

The Joseph Atkinson & Rachel Child 1788 Marriage Certificate

Joseph Atkinson, son of Joseph and Sarah (Silver) Atkinson, and Rachel Child, daughter of Isaac and Rachel (Bradshaw) Child, were married on the 22nd of 5th month (July, since 1st month was March), 1788, at Plumstead Meeting House in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. This document is the marriage certificate produced by Plumstead Meeting and provided to Joseph and Rachel. The marriage was recorded in the Buckingham Monthly Meeting Book of Records (page 340) by Aaron Paxson, as noted on the back of the certificate, and it may have been this Aaron Paxson who penned this certificate. It appears to have been written in one hand, the same hand that also wrote the labelling on the back. The front contains a list of witnesses to the marriage—these are not signatures since they are all written in the same style, so these names have been copied from some other record. Joseph and Rachel used the back of this certificate to record the births and deaths of their children, from 1789 to 1823. I surmise that it was Joseph himself who recorded these events, since if Rachel had been in the habit of doing so she would likely have recorded the death of her husband too, in February of 1828.

Of the witnesses to the marriage, the ones beneath the names of Joseph and Rachel, on the right, appear to have been the immediate family. Ruth Child, Jonathan Child, Isaac Child and Israel Child were all siblings (and there were no others) of Rachel. If the Browns too were immediate family then it seems most likely that Rachel Brown was Rachel (Bradshaw) Child, re-married to John Brown; but we have no record of this marriage. There was indeed a John Brown in Plumstead whose wife died in 1777. And Isaac Child died in 1769, at the age of 35. So, if Rachel (Bradshaw) Child married John Brown then it was between 1777 and 1788. Mathias Brown was John Brown's son, age 26 in 1788, and perhaps Margaret was his wife (she does not appear to have been a daughter of John Brown). No members of Joseph's family made the 25 mile trip (as the crow flies) to Plumstead from Bristol. Of the other witnesses, "Andrew Ellicott" is very likely the person who with his brothers Joseph and John in 1772 established what became known as Ellicotts' Mills on the Patapsco River west of Baltimore, Maryland. Andrew's wife Esther and their children lived in Plumstead in 1788. Esther and 18-year-old daughter Tacy are listed among the witnesses. Joseph and Rachel moved to Ellicotts' Mills about three years after their marriage.

This marriage certificate had been locked away for years in a wall vault, or safe, in an old office building or bank building, presumably in Baltimore. We don't know to whom the vault belonged. An advertisement was placed in the paper when the building which contained the vault was being torn down, describing the vault's contents and calling for Atkinsons to submit claims. It was the claim of my grandfather's brother, Joseph Matthew Atkinson, born in 1876, which was considered the most legitimate; and so he acquired the contents, consisting of this marriage certificate, a picture of Amos Atkinson in a full beard in a 2" by 2" velvet case (this picture has since been lost), a sampler made by Rachael Atkinson, age 10, and a sampler by Marietta Hough (daughter of Sarah Atkinson Hough). All of this was told to me by Dorothy Atkinson, daughter-in-law of Joseph Matthew Atkinson, who restored the marriage certificate and gave it to her grandson, John Edward Atkinson.

On the next four pages are photocopies of the front and back of the marriage certificate, along with transcripts of the same. The actual size of the certificate is 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ " by 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ ", and it has been sandwiched between two sheets of plastic, and sealed around the edges, to preserve it. The certificate itself is actually quite brownish now, mostly of the same hue, and I have brightened and enhanced the contrast of the image to make it as readable as possible.

Conrad Terrill
August 2007

Wheras

Joseph Atkinson Son of Joseph Atkinson late of the Township of Bristol, County of Bucks
(now State) and Province of Pennsylvania Deceas'd; and Rachel Child Daughter of Isaac Child late of the Township of Abington,
(now Montgomery) County of Philadelphia and State Aforesaid likewise Deceas'd; Having Declared their Intentions of Marriage with Each
Other before several Monthly Meetings of the People called Quakers held at Buckingham, According to the good Order used
amongst Them; And no Obstructions appearing, Their said Proposals of Marriage were Allowed of by the said Meeting.

Now These are to Certify all Whom it may Concern, That for the full Accomplishing Their said Intentions this Twenty
second Day of the fifth Month in the Year of our Lord one Thousand seven Hundred and eighty Eight, They the said
Joseph Atkinson and Rachel Child Appeared in a Public Meeting of the said People met together at their Usual Meet-
-ing House in Plumstead in the County of Bucks Aforesaid; And the ^{said} Joseph Atkinson taking the said Rachel Child by
the Hand, Did in a solemn Manner Openly Declare that He took her the said Rachel Child to be His Wife, Promising
Through Divine Assistance to be unto Her a loving and Faithful Husband until Death should seperate Them:
(or Words to that Purpose) And Then and There in the Same Assembly, the said Rachel Child Did in like Manner
Declare, that She took the said Joseph Atkinson to be Her Husband, Promising Through Divine Assistance to be
unto Him a loving and a Faithful Wife until Death should seperate Them: (or Words to that Effect.) **And-**

Moreover They the said Joseph Atkinson and Rachel Child, She According to the Custom of Marriage Assuming
the Name of Her Husband, as a Further Confirmation Thereof, Did Then and there Set Their Hands.

