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A 300-YEAR HISTORY

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	ix
✓ The Founding, 1681-1701 by <i>Mary Maples Dunn and Richard S. Dunn</i>	1
✓ Village into Town, 1701-1746 by <i>Edwin B. Bronner</i>	33
✓ Town into City, 1746-1765 by <i>Theodore Thayer</i>	68
✓ The Revolutionary City, 1765-1783 by <i>Harry M. Tinkcom</i>	109
✓ The Federal City, 1783-1800 by <i>Richard G. Miller</i>	155
The Athens of America, 1800-1825 by <i>Edgar P. Richardson</i>	208
The Age of Nicholas Biddle, 1825-1841 by <i>Nicholas B. Wainwright</i>	258
Industrial Development and Social Crisis, 1841-1854 by <i>Elizabeth M. Geffen</i>	307
The Border City in Civil War, 1854-1865 by <i>Russell F. Weigley</i>	363
The Centennial City, 1865-1876 by <i>Dorothy Gondos Beers</i>	417
The Iron Age, 1876-1905 by <i>Nathaniel Burt and Wallace E. Davies</i>	471
Progressivism, 1905-1919 by <i>Lloyd M. Abernethy</i>	524
The City Embraces "Normalcy," 1919-1929 by <i>Arthur P. Dudden</i>	566
Depression and War, 1929-1946 by <i>Margaret B. Tinkcom</i>	601
Rally and Relapse, 1946-1968 by <i>Joseph S. Clark, Jr., and Dennis J. Clark</i>	649
The Bicentennial City, 1968-1982 by <i>Stephanie G. Wolf</i>	704
Epilogue by <i>Edwin Wolf 2nd</i>	735
Notes .	753
Index	815
Authors and Contributors	841

Town into City

1746-1765

by Theodore Thayer

Blessed be God, that it was our Lot to be sent to Pennsylvania, where our Wants have been relieved. . . .

— JOHN BAPTISTE GALERM,
speaking for French refugees from Nova Scotia

. . . why, I say, should that little island [England] enjoy in almost every neighbourhood more sensible, virtuous, and elegant minds than we can collect in ranging a hundred leagues of our vast forests? But 'tis said the arts delight to travel westward.

— BENJAMIN FRANKLIN¹

The year 1751 was the fiftieth year of the Constitution of Pennsylvania: the famous Charter of Privileges. The bell ordered to commemorate this anniversary, an anniversary coinciding with that of Philadelphia's corporate charter, arrived the following year. Philadelphian Isaac Norris, Jr., speaker of the legislative Assembly, chose the prophetic inscription from Leviticus 25:10, an inscription prefaced in the Bible by the words "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year": "Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof." Though this famous Liberty Bell cracked on first ringing and twice had to be recast, its hanging in 1753 at the State House in a belfry especially built for it signaled the coming of age of Pennsylvania and its capital city.

I

The years 1750-1755 in fact proved crucial in the metamorphosis of town to city. A most obvious change was in the cityscape itself. A visitor approaching the city in 1750 would view the low unbroken skyline of any ordinary country market town, a skyline pierced only by the belfry at Second and High. Two years later the traveler toward the city would first see the grand new State House tower which would house the new bell. Before long the skyline would also present the upward thrust of the new spires of several churches, most notably the 196-foot steeple of Christ Church.

There were also less celestial changes in the city's physical aspect. Such matters as street paving may seem comparatively mundane, but they too serve to demarcate the city from the crossroads town. By mid-century most of the streets had brick or flagstone sidewalks, often bordered with posts that protected pedestrians from vehicular traffic. Some merchants now also took the initiative to have cobblestones or paving blocks laid in the streets in front of their places of business. Such private efforts continued until the city corporation itself in 1762 took on the responsibility, which it funded by a general tax and lotteries; at the same time the city took the giant step of hiring street cleaners.²

Philadelphia's merchants not only facilitated pedestrian and vehicular movement through the city's streets, but they also began to provide street lighting, another amenity not generally found in the ordinary town. In Philadelphia the evening's darkness was frequently penetrated by lamps hanging before the merchants' shops. In 1751, by means of a special tax, the principal streets were illuminated by whale-oil lamps suspended from lamp posts. The new globes, however, quickly became smudged with smoke, creating a maintenance problem. With his usual resourcefulness Franklin persuaded the corporation to adopt a square lamp fixture with four panes and with air holes to allow the smoke to escape. The frugal corporation recognized that a broken pane would be cheaper to replace than a globe.³

Since a supply of pure water was vital to a growing city, Philadelphia periodically took steps to see that the need was met. Most houses had wells situated in the rear, but some had them bordering the street. Both public and private wells lined High Street's marketplace teeming with people and horses during the busy hours. By mid-century the city was exercising some control over the privately owned street pumps, and in 1756 it took over most of them. Under new regulations the city made the city wardens responsible for inspecting the pumps, having new wells sunk when necessary, buying up private pumps, and assessing householders who used the city water. The wardens, like the overseers of the poor, formed a committee elected by the freeholders as provided by an act of the provincial Assembly. This was a means of circumventing the inactivity of the sluggish corporation on civic concerns.⁴

Another marked improvement followed the appointment of Benjamin Franklin as one of the two deputy postmasters-general for the colonies. Responsible for the postal service in the northern colonies, Franklin instituted three regular mail deliveries a week between Philadelphia and New York. In 1755 he provided one weekly delivery to Boston, a run that previously had no set schedule. Mail service to the west and south continued to be more sporadic, but Franklin eventually established regular service to Virginia, and by 1767 three stage lines were running south to Baltimore and beyond.⁵ Under the aegis of two Franklins—Benjamin had appointed his son William comptroller—the post office on the corner of Church Alley and Third Street became a kind of symbol of the growing network of communications of which Philadelphia was the center.



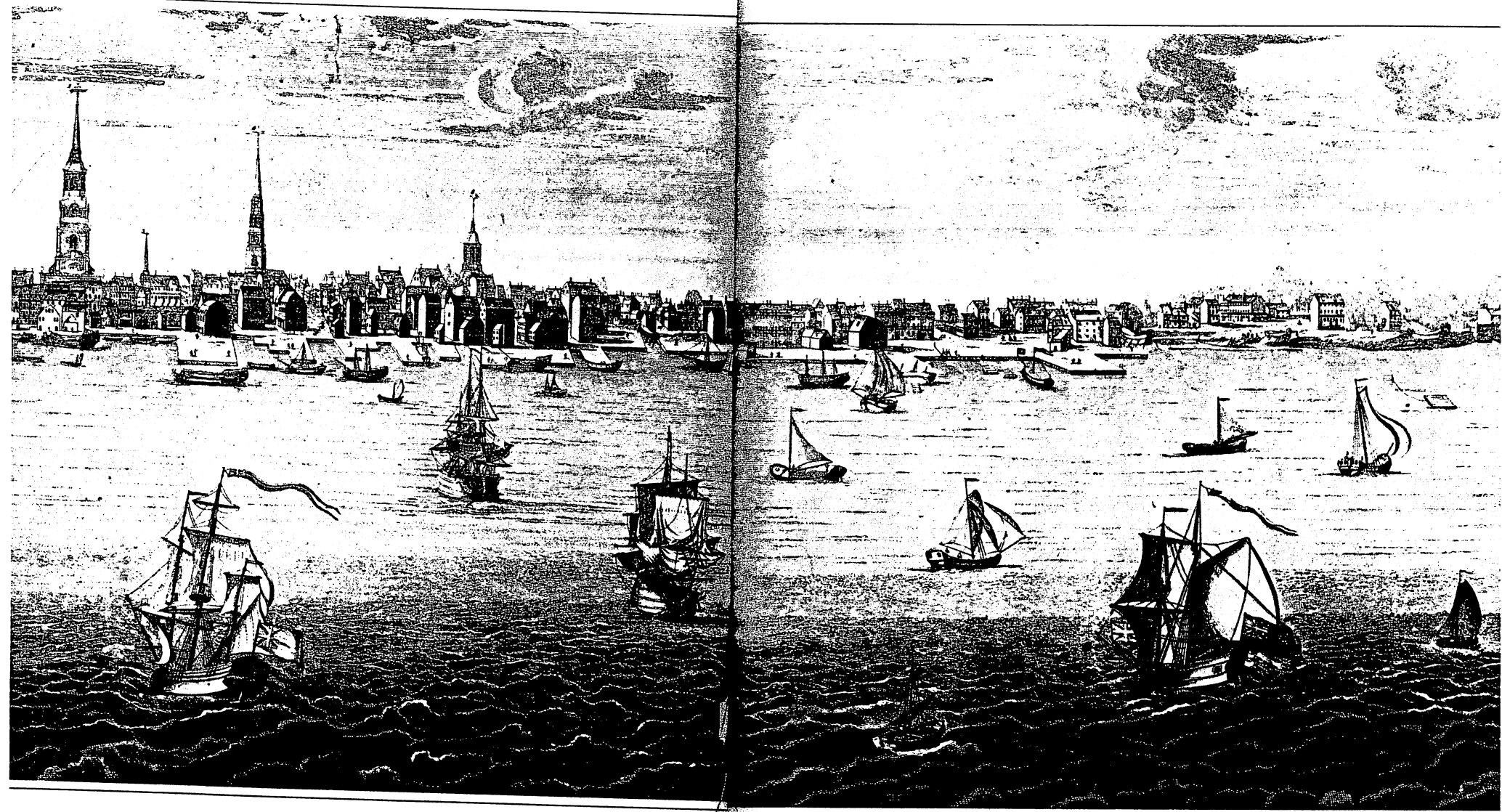
An East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia; taken by George Heap [c. 1715-1752] from the Jersey Shore, under the Direction of Nicholas Scull [1687-1761] Surveyor General of the Province of Pennsylvania (1754), engraved by Gerard Vandergucht. The view of the city, printed in London from four copper plates, measures nearly seven feet in length when the prints are assembled and portrays the riverfront from below South Street to Callowhill Street on the north. An inset at the left, near Windmill Island, depicts the fortification called the Battery which was below the Swedish church in the vicinity of the present Federal



Street. The steeples in the center are those of the State House on Chestnut Street; Christ Church near Market Street; the Academy (a slender, lower steeple) on Arch Street at Fourth; the Presbyterian Church, also on Arch Street at Third; and the German Reformed Church on Race Street near Fourth. The Court House and Great Meeting House are visible in the center of Market Street.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

(Panorama continues on the next two pages.)



Improvements in transportation facilitated Franklin's expansion of the postal service. Until Joseph Borden, Jr., and his partners started their stage line in 1755 between Philadelphia and New York, there was no regular service between the cities. The first lap of the journey was by a stageboat which left the wharf at the Crooked Billet on Chestnut Street and sailed to Bordentown, New Jersey. An overland stage continued the journey to Perth Amboy, whence passengers were transported by water to New York. When the weather cooperated the trip took three days; the cost was three pence per mile. A rival line was soon started by John Butler. His stage left from the Sign of

the Death of the Fox on Strawberry Alley and traveled by way of Trenton to New York. In 1766 another stage called the Flying Machine made the trip to New York in two days. This remarkable feat was accomplished in a "stage wagon" with seats suspended on springs. It ran twice a week and cost only two pence a mile, putting all rivals at a definite disadvantage.⁶

An improved network of transportation and communication during the century's middle years also meant a concomitant growth in trade. By mid-century the most frequently used highway in America was the great Philadelphia Wagon Road that led out from the city to Lancaster. Over it moved

settlers seeking lands to the west, and, coming and going, wagons and caravans of supplies and trade goods. To Lancaster from the west came the furs and skins sent in by George Croghan and his partner William Trent, who traded directly with the Indians on the Ohio. This trade alone had an annual value of £40,000. The leading merchant in Lancaster was Joseph Simon, the frontier representative of Levy and Franks. Franks, also associated in Philadelphia with William Plumstead, had a brother in London who looked after his affairs abroad. Later the firm of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan with their English correspondents would vastly increase the economic as well as the political aspects of the western trade.

While overland transportation vastly improved during these years, the Atlantic remained Philadelphia's principal avenue of trade. So rapid was the growth of commerce in this period that more waterfront construction took place in Philadelphia than in any other American port. According to an Assembly report, the number of vessels clearing the port increased from 85 in 1723 to an average of 403 between 1749 and 1752. Most of these ships were Philadelphia-owned, often collectively by a dozen or more merchants, and they kept the city's shops well stocked with goods from all over the world. There were linens from Ireland, wines from Portugal and Madeira, India goods, expensive woollens and high-grade cutlery from England, rum and molasses from the West Indies, and Rhode Island oysters that Edward Shippen thought were superior to any others.⁷

The great proportion of ships leaving Philadelphia's docks, however, never ventured beyond American waters. These vessels were bound for ports in sister colonies in a trade that surpassed overseas commerce in both value and tonnage. Ships either in the coastal or overseas trade were often tied up at Philadelphia's wharves for several weeks while their owners advertised for and collected freight. The staple exports had not changed—mainly grain and flour but also meat, lumber, barrel staves, flaxseed, pig and bar iron, deerskins, and furs.

