



Haverford Township Historical Society



ROBERT NICHOLAS LEE (1825-1913) AND FAMILY

Compiled by Richard D. Kerr

[The following is excerpted from Historic Homes and Institutions and Genealogical and Personal Memoirs of Chester and Delaware Counties, Pennsylvania, by Gilbert Cope and Henry Graham Ashmead, published by The Lewis Company, New York and Chicago in 1904.]

ROBERT N. LEE, a venerable and highly respected citizen of Bryn Mawr, Delaware county, Pennsylvania, where he has contributed much towards the material advancement of the neighborhood in which he has resided for nearly forty years, is a native of Zanesville, Ohio, where he was born January 27, 1825, a son of William H. and. Susan (Umstead) Lee. [He died March 1, 1913.]

WILLIAM N. LEE was a native of Baltimore county, Maryland, where he was born in 1786, and was there educated and reared to manhood. During the war of 1812, he was loyal to his country's cause and served as a private soldier during the attack on Baltimore by the English. Soon after the cessation of hostilities, with others, he emigrated westward into Ohio, making the journey with a wagon and team of horses. After a tedious journey fraught with perils and hardships, he finally settled and took up lands by purchase, where the city of Zanesville now stands. He afterwards sold part of his lands to his brother, who in turn laid out the tract into building lots which have become an important part of the city of Zanesville, opposite the new concrete Y bridge. Mr. Lee was a man of strict integrity, and reliability, and was for some time employed by the Bank of Zanesville as messenger to carry remittances to and from Cincinnati, the bank officials having placed so much confidence in his honesty that they would not require from him a bond of security as was usual in such cases. His son, Robert N. Lee, recalls an incident on one of the trips. His father was carrying the sum of fifty thousand dollars in silver in his wagon, when one of the wheels broke down. The son, Robert, was left entirely alone as guardian over the treasure, while the father carried the wheel to the nearest shop to have it repaired. Mr. Lee was united in marriage to Miss Susan Umstead, and to them were born the following children:

1. Margaretta Lee, who became the wife of George Brenholtz;
2. Elizabeth Lee, who married Wesley Ebert;
3. Ellen Lee, who married Jacob Kircher;
4. Josephine Lee, who became the wife of Charles Brenholtz;
5. Harriet Lee, whose first husband was a Mr. Moore, and her second husband was John Ford;
6. Francis Lee, unmarried;
7. Emma Lee;
8. William, who married and resided at Zanesville, Ohio;
9. Robert N. Lee.

ROBERT N. LEE, youngest child of William H. and Susan (Umstead) Lee, was reared to manhood and acquired his education in the public schools of Zanesville, Ohio, and in the fall of 1851 removed to Pennsylvania, settling in Philadelphia, where in partnership with John Bancroft he established a wholesale notion business. Their enterprise, good management and systematic methods commended them to the public confidence and support, and they met with a large degree of success, in their

undertaking which they continued for a number of years. In 1863 Mr. Lee purchased a tract of land in Haverford township. A part of this land he afterwards sold for building purposes, thereby contributing in large degree to the growth and development of the neighborhood. He retired from active business pursuits in 1868. While a resident of Zanesville, Mr. Lee was a member of good standing in the order of Odd Fellows, but shortly after his removal to Pennsylvania he joined the Masonic order, affiliated with Cassia Lodge, No. 262, at Ardmore. Politically he is a staunch supporter of the principles of the Democratic party, was for twenty-five years a member of the Haverford Township school board and served as president of the board for a number of years, an active member of the Lower Merion Baptist church, in which he has served as deacon for a number of years; he is also a member of the board of trustees, and has served as its president for some time.

About 1845, Mr. Lee married Miss Sarah Evaline Arter, daughter of William Henry and Sarah Arter. Their children are:

1. Henry A. Lee, who married Eugenia Harnish;
2. Ellen Clara Lee, now the wife of Charles Hill Anderson, a son of the Rev. George W. and Maria Frances (Hill) Anderson; they had one child, Charles Lee Anderson;
3. Eva Randolph, now the wife of Fletcher Randolph, a son of the Rev. Warren and Malvina (Dunn) Randolph; their children are: Robert Lee Randolph, Frederick Warrren Randolph, and Norman Randolph;
4. Susan J. Lee, unmarried;
5. Ida Alice Lee, who died in 1870;
6. Emma Lee, the wife of William H. Turton of Brooklyn, New York; she died in 1886;
7. Charles Robert Lee, who married Jeanetta Drysdale of Philadelphia, daughter of Dr. Thomas and Mary C. (Arter) Drysdale; they have one child, Jeanetta D. Lee; and
8. William F. Lee, who married Carrie M. Butler of Bryn Mawr, a daughter of J. E. Butler; they have one daughter, Frances B. Lee.

The mother of this family, Sarah Evaline (Arter) Lee, died August 24, 1870. She was a most estimable lady of the old school type, was possessed of many excellencies of character, and was respected and esteemed by aft who knew her.

[This death notice appeared in a Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania newspaper, name and date unknown.]

FUNERAL OF ROBERT N LEE

Venerable Citizen of Bryn Mawr Laid to Rest In Baptist Burial Grounds - Came here in 1863 and was Active In Public Life

The funeral of Mr. **ROBERT NICHOLAS LEE** took place yesterday afternoon from his residence, Lancaster Avenue, Bryn Mawr. Mr. Lee who was in his eighty-eighth year was one of the oldest and most respected residents of this vicinity. Despite his age he was active and made his trip to the city on business every day up until two weeks before his death. He was a member and deacon of the Lower Merion Baptist Church and was buried in the church cemetery, Gulf and Roberts Road in a grave which he personally superintended the preparation of about four years ago. . . . Mr. Lee was a most venerable and highly respected resident of Bryn Mawr and in his death the community has lost a citizen, who during his 47 years of residence here contributed much towards the material advancement of the neighborhood.

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