

LOTTERIES IN PHILADELPHIA PRIOR TO 1776

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IT IS but a stretch of the imagination to picture the early inhabitants of the Quaker City clad in sombre garb, powdered wig and queue, ruffled waistbands, buckled shoes or tightly buttoned gaiters, broad brimmed hat, and carrying a gold headed walking-stick, going to purchase lottery tickets in their favorite "scheme." Perhaps some left their homes in riding-chairs or brightly ornamented carriages, built by Philadelphia craftsmen, of course, for there were many in the city during the eighteenth century; such conveyances were seldom brought from England. There was a dignity about the gentlemen of that period not often observed these days and it leads one to ponder as to why they patronized lotteries as they did—those gambling affairs which are declared illegal and frowned upon in this twentieth century. The records still preserved show that many of the city's foremost citizens frequently invested from £5 to £100 in tickets for the lotteries of their day.

The custom of drawing by lot or the lottery as a means of acquiring property, position, or gaining office has been in vogue almost from the earliest history of mankind. The land of Canaan was apportioned by lot (Numbers, 26:55); Saul said "Cast lots between me and Jonathan my son. And Jonathan was taken" (I. Samuel, 14:42); the lot was used to divide Christ's raiment (Matthew, 27:35); and Matthew was chosen by lot (Acts, 1:26). The Romans also resorted to lotteries as did the early Italians and French. A lottery was projected in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth in 1556, the prizes varying from fourteen shillings to £5,000.¹ All the City Companies of London subscribed to this scheme as a means of adding to their funds. In 1612 the English king favored a lottery "for the present plantation

¹ John Ashton, *History of English Lotteries* (London, 1873), pp. 5, 6, 9.

of English Colonies in Virginia" to include £5,000 in prizes.² A state lottery was started in London in 1739 for the purpose of building a bridge over the Thames at Westminster and in 1753 another was inaugurated as a means of raising funds for the British Museum, then brought into existence. The Sloane Collection was being purchased for £20,000, and £10,000 was required to secure the Harleian Collection, but few funds were available; so a lottery was started. It was decided that 100,000 tickets should be sold at £3 each. Two-thirds of the proceeds were to be allotted for prizes and £100,000, less the expense of conducting the lottery, was to go to the Museum. Of this sum £30,000 was to be set aside for the payment of salaries, wages and the upkeep of the building. Thus was started the greatest museum and educational exhibition the world has known.³ Many lotteries were carried on in London for various objects, and it is noted that Thomas Hyam and Son of London bought on November 10, 1751 for Thomas Penn "according to thy order" a lottery ticket "for which we were obliged to give £12.11s," the price having risen, owing to the demand of people for them.⁴

In 1732 Henry Fielding sang these lines in his play *The Lottery*:

A Lottery is a Taxation
 Upon all the Fools of Creation;
 And Heaven be prais'd
 It is easily raised,
 Credulity's always in fashion;
 For Folly's a Fund
 Will never lose ground
 While Fools are so rife in the Nation.

And not long after, Balzac wrote, "The Lottery, the most seductive elf in the World." Both quotations seem to fit mankind for all periods.

During the reign of George II a footman in a house of wealth, having lost his savings of twenty years in lottery speculation,

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³ A ticket for this lottery is in the Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁴ "The Family of William Penn," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XXII, 181.

committed suicide and left a note to indicate what he had intended doing with the prize of £5,000 had he won it:

As soon as I have received the money, I will marry Grace Towers; but, as she has been cross and coy, I will use her as a servant. Every morning she shall get me a mug of strong beer, with a toast, nutmeg, and sugar in it; then I will sleep till ten, after which I will have a large sack posset. My dinner shall be on table by one, and never without a good pudding. I will have a stock of wine and brandy lain in. About five in the afternoon I will have tarts and jellies, a gallon bowl of punch; at ten, a hot supper of two dishes. If I am in a good humour, and Grace behaves herself, she shall sit down with me. To bed about twelve.⁵

Needless to say with such a life neither he nor his prize would have lasted long and Grace would indeed have been a servant.

Many state lotteries were inaugurated in England before 1819 to raise money for the government, but in 1826 all lotteries were declared illegal in that country. During the arguments for or against suppressing them the following epitaph was suggested for the Chancellor of the Exchequer: "Here lies the Right Hon. Nicholas Vansittart, once Chancellor of the Exchequer; the patron of Bible Societies, the builder of Churches, a friend to the education of the poor, an encourager of Savings Banks, and—a supporter of Lotteries."⁶

One of the first laws of Pennsylvania read:

That if any person be convicted of Playing at Cards, Dice, Lotteries, or such like enticing, vain and evil Sports and Games, such persons shall, for every such offence, pay five Shillings, or Suffer five days Imprisonment (at hard labour) in the house of Correction.⁷

This law was repealed by King William. It was later restored,⁸ but before long the colonists had the law repealed again, for they seemed to have been imbued with the speculative fever.

⁵ John Ashton, *History of English Lotteries*, p. 311.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁷ *Charter to William Penn and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania, 1682-1700* (Harrisburg, 1879), p. 114.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 114, footnote.

In 1716 the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting advised the Friends against "going to, or being in any way concerned in plays, games, lotteries, music, and dancing." Later on, lotteries were not considered a form of gambling, but a means of raising funds for public purposes, with a prospect of a profitable return for the lucky ones.

In the *American Weekly Mercury*, August 18, 1720, was printed:

These are to give Notice to all persons, that there are to be disposed of by way of a Lottery, A Large New Brick House on the East side of Third Street in Philadelphia, Fifteen feet front and Six and Twenty feet back. . . Shall be well finished by the next fall Fair, Which is time prefix'd to draw the said Lottery if then full.