One lucrative aspect of foreign commerce continued to be the transportation of immigrants to America. The vast majority of them at mid-century came from Germany. Twenty-two ships, the greatest number in any one year, carrying about 7000 persons, arrived in Philadelphia in the autumn of 1749. A year later fourteen ships brought 4000 to the swelling German population in Pennsylvania. By comparison only about 1000 immigrants arrived that year from Northern Ireland and Great Britain.⁸ Many Germans stayed in nearby Germantown or in Philadelphia, which had a sector that was almost completely German. The rapidly growing number of shops of all kinds in the city welcomed them many of whom were skilled artisans. But so great was the influx that some Philadelphians feared they would eventually take over and make Philadelphia a German city.

Voyages to Philadelphia from Europe lasted about seven weeks. Carrying an average of 300 passengers, the ships were dreadfully crowded. Hunger added to this misery, and disease frequently took a frightful toll. In 1750 the

Assembly made an effort to improve the immigrants' lot by limiting the number of passengers a ship could carry. This proved to be little more than a well-meaning gesture. Despite untoward conditions most ships made the voyage without severe misfortunes and landed the bulk of their human cargo safely at Philadelphia. Many ships, like the *Edinburgh* and the *Two Brothers*, sailed year after year in the indentured servant trade; others made sporadic trips depending on market conditions.⁹

Immigrants of another kind also came into the city as Philadelphians expanded their importation of slaves, usually from the West Indies. Although the trade was not nearly so extensive as that of other colonial cities north and south, nevertheless throughout the 1750s "parcels" of slaves frequently arrived in Philadelphia along with cargoes of sugar and molasses. Prominent among those merchants handling slaves were William Allen, Joseph Turner, Thomas Willing, and Robert Morris. By this time most Quaker merchants, faced with growing opposition to slavery within the Society of Friends, would not allow their ships to carry slaves.¹⁰

Philadelphia's commerce of all kinds—raw materials, manufactured goods, and human beings—grew greatly during the French and Indian War. Imports, for example, skyrocketed from a value of £168,000 in 1757 to over £700,000 in 1760. According to the firm of Willing and Morris, the supply of cotton goods in 1758 was sufficient to last three years, a symptom of a general condition that at the end of the French and Indian War created a severe recession.

The export trade was richly if illicitly supplemented by supplying the French through neutral ports in the West Indies. The collector of the port, Abraham Taylor, and Chief Justice William Allen were accused of this offense, while Gov. William Denny himself appears to have made a business of selling flags of truce. Of course smuggling was nothing new; it was estimated in 1757 that out of 400 chests of tea received in the previous two years, only about sixteen were legally imported.¹¹

All this trade depended on an ample number of ships for its cargoes. Boston had been the great shipbuilding center of the American colonies, but by 1750 this primacy was passing to Philadelphia, in large part because of the greater supply of ash and cedar in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Moreover, because of lower costs of materials, ships constructed in the Philadelphia yards were about 10–15 percent cheaper than those built in England. These ships were not, however, so well built as those constructed in the mother country or in New England. "Our Ship Carpenters never season a stick," Lewis Evans complained. For all this, shipbuilding flourished. Scull and Heap's 1754 view of the city shows twelve shipyards in the mile between Old Swedes' Church and Poole's Bridge, over Coaquannock Creek (or Pegg's Run) at the northern edge of the city.¹²

Near the waterfront and often in the neighborhood of the shipyards, other industries, large and small, were operated. Many of them, such as the blacksmith shops, foundries, and ropewalks, were essential for the shipbuilding

industry. There were tanneries, distilleries, breweries, carriage shops, fulling mills, and cooperages. Philadelphia rum was reputed to be as good as any in America. And the shoe industry prospered despite the fact that the best boots and shoes had to be made from imported leather because of the poor quality of the local product. To satisfy the needs of dressmakers and tailors, quantities of buckles, buttons, and hooks and eyes were manufactured in the city. Philadelphia shops even produced such specialties as mustard and chocolate.¹³ All these industries created such a demand for labor that William Meyer opened an employment office in 1756 which supplied the services of journeyman artisans, apprentices, Negroes, and common laborers.¹⁴

One inevitable component of urbanization was the ever-increasing number of taverns in the city. At High and Water Streets, near the popular Indian King, Obadiah Bourne set up in 1748 a new tavern whose name held more than a bit of irony. Bourne, a sea captain, called it "Le Trembleur"—The Quaker—for his privateer which had brought terror to the French and Spanish during King George's War.¹⁵ In Water Street was the Tun Tavern, commonly known as Peggy Mullen's Beefsteak House. It was a favorite meeting place for Freemasons. The Masons also often gathered at the Widow Pratt's Royal Standard on High Street, where the directors of the Library Company regularly met and the contributors to the Pennsylvania Hospital convened for a time.¹⁶ The busiest tavern in the city remained the London Coffee House, acquired in 1754 by William Bradford, who promoted the house's reputation as a merchants' exchange.¹⁷

If the tavern was an inevitable ingredient of city life, so was the rising incidence of crime. There were such serious crimes as murder and grand larceny, with the last having a surprising number of women offenders. Most breaches of the law, however, were of a less serious nature—stealing, disorderly conduct, drunkenness, and gambling. Those convicted were overwhelmingly from the middle and lower classes; the rather few erring wealthy usually escaped punishment through their influential connections. The fathoming of bastards, however, brought to account nearly all, regardless of class, who did not provide a settlement for the mother and child.¹⁸

Sentences were imposed by the city magistrates. For major crimes the punishment could be hanging, jailing, or forced departure from the colony. In 1718 the Assembly had forsaken Penn's humane limitations on capital punishment in favor of the rules practiced in England. This change arose from a bargain permitting Quakers to continue holding office in the province without taking oaths. Petty offenders faced being fined, whipped, jailed, and put in the public stocks at the discretion of the magistrate. Culprits, however, could appeal to the mayor, aldermen, and councilmen, who were usually lenient, partly out of compassion or out of consideration for the city budget if the sentence prescribed jailing. Because of Daniel Ford's poverty and bad health, for example, the board of appeals remitted his £20 fine for keeping an unlicensed tavern. Leonore Martin's fine of £10 for having a bastard child was remitted because she needed the money to support the child. Such examples



Trade card of Benjamin Harbeson (1728–1809), engraved c. 1764 by Henry Dawkins (act. 1753–1786). At his shop on Market Street, corner of Strawberry Alley (west of Second), Harbeson made tin and pewter articles in addition to the copper wares offered on his elegant card. A respected political leader among the craftsmen of Philadelphia, Harbeson signed the Nonimportation Agreement of 1765 and became a captain of the Second Battalion of Philadelphia Associators in 1776.

could be multiplied many times in the course of the years. One sentence, however, was seldom if ever set aside. When ordered, a public whipping at the whipping post in the Court House yard was dutifully carried out by Daniel Pellito, the city executioner.¹⁹

The ostracism of criminals and other undesirables was common practice in the eighteenth century. In 1749 a dozen or more lawbreakers in Philadelphia had their fines remitted when they agreed to leave the city. Even Samuel Jackson's capital sentence for the serious crime of counterfeiting was commuted in 1752, but only after he had been whipped. Two years later George Lee and Richard Davis, guilty of assaulting a nightwatchman, escaped punishment by enlisting on a British warship. In times of war most anyone could go free by joining the armed forces.²⁰

Court sessions evidently offered an entertaining diversion for Philadelphia's citizenry. "On court days," writes Gottlieb Mittelberger, "young and old may enter the chamber and may listen to the cross-examinations and to the judgments, which often cause the listeners to burst into uproarious laughter." One such cross-examination involved a pregnant woman who wanted for a husband the man she accused of rape. The man during the trial pretended deafness, claiming that when he had "raped" the woman, "she had cried out so horribly that he had lost his hearing." When he said this, the woman angrily retorted, "O, you godless villain, how can you say this? You remember I didn't say a word then." But of course if she had thought she would become pregnant, she "would certainly have cried for help. At this," Mittelberger concludes, "young and old broke into great laughter; and the man was at once acquitted and set free."²¹

On the evidence of Mittelberger's tale of the "deaf" man, sometimes crime in Philadelphia did pay. Philadelphians, nevertheless, were as desirous of preventing crime as of punishing the criminal. Street lighting helped. So did a paid nightwatch, which at last became a reality in 1751 when the Assembly authorized the city corporation to levy a property tax for this purpose.²²

As it happened, however, the nightwatch proved as efficacious in the detection of fire as in the prevention of crime. By mid-century there were six fire companies ready to respond to an alarm sounded by the nightwatchman. Two more, the Britannia and the Hibernia, were formed in the early 1750s. The fire companies had many of the features of social clubs. They met regularly for inspection and relaxation, and drew their membership from particular groups in the city; for instance, the Hibernia was overwhelmingly Irish.

Philadelphia's fire companies provided some training for their men, but more important, by now they owned an impressive amount of firefighting equipment. Most of their manually operated pumping engines were purchased from Richard Newsam of London, who advertised throughout the colonies. In 1752 the Union Fire Company and the Hand-in-Hand jointly purchased a large fire bell that could be heard throughout the city from its belfry atop the academy in Fourth Street. More wells that could be used in

firefighting were dug and public pumps installed. In 1755 the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses ordered from harnessmaker Obadiah Elbridge twenty-four leather buckets to be hung at convenient places for the watch. In 1764 four of the fire companies elected a joint president and board of managers, to begin the process of amalgamating the companies into a cooperating union.²³

A natural outgrowth of fire consciousness and protection was fire insurance. Following Charleston's abortive effort in this field in 1735, no other attempt was made until 1750 when the Union Fire Company under Franklin's aegis offered its members a mutual fire insurance scheme. Nothing immediately came of this plan, but two years later, again sponsored by Franklin, the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire was established. Commonly known as the Hand-in-Hand from its firemark, the Contributionship was the first successful fire insurance company in America and has continued to serve the needs of Philadelphia's citizens down to the present day.²⁴

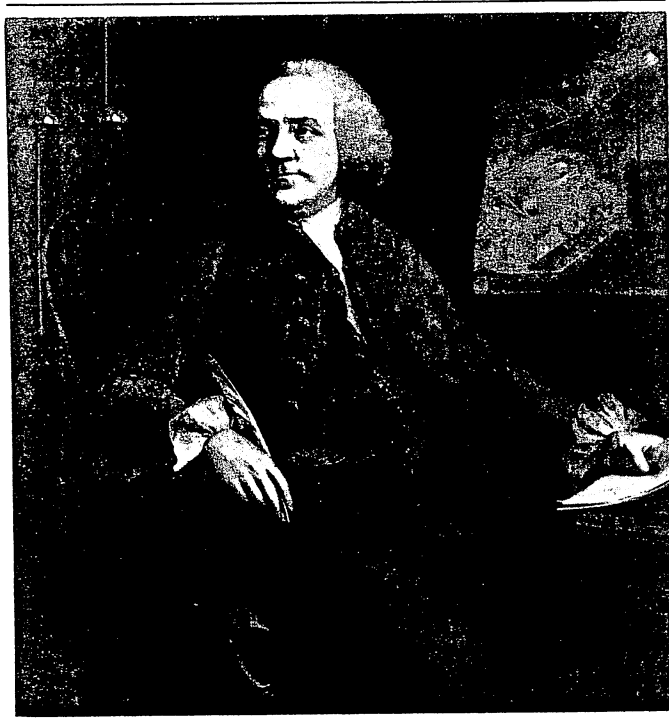
The institutionalization of fire protection was one of the many results of the growth of Philadelphia as a great commercial center. So was her astonishing increase in population. In 1746 there were some 1500 dwellings in the town, housing an estimated population of about 10,000. In 1765 there were nearly 5000 habitations with a population of over 25,000. Boston on the other hand had remained virtually stable throughout this period, with a population of about 15,000. New York, with a population about equal to Philadelphia's in 1755, had fallen behind by 1765 and remained so until long after the American Revolution. To one English visitor in 1765, Philadelphia was a "great and noble City": a not inappropriate appellation, for Penn's "greene Country Towne" was now probably the fourth in size among the cities of the British world, behind only London, Edinburgh, and Dublin.²⁵

II

"I never was before engaged in any study that so totally engrossed my attention and my time as this has lately done. . . ."²⁶ So exclaimed Benjamin Franklin as he launched his series of epoch-making "Philadelphia experiments" which gave rise to the modern science of electricity. His resulting *Experiments and Observations in Electricity* of 1751, to which he constantly added in subsequent editions, has been called the single most important book to come out of colonial America. The single-fluid theory of electricity and the proof of the identity of an electric spark and lightning—along with the invention of the lightning rod—placed Franklin in the forefront of the world's scientists. They also served to denominate Philadelphia as the American center in the world of an emerging Atlantic civilization.²⁷

But Franklin was only the most outstanding of an ever-enlarging circle of science-minded men who since Logan's time had brought Philadelphia world renown. Ebenezer Kinnersley, for example, worked closely with Franklin in his electrical experiments. In the early 1750s while Franklin's work

was gaining European favor, Kinnersley was becoming known and respected in colonial scientific circles through his extensive traveling and lecturing. He proved that electricity produces heat, and he invented an electrical air thermometer. The English scientist Joseph Priestley wrote of him: "Some of his observations . . . are very curious; and some later accounts . . . seem to promise that, if he continues his electrical inquiries, his name, after that of his friend, will be second to few in the history of electricity." After 1755 Kinnersley taught English and oratory at the College of Philadelphia while continuing his scientific researches.²⁸



Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), painted by Mason Chamberlin (d. 1787) in London in late July 1762 for Franklin's friend, Col. Philip Ludwell III. Franklin himself considered the portrait an accurate likeness, and he ordered more than a hundred copies of an engraving taken from Chamberlin's painting.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART MR. AND MRS. WHARTON SINKLER COLLECTION

Philip Syng, silversmith and another associate in the electrical experiments, was the inventor of a convenient friction machine for producing electricity. Robert Grace, like Syng, had been an original Junto member. A metallurgist, he cast the plates for Franklin's first invention, the Pennsylvania fireplace, and he now also assisted in the experiments with electricity.

