

Story of Whitacres and the Quakers

Story taken from the book
Ye Meetg Hous Small

A short account of Friends in Loudoun Co., VA – 1782-1980

By Werner & Asa Moore Janney

Pgs. 53 – 55 & 63



Even in Goose Creek proper, the disownment rate was dismal. As an example, let us take the Whitacres. If we have to make remarks about people around Goose Creek, we had better pick on kinfolk, and the Whitacres were not only full of the Old Ned, but were also kin to the Janney. John and Naomi Whitacre came to Loudoun, VA in 1761 from Bucks County by way of New Jersey and duly had their certificate recorded at Fairfax, the monthly meeting of which Goose Creek was then a part. Since the couple had nine children, let us concentrate on one of them, Benjamin Whitacre.

As soon as he was grown, Ben and his brother Caleb were hauled before Fairfax meeting for fighting. Caleb apologized, but Benjamin proved recalcitrant and was disowned. It was not long before both brothers were in trouble with the meeting again, this time for "still making addresses to young women not of our Society, with the object of marriage." Somehow or other the meeting got mixed up and, for good measure, disowned Ben a second time. This was in 1776. All non-member, in 1780, and when Alice showed signs of wanting to become a Friend, the meeting reinstated Ben in 1781 and the next year extended the right hand of membership to Alice.



Soon after getting off to such a good start at Fairfax, Ben and Alice were transferred to the Goose Creek records in 1785, not that they had moved but that they were living in Goose Creek territory when Goose Creek became a monthly meeting that year. Emulating his father and mother, and with some help from Alice, Ben also assembled a family that eventually included nine children. Of this litter, two girls were disowned for being unchaste and having children as a result. Five of the nine were disowned for marrying out of unity, for fighting and quarreling, and for drunkenness. Albina Whitacre married Joel Craven out of unity but kept her membership because she said she was sorry, not that she had married Joel (they were still newlyweds) but that she had not married in the meeting. Such apologizing was something her headstrong sister, Naomi, who married Thomas Gregg, captain of Loudoun militia, would not do. The total loss to Goose Creek,

and it probably was a loss, even if it was a somewhat randy bunch, was seven members. Of the two left in membership, one was a spinster. (A footnote: Albina's husband, Joel Craven, had a sister named Esther. She married Daniel Cockerill, who at the age of 25 would be entrusted with the building of the new brick meeting house.)

At Fairfax Monthly Meeting, especially, it did not take much to get you disowned.

Of course people who were not members could attend meetings, and many did so regularly. Albina Craven's nephew Thornton Whitacre was not a member, since his father had been disowned for fighting and drunkenness. Thornton, though, was a regular attender at both First-day and Fifth-day worship and should not be shorted merely because he had a kind of vested interest in going to meeting and sizing up the people who would some day be wearing his coffins to the grave. But did he ever obtain any satisfaction, we wonder, from noting that some occupant of his product had assisted in the disownment of his father and his uncles and his aunts?

In his later life, Thornton's partner as cabinetmaker was Walker Welsh, who had married Thornton's first cousin, Albina Craven, the daughter of his Aunt Ablina Crave. Whitacre and Welsh charged six dollars for a walnut coffin, but only two dollars for a pine box suitable for customers arriving from the county poorhouse. As no family wanted to wind up at the poorhouse after the funeral expenses had been paid, and since both types of coffin had a common destination, many people opted for the pine.

Pg. 63 states: Samuel M. Janney had his home, called Springdate, built in 1832 by Will Bolen and Thornton Whitacre, who took in payment rents realized over a period of time from a wharf that Elizabeth Janney owned in Alexandria.

*See Chapter 15 -

Whitacre, (Whitaire), John Jr. - *Quaker of Falls Monthly Meeting, PA*

Son of John & Naomi (Hulme) Whitacre: Connection to the Janney Family.

...Robert Whitacre – b.1747, Falls, Bucks, PA – md 1st 1766, PA ,

Sarah Roach – b. 22 April 1760 – d. before ca. 1786 –

d/o Richard & Hannah (Sands) Roach of Loudoun Co., VA

md 2nd Hannah Janney – b. ca. 1765, VA – d. 31 May 1787

md 3rd Patience ?