This house stood on a 100 foot lot; there were also an adjoining lot and another of 80 feet front, on the west side of Third Street at the corner of Mulberry (Arch) Street, a part of Rachel Whitsoncraft's lot, offered in the same lottery. The house was valued at £250 and its lot at £50. There were to be 340 tickets sold at twenty shillings each, which could be obtained from John Read in High Street and Henry Frogly in Chestnut Street, who stood "bound unto the Mayor of Philadelphia in the Penal Sum of Five hundred Pounds to see that the said Lottery be drawn Fairly, and Legally, and that Every Winner shall have a good and lawful Title."

Selling a house by lottery was apparently well thought of, for we see in the same newspaper, in the issue of July 18, 1723 an advertisement for another to be disposed of in the same manner:

New Brick House and Lot, with a good Kitchen, [*sic.*] Wash-House, Oven, half of a Well, and Necessary-House and a handsome Garden, valued at 230 Pounds. . . Now in the Tenure of Dr. Francis Gandouit, and Situated on the East side of the Third Street near the Market Place in Philadelphia.

The first prize was to be the house and, "Whosoever draws it is obliged when the Title is made to pay the other four Prizes,

one of Twenty Pounds, one of Ten Pounds and two of Five Pounds each. . . .All Persons inclined to try their Fortune in this Affair may be Supplied with Tickets by the Managers and Sureties, viz. Philip John at the Rose and Crown in the Front Street, Edward Warner, Carpenter, living at James Poulitis's in the Second Street in Philadelphia." Altogether, 460 tickets were to be sold at ten shillings each.

The *American Weekly Mercury*, March 30, 1727, carried another advertisement for a lottery, which was to be "drawn at Mr. John Stevens in Perth Amboy, for £501 of Silver and Gold Work, wrought by Simeon Soumain of New York, Gold-Smith, all of the newest Fashion. The highest Prize consists of an Eight square Tea-Pot, six Tea-Spoons, Skimmer and Tongues, Valued at £18 3s. 6d. The lowest Prize consists of Twelve Shillings Value." The cost of the tickets was six shillings each "York Money" or seven shillings "Jersey Money," nothing being said of Philadelphia currency, although Andrew Bradford of this city had the tickets for sale. Collectors and students of American-made silverware would be interested to trace the eight-square teapot, spoons, skimmer and "tongues" offered as first prize.

The city fathers evidently scrutinized the forming of lotteries in the Quaker City, as we see by the Minutes of the Common Council for May 16, 1728: "The Board having heard that a Lottery was Intended to be Erected by Samuel Keimer in this City, during this present fair, he having set forth severall [*sic.*] printed papers for that purpose, the Board sent for the said Keimer, who Came and having heard what he had to say in behalf of the said Lottery, Ordered that no Lottery be kept during the said fair."

Not only lotteries, but raffles were played in 1734. One reads in the *American Weekly Mercury*, September 12, 1734, that:

At Mr. Shubart's, who keeps the London Tavern in Water-street, on Friday the 27th. Inst. at 5 a Clock in the Afternoon precisely, will be raffled for, a very curious Chased Gold Watch, entirely new and good, the value of 60 Pounds, it is proposed that 12 Gentlemen put in £5 each, or 10 £6 each. The Watch is to be seen any Hour in the Day, until the Time aforesaid, at Mr. John Wood's, Watchmaker, in Front-street, Phila-

delphia. If the Gentlemen chuse [*sic.*] a greater or less Number to raffle, they may settle that among themselves, a Majority to decide it.

About this time the Penn heirs of Pennsylvania were much in need of cash and desired to sell more of their land in this state than had, up to that period, been applied for. The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 5, 1735, gave this notice to its readers: "We hear that a Proposal has been offered to the Honourable Proprietors, for making Sale of a large quantity of Land by way of a Lottery; and that the same is likely to meet with their Approbation." This had evidently been discussed for some time and occasioned much comment in London, for on March 18, 1735 John Penn, then in England, wrote his brother Thomas in Philadelphia, that David Barclay and others of London felt that John should have brought over to London a considerable quantity of tickets for this lottery, and that Barclay thought the entire issue might have been sold there.⁹

In the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 7, 1735, appeared a notice to readers that tickets could be procured from the managers or from the secretary, John Georges, and the issue of August 28th carried an advertisement of the lottery stating "that no more than one fifth Part or the Ore of all Mines delivered at the Pit's Mouth (mines royal excepted) shall be reserved in all Patents." On December 11th, readers were advised that a draft of lands located could be seen at the Surveyor General's office or at the house of Patrick Baird, one of the managers. The others included Clement Plumsted, Thomas Lawrence, Charles Read and Thomas Graeme. The drawings intended to have been made in January were postponed to the following August, although the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of that month and September following did not mention the lottery again. It was not a success, not sufficient tickets having been sold; although those who had subscribed did secure some lands.

The prizes for this land lottery are given in a printed circular in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania Collections¹⁰ as follows:

⁹ Penn Letter Books, I, 146. (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

¹⁰ Historical Society of Pennsylvania Collections, Ab, V, 618.

Prize	Acres
1 _____	3,000
2 of 1500 acres _____	3,000
10 1000 _____	10,000
20 500 _____	10,000
140 200 _____	28,000
150 100 _____	15,000
250 50 _____	12,500
720 25 _____	18,000
<hr/>	
Benefits 1293 _____	99,500
Blanks 6457 _____	{ 200 first } { 300 last } drawn
<hr/>	
Total 7750 _____	100,000

In the *Pennsylvania Archives* may be found a reference to this lottery and the Proprietors' notice regarding the same, together with a deed respecting their proportion of mineral rights (other than mines royal),¹¹ while in Charles Thomson's *Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawnee Indians from the British Interest*,¹² mention is made of the uneasiness among the Indians, who had never sold some of the land taken by settlers, and their great incense over that fact.

