

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### *The Records of the First “American” Denomination: The Keithians of Pennsylvania, 1694–1700*

For the ten years between 1691 and 1701 George Keith and his schismatic Quaker followers upset the precarious religious order of infant Pennsylvania. Although the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting disowned Keith in 1692 and the London Yearly Meeting did likewise in 1694, after Keith returned to England, religious tensions scarcely eased in Pennsylvania. Friends continued to fret about his followers, who literally stormed the doors of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1696, and the worry continued after Keith's followers divided among themselves.<sup>1</sup>

The documents printed below constitute the principal surviving “denominational” records—if they can be called that—of the Pennsylvania Keithians, the Quaker schismatics who were essentially expelled from the Religious Society of Friends in Pennsylvania in 1693, then began splitting among themselves, some becoming “Keithian Baptists,” others gravitating

<sup>1</sup>For an introduction to the Keithian affair, see Butler, “‘Gospel Order Improved’: The Keithian Schism and the Exercise of Quaker Ministerial Authority in Pennsylvania,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 31 (1974), 431-52, and “Into Pennsylvania’s Spiritual Abyss: The Rise and Fall of the Later Keithians, 1693-1703,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 101 (1977), 151-70; Gary B. Nash, *Quakers and Politics, Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton, 1968), 144-60; Edward J. Cody, “The Price of Perfection: The Irony of George Keith,” *Pennsylvania History* 39 (1972), 1-19; Ethyn W. Kirby, *George Keith (1636-1716)* (New York, 1942), 47-105; J. William Frost, “Unlikely Controversialists: Caleb Pusey and George Keith,” *Quaker History* 64 (1975-76), 16-36; and J. William Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania* (Norwood, Pa., 1980).

toward English Baptist, Muggletonian, Presbyterian, and Anglican circles.<sup>2</sup> They reveal both the optimism and the pitfalls of Keith's effort to sway opinion among London Friends in 1694, and they chart the transformation of Keith's Chester County followers from Keithian Quakers to a Keithian Baptist group that soon, itself, became beset with "separatist" tendencies. Some of the separatists ultimately helped form an "orthodox" Baptist congregation associated with the Philadelphia Baptist Association about 1715.

The first two documents are letters written from London by George Keith and his supporter, the Philadelphia merchant, Thomas Budd, in the spring of 1694. Although they were addressed to Keith's followers in Pennsylvania, they were, apparently, intercepted by orthodox Friends, because the texts derive from copies made by the important Quaker leaders David Lloyd and Isaac Norris. They now are part of an exceptionally useful file of materials on the Keithian schism in the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore. The second group of documents contains all the known proceedings of the Keithian Baptist congregation that met in the home of Thomas Powell in Providence, Chester County, between 1692 and 1700. These include two marriage certificates, one birth notice, a narrative of the congregation's early history and confessional principles, and the congregation's baptismal register.

Students of Pennsylvania history will find a threefold significance in these materials. The Keith and Budd letters perhaps unwittingly reveal the principal causes behind Keith's 1694 disownment by the London Yearly Meeting, which also constituted Keith's final separation from orthodox Friends. On the one hand, they demonstrate Keith's immense optimism about his early reception in London. He seemed to find support from nearly all orthodox Friends, including even the great Quaker leader George Whitehead, who had, by Keith's own admission, already signed a document condemning the

<sup>2</sup> Excerpts from Keithian records have appeared in several publications from the 1780s to the 1930s. The Revolutionary-era collector of Baptist records, Morgan Edwards, referred to materials from at least three Keithian congregations in his *History of the Baptists in Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1770). The nineteenth-century Pennsylvania historian, George Smith, printed a portion of the baptismal register of the Chester County Keithian congregation in his *History of Delaware County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1862), 544, although with many errors. R. E. E. Harkness included some excerpts from Keithian documents in his "Early Relations of Baptists and Quakers," *Church History* 2 (1933), 227-42, but these stressed the Baptist origins of the entire Quaker movement, an interpretation historians have long rejected, and one that also casts Keithians in an erroneous light. Finally, J. William Frost included many tracts and several manuscripts of the 1690s in *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*.

infighting in Pennsylvania. On the other hand, they evidence all too well Keith's insistence on confrontation, his constant demand for debate, and his incessant castigation of opponents, whether in Pennsylvania or England. He gleefully told his Pennsylvania followers that his London preaching stirred up "contradictory testimonys . . . and frequently Private Conferencys about those fundemtle truths of the Everlasting Gospell hld forth by us." When Keith accepted support from older London Quaker schismatics at the so-called "Harp Lane Meeting," a separation dating from the Wilkinson-Story dispute of the 1670s, a particularly bitter dispute that centered on the institutional authority of the emerging Quaker meeting structure and the legitimacy of separate women's meetings, he probably sealed his fate in London. By Keith's account and theirs, the 1695 London Yearly Meeting probably only confirmed reality when it formally disowned him as being "Gone from the blessed Unity of the peaceable spirit of our Lord." It was the one point on which Keith and the orthodox Friends agreed.<sup>3</sup>

