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On the cover: Advertisement for the Blitzstein Bank (*Jewish Morning Journal*, October 13, 1913).

B. FRANKLIN ROYER: A HALF CENTURY IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Jim Higgins

Abstract: Pennsylvania is often regarded in the historiography of public health, medicine, urban, and industrial history as little more than a disaster; her chief cities, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, highlighted the health disparity between rich and poor, their tenements among the most degraded in the nation, their water poisonous, and their skies leaden. The plight of the state's city dwellers were exceeded in misery and mortality rates only by the wretched conditions of the coal patches, small steel towns, and timber camps that dotted the Commonwealth. By the turn of the twentieth century enough political will was mustered to overcome objections to a state department of health. Benjamin Franklin Royer emerged from the public health apparatus of Philadelphia to assume a critical role in the department, eventually rising to its head and guiding the state through the influenza pandemic of 1918. In the early 1920s, after a titanic explosion leveled most of Halifax, Nova Scotia, Royer took the lessons he learned in the state and rebuilt Halifax, starting the first public health nursing program in Canada. Between 1926 and 1932 he was medical director of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness where he led a campaign against bacteria-induced blindness in newborns and adolescents before returning to Pennsylvania to work on antiblindness and tuberculosis control efforts.

*T*he historiography of public health in the United States devotes much space to the positive role that the health departments of New York City, Providence, Rhode Island, and Milwaukee,

Wisconsin, among others, played in the development of public health during the Progressive Era, with works such as John Duffy's *A History of Public Health in New York City: 1866–1966* and Judith Walzer Leavitt's *The Healthiest City: Milwaukee and the Politics of Health Reform*, rightly taking their place as leaders in the historiography.¹ Likewise, historians have lionized leaders of certain urban health departments, for instance, Herman Biggs and Charles V. Chapin—with the single best volume of this genre James H. Cassedy's *Charles V. Chapin and the Public Health Movement*—for their focus on the health of the urban poor and influence on public health officials and practices across the country.² Other public health leaders not attached to a particular board of health, such as Rupert Blue, William Welch, and Joseph Goldberger, were celebrated for a mixture of their individual scientific work—identification and control of plague in San Francisco in the case of Blue and the epidemiologic investigation of pellagra in the South by Goldberger—along with their prominence in national public health organizations and, in the case of Welch, the founding of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and Hospital.

Pennsylvania, the second most-populous and most-industrial state, and home to two of the largest cities in the nation, acted as little more than a foil in the general narrative of triumphant public health leadership. To be sure, the condition of the Commonwealth presented a grim picture: Philadelphia and Pittsburgh were public health disasters through any lens, with works such as Sam Alewitz's "*Filthy Dirty:*" *A Social History of Unsanitary Philadelphia in the Late Nineteenth Century*, John F. Bauman and Edward K. Muller's *Before Renaissance: Planning in Pittsburgh, 1889–1943*, Jacqueline Karnell Corn's *Environment and Health in Nineteenth-Century America: Two Case Studies*, S. J. Kleinberg's *The Shadow of the Mills: Working Class Families in Pittsburgh, 1870–1907*, and Joel A. Tarr's *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective and Devastation and Renewal: An Environmental History of Pittsburgh and Its Region* highlighting the political corruption and corporate influence that produced mortality rates unparalleled in like-sized cities in the industrialized Western world.³

The historiography of the history of medicine in Pennsylvania follows the trend of the more general histories and is most heavily concentrated upon epidemics in urban areas. Not surprisingly, the devastating yellow fever outbreak in Philadelphia in 1793 figures prominently. J. H. Powell's *Bring Out Your Dead* is dated but remains the standard history of the epidemic, while an essay by Thomas Apel, "The Rise and Fall of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia, 1793–1805," provides a definitive account of the economic

and social relations between the city and the Caribbean as well as the public health responses the city implemented to lower incidences of the disease.⁴ The quality of Philadelphia's water and the political fights generated by the effort to disinfect it were examined in Michael P. McCarthy's *Typhoid and the Politics of Public Health in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia*.⁵ More recently, William Pencak illustrated the role of dispensaries in Philadelphia and the legal fights they provoked in his essay "Free Healthcare for the Poor: The Philadelphia Dispensary."⁶ On a broader front, Barbara Bates's excellent work, *Bargaining for Life: A Social History of Tuberculosis, 1876–1938*, explored the relationship between a pervasive and lethal disease, its chronic sufferers, and the role of medical intervention before the antibiotic era.⁷ Beyond the cities, the coal mines and the communities they supported continue to garner historians' attention. Karol K. Weaver explored gender, ethnic identity, and folkways in "She Knew All the Old Remedies": Medical Caregiving and Neighborhood Women of the Anthracite Coal Region of Pennsylvania" and in a more recent monograph, *Medical Caregiving and Identity in Pennsylvania's Anthracite Region, 1880–2000*.⁸ As well, a number of studies detailed the mine disasters, especially in the state's anthracite region. Two noted works in this genre, especially as they trace the labor, political, and economic results of coal disasters, are *The Knox Mine Disasters: The Final Years of the Northern Anthracite Industry and the Effort to Rebuild a Regional Economy* by Robert P. Wolensky, Kenneth C. Wolensky, and Nicole H. Wolensky and *Tragedy at Avondale: The Causes, Consequences, and Legacy of the Pennsylvania Anthracite Industry's Most Deadly Mining Disaster, September 6, 1869* by Robert P. Wolensky and Joseph M. Keating.⁹

What remains for historians to explore is the state's role in Progressive Era public health and medical advances and the careers of public health leaders who implemented those changes. Pennsylvania's health department was only created in 1905, long after most states had such organizations, and remains overlooked by historians. Barbara Gutman Rosenkrantz, for instance, explored the development of the Massachusetts Board of Health in her seminal work, *Public Health and the State: Changing Views in Massachusetts, 1842–1936*.¹⁰ Though the Massachusetts board faced resistance in many areas, it benefited from its inauguration in the prebacteriologic era and the decades it spent developing concomitantly with the new scientific and public health advances of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By contrast, the Pennsylvania Department of Health was charged with the unenviable task of imposing novel, science-based standards upon a citizenry

hitherto free from most public health oversight at any level of government. Despite sometimes-staunch resistance, the history of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, at least its first dozen years, comprised a compelling trajectory; the department created a bureau of vital statistics whose methods the federal Census Bureau adopted as their own, broke new ground in statewide treatment of tuberculosis, improved the quality of many of the state's small streams through effective pollution control, enforced isolation and quarantine of households and communities, and saved tens of thousands of lives. In addition, the department initiated the state's first public health nursing program, originally dedicated to staffing state-run tuberculosis hospitals and dispensaries, but later expanded to offer aid during epidemics and natural disasters, for instance, the Austin Dam collapse in 1911.

One of the most important figures in Pennsylvania's medical history was Benjamin Franklin Royer. Royer earned his medical degree in the late nineteenth century and spent the first two decades of the twentieth century in command of the state's largest publicly supported contagious disease hospital, acted as the Department of Health's chief enforcer, and ultimately headed the department during the last years of World War I and the influenza epidemic. He spent the dozen years after the war outside the state, laboring against public health problems in Canada and the American West Coast, and as America's premiere antiblindness crusader. His return to Pennsylvania in the early 1930s began another twenty-year association between the Commonwealth and Royer. Pennsylvania provided an ideal environment for sharpening his public health skills; the state's excellent academic institutions and hospitals, and the minds that staffed them, were juxtaposed to appalling health conditions across the state and a political class and general public that was often hostile to public health improvements. Perhaps no state, as understood through the prism of the intense resistance of politicians and citizens to health reforms, better exemplified the revolutionary nature of the struggle between old beliefs and new science in the fight against disease. From these struggles emerged a medical triumphalist inured to political and social obstacles and versed in seemingly every aspect of public health work.

For a man with a prominent role in public health, Royer is surprisingly difficult to know beyond his public writings, lectures, and media coverage. Such sources do, however, allow scholars to construct a composite of Royer's views on subjects beyond strictly public health and medicine. For instance, his statements and actions—and in the case of African Canadians his inaction—offer insights into his views concerning the role of women in

both healthcare and society, as well as stereotypes he held concerning class, race, and ethnicity. What emerged is a physician devoted to the notion that science-based medicine held the power to a future of continuously declining disease, a public official convinced of the efficacy of public health in the prevention of disease and increased standard of living, and a crusader unapologetic in neither his fights against entrenched interests nor his efforts to promote the responsibility of the individual in preserving one's own health through "clean" living. He disdained any considerations—political, business, or simple ignorance—that threatened the public health. Royer was, according to such an essay, a Republican progressive and committed technocrat who saw political reform allied with technology as the harbingers of a better world.

Compared to his public life, however, Royer's private life remains shrouded. He kept no journal of his personal or public affairs and appeared to have had no associates not connected to his profession. Royer did not marry until age fifty-five, and when his wife died in 1932 she left no personal papers. His second wife, whom he married in 1936, passed away a few years after Royer and likewise left no diaries or other personal papers. Royer had no children and spent most of his life away from his family so that even anecdotal accounts of his life away from public duties remain impossible to find. When he died at ninety, his obituary resembled a resume, with only his wife and "a number of nieces and nephews" listed as survivors.¹¹ His only archived paper collection amounts to fewer than twenty pages of lecture notes, clippings, and sundry public health notes kept by Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, none of which contain personal reflections. Again, however, the outlines of a personality may be discerned. Royer presented a tidy image in the few photographs that remain, his neat hair parted on the left, and unlike many of his peers, he kept himself clean shaven. In none of the portraits does he evince even a trace of a smile, and in this regard his visage matches his record as a man who saw the world, at least the world of public health, in near-absolute terms of right and wrong; in such matters he was often the final arbiter and seldom wasted time on politicking or compromise, a tendency that produced mixed results.

Royer began life on a farm in south-central Pennsylvania in December 1870. The rolling farmland of post-Civil War Franklin County afforded a comfortable life for Royer's family, one of the oldest families in the county, but offered scant opportunity for training an astute mind with a scientific bent. Young Royer received his education in one-room schoolhouses, in

lessons his parents offered at home in German, and in his late teen years at Cumberland Valley Normal School, later renamed Shippensburg University.¹² In the early 1890s Royer taught briefly at a rural school near the family farm and then ventured to Illinois where he completed a two-year degree for teachers and taught in another rural school until 1893. He attempted to secure a science degree from Dixon College in Illinois but withdrew and returned to Pennsylvania in August 1893 upon the death of his father. He next entered Mercersburg Academy, where the school entrusted him with a position teaching younger students and from which he graduated in 1895 as class orator.

The next step in Royer's education shaped the rest of his life and exerted a profound influence on the quality of life in Pennsylvania for decades; Jefferson Medical College accepted his application and he entered medical school in August 1895.¹³ The 1890s were an exciting period of American medical education as breakthroughs made by European scientists in the 1880s confirmed the role of microbes as the cause of infectious disease and the principles of the germ theory revolutionized medical education. Royer's decision to enter medical school in Philadelphia placed him in proximity to several large hospitals as well as some of the brightest medical minds in the nation.¹⁴ One of those minds belonged to Wilmer Krusen, an expert obstetrician/gynecologist who also evinced a strong interest in public health and later served as head of the Philadelphia Department of Health and Charities. With Krusen as his preceptor, Royer graduated from Jefferson in 1899 as a Gold Medal student in obstetrics and honorable mention in gynecology. By the autumn of 1900, after a short stint in Canada attending a private patient, Royer secured a position at Jefferson Medical College as lecturer in anatomy and obstetrics and was quickly promoted to chief resident physician for Jefferson Hospital.¹⁵

The new physician's first important foray into public health occurred in September 1903 when a senior professor at Jefferson Medical College, Dr. Hobart Hare, suggested to the Department of Health that Royer assume the directorship of the Philadelphia Municipal Hospital for Contagious Diseases.¹⁶ Built in 1865, the hospital was one of the largest of its kind in the country and its patients tended toward the lowest rungs of the socioeconomic ladder. Municipal Hospital, as it was often called, ameliorated the devastation of a number of epidemics in the late 1800s, including large outbreaks of diphtheria, scarlet fever, and typhus. Though adequate by the standard of care during the first years of operation, by the 1890s the hospital was in

disrepair, with clapboard sheds designated for the isolation and care of those suffering from lethal infectious disease. Beyond the walls of the hospital, the city, on whose periphery the facility once stood, continued to spread toward its grounds. Beginning in 1889, public health leaders pled with the city for a new hospital adequate to the needs of the growing metropolis and in keeping with the advances in standard of care initiated by the bacterial revolution, but by 1893 the city council decided to appropriate funds to increase the number of buildings of the original hospital rather than construct a new facility.¹⁷ The physician-in-chief preceding Royer, noted local public health figure and physician William M. Welch, proved an able administrator and caring physician, but he handicapped himself and the hospital by remaining "violently opposed to a laboratory-oriented" style of medicine.¹⁸ Put another way, he trusted the experienced eye of physicians and demonstrable symptoms more than the laboratory assays of bacteriologists; rather than embrace new methods, he chained the hospital and its patients to prebacteriologic medicine. Welch's attitude extended to even diphtheria antitoxin, whose results he believed were so overstated that in 1898 he declared to attendees at an American Medical Association conference that diphtheria never constituted the great killer in Philadelphia as it had in other cities; nor was antitoxin the miracle cure.¹⁹

Royer's appointment marked a departure from past practices. Before he took up his post, Royer traveled to public contagious disease hospitals in New York, Boston, and Montreal, where he studied quarantine and treatment methods and gained a deeper understanding of public medicine, distinguished from public health by the former's focus on the individual patient and the treating of disease, as opposed to public health's concentration on populations and disease prevention. He continued to study other contagious disease hospitals in Great Britain and Canada throughout his tenure at Municipal Hospital to improve his own efforts. When he began his directorship, he found the hospital in the midst of a maelstrom as the last of the large, lethal epidemics of smallpox carried off dozens in the city and deposited scores of the sick and dying within the hospital's walls, an epidemic the city finally broke through mass vaccination, but not before more than 800 deaths occurred in the hospital over the course of three years.²⁰ In 1904 Royer established the first bacterial laboratory on the hospital's grounds, finally reversing years of reticence on the part of the former director and obviating the need to run specimens to the seventh floor of City Hall, which housed the only other city-operated laboratory.²¹ With the laboratory operating, Royer instituted a

rigorous modern approach to diagnosis and treatment with the laboratory a centerpiece in both treatment and research.

Municipal Hospital offered Royer the opportunity to initiate studies on infectious disease, especially diphtheria and anthrax, which brought him national recognition. In 1905 he published a study entitled "The Antitoxin Treatment of Diphtheria, with a Plea for Rational Dosage in Treatment and Immunizing," which received attention from physicians across the country.²² When compiling data for the article, Royer did not narrow his focus to his hospital or even Philadelphia, but instead presented statistics from a number of cities and hospitals and compared treatment outcomes to those of his hospital. Based upon statistical evidence and experience, he argued forcefully for changes in diphtheria treatment and prevention protocols. In Royer's view, very large doses of antitoxin injected over the course of several days offered the best hope for patient survival. Moreover, he argued that family members and others in close contact with sufferers should be afforded antitoxin treatment even when not symptomatic. Finally, he advocated for large doses of antitoxin in cases where the disease was suspected but not yet confirmed by tests for the bacteria's presence in the throat, converting the antitoxin from treatment to prophylactic. His reasoning was clear: "The time to give [antitoxin] is when you have clinical evidence of diphtheria. Do not await a culture report; do not wait to see if you will have severe diphtheria. Give it at once." The antitoxin would do no harm in the event it was given to those not infected, but death might be the result of a delay in antitoxin treatment. Royer argued that physicians who delayed administering antitoxin "would find it exceedingly difficult to defend yourself in a court of law were proceedings brought against you for neglecting to give such a lifesaving agent until time had passed when it would positively cure your patient."²³

Medical journals reprinted and cited Royer's findings for several years, and the Philadelphia health department implemented his dosage guidelines throughout the city, which resulted, according to the head of the department, in near elimination of "dissemination of the disease from the infected person to others surrounding him, either at hospital or in private houses."²⁴ In the early twenty-first century, standard of care insists that physicians who suspect, but have not had laboratory confirmation of diphtheria, administer antitoxin prophylactically.

In 1908 Royer published a series of articles on experiments he conducted at the hospital on patients suffering from anthrax and diphtheria. The first

article detailed the treatment of fifteen cases of anthrax with antitoxin serum, surgical drainage of lesions, and injection of antiseptic solution. All but two of the patients survived, and Royer claimed that his unprecedented use of Sclavo Serum, the most powerful anthrax antitoxin available in the world, was largely responsible for successful health outcomes in his treatment.²⁵ The work Royer carried out on anthrax would have been impossible were it not for the excellent bacterial laboratory at the Municipal Hospital, a fact he repeatedly stressed in the article. Two months later, Royer published the findings he and his laboratory chief made concerning the effect diphtheria antitoxin had on phagocytosis. Phagocytosis is the absorption of bacteria by immune cells. The experiments performed under Royer's direction included analysis of phagocytic activity in blood drawn before administering antitoxin and for up to three weeks after antitoxin injection. Royer also wished to understand whether diphtheria antitoxin was so specific that it held no efficacy against streptococcus and pneumococcus toxin. Royer concluded that the antitoxin had no effect on the phagocytosis of patients ill with streptococcus or pneumococcus, that the antitoxin's effect on phagocytosis was not uniform from day to day, and that the age and race of a patient did not influence the degree of phagocytosis.²⁶ Though no great breakthrough, his evaluations of phagocytosis offered a deeper understanding of immune system response relative to antitoxin use.

The final round of experiments Royer and his staff conducted at the hospital centered upon what he termed hypersusceptibility to diphtheria antitoxin. For years, clinicians noted that a second series of injections of diphtheria antitoxin often induced immediate and negative symptoms, though they were rarely fatal, in patients. The most commonly noted symptoms included swelling at the injection site, edema, full body rash, itching, and sometimes vomiting. Royer examined the phenomenon, taking special care to differentiate between the often-fatal collapses of the respiratory system a very small number of first-time injectors experienced and the mild symptoms, including facial flushing, associated with a second injection after a prolonged interval. Royer concluded that "spaced injections are errors in treatment and should be avoided because of unnecessary sickening," and therefore doctors should give "injections at close intervals, until the clinical evidence of the disease is well under control."²⁷ Royer's treatment protocol shortened the duration of the illness while it avoided the distressing symptoms of antitoxin sensitivity.

Throughout his tenure at Municipal Hospital, the dilapidated condition of the campus remained a constant source of concern. His 1906 report to

the mayor complained that “appropriations for repairs have been entirely too small to attempt anything excepting what is absolutely required to keep patients dry and warm.” The sewer beneath the scarlet fever hospital frequently backed up and flooded the basement with excrement while the condition of the smallpox isolation unit had deteriorated to such a degree that Royer used much of the building as storage while he constructed additional isolation sheds from rotten lumber taken from the original smallpox hospital. The nursing situation remained critical throughout his tenure because, as Royer summarized, the hospital functioned as a place young nurses used to gain experience before moving on to better postings, in part because private-practice nurses earned up to twenty-five dollars a week while his hospital paid nurses only thirty-five dollars a month.²⁸ In these miserable surroundings people lay ill and dying behind warped wooden walls that admitted icy breezes during winter and mosquitoes during the summer, in an atmosphere fouled by excrement flowing a few feet beneath their beds, attended by underpaid nurses who viewed the hospital—and their patients—as stepping stones to better jobs and whom Royer often caught hoarding the most effective stocks of diphtheria antitoxin for their own use should infection spread among the nursing staff.²⁹ After years of agitation on the part of the city’s public health officials and concerned physicians, and Royer’s more recent highlighting of the hospital’s shortcomings, the city opted to build a thoroughly modern facility and left it to Royer to draw up guidelines for the new campus, which opened in 1909.

One of the remarkable aspects of Royer’s time at Municipal Hospital was his willingness to remain even after it was clear the city did not intend to improve conditions. Royer was a strong candidate for a position in any hospital in the nation and had already filled such a post at Jefferson Hospital. Too, his brief stint as a professor indicated that a career in academia did not exceed his reach. Perhaps he envisioned service at the hospital as the surest way to conduct research and refine treatment protocols while making a name for himself beyond Philadelphia. Regardless of his motivations, the hospital presented the sort of public health challenge upon which Royer thrived, especially as this challenge came with the added privilege of authority: sole responsibility for the methods employed by his staff and, at only thirty-two years of age, management of a large institution. Royer, who lived on the campus, rose every day to face what modern epidemiologists term a “hot zone,” a location where acute, contagious disease spreads in human populations. No mere threat, the hospital lost several physicians, nurses, and other staff to

infections contracted while treating patients that other Philadelphia hospitals rejected as either too dangerous or too poor.

In 1905, as Royer published his first scientific studies, years of lobbying by reformers resulted in the replacement of the moribund state Board of Health with a powerful Department of Health. One of the minds behind the push for such a department was Dr. Charles Penrose, a noted Philadelphia gynecologist and brother to Boies Penrose, the state's most powerful Republican boss and a US senator. Charles extracted a promise from his brother that he would make every effort to ensure that the new department not become a dumping ground for political appointees.³⁰ For the first dozen years of its existence, successive governors and powerful bosses allowed this department, the most powerful in the state and headed by an executive who was, in Royer's own estimation, granted "greater power than was given to any other officer of the Commonwealth, save the Governor," to operate free of political intrigue.³¹

The first commissioner was an outstanding scientist and physician, Samuel G. Dixon, who had earned his law and medical degrees at the University of Pennsylvania, served briefly as a professor at the university, and by the mid-1890s headed the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. In 1908 Dixon tapped Royer for a position in the medical division of the department with the title of associate chief medical inspector, a position that not only placed him as second in command in the division and one for which, according to Dixon, Royer was uniquely qualified because his time at the Municipal Hospital allowed him to enjoy "unusual opportunities for becoming familiar with the diagnosis of communicable diseases," but also placed him in command of the health department's epidemiologic work.³²

Royer resigned his post at the hospital and by 1910 Dixon elevated Royer to chief medical inspector with responsibility for investigating infectious disease outbreaks throughout the state, recommending and ordering quarantine, and offering or ordering implementation of preventative techniques or equipment. In the space of thirty-six months, Royer emerged as one of the top two enforcers of state health policy. Royer's influence extended well beyond his official role because Dixon used him as *de facto* deputy commissioner and Royer became, according to one source, the state's executive physician, assigned any task Dixon saw fit.³³

The relationship Dixon and Royer may have shared before Royer's appointment, if indeed they knew one another at all, is unclear, but Philadelphia was likely the nexus between the two men. Before his appointment by the governor, Dixon involved himself deeply in the scientific life of the city and

served on the school board as a medical advisor. When Dixon took the job as commissioner of state health, Royer had two years behind him as director of Municipal Hospital and even had they not been acquainted before 1905, Royer, in his capacity as the head of the state's largest public hospital for infectious disease, must have come to Dixon's notice. Dixon and Royer formed a complementary relationship; Dixon the folksy and affable head of Health, able to negotiate the minefield of state politics, and Royer, the technocrat who never failed to remedy a health menace and chastise those responsible. Indeed, a suggestion from Royer was an order from Dixon. Though Dixon commanded a department in a state intensely hostile to public health efforts, the department's unarguably positive results—and Dixon's insistence on publishing the department's victories against infectious diseases—combined with the commissioner's moderate, nonconfrontational approach to public health reform, and was rewarded by ever-increasing budgets. In 1905 the legislature voted \$186,000 for the department, a figure that grew to \$6 million by 1917.³⁴ By 1907 the department's performance so impressed the legislature that it earmarked \$1,000,000 for a comprehensive antituberculosis campaign that included dispensaries and sanatoria. From an initial 200 county health and sanitary inspectors, the department's workforce rose to include thousands of physicians, nurses, and inspectors whose duties ranged from nuisance abatement to the administration of hundreds of tuberculosis hospitals and dispensaries. In addition, 1,100 registrars of vital statistics, under the direct control of Dixon, aided the department in identifying and quantifying public health threats through statistical compilation of births, deaths, and causes of morbidity and mortality. Another great strength of the department was Dixon's care to keep the public informed about new steps the department planned to take and the results obtained by the department's activities, which helped set the public at ease about the broad police powers inherent in the bill that formed the department. By 1917 the department announced that in the previous ten years, deaths per thousand declined to such a degree that as many as 120,266 lives had been saved, mostly from infectious disease.³⁵

Though the benefits to the state and its people were demonstrated in continually lower rates of morbidity and mortality for infectious disease, resistance to reforming the state's health system remained, and Royer and his colleagues faced sometimes-violent opposition. One reason for the pushback was rooted in the novel encroachments on private property that health reform entailed. Property owners, whether urban or rural, were accustomed to doing with their property as they pleased. The legislation

that created the Department of Health provided for inspection of property when certain infectious diseases or sanitary violations were suspected. Without such inroads into traditional private property prerogatives, the new department would have been little better than the old state Board of Health, which Dixon characterized as limited only to “educational and missionary” activities.³⁶

Physical attacks against department personnel, if not frequent, were nevertheless a cause for concern. One health inspector near Reading suffered a skull fracture at the hands of a farmer who claimed the inspector had no right to invade his property to verify the sanitary quality of a stream that crossed from his property onto other farms. Another inspector who attempted to disinfect a house whose family produced a case of measles was subjected to an assault so savage that he lost an eye. A second major objection turned not on sacrosanct ideals of the inviolate nature of private property, but rather on traditional notions of disease causation and deep suspicion of particular scientific remedies, especially smallpox vaccination. Crowds in Waynesboro burned Dixon in effigy and denounced him as a “czar” and “dictator” even as the department attempted to squash a smallpox outbreak.³⁷ One of the men in the crowd, convinced by antivaccinationists that Dixon wished to kill his family through the vaccine, lay in wait at night to shoot Dixon—who fortuitously chose to not take his usual route, while the would-be assassin was discovered by a passerby.

