

## PENNSYLVANIA AND IRISH FAMINE RELIEF, 1846–1847

*Harvey Strum*

*Abstract:* During the Great Famine Pennsylvania emerged as the second most important state for famine relief in 1846–47. Philadelphia became the second-largest port shipping aid to Ireland. Relief supplies from all over the United States were channeled to the Philadelphia Irish Famine Relief Committee, the nonpartisan citizens committee, and to Philadelphia Quakers who organized their own relief operation under the leadership of Thomas P. Cope. Pennsylvanians joined in a national cause of philanthropy, and members of all denominations gave to relief aid—Roman Catholic, Methodist, Quaker, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Moravian, and Jewish. In 1847 the people of Pennsylvania put aside sectarian differences because of shared values of common humanity with the suffering Irish. Pennsylvanians portrayed themselves as a people of plenty with an obligation to help, the Irish as worthy of that aid, and international voluntary aid as an expression of American republican values. Political leaders, whether Whig or Democrat, embraced this responsibility by encouraging citizens to raise funds for Ireland. In a movement spearheaded by Governor Francis Shunk, who persuaded the state legislature to pass legislation allowing toll free shipping of relief aid, citizens throughout the state organized town and county meetings to raise money, food, and clothing for famine relief and joined in a national movement to aid the starving Irish.

“Every arrival from abroad adds horror to the story of the suffering of the people of Ireland. . . . The Highlanders of Scotland, too are represented as suffering for the want of bread,” Governor Francis

Shunk told the state legislature in his February 22, 1847, appeal to rally public support for the relief of the starving in Ireland and Scotland.<sup>1</sup> The Pennsylvania governor joined in a national effort to persuade citizens to organize local committees at the town, city, and county level to raise food and money for the relief of the starving in Europe. Shunk asked the state legislature to pass legislation to allow the toll-free shipping of relief aid on public roads and canals as other states had done in the spring of 1847 as part of a national movement in voluntary philanthropy.

Americans put aside their political and sectarian differences and organized a remarkable effort at voluntary foreign aid. Whigs and Democrats, Catholics, Protestants, and Jews all participated in this national movement. Even Cherokees on the frontier of Indian Territory contributed money and food, sending it to Philadelphia for shipment to Scotland. Germans in Lancaster County, Irish in Pittsburgh, Quakers in Philadelphia, Jews in Charleston, free African Americans in Richmond, slaves in Alabama, Dutch in Albany, and Choctaws at Fort Smith, Arkansas, all joined in this outpouring of aid to Ireland and Scotland. Historian Rob Goodbody confirmed that “donations were being offered from people of all religions and backgrounds throughout the United States.”<sup>2</sup>

Due to the 150th anniversary of the Great Famine historians evaluated the significance of the disaster on Irish history and immigration to the United States. Much of the research analyzed the role of the British government, but according to historian Diane Hotten-Somers, “the American response to the famine has received hardly any critical attention.”<sup>3</sup> General histories of the famine give a brief but important mention to Philadelphia and tend to ignore the rest of the state. Histories of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania give it passing mention at best.<sup>4</sup> In reality, Pennsylvania emerged as the second most important state for famine relief in 1846–47. Philadelphia became the second-largest port shipping aid to Ireland and Scotland after New York City. Relief supplies came from all over the United States and were channeled to the Philadelphia Irish Relief Committee, the nonpartisan citizens committee, or the Philadelphia Quakers who organized their own relief operation. For example, Quakers in Indiana, Ohio, New Jersey, Rhode Island, North Carolina, Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey steered relief supplies and money to the Philadelphia Quaker committee. Thomas Pim Cope, chair, and Jacob Harvey of New York City were the two most important American Quakers who raised the alarm about the plight of the Irish in the United States. Following the pattern that appeared across the United States, local

citizen committees formed in February/March 1847 from Towanda to Beaver to raise donations of money, food, and clothing for the Irish and Scots. The people of Pennsylvania contributed to aid sent from America that the Irish Quakers described as "on a scale unparalleled in history" as the United States assumed a new role as a leader in voluntary international philanthropy.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the nineteenth century Americans participated in campaigns to aid the victims of famine, natural disasters and pogroms abroad. In the 1820s Americans rallied to the cause of Greek independence against the Turks, and Philadelphia and Pittsburgh hosted committees for Greek aid; factory workers in Pittsburgh contributed over \$400. Americans sent aid to the Irish in 1862-63 and again in 1879-80 when food shortages hit. Republican congressman William Ward, representing a district in Chester, introduced a resolution in 1880 that was approved by the House, Senate, and President Rutherford Hayes to send the warship *Constellation* with relief supplies bought with the voluntary donations of the American public including the citizens of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia played a key role in Russian relief in 1892 and a citizens' committee formed in the mid-1890s to aid the Armenian victims of the Turkish massacres of 1894-96. All of these campaigns consisted of voluntary action. The federal government refused to give foreign aid and limited its role to sporadically agreeing to use public vessels to carry relief supplies donated by the American public, as it did in 1847 and 1880 to the Irish.

The magnitude of the crisis in 1846-47 and the widespread nature of American aid as almost every town, city, and county created an Irish relief committee made the American response to the Great Famine unique. According to historian Merle Curti, "the Irish famine called forth the most impressive . . . the first truly national campaign to relieve suffering in another land." American generosity set the pattern for the new role of the United States. Despite the image of American isolation from world affairs in the nineteenth century, Americans did engage with the world.<sup>6</sup> In Pennsylvania politicians, religious leaders, and the public did not isolate themselves, whether it was the Great Famine of the 1840s or starving Lancashire textile workers in 1863.

In the fall of 1846 the situation in Ireland worsened and the Society of Friends in Dublin created a Central Relief Committee in November to solicit donations. Quakers sent an appeal letter to Jacob Harvey, a Quaker and New York City merchant, to encourage Quakers and others in the United States to contribute to the cause of Irish relief. Harvey contacted Quakers

in New York, Baltimore, and Philadelphia to start relief campaigns and his efforts raised the visibility of the famine among non-Quakers. In late December Harvey contacted Thomas P. Cope and expressed his “hope thou may be able to get up a very respectable subscription list from Friends in Philadelphia—it would have a firm effect in Dublin in encouraging the Committee there to go forward it the work of charity.”<sup>7</sup>

Cope emerged as the second most important American Quaker in the relief campaign in the United States. “Received an interesting Letter from my old friend Jacob Harvey . . . on the subject to the distressed condition of the Irish poor . . . proposing that the Friends of Philadelphia should contribute,” noted Cope in his diary.<sup>8</sup> One of the two secretaries of the Irish Central Relief Committee, Jonathan Pim, sent out an appeal on December 3, 1846, to Harvey encouraging him to get the appeal published in the *Friend*, a Quaker journal published in Philadelphia. Harvey complied and forwarded the circular to Cope for publication to stimulate a subscription. “He quickly responded to my request,” and Harvey notified Pim, “and a general meeting of Friends is to be held today, to concentrate their efforts in raising funds for Ireland.”<sup>9</sup> Cope raised the issue at the December 23 monthly meeting of Quakers and informed them of the efforts of their brethren in Ireland to help the famishing. At a follow-up gathering at Mulberry Street Meeting House of four Quaker congregations on December 28, 1846, Cope argued for the cause of famine relief and was elected chair of the corresponding committee to forward money raised to Ireland.

