

**MARY ELIZABETH CRICHTON**  
**9/21/13 - 10/13/89**

Mary Elizabeth Crichton was the older of two children born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, to Clorinda Geary Crichton and James Dunlop Crichton. Her brother, Philip Crichton, his daughter and two nieces survive in Houston, Texas.

Mary's association with our Meeting began in her middle years after she moved to Washington, about 1955. Earlier in her life, during her year or two at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Mary became acquainted with the Wider Quaker Fellowship and she once participated in an American Friends Service Committee workcamp. Until 1978 when she retired, Mary did laboratory work for the (federal) Food and Drug Administration. When she died on October 13, 1989, she had been our member for 19 years.

During those years we learned that Mary was moved by beauty and order; we also learned she had an affinity and affection for children.

Mary herself identified her concern for beauty and order. She wrote in her application for membership in 1970, "There are associations and influences here at the Meeting which I feel I cannot lose . . ." Mary had lost her mother to cancer in 1950 and her father died in 1955. When she came to Washington, the home in Beaver Falls was closed. Her letter continues, "I find that to come here to the Meeting House and participate in even a limited way, as I do, or just be here where there is the simple charm of good structure and greenery representing the concern of Friends past and present, bring to my life a meaning of continuing value."

About her concern for children. Introducing herself in 1971 as a new member of our Meeting, Mary indicated that she had once, with her father, operated a nursery school in their home. Friends who spoke at Mary's memorial service referred repeatedly to Mary's active support for our children's library. She was also known to be very generous to children of her friends. One friend suggested that perhaps God came to Mary through children.

Mary was known to us as self-effacing, shy and perceptibly more comfortable working in the children's library than in any other form of participation in our Meeting. More friends than perhaps she had dared dream of mourned her passing, but rejoiced that after her last two years of ever more severe disability, she was suffering no longer.