The very much younger David Rittenhouse—he was only nineteen when Franklin published his electrical experiments—opened on his father's farm an instrument shop mainly devoted to clockmaking. Within the next years, however, he would invent a pocket metallic thermometer, experiment with the compressibility of water, and design his celebrated orrery, a mathematically precise model of the solar system in motion.

John Bartram, the protégé of James Logan, continued his botanical studies during this period. In the same year that Franklin published his electrical book Bartram's *Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, etc. . . . made by John Bartram in his travels from Pennsylvania to Lake Ontario* appeared. Bartram's book was based on his journey of 1743, a journey that has been called the first scientific exploration by an American. Later, William Bartram would carry on his father's work.²⁹

Exploration of the North American continent was not confined to the colonial mainland. Arctic expeditions whetted the scientific imagination of Philadelphia, in large part because of the unsuccessful English attempts to find a northwest passage to the Orient. Speculation about such a passage became active in Philadelphia in 1748 when Peter Collinson sent over a book on the subject. Five years later the first Philadelphia—or American—expedition to the frozen north was launched when the schooner *Argo*, sponsored by William Allen and other wealthy citizens, set sail under Capt. Charles Swaine. Stopped by an impasse of ice, Swaine returned with discouraging reports. A second expedition sent out the next spring took the *Argo* as far north as the sixty-third parallel, but it proved as fruitless as the first in finding a passage through the Arctic wastes. The expedition did, however, chart the Labrador coast and discovered good fishing banks hitherto unknown to Philadelphians.³⁰

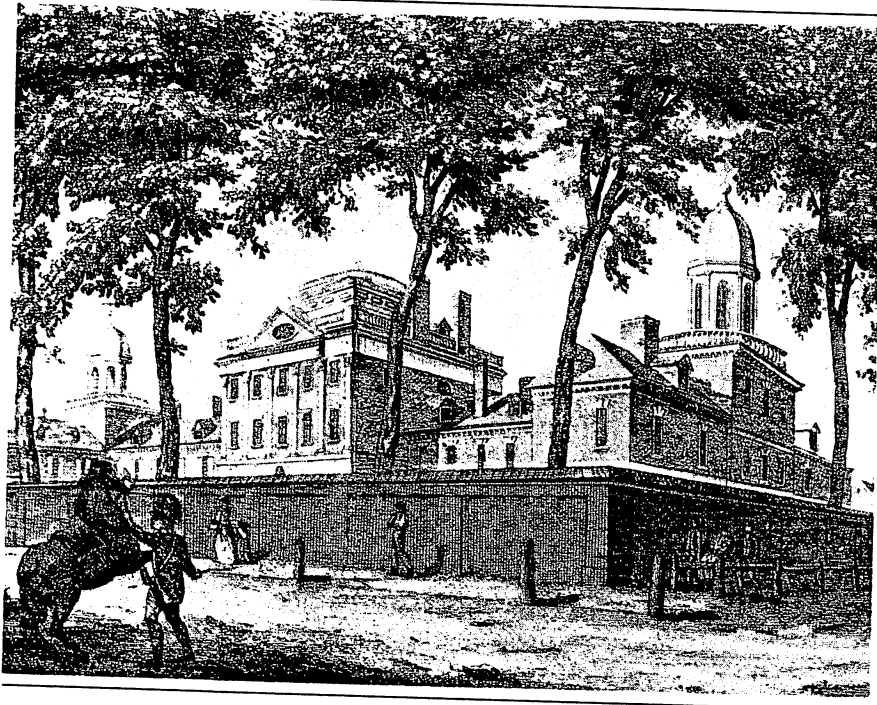
Of more immediate utility—it would be almost another century before Americans again attempted the Arctic regions—was the field of medicine, in which Philadelphians made significant contributions. The ubiquitous Franklin invented the first flexible catheter in America in 1752, and he had probably already begun his ruminations on lead poisoning. More young Philadelphians bent on a career in medicine were going abroad to study in the great medical schools of Europe. Following his training at Edinburgh—he was among the first Americans to study there—Dr. John Redman pursued his interest in obstetrics at the University of Leyden, where he wrote his dissertation, *De Abortu*. Obtaining practical experience in the hospitals of London and Paris, Redman returned to Philadelphia where he had a long and distinguished medical career both as a practitioner and as an instructor in the College of Physicians.³¹

Dr. Thomas Bond began his career at Annapolis, where he studied with the peripatetic Scotsman Dr. Alexander Hamilton—he who in the 1740s had pungently commented in his diary about Philadelphia and its citizens. Bond then attended medical schools in both Paris and London before settling in Philadelphia as a skilled surgeon with particular interests in hygiene and

epidemiology. Bond also published in an English journal a paper on liver worms and discussed with physician to the Crown Dr. John Fothergill the use of Peruvian bark in the treatment of scrofula.³²

Bond, furthermore, first conceived of a charity hospital for Philadelphia along the lines of those of London and Paris. Franklin publicized the project in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, and the leading Quakers offered their support—perhaps, as some people suspected, in order to offset attacks on their pacifism. To raise funds for the project Franklin introduced what may have been the first dollar-matching scheme in American history. He prevailed upon the Assembly to grant £2000 to the hospital only when a like amount was privately raised. The plan was immediately successful, and in 1752 the Pennsylvania Hospital opened temporary quarters in the house of the late Justice John Kinsey on the southeast corner of Fifth and High Streets.

Two years passed before a permanent site for the hospital was acquired beyond the built-up area of the city, between Eighth and Ninth Streets on the north side of Pine. Subsequently the proprietors gave the hospital the



The Pennsylvania Hospital, Pine Street at Eighth, begun 1755, engraving by William Birch (1755-1834), 1799. The hospital's east wing, designed in 1751 by Samuel Rboads (1711-1784), was completed in 1756, the west wing in 1796, and the central building in 1794-1805.

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA

remaining land in the block, extending to the south side of Spruce Street. Samuel Carpenter, a master carpenter and one of the managers of the hospital, drew up the design for its buildings, a plan that was not to achieve completion until after the Revolution; the east wing, however, was built in 1755.

The need for the hospital was apparent from the beginning. The Quaker Alms House had become inadequate, and the St. Andrew's Society, founded by Dr. Thomas Graeme, James Burd, and John Inglis in 1749 for the relief of poor Scots, was helpful but limited. From the time the new hospital opened its doors, therefore, the list of patients awaiting its facilities was a long one. Most of the city's physicians, including Dr. Bond, offered their services without pay.³³

Franklin, who served as a manager for several years and was the first secretary of the hospital's board of trustees as well as its second president, composed the inscription for the cornerstone of the building:

IN THE YEAR OF CHRIST

1755

GEORGE THE SECOND HAPPILY REIGNING

(FOR HE SOUGHT THE HAPPINESS OF HIS PEOPLE)

PHILADELPHIA FLOURISHING

(FOR ITS INHABITANTS WERE PUBLIC SPIRITED)

THIS BUILDING,

BY THE BOUNTY OF THE GOVERNMENT,

AND OF MANY PRIVATE PERSONS,

WAS PIOUSLY FOUNDED,

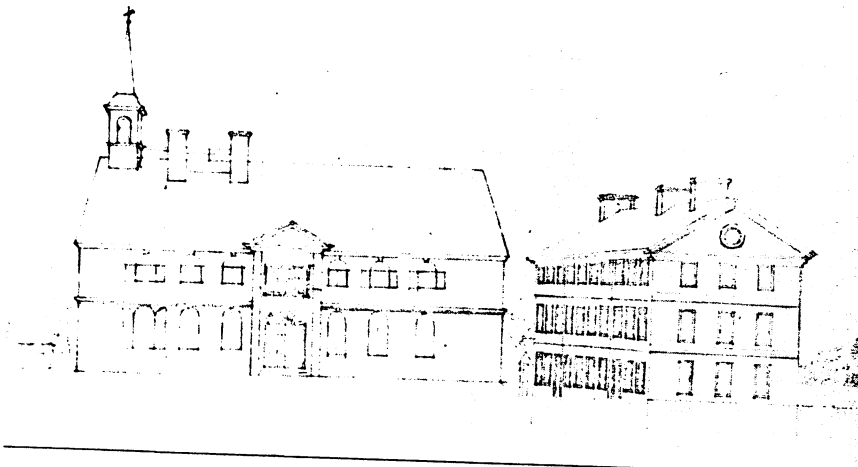
FOR THE RELIEF OF THE SICK AND MISERABLE.

MAY THE GOD OF MERCIES

BLESS THE UNDERTAKING!³⁴

God perhaps was listening, for the record of the Pennsylvania Hospital far surpassed those of London and Paris. In its first twenty-five years over half of almost 9000 persons admitted were completely cured.

In the same year that the cornerstone for the hospital was laid, the College of Philadelphia received its charter of incorporation. Franklin—of whom when he died it has been said that “no other town, burying its great man, ever buried more of itself than Philadelphia with Franklin”³⁵—was again the catalyst. Eight years previously the successful printer had opined that though Philadelphia was a good place to live, it lacked two essentials: there was “no Provision for Defence, nor for a compleat Education of Youth.”³⁶ The solution to the former was the military association he shortly organized. In pursuit of the latter he published his famous proposals *Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*, in which he suggested the establishment of a nonsectarian academy. His idea won the support of such influential Anglicans as Tench Francis and Richard Peters and of such Presbyterians as William Allen and the Shippens. Of the first twenty-four trustees, eighteen were Anglicans.



The College of Philadelphia, Fourth and Mulberry (Arch) Streets, sketch by Pierre Eugène Du Simitière (d. 1784), c. 1780. The Academy of Philadelphia held classes in a large ball which had been built in 1740 as a charity school and meeting-house by the followers of George Whitefield, the English evangelist. In 1755 the Academy was empowered to grant degrees to the graduates among its 300 students and to change its name to "The College, Academy, and Charitable School of Philadelphia." A dormitory, to the north of the main ball, was added in 1762.

LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

Although a few Quakers, such as Abel James, donated substantially to the project, and James Logan and Dr. Lloyd Zachary served on the original board of trustees, most Friends opposed it. Critical of higher education, they also feared a further loss of power, especially to the Anglicans. Despite this opposition £15,000 was raised within a year, and in 1751 the first classes of the academy were held in a warehouse owned by William Allen on Second Street. Shortly thereafter the academy moved to the large building on Fourth Street below Arch that had been erected for George Whitefield's religious meetings.

At its beginning the academy was headed by the Rev. David Martin, the Latin teacher, but upon his death within the year the position was taken by the noted Presbyterian minister and classical scholar Francis Alison. Franklin was not enthusiastic about the classical aspects of the curriculum, but in order to secure the backing of the wealthy William Allen and others he had agreed to dividing the academy into an English and a Latin school. In addition to Alison the first faculty included Theophilus Grew, who taught mathematics and geography, and David James Dove, who taught English. In 1754 the young Rev. William Smith joined the group as a teacher of humanities. His pamphlet *A General Idea of the College of Mirania*, which stressed practical subjects, had caught the interest of Franklin, who soon afterward secured Smith's appointment.³⁷

When in 1755 the academy received college status with power to grant degrees, it became the College, Academy, and Charitable School of Philadelphia, commonly known as the College of Philadelphia. William Smith, who introduced the term in America, became the first provost, and Francis Alison, vice-provost. Among the first seven graduates in May 1757 were Jacob Duché, Hugh Williamson, John Morgan, and Francis Hopkinson, all of whom became distinguished in their fields. Since so many Philadelphians frowned on higher education, the college never had a large enrollment in its colonial days. Only 141 men were graduated before the Revolution. Nevertheless, except for Harvard, it offered the best education available in British America.