In the Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania is a copy of the following receipt:

14th Febry. 1745 Received of Mr. Charles Norris
Thirty Eight Lottery Tickets which entitle him to 490
a. or thereabouts.

Richard Peters
Secry.

These 38 Tickets are in part of Govr. Gordons Tickets
and bot. of his Executs.

On the reverse is the following letter, dated April 27, 1750:

I purchased thirty Eight tickets in the Lottery in
Compy wth C. Norris of 1735, of the Estate of Governor

¹¹ *Pennsylvania Archives* (Harrisburg, 1852), 1st Series, I, 453.

¹² (London, 1759), pp. 29-30.

Gordon, which tickets at the Request of Richd. Peters secrety. I delivered to him and took his receipt dated Feby 14, 1745 which he gave in ye name of Charles Norris which I have now before me—I have taken up in right of these tickets two hundred & forty Acres of land in philada County near Maiden Creek—I have likewise returned Into the Office a survey of forty Acres and a half in Alsawe township serveyed May 2^d 1749 And have sold to John Hunt who assd. to Richd. Lloyd Nov^r 14, 1750 a Right to Fifty Acres which is All I have yet taken up In Right of those Lottery tickets.

Isaac Norris.¹³

In the same collection is a small plan about 2 x 4 inches, undated, showing 29 acres belonging to Isaac Norris by right of his tickets. Since the above was written the writer has purchased three plans of the "Lottery Lands" showing the various plots, mostly in Bucks and Northampton counties. One takes in land from the Delaware River at Easton to beyond Allentown north of the Lehigh River.

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* of July 10, 1740 has this notice: "To be Raffled for, A good New Pleasuring Boat Sixteen Foot Keel, with Masts, Sails &c." The boat was valued at £17, and chances were sold at ten shillings each; the raffle was to take place on the following day. William Cunningham, at the upper end of Front street and William Harris, at the Crown and Scepter in Front street were the advertisers.

Nicholas Bishop and Hester, his wife, offered by way of lottery seventy lots in the city of Wilmington, in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 9, 1745. Each subscriber was to pay forty shillings down and two shillings per year as ground rent. There were no blanks so that every one would secure some kind of a lot. And John Bood notified the readers of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 4, 1745-6, that he would sell 2000 tickets at thirty shillings each, for a lottery on a new brick house on the south side of Sassafras Street, a house and plantation in Oxford township, and sundry lots in Trenton, Kensington and elsewhere. These examples show how the fever of chance appeared to be taking hold of the populace.

¹³ Logan Papers, XIV, 75.

A New York lottery was advertised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 15, 1746; 15,000 tickets at thirty shillings each were to be sold, some of which could be obtained from Benjamin Franklin. The same journal for September 18 reported that the £1000 prize had been won by a clerk of Richmond Hill who had bought but one ticket. On December 12, 1747 a "Scheme of the Philadelphia Lottery" to sell 10,000 tickets at forty shillings each was noted in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Fifteen per cent, or £3,000, was for the building and equipment of a Battery for the protection of the city, for the French were expected to sail up the river to capture Philadelphia and local merchants were worried over their shipping. It might not be out of place to quote from John Swift's Letter-book¹⁴ excerpts from letters to his uncle, John White of Croyden, England, which read:

September 23, 1747: "A Spanish Privateer of 10 Guns, took last Week 8 Vessels belonging to this place & 3 to Virginia. She came to Anchor in the Bay . . ." November 29, 1747: "The Success the Spanish Privateer had upon our Coasts last Summer has much alarmed the inhabitants of this Town: And a Pamphlet Published here a few days ago, setting forth the miserable Calamities that may befall us, if something is not done for our security against next Spring, has raised a Military Spirit amongst the people.¹⁵ Yesterday there was a Grand meeting of all Ranks and Conditions at Whitefield's building, When they signed an association for forming themselves into a Militia for the Defence of the City. And there is to be a Lottery set on foot immediately to raise money towards fitting out a Vessel, to protect the Trade. And a Petition will be presented to our worthy Assembly (who are now sitting) praying them to take into consideration, and do something for the common security. I have sent you the Pamphlet and a Copy of the Association, and three papers relating to the Quaker principles of not defending themselves, wch has been of great service to some of them and convinced them that they have been in a mistake about that matter." April 12, 1748: "The Platform for a Battery is begun by the

¹⁴ Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

¹⁵ This was no doubt Benjamin Franklin's *Plain Truth/or Serious Considerations/on the Present State of the/City of Philadelphia/and/Providence of Pennsylvania/By a Tradesman of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1747).

Swamp below the Swedes Church, & we have Cannon coming to us from N. York." [These were 12 twelve pounders and 2 eighteen pounders.] . . . "There is another Lottery going to be sett on foot, to raise Six thousand Pounds, which is to be applyed for defending the City." June 10, 1748: "Mr. Taylor has made a Seizure of a French Flag of Truce Sloop Loaded with Sugar that came in here to Trade with us, which I suppose will be worth Twelve or fifteen hundred Pounds."¹⁶

It is worth noting what John Smith, a strict member of the Society of Friends, wrote in his diary under date of "10th mo. 31, 1747":

I spent the Evening with our fire company¹⁷—22 of us met—& defence & the Association¹⁸ formed was much the subject of Conversation. I said but very little—only when it was proposed that our Bank Stock should be applied towards purchasing Lottery Tickets & that it should be put to vote by Balloting. I opposed that, telling them I feared if we took that private method, perhaps some might Vote for it that would not openly—and if that should be the Case I thought As we were members of a Society that had made it a part of their discipline to Caution against being Concerned in Lotteries I thought it would not be to our Reputation. After some debate, the Question was put Whether we should vote by Ballot or openly and carried for the latter 13 against 9. the Question was put—Whether our Bank Stock should be so applied or not & Carried in the Negative, 19 against 3.¹⁹

The "Bank Stock" was the accumulation of fines by the fire company. It is interesting to see how that strict Quaker, John Smith, subtly argued and how he won his point in the meeting, which was apparently largely of men of that faith.

