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Philadelphia



A 300-YEAR HISTORY

A Barra Foundation Book

W · W · NORTON & COMPANY

NEW YORK · LONDON

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Printed in the United States of America.

The text of this book is composed in photocomposition Janson Alternate, with display type set in Roman Compressed No. 3 and Garamond Old Style. Composition by The Haddon Craftsmen, Inc. Printing and binding by The Murray Printing Company.

BOOK DESIGN BY MARJORIE J. FLOCK

To
Roy F. Nichols
and
Jeannette P. Nichols

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

Philadelphia: a 300-year history.

Includes index.

I. Philadelphia (Pa.)—History. I. Weigley,
Russell Frank. II. Wainwright, Nicholas B.
III. Wolf, Edwin, 1911—

F158.3.P5664 1982 974.8'11 82-8220

ISBN 0-393-01610-2

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.
500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110
www.wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd.
Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

6 7 8 9 0

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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 war-time 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 method. 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

the cost to the direct beneficiaries of the protective force, the colonists. Parliament responded with measures that seriously and directly affected all colonial entrepreneurs. The three pieces of legislation that produced the most violent reactions were the Stamp Act of March 1765, the Townshend Revenue Acts of June 1767, and modifications of the Tea Act in 1773.

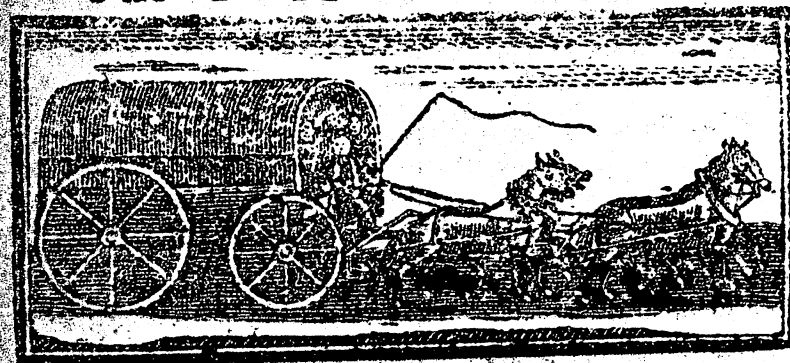
Philadelphia's response to these and to various other irritants showed an intensity of feeling, expressed by people of all classes, that could only emanate from a community conscious of having suffered deep and serious injury. Proof of this was found in the ease with which chiming bells and pounding drums could summon capacity crowds of approximately 8000 people to the State House Yard to act on the latest developments. It found expression in the newspapers, then becoming more aware of the influence they wielded in helping to form public opinion. It burst forth passionately in the taverns and howled through the streets with the mobs. It put in ferment a city whose government was complacent and content, and generated mass meetings as vehicles of expression and committees as agents of force in a community that came to accept them almost as a way of life.

News of the Stamp Act was received in Philadelphia with resentment and anger. The first direct parliamentary levy on America, it taxed almost everything written or printed on paper or vellum—newspapers, diplomas, legal documents, licenses, almanacs, and even playing cards. Everyone was affected. Moreover the Stamp Act struck a city in distress after five years of economic dislocation. The close of the British army's active campaigning against the French in North America in 1760 had proven a mixed blessing. Economically it meant the abrupt withdrawal from colonial commerce of unprecedented quantities of specie, with which the army by purchasing subsistence and equipment stimulated economic activity everywhere in British North America. That resource removed, the colonies' perennial unfavorable balance of trade with Britain promptly pulled hard money back across the Atlantic. The colonial demand for bills of exchange then drove up the exchange rate unfavorably for colonial currencies. Merchants' debts to Britain became harder to pay; merchants' inventories proved to be overstocked. In turn the sudden end of wartime prosperity left the colonial customers in city and countryside deeply in debt to the merchants. The prices of imported manufactured goods fell and virtually eliminated profit margins. Despite this British exporters, accustomed to large colonial sales, continued to ship goods to America at practically the wartime rate. Philadelphia linen importers, for example, who had enjoyed an average markup of 33 percent in the booming war years 1758–1759 saw their markup fall to 16 percent in 1760–1762 and 13 percent in 1763–1765. Meanwhile the Currency Act of 1764 affirmed a British determination, already evident enough during the war, to curb the unsatisfactory colonial paper money.²

Meanwhile also, Philadelphia's West Indies trade, from the beginning a pivot of the city's commerce, was undergoing long-term changes that were discouraging. The decline of the productivity and prosperity of the British

Seventh-day Evenings for that purpose.

The FLYING MACHINE.



This is to give NOTICE to the PUBLIC, THAT the FLYING MACHINE, kept by JOHN BARNHILL, in Elm Street, near Vine-Street, Philadelphia; and JOHN MASHEREW, at the Blazing Star, performs the Journey from Philadelphia to New-York in two days, and from thence to Philadelphia in two days also; a circumstance greatly to the advantage of the traveller, as there is no water carriage, and consequently nothing to impede the Journey. It has already been performed to the general satisfaction of many genteel people. They set off from Philadelphia and New-York on Mondays and Thursdays, punctually at Sunrise, and change their passengers at Prince Town, and return to Philadelphia and New-York the following days: passengers paying ten shillings to Princeton, and ten shillings to Powles's Hook opposite to New-York, ferriage free, and three-pence each mile any distance between. Gentlemen and Ladies who are pleased to favour us with their custom may depend on due attendance and civil usage, by their humble servants,
\$ JOHN BARNHILL and JOHN MASHEREW.

Pennsylvania Journal, April 16, 1767.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

sugar islands was persisting, and with it the decline of the market for Philadelphia exports. The development of new sugar-growing areas, such as northern Jamaica, and the acquisition of Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Tobago from France in 1763 could only partially offset the deterioration of the older markets. At best the traditional Philadelphia method of trading with the islands, the speculative venture in which the merchant shipped cargoes at his own risk to undetermined customers, had paid handsomely only with careful

calculation of prevailing conditions in the West Indies. If rains favored the Caribbean in a given season, the islands could grow enough provisions for themselves to curtail sharply the market for mainland grainstuffs. Altogether, a speculative voyage to the Indies was as likely to result in a loss as in a profit. The glory days of the West Indies trade were over.³

II

The forms of protest against the Stamp Act varied, with the first serious action taken being to prevent the use of the stamped paper. John Hughes, appointed stampman for Pennsylvania as a mistaken act of friendship on the part of Benjamin Franklin, received pointed suggestions early in September 1765 that he should resign his commission. In spite of mounting pressure and threats to his person and property, he refused. His refusal may have been buttressed by the support he received from the White Oaks, a carpenters' association. On the night of September 16 the White Oaks gathered 800 men to defend the houses of Hughes and Franklin against a mob attack. The White Oaks were not friends of the Stamp Act, but they had supported Franklin and the Quakers in efforts to rid Pennsylvania of the proprietary regime, and they would not now abandon either Franklin or a principled opposition to violence as a means of achieving political ends.⁴

On October 5 when the *Royal Charlotte* appeared off Gloucester Point with the stamped paper on board, thousands of Philadelphians rushed to a meeting in the State House Yard. There a committee was appointed to demand Hughes's resignation. He refused again, but he did agree not to carry out his duties unless the Stamp Act was being executed in the neighboring colonies. When the hated paper was later put aboard the warship *Sardine* for safekeeping, a victory had been won by the community. Of equal importance was the fact that the force of law, as represented by the mayor of Philadelphia and the governor of Pennsylvania, had not supported the agent of the Crown.

The intimidation of local officialdom was only one phase of the struggle, which ended before November 1, the date set for the enforcement of the act. After that time any business transacted without the use of stamped paper would be illegal. Consequently shipowners worked feverishly to get their vessels away, and when the deadline arrived almost all ships had been "cleared out."⁵ Thereafter for a time business almost ceased.⁶

To gain support for their protest in Britain, several merchants met in November and agreed to boycott British goods until the Stamp Act was repealed. They were then joined by more than 300 merchants and shopkeepers large and small who determined to buy no British goods, with the exception of certain items necessary for continued local industrial growth, such as utensils used in manufacturing and dyestuffs.⁷

The boycott was almost of necessity coupled with a tentative movement to increase home manufactures, with emphasis on textiles. A cloth market for locally made goods was established, and the resolutions of the Sun, Fellowship, Union, Crown, and Beaver Fire Companies to discourage the purchase

of lamb in order to increase the amount of wool available for manufacture were printed by newspapers almost everywhere in the colonies.⁸

Resistance and confusion prevailed in Philadelphia until it was learned early in the spring of 1766 that the Stamp Act had been repealed. The news was received with jubilation, and was celebrated with a banquet at the State

N. B. It is supposed the said Woman is gone off with a Man and may pass for his wife.

March 12.

ALL Persons indebted to GEORGE FULLERTON, whose accounts are above twelve months unpaid, as well as those indebted to him by bond, bill or note, are requested to discharge the same before the first of May next, otherwise they may expect to be sued without respect of persons. *So w.*

March 12,

Imported in the last vessels from London, Liverpool and Bristol, and to be sold wholesale or retail on the very lowest terms for cash only, by

ALEXANDER BARTRAM,

At his shop in Market Street, next door to the sign of the Indian King.

A Neat assortment of DRY GOODS, suitable for the season. Likewise a large assortment of enameled and blue and white CHINA consisting of plates and dishes chocolate cups with handles and saucers; halfpint bowls and saucers; coffee cups and saucers; tea-cups and saucers; teapots; sauceboats; sugar dishes and cream jugs.

Also, short pipes by the box; great choice of chimney tiles; a very large assortment of glass, delft blue and white, stone, and enameled stone ware, by the crate or smaller quantity; tea; coffee and chocolate

And on the 23d of this month will begin the sales of his Pennsylvania pencil'd tea pots, bowls and sugar dishes, which for beauty of colours, and elegance of figures, &c are allowed by the nicest Judges to exceed any imported from England.

N. B. Those who are indebted to Bartram and Dundas are once more earnestly intreated immediately to pay their respective debts to Alexander Bartram, otherwise, he will be laid under the disagreeable necessity, of suing them for the same, without further notice; he hopes this will not be thought ungenerous or severe as he intends leaving the province soon. *thc w.*

The 14th of the 3d month, called March

WHEREAS JOSIAH WOOD, who left this city some years past and has not been heard of since; if the said

House. On that occasion many Philadelphians who had bought homespun clothing to encourage local manufactures promised to give it to the poor. This generosity was laudable but premature, for Parliament had by no means given up its intention to tax the colonies.

It tried again in 1767 with the passage of the Townshend Revenue Acts, which levied duties on glass, lead, painters' colors, paper, and tea. Philadelphia's response to these taxes lacked the explosiveness and spontaneity that had characterized the reaction to the Stamp Act. For some months after the Townshend duties went into effect in November 1767 the attitude of the

MADE at the Subscriber's Glass-
Works, and now on Hand, to be sold at his House in Market-Street, opposite the Meal-Market, either whole-sale or retail, between Three and Four Hundred BOXES of WINDOW GLASS, consisting of the common Sizes, 10 by 12, 9 by 11, 8 by 10, 7 by 9, 6 by 8, &c. Lamp Glass, or any uncommon Sizes, under 16 by 18, are cut upon a short Notice. Where also may be had, most Sorts of Bottles, Gallon, Half Gallon, and Quart, full Measure Half Gallon Case Bottles, Shuff and Mustard, Receivers and Retorts of various Sizes; also electrifying Globes and Tubes, &c. As the abovementioned Glass is of American Manufacture, it is consequently clear of the Duties the Americans so justly complain of, and at present it seems peculiarly the Interest of America to encourage her own Manufactories, more especially those upon which Duties have been imposed, for the sole Purpose of raising a Revenue.

N. B. He also continues to make the Philadelphia Brass Buttons, well noted for their Strength, such as were made by his deceased Father, and are warranted for seven Years.

Philadelphia, August 10.

RICHARD WISTAR.

WE hear some Copies are to be had in Town of the famous North-Brittons; No. 50 and 51, for publishing which Mr. Bingley is now under Confinement in the King's Bench Prison in London.—Inquire at the Printing-office.

Just imported from the Maker, and original Inventer, now in London, the rightly prepared and improved

LIQUID TRUE BLUE.

New York Journal and General Advertiser, August 17, 1769.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

generality of merchants seemed to mirror that of the Philadelphia Council, which, except for one negative action, officially ignored the rising storm. Appealed to by a Boston town meeting in October, the Council replied two months later that the interests of the colonies could best be served "by diffusing a spirit of Industry and Frugality." It declined to initiate any action.⁹

Similarly, the merchants' resistance to the Townshend duties was weak until they were goaded into action by boycotts and threats of mob violence. The opposition to the duties was by no means totally lacking in leadership by prominent citizens—such as the merchants Charles Thomson and Thomas Mifflin, the printer William Bradford, Jr., and the lawyer John Dickinson. Nevertheless dissatisfaction with British revenue measures was already being turned into a vehicle for the airing of class differences at home. When merchants' protests were lukewarm, mechanics and artisans and members of the lower orders more generally could vent their dislike of the merchants' economic and political domination of the city by charging the merchants with indifference to Philadelphia's and America's self-government and security. In March 1769, pushed thus from below and from the colonies to the north, more than 300 Philadelphia merchants signed nonimportation agreements.¹⁰ This resolve once taken, thereafter Philadelphians cooperated with effect. Comparative import-export figures for 1768-1770 show that Philadelphia stuck to nonimportation more faithfully than the other colonial ports. Philadelphians were furious when New York reneged in 1770.

