

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT  
PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

**SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)**

**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** (must comply with an Office of Property Assessment address)

Street address: **1701 Lindley Avenue (formerly/alternatively 1825 Lindley Ave)**

Postal code: **19141**

Councilmanic District: **8**

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: **Little Wakefield**

Common Name: **St. Mutien's Hall and Gazebo**

**3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

**Building**

Structure

Site

Object

**4. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Condition:  excellent  **good**  fair  poor  ruins

Occupancy:  **occupied**  vacant  under construction  unknown

Current use: **Used and Owned by La Salle University.**

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Please attach a plot plan and written description of the boundary. **SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

**6. DESCRIPTION**

**SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

Please attach a description of the historic resource and supplement with current photographs.

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

Please attach the Statement of Significance.

[See Attached Sheet]

Period of Significance (from year to year): from

**1829 to 1950**

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration:

**Built 1829**

Architect, engineer, and/or designer:

**Unknown**

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan:

**Unknown**

Original owner:

**Thomas Rodman Fisher**

Other significant persons:

**Mary R. F. Carpenter, Elliott Fisher**

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- X **(a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,**  
(b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation;  
or
- X **(c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,**  
(d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,  
(e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,  
(f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,  
(g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,  
(h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,  
(i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- X **(j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.**

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Please attach a bibliography.

**SEE ATTACHED SHEET.**

**9. NOMINATOR**

Name with Title: **Oscar Beisert**

Organization: **Keeping Society of Phila.**

Email: [Keeper@KeepingPhiladelphia.org](mailto:Keeper@KeepingPhiladelphia.org)

Date: **14 July 2016.**

Street Address: **1315 Walnut Street**

Telephone: **(717) 602-5002**

City, State, and Postal Code: **Philadelphia, PA 19107**

Nominators are not the property owners.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: 7/15/2016

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: 9/6/2016

Date of Notice Issuance: 9/6/2016

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: La Salle University

Address: 1900 W Olney Ave

City: Philadelphia State: PA Postal Code: 19141

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated  Rejected



**Little Wakefield  
Mansion House of the Wakefield Estate and the Fisher Family  
Fisher's Lane, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**



Top: "Old House, Little Wakefield. Mrs. Carpenter's place." By Marriot Canby Morris (1862-1948). Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia. Bottom: Demonstration Center [Little Wakefield]. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

## 5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Little Wakefield and its associated Gazebo are identified on the La Salle University Campus Map as building numbers 64: St. Mutien Hall, and 65: Gazebo. The structures sit within a larger parcel that includes numerous buildings not intended for inclusion in this nomination. The boundary of the larger parcel (known alternatively as 1701 and 1825 Lindley Avenue) is described below. The area proposed for designation includes Little Wakefield/St. Mutien Hall and the Gazebo, as well as undeveloped land around those structures.



*The boundary of the larger parcel known as 1701 (formerly/alternatively 1825) Lindley Avenue is highlighted in blue. The structures proposed for inclusion on the Philadelphia Register are circled in red (see below for a more detailed outline of the boundary proposed for designation). Courtesy of Parcel Explorer (left) and La Salle University (right).*



*The boundary proposed for designation is outlined above in red, and is intended to follow the edges of existing roads/paths/rights-of-way. The lasso-shaped driveway in front of Little Wakefield/St. Mutien Hall is included in the proposed boundary, as it corresponds to the historic driveway of the property. The boundary does not include St. John Neumann Hall, the Communication Center, Treetops Café, St. Basil Court, or any other existing structures on the larger parcel.*

The larger parcel known as 1701 Lindley Avenue (formerly/alternatively known as 1825 Lindley Avenue) is described as follows:

All that certain lot or piece of ground. Situate in the 17th ward of the city of Philadelphia, described according to a plan of the property made for St. Basil's Orphanage by Barton and Martin engineers dated January 9, 1988:

Beginning at a point on the Northerly side of Lindley Avenue (60 feet wide) at the distance of 205 feet, 1-1/4 inches Northwestwardly from the Northwestwardly side of Ogontz Avenue (100 feet wide) thence along the said Northerly side of Lindley Avenue crossing a right-of-way reserved for drainage purposes; which extends Northwardly from the said Lindley Avenue, North  $78^{\circ} 39'$  West 85 feet, 2-3/8 inches to a point of curve in the bed of the curve for the said right-of-way; thence Westwardly along then said Northerly side of Lindley Avenue partly crossing the after said right-of-way, etc., on the arc of a circle curving to the left having a radius of 669 feet, 5-1/4 inches the arc length of 84 feet 1 -1/2 inches to a point; thence Northwardly on the arc of a circle curving to the left point; thence Northwardly to the arc of a circle curving left having a radius of 55 feet, 10-7/8 inches the arc length of 80 feet, 9-5/8 inches to a point of compound curve; thence Northwardly to the arc of a circle curving to the left having a radius of 389 feet, 5-1/2 inches the arc length of 228 feet, 10-1/8 inches to a point of tangent and to a point on the southwesterly side of the aforesaid right-of-way; thence North  $22^{\circ} 19'$  minutes West along the

Southwesterly side of the aforesaid right-of-way; 490 feet, 9 inches to a point of curve; thence Northwardly along the Southwesterly side of the aforesaid right-of-way on the arc of a circle curving to the right having a radius of 360 feet the arc length of 329 feet, 10 inches and 38 inches to a point of tangent thence North 30 degrees 11 minutes east partly along the aforesaid right-of-way and partly crossing the bed of former Somerville Avenue (and vacated from the city plan July 30, 1958) 179 feet, 8-7/8 inches to a point on the middle line of the said Somerville Avenue; thence Northwestwardly along the middle line of said Somerville Avenue on the arc of a circle curving to the right having a radius of 530 feet the arc length of 213 feet 10-5/8 inches to a point; North 44° 33' 31.4" West part by recrossing the bed of said Somerville Avenue 30 feet to a point on the said Southwesterly side of former Somerville Avenue; thence Northwestwardly along the said Southwesterly side of former Somerville Avenue on the arc of a circle curving to the left having a radius of 292 feet, 2 inches the arc length of 150 feet, 2-5/8 inches to a point; thence North 4° 20' 20" East partly crossing the said former Somerville Avenue 10 feet, 2 inches to a point in the bed of said former Somerville Avenue; thence South 60° 47' 40" East 709 feet 8-1/4 inches to a point; North 4° 20' 20" East partly crossing said former Somerville Avenue 10 feet, 2 inches to a point in the bed of said former Somerville Avenue; thence South 68° 47' 40" East 709 feet, 8-1/4 inches to a point; thence South 74° 42' 44" East 105 feet 9 inches to a point; thence South 6 degrees 59 minutes East of 167 feet, 10 inches to a point of curve; thence Southwardly on the arc of a circle curving to the right having a radius of 275 feet the arc length of 150 feet, 4-5/8 inches to a point of tangent; thence South 24° 21 minutes West 18 feet, 10 inches more or less to a point; then South 7° 22' 46" East 346 feet, 1-7/8 inches to a point then Southwardly on the arc of the circle curving to the right having a radius of 194 feet, 11-1/4 inches the arc length of 275 feet, 7-1/8 inches to a point of tangent; then South 50° 9 minutes West for 162 feet, 10-1/8 inches to a point of curve; thence Southwardly on the arc of a circle curving to the left, having a radius of 323 feet, 9-1/4 inches the arc length of 219 feet, 3 inches to a point of compound curve; thence Southwardly the arc of a circle curving to the left having a radius of 50 feet, 2-1/4 inches the arc length of 78 feet, 10-1/8 inches to a point on the said Northerly side of Lindley Avenue, being the first mentioned point and place of beginning. Being 1701 Lindley Avenue (alternatively/formerly known as 1825 Lindley Avenue).

The property is known as Parcel No. 135N13-0096, Office of Property Assessment Account No. 776513000.

## 6. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

*Little Wakefield* is a modest mansion known today as St. Mutien Hall—Brother's Residence, serving as the International Students Center of LaSalle University. The undesignated historic property is located north of Lindley Avenue between Belfield and Ogontz Avenues, now part of the South Campus of LaSalle University in Lower Germantown. Little Wakefield is situated atop a high point, perhaps one of the highest in Germantown, and is accessed by the remains of a serpentine driveway from Lindley Avenue to the top of the hill.

Little Wakefield was constructed in two distinct phases: the Main Block in 1829 and the Rear El in 1844. Originally set within the Wakefield Estate, as the smaller and newer of two mansions, Little Wakefield is among vintage and contemporary buildings that were once home to St. Basil's Orphanage. While out of keeping with the original rural scene and rustic environs, the surrounding buildings do not entirely diminish the forested setting that defined the Wakefield Estate.

Little Wakefield is a two-story, roughcast stone building, likely entirely of Wissahickon Schist, that has a squat appearance in comparison to many other mansions of its day. The building features a low-slung hipped roof, which is uninterrupted aside from chimneystack piercings. The roof is of an understated pitch that was a format used during the mid- to late-Greek Revival stylistic period, creating a strong feeling of architectural severity. The primary, north elevation of the Main Block is three generous bays wide. The fenestration features a symmetrical arrangement of apertures—including an entrance on the first floor at center with an aligned window above, and a bay which is flanked by single bays of windows, aligned one per floor and also of a generous proportion. The primary entrance is obscured by an enclosed, one-story entrance porch, which projects from the façade and is defined by a hipped roof. This feature appears to have been extant throughout the history of the building. The most recent treatment of the entrance porch includes an enclosure of brick pillars, and wooden and glass fill with transoms featuring opaque, textured glass. This version of the porch enclosure likely dates to the World War II period; however, photographs dating to the post-Civil War period indicate at least one earlier enclosure that was removed in the late nineteenth century; or this treatment may have been seasonal. The aperture of the central entrance is gracious in width, featuring the original double wooden doors that are flanked by narrow three-quarter sidelights and one-quarter paneling. The heavy wooden doors feature three panels in the upper part and one panel in the lower portion. The hardware is original and/or early, including the brass doorknobs. Above the entrance and flanking this bay, the fenestration consists of five windows, which are original and/or period-appearing double-hung wood sash, featuring an eight-over-eight light configuration. Being gracious in width, the scale and size of the apertures accentuate the squat appearance of Little Wakefield. All of the windows throughout the entire building feature simple wooden architraves, from which the shutters are mounted. Original and/or period-appearing paneled shutters flank each aperture with few exceptions. The paneled shutters are fully operational and are painted green. Wide eaves separate the roof from the façade of the building, which is lined with a gutter that likely dates to the early twentieth century.

The west elevation of the Main Block consists of a symmetrical fenestration of four windows aligned and of equal size. These apertures feature original and/or period-appearing double-hung, wood sash windows of a six-over-six light configuration. Paneled shutters also flank each

window as previously described. The rear, south elevation of the Main Block features three apertures, likely a reduction from four. The apertures are aligned to the symmetry of the interior or in correspondence to the other, more visible elevations of the building, and are of irregular sizes. One of the apertures features an unsympathetic, replacement pedestrian door that serves the rear of the center hall beneath the cantilevered staircase. The westernmost portion of the south elevation is obscured by the Rear El.

