

On 14 december 1727 Elisabeth Townsend of Philadelphia widow, James Townsend carter, and Charles Townsend laborer of Philadelphia were bound for £200 with Elisabeth as administrator of the "goods Chattles rights & Credits" of John Townsend deceased:

Inventory of the Estate Goods & Chattles of John Townsend late of the city of Philadelphia a Carpenter decd. Taken the 14th day of the Tenth Month An[n]o Dom[in]I 1727

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| Wearing apparel | 2 | 10 |
| Old feather bed bolster & sheets blankets | | |
| Rugg bedstead & old curtains | 3 | 5 |
| Two small tables six chairs & box | | 13 |
| Earthen & wooden ware | 15 | |
| Old Chest box iron & heaters | 4 | 6 |
| Two Iron potts Gridiron & Frying pan | 7 | |
| Two small Tenements & 2 Lotts on the North side of Walnut Street | 100 | |
| Dough Trough & Leathern [Lantern?] | 4 | |
| Total | 108 | 86 |

Appraised

[signed] Jon Cadwalder

[signed] Edward Roberts

The land described as "Two Small tenements & 2 Lotts on the North side of Walnut Street," which was sold by the Townsends over the years, was that on which the Pennsylvania State House, now known as Independence hall, was built.

John Townsend's heirs sold part of the Walnut Street property to James Townsend on 24 January 1743 by unrecorded deed. In turn James Townsend and wife Mary sold the land on 26 October 1756 to David Erwin, stating that the property was the "premises John Townsend the late father of the said James Townsend died Siezed in Fee Intestate whereby the same descended to the said James and his several Brothers and Sisters Who by their Indenture of the twenty fourth day of January 1743 did grant and Confirm the same Lot unto the said James Townsend his Heirs and Assigns forever." David Erwin with wife Elizabeth sold the land to trustees on 6 February 1769 for the erection of a new statehouse. Fortunately, that deed cited the entire chain of title; the following is most important for our purposes:

On the same day, Charles Townsend of Philadelphia carter and wife Abigail sold what was apparently the remainder of John Townsend's land to the trustees.

With John's family, we see the tendency to move in and out of Quakerdom. The first two children were baptized in the parish church, the third was recorded in the Quaker records, and the fourth was recorded with a special entry in the parish register. There is no mention of John Townsend and his family in the Philadelphia Quaker records until his burial record – and he was buried as a non-Quaker.

And Whereas the said John Townsend by Force and Virtue of some food Conveyance and

assura[nce] in the Law duly had and executed became in his lifetime Lawfully seized in his demesne as of Fee and in the Lot of piece of ground herein mentioned and described being part of the above described Lot. And being so thereof seized died Intestate leaving issue, Four Sons and Five Daughters, to wit Stephen Townsend his eldest son James Joseph and Charles his Younger Sons, and Elizabeth Sarah Mary Jane and Rachel who intermarried with Alexander Foreman, Owen Thomas Jo[hn] Kennard Thomas Humphreys and William Adams... and the said James Joseph Charles his Younger Sons and the said Alexander Forman and Elizabeth his Wife, in right of the said Elizabeth, the said Owin Thomas and Sarah his Wife in right of the Said Sarah, John Kennard and Mary his wife in right of the said Mary, Thomas Humphreys and Jane his Wife in right of the right of said Jane, and William Adams and Rachel his Wife in right of the said Rachel...