One of the major forces that impelled the merchants to join in nonimportation was the influence of the Philadelphia press. Departing from their former preoccupation with the wranglings of political factions, Bradford's *Pennsylvania Journal*, David Hall's and William Sellers's *Pennsylvania Gazette*, and William Goddard's *Pennsylvania Chronicle and Universal Advertiser*, founded in 1767, emphasized imperial matters. Radical in their opposition to the Townshend Acts, they not only reported but stimulated events.¹¹ It was the new *Pennsylvania Chronicle* that, beginning in the early winter of 1767, published a series of letters that in their influence and circulation exceeded any publication of the revolutionary era except Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. These, the famous "Farmer's Letters" of John Dickinson, were copied in colonial newspapers everywhere and later published in pamphlet form as *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies*.¹²

The "farmer" was actually an outstanding Philadelphia lawyer, but it is likely that Dickinson was too well aware of the suspicion in which lawyers were held in some quarters to write as a member of that profession. In trenchant and logical prose he constructed a brief for constitutional government that was used not only in the trial of strength with Britain over the Townshend Acts, but in other trials that sorely tested the fortitude of Americans for years to come. Dickinson advocated caution and nonviolent action, but he made it clear that the Townshend duties were unconstitutional and a dangerous innovation; that there was no difference between external and

internal taxes; and that the colonies needed to unite their efforts, for the cause of one was "the cause of all." A Boston public meeting was held in Dickinson's honor. Next to Franklin, he was possibly the best known Philadelphian of the prerevolutionary era. Writing at a time when there was probably more



THE PATRIOTIC AMERICAN FARMER.
J-N D-K-NS—N ESQ^r BARRISTER at LAW.
*Who with Attic Eloquence and Roman Spirit hath asserted
The Liberties of the BRITISH Colonies in America.*

*'Tis nobly done, to stem Taxations Rage,
And raise, the thoughts of a degenerate Age,
From Happiness, and Joy, from Freedom Spring;
But Life in Bondage, is a worthless Thing.*

Printed for & sold by A. Bell, Bookbinder.

The Patriotic Farmer, John Dickinson (1732–1808), engraved by James Smither (d. 1797).

LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

ideological agreement in America than there would be again until England had been defeated, Dickinson may well be regarded as the first "Continental" spokesman, the first prenational patriotic hero.

After the lapse of the nonimportation agreement in 1770, resistance in Philadelphia to Parliament's taxing policy waned in the face of a creeping lethargy and conservatism that was not overcome by the newspapers, the mechanics, or the active Whigs—the political opponents of British impositions. The Pennsylvania Assembly did rouse itself sufficiently to send a petition to George III in March 1771 deploring the continuing tea levy as taxation without consent.¹³ But the public had a means of persuasion that was more forceful than petitions, one that required less cooperation from merchants than nonimportation agreements. This was the determination to buy smuggled Dutch tea in preference to the product offered by the British East India Company that was subject to duty. The consequent loss in sales, along with other financial difficulties, brought the company to the verge of bankruptcy. To relieve its distress Parliament allowed it, by passage of the Tea Act in 1773, to bypass the duty collected in England and to send its tea directly to selected consignees in America. This procedure eliminated the profit of the English middleman and made it possible for Americans to buy tea at lower prices than the Dutch charged.

Philadelphia, July 12, 1770.

THE Inhabitants of the City of New York, having broke their Non-Importation Agreement, and thereby endangered the Liberties of all America, the Inhabitants of this City and County, are therefore earnestly requested to meet in the State-House, on SATURDAY next, at Three o'Clock in the Afternoon, to consider what Steps may be necessary on the present alarming Occasion.

From an unidentified press, July 12, 1770.

LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

The first protests against the Tea Act came from Philadelphia and New York, where smugglers were the most active. In addition to resentment over the tax levied under the Townshend Acts, which would still be collected at American ports, there was the fear that the use of designated American wholesale consignees was the first step toward the future monopolization of all American business by the British.¹⁴ From the time in October 1773 when Philadelphians were warned that tea ships in England were loaded for transit to America¹⁵ until one arrived in the Delaware River in December, the

opposition to the Tea Act was carried on by the press, mass meetings, and committees. Once again, as in 1765, there was an opportunity to act directly upon individuals, in this case the tea consignees, and at a meeting in the State House Yard on October 16 a committee was appointed to persuade them to refuse the cargo. Some, notably Thomas Wharton, perhaps the most prominent merchant among them, did so within a few days, but others required "farther explanation."¹⁶ The firm of Henry Drinker and Abel James, another prominent merchant house, did not surrender its agency until December. James was finally convinced by the appearance of a hostile crowd in front of his place.¹⁷ If the tea were stored in warehouses, "A Countryman" warned in the *Pennsylvania Packet* for October 18, they should be built of stone or "asbestos" to prevent "trifling accidents." A "Committee for Tarring and Feathering" threatened violence to any pilot who brought the tea ship up the river, and they also planned to attack the ship with burning rafts.¹⁸ To stop a price escalation when the tea supply decreased sharply, a committee visited dealers and persuaded them to charge not more than six shillings a pound.¹⁹

On December 24, as excitement mounted, the *Pennsylvania Packet* printed news of the Boston Tea Party. Amid rejoicing over that wet affair it was learned on the following day that Philadelphia's shipment of tea had arrived at Chester in the ship *Polly*. Another test had come, and the measures then taken, although lacking the flamboyance of Boston's, were more effective. To prevent the *Polly* from even reaching port, a delegation was sent to intercept her at Gloucester Point. There she was hailed and her commanding officer, a Captain Ayres, agreed to leave his ship and go to Philadelphia with the deputation. At a large meeting in the State House Yard on December 27—called at an hour's notice "to consider what is best to be done on this alarming crisis"²⁰—Ayres was ordered to sail away without landing the tea or reporting his vessel at the custom house. Ayres agreed, and with a special committee dogging his shadow, fully complied with his instructions.²¹

As the *Polly* sailed down the Delaware the first phase of Philadelphia's resistance to Britain's new imperial program ended. The experience had taught the Whigs a few lessons, ones that would be put to use in the more

Monday Morning, December 27, 1773.
THE TEA-SHIP being arrived, every Inhabitant, who wilhes
 to preserve the Liberty of America, is desired to meet at the
 STATE-HOUSE, This Morning, precisely at TEN o'Clock, to ad-
 vise what is best to be done on this alarming Crisis.

Notice circulated December 27, 1773.

LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

violent years ahead: if colonial protests could be expressed with sufficient vigor and unity, there was a good likelihood that objectionable legislation would be modified; if the Assembly became too conservative and timorous to take forceful action, then reliance would have to be placed on an aroused citizenry operating through the media of committees, meetings, and the press; if voluntary merchant associations failed to hold nonimportation lines, they would have to be forced to do so; and finally, if all the major commercial colonies did not act in unison, they would all suffer together.

III

Philadelphia was prepared, then, with a *modus operandi* when the second act of the revolutionary drama began. It opened when Paul Revere, silversmith, engraver, and horseman extraordinary, rode into town on May 19, 1774, with a plea for aid from the people of Boston. The port of that town was to be closed on June 1 by an act of Parliament as punishment for the destruction of the East India Company's tea. Would Philadelphia come to the aid of its fellow Americans?

To ardent Philadelphia Whigs a positive answer to that question was an absolute necessity for the welfare not only of Pennsylvania but of the colonies in general, and during the next two years they devoted their energies to that end. Led by Thomas Mifflin, merchant, Charles Thomson, merchant and former schoolteacher, and Joseph Reed, a brilliant young lawyer who had moved from New Jersey to Philadelphia a few years before, they realized the necessity of involving all of Pennsylvania as soon as possible.²²

In the spring of 1774 the sentiment for unification of American efforts against British policies induced the Whigs in all the colonies to discuss the desirability of calling a general congress. Philadelphians, who embraced this idea with enthusiasm, petitioned Gov. John Penn in June to call the Pennsylvania Assembly into session. After Penn's refusal, which was not unexpected, thousands of people gathered for a meeting in the State House Yard on June 18. Presided over by John Dickinson and the merchant Thomas Willing, the meeting endorsed the idea of a colonial congress and the appointment of a special Committee of Correspondence for Philadelphia City and County to devise the best means of choosing Pennsylvania's delegates.²³

The Committee of Correspondence, with Thomas Willing as chairman, persuaded Penn to convene the Assembly after all and then asked "proper Persons" in every county to arrange for the appointment of committees to attend a Provincial Conference of Committees in Philadelphia on July 15 to prepare instructions for the Assembly.²⁴ The Provincial Conference met on the designated day, approved the calling of a congress, and asked the Assembly to appoint delegates.²⁵ Obliging, the Assembly did so on July 22. But before reaching that decision it had discussed resolutions and letters received from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Virginia, all in favor of a congress. A resolution of the Massachusetts Assembly of June 17, 1774, suggested Philadelphia as a possible location for the meeting.²⁶

When the First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in September, it began its sessions in the new and still incomplete Carpenters' Hall, constructed for the Carpenters' Company by one of the most distinguished of their number, Robert Smith. The Congress could count on a warmer reception from the Carpenters than it would have found in the chambers of the Assembly. As John Adams noted, an excellent library—the Library Company—was on the second floor.

The absence of general enthusiasm for it notwithstanding, the relationship between the city and the Congress was to continue for the next nine years, primarily because of the contributions Philadelphia could make during the Revolution.²⁷

Many of the delegates to the First Congress were stunned by the magnificence they found there, in the manifestations of luxury. By 1774 its brilliant Chippendale style had reached the apogee of colonial achievement in its interpretation of the rococo and was to be seen in all its glory ornamenting the city's principal mansions. Builders such as Samuel Rhoads, David Evans, Thomas Nevell, and Robert Smith erected houses whose interiors displayed splendid paneling, carving, and gilding, impressive chimney pieces, elaborate stucco ceilings, portraits by Charles Willson Peale, furniture from the shops of Benjamin Randolph, Thomas Affleck, James Reynolds, and William Savery. Their silver illustrated the artistry of Philip Syng and the Richardsons. Most of these grand city and country houses had been created in the 1760s and early 1770s, and were in their prime. Such indeed were those of John Cadwalader on Second Street below Pine and Samuel Powel on Third Street, the only one of these great urban mansions still standing in restored condition. Silas Deane, a Connecticut delegate, dined with Cadwalader and observed that the Philadelphian's "furniture and house exceed anything I have seen in this city or elsewhere." John Adams also noted Cadwalader's "grand and elegant House and Furniture." Both delegates liked Philadelphia. Deane found that "hospitality itself resides" there, while Adams feared he would be killed with kindness. Many of the entertainments enjoyed by the delegates took place at the new City Tavern on the west side of Second Street between Walnut and Chestnut. Adams pronounced it the most genteel tavern in the colonies.²⁸

Exposed to the visitors' admiring view were the sophisticated ways of life of the local aristocracy, their many diversions. Most prominent men belonged to the exclusive fishing clubs located several miles up the Schuylkill. The oldest of these, instituted in 1732, was the Schuylkill Fishing Company of the Colony in Schuylkill (it exists to this day with a change in its title, immediately after the Revolution, of the word "State" for "Colony"). Another similar club was the Fort St. David's Fishing Company. Its clubhouse was home to what may have been Pennsylvania's first museum, an accumulation of Indian materials and objects of natural history. Adams thought the collection admirable. In addition to the fishing clubs, local men of wealth maintained a Jockey Club founded in 1766 "to encourage the breeding of good horses and to



House at 224 Pine Street, probably built by John Stamper in 1765, demolished c. 1930 (photograph made c. 1860). Stamper, a wealthy merchant, was mayor of Philadelphia in 1759–1760.

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA

promote the pleasures of the turf" (visited by Washington in 1773) and a fox hunt established in 1767.

Philadelphia's public buildings and institutions—the commodious State House, which would house Congress after all following 1774, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the Barracks in the Northern Liberties, the Pennsylvania Hospital, and the Walnut Street Prison, a model jail built on Walnut Street east of Sixth in 1773 by Samuel Rhoads—all were of vital importance for the convenience of a Continental government. Living quarters for congressmen and the many visitors drawn to the capital were readily found in private homes, rented houses, and the many taverns. The excellent printing shops and the city's newspapers, by now seven in number, supplied with paper from the Wissahickon mills, met Congress's publishing needs.

The delegates to the First Continental Congress perceived the divisions that existed in Philadelphia over the proper measures to take in the attempt to obtain a redress of grievances from Britain. Would Congress take sides in the local disputes? It would, and the decisions promptly indicated its political bias. Congress originally chose to meet in Carpenters' Hall although Joseph Galloway, speaker of the Assembly, an adamant conservative and later a Tory, offered the State House as quarters.²⁹ The intercolonial delegates went on to select as secretary Charles Thomson, a zealous radical who was anathema to Philadelphia conservatives. Able, dedicated, and punctilious, Thomson would serve patiently and faithfully, at considerable expense to himself, until the establishment of the government under the federal Constitution.

And so the Congress set to work. Once again it is John Adams who gives a general idea of a delegate's life at that time: "We go to Congress at nine, and there we stay until three in the afternoon; then we adjourn, and go to dine with some of the nobles of Pennsylvania at four o'clock and feast upon a thousand delicacies, and sit drinking madeira, claret and Burgundy till six or seven and then go home fatigued to death with business, company and care."³⁰

IV

To force the British into a change of policy the Congress adopted a resolution called the Association. It bound the colonies to a nonimportation, nonexportation, nonconsumption agreement that was to be enforced not by the merchants themselves but by local committees. Now, with sufficient backing to force reluctant merchants to honor such agreements, the Philadelphia Whigs reorganized the committee system. The Committee of Correspondence for the City and County of Philadelphia, elected on June 18, was dissolved³¹ and a new one, for the city only, was chosen in a general election on November 12.

One of the first and most important actions of the new committee was the creation, on December 5, 1774, of the Philadelphia Committee of Inspection and Observation. This committee served zealously in enforcing the Association until its dissolution in September 1776. In an early move to strengthen its hand the Philadelphia Committee of Correspondence, which began to assume a tentative leadership for the entire province, issued a call for a provincial convention to meet in Philadelphia on January 23, 1775.