The Rear El consists of three facades—including its west, south, and east elevations. Continuing the description above in a clockwise manner, the Rear El's west elevation features a fenestration of five apertures—three windows at the second floor and a window and a door at the first floor. This arrangement is likely a reduction from six apertures that were symmetrically placed, the possible additional window being filled for some purpose of modernization. Aside from the doorway featuring a replacement door, the other apertures within this fenestration feature original and/or period-appearing double-hung, wood sash windows of a six-over-six light configuration. Paneled shutters also flank each window as previously described. An exterior chimneystack pierces the roofline at center and within the continued eave, being of a generous width. The chimneystack is roughcast, which is a contemporary treatment, and may or may not be original. The rear, south elevation of the Rear El features a single aperture and a similar chimneystack. A replacement pedestrian door fills the single aperture. This elevation was reconfigured after the demolition of a frame extension to the Rear El. Its original configuration is not known.

The Main Block and the Rear El form a solid façade at the east elevation. The first floor features five apertures—four windows and a door, while the second floor features four apertures—all windows. While the doorway features a replacement door, the other apertures appear to feature original and/or period-appearing double-hung, wood sash windows of a six-over-six light configuration. Paneled shutters also flank each window as previously described. There are three windows within the Main Block. The remaining windows and the door appear to be within the Rear El. The second floor features a mullion window at center, which accounts for two of the windows. An entrance porch with a hipped roof projects at the first floor of the Rear El at its final two bays, providing shade over the single pedestrian door and window. The porch roof is supported by simple wooden Doric columns.

At the east side of the house, the ground slopes several feet from the house and old carriage steps have been reused to create two of a four-step flight of stairs to the lower elevation of the yard. These are likely from the Wakefield Estate and are contributing elements of this designation.

*Gazebo at Little Wakefield.* Just east and slightly downhill from Little Wakefield is a gazebo that dates to the World War I period and was constructed in 1917 to serve the Germantown Branch's Demonstration Center, the National League of Workers. Located on the same parcel, this structure is a contributing element of this designation.

The craftsman style gazebo is large structure of its kind, which faces west towards the side, rear yard of Little Wakefield. The structure is wood frame and built upon a stone foundation that sits upon the sloping lawn. The hipped roof features a single, west-facing dormer that appears to serve ventilation purposes due to its original louver panel. The roof is supported by wooden posts

and its open interior features exposed roof beams and bead board ceilings. The majority of the materials that comprise the structure are original and/or period appearing, including the wood flooring. At the west-facing elevation, the roof projects west over in part beyond the main structure to provide an entrance shelter.

## **INTEGRITY**

Little Wakefield and its gazebo retain sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance.



Looking northeast. Little Wakefield, circa 1865-1875. Courtesy the Jane Campbell Collection, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Looking northeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking north. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northwest. Note the carriage steps. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking west. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking west. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



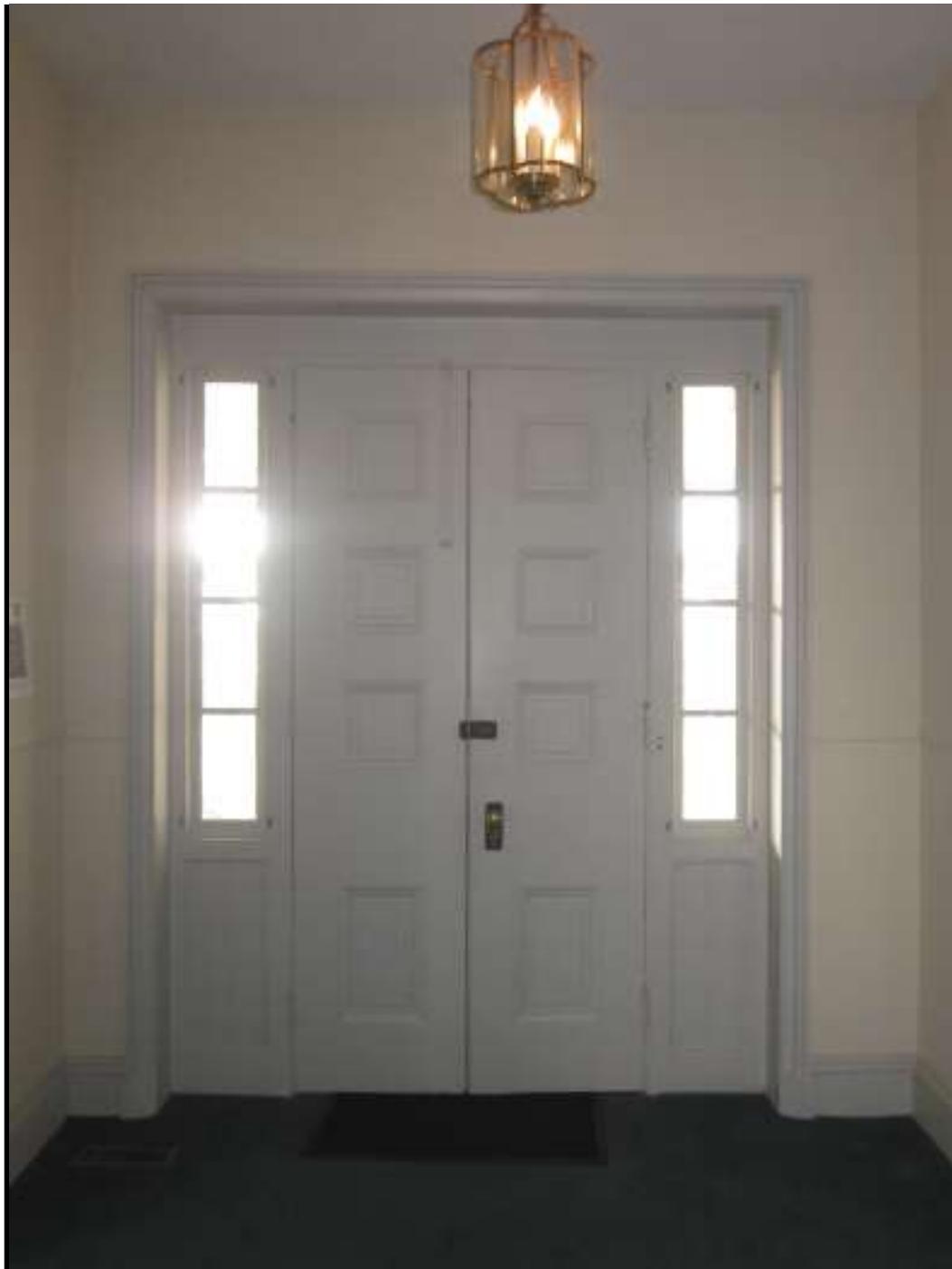
Looking south. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking south at the original entrance interior. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northeast at the original staircase. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest at the original entrance hall and staircase. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking down the original staircase. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southeast through the dining room. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northwest within the basement. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking east. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking northeast. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



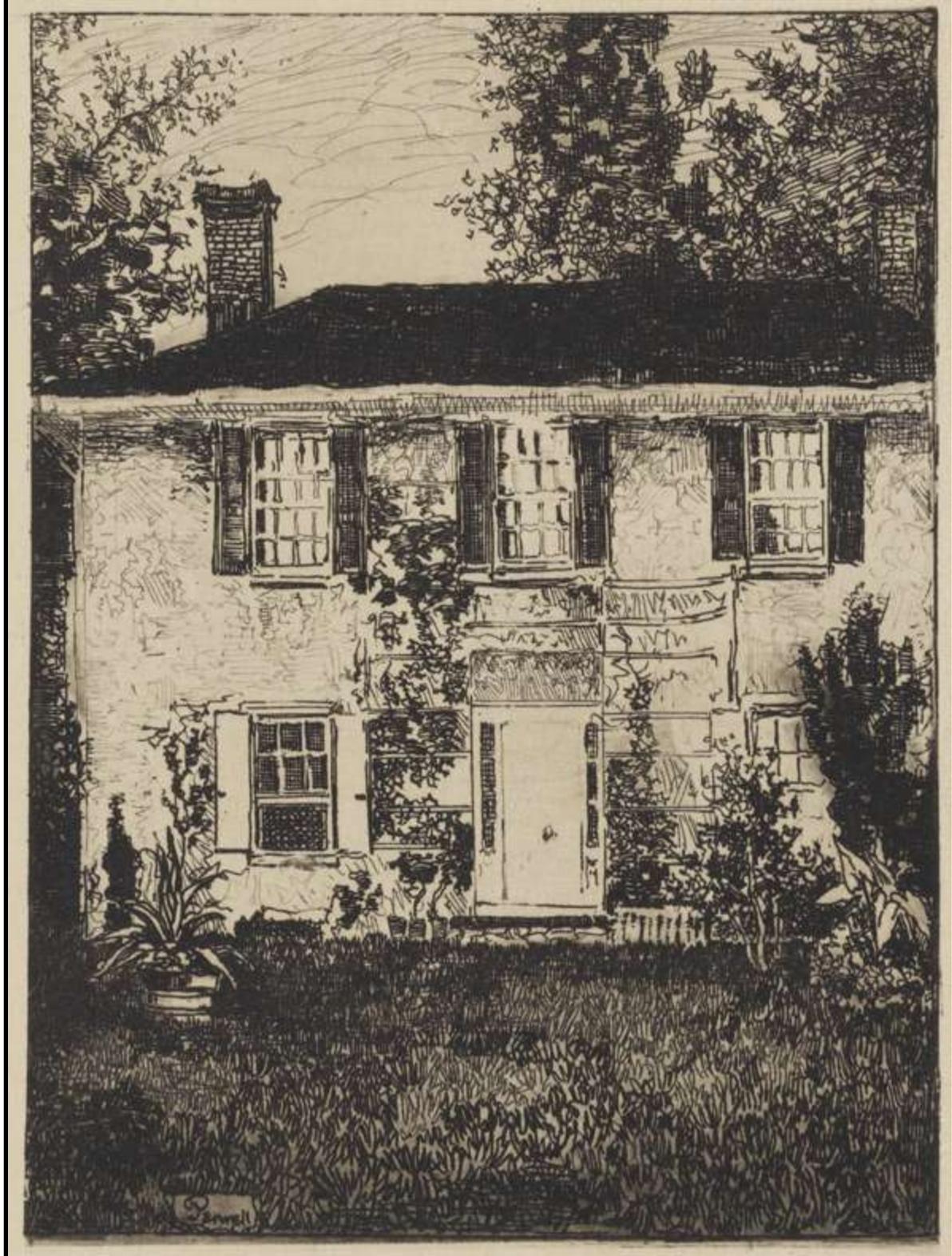
Looking west. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



Looking southwest. Courtesy Oscar Beisert.



*Little Wakefield* (1880), By Joseph Pennell (1860-1926). Etching on Japanese tissue chine colle on cream wove paper.  
Gift to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.





