Brooke was granted 2550 acres of land called "Addition to Charley Forest." He subsequently deeded 300 acres of this grant plus parts of land parcels called "Brother's Content" and "George III" to his son Richard, who built the first part of Fair Hill in 1760.

Although Richard Brooke was otherwise a good Quaker, he abandoned his religion's nonviolent philosophy when the American Revolution began, becoming a colonel in the Continental Army. He died in 1788 and was buried near his house. However, the local, peace-loving Quakers publicly condemned him, and it is said his guilt-ridden ghost regularly rode up one staircase and down another at midnight.

His daughter Ann Brooke married William Hammond Dorsey at Fair Hill in March 1790, and they built a large frame addition to the house at that time. The property later changed hands several times until Whitson Canby purchased it on May 30, 1817, to use as housing for his pottery workers. When the Baltimore Yearly Meeting bought it from Canby, there were eight families living in the rambling manor house, and it was badly in need of repairs.<sup>7</sup> The Quakers remodeled and enlarged the building to accommodate the expected enrollment of 60 to 80 boys and girls, adding a two-story brick addition at the east end.

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2. Sesquicentennial - Sandy Spring Friends Meeting House 1817 - 1967 (Sandy Spring, Maryland: Sandy Spring Sesquicentennial Committee), p. 54.

3. Margaret H. Bacon, The Quiet Rebels (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969), p. 5.

4. Forbush, op. cit., p. 50.

5. Bacon, op. cit., p. 153.

6. Forbush, op. cit., p. 52.

7. Roger Brooke Farquhar, Old Homes and History of Montgomery County, Maryland (Washington, D.C.: Roger Brooke Farquhar, 1952), pp. 146-148.



View of Fair Hill Looking North

The brick part built by Richard Brooke is on the right; the frame part added by the Dorseys is on the left; the addition with the large chimney on the extreme right was added by the school.

The Fair Hill Boarding School opened May 1, 1819, and was set up as a large family unit with Samuel<sup>8</sup> and Anna Thomas, the principals, supervising the farm and also doing some of the teaching. Tuition was set at \$116 a year, payable quarterly in advance. The Thomases, shining lights in the Quaker community,<sup>9</sup> attracted many pupils, giving Fair Hill Boarding School an auspicious beginning.

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8. Samuel was known as "Roxbury Samuel," a reference to a previous abode, to distinguish him from other Samuel Thomases. In his earlier school at Woodlawn he had taught two daughters of Francis Scott Key.

9. Forbush, op. cit., p. 52.

Benjamin Hallowell<sup>10</sup> came to teach mathematics when the school was only seven months old and he was only nineteen years old. Margaret Judge opened the girls' section of the school at that same time.

Hallowell had had no problem in obtaining his position at Fair Hill, but getting there turned out to be quite another matter. He traveled easily from his home in Cheltenham, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, to Baltimore, but could get no farther. When he inquired of Isaac Tyson, a fellow Quaker, how to get to Fair Hill, Isaac replied, "Why, there is no way; it is the most out-of-the-way place in the world." After much thought, Isaac did come up with the possible solution of getting another Quaker, Samuel Snowden, to take Hallowell to Fair Hill. But Hallowell was determined not to impose on anyone. He proceeded to the stage office, where he was told to take one stage to Washington and then another to Rockville, which would put him very close to Fair Hill. He rode the stage to near the present site of Laurel, where some men informed him that, after traveling 30 miles to Rockville, he would be just as far from Fair Hill as he was when he started his stage journey!

He took his luggage and left the stage, still 14 miles from his destination. He could find no carriage or carryall in the neighborhood. Finally, late in the afternoon, he found a man with a horse and cart who was willing to rent them to him for \$5 and also to provide a boy as a guide. At sunset the boy and horse arrived. The entire journey had to be made in the dark through fields and pine bushes. Nowhere were houses or people visible. The boy was not knowledgeable about the route, and the horse was in such sad shape that Hallowell just put his luggage in the cart and walked the whole way. They stumbled along until they came to the Patuxent River which they followed until they reached a house. It turned out to be William Thomas's house, located on a good road just 3 or 4 miles from Fair Hill. Hallowell was greatly relieved. He arrived at the school at ten o'clock that night.

