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PENNSYLVANIA AND IRISH FAMINE RELIEF, 1846–1847

Harvey Strum

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOTES

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

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

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

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

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

**“WISE AS SERPENTS AND HARMLESS
AS DOVES”: THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF
THE FEMALE PRISON ASSOCIATION OF
FRIENDS IN PHILADELPHIA, 1823–1870**

Judith Scheffler

Abstract: In 1823 a group of Orthodox Quaker women in Philadelphia formed the Female Prison Association of Friends in Philadelphia, a female auxiliary of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons (later known as the Pennsylvania Prison Society). For approximately the next fifty years they engaged in organized prison visiting in Philadelphia at Arch Street and Moyamensing prisons and the Eastern State Penitentiary. As visitors they became subtle, understated allies in the operation of the Pennsylvania System of separate confinement with labor. Their work was reformist in nature, in that they pressed for practical measures they deemed significant to improve the condition of female inmates: the institution of matrons and the founding of the Howard Institution, a sort of halfway house for released prisoners. Their main goal, however, was spiritual, and the salvation they sought was their own as well as that of the imprisoned women they aided. As a Quaker women's group that worked quietly in the background during a period usually associated with the more public work of activist Hicksite Quaker women, they were barely officially recognized by the male society in their own day and are almost entirely unknown today. Their story suggests that the spiritual motivation of some nineteenth-century women may be a significant but little-noted force behind their contributions to the history of social reform.

Both British and American Quakers figured centrally in a transatlantic burst of prison reform at the close of the eighteenth century. In Philadelphia, an international center of thought and experimentation in penology, the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons (PSAMPP) organized in 1787 to improve egregious conditions, including overcrowding and indiscriminate mixing of inmates without regard to age, sex, or crime. PSAMPP members, all of them male and a third of them Quaker, monitored prison conditions and actively engaged in reforming individual inmates through prison visiting.¹ In London, prison reform commanded increasing public attention after wealthy Quaker Elizabeth Fry (1780–1845) boldly entered the forbidding walls of notorious Newgate Prison in 1813 and read to the illiterate, disorganized rabble of women incarcerated there.² Ten years later, in a scene replicating Fry's iconic entry into Newgate, Philadelphia Quaker Mary Waln Wistar (1765–1844) and her husband, wealthy PSAMPP leader Thomas Wistar, entered Arch Street Prison, the city's bridewell or jail, on May 5, 1823, with two female Friends and began ministering to imprisoned women. That same year Mary Waln Wistar formed the Female Prison Association of Friends in Philadelphia (FPAFP), which was modeled upon Fry's British Ladies' Society and affiliated with the PSAMPP.

Historians of American prison reform have presented detailed accounts of Philadelphia's role in the development of prison architecture and penology.³ In 1790 the Walnut Street Jail was renovated in an attempt to separate categories of prisoners and provide solitary confinement with labor for the worst offenders. The Walnut Street Jail became a state facility where overcrowded conditions led to its closure and the opening of Eastern State Penitentiary in 1829. There the PSAMPP embarked upon a great experiment applying its penal philosophy of separate confinement with labor, which endeavored to reform rather than simply punish and to prevent inmates' associating in future criminal activity by confining them in separate cells throughout their sentences. This Pennsylvania System became the subject of international debate, centered mostly on the effects of "solitary confinement." New York's Auburn or Silent System offered a competing method, housing inmates separately at night but allowing them to congregate in harshly enforced silent work by day. Defenders of the Pennsylvania System stressed that inmates were not truly "solitary," as explained in the Quaker journal *The Friend*: "the prisoner, though totally separated from his fellow-convicts, should be permitted to see as many respectable persons as would not interfere with the discipline of the institution."⁴

In the context of the PSAMPP's tenacity in publicly advocating for the separate system, the FPAFP successfully negotiated an undercurrent of reforms more tailored to women's needs, even those opposing the PSAMPP's philosophy. Despite its success in effecting major reforms such as the installation of matrons for women in Philadelphia's prisons and the creation of a "halfway house" in Philadelphia for released female inmates, the FPAFP received little credit in its own era and is virtually forgotten today. Through their rhetoric and savvy in negotiating within the Quaker value system, they effected changes they sought. The Orthodox Quaker women who comprised this organization, unlike members of other female voluntary organizations at that time, were motivated only secondarily by humanitarian impulses or the desire to form religious organizations, although they certainly were active in doing just that.⁵ Instead, their engagement in prison reform must be viewed in the context of the Quaker principle of submitting to an inward spiritual call rather than primarily acting on a social goal. This distinction lies at the heart of their identity as an association and as individual members, and suggests why they neither sought nor received credit, whether as individuals or as an association. The story of how they effected significant social reforms in the process of pursuing primarily spiritual goals may enrich our understanding of the complex and varied history of women's leadership and of Quaker influence upon prison reform in America.