Robert Whitacre of Loudoun, VA – b. 30 September 1758, NJ –

d. 18 September 1828, OH, s/o John & Naomi Whitacre of Loudoun, Co., VA

md 1st Sarah Roach with by whom he had one son Jonas Whitacre.

Robert Whitacre produced a certificate from Fairfax Monthly Meeting, VA

showing clearness with respect of marriage to his 2nd wife, Hannah Janney, d/o Jacob & Hannah (Ingledue) Janney of Loudoun Co., VA. No issue by his 2nd wife. Robert Whitacre and his son Jonas received on certificate from Fairfax Monthly Meeting, VA for settlement 2 March 1789 dated 28 February 1789. Robert Whitacre and Jonas removed and was granted certificate to Crooked Run Monthly Meeting, VA on 25 January 1790 "for settlement." Patience his 3^d wife bore him seven children all born in VA.

Children of Patience and Robert Whitacre were:

Andrew Whitacre – b. 13 August 1790 – d. 13 September 1864; John Whitacre b. 11 January 1792; Pricilla Whitacre – b. 21 July 1795 – d. 28 April 1870; Aquila Whitacre – b. 7 September 1797; Jane Whitacre – b. 21 September 1799; Jane Whitacre – b. 21 September 1799; Rhoda Whitacre – b. 12 March 1802 – d. 25 February 1884 & Moses Whitacre – b. 17 June 1804 – d. 8 January 1842. Robert & Patience Whitacre and children including Jonas by his 1st wife were granted certificate to Miami Monthly Meeting, VA on 5 May 1805. Hinshaws American Quakers – Goose Creek MM, pgs. 719 & 720.

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Pg. 11 – On 3rd Month 20th, 1742, Jacob Janney (age not known) married Hannah Ingledue of Philadelphia (not yet 17). Today, in order to lay a sound financial base for the marriage, Jacob might start looking around for a better job. In 1742 he started looking around for land. He found it in Loudoun, VA where some relatives had already gone. The next year, on June 20, 1743, he obtained a grant of 690 acres, and a few months later, on 8th Month 5th, 1743, he and Hannah obtained their certificate of removal from the Falls Meeting. They did not remove then, however, and the next year, 1744, he went down to Loudoun and got another 270 acres. We know he was personally in Loudoun in 1744, because he is mentioned as an overseer at the first meeting of the new Fairfax Monthly Meeting. But it was not until the year after that, in 1745, that Jacob and Hannah, married now three years and with a family, actually moved to Loudoun and settled about a mile east of where the Goose Creek meeting house would rise. Their stone house, the one that succeeded their original log cabin, still stands there to remind us of them.

Hannah (Ingledue) Janney died in ca, 1818 at the age of 93. – pg. 14



At Goose Creek, Jacob Janney had a grist and saw mill going by 1774, inherited by Israel in '84, and then by Daniel in 1818. Three sons of Jacob were millers: Israel, Jonas, and Joseph. Jonas and Joseph were working their mill on the North West Fork of

Goose Creek by 1774. The Greggs, Samuel and Harmon, also ran this mill at a later date.

Most of these when working as flour mills operated at some nine to fifteen horse power and could make about eighteen to twenty barrels of flour a day. But that amount demanded pretty good running with a full flow of water in the forebay. This the mill seldom had in August and September, just when the wheat was coming in the strongest, especially if the farmers needed money. In those months, mill often had to run at night, when the water flow was better, or they even had to run by heads – that is, let the water build up for a few hours and then run until the wheel showed down. During one very dry spell, Millard Fillmore Janney, then the mill at Wheatland, asked a preacher to pray for rain. He may well have made the request as a joke. If so, the Lord had the last laugh. The preacher prayed so hard he liked to have ruined Millard when the dam washed out.