When the convention met in a three-day session, it passed resolutions to buttress the Association, promote domestic manufactures, and prohibit the importation of slaves. Then in an action of major importance to the city's revolutionary leadership, it made the Philadelphia committee a standing committee of correspondence for the eight counties represented at the convention.³² As spokesman for the provincial convention, it became in effect an extralegal body in competition with the Assembly.

V

In 1775 the course of the revolutionary drama accelerated with the Second Continental Congress due to meet that May. Prior to that event came news

of the bloody encounters at Lexington and Concord. The country was now in effect at war; an enraged irregular army besieged the British army at Boston. The military movement in Philadelphia, which saw the Light Horse of the City (the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, which is still in existence) organized on November 17, 1774, went into high gear with the recruiting of large bodies of men. Cols. John Dickinson and his first cousin John Cadwalader commanded two of the major units.



Charles Thomson (1729-1824), appointed secretary of the Continental Congress in 1774, woodcarving by William Rush (1756-1833).

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

It was onto this scene of excitement that the southern delegates to Congress came on May 9, 1775, George Washington among them, in his own carriage. They were escorted into town by a large, enthusiastic cavalcade of the militia and private citizens. The following day Congress, meeting in the State House, considered raising an army, but it was not until June 15 that Washington was unanimously elected to command the Continental forces. A week later, after a farewell dinner at the City Tavern, he set out for Boston, escorted as far as New York by the city's Light Horse. With Washington as aides went two Philadelphians, Thomas Mifflin and Joseph Reed.³³

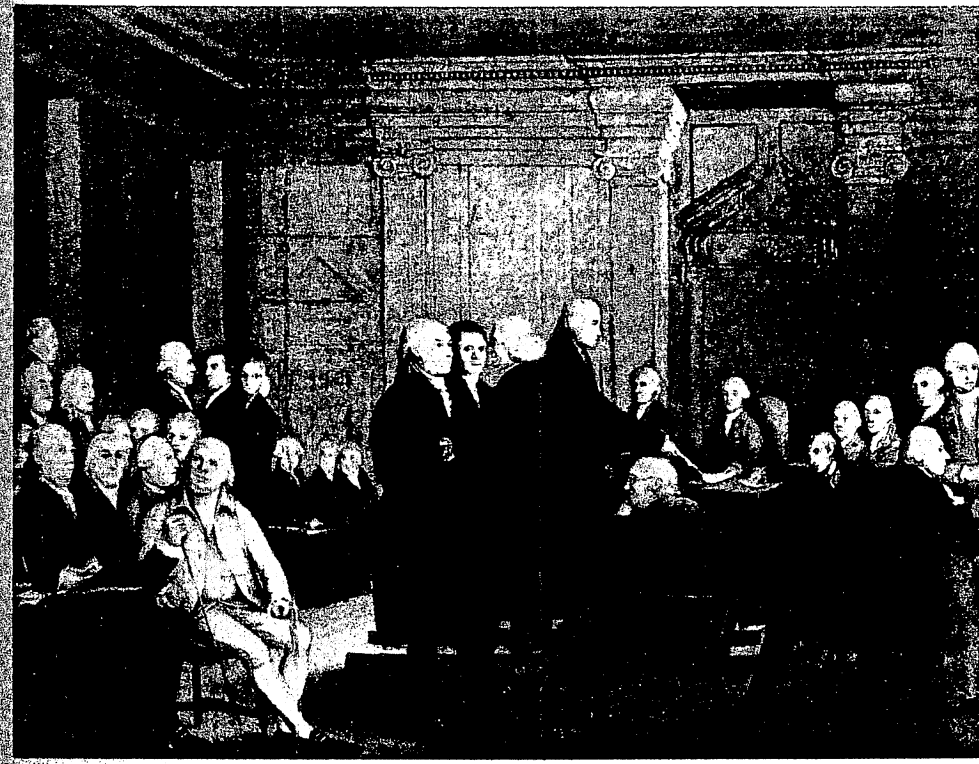
Although later in the year the Assembly expressly prohibited the Pennsylvania delegation to Congress from agreeing to any proposition that would lead to a separation from England or a change in the Pennsylvania govern-

ment,³⁴ the move toward independence could not be stopped. The Second Continental Congress again inserted congressional influence into local politics with its resolution of May 10, 1776, calling for the establishment of governments freed of British authority in all the colonies.³⁵ Responding to this resolution, the Philadelphia committees led an attack on the Pennsylvania colonial government that would bring about its destruction. At a mass meeting in the State House Yard on May 20, chaired by merchant Daniel Roberdeau, a decision was made to inform the Assembly that the Committee of Inspection and Observation would call a provincial conference of county committees to meet in Philadelphia and plan for the election of a convention to set up a new government.³⁶

Before the provincial convention could forgather, the United Colonies became the United States of America, despite the efforts of most of the members of the Pennsylvania delegation to Congress. On July 1, when Congress voted in committee of the whole on the question of independence, a majority of the delegation was opposed. On July 2, however, when a formal poll was taken, the affirmative votes of John Morton, James Wilson, and Benjamin Franklin aligned Pennsylvania with her sister states. Thomas Willing and Charles Humphreys opposed to the end, while John Dickinson and Robert Morris abstained from voting.³⁷ On July 4 Congress adopted "The unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America," a document that explained the reasons for the action of July 2. The Declaration was written during June by Thomas Jefferson, who had rented living quarters on the western edge of the city, in Jacob Graff's house on the southwest corner of Seventh and Market Streets.³⁸ When John Hancock, president of Congress, urged unanimity in the signing of the Declaration—"There must be no pulling different ways: we must all hang together"—Franklin is reputed to have agreed: "We must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."³⁹

To some Philadelphians the Declaration seemed a disaster, but those who felt otherwise proclaimed it on July 8 with military parades, gunfire, and the ringing of bells day and night. The sheriff, Lt.-Col. John Nixon, militia officer, merchant, and Whig leader, read the Declaration to a large crowd in the State House Yard, and in the evening the king's arms were taken from the courtroom in the State House and burned.⁴⁰

The story of the ringing of the State House bell on July 4 to proclaim liberty throughout the land apparently originated with the nineteenth-century Philadelphia popular writer George Lippard, and the veneration of the bell as the "Liberty Bell" is also a development of the nineteenth century.⁴¹ Almost as appealing to tourists as the Liberty Bell is that other shrine of nineteenth-century legend, the house presently numbered 239 Arch Street and associated with Elizabeth Griscom "Betsy" Ross. In this instance the patriotic tale—of Betsy's following up independence by fashioning the first Stars and Stripes—originated with the protagonist's grandson in 1870. Betsy's husband of the time, John Ross, the first of three husbands, did have an



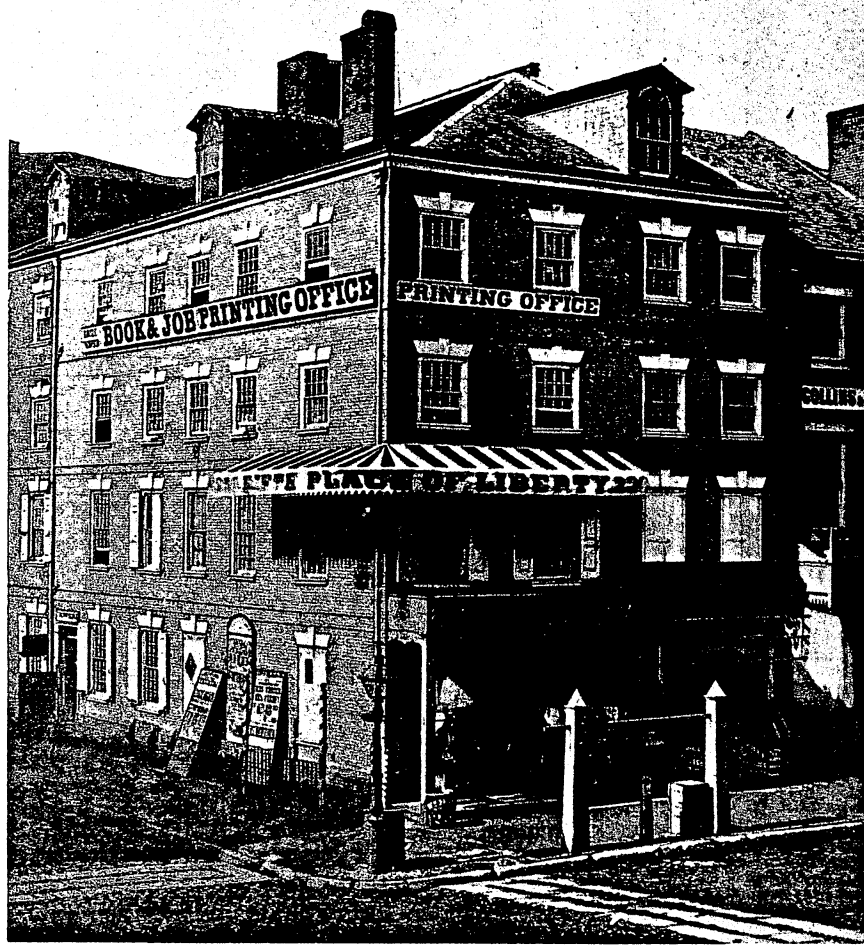
Congress Voting Independence in the Assembly Room of the State House on July 4, 1776, painting begun by Robert Edge Pine c. 1788.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

upholsterer's shop in Arch Street, and Betsy was a seamstress who is known to have made ships' colors during the Revolution.

V I

While partisans were quarreling over political control of the city and state, no one was unaware of the possibility that the British armed forces would sooner or later invade Pennsylvania. To repel attack upon the city, preparations had to be made on both land and water, but unfortunately the patriots had little or no local foundation upon which to build. At the outset of hostilities in Massachusetts in 1775 Pennsylvania was without a formal militia establishment or manned fortifications.⁴² Until the Assembly passed a comprehensive militia law in March 1777 the city was forced to rely mainly on voluntary groups such as the Light Horse of the City of Philadelphia⁴³ and the Military Association. The latter had apparently diminished to two companies by early 1775, the Philadelphia Greens under Capt. (later Brig.-Gen.) John Cadwalader, and the Quaker Blues under Capt. (and Sheriff) Joseph Cow-



House of Jacob Graff, southwest corner of Market and Seventh Streets, where Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence in June 1776. The house was demolished in 1883, but it has been reconstructed as part of Independence National Historical Park.

LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

perthwait. The news of Lexington and Concord stimulated military activity, however, and by August 1775 the Philadelphia Committee built up the Associators of Philadelphia to four infantry battalions, a rifle battalion, an artillery battalion, and the City Guards, a kind of patriot police force. In response to a petition from the Committee, the Assembly on June 30, 1775, approved of the Military Association and promised to pay wages to its members, but only when they were engaged in repelling actual attacks.⁴⁴ At the same time

a provincial Committee of Safety was appointed to determine the time when it was necessary to call out the Associators and to supply them with equipment and ammunition. To the demands of the Philadelphia Committee in October 1775 that a regular militia be created, the Assembly responded by attempting to improve the Association, but without much effect.

Housing an unprecedented number of men under arms in Philadelphia presented serious problems. The Barracks were soon filled to capacity, and the overflow was distributed in the latter part of 1776 and early 1777 among private houses, the college, Quaker meetinghouses, churches, and any other available quarters. Although the number of soldiers in the armed service of Pennsylvania was small, 1365 in August 1776,⁴⁵ the facilities were overtaxed by other troops who were in transit, in training, or awaiting assignment.

Before the war the river defenses of Philadelphia never occasioned enough concern to warrant heavy or sustained expenditures for elaborate fortifications. In 1773 the Assembly appropriated money to purchase Mud Island (later called Fort Island), several miles below the city, and to build a stone fort to ward off raiding ships. The works were commenced in 1774 but remained uncompleted because of insufficient funds.⁴⁶

Acutely aware of the possibility of British attack on Philadelphia from the Delaware, both Pennsylvania and Continental officials concerned themselves with planning and building defensive fleets and fortifications from the summer of 1775 to the autumn of 1777. Despite delays occasioned by conflicting authorities over methods of constructing and financing the defenses, they eventually reached a stage of development that made them serious obstacles to British control of the river. Topographically, the approaches to Philadelphia from Billingsport on the New Jersey shore north to the mouth of the Schuylkill lent themselves reasonably well to defense. The main channel ran along the eastern shore of Mud Island, just below the mouth of the Schuylkill, and thence south past Hog Island and Billings Island, opposite Billingsport. The basic plan of defense called for the erection of *chevaux-de-frise*—wooden obstacles with protruding stakes, literally looking like “frizzy horses”—to block the channels at Billings Island and Mud Island. To protect these underwater obstacles, forts were built at Billingsport; at Red Bank, New Jersey, just opposite the tip of Mud Island (Fort Mercer); and on the southwest extremity of Mud Island (Mud Fort, later Fort Mifflin), on a design first laid out in 1771 by the British military engineer Capt. John Montresor. To permit friendly shipping to use the river, secret openings were made in the *chevaux-de-frise* that were known to only a handful of pilots.⁴⁷

In addition to stationary defenses Pennsylvania built a small navy of galleys and gondolas for operation in the Delaware. They were supported by floating batteries and fire rafts. By November 1776 it was estimated that there were 150 fire floats, two fire boats, two floating batteries, and seven cannon at Mud Island. In addition, forty *chevaux-de-frise* had been planted and a large chain stretched across the channel at that point.⁴⁸ The Pennsylvania navy in August 1776 numbered 768 men.⁴⁹

Until the spring of 1776 Philadelphia experienced the milder and more

pleasant sights and sounds of war—the parades, cheers on the training grounds, and the thrilling roll of drums. Then in March the British frigates *Roebuck* and *Liverpool* appeared at the mouth of Delaware Bay and instituted a blockade. The sealing of the harbor was virtually complete, and the shipping that had been the life blood of Philadelphia stood idle; but the demand for the manufacture of munitions, clothing, and equipment for the soldiers was so great, and consequently such was the demand for capital and labor, that the blockade had remarkably little impact on the city's prosperity. In May the first local armed clash occurred, when the *Roebuck* and the *Liverpool* ventured up river and engaged thirteen Pennsylvania galleys and the Continental sloop *Reprisal* near the mouth of the Christiana River. Spectators gathered on both banks of the Delaware. All turned out well when the intruders retired down the river under fire.⁵⁰