**CRITERION A & CRITERION J: Situated upon the larger estate of James Logan, Little Wakefield was built in 1829 by Thomas Rodman Fisher at the time of his marriage to Letitia Harvey Ellicott and it was in this house that the Fishers raised their seven children, including Mary Rodman Fisher—later known as Mrs. George Washington Carpenter, Jr. and Ellicott Fisher. The Fisher family founded the Wakefield Mills—said to be first “modern” knitting mill in America—and it was certainly one of the oldest. Mary Rodman Fisher—Mrs. George Washington Carpenter was also an important social figure in the Germantown community, as well as Philadelphia at-large. Ellicott Fisher was an eminent Philadelphia business- and clubman. Little Wakefield represents individuals important to our national industrial heritage, as well as local history in Germantown and Philadelphia. Furthermore, this section of East Germantown or Lower Germantown was once home to Fisher’s Hollow—the Wakefield Mills, as well as Wakefield—the Mansion of William Logan Fisher, built in 1798. Almost all of the buildings related to Fisher’s Hollow, Wakefield, and the Wakefield Mills have been destroyed and/or taken down; therefore, rendering Little Wakefield as especially significant, representing the cultural, economic and historical heritage of the community and this important Germantown family.**

### **Wakefield and Its Offspring—Little Wakefield**

Located within the campus of LaSalle University within the original boundary of the Wakefield Estate, Little Wakefield is one of several important old mansions related to the following family names that once lived in Germantown: Blain, Carpenter, Fisher, Logan, Starr, Wister, and Wright. The other Germantown houses include Belfield (extant), Butler Place (destroyed), Grumblethorpe (extant), Overview (destroyed), Stenton (extant), Vernon (extant), Wakefield (destroyed), and Waldheim (destroyed). Located in the south part of LaSalle’s campus today, Little Wakefield has associations with the Carpenter, Fisher, Logan and Wright families. However, most of these families were interrelated, living so close together in the vicinity of Germantown.

Little Wakefield’s most illustrative forbearer was the eminent James Logan (1674-1751), Secretary of the Province of Pennsylvania—agent to the proprietor. James Logan began acquiring land in the area of Little Wakefield in the 1710s. By the 1720s Logan acquired close to 500 acres which became part of his country home, Stenton. The section the estate that Little Wakefield sits on was acquired by Logan from John Richardson in 1722.<sup>1</sup> At his death in 1751, James Logan devised his Stenton estate to his son William Logan (1718-1776). William in turned bequeathed the estate to his three children, George, Charles and Sarah in his will. They divided up the estate 1781 and the portion that fronted Old York Road and was north of Fisher’s Lane was assigned Sarah Logan (1751-1796) and her husband Thomas Fisher (1741-1810), whom she married in 1772.<sup>2</sup>

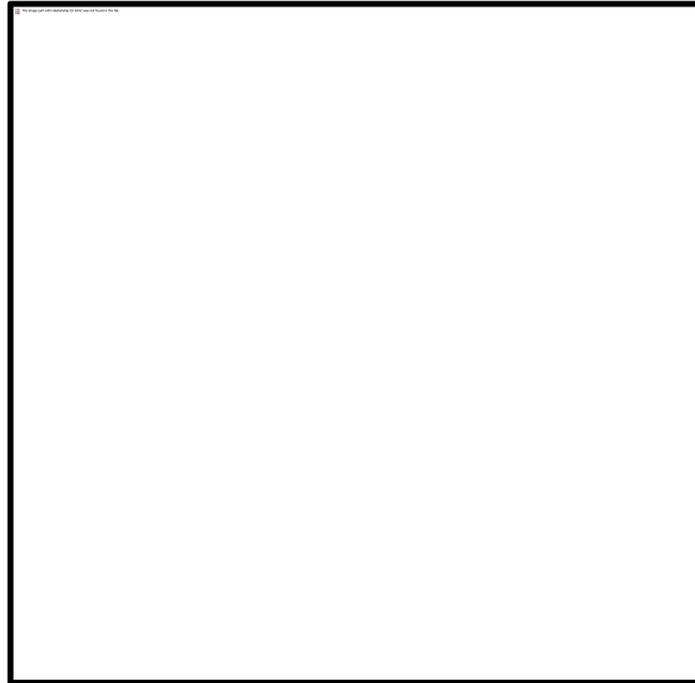
All of Wakefield’s early owners were Quakers. Thomas Fisher was not only the oldest son of Joshua Fisher and Sarah Rowland, he was also a direct descendant of John Fisher, who arrived

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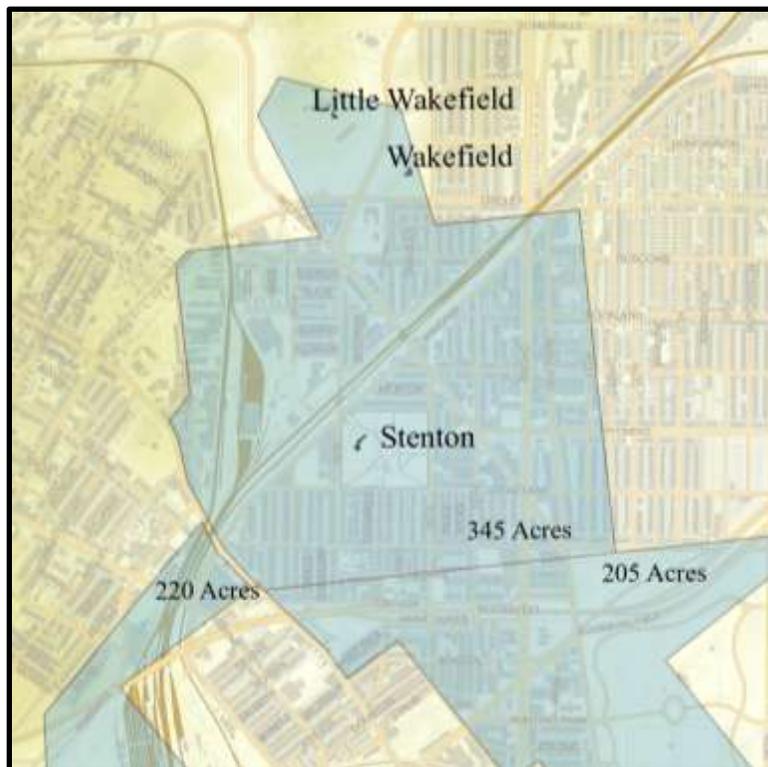
<sup>1</sup> Deed: John Richardson to James Logan, 30 November 1722, Logan Family Papers, Stenton.

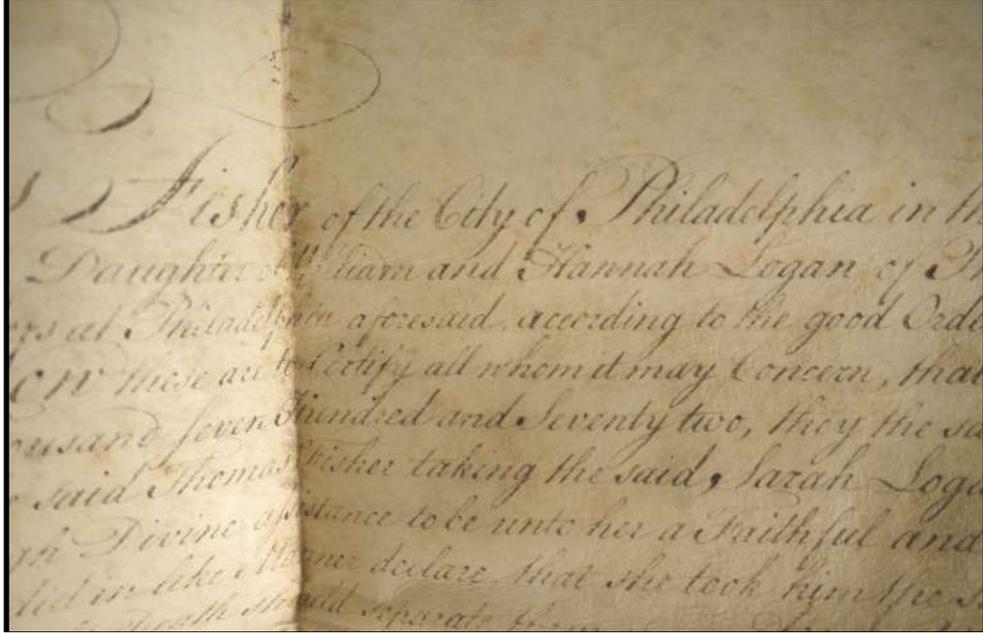
<sup>2</sup> Deed: William Rotch Wister, trustee of the Wakefield Mill Property, to Mary R. Carpenter, wife of George W. Carpenter, Ellicott Fisher, and Harvey Fisher, 16 February 1885, Deed Book G.G.P., No. 15, p. 347, City Archives of Philadelphia.

with William Penn on the *Welcome* in 1683. Early in his life, Thomas Fisher worked for his father's firm—Joshua Fisher & Sons, merchants in Philadelphia. In 1771, Sarah Logan inherited the northwest portion of the Stenton Estate, which had originally belonged to her grandfather James Logan. After the death of his wife, Thomas Fisher built Wakefield in 1798, which stood upon the estate recessed at the northeast from the juncture of Ogontz and Lindley Avenues. Wakefield was destroyed in 1985.



Above: 1781 Partition Plan of the estate of William Logan's Stenton estate among his three children. Stenton is the building at the bottom and Little Wakefield was built on the Thomas and Sarah Fisher property at the top. Courtesy of the Pennsylvania State Archive.  
Below: Plan of Stenton Estate at its maximum extent. Courtesy of J.M. Duffin.





The original wedding certificate created by the Society of Friends upon the marriage of Thomas Fisher and Sarah Logan.  
Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



"The Fisher Estate." Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.



“The Old Wakefield House.” By Marriot Canby Morris (1862-1948). Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.



“Wakefield, home of Thos. & Sarah Fisher. Built about 1795.” Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

### **Historic Context: William Logan Fisher (1781-1862)**

The third child of Thomas Fisher and Sarah Logan, William Logan Fisher grew up on the Wakefield Estate until he was fourteen, at the time of his mother's death in 1796. Soon after William Logan Fisher was sent by his father to New Bedford, Massachusetts to work as a clerk in the counting house of William Rotch, Jr., an eminent merchant. William Rotch, Jr. was related to the Fishers through his uncle Samuel Fisher's marriage to Hannah Rodman. The clerkship lasted from 1796 to 1802. Upon the end of his clerkship, William Logan Fisher purchased a share in a whaling schooner. At about this same time, he was admitted into the New Bedford Monthly Meeting, where on November 25, 1802 he married Mary Rodman, the daughter of Samuel Rodman, another eminent merchant.<sup>3</sup>

William Logan Fisher and Mary Rodman made their life in New Bedford for several years, having three children—Thomas Rodman Fisher, Sarah Logan Fisher, and Elizabeth Rodman Fisher. In 1806, William Logan Fisher's older brother, Joshua Logan Fisher, died of bilious cholera. Thomas Fisher also suffered a breakdown in health with attacks of tic doloroux in his face. This disease debilitated Thomas Fisher and as a result he offered Wakefield to his son William Logan Fisher.<sup>4</sup> However, William Logan Fisher also suffered from ill health. He had taken an excess of mercury in order to treat pain in his damaged shoulder, which led to the development of a liver disease. His injuries and health issues also prevented Fisher from using his right arm; he learned to write with his left hand. In spite of these troubles, he was a highly productive man in prime of his life.<sup>5</sup>

While the decision was likely forced by the circumstances, it was difficult for William Logan Fisher and Mary Rodman to leave New Bedford.