The next morning's breakfast, as described by Hallowell, was probably the established pattern at Fair Hill. Samuel and Anna Thomas sat at the ends of one long table, while Hallowell and Margaret Judge sat at the ends of a second. The students occupied the sides of both tables. No conversation was permitted, and, when the eating was finished, there was an additional time of silence, a characteristic of the Quaker religion. Then the students quietly filed out two by two.

On his first Sunday at Fair Hill, Benjamin Hallowell was surprised to find that Samuel Thomas was the preacher at the Sandy Spring Meeting. He was very proud to be associated with Thomas, whom he found to be kind, considerate, genial, and intelligent. In fact, he was very pleased with all three of his associates, Samuel Thomas, Anna Thomas, and Margaret Judge, calling them, "three precious Friends and devoted servants of the Most High ... much beloved by the inmates of the family, teachers, scholars and domestics."

Because the only other male teacher at Fair Hill was Samuel Myers, who was married and lived with his family in Sandy Spring, Benjamin Hallowell spent much time alone in meditation and reflection. Some of this lonely time he spent in his school room, but, whenever possible, he went into the surrounding fields and woods. After

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10. Benjamin Hallowell became a noted Quaker educator, mathematician, scientist, and agronomist, who established his own very successful school in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1824. He founded that city's famed Lyceum, planned its waterworks, lectured at the Smithsonian Institution, and was the first president of the Maryland Agricultural College, which later became the University of Maryland at College Park.

spending many contemplative hours in his favorite place, a thick clump of bushes with a large cedar in the center, he was surprised to discover that quite a few people had spent time there - it was the former private burying ground of the Dorsey family who had previously owned the property!

Since some of Hallowell's students were his own age (Robert Crew, George Winston, Isaac Briggs, Artemus Newlin, and Robinson and Thomas Stabler) and some even older (David Brown, John Smith, Henry S. Taylor, Thomas Stabler, and Samuel Peebles), he could have had any number of difficult problems, and he felt the weight of his responsibilities very strongly. But he described the boys as being "nice students" and said that "all was harmonious and pleasant."<sup>11</sup>

In reference to Fair Hill, Bliss Forbush quotes:<sup>12</sup>

Corporal punishment could in no case be resorted to, but some place of seclusion was provided for refractory boys where they could not have much light, but plenty of air, and where they could be kept comfortably warm in pretty cold weather ... The boys and girls should be at a proper distance from one another ... to prevent undue familiarity, and yet not so far separated but that an innocent and cheerful intercourse would be allowed and encouraged in suitable seasons. Boys and girls were tenderly advised to ... close the day by remembering their gracious creator, that being the best preparation for quiet repose. Unnecessary noise was discouraged, orderly conduct expected; lessons were to be learned in silence, and moderation and decency were required at all times.

In the early winter of 1820, after being in operation only a little over a year, Fair Hill School was struck a cruel blow when Anna Thomas suffered a disabling stroke which resulted in her death on May 19, 1820. She was greatly missed by all. Benjamin Hallowell reported that her husband was so deeply affected that, "To him the light of the outer world seemed extinguished."

Deborah Stabler, a very able person, temporarily took Anna Thomas's place as superintendent of the girls' department and was a great comfort and strength to all.

After Anna's death, Samuel Thomas spent much time in conversation with Hallowell, who described Thomas as "open, deep, philosophical, social and profoundly religious." Thomas was fond of giving Hallowell pointers, such as, "Ah, it is a great thing to learn to let 'well done' alone; by attempting to mend it you spoil it." He illustrated this point with a story of a powerful sermon he had delivered while he was a Methodist preacher. After sitting down, he remembered some additional points and, returning to the pulpit, he went on and on and on, completely nullifying his original strong sermon.

Thomas also recounted to Hallowell his past experience with recurring bouts of "slave sickness." Despite the fact that he thought he could not get along without

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11. Benjamin Hallowell, Autobiography of Benjamin Hallowell (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Friends' Book Association, 1884), pp. 43-51.