Dividing the city into districts the Quakers established local committees to collect donations. “Feeling a deep sympathy for the sufferers . . . and anxious to cast our mite . . . in alleviation of the sufferings of the poor,” Cope and the other three members of the committee, sent the first donation of 500 pounds sterling to Dublin.<sup>10</sup> In addition, Philadelphia Quakers drafted their own separate appeal on December 28 “to Friends residing elsewhere, desiring them to co-operate in this benevolent work.”<sup>11</sup> The committee that drafted this appeal urged fellow Quakers to forward cash contributions to Thomas Pim Cope and provisions to Henry Cope in Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Society of Friends Famine Relief Committee took responsibility for soliciting donations from Quakers across the country and forwarding it to the Dublin Quakers. In New York and Philadelphia Quakers took the lead in informing other Quakers and the American public of the grave situation in Ireland and encouraging voluntary aid to the starving.

Because of the Mexican-American War the American press did not pay attention to the situation in Europe until November 1846 when *Arcadia*, *Britannia*, and *Great Western* arrived in Boston from Europe with news of the famine. Reports in the newspapers and appeals by Quakers led to public meetings in the major American cities, like Washington, DC, Boston, New York, Baltimore, and Savannah. In Pennsylvania two cities led the way, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. In each city local leadership emerged and no national spokesmen came forward to lead the campaign besides the efforts of Harvey and Cope. Quakers, Irish Americans, and philanthropic local leaders—a mix of politicians, bankers, clergy, and merchants—and editors solicited funds for Ireland.

Newspapers played a crucial role in publicizing the crisis, pushing for public meetings and encouraging contributions. In Pittsburgh, for example, the *Morning Post* argued, “we hope our friends of the *Chronicle*, as well as every editor in the city, without reference to party or sect, will join us in urging the Mayor to call a meeting at once . . . to alleviate the awful misery” in Ireland.<sup>12</sup> The comments of the *Post* suggested the public service function of journalism in times of crises, both domestic and foreign, and emphasized a constant theme in American famine relief efforts that should be free of partisanship and nondenominational. The editors of the *Chronicle* agreed and after a lengthy editorial on “the deplorable condition of the Irish people” and the actions taken in other cities commented that “now it only remains for Pittsburgh to come forward and contribute her portion.” The editors joined with the *Post*’s editor to urge “the Mayor to call a town meeting for the purpose of raising money to assist the Irish people.”<sup>13</sup> Editors played an instrumental role in famine relief. Editor James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald* claimed the press did the public business, outlining the public service role for journalism. Pennsylvania’s newspaper editors used the press to teach the public a lesson in philanthropy and urged support for what eventually became a national cause of voluntary philanthropy.

A petition of prominent citizens asked the Pittsburgh mayor to call a public meeting, which took place in December 4 at the local courthouse. The public meeting organized ward and borough committees to solicit donations and called upon the clergy to give sermons and raise contributions on the following Sunday for Ireland. In their appeal the public meeting emphasized that Americans were a people of plenty who had an obligation to help the starving in Ireland. In keeping with the ecumenical spirit the funds raised in

Pittsburgh were distributed by the Catholic, Episcopalian, and Presbyterian clergy in each of Ireland's four provinces.<sup>14</sup>

In Philadelphia some members of the Irish community, which by 1850 had grown to 72,000 (18% of the population), had already begun to raise funds for Ireland when the appeal came from the Quakers. Simultaneously, a group of citizens encouraged by a circular written by John Binns, a Protestant Irish nationalist immigrant and Democrat, on November 9, 1846, met eight days later to organize relief efforts. Philadelphians claimed that this was "the first movement of a public character in the United States on the subject of Irish Relief," suggesting the pride that residents took in their early activities for Ireland.<sup>15</sup> The newspapers publicized and supported the public efforts at Irish relief as well as reprinting the public appeal drafted by the Philadelphia Irish Relief Committee after a public meeting on November 26. In the wake of the meeting chaired by Judge John Gibson, the relief committee reminded the citizens of Philadelphia of the starvation in Ireland and that Americans were "blessed with great abundance, and favored in every way beyond any other people." Americans had a moral responsibility to help the Irish.<sup>16</sup> The committee sent circulars to the clergy to use their pulpits to solicit aid for the Irish. Many relief committees at the town, city and county level reached out to the clergy, Protestant and Catholic, to get them involved in the relief efforts.<sup>17</sup>

An address drafted by the committee was distributed throughout Pennsylvania and the country, turning Philadelphia's and New York City's Irish relief committees, into national efforts as contributions came in from across the United States. In effect, the public committee headed by Gibson and Philadelphia's Quaker Irish Relief Committee became national relief committees soliciting aid for the Irish. After an initial round of fundraising brought in \$4,000, the Philadelphia committee sent the collections to the Society of Friends in Dublin, as did most of the American committees, "being well assured that the funds committed to your charge will be . . . impartially distributed."<sup>18</sup> Americans trusted the Quakers to distribute the aid without denominational favoritism.

The arrival of the packet *Hibernia* in Boston in mid-January followed by the *Sarah Sands* two weeks later in New York brought grim reports of starvation in Ireland. Judge Gibson noted that the news "created a lively sympathy in the minds of all classes throughout the United States."<sup>19</sup> It led to a public meeting in New Orleans for Irish relief addressed by Whig political leader and former presidential candidate Henry Clay on February 4 and received

national attention. Vice-President George Dallas, a Pennsylvania Democrat, chaired a meeting on February 9 in Washington, DC, attended by members of Congress and the Supreme Court, which called for a national effort at philanthropy designating Philadelphia as one of the port cities that should serve as a channel for American aid to Ireland. Pennsylvania senator Simon Cameron served as one of the vice-presidents of the Washington meeting, which encouraged citizens to establish relief committees in each town, city, and county in the country to solicit contributions and forward the food, clothing, and money to the port cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans. This combination of appeals from the Philadelphia committee, the Quakers, the national meeting in Washington, and the governor of Pennsylvania led the residents in every county in Pennsylvania to hold meetings for Irish relief.