The news of the fighting that took place between the American and British forces in and around New York during August and September alternated between bad and terrible. General Washington and the Continental Army were defeated in a series of engagements by the British army under Gen. Sir William Howe, and in November the remnants of Washington's badly mauled forces retreated across New Jersey toward the Delaware. Previously the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, apprehensive that Howe would invade the state, had asked Congress to consider the possibility of stationing troops near Philadelphia, and to name a general officer to command them.⁵¹ Congress had no troops to spare, but on November 11, 1776, it did ask the Continental Board of War, its military administrative agency, to confer with the Council of Safety on Philadelphia's defense.⁵² To consolidate defense Congress asked Washington to take direct command of all the troops in the Northern Department that had been raised in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.⁵³ In an effort to supplement Washington's forces the Council of Safety was requested to call out all the Associators in Philadelphia City and County and the counties of Chester, Bucks, and Northampton to serve for six weeks in the Continental forces.⁵⁴

In the deepening crisis David Rittenhouse, vice-president of the Council of Safety, warned the city that only vigorous action could save it from invasion. To inspire courage and enthusiasm, on November 28 he and Thomas Mifflin, now quartermaster general of the Continental Army, addressed a mass meeting in the State House Yard. About 2000 men in the city responded to their appeals by taking up arms. The Philadelphia Associators, who about this time were reorganized as the Philadelphia Brigade, went into active service and eventually fought creditably. But while the city responded reasonably well to the military emergency, the countryside appeared lethargic, indifferent, and sometimes hostile to the cause.⁵⁵ The countrymen's failure to rally, and the apparent hopelessness of stopping the numerically and qualitatively superior British army, deepened the fear and frustration in the city, and thousands began leaving for the country as reports of British progress filtered in. When it was learned that the enemy had reached New Brunswick, the

Council of Safety requested that the schools be closed and that all inhabitants immediately spring to the city's defense. By December 7 the council thought that the British "may be hourly expected" in Pennsylvania, but curiously enough it asked that the "Schools in the City be opened on Monday next, and the Education of Youth be carried on as usual."⁵⁶

The situation had not improved in the slightest, however, and while the children were thinking of resuming their studies, Congress was contemplating departure from a city that apparently could not be defended. But before it decamped on December 12 and headed for Baltimore, it made some last desperate efforts to save its place of residence. On December 9 it reinforced Washington's repeated requests for troops by asking the Council of Safety to scour the backcountry, and among other actions it directed the commanding officer in the city, Maj.-Gen. Israel Putnam, to defend it "to the utmost extremity."⁵⁷ Putnam imposed martial law, announced a ten o'clock curfew, and in the face of a general flight, ordered the inhabitants out to dig entrenchments.

Before the disorderly exodus from the city ended about half of the people had fled, and the roads to the west were covered with escapees in carts and wagons of all descriptions. "This city was, for days," wrote Robert Morris on December 21, "the greatest scene of distress that you can conceive; everybody but Quakers were removing their families and effects, and now it looks dismal and melancholy."⁵⁸ To add to the misery and disorder, smallpox and camp fever spread among the soldiers in epidemic proportions. The dead were buried by the hundreds in long shallow trenches in the area of the Walnut Street Prison.

Then, amid the pervasive gloom that marked the nadir of the revolutionary cause, came news of Washington's victory at Trenton on December 26. Four days later hundreds of Hessians captured in the fighting were marched through Philadelphia's streets.⁵⁹ Returning to New Jersey to fight again at Princeton on January 3, Washington cleared the enemy from that state, except in the easternmost part, and went into winter quarters near Morristown. From the hills there he could overlook the invasion route across New Jersey toward the Delaware and discourage another British overland advance by threatening its line of communications. The Philadelphia Light Horse, attached to the Continental Army for the emergency, won distinction in reconnaissance and in outpost actions during the course of the Trenton-Princeton campaign.

When the threat of invasion had receded, Philadelphia once again became its former bustling self as thousands of refugees returned. Congress too came back in March 1777, openly unrepentant, but nevertheless somewhat chagrined over its hasty departure.

Many suspected, however, that the city enjoyed a reprieve that was merely temporary, for every month that followed brought its alarms. In April the Pennsylvania Executive Council, warned by General Putnam that Howe would probably appear soon, encouraged Pennsylvanians to join the militia

by assuring them that the city had once been saved by a few Associators, just as a "Divine Providence" had remarkably saved "the lives of the militia in every Battle during this just War."⁶⁰ Despite such reassurance many potential soldiers preferred to stay at home and give Providence an even better chance. Home also had its attractions for the Executive Council and the Assembly. Both responded to the April alarm by promptly adjourning. Congress immediately asked them to come back to Philadelphia, and in the meantime it decided "to watch over all matters" in Pennsylvania because the state's executive authority was "incapable of any exertion adequate to the present crisis."⁶¹

Again the patriots, as they had in the past and would in the future, turned to the committee system to get things done. On April 17 Owen Biddle, chairman of the Pennsylvania Board of War, announced that a Committee of Fifty had been named by the board to remove from Philadelphia all equipment and provisions that might fall into British hands.⁶² It had the power to keep goods from coming into the city, to search for suspected hidden supplies, and to determine the amount of provisions any family might retain.

In the summer rumors of invasion increased, for on July 23 General Howe sailed out of New York harbor on his way by sea to wage a campaign in Pennsylvania and capture Philadelphia.⁶³ In a leisurely voyage he eventually reached the Virginia Capes, and coming up the Chesapeake, his troops debarked at Head of Elk on August 25.

V I I

As the danger from the enemy outside Philadelphia increased, both the state and congressional authorities came to concern themselves more and more with the enemies, real and imagined, from within. Unfortunately the problem of detection and punishment was as complicated as it was vexatious. The political spectrum of Philadelphians ranged from patriot blue to bright British red, and while some held true to their colors, others had the habit of changing with perplexing frequency as the revolutionary tides rose and fell. But however annoying the chameleons were, the real danger would come from the men who might be waiting for the moment of greatest urgency to commit overt treason. Of course some saw Tories behind every teapot, but which ones were most likely to have hidden guns in the stable or the attic? They had to be identified as soon as possible.

Before the Declaration of Independence Tories were more outspoken than they were after that event. In 1775 the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety had required self-acknowledged Loyalists to recant. Isaac Hunt, a lawyer, was carted through the streets by a mob for refusing to apologize for having acted as an attorney for a Loyalist. Dr. John Kearsley, a Tory physician who sharply protested against this action, was then himself manhandled. Hunt later left for England, and Kearsley was sent as a prisoner to York.⁶⁴ For aiding South Carolinian Moses Kirkland to escape from Philadelphia in May 1776, Arthur Thomas and his sons were attacked in their home by a mob. After a term of imprisonment Thomas went in September to New York, the haven for sev-

eral local Tories. Quite a few Loyalists left Philadelphia in the summer of 1776, including several sons of former Chief Justice William Allen. John Penn and Benjamin Chew, chief justice of Pennsylvania from 1774 to 1776, were exiled to New Jersey in 1777. The number of Loyalists, of whatever hue, who remained in Philadelphia could only be conjectured. The patriots suspected that they were numerous, but what they would do during a British invasion was the important question.

The Quakers presented a special problem. Throughout the colonies the Society of Friends was trying to keep its members true to their religious professions, urging them to avoid any participation in revolutionary activity. The Quaker community in Philadelphia, the strongest and most influential on the continent, served as a clearinghouse for information that was widely circulated, along with advice and earnest exhortations, to Friends everywhere in America.⁶⁵ At the same time their attitude was in accord with that of the Yearly Meeting in London, which in 1775 entreated American Friends to remain clear of any political commotions or rebellious activities against the king. They continued to insist on this policy throughout the war, and urged the colonials to have nothing to do with the new order and to refrain from sympathizing with it in any manner.⁶⁶

The Pennsylvania Quakers needed no urging. While embracing the peace testimony as the foundation of their opposition to the Revolution, they enlarged it with political and economic pronouncements that angered most Whigs. Although many had joined in resistance to British policies in the 1760s, they began a definite withdrawal when the opposition took on more violent forms. To the English king, according to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of 1774, could be attributed the liberties enjoyed in America, and therefore all opposition to him, even the evasion of customs duties, should be discouraged. Yet more specific was the 1775 declaration by the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings that Quakers should oppose all violations of law as manifested in usurpation of power and the convening of "illegal assemblies."⁶⁷ The stand taken by the Meeting for Sufferings, as Anne T. Gary puts it, "was especially sympathetic to the political opinions and economic interests of prominent Quaker merchants, such as Israel Pemberton, who were instrumental in obtaining the official adherence of their meetings to British [Quaker] counsels. Thus the political pronouncements of colonial Quakerism were more loyalistic than a strictly logical interpretation of their dogmas demanded."⁶⁸

It was on the recommendation of the Meeting for Sufferings that the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in September 1776 discussed the Quaker position vis-à-vis the Declaration of Independence and its consequences. With all American yearly meetings represented but New York, the meeting adopted one of the most important and comprehensive statements yet made. Friends were strictly forbidden to participate in civil government under the Declaration, even in elections, to pay fines in lieu of military service, or to engage in business that was likely to help the war effort.⁶⁹

In 1775 the Pennsylvania Quakers had begun to enforce a rigid code of

conduct. By the end of that year 163 Friends had been investigated, of whom 65 were disowned. Some 353 more were disowned from 1776 through 1778.⁷⁰ No revolutionary government ever came close to compelling such obedience.

But behind the adamant stand of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia fundamental changes were taking place. The Revolution undoubtedly presented the severest test the Quakers had yet faced in Pennsylvania. Many of them met it by hearkening to the voices of reform which had become more insistent in recent years and by returning to the original simplicities of the faith, by living more plainly and withdrawing as much as possible from "worldly" influences.⁷¹

The various pronouncements and injunctions issued by the Quaker meetings had of course come to the attention of the government. They were taken so seriously that Congress, on August 28, 1777, as invasion became imminent, recommended that the Pennsylvania Executive Council arrest and confine three members of the Fisher family, three Pembertons, including Israel, and five other leading Quakers, because they were certainly and notoriously "disaffected to the American cause" and would be inclined "to communicate intelligence to the enemy."⁷² The Executive Council was not only willing to comply with the recommendation but added the names of thirty more men whom it deemed dangerous to the public safety.⁷³ Accordingly, in the first week of September a number of persons, mostly Quakers, were rounded up and confined in the Freemasons' Lodge in Norris (Lodge) Alley just off Second Street.⁷⁴ Subsequently, just as the British and American armies were about to clash at the Brandywine, twenty of them were exiled to Virginia.

VIII

The problem of Loyalism was only one of many that faced Congress and the Executive Council as they sought means to save Philadelphia from British occupation or, failing that, to prevent valuable supplies from falling into enemy hands. In August the Committee of Fifty continued to remove superfluous stores to places of safety. People who refused to promise allegiance to the state were disarmed, lead spouts were torn from the houses, and frantic efforts were made to fill the militia ranks in the city and the nearby counties.⁷⁵

General Howe stayed only a short time at Head of Elk before marching into Pennsylvania. Howe had come to force Washington into a general engagement which he was sure the Americans would have to accept to protect Philadelphia. Had he forced a fight in New England he would have had to contend with the local militia who he thought were "the most persevering of any in all North America," but he did not expect that Washington would be able to obtain any considerable increase in his forces in Pennsylvania.⁷⁶

On August 24 Washington took his troops through Philadelphia, making "pathetically minute" preparations to ensure a show of strength that might impress the city's Tories and Quakers. The Continental Army came down Front Street and moved west out Chestnut, impressive in that they marched twelve deep and yet took over two hours to pass by, but even to John Adams's

sympathetic eye not having "quite the air of soldiers," and trying to make up for their utter lack of uniforms by wearing sprigs of green leaves in their hats.⁷⁷ Then on September 11 around Chadd's Ford on the Brandywine Creek outnumbered as well as overmatched in training and discipline, the Continentals met the British in battle.

In the city, where the firing could be heard, prayers were sent up for both sides.⁷⁸ There was little activity until the end of the day when reports began arriving from the battlefield. At first no two accounts agreed, but as night came on a horseman sped down to the Indian Queen with more definite news. At six o'clock the next morning Congress heard the worst when dispatches from Washington were read.⁷⁹ The Continental Army had been outgeneraled as well as otherwise overmatched and nearly trapped; it had extricated itself from the field, but Howe had badly beaten Washington.

