

1183 - AIMWELL SCHOOL. RECORDS, 1796-1935.

4 boxes.

(No provenance available, though a key to the box in which the records were laid was labeled "Friends Historical Association, 1936)

The Aimwell School in Philadelphia was founded in 1796 by Anne Parrish (1760-1800) for the purpose of providing "a good English education" ¹ in the "primary and grammar grades" for poor girls. It was instituted by the Society for the Free Instruction of Female Children and operated under the management of the Society of Friends. It opened on March 6, 1797² in Anne Parrish's home on N. 2nd Street in Philadelphia. The school was held in four places after Parrish's home until 1889 when it was housed on the second floor of Friends' Meeting House, 6th & Noble Streets, in Philadelphia remaining there until the North Meeting was laid down in 1914. It reopened in 1915 at 865-69 N. Randolph St. in Philadelphia with 70 pupils. The school provided spiritual, mental, moral and physical training.³ No tuition was charged; the school was supported by donation.

The Aimwell School Association was incorporated in 1859. At that time, the name was also changed from the Society for the Free Instruction of Females. It continued to function until 1923. The corporation was dissolved in 1935 whereupon funds were transferred to a Friends fiduciary group.

Some significant contributors to the work of the school were: Anne Parrish, Sarah Richie, Sarah Bacon and Margaret Warder (all first members of the Society)⁴; Catharine Morris, also among the early members and a strong financial contributor; Mary Wheeler, the first treasurer; and Mary M. Leeds who served as treasurer for a long period of time.

The seal of the school can be seen on a document appointing Rebecca Sheppard as treasurer laid into the 1866-1895 treasurer's account book.

Box 1

- Nine minute books, including one containing extracts of minutes, 1797-1880. Also, two separate extracts and one draft of minutes.

The volumes contain information in addition to the minutes, such as the regulations of the school in the 1797-1802 volume. These regulations and rules of conduct for the scholars changed several times over the course of its history. Several volumes also contain financial accounts.

¹ "Aimwell School for Girls", ca. 1900

² cover of treasurer's accounts, 1797-1808

³ "Aimwell School ..., 1796-1920"

⁴ as recorded in the 1797 minutes

Box 2

- Four minute books, 1885-1935. A typed copy of the legal 1935 dissolution of the school and a typed copy of the 1935 statement of purpose of the school addressed to Friends Fiduciary Corporation are laid into the 1925-1935 minute book.

Box 3

- Eleven volumes of treasurer's accounts, 1797-1895. Included, separately, is a statement of the cost of erecting the school house on 10th & Cherry Streets in Philadelphia in 1825.

Box 4

-Articles of association, 1796. Notebook also contains names of members; Anne Parrish and Mary Wheeler (both 1796) are the earliest recorded.

- Artifacts.

Envelope contains keys to some of the Aimwell School buildings and a key to the original box which contained these records and was marked "F[riends] H[istorical] A[ssociation], 1936"

- Constitution, 1859.

Notebook also contains names of members, 1834-1923.

- Insurance contracts, 1886-1919. 5 items.

- School library materials, 1809 - 1846. 6 items.

These include catalogues of books, 1827, 1846 (with some circulation statistics laid in) & n.d.; library financial accounts, 1809-1839; sheets of numbers (to be affixed in books), beginning with no. 378 & other information about books received.

- Mortgages, bonds, deeds, 1886-1896. 6 items.

- Photographs. ca. 20 items. Primarily prints of which some are original, others are copy prints and some negatives.

Silhouettes of Anne Parrish; buildings which were the sites of the school; scenes from a 1922 play about the school; Lucy B. Child, principal for 31 years, 1891-1923; 125th anniversary of Aimwell School (11/18/1925 with children and teacher; dressed up students to represent Ann Parrish and her parents.

- Pupils, 1888-1909. Notebook listing.

- Regulations. 2 notebooks, [ca. 1797?] and 1811.

These notebooks contain information on what should be learned and how this should be done. The 1797 volume contains later regulations as well.

- School documents. 3 folders, 1806-1920.

These include bequests and other donations, regulations, typed history (ca. 1920), letters to the treasurer, Mary M. Leeds, particularly re property and mortgage, notes from teachers; documents re pupil absence, committee oversight, regulations and organization.

Removed from the collection to Quaker Collection or PG:

1. Four editions of "Some Account of the Aimwell School 1861,1874, 1888, 1902.
2. "Aimwell School for Girls". ca. 1900.
3. "Aimwell School for Girls". ca. 1915
4. "Aimwell School, Historical Sketch and the First Printed Report". ca. 1916.
5. "Aimwell School". ca. 1920.
6. Clippings and other ephemera