The documents from Chester County offer our principal extended record of the Keithians' birth, development, and demise. The Chester County documents substantially expand the list of known Keith supporters, customarily drawn from *The Judgment Given forth by Twenty Eight Quakers Against George Keith* (Philadelphia, 1693), and confirm earlier views that most were modest men and women whose names seldom appeared again in later Pennsylvania records.<sup>4</sup> More importantly, the Chester County documents reveal the Keithians' rise and fall in Pennsylvania. The 1694 marriage certificates and birth notice demonstrate that the Keithians still retained both the term "Friends" and traditional Quaker practices. But the narrative and baptismal register demonstrate how, by 1697, Keithians had substantially altered their beliefs and the ceremonies that accompanied them by adopting

<sup>3</sup> See Kirby, *George Keith*, 95-112; H. Larry Ingle, *First Among Friends: George Fox and the Creation of Quakerism* (New York, 1994), 252-55, 261-64; Bonnelyn Young Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (Stanford, Calif., 1995), 143-68; Francis B. Pollard et al., *Democracy and the Quaker Method* (London, [1949]), 102-17.

<sup>4</sup> *The Judgment Given forth by Twenty Eight Quakers Against George Keith* is printed in Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 103-26; the names of Keith's supporters are on pp. 113, 126. Names of additional Keithians can be found in *Some Reasons and Causes of the Late Separation That hath come to pass at Philadelphia betwixt us, called by some the Separate Meeting, And Others that meet apart from us* (Philadelphia, [1692]), 19, and in "An Account of such as have formerly frequented Friends Meetings and have Since followed George Keith or Others," an anonymous list probably compiled about 1700 that is printed in Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, 371-75. The Keithians' economic standing is discussed in Butler, "Into Pennsylvania's Spiritual Abyss," 155.

the rites of adult baptism and Lord's Supper, both eschewed by Quakers, even as they retained the Quaker practice of forswearing arms, oaths, and heathen names for the months of the year.

The documents also suggest how the Keithians' steady diet of religious change precluded their own unity, both in Chester County and elsewhere. Even in 1694, as Keith and Budd were writing words of encouragement from London, the Pennsylvania Keithians already were dividing among themselves. William Davis, who performed the baptism at Pennepek, north of Philadelphia, on October 30, 1700—the last entry in the Chester County Keithian baptismal register—had actually begun arguing with John Hart, the Pennepek Keithian leader, on May 4, 1694. This was only three weeks after Keith and Budd had written from London, disputing Hart's advocacy of egalitarian doctrines that emphasized the ability of the holy spirit to work in all Friends and denied distinctions among Public Friends, who were preaching Quakers responsible for proselytizing and doctrinal clarification. Hart's demands apparently caused tension between the Pennepek and Chester County Keithians, while in 1697 his critic, William Davis, joined the Particular Baptist congregation that met at Pennepek. However, when Pennepek Baptists excommunicated Davis within the year, he applied to the Chester County Keithian congregation that had, by then, adopted the "Baptist" principles described in "Things transacted by a Congregation usally met at Powels house."<sup>5</sup>

William Davis's request for membership split the Chester County Keithian Baptist congregation. One of its leaders, Thomas Martin, opposed Davis, while another, William Beckingham, apparently supported him. By 1700, however, Beckingham's faction apparently had won some sort of victory and, as the baptismal register indicates, its services moved, at least temporarily, north to Pennepek. There, William Beckingham baptized three people in April 1700, while both William Davis and another old Keithian, Thomas Rutter, also performed baptisms.<sup>6</sup>

William Davis's baptism of Reece Price at Pennepek on October 30, 1700, constituted the final known act of the Keithian Baptists in either Chester County or Pennepek. No more entries were recorded in the

<sup>5</sup> These events can be followed in William Davis, *Jesus the Crucified Man, the Eternal Son of God . . .* ([Philadelphia, 1700]), unpaginated introduction, and in the manuscript minutes, Pennepek Baptist Church, 10-16, 21-30, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.

<sup>6</sup> Minutes, Pennepek Baptist Church, 30.