Here was another crisis in my affairs. From my childhood, from being much in the country, I had become very fond of agricultural concerns and in New Bedford, although a small one, I had one of the nicest gardens in the place, stocked with shrubbery, fruits and flowers.<sup>6</sup>

The Fishers moved to Philadelphia in 1807. The young couple then took over Wakefield and all of its associated affairs.<sup>7</sup>

After returning to the area, William Logan Fisher acquired the Germantown Woolen Mills from Thomas Roberts. Soon after, Thomas Fisher died in 1810, at which time William Logan Fisher inherited Wakefield. In 1813, his wife Mary Rodman Fisher also died.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mears, Anne de Benneville. *The Old York Road: And Its Early Associations of History and Biography*. (Philadelphia: 1890), p. 84.

<sup>4</sup> Autobiographical Correspondence, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, Collection 1960, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter HSP).

<sup>5</sup> Autobiographical Correspondence, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

<sup>6</sup> Autobiographical Correspondence, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

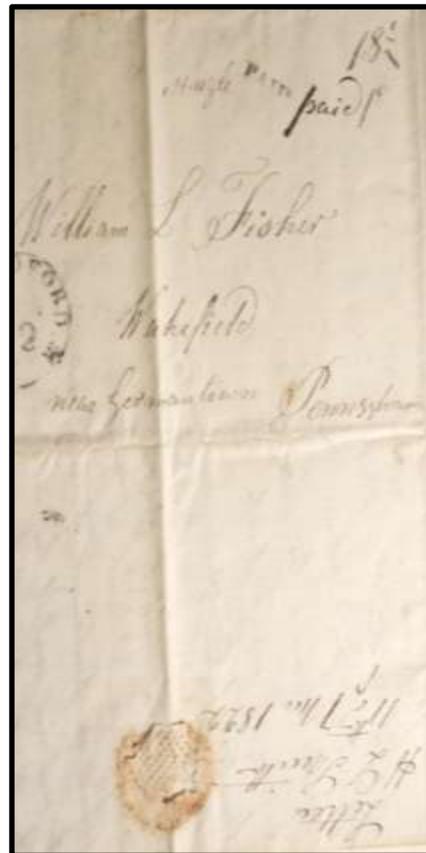
<sup>7</sup> James A. Butler, *Three Centuries on the South Campus* (Philadelphia: La Salle, 1998), 1-5.

<sup>8</sup> *Historic Pennsylvania Church and Town Records*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of the 6<sup>th</sup> mo. 1813, I lost my amiable and beloved wife. Though my subsequent affections have been of fast and enduring character, I cannot allude to this severe bereavement without pain. I cannot revert to the agony I felt when the scale which held life and death seemed to be suspended with an even balance. She passed quietly away without acute suffering and I felt that I had performed my covenant as an affectionate husband. Many years have now passed, but my mind turns to our youthful affections.

She died in our back room, which is now our library and on the 6<sup>th</sup> was interred in Germantown.<sup>9</sup>

William Logan Fisher appears to have been devastated by the death of his wife, as reflected in letters to his mother-in-law, Elizabeth Rodman. However, William Logan Fisher's business interests served as his solace, and his woolen mills were a great success—a firm that benefited greatly from the War of 1812. William Logan Fisher is also known for a pilgrimage in 1815 with a small group of fellow Quakers made to the south and west, which included parts of Western Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio. He kept a diary of the trip.



<sup>9</sup> Letter: William Logan Fisher to Sarah Rodman, Philadelphia, June 1813, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

Left: William Logan Fisher. Right: Letter to William Logan Fisher, addressed Wakefield. Courtesy t Found in Collection 1960: the Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers (1703-1940), 45 boxes, 73 vols., 33.4 lin. Feet, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



Left: William Logan Fisher. Right: Hannah Lindley. The portraits were painted to be hanging together with a picture of Wakefield at center, the mansion house in the picture of William Logan Fisher. Courtesy the La Salle University.



Right: Painting of Wakefield within the portrait of William Logan Fisher. Courtesy La Salle University.  
Left: William Logan Fisher and Hannah Lindley. Courtesy Ancestry.com.



“Cottage & race on the valley above Wakefield place.” By Marriot Canby Morris (1862-1948). Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

After the pilgrimage, William Logan Fisher returned to the woolen mill, which he continued to operate with success. In 1817 he married a fellow Friend Hannah Lindley, the daughter of Jacob Lindley and Ruth Ann Rutter.<sup>10</sup> Together they had three children: Lindley Fisher, Charles Fisher, and Mary Rodman Fisher. In 1824, William Logan Fisher authored an attack on formal religion—*The Light of Truth in the Mind of Man, the Only Rule of Faith and Practice, with Some Observations upon the Formality of Religious Sects*. As a result of his newfound religious solemnity, William Logan Fisher stopped attending meeting and, in 1827, was disowned by the Society of Friends due to his “negligence.” He never appears to have reconciled with the Society of Friends.<sup>11</sup>

In the 1830s, William Logan Fisher entered a joint venture with his brother-in-law Jacob Lindley and a New Bedford Friend, Charles W. Morgan. The trio joined to purchase an iron-making operation—the Monte Bello Furnace, Perry County, Pennsylvania.

In 1836, the business expanded through purchase of 4,000 acres of wooded land in Duncannon, Pennsylvania, founding what became the Duncannon Forge and later the Duncannon Iron Works. William Logan Fisher appears to have managed operations in part from Wakefield and through the work of his sons—Charles and Lindley Fisher. The business appears to have been a great

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<sup>10</sup> Ancestry.com. *U.S., Quaker Meeting Records, 1681-1935* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014.

<sup>11</sup> William Logan Fisher, *The Light of Truth in the Mind of Man, the Only Rule of Faith and Practice, with Some Observations upon the Formality of Religious Sects* (Philadelphia: 1824).

success, despite a major flood of the Susquehanna River in 1840, which costs the firm the ungodly sum of \$35,000. When the partnership dissolved in the 1850s, William Logan Fisher became the sole owner. After this time, the business appears not to have been lucrative for the Fishers.<sup>12</sup>

William Logan Fisher died in 1862.<sup>13</sup>



Fisher's Hollow by John Richard. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



"Race & buttonwood trees. Little Wakefield, Gtn." By Marriot Canby Morris (1862-1948). Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

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<sup>12</sup> Butler, *Three Centuries on the South Campus*, 1-5.

<sup>13</sup> Ancestry.com. *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Death Certificates Index, 1803-1915* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.



Left: Thomas Rodman Fisher. Right: Mary Rodman Fisher, Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

## **CRITERION A**

### **Thomas Rodman Fisher (1802-1861)**

**Thomas Rodman Fisher is a significant person of the past, operating, for many years, the Wakefield Mills and constructing the subject house—Little Wakefield. The biography below shall illustrate his contributions and importance to local history in Germantown and Philadelphia.**

The oldest son of William Logan Fisher and Mary Rodman, Thomas Rodman Fisher was born on October 28, 1803 in New Bedford and, after the age of five, grew up on the Wakefield Estate. Thomas Rodman Fisher demonstrated the strong business acumen of his father, William Logan Fisher, and was able to establish himself in the annals of American business history.

Operating prior to 1820, Fisher, Gouge & Potts were recorded in the “Woolen firm, capital, work force, and machinery, Philadelphia, 1820” having “Capitol”; a workforce of sixty-six; and the following machinery: 11 cards, 8 jennies, 3 billies, 3 pickers, 22 looms, three fulling stocks, five shearing frames, and one “Brewster patent water jenny.”<sup>14</sup> This precise year appears to record a major depression in the textile manufacture industry. Nevertheless, Thomas Rodman Fisher is said to have organized a Knitting Mill, much like the family-owned Germantown Woolen Mills. The concept involved the assembly of individual knitters and their looms under one roof, where

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<sup>14</sup> Philip Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism: The Textile Manufacture at Philadelphia, 1800-1885* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 104.

the company supplied the raw materials and sold the final product. Existing for a time as “Fisher, Gouge, and Potts,” the Wakefield Mills was one of the few incorporated mills in antebellum Pennsylvania—and is even said, by some, to be the first knitting mill of its kind in America.<sup>15</sup> The “Wakefield Mills” were located at the juncture of Belfield and Lindley Avenues. Being awarded most of the important contracts from the Federal government, the Wakefield Mills produced nearly nine-tenths of America’s hosiery and fancy knit goods through the time of the Civil War.<sup>16</sup>



“Wakefield Mills” by John Richard, ca. 1875. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

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<sup>15</sup> Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism*, 232-233; Martha C. Halpern, “Germantown Goods: A Survey of the Textile Industry in Germantown” *Germantown Crier* 43 (1990): 9.

<sup>16</sup> “History Club Visits Noted Places: Germantown Mills and Mansions of Colonial and Revolutionary Times Viewed in Weekly Jaunt” [unknown publication].



“Wakefield Mills” by John Richard, ca. 1875. Courtesy the Germantown Historical Society.

After establishing the Wakefield Mills, Thomas Rodman Fisher married Letitia Harvey Ellicott (1803-1881), who was born to Jonathan Ellicott and Sarah Harvey on June 27, 1803 at the Ellicott Mills (now Ellicott City) in Baltimore County, Maryland.<sup>17</sup> The Ellicotts were also Quakers, originally from Bucks County. The mill connection was one that likely influenced Thomas Rodman Fisher’s decision to marry Letitia Harvey Ellicott in 1829.<sup>18</sup> However, his sister had previously married a member of the Ellicott family several years before. At the time of his marriage, Thomas Rodman Fisher was given a large tract of land, a piece of the larger Wakefield Estate, which had been part of the Logan Estate.<sup>19</sup> That same year Thomas Rodman Fisher inherited \$3000 from his godfather, Thomas Rodman, which led to the construction of the subject house—Little Wakefield.

...that genial home where we were always welcome...<sup>20</sup>

Thomas Rodman Fisher continued to manage the Wakefield Mills, which would experience fluctuating fortunes over the years. The site of the Wakefield Mills included the earlier mills owned and/or founded by his father and the Wakefield Mills, which comprised Fisher’s Hollow in Lower Germantown, on Fisher’s Lane. He wrote the following in his record book throughout the 1850s:

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<sup>17</sup> Swarthmore College; Swarthmore, Pennsylvania; *Deaths Not Ascertained*; Collection: *Quaker Meeting Records*; Call Number: RG2/Ph/G7 3.4.

<sup>18</sup> Ancestry.com. *Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Church and Town Records, 17 08-1985* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.

<sup>19</sup> “The Two Wakefields,” unknown newspaper, (1903), Historic Buildings Pamphlet File, Germantown Historical Society.

<sup>20</sup> Ella Wister Haines,, “Memories,” [unknown publication] p. 79, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

The buildings I have added to the mill property are as follows

The house to east of carding mill raise—a two story double house cost me [\$]1500

Raising a Story at the Fulling Mill, [\$]1200...

The 2 story stone building and, as store, warmer, office, and machine shop, cost . . . [\$]2100

Adjoining house next to Carding Mill and making 4 houses from house & old shop 3 stories cost me abt [\$]1500...

Frame building in meadow south of Fisher's Lane two houses renting for [\$]100...cost me . . . [\$]650

Addition to house south side of Fisher's Lane and kitchens to both houses so as to rent for two houses, cost . . . [\$]300

House made of old stable West of Carding Mill cost . . . [\$] 250

New Mill, Day House, Dey House, Engine House, Carpenter's Shop and wall round the mill yard cost me . . . [\$]5500...

