

EDWARD HICKS



A Brief Biography of Edward Hicks

Newtown Friends Meeting was organized in 1815 by Edward Hicks and a number of his Bucks County neighbors and friends. They met in the County Court House, then at the corner of Centre Avenue and Court Street. In 1817, largely through Edward Hicks' efforts, the present meetinghouse was built on Court Street, close by his home on Penn Street.

A carriage and sign painter by profession, Hicks was respected during his lifetime more for his powerful ministry in Friends' meetings than for his art, but to him his paintings were undoubtedly "sermons in oils," as George Haynes, a respected member of our Meeting, called them in his monograph on Hicks. Inspired by words in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Isaiah, he painted more than one hundred versions of "The Peaceable Kingdom," his best known work.



Today he is recognized as one of America's great primitive painters. Copies of his "Peaceable Kingdom," "The Twining Farm," "Noah's Ark," and other paintings now nationally known, are in the Hicks room on the second floor of our meetinghouse, where visitors are cordially invited to inspect them at their leisure. Edward Hicks' grave, with the low headstone preferred by Friends, may be found near the sycamore tree across from the front porch of the meeting house that he loved so much.