To assume that the women of the FPAFP were motivated primarily by benevolent impulses to help the disadvantaged poor, feminist concern for their vulnerable sisters, or desire to mitigate the miseries of a criminal justice system that was fundamentally racist—that is, to identify these women with members of either female benevolent or reform societies—would be to misread their priorities.⁶ Many of those motivations played a role in their activities, but their primary commitment was to the spiritual condition of the women they aided as well as of themselves. The central importance of a Quaker's "concern" must be acknowledged in order to understand what motivated these women and, ultimately, generated the respect paid to their prison work by the men of the PSAMPP. A concern, or "quicken[ing] sense of the need to do something or to demonstrate sympathetic interest in an individual or group, as a result of what is felt to be a direct intimation of God's will," might give rise to a "leading" or "sense of being drawn or called by God in a particular direction or toward a particular course of action."⁷

Following their leadings and biblical teachings, these evangelical Orthodox Friends perceived a call to ministry that led them to action, in this case on behalf of imprisoned women.

As Leigh Ann Wheeler and Jean Quataert state in their editorial note to the "Politics, Activism, Race" issue of the *Journal of Women's History*, "attention to the history of women's activism reveals as many new insights today as it did when women's history entered the academy decades ago." Since the 1970s, an extensive historiography of the development of women's benevolent organizations and leadership experience in collective activism has illuminated the contributions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century associations, with the emphasis upon accounts of affluent white Protestant women's organizations. Lori D. Ginzberg has shown how the "ideology of benevolence" powerfully influenced white antebellum women's social activism by conflating ideas of morality and femininity. Members of these privileged societies, Anne Fior Scott has explained, "nearly always made a distinction between the 'worthy' and the 'unworthy' poor," including the habitually poor, foreigners, beggars, and drunkards. Stories of forgotten or underrepresented women, Anne B. Boylan has demonstrated, are needed in order to "convey the unity and multiplicity, focus and diffusion, clarity and shadows, centrality and marginality that characterized the history of women's organizing." Daniel S. Wright's analysis of the Female Moral Reform Movement in the Northeast in the 1830s and 1840s, for example, has demonstrated the efforts of rural women to organize for social change.⁸

More recently, historians have turned a lens on women's religiosity, another facet of the history of women's collective action. Kathryn Kish Sklar, for example, has observed that religion both positively and negatively motivated Angelina Grimke's work for women's rights. Although Sklar's description of Grimke's "subjective spiritual quest" shows it to be very different from that of the Quaker FPAFP members, her discussion highlights how consideration of a religious dimension may enrich historical interpretation.⁹

In her study of eighteenth-century Quakerism, Phyllis Mack argues powerfully for historians

to consider the experience of religious women in relation to theories of women's agency. . . . For secular scholars trying to understand the relationship between religion and agency, the otherness of religion

we need to confront is not dogmatism but a conception of agency in which autonomy is less important than self-transcendence and in which the energy to act in the world is generated and sustained by a prior act of personal surrender.¹⁰

Mack encourages historians to consider viewing women's religious experience apart from "narratives of social oppression, personal ambition, or the search for self-expression (e.g., viewing religious meetings as a training ground for women's public speaking)." For some women, religion is far from being "marginal to the main story," and "a secular liberal model of agency is of only limited use in tracking the public activities of religious women or the religious origins of feminism."¹¹ Similarly, I would argue that the anonymity of the Orthodox Quaker members of the FPAFP may be explained at least partly by the primacy they gave to their religious purpose and focus, placing it before their own self-fulfillment or even the causes they espoused.

