

MEMOIR OF PHILIP AND RACHEL PRICE

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Memoir of Philip and Rachel Price by Eli Kirk Price

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ELI KIRK PRICE

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AND RACHEL PRICE**

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OF

PHILIP AND RACHEL PRICE.

By Eli K. Price

"Honour thy Father and thy Mother."

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED FOR ELI K. PRICE AND PHILIP M. PRICE.
1852.

PHILIP AND RACHEL PRICE.

BELOVED and venerated parents, your memory is cherished by your children with a devoted affection: Shall they pay no outward tribute of respect, nor leave of you any memorial for the future? To you, under Providence, we owe it, that we breathe the breath of life—that we open our eyes to the glorious light—behold the beauties of all created things, and rejoice in a happy existence. To you we owe yet more; that we were trained to lives of usefulness, guided in the paths of virtue, and from your lips received the inspired words to turn the heart in love to God. With us and our children the recollection of beloved features will pass away; and shall the memory also of your worth, affections, and devoted service with us perish for ever! The thought of it brings the reproach of a delinquency in filial duty to you, and also of the neglect of the sacred obligation we owe to our posterity, to perpetuate your precepts and example, for their observance and imitation. To com-

memorate these I would invoke to the service more than the skill of the Egyptian art of conservation, that your character and memory might be embalmed in the hearts of our descendants in all the purity and beauty in which you lived, and yet live in the recollections of your children: And as your long lives were a bright exemplification of the power of Gospel truth, so may your memory live in its light and life, enshrined in living temples of love and devotion, for ages to come.

To commemorate by written memorial all those of good name who have lived and died would multiply books beyond the capacity of readers to peruse more than a very limited selection. The beneficence of the Creator produces in his creation the good and the beautiful in boundless profusion. The sequestered flowers that bloom unseen by human eye, and "waste their sweetness on the desert air," do not uselessly grow,—but produce a seed that in time may germinate in light, and lend a cure to the healing art. The humbly good that pass through life and challenge no admiration of men may unobtrusively instil into many hearts sentiments to be perpetuated for the moral and religious preservation of our race: And if their virtues do but bloom in the sight of the Creator's Eye, and shed a fragrance that is but an incense to Him, they will not have lived in vain.

To claim a worldly distinction for those whose endeavour it ever was—"to do justly, and to love mercy, and

walk humbly with their God"—would be to act in conflict with the spirit that actuated their lives. Acting solely in obedience to their apprehension of duty to man and his Creator, such a pretension would be rebuked by the recollection of that self-watchfulness that ever guarded them against the weakness of human vanity, and accounted all that was good and excellent as emanating from a Divine Source; the merit of which man cannot rightfully claim as his own. Yet all of their history that may be useful to others, in precept or example, it is a duty to rescue from forgetfulness and loss; and to perpetuate it, is in perfect consonance with their sentiments and character. If their lives were rightfully devoted, the record of the testimony of that devotion cannot fail to be useful; and faithfully to portray, is unavoidably to commend,—for the facts speak praise: But praise cannot reach "the dull cold ear of death,"—and their offspring cannot share it but by a like deserving.

The plain and simple memoirs of Philip and Rachel Price will readily and harmoniously blend in the narrative. United early in life, they lived together in cordial affection and harmony of views for more than half a century. Born and educated in the Society of Friends, and both at an early age brought under that Divine influence which alone can constitute them truly its members, they devoted their protracted lives faithfully to the duties which its discipline, its testimonies, and its faith enjoin.

The one successively an overseer and elder and the other a minister of the Gospel, they were never called to move under diverse views, and were only separated by the calls of duty leading either to the visitation of distant places, when the sacrifice was made from the united sense of a religious obligation. These separations were felt to be privations in proportion to the intensity of their affection, but in a like degree was the sacrifice a source of consolatory reflection, when their minds were brought to the test of the inquiry whether they had fulfilled the Divine injunctions laid upon them. In the performance of the services required they were often separated in person, but in harmony of feeling, devotion to duty, love for each other and for their Maker, there was ever a unity in one mind and one spirit.

PHILIP PRICE was born the 8th day of the First month, 1764, and was the fifth in the line of lineal descent from Philip Price, who came into Pennsylvania with the Welsh settlers, who in 1682 took up Merion, Haverford, and Radnor townships, and increasing afterwards settled the townships of New-town, Goshen, and Uwchlan (1 Proud's His. 221). The name was continued to him through but a single male representative in each generation from the first settler. His father, Philip Price, of Darby, died 9 month 17th, 1811. His mother, Hannah Bonsall, of Kingessing, was of English descent, and of a family of the first settlers in that place. They were both members of

the Society of Friends in good esteem, the latter an elder, lived together in close harmony half a century, and extended to their children the guarded education recommended by the discipline of their religious society.

RACHEL PRICE, born the 18th day of 4th month, 1763, was a daughter of William Kirk, of East Nantmeal, Chester county, the tenth child of Alphonsus Kirk, who came from the North of Ireland, and settled in Centre, New Castle county, in 1689 (1 Proud, 218), and of Sibylla Davis, who was of a family of early Welsh settlers. They were also members and held in esteem in the Religious Society of Friends, and their children received from them the religious care customary in that society.

The parents of neither were wealthy, and as a grazier in Kingsessing, Philip Price in the same season suffered the loss of his stock of fat cattle by the British, and afterwards of his poor by the American army, during the revolutionary war.

William Kirk, removing from his father's residence near Wilmington, prior to the middle of last century, was a pioneer in a new settlement, and encountered the usual hardships and perils of those who first penetrate the wilderness, to fell the forest and reclaim the earth for cultivation. At an early period of this settlement, when the clearing was small and the crops in proportion, a severe winter came on, with a heavy snow three or four feet deep, and drifting, made the roads next thing to im-

passable. It found them destitute of provision. The father rode all day to procure a supply, but returned at night exhausted and sick, without any success. The feelings of the wife and mother were roused to make another effort to avert starvation. She set off next morning and beating her way through the snows on horseback, reached George Ashbridge's mill, now Milltown, near Westtown School, a distance of more than fourteen miles. She offered her web of homespun and next year's crop in pledge for meal; frankly confessing that they were without food and without money. The miller—honoured be his name, as yet it is in Chester county and the city of Philadelphia in the third and fourth generations—took only her word, and furnished her the meal, and offered to supply the family until the next harvest. The husband in her absence had appeased the sharpest cravings of their children's hunger by the rinsings of the kneading bowl, and at night *they* found respite in sleep. But the sleepless husband watched in deepest anxiety and sympathy for her return all the night long, during which the heroic wife had battled with the snows. She reached their cabin in the morning, with the precious store for relief, and the husband and wife, overcome with joy and gratitude, fell into each other's arms and wept,—much to the astonishment of her young brother, a lad of ten or twelve years of age, at such a manifestation of rejoicing,—who sensibly hastened to