I make this inventory to show what these improvements cost,—as my father has devised to me in his will the Wakefield Mill Property and all his land west of the Fulling Mill Run—which is by his will to be valued without reference to money I have expended on improvements...<sup>21</sup>

The mill facility required numerous improvements over the years, and included the retrofitting and construction of new buildings due to “change in use,” etc. Thomas Rodman Fisher invested in new machinery for the mills in 1840.<sup>22</sup> Soon after, the Wakefield Mills underwent financial problems and by 1842 the machinery was lost by the Fishers. William Rotch Rodman, Jr. purchased the machinery at Sheriff's Sale for \$4880.45. Thomas Rodman Fisher made payments to his friend and distant relative over the years, who was considered to be an investor on paper.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Thomas Rodman Fisher, Journal [1850s], Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

<sup>22</sup> Scranton, *Proprietary Capitalism*, pg. 233.

<sup>23</sup> Correspondence, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP..



"Mrs. Carpenter's Place," Little Wakefield. Courtesy the Jane Campbell Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

By 1850, the Wakefield Mills had become the incorporated Wakefield Manufacturing Company, which then consisted of both steam- and water-power and a corp of 180 workers. Thomas Rodman Fisher was making roughly \$1300 for his "...investment exclusive my [Thomas Rodman Fisher] dwelling house..." as of 1853. The income included rent from the Wakefield Manufacturing Corporation. However, likely due to the Panic of 1857, the Wakefield Manufacturing Company failed to survive the decade.<sup>24</sup>

Thomas Rodman Fisher and Letitia Harvey Ellicott went on to have seven children, including the following: Sarah Ellicott Fisher (1830-1832), William Logan Fisher (1832-1858), George Logan Fisher (1835-1836), Mary Rodman Fisher (1838-1899), Ellicott Fisher (1840-1908), and Harvey Fisher (1843-1885). Of this entire brood, Ellicott Fisher and Mary Rodman Fisher were the only children to marry, and, incidentally, she was the only child to have her own issue through her marriage to George Washington Carpenter, Jr., the son of George Washington Carpenter of Phil Elena, Germantown.<sup>25</sup> Thomas Rodman Fisher died November 4, 1861 and was buried three days later.<sup>26</sup> His wife lived on for nearly twenty-five years, her death occurring on May 22, 1881 in Germantown.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> "History of the Wakefield Mills," Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP..

<sup>25</sup> *Genealogy of the Fisher Family 1682-1896*. Ancestry.com. *North America, Family Histories, 1500-2000* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2016.

<sup>26</sup> "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915." Index. FamilySearch, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2008, 2010. From originals housed at the Philadelphia City Archives. "Death Records."

<sup>27</sup> Quaker Periodicals, Haverford College; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; *The Journal*; Volumes: 1875 Jan - 1885 Apr (Vol 9 - 13); and Ancestry.com. *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Death Certificates Index, 1803-1915* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011.



"The Wakefield Manufacturing Company" at Fisher's Hollow, Lower Germantown. Courtesy Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, Yale University Art Gallery.



Detail from print showing "Little Wakefield." Courtesy Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, Yale University Art Gallery.



Left: Mary Rodman Fisher. Right: George Washington Carpenter, Jr. Courtesy the *Descendants of the Carpenter-Fishers*.

Signature of Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

### **Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter (1838-1894)**

The daughter of Thomas Rodman Fisher, who married George W. Carpenter, lives at Little Wakefield west of the old property.<sup>28</sup>

**Mary Rodman Fisher is a significant person of the past in Germantown and Philadelphia. Registered in the records of the Green Street Monthly Meeting, Mary Rodman Fisher was born on August 20, 1838 in Lower Germantown, the fourth child of Thomas Rodman Fisher and Letitia Harvey Ellicott.<sup>29</sup> Incidentally, she was the only child of seven in her family to carry on the bloodline. While Mary Rodman Fisher was to become “...a leader in society and charitable circles in Germantown...” she was born at Little Wakefield, where she was a vibrant member of the Fisher family.**

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<sup>28</sup> “Philadelphia’s 500: No. 11, The Fisher Family,” [unknown newspaper], Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP

<sup>29</sup> *Swarthmore, Quaker Meeting Records*. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

Mary Rodman Fisher likely attended the Green Street Monthly Meeting, and, no doubt, received a Quaker education. She was also an early member of the Germantown Cricket Club, which was established in 1854. She was known to have started a mission for her family's workers in one of the Wakefield Mill buildings at Fisher's Hollow in 1856—a faction of the mission would go on to become the Wakefield Presbyterian Church, formerly located on Germantown Avenue.<sup>30</sup> On a whole, the mission appears to have evolved into a school for children of mill workers in the neighborhood of Fisher's Hollow, which led to the establishment of the Wakefield Infant Day School.

Mary Rodman Fisher was twenty-two when she married George Washington Carpenter, Jr., the son of the same George Washington Carpenter, who built and resided in Phil-Elena—the incredible Greek Revival mansion at Mt. Airy (now demolished).

On her marriage to George W. Carpenter, the eldest son of the owner of that splendid country seat on which Pelham has since been built, the young couple lived at Little Wakefield, a smaller house on the parenteral place....<sup>31</sup>

After Mary Rodman Fisher married George Washington Carpenter, Jr. on the eve of the Civil War, he almost immediately enlisted in the 20<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Pennsylvania Cavalry. No doubt completing some kind of volunteer service during the war, she went on to organize the Germantown Relief Society; served as Treasurer of the City Parks Association of Philadelphia; was a member of the Germantown Flower Mission; the Philadelphia College Settlement; the Colonial Dames; and numerous “whist clubs,” in Germantown and Philadelphia at-large.<sup>32</sup>

Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter, often called more officially, Mrs. George Washington Carpenter, was a prominent Germantown socialite, despite being known as “down to earth.” Some thought she was too done to earth, as per this entry by Cornelius Weygandt:

Geo. W. Carpenter [Jr.] of the present, was on hand to receive us, and introduced us to his step-mother Mrs. G.W.C. Sr., took us out into the dining room, and was, in various ways quite polite. Mrs. G.W.C. Sr. is a dignified looking old lady, with white curls and a pleasant manner, and she made an agreeable impression upon Lucy. G.W.C.'s wife, nee Fisher, looks like a huckster, and like her poor first cousin, Mrs. Nuneville, the wife of our drunken upholsterer, who herself also imbibes freely of stimulants.<sup>33</sup>

Also written by Weygandt, the following description was recorded in his diary of Little Wakefield:

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<sup>30</sup> Francis Reeves, *Wakefield* [privately published booklet], Wakefield Day School Papers, Germantown Historical Society.

<sup>31</sup> “Personal and Pertinent,” *The Times*, Philadelphia: 11 October 1899, p. 6.

<sup>32</sup> “Mrs. Carpenter's Death, She was one of the Social Leaders of Germantown,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Philadelphia: 11 October 1899, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> Diary of Cornelius N. Weygandt, June 2, 1888, Cornelius N. Weygandt Papers, University Archives and Records Center, University of Pennsylvania.

G.W.C. [George W. Carpenter, Sr.] was very polite, and followed us around to see that we were attended to. We saw also his wife and two daughters, Mrs. Wright and Bessie Carpenter. Sophie and I walked around the grounds after being refreshed – partly to get warm, for it was cool without our wraps, which we had left in the phaeton. It is a charming place; by name [Little] Wakefield. That is the grounds are beautiful, on a gently sloping hillside, with fine old trees and lovely vistas. The house is old and quite small.<sup>34</sup>

Other impressions of Little Wakefield were more favorable to the old property and its Mansion House:

“Wakefield” is delightfully located and is especially adapted for fetes and similar entertainments. It stands on a high hill, and a view of the surrounding country can be had for miles around. From 4 o’clock until nearly 6 carriages of every description, carts and a tally-hoe conveyed the guests to the reception. The line of vehicles extended from the grounds to Wakefield Street, on the west side, nearly one-half mile distant. The tally-hos of Messrs. Miller, Biddle, and Browning, filled with guests, made a delightful spectacle as they drove up the winding drive to the plain white porch at the entrance of the house.<sup>35</sup>



View of Wakefield Estate with Little Wakefield and the bridge over the Wingohocking Creek, which allowed access to Wakefield. Found in Collection 1960: the Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers (1703-1940), 45 boxes, 73 vols., 33.4 lin. Feet, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

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<sup>34</sup> Diary of Cornelius N. Weygandt, June 13, 1888, Cornelius N. Weygandt Papers, University Archives and Records Center, University of Pennsylvania.

<sup>35</sup> “Society in Summer: Brilliant Reception given by Mr. and Mrs. G.W. Carpenter,” [unknown newspaper publication], Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.



Letitia Ellicott Carpenter (1856-1933) and Elizabeth Rodman Fisher Carpenter (1870-1942). Courtesy Ancestry.com.

As referenced earlier Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter was the only descendant known to carry on the family bloodline, having two daughters—Letitia “Letty” Ellicott Carpenter (1856-1933) and Elizabeth “Bessie” Rodman Fisher Carpenter (1870-1942). While Letty was born in France, both Letty and Bessie were primarily raised at Little Wakefield, where the Carpenters would make their home for most of their married life.

Unlike her sober forbearers, fashion became a more serious consideration in the period after the Civil War. And as did many Quaker descendants, Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter left the Society of Friends to become a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church. She was baptized at St. Luke’s Church in Germantown in 1875.<sup>36</sup>

Private balls and many of the most important social functions were considered incomplete without Mrs. Carpenter being one of the patronesses or managers.<sup>37</sup>

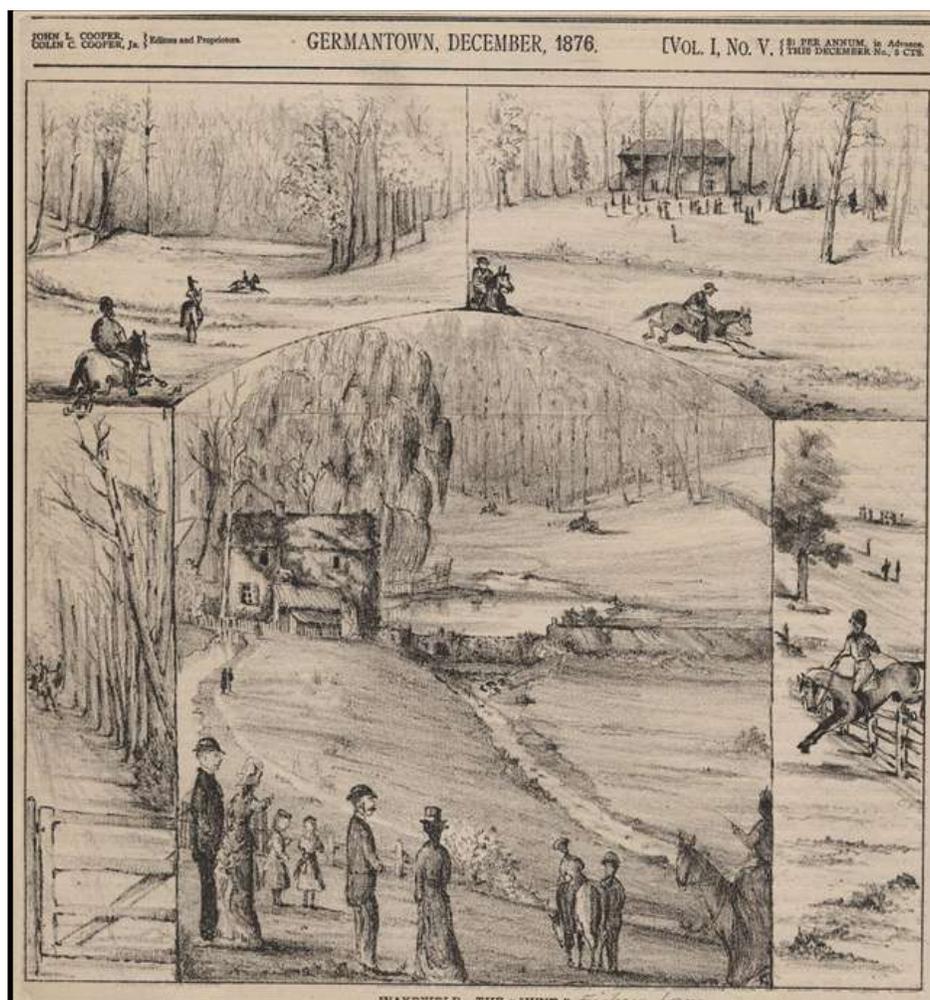
George Washington Carpenter Jr. served on the vestry at St. Luke’s Church. He was a principal organizer of the Hare and Hunt Cub, one of the most prominent riding clubs of its day between 1876 and 1885. He was highly interested in all equestrian subjects, especially the steeplechase,