Rebecca Larson's account of the visibility and transatlantic popularity of eighteenth-century Quaker women preachers notes that, in the post-Revolutionary period,

Quaker women preachers, as well as Friends generally, continued to influence the larger society with their principled idealism, but in private philanthropies and social reform movements such as abolitionism. Quakers' reassertion of boundaries between their religious society and worldly culture strengthened their commitment to Quaker values, but reduced the visibility of Quaker women as public figures in their preaching role, resulting in a closer confinement of the female ministry to the cloistered meetings of a "peculiar people."¹²

While this interpretation helps to explain the reticence of the FPAFP, a more nuanced consideration of the distinction between the approach taken by Orthodox and Hicksite women to philanthropies and social reform is needed. Larson's account notes, quite appropriately, the remarkable leadership of Quakers in the women's rights movement, but these women were mostly Hicksites and their approach was far more secular than was that of the FPAFP.¹³ In 1827 Philadelphia area Quakers underwent a wrenching schism into Hicksite and Orthodox branches, dividing meetings and even some families until a reunification in the mid-twentieth century. The Orthodox tended to be wealthier, urban Quakers, who identified with London Yearly Meeting

and placed an evangelical emphasis upon scripture and faith in the sacrifice and divinity of Jesus. Hicksites, on the other hand, tended to be rural farmers, following the ministry of Elias Hicks, a New York Quaker preacher who urged a return to “primitive” Quakerism and its reliance upon the “Inward Light, a divine spark within each person,” and individual revelation. Both groups saw themselves as preservers of traditional founding principles of Quakerism, and the schism caused Friends on both sides to leave meetings they felt to be in conflict with their values and join or build separate meetings.¹⁴

The names and achievements of Lucretia Mott and Abby Hopper Gibbons are lauded; conversely, as Quaker historian Margaret Hope Bacon has noted, Mary Waln Wistar was “the pioneer of women’s prison reform in America, although her story has remained buried.”¹⁵ Why should this be the case? Historical accounts linking Quaker tolerance of women’s leadership in monthly meetings with training for leadership in feminist and social causes tend to focus on celebrated leaders, such as Mott and Gibbons, who were affiliated with the Hicksite branch or who, in the case of Gibbons, eventually broke ties with Quakerism altogether. Mott left her Orthodox meeting to join with the Hicksites, but came to feel uncomfortable even there, although she remained a Friend until her death. While Quaker background may help to explain the motivation and confidence of these female leaders to address social issues, reforms attributed to their Quaker heritage are generally secular. The significance of this Hicksite-Orthodox distinction, while seemingly merely technical unless Quaker history itself is being discussed, has quite marked implications for this study, for it helps to explain how cultural differences within what is identified generally as “Quakerism” may account, at least partly, for the anonymity and apparent reticence of the almost entirely Orthodox FPAFP in their social activities.

In 1845, twenty-two years after their first organized prison visits, the Philadelphia women wrote a history of their society for publication in the journal of the PSAMPP, the *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*. A long description of the life of Elizabeth Fry, their recently deceased mentor in prison visiting, written by the PSAMPP, precedes the ladies’ history, clearly indicating the relationship that all felt existed between the “humble and unpretending” efforts of these Quaker women on both sides of the Atlantic. The ladies’ history, written by themselves, identifies only two women by name, Mary Waln Wistar and Anna Potts, who were by that time deceased, and explains that other “names we withhold, as they are still living.” The account by the FPAFP of their entry into prison work echoes Fry’s

sentiments: "The engagement was entered upon with feelings of weakness and fear, under a sense of the importance of keeping in view our blessed Redeemer's declaration, 'Without me, ye can do nothing.'" Although only a few of the FPAFP actually served as ministers in the Society of Friends, their approach to their work with female prisoners had a distinctly religious character, suggesting that spiritual goals rather than political power, social reform, or worldly recognition, were their underlying motivation. Aiding female prisoners advanced their own spiritual journey, for, like Fry, they saw themselves first as ministers of God and second as reformers.¹⁶

Elizabeth Fry's Example

The accomplishments of the Philadelphia women are best understood in the context of the example that had been set by Elizabeth Fry, "that Queen of all women."¹⁷ Fry, a female Quaker celebrity almost from the beginning of her prison work, traveled throughout Europe, seeking the support of royalty and the powerful. Examining the work of Fry's protégées in the Philadelphia prisons sheds light on their own motivation as well as Fry's, because their actions may be viewed uncomplicated by the Victorian-style media circus surrounding this famous woman's activities.