12. Bliss Forbush, Moses Sheppard, Quaker Philanthropist of Baltimore, quoted in Forbush, A History of Baltimore Yearly Meeting of Friends, p. 52.

his slaves, he started to be bothered by the thought that one particular man should be set free. This man had served faithfully and deserved his freedom, but Thomas felt that this slave was the very one he could not spare. The thought of freeing the man kept coming back into Thomas's mind, even keeping him from sleeping. Finally, after a completely sleepless night, Thomas rode to Annapolis, brought home the man's freedom papers, and set him free. After that Thomas slept very well. But in a few months thoughts of a woman slave started to keep him awake. The pattern repeated itself until there was only one slave remaining, a 16-year-old boy who was very helpful to Thomas. Thomas enjoyed his sleep for a long time, but eventually the same old symptoms returned. Thomas felt he really couldn't spare the boy, as the lad slept near his room, saddled his horse, waited on table, and was just generally indispensable. Thomas would keep busy during the day and not think about it, but he couldn't keep the boy out of his mind at night. He worried about what would happen to the lad if he, Thomas, should die. Finally he could stand it no longer, and once again he went to Annapolis for the freedom papers.

At the end of the story, Thomas said to Hallowell, "Then, Benjamin, I did feel comfortable, and have never had any slave sickness since. How kind the Good Father was, in not laying all this burden on me at once, which in all probability would have crushed me, but he just moved in it gradually, as I was able to bear it, and I cannot express how grateful I now am to him for the blessing and favor."

In mid-September tragedy once again struck Fair Hill School when Thomas himself became seriously ill with bilious fever. He died on September 30, 1820, only five months after Anna. After Thomas's death, Benjamin Hallowell said, "He was one of the best men I ever knew, and one of the kindest friends I ever had, and the main support of the discipline of the school."

Thomas's death was a terrible, unexpected blow for the school and all connected with it. However, Deborah Stabler, temporary superintendent of the girls' department, and the other teachers managed to keep the school functioning. Philip Dennis, a local property owner, took charge of the farm and outdoor affairs.

When enrollment in the girls' department increased in the spring of 1821, Margaret Farquhar was hired as a teacher. She had visited the school the previous winter and had commented to her cousin Mary Briggs (later Mary B. Brooke) that Benjamin Hallowell was "no beauty, anyhow." She seemed to have no presentiment that, before four years had passed, she would be Mrs. Benjamin Hallowell.

About this same time Samuel Myers left and was replaced by Margaret's brother Charles Farquhar. Both brother and sister began their teaching duties March 1, 1821, at which time Fair Hill had about 43 pupils.<sup>13</sup>

At one time there was a Superintendent McPherson at Fair Hill who impressed Hallowell with his handling of a particular situation. It seemed that the boarding school boys had been very busy for several days in an area called the "bounds," which was hidden from the rest of the school by a clump of trees. Knowing they couldn't hurt themselves there, the superintendent didn't investigate their activities. Finally a student rushed in and excitedly told him that an old sow was stranded in a deep hole down in the "bounds." Sure enough, there was a very confused, 300-pound sow in a hole that was 6 feet deep! After looking the situation over carefully, the

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13. Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 52-58; Friends Miscellany, Vol. XI, p. 291 as quoted in Sesquicentennial, op. cit., p. 85.

superintendent said, "Now, boys, you have dug a grave for the old beast, now bury her." Gleefully the boys threw shovelful after shovelful of dirt into the hole. Of course, when enough dirt had been returned to the hole the pig walked out by herself. Hallowell's comment is a classic: "Everything can be moved if we touch the right spring."

In September 1821, after being there one year and nine months, Benjamin Hallowell resigned his position as teacher at Fair Hill Boarding School. His salary had been \$400 a year. It was rather curious that he left at that time because he had no other job or home and he was deliberately vague about his reasons for leaving. He evidently did not want to be anywhere in the area, since he later refused a job at Ellicott's Mills because of its location. He had become engaged to Margaret Farquhar before he left, though, and they were finally married at Sandy Spring Meeting House on October 13, 1824, after which Hallowell opened his own very successful school in Alexandria, Virginia. Many years later Benjamin and Margaret came back to live on a farm just down the road from Fair Hill.<sup>14</sup>

Oliver Paxson was hired to succeed Hallowell at Fair Hill, and Amos Farquhar, father of Margaret, came from York, Pennsylvania, to take over the management of the school.<sup>15</sup>