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<sup>36</sup> *Historic Pennsylvania Church and Town Records*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>37</sup> *Public Ledger*, October 10, 1899.

and he led most of the steeplechases through the east side of “the country over” Harper’s, Winter’s, and Fisher’s Woods and Meadows.<sup>38</sup>

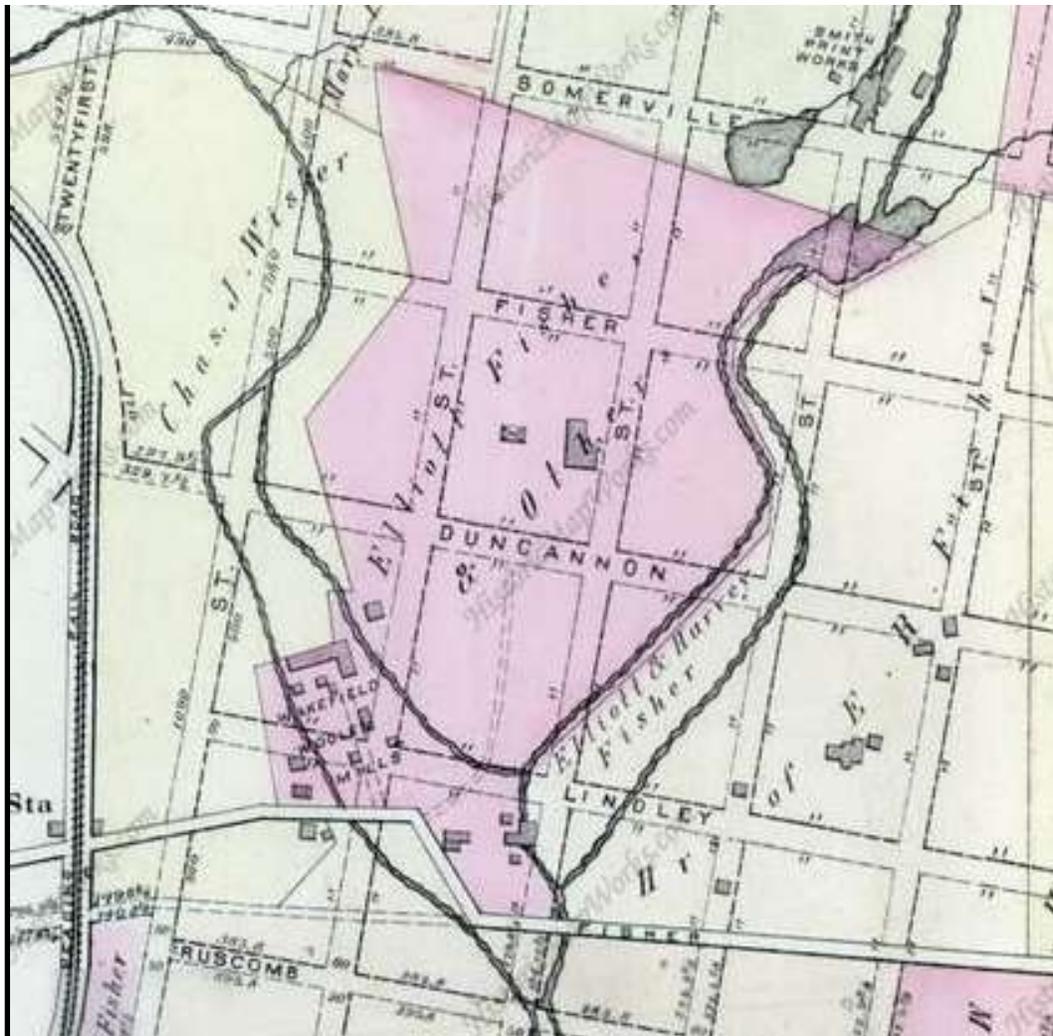


“Wakefield—The Hunt.” Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

While Letitia Harvey Ellicott Fisher would live until May 23, 1881, her son Ellicott Fisher took over the management of Little Wakefield in the post-Civil War period.<sup>39</sup> By 1876, Ellicott Fisher was listed on local maps as the owner of the estate, despite the fact that his mother was still alive. And, by the 1880s, “Mary R. Carpenter” is listed on various maps, indicating ownership. According to most family references, Ellicott Fisher was an old bachelor who lived with his sister at Little Wakefield, Mrs. George Washington Carpenter, Jr.

<sup>38</sup> “Personal and Pertinent,” *The Times*, Philadelphia: 11 October 1899, p. 6.

<sup>39</sup> *Swarthmore, Quaker Meeting Records*. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.



Excerpt from the City Atlas of Philadelphia, 1876. By G.M. Hopkins. Courtesy of Historic Map Works.

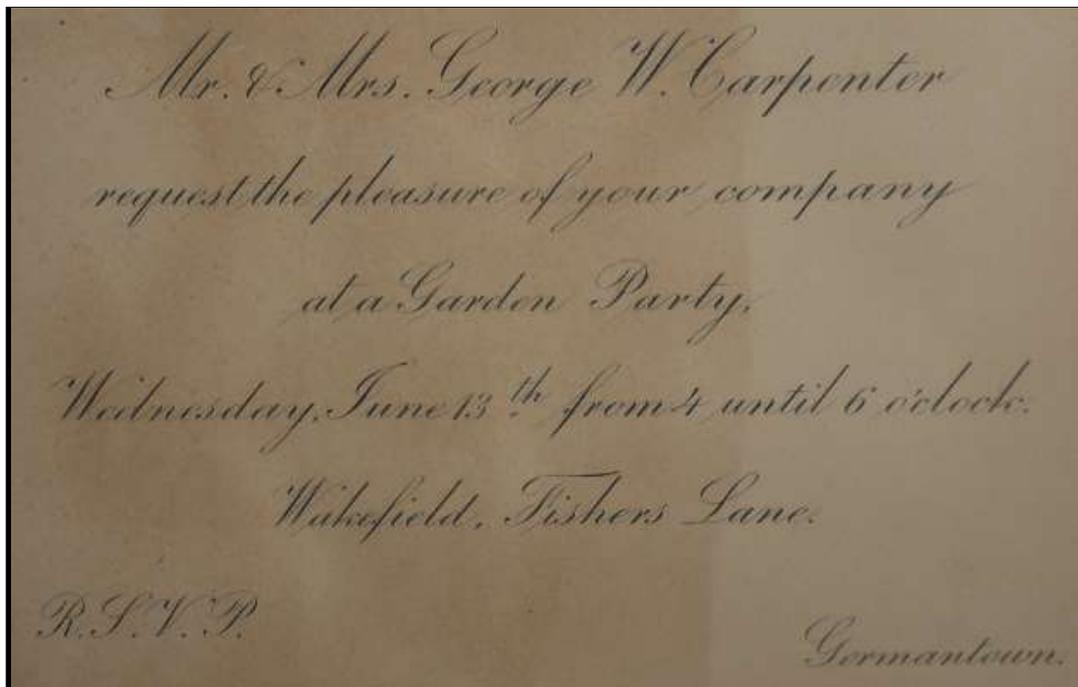
The oldest daughter, Letitia Ellicott Carpenter, was married to William Redwood Wright in 1881 by Rev. W.H. Vibbert at St. Luke's Church in Germantown. The reception was held at Little Wakefield.

The bride was dressed in white satin and point lace and was attended by a little sister and cousin, in white dresses, as bridesmaids. After the wedding the particular friends of the bride were received at Wakefield [Little Wakefield].<sup>40</sup>

The Wrights built "Waldheim" just northwest of Little Wakefield within the larger Wakefield Estate. William Redwood Wright was a businessman and also served as City Treasurer, a tenure that was riddled with scandal.<sup>41</sup> Letitia Ellicott Carpenter lived in this house until 1923, at which time she removed to Chestnut Hill. Waldheim was destroyed by fire in 1926.

<sup>40</sup> "A Germantown Wedding," Scrapbook of George W. Carpenter, Jr., Philadelphia, 1881, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP

<sup>41</sup> Scrapbooks of William Redwood Wright, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.



Invitation to Little Wakefield of Mr. & Mrs. George W. Carpenter. Found in Collection 1960: the Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers (1703-1940), 45 boxes, 73 vols., 33.4 lin. Feet. Courtesy the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

On September 17, 1894, Elizabeth Rodman Fisher Carpenter married Robert Edward Glendinning at St. Luke's Church with an estimated 1600 people present.<sup>42</sup> Their reception was held on the grounds of Little Wakefield.

The reception which followed at Wakefield [Little Wakefield], the old Fisher place on the Hill, above Fisher's lane, partook of the nature of a garden fete, such as so many have enjoyed in this old centre of Germantown hospitality. The same old trees have looked down upon many other wedding festivities in the same families, and the same porches have held other bridal parties. The bride's sister was married from there and her mother, and her grandmother came there a bride from Baltimore.

A lot of the bridegroom's friends had assembled by stealth at the gloomy, dismal station of the Reading Railroad, near the gate to the grounds, where only a candle dip flickers, and as they were about to take the train quietly a series of bombs went off which were heard for miles, and from all the surrounding dark places rockets and other fireworks illuminated the sky.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Historic Pennsylvania Church and Town Records*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Historical Society of Pennsylvania.; and "Miss Carpenter A Bride," [unknown newspaper publication], 1920, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

<sup>43</sup> "A Pretty Rural Wedding, Miss Carpenter and Mr. Glendinning Married Yesterday, the Reception at Wakefield," *The Times*. Philadelphia, 18 September 1920.

The Glendinnings lived in a house in Chestnut Hill known as The Squirrels. Little Wakefield was inherited by Sydney Longstreth Wright, Jr. in 1920, which he held until after the Second World War.<sup>44</sup>

References to Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter—or Mrs. George Washington Carpenter, Jr., began in reference to Wakefield or Little Wakefield as early as the 1870s through the time of her death.

#### Fisher's Lane

We now come to Fisher's Lane. Wakefield is a famous old country seat on this Lane. It was the property of William Logan Fisher, but is now owned by Mrs. Samuel Fox, a daughter of Mr. Fisher.