The lottery in question had been much in the public mind, and was intended to raise money for public defence. A Battery was to be built at the lower end of the city for defence, and when the

¹⁶ See Harrold E. Gillingham, *Marine Insurance in Philadelphia, 1721-1800* (Philadelphia, 1934), pp. 26-27.

¹⁷ "Philadelphia's First Fire Defences," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LVI, 367.

¹⁸ The Associators, a military body formed when war with France was threatened.

¹⁹ Diary of John Smith, 2/3. (Ridgway Library, Philadelphia.)

matter came before the Common Council at their meeting of November 26, 1747 it was proposed to the Board "that the Scheme of a Lottery for raising Money for the Use & Benefit of this City is set on Foot." Later the Council voted "by a great Majority" to buy 2,000 tickets in this lottery.

It was during these fearsome times when war threatened the Quaker City and the "Associators" were formed that the Quakers lost control of government. Those of other faiths ruled the state and city.

To return to the lottery discussed at the meeting of "our fire company" mentioned by John Smith. The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 15, 1747, printed the "Scheme of the Philadelphia Lottery, For Raising Three Thousand Pounds for the Public Use," which was under the management of such prominent citizens as William Allen, Joshua Maddox, William Masters, Samuel McCall, Edward Shippen, Thomas Leech, Charles Willing, John Kearsley, William Clymer, Thomas Lawrence, William Coleman and Thomas Hopkinson. The profits were to be applied as they and William Wallace, John Stamper, Samuel Hazard, Philip Syng, John Mifflin, James Coultas, William Branson, Reese Meredith, Thomas Lloyd and Benjamin Franklin "or the majority of them, shall judge Most for the benefit and advantage of this city and province, our present circumstances considered." The advertisements for this lottery appeared in subsequent issues of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, that for February 23, 1747/8 devoting three pages to the list of winning tickets. No. 1362 secured the prize of £500. It was probably this lottery to which John Swift referred in his letter of February 18, 1747 to his uncle, "John White at the Pensilvania [*sic.*] Coffee House, London," when he wrote: "I had like to have forgot to acquaint you that I was disapointed [*sic.*] of the five hundred Pounds, which I hoped to get in the Lottery here; but I had a Prize of three Pounds."²⁰ And we read in Burd's Account Book under date of March 3, 1748 this entry, "Gained in the Philada. Lottery £9.12.6,"²¹ which shows that some made a profit from their speculation.

Owing to the apprehension of Philadelphians over the possible French invasion of the port a second lottery was advertised in the

²⁰ John Swift's Letter Book. (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

²¹ Burd's Account Book, p. 26. (American Philosophical Society.)

Pennsylvania Gazette, June 2, 1748, "to raise 9375 Pieces of Eight for the Publick Use of the City of Philadelphia and Province of Pennsylvania," which was under the management Joseph Turner, Abraham Taylor, Tench Francis, John Inglis, Samuel Hazard, John Sober, William Plumstead, Patrick Baird, Philip Syng, Evan Morgan Jr., Jacob Duché, Austin Hicks, Samuel McCall, Jacob Sims and Richard Nixon. At a meeting of the Common Council held on November 16, 1748 the treasurer was authorized to take up not exceeding four hundred tickets in the second class, but the reports of that officer do not mention the winning of any prizes.

On December 12, 1749 a lottery was set up in Philadelphia for the benefit of the New Jersey College. The sum of £1,500 was to be raised by the sale of 8,000 tickets at thirty shillings each; eight Philadelphians were listed as managers of the scheme together with three residents of New Jersey.²² Another out of town lottery was noted in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 10, 1753, "for purchasing a Town Clock and cleaning and securing the Dock, in Annapolis," one of the managers thereof being Samuel Soumaine, a Philadelphia silversmith of some note.²³

The speculative tendencies of the citizens in lotteries and the readily obtained profits from this game of chance soon induced the members of various religious organizations to raise money by that means. On November 2, 1752 the *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertised a "Scheme Of a Lottery for raising One Thousand and Twelve Pounds, Ten Shillings," to be applied to the finishing of the steeple of Christ Church in Philadelphia and the residue toward purchasing a "Ring of Bells." Altogether, 4,500 tickets at "four Pieces of Eight" each were to be sold for a total of 18,000 "Pieces of Eight." Fifteen per cent was to be deducted from each of the prizes drawn, before paying, and this sum was to be allotted to the church.

The managers of this lottery were Thomas Lawrence, Abraham Taylor, Benjamin Franklin, Charles Stedman, John Kearsley, Henry Harrison, James Humphreys, Joseph Redman, Evan Morgan, Thomas Leech, Henry Elwes, John Baynton and Jacob

²² The College of New Jersey was first established at Elizabethtown in 1747, moved to Newark and about ten years later transferred to Princeton. Frank Stockton, *Stories of New Jersey*, p. 71.

²³ Soumaine's death is recorded in Christ Church Records under the name of Samuel Samaine.

Duchee. [*sic.*] Tickets were to be sold only by the managers and the drawing was to be held March 1st, 1753 "or sooner if sooner full." The fortunate prize winning tickets were published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 13, 1753.

