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The Masons of Longwood: Soon after Pierre S. du Pont developed Longwood Gardens near Kennett Square, he assembled a talented group of young men to assist him in running the massive operation. Charles H. Mason (1886–1949) of Lewes, Delaware, was in this group and became chief chauffeur for Mr. du Pont and his wife. Mason's brother-in-law, Allan L. "Skutch" Lauritsen (1894–1934), also of Lewes, was established by Mr. du Pont as one of his two major building contractors. Mason and his wife, Marguerite Lauritsen Mason (1896–1934), occupied a large stone home on the Longwood property and raised two daughters, Virginia and Ann, and a son, Charles H. Mason III. I knew them all, as well as the three Lauritsen girls, as all of them attended Wilmington Friends School. When Eleanor Marshall and I were placed in Ruth Pusey's first-grade class in 1930, Charlie Mason was seated at a tiny table with us and became a lifelong friend.

Mr. du Pont also hired two important people from the Quaker community of Sandy Spring, Maryland: Malcolm Farquhar and Douglas Gilpin. The former was his top man in the Conservatory operation, and the latter managed all the du Pont farms connected with Longwood. Farquhar built a fine home adjacent to Longwood, and Gilpin lived in one of Mr. du Pont's homes on the property. Mason, Gilpin, and Lauritsen were "tournament" (serious) trapshooters, and Farquhar enjoyed the sport on a less frequent schedule. Mr. du Pont allowed them to build the Longwood Gun Club just west of the Conservatory, which had two traps and was one of the clubs in the Penn-Del Twilight League for many years. Charles Mason and Doug Gilpin, both 90% shooters (usually Class C), never missed shooting in the 500-target Marshall Marathon at Yorklyn.

Both Charles Masons were very popular with trapshooters. The father became High Chief of the Atlantic Indians, a trapshooting membership organization, in the late 1930s, and his son held the same position in the 1970s. My father was High Chief in the mid-1940s. The younger Charles became a Class AA shooter and worked for Hercules Powder Company's Sporting Powder Division in the south-central part of the United States before the division was eliminated. He and I had some friendly competition before and after World War II, but he soon outpaced me in shooting ability. His sister, Ann, who married Robert Ewing and became a newspaper editor in Pinehurst, North Carolina, was one of the best woman shooters in the East.

The Masons maintained a nice beach-front property on Lewes Beach, Delaware, and family members shared many happy times there. Of all those mentioned in this article, only Virginia Mason Morgan, born in 1920, is still alive.