The period 1908 through 1917 was the most varied of Royer’s professional life and encompassed almost the full gamut of public medicine and health activities. His experience in hospital management and institutional infection control allowed him to manage one of the state’s three large tuberculosis hospitals at Mont Alto and act as temporary director when regular managers resigned or fell ill. His position as chief medical inspector positioned him as supervisor of the state’s epidemic prevention efforts even as he refined regulations for epidemic control measures. Throughout his career, Royer devoted considerable attention to educating fellow health professionals and the public in the most efficient methods of infectious disease avoidance and treatment. To that end, he offered scores of lectures to professional and lay audiences on behalf of the Department of Health, many of which stressed that the key to the reduction of infectious disease deaths lay in the hands of the individual: proper washing, modern water sanitation, and voluntary isolation of the sick. Royer also continued to publish articles that highlighted the department’s role in efficient epidemic response and the role

of the department in treating tuberculosis, diphtheria, and other contagious diseases. A recurring theme in much of his writing stressed the importance of professional nurses, whom Royer believed key to controlling any infectious disease outbreak.

In 1917 the nation joined the war against the Central Powers and Pennsylvania became arguably the most important component of America's war effort. The state was a magnet for workers from the South and Midwest who sought positions in her industries. The migration, already underway by 1915, accelerated rapidly after the April 1917 declaration of war. The populations of industrial cities swelled—with Pittsburgh adding tens of thousands and Philadelphia adding hundreds of thousands—to their already crowded tenements. Space was at such a premium that boardinghouses routinely ran two and three shifts of boarders per day, per mattress. Railroads, coal mines, and steel mills converted railroad boxcars to bunkhouses with a hole in the floor as a toilet. Pittsburgh reversed its condemnation of houses to accommodate southern black newcomers. Even these quarters were preferable to the dank, windowless, and frequently flooded cellar apartments other workers occupied. By the end of 1917, the state was ripe for an epidemic.

Concomitant with the increase in public health work during 1917 was a decline in Dixon's health. Though the sixty-six-year-old retained his acute mind and spirit for work, he neared physical collapse and depended upon Royer as his eyes and ears, especially when he was admitted during the autumn of 1917 to the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Nearly bedfast, Dixon still wrote weekly health tracts for newspapers across the world and demanded his personal secretary and clerks keep him apprised of the work of the department. He was diagnosed with a form of anemia and doctors treated him with a series of blood transfusions, the effects of which decreased as the months wore on. By January, Dixon accepted that no reverse in his decline was possible and he put his affairs in order. This may have included a recommendation for Royer to succeed him, but the record is silent on the point. On February 8, Dixon died. Within days of Dixon's death, the governor named Royer acting commissioner of health for the remainder of 1918. The forty-seven-year-old Royer had reached the pinnacle of the public health establishment in Pennsylvania and by virtue of his reach was one of the most powerful medical men in the nation.

Even before Dixon's death, the war kept Royer perpetually busy. The department he now commanded spearheaded efforts to control smallpox

outbreaks among Pittsburgh's African American war workers, inspected housing for armaments workers across the state, and aided the federal government in closing those saloons and brothels deemed too close to military camps and bases. His most important single assignment involved the military and federal government. The federal government selected Hog's Island, a few miles south of Philadelphia on the Delaware River, for the site of the world's largest shipyard. Before the project could commence, the vast swamp-land that constituted the site needed to be cleared of mosquitoes that, it was feared, might carry malaria or even yellow fever. Though malaria was almost unheard of in the city and yellow fever utterly absent, authorities feared their emergence among the tens of thousands of laborers who would one day man the fifty slipways. Royer took to the task with a single-mindedness that brooked no obstacles, especially the political barriers that so often arose when large projects were contemplated in Philadelphia. Royer relentlessly drained the swamps through the construction of main and secondary drainage canals, installed pumping stations, and sprayed kerosene to suffocate mosquito larvae. In an article detailing his efforts—and future efforts he hoped to undertake throughout the state—Royer asserted that “limiting the work to political subdivisions, operating independently, is not practicable.”³⁸ His attitude toward local political concerns presaged his attitude toward and treatment of local politicians and small business when the greatest epidemic in the nation's history, the influenza epidemic of 1918–19, emerged.³⁹

The epidemic, first reported in Boston on August 27, was detected in Philadelphia as early as the first week of September. By September 20, the virus had entered every city in the state and was well along in its assault on most towns, villages, and mining camps. Without a strong federal public health service, each state and community met the epidemic in its own manner and according to its own resources. Unlike almost every other state, where local communities generally fought lonely battles against influenza with little aid from state health agencies, Pennsylvania chose to fight the epidemic under the aegis of a statewide, coordinated response because its health leader, Royer, chose to do so and possessed the power to implement his designs. The legislation that created the Department of Health permitted unilateral action, including quarantines, if the commissioner of health deemed it necessary, and further provided that “it shall be the duty of the Commissioner of Health to protect the health of the people of the State, and to determine and employ the most efficient and practical means for the prevention and suppression of disease.”⁴⁰ Between 1905 and 1918 the department enforced numerous family,

institutional, and community quarantines. Thus, legislation and precedent meant Royer needed neither the permission nor the consent of the governor or legislature to impose his epidemic response program. In the event, the governor, Martin Grove Brumbaugh, on vacation in Maine throughout the summer with his young bride, returned to the state only after the main sequence of the epidemic was underway.

The plan Royer devised to meet the epidemic had twin goals: preservation of lives through a rational, public health-based response and the unabated production of vital war material in the mines, factories, and mills. To meet these requirements, Royer opted not to slap an absolute quarantine on the state; rather, the order he issued is best conceptualized as a crowd ban, and Royer often referred to it as such. He directed the full force of the ban toward public entertainment venues: theaters, vaudeville houses, nickelodeon arcades, sporting events, and especially saloons. He left to local officials the decision to close houses of worship and schools if they believed it necessary—and most did take these steps—with some communities, for instance Bethlehem, isolating dormitories, coffeeshops, and other potential gathering places, too.

It is important to note that most historians, including Alfred W. Crosby Jr. in his work *Epidemic and Peace* 1918, and the more recent popular study by John Barry, *The Great Influenza*, misidentified the crowd bans as begun by Philadelphia and its health director, Dr. Wilmer Krusen.⁴¹ Such an interpretation envisions the state's crowd ban as a series of local quarantines initiated by local officials. This was not the case as Krusen acted on Royer's orders and, like other local health officers, only ended the closure order when Royer permitted.

Even when local authorities closed schools and churches, the ban left a great deal of room for large businesses, public transportation, and most small businesses to operate. In addition to the crowd ban that went into effect on October 4, Royer ordered cases of influenza be reported to the state by nurses, physicians, and local health boards. Royer also urged communities to stock supplies, call for volunteers, and identify buildings large enough to serve as emergency hospitals, and noted that results in Boston suggested that placing patients in open-air settings reduced mortality rates.⁴² To increase the supply of nurses, Royer closed 120 state tuberculosis dispensaries and released the nurses for local service.⁴³

Royer's approach toward the fight against influenza fit well with the general theory and practice of anti-epidemic measures he and other officials

utilized during community outbreaks of other diseases. Though his actions might appear unremarkable during peacetime, Royer stood apart from most of the nation's states and many of its health officers, whose pronouncements regularly told the public that there was little to fear and later, after the public realized there was much to fear, that the worst was past and the epidemic nearly over. Furthermore, events encouraged local and state officials to comply with his orders as he was seemingly the only official prepared to offer solid answers to the disaster confronting the state.

In Philadelphia officials who often sparred with Harrisburg now spoke of the epidemic's effects on their wards in awed terms. Edwin Vare, South Philadelphia's political boss, told health officials that "conditions in South Philadelphia were worse than at any time in his experience" and that "the people were panic stricken, the doctors overworked, and many pharmacies short of the necessary drugs."⁴⁴ It appears that in this atmosphere of sickness and death, and the raw fear it produced, even politicians who jealously guarded their prerogatives—and Vare was undisputedly a jealous politico—yielded to the advice of Royer. Not a single word of protest emerged from political quarters in Philadelphia until nearly November, when some agitation for saloon and theater openings appeared.

In the parlance of the twenty-first century, Royer employed social distancing measures which, as an important University of Michigan study suggested, offered the chance to slow transmission of the virus and thus moderate the rapid morbidity curve that led to overwhelmed hospitals, nurses, and families and increased the case fatality rates and overall mortality rates communities suffered.⁴⁵ Indeed, twenty-first-century plans to meet an outbreak of influenza rely upon social distancing measures to reduce the rate of viral transmission between people.

The crowd ban constituted the passive element of Royer's plan to fight the epidemic. For the active portion of his plan, Royer aimed to respond to communities' requests for aid as much as conditions allowed. To facilitate the department's activities, Royer temporarily coupled it to the Pennsylvania Council for National Defense, an organization designed to react to war emergencies and one that maintained offices in every major community in the commonwealth, including most county seats. With the governor returned to Harrisburg and backing Royer's scheme, the council immediately provided Royer with clerks to manage the reports and pleas that arrived continuously by telegraph and telephone.⁴⁶ Not strictly subordinate to Royer, the council helped organize responses based upon Royer's requests. The council, for

instance, arranged for extra embalmers for communities overwhelmed by the unburied dead, moved a sealed train filled with medical students under cover of night from Harrisburg to the coal town of Pottsville, and collected pharmaceutical supplies.

The role the military assumed in the state's struggle with the epidemic was another anomaly and one that Royer fostered. In the best-known recent history of the epidemic in America, John Barry wrote that "the army, itself under violent attack from the virus, would lend none of its doctors to civilian communities no matter how desperate the circumstances."⁴⁷ As terrible as the epidemic was for civilians, the military's experience was far worse; camps hastily erected in the wake of America's declaration of war to train troops existed in a state of constant overcrowding. When influenza arrived in the camp, one case might turn into hundreds every day for weeks, with the worst-hit camps losing hundreds of men. Camp Crane, located in Allentown, proved the greatest exception to this rule. The only major camp to train solely medical personnel—ambulance drivers, medics, orderlies, and physicians—Camp Crane avoided the full force of the virus through close surveillance of barracks, immediate removal of confirmed and suspected cases of flu, and better general access to medical care both in the camp and on a per diem basis at a community hospital that lay across the street from the camp. The result was not only a relative handful of deaths, about a dozen, but also a large body of medical men trained to operate under emergency conditions and equipped with ambulances, efficient command and control, and stocks of highly mobile medical supplies. Yet even with these reserves of men and equipment, neither the army nor the camp's commanders offered their services. As Royer scoured the state for resources, he recognized the potential of Camp Crane.

Royer enjoyed a long association with the military beginning in 1911, when he was commissioned a lieutenant in the Army's Medical Reserve Corps, a commission he did not resign until 1927. His relationship with the military grew closer when, in April 1917, the Army promoted Royer to the rank of captain and appointed him chairman of the Harrisburg Army Medical Board, where he vetted the abilities of medical professionals called to serve, evaluated their physical fitness level, and recommended the rank each merited. In his recollections, which Royer penned in the third person, he wrote that his "joint relation with the U.S. Army . . . and his full authority as Commissioner of Health gave him permission to get release of many Army physicians."⁴⁸

Royer convinced the army to provide more than 100 physicians for service in civilian communities. Some physicians undertook work at colleges and universities close to Camp Crane with several more engaged at an emergency hospital in Bethlehem, which treated the sick from the Bethlehem Steel Corporation's enormous mill complex, the largest producer of finished munitions in the world and a cornerstone of the Entente's war effort. Royer deployed most of the physicians, however, to the anthracite coal region to care for those whose bout of influenza was worsened by years of inhalation of mineral dust. Passing anecdotal evidence of the army's efforts appeared in one of the few literary works to examine the influenza epidemic. Author John O'Hara from Pottsville, fifteen years old in 1918, recounted the gray army ambulances and confident personnel from Camp Crane in his short story *The Doctor's Son*.⁴⁹ Doctors from the camp materialized as far afield as Altoona, 200 miles from Allentown, and positively contributed to Pennsylvania's anti-epidemic fight, with Royer coordinating their service, moving them from crisis to crisis as a general moves troops. According to the Department of Health, Royer managed to assemble 293 emergency hospitals staffed with 851 enlisted personnel and 125 Army physicians, all in a matter of six weeks.⁵⁰

Notwithstanding the acting commissioner's efforts and experience, Pennsylvania counted tens of thousands dead by the end of October. It was impossible then—and remains an elusive proposition today—to quantify how many more deaths might have occurred had Royer not acted with such swift, strong measures. What could be quantified by local officials were the effects the closure order exerted on local economies; the crowd ban aimed to save lives and continue war-related manufacturing at all costs, even if the measures bankrupted elements of the local small-business community.

The ban fell most heavily on the politically and economically important alcohol and entertainment portion of local economies. The economic effect especially aggravated machine politicians who depended upon fees and pay-offs from saloons, speakeasies, brothels, bawdy houses, and theaters to pad their own salaries and ensure the smooth operation of the wards. Throughout his career Royer evinced little respect for political interests when they conflicted with the public health.

An additional tension existed between Royer and local governments and business communities: His disdain for alcohol. Not a prominent prohibitionist, Royer nevertheless shared with many of his medical contemporaries a dislike for a substance often believed at the root of the physical and psychological

deterioration they daily confronted in hospitals and during public health efforts. Several of the cases of anthrax and other diseases Royer highlighted in articles included endnotes that pointed to alcohol and delirium tremens as contributory causes to death. With prohibition almost a national reality and brewing suspended during the war to free up grain, labor, and railroad space for the war effort, all businesses connected to the liquor trade believed themselves under siege.

The city of Lancaster broke first from the crowd ban. Officials in the city of 50,000 pointed to an obscure clause of their city charter, which they claimed superseded state law. When the city fathers took the next step and reopened the saloons and theaters, Royer ordered the state police to block all roads into the city and ordered trains to detour around the city or, if moving through the city, not stop for transfers of passengers and freight. A county court sided with the city and ordered Royer to lift his roadblocks and allow train traffic, but he would not relent and Lancaster once again closed its entertainment venues and fell in line with the state ban; the economic toll of road and rail closures far outweighed the financial distress the ban caused. However, continuation of the ban faced a far greater challenge in Pennsylvania's second city.

In 1918 a Republican machine whose operational style remained almost unchanged by Progressive Era reforms possessed Pittsburgh. The machine jealously safeguarded a forty-year-old agreement with the state legislature that allowed Pittsburgh to operate largely outside state public health laws.⁵¹ The public health and sanitary ramifications included the worst rates of morbidity and mortality of any large American city and a standard of living for workers even worse than that experienced by laborers in, for instance, the more famous hovels of Birmingham and Chicago. The city possessed no community hospital beyond a tuberculosis farm while its Board of Health was managed by a former city treasurer with no medical training. When the state imposed the crowd ban on October 4, city officials, the mayor included, professed no knowledge of the order and then attempted to delay enforcement. Pittsburgh enacted only the barest anticrowd measures and failed to close either schools or houses of worship until the end of the month and opened only a few very small emergency hospitals late in October. In fact, the head of the Pittsburgh board of health believed that by tracking sickness and deaths among pupils, the board might extrapolate the progress and severity of the epidemic in the city as a whole.⁵² Royer urged more action, but as long as the city did not violate his ban order and continued to report cases of influenza, he could not compel action on the part of the city.

On October 29, as deaths and revenue losses climbed, the mayor of Pittsburgh, Edward V. Babcock, traveled to Harrisburg to request an easing of the ban in his city. Royer denied the request and during the last third of October and the first third of November, Babcock and Royer traded accusations and insults. Babcock offered as his reasons the obvious (to his mind) failure of the ban to control the disease and his own position as the duly elected leader of the city of Pittsburgh, with both claims ignored by progressive citizens' groups and Royer.⁵³ The health commissioner countered the mayor's arguments by pointing to the clear mandate within the 1905 state health department legislation and the peculiar requirements of wartime production.

Royer deftly positioned those who wished to defy the ban as poor American citizens who chose alcohol and entertainment over the needs of the sons of the nation who were in the fight of their lives in Europe. In the Pittsburgh newspapers, Royer proclaimed that "liquor interests stand alone in their efforts to lift the order and in their total disregard for public health and welfare." He exhorted women, often viewed by public health officials as a first line of defense against disease, to demand their husbands support the closure order. Royer also launched, because 1918 was an election year, a series of scathing critiques of politicians who used the ban to further their own political aims. Royer appealed to the better instincts of his fellow citizens when he implored them to not pull "political chestnuts out of the alcoholic flame" by supporting anticrowd ban politicians in the upcoming elections.⁵⁴ So important was the fight in Pittsburgh that US Surgeon General Rupert Blue threatened to declare Pittsburgh a "military district" and close all saloons and theaters for the duration of the war, with Army infantry patrols used to enforce the closures.⁵⁵ Royer sent state investigators to the city and an Allegheny County judge promised to support the Department of Health and send ban violators to prison and pull liquor licenses from any business that did not comply with the commissioner of health.

The fight over the ban that raged between the state and the city acquired the trappings of a personal battle between Babcock and Royer. Legally, Royer stood on firm footing; nothing less than a change in the law by the legislature or a ruling by the state supreme court could overturn the ban. Perhaps the strength of the legislation prompted Pittsburgh officials, especially the mayor, to concentrate pressure on Royer, including personal attacks, rather than a court injunction, to end the ban. As November began, recriminations flew between the men and their respective backers. Babcock characterized Royer as "drunk with power."⁵⁶ Furthermore, wrote Babcock, a "pall"

hung over his city, the direct result not of the epidemic, but of the crowd ban.⁵⁷ A progressive group, the Citizen's Political Union of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, contradicted the mayor and insisted that "the depression in our city caused by deserted assembly places by reason of the ban is not to be compared with the terror in the city caused by the spread of the disease."⁵⁸

The bickering in Pittsburgh was not simply a spat over local and state prerogatives, but clearly underscored the resistance of Old Guard, machine politicians to the power of and reforms championed by public health leaders and progressive political groups. The war effort, which the ban helped protect, added another dimension to Royer's efforts to preserve the ban. In Royer's estimation, decent citizens faced the obligation of pitching in no matter the economic and social costs. A former assistant surgeon general of the USPHS, A. J. Lanza, who supported the uniquely strong Pennsylvania ban, echoed Royer's views when he suggested that when "General Pershing cables for guns and ammunition we cannot tell him that we cannot send the supplies because we did not quarantine a city for fear it would be an inconvenience to the merchants and saloon men."⁵⁹ Royer tied his state's fight against the epidemic directly to a much broader fight on the battlefields of Europe. In the end, these two willful men, Babcock and Royer, personified a conflict between two paradigms, one founded upon nineteenth-century notions of local control, including antiquated notions of epidemic control, while the other was science-based and demanded that the disciples of the new public health be granted broad latitude to meet epidemics and other threats to the public's health, regardless of political concerns.

In January 1919, long before the last embers of the epidemic died, the term of Governor Brumbaugh came to a close. The new governor, W. C. Sproul, might have renewed Royer's appointment, as had the three previous governors, but declined. The reasons are difficult to pin down, and no documentation exists to confirm suspicions, but the logic can be guessed. Royer was the new face of the department, a visage less respected than Samuel Dixon. Though a Republican, Royer was unpopular with the political leaders of Pittsburgh, Allentown, Lancaster, and certain corners of Philadelphia. The mayor of Pittsburgh was an ally of Senator Penrose, and Penrose may have influenced Sproul's decision to release Royer. Indeed, the crowd ban nearly hamstrung Sproul's election campaign in its last months; with saloons closed, the ward bosses faced difficulties organizing their constituents for the ballot box, especially in Pittsburgh, while the prohibition of crowds put a halt to stump speeches. Sproul's Democratic opponent, Judge E. C. Bonniwell,

exploited the limitations the crowd ban placed on his opponent's campaign. For instance, Sproul faced accusations that he backed the ban on alcohol, with some Bonniwell supporters suggesting to steelworkers that even though doctors believed whiskey might save them and their families, they were forbidden from prescribing it because of Royer's order.⁶⁰

The end of Royer's tenure marked the conclusion of an important chapter in the history of Pennsylvania medicine; the next director, Dr. Edward Martin of Philadelphia, was a purely political appointee who more than ten years before led the Philadelphia Department of Health and Charities. Not a bad physician, Martin was sixty years old at the time of his appointment and not a technocratic public health visionary in the mold of Dixon or Royer. He was, however, conservative and possessed a long record of complacency in the face of political pressure. In Pennsylvania, political payback and political reward—the sacking of Royer and appointment of Martin—reflected two sides of the same coin. Martin's appointment opened an era in which the state Department of Health might be considered competent, but not visionary, a state of affairs that continues through the early twenty-first century.

In February 1919 Royer was an unmarried forty-eight-year-old whose decade-long association with the state Department of Health was finished. That month, Ursinus College conferred an honorary doctor of science degree upon him, his testimonial read by Dr. Wilmer Krusen, head of the Philadelphia Department of Health and, in the late 1890s, Royer's preceptor. Krusen praised Royer for his dedication to science and medicine and said, in part, "During the past year . . . he administered the laws in fighting, with vigor and effect, the worst epidemic disease in modern times, and organized relief for the sick in many parts of the state with great dispatch, saving many lives."⁶¹ At this juncture Royer might well have retired from public life and enjoyed a long retirement, or perhaps begun a modest private practice or a professorship. An event nearly a thousand miles away, however, intervened and set his life upon its course for the next twenty years.

The port of Halifax, Nova Scotia, was a major gathering point for convoys of men and equipment headed to Great Britain during World War I, its waters crowded with vessels waiting for escort while ashore the dockyards bustled with all manner of commerce. The port of Halifax was really two ports: The eastern portion, which bordered the Atlantic Ocean, was called Halifax Harbor with a slender strip of water called the Narrows connecting it to a large interior port to the west called Bedford Basin. The Narrows separated Halifax from the smaller city of Dartmouth, and both looked toward

the port for their livelihoods. On December 6, 1917, the French freighter *Mont Blanc* collided with the Norwegian freighter *Imo* in the Narrows. The *Mont Blanc*, heavily laden with thousands of tons of gun cotton, cordite, powder charges, shells, and barrels of benzol, drifted for twenty minutes toward the piers of Halifax. The thick, black smoke that poured from her holds prompted thousands of people to move toward window and waterfront to watch the spectacle.

The detonation of the *Mont Blanc* was catastrophic; the ship disappeared between blinks of an eye, and pieces that weighed several tons landed more than three miles away, the rain of hot metal igniting fires throughout the cities of Halifax and Dartmouth. The blast constituted the largest manmade explosion in history until the 1945 atomic test. The force of the explosion raised a tsunami sixty feet high that destroyed a Micmac Indian settlement on the harbor's edge. Photographs taken in the minutes after the explosion captured a mushroom cloud rising thousands of feet above a boiling maelstrom of smoke and fire. More than 1,600 people died in the first seconds following the explosion, with bodies thrown upon roofs, buried under rubble, and tangled in trees. Scores more lay buried alive under mounds of rubble, doomed to a miserable death from the cold, wet December weather. The pressure wave the explosion caused rushed out in all directions and caught people looking out windows unprepared. The concussion shattered thousands of windows and sent glass into the eyes of schoolchildren and office workers and transformed Halifax into the West's blindness capital. The city pressed partially destroyed buildings into service as morgues, with bodies in one location and parts of bodies in another.

The response from Canada and New England, especially Boston, overwhelmed the city. Within only a day, a train filled with supplies left Boston, followed by volunteers and donations. A year after the explosion, more than \$250,000 remained unspent and officials in Halifax and Massachusetts decided to use the money to improve the city's public health and established the Massachusetts-Halifax Health Commission.⁶² In October 1919 the commission asked Royer to act as its chief executive officer, responsible for all public health operations in the city. Royer accepted and moved immediately to Halifax, where his experience in overseeing citywide public health operations under trying conditions—and in the case of Halifax this included not just a blasted city but one with a growing smallpox epidemic when Royer arrived—perfectly suited him to the task he faced. His first major undertaking was the opening of Health Center no. 1 in the Admiralty House,

a grand three-story stone house originally built by the Royal Navy in the early nineteenth century to house the fleet admiral when he was in Halifax. Though it suffered serious damage from the blast, workers repaired the building and provided the only available substantial structure that might offer space for medical outreach within the “devastated zone,” as officials called the area closest to the explosion.⁶³ The Admiralty House became a center of public health efforts with rooms for prenatal and neonatal work, tuberculosis examination, “psychopathic” rooms for people suffering adverse reactions to the blast and its aftermath—what modern physicians term post-traumatic stress disorder—and general administrative offices, and was followed by two other centers and several substations in the years that followed.⁶⁴ The task before him, however, required not only health stations but a systematic, city-wide approach to public health and public medicine that carried healthcare work to the community, a model never before tried in Halifax.