Harvard, like the College of Philadelphia, was a private institution. Harvard represented, however, the capstone to the longstanding Puritan commitment to education, privately as well as publicly supported. Philadelphia, on the other hand, had no publicly supported schools. Rather, previous to the academy Philadelphia's youth was educated solely in sectarian institutions or with private schoolmasters. The church-related schools usually provided free instruction to a few promising poor pupils, but others paid a tuition fee to cover operating costs. As Philadelphia grew more urbane, controversy had developed over the relative merits of classical as opposed to practical learning. By 1750 the Quakers themselves were allowing their schools to emphasize Latin along with the subjects taught in the English departments. Even the "ignorant" Baptists established a Latin grammar school five years later. There were those, naturally, who opposed this drift toward classical education. John Bartram, for example, wanted his son to receive an education that would enable him to make a "temperate, reasonable living." To meet the demand for practical studies several private schoolmasters taught such subjects as accounting, mathematics, navigation, and surveying. Anthony Lamb for twenty-six years taught "Italian," i.e., double-entry bookkeeping, writing, and arithmetic among other subjects, and prepared many of Philadelphia's youths for the world of business.³⁸

Young women too had their opportunities for schooling beyond the expected social accomplishments of a well-bred lady. The Quakers for years had included girls in their schools, but in 1751 David James Dove conducted a private school for girls that offered a curriculum more advanced than the accepted elementary level. After his dismissal in 1753 from the College of Philadelphia where he also taught, Dove merged his tutorial interests and opened a boarding school in Vidal's Alley for both boys and girls. In the same year William Dawson inaugurated night classes for working girls which included psalmody in addition to the more useful writing and arithmetic. Inspired perhaps by the success of these private schools, Anthony Benezet in 1754 started a school for girls which became highly successful and in time included in its curriculum Latin and Greek, alongside needlework.³⁹

Even before Benezet's interest in female education, the concern over slavery for which he is famous had led him to support education for Negroes. In 1750, in his own home, he began to conduct evening classes for black

children, an undertaking he engaged in for twenty years. Later in the decade, in 1758, the Bray Associates, a group of Englishmen administering a fund left by the philanthropic Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray, were persuaded by Benjamin Franklin to open a school for blacks under the direction of the Rev. William Sturgeon of Christ Church. At its opening thirty black pupils were taught by a woman instructor to "Sew, Knit, read and write."⁴⁰

Formal institutions of education were supplemented in Philadelphia by a proliferation of libraries. "You would be astonished," the Rev. Jacob Duché declared in 1774, "at the general taste for books, which prevails among all orders and ranks of people in this city." Because membership in the Library Company had become expensive, a group of professional men, tradesmen, and artisans in 1747 organized the Union Library Company, also a subscription library. By 1759 the Union Library owned more than 300 volumes and its membership had reached its limit of 100. A third company, the Association Library, was founded in 1757 by a group of artisans, mostly Quaker, which included such notables as printers William Bradford and David Hall, apothecary Christopher Marshall, and clockmaker Owen Biddle. Before long this library too had accumulated a sizable collection. At the same time that the artisans were forming the Association Library, a group of workingmen organized the Amicable Company, a smaller and less successful undertaking than the others. During the years that followed the feasibility of supporting so many similar libraries was increasingly questioned, and in 1769, after a series of mergers, the Library Company of Philadelphia absorbed them all, thus becoming once again the sole "public" library in the city, well endowed with money, members, and books.⁴¹

Just as libraries flourished, so did booksellers. One of the better known was William Bradford, nephew of Franklin's old competitor Andrew Bradford and publisher of the *Pennsylvania Journal*. William Bradford combined retailing with printing at the Sign of the Bible, next door to his London Coffee House. With the absence of copyright laws, Philadelphia printers increasingly published their own editions of English and European works. By the late 1760s, after the Nonimportation Agreement, Robert Bell industriously brought out popular titles of the day, the works of such authors as the historian William Robertson and the jurist William Blackstone and a whole series of English plays. In 1774 James Humphreys issued the first American edition of Lawrence Sterne's collected works.⁴²

There were a half dozen or so printing shops by mid-century, with three printers—Franklin, William Bradford, and in Germantown, Christopher Saur—publishing newspapers. Bradford, later denominated "the patriot printer" for his activities during the Revolution, undertook in 1757 the ambitious plan of publishing a literary magazine modeled on similar English journals of the day. For his editor Bradford chose College Provost William Smith, under whose auspices *The American Magazine, or Monthly Chronicle for the British Colonies* managed a brief life of twelve issues before financial exigencies caused its demise. *The American Magazine*, which has been called the "most

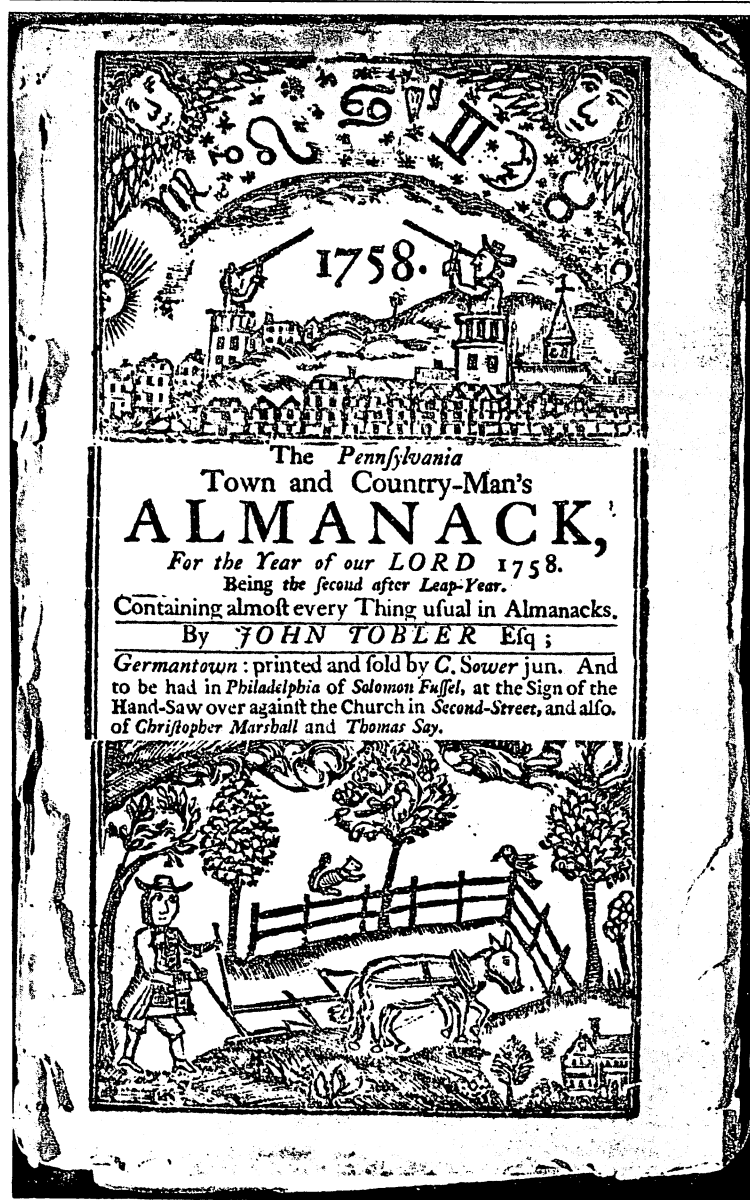
brilliant" publication to come out of colonial America, offered a forum for such Philadelphians as the versatile Francis Hopkinson, composer and inventor as well as versifier, and Thomas Godfrey, Jr. Godfrey, son of the improver of the mariner's quadrant, would soon author a play entitled *The Prince of Parthia*. Its production in 1767 made it the first drama by an American author to be professionally staged. Godfrey was probably the most talented of the literati surrounding Provost Smith, but death cut off his career in 1763 at the untimely age of twenty-seven.⁴³

Five years before Godfrey's death Benjamin Franklin, who wrote in a less derivative, less pretentious style—the Smith group doted on English taste and manners—composed what would shortly become the most widely read American work of the century. *The Way to Wealth*, as it came to be called, was the preface to the 1758 *Poor Richard's Almanac*, the last to be edited by Franklin. Before the century was out Franklin's homely essay in the prudential virtues—a relevant lesson at a time when the mobility was replacing the nobility—had enjoyed 144 reprintings, including twenty-eight in French, eleven in Italian, three in German, and one each in Dutch, Gaelic, and Swedish.

Franklin, who in 1748 had other things on his mind such as politics and electricity, that year turned his printing business over to his partner David Hall. But his interest in journalism and printing remained keen, and early in the 1750s he again tried unsuccessfully to establish a German-language newspaper. He was not able, however, to compete with Christopher Saur (Sower), Sr., of Germantown, a man of much influence among the Germans who by 1753 claimed a circulation of 4000 for his *Pensylvanische Berichte*, a newspaper founded in 1739 as *Der Hoch Deutsch Pensylvanische Geschichte Schreiber* and destined for a number of metamorphoses. Until his death in 1758 Saur, and thereafter his son and grandsons, published a variety of books and tracts in both English and German. The elder Saur, who started out in Germantown as a clockmaker, is best known for his prayerbooks and Bibles. His German Bible published in 1748 was the first in a European language to be printed in America. Heinrich Miller's *Der Wochentliche Philadelphische Staatsbote* was able soon after its founding in 1762 to surpass Saur's publication as the most widely circulated German newspaper, not only in Philadelphia but throughout the German settlements in America.⁴⁴

The German press was but one facet of the growth of educational opportunity for Philadelphia's citizens. From foreign-language periodicals to Franklin's homiletics, to schools for blacks, to libraries, to short-lived if ambitious literary projects such as Bradford's *American Magazine*—in short, in the general dissemination of the printed word, education, either formal or informal, became increasingly available. When at the same time the economic system afforded leisure to a significant portion of her citizens, the scene was set for the city to enjoy a modest flowering in the arts that depend on both education and leisure.

The so-called higher arts, painting, music, and the like, were patronized



The Pennsylvania Town and Country-Man's Almanack, by John Tobler, printed in 1758 by Christopher Sower (Saur), Jr. (1721–1784). Beginning in 1739 Christopher Saur and his sons printed German and English almanacs, as well as religious books, on their presses in Germantown, the early textile and paper manufacturing center.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

—though in Philadelphia with one exception—by those who could afford them. That exception included most of the wealthy Quakers, whose pietistic faith disdained worldly amusements as a waste of God-given time. Upper-class Anglicans and Presbyterians, however, increasingly supported the fine arts, most particularly the art of portrait painting. Their interest brought to Philadelphia a number of artists from abroad and from other American colonies. The Swedish painter and organ builder Gustavus Hesselius continued to live in the city much of the time. Some artists stayed only briefly, such as John Wollaston, who worked in the city around 1755 when he painted the portraits of Mayor William Plumstead and Judge William Peters. Likenesses of Mrs. Peters and of Attorney-General Tench Francis along with others had been painted some years earlier by Robert Feke, noted Rhode Island portraitist who made several visits to Philadelphia in the late 1740s.⁴⁵

A clientele for portraits made Philadelphia attractive to artists. It is significant too that the Philadelphia Academy taught painting to local boys with talent. For their art supplies one of the best shops was the “oil and colour shop” run by Christopher Marshall under the Sign of the Golden Ball near the Three Tuns Tavern in Chestnut Street. Matthew Pratt, who became a popular Philadelphia portrait painter, learned his craft as an apprentice to his uncle James Claypoole.⁴⁶ Another artist who taught painting was William Williams, the versatile Welshman who came to the city about 1750 and achieved renown as the scene painter for David Douglass’s 1759 theater on Society Hill in Southwark. More important, Williams introduced oil painting to the talented Benjamin West, a young student on the threshold of his career.⁴⁷ Encouraged also by Provost William Smith, West painted a few Philadelphia portraits in the manner of Williams, including one of Thomas Mifflin, before departing for European study in 1760, never to return.

