

**"WHAT AN ADDITION TO MY HAPPINESS
HAS MY WIFE AND CHILDREN BEEN
TO ME"? THREE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY
PENNSYLVANIA HUSBANDS "TALK" TO AND
ABOUT THEIR WIVES**

*Judith Ridner
Muhlenberg College*

On Woman

Ere Eve was made . . . the father of mankind,
Survey'd his Eden with a pensive mind,
With wand'ring steps the beauteous place explor'd,
And with sad heart his lonely state deplor'd;
Tho' all combin'd to entertain the sight,
And fruits delicious did the taste invite,
Tho' trees and flowers, with richest odours grow,
And all luxuriant nature could bestow,
He was alone, which did all bliss destroy,
Nor could till WOMAN came, once taste a joy;
Then rapture fill'd his mind, nought was the same,
And Eden now a Paradise became,
Woman still smooths the anxious brow of care,
And smooths our passions with a pleasing air;
What's life without enjoyment of the fair?¹

This poem, authored anonymously, appeared in the "Poet's Corner" of a 1785 edition of the backcountry newspaper *The Carlisle Gazette*. It took readers to the Garden of Eden, and playing upon the Biblical story of creation, focused on the father of mankind's loneliness without, what the author termed, the "enjoyment of the fair." Here Adam, portrayed as a sad and lonely man, looked to woman, specifically Eve, to bring him "joy" and "rapture." Her presence transformed him and made Eden a paradise. *Gazette* readers, who were no doubt well acquainted with the story from Genesis, were thus reminded that woman was created not just to serve, but to please man. Freed here from the taint of original sin, woman smoothed a man's passions and anxieties. She brought him joy. She made the world harmonious. And yet there was ambiguity too. Although woman was a passive FIGURE meant to act as man's helper and better his life, she was also a transformative force. After all, "nought was the same" after she arrived. Man's happiness, his well being, depended on her presence. As a note beneath the title proclaimed: "O woman! lovely woman! nature made you to temper man."²

Nearly a year later, another anonymously authored poem appeared in the *Gazette*. This one too spoke directly to the relationship between the sexes.

Epitaph on a Termagant Wife,
Written by her Husband

Beneath this rugged stone doth lie,
The rankest scold that e'er did die;
Whose softest word to dearest friend,
Would make his hair stand bolt an [on] end!
You'd think storms rising when she sung;
Thunder was music to her tongue!
When real storms in her did rise,
Lightning was twilight to her eyes!
Her mildest look so fierce a sight,
Great chance you'd catch ague by't;
And when her person mov'd—huge rock!
No earthquake gave so great a shock!
Where she abides, seek not to know,
If they want sulphur, she's below;

If she's above, Gods hear my pray'r,
And send me any where but there.³

Here man was meek, wounded, and even victimized. He receded into the background, reduced to asserting himself not by action, but by ending his stanzas with exclamation points, as his termagant wife, the "rankest scold," claimed the foreground, contaminating him and everything else she touched much like a disease. This termagant wife, a woman of amazonian-like stature, did not bring her man happiness or joy, but instead her hulking body, fierce ways, and domineering presence evoked fear and loathing from her widowed spouse. She was the kind of woman no man wished to know.

These two poems, both narrated by men, and consumed by a predominantly male reading public in south-central Pennsylvania, offer fascinating and mostly contrasting depictions of man's relation to woman. In the first, man is contemplative and a bit melancholy and woman, mostly passive, pleases him. In the second, man is the frustrated victim and woman, depicted as a wife, is threatening and domineering. Taken together, these poems posit a dichotomy of male-female relations—one characterized by joy and harmony, the other by fear and loathing—that was, at first glance, not especially original to the eighteenth century or Pennsylvania. Indeed, in the implied assertions of these anonymous authors that there was no in-between when it came to relations between the sexes, they invoked what were, even at the time these poems were published in the mid-1780s, centuries-old western stereotypes of women especially but men too that reduced each sex to a nearly immutable form set in opposition to the other. Here in these poems, as elsewhere in western literature, women were portrayed as temptresses, comforts, and/or harridans who either supported men and made them happy, or terrorized them and made them hate. While men, at least by implication, vacillated too between extremes of great strength and weakness. Each sex, these poems implied, was trapped in a binary opposition to the other; there was, it seemed, no middle ground of common experience and understanding between them.

As we will see, this stark dichotomy—no matter how powerful and persuasive it might have been in print—was mostly a false one that rested upon stereotypes. The late eighteenth-century husbands of Carlisle who read these lines in the *Gazette* were neither wholly strong nor weak, while their wives, they well knew from daily experience, could not be simply pigeonholed as angels or termagants. Marriage, especially in the post-revolutionary Pennsylvania backcountry, was far more complex and nuanced; masculine and

feminine roles were multi-faceted. Even so, stereotypes are powerful things. By imposing expectations on a group of people, stereotypes restrict experience and circumscribe identity. At the same time, however, in their predictability, these characterizations, however one-dimensional, can be reassuring—especially during times of change.⁴ For these reasons, it is difficult to see the publication of these poems as random incidents. They appeared in print, after all, in 1785 and 1786, on the heels of the American Revolution, and in the middle of a decade long seen as one of the most “critical” periods in American history. This was the time when the political, social, and economic transformations begun during the war continued to push the old, monarchical order of the colonial period to give way rapidly to the rise of a new, republican society whose contours remained uncertain. Indeed, with the war won, Americans, and especially men—who formed the core of the political nation—found themselves facing new obligations and responsibilities because a republic demanded a different, more active, and responsive kind of citizenry than did a monarchy of its subjects. While Americans—male and female—mostly embraced such change, they also faced many uncertainties as the political, social, and economic relationships upon which their world was based were redefined. The responses to such uncertainty varied. Some Americans, scholars tell us, tried to anchor their changing world by seeking to restore aspects of the colonial social order. And for some men, this meant seeking a restoration of a patriarchal order partly undone by the Revolution.⁵ To them, stereotypes such as those expressed in the *Gazette* poems, however exaggerated, were something they could grasp onto because they helped make American society seem more predictable; in a grey social world, stark and simple contrasts were comforting.

But the response of some is not the whole story. For other men, the uncertainties of the age brought many different and sometimes unfamiliar facets of their masculinity into focus. In theory at least, social changes wrought by revolutionary ideals such as liberty, equality, and independence had paved the way for America’s men to be not only patriarchs, but also the kind of loving husbands and supportive family men more in keeping with a republican society.⁶ The challenge these men found, however, was how to acknowledge and then balance these complex and sometimes seemingly contradictory sides of their masculinity—while not simply retreating into the past or grasping at stereotypical roles as a way to find security.⁷ Indeed, stereotypes like those presented in these two poems typically represent the most extreme expectations of a society. And as extremes, stereotypes rarely capture the more

complex lived realities experienced by individuals. With this notion in mind, one can read the *Gazette* pieces from a different perspective, one more in keeping with the multifaceted response many men had to the changing circumstances they faced. These poems were not as straightforward or stereotypical as they might first appear. In the first, we are reminded that woman, though seemingly passive, has the power to transform. Man, though the foregrounded FIGURE, is dependent on her for his "enjoyment." In the second, the husband, though seemingly victimized, seeks to reclaim his lost manhood upon his wife's death. He writes this epitaph to assert himself and put her back in what he sees as her rightful place as his subordinate; he seeks to reclaim lost authority. Each poem, in other words, has multiple meanings; each includes ambiguities. Neither man nor woman is consistently passive or aggressive, submissive or dominant. Their roles and identities shift. So too do relations between them. Although clearly interdependent, there is no clear or steady equilibrium between them. And in emphasizing complexity, ambiguity, and change, these poems captured, in a fundamental way, the inherently dynamic—and sometimes even volatile—nature of male-female relationships of the post-revolutionary period.

