



# Haverford Township Historical Society



## ROBERT C. TORRENS (1851-19xx)

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 CUNNINGHAH TORRENS**, a prominent representative of the business interests of Chester county, Pennsylvania, was born near Belfast, Ireland, September 26, 1851, a son of James and Margaret (Mackey) Torrens, who were the parents of the following named children: William, now a resident of New York city; Sidney, the wife of Robert McConoghy, of New York city; Margaret, whose death occurred in Ireland, and Robert Cunningham Torrens. Robert Cunningham, great-uncle of Robert C. Torrens, was an active participant in the Revolutionary war, serving in the capacity of an officer under General Washington. After the termination of the war he returned to Ireland, taking his sword with him, and it is now in the possession of Mr. William Torrens, of New York city, a brother of Robert C. Torrens.

Robert C. Torrens was a student in the McGill College, Londonderry, Ireland, after which he entered Queen's College, Belfast, Ireland, from which institution he was graduated in 1867. Two years later he came to America, located in New York city, and engaged in the grocery business. He disposed of this business two years later on account of ill health, and then removed to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he pursued the same line of trade for a short period of time. He then took up his residence in Fernwood, Delaware county, acted in the capacity of manager for Barton Brothers, lumber and coal merchants, but after a short space of time he removed to Wilmington, Delaware, and rented the DuPont farm for seventeen years. After the expiration of this period of time he located in Swarthmore, and established a lumber and coal business which he conducted for two years. In April, 1897, he finally settled in Haverford township, and purchased a farm which consists of one hundred and thirty-eight acres of finely cultivated land, and is now known as the "Brae Side Stock Farm." This is one of the most beautiful and productive farms in the township, and since becoming the owner of it Mr. Torrens has devoted his entire time and attention to the breeding of live stock, in which occupation he has met with an unusual degree of success. In his political affiliations he is a firm believer in the principles of the Republican party, having voted that ticket ever since his majority. He is an active member of the Knights of Pythias.

September 26. 1871 Mr. Torrens married Miss Ellen Porter, a native of Chester county, and a daughter of John Porter, who came to this country from Ireland in 1868. Seven children have been born to Mr. and Mrs. Torrens, three of whom are living at the present time, namely:

1. Margaret S. Torrens,
2. Jane Torrens,
3. Sidney Torrens.

The names of their deceased children are:

1. Catherine Torrens, died at the age of eight months;

2. Jane Torrens, died at the age of nine years;
3. William Torrens, died when five years old;
4. Helen Torrens, who died at the age of three years.

Their deaths occurred in the same week from that dread disease, diphtheria.

Mr. Torrens and his family are active and earnest members of the Presbyterian church of Willistown, Chester county, Pennsylvania.

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