As patrons of the dramatic arts, the non-Quaker gentry gave the theater a breath of life in a city still prejudiced against this form of entertainment. In August 1749 Walter Murray and Thomas Kean brought a troupe to Philadelphia to perform several plays including Joseph Addison’s tragedy *Cato*. The large brick warehouse owned by William Plumstead on the banks of the Delaware at the foot of Pine Street served as a makeshift theater. Prodded by Quakers and other conservatives, the city Council ordered magistrates to bind the actors against the showing of any improper performances.⁴⁸

Five years passed before another theatrical visit. This time the company was the better known group directed by Lewis Hallam, fresh from successful engagements in New York and Charleston. Using Plumstead’s warehouse, now equipped with stage, pit, and gallery, Hallam opened the season in April 1754 with a tragedy, Nicholas Rowe’s *The Fair Penitent*, and a farce, David Garrick’s *Miss in Her Teens*. In the course of its thirty performances Hallam’s company may well have performed some of the Shakespearean plays in their repertory.

Following Hallam’s death in 1756 his widow married David Douglass, a theater manager and architect, and in 1759 they came to Philadelphia with a

1763. Der Wöchentliche 61 Stück.
Philadelphische Staatsbote,
 Mit den neuesten Fremden und Einheimisch- Politischen Nachrichten;
Samt den
 von Zeit zu Zeit in der Kirche und Gelehrten Welt sich ereignenden Merkwürdigkeiten.

Montage, den 14. März.

Diese Zeitung wird alle Montage ausgegeben, für Sechs Schillinge des Jahrs, bey Heinrich Miller, Buchbruder, zwischen der Wein- und Ness-strasse, in der Zweyten strasse.

NB. Die Abfertigungsmittel oder Bescheinigungen, welche man in diese Zeitung mit gefügt haben, werden, sammt der Zahlung, abgeliefert, in Vollziehung des oben benannten Vertrages, und dem Herrn Georg Honig, Erbsitzig zum König von Preussen, in der Warthe-Stadt, und an andern Orten des folgenden Jahres: Im Vernehmen des Augustin Weisser, in Kassa bei Adam Wälder; in Pommern bei Jacob Hillmeyer; in Pommern bei Conrad Grob; in Koenigsberg bei Waritz Rog; und in Preussen bei Jacob Gind, auf dem Breiten Markt.

Um Recommendation guter Kundleute wird freundlichst gebeten; und daß einer es dem andern sagen wolle.

*) In dem vorhergehenden Heft dieser Zeitung, auf der Seite Blaustrich, in der 1ten Spalte, und von Seite 200 abwärts, liest: denn es ist kein, sondern, wenn es kein. Auf einer bestimmten Blaustrich, in der 2ten Spalte, auf der Seite 200, steht: denn es ist kein, sondern es ist kein: Sie sind gleich es mit. Weiterhin liest: auf, auf, auf und es ist kein.

Wien, um das Wasser in breslauer Stadt, dem Bezirk von Goutsmart, und den Rorber Freuden, bräuflich rufend.

[illegible]

* Der Feldherrn-Baum ist ein Zusammenfluß vom Baum oder Farn der Franzosen oder belgischen Soldaten, vom Peruanischen Baume, und Weingarten oder Spiritus Vini.

Es ist mir das eine Freude, daß in euren Briefen eine große Anzahl von Briefen enthalten ist. Der Brief ist ein sehr wichtiges Mittel, um die Gedanken zu veranschaulichen. Ich habe die Briefe von eurer Hand gelesen und bin sehr erfreut, daß sie so viele interessante Gedanken enthalten. Ich habe die Briefe von eurer Hand gelesen und bin sehr erfreut, daß sie so viele interessante Gedanken enthalten. Ich habe die Briefe von eurer Hand gelesen und bin sehr erfreut, daß sie so viele interessante Gedanken enthalten.

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sich findenden Dingen in und bey der Stadt Pby-
delphia vorhanden und abzuheben.

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Stoffen, Gassen oder Plätze anzuheben, zu großer
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practisch octodones, Das wohnt einiger Müll-
er, Seifenwäher, oder Kermwäher, innerhalb
bestahr Stadt, Perjur, oder Launfops, einiges
unkeines oder edelhaftes Gewerke auf vorer-
breit oder drüber, innerhalb bestahr Stadt,
mitgen Vorhof, Sellen-Drö, oder Sellen, so sich über
der Fuß Drei Zoll in solche Straße hinaus er-
strecken müß, aber in der vorerwähnten Straße

[illegible][illegible]

den unvollständigen und unvollständigen Dingen vorzubringen. So wird hiernächst gefälligst beordert von dem Großherzog James Hamilton, Fürst von Cumberland, unter dem Großherzogthum

Thomas Penn, und Richard Penn, Ep-
berrn der Provinz Pennsylvania, und Countess
Pembroke.

Wurde auf's Neue und Suffer an der Delamare, auf die mit dem Raub und Ermordung der Repräsentanten der freien Gemeinschaft befaßter Provinz, in allen seinen Handlungen unausweichlich

und vertheilte das dort gesammelte Vermögen, und brachte derselben Gemalt, das er in einem griechischen befugter Stadt oder einem respektive and überführt worden, für jedes solches Verbrechen die Summe von fünf und dreißig Schillingen vertheilt, und fragten

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zu gebrauchen, ein jeder so schmerzhaft als
zu einigen Pfund, Strube oder Lammlein, heist
diefer Stuck, *Beizig* oder *Amuch*, innerlich
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Im Gaby, dass am dort liegt der einzige der Stadt (Wirtshaus) befragter Stadt, tappte über Nacht

talented troupe of actors. Hoping to escape the inevitable opposition in the city proper, the company gave its performances in a new frame building on the southwest corner of Cedar and Vernon Streets (South and Hancock), just west of Front and, more important, across the street from the city boundary line. No sooner had the building been started than the provincial Assembly, prodded by church groups in Philadelphia, framed a bill banning theaters in Pennsylvania and sent it to Governor Denny. The liberal-minded governor, hoping to give the actors a reprieve, amended the bill and sent it back to the Assembly. This maneuver allowed the company to perform during the entire season from June until December. In 1761 the Privy Council in England disallowed the antitheater act, thus ending legislative attempts to ban the theater for the remainder of the colonial period.

The "Theatre on Society Hill" had only one season, but it was notable. It was for this theater that William Williams painted his scenery, and it was here that Philadelphia saw John Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, the first opera to be performed in Penn's colony. The season also included *Hamlet*, as well as a tragedy with music by Henry Purcell and some lighter interludes, both vocal and instrumental.

In 1766 Douglass's troupe became the American Company and permanently based itself in the northern colonies. On November 12 of that year the company opened a new Southwark Theater closer to the residences of most of the potential patrons, on the south side of Cedar Street at Apollo, west of Fourth. The inaugural performance was of *The Provoked Husband*. From the 1767 season onward until the Revolution Douglass and the Southwark Theater made drama an established feature of Philadelphia life.⁴⁹

Music also was slowly entering Philadelphia's social life. The Quakers would have no part of it, but by 1750 there were organs in at least four of the city's churches—Christ Church, the Moravian church, St. Michael's Lutheran, and St. Joseph's—and interest was being shown in other instruments as well. John Beals, music master from London, in 1748 taught the violin, oboe, flute, recorder, and dulcimer. He was also willing to supply music for various occasions, and may perhaps have played for the Dancing Assemblies.⁵⁰

German-language publications were printed by Benjamin Franklin and others to accommodate the estimated 58,000 German immigrants who had arrived through the port of Philadelphia by the early 1750s. In 1763 Der Wochentliche Philadelphische Staatsbote was issued every Monday by Heinrich Miller from his press on Second Street between Vine and Race. The distribution of Miller's readership is revealed by his list of advertising agents in Philadelphia, Germantown, Lancaster, York, Reading, Fredericktown (Maryland), and New York.

Brig Nancy, N. Cooper to Madeira.
 Sloop Lovely Peggy, A. Clarkson to Maryland.
 Brig Philadelphia Packet, J. Harrison to South-Carolina.
 Ship Ann, G. Forten to Ditto.
 Sloop Speedwell, J. Sooy, Jun. to Ditto.
 Brig Nancy, H. Dougherty to Barcelona.
 Schooner Charming Nancy, J. Mullowny to Halifax.

By Authority.

NEVER PERFORMED BEFORE.

By the AMERICAN COMPANY,
 At the NEW THEATRE, in Southwark,
 On FRIDAY, the Twenty-Fourth of April, will be
 presented, A TRAGEDY written by the late ingenious
 Mr. Thomas Godfrey, of this city, called the

PRINCE of PARTHIA.

The PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS by Mr. HALLAM,
 Mr. DOUGLASS, Mr. WALL, Mr. MORRIS,
 Mr. ALLYN, Mr. TOMLINSON, Mr. BROAD-
 BELT, Mr. GREVILLE, Mrs. DOUGLASS,
 Mrs. MORRIS, Miss WAINWRIGHT, and
 Miss CHEER.

To which will be added, A *Ballad Opera* called
The CONTRIVANCES.
 To begin exactly at Seven o'Clock.--*Vivant Rex & Regina.*

April 23.
TO BE LETT,

TWO pasture LOTS. situated near the Lower Ferry road,
 on the first lane to the southward as you enter said road
 from the common land of Andrew Ellish.

*Advertisement in the Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser,
 April 23, 1767. The Southwark Theater, on Cedar (South) Street west of Fourth,
 was built in 1766 for David Douglass and his American Company. Midway in the
 first season, the group advertised performances of The Prince of Parthia, a tragedy
 in blank verse recounting the love of a king's son for a captive maiden. The play
 had been written by Thomas Godfrey, Jr. (1736-1763), in Philadelphia in 1759.*

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

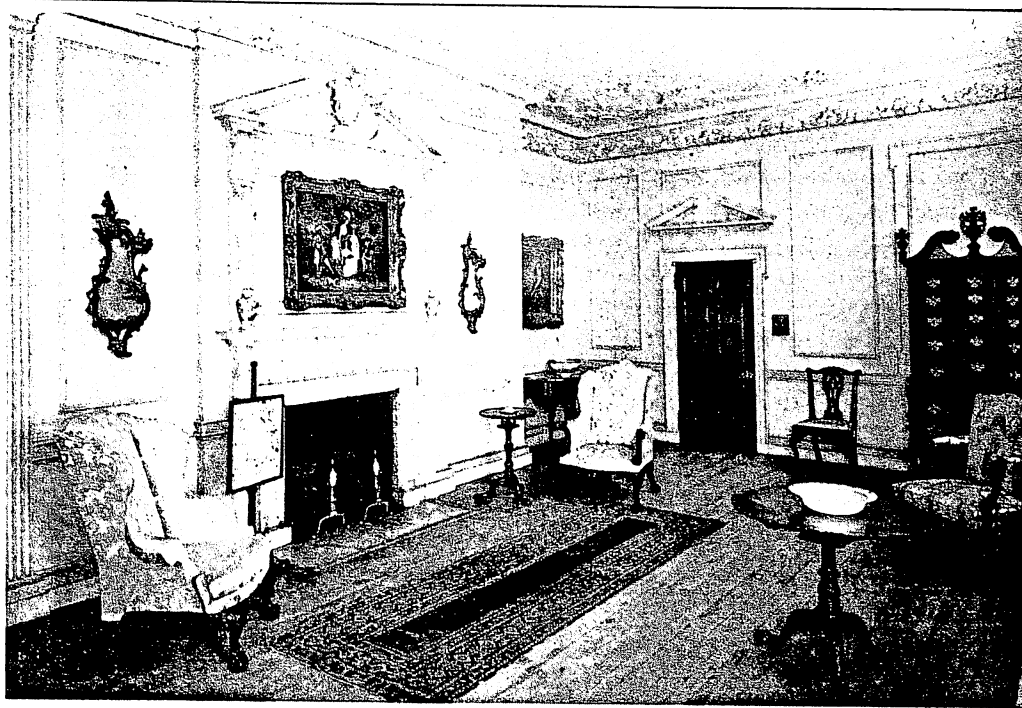
III

When a gentleman came to Philadelphia in 1747 to offer lessons not only in dancing but in "the noble art and science of defence, and pursuit of the small sword," Samuel Foulke, a leading Quaker, avowed that such evils would open the gates to a whole train of sins, including the wasting of time and all the afflictions of worldliness.⁵¹ But Quaker attitudes themselves continued to undergo a gradual change. While some affluent Friends departed the meetings for the greater freedom of the Church of England, others such as Joseph Fox, who was censured by the Friends in 1759 for supporting the war with France, remained within the Society but adopted a mode of life that became more and more inconsistent with old Quaker precepts. In spite of their dogmatic utterances wealthy Quakers generally owned elegant houses, drank the best wines, and set luxurious tables. Their dress, though somber in hue, was stylishly cut from the finest materials. A good example of the new worldliness was Israel Pemberton, Jr. While consistently opposing all the arts, he had in 1747 purchased Clarke Hall on the southwest corner of Third and Chestnut Streets. Built in 1694, this attractive residence was surrounded by formal gardens. In reality, wealthy Quakers were increasingly hard to distinguish from their non-Quaker neighbors.⁵²

Charles Norris is another example. His large three-story Georgian mansion on Chestnut Street between Fourth and Fifth contained a handsome wild-cherry staircase in its spacious hall and was gracefully furnished throughout. Back of the house were a greenhouse and a hothouse with pineapples, both buildings heated against the cold. Next to such mansions as these or in nearby courts and alleys stood the less pretentious residences and even the dwellings of the poor.