Immediately after the Washington meeting, Philadelphia mayor John Swift called for a public meeting to determine the best way to aid the Irish. Philadelphia's newspapers endorsed the famine relief effort. For example, the *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian* urged: "let the metropolis of this great agricultural state second the efforts of her sisters with alacrity and zeal . . . let us act with hearts conscious of what we owe to Ireland."<sup>20</sup> At the meeting held at the Chinese Museum on February 17 "thronged . . . with an assemblage of all classes and conditions," speakers stressed the obligation of Americans, especially the people of Philadelphia, to provide relief.<sup>21</sup> One of the speakers, Alderman John Binns, noted the contributions of Irish immigrants during the Revolution as part of the obligation of Americans to pay back the aid the Irish had given. Other speakers stressed the history of Pennsylvania as founded with a special philanthropic purpose that added historical necessity for the state to aid the Irish, and argued that the blood ties to the Irish or Christian charity demanded Philadelphia's participation. In contrast to the anti-Irish nativism of the time period the Philadelphia meeting stressed the ties with the Irish and the American obligation to help the starving people of Ireland. The meeting's leaders, including prominent citizens like Quaker Thomas P. Cope, merchants, and public officials, set up neighborhood committees to collect donations and purchase food to ship to the Central Committee of the Society of Friends in Dublin for distribution. Philadelphians also appealed to the federal government to provide a public vessel to carry relief supplies to Ireland and requested "that all citizens throughout the Commonwealth be earnestly requested to contribute money or produce . . . to relieve the present unutterable distress which desolates Ireland."<sup>22</sup>

At the national level Congress refused to contribute public aid to the Irish, and almost all public legislative bodies, with the notable exception of the New York City government, refused to use public funds because President James K. Polk considered it unconstitutional to approve foreign aid from public funds. Proposals to appropriate \$500,000 died in committee as did later proposals in 1861 and 1879 to aid the Irish when Republicans controlled the presidency. While public leaders provided leadership in 1847 they would not vote public money for the Irish, turning American aid into the leading example of international philanthropy as a people-to-people movement in the nineteenth century. The federal government did listen to petitions from Philadelphia, Albany, Boston, and New York to provide public vessels. Most of the aid from the United States went on privately chartered vessels, as was the case in Philadelphia, but Congress agreed in March to provide the frigate *Macedonian* and sloop-of-war *Jamestown* to bring relief supplies from New York and Boston, respectively, to Ireland and Scotland.<sup>23</sup>

According to the Philadelphia committee, the appeal “was made in the name of common humanity, and the response was from men, women, and children of all creeds, Jews and Christians, of every variety of religious denominations.”<sup>24</sup> Appeals to churches led to collections in “several Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, and other Churches in this city and elsewhere,” once again suggesting that all Americans regardless of religious denomination gave to Irish relief.<sup>25</sup> The Philadelphia committee was somewhat unique in publicly mentioning the contributions of Jews. Like other committees, whether in Albany or Chicago, the Philadelphia committee made clear that Americans of all religious backgrounds contributed to famine relief and that the distribution of relief in Ireland was given to anyone who needed the aid regardless of religious affiliation. The people of Pennsylvania and the American people as a whole worked together in this international campaign of philanthropy and expected cooperation across religious denominations.

Contributions included all ethnic and religious groups. African Americans in a number of communities contributed to famine relief. In Philadelphia African Americans living in Northern Liberties and Kensington held a meeting in March and appointed a committee to solicit donations for Ireland and Scotland which was forwarded to Frederick Douglass, who was in the British Isles. Pennsylvania’s large German community actively participated, and German churches, whether Lutheran, Moravian, or Catholic, sent in donations. Many of the state’s Scots-Irish community contributed via Presbyterian churches to both Irish and Scottish relief.<sup>26</sup>



At the same time that the Irish committees were established, a separate Scottish relief committee was organized in Philadelphia to raise funds for the smaller-scale food shortage in Scotland. St. Andrew's societies led the way in some communities. In others, separate, nondenominational public committees, similar to the Irish committees, were established, but in most towns Irish committees expanded their mandate to include fundraising for Scotland. Philadelphia had a separate Scottish committee led by Nathaniel Chapman, president of the St. Andrew's Society, who organized a committee based on a public meeting on February 22, 1847. Scottish immigrants and Scottish Americans, as well as Scots-Irish, played a key role in the fundraising. One of its most interesting contributions came in response to a circular it had sent. John Ross, principal chief of the Cherokees, called a public meeting on May 5, 1847, in Tahlequah, Cherokee Nation (Oklahoma), and raised \$200, which he then sent to Dr. Nathaniel Chapman, chair of the Scottish Relief Committee in Philadelphia.<sup>27</sup> At least three Native American nations contributed to Irish or Scottish famine relief suggesting how famine relief had become an American cause in 1846-47.

By the middle of March the Philadelphia Irish committee raised \$10,000 and sent its first chartered vessel, barque *John Walsh*, to Londonderry with provisions for the Dublin Quakers to distribute. Following were the brig *St. George* to Cork and barque *Lydia Ann* to Limerick; barque *Ohio* to Dublin; brig *Baracoa* to Belfast; brig *Adele* to Donegal; brig *Islam* to Galway; and finally the brig *Tar* to Liverpool carrying the last relief supplies to Ireland. These vessels carried about \$72,000 worth of provisions to Ireland. In addition, the Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches in Pennsylvania collected \$3,000 and \$6,400, respectively, and sent it directly to the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin for distribution without regards to religious denomination. The Philadelphia committee emerged as the state committee as contributions from around the state went via the port of Philadelphia and contributions from other states, like Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, and Missouri went to Ireland via the Philadelphia committee as it fulfilled the function that the national meeting in Washington had suggested.<sup>28</sup>

The Philadelphia committee estimated that private citizens in Philadelphia sent remittances via four local banks of "small bills sold chiefly to working people" worth \$311,000. Jacob Harvey, a New York City Quaker, publicized in early 1847 the remittances of working-class Irish in New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore as an example for others to follow. The

Philadelphia committee seconded this in its final report to give credit to the poor immigrants for their own aid to friends and relatives in Ireland. These contributions came from the Irish immigrants in the city. Elsewhere in the state Irish immigrants sent remittances to family and friends in Ireland. For example, in Schuylkill County, a local newspaper editor estimated that in an eight-week period in January and February 1847 immigrants sent \$750 per week in remittances. On the whole, the Philadelphia committee estimated that over \$500,000 worth of aid went "from and through Philadelphia" to aid Ireland.<sup>29</sup>

Philadelphia Quakers, who had already raised funds, also reacted to the national appeal by holding a general meeting of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia on February 19 at the Cherry Street Meeting House to consider the Irish famine and established a central committee of sixteen for the relief of the Irish poor. Like the Philadelphia public committee, the Quaker committee acted as a fundraising channel for Quakers in Philadelphia, other parts of Pennsylvania, and as a national committee for Quakers.<sup>30</sup> The local Quaker press, like the general newspapers, documented the distress and encouraged citizens to contribute. Philadelphia Quakers hoped to encourage country Quakers to realize the seriousness of the situation in Ireland and send money or provisions to Philadelphia. For example, the *Friends Intelligencer* pleaded, "we again desire to call attention to the extreme distress of large portion of the Irish people" and published extracts of documents from Irish Quakers detailing the famine.<sup>31</sup> Provisions contributed went on the same chartered vessels that carried relief supplies for the Philadelphia Executive Committee, suggesting some degree of cooperation between the two committees on the shipment and distribution of relief aid.