Before the above drawing, the church authorities saw that they needed more money and on February 27, 1753, a supplementary lottery was offered readers of that journal for the same amount as the previous one which "was not calculated to raise enough and there was no prospect of raising money by other means." This second lottery was to finish the steeple and furnish a "Ring of Bells, and a good Clock." Then follows a statement of cost which was £999 4s. 6d. including an item of £22 12s. 8d. "for Rum for the Labourers." How times have changed! Think of the present congregation of any church trying to raise money by public lottery and spending such a sum for rum to be given the workmen.

Evidently other sects realized how easily money was raised by lottery for churches, for we see the Presbyterians advertising on March 13, 1753 a lottery to raise £853 "towards finishing a Steeple to the New Presbyterian Church in Arch-street." The managers were William Bradford, Andrew, Hugh and William Hodge, Samuel Hazard, William Grant, George and William Spafford, John Meese and Hugh McCullough. The drawing was to take place "at a Store on Mr. Hamilton's Wharf." This church was at the north-west corner of Third and Arch Streets.

Other churches of the city soon realized the profits to be had from this speculative means and we read in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 23, 1753, of a lottery to raise £675 to erect a "School-House, assisting the Schoolmaster &c. for the benefit of the poor of the Society of the Dutch Reformed Congregation, commonly called the Calvinists, in Philadelphia." The list of prizes was published on May 30, 1754.

At the end of August 1753 another lottery was begun to raise £562 10s. to purchase "a Messuage and lot of ground in German-town for the minister of the Dutch Lutheran Congregation, and School-house &c.," the drawings of which were not published until August 1, 1754; thus the selling of these tickets had been rather slow.

The next Philadelphia lottery started should interest readers of PENNSYLVANIA HISTORY as it was for the Academy and adver-

tised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 3, 1754, to raise 3,000 pieces of eight for the benefit or "use of the Academy at Philadelphia." Twenty per cent was deducted from each of the 93 prizes over five dollars, and fifteen per cent from the 1000 smaller prizes of five dollars. The Common Council of the city, at its meeting of March 1, 1750, voted to purchase 500 tickets for this lottery.

Before the closing of the former, a second lottery was begun and advertised on March 11, 1755 to raise 9,375 pieces of eight "for the Use of the College, Academy and Charity School, of Philadelphia," and a third to raise 3,000 pieces of eight for the same cause was noted in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 17, 1757. In all, seven lotteries were carried on for the College, the winning tickets for the seventh being listed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of August 13, 1761.

In the Wallace-Bradford Collection is the following statement:

Mr William Bradford his Accot wth William Allen in
5th. Acady Lotty.

Dr. Tickets [listing 413] @ 30/ each	£619.10.0
Cr. Prizes Drawn	378.13.6
Comms $\frac{1}{2}$ p.c. on Sales	15. 9.9
Ball due W ^m Allen	225. 6.9

The Daniel Clark letter book contains a letter to John Ormsby at Fort Pitt dated June 27, 1761 as follows: "As you have always gained in the Loteries [*sic.*] with me I'll venture without permission to put your name on 10 of the Academy Lottery tickets perhaps you'll [*sic.*] draw the 2000 peices [*sic.*] [of eight]."²⁴

The Provincial Assembly passed a law on June 20, 1759 to prevent lotteries being held, but by a Proclamation of Lieutenant Governor James Hamilton, published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 5th, 1761 it develops that "An Act for the more effectual suppressing and preventing of Lotteries and Plays" was declared void by the British government on September 2, 1760, and at once there seems to have been a great many lotteries started for all sorts of projects. In one issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, soon after the above Proclamation appeared, there were six lotteries advertised. On January 29th, this notice appeared:

²⁴ Both the above are in the Collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

As a new Church, called St. Paul's Church, has been thought necessary, for the Worship of Almighty God, to be erected in this City, by many well disposed Christians; who have, according to their Abilities, cheerfully subscribed, and many of them paid considerable Sums of Money, towards carrying on this pious Work. In Consequence whereof, a very large and commodious Building hath been begun, and carried on to the full Height of the Brick Work: But it being judged that the Expence [*sic.*] of completing and finishing this Church, will greatly exceed the Sums subscribed; therefore it is thought expedient to set up a Lottery, for the raising 3000 Pieces of Eight, which it is hoped will completely finish the said Church; and not doubted but all well Wishers to the true Worship of God, will favour and encourage the Undertaking.

The tickets sold rapidly, and within twenty days of the first advertisement all were sold. The drawings were published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 12, 1761. Feeling such encouragement, the committee started a second lottery for Saint Paul's, which was advertised on April 16th, stating that 7500 tickets would be offered at \$4.00 each, the drawing to take place on May 4th. This was to clear a ground-rent due on the property and to purchase a burying place nearby. The drawing took place "at a Store on Captain Goodman's Wharf" and was advertised on July 23, 1761 in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*.