In the days that followed, while the city was being scoured to remove any supplies that had been missed before, another exodus began. The city's bells, including the State House bell, were taken down and carted off to safety in Allentown. Thousands fled into the backcountry and across the Delaware into New Jersey. The Assembly and the Executive Council hurried to Lancaster, and Congress, after a brief stay there, went on to York. On the night of September 19, when rumor had it that the British were approaching, Mrs. Sarah Logan Fisher, whose happiness over the news was somewhat dampened by the exile of her Quaker husband to Virginia, saw "horses galloping, women running, children crying, delegates flying, and altogether the greatest consternation, fright and terror that can be imagined. Some of our neighbors took their flight before day, and I believe all the Congress moved off before 5 o'clock, but behold when morning came, it proved a false alarm."⁸⁰

Mrs. Fisher, who described the American troops as "lawless banditti" and "dirty creatures," and Washington, Congress, and the Executive Council as "infernals," had to wait another week for the full triumph. It came on September 26, when huge crowds, composed for the most part of women, children, and Quakers, lined the streets and shouted with joy as Maj.-Gen. Charles Lord Cornwallis marched part of the victorious British army into the city.⁸¹ Smoothness and good order marked the entrance. Since the soldiers were unacquainted with the locality, two Tories, Enoch Story and Phineas Bond, Jr., guided the light horse in. They were followed by a band; then, led by Cornwallis, came the main body of troops, the artillery, the Hessians, and another band. That was not all, though. Apparently the invaders had come to stay, for "Baggage wagons, Hessian women, and horses, cows, goats and asses brought up the rear." All of this was fitting and proper, thought Mrs. Fisher. Even the Philadelphia weather cooperated. As the British neared the city the clouds dispersed, "the sun shone out with a sweet serenity," and the air was cool enough to prevent the troops from being "incommoded with the heat."⁸²

Philadelphia's capture was a serious blow to the Revolution; Washington at one time thought it would be fatal to the American cause. The reasons for

his concern are clear when one considers the important role the city had played as a war center and arsenal. From 1775 the demands for armament, ships, cloth, and tents had greatly expanded Philadelphia's productive capacity. As a case in point, about 4000 women were engaged in their homes in the manufacture of textiles by the summer of 1776. In the latter part of the same year Robert Morris presented a graphic view of Philadelphia's importance. "You will consider Philadelphia," he wrote, "from its central situation, the extent of its commerce, the number of its artificers, manufactures and other circumstances, to be to the United States what the heart is to the human body in circulating the blood."⁸³ The loss of America's leading city, the disruption of government on all levels, and the population dislocation, including the flight of many in the industrial and commercial groups, undoubtedly hampered the war effort. Certainly one of the immediate effects of the loss was to force Washington's army to draw its supplies other than subsistence from distant areas.⁸⁴ With the revolutionary cause in such sad disarray, subsistence became hard to extract from southeastern Pennsylvania farmers who preferred to sell for British currency. The miseries of Valley Forge would come soon enough.

But there were some mitigating circumstances in the loss of Philadelphia. So long a period of warning had preceded the British approach in the late summer and early autumn that ample opportunity was afforded to remove war and industrial matériel. So much had been taken and so many people had left that for the moment the city was almost a hollow shell.

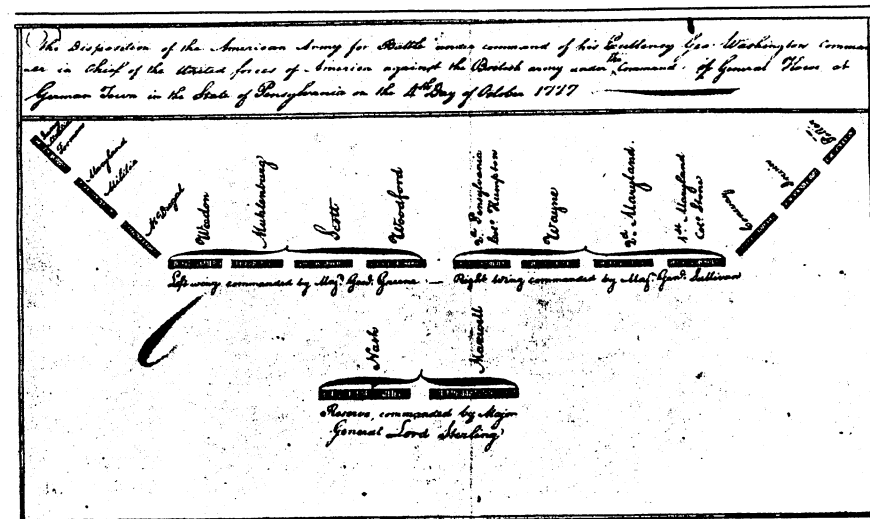
To prevent the British from using local printing facilities, Congress on September 18 had directed Brig.-Gen. John Armstrong to transport into the country the printing presses and type of the city and Germantown. During the first three weeks of September all the major English-language newspapers in Philadelphia suspended publication. All, incidentally, would resume operations in the city after it was reoccupied by the Americans. In the meantime David Hall and William Sellers issued their *Pennsylvania Gazette* from York, and the *Pennsylvania Packet* was published at Lancaster. Apparently General Armstrong did not make a clean sweep of the printing presses for Benjamin Towne's *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, which had suspended publication from September 23 to October 11, resumed under British control, and James Humphreys's *Pennsylvania Ledger*, a Tory paper which had been suspended during the previous year, resumed operation on October 10. In the same month Christopher Sower [Saur] brought his press in from Germantown and resumed publication of his *Pennsylvanische Staats-Courier*, the current version of the series of German papers initiated by his father the first Christopher Saur.⁸⁵

The people who remained in the city, Southwark, and the Northern Liberties numbered 21,767, of whom 17,285 were women, children, and adolescents. Thus there remained only 4482 males over eighteen years of age.⁸⁶ Of the 5470 houses in these areas, 587 were untenanted, and many of the 287 stores were left vacant.⁸⁷ Within a short time, however, the population figures

increased dramatically. Now open to avowed Tories, deserters, refugees, and opportunists of all descriptions, the city was overrun with strangers who sought to exploit the Whigs' misfortune.

To guard the city against Washington's army, Howe established his headquarters at Stenton, the Logan house near Germantown, and positioned much of his army about a mile to the northwest in the general region of Germantown's Market Square. Cornwallis's division occupied Philadelphia and began building works for its defense, and Howe planned to reduce the fortifications on the Delaware, which were still in American hands. Until he did so the British situation at Philadelphia was vulnerable, because supplies could not reach Howe's army by the Delaware River route. To cover the operations against the Delaware forts, however, Howe had to stretch his Germantown lines thin.

Washington took advantage of this deployment by attacking at Germantown on October 4 with 11,000 Continentals and militia. The American commander's complicated battle plan called for the converging of four columns against the British lines; such a difficult operation rarely works even with veteran troops led by professional officers. Inevitably, during their night march the timing of the American columns went awry and they did not attack simultaneously. Maj.-Gen. John Sullivan's column, which marched down the Germantown Road across Chestnut Hill and through Mount Airy, lost much of its momentum when Washington diverted troops from it to deal with six



The Disposition of the American Army for Battle under the command of his Excellency Geo. Washington . . . against the British army under the Command of General Howe at German Town, October 4, 1777. Page from an orderly book.

small companies of Lt.-Col. Thomas Musgrave's 40th Regiment that retired into Cliveden, Benjamin Chew's house, and defended it sturdily. Nevertheless the British were much handicapped because the American attackers were coming at them out of a heavy fog. Sullivan's column and Maj.-Gen. Nathaniel Greene's, which was approaching Market Square down the streets from the Limekiln Road farther north, actually drove the enemy before them—until the fog confused them too, and they commenced fighting each other. When the British counterattacked, the Americans began a retreat that degenerated into panic. The battle of Germantown, the second major engagement fought for Philadelphia, ended as another British victory. But the determination with which the Americans attacked, and their conviction that they had



Medal commemorating the British victory at Germantown and Lt.-Col. Thomas Musgrave's defense of Cliveden, the house of Benjamin Chew, October 4, 1777. The Chew mansion is now owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON

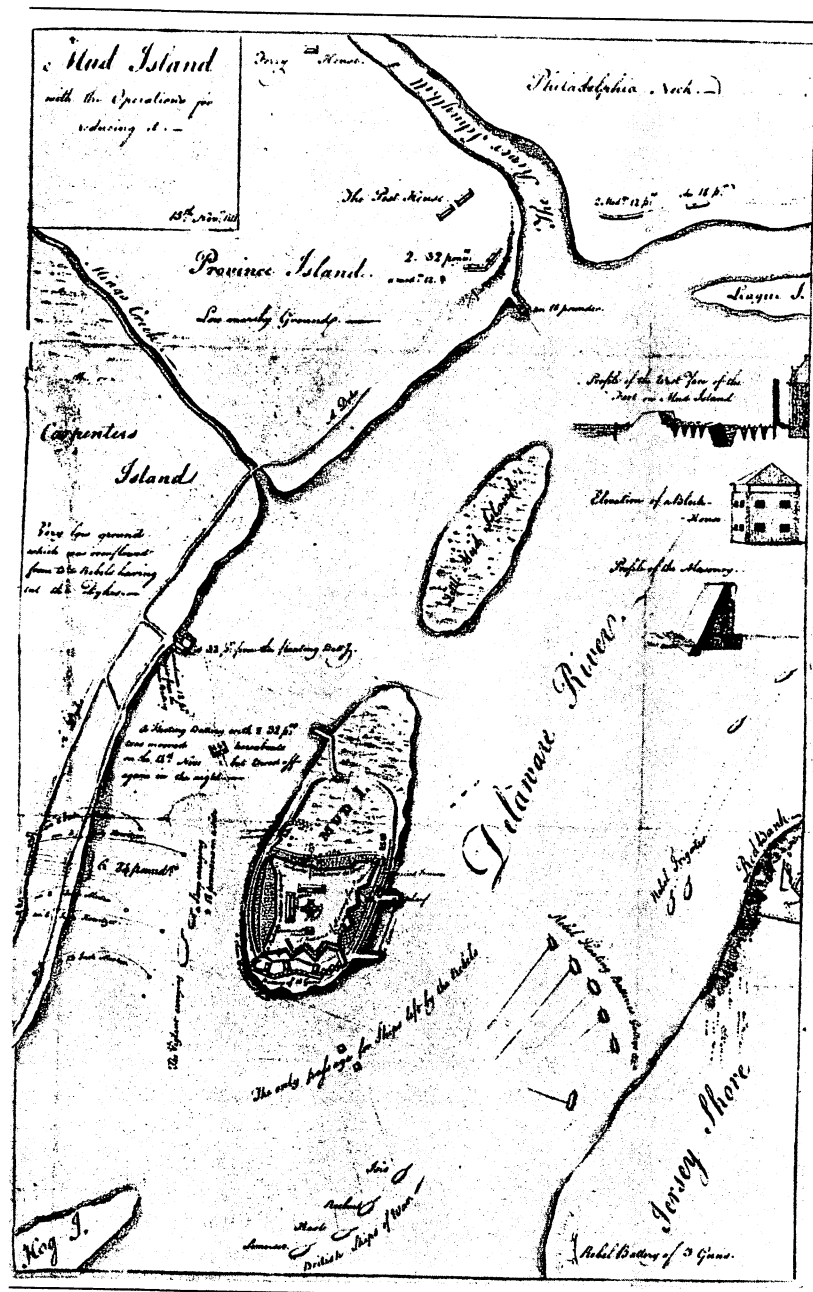
been on the verge of winning, did much for their morale and impressed the French government, which was contemplating an American alliance.

The determination of the American attack also impressed Howe to the extent that he withdrew his army into Philadelphia. Thus constricted, he more than ever needed access to the sea by way of the Delaware, but the American river defenses were proving stubborn. The British occupied an abandoned Billingsport on October 9, but on October 22 some 400 Rhode Island troops in Fort Mercer at Red Bank beat off an attack of 2000 Hessians. The next day the guns of Fort Mifflin and the Pennsylvania navy repulsed a British naval attack; six enemy warships were heavily damaged, and the sixty-four-gun ship *Augusta* and the sixteen-gun sloop *Merlin* ran aground. After the *Augusta* caught fire and blew up, the British destroyed the *Merlin*.

Washington hoped Howe would have to divert enough strength downriver and into New Jersey against the forts so that he could stage a second assault. This hope foundered, however, on the isolation of Fort Mifflin from effective American help and on the strength of Howe's artillery train and the Royal Navy. Though Province Island was a mud bank largely under water at high tide and thus hardly a good artillery platform, the British contrived to mount five heavy batteries on it within range of Fort Mifflin. They also brought a floating battery of twenty-two twenty-four-pounders within forty yards of the fort. On November 10 they opened a bombardment with these guns. Five days later their fleet also came into action. Fort Mifflin's guns were knocked out one by one until only two could fire, and by nightfall of November 15 its garrison had to move to Fort Mercer. But that post was now too isolated to be held, and it was abandoned on the night of November 20–21. The Pennsylvania navy also had to be given up, scuttled by its crews.⁸⁸

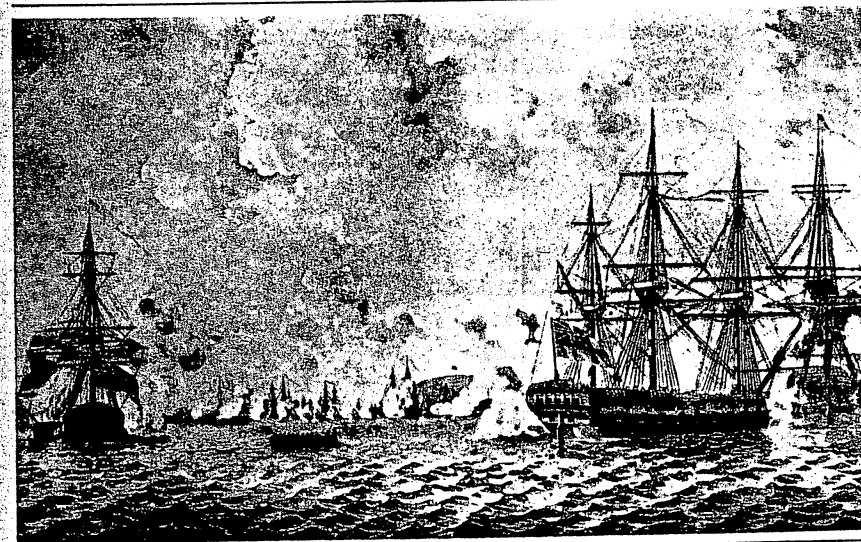
Even then the rebels were not yet ready to cede undisputed control of the Delaware. David Bushnell, earlier the inventor of a primitive submarine called "Bushnell's Turtle," had suspended his experiments in trying to sink British ships with that underwater craft, but he conceived the idea of floating kegs laden with explosives from above Philadelphia down the Delaware on the ebb tide, to blow up among the British ships in the harbor. The kegs were readied, but a heavy frost on the night in January 1778 when they were put into the river happened to cause the ships to be moved to the city's wharves, out of danger. The kegs were discovered when a bargeman hauled one out of the water and it exploded in his arms, killing him and several companions. This incident touched off wild rumors that the fiendish rebels were coming down the Delaware in kegs that they were using as Trojan horses. British troops were drawn up on the riverbanks to fire at the kegs. One story has it that just as the alarm was subsiding, a marketwoman dropped a keg of cheese into the Delaware and touched off a frenzy all over again. Francis Hopkinson, the sole member of William Smith's old Anglophile literary circle to become a rebel, immortalized this "Battle of the Kegs" in verse.⁸⁹

The whole tedious business of gaining control of the Delaware left the



Mud Island with the Operations for reducing it, 15th Novr. 1777, drawn by Maj. John André. Badly damaged during the Revolution, Fort Mifflin was rebuilt in 1798.

