

JOSEPH JOHN WETHERALD

APRIL 23, 1894 to AUGUST 4, 1980

(memorial minute approved 4/23/1981)

Life was good to our friend Joseph John Wetherald primarily because he worked at being a Christian. He loved his God and his family, and he loved the earth on which he walked with God. All of God's creations were sacred to him, Joseph spent his life quietly and humbly serving his God and his life was a rich, though not always easy, journey.

Born and raised in rural southern Maryland in a modest Quaker family, Joseph knew and loved farming well. When he and Sally moved to the city with their growing family he still stayed close to the land. Joseph worked for 34 years for the Department of Agriculture at the Beltsville (Md.) Experimental Station. His large home garden was a delight to behold even long after his retirement from government employment. The crops from it supplied a bountiful table and were generously shared with neighbors and friends. Who can ever forget the delicious strawberries and tomatoes and the corn pudding brought by the Wetherald family to Monthly Meeting Day pot luck lunches?

The Wetherald family consisting of Joseph and Sally and their six active children Elizabeth, Florence, Ruth, Roger, William, and Thomas, were an integral part of the Irving Street Friends Meeting in Washington, D.C. for many years. When that Meeting was laid down they were instrumental in starting a Friends worship group at the University of Md. which evolved into College Park Monthly Meeting and later Adelphi Friends Meeting. Joseph was fond of the pastoral form of Meeting but he acceded to the will of the group for an unprogramed Meeting* His example of always living by Christian principles, his frequent humbly and sometimes haltingly presented messages during meeting for worship, and his special love of children made him someone very special to all of us at Adelphi Meeting. The children considered him a very special person; another grandfather, a maker of handkerchief mice for playing with in meeting, or a person they could tease and joke with anytime. For the adults he set an example of patience and love, the importance of a sense of humor, and the ability to mediate differences and bring things into focus with a few quiet words.

Joseph was familiar with and loved the Bible. He believed, without question, in the divinity of Christ and the power of prayer. On several occasions during meeting for worship he described an experience he had as a young man. He was riding on top of a wagon load when an inner voice warned him to duck down. He obeyed and the action saved his life. This was to Joseph a mystical experience, one of many he could recount, which were to him living proof of the power of God's love and care.

After his beloved Sally died, life lost much of its meaning for Joseph, though he continued to bask in the love of his family and Meeting for several years until his death.

For those of us who were fortunate enough to know him during his active years, Joseph will continue to serve as an inspiration and example of living a good life under God's guiding hand. And now we dedicate to him the thoughts he expressed when a member of Adelphi Meeting withdrew from membership-

I (we) miss him
I (we) need him
I (we) love him