One of the most elegant of all the prerevolutionary town houses in Philadelphia was the mansion built by Charles Stedman and later purchased by Samuel Powel. Excepting two other dwellings, this imposing house and its gardens occupied the entire block on Third Street between Spruce and Willing's Alley. It was built in the usual manner of Philadelphia houses with red brick walls and white trimming. Inside, Powel made it a place of striking beauty with mahogany wainscoting, paneled pine walls painted in soft colors, and bas-relief plastered ceilings. Powel, grandson of the "rich carpenter" of the same name, occupied the house after returning from Europe in 1766. He used the wealth accumulated by his father and grandfather to grace his dwelling with Chippendale furniture, paintings by artists of renown, and costly carpets and rugs.⁵³

Besides richly decorating their houses, Philadelphia's wealthy men of every faith also took great pride in their fine collections of books. Outstanding was the library of the Quaker Isaac Norris, Jr., a scholarly man, competent in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French. His collection was passed on to his daughter, the wife of lawyer and revolutionary "Pennsylvania Farmer" John Dickinson. The latter in 1785 presented a portion of the books to Dickinson



The second-floor front room taken from Samuel Powel's house, now installed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Another room from the Powel house is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The actual house on Third Street between Spruce and Willing's Alley has been restored by the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks and is open to the public.

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The Rev. Richard Peters also owned a superb library, and Attorney-General Tench Francis could boast of a law library of more than 300 volumes. Christopher Marshall owned even more books of a miscellaneous character, and Lloyd Zachary had probably the best medical collection in town, most of which he left to the Pennsylvania Hospital.⁵⁴

But for all one's fine town house with its rich furnishings and large library, the true mark of having arrived was the ownership of a country estate. Patterned after the great country seats of Old England, such mansions as have been preserved are today within the metropolitan area. In the eighteenth century they were within an hour's ride of the city, for example, on the banks of the Schuylkill or near Germantown. Most of the estates were farms as well as country homes, well stocked with horses, cows, and sheep, attended by indentured servants. In the mansions some of the landlords had collections of art bought in Europe. Outside the houses there were invariably large flower

gardens, greenhouses, and fishponds. The country seats not only were places where the wealthy could go for the joys of country life, but also served as refuges when epidemics struck the city.⁵⁵

Like persons of their station everywhere the Philadelphia gentry were lavish entertainers. Occasions like the sumptuous party given by Gov. James Hamilton in 1752 in honor of the king's birthday were not uncommon. Following the dinner at his country estate at Bush Hill, where in the early twentieth century the United States Mint would stand along Spring Garden Street west of Sixteenth, a grand ball and supper were held in the Long Gallery of the State House. Great banquets were given for incoming and outgoing governors and other dignitaries, and special events were similarly observed. In 1746, for instance, Gov. George Thomas celebrated the victory of Culloden Moor with a banquet for a hundred guests. Similarly, the Corporation of Philadelphia in 1757 "genteely entertained" Major-General Lord Loudoun, four colonial governors, and a number of high-ranking officers of the British army.⁵⁶



Samuel Powel (1738-1793), copy of the portrait painted in Rome (1764) by Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807). Grandson of a Quaker carpenter, Powel was the last colonial mayor of Philadelphia and the first to hold the office under the new government in 1789.

PHILADELPHIA SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LANDMARKS

Such entertainments were admittedly exclusive, but there were pastimes that could be enjoyed by all levels of society. Skating in winter and swimming in summer were both popular sports. Alexander Graydon recalled that Philadelphia had "the best and most elegant skaters in the world," and perhaps because of so many opportunities, excellent swimmers as well. Franklin took great pride in his skill as a skater and a swimmer. Although not allowed to frequent the places where males went swimming, girls were permitted to bathe in the ocean when the family vacationed on the Jersey shore.⁵⁷ For the spectator there was occasional bull-baiting, bear-baiting, and cock-fighting. But above all there was horse racing; along what is now Race Street and later at Centre Square, sportsmen would gather to bet on their favorite pacers.⁵⁸

Some gentlemen kept race horses as well as coach and riding horses in their stables, and this ownership of horses reflects, in part, the class lines in Philadelphia. If they had them at all, the lower classes were able to own only an occasional work horse. Those who could afford horses added sleighriding to their winter pleasures, and throughout the year moved about town and to the country in sulkies and carriages whose swiftness was annoyingly impeded by the rutted condition of the roads. By the 1750s the very wealthy began to acquire luxurious coaches which naturally excited the envy of the less affluent. There were only eight four-wheeled vehicles in Philadelphia in 1736; twenty-five years later almost forty private carriages were in use. The rising demand for vehicles of all types gave impetus to the carriage-making trade in Philadelphia, despite the fact that many continued to be imported from England.⁵⁹

The rage for carriages reflected the desire as well as the ability of Philadelphia's emergent upper class to emulate the social forms of the mother country. So did the Philadelphia Dancing Assemblies, first held in 1748. An institution whose social exclusiveness continues to the present day, the first Assembly had fifty-nine subscribers, none of whom was a Quaker. The list included such nabobs as Dr. Phineas Bond (brother of Thomas), Joseph Shippen, William Plumstead, James Hamilton, Archibald McCall, William Allen, Richard Peters, Lynford Lardner, and David Franks. Although tradition maintains that the first dance was held at the home of John Swift, treasurer of the Assemblies, most of the early affairs took place at Andrew Hamilton's warehouse. Light refreshments were served and music was provided for by a levy on the members. At one of the first Assemblies Anne Shippen Willing, wife of Mayor Charles Willing, had the honor of leading off the dance with Gov. James Hamilton. Also in attendance was the noted beauty Mrs. Jekyll, granddaughter of Edward Shippen, the city's first mayor.⁶⁰ Her marriage to a brother of Sir Joseph Jekyll, one-time secretary to Queen Anne, had given her the English association so greatly esteemed by America's upper class.

Writing of the Philadelphia of the 1720s, the prominent historian Carl Bridenbaugh states that in the city "there was little gaiety and less elegance; a dreary commercialism, clothed in the austere garb of Quaker principles, permeated the very air."⁶¹ The same could no longer be said of Philadelphia twenty-five years later. Education, science, the arts, the pretentious emulation

of the social mores of old England by a self-conscious minority of name and wealth, all of these contributed by the 1750s to the making of an unmistakably vibrant city.

I V

Philadelphia society by 1750, though no longer a tight circle of Quakers, was nonetheless closely knit. By then although many of their fathers were of humble origin, most members of the upper class were born to wealth and position. The importance of family or lineage separated the middle-class man who had attained wealth by his own means from the man who simply inherited it from his parents or grandparents. As with the Quakers, marriage ties among the non-Quakers tightened the circle of their society. The subscribers to the first Assembly offer a case in point. John Inglis, a director of the Assembly, was married to Catherine McCall, sister of Archibald McCall and daughter of George McCall, head of one of the city's leading merchant families. William Plumstead, another merchant, married Catherine's sister Mary in 1753, and the next year another sister, Eleanor, became the wife of Andrew Eliot, son of a Scottish nobleman. Col. Joseph Shippen, who married Jane Galloway, was the brother of Mrs. Charles Willing. Chief Justice William Allen married Anne Hamilton, daughter of the noted lawyer Andrew Hamilton. Anne's brother was James Hamilton, governor of the province from 1748 to 1754 and 1759 to 1763. In 1766 Allen's daughter married John Penn, grandson of the founder. These were but a few of the family connections that formed the web of Philadelphia's society.⁶²

Not all of society, of course, enjoyed the manifold delights of life—the Dancing Assemblies, for example—that the city at mid-century could provide for those who could afford them. Philadelphia's upper class provided the glitter. The less wealthy—smaller merchants, traders, shopkeepers, some artisans, professional men and clergymen not of the front rank, lesser officials, teachers—provided much of the substance.

The more prestigious upper middle class included the talented craftsmen, the silversmiths and goldsmiths, the watch and clockmakers, the printers, instrument makers, and makers of coaches and fine furniture. Some of the more illustrious among them are frequently classed with the gentry, who were merchants and the owners of land and property. Amassing considerable wealth, they participated in civic and philanthropic undertakings and were patrons and members of various organizations. Silversmiths Philip Syng and John Leacock and clockmaker Thomas Stretch, for example, became members of the fashionable Colony in Schuylkill.

By the middle of the eighteenth century Philadelphia craftsmen were known throughout the colonies. Philadelphia cabinetmakers, many of them Quakers, had a reputation for fashioning durable furniture of fine workmanship and excellent design.⁶³ Especially distinguished were the city's silversmiths. Catering to a Quaker clientele, Joseph Richardson was noted for the beauty and simplicity of his designs. Philip Syng in 1752 made the silver

inkstand for the provincial Assembly that would later be used in signing the Declaration of Independence. John Leacock, whose shop was the Sign of the Golden Cup in Front Street, the center of the city's silversmiths and goldsmiths, is remembered not only for his silver pieces, but as the author of *The Fall of British Tyranny: or, American Liberty Triumphant*, a popular play of 1776.⁶⁴ Another outstanding artisan, a craftsman in pewter, was Cornelius Bradford, who worked at his Sign of the Dish in Second Street opposite the George Tavern.⁶⁵

Among Philadelphia's excellent clockmakers was Thomas Stretch, already mentioned, who in 1753 made the State House clock, with its dials at the east and west ends of the main building connected by rods to the clock movement in the middle of the building. Edward Duffield, like so many craftsmen of his day, not only produced his specialty, clocks, but was active in other affairs. He was a member of the American Philosophical Society and created perhaps the first commemorative medal in America, representing Col. John Armstrong's defeat of the Indians at Kittanning in 1756. Just beginning his career as a maker of clocks, watches, and other fine instruments was Owen Biddle, who some years later, as a mathematician, would be associated with David Rittenhouse in observing the 1769 transit of Venus.⁶⁶

Less prestigious but more typical of Philadelphia's middle class were the small merchants, shopkeepers, taverners, and others of moderate income, who like the craftsmen lived with their families and apprentices at their places of business. Hanging out over the sidewalks, decorative, descriptive signs advertised many a tradesman's specialty. Wives and daughters frequently helped in the shops, and millinery and dressmaking were almost exclusively in the hands of widows and maiden ladies. Mary Cahell from Dublin, for example, worked for Mr. Burk, a peruke maker on Front Street, and made hats and bonnets, cloaks, bags for gentlemen's hair and wigs, and turbans for Negroes. Occasionally taverns were run by women, usually widows who took over the management after a husband's death. For the most part, however, women kept house and managed the family.

The skilled workmen, called mechanics or artisans, formed the largest part of the middle class. Prominent among these were the men who performed the skilled tasks in shipbuilding. In 1747 Elias Bland, a prominent London businessman, placed an order for a ship with the Quaker merchant John Reynell. James West was hired to construct the seventy-five-foot vessel at his shipyard at the foot of Vine Street, and contracts were let for outfitting the ship. Among those hired to outfit the vessel were Samuel Chandler, joiner; Joseph Oldman, blacksmith; Samuel Austin, blockmaker; and Henry Wells, carver. John Ridge and William Sims provided the rigging and Abraham Mason the sails; the chandlers were Henry Elves and William Spofford.⁶⁷

Among the most numerous craftsmen were the coopers who supplied the barrels and tubs in which were shipped sugar, molasses, rum, and most every kind of produce. The demand was enormous, and cooperages dotted the waterfront. Their lumber was amply supplied by the white oak trees of the

forests of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Besides supplying the American market, coopers made barrels for overseas purchasers chiefly in the West Indies but in Europe as well.

Nearly everyone who worked in eighteenth-century Philadelphia worked as an individual or in a family group. The one-man workshop or store was the standard unit of labor. Even the great merchants had but a partner or two and a clerk. It was mainly in the shipyards, ropewalks, and distilleries that labor groups as large as five or ten were found. Within this individualistic scheme, the kind of work a man did largely determined his status in society.