HUNTINGTON LIBRARY, SAN MARINO, CALIF.



Representation of the Action off Mud Fort in the River Delaware . . . 15th Novr 1777. Drawn and engraved by Lt. W. Elliot, 1787.

I. N. PHELPS STOKES COLLECTION, PRINTS DIVISION, NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY:
ASTOR, LENOX, AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

British army feeling far less at ease in Philadelphia than they had anticipated. To ward off another attack by Washington, Howe erected a chain of ten redoubts, with connecting abatis, between the two rivers in a line running north of and parallel to Callowhill Street.⁹⁰ The construction of these works, begun while Howe was still in Germantown, was hampered by a labor shortage. Although Joseph Galloway was sure it would be a simple matter to get 500 civilians to do the digging, the most the British could obtain was about eighty. Few were interested in working all day for eight pence and a ration of salt provisions.⁹¹ Many summer mansions that might have sheltered snipers along the defense line were burned to the ground, including John Dickinson's Fair Hill, formerly a residence of his father-in-law Isaac Norris II.

Washington continued scrutinizing the Philadelphia defenses, warding off Howe's lunge against him at Whitemarsh in early December, until he decided there were no longer any inviting openings and retired into winter quarters at Valley Forge on December 19. There, about twenty-two miles northwest of the city, the Continental Army took up a hilly defensive position that could command any enemy foray toward Congress at York or toward the remaining American supply depot in the area at Reading. There was an abundance of water and of wood for fuel and building. Food that the farmers would part with was less available, and for a time in midwinter the army was close to starvation. The soldiers were also so destitute of clothing that in mid-January many could not leave their huts. But famous though the suffer-

ing at Valley Forge has become, and real though it was, the winter fortunately was in fact rather mild. Beginning in March there was opportunity for the training program inaugurated by the new inspector-general of the army, Baron Friedrich Wilhelm Augustus von Steuben, to begin honing into soldierly discipline the raw warrior skills displayed in the vigor of the attack at Germantown.

I X

Less self-assured than when the Philadelphia campaign had begun, by the latter part of December the British settled down in relative comfort for the winter. The troops were quartered in the Barracks, available public buildings, and encampments, while officers lived in private houses. Lt.-Gen. Wilhelm Baron von Knyphausen, the Hessian commander, occupied John Cadwalader's residence. The Samuel Powells, who had elected to stay in the city, were relegated to the back of their house while high-ranking officers took over its front rooms. General Howe established his quarters in former Gov. Richard Penn's large house on Market Street, and all lived rather luxuriously. When news at last reached Franklin in France that Howe had taken Philadelphia, the philosopher remarked that, on the contrary, Philadelphia had taken Howe. This seemed to be the case, for Howe showed little interest in leaving his mistress and the comforts of the city.⁹²

American prisoners, about 500 of them, were put into the two jails, the Walnut Street Prison and its predecessor at Third and Market; the officers were confined in the State House.⁹³ The deprivations suffered by the men in the jails were extreme. Fed barbarously restricted rations, they supplemented their diet with wood, leather, and rats. The provision baskets they hopefully suspended to the street level yielded very little.⁹⁴

To govern Philadelphia, Howe enlisted the aid of Joseph Galloway, who made himself useful in the early days of the occupation by identifying rebels, directing an agency of about eighty spies, and administering oaths of allegiance to the inhabitants. In December he was appointed superintendent-general of the police and director of exports and imports.⁹⁵ He was in effect the civil governor of the city. Other Philadelphians also served Howe faithfully: Samuel Shoemaker and John Potts as police magistrates; George Roberts, James Reynolds, and several others as commissioners of the nightwatch. George Harding ferreted out spies, while Abraham Carlisle granted passports only to those above suspicion, and carefully watched the city's entrances for dangerous intruders. To secure the streets at night a curfew was imposed in January which required all pedestrians to carry lanterns.⁹⁶

During his stay in the city Howe made strenuous efforts to recruit Loyalists, but without much success. The lack of enthusiasm was a repetition of what he had experienced on his march from Head of Elk. At that time, despite the assurances of Galloway that there were many Loyalists in southeastern Pennsylvania, Howe remained doubtful. He was suspicious of everyone but the Quakers, and he felt later that with very few exceptions they were the only

people in Philadelphia who were really glad to see him occupy the city.⁹⁷ Because of their religion, however, the Quakers would not fight in the king's behalf; nor, for quite different reasons, would most of the other Loyalists in Philadelphia. After eight months of recruiting, according to Howe, only 974 men were raised, and quite a few of those had come in from Maryland and New Jersey.⁹⁸

Joseph Galloway thought that the people who stayed in Philadelphia, with few exceptions, were Loyalists.⁹⁹ Some of the exceptions could very well have been such prominent Whigs as Dr. John Morgan and Thomas Willing. But Morgan's Whig patriotism was lukewarm at the time because he had been dismissed as director-general of hospitals in the Continental Army. Moreover he was disgusted with what he regarded as the arbitrary conduct of the city committees.¹⁰⁰ Willing, whose business partner Robert Morris was of course not in the city, continued to work there, but he refused to take an oath of allegiance to the king.¹⁰¹ Other exceptions were, according to Howe, Whigs who filtered back into town to carry out supplies and information to the rebel army, and to do all the damage they could to Howe's forces. In the opinion of James Allen, many of "the fiercest Whigs" stayed on unmolested.¹⁰² There were also many neutralists who carried on business as usual and were cordially accepted by the British officers but whose conduct did not injure them in the eyes of the Whigs when the British departed.

During the early days of the occupation commodities of all kinds, provisions especially, were scarce, and prices were exorbitant. Tea sold for \$60 a pound, silk commanded \$100 a yard, wood was at times unobtainable, and the markets were often unable to provide flour, butter, and eggs.¹⁰³ The rebel blockade of the Delaware until Forts Mifflin and Mercer were taken, a refugee inundation, and plundering by the British troops contributed to the scarcity. Howe imposed price controls and restrictions on the sale of certain items, but enforcement, largely in the hands of the merchants, was not strict and prices consequently remained high throughout the winter.¹⁰⁴ The shortage of goods was considerably relieved after the Delaware was cleared for shipping and the cessation of major campaigning allowed a greater freedom of trade between the city and the local farmers. The steady flow of provisions into Philadelphia angered Washington, but he could not stop it. The Pennsylvania militia, to which this task was mainly entrusted, was so weak in numbers—at one time there were only sixty men in the field—that their scattered patrols were evaded with relative ease by farmers who preferred British specie to depreciated currency.¹⁰⁵ With the exception then of the very poor, among whom many in the swarms of Loyalist refugees could be included, the inhabitants of Philadelphia lived in moderate comfort while Washington's troops were starving at Valley Forge. During January and February, the worst months at the American camp, the city was said to be full of goods and provisions.¹⁰⁶ Toward the end of the occupation, however, food was again less plentiful. When Robert Morris entered Philadelphia in June shortly after the British left, he was struck by the underfed appearance of the inhabitants. "You

cou'd know," he wrote, "a Country Refugee from a Citizen [of Philadelphia] the whole length of a square by the difference of their looks, but as the market begins to fill with wholesome provisions before I left them, I suppose they will fatten fast."¹⁰⁷

The social season during the occupation was lively and exciting, with an understandable military orientation. It reached its height on May 18 with an extravaganza called, because "it was made up of a variety of entertainments," the Meshianza (as the ticket spelled it).¹⁰⁸ This affair honored the departure of General Howe, who had resigned in the face of adverse political pressure and discouragement and had been replaced by Gen. Sir Henry Clinton as commander in chief of the British forces. The fête included a trip on the Delaware to Walnut Grove, the estate of the absent Thomas Wharton south of the city, a mock medieval chivalric tournament, varied gustatory delights, fireworks, and dancing that lasted until four o'clock in the morning. The British officers came costumed as knights of old—but because it would have been awkward to dance in armor, in court costumes of the period of Henry IV. Since it would not do to have the American girls who attended, however Loyalist their sentiments, dressed as aristocratic ladies, they were costumed as Turkish maidens instead. In the later recollections of old women, the girls were not criticized by the Whigs for consorting with the enemy. When the American army returned and a dance was given for the French officers, many of the Meshianza girls were invited. With happy impartiality they accepted. The uniforms were different, but a dance was a dance.¹⁰⁹ In accepting the British invitations the girls may have been a bit daring, for rumors were circulating to the effect that their hosts' stay in Philadelphia would be short.

The British were in fact planning to return to New York. The French alliance with the rebels and the consequent threat of French naval activity off the American coast impelled them to consolidate their forces. To many of the merchants and refugees the news was appalling. In May tradesmen with large stocks of goods on their hands lowered prices sharply and tried to remove the remainder from the city.¹¹⁰ Equally urgent was the necessity of collecting from the British troops to whom they had extended credit. In that effort they were only partially successful, for it was estimated that the uncollected debts on their books when the army left exceeded £10,000 sterling.¹¹¹

The intended departure of the British left many Loyalists in a quandary over whether they should go along or stay and take a chance on Whig mercy. Certainly those who held commissions under the king or aided the enemies of the new governments of Pennsylvania and the United States, actions declared treasonable by a Pennsylvania law of February 11, 1777, were courting serious danger by remaining.¹¹² Under the curious delusion that they really had a choice, Galloway and other city magistrates asked General Howe for an opinion as to the best thing to do. Howe later recalled that he told them that if they chose to go with the army they would be safe, but he would not object if they stayed behind to ask protection from Washington and Congress.¹¹³ Galloway's recollection of the matter was different. He was advised

by Howe, he said, to make his peace with Washington.¹¹⁴ But most of the men who held office during the occupation did not risk capture by the Whigs. The fate in store for them was further clarified by an act of the Assembly of March 6, 1778, which declared that all Pennsylvanians who voluntarily served the king during the war were attainted of high treason. This act also required Galloway, Samuel Shoemaker, and certain other Philadelphians to appear for examination by April 20 or suffer seizure of their property.¹¹⁵ When the British army withdrew in June, 3000 civilians left with it, most of them on British ships. It is impossible to estimate with any accuracy the number of Philadelphians who were of this group, for it included runaway slaves and servants and the refugees who had flocked into the city during the previous months. The actual number of Philadelphians who were attainted of treason from 1778 to 1781 for serving under the British was 109.¹¹⁶

X

Fifteen minutes after the last enemy soldier left the city, on June 18, 1778, an American cavalry troop entered.¹¹⁷ The reoccupation was accomplished quietly as the soldiers moved about on their missions. Two weeks before, on June 4, Congress had forbidden any molestation or pillaging of the inhabitants, and apparently those orders were observed. Gouverneur Morris of New York thought the citizens should be confined to their houses and forced to contribute £100,000 to the American cause, individual amounts to be determined by wealth and degree of disaffection. But Congress took milder action. It was primarily concerned with the supplies that might have been left by the British and with any goods belonging to people who could be regarded as British subjects. Their ownership would be decided by a committee appointed by Congress and the Pennsylvania Executive Council.¹¹⁸

To carry out congressional orders, Maj.-Gen. Benedict Arnold, who had been appointed military commander of the city, issued a proclamation on June 19. Prepared with the help of Joseph Reed, former adjutant-general of the army and now a delegate to Congress, and other influential Philadelphians, it placed the whole urban area under martial law until civil authority could be resumed. Lists of goods in the categories that concerned Congress were to be submitted to Arnold's officers by noon on June 20, and nothing could be sold or transferred without Arnold's permission.¹¹⁹ With the suspension of all business in areas vital to the Continental Army, the supply officers were enabled to enter into contract arrangements with the merchants without competition.¹²⁰

One week after Arnold's proclamation the Executive Council returned from Lancaster and restored civil government. Martial law ended, but Arnold would continue as military commander of Philadelphia until March 1779.¹²¹ In the interval this former fighting general, once the best tactical commander in the Continental Army but now crippled by the leg wound he had received at Saratoga, developed a luxurious lifestyle. Quartered in the Market Street mansion that had recently sheltered General Howe, he fell under suspicion of excessive friendship with Tories, and the state government pursued him

with charges that he financed his luxuries by using his office for illegal business partnerships and profiteering. Enough evidence to prove the charges never surfaced during Arnold's tenure, but they were true, and he left the Philadelphia command after an acrimonious court-martial, convicted of only minor charges—issuing an improper pass for a vessel to leave the city and using public wagons for private purposes—but distinctly under a cloud. Worse, of course, followed. While in Philadelphia Arnold courted and married the pretty and vivacious young Peggy Shippen, daughter of the jurist Edward Shippen (who was a great-grandson of the city's first mayor). Through Peggy, Arnold soon made contact with Capt. John André of General Clinton's staff, who had been one of the principal organizers of the Meshianza. With André, Arnold plotted still more illicit profits for himself by selling not contraband merchandise but the revolutionary cause.¹²²

Congress, happy to leave its cramped quarters in the little town of York, adjourned its sessions there on June 27 and started back to Philadelphia. The State House, however, had been used by the British as a hospital, and had been left in a disgraceful condition. The air in the immediate vicinity was especially foul because the enemy had opened a large pit and used it for the disposal of garbage, dead horses, and dead men. Consequently Congress, which mustered a quorum on July 7, had to convene in a nearby meetinghouse and in College Hall until the State House was again fit for occupancy.¹²³ The congressmen were by no means the only ones disturbed by the condition of the city. Property destruction, much of it wanton, was everywhere to be seen. In 1782 it would be estimated that the losses due to vandalism and theft amounted to £187,280.¹²⁴ Even Fort St. David's and its museum were not spared; the Hessians sacked the place. Captain André, who had occupied Franklin's house, had seen nothing wrong in helping himself to books from its library, as well as the doctor's portrait.¹²⁵

After their return to Philadelphia many Whigs were determined to take action against Loyalism in all of its degrees and manifestations. Its detection, although not easy, was less difficult than it had been before the occupation. The uncertainties and kaleidoscopic changes that had characterized the Revolution from the beginning, along with the political and military confusion that existed for months before the arrival of the British, had blurred lines of allegiance and permitted considerable dissimulation. But the invasion of Pennsylvania had brought more Loyalists unabashedly to light and aroused serious suspicions of others. The former were to be dealt with out of hand, and the others were to be discovered and punished. Inspired by the ratification of the French alliance in May 1778 and the departure of the British army, the Whigs went about their task.

