

Warner, Yardley ^[1]

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2 Nov. 1815–4 Jan. 1885

Yardley Warner, educator, lawyer, minister, and freedman's friend, was born at Warner homestead, Penn's Manor Farm, in Bucks County, Pa., the son of William and Letitia Field Warner, both of whom descended from generations of Quakers ^[2]. He attended Westtown School ^[3] in Pennsylvania, studied law under John Cadwallader in Philadelphia, and was admitted to the bar in 1838 at age twenty-three. Warner did not practice long, for in the same year he returned to Westtown as a teacher. He stayed until 1841, when he opened a private boarding school for Quaker girls at East Whiteland, Chester County, Pa. In 1842 he married Hannah Allen, who died on 25 Oct. 1872.

From 1858 to 1861 Yardley and Hannah Warner were joint superintendents of the Ohio Yearly Meeting Boarding School ^[4] at Mount Pleasant, Ohio. After resigning this position they returned to Pennsylvania, but little is known of them until 1863, when they were again at Westtown.

Following the Emancipation Proclamation ^[5] in 1863 Friends (Quakers) in New England, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and elsewhere saw the urgent need for assisting the newly-emancipated enslaved people. The Friends Freedman's Association, formed in Philadelphia, raised money to establish schools for the formerly enslaved people but soon realized that there was a greater demand for well-trained black teachers. The association established normal schools in Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and other Southern states. Warner spent several years traveling to these places, helping to open new schools, visiting those already in existence, distributing literature, and giving aid as required.

As a part of this work, he left Philadelphia in 1865 and went to Greensboro ^[6], where he bought 35.5 acres of land in the southeast quadrant of the city and sold it to free blacks in small parcels at a low cost. He also built a schoolhouse, organized the Warner Day School for black children, and taught black adults crafts and agriculture. Warner, who maintained his home in this black community, was severely criticized, even ostracized, by whites. The area became known as Warnersville, and, although the old homes were replaced by a redevelopment housing project, its residents still referred to it by this name in the late twentieth century. In 1972 grateful descendants of these early residents erected a monument to Warner's memory.

When this phase of his work in the South was completed, he spent several years as the superintendent of Pales Monthly Meeting School in Radnorshire, Wales. While there he married Anne Elizabeth Horne, matron of the Hospital for Children in London, and they became the parents of Stafford Allen, Joseph Yardley, and Charles Horne. The family returned to America in 1881 and lived in Jonesboro, Tenn., where Warner conducted the Freedman's Normal School, also known as the Warner Institute. In 1883 they went to Burlington, N.J., for a brief time before being received into the membership of Springfield Monthly Meeting of Friends, near High Point ^[7], N.C., in 1884. They resided at Bush Hill, now Archdale, where Warner taught in the Little Davie, a private school for black children.

Warner died of typhoid fever at age seventy and was buried in the Springfield Monthly Meeting Cemetery. After his death Anne Warner and her three young sons returned to England.

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[Educators](#) ^[16]

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[Quakers](#) ^[18]

[Religious Leaders and Clergy](#) ^[19]

Authors:

[Mathis, Treva W.](#) ^[20]

Origin - location:

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[High Point](#) ^[22]

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press.](#) ^[23]

1 January 1996 | Mathis, Treva W.

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