Of slaves and most free blacks it might be said that they remained off the class ladder entirely. They were not a class in fact, but rather a caste separated from the rest of society by the ineradicable badges of race and color. That within their ranks their status varied according to occupation—from stable-hand to artisan—made no impress upon the white society they served. Next on the ladder were those indentured servants of whom some—again, according to occupation—might join in status the ranks of free unskilled labor: sailors, carters, hostlers, and others. The few indentured servants who had been artisans or mechanics in the Old World might, upon completion of their terms, open shops of their own.

Although there was social mobility beyond anything known in England, Philadelphia remained an eighteenth-century class-conscious social organism. Evidence of social distinction is clear, for example, in the city's election laws. The limitation of the franchise to a few helped fix status by delineating sharply who could share in political power. For the city, the ownership of personal property to the value of £50 was required to vote or hold office. Only about one in fifty of the inhabitants, it is estimated, met the property qualifications in Philadelphia. Furthermore, by the eve of the Revolution 10 percent of the people paying the highest taxes owned 89 percent of the taxable property. Fewer than 20 percent of Philadelphians owned their own homes, the rentals of which were a major source of income for the well-to-do.⁶⁸

Whether they rented or owned their homes, many artisans of the "middle sort," and not a few wealthy families, used part of their houses as places of business. On Water Street, for example, Abel James, one of the foremost Quaker merchants of his day, lived on the second floor above his counting-house. By the 1760s about a fourth of the houses in Philadelphia were to be found in Mulberry Ward, which extended from Front to Seventh Streets between Mulberry (Arch) and Vine, the most populous of the city's ten wards. In the three wards lying between Mulberry and Walnut, Second and Seventh Streets, were a somewhat greater number of buildings in total. Dock Ward, between Walnut and Cedar (South), had half as many houses as Mulberry Ward and was steadily growing. The small wards bordering the waterfront—Walnut, Chestnut, High, and Lower Delaware—had developed early and remained fairly static in population during the rest of the colonial period.⁶⁹

Within the wards containing most of the city's population, unlike the

pretentious mansions of some of the wealthy, the typical Philadelphia house was of modest size, a plain, red-brick building of two or three stories with a garret. Representative of this style, Provost Smith's house had cedar shingles and was equipped with gutters and downspouts that protected pedestrians from the runoff in rainstorms. The woodwork, inside and out, was generally painted white; the rooms were plastered and whitewashed. Wallpaper was not yet in use, and though many houses had rag rugs, carpets were rare. Despite the monotony of the city's gridiron blocks and row houses, Peter Kalm in 1749 found that Philadelphia's aspect was agreeable and equal to any town in Europe. In 1755 the city's brick houses and pent roofs and shops reminded Thomas Pownall of Cheapside, London.⁷⁰

Housing, of course, was one measure of class. So in Philadelphia was church membership, particularly at the top of the ladder. Most of the moneyed people, other than the Quakers, were Anglicans. In London, Thomas Penn himself, son of the founder and now chief proprietor, became an apostate from Quakerism and in 1751 joined the Church of England. In a few years Christ Church in Philadelphia found its membership increasing to such an extent that the building of St. Peter's, initially a chapel to the east of Christ Church, was begun on the southwest corner of Third and Pine Streets in 1758. The smaller St. Paul's, on the east side of Third below Walnut, was added in the 1760s.

St. Peter's, where services were first held in 1761, lacks Christ Church's imposing effects, but it is a most dignified and pleasing structure. Its designer, Robert Smith, a Quaker emigrant from Glasgow, had but recently built Nassau Hall at Princeton and would be responsible for other buildings from Providence to Williamsburg. A member of the Carpenters' Company, Smith probably had the best claim of any builder in the city to priority in achieving the transition from master carpenter to architect. St. Peter's is noted particularly for its Palladian window on the east front and its exceptional beauty within.⁷¹

As for Quakerism, in spite of the formidable social stature of several of the old families, membership in the meetings was in relative decline. The Hill Meeting House on Pine Street in the Society Hill area was erected in 1753 to serve the only new Quaker congregation to be added in Philadelphia before the Revolution. Two years later the Quakers tore down the Great Meeting House at Second and High Streets and replaced it with the Greater Meeting House. Nevertheless, by mid-century they comprised only a quarter of the city's population.⁷²

Presbyterianism on the other hand continued its growth. Counting among its members some of Philadelphia's wealthiest citizens—most notably William Allen—this largest religious group in Philadelphia more nearly reflected the class structure of the city as a whole. For a time Presbyterians divided over the issue of evangelism. Drawing heavily from the middle and lower classes, the New Lights erected a church at Third and Arch Streets in 1750, adding a steeple two years later.⁷³ The more wealthy Presbyterians remained with

the conservative Old Side, headed by the scholarly Rev. Francis Alison. But as enthusiasm generated by George Whitefield ran its course, such disputes faded. By 1758 the two groups of Presbyterians in the city achieved a rapprochement. In 1763 Whitefield himself, visiting Philadelphia for the seventh time, was welcomed even by the Anglican clergy who had been a target of his attacks on previous occasions.⁷⁴

If religious enthusiasm subsided after the Great Awakening, religious prejudice remained. Catholicism, in the minds of many, still invoked memories of James II and Jacobitism. Particularly when England was at war with the Catholic Bourbon powers—a condition practically endemic in the eighteenth century—anti-Catholicism emerged with renewed vigor. Word of Maj.-Gen. Edward Braddock's defeat in the summer of 1755 aroused such fears that an anti-Catholic mob attempted to destroy St. Joseph's and was turned back only through the persuasion of some brave Quakers. Two years later known Catholics were not allowed to serve in the militia, though they were obliged to pay the militia tax.⁷⁵

Despite such occasional evidences of tension and suspicion, it was generally acknowledged that all religions were entitled to religious freedom as guaranteed by Penn's Charter of Liberties, and the English, Irish, and German Catholics continued worshipping at their chapel. In 1757 Fr. Robert Harding, who had succeeded the Rev. Joseph Gheaton in 1750, tore down the original St. Joseph's and built a larger one in its place. Father Harding's support of the Pennsylvania Hospital and other civic enterprises did much to soften dislike of Catholics, and under his guidance the parishioners gave their neighbors no cause to question their loyalty.⁷⁶

Like the Catholics, both the German Reformed and the Lutherans built new houses of worship during these years, and in 1750 the latter installed at St. Michael's an organ brought from Germany. Meanwhile the proportion of unchurched Philadelphians seemed to grow. Gottlieb Mittelberger, who had accompanied the St. Michael's organ to America and who had found Philadelphia's court sessions amusing, was astonished at the numbers of Philadelphians who had no belief in "a true God," in heaven or hell, and who did not even know the Bible. Deism, of course, had its attractions for Philadelphia's cosmopolitan elite, while at the bottom of the social ladder the churches frequently failed to reach the city's burgeoning population. In any case it is a significant fact that Philadelphia by the time of the Revolution had no more than eighteen churches, large and small—one for every 1700 inhabitants.

With the exception of sporadic anti-Catholic outbursts, Philadelphians at mid-century, true to the founder's purpose and in the spirit of the Enlightenment, were moderate and tolerant in their religious attitudes. Mittelberger was struck by the absence of bigotry. "To speak the truth," he wrote, "one seldom hears or sees a quarrel among them [which is] the result of the liberty which they enjoy and which makes them all equal."⁷⁷

Other visitors made similar comments. Lord Adam Gordon, who in 1765 had denominated Philadelphia "a great and noble City," went on to acclaim

her "one of the wonders of the World." He particularly noted "the Magnificence and diversity of places of Worship (for here all Religions who profess the name of Christ are tolerated equally) . . .":

It is not an hundred years since the first tree was cut where the City now Stands, and at this time it consists of more than three thousand Six hundred Houses.—It is daily encreasing, and I doubt not in time, will reach all the way, from River to River,—the great and foreseeing Founder of it, Mr. Penn having wisely laid out the Space so far, which is daily taking and filling.⁷⁸

Lord Adam's words serve as a reminder that although Philadelphia was indeed a true city, there was still plenty of "Space" to be filled in. The point needs making, for no true picture of mid-century Philadelphia can be drawn if it neglects the lingering "country" aspects that reflected its recent founding at the edge of a wilderness. Though visitors naturally emphasized its rapid growth, they also recognized that it had not yet lost the charm of its country origin.

Behind the houses of the more well-to-do, for example, could be found gardens and orchards, as well as outbuildings, such as a barn or stable, where chickens, geese, a cow, and perhaps a horse were kept. A few private gardens, like the "pretty pleasure garden" on the proprietor's estate at Springettsbury, along the Schuylkill north of the city proper, were open to the public; while some of the public gardens, like Cherry Garden which extended from Front Street to the Delaware, became retreats where one could capture a bit of rural serenity.⁷⁹ At Walnut and Sixth nearly six acres of ground, today's Washington Square, served as a potter's field. Jacob Shoemaker pastured his cows here until complaints forced the city corporation to charge him rent for its use. Two small plots between Chestnut and Walnut near the outskirts of the city were set aside by the proprietors in 1755 as a camping ground for visiting Indians. Beyond the built-up area to the west was a forest known as the Governor's Woods.⁸⁰

Philadelphia then, for all its citified ways, was still close in time and setting to its pastoral origin. The land retained its ancient appeal. The artisan dreamed of a farm of his own, just as the wealthy merchant saw riches in western land schemes. Philadelphians would look askance at impediments to western settlement, be they in the guise of French power, Indian land claims, or official British policy.

But Philadelphia also fronted a seaway to the Atlantic. As an outpost of empire, the diverse city would respond in diverse ways as the outside world pressed on her from both east and west. In the successive crises to come her buoyant citizenry would simply bypass their outmoded and ineffectual government. In an effort to capture the essence of this baffling new phenomenon, Mittelberger quotes a saying he had heard in the province: "Pennsylvania is heaven for farmers, paradise for artisans, and hell for officials and preachers."⁸¹ The coming years would generously attest that Mittelberger's saying was not far off the mark.

V

In the year 1701 when Penn bestowed his new charter of incorporation upon his town, England and France were getting set to undertake the second in a series of world wars that would not end until 1815 and the Battle of Waterloo. Four of these wars occurred during America's colonial period, while a by-product of the fifth was America's independence. But all of them one way or the other intimately affected the life of the American people.

Philadelphia of all the major cities of English America had the least capabilities of military defense. Boston had its Castle William, New York and Charleston had their various shore batteries, but Philadelphia long had nothing. The city's exposed condition was the product of three factors: first, her geographical location away from the sea gave her a false sense of security; second, Quaker principles impeded military preparedness; and third, money bills for defense were blocked in the legislature by a chronic deadlock between the Assembly and the proprietors over the power of the purse.

Therefore when in 1747 French and Spanish privateers cruised off the Delaware Capes and even raided plantations up the river in New Castle County, the citizens themselves acted. In November Franklin came forth with his famous pamphlet *Plain Truth*, in which he proposed a volunteer association for defense. Popular reaction was immediate and enthusiastic. James Logan approved Franklin's proposal, and it was hoped that other so-called defense Quakers would give their support. Within a week after *Plain Truth* appeared, Franklin, William Allen, provincial Secretary Richard Peters, and other non-Quaker leaders worked out a plan for an association for defense and submitted it to various groups in the city—tradesmen, mechanics, merchants, and gentlemen—for their endorsement. On November 24, 500 inhabitants signed the association, and in a matter of days more than 1000 men had joined.⁸²

The associators were divided into companies in accordance with Philadelphia's wards and townships. Company officers were chosen by the rank and file. Among these were a number of members of the city corporation, such as Capt. Charles Willing and Thomas Bond. The company officers in turn gathered and elected their regimental officers: thus Abraham Taylor became colonel; Thomas Lawrence, lieutenant-colonel; and Samuel McCall, major. Each company had its own colors with some distinctive emblem, such as a lion, eagle, or elephant. Early in December the associators presented themselves in military formation to the provincial Council and received its approval and encouragement.⁸³

The foremost problems facing the association and the city were fortifications and supplies. Two batteries were begun immediately. The smaller one, under Society Hill at today's Lombard Street, was completed in three days. The larger "Association Battery" was erected just south of the city below Gloria Dei Church; it eventually mounted twenty-seven cannons.⁸⁴ But procuring the cannons was more difficult than erecting fortifications. Franklin

answered the need by arranging Philadelphia's first lottery, managed by William Allen, Charles Willing, Edward Shippen, and others. The city corporation, holder of the largest bloc of tickets, was one of the lottery winners, and to evidence its civic concern it turned its prize back to the association. James Logan bought the largest number of tickets by an individual. When the Union Fire Company subscribed, only one of the Quaker members showed up to register an objection.⁸⁵

With the lottery proceeds the association ordered cannons from London, twelve of which were received in the summer of 1748. The provincial Council and city corporation already had sent appeals for guns to the proprietors, but their petitions were denied.⁸⁶ Thirty-nine new Spanish cannons ordered from Boston eventually arrived in Philadelphia, and a large thirty-two-pounder was contributed by the Colony in Schuylkill. To serve as a stopgap until the guns from London and Boston came, a committee consisting of Franklin, Thomas Lawrence, William Allen, and Abraham Taylor visited Gov. George Clinton of New York to ask his assistance. That worthy first refused, "but at a Dinner with his Council where there was great Drinking of Madeira Wine," Franklin later recalled, "he soften'd by degrees, and said he would lend us Six. After a few more Bumpers he advanc'd to Ten. And at length he very good-naturedly conceded Eighteen."⁸⁷

Continued harassment of shipping by French and Spanish privateers during the spring and summer of 1748 in the waters near New Castle dramatized the need for strong defenses. A poem in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* expressed the fear that had seized the city:

—While scarce a day but fresh Alarms
Of Blood and Slaughter shock our Ears;
Our Foes around us shine in Arms,
And every Bosom beats with Fears.
Some dread the butch'ring *Indians* most,
And some the *Spaniards* on the Coast. . . .⁸⁸

News of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle finally arrived in August 1748, and Philadelphians once again returned to their peacetime pursuits.