The task of carrying healthcare to the community highlighted Royer’s multifaceted, scientific approach to public health. He cut Halifax and Dartmouth into districts, with each district assigned a public health nurse. Always an ally of nurses, and women in general as key to public health efforts, he most relied upon trained nurses at Halifax. The nurses of Halifax, he wrote, were “responsible for the entire public health program in the district assigned to her, and for the health of every member of each family with whom she comes in contact.”⁶⁵ Women fairly ran the health centers and substations and, when Royer founded a well-baby clinic, he hired a female dentist who had long experience treating children and declared that, with regard to baby welfare stations, he considered nurses as having “as much or more value than doctors.” To maintain a pool of nurses, Dalhousie University appointed him a professor in the school of medicine in 1920 where he taught courses on medical jurisprudence and, crucially, founded and directed Canada’s first program in public health nursing, a six-month-long postgraduate course of lectures and fieldwork.⁶⁶ Many of the graduates remained in Halifax to carry out the work of the commission under Royer’s careful eye and that of another Pennsylvanian, a nurse from Tunkhannock named Jessie Leona Ross. Ross, thirty-nine years old in 1920 when Royer appointed her chief nurse for the commission, was considered one of the most experienced public health nurses in Pennsylvania, with decades spent as a tuberculosis nurse, past president of the state’s nursing association, and head of state child welfare programs during World War I. Whatever the nature of their relationship before her appointment by Royer in 1920, they were married on July 19, 1923, at the

American Consulate General and remained, until her death, closely entwined personally and professionally.

Research and publishing played a prominent role in every appointment Royer accepted, and his time in Halifax proved no exception. In the main, the articles and lectures that emerged from his three-and-a-half-year stay in Halifax highlighted the manner in which commission-funded efforts reduced morbidity and mortality, offered instruction to the community, and increased the standard of living for all Halifax, all written in dry, scientific terms. He offered one address at the annual meeting of the Provincial Council of Combatting Venereal Diseases in early summer 1920, however, that outlined the best methods of venereal disease control while mixing the moral convictions of a confirmed Christian with a strikingly frank discussion of human sexuality and included pointed remarks concerning gender double standards. He recognized the need to work with courts so that the “immoral and criminal classes” might be treated while confined for trial or punishment and, in a novel twist, suggested some criminals be offered suspended sentences in return for venereal disease treatment. In his estimation, however, more important than treatment was education about venereal disease, and its often-understated consequences, and the banishment of the mythology that he believed surrounded sex and sexuality. The myths—for instance the fear that male orgasm while sleeping dissipated a man’s essence, that celibacy might lead to serious sickness, or that “there should be a double standard of morals,” one for men and one for women—were designed to “exonerate the weak and impure man who so often comes to the marriage bed after having fallen times without number, and expects to meet there a virgin mate.”⁶⁷ Royer continued that “only when you have come to insist that what is fair and just for the male is fair and just for the female” would society manage to preserve the purity of youth for procreation in marriage.

Though his address expressed egalitarian notions, his general thrust was toward ensuring proper marital relations and healthy offspring. Of couples who wished to avoid pregnancy for “selfish or prudential motives,” Royer accused them of “treason to society, treason to humanity.” The address was the most personal explication of Royer’s views on gender, sex, and sexuality and offered a tantalizing glimpse of a man who believed that modern society must confront sex in an honest, science-based manner even while he remained committed to orthodox views surrounding intercourse as an act reserved for marriage and expressly designed, through “the Providential plan for bringing a family into life.”⁶⁸

As Royer continuously refined the commission's operations and Halifax slowly recovered from the explosion, North American public health experts, including the Rockefeller Foundation, studied its activities.⁶⁹ He turned now to problems of infrastructure and lifestyle. An expert in water treatment, Royer surveyed the watersheds and sterilization methods of Halifax and Dartmouth, pronounced them polluted, and prescribed a switch from chloride of lime to liquid chlorine, the standard chlorine delivery system in most American and Canadian cities.⁷⁰ In a further reflection of his experience in Pennsylvania, Royer recommended a system of tuberculosis hospitals and dispensaries for the city and urged the construction of a municipal infectious disease hospital. Ever mindful that much of the good a public health program accomplishes stems from educating the community, Royer directed much of the commission's energy toward instruction of families in basic hygiene and lifestyle choices. Concomitantly, the nomenclature he employed to describe the goals of such programs offers scholars a small but important window onto his personal views of health maintenance and personal morality. Of the physicians in Halifax who opposed pasteurization of milk, Royer wrote that "a good deal of backward education has to be overcome."⁷¹

Public health education also meant breaking unhealthy habits in the community. For instance, Royer charged the nurses of his Tuberculosis Service to impress upon their patients the "lessons of right living." In another minor attempt at social engineering, Royer divided the spacious grounds of Health Center no. 1 into thirty garden plots where, he hoped, families who lived in tenements might "acquire a taste and desire for a real home with a garden," even if he failed to acknowledge that such accommodations remained financially unrealistic for tenement populations. Royer also wished to introduce the middle-class university student to volunteerism and duty at the Dalhousie University health station, hoping to ensure that "students will have an opportunity to acquire the right attitude of mind toward community service."⁷²

Perhaps his only major deviation from a community-wide approach to public health was his treatment of "Africville," an Afro-Canadian slum filled with people long shunned by Halifax's white population and now homeless, too. The poorest segment of the population, Africville merited only a substation and periodic visits by a nurse. The soft racism of North America's progressives informed the quality and quantity of aid Halifax's blacks received. Defects aside, by the time Royer resigned in mid-1923, the health commission credited him with halving the overall death rate, from 20 per 1,000 to 11.7 per 1,000, an annual savings of 480 lives for four straight years.⁷³

His return to the United States did not signal a lessening of his public health labors. During 1924 Royer surveyed nineteen cities in the western United States on behalf of the American Child Health Association, which published his findings as part of a compendium entitled *A Health Survey of 86 Cities* in 1925. The volume is the most detailed single examination of child welfare in small- to medium-sized cities during the early postwar period. A year later the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness appointed him medical director. The appointment came at least in part as a result of his work in Halifax, the aftermath of which the Society watched closely. Already a budding expert in the treatment of eye injuries caused by trauma, he threw himself into the mission of understanding blindness, especially blindness prevention in children. In his capacity as medical director, Royer oversaw all aspects of the Society's national program and reached forcefully into new territory. Drawing on his experience in Pennsylvania, he lobbied industries to adopt safety glasses and update lighting to reduce eyestrain. As children always loomed large in Royer's public health efforts, he championed inspection of schoolchildren for vision defects and advocated well-lit classrooms so that children might avoid falling behind in their studies for want of proper eyesight.⁷⁴ For six summers, Royer offered ten-lecture courses on the topic of blindness and its prevention at major universities, including Columbia, Tulane, and Chicago, and offered an extraordinary sixty scholarly papers and lectures and fifteen radio lectures.

Royer took particular pride in his outreach to physicians and public health officials at all levels of government and understood how these professionals thought and what might motivate them to act upon his concerns. Royer was not concerned with guarding his organization's turf, but rather defeating blindness in the most efficient manner, which meant interagency cooperation. In 1935, after he retired from the Society, Royer wrote a piece in their *Proceedings* in which he explicated his vision of a campaign against blindness through the combined efforts of multiple agencies, a campaign he orchestrated as medical director. The "best results," he believed, "may be achieved through conference of all groups, official and volunteer, in states and municipalities that have a contribution to make to conservation of sight and prevention of blindness."⁷⁵

Shortly after he assumed the medical directorship of the Society, Royer issued a major challenge to public health officials, clinicians, and scientists to evaluate the body of knowledge related to trachoma. Trachoma is a bacterial infection of the eyes, often associated with the bacteria species that produce chlamydia and gonorrhea, though other bacteria also play a role. Symptoms,

which usually manifest shortly after birth or in early childhood, include soreness, exudate, and scarring of the eye, which had led to vision impairment and blindness for millions of Americans.

Royer viewed trachoma as simply another disease with serious consequences for sufferers and society and therefore in need of prevention and cure, and his previous statements on venereal disease presaged his open and blunt approach toward discussing trachoma with medical professionals and the public alike. Trachoma's association with venereal disease resulted in doctors avoiding the topic with their patients and diminished the likelihood of rapid treatment. In his first major address on the disease, in 1926, Royer highlighted for his peers the role "common wisdom," unsupported by scientific study, played in their understanding of trachoma, including conclusions about the disorder's etiology, contagiousness, and treatment and challenged them to reexamine their work and discard unsupported theories. He went on to suggest that "some reports alleged to be epidemiological studies are mere surveys of prevalence." Royer challenged physicians, public health services, and governments to allot the necessary resources to rid the world of "perhaps the greatest single cause of vision impairment and blindness."⁷⁶ Less than a year later, Royer devoted an entire article to the role venereal infections played in the sight impairment and blindness of both children and adults, and impressed upon his audience that not everyone struck low with venereal-associated vision problems bore the "stigma of immorality."⁷⁷

His efforts bore almost immediate dividends; by 1931, his next major article on the subject happily acknowledged that he might now discuss the link between venereal disease and blindness before groups of physicians and social workers without fear of giving offense.⁷⁸ Furthermore, both groups acknowledged tracing perhaps 15 percent of cases of blindness to venereal disease with several times that number of nonblinding vision defects traceable to venereal disease. Royer also noted that states and physicians had moved toward greater control of trachoma and its fellow travelers.

The progress against the disease that affected millions, regardless of social class and color, was the result of a coordinated assault. The first step was to initiate scientific investigation of the disease. As new data, unfettered by antiquated notions of the disease's etiology, emerged and confirmed the role of venereal disease in blindness, his focus shifted to public health measures. Most important, he led a campaign to promote the use of silver nitrate drops as an integral part of the birthing process. Doctors had for years understood that a drop of silver nitrate in each eye immediately after birth lessened babies' chance of developing what laypeople termed "babies' sore eyes," and

what clinicians understood as trachoma.⁷⁹ A single drop ended the danger of blindness from almost every bacterial species that might gain entry to the newborn's eyes during birth, but parents, doctors, and midwives often neglected the drops because they disbelieved or misunderstood its efficacy.

Convincing physicians to standardize use of silver nitrate was relatively uncomplicated, but parents and midwives often remained unconvinced. To reach these populations, Royer oversaw a program of pamphlet distribution, every one of which included a sketch of an infant with infected eyes and a mother trying to decide upon a course of action. Alternatively, pamphlet sketches depicted older children lamenting the fact that though their mothers recognized they suffered from sore eyes as infants, their mothers refused to seek a physician's aid and silver nitrate drops, and their blindness and stunted lives were the direct—and inexcusable—result. He also lobbied legislatures for passage of state and local laws requiring the use of silver nitrate and inspection for the disease in public schools, and for stronger enforcement of the laws already on the books that governed silver nitrate use. Nationally, the campaigns against trachoma and other venereal disease–related causes of blindness, inspection of schoolchildren, and industrial-accident blindness prevention increased the rate and quality of research, raised awareness through education, and dropped rates of blindness nationally. As always, Royer utilized nurses in the education and inspection programs of the Society, especially with regard to children.

As he waged his fight against trachoma, Royer also founded a committee dedicated to compiling as much statistical data about blindness during all periods of life and using that data to effect prevention and treatment programs. So extensive and reliable were the data compiled by the committee that the National Security Board used the Society's statistics to classify degrees of disability, and therefore relief, for the blind and sight-impaired.⁸⁰ In this instance, the remarkable fight Royer led against blindness in all its forms was carried, through the apparatus of the New Deal, to every sight-impaired person in the nation; the amount of government assistance one received depended upon gradations of impairment devised by Royer and his colleagues at the Society.

In the midst of his work for the Society, Royer's wife and partner in public health work fell ill. During the late 1920s Ross-Royer worked alongside her husband at the Society and was charged by the Society with developing a vision test for preschool children. Ross-Royer's product was brilliant; she developed a game based upon ophthalmologist-designed vision charts that

worked for testing not only the vision of normally developed children, but also illiterate youngsters and children who did not speak English. According to Royer, physicians and public health officials across North America praised the test. By 1932 Ross-Royer was clearly ill, though the nature of her sickness remains unclear. Royer resigned from the Society in early 1932 so he might personally care for his wife when she slipped into infirmity at their home in Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania, for the next ten months. In October 1932 Ross-Royer died and was buried in a solitary grave. Royer remained in the town through 1936, close to her family who were prominent members of the town's society.

In March 1933 Royer offered to assist in the organization of the Pennsylvania Emergency Child Health Committee, conceived in response to the privation of the Great Depression. The head of the committee was Dr. Samuel McClintock Hammill, president of the American Child Health Association and former head of the American Pediatric Society, and he accepted Royer as his First Vice President. The committee was run through subcommittees in every county in Pennsylvania but was centrally managed as a joint venture between the Pennsylvania Emergency Relief Board and the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania. By his own count and for no salary, between 1933 and 1936 Royer visited each of the state's sixty-seven counties at least ten times to coordinate activities of local committee members, survey the needs of children either on state relief or candidates for such relief, and act as a go-between bridging the gap between Harrisburg and the rest of the state. In three years Royer delivered lectures before forty-two medical societies and more than a hundred more lectures before public health groups and concerned citizens, and sent roughly 1,000 handwritten notes and reports to President Hammill.⁸¹ The testimony of the Society, largely based upon county-level statistical analysis on childhood malnutrition and other major medical disorders, was part of congressional testimony during the hearings on the Economic Security (Social Security) Act of 1935. In 1936 Royer resigned his role in the Society and married Nellie (Geiger) Kauffman. They married in her family's ancestral farm in southern Franklin County, the place of Royer's birth. He left his home in Tunkhannock for what would become his place of residence until the end of his life. In 1937 Royer acted as president of the Pennsylvania Council for the Blind while the elected president recovered from an illness, and between 1938 and 1939 he served as chair of the Franklin County Child Health Committee.

Just as Royer appeared reconciled to retirement, war once again stirred his patriotism and compelled him to petition the Procurement Board in Washington, DC, to place him in any capacity in any of the uniformed armed services or the US Public Health Service. The government declined his request because of his advanced age, but the continued drain of doctors from Pennsylvania in 1942 prompted the Department of Health to enlist Royer as a physician at the Mont Alto tuberculosis hospital in December 1942. In April 1943 the state requested Royer take over as medical director at the Cresson tuberculosis hospital nestled in the mountains about seventy-five miles east of Pittsburgh. Royer instituted a regime of strict quarantine measures in the hospital to limit cross-infection between the advanced, infectious cases among the patient population and those patients who were recovering or asymptomatic. His scheme merited a combined audience of the Blair and Cambria County medical societies and was met with a unanimous endorsement by all those present. His address was reprinted in the *Bulletin of the Cambria County Medical Society*. Regardless of his quarantine measures, the positive health outcomes of tuberculosis patients steadily increased during his tenure as a result of new therapies. In 1947 the use of the antibiotic streptomycin radically altered the topography of tuberculosis control. On September 1, 1947, the state removed Royer from his medical directorship and made him special medical advisor to the Division of Tuberculosis Control.

The position of special medical advisor conferred to Royer the responsibility of overseeing statewide efforts to isolate noncompliant pulmonary tuberculosis patients from not only the public, but from their families, too. As he had done thirty years before during the influenza epidemic, Royer labeled patients unwilling to follow treatment protocols and isolation measures a threat to public health. He paid particular attention to the eastern counties of the state, where, with the exception of Philadelphia County, public health officials and private physicians frequently adopted only weak patient control measures for tuberculosis cases though state law permitted isolation and control of movement. Again, Royer employed his method of educating medical professionals and interested laypeople, including the patients, to the dangers of active pulmonary tuberculosis cases in the community. Indeed, he informed tuberculosis case workers that until they “welcome restrictive measures when indicated they are only talking and playing with what is a real public health problem.”⁸² He turned then to tracking

the movements of infectious cases, noting their employment and housing situation. He next offered a carrot; patients could voluntarily enter treatment programs, sometimes at a local hospital or dispensary, though many faced a long convalescence in one of the remote state tuberculosis hospitals. Patients who refused to comply faced forced quarantine in home or hospital, and though most complied, Royer admitted he arrested and even jailed those whose resistance proved too entrenched for more mild measures. There can be little doubt that Royer viewed such imprisonments as perfectly justified in the interest of public safety, especially as it was imposed only as a last resort against people to whom he extended choices other than jail.

In 1948 Royer resigned his position with the Division of Tuberculosis Control, the last position of his career. Now seventy-eight years old, Royer was but a year shy of fifty years of medical and public health practice, spanning the entirety of the first half of the twentieth century. He returned to Franklin County where he and his wife made their home in Greencastle, only miles from the home of his birth. Their house, a red brick three-story structure constructed in 1930, bespoke an upper-middle-class lifestyle. Throughout the last decade of his life, Royer busied himself with his genealogies and local historical pursuits, acting as a director and vice-president of the county historical society from 1950 through 1959. He did not venture again into the public health arena, one of many decisions one wishes Royer had explained in a personal journal. With his affinity for history and genealogy, Royer likely reflected upon his life and the role his life played in creating the modern health conditions in the towns and farms he left in the mid-1890s. In myriad ways, Royer guided and sometimes imposed change on cities and the state—and later the nation—especially with respect to contagious disease prevention and treatment. On February 16, 1961, B. Franklin Royer, age ninety, gathered up his winter clothing and a snow shovel. A short time later his wife noticed him slumped in the snow.

B. Franklin Royer remains, with Samuel G. Dixon, one of the two most important medical figures produced by Pennsylvania. Indeed, in terms of lives saved, Royer's work far outdistanced that most celebrated of Pennsylvania-based physician-scientists, Jonas Salk. His career, however, and the effect his career exercised on the lives and health of millions of Pennsylvanians, Canadians, and the blind are entirely overlooked by historians. Yet each stage of Royer's professional development offers fruitful ground for scholarly research. Viewed through the sweeping lens of an

entire life, the trajectory of his career progressed from that of a mid-level public health officer in an American metropolis with a decidedly inefficient board of health, to a high-ranking health officer of the nation's second most populous and industrial state, a state newly equipped with a strong health department and legislation to back its mandates. Every opportunity to influence the public's health in the years that followed might be traced to his time in Pennsylvania, particularly his tenure in the Department of Health. Most insightful during that period was his fight against influenza, which highlighted his struggle to place the new science of medicine above the political inertia of the past and Royer's passion for public service. The epidemic also cast light upon another, less fortunate trait—his inability to view a political debate about the public's health in terms other than right and wrong; his position, which served him well in hospital and as the department's executive officer, emerged as a weakness during the fight over the crowd ban in Pittsburgh.

Royer was a progressive insofar as he believed in a technocratic approach to the solving of society's ills allied to clean government. His reliance upon science and the use of statistics fit neatly into the general trend among early twentieth-century medical experts to demand quantification of disease prevalence and the efficacy of treatments rather than reliance upon common wisdom and simple personal experience. Furthermore, Royer advocated for the place and importance of women as professional nurses in public health and medicine and enlisted the aid of women in combatting public menaces in their communities and homes. Concomitantly, he evinced conventional, but nevertheless disappointing indifference to the plight of, for instance, blacks in the aftermath of the Halifax explosion, whose community he largely ignored during his public health efforts. He tended also to write off the intelligence of people who failed to follow what he believed were indisputably good habits of living, such as those who expectorated on sidewalks and in train cars or people whom he believed willfully (and, no doubt, in his mind criminally) ignored tuberculosis laws. Yet, these failings must be balanced by a broad view of a life lived, from the age of twenty to the age of ninety, in the service of his fellow-citizens. Despite his varied achievements—and the long period of those achievements—historians and Pennsylvania allowed memory of his work to slip, almost unnoticed, into oblivion. Indeed, the website of the Pennsylvania Department of Health fails to even place his name or photograph in the list of the state's directors of health.

NOTES

This article benefitted immeasurably from the efforts of the late Professor William Pencak, who happily took the time to advise a person he never met, about how to make an essay he never saw completed, better.

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PENNSYLVANIA CREDIT IN THE VIRGINIA BACKCOUNTRY, 1746–1755

Turk McCleskey and James C. Squire

Abstract: This essay investigates economic connections between Virginia frontier settlements and Pennsylvania during the period 1746–55. We explore how frontier debtors in remote Augusta County, Virginia, acquired Pennsylvania monetary obligations, what happened when debts involving Pennsylvania money were litigated in Augusta County, and what exchange rate was used in judgments for debts denominated in Pennsylvania money. We find that fluctuations in Augusta County exchange rates correlated to the overall regional market for monetary exchanges involving pounds sterling and Pennsylvania or Virginia money. A statistical tool called the two-tailed student t-test indicates the correlation was not the result of random chance. We therefore conclude that ordinary settlers in the Virginia backcountry were thoroughly acquainted with Pennsylvania market conditions at an earlier period than previously has been recognized.

*I*n 1739 New Jersey speculator Benjamin Borden acquired over 90,000 acres in the upper Valley of Virginia and promptly began subdividing it. Most of Borden's clients immigrated from Ulster and the north of England, debarking at Delaware River ports and following the Great Wagon Road through Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and across Maryland into Virginia.¹ To one such newcomer, Nathaniel McClure, Borden sold a modest

tract located about a mile north of modern Lexington, Virginia, and well over 300 miles from Philadelphia (see fig. 1).²

As McClure settled into routines and relationships that defined the lives of frontier yeomen, he in many ways exemplified male Scots Irish immigrants of the mid-eighteenth century.³ The 180 acres he purchased from Borden included fertile soil close by the Great Wagon Road. McClure was mustered with a militia company in 1742, served as a neighborhood constable for a year beginning on March 10, 1745/6, and presented children for baptism by a Presbyterian minister in 1747 and 1749.⁴ Like many of his peers, McClure obtained goods and services on credit, acknowledging his indebtedness by

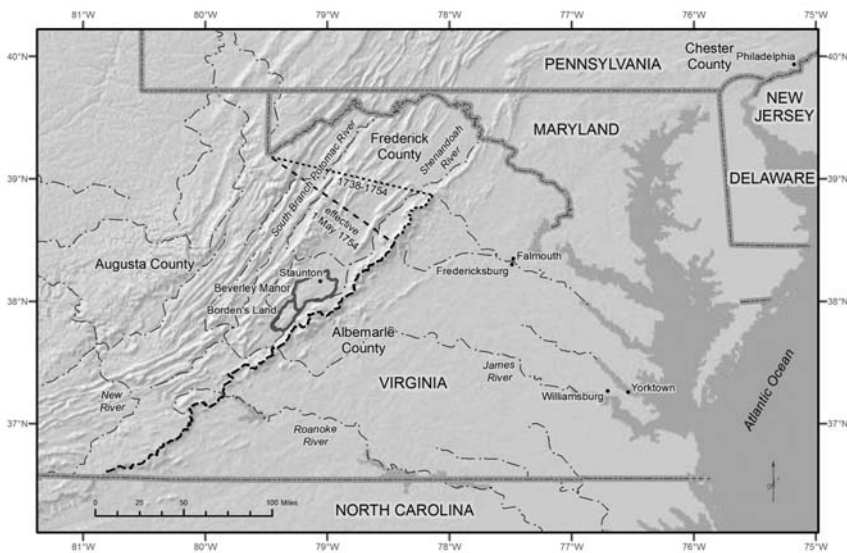


FIGURE 1: Augusta County, Virginia, 1738–1769. *Sources:* State boundaries: Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2004. Available online from <http://www.nhgis.org>. Shaded relief: World Shaded Relief: Copyright © 2009 ESRI, available online at: http://goto.arcgisonline.com/maps/World_Shaded_Relief. Rivers: National Atlas of the United States of America. Reston, VA: U.S. Geological Survey, n.d. Available online from <http://nationalatlas.gov/atlasftp-na.html>. Augusta County boundaries: DenBoer, Gordon, and Peggy Tuck Sinko. Virginia Historical Counties. Data Set. Laura Rico-Beck, digital comp. Atlas of Historical County Boundaries, ed. by John H. Long. Chicago: The Newberry Library, 2010. Available online from <http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp>. Augusta County border adjustment, 1754: Hening, *Statutes at Large* 6:376–79. Cartography by James W. Wilson, James Madison University.

signing notes of hand. Such notes were legally enforceable debt contracts to pay a sum certain to the creditor. As with a smaller proportion of his peers, McClure defaulted on at least two notes of hand, forcing creditors to sue him for £1:15:0 in 1746 and £6 in 1749. Intriguingly, both overdue sums were denominated in Pennsylvania currency.⁵

McClure's unpaid debts and others like them amount to evidence about early intercolonial business connections. Scholars long have recognized such ties in a somewhat later period, commercial links between colonial Pennsylvania and the Virginia settlements west of the Blue Ridge. In his 1978 book *Commercialism and Frontier: Perspectives on the Early Shenandoah Valley*, historical geographer Robert D. Mitchell investigated how the regional frontier economy of western Virginia increasingly was integrated into the larger economies of both colonies. Mitchell demonstrated that ordinary early settlers wanted to earn and spend money, and their spending impulse included purchases on credit.⁶ By 1760, according to Mitchell, Valley of Virginia settlers followed well-established routes to markets in Philadelphia as well as to the more modest port towns of tidewater Virginia. Exports of cattle, grain, butter, hides, and cloth thus financed the flow of consumer goods back to the Valley.⁷

Such a summary makes the backcountry economy sound almost orderly, but details of those commercial exchanges, especially with regard to credit relationships, remain obscure. Relatively few business records survive from frontier settlements, and Virginia debtors represented only a small proportion of accounts in Pennsylvania's voluminous mercantile documents. Anecdotal evidence from Frederick and Augusta counties, the two mid-century polities west of the Blue Ridge, indicates that some initial settlers in the Valley of Virginia maintained direct commercial relationships with Pennsylvania merchants and creditors.⁸ Beyond incidental glimpses, however, the extent to which Pennsylvanians traded with a whole region in colonial Virginia cannot be quantified from surviving mercantile records.