In 1824 the chairman of the Fair Hill Boarding School Committee reported to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting that the school's affairs "were conducted with economy and prudence, and that the general deportment and improvement in the pupils was satisfactory." However, the school was operating at a deficit despite contributions from the Quarterly Meetings. In an effort to attract more students, tuition was reduced to \$100, and then to \$80, but it did no good. The school closed in 1826. It was felt that the early deaths of Anna and Samuel Thomas contributed to the failure of Fair Hill School. Local Quakers who might have sent their children to a school run by the Thomases instead continued to send them to better-known Quaker schools in New York and Pennsylvania.<sup>16</sup>

The Baltimore Yearly Meeting retained ownership of Fair Hill and, in 1850, leased it to Richard Kirk, who opened the Fair Hill Boarding School for Girls there on May 5, 1851.<sup>17</sup> His wife Mary and her brother William H. Farquhar were the principals. They were children of Amos and sister and brother of the Margaret Farquhar who had taught at the original Fair Hill School and was now married to Benjamin Hallowell. Prior to the opening, a long addition had been added to the north side of the house to accommodate the expected 40 students.

In 1854, 22-year-old Mary P. Coffin joined the teaching staff at Fair Hill. Being from New York State and thinking she was coming to the sunny South, she brought only light-weight clothing with her. What a surprise! But at least she had a much easier time getting to Fair Hill than Benjamin Hallowell had had 35 years before. Mary was met in Baltimore by William Farquhar, who took her by carriage to his home, "The Cedars."

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14. Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 61-63, 98.

15. Ibid., p. 94; Sesquicentennial, op. cit., p. 87; Farquhar, op. cit., p. 241.

16. Forbush, op. cit., pp. 52-53.

17. Catalogue of Fair Hill Boarding School for Girls (Silver Spring, Maryland, 1862).

She was surprised to find that "Sandy Spring" really meant a large general area and that the village, except for the large brick meeting house, contained only a few small buildings. Some of the country was very "scrubby and raggedy-looking" according to Mary. But any initial disappointment she may have felt was completely erased when she became acquainted with her associates and with the students at the school. Like the original Fair Hill, this school was run like a large family, with the Kirks, their four children, and Mary Kirk's Aunt Phoebe Farquhar making up the core of the "family." There was much love and affection, and "Miss Mary" Coffin seemed to have a truly special place in the hearts of her students. She spent eleven happy years at Fair Hill.<sup>18</sup>

Mary always had the youngest scholars sleep in a room next to hers so they could have someone to call if they awoke in the middle of the night. These girls were generally orphans whose expenses were paid by the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. The Yearly Meeting also paid the expenses of "apprentice teachers," girls who agreed to teach in a school for Friends' children after receiving their training.<sup>19</sup>

Mary S. Hollowell, niece of Mary Kirk and William Farquhar and daughter of Margaret and Benjamin Hollowell, was a student at Fair Hill in 1854. Mary Coffin remembered her well. Although not sturdy physically, she had a strong character and was painstakingly conscientious, undoubtedly reminding the older local residents of her well-known father. She also had a sweet voice and often sang Scotch songs, which was unusual for a Quaker girl since they were not usually taught music. Mary Hollowell subsequently married William S. Brooke of Sandy Spring. She died four years later, leaving two young daughters.

Miss Mary had fond memories of all her students, and one that she specifically mentions in her autobiography is Dolly Edmonston Waters, who attended Fair Hill from age 10 to age 17. She was especially helpful to Miss Mary, even charming General J.E.B. Stuart out of taking Mary's horse when the Confederate was collecting mounts while passing through Maryland. Although a Southern sympathizer, Dolly married a Union officer and lived out her life on various military posts.

Every six weeks there was a "visiting day" when reports or "character papers" were sent to the parents. The girls whose homes were close enough went home and often took friends with them, including their friend and teacher, Miss Mary.<sup>20</sup>

In a catalogue issued by Fair Hill School in 1862, it is seen that William Farquhar, Mary Kirk, and Mary Coffin were still the three teachers. The fee for board, lodging, washing, tuition, and textbooks was \$140 a year plus \$10 extra if a girl took drawing. The school year ran from the beginning of October to the end of June. Subjects taught were spelling, reading, writing, geography, grammar, composition, arithmetic, bookkeeping, natural and moral philosophy, physical geography, chemistry, mythology, physiology, botany, geology, history, algebra, geometry, French, German, and Latin! There is no explanation of how three teachers were able to handle this large curriculum.