John Ord, one of the managers of the lottery advertised on March 12th that he would insure tickets in the St. Paul's Church Lottery "at a low Premium." The insurance of one's winning a prize on a lottery was not an uncommon thing in England; but it was not until about this time that the Philadelphia merchant underwriters ventured into this branch of business, and we find it was frequently done up to 1771. Policies and loss papers for lottery insurance are to be found in the manuscript collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

On February 12, 1761 this notice appeared in the newspapers: "It is generally acknowledged that a Variety of Steeples of different Form, beautifies Cities and renders the Prospect more Agreeable" and that a scheme for a lottery to raise 3000 dollars for the steeple of the Presbyterian Church in Arch street was inaugurated. The notice continued, "It is hoped generous Persons of

different Societies, and Denominations, who wish well to the Credit and Weal of the Community in general, Persons who are desirous to increase the Ornaments of the large and growing Metropolis, will freely encourage."²⁵

The next month another lottery was started, this time for the benefit of a "Public School lately instituted in Germantown," known at that time as the Union School, later as the Germantown Academy. The sum of £1125 was to be raised, but according to the Minutes of the Trustees of the school only £270 11s. 4d. was realized. Their Minutes of December 29, 1762 show that "Thomas Wharton produced an account in which is included several items of money rec'd from the following persons, From Thomas Yorke in part of Lottery money £173 10s. 4d., From James Child the balance of his Lottery A/C £97.1.0." This was a little over one-fifth of what was anticipated.

A private lottery was also instituted in March 1761 when William Dunlap—at the Post Office—tried to raise £3,750 by disposing of his "Collection of Books, Plate, Jewels, &c.," which had lately arrived from England. Among the articles offered as prizes were silver coffee-pots and stands, spoons, cream jugs, "Several Pinchbeck and Silver Watches," and a "curious large Orrery," together with land in Gloucester county, New Jersey. The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 23, 1761, stated that, "The Drawing of Mr. Dunlap's Lottery begins on Tuesday next, the Tickets being all sold: A Boat will be in Waiting at Arch-street Wharff, at Nine o'Clock in the Morning," to take those who wished to be present at the drawing to Petty's Island. The public was also advised that, "Prizes not demanded within six months after Publication aforesaid, will be given to the Pennsylvania Hospital." About 5000 tickets were sold.

The city authorities advertised a lottery on March 26, 1761, "for raising One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Dollars, for paving the North End of Second street, from Sassafras or Race-street, in the City of Philadelphia, to Samuel Noble's House on Callowhill." Henry Woodrow, Benjamin Davis, John William

²⁵ Thomas Riche wrote to John Scott on February 26, 1761, "the Tickets St. Paul's Church Ticket [*sic.*] was all Disposed of therefore I have enclosed you 4 of the Academy Lottery and 2 of the Presbyterian Steepel [*sic.*] & wish you a Good Suckses [*sic.*] with them." (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

Hoffman, William Clampffer and Alexander Allaire were the managers. The following month the city started another lottery to raise £2812 10s., "for paving such Part or Parts of the City of Philadelphia, as a number of Persons, appointed by the Managers . . . shall think suitable." This was independent of the Second Street paving proposition and indicates how our city fathers first raised the money for street paving. The selling of tickets went slowly, as the winning tickets were not published until February 25, 1762. About the time of the Second Street lottery, Trinity Church in Oxford township, Philadelphia started a lottery to raise £500 for "erecting Galleries, walling in the Grave-yard &c.," which was closed before either of the city affairs. A lottery to dispose of forty-six acres of the south-west end of Petty's Island, being the property of Alexander Alexander, was also advertised the same time.

In Baynton and Wharton's letter book may be found a letter to a Canadian correspondent, stating: "Agreable [*sic.*] to your Orders, We purchased for you, Twenty Tickets, in the Street Lottery—The numbers are as follows. Vizt. 10 Tickets from No. 3491 to 3500 Inclusive & 10 Do from No. 3501 to 3510."²⁶

There are few account books of early merchants extant which do not show the purchase of lottery tickets for themselves or their customers out of town. Thomas Riche's Lottery Book of 1761²⁷ seems to have been kept solely for the purpose of recording tickets sold to others. Therein one reads such names as Dr. Thomas Bond, Tench Francis (who bought £30 worth of tickets in the "Light House Lottery"), Enoch Story, Thomas Lawrence, John Richards, William Rush, Charles Coxe, William Bradford and many others. The latter bought 350 tickets in the street paving lottery, paying therefor £525 and drawing prizes amounting to £356 5s. 6d. "John Richards in Jersey" bought 200 tickets in the same lottery paying £300 and his winnings amounted to £239 1s. 3d. Few of the entries show much profit from the speculation and many indicate that no prizes had been won. Thomas Dowdell however is an exception. He made a "killing" from his investment of £15 for ten tickets. His winnings were

²⁶ Baynton and Wharton, Letter Book, p. 27. (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

²⁷ Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

£171 16s. 1½d., showing a net profit of £156 16s. 1½d., or over ten times his outlay.

Samuel Morris' day book shows that on August 18, 1761 he "paid Wm. Bradford for ½ of 10 Tickets bought of him this day, in Co. with Wm. Morris. Sign'd by Charles Coxe for the New Jersey College Lottery, No. 4411 to 4421 £7.10.0."²⁸ He also "paid Alexr. Allaire for 1 of 4 Tickets in the Second Street Lottery, No. 4415, 16, 18, 4419. £3.0.0." On the same page William Morris is charged £10.10 for his share of the speculation.

