

**Family of Comly Randall
1738 – 1801**

Settlers of Yonge St

Archives: Box 24

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Comly Randall and his wife Mary, Quakers, lived in Muncy Township, PA and most of their children settled in York County in the Quaker settlement under the Yonge St Meeting. This undated paper about the family was written by Ernest C. Dickson.

The transcription was coordinated by Jane Zavitz Bond, archivist for Canada Yearly Meeting, and fully transcribed by Sheila Havard with minor formatting changes for posting by Randy Saylor. The text was transcribed as written. Transcriber notes are in square brackets. The memoir has not been proof read.

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THE FAMILY OF COMLY RANDALL

A Pioneer of Muncy Township

by

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The Family history of the above connects the ancestral line to President Herbert C. Hoover. Huldah, daughter of Hannah and Francis Scott Wasley married Joseph Randall. Henry Wasley, a brother of Huldah, married Ann Tool. His daughter Mary Wasley married Theodore Minthorn and

Huldah Minthorn, a daughter of this union married Jesse Hoover and became the mother of the President of the United States.

Among the early settlers of Muncy Township was Comly Randall, who was born in the Manor of Moreland, Philadelphia County. He appeared in Muncy in 1785 and died there in 1801. Within a few year after his death the majority of his surviving children had moved on to York County, Ontario, then known as Upper Canada, and settled in the Quaker settlement on Yonge Street, or nearby in Whitchurch and King Townships. The sojourn of the Randall's was of relatively short duration at Muncy.

There were about twenty-five distinct families of Randalls among the early immigrants to the American continent.

The Randalls from which Comly descended were among the early settlers of Pennfield. In 1683 George Randall bought land on Mulberry St., Philadelphia.

In 1864 he applied for one hundred and fifty acres, but no further record is found. He is among the list of original purchasers of land – “500 acres on east side Schuylkill”

The two Randalls, George and Nicholas associated in the early records of Pennsfield. It is not known at what port they arrived but in the Friends records, Bristol, England, it is recorded that George Randall was married and had one daughter, and [as] he mortgaged his house and lot in 1864 to “Ye Master of ye ship called the Merchant of Bristoll,” together with “his dwelling house thereon for seaven pounds”

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it appears that he mortgaged his lot to help pay the transportation of his brother Nicholas, so that he could come to join him in America. In 1713 George Randall transferred real estate to [Robert] Heston. It is Nicholas Randall who was the progenitor of Comly Randall. Nicholas did not remain long in Philadelphia. They appear to have moved about the state as their names are recordd in various places.

On 3, mo., 1697, Nicholas Randall endorsed to James Poulton of Philadelphia the patent from William Penn dated 22, 5 mo., 1684 for the lot on Mulberry St., Philadelphia. This document was witnessed by George Randall. Various other real estate transactions are on recd in Philadelphia. Elizabeth Randall was a witness at the marriag of George Randall and Elizabeth Doane, in 1722. Nicholas Randall apars to have had three sons, George, Joseph and Nicholas Junior. Grge and Joseph Randall were admitted to membership in the Buckinam monthly meeting, 2 mo., 4, 1721. In 1722 they requested ceificates to Middletown Monthly meeting, where on 8 mo., 10, 1722, George married Elizabeth, and Joseph married Rebecca, daughters of [Dael] and Mehitable Doane. They moved in 1752 to Southampton Towhip.

George Randall's first wife died 1 mo., 20, 1727-28, and on 10 mo., 16, 1731, married Mary, widow of Thomas Harding, the eldest daughter [Henry] and Agnes (Heaton) Comly at Middletown. Among the witnesses were Nicholas, Joseph and Nicholas Randall Junior. George Randall died in 1751. John Randall, his son was his administrator. In 1755 Joseph moved with his family to York County, Pa. No attempt has been made to follow further the genealogical lines of George and Joseph.

In the minutes of Middleton Monthly meeting on 12 mo., ...2

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-38, Nicholas Randall Junior proposed intentions of marriage with Agnes Comly of Abington, Mo. Mtg. On 27. 6 mo. 1729, they presented a certificate at Abington Mo. Mtg.

Agnes (Comly) Randall, the seventh child of Henry and Agnes (Heaton) Comly, and sister of Mary, second wife of George Randall, was born on Feb. 20, 1713, (Martindale -- Dudley, p 274), probably at "Green Brier Spring," the home of Henry Comly in Moreland. Her father was the son of Henry and Joan (Tilar) Comly, and her mother was the daughter of Robert and Alice Heaton. Henry Jr. and Agnes, his wife, were born in England and accompanied their parents to America ca. 1688. With the exception of the few months spent at Middletown Mtg. it is probably that Agnes (Comly) Randall spent her whole life within the membership of Byberry and Abington meetings. She died 9 mo. 22, 1779, aged 66 years, 6 mos. 12 dys.