It is possible, however, to quantify the degree to which ordinary frontier Virginians like Nathaniel McClure were informed about market conditions in Pennsylvania. The calculations involve additional lawsuits from early Augusta County, which was organized in late 1745 and then considerably disorganized in the summer of 1755. As of the May court in the latter year—the last session before the onset of the Seven Years' War—plaintiffs had launched and concluded 3,764 suits. The majority of these cases involved some form of indebtedness.⁹

Of those early Augusta County debts, a minority but statistically significant proportion was denominated in Pennsylvania money. Of the 1,198 judgments in indebtedness cases for which the debt was recorded, at least 118—9.8 percent—involved Pennsylvania money. These 118 suits allow an exploration of three related questions: how did Augusta County debtors acquire Pennsylvania monetary obligations, what happened when debts involving Pennsylvania money were litigated in Augusta County, and what exchange rate was used in judgments for debts denominated in Pennsylvania money? The answers to these questions indicate that ordinary settlers in the Virginia backcountry were thoroughly acquainted with Pennsylvania market conditions at an earlier period than previously has been recognized.

How Augusta County Debtors Acquired Pennsylvania Monetary Obligations

Augusta County debts denominated in Pennsylvania money had diverse origins. Some delinquent debtors incurred their obligations as residents of northern colonies and subsequently moved to Virginia. Others were Virginians shopping abroad in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Unexpectedly, a third category of debtors were Virginians dealing with fellow Virginians.

Debtors residing in northern colonies who moved to Augusta County included John Scull of New Jersey (see table 1). As a young man living in Gloucester County, New Jersey, just across the Delaware River from Philadelphia, Scull executed a bond for £15 on May 21, 1746. Scull promised to pay Gloucester County resident Nicholas Gibbons by July 1, but instead immigrated to Augusta County. By late 1747, Gibbons had located the debtor and obtained a summons for Scull to appear before the next Augusta County court. Augusta County's sheriff served the summons on Scull, who twice failed to appear in court and answer Gibbons's suit. County magistrates therefore confirmed a conditional judgment against Scull. On February 28, 1749/50, a jury on a writ of inquiry found Gibbons's damages to be £15 proclamation money valued at £11:5:0 Virginia, plus costs.¹⁰

The second type of debtor was comprised of Augusta County residents who visited Pennsylvania. It seems today a daunting journey, but ordinary settlers such as Andrew Scott nevertheless sometimes undertook it. In the course of

TABLE 1. Middle-Colony Plaintiffs Suing in Augusta County for Debts Denominated in Pennsylvania Money, 1746-1755

Plaintiff and Location	Defendant	Action and Date of Judgment	Instrument	Amount in PA £	Citations
Adam Andres/Andrews, Philadelphia, PA	Jost Dubbs/Tubbs	Attachment 3-3-1749/50	Penal bond	£54:15:4 (£109:10:8) ^a	AOB 2:327, 345
John Ax, Germantown, PA	Jahanes Kogh and Jost Dubbs/Tubbs	Debt 3-1-1750/1	Promissory note	£8	AOB 2:545, 3:52, 64, 78; Aug. CCC
James Blythe, PA, assignee of William Blythe	John Story, dec'd, and John Rutledge ^{b1, c}	Debt 6-19-1752	Penal bill	£36	AOB 2:566, 3:100, 125, 134, 150, 277
Adam Boyd, Chester Co., PA	Andrew Scott ^{b7, c, d}	Debt 5-18-1753	Penal bond	£9 (£18)	AOB 3:452
Thomas Campbell, Philadelphia, PA	Joseph Love ^{b4, c}	Trespass on case 2-28-1750/1	Account	£34:14:1	AOB 1:353, 2:23, 123, 460, 535, 3:14, 34, 46
George Croghan, Logstown, PA	James Rutledge, dec'd ^e	Debt 3-26-1754	Penal bond	£278:1:3 (£556:2:6)	AOB 2:604, 3:96, 114, 472, 4:47, 155
Robert Dunning, dec'd, Lancaster Co., PA, by executors Mary, Ezekiel, and James Dunning	James Rutledge, dec'd ^e	Trespass on case 3-26-1754	Not specified	£16:10:10	AOB 2:605, 3:96, 114, 473, 4:47, 147, 156
George Emblen Jr., Philadelphia, PA	Joseph Love ^{b4, c}	Debt 2-28-1750/1	Penal bond	£15:17:9 (£31:15:6)	AOB 2:88, 124, 460, 535, 3:14, 48
John Theobald End, Lancaster Co., PA	Henry Moyer	Debt 3-26-1754	Penal bill	£7:13:0	AOB 3:404, 493, 4:33, 93, 157

(Continued)

TABLE 1. Middle-Colony Plaintiffs Suing in Augusta County for Debts Denominated in Pennsylvania Money, 1746–1755 (continued)

Plaintiff and Location	Defendant	Action and Date of Judgment	Instrument	Amount in PA £	Citations
James Galbreath, Lancaster Co., PA	John Wilson ^{b4, f}	Petition 8-26-1749	Note of hand	£6	AOB 2:284
	James Millican and Charles Millican ^{b1, c}	Debt 3-3-1749/50	Note of hand	£5	AOB 2:343
	James Millican and Charles Millican ^{b1, c}	Debt 5-25-1750	Note of hand	£14	AOB 2:146, 386, 3:25
Nicholas Gibbons, Gloucester Co., NJ	John Scull	Debt 2-28-1749/50	Penal bond	£15 ^g (£30)	AOB 1:351, 2:21, 329, 3:21; Aug. CCC
Hans Hamilton, York Co., PA	Daniel Henderson	Petition 8-22-1747	Note of hand	£3	AOB 1:226, 277
John Leshner, PA, assignee of Frederick Skerch	Abraham Dealback	Debt 6-19-1752	Penal bond	£8:15:0 (£17:10:0)	AOB 3:118, 134, 180, 223, 276
Nathan Levy and David Franks, Philadelphia, PA	Joseph Love ^{b4, c} and Francis Fulton	Debt 3-1-1750/1	Penal bill	£29:21:5	AOB 2:87, 123, 482, 542, 3:14, 34, 46, 84
		Debt 3-1-1750/1	Penal bill	£197	AOB 2:88, 123, 482, 542, 3:14, 84
Hugh Parker, dec'd, Lancaster Co., PA, by executors Thomas Cresap and Jeremiah Warder	James Rutledge, dec'd ^e	Debt 3-25-1754	Penal bond	£250 (£500)	AOB 3:470, 4:45, 143

Plaintiff and Location	Defendant	Action and Date of Judgment	Instrument	Amount in PA £	Citations
William Purveyance, Paxton Township, Lancaster Co., PA	James Rurlidge, dec'd ^e	Debt 3-25-1754	Penal bond	£42:5:0	AOB 2:605, 3:96, 114, 473, 4:48, 99, 146
Andrew Reed, Trenton, NJ	Thomas Moffet	Petition 6-20-1746	Penal bill	£2:13:4 ^g	AOB 1:64
John Stevens, Philadelphia, PA	John Trimble ^{b19, c, d, f, h}	Debt 5-19-1748	Penal bond	£11	AOB 1:312, 334, 2:11
	Joseph Love ^{b4, c}	Petition 5-22-1749	Note of hand	£6:4:2	AOB 2:82, 146
Walter Thretford, New Castle Co., DE	John Young, dec'd ^{b5, c, d, f}	Debt 3-23-1754	Promissory note	£12	AOB 3:118, 134, 148, 152, 166, 171, 290, 331, 379; Aug. CCC

^aParentetical amounts indicate the doubled nominal value of a penal bond; at judgment, 5% interest was awarded on the principle, i.e., the lesser figure.
^bPetit juror in Augusta County during study period for number of trials indicated.

^cDefendants owned land in Augusta County at the time of their suit.

^dConstable in Augusta County during study period.

^eJustice of the peace in Augusta County during study period.

^fGrand juror in Augusta County during study period.

^gSource identified as proclamation money.

^hNamed in Augusta County road orders during study period.

Abbreviations: AOB= Augusta County Order Book (microfilm, Library of Virginia); Aug. CCC=Judgment Files, Office of the Clerk, Augusta County Circuit Court, Staunton, VA.

what would have been at least a 600-mile round trip to Pennsylvania, Scott signed a penal bond with a face value of £18 to secure £9 owed to Adam Boyd of Chester County; the debt was due on November 1, 1752. When Scott failed to make restitution, Boyd sued on a writ of debt, to which Scott responded by promptly appearing in court and confessing judgment. Scott acknowledged the £18 Pennsylvania debt, which was noted in the court order book as worth £13:10:0 Virginia.¹¹

Scott's business connections far beyond the county borders are notable because he was a typical small frontier farmer, the sort of person not normally thought of as a roving consumer. Scott settled in Augusta County as early as September 12, 1742, when he sponsored his son's baptism at the Tinkling Spring Presbyterian meeting house near modern Staunton. He presented two more children for baptism in 1747 and 1749.¹² County magistrates appointed him a constable in May 1747, and he served the usual one year; this was the sole county office Scott held through at least 1772.¹³ He also served on a total of seven petit juries in the years 1747, 1751, and 1755.¹⁴ In early 1748, Scott requested and received permission to keep an ordinary at his house, an annual license the magistrates subsequently renewed once.¹⁵ Presumably the house in question was located on the 200 acres that Scott later purchased in Beverley Manor in 1753. His land lay in the same militia precinct as his constable's appointment six years previously, and Scott neither bought nor patented additional land in Augusta County through at least 1772.¹⁶ A 1756 militia roster indicates that Scott still resided within the bounds of the same militia company in that year.¹⁷ Andrew Scott thus embodied a variety of traits shared by small farmers who incurred debts while traveling in Pennsylvania.

A third and unexpected type of debtor was comprised of Augusta County defendants owing Pennsylvania money to Virginians in adjoining counties. At least two Albemarle County residents sued in Augusta County courts to recover such debts.¹⁸ Most strikingly, fourteen Frederick County residents filed comparable suits (see table 2). Their cases suggest that some Virginia retailers dealt with Pennsylvania markets so extensively that they found it simpler to reckon Virginia store accounts in Pennsylvania money. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that in Frederick County, out of the fifty earliest judgments for financial suits in which monetary amounts were specified, thirty judgments (60.0%) involved debts calculated in Pennsylvania money.¹⁹

TABLE 2. Frederick County Plaintiffs Suing in Augusta County for Debts Denominated in Pennsylvania Money, 1746-1755

Plaintiff	Defendant	Action and Date of Judgment	Instrument	Amount in PA £	Citations
Peter Bowman, assignee of George Maurer	Jacob Miller ^b	Petition 2-17-1747/8	Bill	3:5:0	AOB 1:310, 339; file Aug. CCC; Joyner 24 (plaintiff location, hereafter cited plt location)
Peter Bowman, assignee of John Miller ^e	Jacob Miller ^b	Trespass on Case 8-20-1748	Account	8:18:7	AOB 1:312, 333, 2:10, 61; File Aug. CCC
Andrew Campbell ^e	Joseph Walker ^{b5, h}	Debt 8-31-1750	Promissory note	6:11:3	AOB 1:352, 362, 2:11, 400, 451, 3:5, 32; Drawer 389 Aug. CCC; EJC 5:117
Andrew Campbell ^e assignee of Joseph Beggs ^e	William Mahon ⁱ	Debt 3-1-1750/1	Penal bond	£7 (£14) ^a	AOB 2:492, 540, 3:68, 80; Drawer 390; Aug. CCC
John Hite ^e	Peter Mauck	Petition 8-17-1753	Note of hand	2:17:1	AOB 3:482, 4:23; EJC 5:269, 302
Absalem Howard	John Hodge ^{c, d}	Petition 9-3-1750	Note of hand	2:7:0	AOB 2:476, 4:121; Aug. MB 1754, 20 (plt location)
	Valentine Sevier ^{b5, d, h}	Debt 2-20-1746/7	Bond	14:2:0	AOB 1:33, 56, 86, 107, 136, 161
John Jones, assignee of James John	Robert Williams ^{b3, c, h}	Petition 8-17-1753	Note of hand	4:10:0	AOB 3:483, 4:22; Aug. MB 1749-50, 60

(Continued)

TABLE 2. Frederick County Plaintiffs Suing in Augusta County for Debts Denominated in Pennsylvania Money, 1746–1755 (continued)					
Plaintiff	Defendant	Action and Date of Judgment	Instrument	Amount in PA £	Citations
Thomas Jones	Morgan Thomas	Petition 6-1-1751	Note of hand	6:0:0	AOB 2:609; Joyner 83 (plt location)
Nathaniel Kerr	John Smith ^{b2, h}	Petition 4-15-1746	Bill	4:0:0	AOB 1:32; Joyner 28 (plt location)
John Neal ^e	John Campbell ^{b2, c, d, h}	Petition 3-19-1746/7	Note of hand	2:10:0	AOB 1:126, 150, 180; EJC 5:269, 302
John Nealand, assigned to James Rutledge	Joshua Hickman ^{b2, f}	Petition 8-23-1746	Note of hand	3:0:0	AOB 1:94; Aug. MB 1746-47, 75 (assignee location); Hofstra, 214, 216 (assignor)
James Ross execs	Abel Westfall	Petition 11-20-1752	Note of hand	5:0:0	AOB 3:400; Aug. MB 1755, 19
George Seller	Abraham Miller ^{d, h} and Christian Miller	Debt 9-17-1747	Penal bond	£9 (£18)	AOB 1:209, 228, 264, 295; Drawer 386, Aug. CCC
George Smith	Francis Wafer	Attachment 3-23-1754	Note of hand	102:0:0	AOB 4:13, 15, 78, 125, 126 Joyner 68, 142 (plt location)
Lewis Stevens ^e , assignee of Richard Johnston/ Jones	Philip Carl Carson and Johan Yough Rough	Petition 8-29-1751	Note of hand	3:3:0	AOB 2:552, 610, 3:192; EJC 5:269, 302, 391

Plaintiff	Defendant	Action and Date of Judgment	Instrument	Amount in PA £	Citations
Peter Tostee	Daniel Richardson ^{b2, d, h}	Petition 11-30-1750	Nore of hand	2:5:0	AOB 2:510

^aParentetical amounts indicate the doubled nominal value of a penal bond.
^bPetit juror in Augusta County during study period for number of trials indicated.
^cDefendants owned land in Augusta County at the time of their suit.
^dConstable in Augusta County during study period.
^eMagistrate in Frederick County during study period.
^fGrand juror in Augusta County during study period.
^gAssignor = Frederick County resident (unmarked assignors have not been located).
^hNamed in Augusta County road orders during study period.
ⁱMoved from Frederick County to Augusta County after incurring debt.

Abbreviations

- AOB Augusta County Order Book (microfilm, Library of Virginia).
Aug. CCC Judgment Files, Office of the Clerk, Augusta County Circuit Court, Staunton, Virginia.
Aug. MB Augusta County Minute Books (microfilm, Library of Virginia).
EJC Hall, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council*.
Joyner *Abstracts of Virginia's Northern Neck Warrants and Surveys*, ed. Peggy Shomo Joyner, vol. 2, *Frederick County, 1747-1780* (privately published, 1985).
Hofstra Hofstra, *The Planting of New Virginia*.

At least three Frederick County creditors suing in Augusta County were magistrates; others, such as Peter Tostee, were shopkeepers.²⁰ Tostee operated a store in the Frederick County (lower) portion of the South Branch of the Potomac River valley as early as 1748.²¹ A delinquent customer of Tostee's, Daniel Richardson, had lived upstream in Augusta County since at least June 18, 1746, when Augusta County magistrates appointed Richardson and two South Branch neighbors as road viewers.²² Richardson never owned land in Augusta County, but he played an active role in its early settlement. He served as a constable in his neighborhood for the usual one-year term beginning in May 1750 and was named again in a 1751 South Branch road order.²³ On May 31, 1751, two days after he petitioned the court to relieve him of his constable duties, Richardson twice served as a petit juror in Augusta County trials at Staunton.²⁴ He did not attend court, however, the previous November (1750), when Peter Tostee's attorney petitioned the Augusta County magistrates to recover a debt secured by Richardson's note of hand. Because Richardson failed to appear to answer Tostee's petition, the magistrates immediately issued judgment for the plaintiff. Richardson's note of hand was for £2:5:0 Pennsylvania, which the court valued at £1:13:9 Virginia.²⁵ Richardson thus represents a third type of frontier debtor dealing in Pennsylvania money, a Virginian dealing with another Virginian who in turn was closely tied to the Pennsylvania economy.

Taken together, the three types of debtors shared certain characteristics. All were male, and most exercised only occasional minor public authority. The great majority owned no land when their creditors sued them.²⁶ Debtors who did own land held acreage that was typical for Augusta County yeomen.²⁷ In short, they were ordinary frontier white men.

Litigation Involving Pennsylvania Money

Virginia statutes offered scant guidance about how to handle lawsuits involving debts incurred in other colonies. As of 1686, debts contracted in Maryland or North Carolina were "recoverable in Virginia ... as though ... [they] had been contracted in Virginia."²⁸ Over time, Virginians traded farther afield, and the practice of recovering debts incurred abroad apparently was extended to include those from Pennsylvania and other colonies without additional statutory authorization.

Debts contracted outside Virginia did require special handling, however. Virginia courts could only render judgments in Virginia money or in pounds

sterling. If debts were denominated in the money of some other colony, then an exchange value had to be established. Given that no Virginia statute governed exchange rates for money from other colonies, who set the exchange rates in Augusta County cases? The answer, it turns out, is a reminder that English common law as practiced in local courts often defied easy generalization.

Judgments for debts denominated in Pennsylvania money were translated into Virginia currency in various ways. Sometimes contemporaries approached conversion problems as questions of fact resolvable via trial by jury. For example, in 1742, John Pickens signed a penal bond for a nominal £23 Pennsylvania money to secure £11:10:0 payable on demand. When plaintiff's attorney James Porteus initiated suit on a writ of debt in 1747, Porteus stipulated that £23 Pennsylvania was of the value of £23 Virginia. At the trial in early 1748, however, an Augusta County jury found for the plaintiff and valued his award in Virginia money as 75 percent of the Pennsylvania amount.²⁹ The facts determined by juries thus included factual questions of exchange rates. Cases were tried by juries relatively rarely—5 out of 118 suits (4.2%)—but the 56 individual jurors in those suits represented a substantial number of votes about monetary exchanges.

More commonly, juries were convened by writ of inquiry outside the court under a sheriff's supervision to determine a plaintiff's damages after a defendant defaulted—that is, after a plaintiff received judgment when a defendant failed to appear in court. In cases involving a writ of inquiry, defendants did not present their side of the issue to the jury. Sheriffs oversaw such juries in 14 out of 118 suits (11.9%) involving Pennsylvania currency. For example, in 1748, James Greenlee's attorney, Gabriel Jones, launched a lawsuit against Malcom Campbell seeking £11:0:6 Pennsylvania in damages, valued by Jones at the identical amount in Virginia currency. Campbell defaulted by not appearing in court to plead, and the sheriff subsequently convened a jury to determine the plaintiff's damages. The jury found Greenlee's damages to be £8:5:4 in Virginia money.³⁰ In all, 106 individuals served on juries convened for writs of inquiry involving Pennsylvania money, of whom 85 jurors had not served in trials of the issue regarding monetary conversion. Adding 56 unique jurors in trials of the issue to 85 unique jurors on a writ of inquiry yields 141 different venire men with a vote in establishing exchange rates.

Exchange rates also were set by magistrates, either in their individual capacity or collectively while sitting as a court in course. In 1749 magistrate

David Stuart ordered an attachment against Edward McGinnis on the suit of Robert Aul, evaluating McGinnis's debt of £5:1:7 Pennsylvania as worth £3:16:2¼ Virginia.³¹ On a number of occasions, the court acted on behalf of defendants who seem not to have been present for trial. For example, George Lewis ignored a summons to appear in court on March 26, 1754, so the magistrates awarded judgment to plaintiff John Dickenson. In delivering its judgment, the court disregarded a complaint drawn by Dickenson's lawyer, who asserted that the original bond's principle of £20 Pennsylvania was worth the same amount of Virginia money. Instead, the court considered that Lewis owed £15 Virginia plus interest and costs.³² During the study period, thirty-eight individual magistrates participated in verdicts involving Pennsylvania money.

In summary, during the study period at least 179 jurors and magistrates set monetary exchange rates in law suits. Frequently they rejected plaintiff attorney assertions that Pennsylvania debts should be paid at par with Virginia money. The jurors and magistrates represented a range of social and economic circumstances; collectively their decisions about exchange rates constituted a frontier money market.

Monetary Exchange Rates on the Virginia Frontier

Given such a diverse market, what exchange rate was produced? At first glance, the ratio seems to have been a foregone conclusion: during the study period, £3 Virginia usually equaled £4 Pennsylvania. Specifically, the 118 suits under consideration had an average annual exchange rate of 0.7507. In other words, the average was within seven ten-thousandths of 3 to 4; indeed, the ratio was exactly £3 Virginia to £4 Pennsylvania in nine out of ten cases.³³

But what about the other 10 percent? That remainder has some interesting fluctuations which contributed to slight annual variations visible in figure 2. In part, figure 2 graphs the annual average of Augusta County exchange rates for Pennsylvania money. Significantly, the average sometimes was pulled a little above or a little below the 0.75 ratio.

The fluctuations in Augusta County's exchange rate have an intriguing mathematical relationship with a second set of averages also graphed in figure 2. The additional exchanges, labeled "The Market," compare annual average exchange rates in sterling for bills of exchange drawn in Virginia and in Pennsylvania. Data for The Market come from a wide range of sources tabulated and published by John J. McCusker.³⁴ The Market's more volatile

PENNSYLVANIA CREDIT IN THE VIRGINIA BACKCOUNTRY, 1746-1755

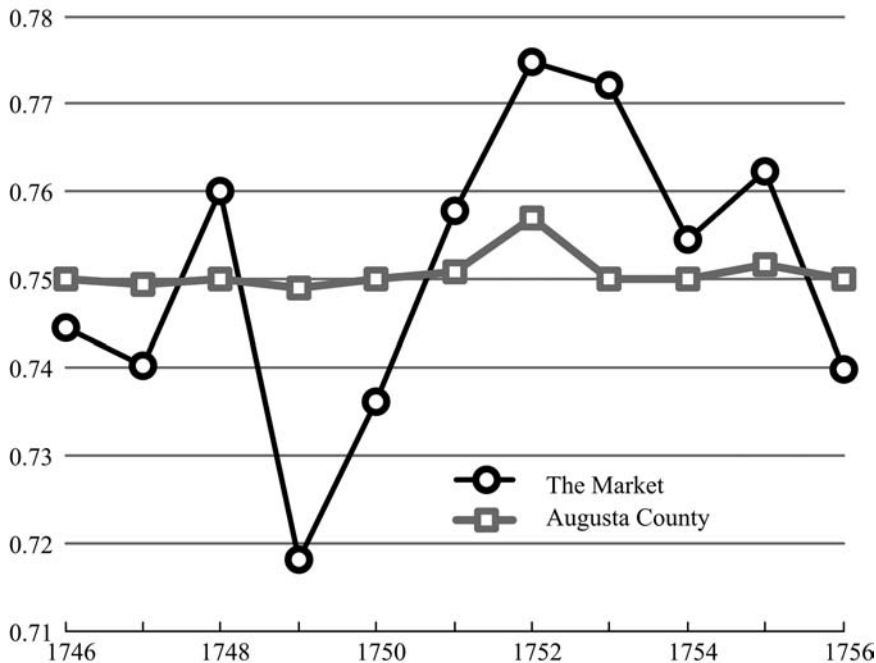


FIGURE 2: Comparison of Virginia-to-Pennsylvania Exchange Rates. *Sources:* The Market: John J. McCusker, “Table Eg 315–324, Rates of Exchange on London, by Colony or State: 1649–1790,” in *Historical Statistics of the United States: Earliest Times to the Present, Millennial Edition*, vol. 5. *Governance and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 697–99. Augusta County: Augusta County Order Books 1 through 5, microfilm, Library of Virginia.

Year	The Market	Augusta County
1746	0.74452	0.75002
1747	0.74026	0.74932
1748	0.75998	0.75000
1749	0.71812	0.74907
1750	0.73619	0.75001
1751	0.75773	0.75078
1752	0.77470	0.75694
1753	0.77217	0.75000
1754	0.75453	0.75009
1755	0.76229	0.75174
1756	0.73971	0.75000

graph illustrates all known exchanges of Virginia or Pennsylvania money for pounds sterling in a given year.

It is important to note that while this second set of rates shows a more diverse range of values, it also averages to almost exactly 3 to 4. Specifically, the average is 0.7509. Augusta County's average annual rate for the decade under study thus was just two ten-thousandths off The Market's average annual rate—a minuscule difference equal to one farthing out of about £5:2:2. In the big picture, then, Augusta County currency exchanges almost exactly reproduced The Market rate but with much less year-to-year fluctuation. To a modern economist, this means Augusta County exchanges included less financial risk than The Market.

