

MARTHA ANN SCHOFIELD



Born: Feb. 1, 1839 in Newton, Bucks, PA

Died: Feb. 1, 1916 in Aiken, SC

Appointment(s):

Pennsylvania Friends Relief Association
Hilton Head Island

Johns Island

1865

Schofield Normal and Industrial School
Aiken, SC

1867

1839-1916

Martha was born February 1, 1839 in Newton, Bucks Co., Pennsylvania to Oliver W. Schofield and Mary Jackson. Her parents were Hicksite Quakers who were very involved in the social issues of their day: abolition, women's rights, temperance and public education for all.¹ Martha's mother set an example for her daughter as she lived a life beyond the expectations of a 19th century woman. She travelled to teach Native Americans as a young woman.² The Pennsylvania Friends Relief Association in Germantown, PA supported her as a teacher to the freedmen in Hilton Head, South Carolina where she arrived in 1865.³ She was temporarily assigned to Johns Island shortly after her arrival in Hilton Head. She showed her political bias when she donned

¹ Yellig, Kathryn (Smedley), et al. "Biographical Notes". *Martha Schofield Papers*, RG 5/134. Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, Box 3.

² Evans, Matilda A, Dr. "Biography, Martha S Pioneer Negro Educator" 1916, *Martha Schofield Papers*, RG 5/134. Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College. Box 1.

³ Smith, Janet Janiczek. *From A Northern Home to a Southern School: Cultural Imperialists Or Just Stubborn Yankees*. Georgia Southern University, Jack N Averitt College of Graduate Studies. Electronic Theses and Dissertations #58. Spring 2013, p179. <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/etd/58>.

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Union aprons whenever she welcomed visitors to the Plantation school.⁴ She was known to include narratives of the Union's noble mission and military achievements in the classroom. Miss Schofield found the climate devastating to her health and when a malaria outbreak occurred, she decided to move inland to Aiken where the heat and humidity were not so oppressive.⁵ She was then additionally supported by the Philadelphia and New York Yearly Meetings of the Hicksite Quakers. They helped her finance the purchase of two acres of land where she established the Schofield Normal and Industrial School in Aiken, SC in 1868.⁶ It gradually became a boarding school to train black teachers and tradesmen and was finally absorbed into the public school system in 1952. Some teachers not only taught the basics of reading and writing, but also advocated for industrial education to provide the youths with a way to be productive and earn a living to support themselves. The two strongest proponents of such education for the freedmen youth were Martha Schofield and Rachel Crane Mather. They both instituted a crafts-oriented curriculum in their schools in Aiken and Beaufort, respectively. This included such things as harness making, carpentry, printing and farming as well as sewing and cooking⁷. In 1878, Martha was a delegate from South Carolina to the 30th Anniversary of Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York.⁸ Martha taught freedmen's children for 48 years before returning north in 1912. Martha died February 1, 1916 in her sleep in Aiken, SC but her body was transferred north for burial at the Darby Friends Burial Ground in Darby, Pennsylvania.⁹

⁴ Southern Historical Association. *The Journal of Southern History, MS Papers, Vol 48, No 3, Aug 1979.* Diary I, pp 28 & 40.

-Yellig, Kathryn (Smedley), et al. "Biographical Notes". *Martha Schofield Papers*, RG 5/134. Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College, Box 3.

⁵ *The American Freedman* [earlier known as *Pennsylvania Freedman's Bulletin*] Vols 1 & 2. NY: American Freedman's and Union Commission, 1866-1869, p 142.

⁶ Evans, Matilda A, Dr. "Biography, Martha S Pioneer Negro Educator" 1916, *Martha Schofield Papers*, RG 5/134. Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College. Box 1.

⁷ Small, Sandra. "The Yankee Schoolmarm in Freedmen's Schools: An Analysis of Attitudes" pp 381-402.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/2208200?read-now=1&seq=20#page_scan_tab_content

⁸ Schofield, M. (n.d.a) "A Moral Lesson", *Martha Schofield Papers*, RG 5/134. Box 5. Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.

-Evans, Matilda A. Dr.

⁹ Yellig, Kathryn (Smedley), et al.

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