



FOUNDING FEMALES Female Qualifying Ancestor Index

Female Ancestor Number: 052

Name: Shoemaker, Dorothy Penrose

Dates:

Born c. 1704, Montgomery Co., Pennsylvania

Died 11 Aug 1764, Shoemakertown, Cheltenham Twp., PA

Colonial Society: PA

Date added to ROA: February 2023

Service: Woman of Distinction: Business Owner "Dorothy's Mill", 1746

Authority: Hill, M.D., M.A., D. Litt., George J., Quakers and Puritans: The Shoemaker, Warren and Allied Families, Vol. One (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, Inc., 2015), pp. 10-11, 20.

Biography:

Dorothy's maternal Leech grandparents arrived in Philadelphia from Gloucestershire, England in 1682, the same year William Penn established the city. Her mother was born just 3 years later in 1685.

Grandfather Toby Leech was an Anglican (Church of England) and considered a "gentleman" due to his great wealth and land ownership. He was also a member of the Pennsylvania Colonial Assembly. Dorothy was the daughter of Hester Leech and Bartholomew Penrose.

Dorothy Penrose married Quaker Isaac Shoemaker about 1722. Isaac inherited a three-story stone house at Shoemakertown (present-day Elkins Park) that his great-grandfather, Richard Wall, had begun in 1686. Isaac and Dorothy took occupancy in 1725, and Dorothy remained there until her death in 1764. Following her husband's death in 1741, Dorothy went into business with her sister's husband, Richard Mather and another man, John Tyson (who would also marry into the family.) It was on the Shoemaker property (opposite her garden) that "Dorothy's Mill" was built in 1746, which was a corn-grist watermill. Her son John bought an interest in the mill from John Tyson in 1752.

The Shoemakers were well connected in the Society of Friends and throughout the region. Isaac's cousin Benjamin Shoemaker served as mayor of Philadelphia three times and held the office of treasure until his death in 1767. Ben's son Samuel also served as mayor, but vacated the city with the British Army during the Revolution, as he was a Loyalist. He did not return to America until 1786.

In Dorothy's will, she bequeathed her entire estate to her beloved children; John, Isaac, Thomas, Joseph, Esther, and Sarah. She also mentions two of her daughters-in-law and several grandchildren by name. Her



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grandson Isaac (son of Isaac) carried on the milling business for nearly half a century. The Shoemaker home was demolished in 1927.