Contributions came in from Pennsylvania and from other states. For example, in Pennsylvania, Anthony McCoy of Easton wrote about the contributions from his community for "the suffering poor of Ireland" and how best to ship it.<sup>32</sup> John Reynolds, who read the Quaker newspaper and circulars sent to his county, was motivated to raise funds in Cecil County, Maryland, "for the distressed in Ireland."<sup>33</sup> At the Salem monthly meeting in Liberty, Indiana, local Quakers nominated a committee and solicited donations in Union County for the Irish, forwarding the funds to Thomas Cope.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, Quakers in St. Clairsville, Ohio, met and agreed to collect produce in Belmont County "in aid of the sufferers in Ireland," and they shipped corn to the Philadelphia Quakers.<sup>35</sup> In North Carolina, Quakers in Springfield, Guilford County, met and set up a committee of twelve to solicit donations

and requested assistance from Henry Cope on how to ship wheat, corn, and meat to Philadelphia. Cope recommended selling the produce and forwarding the money to avoid shipping costs.<sup>36</sup> While Henry Cope took charge of most of the produce shipped to Philadelphia, Thomas P. Cope took responsibility for responding to the correspondence from fellow Quakers across the country sending aid to Ireland. The Quakers collected \$8,582 by August 1847 and additional amounts in produce—pork, beans, corn, wheat, flour, and dried beef, with corn being the most common item of produce shipped to Philadelphia. Quakers wrapped up their work in September 1847 and received acknowledgment of their shipments from the Society of Friends in Dublin.<sup>37</sup>

Meanwhile, on February 22, 1847, Governor Shunk made his appeal to the state legislature and the people of Pennsylvania to join in the cause of famine relief. His speech was a model of promoting tolerance. He pointed out that the sons of Ireland had fought “upon every battlefield of the first and second war of American independence” and the Scots and Irish had “mingled their blood with ours.”<sup>38</sup> Shunk stressed the common bonds between the American people and the people of Ireland and Scotland. Americans, blessed by God with abundance, had a responsibility to help the starving in Ireland and Scotland. Governor Shunk joined a few other governors, including the governor of New York, in providing leadership at the state level for famine relief.

Throughout the state the press responded by pushing local communities to set up relief committees and encouraged a spirit of competition between towns and counties on famine relief. Just before the governor’s speech, the *Erie Observer*, noted the meetings for famine relief across the country, specifically pointing out a recent meeting in Buffalo, commenting: “such liberality is commendable, and our citizens will soon be called upon to manifest theirs.”<sup>39</sup> In New Berlin, the *Union Times* observed that “meetings have been held in almost every town and county in the state to raise funds for the relief of the starving poor in Ireland. Why don’t the good people of Union County make a move in this matter?”<sup>40</sup> In Lewistown, a local paper reported that “meetings are being held in parts of the country to devise ways and means for the relief of the poor of Ireland. . . . Cannot something further be done in this matter in Mifflin county?” The newspaper also published a lengthy letter from “W,” probably George Woodward, an early contributor who sent a donation to Thomas Cope in Philadelphia urging action in Mifflin County. He urged “the people of Little Mifflin . . . to load a boat with corn” and send it to the Philadelphia Irish Relief Committee, noting that the eastern

counties were doing their philanthropic duty “and our own mountain county, which produces so abundantly of the fruits of the field, will be found in line” sending aid to the famishing Irish.<sup>41</sup>

In almost every paper in every county in the state and nation the same appeal appeared. The press certainly did the public’s business in 1847 by encouraging local communities to join in this national cause of philanthropy. In Mercer a local paper commented that “our neighbors of Beaver and Butler are moving,” holding meetings for Irish famine relief and the editor asked: “will not this county do something for poor Ireland?”<sup>42</sup> Repeatedly, editors reminded citizens of what was being done in the country for Irish relief and turned it into a competition with neighboring towns and counties to motivate local people to act and contribute. Similarly, the *Clearfield Democratic Banner* reported on the Washington meeting and pleaded, “Why should not our citizens lend their aid in this humane work?”<sup>43</sup> An editor in Somerset reminded his readers of the relief efforts in Philadelphia for the Irish and suggested “the propriety of taking some action upon it in our county.” The Somerset County editor emphasized the common theme that Americans and specifically the residents of Somerset County “are blessed with abundance” which gave them a responsibility to aid the famishing.<sup>44</sup>

The editor of the *Hollidaysburg Register* published an appeal from a local resident to organize a public meeting for a general collection for the Irish and noted that Americans across the county had contributed “without distinction of sect or party.”<sup>45</sup> Although Pittsburgh contributed early to famine relief, the local press pushed for another round of contributions as citizens prepared for another public meeting on Irish relief. The editor of the *Morning Post* shamed residents: “Pittsburgh has not contributed one half of what of right ought to be its share, towards the relief of the sufferers of Ireland.”<sup>46</sup> Editors throughout the state encouraged, pleaded, and shamed citizens to hold public meetings and contribute. They publicized the meetings to make sure that residents heard the message to join in this philanthropic cause.

Pennsylvanians heeded the call and held meetings in every county for Irish and Scottish famine relief. In Hollidaysburg and Williamsburg in Blair County two separate meetings were held for Irish and Scottish relief. The plan used in these two towns followed the pattern adopted at every meeting in the country—the meetings established voluntary committees to collect contributions of money or grain for Ireland and Scotland. The Williamsburg meeting expressed one of the common themes that Americans, “as a people with an abundance of necessities and comforts of Life,” had an obligation to aid the

starving.<sup>47</sup> In an editorial, the editor of the local newspaper made the same point in pushing the residents to join the effort. Residents of Hollidaysburg adopted in their resolutions another common element seen across the country: two-thirds of the aid would go to Ireland and one-third to Scotland.

