

Harrogate's Family Tree

by Sonnie Sperati

Sold to . . .!

Subdivisions even way back then

Before William Penn made one of his many trips back to England, he gave orders to surveyor Henry Hollingsworth to map out land for his younger children, William Jr. and Letitia. 35,000 acres were divided up. William Jr. received a patent in May 1706 for 14,500 acres. Approximately 8913 acres of this land comprised the area known as New Garden Township, while 5587 acres adjoining NGT became Mill Creek Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware. Another parcel, patented to daughter Letitia, was in the area now known as Kennett Square. Both sections were named "Manor of Stenning" (or Steyning), probably for Steyning Hundred in Sussex, England. And you see that name survive in Stenning Woods just minutes from Harrogate on Limestone Road.

William Jr. planned to return to England and wished to dispose of the land. He hired Griffith Owen, James Logan, and Robert Ashton to act as his attorneys and sell his property.

Most likely, the first parcel was deeded to Mary Rowland in 1708, and comprised seven hundred acres lying below Toughkenamon Hills. Within

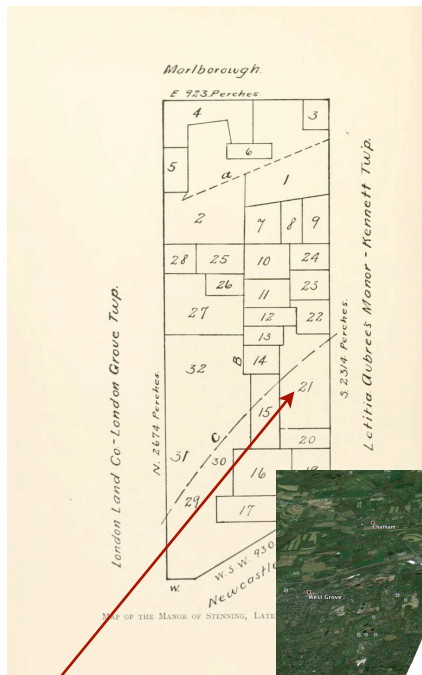
three years after that first Deed was conveyed, several families of the Society of Friends arrived, most from County Carlow, Ireland. They may have been here for a few years before deeds were recorded for their properties. Of the approximately thirty families who first settled in New Garden Township, twenty were Irish Friends. The settlers named this area New Garden after New Garden Meeting in County Carlow. When the area became a township, the name was retained.

Simon Hadley was born in 1675 in Ireland. He was the son of Simon and Catherine Hadley. Simon with his parents joined the Quakers in 1706. His father died in 1711 and having inherited quite a bit of money, at the age of 37, young Simon came to America around 1712 with his first wife, Ruth (perhaps Miller, perhaps Keran), and six children. Two more were born in New Garden. He purchased 1000 acres which is plot 21 on the drawing at left. The PA/DE state line at the time passed through his

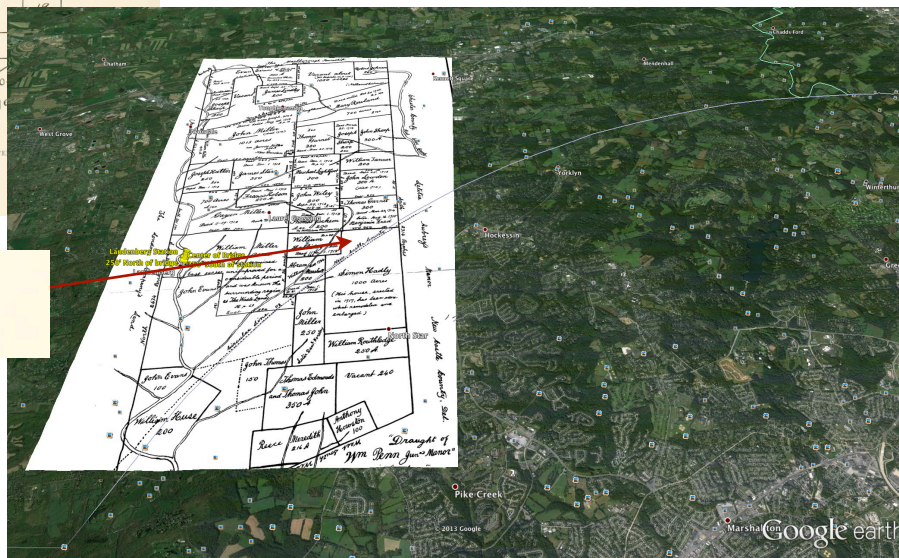
acres, which put his home in New Castle County. If we overlay this drawing over a current New Garden map, we see that Harrogate land lies within plot 21. Shake hands with our fourth owner.