This is a simple mansion of an early day, built of stone, three stories in height, with a porch in front, and having a pointed roof. A fine extensive open lawn lies before the mansion, while trees border the drive, and guard the front of the house.

Little Wakefield joins this place. George W. Carpenter and Ellicott Fisher reside here. George Carpenter married the daughter of Thomas Fisher, who was also the granddaughter of William Logan Fisher.<sup>45</sup>

The above excerpt is dated 1892, indicating that both Ellicott Fisher and Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter resided at Little Wakefield during the last quarter of the nineteenth century and that references to Wakefield included Little Wakefield.

Mary Rodman Fisher Carpenter died "...yesterday morning [October 9, 1899] at her home, Wakefield [Little Wakefield], on Fisher's Lane, Germantown, of heart disease. Mrs. Carpenter was 61 years old, and was born and spent her lifetime in the old Fisher homestead where she died." She was buried on October 11, 1899 in the "family vault" in the churchyard of St. Luke's Protestant Episcopal Church.<sup>46</sup>

A conspicuous figure is lost from the social world in the death of Mrs. George W. Carpenter. She was the daughter of Thomas Rodman Fisher, whose grandfather, Thomas Fisher, before the revolution, married a daughter of William Logan, of Stenton, and on a corner of the Logan estate built Wakefield, on Fisher's Lane, where successive generations of the Fishers have been born lived and died. The mother of Mary Fisher as she is still remembered by old friends in Germantown

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<sup>44</sup> George W. Carpenter Dies At Age of 82, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13 February 1921, p. 8.

<sup>45</sup> Samuel F. Hotchkin, *The York Road, Old and New* (Philadelphia: Binder & Kelly, 1892), 238.

<sup>46</sup> "Pennsylvania, Philadelphia City Death Certificates, 1803–1915." Index. FamilySearch, Salt Lake City, Utah, 2008, 2010. From originals housed at the Philadelphia City Archives. "Death Records"; "Died Intestate, How Mrs. Carpenter's Fortune is to be Apportioned," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 27 October 1899, p. 3.

was Miss Ellicott, and her aunt, Sarah Logan Fisher, was married to the late William Wister, of Belfield, the place adjoining Wakefield.<sup>47</sup>

After the death of his wife, George Washington Carpenter, Jr. remarried to Susan Emlen Jones and removed to Rittenhouse Square. He died at his home, 128 South 19<sup>th</sup> Street on February 12, 1921.<sup>48</sup> The funeral was held at St. Luke's Church on a Monday afternoon. As a tribute to the deceased, a lifelong friend Rev. Samuel Upjohn, rector of St. Luke's Church, gave a special chant, which he composed for the occasion.<sup>49</sup>

### **Ellicott Fisher (1840-1908)**

Registered in the records of the Pre-Hicksite Green Street Monthly Meeting, Ellicott Fisher was born on May 4, 1840 at Germantown.<sup>50</sup> He was the fifth child of Thomas Rodman Fisher and Letitia Ellicott. Of the seven children born to the Fisher family, he was one of two children to survive to adulthood and marry; however, he and his wife did not have children. While Ellicott Fisher would eventually become an important Philadelphia business- and clubman, he was born at Little Wakefield, where he would also make his home as an adult. He was a member of the Green Street Monthly Meeting, and, no doubt, received his education with the Society of Friends. After his early Quaker education, Ellicott Fisher attended the Germantown Academy and then matriculated at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated from Penn as part of the Class of 1860.<sup>51</sup>

Starting his professional career as a clerk at the Duncannon Iron Company, Ellicott Morris eventually became its president. Another early endeavor began in 1861, when his father requested that he serve as a Director of the Wakefield Mills, becoming head of the company as the health of his father, Thomas Rodman Fisher, declined. Serving also as President, he incorporated the Ellicott Fisher Company, iron and steel merchants, in 1891. This company manufactured horseshoes. The officers included Leon S. Dexter, Treasurer, and Edward McCullough, Secretary. The company was for a time located at 1024-1026-1028 Buttonwood Street, serving as dealers for the Duncannon Iron Company, and was likely the predecessor of Fisher & Ross.<sup>52</sup> Ellicott Fisher also served as the Director of the Bloomsburg Iron Company and the Sixth National Bank of Philadelphia.<sup>53</sup>

As previously stated, the Fishers were also very active members of the Germantown and larger Philadelphia communities, and Ellicott Fisher was no different. Like his sister, he was also a

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<sup>47</sup> "Ellicott Fisher: Was Germantown Descendant of Passenger in Penn's *Welcome*." [Unknown Publication], 1908, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

<sup>48</sup> "George W. Carpenter Dies At Age of 82," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13 February 1921, p. 8; "Death Notice," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 13 February 1921, p. 15.

<sup>49</sup> "Personal and Pertinent," *The Times*, Philadelphia: 11 October 1899, p. 6.

<sup>50</sup> *Swarthmore, Quaker Meeting Records*. Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

<sup>51</sup> *Delta Phi, Delta Phi Catalogue, 1827-1907* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1908), 300.

<sup>52</sup> Typescript transcribed from personal writing, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP.

<sup>53</sup> Daniel Baird, "Obituary, Sixth National Bank," [Unknown Newspaper Publication], 1908, Logan-Fisher-Fox Family Papers, HSP

founding member of the Germantown Cricket Club when it was established in 1854 and, in turn, he was a devoted cricketer. Ellicott Fisher was a founding member of the Welcome Society—an organization composed of descendants of those who came with Penn on his first voyage to America upon the ship named “The Welcome.” He was a member of the Union League; an associate member of the Military Order, Loyal Legion of the United States; and an honorary member of the “State in Schuylkill.”

All of this was possible despite an accident which impaired his vision in one eye. He lived at Little Wakefield with his sister, Mary Rodman Fisher—Mrs. George Washington Carpenter, Jr. until her death, (when did she die), at which time he married a widow from Baltimore, Mary Addition Tyler Gatchell on October 28, 1897 by Rev. E.H. Ingle at St. Bartholomew’s Church.

The bride entered the church with her brother, Mr. Tyler, by whom she was given away at the altar, where she was met by the groom and his best man, Mr. W. Fisher Lewis of Philadelphia. She wore a going away gown of dark red cloth and velvet, with bonnet to match and carried a bouquet of roses.<sup>54</sup>

Ellicott Fisher and his new wife made their home at Little Wakefield, as George Washington Carpenter remarried and removed to a house in town. There were no children.

Mr. Fisher was a gentleman of sterling worth and strict integrity and who’s amiable disposition endeared him to all.<sup>55</sup>

Ellicott Fisher died on Monday, December 20, 1908 in the Germantown Hospital near his home.<sup>56</sup> The funeral was held at Little Wakefield on Wednesday, December 22, 1908 at 11:30 AM.<sup>57</sup> Herkness’ Bazaar at Ninth and Sansom Streets advertised an auction to take place on June 11, 1909 for “Horses, Carriages, Harness, Etc.,” and also “For Estate of Mr. Ellicott Fisher, Dec’d”.<sup>58</sup> His widow, Mrs. Ellicott Fisher, lived in the Belgrade after her husband’s death.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> “Matrimony Notice,” *New York Tribune*, 29 October 1897, p. 7.

<sup>55</sup> “Notes of the Street,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 20 February 1909, p. 11.

<sup>56</sup> “Deaths of the Day: Ellicott Fisher,” [Unknown Newspaper Publication], 1908.

<sup>57</sup> “Ellicott Fisher Dead,” [Unknown Newspaper Publication], 1908.

<sup>58</sup> “Herkness’ Bazaar,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 1909, p. 10.

<sup>59</sup> “Early Spring is Chosen for a Visiting Period,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 5 April 1914, p. 15.

**CRITERION A & CRITERION J: During the founding period of the National League of Workers, in 1917, Little Wakefield was used as the Demonstration Center for the Germantown branch, which was an organization that made a significant local contribution to the efforts to aide World War I. Most importantly, the National League of Workers was a women’s organization that provided a nation-wide presence and contribution to the effort and the deficiencies created at home as a result of wartime. Little Wakefield, the Gazebo, and the Wakefield Estate were used as a center for these efforts, as a service of the Fisher family to the local community and, as a result, *exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the community.***

**Demonstration Center (Little Wakefield) of the National League of Workers**

Founded in 1917, the National League of Workers was formed by a group of women as a national organization geared toward the standardization of work of the women of America. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., it quickly became a nationwide force with a particularly large division in Pennsylvania. The primary objectives of the organization were shared by all of the divisions.

“...to promote constructive patriotism; to develop the resources and to promote the efficiency of women in meeting their everyday responsibilities of home, state, nation and humanity; to provide organized groups in every community prepared to cooperate with the Red Cross and other agencies in dealing with any calamity, fire, flood, famine, economic disorder, etc. and in the time of war to supplement the work of the Red Cross, the army and navy and to address the question of women’s work and woman’s welfare.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Lydia Stieber, “The National League for Women’s Service: The Women of Germantown and Their Service to the Nation in World War I,” *Germantown Crier* 49 (1999): 48-53.

The Germantown branch was founded on April 28, 1917 by middle to upper middle class and well-to-do women of the community. The YWCA building at 5820 Germantown Avenue was used as the Germantown Community Instruction Center, where the meetings of the Germantown branch were held. One of the primary objectives were the war gardens, which were located at Wissahickon and Manheim, as well as Oak Road.<sup>61</sup>



Canning and preserving at demonstration center at Little Wakefield, Germantown. Taken by Charles R. Pancoast. Library Company of Philadelphia.

The Germantown branch was chaired by Sarah Logan Wister—Mrs. James Starr, of Belfield. She, no doubt, influenced the use of Little Wakefield as the institution and demonstration center. Little Wakefield became a school where “...women could learn preparedness of the kind Uncle Sam was most anxious for...”<sup>62</sup> The demonstration center at Little Wakefield became free educational facility for high school-age women, who boarded for two week periods.<sup>63</sup> During this time they worked for the entire day—daybreak to nightfall—planting and weeding gardens. A large gazebo was built for the demonstration center on the sloping lawn of Little Wakefield, which served for outdoor occasions, such as lunches and other gatherings. The gazebo is a structure that is a subject of this nomination.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> “Woman’s Manifold Activities Engage The Attention of the Watchful Camera Man,” *Evening Public Ledger*, 23 May 1917, p. 20

<sup>62</sup> Jane Campbell, “Learning to Preserve at Little Wakefield,” 1917, Jane Campbell Scrapbooks, vol. 34, p. 17, HSP.

<sup>63</sup> “Woman’s Manifold Activities Engage The Attention of the Watchful Camera Man,” *Evening Public Ledger*, 23 May 1917, p. 20

<sup>64</sup> Stieber, “The National League for Women’s Service,” 48-51.

At the time in which the demonstration center opened, a vegetable garden of four acres had already been planted. The women worked this garden, cut grass to make hay, received lessons in practical cooking, etc. The weekly activities included the following: drying food for preservation in jars on Monday and Tuesday and practical cooking instructions on Wednesdays. Thursday and Friday were for outdoor activities. Letitia Carpenter Wright, the daughter of Mary Roman Fisher Carpenter, established “Bee Culture” and Fridays were eventually dedicated to coursework in the study of bees, their hives, and honey making, which Letitia Carpenter Wright administered. Bee Culture was a unique feature of the Germantown branch.<sup>65</sup>



Group of National League Workers at Little Wakefield. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

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<sup>65</sup> Stieber, “The National League for Women’s Service,” 49.