Town meetings appealed to local churches to collect funds and the Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist and Methodist churches in Blair County did suggesting the willingness of all American denominations to join the philanthropic cause. In Towanda the borough committee recommended that each church collect donations and the four churches—Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopal—complied. Also in Tioga County, the public meeting held in Wellsboro in February called on all the preachers in the county to take up collections “in their respective places of worship.”<sup>48</sup> Similarly, in Beaver County the public meeting requested that the clergy of all denominations in the county assist in fundraising. Members of every denomination in the state contributed, whether it was Moravians in Lancaster or German Catholics in Pittsburgh or Presbyterians in the “Old First Church,” in Pittsburgh. Newspapers substantiated the conclusions of the Philadelphia Irish Relief Committee about every sect joining in the effort. Alonzo Potter, bishop of the Episcopalian Diocese of Pennsylvania, had each church in the state set aside the first Sunday in March for famine relief. Citizens’ committees portrayed their work as nondenominational, but they expected the active cooperation of each clergyman in their town and county to encourage donations. Reports in the press suggested that almost every clergyman in the state participated.

Meanwhile, in Luzerne County, the residents of Wilkes-Barre held a meeting on April 16, adopted resolutions, established a committee to collect donations, and appointed subcommittees to collect funds in each township in the county. The Wilkes-Barre meeting established a separate Ladies Committee, consisting of three married and one single woman, to raise funds from “among their own sex, for this hallowed cause of charity,” and encouraged schoolchildren to contribute at church Sabbath schools.<sup>49</sup> Setting up a women’s committee—while fairly common in New York—did not occur on a regular basis in Pennsylvania or other states. While children’s participation was not unusual, an organized effort like the one in Wilkes-Barre was rare. This suggested the widespread nature of participation in famine relief as did the contributions from everyone at a local rolling mill, from the supervisors to the mill hands, where \$153 was raised for Ireland and \$51 for Scotland. As the local newspaper observed, “every hand in the mill gave something which

was creditable to them . . . considering that they have been idle for some weeks, owing to the Mill undergoing some repair.”<sup>50</sup>

Towns in Union County held famine relief meetings, and the population of the Buffalo Valley made large contributions to Irish and Scottish famine relief.<sup>51</sup> In Crawford County the local press reported on the famine. When people in the county organized a “large and respectable” meeting in Meadville on February 26, residents rejoiced at the relief meetings held throughout the country for the Irish and reminded citizens that “Irishmen have contributed largely to the wealth and prosperity of the country.”<sup>52</sup> Americans had an obligation to aid Ireland. Certain themes appeared spontaneously at county meetings on famine relief. Residents organized a temporary committee to solicit donations and created subcommittees to obtain donations in each township in the county, the common method of organizing for famine relief. The pattern in the interior of the state was to channel donations to Philadelphia to the de facto state committee to forward to Ireland and Scotland.

A Beaver County newspaper noted that “prompt measures have been adopted to raise contributions in money, food, and clothing” for Irish relief throughout the country. Citizens of the county met in Beaver on February 23 and expressed their approval of the Washington gathering of notable political leaders “making the relief of Ireland a national measure in which the whole people of the United States may co-operate.”<sup>53</sup> The effort to aid the Irish and Scots in 1846–47 remains unique in that Americans, wherever they lived, embraced famine relief as a national cause requiring widespread voluntary citizen participation. The people of Beaver County articulated this idea and noted the obligation of a people of plenty to aid the less fortunate. As in other meetings Beaver County set up subcommittees to hit every town in the county. The press became a vehicle to express pride when residents fulfilled their duty; “the response of Beaver County . . . is creditable to the humanity and philanthropy of our citizens.”<sup>54</sup>

Throughout Pennsylvania in early 1847 residents held meetings to aid the Irish and Scots. A newspaper in Chester in Delaware County used the spirit of competition to motivate its readers: “now that all have an opportunity to contribute, . . . the example set us by the neighboring districts will be cheerfully followed by our own.” When the residents of Delaware County met on February 22 they noted that, like the citizens of Beaver County, they were part of a national campaign for famine relief. They felt that Americans had an obligation to contribute and hoped that the local people would “prove that generosity is inseparable from the heart of an American.”<sup>55</sup> Following

the pattern, the county committee established town subcommittees and sent the contributions to the Irish and Scottish committees in Philadelphia, with about 85 percent going to the Irish and 15 percent to the Scots.<sup>56</sup> This percentage distribution paralleled the national distribution of aid to Ireland and Scotland in 1846-47, although individual committees at the town or county level varied in splitting the donations from 15 to 50 percent for Scottish relief.

The press pushed and residents responded. In Bucks County a local newspaper cited the Washington meeting and fundraising efforts in major cities and called for a county meeting: "we feel that a reproach would rest upon our county if we stand idle while our sister counties are active in the benevolent work." The people of the county called a public meeting on February 18 in Newtown for famine relief and reminded their fellow residents "of the charitable disposition of the free and enlightened people of this country."<sup>57</sup> They believed a free people had an obligation to provide help and it was part of the American nature to extend aid to the starving of Europe. The "people of plenty" theme was stressed by the residents of Lancaster who met at the city courthouse on February 15. "Living as we do amid the bountiful possession of the gifts of the All-wise Creator, who has caused our fields to smile with gladness in the rich abundance," the people of Lancaster County believed they had an obligation to help. Even the children in the public schools and church Sunday schools contributed as Americans encouraged widespread citizen participation, including children in this noble effort.<sup>58</sup>

Chester County was one of the first counties outside Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to come to the aid of the Irish. Citizens met in West Chester on February 5, established subcommittees in each township, collected subscriptions, and forwarded them to Philadelphia. What is unusual about Chester County is that Irish communities at the time and many years later acknowledged the aid from the people of the county. Charles Gibbons conveyed the thanks of the community of Ballenspittle in April 1847 for the 600 barrels of flour because "our own funds were all but spent, and our government had ordered all Relief works to be suspended" when the aid from Chester County arrived to save the poor people of Kinsale "in their time of need and suffering."<sup>59</sup> Later, in July James Redmond Barry reported on the distribution of the aid from Chester County to three other Irish communities that "saved the lives of hundreds." In addition to flour, Chester sent dried peaches that got turned into a nourishing drink and "your beef and pork was an excellent ingredient to the soup pot" supplementing the limited diet of the Irish.<sup>60</sup>

Fifteen years later, the son of one of the organizers of the relief effort in Chester County visited Ireland and was told that the “Irish of Ballenspittle will ever gratefully remember the county of Chester” for the timely aid that saved the lives of the local residents from famine.<sup>61</sup>