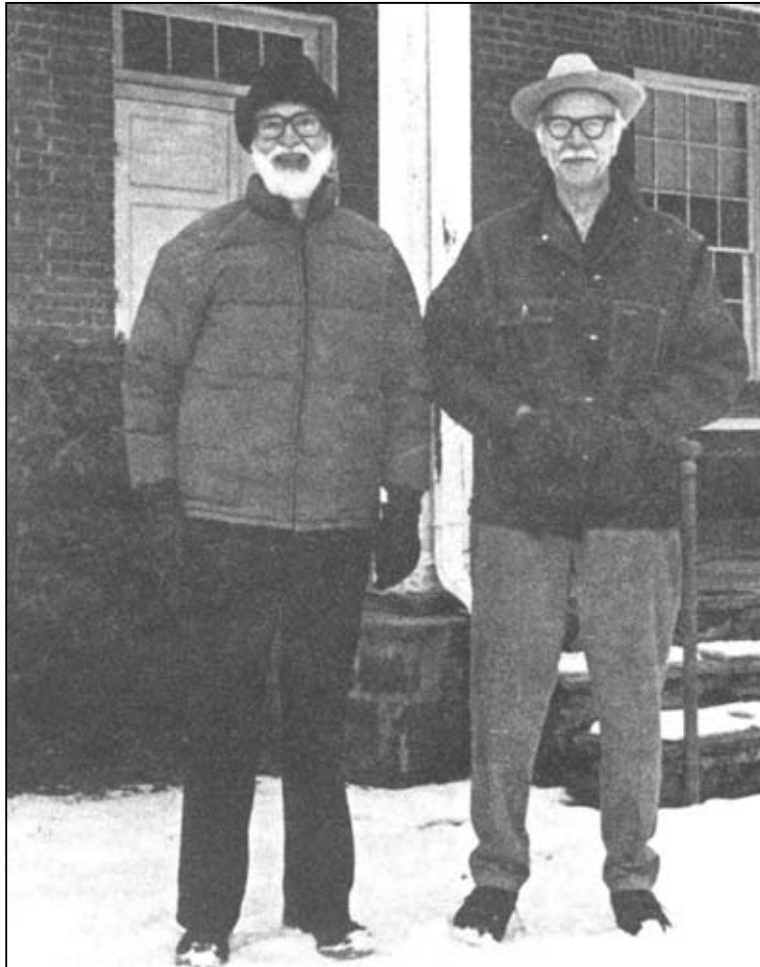
An early miller, when you wanted flour for home use, would take on exchange five bushels of your wheat, each weighing 60 pounds, and give you back on 196-lb. Barrel of flour plus 60-some pounds of offal (bran and middlings). In effect his toll was an eighth of the wheat, or 2 1/2 pecks of wheat for every barrel of flour. When the miller bought your wheat outright, he had a lot of offal to dispose of, which he found hard to unload since farmers did not appreciate it then. Consequently, it often ended up in the creek, and a sticking mess it made too, till the first freshet carried in downstream.

Just when the miller thought he was making some money, the wheel would break down or a wooden cogwheel would strip, the race would fill up with mud, or he would have to stop to pick (sharpen) the burrs. The largest single drain, since it meant paying out cash money of the realm was silk bolting cloth, which sifted the flour from the bran. Beautiful, heavy stuff! If you haven't seen bolting cloth, you haven't seen a piece of quality silk.

After enough hard use, this cloth would begin to show wear holes, which the miller stopped up with a gum of flour and water – or spit on the sly when nobody was looking. All in all the early miller did not have life as easy as it looked to the loafers who were always gathered at the mill. Anyone who could buy from the tight Quaker farmers around Goose Creek and sell to the Scottish merchants in Alexandria and still put food on the table for 8 to 12 children had to work hard and possess some business acumen too.



Present day Goose Creek Meeting House 1949



Werner & Asa Moore Janney

When they were young, the Janney brother both developed a high regard for the history and happenings in their small corner of the world. This love of local history resulted in their joint efforts in producing *Ye Meetg Hous Smal*, *The Composition Book*, *John J. Janney's Virginia*, and a reprint of the *Yardley Taylor Map of Loudoun County 1853*.

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