The name of Nicolas Randall appears frequently in the minutes of Byberry indulged and Abington Mo. meetings on disciplinary committees, and several times he was appointed to represent Abington Mo. Mtg. at the Quarterly Meeting (Min. Byberry Mtg. & Abington Mo Mtg.) He died in 1783 (Martindale-Dudley, p 291)

Nicholas and Agnes Randall had eight children: Comly, b. 9, 12 1738; Thomas, b. 10 8 mo., 1740, d. 1743; Jonathan, b. 17 3 mo., 1742, d. 1748; Nathan, 8. 12 8 mo., 1743, d. 1748; Rachel, b 21, 11 mo., 1745, d. 1748; Thomas, b. 13, 5 mo., 1748, d. 1782; Mary, b 22, 12 mo., 1751, m. Joshua Gilbert, d. 13, 3 mo., 1812; Nicholas, m. Hannah, daughter of Thomas Townsend, (Martindale-Dudley, p. 291) d. 1804. One cannot but wonder which of the epidemics of diseases was raging in Moreland in 1748. Of four children who were living at that time, Nicholas and Agnes Randall lost all but their eldest son.

Comly Randall was a birth-right Friend and, as were his father and mother, he was married in meeting.

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He was connected with Catawissa Mo. Mtg. when that meeting was established in 1796.

The Muncy meeting records contain the following names of children of Comly and Mary Randall:

Edward, b. 2 mo., 21, 1776 (disowned); Joseph, b. 5 mo. 5, 1778; Phebe, b. 9 mo., 25, 1770, (removed, deceased); Elizabeth, b. 9 mo. 18, 1780, (deceased).

But this list is not complete. The will of "Comly Randall of Muncy township, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania," dated 25th 2nd. mo., 1801, and proved June 10,) mentions wife Mary, daughter Agnes, wife of William Lundy, Mary, wife of John Widdifield, and Phebe; sons Jonathan, Edward, Asa and Joseph, granddaughter Mary Widdifield daughter of John Widdifield, and grandson Joseph Lundy, son of William Lundy. There were, therefore, at least eight [~~eight~~] children of whom Elizabeth was deceased before 1801.

It is family tradition that Mary, widow of Comly Randall, was living when her daughter Phebe married and moved to Upper Canada in 1805; also, that she was much opposed to Phebe taking the long journey on horse-back. There is no available record as to whether Mary eventually joined the majority of her children in Upper Canada or whether she remained in Muncy. Neither is there available record of the time of her death.

In the "Catalogue of Marriages at Catawissa, Roaring Creek, Fishing Creek, Muncy, Elklands, Bald Eagle, Wellsborough, Greenwood and Penns Grove, 1796-1876" are the following items:

1. Married at Muncy Meeting House 3d of 6 mo., 1796, John Widdifield son of Henry and Martha, and Mary Randall daughter of Comly and Mary Randall, all of the township of Muncy, Lycoming Co., Pa., among the witnesses was a Martha Randall who has not been identified.

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2. Henry Widdifield of Yonge St., County of York, Upper Canada, and Phebe Randall daughter of Comly Randall and Mary his wife, married at Muncy Meeting House 23d of 1st mo. 1805.

3. Married at Greenwood Meeting House, 27th of 12th mo., 1810, Isaac Marker, son of James and Martha to Sarah Randall."

From items in the minutes of Muncy Mo. Mtg., Pelham Mo. Mtg. and Yonge Street Mo. Mtg. -- the two last in Upper Canada -- and other sources, it is established that the majority of Comly Randall's children moved to Whitchurch tp., York co., Upper Canada (Now Ontario, Canada).

In the minutes of Muncy Mo. Mtg., 3 mo., 18, 1801, it is recorded that Joseph Randall made acknowledgement of marriage out of unity, and that on 5 mo., 2, 1801, his acknowledgement was accepted. Meantime, on 4 mo., 22, 1801, his wife, Hulda, had made application for membership in the meeting, and her application must have been accepted because in 7 mo., 22, 1801, it is recorded that Joseph Randall and Huldah his wife requested a certificate to Pelham Mo. Mtg.,

Upper Canada. The certificate was received at Pelham meeting on 7 mo., 7, 1802. (Min. Pelham Mo. Mtg.)