While the press and the county committees did not emphasize the participation of women, they were involved. When the citizens of Bethlehem met on February 9 they established a committee of three men and “three ladies” to collect funds.<sup>62</sup> This is the closest Irish famine relief came to equal rights for women in 1847 by uniquely establishing gender equality on a public committee. The women of York on their own solicited contributions of corn and cornmeal. In Lewistown, a group of women announced that they were holding a separate meeting of ladies for Irish relief on March 2. Amelia Potter, president of the Ladies Association, reported to the president of the Mifflin County Irish Relief Committee that the women of the borough had raised “a considerable sum of money” and desired that half be sent to the Irish and half to the Scots.<sup>63</sup> Male members of the county committee publicly acknowledged the contributions of the ladies of Lewistown and appointed a subcommittee to convey their gratitude to the women for their efforts. The local press congratulated the initiative of the women: “they are certainly entitled to great credit, for their exertions,” a rare acknowledgment that women could play a public role in international philanthropy.<sup>64</sup> While encouraging women to participate and publicizing their contributions was unusual, even more unique was the independence shown by the women of Lewistown, which parallels the women of Brooklyn who also acted independently of the men in soliciting donations. The Bethlehem meeting that created a gender-equal committee may be the only example in the United States in 1847. For some women famine relief provided an opportunity to expand the role of women in the public arena.<sup>65</sup>

Politicians also did their best to show support for famine relief. In addition to his address to the state legislature Governor Francis Shunk presided over a public meeting held in Harrisburg in February. The citizens drafted resolutions calling upon the legislature to waive tolls on public carriers for famine supplies, which it did, and urged that a ship of the line *Pennsylvania*, in Norfolk, be used to carry relief supplies. This attempt to merge support for relief aid with state pride failed to budge Congress or the Polk administration, which did authorize two other vessels, *Macedonian* and *Jamestown*, to transport some of the relief aid, but the administration ignored the combined request from the citizens of Harrisburg, Governor Shunk, and members of the state legislature to authorize the *Pennsylvania* to transport aid.



Responding to the public meeting, state workers and members of the legislature contributed to famine relief. Charles Gibbons, speaker of the state Senate, and James Cooper, speaker of the House of Representatives, collected the funds from their colleagues and state agencies and reported back to the citizens of Harrisburg on these donations. Cooper and Gibbons also addressed the second public meeting on their efforts. The people of Harrisburg and the state's political leaders emphasized that the Irish and Americans shared a love of liberty. Americans had an obligation to share "the abundance of this land of plenty."<sup>66</sup>

When Democrats met in a state convention in March in Harrisburg they also promoted the cause of Irish relief. Democrats passed resolutions expressing their sympathy for the plight of the Irish and their pride in the "Christian and republican spirit" of the American people in providing aid to the Irish. The convention recommended "to our friends throughout the Commonwealth to make the most liberal contributions" to famine relief.<sup>67</sup> Individual politicians, like Democrat James Buchanan, at the time secretary of state, and James Irvin, the Whig candidate for governor in 1847 against Shunk, gave to the cause of famine relief. Buchanan sent \$100 to the Lancaster County Irish Relief Committee and Irvin gave \$50 via the Centre County committee. Jonathan Sterigere, the deputy attorney general in Montgomery County, gave up his fees of office to send them as donations for famine relief.<sup>68</sup> In Pennsylvania politicians publicly endorsed famine relief, contributed to it out of their own pockets, and encouraged the state's citizens to actively help the starving of Europe out of state pride and as part of a national effort in international philanthropy.

Members of the two major political parties, Whigs and Democrats, jointly participated in local committees. One of the vice-presidents of the Tioga County meeting, Joel Parkhurst, was a Whig County activist. Two of the speakers, A. P. Cone and Henry Sherwood, were members of the Democratic Standing Committee of the county. When the Schuylkill County residents met for their famine relief meeting they met in the office of Democratic Judge Strange N. Palmer and he served on the standing committee for famine relief. Jonathan Neville, another member of the county committee, was a Whig. The local committees established included the Whig postmaster Andrew Mortimer in Tuscarora, a Whig political activist Henry Robinson in Schuylkill Haven, and Democrat C. M. Straub of Orwigsburg (sheriff and of German extraction). The South Ward committee in Pottsville included Whig Benjamin Shanan and Democrat Jacob Kline, a German American. On the North Ward committee was G. W. Pitman, a local Whig politician. Town

and county committees organized for famine relief remained nonpartisan and included Whigs and Democrats. This reflected the fact that both major parties endorsed famine relief and supported aid to Ireland in 1847 as a voluntary movement of the American people.<sup>69</sup>

The United States emerged as a leader in international philanthropy during the Great Famine. As historian Rob Goodbody concluded, "The donations from the United States were so great as to virtually overshadow all other sources."<sup>70</sup> Pennsylvania played a key role in the famine relief effort. Residents joined together in virtually every town and county of the state to hold meetings for famine relief for the Irish and Scots. In late 1846 and early 1847 Americans embraced the cause of Ireland and made it a national movement. However, it followed an American pattern for charity and philanthropy in the nineteenth century. This outpouring of American generosity faded from the collective memory of the nation's history but it showed how Americans organized for international and domestic charity. Citizens created temporary committees that were nonpartisan and nondenominational, organized on the village, town, ward, city, and county level throughout Pennsylvania and the United States. As a newspaper in Montrose in Susquehanna County observed in an editorial on famine relief: "in nearly every city, town, and hamlet in our land, a spirit of generous liberality, commensurate only with the world lauded sympathies of the American people has begun to manifest itself."<sup>71</sup>

Citizens of all denominations participated in the relief effort. The report of the Philadelphia Irish Relief Committee noted that Jews and Christians of all denominations participated in the relief effort or to quote a meeting of Jews in New York City for Irish relief: "Our fellow citizens have come forward with promptitude and generosity; contributions have poured in from all classes, from all sects."<sup>72</sup> Just as Americans contributed without distinction of religious denomination they wanted to make sure that the distribution of the aid did not get mired in denominational differences. As the residents of the small town of Lititz in Lancaster County told the Philadelphia Irish Relief Committee: "We take it for granted, there will be no distinction made as regards the religious tenets of the sufferers, wishing our Catholic, as well as our Protestant brethren, to be the recipients."<sup>73</sup> Americans, whether in Albany, New York, or Lititz, Pennsylvania, expected the nondenominational distribution of the American relief aid. For that reason Americans selected the Quakers as the honest brokers for distribution in Dublin.