Peace, however, was of but a short duration. With the outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1754 Philadelphia was again confronted with the problem of living in an empire at war. This time the main danger to Pennsylvania came from the western frontier, where the French were moving to secure the Ohio Valley. Defense once more became the prime issue. Franklin, now an assemblyman, in 1755 managed through the legislature the first militia bill in Pennsylvania's history. Believing the measure to be too democratic—the men, New England style, elected their own officers—Gov. Robert Hunter Morris instituted "independent companies" under proprietary, not Assembly control. Philadelphia was now treated to the portentous scene of the Assembly militia's and the proprietary companies' staging competitive military exercises.

The Philadelphia City Regiment elected Franklin its colonel, and in an excess of military ardor fired several rounds before Franklin's door. This

affectionate display did not altogether please the new colonel, for as he ruefully explained, the resulting concussion "shook down and broke several Glasses of my Electrical Apparatus."⁸⁹

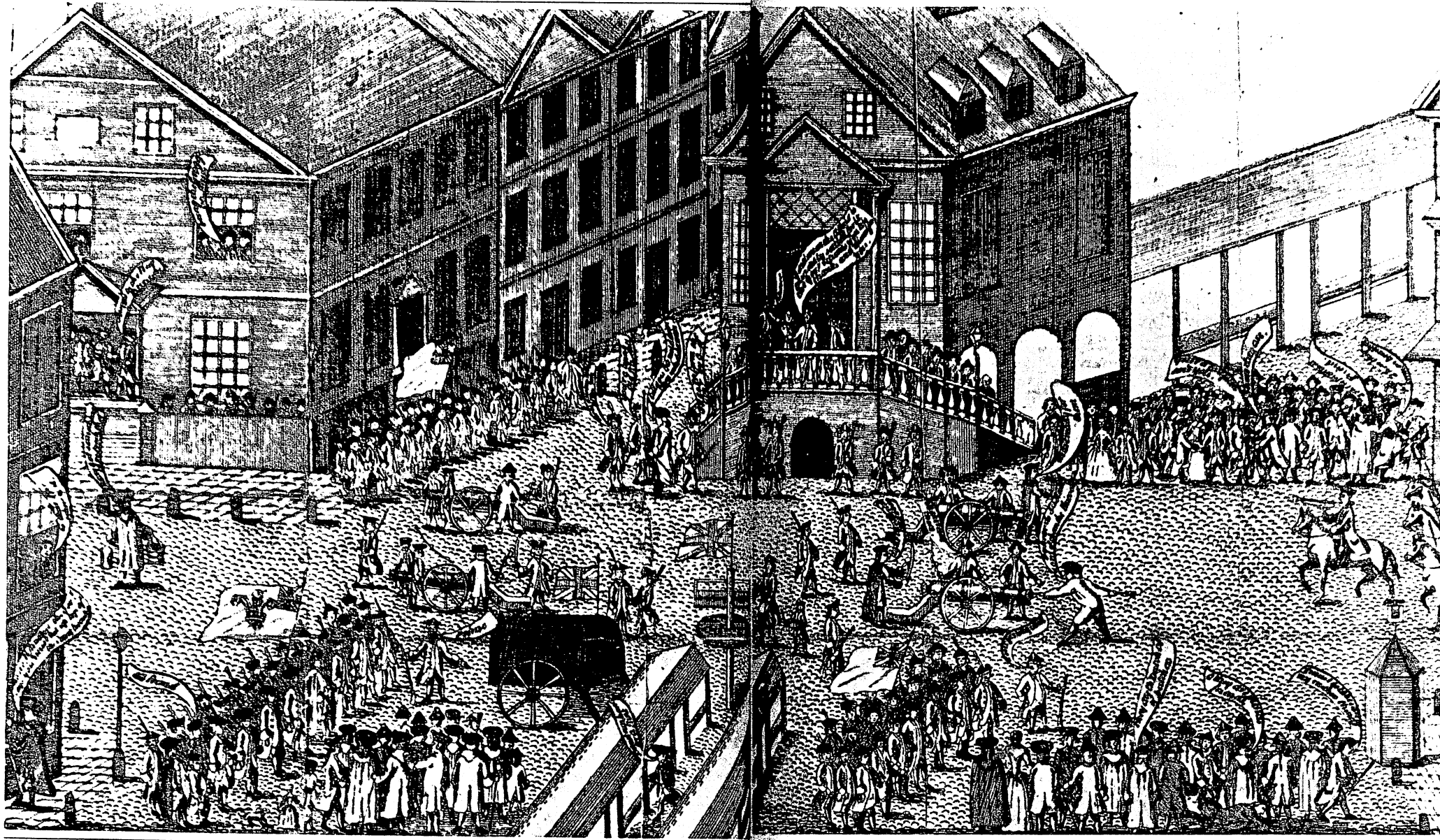
While the first years of the French and Indian War proved a disaster for the English cause, Philadelphia became a city of refugees. There were the surviving soldiers from General Braddock's calamitous defeat along the Monongahela. There were civilian refugees from the West, driven from their homes by the aroused Indians, and there were some 450 of the 1000 Acadians whom the English, fearing them loyal to France, expelled from their Nova Scotia homes. Housed in a row of one-story wooden buildings on Pine Street and distrusted by British officialdom, the unfortunate Acadians found in Philadelphia's Quaker citizens their main protection and sympathy. Longfellow's heroine Evangeline, it may be recalled, discovered her dying Gabriel in the Friends' Alms House in Philadelphia.

Wartime Philadelphia was not only burdened by refugees. Late in 1756 the city was ordered to house the new Royal American Regiment, British regulars recruited in the colonies. In compliance, the Assembly designated that they be quartered at inns, but the innkeepers refused to house the soldiers at the legislated fee. With the men freezing in makeshift quarters and sick with smallpox, Lt.-Col. Henry Bouquet appealed unsuccessfully to Mayor Plumstead and the city corporation, and then turned to Governor Denny, who had succeeded Governor Morris. Denny's authorization to use private homes if public accommodations could not be found raised a predictable chorus of protest throughout the city. From New York, Lord Loudoun thundered that he was prepared to march troops to Philadelphia to seize the necessary quarters. Finally, when a committee appointed by the Assembly and headed by Franklin persuaded the tavern keepers to accept the prescribed rates, the affair blew over about as quickly as it had arisen.

The following year, in response to directives from London, army barracks, known popularly as the "British Barracks," were built in the Northern Liberties, around the present Third and Green Streets. The quartering of troops in Pennsylvania never again became a major issue with British authorities as it did in some other American colonies.⁹⁰

The year 1758 proved a turning point for the British cause in America. Philadelphia, where each successive British victory was celebrated by fireworks, was the gala scene of preparation for Brig.-Gen. John Forbes's successful reduction of Fort Duquesne, renamed Fort Pitt. Philadelphians gave the ailing Forbes a hero's welcome on his return to the city. But the euphoric mood was shortly dissipated when Forbes died on March 11, 1759. Amid general mourning, he was interred with fitting ceremony at Christ Church.

The British victory ratified at Paris in 1763 did not spare Philadelphia from further alarms. The frontier was again in flames as Chief Pontiac led his followers in a desperate effort to contain the whites' incessant penetration into the interior. The city once more filled with refugees from the West. Among them was a small group of "Moravian Indians," who sought succor in the city both from Indians angry at their pacifism and from the white frontiersmen.



The Paxton Expedition, engraved by Henry Dawkins (act. 1753-1786), 1764. This satirical cartoon, which depicts Franklin proclaiming his delegation's success to the nervous citizens of Philadelphia, is one of the earliest street scenes of the city. The Court House is shown in the middle of Market Street with the market

stalls extending westward. The Greater Meeting House (1754)—which replaced the Great Meeting House (1696)—is at the southwest corner of Second and Market, and the house of John Speakman, apothecary, is shown at the northwest corner. The public pillory appears in the center foreground near the New Jersey stalls.

Their need for such protection was vividly illustrated when angry frontiersmen massacred the defenseless and peaceful remnants of the Conestoga tribe at Lancaster. The so-called Paxton Boys—"Christian White Savages," Franklin called them—marched toward Philadelphia with the avowed purpose of destroying the Moravian Indians.

Philadelphia was thrown into a panic. The citizenry called upon Franklin to organize a defense. Within a few days he revived the association with eight companies of volunteers. Even some of the Quakers were seen shouldering muskets and marching with the militia.

When the Paxton Boys approached the city early in February 1764, they found the ford over the Schuylkill into Philadelphia so well guarded that they moved upriver and came by way of Germantown. Here Franklin met them at the head of a committee, and, as he said, "The fighting face we put on and the reasonings we used with the insurgents . . . turned them back and restored quiet to the city."⁹¹ Soon afterward the Indians were defeated by Colonel Bouquet at Bushy Run and peace was restored on the frontier. As for the defenseless Moravian Indians, they were sent back to the frontier and were later destroyed during the turmoil of the American Revolution.

Philadelphia's experiences during the long and arduous French wars, experiences for which her governmental institutions proved inadequate, provided a schooling for the trials yet to come during the years of the American Revolution. Philadelphians and all Pennsylvanians learned invaluable lessons in war and defense, lessons that included levying taxes, recruiting volunteers, organizing a militia, and erecting fortifications. As a time of testing the wars reinforced the process of maturation leading to Philadelphia's leadership in the nation soon to be born.

The crises solved by citizen initiative ultimately led to a more responsive governmental structure. The electoral base of the city broadened as the wartime economy enabled more men to acquire the means to qualify for the franchise. In consequence the mechanic element that would figure prominently in the American Revolution became a force in public affairs. The influence of the Quakers on the other hand, now but a fraction of the population, diminished.

The middle years of the eighteenth century had seen the flowering of colonial Philadelphia. Under an ever-growing cosmopolitanism, the city attained preeminence among the cities of colonial America. Not only was its material growth phenomenal, but its advancement in cultural attainments was as striking. The advent of the College of Philadelphia and the veritable explosion in the number of books owned by Philadelphians epitomized its intellectual growth. Already the cultural center of colonial America, Philadelphia would soon as well become the political center of the colonies from whence, in deeds as well as words, Liberty would be proclaimed "thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof."

The Revolutionary City

1765-1783

by Harry M. Tinkcom

. . . they are determined to fall upon every measure to raise a revenue in America. We are to be their grand Milch Cow but if they are not prudent in their modes we shall turn dry upon their hands.

— WILLIAM ALLEN

It is happy for us that we have Boston in the front & Virginia in the rear to defend us. We are placed where Cowards ought to be placed, in the middle.

— WILLIAM BRADFORD, JR. ¹

For many reasons Philadelphia was destined to play a stellar role in the American Revolution. Its strategic location, wealth, industrial and commercial importance, large and cosmopolitan population, and professional and business classes combined to make it after 1774 the hub of America's revolutionary activity.

The forces and circumstances that led to the attainment of Philadelphia's critical position were as much a part of the city's prewar history as they were of the Revolution itself. At the beginning of hostilities the city was successful in so many areas of achievement that its potential for leadership within the colonies was clearly evident. Ironically, though, many of the people who were most responsible for this success, the erstwhile commercial and political leaders of the city, withdrew or were shoved aside by the revolutionary stream of change grown so violent that it could not be navigated by the old methods. From backwaters and eddies they watched new men, along with a few of their own group, assume control of a movement that had started years before as a result of parliamentary measures.

I

In 1763 the British Ministry, at the urging of George Grenville, chancellor of the exchequer, had projected a defense plan for North America which required the recruitment and maintenance of an army of 10,000 men. To the British, a people already heavily taxed, it seemed reasonable to shift part of

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THE REVOLUTIONARY CITY, 1765-1783

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