The *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 23, 1761, had advertisements of eight different lotteries, five of them for out of town churches. In November of that year a lottery was inaugurated for the good of all merchant-shippers of the Delaware Valley. This was to raise £3,000 to erect a lighthouse at Cape Henlopen, and apparently was quickly sold, as the drawings took place in April, 1762. In October, 1763 the Assembly passed an act, "For the erecting a Light-house at the Mouth of the Bay of Delaware, at or near Cape-Henlopen, for placing and fixing Buoys in the said Bay and River-Delaware, and for appointing Commissioners to receive, collect and recover certain Sums of Money heretofore raised by Way of Lottery, and to appropriate the same to the Purposes aforesaid." The Commissioners were prompt in carrying out the purposes of this act, as the *Pennsylvania Journal*, November 14, 1765 (p. 3) states, "It is with pleasure we can inform the public, that the elegant Light-house building on Cape Cornelius (commonly called Cape Henlopen) will be very soon lighted for the direction of shipping."²⁹

On January 14, 1762 this notice to raise £562 for an out of town lottery appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal*:

WHEREAS the Members of the Episcopal Congregation of St. Paul's Church in the ancient Burrough [sic.] of Chester in the Province of Pennsylvania, having received repeated Intimations from the Honourable Society

²⁸ Samuel Morris, Day Book, p. 261. (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

²⁹ It stood on ground fifty feet above the sea and the stonework was about seventy feet high. An engraving of this lighthouse, made about 1780, is in the manuscript copy of Watson's Annals in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

for propagating the Gospel in foreign Parts, that by the standing Rules of the said Society, they will be obliged to withdraw the Mission from them if they do not forthwith make that necessary Provision for the better Accommodation of their Missionary which the Society expects and requires, viz. a Glebe, a Dwelling-house, and their Church and Burying Ground in decent Order and Repair; which things, unfortunately for them, their Predecessors did not take care to secure when Land was to be had at an easy Rate, and Building cheap to what it now is. They find themselves under the disagreeable Necessity to apply to the Publick by way of a Lottery, not doubting it will meet with all suitable Encouragement, from the well disposed of every Denomination, as it is intended for the Glory of God and consequently the good of the Province. This Lottery is calculated greatly to the Advantage of the Adventurers, the large Prizes being so reduced as to make the small Ones of more Value than any hitherto exhibited to the Publick for raising so small a Sum as that of £562.10.0.

Five thousand tickets were to be sold and fifteen per cent of the proceeds were for the church. The Philadelphia managers were Rev. Richard Peters, John Ross, James Young, Charles Stedman and Dr. John Kearsley Jr., who with William Bradford and David Hall sold the tickets in Philadelphia. Readers of the *Pennsylvania Journal* were also advised that:

It is hoped that if any are scrupelous [*sic.*] as to this Method of raising Money, yet wish well to the design, and are willing to promote the same; if such Persons will deliver their liberality in to the Hands of Mr. Charles Thompson, Merchant in Philadelphia, or to any of the Managers aforesaid, it will be gratefully acknowledged and carefully applied accordingly.

The experiences of the former years evidently induced the Pennsylvania Assembly to pass an act in 1762 for the suppression of all new lotteries,³⁰ but those already begun could continue. Yet, it did not prohibit advertising in Pennsylvania the lotteries to be held outside the state limits, and many were drawn in New Jersey and Delaware. Lotteries could be held if permission

³⁰ J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884* (Philadelphia, 1884), I, 256.

was secured from the state authorities and the cause felt to be desirable. Owing, no doubt to the preponderance of Church of England members in the Assembly, an act was passed in 1765, the notice of which read, "The Governor and Assembly of this Province, favouring the pious and commendable Purposes of these Petitions, have been pleased to pass an Act for raising by means of lottery, money for St. Peter's and St. Paul's Churches in Philadelphia as well as for others in nearby counties."

In one of the advertisements for this lottery appeared this notice, "John Reily will insure tickets in this Lottery at a low premium."⁸¹

St. Peter's Church was to receive £1325 and St. Paul's Church was to benefit to the extent of £425, but the drawings did not take place until July 1767 and were advertised in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of the 23rd of that month. The cost of printing and advertising the St. Peter's Church lottery is preserved in the Wallace-Bradford Papers and shows that from February 1765 to July 1767 the total cost of the same was £32 13s.⁸²

The Assembly passed an act on February 20, 1768 for the raising by means of a lottery £5,250 for the purchase of a public landing in the Northern Liberties and for paving streets in Philadelphia.⁸³ The lottery was of four classes, the tickets costing twenty shillings, thirty shillings, forty shillings and fifty shillings, according to the class, and the prizes varied from £2 10s. for the smallest to £3,000, first prize. The winning numbers for the different classes were printed in the *Pennsylvania Journal* for July 14, October 27, 1768, March 30, 1769 and July 10, 1769.

The returns from the first class drawings must have been promptly paid, for we see in Samuel Morris' Journal, 1755-1782⁸⁴ under date of November 30, 1768 this entry: "Cash Dr. To Philada. Public Four Class Lottery. Recd. of the Managers thereof towards purchasing a Public Landing £1180." and again, "Philadelphia Public Four Class Lottery Dr. To Cash paid Philotesia Strettell for a Lot in Front Street opposite the Barracks for a Public Landing £1175."

⁸¹ *Pennsylvania Journal*, March 21, 1765.

⁸² Wallace-Bradford Papers, Folio Vol. 1, 179. (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

⁸³ *Votes of the Assembly*, VI.

⁸⁴ Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Scharf and Westcott state that this landing was at the foot of Noble street and was known as the Hay Scales Landing. John Wilson's cash book shows that in August 1768 he paid Philip Syng £2 5s. for half the cost of three lottery tickets and again on February 16, 1769 he paid Syng £3 15s. for half the cost of three more tickets. Evidently they were in partnership.³⁵

On February 18, 1769 the Assembly authorized a three class lottery to raise £3,099 12s. for the use of the First, Second and Third Presbyterian Churches in Philadelphia and the German Reformed Church in Worcester township. Tickets cost fifteen, twenty-five and forty shillings in each class and it was known as the Philadelphia and Worcester lottery. It was so successful that the first class drawing was held April 10th at the Indian Queen tavern and that for the second class on July 31, 1769 at "Mr. Josiah Davenport's Long Room, in Third Street," which was in the Bunch of Grapes Tavern, as it was then known.