"Less financial risk" is not a phrase normally associated with economic activity in colonial settlement frontiers, and the finding invites additional analysis. On closer scrutiny it appears that in each year but 1754 Augusta County average rates moved with The Market—up a bit when The Market rose, down a little when it fell. The movements are an evocative—not in themselves definitive—set of coincidences; the similarities encourage investigating whether the relationship between exchange rates in Augusta County and exchange rates in The Market could have been a product of random chance.

This question—for brevity we'll call it the null hypothesis—can be resolved statistically with the student t-test. According to the rigorous, two-tailed student t-test, there was a 4.22 percent chance that randomly assembled data would follow The Market as closely as Augusta County's exchange rate. That 4.22 percent chance, which statisticians call a *p*-value, is below the 5 percent threshold generally accepted to indicate the data are statistically significant. We can reject the null hypothesis. The correlation was *not* a product of random chance. The small *p*-value tells us the two rates are correlated. It does not say anything about causality; we cannot tell which exchange rate tracks the other. But we can be confident that their correlation is no accident.

Conclusion

Between 1746 and 1755, ordinary frontier white men incurred debts denominated in Pennsylvania money. They carried those debts to Virginia or acquired them while traveling north of Virginia or agreed to them while doing business with other Virginians. When debtors refused to pay and were sued to recover what they owed, an exchange rate was set by Virginia

magistrates, jurors, or plaintiffs. In Augusta County, numerous people representing divergent interests comprised a frontier market, and the frontier market was correlated to the overall regional market for monetary exchanges involving pounds sterling and Pennsylvania or Virginia money. Exchange rate data therefore reveal that in the earliest decade of Augusta County, even ordinary Virginia settlers were knowledgeable participants in the colonial Pennsylvania economy.

NOTES

Thanks to Warren M. Billings, Ronald Hoffman, and John J. McCusker for valuable comments.

1. Robert D. Mitchell, *Commercialism and Frontier: Perspectives on the Early Shenandoah Valley* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977), 31–36. A minority of immigrants elsewhere in the upper Valley of Virginia were Germans; for a comprehensive account of scholarship on their early history in western Virginia, see John B. Frantz, “The Religious Development of the Early German Settlers in ‘Greater Pennsylvania’: The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia,” *Pennsylvania History* 68 (Winter 2001): 66–100. German speakers tended to settle either in the northern end of Augusta County or far southwest in the New River Valley and only rarely appeared as parties to the lawsuits examined below.
2. Augusta County Deed Book 1:265. (County records cited herein are available via microfilm, Library of Virginia, Richmond, unless otherwise noted.) McClure’s exact migration path is unknown, but his kinsman James McClure swore on July 24, 1740, that he had imported himself, his wife, and five children from Ireland to Philadelphia and thence to Virginia. Orange County Order Book 2:209.
3. James G. Leyburn, *The Scotch Irish: A Social History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 204–7; Kenneth W. Keller, “What Is Distinctive about the Scotch-Irish?” in *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era*, ed. Robert D. Mitchell (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky), 72–75; Patrick Griffin, *The People with No Name: Ireland’s Ulster Scots, America’s Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689–1764* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 158–59, 162–63; Ned C. Landsman, “Religion, Expansion, and Migration: The Cultural Background to Scottish and Irish Settlement in the Lehigh Valley,” in *Backcountry Crucibles: The Lehigh Valley from Settlement to Steel*, ed. Jean R. Soderlund and Catherine S. Parzynski (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2008), 107–9; Landsman, *Crossroads of Empire: The Middle Colonies in British North America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 99–100.
4. “Augusta County, [Va.] Muster-book of militia,” [1742] Draper Mss. 1QQ 10–17 (microfilm edition, 1980, reel 121), State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Augusta County, Virginia, Order Book 1:20 (hereafter Augusta OB). “Appendix F. Record of Baptisms, 1740–1749,” in Howard McKnight Wilson, *The Tinkling Spring, Headwater of Freedom: A Study of the Church and Her People, 1732–1952* (Richmond, VA: Garrett and Massie, 1954), 478.
5. William Alexander v. Nathaniel McClure, Augusta OB 1:36, 43, 184; Joseph Duncan v. Nathaniel McClure, Augusta OB 2:143.

6. Mitchell, *Commercialism and Frontier*. Earn money: "The great majority of settlers were eager to exploit any profit-making opportunities available" (4). Purchase on credit: "The early search for markets, characterized by small-scale trade by individual settlers with a large number of widely distributed centers in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, appears to have been out of all proportion to the generally localized, limited commercial capabilities of early agriculture" (160).
7. "Fig. 21. Trading connections of the Shenandoah Valley by 1760," in *ibid.*, 150. See also Richard K. MacMaster, "The Cattle Trade in Western Virginia, 1760–1830," in *Appalachian Frontiers*, ed. Mitchell, 127–49.
8. Warren R. Hofstra, *The Planting of New Virginia: Settlement and Landscape in the Shenandoah Valley* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 202–3, 231–32.
9. Augusta County, Virginia, Order Book No. 1 through 4:462. The 3,764 suits included at least 721 petitions to recover debts, 56 assumpsit actions, 1,083 suits on a writ of debt, 471 actions on attachment, and at least 10 suits on a writ of trespass on case involving a financial instrument. In all, at least 2,341 suits over indebtedness represented at least 62.2 percent of the total.
10. Augusta OB 1:351, 2:21, 329, 3:21. Penal bond May 21, 1746, complaint n.d., capias December 18, 1747, and appearance bond January 13, 1747/8, in *Nicholas Gibbons v. John Scull*, originally filed in bundle February 1749A [i.e., 1749/50], Augusta County Circuit Court, Staunton, Virginia [hereafter cited as Augusta CCC]. For a comparable case involving parties from Newcastle County, Delaware, see *Walter Thretford v. John Young*, deceased, administration by James Young in Augusta OB 3:118, 134, 148, 152, 166, 171, 290, 331, 379, 4:127, and promissory note, September 16, 1736, complaint n.d., Augusta CCC. Proclamation money was colonial money emitted by colonies such as Pennsylvania and New Jersey and exchanged with British sterling at a rate of 4 to 3. Thus in general, £100 British sterling was valued at £133.33 in proclamation money. Gibbons's bond does not specify the currency so presumably the original debt was for New Jersey money, but given that "New Jersey's paper circulated in Pennsylvania at Par," the Gibbons debt is included here in the cohort of Augusta County debts denominated in Pennsylvania money. John J. McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600–1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1978), 126, 168. (Quote regarding New Jersey/Pennsylvania par on latter page.)
11. As with all penal bonds, Scott's debt was to be discharged by payment of half the face value plus interest from the date due and court costs. Augusta OB 3:452; see also Lyman C. Chalkley, *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia* (1912; repr. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1980), 1:308.
12. Wilson, *Tinkling Spring, Headwater of Freedom*, 481.
13. Scott's precinct was in Captain John Christian's militia company. Augusta OB 1:198, 217, 2:4 Scott was listed as a private in Christian's company in a muster roll not later than September 15, 1742. Augusta County Militia Roster, 1742, Draper MSS 1QQ 14.
14. Augusta OB 1:299, 300, 302, 3:224, 4:435, 436 (2 juries).
15. Augusta OB 1:344, 2:148. There is no record that Scott sought an additional renewal after the one-year permission expired in May 1750.
16. Augusta County Deed Book 5:224. For Scott's residence in 1753, the year of his suit, see the August 15, 1753, road gang roster for John Henderson's road. Augusta OB 4:7.
17. Muster roll of Captain Israel Christian's company, August 9, 1756, in Augusta County Court Martial Records, 1756–96.

18. *Joseph Kinkead v. John Carmichael*, Augusta OB 1:242, 3:304; *James Finlay, deceased, administration by David Bell (subsequently James Bell) v. James Rutledge*, Augusta OB 2:39, 391, 3:5.
19. Frederick County Order Book 1:1–53.
20. *Andrew Campbell gent v. Joseph Walker*, Augusta OB 1:352, 362, 2:11, 400, 451, 3:5, 32; Campbell was reappointed as a Frederick County magistrate on April 23, 1743. Wilmer L. Hall, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1967), 5:117 (hereafter cited *EJC*). *John Hite gent v. Peter Mauck*, Augusta OB 3:482, 4:23; *EJC* 5:269, 302. *John Neal v. John Campbell*, Augusta OB 1:126, 150, 180; For Hite and Neal's initial appointment to the Frederick County commission of the peace on November 12, 1748, and renewal on October 13, 1749, see *EJC* 5:269, 302.
21. Hofstra, *Planting of New Virginia*, 192.
22. Augusta OB 1:49.
23. Constable: Augusta OB 2:354, 576. Road: Augusta OB 2:581.
24. *Ibid.*, 2:596, 597.
25. *Ibid.*, 2:510.
26. Out of 118 cases in which debts originally were denominated in Pennsylvania money, 82 (69.5%) involved defendants who owned no land when they were sued. Out of 90 individual defendants, 62 (68.9%) owned no land when they were sued.
27. In 36 cases, defendants owned land. Of these, the minimum acreage was 100, the maximum acreage was 1,348, the mode acreage was 400, the mean acreage was 422.4, and the standard deviation was 261.4. In all, 28 individual defendants owned land. These had the same minimum, maximum, and mode acreage; their mean acreage was 431.7 and standard deviation was 275.9.
28. "An Act declaring Maryland and North Carolina debts pleadable," October 1686, in *Statutes at Large, Being a Collection of All the Laws of Virginia*, ed. William W. Hening (Richmond, 1823–35), 3:29. This act repealed a 1663 law stipulating that "noe debt whatever is pleadable against any inhabitant of this country but for goods imported in this country." "An act concerning forreigne debts," September 1663, 2:189.
29. *Martha Artbur by next friend & father-in-law Thomas Williams v. John Pickens*, in debt, Augusta OB 1:370, 2:50. Per Augusta CCC box "Jan 1747–Aug 1747," the capias dated May 26, 1747, cited defendant's debt for £23 Pennsylvania valued at £23 Virginia. The instrument was a penal bond dated September 16, 1742, for £23 Pennsylvania to secure £11:10:0 payable on demand.
30. *James Greenlee v. Malcom Campbell*, Augusta OB 2:88, 334, 3:22. The jury's award was one ha'penny less than 75 percent of the Pennsylvania value claimed by Greenlee's attorney.
31. *Robert Aul v. Edward McGinnis*, on attachment. Judgments, Augusta CCC.
32. Penal bond and complaint, *John Dickenson assignee of Israel Robinson assignee of Nicholas Roberts v. George Lewis*, in debt, Box 1753 Nov–1753 Dec, Augusta CCC; *John Dickenson assignee of Israel Robinson assignee of Nicholas Roberts v. George Lewis*, in debt, March 26, 1754, Augusta OB 4:171.
33. Out of 118 suits in which Pennsylvania money was converted to Virginia money, the ratio of Virginia to Pennsylvania money was 0.7500 in 106 cases (89.8%).
34. John J. McCusker, columns Eg 315 and Eg 321 within Table Eg 315–324, "Rates of Exchange on London by Colony or State: 1649–1790," in *Historical Statistics of the United States: Earliest Times to the Present, Millennial Edition*, vol. 5, *Governance and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 697–99.

**AN IMMIGRANT BANK IN PHILADELPHIA
SERVING RUSSIAN JEWS: THE BLITZSTEIN
BANK (1891–1930)**

William Velvel Moskoff and Carol Gayle

Abstract: The Blitzstein Bank of Philadelphia, established in 1891 by Russian Jews to serve Russian Jewish immigrants, had two main functions: first, to sell steamship tickets to immigrants so that they could bring relatives and friends to the United States and, second, to serve as an intermediary in the transfer of dollar remittances to relatives in Russia and then the Soviet Union. The financial status of the bank was tied to economic conditions in the United States and those in Russia. When prosperity reigned in the United States, the bank sold many tickets. When conditions were especially harsh in Russia, the impulse to migrate to the United States was high and so were ticket sales. The bank's fortunes were also indirectly connected to legal barriers against Jewish emigration erected by both the fledgling Soviet Union and the draconian immigrant quotas imposed by the United States in the early 1920s. After initially surviving the first wave of bank closings at the beginning of the Great Depression, the bank finally succumbed and closed its doors in late December 1930.

*M*ass immigration to America ballooned as the nineteenth century progressed. In mid-century the Irish came in large numbers fleeing the potato famine, followed in subsequent decades by a flood of immigrants from Italy and eastern and southeastern Europe, including Russian Jews. Immigrants from all groups,

finding themselves in an alien world, tended to gravitate to the neighborhoods of their fellow countrymen where neighbors spoke their language and customs were like those of the old country. The immigrants established institutions that could assist them, such as burial societies, mutual aid societies, and small informal banking institutions geared to the immigrant community, the so-called immigrant banks.

This article focuses on an immigrant bank in Philadelphia, the Blitzstein Bank, and examines the large role that it played in Russian Jewish immigration to the city. The bank was created in large measure to sell steamship tickets to Russian immigrants, and it prospered in this business from the 1890s into the 1920s, the era of the floodtide of mass immigration. When that flood ended because of changes in United States and Soviet policy and also larger economic and political global changes after World War I, the Blitzstein Bank's business contracted. Although the Bank made some efforts to develop new fields of business, it was killed off by the Great Depression.

Jews of the Russian empire formed a special group among late nineteenth-century immigrants. They came to the United States fleeing persecution as well as poverty. Jewish emigration grew in the 1870s, but the numbers leaving Russia exploded in the 1880s. This was partly the result of pogroms set off by the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 that swept through the area that was the Pale of Settlement, an area stretching across much of the western part of the Russian empire, where 94 percent of the 5 million Jews in the country lived.¹

But other factors contributed to the giant leap in emigration. One was the rapid growth of the population in the Russian empire, including Jews. The huge increase was especially onerous to the Jews as they were confined by law to the Pale of Settlement, which led to a situation where there were many mouths to feed and relatively few employment opportunities. As much as 70 percent of the Jewish labor force in the late nineteenth century could be classified as "working poor." Moreover, according to the 1897 census, the proportion of Jews who were gainfully employed was no more than 30 percent, probably half that of Christian Russians in the large cities of the empire.² Facing unrelenting economic despair in Russia, Jews had a strong economic incentive to emigrate.

Between 1881 and 1914, the peak period of Jewish immigration, 2,056,600 Jews arrived in the United States, about three-quarters of them from the Russian empire. Other Jews emigrated from Romania and the lands

of the Hapsburg monarchy in those same years. By 1920 nearly a quarter of the world's Jews lived in the United States.³ Generally, Jewish immigrants came as families intending to settle in the United States, and even those males who left their families back home entered the country with the intention of bringing their families over as soon as possible.⁴

Before the 1880s there were few Jews in Philadelphia, possibly 5,000 or so. In 1882, 225 Jews arrived by steamship in Philadelphia, the first to immigrate directly to the city.⁵ Thereafter, there was a steady influx of Jewish immigrants, more than 40,000 arriving by 1891. Whereas Jews comprised only 2.2 percent of the city's population in 1900, thirty years later their relative size had doubled to 4.5 percent of the 1930 population. Among the large number of newly arrived Jews in Philadelphia, most were from Russia and almost all stayed in the city.⁶

Beginning in the 1870s, the few Jewish settlers from the Russian empire who came to Philadelphia gravitated to the northeast part of the growing city near the shipyards. This Yiddish-speaking, Orthodox community settled along William Street, in the Port Richmond area. At the end of the 1870s Jewish immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian and Russian empires and from Romania began to cluster in South Philadelphia, a mixed area housing blacks and Irish immigrants, especially along Lombard Street, where some Dutch and German Jews had settled earlier. It was into this neighborhood, particularly between Second and Sixth streets and South Catherine Street, that Russian immigrants flooded after 1882.⁷ In a city whose economy was marked by its consistent diversity from 1880 to 1930, the dominant industries were textiles, apparel manufacture, printing, publishing, foundry work, and machine manufacture.⁸ As with other immigrant groups in Philadelphia, Russian Jews demonstrated preferences for certain jobs. They steered clear of construction work and at first often worked as "peddlers, hucksters, merchants, and shopkeepers." As time passed, most found jobs in the garment industry or the needle trades.⁹

Immigrant Banks

The first immigrant bank in the United States was the Emigrant Savings Bank, founded in New York in 1850 by members of the Irish Emigrant Society.¹⁰ In the late nineteenth century, as the number of immigrants increased exponentially, immigrant banks emerged in all the great port cities on the East Coast, including Boston and Philadelphia as well as

New York. Typically, these were not traditional banks and almost none of them were well capitalized.¹¹ They were mostly individual proprietorships and were not incorporated. Banking was usually not even their primary business, as the banks were often housed in other economic entities, such as groceries, saloons, bakeries, and even peddlers' carts. The businessmen-bankers helped immigrants do things they could not do for themselves, such as safeguarding savings, sending money to their families back in their native countries, writing letters for their clients or receiving their mail, serving as notaries public, and so on. With the rise of regular steamboat routes across the Atlantic, many immigrant banks sold steamship tickets to their customers who wanted to bring their families across the ocean to join them, as well as to those who wanted to make a visit back home. In the first decade of the twentieth century, 94 percent of businesses selling steamship tickets were involved in immigrant banking.¹²

Immigrant banking was widespread among the groups that came from southern and eastern Europe, such as the Italians and the Jews. Many immigrant banks were founded in these communities in the 1890s. They played a vital role in that decade and the early twentieth century, but they gradually declined in importance in the 1920s and then faded away. Partly this was because their customers began to assimilate into American society. Moreover, the streams of incoming migrants were significantly diminished by new American laws restricting immigration that were enacted in the early 1920s. These small community banks were hard hit by the Great Depression and many had to close their doors.

In their heyday, immigrant banks prospered for several reasons. The bankers had the trust of the people who came to them because they spoke their language and understood their culture. Many immigrants felt uncomfortable going into a regular bank, especially in their work clothes, or found the limited hours of business inconvenient. They turned to the immigrant banks, which maintained hours that were convenient for the laborers who were their customers—for example, having hours at night or, in the case of Jewish banks, being open on Sundays.¹³ For the first generation of immigrants, these casual banks were essential. The immigrant bank was a financial haven and guide in a strange world, and it was a bridge to family back home through steamship ticket sales and remittances. The banker often provided services that helped the uneducated or semi-literate navigate the world of officialdom, providing legal advice and related services.¹⁴ Jared Day, who has studied immigrant banks, goes so far as to describe immigrant bankers as the most important figures in the immigrant

community.¹⁵ In many ways, these banks were all things to a great many immigrants.¹⁶

One can gain a sense of the economic situation of those who used immigrant banks by the fact that most individual bank accounts were small. A congressional study of immigrant banks in the first decade of the twentieth century showed that few accounts grew to be larger than \$100, and for a group of more than 3,000 laborers the average amount in an account was \$65.45.¹⁷

Because these small banks generally were not regulated, they operated very loosely. Many failed. Immigrant money was seldom protected because there was no law obliging immigrant banks to maintain cash reserves.¹⁸ Most bankers had no financial training and some were simply incompetent. Others were crooked and absconded with their depositors' money.¹⁹ Most banks took advantage of the naiveté of the immigrants, most egregiously by not paying interest on deposits. The congressional study found that fewer than 30 percent of immigrant banks paid interest. On the other hand, many immigrants did not expect interest but found it sufficient that their bank would hold their money for safekeeping. The bankers often took advantage of this and deposited immigrant money in their own personal accounts in regular banks at rates of interest ranging from 2 to 4 percent.²⁰

In keeping with the pattern for other ethnic groups, a number of Jewish immigrant banks emerged to serve their communities. From the 1890s to as late as mid-1914, the sale of steamship tickets to transport people from Russia played a very big role in the business of many of these banks. Sales of such tickets were interrupted by World War I and never really revived. The Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent Russian Civil War prevented emigration from Russia and then the new Soviet government adopted policies that made it very difficult for anyone living within its territory to emigrate.²¹ Also, the United States erected steep barriers against immigration, particularly of people from southern and eastern Europe.

In Philadelphia, which became a center of Jewish immigration in the 1890s, four major Jewish banks emerged: the Blitzstein Bank, the Lipshutz Bank, the Rosenbluth Bank, and the Rosenbaum Bank. All had similar patterns of development and activity. They were family enterprises generally founded during the 1890s, and they became prosperous in the first decade of the twentieth century. Three, the Rosenbluth, Lipshutz, and Rosenbaum banks, were founded by Jewish immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian empire. The Rosenbluth Bank (founded in 1892) survives. It always focused on selling steamship tickets for immigrants and since the era of the Depression

has devoted itself entirely to the travel business; today it is one of the world's leading travel firms.²² To a lesser extent, the Lipshutz Bank followed the same path, although it is no longer in business. The Rosenbaum Bank had been established at least as early 1890 and tended to serve Jews from the territory of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The bank became so successful that in 1907 it erected a handsome Beaux Art headquarters for itself at 603-605 South Third Street. The building survives and has been designated a Philadelphia landmark, although the bank failed in 1929.²³

The fourth Jewish bank in Philadelphia, the Blitzstein Bank, was founded by Jews from the Russian empire in 1891 and survived until 1930. It kept extensive, complete, and very legible records that provide substantial information on the Jewish immigrants from Russia and the pattern of the bank's steamship ticket business. These records, which cover the years 1900 to 1930, allow the family researcher to trace individual immigrants and the historian to study immigration patterns. Regrettably, records concerning the bank's loans and investments do not survive. The remainder of this article will focus on the Blitzstein Bank, its role in bringing Russian Jewish immigrants to Philadelphia, and how the pattern of Jewish emigration from Russia affected the bank's business.

The Blitzstein Bank

The Blitzstein Bank was established by Marcus (Moishe) and Anna (Hannah) Blitzstein, husband and wife from the cosmopolitan city of Odessa in the Russian empire, who brought their growing family to Philadelphia in 1889. They settled at 431 South Fourth Street, in the center of the Russian Jewish immigrant community in south Philadelphia.²⁴ Soon after arriving, the couple started a successful tobacco business. Friends who respected their business acumen asked Marcus and Anna to manage money for them and soon the Blitzsteins began to offer services more widely to their compatriots. About the same time, they also started to finance the sale of steamship tickets for immigrants. Their business flourished and they formally established a bank in January 1891. The enterprise, officially called M. L. Blitzstein & Co., but generally referred to as "the Blitzstein Bank," was set up in the family home. The Blitzsteins were especially well suited to help the Jewish Russian immigrants buy steamship tickets for relatives because they themselves had emigrated from Russia and they spoke both Russian and Yiddish.²⁵ The bank advertised itself as a steamship ticket order facility

"די עלטסטע אידישע באנק אין פילאדעלפיא"



ESTABLISHED 1889

M. L. BLITZSTEIN & CO.
BANKERS

FOURTH AND LOMBARD STREETS

COMMERCIAL ACCOUNTS	STEAMSHIP TICKETS
SAVINGS ACCOUNTS	FOREIGN EXCHANGE

WE PAY 2% on Check Accounts
4% on Savings Accounts

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Other Days, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

FIGURE 1: Advertisement for the Blitzstein Bank showing the founding date as 1889. (Allen Myers, *Images of America*, p. 13.)

We Move To Our New Building This Saturday



For 31 years we have been serving an always-increasing clientele. We have been forced to take larger quarters. On Saturday, April 24, at 6 P. M., we start business in our own new Bank Building at 4th and Lombard, where we can better serve you. Banking in all its branches and Foreign Exchange. Our ability to serve you well in the past is our best promise to you for the future.

