

## Who organized the Aimwell School for the Free Instruction of Females?

**Answer:** Anne Parrish

During the Yellow Fever outbreak of 1793 in Philadelphia, Anne Parrish's parents fell very ill. Parrish had lost other relatives to the disease and vowed to devote her life to charity if her parents survived. They lived through the ordeal and Parrish stayed true to her word.

One of Parrish's first charitable acts was to take a few neglected girls into her home to care for them. But with her own health in a fragile state, Parrish eventually sought the assistance of other Quakers, including Mary Wheeler and Hannah Hopkins Jr. Parrish founded the Aimwell School (later called the Aimwell School for the Free Instruction of Females) in 1796. The school initially operated out of Parrish's home on North Second Street. Parrish and other Quaker women taught spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, and sewing to their small class. By 1799, Parrish's informal school had eighteen women who rotated teaching duties.

The school moved several times throughout its history. In 1889, the school was moved to the Friends' Meeting House at Sixth and Nobel streets, where it remained until about 1914. Around that time, the school moved one last time to the 800 block of Randolph Street. The school, which had been funded through private donations since its inception, closed in 1923.

HSP holds a number of collections that contain items from Anne Parrish and the Parrish family, including the [Cox-Parrish-Wharton papers \(#154\)](#) <sup>[1]</sup> and the [Parrish family papers \(#1653\)](#) <sup>[2]</sup>. Additional resources on the Aimwell School are available in our library.

*Image:* [Anne Parrish, silhouette \(undated\)](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

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### Links

[1] <http://discover.hsp.org/Record/hsp.ead.at01-0154/Description#tabnav>

[2] <http://discover.hsp.org/Record/hsp.ead.at01-1653/Description#tabnav>

[3] [http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object\\_id/3614](http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/3614)