Keithian register, and the Chester County congregation apparently disbanded. Most likely, however, William Beckingham kept the old Keithian register, and when the Particular Baptist congregation that still exists at Chadds Ford was formed in 1715, someone, perhaps Beckingham, wrote in the book that a congregation led by Thomas Martin and Beckingham once prospered there "until about the year 1700 when Several occasions occurred that our Congregational Estate was Dissolved[,] that we could no Longer Bear Up our Church polity; Being dispersed [we] Continued without the fac[e?] of a Church for many years."<sup>7</sup>

1. Letter: Thomas Budd to Friends, 12 April 1694<sup>8</sup>

London the 12th of 2nd month 1694

Dear Freinds:

Wee writte you from maryland and Virginia of our Welfare & Prosperity & think fitt to lett you know that on the 7th day of the 12th mo wee Sayled from James River & in Six weeks wee Sounded wth the Lead & found Ground 15 fathoms Deep & that day wee mett wth one of the Kings war Ships by one [illegible deletion] of wch wee Recd Information that fourteen Sayle of french Ships of 40 Gunes apeice was waiting Near the lands End for the Virginia fleet but through the Great providence of God by means of A faire Wind & a Great fogg which lasted Severall days we Came Safe to ankor in the Downes and was landed at Dealle & from thence wee Came to London the 28th day of the 1st Mo & the 30th day being the 6th day of the week we went to the meeting at the Bull in Aldersgate Street where our fr G[eorge] K[eith] Bore a Good testimony for the Truth but was Reflected on by Wm Bingley wch Caused Some Disorder in the Meeting,<sup>9</sup> but Sence tht time wee have Visited most meetings in and Abt London, in wch our

<sup>7</sup> Records, Brandywine Baptist Church, Chadds Ford, Pa., unpaginated (microfilm copy at the Southern Baptist Historical Society, Nashville, Tenn.). The statement also was printed in Smith, *History of Delaware County*, 543-44, but with several errors.

<sup>8</sup> Papers relating to the Keithian Controversy, Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa. I have followed editorial practices set out in Mary Maples Dunn and Richard S. Dunn, eds., *The Papers of William Penn* (Philadelphia, 1981), 1:15-18.

<sup>9</sup> William Bingley was a London merchant who may have traveled with George Keith to Holland in 1684. He was pictured in Francis Bugg's cartoon, "The Quakers Synod," drawn in 1693. See Norman Penney, ed., *The Journal of George Fox* (2 vols., Cambridge, 1911), 2:496.

testimony have bin well (owned &c) received by the Greatest Part of the People, but Slighted by Some of the Preachers though well Approved by others of thm wch Occasions Contradictory testimonys in their publick Meetings, & frequent Disputes by Private Conferencys abt those fundementl truths of the Everlasting Gospell held forth by us, & others of the Ministry wch Joyne wth us herein: & through the Great love of God to Us wee prevaile & Grow daily Stronger and Stronger & our Opposers Grow weaker and weaker & Although they despise us & our testimony and Smite behind back in publick & private yet dare not to oppose our testimony wn wee are present Unless it be in a Secrett & hidden way and manner. Samuell Jennings have little Appeared at Meetings in this City he being Under the Publick Scandall of Being A Persecutor &c. the Generallity of the honest hearted very much dislike his Tirannicall & Wicked practices, & Some of thm keep on their hatts wn he prays and freinds are much blamed for Countenancing his Preaching & tis beleived they will be Constrained publickly to deny him for those Antichristian Practices he is Guilty off[.]<sup>10</sup> Frds do incline before the Yearly Meeting to Give us A meeting for A fair hearing of our Differences in order to Revers those false Judgmts wch was Given out by the 28 & others<sup>11</sup> many of Cheifest Note Espousing our Just Cause both In publike & private the meetings are Greatly thronged where our frd G[eorge] K[eith] doth Come & many honest tender-hearted frds & people do Greatly Rejoyce and Say they Never before heard such Christian Doctrine & Gospell truths So plainly & powerfully preached[.]<sup>12</sup> tis hoped that there will be a th[o]rough Reformation both in principles & practices

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Jennings was one of Philadelphia's most important Public Friends and a leader of Keith's prosecution for libel in the fall of 1692. London Friends bitterly criticized the Philadelphia Quaker leadership for this use of the courts to corral Keith. See Butler, "Gospel Order Improved," 449-51. Philadelphia Quakers sent Jennings and Thomas Duckett to London to represent Pennsylvania's Public Friends after Keith and Budd sailed for London to exonerate themselves. When Keith's London supporters refused to remove their hats as Jennings prayed, they insulted Jennings doubly, since they were treating him as a non-Quaker for whom they would not perform "hat-honor" and placing him outside the pale of Friends engaged in true prayer who removed their hats out of respect for God.

<sup>11</sup> This is a reference to the twenty-eight Public Friends, or members of the Philadelphia meeting of ministers, who signed a statement condemning Keith on July 20, 1692. Keith often castigated "the 28," as in *An Appeal from the Twenty Eight Judges, to the Spirit of Truth and True Judgment in . . . Quakers* (Philadelphia, 1692).