For at least three men living in the town of Carlisle in the 1780s, such messages would have held especially poignant meaning. For these three men—the young Presbyterian minister-in-training Nathaniel Snowden, the middle-aged brigadier general William Irvine, and the elderly tavernkeeper James Brandon—although of differing ages, as well as class and educational backgrounds, nevertheless shared a key experience; namely, each man had faced or was about to face his own "critical period" in his relationship with the woman who was or would soon be his wife. And it was during this critical period, when each man, Snowden, Irvine, and Brandon, had to face the real emotional and personal challenges of either deciding whom to marry, working to preserve his marriage long distance, or considering the end of a marriage to an abusive wife, that all three came to understand the degree to which their relationships with their wives, whether filled with joy and love, anxiety and tension, hate and hostility, or some combination of all of these qualities, remained unpredictable and hence, uncontrollable. Indeed, in the written records each of these three men left of his experiences, we can glimpse at marriages where the partners are not so much one-dimensional stereotypes, as complex, sometimes contradictory, sometimes loving, sometimes hostile, and often frustrated and anxious individuals joined together in a union where their roles, authority, and feelings remain in very much flux.⁸

In this essay, I intend to take a microcosmic approach to studying eighteenth-century marriages by using these three Carlisle husbands, and their relationships with their wives, as case studies. In doing so, I have several goals. First and perhaps most obviously, I wish to explore the variety of their experiences, the challenges they faced, and the varied and sometimes uncertain responses they had to them. Each man, as we will see, had his own fascinating way of "talking" to or about his wife, and therefore each relationship, like all relationships, was unique. At the same time, however, each man's "talk" was reflective of not only his individual circumstances and identity, but also his time and place. To be sure, as a lived experience between two connected individuals whose needs, aspirations, and feelings evolve over time, marital relationships tend to have certain timeless, universal qualities about them. At the same time, however, marriage is also a social institution reflective of its time, place, and cultural milieu. As such, the relationships Nathaniel Snowden, William Irvine, and James Brandon had with their wives can be interpreted as reflective in part of both the social changes of the post-revolutionary period and the maturing Pennsylvania backcountry society in which they lived on a daily basis. Snowden, Irvine, and Brandon were quite ordinary men. Although two of them were educated and of at least middling economic means, none of them had accumulated great wealth. Only one of them, William Irvine, ever achieved any kind of modest national recognition. And their ordinariness is important, I assert, precisely because it allows us to glimpse how macro changes in society following the Revolution impacted individual identities and relationships in the micro communities of early republican America.

Nathaniel Snowden – Negotiating a Connection

By the stanzas of the first *Gazette* poem, it was not until woman arrived that man "taste[ed] a joy." Woman, it was said, made Eden a kind of blissful paradise by calming man's anxiety and smoothing his passions. But as the diaries kept by the Presbyterian minister-in-training Nathaniel Snowden reveal, having a woman come into one's life could also have the opposite effect. Love and desire for a young woman impacted the young Snowden in ways he never could have foreseen. On the one hand, love for the woman who would become

his wife certainly infused his life with happiness and new meaning. Yet at the same time, the intense emotional attachment and desire he felt for her only intensified his anxiety, heightened his passions, and fueled an intense crisis of conscience and identity in him.⁹ As the lines in the *Gazette* poem cautioned its male readers, once woman came, "[t]hen rapture fill'd his mind" and "nought was the same." No words could have been truer for Nathaniel Snowden. Although Snowden spent most of his adult life in the Pennsylvania interior, he was a Philadelphian, and not a backwoodsman, by birth. As the son of Isaac Snowden, an active member of Philadelphia city government and a Presbyterian elder of likely English rather than Scottish or Scots-Irish extraction, Nathaniel first came to Carlisle in the late 1780s to study for the ministry under the direction of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, a well-known Scots Presbyterian theologian who was then serving as the first principal of the newly established Dickinson College.¹⁰ For Snowden, his move to the Pennsylvania interior promised a new future that would usher in "a wonderful scene & period of my existence!"¹¹ Like so many other men of the time, Snowden moved west to seek opportunity in a Turnerian-like fashion. Only, unlike most men who ventured into the interior in search of land or other forms of economic opportunity, Snowden went west for spiritual and intellectual reasons—his was a journey for faith, not wealth. And if his diaries offer any indication, he pursued this new future with intensity, dedication, and much emotional commitment. He immersed himself in his studies and focused his life on making himself worthy to serve God. Yet there were challenges along the way, and one challenge in particular nearly caused him to fumble and lose sight of his journey. Indeed, his dedication, and the fervor that accompanied it, wavered in 1797 as his studies wound down, his life in Carlisle drew to a gradual conclusion, and his blossoming and undeniable love for a local young woman presented him with new and wholly unanticipated dilemmas. Sally Gustine, the sixteen-year-old daughter of Carlisle doctor Lemuel Gustine, was the object of Snowden's affections. The Gustines were a well known family in Carlisle who had migrated to the town from the Wyoming Valley after the British-Indian invasion of that region in 1778. Sally, or Sarah as she was known formally, was Lemuel's daughter from his first marriage.¹² As Snowden's diary makes clear, the Gustine's house was a gathering place for many of the town's leading Presbyterians. During his stay in Carlisle, Snowden spent much time there engaging others in "religious conversation" and debate. He also prayed and socialized with the family—especially daughter Sally.¹³

In the pages of his diary, which served as a forum for spiritual and emotional reflection, the twenty-one-year-old Snowden revealed his near obsessive love for Sally and the way it changed his life. Again and again he recorded what he perceived as his uncontrollable desires for the young woman he repeatedly referred to by the initials "S." or "S.G." At the end of one day in 1791, he gleefully noted his "happy frame of mind" and revealed that he "actually loved her & c[oul]d not get her out of my mind. Even in my morning devotions she w[oul]d be always present to my imaginations."¹⁴ In their private meetings as well, Snowden was equally unabashed in his demonstrations of love and desire. He was "very happy" with Sally and "kis[s]ed her" on several occasions, noting that "we parted in love."¹⁵

