

Copied from Minutes of the Dover Monthly Meeting of Friends
by Elwyn M. Meader January 1883

Dover Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Dover 12th mo. 7th 1892 ...
To the monthly meeting to be held at Dover 12th mo. of 12th month 1892 - Dear
Friends - a difficulty having arisen in Gilmanton whereby Richard D.
Varney, Mary P. Varney and Cynthia Varney have transgressed our
Discipline in not taking the advice of Friends which the Overseers are
unable to reconcile we submit it to the monthly meeting - Eli Meader,
Sarah V. Meader (Overseers) --- This meeting appoints Mercy Jenness,
Lydia M C Tuttle, Daniel F. Jenness and William P. Jenkins as a com-
mittee to visit and advise them upon the subject and report at our next
meeting --- William P. Jenkins, clerk.

Dover Monthly Meeting held at Bonic 2nd month 8th 1893 --- The friends
appointed in the 12th month last to visit the friends at Gilmanton make
the following report viz To Dover Monthly Meeting of Friends - Pursuant to
our appointment we have visited the Friends at Gilmanton against whom
Complaint was made at our last monthly meeting and find them unwilling to
settle their difficulty by arbitration which we submit - Mercy Jenness
Lydia M C Tuttle, Daniel F. Jenness and William P. Jenkins.

Dover 12th mo 18th 1892 (⁷/₃) --- the report being satisfactory to the meeting
this meeting decides to defer action for two months - William P. Jenkins clerk

Dover Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Dover 4th mo. 12th 1893 ---
This meeting having the case of complaint against Richard D. Varney
Mary P. Varney and Cynthia Varney brought before this meeting which
was deferred from the monthly meeting in 2nd month last; This meeting
after due consideration decides to disown Mary P. Varney and Cynthia
Varney from membership with us and the clerk is directed to inform them
of our decision --- William P. Jenkins, clerk

Minutes Regarding Gilmanton Friends Meeting House

Dover monthly Mtg. of Friends held at Dover 12th mo. 11th day 1895 :- a notice has been rec'd of a petition for a new road to be laid out in the town of Gilmanton crossing monthly meeting property there with a hearing appointed 12th 21st 1895. The clerk is directed to prepare a remonstrance and forward to the Selectmen on behalf of the meeting against laying out a highway in front of the meeting house there --

Dover monthly mtg. of Friends held at Dover 4th mo. 8th 1903 --- The matter of disposing of the Gilmanton meeting house having claimed our attention, the board of trustees with the advice of Charles E. Peaslee are instructed to dispose of the house according to their judgement -- Wm. V. Ware, clerk

Dover monthly Mtg. of Friends held at Goric 8th mo. 12th 1903 --- The committee appointed to sell the Gilmanton meeting house report that the meeting at that place is opposed to selling the property and the committee is continued to make further investigations in the matter. This meeting is united in requesting the parties who removed the furnishings from the Gilmanton meeting house to replace or make good the same. ---

Dover monthly Mtg. of Friends held at Goric 2nd mo. 4th 1910 --- The matter of disposing of the Gilmanton meeting house having claimed our attention by two propositions coming from parties there - one to buy the meetinghouse to be moved away and the other to rent it to the Methodist people to hold meetings; this meeting is united in renting it to the Methodist people [to hold meetings] in consideration that they keep the house in repair and we instruct Charles Peaslee to notify the parties to that effect. --

Dover monthly Mtg. of Friends held at Rochester 9th mo. 9th 1925 -- The proposition of repairing Gilmanton meeting house having claimed our attention, we appoint Dana W. Meader + Edwin I. Niles to confer with Gilmanton friends in regard to this matter --- Wm. V. Ware, clerk

Dover monthly Mtg. of Friends held at Dover 10th mo. 9th 1929 --- Having rec'd a communication from Alice SCRIVEN to buy some of the Gilmanton meeting house property we appoint Myron d. Jenness and Wm. Ware a committee to visit the place and to dispose of the property as it seems best. -- Wm. V. Ware, clerk.

Dover monthly Mtg. of Friends held at Goric 11th mo. 15th 1929 --- The committee appointed to dispose of the Gilmanton house property report that they sold the house and furnishings to Alice Scriven and invested the money in the Stafford Savings Bank: - Wm. V. Ware

NOTES ABOUT THE QUAKER MEETING HOUSE AND TWO OF ITS PEWS WHICH TODAY SUNDAY, AUGUST 9th, 1981, BECAME A SMALL PART OF THE HISTORIC SMITH MEETING HOUSE IN GILMANTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

The Society of Friends Meeting House, or "The Quaker Meeting House" as it was known in Gilmanton, was located on the "Iron Works" road (rte. 140), just above the Varney Cemetery, about an eighth of a mile up the hill from the Five Corners.