<sup>12</sup> There is little evidence to support Keith's claim that London Quakers were inclined to have a public airing of the charges against Keith prior to London Yearly Meeting. Keith's appearance in London is discussed in Kirby, *George Keith*, 95-102.

of true Christianity without a farther Separation and doe hope wee Shall be Instrumentall in the lords hand to heall the Breaches & Reconcile the Differences Amongst Gods people of the Several forms of the Xtian Religion out of wch the lord is Gathering A pure Church & Royall Preisthood tht he may dwell Among thm and be their God & they may be his peculiar people. Wee Received R[obert] T[urner] and J[oseph] W[illcox] Lettrs at James River<sup>13</sup> and at Maryland wee Recd lettrs from Divers other frds in which had a particular Acct of Affairs among you wch wee was Glad off, & do believe it will be Great Joy to yu to have this Good acct from Us of our kind Reception by the honest hearted as aforesd. I hope wee Shall mutually Informe one another from time to time of our welfare & Christian Affairs tht wee may be Comforted one in another & may be Epistles written in one anothers hearts wch is the reall desire of your Xtian frd and Brother  
 Thomas Budd

(Send Coppies to our meetings)

## 2. Letter: George Keith to George Hutcheson et al., [April 1694]<sup>14</sup>

Dear frds

George Hutcheson John Hart Richard Dungworth Phillip James Abraham Optegrave and [illegible word] with all other our dear frds & Brethren and Sisters in the Blessed truth, as well not named as named to whom is the Remembrance of mine and my dear wifes love [illegible deletion] in the truth;<sup>15</sup> Since I came to London the Ld by his mighty power hath made way for me beyond wt I could Expect in Raysing up the love of many frds towards mee both in City & Country who have Come to See me, and have declared their Unity with Mee, & my testimony, & in meetings my testimony hath gained Great Ground in the hearts and Consciencs of most tht have heard mee, & though I have been Scarse two weeks in London & have largely declared those fundamentall truths of Christianity in nine

<sup>13</sup> Turner and Willcox had long supported Keith; see *ibid.*, 75-76, and Charles P. Keith, *Chronicles of Pennsylvania, from the English Revolution to the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1688-1748* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1917), 1:228.

<sup>14</sup> Papers relating to the Keithian Controversy.

<sup>15</sup> Hutcheson, Hart, Dungworth, James, and Opdegrave were long-time Keith supporters. See Kirby, *George Keith*, 80, 93; Charles P. Keith, *Chronicles of Pennsylvania*, 1:218, 228.

Severall Meetings, who was at all of thm A Very Great Concourse of people both frds & other freindly people & professers of Divers Sorts so tht Meetings are much more full thn ordinary which [disturbs?] Some Prejudiced persons of thm Called the ministry tht we Should be So much Noticed. I have three Severall times largely declard at Gracechurch Street Meeting twice at Bull & mouth, once at Devonshire house, once at the Pille once at park once at horselydown[.] Some of the Preachers here have dared to contradict my publick testimony, wth the like Ignorance as they have done in pensilvania, but I have bin [Assisted?] to Discover their Ignorance to their face in publick meetings & that in a Cool & meek Spirit to the Satisfaction of many. but Generally they doe not publickly oppose but [meet?] in Corners Agst us G[eorge] W[hitehead] hath bin Severall times wth mee who at first was Severe but Afterwards upon further discourse & bettr Information, is more kind<sup>16</sup> and mainy friends hope that we are like to agree in principles even though at present wee Differ as Appears by a late treatise Sett out by him and others relating to our Differences in pensilvania<sup>17</sup> wch I do plainly See Contradicts in Some pts our printed Sheet relating to our principles,<sup>18</sup> but frds tht love us, Say it is for want of A Good Understanding on his part, not Reaching the Sence of wht Is Contained in our printed Sheet, Wm Mede and Divers others of Greatest note of Mchts in the Citty tht are frds as Walter Myers and others have bin wth mee and were loving beyond Expectation<sup>19</sup> Clement Plumstead & Job Bolton & Thomas Green are very loving and Generally all thm Calld Seperatists of harp lane meeting

<sup>16</sup> Whitehead's role in the Keith affair is discussed in Kirby, *George Keith*, especially chap. 7.

<sup>17</sup> This probably is a reference to *The Christian Doctrine and Society of the People Called Quakers cleared from the Reproach of the Late Division of a Few in Some Parts of America* (London, 1693), which was signed by Whitehead and seven other Friends.

<sup>18</sup> The most likely "printed sheet" is "An Account of the Sincere Christian Faith of some of the faithful People, called in scorn, Quakers, in Pennsylvania," in *Some Reasons and Causes of the Late Separation*, 29-36; less likely is *The Fundamental Truths of Christianity briefly hinted at . . .* (Philadelphia, 1692), which reprinted a confession of faith Keith published in London in 1688. The statement issued by the London orthodox Friends went out of its way to impute a belief in the transmigration of souls to Keith and his followers, alluding to Keith's earlier publications on the subject and arguing that while it had not been raised by Keith in the Pennsylvania dispute, "it seems to be followed implicitly by some."