In many respects, their relationship, based as it was on affection and companionship, seemed an ideal one by late eighteenth-century standards; it was founded on the emotional choice of the partners, rather than the arrangements of their parents.¹⁶ As Snowden's own words reveal, Sally's presence—and his love for her—transformed his world into a kind of paradise; she brought him immense joy. Yet Snowden was also deeply conflicted about this transformation. Accustomed to a life where he rose in the morning to days of prayer, introspection, reading, and study, love and the sociability it entailed not only upset his daily routines, but upended his whole spiritual and emotional universe. Unlike the narrator in the *Gazette* poem, Snowden had yet to let Sally "smooth" his "passions with a pleasing air." His passions instead remained in high gear, and he was all torn up by feelings he could not seem to control. At first, he lamented the way love undermined his self-control and spiritual discipline and prayed repeatedly to be "weened from S.G." and returned to his simpler life of solitary piety.¹⁷ But, as he quickly discovered, his love for Sally was difficult to suppress. So was his desire. And in response, Snowden, who as both a Presbyterian and an educated man of the eighteenth century placed great stake on self-control and self-discipline—especially in the public sides of his life—grew increasingly frustrated at his own inability to control his feelings. Indeed, in a republic of citizens where men, as its leaders, were expected to be guided by reason and virtue, passion was seen as a potentially dangerous—and even feminizing—force.¹⁸ And for Snowden, intense internal conflict was the result as he tried to reconcile the ideals of his time with the reality of his situation. He became extremely self-critical. Venomous words of self-critique began to appear in the pages of his diary. He derided himself as being "exceeding[ly] vile." He labeled himself a "hypocrite in many things," and lamented "how weak & ignorant a person I am."¹⁹ He

also begged for direction, asking God to "show me how I shall leave Carlisle with reputation. O direct me in the affair of S.G.." ²⁰ Clearly, the emotional and sexual intensity of this relationship challenged the very core of his being. He felt out of control, helpless. And these were emotions he was unaccustomed to experiencing—at least in a secular context. As a devoted Presbyterian who had given himself wholly up to God, Sally was in some respects an unwelcome distraction that threatened to sideline his dedication and ambition. Her presence made his future ambiguous. What's more, being with her left him feeling emotionally defenseless—a state he had reserved for his relationship with God—and that made him feel "vile," hypocritical, and "weak," as well as confused. In Snowden's world, a pious man was vulnerable to his God, but not to a woman. ²¹

Seeking guidance and resolution, the deeply conflicted Snowden did what he had learned to do while in Carlisle—he threw himself on the mercy of God's will in the hope that God would sanction their courtship and make it work. He prayed: "Say it is of the Lord[']s will to bring us together . . . but he must direct & bring it about himself[,] for I will have nothing to do in [the] matter." And as he reminded Sally (and himself) in one of their meetings, he was "only committed . . . to God." Indeed, he tried to reconcile himself that if she was really "designed" for him, as he phrased it, God would "bring it about in his own good time." ²² Yet the pious Snowden also contradicted himself a bit when he took more active steps on his own to foster their relationship—and her piety. And his actions demonstrate the extent to which he sought to triumph over what he perceived as his own personal weaknesses. Perhaps she was the woman for him, he wondered? But he had doubts, and those doubts had to be resolved before he could commit fully to her. For instance, he knew Sally loved him, but love alone, he felt, was not enough. ²³ He worried especially about the state of Sally's soul because he was unsure of the intensity of her spiritual commitment; was her faith truly sincere? He worried too whether it was in her "nature" to be a minister's wife. ²⁴ Sally liked to attend balls; she seemed more oriented towards the secular, rather than the spiritual world. Could she be, he wondered, the "humble follower of Christ" he so wanted her to be? ²⁵ Their courtship, therefore, focused as much on him cultivating her piety as on him getting to know her as a person and potential spouse. Snowden "talked plainly to her about her soul[,] read letters to her and prayed in my mind to God for her"—trying to spiritually and metaphorically "convert" her to his ways and fashion her into the kind of worthy Presbyterian who could

really be his wife.²⁶ Sally, he noted happily, took these conversations "very well."²⁷ She encouraged him with many kisses. She also grew more pious. He was especially thrilled when one day "God blessed me with some [show of] faithfulness to her soul."²⁸ And little over a year later, after Snowden departed Carlisle for a time amid "weeping and tears" to assume his first ministerial post, God finally "bless[ed]" him "with her hand," and the two were married in Carlisle's First Presbyterian Church.²⁹ Their union, it finally seemed to him, was truly meant to be.

Marriage, however, did not resolve Snowden's anxiety when it came to his relationship with Sally. God's apparent sanction of their union convinced him that his love for her was not misguided, which did much to resolve his crisis of identity. Yet worry remained. After their move to his new position as minister of a congregation in Paxton Township, Lancaster County, Snowden's love for his young wife continued to blossom, but so did his anxiety. Adoration and passion for his young wife—whom he now referred to as "Mrs. S."—flowed unabashedly from the pages of his diary. Yet marriage did not bring a tranquil happiness; instead, marriage, and especially fatherhood, brought only a new series of emotionally charged experiences that heightened his unease and undermined his sense of well-being. In response, he found himself trying to precariously balance different sides of his masculinity. This was particularly evident as Nathaniel and Sally began to have children in the 1790s (they eventually had five sons and one daughter survive to adulthood); he suffered each of her pregnancies nearly overcome with worry and dread.³⁰ In 1796, he prayed: "Oh Lord[,] prepare her and us for the event before us in thy providence[.] Bless the child in her womb and[,] oh[,] grant if it be thy will that she may be the living mother of another living child."³¹ Two years later, he again gave thanks to God "for all his mercies[,] especially for his recent goodness to his handmaid in making her [Sally] the living mother of another living child."³² While these pregnancies resulted in the "safe deliverance" of healthy and "firm" sons, whose births caused him intense worry but also resulted in great joy, fatherhood, he soon discovered, also had an even more worrisome and painful side. In October 1800, Snowden noted that he "wept and cried to God" as wife Sally endured her labor "[i]n great trouble." Although he prayed that "God w[oul]d bless her & the child in her womb," he knew she was "bad indeed but not enough to be delivered." He clearly feared for her life as well as the life of their child. When later that night she finally gave birth to "a dead Child"—a "fine" son—he "[t]ried to be resigned" to this fate, and despite the emotionally wrenching nature of this

experience, he ultimately expressed his thanks "to anodoring [an adoring] providence for preserving the life of the Mother."³³ Sally, the woman he loved so much, had at least survived this ordeal; real tragedy had been averted. Yet as Snowden's own words attest, the loss of this baby—and the very real threat its birth posed to Sally's life—was a traumatic experience; one that Snowden would carry with him for the rest of his life. Snowden, in short, was a changed man. The fear and uncertainty marriage and fatherhood sometimes created could bring him to his knees, pleading for God's mercy. On other occasions, by contrast, the joy and love his wife and children brought to him could raise him up in thanks and praise. For him, marriage was a relationship marked by stark emotional contrasts that he had to negotiate between. And as the pages of his diary reveal, finding a point of equilibrium between these emotional extremes was a surprisingly difficult task.

William Irvine – Overcoming Distance

Whereas courtship and the earliest years of marriage presented the young Nathaniel Snowden with his greatest emotional and spiritual challenges, the long and well-documented relationship of Carlisle physician and Brig. Gen. William Irvine and his wife Ann Callender Irvine, demonstrates the extent to which Carlisle men in more mature relationships too faced different but equally powerful and perplexing personal dilemmas as well.

