

Bertha Schooley Buckman
June 9, 1895 – July 28, 1989

Friends are grateful for the life of Bertha Schooley Buckman, who died seventh month, twenty-eighth, 1989 at the age of 94. Quiet and modest as she was, Bertha would not have told us how often and well she served Washington area Friends. A birthright member of Alexandria Monthly Meeting, and a charter member of Friends Meeting of Washington, she was active in both Meetings, a faithful attender at Meeting for Worship, Quarterly Meeting, and Baltimore Yearly Meeting. She was clerk of Alexandria Monthly Meeting for more than forty years. Among the Friends Meeting of Washington committees on which she served, at one time or another, were Ministry and Worship, Finance and Property, and Committee of Overseers. She was co-chairman of the Bazaar in 1969, secretary of the Quaker committee which had oversight of International Student House, and was a trustee for Friends House in 1959, when it was located in downtown Washington, D.C.

Bertha was the eldest of five children, and when their mother died, she, as a teenager, held the family together. After graduating from Sidwell Friends School, then located on Eye Street in Washington next to the Meeting House, she was one of the early students at Woolman School. Swarthmore College opened Woolman School as a residence center for religious study, and patterned it after Woodbrooke in England. It was the precursor of Pendle Hill in Wallingford, Pennsylvania.

For several years Bertha taught at Woodlawn, and then Snowden Elementary Schools in the Fairfax County School system before she chose a business career in banking. She worked for many years for Union Trust Company until their merger with American Security Bank, where she continued until her retirement. During those years she often took late afternoon and evening courses at George Washington University, not work-related, but in subjects of particular interest to her.

When we consider her life as a business woman and her varied and extended service to the Society of Friends, we marvel at the source of her strength and energy which may well have come from her calm and tranquil spirit.