<sup>19</sup> Mead's interest in Keith probably benefited from the personal dispute that Mead and Penn carried on in the 1690s. However, assuming that Keith's description was accurate, the reason for the interest of merchants "of Greatest note" remains mysterious, if only because Keith's Pennsylvania support came from small and modest merchants, while the richest ones supported orthodox Philadelphia Friends. William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (rev. ed.; Cambridge, 1961), 172-75; Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 153-61.



Duely follow us from meeting to meeting Signifying Great Satisfaction wth our Testimony & Doctrine also John penniman & his wife hear us frequently and have bin wth me Severall times<sup>20</sup> frds are become more loving & tender to them than formerly,<sup>21</sup> I have Great Advantage agst thm tht blame mee for printing, & Giving hard names to those tht have Opposed fundamentall Doctrines of the Xtian faith whn I tell thm they have done as much & more agst thm tht but Differ abt womens meetings & other Small [illegible deletion] Matters,<sup>22</sup> Some of the Seperatists here have Invited us to their Meeting at harp lane, & in the Country but most of thm say it is not proper lest wee Give occasion to the Other Side to Object agst Us for they Chuse rather to Come to the publick meetings where wee goo. I have Severall times also prayed in publick meetings & I hear not tht any one kept on the hat wn I prayed, though wn Sam: Jennings prayed, Diverse kept on their hats and neither he nor his Associates Appear Near So publicly as wee have done, but are looked upon very Shyly by most frds. George Whitehead was wth me at the Second meeting at Gracechurch Street and heard mee largely pray preach the faith of Christ Crucified as well as of his Inward Appearance, and many observ'd tht he Confirmed my Testimony and in his prayer he prayed tht the lord would bless wth Success what was Spoken, also in private Discourse wth mee he did own tht he Beleived God had Called mee to this testimony I bear to the faith of Christ both wthin us and without us, many Yea most are Glad of our Coming, hopeing It will be of Great Service for A new Convincemt to many as well as to Establish many Already Convinced. I have not Yett Seen Wm Penn he having bin Sickly in the

<sup>20</sup> Clement Plumstead was one of Keith's strongest supporters at the 1694 London Yearly Meeting. Thomas Green signed the important 1666 epistle sent by London Public Friends criticizing Quakers who were "crying down ministry and meetings," meaning John Perrot and his followers. John Penniman, who H. Larry Ingle describes as evincing "an almost pathological hatred of authority," opposed Fox as early as 1660 and was disowned by orthodox Friends in 1670. He supported Quaker separatist movements throughout the next decades and probably belonged to the meeting of Quaker dissidents in Harp Lane organized during the Wilkinson-Story dispute of 1675-76. Job Bolton has not been identified. Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 247-248, 418, 481; Ingle, *First Among Friends*, 200, 203, 223, 335; Pollard et al., *Democracy and the Quaker Method*, 106-7.

<sup>21</sup> Keith's suggestion that orthodox Friends were bridging gaps with "separatists" is not borne out by the known history, which is described in Kirby, *George Keith*, 103-12, and in Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 482-87.

<sup>22</sup> A controversy over women's meetings underwrote the Wilkinson-Story schism. Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 297; Ingle, *First Among Friends*, 261-64; Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism*, 147-52.

Country but I hear he is like to [illegible deletion] be in town Shortly[.] I hear he is ~~like to be~~ Moderate.<sup>23</sup> I have desired A Meeting wth frds that are Impartiall to hear our Differences betwixt Samll: Jennings & us but I have told thm Such who have prejudged the Case already by their Epistles Sent over Must not be [illegible deletion] received in tht Affair only I have yeilded tht Geo: Whitehead being more moderate then the Rest Should hear it but none others of the Rest tht have Signed. I think to Send you over by the first occasion the above mentioned treatise of G[eorge] W[hitehead] and to write to you from time to time, I hope the printer has finished my book, Advise him to Send over Some Coppyes by the first Ship from York,<sup>24</sup> I remain in Dear love your Brother in the truth

G[eorge] K[eith]

This is a true Copy Examined with the Original Letter  
Da'd Lloyd  
Isaac Norris

### 3. Two Keithian marriage certificates and a Keithian birth record, 1694<sup>25</sup>

Radnor the 28th of the 1st month 1694

Whereas William James Batchelor & Margaret Morgan Spinster both residing at Radnor in the County of Chester & Provi[nce?] of Pennsylvania have publickly declared their Intention of marriag[e?] at several meetings held at Thomas Powell's house in Providen[ce in?] the County & province aforesaid. The said meetings having no[thing to?] object against their proceedings, together with the Consent of Relations [con?]cerned [illegible] & obtained, Left them to their freedom to proceed i[n?] their said Intention of marriage.