William and Ann Irvine were probably one of the best known couples in late eighteenth-century Carlisle. William, a physician, was born in Ireland and educated at Trinity College, Dublin. After serving as a surgeon in the British Navy during the Seven Years' War, he emigrated to America and settled in Carlisle sometime before 1768. Coming from a Scots family of at least middling means in northern Ireland, Irvine arrived in Carlisle as a free immigrant with the added advantages of education, a profession, perhaps some limited amount of money, and connections. By all indications, with friends from the Old World there to aid him in adapting to his new home, he quickly assumed a leadership position among the town's sizable Scots-Irish, Presbyterian community and, during the American Revolution, came to be an important regional leader as well, commissioned first as a colonel and later a brigadier general in the Continental Army—serving as commander at Fort Pitt for a time—and, after the war, as a politician and bureaucrat on the state and national levels.³⁴ His wife, Ann, hailed from one of Carlisle's most

prominent pioneer families. She was the daughter of the well-known Carlisle merchant, fur trader, and Seven Year's War militiaman, Capt. Robert Callender, a long-standing partner of fur trader George Croghan and a backwoodsman who was especially well connected to Pennsylvania's proprietary establishment. Ann was socially connected; she was also well educated for a woman of her time.³⁵

By all indications, William, the first-generation immigrant, had married well, and as we will see in his war-time correspondence, loved his wife intensely. Yet he differed from Nathaniel Snowden in several significant ways. It is likely (though not absolutely certain) that his marriage to Ann was arranged by her father. He was also nearly seventeen years her senior in age. William and Ann likely did not begin their lives together as a companionate couple.³⁶ What's more, Irvine's revolutionary war-era correspondence to his wife illustrates the kinds of emotional and personal challenges faced by a husband and wife who were physically separated for long periods of time. For William Irvine, unlike Nathaniel Snowden, his greatest challenge was not coming to grips with love and desire, but dealing with these emotions and others like loneliness while at such a physical distance from his wife.

Indeed, it is this sense of distance, coupled with an equally strong wish to convey a sense of longing and connection that dominates so many of Irvine's war-time letters to his wife. In reading his correspondence one is struck first by the intense desire William expressed for Ann, the woman he always addressed as "my dearest wife." Whether theirs was an arranged marriage or not, there can be no doubt that Irvine missed his wife intensely. Beginning first in 1777 while wintering with the troops at Morristown, New Jersey, William repeatedly lamented being separated from his wife and children. Emphasizing the sense of distance and the frustration it created, he began by writing "I wrote you twelve days ago, I am extremely anxious to get an answer to that letter, or indeed to hear from you at all." He concluded by noting that, although he would not be home as soon as he had hoped, "I need not tell my love—that I will go as soon & stay as long as [is] in my power—I never longed so much to see you & my dear little one's in my life—I look every day for an answer to my last."³⁷ He expressed a similar sense of yearning in 1780, when writing again from Morristown, he noted how he "long[ed] much to hear from my love."³⁸ And five months later, after being reassigned to Fort Pitt, he wrote first of the "anxiety" he felt in awaiting a letter from Ann, and then dwelled for a moment on the intense personal devastation and emotional loss he witnessed around him in the West. As he explained: "It is truly distressing to see

how this Country is laid waste, and more so to hear the lamentations of Widows for their Murdered Husbands and Children—and sometimes the Husbands for his Wife & Children.”³⁹ These were heartfelt observations. Irvine, it seemed, was contemplating the very real possibility that he, or more likely Ann, might await a similar fate of loss and grief—and he clearly found that thought a difficult one to come to grips with.

William's feelings of longing intensified as the war continued and were more often accompanied by heightened expressions of concern and anxiety—especially over his wife's health. For example, when he was “brought . . . an account of your being unwell” (most likely due to her pregnancy with their fourth child) in 1782, William felt “great anxiety.” But because he had “not got a line since[,] nor seen any person who can give me any certain information about you,” he had to rest on the sincere hope “of soon hearing you are recovered.”⁴⁰ Four days later, with still no one having “come up” from Carlisle “who can give me the least account of your situation,” he tried to reassure himself by noting that “if it had been bad, [I] should have heard by some means.”⁴¹ Although there can be no doubt that Irvine was more emotionally reserved than Snowden in his expressions of concern, his words here suggest that he still worried a great deal about Ann—and was frustrated by his inability to know what was happening to her and how she was doing.

In this instance, in the absence of a letter from her, Irvine had to rely on the hope that others would bring news of his wife's well being, and perhaps too the birth of his second son. This pattern of relying on others for news of his family was not at all unusual, however. On a number of occasions during the war he asked friends headed to Carlisle to check in on his family. In response, one friend relayed that he had “found Mrs[.] Irwin & Children with my own Family also in usual health.”⁴² Another told him that “Mrs[.] Irvin[e,] the children and all friends at Carlisle [are] well.”⁴³ Enlisting others to serve as contacts was one way that he sought to collapse the distance between them—and ensure that she and their children were well.

His family's physical health and safety was not his only worry, however. During the tough economic times late in the war and after, Irvine was also concerned about their financial well being. In 1783, while still stationed at Fort Pitt as the war wound down, he “fear[ed] that you [Ann] will be scarce of cash before I get down” to Carlisle.⁴⁴ Some years after the war, while away from home on business, Irvine wrote a worried letter to one of his Carlisle neighbors, Ephraim Blaine, a local merchant who had served Commissary General during the war, because he feared that he had “left Mrs[.] Irvine

rather bare of cash." To remedy the situation, he requested Blaine "direct that payment may be made her for 80 bushels of Rye, which she could have cash for."⁴⁵ He wanted his family to be as economically comfortable as possible.

Irvine also brought or sent along gifts as tokens of his affection. Before heading home for a visit in 1781, he noted that he had "upwards of 25 gallons of Spirit in my Waggon," along with "one loaf [of] sugar," and "some pretty things" for his two eldest children.⁴⁶ Later, he wrote too of gathering servants to "attend" his children. While at Fort Pitt he had "a smart boy of Nine years old bound" to him for his son and had "some prospect of getting a Negro girl of seven years old for Nancy," his daughter.⁴⁷ On another occasion while away in New York after the war, the "small Bundle" that "Major Daughtry does me the favor . . . to carry to you," contained "a handsome & usefull pair [of] gilt Buckels" and "a pair of Cissars" for Ann and a "common pair [of] knee Buckels . . . for Callender," his eldest son.⁴⁸ These gifts, whether delivered by him or others, were another way that Irvine tried to transcend distance and connect with his family. In most cases, these goods, which were most often luxury items, were to serve as happy reminders of his affection for them. On one occasion, however, a gift evidently served as a symbol of shared grief and sorrow. In this case, being unable to make it home, he sent along "a neat[,] well finished[,] little Stone for our dear little Daughter—you had better leave the putting it up till I come" home.⁴⁹ The stone he referenced here was evidently a gravestone for their third child, a daughter named Mary, who died when only a year old. It was her illness and subsequent death that likely accounted for much of William's anxiety in the months before. And his inability to get or take leave at that time likely added an emotional distance to the physical distance already separating him from Ann. This gravestone might well have represented his efforts to close that gulf.

