

As a born & raised Delawarean, I am constantly amazed how we eventually seem to meet everyone or have some close degree of separation. I often get asked, "Oh, are you related to the Worrall's in Kennett Square?" I have to correct them, "-ALL? No, we are -ELL". First of all, I am not a "Worrell". My family name is Houston, but few people know that & I like to keep it that way because it always goes straight to Sam Houston, pronounced the wrong way. But that is another story.

You can only imagine my surprise when one day in October before the big opening of our little local Tweed's Tavern Museum, I was asked, "Are you related to Thomas Worrell?" I was having a conversation with Darlene about her exhibit on the Underground Railroad in Hockessin, DE. I didn't even realize it was active here. As usual, I said, "-ell?" and she said "Yes, -ELL!" She had my total attention now. This could get interesting.



*Miriam C. Lamborn*

Genealogy is one of my hobbies during the winter months. Darlene went on to tell me all about how Thomas Worrell had married Miriam Lamborn (as in the Lamborn Library) in 1833 & moved to Hockessin in 1840. They bought a woolen mill on the creek near the end of Graves Road at Creek Road. One building from the mill is still on the property of Camp Wright (where I went as a child). Across Creek Road on an imposing vertical climb, the Worrell Mansion stands today. I found a letter addressed to Thomas Worrell on E-bay showing his address as "Loveville, Delaware".

Now this was a little spooky for us because we bought a house in Mendenhall Village in 1983 that backed up to the field that led down to this very spot on the creek. So close & we never

knew the connection.

After working the woolen mill for 30 years, the Worrells sold their mill to an Englishman & moved into Wilmington close to Quaker Hill. The Worrells were Quakers that held strong views abolishing slavery & promoting education for all races of people. Their daughter Emma was a teacher & principal at Wilmington Friends School for many years. Emma was also a leader in the Delaware women's suffrage movement.



*Worrell's Woolen Mill & Mansion in 1895*

### **Quaker Beliefs:** **("SPICES")**

**Simplicity**

**Peace**

**Integrity**

**Community**

**Equality**

**Stewardship**

Thomas Worrell was an ardent co-worker of William Lloyd Garrison & Thomas Garrett of Wilmington in providing a safe house for slaves escaping from the south along the Underground Railroad. Even though the woolen mill produced & principally sold wool to the south, & although his customers were pro-slavery advocates, he fearlessly proclaimed his principles, at the same time managed to retain the confidence & respect of his opponents. He was, perhaps, the last of the old-time abolitionists of the Middle States. He never lost interest in promoting education for all & was an early promoter of the Howard School in Wilmington.

While Tweed's Tavern Museum displays a replica of the old Hockessin Railroad Station & other local historical memorabilia of interest, the part that I have volunteered for are the maintenance of the landscape gardens. This project is organized by the local Countryside Garden Club. A new raised bed colonial kitchen garden is planned to be implemented this summer. The garden club members also decorate the tavern & museum with seasonal décor. For me, this shows pride in the place where you live.

See link: <http://mchhistory.blogspot.com/2010/12/thomas-worrell-family-and-mill.html>