In 1847 Pennsylvanians could put aside sectarian differences because of shared values of Christian benevolence and common humanity, which

included Jewish contributors. They—like other Americans—defined the Irish as a people in need and Irish immigrants as fellow workers in the common cause of international philanthropy that became an American national mission in late 1846 and early 1847. Aid to the Irish and Scots fit into Protestant values of benevolence, morality, and responsibility but became universal enough to include German and Irish Catholics as well as Jews in this common effort. Pennsylvanians saw themselves as a people of plenty with an obligation to help, the Irish as worthy of that aid, and international voluntary aid as an expression of American republican values reflecting of the natural generosity of the free people of America. International philanthropy became an obligation of a republican society, and political leaders embraced this responsibility by encouraging citizens to join in the effort, as indicated by Governor Shunk's appeal. The organizational structure of relief committees followed the pattern of American voluntarism prevalent in the United States in the 1840s. It mirrored how Americans joined together for moral improvement, public safety, political activity, charity, and civic and social betterment. For a brief moment, Pennsylvania and the United States became what a Rhode Island Catholic priest, Father Charles O'Reilly, called "universal America" where class, ethnicity, and religious denomination did not matter.<sup>74</sup>

## NOTES

1. Message of Governor Francis Shunk, February 22, 1847, in *Journal of the Fifty-Seventh House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1847), 1:338. Newspapers reprinted his speech to promote famine relief.
2. Rob Goodbody, *A Suitable Channel: Quaker Relief in the Great Famine* (Bray, Ireland: Pale Publishing, 1995), 21.
3. Diane Hotten-Somers, "Famine: American Relief Movement (1846–50)," in *The Encyclopedia of the Irish in America*, ed. Michael Glazier (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 305.
4. On the Irish famine, for example, Cormac O'Grada, *Black 47 and Beyond* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999); Christine Kinealy, *A Death Dealing Famine: The Great Hunger in Ireland* (London: Pluto Press, 1997), 111–16. On the Scottish famine, Tom Divine, *The Great Highland Famine* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988), 13–16, 111–16. Divine briefly discusses American aid and its importance. On famine relief see Peter Gray, "Famine Relief Policy in Comparative Perspective: Ireland, Scotland and Northwestern Europe, 1845–1849," *Eire-Ireland* 32 (Spring 1997): 86–108; Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 41–64; Helen Hatton, *The Largest Amount of Good: Quaker Relief in Ireland*,

- 1654–1921 (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 108–26; Goodbody, *Suitable Channel*, 21–24, 78–82; Christine Kinealy, "Potatoes, Providence, and Philanthropy: The Role of Private Charity during the Irish Famine," in *The Meaning of the Famine*, ed. Patrick O'Sullivan (London: Leicester University, 1997), 158–63. Examples of local Pennsylvania histories that give it passing mention are J. Matthew Gallman, *Receiving Erin's Children: Philadelphia, Liverpool, and the Irish Famine Migration, 1845–1855* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 26–28; Dennis Clark, *The Irish in Philadelphia: Ten Generations of Urban Experience* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), 29–30.
5. Society of Friends, *Transactions of the Society of Friends during the Famine in Ireland*, facsimile reprint of the 1st ed., 1852 (Dublin: Edmund Burke, 1996), 47–48 (hereafter *Transactions*).
6. Curti, *American Philanthropy*, 22–26, 64, 66–67, 81–98, 100–117, 120–33. These represent only some of the causes Americans aided. For local studies on Irish famine relief: Harvey Strum, "Desponding Hearts Will Be Made to Rejoice': Irish and Scottish Famine Relief from Virginia in 1847," *Southern Studies* 11, nos. 1–2 (Spring/Summer 2004): 17–38; Henry Crosby Forbes and Henry Lee, *Massachusetts Help to Ireland During the Great Famine* (Milton, MA: Captain Forbes House, 1967); John Ridge, "The Great Hunger in New York," *New York Irish History* 9 (1995): 5–12; David Gleeson, "Easing Integration: The Impact of the Great Famine in the American South," in *Ireland's Great Hunger*, ed. David Valone and Christine Kinealy (New York: University Press of America, 2001), 198; Neil Hogan, *The Cry of the Famishing: Ireland, Connecticut and the Potato Famine* (New Haven, CT: Connecticut Irish-American Historical Society, 1998), 53–64.
7. Jacob Harvey to Thomas P. Cope, December 23, 1846, folder 5, box B, Thomas Cope Family Papers, Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library, Haverford, PA. For the letter to Harvey from the Dublin Quakers, see Jonathan Pim to Jacob Harvey, December 3, 1846, *Transactions*, 216–17.
8. Thomas P. Cope Diary, December 21, 1846, vol. 8, 1846, 163, Special Collections, Haverford College Library (hereafter Cope Diary). Used online copy of Tri-College Digital Library.
9. Jacob Harvey to Jonathan Pim, December 28, 1846, *Transactions*, 217. The appeal was published in *The Friend*, December 26, 1846.
10. Thomas Pim Cope to the Secretaries, December 31, 1846, *Transactions*, 221. For details of the Quaker efforts see Cope Diary, December 23 and 28, vol. 8, 1846, 164 and 168, respectively.
11. "Circular," December 28, 1846, Broadside Collection, Haverford College Library. This broadside also reprinted the Dublin Quakers appeal of November 13, 1846. Also published in *Friend*, January 2, 1847.
12. *Pittsburgh Morning Post*, November 24, 1846.
13. *Pittsburgh Morning Chronicle*, November 25, 1846.
14. *Ibid.*, December 1, 2, 4, 7, 1846, January 23, 1847; *Pittsburgh Morning Post*, December 3, 4, 5, and 7, 1846.
15. *Report of the General Executive Committee of the City and County of Philadelphia Appointed by the Town Meeting of February 17, 1847, to Provide Means to Relieve the Sufferings in Ireland* (Philadelphia, 1847), 5; For the press, see the following, all from Philadelphia: *United States Gazette*, November 9, 26, and 28, 1846; *Pennsylvanian*, November 26, 28, and 30; *Public Ledger*, November 9 and 27, 1846; and *Catholic Herald*, December 2, 1846.
16. *Report of the General Executive Committee*, 6.