Huldah Randall was the eldest daughter of Francis Walley and Hannah his wife, eldest daughter of Henry and Mary Scott, all pioneer residents of Muncy, township, Huldah's parents also lived on the Samule Wallis estate.

In 1801 Joseph and Huldah Randall settled in Whitchurch to., York Co., Upper Canada, in the Friends' community which was organized by Timothy Rogers who received a grant of 8000 acres from Governor Simcoe for that purpose. It is family tradition that Joseph had been a school teacher in Lycoming County before his marriage at the age of 23, but he was a farmer during the whole of his life in Canada. He and his wife were active members of Whitchurch Preparative and Yonge St Monthly Meetings.

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They had eleven children: Mary, b. 1801, d.ca 1867, unmarried; Hannah, 8. 1803, m. Samuel Lundy, son of William and Atnes (Randall) Lundy -- one son; Phebe, b. 1805 d. 1823, unmarried; Comly. b. 1807, died in infancy; Joseph, b. 1811, died in infancy; ~~Joseph~~ John, b. 1813 d. 1894, m. Ellen Dales, -- five children; Agnes, b. 1814, d. 1842, not married; Edward, 8, 1817, d. 1900, m. (1) Mary, A. King. 5 children. (2) Sarah Sexsmith -- 5 children; Huldah, 8. 1818. d. 1902. m. George Sexsmith -- 2 children; Joseph (again) born, 1821, d. 1900, m. Mary Lundy -- 8 children; Gulielma, b. 1822. d.ca 1865, m. John Hughes.

Joseph Randall was an invalid for several years and he died in 1825, aged 47. His wife, Huldah, with her young sons, the eldest of whom was John, aged 13, and her daughters, continued to work the farm successfully. She died in 1857, aged 74. (Hist. York Co., 2:461.)

It is probable that William Lundy and his wife Agnes (Randall) preceded Joseph and Huldah Randall to Upper Canada in 1800. They settled in Whitchurch tp. and had seven children: Martha, b. 1796. m. William Wray -- 10 children; Samuel, b. 1798. m. (1) Hannah Randall, daughter of Joseph and Huldah -- 1 son, (2) Hannah Starr -- 13 children; Sarah (twin with Joseph) b. 1798, m. Joshua Willson -- 10 children; William, b. 1802, died young; Edward died in infancy; Edward (again), b. 1804, unmarried; William (again) m. Martha Roadhouse. (The Lundy Book, Armstrong, 1902, p. 66)

Henry Widdifield who had married Phebe Randall had gone to Whitchurch tp. ca 1800, but he returned to Muncy in 1804 to marry. The wedding (q.v.) was held on the 23, 1st mo., 1805, and the young couple moved back to Whitchurch in the early spring. They were for many years very active members of Whitchurch Preparative and Yonge St. monthly meetings. Both were at times selected as overseers of the men's and women's meetings, respectively, and in 81 both were appointed elders. They joined the followers of Elias Hicks in 1829.

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Henry and Phebe Widdifield had four children; Charles Ellis, m. Angelina Hughes -- 9 children; Mary Ann, m. George Playter – [illegible] children Mercy, m. Ira Brown; Agnes, m. James Playter. (Min. Yonge St. Mo. Mtg. and Common Biogr. Rec. York Co., Ont., 1907)

John Widdifield who married Mary Randall at Muncy in 1796 (q.v.) requested a certificate to Yonge St. Mtg. in 1807 (Min. Muncy Mo., Mtg., 5 mo. [a.] 1807) and the certificate was received at Yonge St. meeting 5 mo., 1807 (Min. Yonge St. Mtg.) It is probable that they had migrated to Canada some time before as the item in the Muncy minutes states that the John Widdifield certificate was returned from Pelham M.M. for his family with the request that one be prepared for them to “Young” Street, Upper Canada. Yonge Street meeting had become a monthly meeting in 1806. No further record of the family of John and Mary Widdifield has been obtained.

Asa Mary (Collins) Randall are mentioned in the minutes of Muncy meeting of 3 mo., 19, 1811, as having been married out of unity, but they had then been married for many years, probably while living without the jurisdiction of a monthly meeting. because as will be shown, they had a daughter who was of age in 1816. The date of their migration to Canada is unknown and there is no official record of them in the minutes of Friend’s meetings in Canada before 1816. However, in an account book of Joseph Randall is an item dated 1807 “Received of Asa Randall’s Bounty for the Wolf” giving a list of names of neighbors who had contributed. The list includes the names of Henry Widdifield and Samuel Lundy who are known to have been in Whitchurch at that time, and it therefore seems probably that Asa had moved to Canada before 1807.