Established 1889

M. L. BLITZSTEIN & CO., Bankers
4TH AND LOMBARD STS. Opens From 9 A. M. to 6 P. M. Daily

FIGURE 2: Advertisement for the Blitzstein Bank. (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 20, 1920, p. 17.)

and an office for money exchange. (One of their early advertisements, which featured a steamship, said their business began in 1889 [see fig. 1], suggesting they sold steamship tickets even before formally setting up the bank.)²⁶

When Marcus Blitzstein died in 1897, Anna took over active leadership of the bank and expanded it into a full-fledged immigrant bank that also dealt in matters of foreign exchange while continuing its role as an agent



FIGURE 3: Advertisement for the Blitzstein Bank. (*Jewish Morning Journal*, October 13, 1913.)

for steamship passage. Anna Blitzstein was a strong-minded and resourceful woman, nicknamed “Babushka,” or Grandmother. Having obtained some education in Russia, she was literate when she arrived in the United States and so was better equipped for business management than most immigrant women. She is regarded by many as the first woman banker in Philadelphia.²⁷

Drawing her son Samuel and a son-in-law into the business, Anna expanded the Blitzstein Bank and ran it with a strong hand. Under her leadership the bank advertised widely, even in New York City. A 1913 advertisement for the Blitzstein Bank shows a picture of a steamship in the Yiddish newspaper *Der Morgen Zshurnal* (see fig. 3).²⁸ After World War I the bank frequently ran English-language advertisements directed at the general public in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.²⁹ It sought to extend its services beyond the Russian community, for instance, by advertising in English that it would pay cash at market rates for World War I Liberty Bonds.³⁰ Unlike many immigrant banks, the Blitzstein Bank paid interest to its depositors, as was shown in a newspaper advertisement mostly in English, but with a few words in Yiddish, saying it offered 2 percent on checking accounts and 4 percent on savings accounts.³¹

Its Jewish roots notwithstanding, the Blitzstein Bank advertised that it was open every day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (see fig. 2). That is, it was open on

Saturdays, the Jewish Sabbath, an act that would have been unthinkable in the orthodox Jewish world of the East European *shtetl* from which many of its customers came, but one in keeping with the fact that the Blitzsteins were decidedly assimilationist and nonreligious.³² In 1920, when the Blitzstein Bank moved to a new building, it did so on a Saturday, and said so in its advertisement announcing the move.³³ In the United States from 1900 to 1930, the standard six-day work week only allowed for Sunday off; the work week was about fifty-seven hours in 1900 and fell to about forty-eight hours in 1930.³⁴ Thus, many, if not all Jews, had to work on the Sabbath or not work at all. A second explanation for doing business on Saturdays was that this was the practice of the assimilated German Jews who had come to Philadelphia a half century earlier. In Germany most Jews had already moved away from Orthodox Judaism and this became even more pronounced once they arrived in the United States.³⁵ In Philadelphia, therefore, the model that Russian Jewish immigrants had was of German Jews who had embraced the American way of life. The rabbi, who had held sway in the *shtetls* of the Russian empire, was no longer the preeminent figure in their new lives in Philadelphia.³⁶

The Blitzstein Bank thrived, even during the 1920s when changes in immigration policy constricted steamship ticket sales. Then it put greater emphasis on its general banking activities and came to play a major role in the commerce of the South Philadelphia neighborhood where it was located. In 1920 it built a large new headquarters building at the corner of Fourth and Lombard Streets, still in the south Philadelphia neighborhood.³⁷ At that time the bank had about 6,000 depositors, many of them area merchants, and a staff of nineteen employees, a number of them members of the extended Blitzstein family.³⁸ As Anna began to withdraw from active management in the later 1920s (she died in 1929), her son Samuel Blitzstein (father of the composer Marc Blitzstein) and her son-in-law Constantine Voynow took over full leadership of the business.³⁹ Business remained good and the bank undertook to expand the size of its Lombard Street headquarters in 1929, despite the looming clouds of the Great Depression.⁴⁰

The Blitzstein Bank's Steamship Ticket Sales

The expansion in the sale of steamship tickets by the Blitzstein Bank for travel to Philadelphia was closely connected to the increase in immigration of Russian Jews into the city beginning in the 1890s and after. Philadelphia

THE BLITZSTEIN BANK (1891-1930)

TABLE 1. Blitzstein Bank Steamship Ticket Sales, 1900-1930

Year	Total Ticket Sales	Sales to Jews in Russian Empire/Soviet Union	Sales to Russian Jews (Percentage of Total)
1900	1,186	710	59.9
1901	1,133	751	66.3
1902	1,385	903	65.1
1903	1,824	1,190	65.2
1904	3,367	1,168	34.7
1905	2,899	2,083	71.9
1906	4,211	3,222	76.5
1907	2,238	1,487	66.4
1908	1,025	633	61.8
1909	1,665	1,306	78.4
1910	1,956	1,575	80.5
1911	1,710	1,304	76.3
1912	1,695	1,307	77.1
1913	2,789	2,204	79.0
1914	1,770	1,395 ^a	78.8
1915	34	0	-
1916	35	15	42.9
1917	10	0	-
1918	0	0	-
1919	24	0	-
1920	1,089	0	-
1921	765	73 ^b	9.5
1922	686	270	39.4
1923	773	298	38.6
1924	236	102	43.2
1925	60	13	21.7
1926	42	8	19.0
1927	54	6	11.1
1928	63	24	38.1
1929	123	48	39.0
1930	87	17	19.5

^aGermany officially declared war on Russia on August 1, 1914. The last ticket sold to a Russian Jew that year was on August 17.

^bTicket sales to bring Soviet citizens to Philadelphia resumed in late 1921.

became the terminus of several standard steamship itineraries, often sailing from Hamburg or Liverpool. Sales to Russian Jews accounted for the preponderance of the Blitzstein Bank's ticket business (see table 1). The bank began selling tickets in the early 1890s but the sales ledgers for those early years have not survived. However, we do have detailed records of the ticket sales of the Blitzstein Bank from 1900 through 1930 and these are preserved in the Philadelphia Jewish Archives at Temple University. The bank's careful and informative records show the place from which their clients departed, the number in their party, and the fare paid.⁴¹ The records end abruptly in late December 1930 when the Blitzstein bank had to close its doors.

The table provides an overview of the total number of tickets the Blitzstein Bank sold from 1900–1930 and the sales to Russian (and Soviet) Jews in both absolute numbers and as a percentage of total sales. Business was booming until the outbreak of World War I, with sales to Russian Jews after the first years generally ranging from two-thirds to three-quarters of the total. The fluctuation in total sales seems to have been influenced by economic and political events in Russia and abroad. More specifically, ticket sales shot up in 1905 and 1906, the economically unstable and politically violent years connected with the 1905 Russian Revolution. Sales fell off in 1907 and 1908, years of economic distress in both Russia and the United States. They rose sharply on the eve of World War I. In these years the Blitzstein Bank's sales to Russian Jews usually accounted for three-quarters to four-fifths of its total sales. After stopping almost entirely for six years, 1915–20, the period of the world war and the subsequent Russian Civil War, ticket sales resumed in 1921, but at a level substantially lower than before the war, reflecting the precipitous decline in the number of Jews emigrating from Russia. This falloff was a result of Soviet policies that restricted emigration and a major shift in US policy that sharply curtailed all immigration. Thus the fate of the bank's steamship ticket business was strongly influenced by forces totally outside of its control.

A more detailed analysis of the bank's ledgers allows us to make some further generalizations. First of all, when we look at tickets sold to citizens living in the Russian empire, we find that throughout the entire period 99 percent of the tickets the Blitzstein Bank sold to Russians were sold to Jews from the Pale of Settlement and of these, on average, more than 95 percent were sold to Jews who came from the fifteen Russian provinces in the eastern and southern part of the Pale, that is from the lands of Russia and Ukraine, as opposed to the so-called Polish provinces in the western part of the Pale.

A closer examination of the conditions in the Russian empire in the years around the 1905 Revolution may help us understand the high numbers of Jews emigrating in that period. There was a recession in the Russian empire from 1901 to 1903 and then another downturn in the economy during the revolutionary years of 1905-6. In addition, in these years of economic and political disorder an upsurge of anti-Jewish activity spread through the Pale. Particularly notable was the 1903 massacre of Jews in Kishinev, a city that was 46 percent Jewish in 1897. Following the deaths of a Christian child and the suicide of a Christian woman in the Jewish hospital, the charge of blood libel was leveled at the Jewish community and in the ensuing violence 49 Jews were killed and more than 500 injured.⁴² Even more destructive was the October 1905 pogrom in the heavily Jewish city of Odessa, in which about 400 Jews were killed, another 300 injured, and more than 1,600 Jewish homes and stores damaged.⁴³ There were many smaller pogroms as well. The fact that the Blitzstein Bank's 1906 ticket sales for emigrants from Russia increased by 55 percent over 1905 may reflect the intensification of anti-Jewish violence connected with the 1905 Revolution.

The number of tickets that the Blitzstein Bank sold for people living in Russia may not reflect the actual total of Russian Jews who bought their tickets through the bank because many sailed first to Great Britain before making their way across the Atlantic. The pattern of Jews stopping first in England is well documented. British immigration figures show that in 1902, 81,533 individuals described themselves as en route to other countries; in 1903 that number was 82,572.⁴⁴ This was especially true for Russian Jews in 1904. Although in that year the bank sold nearly twice the number of tickets as in previous years, only 35 percent of all tickets were sold to Jews coming directly from Russia, as opposed to roughly two-thirds in the previous three years. In 1904 the bank sold nearly 1,500 tickets to bring Jews from England, a number much higher than usual. (In 1905, it was only 312.) To be sure, it is not possible to tell from the bank's ledger entries whether any given Jew leaving England was originally from Russia, or instead was from Romania, Austria-Hungary, or Poland. But since about 75 percent of the Jews who came to the United States were from Russia, it is possible that the Blitzstein Bank brought more than 1,100 additional Russian Jews to Philadelphia in 1904 on tickets sold through the bank to individuals coming through Great Britain.⁴⁵

If Jews leaving Russia during the chaotic years of unrest around the 1905 Revolution had thought of settling in Britain, they would have faced

conditions there that were far from welcoming. First, there was a severe recession in England that would have made it difficult for Jews (or any immigrant) to find work.⁴⁶ Second, some British leaders used the Jews as scapegoats for the economic downturn, employing the argument that British workers were suffering because of Jewish competition. The British Home Secretary Aretas Akers-Douglas said that Jews were willing to work for starvation wages and live in conditions that no “decent British man” would tolerate and claimed that the “whole of the native English population was being pushed aside and turned out of dwellings.”⁴⁷ In reaction to concern about Jewish immigration to England, Parliament passed the Aliens Act of 1905, which for the first time imposed controls on immigration. Lloyd Gartner argues that one of its primary objectives was to inhibit the inflow of East European Jews.⁴⁸

The table also shows that in 1907, after a rise for several years, there was a 54 percent decline in ticket sales to Russian Jews by the Blitzstein Bank compared to 1906. This may have been because in addition to poor economic conditions in Russia there was a serious thirteen-month recession in the United States from May 1907 to June 1908. During that period business activity fell by 29.2 percent and unemployment rose from 2.8 percent to 8 percent. American immigrants would have had less money to spend on steamship tickets to bring over their relatives. Overall, immigration into the United States, which had risen to 1.2 million in 1907, fell to 750,000 by 1909, and did not reach the 1 million mark again until the following year.⁴⁹

The table shows that in 1913 the bank's ticket sales to Russian Jews were again robust, with the total at 2,204 tickets. In 1914 ticket sales were also strong for the first half of the year, but the total sold to Russian Jews for the entire year was only 1,395 because Germany declared war on Russia on August 1. After that the bank sold only three more tickets in 1914, none in 1915, and fifteen tickets in 1916. The outbreak of revolution in Russia, followed by civil war, prevented emigration from Russia: the bank sold no tickets to Russian Jews from 1917 to 1920.

After the Russian empire was replaced by Soviet Russia, while significant portions of the Jewish Pale were incorporated in the newly reestablished Poland, many Jews still remained within the boundaries of the new Soviet state. If the new Soviet government officially eschewed anti-Semitic policies, substantial popular anti-Semitism persisted and there was extensive violence against Jews during the Civil War. The Soviet campaign against all religions alienated many pious Jews. Moreover, life in the early years of

the Soviet Union was hard and it was made worse by a terrible famine in 1921-22. Even after the fall of the Tsarist empire, there were still good reasons for Jews to want to emigrate from Russia.

Emigration to the United States, however, did not recover. Soviet policy made leaving the country much harder. And with the 1922 creation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the two most populous republics, the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, issued rules that made legal emigration virtually impossible.⁵⁰ On the American side, the laws of 1921 and 1924, respectively, restricted the number of immigrants per year to 3 and 2 percent of any nation's population in the country as of 1890. The people most severely affected were those of Eastern and southern Europe, who had comprised the bulk of the immigrants who had come after 1890.

Jewish immigration was especially curtailed. After the first quota law it went from 119,036 in 1920-21 to 53,524 in 1921-22.⁵¹ Whereas between 1881 and 1923 some 1.4 million Jews had arrived, from 1925 to 1930, only 23,829 Russians (Jews and non-Jews), an average of 4,000 a year, entered the country.⁵² Total Jewish immigration from Russia and Eastern Europe combined also declined, falling to a little more than 10,000 each year.⁵³ The proportion of Russian Jews in the total of Jewish immigration fell from over 80 percent in the period 1905-14 to less than 25 percent from 1915 to 1925.⁵⁴

The figures for the Blitzstein Bank's steamship ticket sales to Russian immigrants for 1922-25 clearly reflect this decline. Sales straggled along after 1925 and, although they were beginning to rise in 1928 and 1929, they were squelched by the Great Depression. So the Blitzstein Bank was forced to look elsewhere for business and as early as 1920 had begun to tap new markets. In that year, the bank sold nearly \$110,000 in tickets, virtually all of them to bring Jews from Romania (448 passages) and Poland (438). Nonetheless, it is clear that the sales of tickets to any Eastern European immigrants was a declining business.

Remittances

In addition to selling steamship tickets, the Blitzstein Bank helped Russian immigrants in Philadelphia send money to relatives back in the old country. Although the archives of the Blitzstein Bank do not contain records for monetary transfers abroad, we do know that this was a fundamental role of

immigrant banks. An analysis of the late nineteenth-century deposit records of Philadelphia's largest savings bank, the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society, shows that among all immigrant groups, savings were essentially transferred to families living abroad.⁵⁵ The total sum of immigrant remittances to Russia sent through all immigrant banks was large, amounting to \$15,241,482 in 1907, \$11,416,009 in 1908, and \$4,477,271 in the first half of 1909.⁵⁶ Moreover, banks were not the only vehicles for remittances. Immigrants also used international money orders issued in the United States and paid in the country where the recipient lived. While immigrant banks remained dominant, the use of international money orders rose steadily from 1900 to 1909. For example, in 1907, international money orders to Russia amounted to \$7,230,854 and in 1908 to \$7,898,484. For the first half of 1909, the figure was estimated to be \$3,226,123.⁵⁷ Conversely, as a proportion of all remittances to Russia, the amount sent through immigrant banks fell modestly, from 68 percent in 1907, to 59 percent in 1908, and to 58 percent in 1909.

The large size of the total of all remittances sent home by Russians who had migrated to the United States (a total of \$19,314,493 in 1908 alone), indicates great family cohesion on the part of the collective Russian immigrant community. At the same time, the average individual remittance was small, amounting to \$28.72,⁵⁸ which suggests that sending money abroad was spread widely among many immigrants, mostly workers with little money to spare.

Remittances continued to be sent through the Blitzstein Bank to the Soviet Union at least through 1929.⁵⁹ The illustrations below show postal receipts for money sent through the bank to Jews in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. None of the receipts we own indicates the name of the individual who sent the remittance. Figures 4a and 4b show an April 1923 registered receipt for a money transfer of \$10 sent to Abram Krasniansky, who lived in Soviet Ukraine, south of Kiev. When converted to rubles, the \$10 sent from Philadelphia gave Krasniansky the inflated sum of 400 rubles, with the low value of the ruble reflecting the lingering effects of the hyperinflation in Soviet Russia during 1921 and 1922.⁶⁰

Figure 5 is a registered postal receipt recording the money sent to a woman named Feiga Sokolinskaia, who also lived in Soviet Ukraine. The \$20 she was sent on June 30, 1925, reached Moscow three weeks later on July 21 and then was dispatched to Boguslav, a city about sixty miles south of Kiev, where it arrived three days later. Because she was illiterate, the money



FIGURE 4: Remittance from the Blitzstein Bank to Abraham Krasniansky. Collection of William Velvel Moskoff.

was signed for by a relative, Basia. Feiga Sokolinskaia received 38 rubles in exchange for the dollars, a sign that the earlier inflation had largely been brought under control. At the bottom of the card, in addition to the date,

102522

Почтовое отправление, принятое под расписку № 4497
Варшава, Кув. 7. на имя Фейга Соколинская

Ам. Долл. двадцать "Восценное" в Руб. 38

Расписка в получении:
 получено лично Фейга Соколинская адресат
\$ 20. — по доверию бася
 Не выдано: — Соколинская

1) за неразъяснением адреса
 2) за неявкой
 3) за отказом от получения

Подпись чиновника
Воспитан и бухгалтер М. Л. Блицштейн

В печатном тексте почтовый чиновник начеркивает пером те указания (1, 2 и 3), которые окажутся ненужными.

Ф. № 371.

30 ЮН 1925 M. L. Blitzstein Co Philadelphia

FIGURE 5: Remittance to Feiga Sokolinskaia from the Blitzstein Bank. Collection of William Velvel Moskoff.

the words "M.L. Blitzstein Co. Philadelphia" are stamped. This is the only English writing on the receipt.

Relatively speaking, the money sent from America must have been a significant gift for the individual recipients in Soviet Russia. The average monthly wage of workers in 1924–25 was 25.18 rubles and in 1925–26 it was 28.57 rubles.⁶¹ The sum of 38 rubles received by Feiga Sokolinskaia amounted to nearly a month and a half's wages. At the same time, sending remittances must have represented a real sacrifice for the American immigrants in Philadelphia. Taking the average weekly earnings of production workers in manufacturing as a proxy for blue-collar wages, in 1923 average weekly earnings were \$23.56.⁶² Thus, the \$10 that was sent to Abram Krasniansky probably represented at least 40 percent of a week's pay to his American relative. In 1925, when the average weekly wage was \$24.11, the \$20 remittance sent to Feiga Sokolinskaia could have been more than 80 percent of her relative's weekly pay. These figures suggest that the money Russian Jews in the United States sent abroad constituted a significant portion of their earnings. The overall lesson is that great sacrifices in the United States yielded great benefits abroad.

The Demise of the Blitzstein Bank

The Blitzstein Bank, like many banks all over the country, was put under great pressure as the Great Depression wreaked havoc in the American economy. The bank managed to avoid insolvency for more than a year after the 1929 stock market crash, partly because of its steamship ticket business, diminished as it was. When several Philadelphia banks failed in 1930, the Blitzstein Bank held out for some weeks and its owners thought they could weather the storm. But its demise was made inevitable when a large Philadelphia bank, the Bankers Trust Company, with \$45 million in deposits, succumbed to a bank run on December 22, 1930. The next day, the Blitzstein Bank, with a mere \$1.25 million in deposits, was swamped by desperate depositors seeking to withdraw their money and the bank was forced to close in the early afternoon. It never reopened.

When the Blitzstein Bank had to close its doors on December 23, 1930, it was a shock to the family, who had thought their bank was strong enough to stay open. The crisis at the bank precipitated anguished family meetings, during which one of Anna Blitzstein's grandchildren heard family members saying, "Thank God, Babushka's dead."⁶³ Within days, the Blitzstein Bank declared bankruptcy.⁶⁴ Since the family's financial holdings were largely tied up in the bank, a number of members of the extended Blitzstein family instantly became impoverished.⁶⁵

The closing of the bank was also a shock to the many people who had placed their money and their trust in this neighborhood institution. Three days after the bank closed there was a large meeting of its customers in the Brith Sholom building on Pine Street on Philadelphia. Those attending selected a group of fifteen people to represent depositors in court.⁶⁶ After the bankruptcy, the creditors went to court and received a judgment that paid them one-third of their claims in cash. The remaining assets were placed in the hands of liquidating trustees who issued paper certificates for the remaining two-thirds of the creditors' claims. The depositors appealed the judgment, but nothing came of their suit, as the District Court ruled in 1938 that it lacked jurisdiction.⁶⁷ In the end, however, the Blitzstein family managed to pay off 52 percent of the depositors' claims by 1937.⁶⁸

After playing an important role in the life of the city for forty years the Blitzstein Bank became a part of Philadelphia's historical memory, albeit a significant one. It was created by Russian immigrants to serve Russian immigrants to Philadelphia, particularly Russian Jews. While the Great

Depression and the run on the banks in 1930 were the proximate causes of its demise, it is clear that in a larger sense the decline resulted from the end of the era of mass immigration during the 1920s and the accompanying business of selling tickets to immigrants.

NOTES

We thank Sarah Sherman, former archivist at the Philadelphia Jewish Archives at Temple University, who generously provided copies of the Blitzstein ledgers for our use. We also thank David Skipton for his assistance interpreting the Blitzstein remittance receipts, and Jonathan Levine, who helped us understand the implications of the Blitzstein bankruptcy court case.

1. There were twenty-five provinces (guberniia) in the Jewish Pale: fifteen in the Russian portion (Bessarabia, Chernigov, Ekaterinskaia, Grodno, Kherson, Kovno, Kiev, Minsk, Mogilev, Poldolsk, Poltava, Taurida, Vilna, Vitebsk, and Volin) and ten in the Polish part of the empire (Kalisz, Kielce, Lublin, Lomza, Petrikow, Plock, Radom, Siedlec, Suwalk, and Warsaw). Natan M. Meir, *Kiev, Jewish Metropolis: A History 1859–1914* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 55 and 102–5. The total Jewish population of the empire was 5,189,401 according to the 1897 census. N. A. Troynitsky, ed., *Pervaia vseobshchaia perepis' naseleniia Rossiiskoi Imperii* (St. Petersburg: Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1905).
2. Eli Lederhendler, *Jewish Immigrants and American Capitalism, 1880–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3, 7.
3. Ibid.
4. Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989), 58.
5. Russell F. Weigley, ed. *Philadelphia: A 300–Year History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1982), 489.
6. Theodore Hershberg et al., “A Tale of Three Cities: Blacks, Immigrants, and Opportunity in Philadelphia, 1850–1880, 1930, 1970,” in *Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family, and Group Experience in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Hershberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 465.
7. Maxwell Whiteman, “Philadelphia’s Jewish Neighborhoods,” in *The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790–1940*, ed. Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), 233–36, 237–39.
8. Hershberg et al., “A Tale of Three Cities,” 474.
9. Caroline Golab, “The Immigrant and the City: Poles, Italians, and Jews in Philadelphia, 1870–1920,” in *The Peoples of Philadelphia*, ed. Davis and Haller, 220.
10. Richard Salvato, *A User’s Guide to the Emigrant Savings Bank Records*, New York Public Library, 2, <http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/spe/rbk/faids/emigrant.pdf>.
11. The general description of immigrants’ banks is taken from an extensive congressional study carried out in 1909–10, *Reports of the Immigrant Commission*, 61st Cong., vol. 37 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), and from Jared N. Day, *Urban Castles* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
12. *Reports of the Immigrant Commission*, 37:212.
13. Day, *Urban Castles*, 36.

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14. Frederick M. Binder and David Reimers, *All the Nations under Heaven: An Ethnic and Racial History of New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 156.
15. Day, *Urban Castles*, 36.
16. Jared N. Day, "Credit, Capital and Community: Informal Banking in Immigrant Communities in the United States, 1880–1924," *Financial History Review* 9 (2002): 65–78.
17. *Reports of the Immigrant Commission*, 37:239.
18. *Ibid.*, 247.
19. For efforts to regulate the immigrant banks to prevent taking advantage of immigrants, see Matthew Silver, *Louis Marshall and the Rise of Jewish Ethnicity in America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 157–61.
20. *Reports of the Immigrant Commission*, 37:238, 243.
21. In this article we use the term "Soviet" for the Bolshevik government, and "Soviet Union" for the territory ruled by the Bolsheviks although the latter term was not actually in use until the early 1920s.
22. "Rosenbluth International Inc. History," <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/rosenbluth-international-inc-history/>, accessed October 1, 2012.
23. Jorge M. Danta, "The History of the Rosenbaum Bank Building," Queens Village Neighborhood Association, 2011, <http://www.qvna/2011/08/rosenbaum-bank-building/>, accessed October 1, 2012.
24. Howard Pollack, *Marc Blitzstein: His Life, His Work, His World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7–8.
25. Eric A. Gordon, *Mark the Music: The Life and Work of Marc Blitzstein* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 4.
26. Allan Meyers, *Images of America: The Jewish Community of South Philadelphia* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1998), 13.
27. Harry D. Boonin, *The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia: A History and Guide, 1881–1930* (Philadelphia: Jewish Walking Tours of Philadelphia, 1999), 32.
28. *Der Morgen Zsburnal*, October 13, 1913, 2.
29. See, e.g., its many small ads in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* during January 1919, e.g., January 19, 1919, 19, and January 25, 1919, 25.
30. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 19, 1920, 19.
31. Meyers, *Images of America*, 13.
32. Gordon, *Mark the Music*, 17.
33. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 20, 1920, 7.
34. Dora L. Costa, "The Wage and Length of the Work Day: From the 1890s to 1991," *Journal of Labor Economics* 18 (2000): 156–81; Guillaume Vandenbrouke, "Trends in Hours: The United States from 1900 to 1950," *Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control* 33 (2009): 237–49.
35. Arthur P. Dudden, "The City Embraces 'Normalcy' 1919–1929," in *Philadelphia*, ed. Weigley, 587–88.
36. Lederhendler, *Jewish Immigrants and American Capitalism*, 92. In 1919, when the rabbi of a prominent synagogue asked his wealthy congregants to consider moving to a five-day work week,

- they opposed his proposal, arguing that this would only embolden their own Jewish workers to ask for a reduction in the work day (62).
37. The architect for the Blitzstein Building was John Horace Frank (1873–1956). A Philadelphia-based architect during his entire career, he worked with a number of the city's senior architects. Her designed homes, especially in Germantown, and a number of stations for the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co., <http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>
 38. Boonin, *Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia*, 31, 33, and 155 n. 84.
 39. Gordon, *Mark the Music*, 8 and 155 n. 79. Marc Blitzstein (1905–64) wrote the English lyrics for Bertolt Brecht's *The Three Penny Opera* and the pro-union musical *The Cradle Will Rock*. See Leonard J. Lehrman, *Marc Blitzstein: A Bio-Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 14, and *New York Times*, January 25, 1964, 1, 24, as well as the previously cited biographies of the composer by Pollack and Gordon.
 40. As late as 1929 the major banks in New York and a number of banks in Philadelphia were also expanding, both by increasing credit availability and through mergers and acquisitions of other banks. Tobias F. Rötheli, "Banking Principles, Bank Competition and the Credit Boom of the 1920s," Working Paper, 2009. Duke University, <http://www.econ.duke.edu>, 11, 18. See also *Philadelphia*, ed. Weigley, 600.
 41. Ledgers of the Blitzstein Bank, Philadelphia Jewish Archives, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University, Philadelphia.
 42. "Kishinev," *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Farmington Hills, MI: Thompson/Gale, 2007), 12:197–200.
 43. Robert Weinberg, "The Pogroms of 1905 in Odessa: A Case Study," in *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, ed. John D. Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 248–89.
 44. *Jewish Chronicle* (London), January 15, 1904, 24. The continuation of the journey from Russia to the United States through England was assisted by a Jewish organization in London, the Emigration Society, which provided on average 3 pounds, 2 shillings, and 8 pence to the migrants. While most of the Jews they assisted went to New York, a number did go to Philadelphia. *Jewish Chronicle* (London), May 20, 1904, 15.
 45. Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880–1920* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 42.
 46. Peter R. Shergold, *Working-Class Life: The "American Standard" in Comparative Perspective, 1899–1913* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1982), 23.
 47. *Jewish Chronicle* (London), January 22, 1904, 16.
 48. Lloyd A. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England 1870–1914* (London: Simon Publications, 1960).
 49. Victor Zarnowitz, *Business Cycles: Theory, History, Indicators, and Forecasting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 226; Robert F. Bruner and Sean D. Carr, *The Panic of 1907: Lessons Learned from the Market's Perfect Storm* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2007), 142.
 50. Alan Dowty, *Closed Borders: The Contemporary Assault on Freedom of Movement* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 69.
 51. Mark Wischnitzer, *Visas to Freedom: The History of HIAS* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1956), 97–98.