These are therefore to Certifie all it may Concern that in [or?]der to the

<sup>23</sup> Penn vacillated in his position on Keith, in part, because Penn's principal foe in Pennsylvania politics, deputy governor Thomas Lloyd, strongly supported Philadelphia's Public Friends.

<sup>24</sup> Keith published two books in New York in 1694: *A chronological account of the several ages of the world from Adam to Christ* ([New York], 1694), and *Truth advanced in the correction of many gross & burisful errors: wherein is occasionally opened & explained many great and peculiar mysteries and doctrines of the Christian religion* ([New York], 1694).

<sup>25</sup> Records, Brandywine Baptist Church.

full Effecting Accomplishing and Consummation of the said Intention of Marriage the sd day and year abovementioned [the?] sd parties being Come to David Price's house in Radnor above & in an assembly there met upon that account stood up together and there and then [the certificate ends here]

William the sone of William James and Margaret his wife was born the 26th day of the 11th month 1694<sup>26</sup>

Radnor the 25th of the 4th month 1694

Whereas William Thomas & Elizabeth Philips both residing at Newton in the County of Chester & province of Pennsylvania have publicly declared their intention of marriage at several meetings held at Thomas Powells house in Providence in the County & province aforesaid, The said meeting [see?]ing nothing to object against their proceedings together wth the Consent of Relations had & obtained left them to their freedom to proceed in their said intention of marriage.

These therefore are to Certifie all it may Concern that in order to the full Effecting, Determination, & Consummation of their Intention of marriage, The day & year above written. The said pa[rties?] being Come to David Price's at Radnor aforesaid, & in an assembly then & there met, stood up together, & then and there the said Wi[lliam] Thomas Solemnly declared as followeth viz Friends I do (here before God & this Assembly) take Elizabeth Philips to be my wedded wife, & promise (as the Lord shall assist me) to behave my self to her as a faithfull husband ought to behave himself to his wife from this day forward till death Separate us. In li[ke?] manner the said Elizabeth Philips solemnly declared as follows viz Friends I here do here (In the fear of the Lord) take Wil[liam] Thomas to be my wedded husband, & promise (as the Lord shall assist me) to be his loving wife & to behave my self as [a wife?] ought to behave her self toward her husband from this day forward till death Separate us. And for further Confirmation of the [illeg.] the Said parties have to these presents set their hands In witness whereof we being there & then present have hereunto subscribed our names.

Mathew Jones  
Philip Rhydderth

Rees Price  
Daniel Harry

William Thomas  
Elizabeth Philips

<sup>26</sup> This birth notice follows traditional Quaker form.

David Philips	David Miles	<u>Their marks</u>
Mathew Jones	Floren Menanvall	Dorothy Rhydderth
Rees Johns	John Price	Gwenllian David
Wm Davis	Steven Dunn	Mary Philips
Wm Jaones	Thomas Powell	Margaret Philips
Geo: Hutcheson	Evan Morgan	Jane Philips
Nicholas Pearse		Sarah Miles
Henry Baddock		Margaret James
John Calvert		Elizabeth Powell
Thomas Coebora		
Samuel Miles		
Griffith Miles		
Evan Harry		
David Thomas		
James Morgans		
Jeremiah Jarman		

#### 4. Narrative of Keithian Development and Confession of Faith, c. 1697<sup>27</sup>

Things transacted by a Congregation usally met at Powels house at upper Providence in the County of Chester about the year 1692 as follows —

Where as by Gods Providence we transported ourselves in the Province of Pennsylvania America frm our native Countrys of England and Wales by Profesion under denomanation of Quakers in Proses of times there happened Some Deference between us, in the Doctrine<sup>28</sup> at which time it Pleased the lord to incline our hearts to be moore like those of Bethlelehem or them of Thesolonica to Search the Scripture in Which Search it Pleased him to open our understanding in many things Who Wee Ware altoether ignorant of before and that in fundamental as well as in other things Pertaining to the Christain Religion of a long Continuance of Conference

<sup>27</sup> Records, Brandywine Baptist Church. The document from which this text is taken probably is an imperfect eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century copy of the original, now lost; among other things, it lacks the signatures mentioned in the text.