Under Pennsylvania laws of 1777 legal procedures had been devised to ascertain the names of all who had sought protection under the British, joined their forces, or held office under their jurisdiction. In May 1778 a long list of Pennsylvanians charged with having entered the British army were required to report to justices of the peace by July 6 and stand trial or be attainted of high treason.¹²⁶ Those so attainted were subject to estate forfeiture. The actual

seizure of the estates was entrusted to agents appointed by the Executive Council. Accordingly, in July 1778 it named William Will, Jacob Shriner, Charles Willson Peale, Robert Smith, hatter, and Samuel Massey to perform that function in Philadelphia. At the same time Chief Justice Thomas McKean, sitting at the city Court House, heard charges that were preferred against people accused of joining or aiding the British army.¹²⁷

Fearful that many Tories would escape from the official net, 186 men in the area joined in a loose, extralegal association to expose all who were "notoriously disaffected to the American cause." Accusing the Tories of intimidating witnesses who might appear against them, the members guaranteed protection for all who were willing to testify. Among the 186 men who signed the association's statement on July 17, 1778, were Joseph Reed, Thomas Paine, Cadwalader Dickinson, Thomas and William Bradford, John Nicholson, and John Dunlap. Significantly absent were such conservative leaders as Robert Morris, James Wilson, Thomas Fitzsimons, and Thomas Mifflin.¹²⁸

To assist Attorney-General Jonathan Sergeant in prosecuting Tories, the Assembly obtained the services of Joseph Reed in September 1778. During the following autumn the grand jury drew up forty-five bills charging treason, of which twenty-three cases came to trial. Only two persons received the death penalty: John Roberts, of Merion, and Abraham Carlisle, of Philadelphia, both Quakers.¹²⁹ Convicted of openly aiding the British, they were executed on November 4. Dozens of petitions signed by hundreds of Quakers could not save them. Individual Quakers protested vigorously, but the Meeting for Sufferings, which investigated the whole matter, did not officially intercede because the two men had not behaved in strict accordance with the principles of the Society of Friends. Cadwalader Dickinson, on the other hand, was disowned for serving as a judge during the trial, and for generally aiding the rebel cause.¹³⁰ To Reed the extensiveness of the subversive activity that came to light was a revelation. His conviction that it had to be suppressed in the future partly accounted for his willingness to take a leading part in government.

As a problem, Toryism was especially difficult to handle because of the varying degrees of seriousness in which it existed, or was suspected of existing, in individuals and groups. Although the Whigs thought that many people in Philadelphia hoped for the destruction of Congress, the American army, and the Pennsylvania government, they found relatively few who had joined the British forces or engaged in overt acts of treason to bring those things about. They were sure, though, that many Tories were trying to effect those same ends by encouraging inflation, diverting army supplies to civilian use, profiteering, and trading and corresponding with the enemy. To expose such activities, state agencies and extralegal bodies remained active, with varying degrees of thoroughness, during the war.

Inherent in the preoccupation of the radicals with Loyalism was a desire to bring institutions as well as individuals into conformity with the democratic spirit unleashed by the Revolution. An illustration of this outlook was the treatment accorded the College of Philadelphia. Despite Franklin's inten-

tions at the founding, those most responsible for the college's administration and growth had thus far shown strong aristocratic and Anglican predilections, an attitude at variance with rising egalitarian and Presbyterian influences. With the coming of the Revolution much Whig antipathy was aroused by the negative position of Provost William Smith and the open Toryism of some of the trustees.¹³¹ In January 1778, after some trustees had joined the British and others remained in the city under "the power" of General Howe, the Assembly suspended their authority for as long as the British occupied Philadelphia and three months thereafter.¹³²

After its period of suspension the college tried to resume. Although the provost, all the professors, and some of the trustees took an oath of loyalty to Pennsylvania, that was not enough.¹³³ Strongly voiced suspicions of the college's loyalty continued, and the Assembly, after a long investigation, passed a law on November 27, 1779, that provided for a new board of trustees, under rules destroying the old Anglican dominance; changed the name of the college to the University of the State of Pennsylvania; and granted the institution an income of not more than £1500 a year.¹³⁴ New trustees and faculty members were then appointed. John Ewing, a Presbyterian minister of scientific attainments, became provost, and David Rittenhouse was named vice-provost. With its charter basically amended but not abrogated by the Assembly's action, the institution was thus made to align itself with the new revolutionary forces.¹³⁵

Coincidental with the bitterness over Loyalism in 1779 was the outrage induced by a sudden and almost disastrous spurt in prices. Inflation had been worrisome for years of course, and the efforts made to thwart it by both Congress and the Pennsylvania Assembly had been hesitant and ineffectual. Whatever caused the upsurge in 1779—many in the ranks of officialdom attributed it to currency depreciation, scarcity of goods, and lack of information on market conditions—the distressed consumer, who saw prices jump 45 percent in one month and rise seven times above the level of the preceding year, was inclined to look about for conspirators.¹³⁶ These, he naturally assumed, were the merchants who asked ever higher prices for their goods. By early May runaway inflation had caused so much distress and anger in Philadelphia that leaderless gangs were roaming the streets looking for scapegoats.

Although most Philadelphians were victims of inflation in one way or another, it was the underprivileged workingman, often living on the verge of dire want, who suffered most. Beyond his comprehension were the fine points of economic theory, but when he compared his position to that of the wealthy, especially those who were living ostentatiously, he was inclined to attribute most of his ills to that class. Furthermore, among the wealthy, he thought, were most likely to be found Loyalists and their protectors, militia evaders, and price gougers. All these complaints were indicative of a general unrest that expressed itself in violence and disorder in 1779. It began in January when sailors, striking for higher wages, dismantled ships, disrupted work on the

wharves, and precipitated a riot. Order was restored when the Executive Council called upon General Arnold to use his troops.¹³⁷

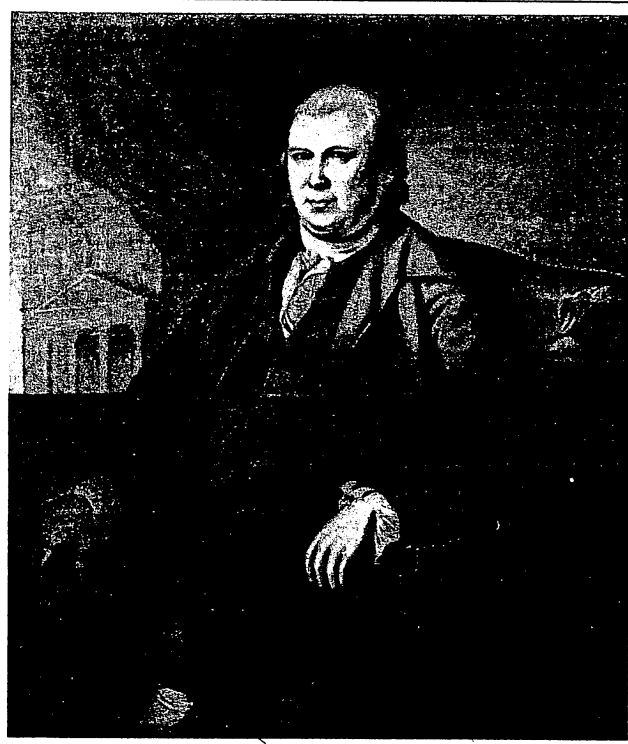
The most violent episode, the Fort Wilson Riot, occurred on October 4, 1779, after the circulation of a handbill that urged the militia to expel from the city all disaffected persons and those who supported them. After gathering in the morning at Paddy Byrne's Tavern on Tenth Street between Race and Vine, a band of militiamen and street loiterers decided to capture James Wilson, signer of the Declaration of Independence but a conservative and a suspected profiteer, as a Loyalist sympathizer. Dr. James Hutchinson and Charles Willson Peale tried vainly to stop them. Wilson, warned that he was high on the list of the suspect because he had defended Philadelphians accused of treason, appealed to the Assembly and the Executive Council for protection. Not sure that the authorities could preserve order, he and about twenty of his friends met on Second Street and began practicing military maneuvers under Thomas Mifflin's command. When the mob arrived Mifflin withdrew his force into Wilson's house at Third and Walnut, and the battle was on. Unable to take the sturdily built house by assault, the militiamen ordered up a field piece. Before it appeared, Joseph Reed, president of the Executive Council, and the Light Horse with drawn sabers arrived on the scene and broke up the riot. The casualties numbered five dead and seventeen wounded.¹³⁸

With inflation worsening and the Continental currency depreciated to the point where it was no longer accepted, Congress in February 1781 took a step to revive credit that had significance not only in Philadelphia but in the country at large. It created the office of superintendent of finance and unanimously elected Robert Morris to fill the position.¹³⁹

His election came as no surprise. As a businessman of outstanding energy, intelligence, and experience, Morris was the leading figure in the most important financial community in the country. And it was from this community that he expected to receive primary assistance in laying what he considered to be the keystone of a national financial structure, the Bank of North America. Congress chartered the bank on December 31, 1781, and one week later it began operations. Thus was established the first modern bank in the United States.¹⁴⁰ From the time it started business until the end of the war it contributed important services to the government. Also conspicuous in mobilizing Philadelphia's financial resources to carry the Continental forces through the final campaigns, as broker for the Office of Finance and agent for the French in America, was Haym Salomon, a Polish Jew not only exiled from his homeland but an escapee from British-occupied New York, where he was twice imprisoned for his support of the Revolution before he came to Philadelphia.

The incorporation and establishment of the Bank of North America was a distinct victory for the Philadelphia conservatives, one that was in keeping with a return to political and social conservatism that came as a reaction to excesses of Tory hunting and out of dissatisfaction with the political groups

most closely identified with the war and therefore with the troubles attendant upon war. Even before the victory at Yorktown in October 1781 many Philadelphians believed, or liked to believe, that the war was practically won, and that the danger of invasion which had stimulated leveling tendencies so disruptive of the old social serenity was a thing of the past. The fighting at least had moved elsewhere.



The financier Robert Morris (1734–1806), painted in 1782 by Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827).

INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK COLLECTION

For those in the dominant social and political levels in prewar Philadelphia the Revolution had been a traumatic experience indeed. Power formerly held by them—by the proprietary leaders and their placemen, and by the Quakers—had between 1775 and 1777 fallen into the hands of new men. The punitive action taken by the radical Whigs against Tories and “sunshine patriot[s]” in 1778 and 1779, however, and the radicals’ failure to bring the considerable resources of Pennsylvania to bear on army supply problems encouraged the basic conservatism of Philadelphia to reassert itself. Of course there were

elements in the unrest of 1779 that reflected the inherent class antagonism between the “better sort” and the “meaner sort,” but the economic fluidity that had characterized Philadelphia in the eighteenth century worked as a safety valve to prevent a violent overturn in basic social structures. This fluidity, along with increased opportunities for economic self-aggrandizement, tended to encourage the growth of the middle class. It is true, of course, that Philadelphia had its very rich and its very poor, but the economic forces operating in the city tended to deemphasize the extremes at the top and the bottom and to magnify the middle. The contrasts evident in 1779 were more indicative of the frustrations and excesses of a long war than of any basic instability in the social structure.

When the conservatives began to reemerge politically after 1779 there was no great social or economic convulsion. From 1780 through 1783 the Republicans showed increasing strength in the elections for assemblymen. Their candidates won in Philadelphia year after year, and when John Dickinson was elected president of the Executive Council in November 1782 political opinion had come almost full circle.¹⁴¹ But regardless of the politics of the men in the ascendancy at any time during Philadelphia’s Revolution, their motivations were fundamentally constructive rather than destructive. Political turnovers were accomplished without assassination; no man on horseback appeared; no guillotine was introduced; and for obvious reasons, no “Bastilles” were attacked or “châteaux” burned. People went on with the task of making a living with a continuing respect for property, and the old habit of deferring to one’s betters did not disappear.