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52. *Abstract of the Fifteenth Census of the United States* (1930) (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1933; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1976), 174.
53. Simon Smith Kuznets, "Immigration of Russian Jews to the United States: Background and Structure," *Perspectives in American History* 9 (1975): 46; *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., 14:211. In part, the decline in Russian Jewish immigration is due to changes in the boundaries of the Russian empire after World War I, with much of the Pale of Settlement becoming part of Poland.
54. Kuznets, "Immigration of Russian Jews to the United States," 47.
55. Rohit Daniel Wadhvani, "Banking from the Bottom Up: The Case of Migrant Savers at the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Financial History Review* 9 (2002): 41–63.
56. *Reports of the Immigrant Commission*, 37:274.
57. *Ibid.*, 261 and 274.
58. *Ibid.*, 278.
59. The year 1929 is the latest for which we have seen remittance receipts; remittances may have been sent through the bank until it closed in 1930.
60. The receipt is also of interest because the card was originally a postal card for World War I prisoners of war. A form for the receipt was simply stenciled or printed in the space on the postcard originally meant for the message.
61. Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the U.S.S.R.* (London: Allen Lane, 1972), 114.
62. George Thomas Kurian, ed., *Datapedia of the United States 1790–2005*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Bernan, 2001), 89.
63. Boonin, *Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia*, 33.
64. Pollack, *Marc Blitzstein*, 63.
65. Gordon, *Mark the Music*, 63. A description of the impact of the bankruptcy of the Bank of the United States, a New York City Jewish bank with sixty branches and 400,000 mostly Jewish depositors, can be found in Beth S. Wenger, *New York Jews and the Great Depression: Uncertain Promise* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 10–14.
66. Gordon, *Mark the Music*, 63.
67. "In re M.L. Blitzstein & Co., 23 F.Supp. 210 (1938) No 13802. District Court, E.D. Pennsylvania. April 11, 1938," <http://www.leagle.com>, accessed September 1, 2012.
68. Pollack, *Marc Blitzstein*, 63. With \$1,250,000 in deposits and 6,000 depositors, on average, account holders had \$208 with the bank.

YOUNG MAN BACHE: NOTES FOR A SKETCH

Arthur Scherr

Abstract: Far from being a humorless radical, as he is often depicted, Benjamin Franklin Bache, editor of the *Philadelphia General Advertiser: Aurora* from 1790 until his death in 1798, was a romantic, erotic young man concerned with loving and being loved. He was also a gentleman, like his grandfather Benjamin Franklin. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Bache had a reading knowledge of Latin. He valued a good education and was interested in presenting arguments in a logical, cohesive manner, rather than in composing partisan, rambling tirades. A complex individual, he was exemplary of the Late Enlightenment, combining its Romantic and rationalist features. More creative and serious-minded than most scholars who write about him comprehend, he was also a loving suitor, husband, and father.

Although he died tragically—from the horrible disease of yellow fever at the young age of twenty-nine—Benjamin Franklin Bache (1769–98) has aroused a great deal of controversy among journalism historians and scholars of the early American Republic. The youngest grandson of Benjamin Franklin was even more famous for his radical political ideas and the way he communicated them in his popular Democratic-Republican newspaper, the *Philadelphia General Advertiser/Aurora*, than for his ancestry. Many scholars, as well as his contemporary political

opponents, have portrayed him as a violent-tempered, angry, resentful individual who hated George Washington because his renown outshone his grandfather's. They say that his criticisms of the new Federalist government of the Washington and Adams administrations were unmerited and divorced from logical thinking, the result of his own emotional needs and demands for public attention. More often than not, they fail to look at what kind of man Benny Bache really was.

We confront obvious impediments in gaining insights into the personalities and psyches of people who lived during the 1780s and 1790s. Nonetheless, Benjamin Franklin Bache's manuscripts, including a detailed diary and memorandum books, various notes that he took as a student at the University of Pennsylvania, and a Commonplace Book he entitled *Melanges* (French for "mixtures") illuminate significant aspects of his adolescence. These materials for the years 1785–88 are available in the American Philosophical Society's Castle Collection. An examination of these papers can help us determine what kind of person Bache was—and for the student of the history of American journalism this is an important question.

Not only was Bache the great Benjamin Franklin's grandson, he was the first major partisan printer of the new nation, and his newspaper was the leading mouthpiece for what became the Democratic Party, a party that still exists today. In addition, Bache has gained a vocal following among scholars, who see him as a proto-democratic hero who demanded greater political, social, and economic equality in the new nation and organized local political cells in Philadelphia to achieve his goals.¹ Therefore, an examination of his personality is worthwhile. This article will try to find out more about "Young Man Bache," in a similar manner to what Erik Erikson did in his great book *Young Man Luther*, but with less of a psychoanalytic emphasis.²

As a teenager, Bache was sexually precocious for his time. In 1786 he was only seventeen. At that age, a young man was expected to think more about his career and less about young girls. However, in his notebooks, Bache writes much about his feelings toward women. To Margaret Markoe, his girlfriend and later his wife, Bache wanted to express his feelings honestly. In a draft of a letter, which he may not have sent, Benny upbraided her for excessive dependence on her mother. "You think it improper to receive any body's Addresses without your Momma's Approbation," he asserted.

You must by this time be perfectly acquainted with my sentiments concerning you, tho you still seem'd inclined to doubt their Firmness & think they formed in a few moments & as soon to dye away, o how you will be mistaken. I am almost glad of your Intended voyage to Saint Croix [her father's birthplace] that I may have an opportunity of convincing you on your return that Love founded on true Regard & Esteem cannot diminish by absence.³

Thus, Bache was a Romantic, a man of sentiment and sensuality.⁴ He wanted to express his sincerity to his beloved. He also possessed his share of irony and wit.

Benny also expressed jealousy. He suspected that Margaret secretly had another lover, whom she preferred to him. Or at least this was what he claimed: "I hope that the above stated objections [her mother's disapproval] are the only Impediments to my Happiness, but I must own I much fear, that tho' they have some Weight with you they are not what I have the most to fear; I still must think your Heart is engaged another Way." He depicted himself as an aggrieved, jilted lover: "Forgive me if my doubts are ill disguised, but why should I ask forgiveness, surely it is necessary if my [illegible] to think you have bestowed your Affections on a Young Man, who, did he know your worth, would almost deserve you."

Thus, it seems that, rather than angry and jealous, Bache is here again being witty and chivalrous, a romantic courtier. He also appears to be an aggressive lover for those times, when the bourgeois male was supposed to tread gingerly until he was married.⁵ Such seems to be the purport of the following sentences: "What gave rise to these fears was the Manner in which you received the last short sentence I wispered to you in the back room, which you seemed not to approve of tho' I thought it would remove the Impediment to my writing [to] you stated in the Front Room."⁶

Ben was a man about town, the chairman of the Philadelphia Dancing Assembly; perhaps it was at a dance party that he made these nebulously bold propositions to Margaret, daughter of a Danish West Indies merchant, possibly also a sugar and slave dealer.

In another instance of youthful precocity, Bache's "Essay on Writing" shows that he understood Latin. He also respected the logical development of an essay. He mentions that his grandfather Benjamin Franklin gained his skill as a writer from imitating Joseph Addison's famous magazine articles

in *The Spectator*. Like Thomas Jefferson, at least according to Professor Jay Fliegelman's analysis of the Declaration of Independence in *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance*, Bache thought that writing should emulate elegant speech. (It is not known whether he, like Jefferson and George Washington, was a poor public speaker, a factor that Fliegelman's interpretation ignores.)⁷

In his "Essay on Writing," Bache observed that gracefulness was an important feature of writing: "Language is the Picture of Thought & when a Writer can clothe his ideas in such words as to express them with Fulness & Elegance, yet Clearness he has attained Perfection in that Point." Recommending that writing and speaking adopt a musical quality, he continued,

There is yet one particular to be attended to render the Communication of knowledge more extensively, I mean the noting setting down speech with Propriety, either by Writing or by means of Printing. And this particular appears to me of great Importance, if the Writer wishes to convey his full Meaning to the Reader & also enable him to read aloud with Propriety. To effect this every considerable rising or depression of the Voice should have its corresponding mark, and every emphatic Expression its proper Sign.⁸

Bache thought that the United States should have a language society like the Académie Française, whose purpose would be to standardize writing and make American English easier for foreigners to learn. He rejected the idea of US subordination to England in matters of language:

We will continue to be ruled by her in this Respect till we have established among us *Literary Authority*; a Society at the example of the *Academie Française* to which we can look up for a proper Standard to regulate all Matters relative to our Language. If such a Society could be established our Language under their Hands would be properly corrected & rendered more extensively really useful in promoting the various good Purposes it is intended for.⁹

Thus, contrary to the disorderly, reckless image that his right-wing contemporaries created of him, which persists in many present-day scholarly accounts, Bache sought uniform language standards and an end to haphazard

modes of writing and spelling American English. More than most young men, he was a seeker for order. He anticipated Noah Webster's *Dictionary* by over forty years. He was a more creative and prescient intellectual than his detractors and even those scholars who seek to rehabilitate his image have assumed. And, at the same time, he was a romantic, loving suitor, husband, and father.

NOTES

1. In general, see Jeffrey L. Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001); James Tagg, *Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991); and Jeffery A. Smith, *Franklin and Bache: Envisioning the Enlightened Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
2. Erik Erikson, *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: Norton, 1958).
3. Letter (draft) from Benjamin Franklin Bache to [Margaret Markoe], n.d., reel 5, Bache Papers, Castle Collection, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
4. On the importance of sentiment in the social life of the Revolutionary War period, see Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: Omohundro Institute, 2009); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, NC: Omohundro Institute, 2010); and Nicole Eustace, *Passion Is the Gale: Emotion, Power, and the Coming of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, NC: Omohundro Institute, 2008).
5. See Nicole Eustace, "The Cornerstone of a Copious Work: Love and Power in Eighteenth-Century Courtship," *Journal of Social History* 34, no. 3 (Spring 2001): 517–46.
6. Letter (draft) from Bache to [Markoe], n.d.
7. Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993).
8. "Essay on Writing," reel 5, Bache Papers, Castle Collection.
9. Ibid.

MUSEUM REVIEW

**A SHAMBLES FOR
THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE**

Peter Hinks

“The President’s House: Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation.” Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, PA. <http://www.nps.gov/inde/historyculture/the-presidents-house.htm>. Permanent exhibition, opened December 15, 2010. Kelly/Maiello, Architects & Planners, designers.

*T*he open-air President’s House site that opened in December 2010 at Independence National Historic Park (INHP) in Philadelphia is situated in some of the country’s most hallowed public space. Immediately adjacent to the Liberty Bell Center and just a long block from Independence Hall and, in the other direction, from the National Constitution Center, the sparsely defined footprint and frame of the house at the corner of Sixth and Market streets commands attention, in part because it is architecturally such a contrast to the solid settlement of all the other buildings around it. This stark difference announces before one even enters the space that the President’s House is a public history site different from any others in the large compound that is INHP. Joined with its central location, that contrast draws many curious visitors into its interior.

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Core themes and narratives were defined for the site by 2005. Official planning for it was launched in 2002 and was initially focused on chronicling the households of Washington and Adams and their centrality in forging the new federal government. Yet, in the same year, an essay by architectural historian Edward Lawler had established in detail the presence of nine slaves in the Washington household. By 2005, spurred by the activism of a local African American organization, Avenging the Ancestors Coalition, and a growing cadre of historians and public advocates, slavery—in the household and in the nation—and the dynamically expanding body of free blacks in late eighteenth-century Philadelphia became fortunately mandated as core axes of interpretation at the site along with the house itself, its occupants both notable and humble, and the development of the executive. A studding of slavery and freedom was now in place on which the designers might show how the house hung here invariably creaked and contracted from its frame.¹ Now that the dust has settled from the site's completion and opening, taking some time to ascertain how well they collapsed the house is worthwhile.

Unfortunately, the design and curating of this singular house in INHP is deeply flawed. Once within its perimeter, any inquisitive visitor might reasonably wonder what exactly they had entered. As currently executed, the President's House is an undisciplined jumble of multiple undesignated entry points, any one of which thrusts the visitor into a sparsely contextualized story recounted on a scattered cluster of walls that barely suggests a domestic space. Unconventional exhibitions in public space are to be applauded, especially if they effectively challenge the obscurantism and mendacity of received national knowledge in novel ways architecturally and curatorially. If some pedantic curatorial hierarchy is being eschewed here and visitors encouraged to build their own story by entering the space and narrative wherever they might choose, fine. But there are limits—if people do not know where they are, what they are confronting, but instead are thrown helter-skelter into some narrative maelstrom, then in fact no socially useful challenge and revisioning can occur. You have to know where you are before you can evaluate it. Perhaps the designers were not concerned to challenge any of these hierarchies. In that case, their curatorial negligence has to be fingered. Nowhere on the perimeter of the house's footprint is there any signage welcoming and introducing the visitor to what is before her. Even at the nominal front door to the house, *nothing at all* tells you where you are. This is inexcusable. The designers have abdicated near totally their reasonable responsibility to orient and gently guide the visitors through a story that they have defined and deployed.

Perhaps their problems with guiding the visitors are because they are not sure what their story is. The site is cacophonous—not only because of its lack of a narrative center, but also because poorly planned points of ambient sound within the space battle to be heard among themselves as well as with the voluble street sounds outside it. In the niche in the site's nominal front, densely inscribed panels briefly recount the first laying of the federal government. Off to the right on a wall are two looping videos, one about black Philadelphians and black St. Domingans in 1793 and another about Martha Washington's slave, Oney Judge, who would successfully run away in 1796. No effort is made, however, to articulate their relationship to the nearby information on the federal government. The federal information seems almost grudgingly advanced; it never is really engaged again. Indeed no context is provided for the videos themselves. Little is said about the Adams administration and household, which among many relevant features briefly included a young free black male named James Prince, whom Abigail Adams met in Philadelphia, championed, and brought back to Braintree where she pushed aside local opposition to have him receive some schooling. John, however, refused to have the "turbulent" black return to the President's House, despite Abigail's continuing endorsement.

The problem at the President's House is not so much that the curators do not know what their story is as much as it is that they really only want to tell a portion of this officially defined story: that the President's House stood at this corner of Sixth and Market streets in the 1790s and that its first white occupants enslaved nine individuals who lived there. The preponderance of curated space at the site is dedicated first of all to characterizing the lives of the nine and second to conventional recapitulations of slavery in the Atlantic world, the American colonies, and the United States—the latter presented unimaginatively in text-driven panels otherwise dense with images hung on the available wall space. Considering as well the significant space assigned a large wall on the site's perimeter containing the names of the nine enslaved and an adjacent, cylindrical cloister of sorts intended for meditating on them and their African heritage, the site strives frankly to be more commemorative than a public history site *per se*—it is finally a memorial to the nine individuals enslaved by a mendacious white democracy and to the hundreds of thousands of other slaves in the United States they then represented. The acknowledgment of their memory is appropriately integral to this site, although currently not furthered by the anemic memory cell squirreled away in a corner at the rear.

Yet the site is after all entitled “The President’s House: Freedom and Slavery in Making a New Nation,” not the President’s Prison House. It was not supposed to be only a site of slavery and commemoration, but one of public history explicating this house, the executive, and their relationship to the broader federal government in the 1790s. The curators thus make nods to telling a more inclusive historical story. Yet when they do, this additional information appears sequestered and incidental. When combined with egregious execution, this frankly narrative sleight-of-hand leads the visitors to have to play a sort of hide-and-seek with the argumentative intent of the site. Confusion abounds, clarity suffers, rich opportunities are missed.

Actually, making slavery the story of the President’s House is fine. The curatorial challenge is in being sure that story is well focused and refined in terms of the unique opportunities and resources the house affords. Currently it is not. The house can be both commemorative—functioning as a site that through the nine memorializes the boundless victims of the nation’s embrace of slavery—and illustrative of how, through the nine and the house, that embrace came to be settled. Indeed the commemoration of the nine can only be enhanced by a resourceful characterizing of the specific political milieu in which they lived in Philadelphia.

While slavery is certainly broached elsewhere within INHP, it is nevertheless fitting to have one key component at the heart of INHP dedicated principally to telling the story of slavery’s relationship to the more centralized nation state forged there in the years immediately after 1787. Indeed no site there can tell the story with the personal poignancy of the President’s House because of the intimacy with which the most powerful implementer of this state lived in that house with his slaves and used that state to secure his tyranny over them. No other site in INHP affords this specific opportunity to explore the uncomfortable intimacy of slavery with the forging of the new nation, how slavery from the very onset of the new federal government not only corrupted it, but was in fact that new federal government. The two were inseparable—not necessarily, but circumstantially. In 1787 the foundation for the Constitution was laid in Philadelphia just around the corner from the President’s House. It schematized a nation fundamentally divided and one of the most important frames first emerging from those blueprints was the President’s House. From 1790 through 1800, not only was it a center for cobbling a weird planking of slavery and freedom into the executive, judiciary, and the legislature; it indeed sheltered and rehearsed within its very walls the daily routines and intimacies of lived freedom and tyranny.

No comparable space for telling this specific story of the early national era exists in Philadelphia, or probably in the nation as a whole.

In this revised larger story, George Washington, as the first executive and as the overarching figure in the new federal government, must be front and center. Through him exclusively are the stories of both that government and slavery simultaneously compressed. Without him as a prominent actor in this site—which he currently is not—the most effective vehicle for grounding slavery in both the President's House and that new government is lost. John Adams needs to be woven into the narrative as well. Perhaps he can pose some alternatives to Washington—his personal opposition to slavery, his administration's complicated relations with Toussaint Louverture and St-Domingue—while finally upholding his policies that reinforced slavery. But he cannot have the prominence of Washington given the centrality of slavery to the story.

In telling this larger story, Washington does not fare well. In 1790 he signed the Naturalization Act, which limited naturalized citizenship to free white persons. In 1791—soon after Washington first installed an advisory cabinet—Attorney General Edmund Randolph advised him on the need to regularly rotate his slaves out of Pennsylvania so that they would never in one single residency overstep the six-month sojourning limit for transient slaves imposed by the state's Gradual Abolition Act of 1780. One day after six months, they could sue for their freedom.² In 1793 he signed the Fugitive Slave Act. Aided by its greater capacity to make treaties with nations both foreign and aboriginal, the federal government, with Washington at its head, could organize and settle territories more effectively, a power critical to the expansion of slavery. It also made possible a policing and securing of slavery that simply did not exist under the Confederation. And, of course, all of this was occurring as he participated more broadly in launching a national government under which the free movement of white men and the security of their property was paramount.

Washington's administration was integral to embedding slavery in the new federal government and reinforcing the infrastructure upholding it. Indeed, no household better modeled the new nation's settlement with slavery than did the First Family at the President's House. Moll dusted and painted and minded Martha's two grandchildren while the younger Austin, Giles, and Paris worked in the stable, drove carts, and served as footmen on Washington's carriage. The young Richmond helped Hercules, his father and the Washingtons' highly skilled chef who would escape in 1797, in the

kitchen and with errands. Christopher Sheels helped attend Washington while Oney Judge waited upon Martha and helped to fabricate her clothes. Their situation in the President's House was not separate from the forging of the new national government. They were the testament that slavery was not actually contrary at all to the new government; rather it was something embedded and arrayed within it with surprising ease alongside its promulgation and protection of white freedoms. Slavery was nothing to be hidden; it was something familiar, domestic, even positive. Evidently, it was not incompatible with the new nation. These arguments that no other site at INHP can make about the young nation with a similar vivacity are core to the public value of the house. The current exhibition does not know how to make them effectively. Over time, this failure must be righted.

Nowhere is the easy tyranny of Washington with his slaves revealed as vividly as it is with his response to the flight of Oney Judge. Yet the story, as currently told at the site, is arrayed sloppily at the same time the curators fail to recognize it must be a—if not *the*—central narrative axis at the site. This story is a resource uniquely residing with the President's House. Oney, born about 1776, was a dower slave to Martha Washington. She had served Martha since age ten and was with her since the Washingtons moved to the house in late 1790. Over the following years, she became Martha's body servant and an expert seamstress. The Washingtons indulged her with small gifts of cash and tickets to the circus and allowed her some freedom to move about the city, which enabled her to become acquainted with local free blacks. In May 1796 Oney executed a carefully planned escape from the Washingtons, fleeing on a ship first to New York City and then to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Washingtons, particularly Martha, were devastated by her flight; George condemned "the ingratitude of the girl, who was brought up and treated more like a child than a Servant." They did not consider the fact that Oney had recently learned she was to be a wedding gift to Martha's granddaughter, Elizabeth Custis. Once George learned by August that she was in Portsmouth, he personally pursued her with whatever resources of the federal government he could muster: the Fugitive Slave Act; pressuring the secretary of the Treasury, Oliver Wolcott, to enlist support of the collector of the Port of Portsmouth "to seize and put her on board a Vessel" for Philadelphia or Virginia. Although vigorous as he could be behind the scenes in hounding Oney, the Founding Father became quite sheepish at the prospect of exciting "a mob or riot . . . [from her]

adherents” in Portsmouth. Rather than have that happen and the public be informed of his cowardly pursuit of a vulnerable twenty-year-old girl, he advised the port collector in December that he nobly deferred to “forego her Services altogether.”

These events do not honor George. The most powerful man in the nation stalked a lone girl of twenty with the force of his minions in the federal government. That’s what the new order under the Constitution made possible. That was slavery both lived in the President’s House and promulgated from it. Recent historiography’s just noting of Washington’s doubts about slavery in his later years are uncomfortably challenged here by this evidence of his petulant slave chasing identical to that of any small-time trader or farmer. Indeed it was worse because the enormously influential Washington could pressure his appointed cabinet officers to serve his self-interest. Without the Constitution and the federal government, the President’s House was unnecessary. We cannot understand the meaning of the President’s House and the slavery it upheld without connecting it intelligently to the federal government that made it necessary.

George Washington and Oney Judge must be two of the most important faces at this ground. It is from the curators’ clear understanding of what the site’s core stories and themes are that a well-executed exhibition might emanate. This site currently lacks such a rich and well-defined center. The crucial advertisement from Washington’s steward seeking Oney’s return is all but hidden on the back of a panel at the rear of the site while a video about her without any contextualization loops quizzically in the nominal front of the house! Disconnected and nonsensical bronzed footprints identifying Oney’s flight are tossed off along another side. They have failed to use the unique resources they have here to elevate this site to the singular significance it merits as perhaps our key public history site for explaining the what, how, and why of the interlocking of slavery and freedom at the federal nation’s raising.

Moreover, both interpenetrating the house and surrounding it were the free blacks of Philadelphia. It was also a site curiously affording opportunities for them. The Reverend Richard Allen, a leader of the black community and the founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, cleaned the chimneys in the house with his young assistants. The black St. Thomas Episcopal Church, led by the Reverend Absalom Jones, was just down Fifth Street from the house. Small black businesses were on nearby streets. The city was

filling with several thousand blacks who had successfully fled slavery. Free blacks helped Oney escape; Oney and other black members of the household probably knew Allen and Jones and other free blacks. Unlike the master of the President's House, they modeled freedom for the household's slaves both within and outside the house.

Probably the single best device currently at the site—a video on Richard Allen—connects this world of free blacks with the black and white residents of the house. It recounts his work there, his labors with black Philadelphia, and his understanding of Washington. On December 30, 1799, Allen, Jones, and seventy-two other local blacks petitioned the federal government to end the foreign slave trade and the Fugitive Slave Law and its “barbarities” while requesting that African Americans “be admitted to partake of the liberties and unalienable rights” of the nation. Just a day earlier, Allen had given a eulogy at his church upon Washington's recent death. Of the legions of eulogists nationally, Allen alone lauded him for his manumission of all his slaves by will. “He dared to do his duty, and wipe off the only stain with which man could ever reproach him.” This video captures these important dramas within free black Philadelphia through Allen, but the curators largely fail to continue to explore their important relationship to the house and its inhabitants beyond the video.