<sup>28</sup> Here, the unknown author refers to the disputes that emerged in 1691 and 1692 between George Keith and Philadelphia's Public Friends over the issues of the historical and spiritual Christ.

and Contension between us that Where Separated from the other Party of the Said Profession Who thought it Expedient being Perswaded by our hearts through hope by A measure of his Spirit to Put in Practice those What Wee think to be our duties Especially the ordinance of Ba[p]tism and the Lords Supper Where that Pasage in John 15-14<sup>29</sup> Ye are my friends if You do What Soever I Command You and What other Scriptures Wee Considered of use and instruction to our Practiseing of the above Said Ordinances and to know how many Where inclined or Willing to Proceed on Which Accordingly Was done by Consent as for Other Things that Some Objected Who thought Expedient at Present to Practice but going to Look an Administrater<sup>30</sup> it was defered for Some time to have Consent of the Assosiation at Philadelphia<sup>31</sup> but they no way being Assistant to us only left us to our Liberty to Chuse an Adminstrater to Baptise and after a Day Sett a part to Seek the Lord with fasting and Prayer and giving Ourselves to him and one another Wee made Choice of Our Brother Thomas Martin and to Baptise him Wee Judged it fit to Chuse our Brother Abel Noble Because he was Baptised and Kept Among us all along. Afterwards Wee Where Baptised by our Brother Thomas Martin as appears in this relation and wee being Desireous to put in Practice the Lords Supper for an Administrater Wee nominated three Persons Viz Thomas Budd Thomas Martin and Wm. Buckingham And Cast Lots and the Lot fell on Wm. Buckingham[.]<sup>32</sup> Wee Chose him to Administer the Sacred Ordinance of the Lords Supper and

<sup>29</sup> "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

<sup>30</sup> This probably refers to the choice of Thomas Martin as "administrater" of baptism, June 28, 1697. See the baptismal register below.

<sup>31</sup> The reference to the "Assosiation at Philadelphia" might seem mystifying because the Philadelphia Baptist Association was not formed until 1706, and it is possible that the narrative was written, or at least revised, after 1706 and perhaps as late as 1715, when the Baptist congregation at Chadds Ford was organized. However, Delaware Valley Baptists also had held informal yearly meetings between 1687 and 1706 with representatives sent from individual congregations, meetings that are described in the manuscript minutes of the Pennepek Baptist Church. The lack of help from the "Assosiation at Philadelphia" probably resulted from the advice offered to the Pennepek congregation by London Baptists in 1697 to eschew Keithians as possible members, an issue discussed in Butler, "Into Pennsylvania's Spiritual Abyss."

<sup>32</sup> English Calvinists sometimes used lots to determine what William Perkins called "things of moment that can no other way be determined," but the practice was widely criticized and had been discarded by most Baptists before 1680. See Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London, 1974), 118-24; Perkins quotation on 120. In 1706 the Pennepek Baptist Congregation agreed to cast lots to choose between Evan Morgan and Samuel Jones as its pastor but subsequently dropped the plan. Minutes, Pennepek Baptist Church, 42.

Wee appointed a time for receiving of it and to sett down together upon Conditions as follows Viz the Articles of our faith first Wee Believe in One God and father Allmighty Who With the Son and holy Spirit is Maker and Creator of heaven and earth of things Visible and invisible Who hath his dwelling Place in heaven 2 Corinth 6-30-33 Acts 7th 4-9-8<sup>33</sup> Wee Believe in one Lord Jesus Christ the Only Son of God Who With the father and holy Spirit Was Maker and Creator of heaven and Earth of things Visible and invisible Who had his goings forth from of old and from Everlasting Proverbs 24-25<sup>34</sup> Micah 5-2<sup>35</sup> Who Came Down from heaven Was Conceived by the holy Gost and By the Powers of the highest Overshadowing of her Malichi 1-18<sup>36</sup> Luke 1-35<sup>37</sup> and Was made man and was Crusified under Pontus Pilate dead and buried rose again the third Day and Asended into heaven and their remains our blessed Mediator with the father whos Kingdom shall have no End Isaiah 9-7<sup>38</sup> Luke 1-33<sup>39</sup> Wee Believe he will Come again from Thence to Judge both the Quick and dead Wee Beleave in the holy Ghost Who Proceedith from the father and the Son together With the father and Son ought to be [illegible deletion] Worshipped Wee Beleave that moral natruel and Coruptible bodys of Saints shall Bee made Incorruptible and immortal 1 Corins 15-53<sup>40</sup> Wee Believe A Glorious reward [illegible deletion] Eternally in the heavens Wee Beleave that None ought to be baptised but Who first Beleave and further Concerning Baptism and the Lords Supper Wee beleave that true Christains ought to be found in

<sup>33</sup> Neither reference makes sense in this context. 2 Cor. 6 contains only eighteen verses; the probable citations in Acts include Acts 7:4: "Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell"; and Acts 9:8: "And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus."

<sup>34</sup> "But to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them."

<sup>35</sup> "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

<sup>36</sup> Mal. 1 contains only fourteen verses.