Vegetable cultivation at demonstration center at Little Wakefield. Courtesy the Library Company of Philadelphia.

**CRITERION C: Situated high on a hill within the larger estate of James Logan, Little Wakefield was built in 1829 by Thomas Rodman Fisher at the time of his marriage to Letitia Harvey Ellicott. Unlike the architectural treatment of Wakefield, Little Wakefield is a modest “mansion house” with Neoclassical or Greek Revival stylistic details of the era. These aesthetic characteristics appear to have been carefully executed to achieve a restraint or simplicity that was indicative of the Quaker ideals of the time. While this building may be unique as an individual commission and/or construction project, it represents and is part of a larger stylistic movement among Quakers. Little Wakefield *reflects the Quaker built environment of the Philadelphia region in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural simplicity that was perhaps more refined being influenced by the Federal—or Georgian and Greek Revival motifs.***

Little Wakefield could simply be described as a two-story, three-bay rough cast, stone box with a low-slung hipped roof. At first glance, the present treatment of the house makes for a very average and menial appearance, standing low as a bland building with little to no discernable architectural style. However, upon careful inspection and an educated understanding of the history, the ideals of its original owner emerge with the stylistic motifs of the Federal, Georgian, and Grecian architectural treatment of the early nineteenth century. It is not a house easily discernable to the mainstream architectural historian, nor a learned historian in his or her own right. Rather it is a building that requires an understanding of the people of the place—an understanding of their culture and their ideals—their own vernacular, architectural language.

As stated, a meaningful inspection of the physical building reveals its interest. The primary elevation is but a mere three bays, executed in a manner that provides three gracious apertures per floor in a space that might easily include an additional window or two. Instead of cluttering the façade with additional openings, there are three generous apertures per floor. The central entrance features the original wooden doors, the paneling of which calls to mind the late Federal or early Greek Revival period. The narrow double doors are within a larger aperture that allows

for fixed wooden side lights. The enclosed entrance porch was once open and may be easily restored at a very reasonable expenditure. The windows that flank the front door, as well as the one that rises above the entrance, are quite gracious in width and size, especially in the department of wooden sash windows circa 1829. The employment of a low-pitched, hipped roof is another feature of Federal and/or Greek Revival houses, like the doorway and the original six-over-six wooden sash windows that illuminate the interior of the building. The overall scale of the houses is low-slung and squat—much like a heavy Grecian temple.

### **Early Classical Revival Style , Roman Classical Revival 1790-1830 and Greek Revival 1820-1860**

While the terms Roman Classicism and Greek Revival seem far from accurate in describing Little Wakefield, it is important to note that these motifs emulated the form of classical Roman and Greek architecture. The transition from Roman to Grecian took place about 1820, which increased as the Greek War of Independence took place between 1821 and 1830.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission describes six identifiable features of the Roman Classical style, three of which relate to Little Wake field:

4. Symmetrically aligned windows and door (5 bay front façade most common)
5. Side gabled or low pitched hipped roof
6. Large windows and doors<sup>66</sup>

The PHMC describes five features of the Greek Revival Style only one of which applies to Little Wakefield:

2. Front porch with columns.<sup>67</sup>

While only certain features of the house are discernable to an architectural style, there is also an overall simplicity to the building that goes beyond classicism.

### **Quaker Architecture: The Distinction of Simplicity**

Despite efforts to avoid architectural distinction, it is convincingly asserted that the commonly employed, simplistic led to the emergence of a distinctive architectural style. One might call it “Quaker Architecture”, others may simply describe the buildings as modest or plain—perhaps even old fashioned.

In *Built from Below: British Architecture and the Vernacular*, Peter Guillery claims that Quaker Architecture contains the following features:

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<sup>66</sup> “Early Classical Revival Style: Roman Classical Revival 1790-1830 and Greek Revival 1820-1860,” in *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, last modified August 26, 2015, <http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/early-classical-revival.html>

<sup>67</sup> “Early Classical Revival Style,” *Pennsylvania Architectural Field Guide*.

[1.] a taste for simplicity; [2.] a demand for functionalism; and [3.] a delight in quality of design, material, execution.<sup>68</sup>

Little Wakefield was built by a devout Friend who clearly believed in simplicity in architectural expression, yet he understood quality of design, material, and execution, as is seen when closely inspecting the subject house. While its basic function may or may not have been extraordinary, the house is evocative of the “taste for simplicity.” Components of its simplicity—its dignity include its rough cast treatment; its low-slung physical appearance, as well as its roofline; the Georgian symmetry employed in the façade; and the limitation of treatment to paneled and louvered shutters, as well as the elegant, but understated entrance porch.

In many ways Quakers shared much in common with Puritans, rejecting “outward ornamentation in favor of simplicity of life, rejecting the arts, vestments, and marriage rings.”<sup>69</sup> The lack of outward ornamentation is an essential Quaker ideal that dates to the founding of the Society of Friends. The first meeting houses as buildings were constructed across the Atlantic in England during the seventeenth century, few of which, if any, survive. America’s oldest is the Maryland Yearly Meeting House in Third Haven, Maryland. It dates to 1682.<sup>70</sup>

Much like Little Wakefield, the Great Meeting House at Philadelphia, High (Market) and Second Streets was a masonry box, featuring a hipped roof. The simplicity of the Quaker Meeting House no doubt had an influence on other buildings:

One of the earliest examples of the Bristol (England) type of meeting house was the Great Meeting House in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania). This square building (50 feet by 50 feet) was erected in 1695 on the southwestern corner of High and Second Streets on land William Penn had set aside for George Fox in 1682.<sup>71</sup>

The Pine Street Meeting House was another early house of worship that employed the Bristol Plan, which allowed for a low-slung masonry building with a hipped roof featuring no dormers—pierced only by chimney stacks. Below is a striking comparison between the Pine Street Meeting House and Little Wakefield.<sup>72</sup>

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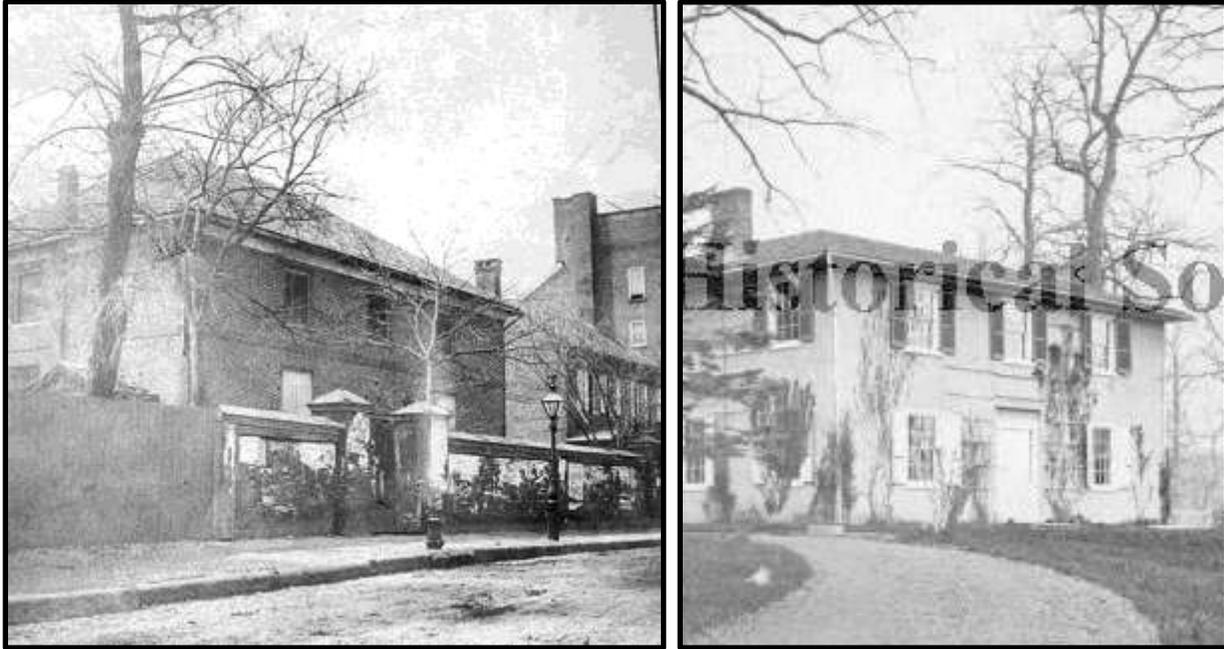
<sup>68</sup> Peter Guillery, ed., *Built from Below: British Architecture and the Vernacular* (London: Routledge, 2011).

<sup>69</sup> Seth Beeson Hinshaw, “The Evolution of Quaker Meeting Houses in America 1670-2000” (masters’ thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2001), 11.

<sup>70</sup> Hinshaw, “The Evolution of Quaker Meeting Houses,” 22.

<sup>71</sup> Hinshaw, “The Evolution of Quaker Meeting Houses,” 25.

<sup>72</sup> Hinshaw, “The Evolution of Quaker Meeting Houses,” 123.



Left: Figure 17. Pine Street Meeting House, Philadelphia. Courtesy Library Company of Philadelphia. Right: Little Wakefield. Ca. 1880s. Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.

The Bristol Plan was repeated again for the erection of the Sadsbury Meeting House in Lancaster County. This building too had a distinctive, but low-pitch hipped roof. A porch too was later added to the building, but it did not offer any stylistic references for the subject style of discussion.<sup>73</sup>

We know that the Fishers were long influenced by historic precedent and tradition in architectural expression and commitment. The great house, Stenton, is the architectural forbearer of Little Wakefield in that its owner, Rodman Fisher, was a descendant of the Logan family, as previously mentioned in this work. While Stenton is far larger, taller, and all around more impressive and stylistically impressive, Little Wakefield's form and massing has a similar to its ancestor, as well as the Pine Street Meeting House—or the Bristol Plan in general. Between Stenton and Little Wakefield stood Wakefield, which was the largest and most impressive of the Fisher home places. While this house burned, many images survive showing it as being at large mansion, resembling perhaps a Quaker Meeting House of a similar form and scale. The Arch

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<sup>73</sup> Hinshaw, "The Evolution of Quaker Meeting Houses," 124-125.

Street Meeting House has a central gable that is surrounded by an alternate roof type, all of which is simple and refined in appearance.<sup>74</sup>



Left: The eastern portion of the “Architect’s sketch of the Arch Street Meeting House, Philadelphia (Pennsylvania). This large meeting house was erected in 1804 to house Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Tvaryanas, p. 124.” The form of the Arch Street Meeting House is very similar to Little Wakefield. Right: Little Wakefield. Courtesy of the Germantown Historical Society.

While the Bristol Plan is certainly the most relative type that could be associated with the subject meeting houses, as well as Little Wakefield, this is in no way to indicate or suggest that the subject house was only influenced by meeting house designs. With the popular architectural

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<sup>74</sup> Hinshaw, “The Evolution of Quaker Meeting Houses,” 124-125.

styles of the day and the Quaker ideals surrounding simplicity in design, Little Wakefield stands as a building illustrative of an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style.<sup>75</sup>

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