Built to replace the original 1780 meeting house, it was erected circa 1880 (History of Belknap County, p 802) and stood across the road from the Peaslee-Varney farm, now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter H. Steenstra.

A broken corner stone of granite and the field stone portion of the foundation are, today, easily found in the woods above the cemetery.

The building was used until about 1904, when a dwindling group of Quakers moved to a more flourishing settlement on Quaker Hill near Hillsborough, New Hampshire.

In the Fall of 1929, Richard and George Varney, who owned the building, decided to tear it down. Repairs would be too costly. Some of their friends and neighbours bought parts of the structure and its contents.

Mrs. Charles Taylor of New York acquired some of the pews and used them as benches in her summer home on the Old Belmont Road where her daughter, Mrs. Richard L. Snall (Eleanor) lives.

More of the pews, both "11 footers" and "5 footers", some blinds, the pulpit and most of the granite foundation stones, probably quarried from Peaked Hill, were purchased by Mrs. William Scriven (Alice) of Chicago. Mrs. Scriven turned the barn of "By the Way", the summer home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles C. Davis, into a large "recreation room". The pews served as hospitable benches, the blinds became background screens and the foundation stones still surround a brick terrace behind the barn.

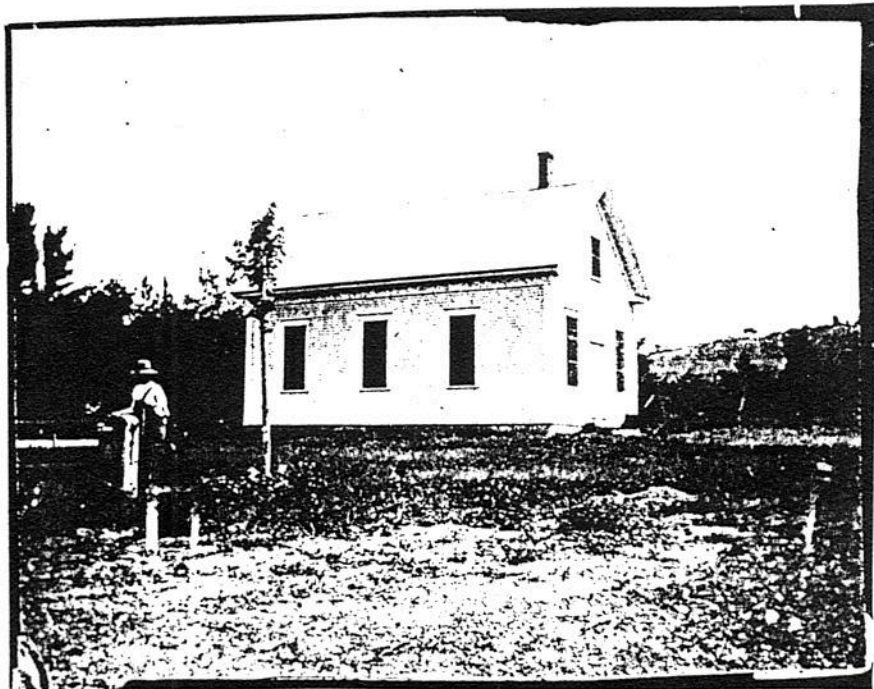
Mrs. Scriven was the mother of Betty Scriven Yates of Denver and of Jane Scriven Cumming of Gilmanton and Washington, D.C. Jane and her husband, Edward, continue to dwell in "By the Way" which is just down the road a piece from the Varney Cemetery and the site of the Quaker Meeting House. They felt that two of the longer pews might be useful in the Smith Meeting House and were delighted when Ruth and George Page and The Executive Committee of Smith Meeting House would accept them.

How many interesting things they must have heard over the years and how closely we would listen if only they would talk!

9/1981



Former
G. L. M. P. T. A.



Gilmanton N.H., Site only and cemetery. Minutes from Dover Monthly Meeting note that in 1903 the trustees were requested to look into disposing of the building but later reported that the still existing meeting was opposed. In 1910 the matter was again raised and it was approved to rent to "the Methodist people". In 1925 it was minuted to look into repairing the building. In 1929 the building and contents were sold to Alice Scriven who lived across the road and the proceeds deposited in the Strafford Savings Bank. At this writing there is no date of the raising of the House although a Preparative Meeting was established in 1814. The House stood adjacent to the present cemetery, which is located a short distance up Route 107 from the Town center. The cemetery is under the care of the Town. Source: Elwyn Meader