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18. Mary C. Brooke, Memories of Eighty Years (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1916), pp. 40-44.

19. Forbush, op. cit., p. 53.

20. Brooke, op. cit., pp. 44-52.

Naturally the catalogue praised the neighborhood, the school buildings, and the teachers' abilities. Parents of prospective students were told that the girls would be regarded as members of the family and would be watched carefully so they would have correct and lady-like deportment. Pupils were required to arise at "5-1/2 o'clock" in the morning in summer and at 6 o'clock in winter. They had to retire at 9:00 P.M. and were required to be "punctual, regular, and orderly in all their habits."

One unusual thing, strongly stressed in the catalogue, was that students would not be allowed to visit their homes at all during the entire school year. According to the catalogue, experience had shown that such visits hampered the students' scholastic achievements. Obviously, the "visiting days" that Mary Coffin wrote about were a thing of the past by 1862.

The school must have been proud of its students, as 314 names of present and past Fair Hill scholars were listed in the catalogue. Most were from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, but some came from as far away as Texas, Minnesota, and California.<sup>21</sup>

On Saturday mornings Miss Mary held a "sewing school," during which the girls did their mending, needlepoint, and knitting while Mary read to them. She read fiction for one hour and history or travel the rest of the morning. The girls made good use of Fair Hill's small library, too, being especially fond of Longfellow and Scott and the poems, Hiawatha, The Courtship of Miles Standish, and Evangeline.

When Miss Mary first taught at Fair Hill, she had her choice of three different kinds of lighting for the school room: candles, lard oil lamps, or benzine lamps. Although the latter gave the best light, they were unsafe, and Mary used the second best, lard oil. Later, when the school began using coal oil lamps, Mary said she "felt as if the millennium had come!" She said that they "almost made daylight." These lamps did require careful management, but Mary felt they were definitely worth it.

Mary Coffin had never seen that "peculiar institution" of the South, slavery, before coming to Maryland. She was terribly distressed when a slave she knew personally was sold by his master and not even given a chance to say good-bye to his family. Some of her pupils had slaves at home, but she was sure they were well-treated.

While Mary was at Fair Hill, the Quakers in Sandy Spring kept no slaves. They employed only free colored people, to whom they paid wages. As there were no public schools in the vicinity for anyone at this time, Miss Mary often taught the servant women and the young black men to read and write. They wanted to write their own letters and read their Bibles themselves.

Fair Hill was a flourishing school in 1861, and there seemed no reason it should not continue to be successful. Unfortunately, the Civil War sounded the school's death knell, even though it did not officially close until 1866. Since the students were, of course, divided as to sentiment concerning the conflict, the school policy was to refrain from discussing it. This was a position taken by many Quakers, who generally believed in following a course of nonviolence.

There were 40 students at the school on April 19, 1861, when rioting broke out in Baltimore between the citizens and the Massachusetts troops who were passing

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21. Catalogue, Op. Cit.

through on their way to Washington. Immediately, many parents withdrew their girls from the school, leaving a student body of only 14 pupils. The following October less than 20 students returned.

The small number of students, the crisis of the war, and the fact that the girls were nearly all bright and in the highest class brought about a natural closeness between students and teachers, and close friendships were formed. One of the students at this time was Maria Weaver, a grand niece of former President Buchanan, who was supervising her education.

Although there was no actual fighting at Fair Hill, the war did pass by several times in the form of columns of men, horses, and cattle that raised billowing clouds of dust. Since Fair Hill was almost 100 years old at this time, the cannonading on the upper Potomac and the practice firing of nearby platoons rattled the windows and knocked plaster off the walls.