Like other soldiers during war-time then or now, letter writing was the principal means Irvine used to remain emotionally connected with his wife through good times and bad. Writing also seemed to allow him a way to moderate his loneliness. William took great pride in his diligence as a correspondent, noting that he "rarely ever miss[ed] an opportunity of writing" whether he had news to convey or not.⁵⁰ Sometimes he even he felt the need to apologize for his industriousness. "My dearest love. You will think I have nothing to do but write letters, as I have wrote you every two or three days for some time."⁵¹ Several months later, even though "nothing of consequence has happened," William wrote nonetheless, noting "nor have I a single thing

to write farther than to inform you—I am well and that I received your letter.” In this same note he also apologized for the poor quality of his handwriting. “You can,” he explained, “therefore excuse it [his handwriting]—as it is in the Woods & almost by Moonlight.”⁵² He was actually out on patrol in northern New Jersey when he wrote.

Irvine's letters are interesting as well for the sensitivity and willingness he displayed in them to connect with Ann on her terms—and not just his own. He wanted to know what was happening on the homefront, while also seeking to keep her informed of the routine events of his daily life—especially while he was stationed at Fort Pitt during the last years of the war. Like many other soldiers writing home, William rarely made mention of armed confrontations; rather, he tended to emphasize the routine and even boring aspects of life at the fort. And in doing so, he made attempts to relate his experiences to hers. Gardening was one of the “safe” topics on which he focused. Near the end of the war in the spring of 1782, only months after the controversial massacre of Moravian Indians at Gnadenhutten by Pennsylvania militiamen had rocked his command at the fort, he noted “in the mean time[,] I will apply myself close to Gardening.”⁵³ Gardening occupied many of his idle hours at the fort. “I assure you,” he noted in an earlier note that same month, that “we have a pretty good garden such as would pass with you as tolerable.”⁵⁴ These accounts offer an interesting mental picture of him, a brigadier general and the fort's commander, living a domesticated life of relative tranquility during times of intense controversy and turmoil at the fort. Indeed, by his descriptions, daily life at Fort Pitt was filled not with tension and anxiety, but with little other than idleness and boredom. “My time is employed in the best manner I can think of,” he explained, “sometimes—trying to bring some order and discipline [to] the Rascally abandoned Troops—other times Riding—Walking[,] Hunting—and other times[,] Gardening”—but never, it seemed, fighting.⁵⁵

Several months later, however, he was a bit more defensive when writing about his activities as the fort's commander. Responding to an expression of concern—and perhaps accusation—in one of Ann's letters (a letter that does not survive) that he had not been entirely honest and forthcoming about his actions, he replied defensively: “You say a certain Colonel divulged a secret—of my going down the Ohio, there was no secret in it, I wrote you everything about it.” Defending his honesty, he assured her that “I suppose you will be dayly told secrets, about my going on Expeditions—they are great people here for reports of such things, a body can[']t ride five miles but is said to have been on an Expedition or Campaign.”⁵⁶

As the above exchange implies, another challenge Irvine faced was coping with and seeking to moderate Ann's own emotional reactions to his long absences from her and their home. William, after all, was adept at soothing his loneliness through letter writing. But his was only one side of their relationship. Ann was there too. And her presence, as well as the considerable age difference between them, lent an added degree of unpredictability to his situation, much like that described in the poems in the *Gazette*. William could not control her sometimes heated emotional reactions to the distance between them. He could attempt to comfort her with assuring words and gifts, but these, as some of their exchanges suggest, did not always suffice. Ann, from what we can deduce, had reasons to be lonely. She was, by the later years of the war, a young woman in her early-to-mid-twenties with two young children to oversee mostly on her own. She was pregnant likely at least twice during the war. She also had suffered the death of her third child, Mary. Although she had servants and one slave to assist her and many friends and neighbors in Carlisle to offer support, she had few immediate family members living nearby. Her mother had died in 1765, and her father in 1776. Her half-siblings from her father's second marriage evidently remained in the area with their mother, her step-mother, but they were only young children, close in age to her own. Her younger sister Isabella, with whom she shared a close sense of connection, had married a Maryland merchant and moved to Baltimore. And although Ann's war-time hardships were by no means unusual for women of her time, she nonetheless experienced them as unique and sometimes traumatic events.

By 1782, in the wake of their daughter Mary's death, Ann made clear to William that she had had enough of being on her own, and became increasingly insistent in her intense need for his company. Although he secured a leave to visit her in Carlisle, the visit he proposed was evidently quite short. In response, Ann proposed an alternative—namely, that she and their children make a lengthy visit to him at Fort Pitt. This idea, William rejected immediately. Aside from the deplorable condition of the fort, its supplies, and its inhabitants, the recent massacre of the Moravian Indians at Gnadenhutten had left the situation at the fort tense and uncertain. "[F]rom the state of things at present," he wrote her in the spring of 1782, "I would not consent for the Universe to your coming up."⁵⁷

This did not end the matter, however. Ann was not only upset about the death of her daughter, she was likely also pregnant again with her fourth child, their son William, and was concerned about being alone during her

pregnancy. Thus, she continued to insist that William send for her and the children so that they might spend the summer with him at the fort. Again, however, William replied: "I can not think of it—I am sensible my love how lonely you are—and have more anxious thoughts about your situation than you can well imagine. Yet consider what situation you would be in to be left at this place three or four months alone. You are now," he reminded her, "comparatively, in the highest State of Bliss." Despite their shared loneliness and anxiety, he would not hear of her coming to Pittsburgh. Not only was he "heartily tired," the fort was filled with refugees arriving daily from the western country "for protection, and assistance." As he explained, "[t]his is the most wretched & miserable vile hole ever a Man dwelt in, but for a Woman of any Credit—delicacy—or humanity," all of which he implied Ann possessed, "I never saw such another."⁵⁸

Once again, however, William's insistence that Ann stay home was met by her equally forceful insistence that she spend time with him. Her tactics changed a bit, though. She accepted an invitation from her sister's family to spend time with them in Baltimore, a decision William supported.⁵⁹ She kept the pressure on him too, however. But instead of pushing to visit him as she had done earlier, she asked him to take an extended leave from his post. In response, William replied, "you say you expect in my next [letter] that I shall be able to inform you what time you may expect to see me." "This," he reminded her, "is impossible[,] you know I can not with any degree of propriety Ask General Washington for leave of absence." He was commander of his post and could "not run away and leave a Garrison and whole Country intrusted to my care." Despite her request that he do just that, "All," he could "possibly say, is, that as soon as any degree of prudence will allow—I will ask leave" and added, that "I can farther ascertain with great truth, that you are not more Anxious to see me than I am to see you."⁶⁰

For William Irvine, marriage at a distance presented many challenges. Daily life without his wife and children, as he discovered, left him feeling sad and lonely. From the sentiments revealed in his letters, his wife and family did indeed create his own personal paradise—one not unlike that evoked in the first poem in the *Gazette*. Yet paradise was not without its ups and downs. Life with his wife could create joy; it could also create heartache and anguish. After all, as these poems also hinted, women were not always as pleasing or predictable as some of the stereotypes used to portray them suggested. Ann's needs, desires, and anxieties shaped his own—in ways mostly unanticipated. Then too there was his strong sense of duty. He felt responsible for the welfare

and well-being of his wife and family. At the same time, though, he also felt a strong sense of duty to serve his country; he worried too about his reputation. And balancing these sometimes competing senses of duty was difficult. By the fall of 1782, as the war wound down as talk of peace was in the air, William, seeming equally worn down by his own balancing act, stated forcefully that he did "not intend to live another year apart, whether in or out of Service." He was looking forward to being retired from service and noted "how extreamly happy shall I be to see you all together once more—this will be the longest time we have been apart at once, and I am determined it should be the last long time."⁶¹