All acts approving lotteries were not upheld by the English government. On February 23, 1769 an act was passed authorizing the German Lutheran Churches at Heidelberg and Lebanon to hold a lottery, but on September 29th of that year was printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*:

The Governor returns the Bill entitled 'An Act for raising by way of Lottery, the sum of £3543 15s. 0d. &cs'; and commands me to inform the House That he has lately been honoured with His Majesty's Orders, by advise of the Privy Council, strictly 'enjoining him on no pretence whatever, to give his Consent to any future Act for raising any Sum or Sums of Money by Lottery, without previously writing to know his Majesty's Pleasure therein, and fully stating the several Reasons which may appear to him to make the passing such Act Adviseable' and that in obedience to this Order, he is under the necessity of refusing his assent to this Bill.³⁶

Thus one sees how the British authorities endeavored to guard against undue speculation on the part of the colonists. Even in the face of this, other lotteries were started and advertised in local papers, but the drawings took place without the boundaries of this

³⁵ John Wilson, Cash Book, Am. 190. (Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

³⁶ *Colonial Records* (Harrisburg, 1852-53), IX, 922.

province, some in Delaware and others on Petty's Island in the Delaware River, a New Jersey possession.

The Petty's Island Land and Cash Lottery—a purely Philadelphia affair—for the disposal of houses and lots in Second Street and on Germantown Road sold tickets in the city but the drawings were held on the island—under New Jersey jurisdiction—and the winners printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for January 2, 1772.

The Presbyterian Church in the Northern Liberties desiring to raise money for their church had to resort to Delaware protection and styled their scheme the “New Castle Lottery for the Campington Presbyterian Church,” the managers for same being Gunning Bedford, Andrew Hodge, William Henry, John Bayard, Isaac Snowden, Benjamin Harbeson, William Coats, Nathan Cook, Hugh McCulloch, William Hollingshead, Jedediah Snowden, William Drewery, John Harper, Dr. Benjamin Rush, David Jacker and William Shippen—all good Philadelphia citizens. This lottery is advertised in the *Pennsylvania Journal*, October 27 and December 16, 1772.

About this time the colonists were doing all they could to encourage manufacturing and become independent of the mother country. In the *Pennsylvania Journal*, September 16, 1772 the “Managers of the Pettie’s [sic.] Island Cash Lottery, for the Encouragement of American Steel Manufactory” stated the drawings would be held as soon as the tickets were sold and that, “Those who have bought Tickets on credit, are requested to pay the money immediately into the hands of the Managers.”

The *Pennsylvania Journal* for May 19, 1773 and subsequent issues advertised a three class lottery for the benefit of the American Flint Glass Manufactory in Richmond, which was to be drawn on Petty's Island. This glass works was on Richmond Street above Gunner's Run (now filled in and called Aramingo Avenue) and was later in possession of Thomas W. Dyott.³⁷ Another lottery was started for the “Flint Glass Manufactory at Manheim,” Pennsylvania, established by William Henry Stiegel; the prizes were listed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 15, 1773.

St. Paul's Church began another lottery of four classes in 1773, with provisions that purchasers of tickets in the first class had

³⁷ *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LIV, 125.

the privilege of subscribing under the same ticket numbers in each of the other classes. This notice appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 3, 1773:

The Adventurers in the Pettie's Island Cash Lottery for the benefit of St. Paul's Church, who intend to renew their Tickets, are requested to be as speedy as possible in so doing, as there have been a Number of Applications for Tickets; on which Account it is not doubted the Second Class will be drawn as soon as the Time limited for Renewal expires, which will be in Saturday, the 20th. of February instant; at which Time all Tickets not renewed will be deemed forfeited, and disposed of accordingly.

The notice evidently had the desired effect as the prizes were printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 10th, the third class on April 28th and the fourth class on July 7, 1773.

Another church lottery going on about the same time was to be drawn in Delaware. Part of the proceeds was for St. John's Church in that state and part for the church in the Northern Liberties, as shown by this notice which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 9, 1773:

According to an article signed the 28th. of December 1772 for accomodating the Members of the Church of England, who inhabit the North part, and Northern Liberties of the City of Philadelphia, with a plan of worship, which it is agreed, can only be done by building two small churches or chapels; one near the North Line of the City, and the other northward of the Barracks, on a lot given by the heirs of William Coats.

A public vineyard lottery was begun, of three classes similarly arranged to that for St. Paul's Church, under the management of William Bradford, Thomas West, Alexander Tod, James Macubbin, Blair McClanaghan, Dr. Duffield and Dr. Phile. The drawings for the first class were printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of June 22, 1774. A copy of the printed "Scheme" together with some of the tickets for this lottery are to be found in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The intention of above record has been to include principally Philadelphia lotteries for local purposes although in one or two

instances out of town lotteries for particular purposes have been mentioned. In addition to those listed, there were many more schemes for profit to the speculators in this form of chance advertised in Philadelphia newspapers. Twenty-three churches in adjacent counties of Pennsylvania, four in New Jersey and three in Maryland offered lotteries. Money was raised also in this manner for four bridges in Pennsylvania, a fire engine in Lancaster, as well as to pay the Rangers of Tulpehocken in 1755. The New Jersey authorities had a lottery to raise money to pay the Indian Land Claims, New York tried to get funds in this way to build the Sandy Hook Lighthouse, Massachusetts wanted to raise money in 1751, the Lord Stirling Land Lottery was proposed in 1774, and several smaller schemes for land and personal property were likewise offered—and all before the year 1776.

Those offered during and after the Revolutionary War, as well as early nineteenth century lotteries have been so ably treated by Miss Irma A. Watts in her "Pennsylvania Lotteries of Other Days," which appeared in the January, 1935 issue of this magazine, that they need not be mentioned here.