Early in 1816 Asa Randall applied at Yonge St. meeting for the admission of his minor sons, Joseph, Edward, Jonathan and Comly, and Mary, wife of Asa, had applied to the Women’s meeting for the admission of her minor daughters, Elizabeth and Agness.

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Also, in the minutes of the meeting of 15, 8 mo., 1816 is an item: “The Women’s Mtg. presents to this a certificate from Muncy Mo. Mtg. dated 7 mo. 24, 1816, recommending Rachel Randall daughter of Asa and Mary Randall as a member of this meeting.” (All from minutes Yonge St. Mo. Mtg.).

It thus appears that in 1816, Asa and Mary Randall had seven children. Rachel married John Hollingshead in 1819 (Marr. Rec. Younge St. Mtg.), and, according to one of the descendants, Comly married Elizabeth Penrose and had four children, and Edward married Susan Millare and had four children. No record has been obtained of the other children.

In 1817 Asa bought a farm in Whitchurch tp. (Deeds Record in Registry Office at Newmarket), and for several years he and his wife and daughter Rachel were very active in the affairs of Whitchurch Preparative and Yonge St. Monthly meetings. All are mentioned several times in the

minutes of the meetings, and in 1820 Asa was appointed care-taker of the Whitchurch meeting house. Asa and his wife joined the followers of Elias Hicks in 1829.

Thus from official records it is clear that at least five of the seven children of Comly Randall who were living at the time of his death in 1801, had emigrated to Canada within a few years. It is suspected that Edward, also, joined his brothers and sisters, in Canada because in Joseph Randall's account book is an item dated 10, 12 mo., 1808 recording that Edward Randall had obtained a quantity of buckwheat, hemp seed and leather, and in 1809 is another crediting Edward Randall for 1 gallon of milasses. Since the only other Edward Randall who is believed to have been in Whitchurch tp. at that time, the son of Asa was still a minor in 1816 (Min. Yonge St. Mtg.) it is highly improbable that these items could refer to him. Edward Randall was disowned at Muncy Meeting in 1801 (Min. Munch Mo. Mtg.) so that there is no record in the Muncy or Yonge St. Mtg. Minutes to indicate whether he moved to Canada.

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Of Jonathan Randall, the remaining son of Comly and Mary Randall the remaining son of Comly and Mary Randall, there are no official records other than those mentioned above, viz., that he was mentioned in his father's will, that he took out a warrant for land in 1792 and that his name appears in the Day Book of Muncy Farm. There are three items, however, that may be significant -- at least they afford opportunity for speculation. In the record of the marriage of Mary Randall and John Widdifield in 1796 (q.v.) there was an unidentified Martha Randall among the witnesses. In the minutes of Muncy Mtg. 5 mo. 18, 1803, there is a complaint that "Sarah Randall, late Collins" had married out of meeting, and under date of 11 mo. 3, 1803, it is recorded that her acknowledgement was accepted. Finally, in the Catalogue of Marriages at Catawissa, Roaring Creek, etc., is a record of the marriage at Greenwood Meeting House 27, 12 mo., 1812 of Isaac Masters and Sarah Randall. Is it possible that Martha was the first and Sarah Collins the second wife of Jonathan Randall, and that Jonathan died some time between 1803 and 1812?

It does not seem advisable to follow the descendants of Comly Randall further at this time. Suffice to say that in the migration to Upper Canada they were accompanied by several other families from the Muncy district. The roster of the pioneer residents of the vicinity of Yonge Street Meeting contains many names which were well known in the West Branch country, among them, Francis Wasley, Peter Pentz, respectively son-in-law and grand-son of Henry Scott, Aaron Tool, James Starr, Peter Dealman, Joseph Collins, John Lundy, Nathaniel Pearson and Thomas Whittaker in addition to those that have been discussed in this report.

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They were, for the most part, members of the Yonge Street Meeting of Friends, a group of men and women who played no unimportant part in moulding the development of the district in which

they had settled. The pioneers of the Yonge Street Meeting have left an interesting memorial of their gratitude towards life in an address which they presented in 1806 to Francis Gore, the new Governor of Upper Canada. Their document concluded with the words: "Hoping they administration may be such as to be a terror to the evil minded, and a pleasure to them that do well: thus will the Province flourish under they direction, which is the earnest desire and prayer of thy sincere friends.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dr. Dickson is a grand-son of John Randall – the son of Joseph and Huldah. He lives in California, is professor of Public Health and Preventative Medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine at Stanford University, in San Francisco, and is much interested in Geneological study as a hobby.