



Whiteland Friends Meetinghouse. *Photo credited to J. Gilmore Wilson.*

Burying Grounds of East Whiteland's Malin Family

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One of the more interesting and historic sites in East Whiteland Township is the surviving cemetery of the no longer extant Whiteland Friends Meeting. The meeting house was built in 1816 on land donated by Randal Malin (the Malin brother who inherited the Malin Hall farm from their father Randal Sr.). Its location was just south of the Lancaster-Philadelphia Turnpike (later Lincoln Highway) on, what else, Malin Road. (Actually in 1816 the road was called Hood Road.) As soon as the meeting house was built, a cemetery was begun beside it. Here virtually all of the local Malins were buried from 1816 until about 1890, when the meeting house was closed and memberships transferred to the new Malvern Friends Meeting.¹

Another small, ancient cemetery north of Swedesford Road and west of Conestoga Road (Route 401) has been considered by some people (at least in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries) to be the private burying ground of the Malins.² Yet strangely the only marked graves are for James Cloyd and his son Hockley, interred in 1807 and 1803 respectively. The father of the James Cloyd buried here, also named James, purchased the tract of land just west of the original Malin acreage from the Paschall family in 1752. This old cemetery was on Cloyd land but is very close to the boundary line with the Malins. Perhaps the Paschalls and the Malins created it for the use of both families early in the eighteenth century. If so it could be the place where Isaac Malin, who settled here in 1709, is buried.

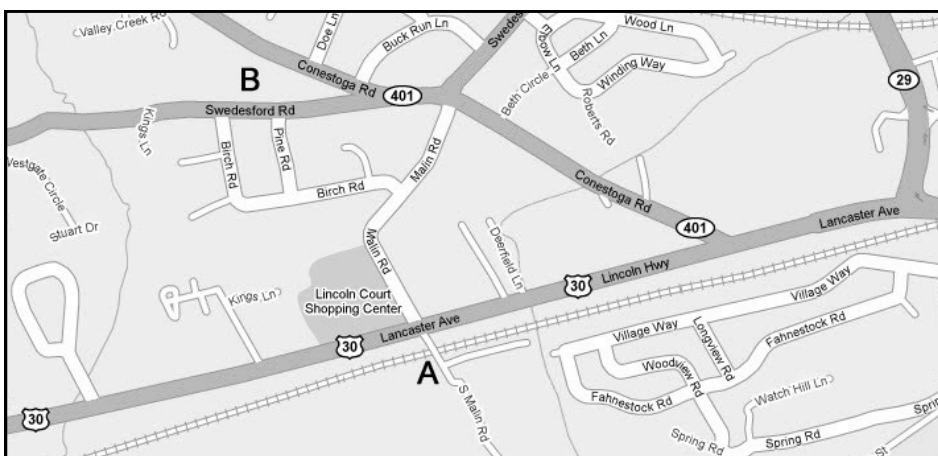
From 1788 to 1816 the East Whiteland Malins were almost all members of the Willistown Friends Meeting. Before 1788 they belonged to the Goshen Monthly Meeting at Goshenville. Only twelve years after their meeting house was built in 1816, East Whiteland's Friends experienced the Orthodox-Hicksite Split which began about 1828. Joseph Malin II (son of Joseph I who hosted George Washington in 1777) was "disowned for joining the Hicksites 31 Jul 1828 and Amy [Hoopes—his wife] was disowned for disunity and joining the Hicksites." Apparently many rural Quakers followed the reformer Elias Hicks in the schism that struck The Society of Friends in America in the 1820s and afterwards. The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting remained in control of the "Orthodox" group. All over the country Quaker Meetings split. The doctrinal differences aren't simply liberal (Hicksite) vs. conservative (Orthodox). Elias Hicks stressed the Inner Light and the Spirit Within, throwing into question the orthodox positions on Christ's divinity, the virgin birth, and salvation from sin through Christ's death and resurrection. Both Hicksite (Joseph II and Amy, e.g.) and Orthodox were buried in Whiteland Friends cemetery. Joseph Malin III (a "birthright Quaker") was baptized (as an adult) into the Baptist faith and three generations of his family are buried together in the Malvern Baptist Cemetery.

A year or so after the Whiteland Friends Meetinghouse closed, the Pennsylvania Railroad built its Trenton Cut-off right beside the old structure. Historian J. Gilmore Wilson writes that the building was torn down in 1895.³ Quaker simplicity and personal humility have always been expressed in very small, squat grave markers with minimal inscriptions that, after a century, can be very hard to read. This is certainly true of the stones at Whiteland Friends. Perhaps sixty years of steam engine smoke alongside them contributed. So it was with a shout of delight that a few years ago I discovered in the map case of the Chester County Historical Society the "Plot of Burying Ground of East Whiteland Friends Meeting," made on "6th mo. 11th" (June 11) 1875 by D. E.

Many genealogists and local historians are probably unaware of this valuable document. Since it only gives names (no dates), it is most useful paired with a thorough knowledge of the families buried there (Malin, Hibberd, Corson, Huchinson, Smith, Lear, Evans, Richardson, Dilworth, Phillips, Pratt, Mendenhall, Lewis, Hoskins, Potts, Davis, McLain, Griffith, and a few others). For obvious reasons, Malins are the predominant family. Joseph I and his second wife Rachel (Valentine), five of Joseph I's children, his brother John's widow Sarah and almost all their children (family of the Malin-George House), Joseph's brother Randal and wife Jane Hoopes (of Malin Hall) are interred here. In all I count 22 marked Malin graves and 19 Hibberds, a family closely allied with the Malins.

Research on this subject is ongoing. Further findings will be shared in a future issue as they are uncovered.

1. Quite a few of the East Whiteland Township Malins were no longer Quakers when Whiteland Friends closed its doors in 1889. Some, like Joseph Malin III (who died in 1892 and had been "disowned" by the Orthodox Friends in 1850), joined the Willistown (later Malvern) Baptist Church.
2. I remember hearing, as a boy, that it was an Indian graveyard!
3. J. Gilmore Wilson, *A Brief History of East Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania: 1765-February 26, 1965* (The Frazer Press, 1965), fourth page of non-paginated photograph insert. (Meetinghouse photo credit, same source).



The Whiteland Friends burying ground is located at A; the Cloyd/Malin cemetery is denoted by B. Google Maps image courtesy of Mike Bertram.