It is very probable that Simon was acquainted with several of the other original land owners such as the Lindleys, Starrs, Huttons, Rut-

A land grant/patent is proof of the transfer of land from a sovereign government to an individual--therefore, if your ancestor held a land patent, he was the very first private owner of the property in question, i.e., the original owner. Deeds, conversely, cover legal transfer of real property from one individual to another.



Simon Hadley



Continued on next page

tledges, Millers, Bowlands, and Johnsons. All of these families were of English origin as were all the Friends (as stated in the first installment) who came to Pennsylvania from Ireland. Many of them had been acquainted in Ireland; many related by blood or marriage. His children married into these families as time went by.

After living in several temporary locations, Simon built a house on his acreage in the part that resided in New Castle County. And where exactly was his farm? $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile south of us on Limestone Road! I bet you pass by it nearly everyday. The house must have been a pretentious one for its day and today although greatly altered is still reportedly a comfortable, well built structure. The house sits nearly a quarter of a mile back from the road. Underneath the pointed gable window in the front a white stone slab is sunk in the wall and on it is carved "S. and R. H. 1717" the initials of Simon and Ruth Hadley, and the date of the building's erection.



Photo by Sonnie Sperati December 2013

From 1708 to 1712 Friends of New Garden travelled to Old Kennett Meeting House twice weekly to worship. John Miller then offered his home as a meeting place. A request was forwarded through Newark Monthly Meeting (Old Kennett) and the powers that be (were?) granted that the Meeting at New Garden was to belong to Kennett Preparative Meeting. It is believed that he intended to donate land as a Meeting House site but he died in 1713, leaving his property to three sons, Joseph, William and James. James and his wife conveyed six acres of ground, with the intention of erecting a meeting house, to certain trustees — Simon Hadley and three others. While meeting at John

Miller's house, decisions were soon made to build a Meeting House and in June of 1713 another request was made to Newark Monthly Meeting, and

permission was granted to build. The log Meeting House served well. Membership increased so much that it soon became too small and plans were made to build a new and larger one in 1743. Roads had improved by this time and they were able to transport brick for the south end from Newport, Delaware that had been used as ballast in sailing ships. The north end was added in 1790.



Old photo of the house date unknown



New Garden Meeting House 875 Newark Road

In 1726 Simon Hadley was appointed Justice of the Peace by Governor Fletcher, who was acting for the Penns, and he was re commissioned seven years later and served in this capacity for many years. He also served at various times as Judge of the New Castle County Courts.

Was it murder?

Hadley was unquestionably a wealthy man and was known to carry large amounts of money on his person. This proved to be a fatal mistake. Legend says that Simon Hadley was killed in 1756 by a servant who was robbing him in his stable. He was buried along side Ruth (who had died six years earlier) at the New Garden Meeting House cemetery. No record has been found to prove or disprove the murder, but from a letter written by Simon Hadley's daughter, Hannah Hadley Stanfield, from North Carolina to her step-mother, it will be seen that her father died in 1756 and that his death was sudden.

"Respected Mother -

This comes to let thee know that I and my family is in good health at present, hoping that these few lines will find thee and thine in the same, and I have great cause to be thankful to the Devine Being for it.

I received thy letter dated the 31st of 5th month 1756, and was glad to hear of thy welfare and true account of my respected father's sudden death.

Thy brother Ricard Beson was here at my house a few days ago. He told me that his wife and family was well and all of our friends here is reasonably well as far as I know, so not having much more to add, I shall conclude with my love to thee and thine and remain thy loving daughter, ye 24th. of ye 7th month, 1756.

Hannah Stanfield

Our next owner actually assumed ownership of Harrogate land in November 1723 when Simon sold 300 acres to Thomas John for 120 pounds of "current Pennsylvania money." Next month, Tom John!