James Brandon – Fighting Dependency

Feelings of love and desire loomed large in the marriages of Nathaniel Snowden and William Irvine. The greatest challenges they faced were how to cope with these emotions and negotiate boundaries in their relationships with their wives, whether they were close by or at a distance. The negotiation of boundaries plays a considerable role too in the story of another Carlisle man, James Brandon. Yet his experiences offer a different, more cautionary tale about boundaries. For Brandon, the challenge was not finding boundaries while creating and maintaining a relationship, but rather reasserting boundaries while trying to uncouple himself from what he claimed had become an abusive relationship. Indeed, Brandon's experiences offer an example of what could happen when an elderly man grew increasingly needy and his wife was more than willing to assume authority over him, his household, and his business. And his dependence, coupled with her increasing power and his growing frustration about it, made their marriage into a confrontational association. Much like the narrator of the second poem in the *Gazette*, Brandon believed he was being terrorized by his own "termagant" wife, a woman who, by his reckoning, had overstepped her bounds and in doing so had laid waste to his manhood.

James Brandon was one of Carlisle's pioneer settlers and a long-time tavernkeeper and shoemaker in the town. Only unlike other pioneers who managed to rise through the town's social ranks, Brandon was never wealthy (by all indications he lived a marginal economic existence), and he stood at the edge of respectability.⁶² We would know little about him except for the petition for clemency he filed with Pennsylvania's revolutionary government

in 1788. In 1781, Brandon had been convicted in the county court of larceny, a felony punishable by whipping and fines. Brandon, it seemed, had been found guilty of stealing three copper kettles and a saw, property of the U.S. government, taken from the public stores then in Carlisle.⁶³ While a conviction for larceny was hardly unusual in Cumberland County, his petition for clemency was, for in this document Brandon boldly claimed that he was "entirely Innocent" and instead blamed his wife for this crime. He described himself as a "Housekeeper" in Carlisle for "near Thirty Years," who had been "in good Circumstances and lived happity [happily]" until a few years before 1781, when "he was so unfortunate as to become connected with a Woman who availing herself of his Age & Infirmities abused his Person." This woman, who became his wife, "confined him in his Chamber & was guilty he fears of receiving into his House Men of bad and profligate Characters." When goods were reported missing from the public stores, "his House was searched" and the stolen goods "found secreted in the Lower part of the House in a Place to which he had had no access for a long time." He hoped that due to "his Character," the testimony of "the Principal Inhabts of the Town," and his age and physical weakness that the government would pardon him of all charges.⁶⁴

Three local justices wrote a petition supporting Brandon and his testimony. He was, they emphasized, a "very *old, Weak, and feeble Man*" (emphasis theirs) who "had a Good Character given of him by the old Inhabitants of the Town of Carlisle." Despite his somewhat shady past, Brandon was nonetheless a man of mostly good standing in Carlisle. He was also deserving of sympathy from the state, he and they claimed, for he had inadvertently fallen victim to his wife, a woman who, these justices said, "had the entire Rule and Governance of the House." Poor Brandon was "beat, abused, and locked up in his Room by her as her Caprice and bad disposition inclined her." Here, they suggested, was a poor and infirm old man whose wife had taken advantage of him. She had retailed liquor and lodged guests in his house, as well as abused him physically. What's more, they argued, she was guilty of stealing. A lodger in the house claimed he witnessed Brandon's wife "with some of the [stolen] Articles ... beside her." She "appeared confused and alarmed" upon observation.⁶⁵ Here then, in the embodiment of Brandon's wife, was the termagant wife spoken of in the *Carlisle Gazette* poem. She could overpower a weak man and supplant his authority in, as he termed it, "his" house. Instead of acting as an ideal wife like one of her female neighbors, a woman who was praised for having a "natural disposition [that] attached her to the home" and

prompted her to "avoid such modes of life as might interfere with her family," Brandon's wife, they suggested, put her own interests first, and taking advantage of his age and infirmities, she acted in ways that confirmed men's greatest fears about women.⁶⁶ She was not his partner, companion, or servant. She was instead his keeper and tormenter. And their marriage was evidently reduced to a competition for authority that he lost. Yet perhaps most galling of all to him, Brandon was the one found guilty of her crimes. Pennsylvania officials, upon hearing Brandon's plea, agreed to remit force, but rejected an outright pardon. Brandon, it seemed, was a man undone. His was not part of a loving relationship like that of Snowden or Irvine. He hated his wife and depicted their association in the most extreme and negative terms. Yet even so, he, like Snowden and Irvine, found himself confronting a certain ambiguity. As his petition demonstrated, the course of his marriage had been unpredictable. He no longer held authority over himself, his house, his business, or his wife; he was reduced to dependency. He also had been abused and neglected. And as his angry words suggest, he had not expected any of these things to happen. But even so, he still held some nominal authority. Despite his infirmities, he remained the male head of household, and as such, Pennsylvania authorities ultimately held him responsible for events that took place in what legally remained "his" house. And so it seemed as if the boundaries Brandon was attempting to erect between his wife and him were being just as rapidly torn down by state authorities. He would obviously have to find some way to construct these boundaries anew.

In certain respects, Nathaniel Snowden, William Irvine, and James Brandon share little, if anything, in common other than their residence in Carlisle during the post-revolutionary period. They were of different ages and of mostly different class and educational backgrounds, one of them was born and raised in Philadelphia, while another, we know, was an Irish immigrant. All of them had different life goals. All of them too were at different stages of their married lives. Even so, these three men shared one essential life experience in common; namely, each faced a critical turning point in his relationship with his wife during an especially "critical period" in the history of the new American nation. And in trying to work through this turning point, each man found himself faced with unforeseen and not easily resolvable dilemmas—both personal and professional. Marriage, it is clear, impacted their lives in ways none of them had anticipated. For Snowden and Irvine,

their wives brought them immeasurable amounts of joy and love, but also fear, heartache, and intense anxiety. For Brandon, by contrast, his wife came to embody his greatest fears and played upon his greatest weaknesses; she did not meet his expectations. In all three cases, the words of these three men reveal how marriage changed them as individuals by situating them in intimate connection—or at least proximity in the case of Brandon—to the women who were their wives; marriage, in short, shaped their identities as men in critical ways. Whether their marriages were rewarding or not, being married, they learned, meant coming to grips, at least on some level, with their own emotional and/or physical vulnerability, a somewhat neglected and unreconciled facet of their masculine identity. Simply put, their wives—and children—could make them feel in ways that they clearly had never felt before, feelings that either encouraged or forced them to broaden the way they defined themselves. And this change in self-definition had important implications, for while the emotional side of marriage has impacted countless men throughout time, lending to it a kind of timeless quality, the particular time context of the revolutionary era surely heightened the experience for these three Carlisle men. After all, just at a time when most Americans were celebrating their independence from Great Britain by shedding many, though not all, of the dependent relationships of the colonial past, these three men, ironically, found themselves growing increasingly dependent on their wives for their senses of well-being and identity. Indeed, as they discovered somewhat painfully at times, masculinity during this “critical period” had multiple and sometimes seemingly contradictory facets.