There was some depredation of the countryside, too. When General Hooker's brigade passed through on its way to Rockville in 1862, the men took all the potatoes out of a 4-acre field. After being approached by the owner, Hooker promised payment, but the army left suddenly in the night, and the owner never saw the money. At Fair Hill in 1863 General J.E.B. Stuart's men (3000 to 10,000 depending upon who was doing the estimating) commandeered many horses and a big farm wagon. They also burned all the new rails around an 80-acre field in one night! In 1864 Benjamin Hallowell, now in his 60's and living on a neighboring farm, was forcibly removed from his favorite horse, Ande, when he refused to surrender him to Confederates heading for Fort Stevens. (Too bad Dolly Waters wasn't around then!) The nearby house of William Brooke was entered by soldiers while the family was away, but only sewing materials and photographs of pretty girls were taken! The last Civil War action in the area took place October 7, 1864, when ten of the famous Mosby's Raiders robbed a Sandy Spring store. That was too much even for peace-loving Quakers, and the neighborhood men shot one rebel and captured another. They turned out to be Prince George's County men who had attended a Sandy Spring school in their youth.

During the hostilities, all this activity and tales of deserters and guerillas afloat in the neighborhood contributed to strong feelings of apprehension in the females at Fair Hill. Mary Coffin, although very nervous about the situation, felt she had to project an image of stability for the young girls. She trained herself to remain outwardly composed and cheerful in all situations. She worked very hard to keep the girls' minds occupied. When they had spare time, Mary recited stories from favorite books while she and the girls were knitting socks for soldiers. Extra reading was encouraged, and scenes from the books were done in tableaux.

Since Mary's bedroom was at the head of the stairs leading from the unlighted front hall, she always checked her room carefully for unexpected occupants before undressing for the night. She also took the precaution of hiding her government bonds under a brick in the hearth. Fortunately, she never found any strangers in her room, and her bonds remained safe for the duration.

Quakers were not fighting people, but they proved their loyalty in other ways. They paid their war taxes cheerfully, and, in the early days before hospitals were established, they supplied the sick and wounded with suitable clothing and food.

After seeing Lincoln at a New Year's Reception in the White House, Mary Coffin reported that he was weary and sad-looking, while mechanically shaking hands. She said his white kid gloves reached about halfway to his wrists.

Lincoln's assassination and the attack on Seward brought widespread consternation to the Sandy Spring neighborhood. No one knew what else might happen. Mary said that the spring weather was lovely, but it was so "out of place, when our hearts were so overburdened with sorrow."

In the summer of 1866 the school finally closed its doors for good. Mary Coffin left the following words:

I want to say that, if I had looked the world over, I do not think I could have found a spot where I could have spent eleven years more pleasantly or, to me, more profitably. The very atmosphere of Sandy Spring was progressive and educational. A Farmer's Club and a Woman's Mutual Improvement Association - the latter believed to be the first Woman's Club in the United States - had been organized several years before I went there, and a Lyceum Hall followed, where courses of lectures were given, and where our reading circle met. Though the weather might be inclement, and the roads in winter almost impassable, we were sure of a good attendance. Swarthmore College and other institutions of the kind were not then in existence, and the young people were more dependent than now on home culture.

Mary subsequently taught at the Sandy Spring Public School and at Stanmore Boarding School for Girls. On October 29, 1871, she married William S. Brooke, the widower of Mary Hallowell, and thereafter lived a long, interesting, and productive life.<sup>22</sup>

When the school closed, Richard and Mary Kirk bought the Fair Hill property from the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Later their son Charles bought it from them and continued farming it. After his death in 1923, the farm was subdivided, and the manor house changed hands several times.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, on May 1, 1977, a disastrous fire completely destroyed Fair Hill.

The Fair Hill Committee of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting invested the funds received from the sale of Fair Hill and used the interest earned to assist in the education of Friends' children. Schools were helped, equipment purchased, teachers' salaries supplemented, and students given loans. In 1957, \$4000 was given from the Fair Hill Fund to help in the establishment of the Sandy Spring Boarding School.<sup>24</sup>

Today, 160 years after the Baltimore Yearly Meeting originally purchased Fair Hill, that name is still synonymous with quality education. The Fair Hill Fund is continuing to help scholars and schools with loans and grants.

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22. Brooke, op. cit., pp. 55-67.

23. Farquhar, op. cit., p. 148.

24. Forbush, op. cit., pp. 82, 99, 140.

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