And We whose Names are hereunder also Subscribed, being Present at the Solemnization of
the said Marriage and Superscription, have as Witnesses Thereunto set our Hands the Day and Year above Written.

Lord

Joseph Pickering

Tacy Ellicott

Hannah Evans

Esther Ellicott

Joseph Atkinson

John Shaw

Jonathan Shaw

Margaret Shepherd

Amos Brown

Rachel Atkinson

Joseph Wright

Robert Kirkbride

Martha Brown

Martha Fenton

Rachel Brown

Johnathan Fell

Hannah Kirkbride

Cornelias Shepherd

Grace Fell

John Brown

Joseph Rich Jr.

Daniel Stradling

Mary Child

James Evans

Ruth Child

Johnathan Shaw Junr

John Townsend

Hannah Child

Rebecca Shaw

Jonathan Child

Joseph Shaw

Sarah Shaw

Sarah Shaw

Isaac Child

Thomas Shaw

Mary Goode

Sarah Shaw

Mathias Brown

Joseph White

Rachel Michener

Sarah Michener

Margaret Brown

Andrew Ellicott

William Bradshaw

Martha Michener

Israel Child

Rebecca Wilson

Jonathan Shepherd

Margaret Good

Jonathan Brown

Mary Plumley

Deborah Michener

On the 12th day of the 2^d mo. 1789 was born Sarah Atkinson, daughter of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel, his wife. ~~~~~

On the 25th day of the 9th Month 1790 was born Rachel Atkinson, daughter of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel his wife. ~~~~~

On the 3^d day of the 5th Month 1793 was born Ruth Atkinson, daughter of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel his wife. ~~~~~

On the 1st day of the 3^d Month 1795 was born Isaac Child Atkinson son of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel, his wife. ~~~~~

On the 6th day of the third Month 1797 was born Mary Atkinson, daughter of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel, his wife ~~~~~

On the 6th day of the 10th Month 1798 was born Joseph Atkinson son of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel his wife ~~~~~

On the 17th day of the 8th Month 1800 was born Died Mary Atkinson, daughter of Joseph and Rachel Atkinson ~~~~~

On the 11th of the first Month 1801 was born Israel Atkinson son of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel his wife ~~~~~

On the 27th day of the 4th Month 1806 was born Amos G. Atkinson, son of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel his wife ~~~~~

On the 27th of 9th mo 1813, Departed this life Joseph Atkinson son of Joseph Atkinson and Rachel his wife, Aged near 15 years ~~~~~

On the 12th day of the 8th mo 1823 Departed this life Sarah A Hough, Daughter of Joseph and Rachel Atkinson. Aged 34 years & 6 months

Marriage Certificate

Joseph Atkinson & Rachel Child

Recorded in Buckingham Monthly Meeting
Book of Records, Page 340

by Aaron Paxson

On the 12th day of the 2^d month 1789 was born
Sarah Minson, daughter of Joseph Minson
and Rachel, his wife.

On the 15th day of the 9th month 1790 was
born Rachel Minson, daughter of Joseph
Minson and Rachel his wife.

On the 17th day of the 5th month 1793 was born
Ruth Minson, daughter of Joseph Minson,
and Rachel his wife.

On the 1st day of the 3^d month 1795 was
born Isaac Minson, son of Joseph
Minson and Rachel his wife.

On the 6th day of the third month 1797 was
born Mary Minson, daughter of Joseph
Minson and Rachel his wife.

On the 6th day of the 10th month 1798 was
born Joseph Minson, son of Joseph Minson,
and Rachel his wife.

On the 1st day of the 8th month 1800 was
born Edw. Lucy Minson, daughter of Joseph
and Rachel Minson.

On the 11th of the first month 1801 was born
Israel Minson, son of Joseph Minson,
and Rachel his wife.

On the 27th day of the 4th month 1806 was
born James G. Minson, son of Joseph Minson
and Rachel his wife.

On the 27th of 7th mo 1812, departed this life
Joseph Minson, son of Joseph Minson and
Rachel his wife. Aged near 16 years.

On the 12th day of the 8th mo 1813, departed this
life Sarah, daughter of Joseph and
Rachel Minson. Aged 24 years & 6 months.

Marriage Certificate

Joseph Minson & Rachel Child

Recorded in: Sachin's name, although being
Book of Records, Page 300

by Sarah Purson