In other ways too the American Revolution looms large in the experiences of these three men. Eighteenth-century men, scholars tell us, earned respect and status by cultivating and then managing connections with their families as well as their peers. Manhood was pursued and proven in a social context, not while alone. Due to the social transformations ignited by the Revolution's rejection of monarchy and aristocracy and embrace of republicanism, however, proving one's manhood was getting more complicated by the last quarter of the century. In a new American nation where talent and not birth was meant to determine one's lot in life, men, especially ordinary men like Snowden, Irvine, and Brandon, found themselves facing many new opportunities and choices. During the war, Continental Army service suddenly became an avenue where a man like William Irvine, an Irish immigrant and backcountry physician of no special standing, could prove his worth—and gradually move into the higher ranks of American, and not just Pennsylvania

backcountry, society. At the same time, America's new-found independence paved the way for the founding of new colleges like Dickinson in America's interior. For men like Nathaniel Snowden this meant new opportunity to venture westward to study for the ministry, while bringing eastern sensibilities and values into interior Pennsylvania communities like Carlisle that were rapidly evolving from frontier villages into well-established American towns. Even the petition of the pitiful James Brandon hints that revolutionary-derived notions of independence and liberty influenced his sense of indignation at his wife; he expected to live the same kind of life free from dependence that so many other men of the revolutionary generation—including those neighbors who supported his petition—embraced.

At the same time, however, the new opportunities created by the Revolution and its aftermath also generated new dilemmas. Indeed, as the experiences of these three men demonstrate, their duties and obligations to act as men among their peers—in these new arenas—competed and sometimes even conflicted with the web of enticing but sometimes frustrating and unanticipated family duties and obligations that love, or at least connection, to their wives created. In response, they sometimes found themselves torn between their own deep and personal needs for emotional attachment—or, in the case of Brandon, protection—and the duties and responsibilities—whether ministerial or military—society, or in the case of Snowden, God—expected of them as men. For these men, much like women of their time, marriage as a lived, customary experience had a double-edged quality; it was at once liberating and confining. And their difficult task as husbands, as their stories suggest, was to wend their way through these polarities in search of some kind of workable middle ground. James Brandon was nearly destroyed by this experience. Feeling emasculated, he lashed out in anger towards his wife. Nathaniel Snowden and William Irvine, in contrast, were better able to cope. Although they never quite relished in the ambiguity of being married men, they were mostly able to embrace the multiple and competing sides of their masculinity that being husbands and fathers brought to the surface. And rather than struggle against their wives, and the personal sense of vulnerability life with them provoked, more often than not they instead tried to take joy from them and their children. As Snowden wondered in the pages of his diary on the fifth anniversary of his marriage: "what shall we render to God for his goodness to us[?]." His marriage to Sally was a blessing, he believed, and one that he could rejoice in unabashedly, noting: "What an addition to my happiness has my wife and children been to me."⁶⁷ Despite all the trials and tribulations, including the deep personal crises,

considerable anxiety, and some sadness that he had faced during courtship and marriage, Snowden ultimately acknowledged, much like the author of the first *Gazette* poem, that he was better off with than without his wife and children. Their presence had indeed changed his world—and, as he was willing to admit, this change was mostly for the better.

NOTES

1. *The Carlisle Gazette*, October 26, 1785.
2. Ibid.
3. *The Carlisle Gazette*, June 21, 1786.
4. For a discussion of the double-edged nature of stereotypes, and the impact they can have on a group of individuals, see Ellis Cose, *The Envy of the World: On Being a Black Man in America* (New York, 2002), 4.
5. For a discussion of the transformations of the Revolution and Early Republic and the implications for Americans, see Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1991). See also Joyce Appleby, *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans* (Cambridge, MA, 2000). For an examination of how one man sought to cling to tradition, see Alan Taylor, *William Cooper's Town: Power and Persuasion on the Frontier of the Early American Republic* (New York, 1995).
6. Wood, *Radicalism*: 183–189.
7. For discussions of manhood and masculinity in a revolutionary and post-revolutionary context, see especially, Mark E. Kann, *A Republic of Men: The American Founders, Gendered Language, and Patriarchal Politics* (New York, 1998): 1–22. See also, Joan Cashin, "Introduction to the Special Issue on Gender and the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 15, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 353–358; Konstantin Dierks, "Letter Writing, Masculinity, and American Men of Science, 1750–1800," *Pennsylvania History, Supplement, Explorations in Early American Culture* 65 (1998): 167–98; Stephen M. Frank, *Life with Father: Parenthood and Masculinity in the Nineteenth-Century American North* (Baltimore, 1998); Anya Jabour, *Marriage in the Early Republic: Elizabeth and William Wirt and the Companionate Ideal* (Baltimore, 1998); Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York, 1996): 16–22; David Leverenz, *Manhood and the American Renaissance* (Ithaca, 1989): 78–89; E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York, 1993): 10–30. For a broader discussion of how gender and the public sphere were shifting in the post-revolutionary period, see David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776–1820* (Chapel Hill, 1997): 78–85.

For discussions of women's status during and after the American Revolution, see Joy Day Buel & Richard Buel, Jr., *The Way of Duty: A Woman and Her Family in Revolutionary America* (New York, 1984); Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect & Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, 1980); Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750–1800* (Boston, 1980); Joan Hoff Wilson, "The Illusion of Change: Women and the American Revolution" in *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism*, ed. Alfred F. Young (DeKalb, 1976): 383–445. For more recent discussions see, among other works, Ruth H. Bloch, "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America," *Signs* 13, no. 1 (1987): 37–58;