X I

The same could be said for the principal cultural institutions—the College of Philadelphia, the Library Company, and the American Philosophical Society. The Library Company of Philadelphia, in existence forty-four years before the Revolution, had not been dismayed by the surrounding turmoil. It had books to lend and it lent them with generous impartiality to congressmen and British officers alike, as long as they obeyed the rules. Not unexpectedly, though, it did suffer some inconveniences. In the early summer of 1776 it had trouble obtaining a quorum of directors to make policy decisions. One year later the Library quarters in Carpenters’ Hall were used to house sick American soldiers. During the war years it was extremely difficult to acquire new books. An attempt to bring some volumes from New York City in 1780 was thwarted when the Executive Council cited a state law that forbade the importation of anything manufactured in England. Finally, in the spring of 1783 the library sent its first money to England since 1774, an order for £200 worth of books.¹⁴²

The sessions of the American Philosophical Society from 1774 to 1776 were sporadic, and from 1776 to 1779 they were suspended altogether. Enthusiasm for the organization still continued, however, and at a meeting at the University of Pennsylvania in December 1779 plans for its incorporation were pre-

pared. They were approved by the Assembly in 1780 in an act that carefully detailed the purposes for which the society was created.¹⁴³

Although the war in its early stages had damaging effects on the local humane and charitable organizations, interest in these matters by no means disappeared. When the American army took over the Bettering House, a larger successor to the City Alms House opened in 1767 on Spruce Street between Tenth and Eleventh, the Quakers offered their Fourth Street Meeting House as a refuge for the poor.¹⁴⁴ Poor relief was generally undertaken by private individuals and groups. For example, they contributed food and old clothing to the inmates of the prisons. From 1776 until the British occupation members of the Society for the Relief of Distressed Prisoners collected food for them in wheelbarrows which they pushed about in solicitation from house to house.¹⁴⁵ Food was also purchased through contributions of money dropped into charity boxes. Those imprisoned for debt were in the worst condition because they, unlike the criminals, received no subsistence from the county. In 1783 John Reynolds, a jailer, made a public appeal in behalf of confined debtors. Forty of the fifty-seven men and women under his control, he reported, were in great distress.¹⁴⁶

In July 1781 there arose a special problem in poor relief that was too large and complicated to be solved by the casual methods usually employed. The city's lodging facilities were overtaxed with the arrival of refugees from the fighting in Georgia and South Carolina. Since many of them were destitute, Congress made arrangements for their support by setting up a committee to borrow money, the return of which was guaranteed by the government.¹⁴⁷

In a time when frequent sickness was accepted as one of the inevitable trials of the human condition, Philadelphians became alarmed only when disease reached epidemic proportions. Two such outbreaks occurred during the war, the first in the winter of 1776-1777 when hundreds of soldiers died of camp fever and smallpox, and the second in 1780 when a great many people, including the wife of Joseph Reed, died of the flux.¹⁴⁸ But whether the amount of sickness was routine or abnormal, Philadelphia had the benefit of what was for the time a high quality of medical care administered by the Pennsylvania Hospital, a boon to both American and British soldiers, and by a group of excellent physicians, outstanding among whom were Benjamin Rush, James Hutchinson, William Shippen, Jr. (a cousin of Peggy Shippen's father), and John Morgan. Despite the growing political turmoil of the 1760s the city had also during that decade inaugurated systematic medical education in America. In November 1762 William Shippen, Jr., fresh from the completion of his doctoral thesis at the University of Edinburgh, instituted a series of medical lectures at the State House aimed at both medical students and seriously interested laymen. In May 1765 John Morgan, returned from his own Edinburgh studies, proposed the founding of a medical school to the trustees of the college. Morgan was promptly elected "Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physick." Unfortunately, jealousy between Shippen and Morgan impeded the subsequent growth of Philadelphia's medical education and

efforts to apply the city's medical learning to the health of the Continental Army.¹⁴⁹

Measures to protect the health of Philadelphians were undertaken both by citizens' groups and by governmental agencies. To provide emergency treatment for persons whose "animation may be suspended" by drowning, choke-damp, hanging, and sunstroke, the Humane Society was organized in 1780.¹⁵⁰ In the same year the city's "Inspector of Salt Provisions," decrying the fact that spoiled and contaminated meat had been fraudulently sold in the past, warned all provisioners and merchants that their goods could not be offered to the public until they had been inspected and approved.¹⁵¹

After the city was returned to American control in 1778 more attention was paid to the maintenance of safeguards against the constant peril of fire. The numerous fire companies had allowed their organizations to languish during the early years of the war, and after a "great fire" in the latter part of December 1778 the Pennsylvania Executive Council urged their revival.¹⁵² Chimney blazes were the main hazard, and although fines were to be imposed on all who suffered these mishaps, many chimneys remained unswept because of householders' forgetfulness or indifference. Since many "owners" of chimney sweeps were unwilling to allow their boys to go out unless they had specific job orders in advance, householders often went unreminded of the condition of their chimneys until it was too late.¹⁵³

The Philadelphia Contributionship, convinced that the numerous trees in the city constituted a fire hazard, reaffirmed in 1781 a decision it had made in 1774 to refuse to insure or reinsure houses located near trees.¹⁵⁴ When opposition to the decision developed considerable strength, the Assembly buttressed the company's policy with an act of April 15, 1782, that ordered the removal of all trees in streets, lanes, and alleys because they obstructed passage, destroyed watercourses, and spread fires. This ill-considered legislation aroused the immediate resentment of a number of petitioners who protested that trees "conduce much to the health of the inhabitants, and are in other respects of great public utility."¹⁵⁵ In response to the petition the Assembly repealed the offending section just five months after the original act was passed, and Philadelphia's trees were saved. The Contributionship stubbornly continued to adhere to its policy, however, a persistence that encouraged the establishment in 1784 of a competitor, the Mutual Assurance Company. The new company was willing to insure houses near trees, at an extra premium, provided the trees were not allowed to grow higher than the eaves of the adjacent houses. It took as its fire mark, and of course became popularly known as, the Green Tree.¹⁵⁶

The effect of the war on organized entertainments and diversions in Philadelphia was at times dampening, but not always suppressive. Congress tried to set the tone for all of the colonies in 1774 when its Continental Association prohibited gaming, cock-fighting, plays, and all sorts of amusements. At that time the New England delegates were especially worried about the spirit of levity they believed prevailed in Philadelphia—for some of them,

Philadelphia was the first relaxed city they had ever seen, and was accordingly disturbing—and mainly at their behest a rule was passed to forbid congressmen themselves from participating in public entertainments. Samuel Adams was much upset at the behavior of southern congressmen who, he thought, should have done more praying and less dancing.¹⁵⁷ But southerners for the most part always enjoyed Philadelphia. Where Samuel Adams beheld sin in all its garish forms, Richard Henry Lee saw an “attractive scene of debauch and amusement.”¹⁵⁸

It was too much to expect that a city that had been transformed into a war capital, inundated with thousands of visitors, invaded, and then liberated, would behave with constant dignity and sobriety. When they had an opportunity Philadelphians liked to dance and revel at gargantuan feasts, and the war brought no cessation of those activities. “We have a great many balls and entertainments,” wrote Mrs. Robert Morris in November 1778.¹⁵⁹ In the same month Col. Walter S. Stewart commented on the great changes that had occurred in manners and customs since his last visit:

Tis all gaiety, and from what I can observe, Every Lady and Gentleman Endeavours to outdo the other in Splendor and show. The manners of the Ladys is likewise much chang'd, they have really in a great measure lost that Native Innocence in their manners which formerly was their Characteristick, and supplied its place with what they call an easy behaviour, they have really got the art of throwing themselves into the most wanton and amorous Postures; which their free manner of speech adds not a little to. By Heaven tis almost too much for a Healthy, Vigorous, young Soldier to bear; to be plac'd on an Elegant Sofa along side one of them, when they are displaying both the artillery of their Tongues and Eyes. The Manner of Entertaining in this place has likewise undergone its change; you cannot conceive anything more Elegant than the Present Taste; you will hardly dine at a table but they present you with three Courses, and each of them in the Most Elegant manner.¹⁶⁰

Yet Stewart's three-course dinner was frugal compared to one attended by Maj.-Gen. Nathanael Greene. He counted 160 dishes on the table.¹⁶¹

The “easy behaviour” noted by Stewart in women at the upper levels of society was evident to a much greater degree in other social areas. There are no statistics on the relative increase of immorality and crime in the city, but according to one observer in 1780, vice was so prevalent that the Devil himself “wou'd blush to be here.”¹⁶² In the same year another observer, disturbed by the increase in crime, suggested that the citizens, “without respect to persons,” organize themselves into nightwatches to stop the spread of robberies.¹⁶³

Whatever the increase in immorality or law-breaking might have been, it had to be assessed in light of the puritanical strictures imposed by legislative action during the war. Almost everything that was enjoyable was widely considered to be immoral or unpatriotic, and that covered a wide range within the blurred lines of the moral spectrum. One outstanding illustration was the banning of theatrical presentations. After the sudden flowering of the Philadelphia theater just before the war, Philadelphians must have been greatly disappointed when stage performances were listed among the forbidden di-

versions by Congress in 1774. Instead of relenting, Congress later reaffirmed its stand by prohibiting army officers from attending the theater. The Pennsylvania Assembly went even further in 1779 when it provided severe penalties for anyone guilty of building stages or acting on them anywhere in the state. That the law would be enforced was made clear by Plunkett Fleeson, president of the Philadelphia magistrates, in January 1782. He had seen an advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Packet* announcing that *Eugénie*, a farce, would be presented by Alexandre-Marie Quesnay and students of the French language for the benefit of the poor in the Pennsylvania Hospital and the soldiers in the Barracks. Fleeson did not stress the moral questions posed by the theater, but he implied that it would be wrong to present a public entertainment while the Indians and the British were still at war with America.¹⁶⁴

Dancing and public celebrations nevertheless provided occasional diversions. The Dancing Assemblies continued and celebrations were held on every suitable occasion.¹⁶⁵ But with the exception of the Fourth of July and the French alliance there was not much to celebrate until 1781. Then came the ratification of the Articles of Confederation, the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, and the arrival of the victorious Washington, all of which were publicly celebrated. Perhaps the most lavish demonstration occurred when 12,000 spectators watched 750 people help the French minister to the United States honor the birth of the dauphin in 1782.¹⁶⁶

X I I

After the great Franco-American victory at Yorktown, Philadelphians eagerly awaited peace. In the early spring of 1783 its signs were unmistakable when American prisoners of war arrived from New York and British prisoners passed through from Lancaster on their way to New York.¹⁶⁷ Finally, in April it was learned that King George had declared a cessation of arms two months earlier. Congress then issued a similar proclamation on April 11, and shortly thereafter the port of Philadelphia was opened to ships of all nations.¹⁶⁸

With the strains and abrasions of warfare now in the past, Philadelphia and Congress would have to readjust to each other in times of peace, but before that could happen the two suddenly parted company under unfortunate and embarrassing circumstances. On Saturday, June 21, 1783, about 300 troops of the Pennsylvania Line, numbering some from the Barracks and about eighty from the Third Pennsylvania Regiment at Lancaster who had come to Philadelphia against the orders of their officers, surrounded the State House. Almost all were recent recruits. They feared that in the still parlous financial condition of Congress they would be sent home without a settlement of their pay, and they had come to seek redress of their grievances from the Executive Council, then in session at the State House. Congress, which had been vainly appealed to by some of the soldiers on June 13, was in adjournment for the weekend, but its president Elias Boudinot hastily summoned it to the State House just in time to be encircled.¹⁶⁹ When called upon by Congress

to use the state militia, the Executive Council, headed by its president John Dickinson, refused. The disaffected troops eventually set a twenty-minute time limit for the surrounded Congress to assure redress of their grievances, but the time limit passed without violence, and when the congressmen mustered courage simply to walk out through the milling troops, they met nothing worse than insults, though by then the soldiers had been drinking freely. The troops returned to the Barracks, still mutinously inclined.

On June 22 and 23 Congress continued to insist that the state use force to compel the mutinous soldiers to accept the command of their officers, and although it coupled this demand with a threat to leave the city, the Executive Council still refused. The council was negotiating with the troops, who by now appeared to be peaceably disposed, and it feared that the use of militia would create even worse disorder. The soldiers finally subsided, finding discharge and going home even more important than firm assurances of pay, though their disorders, following close on the threat of an officers' coup at Newburgh, New York, reinforced traditional American and English suspicions of military power and helped assure Congress's virtually complete dissolution of the Continental Army in 1784.¹⁷⁰

But Congress, meanwhile, would not wait to see the results of the state's negotiations with the soldiers. On June 24 Boudinot signed a proclamation summoning the delegates to meet at Princeton, New Jersey, two days later. Although the stated reason for the move was the refusal of the Executive Council to suppress troops still in "open revolt,"¹⁷¹ many congressmen were eager to leave Philadelphia for reasons that did not appear in the proclamation. Weeks before the mutiny Oliver Ellsworth, delegate from Connecticut, reported that it was "generally agreed that Congress should remove to a place of less expense, less avocation and less influence than are to be expected in a commercial and opulent city."¹⁷²

Philadelphia and Congress had endured the hard realities of war together, and each had contributed much to the other. Their abrupt and angry parting was unfortunate for all concerned, but the war was over and the city had served its purpose.

The Federal City 1783-1800

by Richard G. Miller

... the mechanic labors under the double difficulty of the impracticability of obtaining money to carry on his business and the profusion of foreign goods which prevent the sale of such articles as he could finish.

— A Philadelphia artisan

... the men [of Philadelphia] are almost always immersed in their business affairs and in political intrigue.

— FRANCISCO DE MIRANDA

The room became full before I left it, and the circle very brilliant. How could it be otherwise, when the dazzling Mrs. Bingham and her beautiful sisters were there; the Misses Allen, and Misses Chew; in short a constellation of beauties?

— ABIGAIL ADAMS¹

Philadelphia ushered in its first postwar Christmas season with festivities honoring a secular messiah. On the afternoon of December 8, 1783, Gen. George Washington approached the city on his way from New York, just liberated from British occupation, heading toward Annapolis, where he would resign his commission to the Confederation Congress and go home to Mount Vernon.

John Dickinson, president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, Robert Morris, Maj.-Gen. Arthur St. Clair, Maj.-Gen. Edward Hand, many other Philadelphia dignitaries, and the Light Horse Troop of the city rode out to meet Washington at Frankford and escort him into town. When he arrived at Philadelphia, the church bells rang out, cannon fired a thirteen-gun salute, and even a Dutch ship at anchor in the harbor joined in the celebratory firing of guns. Cheering citizens crowded the streets.²

It was Washington's first experience of so adulatory a welcome; many more were to come, of course, including many in Philadelphia. The signing of the peace treaty in Paris in September and the British evacuation of New York had assured both American independence and the general's own place

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