Moreover the video and the site in general fail to interpret the abundant paradoxes of slavery and freedom inhabiting the President's House that free blacks perceived with a singular clarity. Allen recognized Washington's death as an opportunity—one synchronized with the submission of the petition—to transform an iconic slaveholder into an abolitionist in the hopes of ultimately so transforming the nation. In Allen's skilled hands, Washington became one who “thought we had a right to liberty.” Yet, apparently an oration of gratitude, the eulogy was in fact a muted jeremiad: equating “the American people” with “the chariots of Israel,” he cautioned that “all the officers of the government in the United States, and all the people that say my Father, my Father” must infuse themselves “with a double portion of his [i.e., Washington's] spirit.” Summoning Scripture, he proclaimed the end of those who fail “the cause of the oppressed”: “the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, but the memorial of the wicked shall rot.” Richard Allen was not mired in self-deception: he knew Washington's “only stain” in fact to be indelible and deep. Yet, seizing the moment with a brilliant rhetoric of politics and faith, Allen transfigured him into an

undoubting champion of national abolition, quietly upending mourning into celebration for a man who apparently embodied American freedom but had to die to advance it. Allen and many African Americans around him saw the perilous paradoxes in a national settlement uniting slavery and freedom that leading white men thought viable and constructive. Somehow, he recognized that death and destruction would need to play a role in shivering these fused contradictions.

Of course, “the officers” betrayed this rhetorical dedication to “the cause of the oppressed.” Thus the memorial aptly rots. At the same time it bounds an exhibition asserting the confidence of the new nation with slavery, the site’s architecture argues for the ruins of that settlement— especially when compared necessarily with the buildings surrounding it. If one steps away from the house to the other side of the large lawn bordering it and views it as part of a long sight line running from the beginning of the Liberty Bell Center across Market Street over the Visitors’ Center through to the National Constitution Center, its character as collapse is glaring. Compared with the otherwise smug stolidity of all these other buildings and the sweeping line they create, the site can be recognized not as a house at all, but a shambles that raises doubts about the probity of all the other structures in the chain. The President’s House was intended to be in conversation with the Liberty Bell Center and its attestations to birthing freedom. The tumbled structure is the most honest representation in that whole line of a history built on moral paradox and the terrible suffering of millions. Perhaps the architects intended this sort of comparison; regardless, the curators failed to work with this extraordinary interpretive opportunity to infuse the site with paradox. Looked at with a certain eye, one can see Brady’s photographs of a ruined Richmond and its lone standing chimneys and shattered frames in April 1865. The President’s House—constituting finally a fractured, fundamentally divided frame that its white occupants never recognized—laid the sight line to a ruined Richmond. Thus it is fitting at INHP that we now have this tumbled gap to remind us, on the one hand, where all of the line it shares was heading.

Looked at with fresh eyes, the built structure affords opportunities that can only enhance the site. I look forward to those fresh eyes being applied over the coming many years to a thorough-going reorientation of the interpretation of the President’s House, one of the most important sites for national history and commemoration in the United States.

NOTES

1. Edward Lawler Jr., "The President's House in Philadelphia: The Rediscovery of a Lost Landmark," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 126 (January 2002): 5–95; Lawler, "The President's House Revisited," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 129 (October 2005): 371–409.
2. In a 1786 correspondence with Robert Morris, the wealthy Philadelphia financier, Washington, while professing that "there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do" for abolition, frankly concluded that Pennsylvania's 1780 abolition act and the PAS that sought to safeguard its provisions "introduces more evils than it can cure," despite the fact that they were emblematic of precisely the "Legislative authority" he claimed to seek for a gradual implementation of abolition. GW to Robert Morris, April 12, 1786, in W. W. Abbot, ed., *The Papers of George Washington: Confederation Series*, vol. 4, *April 1786-January 1787* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995), 16. Rotation was not simply a routine safe circuit: Austin, one of Washington's most trusted slaves, drowned after falling from his horse while fording a cold stream in Harford, Maryland, in December 1794. While Washington assigned Austin duties on these trips to Mount Vernon, rotation also necessitated them and bore direct responsibility for the untimely death of a man with a wife and five children.

BOOK REVIEWS

Kate Haulman. *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). Pp. 304. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$37.80.

While fops and fribbles may have signified frivolity in eighteenth-century America, Kate Haulman demonstrates that historians need to recognize that such terms and the larger language of fashion carried powerful political weight. Haulman's meticulously argued book, *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America*, places what she calls "sartorial struggles" (5) at the heart of political debates as well as the sorting out of social categories in the revolutionary era. Fashion created new distinctions of class, gender, race, and nation, serving as the meeting point of economy, politics, and society.

Haulman is clear to note that her study is not of clothes themselves, but of the discursive and performative aspects of fashion. Fashion, Haulman, explains "serves as a set of symbols" (3). The work is deeply informed by theorists in

anthropology, literature, and sociology, especially Pierre Bourdieu, but Haulman wisely relegates theoretical discussions to the footnotes. That theoretical underpinning opens new avenues of analysis for Haulman that push readers to take a more expansive view of what constitutes politics and how deeply culture and gender are implicated in political debates, no matter what the time period.

Of course, discourses can be slippery and mutable, and Haulman is careful to show that there was often disagreement about fashion and power. A particular article of clothing could signify different messages to different groups of people. In addition, the rhetoric of fashion's political implications often did not reflect the reality of people's consumer choices. This was certainly the case with nonconsumption and nonimportation, both of which Haulman treats with considerable nuance. She explains the contradictions in language and behavior by probing the way consumption reformed categories of gender and status, as well as tracing the divergence of popular opinion in fashion versus print. She makes clear that the movements to alter patterns of consumption ultimately reified rather than leveled social classes, and that there were quite mixed implications for women.

The book's six chapters follow a chronological progression divided into three sections. The first two chapters set out how fashion functioned in political ways in the first half of the eighteenth century in colonial America. The next two chapters trace how politics and fashion evolved in response to the imperial crisis, particularly through nonconsumption movements. The final section moves the story into the Revolutionary War and its aftermath in the 1780s. A short but powerful epilogue points ahead into the nineteenth century.

Haulman draws on quite a broad array of sources, enabling her to make connections between fashion in discourse as well as in daily practice. Her discussion of the European hairstyle for women called the high roll, for instance, includes evidence from satires in magazines, portraits, women's writings, and even a set of style cards from France. Well-known sources such as Chesterfield's *Letters* and John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* are also mined for evidence in new and inventive ways. Nearly thirty illustrations offer visual reference points for Haulman's analysis, a welcome and unusual feature for a monograph of this length.

Haulman devotes considerable attention to Philadelphia, making it her focus in chapters 4 and 5. While the book looks at four port cities—Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston—these places are used to extrapolate claims about Americans at large. When regional

differences do exist, Haulman is careful to point those out, but taken together, these differences suggest greater regional (not to mention urban versus rural) divides than Haulman acknowledges. Nonetheless, readers of this journal will be interested to see many familiar Philadelphia names in the impressive research Haulman did in that city's archives.

Readers should be sure not to miss the closing epilogue for the book, which ties fashion to race, the body, and citizenship in the 1790s and early 1800s in thoughtful and concise ways. While neither race nor the body is the focus of the book, there are times when further discussion of the body in particular would be helpful. I wanted to know more, for instance, about her claim that the hoop petticoat "bespoke women's control over their bodies" (53), or what it meant that the foppish "macaroni cut" (135) created narrow silhouettes for men. Overall, the question of the way fashion "makes" rather than simply reflects ideas about the body, race, class, or gender could be further probed. Haulman's work certainly paves the way for future studies of fashion in any era in this regard.

The book's historiographical significance reaches far beyond fashion, however. Specialists in material culture will find this book an excellent complement to Linda Baumgarten's *What Clothes Reveal*, as Haulman's arguments expand and complicate rather than contradict Baumgarten's study. It contributes to scholarship by historians such as T. H. Breen and Kariann Yokota on consumer choices as expressions of political belief in early America, as well as entering a growing conversation on political economy that situates international trade at the center of power struggles in the Atlantic world. In its broadest sense, Haulman's study is an exciting addition to a new wave of discussion, particularly among scholars of gender and culture, about the very meaning and scope of politics and how to write a new sort of political and cultural history.

CASSANDRA GOOD

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Mark Jacob and Stephen H. Case. *Treacherous Beauty: Peggy Shippen, the Woman behind Benedict Arnold's Plot to Betray America* (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2012). Pp. 288. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$24.94.

Some sixty years ago popular historical writer James T. Flexner published *The Traitor and the Spy: Benedict Arnold and John André* (1953, with a slightly

updated bicentennial edition in 1975). Peggy Shippen did not make the subtitle, perhaps a reflection at that time of as yet untapped public interest in women's history; however, she was a major player in Flexner's presentation. The flirtatious, outwardly vapid teenager Peggy, the product of an upper-class, loyalist/neutralist-leaning family, was allegedly smitten with the dashing, dandyish André during the British occupation of Philadelphia during 1777–78. Just how affectionate they were toward each other was left to the reader's imagination, but some sort of adoring relationship there apparently was. When British forces evacuated Philadelphia in June 1778, wounded rebel war hero Benedict Arnold took command of the city as George Washington's chosen military governor. Through twists and turns beautiful Peggy became so enamored of Arnold, who was twice her age, that they married in April 1779, roughly a month before he made his first overtures to return his loyalty to the British via a message sent through an intermediary to none other than Peggy's adoring friend André. Flexner concludes that Peggy stoked the fire that drove the supposedly ever-greedy Arnold forward in what became a plot to turn the vital West Point defenses over to the British in a desperate plan to crush the American rebellion.

Six decades later journalist Mark Jacob and lawyer Stephen H. Case have presented the same basic story, perhaps with a bit more emphasis on Peggy and with less attention given to André. Although mentioning Flexner, the authors contend that they have produced "the first nonfiction book to focus on Peggy's life" rather than merely "to depict her as a supporting character in her husband's story" (vi). Clearly a genuflection to expanding public interest in women's history, their claim is somewhat misleading. The authors have not separated Peggy's story in any significant way from Arnold's. As for the heroic traitor, he remains a central character in their saga. Based on a review of index citations, Arnold receives as much attention as Peggy, if not more. To appreciate Peggy as her own person separate from her infamous husband may be virtually impossible, especially in a book with a subtitle declaring her "the woman behind Benedict Arnold's plot to betray America."

Since Peggy once again turns out to be an Eve-like figure holding forth the forbidden fruit to her corruptible husband, what then of Arnold's persistent presence in this historical drama? He functions more or less as a convenient punching bag for authors Jacob and Case, who repeat everything from fabricated tales about his dissolute youth to a barrage of less than flattering judgments regarding his presumed venal character. To take one example, Peggy described Arnold as "the best of husbands" in a March 1786 letter to

her father. Shortly thereafter, according to the authors, she discovered that “her husband had been a traitor to their wedding vows.” An infant by the name of John Sage, presumably Arnold’s love child by another woman, was born around that time. Certainly, insist Jacob and Case, baby John must have been his child, since Arnold later provided for Sage in his will. The result was that a furious Peggy supposedly “never again used such exalted language to describe her husband, at least not during his lifetime” (203–4).

In reality, it is just as likely that one of Arnold’s older sons fathered, or one of the family’s maids bore, little John Sage, in the latter circumstance with any number of potential fathers residing in the town of St. John, New Brunswick, Canada. It is also possible that Sage was an apprentice attached to the family mercantile business operating out of St. John. Arnold did have a generous side, as witnessed by the large amount of personal funds that he initially poured into supporting the patriot rebellion. Providing a modest sum for Sage thus may well have been a charitable act rather than an admission of violated wedding vows.

The authors do not explore alternative explanations in their rush to such facile judgments. If Peggy was so hopelessly offended, then why did she write her son Richard in August 1794 about being “in a state of most extreme misery” because of a report that Arnold had been made a prisoner of the French in the Caribbean area (216)? Perhaps her grave concern was a reflection of having just borne a new infant two months earlier. Indeed, back in September 1787, she had given birth to another son, conceived within a few months of the time the authors assert that Peggy had learned about alleged love child John Sage. Apparently, though, Peggy was not upset enough to stop sleeping with her husband or bearing more children with him. Moreover, after Arnold died in June 1801, she wrote to her eldest son Edward that she had just been “deprived of an excellent husband, and you one of the best fathers” (letter not presented by the authors, contained in the Arnold Family Correspondence Collection, New York Public Library). A little over a month later Peggy wrote to her brother-in-law Edward Burd that she had lost “a husband whose affection for me was unbounded”; however, Jacob and Case quote from another part of this same letter that ignores this testimonial in favor of what Peggy stated (out of context) about her “sufferings” and “years of unhappiness,” apparently all caused by her adoring husband (219).

So it remains unclear what Peggy really means to be telling us about her relations with Benedict Arnold—or about the meaning of her life as her own person for that matter. In *Treacherous Beauty* the authors too often present conclusions without considering alternative explanations or

carefully evaluating all of the evidence. Certainly this book is well written, definitely a page turner, but it pretty much repeats the same old storyline found in Flexner's *Traitor and Spy* and a smattering of other secondary source treatments. As such, Peggy Shippen Arnold remains an elusive—and certainly controversial—historical figure.

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Harvey Bartle III. *Mortals with Tremendous Responsibilities: A History of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 2011). Pp. 273, illustrations, preface, index. \$35.00.

There are ninety-four federal district courts in the United States. These are the courts where litigation begins; they are the “work horses” of the federal court system. In 2008–9 the US Supreme Court heard 87 cases, the United States Courts of Appeal heard 58,000 cases, and the United States District courts heard 353,00 cases. *Mortals with Tremendous Responsibilities* is the story of one of these federal district courts, the US District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. The federal court in Philadelphia was one of the first district courts set up by Congress in the Judiciary Act of 1789 and this book covers the court from its inception to the present. The author, Harvey Bartle III, was appointed to the court in 1991 and served as its Chief Judge from 2006 to 2011. The volume, according to Judge Bartle, “is intended not only to memorialize the story of this court, but also to serve as a reminder of the consequential role that this court has played” in the history of the federal judiciary.

Many of the important cases in the legal canon had their beginnings in the Eastern District Court. *U.S. v. E.C. Knight Co.* (1895) is one of them. The Supreme Court upheld the ruling of the Eastern Pennsylvania District Court that a monopoly of manufacturing did not mean a restraint of trade. This decision seriously weakened the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971), dealing with the separation of church and state, also began in Pennsylvania. The question involved a Pennsylvania state law that provided public funds to pay teacher salaries in sectarian schools. The district court upheld the law, but the Supreme Court overturned the

district court and ruled this law was “an excessive entanglement between government and religion.” The Supreme Court did allow some governmental aid for sectarian schools and developed the “Lemon” test for allowable expenditures.

There are many such cases detailed by the author, cases that are important historically, or legally significant, or cases that are representative of a particular era. But also included in this history are little-known cases. Some of the unique cases include the case of seaman Holmes, who after a shipwreck threw fourteen passengers out of a sinking lifeboat to their deaths. He was charged with homicide but convicted of manslaughter and the sentence was later remitted. I wonder if the classic Ethics 101 problem of “who would you throw out of a life boat” originated with *United States v. Holmes* (1842).

The composition of the court reflected American legal society. Through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and for most of the twentieth century, the justices were white, male, and mainly Protestant. Bartle’s history of the Pennsylvania district court is also a history of diversity in the legal profession. The first African American justice, A. Leon Higgenbotham Jr., was appointed by Lyndon Johnson in 1963. The first female justice, Norma Shapiro, was appointed by Jimmy Carter in 1978. There are now twenty-two justices sitting on the Eastern Pennsylvania District Court and they represent the multicultural nation we have become.

My criticism of the book is that it can be repetitious: one judge from an old Pennsylvania family and prestigious law firm succeeding another judge from an old Pennsylvania family and prestigious law firm. This narrative occurs over and over again and begins to resemble the first chapter of Matthew tracing the genealogy of Jesus. I realize the author feels all the justices of the court are important to the history of the court; I just wish the author had left some details to footnotes.

I believe this book would be a very good resource for graduate students looking for a thesis or dissertation topic. Much has been written about the decisions of the Supreme Court, but this book points out the need for more research on the early life of a case, where the first determination of the law occurs, in a district court. I would recommend *Mortals with Tremendous Responsibilities* for legal libraries, instructors of political science and history, and anyone interested in legal history. It is a fine historical narrative of an important federal district court.

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Geoffrey Plank. *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom: A Quaker in the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012). Pp. 320. Illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$39.95.

John Woolman's life and career have been extensively studied in a wide range of historical projects. Styling himself a model of piety and a commentator on contemporary social and religious currents, and documenting his experiences, reflections, and prescriptions for decades in a journal, Woolman practically presented himself as a subject for study. His contemporaries began editing his journal for publication as early as 1772, the year of his death. Eminent during his own lifetime and leaving a durable legacy in print, Woolman has proven to be a popular, and conveniently well documented, source for historians interested in religious history of eighteenth-century America.

In his recent study of Woolman's life and work, Geoffrey Plank brings together two threads in an already robust literature on the topic: biography of Woolman and studies of Quakerism in its social and political context. Plank embraces a thematic rather than chronological organization to emphasize his conception of Woolman as a study, alternatively exceptional and representative, of contemporary social currents.

The work remains more biography than systematic study of Quaker politics, theology, or antislavery sentiment, but the attempted marriage nevertheless sheds some light on the life and views of Woolman, as well as his world. Plank situates Woolman within the context of evolving anti-slavery sentiment and pacifism while describing a model of protest that Woolman helped to develop. Aware of his participation in an imperial economy that relied on slave labor, Woolman "resolved to spend his money only in a manner that was consistent with the public good," recognizing as he did "the global impact of consumer expenditure" (8). Plank argues that these actions prefigured those of the American patriots and laid the foundation of a method of social engagement that persists today. More broadly, Plank uses Woolman's writings and experience to reconstruct features of "colonial America, the Quakers on both sides of the ocean, and the combination of religious conviction and communal tension that gave energy to the early days of organized opposition to slavery and its place in the imperial economy" (8).

The first four chapters address Woolman's personal life and development, from childhood to marriage, and the attendant evolution of his views. Even as a youth (at least according to his own recollection), Woolman believed

that he lived in an era of increasing moral weakness. Woolman's imagined remedy to these ills and his description of his own religious realization opens a window onto Quaker theology and religious epistemology. Although there is mention of the interaction of personal experience, the reading of Scripture, and community participation as the constituent factors in religious realization, one might wish for slightly more discussion on this point. For instance, when affirming that Woolman consistently, at least in his early days, sought validation of his views from his Quaker meetings, Plank could have elucidated the degree to which that was a personal habit of Woolman's and a commentary on an evolving epistemology concerning the authentication of religious epiphany.

The next three chapters address slavery and the Seven Years' War. Plank deftly illuminates the evolving contours of Woolman's antislavery views and those of his community. Woolman was not at first an uncompromising opponent of slaveholding; nor were many of his Quaker interlocutors. He grew into a more categorical position, and also expanded his lived protest by, for instance, refusing to accept free lodging from slaveholders. An increasingly robust vision of protest and example-setting in producing positive social change paralleled Woolman's growing disillusionment with formal political channels as a means for change. Many of his fellow Friends would follow his example in protesting the Seven Years' War, applying a model of engagement that would become more important as the power of Quakers in formal politics was curtailed during and following the war.

The final two chapters and the epilogue return to a more personal focus on Woolman, recounting his late-life voyages overseas, illness, and death. He continued to criticize transatlantic trade and shipping, not only for their connection with slavery, but also for the role they played in an often-exploitative economy of which he was skeptical. Plank then details Woolman's time in England, during which, unlike some of his contemporaries, he was not directly engaged with prominent British antislavery activists. He did, however, continue his writing and embodiment of protest against luxury and opulence in, for example, his eschewal of ornamentation and fine clothing. The attention and admiration that Woolman garnered for his activities are evidenced by the prompt editing and publication of Woolman's journal immediately following his death in 1772.

If one were to quibble with any element of the book, one might note that Plank's dispensing with chronological organization in favor of thematic

treatment lends itself to some repetition and, at times, undercuts the coherence of the argument. Moreover, the subtitle is somewhat inappropriate. Plank suggests repeatedly that Woolman did not have much knowledge of imperial politics, and, unlike such contemporaries as Anthony Benezet, did not correspond with British antislavery activists. Woolman participated in the patriots' boycott of tea, for example, not because of the good's taxation but because it was sweetened with sugar produced by slave labor. In other words, Woolman's protests did have an imperial context, of which he was likely conscious, but he was not engaged with the politics of a transatlantic movement per se. Plank could at least have clarified the role of empire in framing his scholarly project. These minor points aside, Plank has produced a compelling study of Woolman's life, views, and role within his community and world.

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Hardy Green. *The Company Town: The Industrial Edens and Satanic Mills that Shaped the American Economy* (New York: Basic Books, 2012; originally published in hardcover in 2010). Pp. 271. Illustrations, notes, index. Paperback, \$16.99.

Hardy Green's *The Company Town* takes an exhaustive look at the history of corporate-developed communities across the United States. In tracing the growth, heyday, and collapse of these towns, Green argues that they are paradoxically un-American in concept yet essential to the spirit of American business. As a survey work, Green does his best to describe a wide spectrum ranging from 1820s Lowell, Massachusetts, to more modern examples of Google's work campuses in California (a descendent of the company town that gives employees all the amenities of the old cities in one location).

Company towns as described by Green follow a few basic guidelines: they are generally tied to a single industry that dominates the local community's manufacturing as well as to the single larger-than-life personality who runs that industry. Most towns also fall along the spectrum between what Green describes as utopia to "exploitationville" (6). Green argues that business leaders establish their towns in accordance to the availability of resources and labor supply, with high-profit ventures tending to be more utopian in

their visions and offerings of welfare capitalism while low-profit, unskilled industries (such as mining) tend to exploit workers and disregard safety or health measures.

For Pennsylvania, the only company town Green discusses in detail is Hershey, which he categorizes as a “utopian” town. He notes the strong religious influences driving Milton Hershey to create his city in 1904. Unlike railroad car magnate George Pullman’s town, which grew up around the same time and set strict guidelines on living that only allowed employees tenuous rental of space, Hershey allowed outright ownership of homes in his city and furnished them with modern plumbing while also providing employees with parks, schools, a zoo, a library, a trolley system, and other entertainments. Hershey believed that cleanliness and attractions would appease employee needs and act as a barrier against evil, but at the same time his actions smacked of a company-led moral police that controlled all aspects of life in the town.

In later years, Green argues that the Hershey Company used this utopian veneer to mask resentment, labor unrest, and a company that struggled to keep up with modern business practices. In 1970 what had been created as a worker-recreational amusement park known as Hershey Park reopened as a theme park called “Hersheypark,” a move that Green calls a “Disney-style” surrender of its old personality (41). This turn toward tourism is a hallmark of many company towns that outlived their original intention. With deindustrialization a sad reality and many jobs associated with the factories and mills either nonexistent or moved overseas, some business conglomerates have turned to their past in order to make money from old relics. He notes that Hersheypark now includes simulated factory tours and a museum in addition to the theme park rides. This allows the Hershey Company to continue to control its image for the foreseeable future and maintain the appearance of a family- and employee-friendly atmosphere.

Readers expecting a thorough discussion of Pennsylvania’s factory towns will be disappointed as the section on Hershey makes up only a small fraction of the more than 200 pages of the narrative. The portions of the text devoted to Hershey, furthermore, are taken from secondary sources rather than any original research. Green cites Michael D’Antonio’s biography of Milton Hershey (*Hershey: Milton S. Hershey’s Extraordinary Life of Wealth, Empire, and Utopian Dreams*), Carol Off’s investigative exposé (*Bitter Chocolate: The Dark*

Side of the World's Most Seductive Sweet), and Joel Glen Brenner's *The Emperors of Chocolate: Inside the Secret World of Hershey and Mars* as well as the company history on the Hershey website and the "Hersheypark" page on Wikipedia. Sadly, while he makes note of the extensive company archives available in Hersheypark, he did not attempt to use them. Many of the other industrial areas of Pennsylvania fare even worse: Homestead and Vandergrift receive mention, but only when Green is discussing the positive and negatives examples Judge Gary considered when planning the Indiana company town that bears his name.

As a history of business written by a former editor of *BusinessWeek*, Green understandably keeps his focus on the leaders of industry and their motivations for creating and operating company towns. This leaves very little room for employee and resident agency, and outside of noting important strike activity, not much is said concerning how workers and their families felt being part of this carefully maintained and monitored superstructure. Green's lack of detailed discussions of both worker lives and unrest may be from the fact that he uses no original or archival material when making his argument. The style remains highly journalistic with sources compiled from many secondary works, newspaper articles, and company histories taken from the internet.

The Company Town originally appeared in hardcover in fall 2010. It has now reappeared in 2012 as a more affordable trade paperback, a sign that publisher Basic Books feels the work is of importance and should be easily accessible. Indeed, the book is a useful starting point for scholars needing a survey of already available information all in one place. While Green's work serves as a handy compendium of company towns and their associated villainy or value, it never delves very deep into any of the towns; nor does it engage in any new research as to the impact these communities held for those who lived there. Unfortunately, historians of Pennsylvania will find scant samples of information relevant to their fields, and this too is derivative of work that has already appeared in the historiography. Historians of labor in general will find nuggets of value in *The Company Town* but Pennsylvania scholars are better off sticking with the more detailed analysis present in other works.

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