- Jan Lewis, "The Republican Wife: Virtue and Seduction in the Early Republic," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3d ser., XLIV (1987): 689-721; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Domesticating 'Virtue': Coquettes and Revolutionaries in Young America," in *Literature and the Body: Essays on Populations and Persons*, ed. Elaine Scarry (Baltimore, 1988): 160-184.
8. Aside from my reading of the *Gazette* poems, a number of recent studies have influenced my interpretation here. These works have challenged long-standing interpretations of the strictly patriarchal nature of early American marriages and families by arguing that husbands and wives, parents and children were linked by mutual obligations, and interdependent, dynamic associations. See, for example, Patricia Cleary, "Making Men and Women in the 1770s: Culture, Class, and Commerce in the Anglo-American World," in *A Shared Experience: Men, Women, and the History of Gender*, eds. Laura McCall and Donald Yacovone (New York, 1998): 98-118; Lisa Wilson, *Ye Heart of a Man: The Domestic Life of Men in Colonial New England* (New Haven, 1999); and her essay, "'A Marriage Well Ordered': Love, Power, and Partnership in Colonial New England," in *A Shared Experience*, 78-97; Karin Wulf, *Not All Wives: Women of Colonial Philadelphia* (Ithaca, 2000), esp. chaps. 3 & 4. For a study that looks more specifically at gender in the context of central Pennsylvania, see Wayne Bodle, "Soldiers in Love: Patrolling the Gendered Frontiers of the Early Republic," in *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, ed. Merrill D. Smith (New York, 1998): 217-239.
 9. Snowden's emotional dilemmas were not unusual. In recent years, scholars have reminded us of the extent to which early American men were emotional beings. See, for example, Dierks, "Letter Writing, Masculinity," 180-192; Jabour, *Marriage in the Early Republic*, 2-5; Wilson, "A Marriage 'Well-Ordered'," 78-97; and Wilson, *Ye Heart of a Man*, chaps. 3 & 5.
 10. Alfred Nevin, *Men of Mark of Cumberland Valley, PA, 1776-1876* (Philadelphia, 1876), 356.
 11. The Diaries of Nathaniel R. Snowden, 3 vols, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA (hereafter cited as HSP), 1: January 1789, HSP.
 12. Nevin, *Men of Mark*, 251-253.
 13. Snowden Diaries, 2: January 23, 1791.
 14. Ibid., 2: January 24, 1791.
 15. Ibid., 2: February 25, 1791, February 28, 1791.
 16. The evolution of what scholars call the "companionate ideal" in the eighteenth century has been discussed in many works. Probably the most recent comprehensive discussion can be found in Jabour, *Marriage in the Early Republic*.
 17. Ibid., 2: January 23, 1791.
 18. Kimmel, *Manhood in America*, 17-22. See also Wood, *Radicalism*, 104-109.
 19. Snowden Diaries, 2: February 2 & 3, 1791; 2: January 25, 1791.
 20. Ibid., 2: February 3, 1791.
 21. For a related and thought provoking discussion of how patriarchal frustration could generate male rage in eighteenth-century America, see Kenneth Lockridge, *On the Sources of Patriarchal Rage: The Commonplace Books of William Byrd and Thomas Jefferson and the Gendering of Power in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1992).
 22. Snowden Diaries, 2: February 15, 1791.
 23. Ibid., 2: February 24, 1791.
 24. He noted, for example, that he prayed to God to "give her a new nature." 2: February 16, 1791.

25. Ibid, 2: February 25, 1791.
26. Ibid, 2: February, 12, 1791.
27. Ibid, 2: February 12, 1791 and February 25, 1791.
28. Ibid, 2: February 16, 1791 and February 25, 1791.
29. Ibid, 2: March 6, 1791; May 24, 1792. See also Marriage Records, Records of the First Presbyterian Church of Carlisle, Dickinson College Archives, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
30. As Wilson, "'A Marriage Well-Ordered,'" 82-83, notes, this was not an unusual reaction among eighteenth-century husbands. In New England too childbirth often served as a fearful reminder of a husband's love for his wife.
31. Snowden Diaries, 3: April 4, 1796.
32. Ibid, 3: May 25, 1798.
33. Ibid, 3: May, 25, 1798; September 30, 1800; October 6, 1800.
34. For information about Irvine and his background, see Mark Boatner, ed., *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution*, s.v. Irvine, William; *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v. Irvine, William; Nicholas Wainwright, *The Irvine Story* (Philadelphia, 1964), 2-11. For a more in-depth discussion of Irvine's manhood, see Judith Ridner, "William Irvine and the Complexity of Manhood and Fatherhood in the Pennsylvania Backcountry," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 125 nos. 1 & 2 (January/April 2001): 5-34. For information about his military career, see Leonard Sadosky, "Rethinking the Gnadenhutten Massacres: The Contest for Power in the Public World of the Revolutionary Pennsylvania Frontier," in *The Sixty Years' War for the Great Lakes, 1754-1814*, ed. David Curtis Skaggs and Larry L. Nelson (East Lansing, 2001), 187-213.
35. For information on Ann, see Gertrude Bosler Biddle, *Notable Women of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1942), 94-97; Wainwright, *Irvine Story*, 2-11.
36. Both Biddle, *Notable Women*, 94; and Wainwright, *Irvine Story*, 11-12, hint at the arranged nature of their marriage. We know that Ann's mother died in 1765. Her father, Robert, married his second wife in the early to mid-1770s. At just about the time that his new wife assumed authority over their household, Ann and her sister Isabella got married and left the house.
37. William Irvine to Ann Irvine, December 22, 1777, Brigadier General William Irvine Papers, 2:63, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA (hereafter cited as Irvine Papers).
38. William to Ann, May 14, 1780, *ibid.*, 3:25.
39. William to Ann, November 14, 1781, *ibid.*, 5:13.
40. William to Ann, November 16, 1782, *ibid.*, 7:45.
41. William to Ann, November 20, 1782, *ibid.*, 7:48.
42. John Armstrong to William Irvine, October 30, 1779, *ibid.*, 2:54.
43. John Davis to William Irvine, June 13, 1780, *ibid.*, 3:45.
44. William Irvine to Ann Irvine, January 1, 1783, *ibid.*, 7:78.
45. William Irvine to Ephraim Blaine, December 22, 1794, Ephraim Blaine Papers, General Correspondence, Library of Congress, Washington D. C.
46. William Irvine to Ann Irvine, February 10, 1781, Irvine Papers, 4:30.
47. William to Ann, September 10, 1782, *ibid.*, 6:123.
48. William to Ann, June 10, 1789, *ibid.*, 10:30.
49. William to Ann, February 22, 1782, *ibid.*, 5:53. See also Wainwright, *Irvine Story*, 12.

50. William to Ann, January 14, 1783, Irvine Papers, 7:81. See also Wilson, *Ye Heart of a Man*, chap. 3, for an interesting discussion of other men whose experiences were much like those of Irvine.
51. William to Ann, June 24, 1780, *ibid.*, 3:51.
52. William to Ann, July 7, 1780, *ibid.*, 3:58.
53. William to Ann, May 21, 1782, *ibid.*, 5:114.
54. William to Ann, May 1, 1782, *ibid.*, 5:94.
55. *Ibid.*
56. William to Ann, September 10, 1782, *ibid.*, 6:123.
57. William to Ann, April 12, 1782, *ibid.*, 5:76. See also Sadosky, "Rethinking the Gnadenhutten Massacre," 197.
58. William to Ann, May 1, 1782, *ibid.*, 5:94.
59. William Neill to Mrs. Nancy Irvine, May 10, 1782, *ibid.*, 5:105.
60. William Irvine to Ann Irvine, June 29, 1781, *ibid.*, 6:37.
61. William to Ann, October 4, 1782, *ibid.*, 7:22.
62. For information on James Brandon, see his indictments for keeping a tippling house on October 1753 and March 1759, Clerk of the Court, Cumberland County Criminal Court, Loose Papers, Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. See also Merri Lou Schaumann, *A History and Genealogy of Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Dover, PA: photocopied booklet, 1987), 196.
63. Indictment of James Brandon, April 4, 1781, Cumberland County Criminal Court, CCHS.
64. Clemency File of James Brandon, Clemency Files, Records of Pennsylvania's Revolutionary Governments, microfilm reel 37:253, viewed at the David Library of the American Revolution, Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania.
65. *Ibid.*
66. Obituary of Isabel Hoge, *The Carlisle Gazette*, February 2, 1791.
67. Snowden Diaries, 3: May 24, 1797.