<sup>37</sup> "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

<sup>38</sup> "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

<sup>39</sup> "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

<sup>40</sup> "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

the Practice of Baptism and the Lords Supper and farther as the y Beleif of the Gospell in the heart is the door into the Church in the Sight of God So the Beleif in the heart and Confesion With mouth and Being Baptised is the door into the Church in the Sight of men<sup>41</sup> Some What Concerning our Condesenion to our friends in Philadelphia in order to receive them into our Communion if they thought their Infant Baptism as they term it Sufisicient Provided Wee had nothing Else against them Yet they refused Which Wee Account a providence and wee do ~~acknowledge~~ Acknowledge Our Shortness in So giving away our Lords Cause and wee not Intending it to be as the Medes and Persians unallterable<sup>42</sup> for Severall reasons best Known to us Wee Saw good Cause after it Especialy in Mark the 16 and 16<sup>43</sup> it is Said beleive and be Baptised so now Wee that are baptised and Whoes names are in after in[s]cribed do unanamosly agree with our first Conclusion Concerning baptism as above as Concerning Swearng Seeing our blessed Lord has Said Mathew the 5-34<sup>44</sup> but above all things Swear Not Wherefore Wee Adjude it unlawful to Swear and as Concerning Resistance Mathew 5th-39<sup>45</sup> I Say unto You resist not Evil romans 12th-17th<sup>46</sup> recompence no man Evil for Evil and Verse 19<sup>47</sup> dearly beloved Avenge not Yourselves but rather give Place to Wrath so that We Judge it not Lawfull to Contradict these and Such Like Scripture Concerning ~~dislp~~ desipline a brother or a Sister haveing a Matter Against Each Other Except in notorious offences ought not Absent themselves from the Table if they have not oppourtunity To be

<sup>41</sup> In 1691 Keith demanded that Friends make personal testimonies of one's dealings with God and assent to a confession of faith as a requirement for Quaker membership. Butler, "Gospel Order Improved," 436-37.

<sup>42</sup> See Dan. 6:15: "Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed." The statement that precedes the allusion to the Medes and Persians is confusing. An opening section of the sentence seems to be missing, accounting, in part, for the confusing reference to "our friends in Philadelphia." What is here, however, suggests that the Chester County Keithians briefly considered dropping the rite of adult baptism in favor of infant baptism, as might have been practiced by Keithians in Philadelphia, but reconsidered after realizing that in doing so they might be "giving away our Lords Cause."

<sup>43</sup> "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

<sup>44</sup> "But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne."

<sup>45</sup> "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

<sup>46</sup> "Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

<sup>47</sup> "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

reconciled before the Celebration of the Lords Supper to Prevent Disorder which otherwise might happen and further to Accomodate any Difference that may happen among us it is Agreed that on the Seventh day or any other Convenient time before the Breaking of bread if Possible to reconcile the disagreeing Parties that Wee May the better Enjoy Each Other in the Lord mooreover that no incumberer of the meeting may do any Matter of Weight or great Concernment in religious or temporal affairs without the Knowledge and Approbation of the Meeting and it is Agreed that Every thing that is of good report and becoming ought to be Observed and put in Practice by us as Modest apperal Proper Language the days of the Week and name of the Months as first Second & So forth According as it is used in Scripture.<sup>48</sup>

### 5. Baptismal Register, Chester County Keithian Baptists, 1697-1700<sup>49</sup>

#### The Names of them that are Baptised

1697 [4th?] mo. 28	Tho. Martin chosen to Baptise & Baptised	8th mo 12th Baptised Ridley	John Beckinham
6th mo 10th baptised Ridley	Thomas Powell Joan Harry Hugh Harry John Palmer Judith Calvert Alice Vestall	1698 4th mo 25th day Ridley	Ann Compton
7th mo 27th Baptised Ridley	Thomas Budd Richard Dungworth John Wells John Powell John Wells John Powell David Thomas John Hannum Marjery Martin Marjery Hannum Mary Palmer Elizabeth Powell	6th mo 9th Ridley Bap. 8th mo 30th Bap. at Tho. Powels 1699 3 mo 7th day at Tho. Powell Bap.	Samuel Miles William Thomas David Price Elizabeth Price

<sup>48</sup> The document ends here without the signatures mentioned in the text.

<sup>49</sup> Records, Brandywine Baptist Church.



[6th?] mo 26th at Crump Creek	Richard Buffington Elizabeth Thomas Jane Philips	18 day at Pennepeak bap	Margaret Phillips
27th day	Edward Lane	6th mo 25th at Ridley Bap. by Wm Beckingham	Elizabeth Pavier
7th mo 7th Cran Creek	Edward Edwar[ds?]	8th mo 5th day Bap. by Wm Davis at Penipack	Mary Clark Elizabeth Hall
8th mo 29th at Crump Creek	James Plumbly	Ib. baptised by Tho. Rutter	Martha Deal
1700 2d mo 7th day at [Pen?]nipak	Abraham Pratt Jane Pratt Richard Wansell	8th mo 30th Bapt. by Wm Davis at Pennip	Reece Price
[illegible]	[illegible]		
1700 3d mo	David Phillips		

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