## PENNSYLVANIA AND IRISH FAMINE RELIEF, 1846–1847

17. I found evidence of contributions from several synagogues for Irish relief in New York City. Local congregations in Philadelphia did not retain any accounts of solicitations for the Irish. Philadelphia's Jews did contribute, but the records of the synagogues failed to mention it. This is based on correspondence with the synagogues and local Jewish archives. Synagogues in Charleston and New Orleans contributed. In 1880 Jewish communities across the United States raised money for the Irish in the "Little Famine."
18. John Gibson and others on behalf of the Citizens of Philadelphia to Society of Friends, Dublin, January 28, 1847, *Transactions*, 221.
19. John Gibson and Samuel Hood, Irish Relief Committee, Philadelphia to the Society of Friends in Dublin, February 25, 1847, *Transactions*, 227
20. *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian*, February 17, 1847.
21. *Report of the General Executive Committee*, 12; *United States Gazette*, February 18, 1847; John Gibson and Samuel Hood, Irish Relief Committee, Philadelphia, to the Society of Friends, Dublin, March 29, 1847, *Transactions*, 228–29; *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian*, February 18, 1847; *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, February 18, 1847; *Philadelphia Catholic Herald*, February 18 and 25, 1847; Cope Diary, February 17 and 18, 1847, 8:187.
22. *Report of the General Executive Committee*, 20; *United States Gazette*, February 20, 1847.
23. Timothy Jerome Sarbaugh. "A Moral Spectacle: American Relief and the Famine 1845–49," *Eire-Ireland* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1980): 6–14. Sarbaugh discusses the debate in Congress over famine relief.
24. *Report of the General Executive Committee*, 24.
25. Joseph Jones, Chairman's Report, October 19, 1847, in *ibid.*, 27.
26. *Philadelphia Pennsylvania Freeman*, March 18, 1847; *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian*, March 16, 1847.
27. *Cherokee Advocate*, April 28, May 6, and July 15, 1847; *Philadelphia United States Gazette*, June 10, 1847; John Ross to Nathaniel Chapman, May 14, 1847, in *The Papers of Chief John Ross*, vol. 2, 1840–1866, ed. Gary Moulton (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 321. For the formation of the Scottish relief committee in Philadelphia see *Philadelphia Pennsylvanian*, March 6, 1847. For the role of Chapman, Minutes of the Philadelphia St. Andrew's Society, October 31 and November 3, 1851, Records of the St. Andrew's Society, Philadelphia.
28. John Gibson and Samuel Hood, Irish Relief Committee, Philadelphia, to the Society of Friends, Dublin, March 29, 1847, *Transactions*, 229; *Report of the General Executive Committee*, 24, 26, 30–31, 36–37.
29. *Report of the General Executive Committee*, 36. For Schuylkill County, *Pottsville Miner's Journal*, February 27, 1847.
30. James Martin and others, on behalf of Friends in Philadelphia, February 26, 1847, *Transactions*, 233–34; *Friends Weekly Intelligencer*, February 13 and 20, 1847; *Report of the Central Committee of Friends of Philadelphia for the Relief of the Irish Poor* (Philadelphia, 1847), 2.
31. *Friends Weekly Intelligencer*, February 20, 1847.
32. Anthony McCoy to Thomas Cope, March 3, 1847, Irish Relief Committee Correspondence, Cope Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), Philadelphia
33. John Reynolds to Thomas Cope, January 15, 1847, in *ibid.*
34. William Talbert and others to Thomas Cope, March 6, 1847, in *ibid.*

35. Parker Askew to Thomas Cope, February 25, 1847, in *ibid.*
36. Thomas Hunt to Henry Cope, February 22, 1847, Thomas Cope Family Papers, Quaker Collection, Haverford College, Haverford, PA.
37. *Report of the Central Committee of the Society of Friends*, 6–7.
38. Message of Governor Francis Shunk, February 22, 1847, *Journal of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1847), 1:304–5.
39. *Erie Observer*, February 20, 1847.
40. *New Berlin Union Times*, March 6, 1847.
41. *Lewistown Gazette*, February 20 and 27, 1847.
42. *Mercer County Whig*, February 23, 1847
43. *Clearfield Democratic Banner*, February 24, 1847
44. *Somerset Herald*, March 2, 1847.
45. *Hollidaysburg Register*, March 17, 1847.
46. *Pittsburgh Morning Post*, March 24, 1847.
47. *Hollidaysburg Register*, March 24, 1847. The Blair County Historical Society kindly provided me with copies of some of the articles.
48. *Ibid.*, March 17 and 31, and April 21, 1847; *Towanda Bradford Reporter*, February 10 and March 10, 1847; *Wellsborough Tioga Eagle*, February 24, 1847.
49. *Wilkes-Barre Advocate*, April 21, 1847
50. *Ibid.*, March 31, 1847. The Luzerne County Historical Society kindly provided me with copies of the articles on famine relief in Wilkes-Barre.
51. John Blair Linn, *Annals of Buffalo Valley, PA, 1755–1855* (Harrisburg, 1877), 547; *Muncy Luminary*, March 27, 1847. Union County Historical Society kindly provided me with copies of two local newspapers and part of the county history.
52. *Meadville Crawford Democrat*, March 2, 1847. Crawford County Historical Society kindly provided copies of the local newspaper.
53. *Beaver Argus*, February 24, 1847. The Beaver County Historical Society also kindly provided copies of the local paper.
54. *Ibid.*, March 10, 1847.
55. *Delaware County Republican*, February 26, 1847. The Delaware County Historical Society kindly provided me with copies.
56. *Ibid.*, “Report of the Executive Committee,” undated, May 14, 1847
57. *Bucks County Intelligencer*, February 12 and March 5, 1847. I would like to thank the Bucks County Historical Society for providing me with copies.
58. *Lancaster Examiner*, February 10 and 17, 1847. Also April 7, 1847, for some of the contributions.
59. Charles Gibbons to William Everhart, Treasurer, Chester County Irish Relief Committee, April 14, 1847, published in *West Chester Village Record*, May 18, 1847. The Chester County Historical Society kindly provided me with copies of this and the subsequent article.
60. James Redmond Barry to the Chester County Irish Relief Committee, July 16, 1847, and report of the contributions by William Everhart, Treasurer, in *West Chester Republican and Democrat*, December 7, 1847.

## PENNSYLVANIA AND IRISH FAMINE RELIEF, 1846-1847

61. J. Smith Futhey and Gilbert Cope, *History of Chester County, Pennsylvania with Genealogical and Biographical Sketches* (Philadelphia: Louis Everts, 1881), 134; James B. Evert, *Miscellanies* (West Chester, 1862), 61.
62. *Easton Whig*, February 17, 1847.
63. *Lewistown Gazette*, February 27, 1847, for the advertisement of the Ladies' meeting. Amelia Potter to the president of the County Meeting, March 15, 1847, *Lewistown Gazette*, March 20, 1847. For the women of York, see *Hanover Spectator*, March 3, 1847.
64. *Lewistown Gazette*, March 20, 1847; *Lewistown True Democrat*, March 24, 1847.
65. Studies of women in philanthropy do not mention famine relief. For example, Lori Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), or Nancy Hewitt, *Women's Activism and Social Change: Rochester, New York, 1822-1872* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984).
66. *Harrisburg Democratic Union*, February 21, 24, and 27, 1847.
67. *Clearfield Democratic Banner*, March 13, 1847.
68. Jonathan Sterigere to Col. John Swift, mayor of the city of Philadelphia, February 22, 1847, in *United States Gazette*, March 15, 1847. Virtually every newspaper in the state mentioned Irvin's contribution. For Buchanan, *Lancaster Examiner and Herald*, February 24, 1847.
69. *Wellsborough Tioga Eagle*, February 24, 1847; *Pottsville Miners' Journal*, February 20, 1847.
70. Goodbody, *Suitable Channel*, 82.
71. *Montrose Northern Democrat*, February 18, 1847.
72. "Meeting of the Jewish Population of New York in Aid of Ireland," *Occident* 5, no. 1 (April 1847): 37.
73. "J.B.T" of the Lititz Irish Relief Committee to Joseph Chandler, February 26, 1847, in the *United States Gazette*, March 1, 1847.
74. *Boston Pilot*, March 6, 1847.