Long before her death, Fry had become the target of attack from both within and outside the Society of Friends. A female Quaker celebrity was certainly an anomaly in Victorian London, and Fry's leadings were subjected to intense scrutiny by the public as well as by her own religious society. Many of her contemporaries as well as later biographers believed that power and fame motivated her, at least partly, although her 1827 manual for female prison visiting associations contains the caveat,

Far be it from me to attempt to persuade women to forsake their right province. My only desire is, that they should *fill that province well*; and, although their calling, in many respects, materially differs from that of the other sex, and may not perhaps be so exalted an one—yet a minute observation will prove that, if adequately fulfilled, it has nearly, if not quite, an equal influence on society at large.¹⁸

Her talents in Orthodox Quaker ministry led to fame that was not always comfortable to her, as she remarked to a friend during the illness that preceded her death: "I have been tried with the applause of the world, and

none know how great a trial *that* has been, and the deep *humiliations* of it; and yet I fully believe that it is not near so *dangerous* as being made much of in religious society. There is a snare even in religious unity, if we are not on the watch."¹⁹ Religious unity notwithstanding, the glamour that attended Fry's activities came to undermine her credibility among many Quakers; this obstacle proved more difficult than the domestic issue that Fry, the mother of eleven children, was so thoroughly engaged in outside activities, since traditionally both male and female "Public Friends" left their families to travel in the ministry. The unsavory nature of Fry's activities—actually entering prisons and transport ships—certainly departed from the safer projects undertaken by most charitable ladies societies, but such activities were considered acceptable for female members of the Religious Society of Friends.

The deepest criticism concerned Fry's expensive lifestyle and perceived courting of worldly fame and position.²⁰ The Philadelphia Orthodox journal *The Friend* cautioned readers to choose "ancient Quakerism" and reject "Elizabeth Fry's constant round of engagements of all sorts, the whirl of philanthropic business which absorbed and oppressed her, inducing premature old age." Her influence was "seductive, because brilliant," but marred by its "inconsistency with doctrines and testimonies most dear to us as a people." Her error, they concluded, was her "false position" as one engaged so deeply in worldly matters while "a minister and leader in the Society of Friends." Her departure from the testimony of simplicity suggested that she was not a "consistent" Friend; that is, she did not consistently observe the tenets of Quakerism.²¹ Opposing this view, the "testimony," or memorial issued by Fry's Monthly Meeting of Ratcliff and Barking following her death, offers a revealing defense against these criticisms. She was "a *consistent friend*" (their emphasis). "Her philanthropic exertions were no hindrance to the exercise of her gospel ministry, but were remarkably blended with it, and often opened her way for it to her own humbling admiration," and "in the prison or the palace her demeanour was the same."²²

Fry also drew criticism from outside the Society of Friends, from those who opposed her approach to prison reform or questioned its claims of success. In an article in the *Edinburgh Review* responding to a British Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline 1821 report, Anglican cleric Sydney Smith disputed the accuracy of statistics citing a 40 percent reduction in female recidivism achieved by the affiliated Ladies Committees at Newgate, although Smith noted that the Society rather than the ladies themselves made this claim. The power of statistics to support or undercut an argument

was beginning to be felt in penology, and claims of such extravagant success needed the support of hard data, citing “dates, names, and certificates,” according to Smith, who advocated “the diminution of offences by the terror of the punishment” and rejected “heart-rending narratives” of individual success stories as “very detrimental” to a report’s argument.²³ Similarly dismissive of Fry’s effectiveness was the Reverend John Clay’s assessment in *The Prison Chaplain; A Memoir*, written posthumously by his son in 1861. With an element of sarcasm, Clay described Fry’s Newgate operation, acknowledging her sincerity and the effectiveness of her charisma in drawing public attention to the need for prison reform, but qualifying her effectiveness:

There was soon hardly a large prison in England without a ladies’ committee, patronizing, lecturing, teaching and philanthropically drilling the female prisoners. The majority of these committees had only an ephemeral existence, though a few continued in operation for many years. After making large deductions for exaggeration and credulity in the records of their achievements there is still a considerable residuum of work well and successfully done.²⁴

What her critics recognized but largely undervalued was Fry’s success in organizing women volunteers locally and inspiring women internationally to express their religious impulses through prison visiting. Fry’s work at Newgate offered an international model of the power of collective action by women volunteers on behalf of women prisoners. Through correspondence and visits to prisons throughout Europe, she succeeded in advancing interest in reforms for female prisoners by mentoring like-minded women who served in their own locations. Lucia Zedner, however, describes the “mixed record of Elizabeth Fry’s prison visiting campaign” in England, where “Lady Visitors” were at times considered meddlers by prison administration. “Unpaid and apparently unwanted, many Lady Visitors simply gave up.”²⁵ Nevertheless, working within male power structures, both religious and political, Fry effected important changes for imprisoned women. Arguably the most significant of the reforms she promoted was the use of female staff to deal with imprisoned women. Contemporaries who praised Fry’s work cited this reform; explaining the deep significance of this change, the journal *Prisoner’s Friend* commented:

But very little will be accomplished in reforming woman till she is committed fairly to the care of her own sex. This principle was one of

the earliest thoughts in the mind of Elizabeth Fry, who labored twenty years to establish this one idea. Most persons think that one idea is hardly worth cherishing; but it is really the one-idea men and women who, I verily believe, accomplish the most in this world. It is the one idea that shakes thrones and kingdoms to their very centre; and one great reason for Mrs. Fry's wonderful success was, that she began with one great thought, and, amidst every obstacle, carried it out.²⁶

The Philadelphia Female Association

Motivation, Methods, and Organization

Fry's motivation for her prison reform work is relevant to a discussion of the FPAFP, because her activities served as a model for their own more subtle and unrecognized activities. Fry's own explanation, in journals and correspondence, of her decisions and actions has not prevented misinterpretation and distortion of her motives. Biographers correctly observe that she was not a generic, benevolent “lady,” and that she put her work before domestic and family duties. However, some say that she contributed nothing to penal theory, although that was never her intention, or that she was an early feminist, seeking power over men, a criticism that assumes goals Fry never expressed. The “testimony of the Monthly Meeting of Ratcliff and Barking,” upon Fry's death, verified her priorities and her essential characteristics: “Our late beloved friend was extensively known in this and other countries, by her christian exertions for the benefit of the poor, the afflicted, and the outcast; but it is more especially laid upon *us* to record her services as a minister of the Gospel, and her bright example in private life.”²⁷

The story of the Philadelphia women follows only partly the pattern of their contemporaries who founded and developed other female voluntary societies in America. The essence of the motivation shared by Fry and the women of the FPAFP is conveyed in a single word: watchfulness. During the winter of her first visits to Newgate, for example, Fry recorded in her journal her mixed “thankfulness” and “fear” regarding the unity with which Friends had responded to her concern to pay ministerial visits to other Monthly Meetings in her region. She expressed her caution of “taking anything like my rest in this sweet feeling that has attended me, and so becoming unwatchful, not devoted and circumspect enough.” Again, in 1814, six months pregnant with

her ninth child and feeling ill, Fry prayed “that increased humility, watchfulness, patience and forbearance, may be my portion; that I may not only be saved myself, but that I may not stand in the way of others’ salvation, more particularly in that of my own household and family; that I may, if consistent with the Divine will, be made instrumental in saving others.”²⁸

“Watchfulness” is similarly a recurring term in Friends’ publications and in the diaries and religious writings of members of the FPAFP. A reference to biblical passages such as Jesus’ admonition to his disciples, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matt. 26:41), it had particular resonance with evangelicals. *The Friend* explains: “What does he who watches? He takes heed to the monitions of the Holy Spirit in his heart, and thus keeps himself in order; quells the mutinies of his own spirit; nourishes and gives strength to whatever is pure, or lovely, or of good report; with unceasing struggle he brings under the wrong, and leads forth the right.”²⁹ An example appears in Wistar’s brief diary written for the benefit of her children six years before her first visit to Arch Street Prison:

I have sometimes been favored to consider it a great blessing that our blessed Redeemer commanded to ‘watch and pray’ for the mind being thus employed is kept humble, sweet and dependent, there is no place for arrogancy.³⁰

Similarly, the 1858 journal of Sarah F. Smiley, a much younger member who served as an officer of the FPAFP, also quotes Jesus’ admonition to his disciples to “Watch and pray.” Smiley felt that her call to ministry was not based upon a secure personal spiritual fulfillment. On the contrary, she presents the call itself as part of the process of her search for personal salvation. Her ability to serve God through serving others was inherently tied to her own path to freedom. She had knelt beside a sobbing woman sentenced to seven years for manslaughter, and her journal account notes the blessing to both women: “these solitary visits to these poor wanderers lead me often into much exercise into deep feeling of my own inability—yet I doubt if in any service I have been more helpful and strengthened than in some of these.”³¹

Humility as opposed to “arrogancy” dominates the accounts of both Fry and the Philadelphia women as they describe their venture into prison visiting. This cultural context, which emphasizes spirituality expressed by the concept of watchfulness, supports a religious interpretation of the value place upon humility, and distinguishes the terminology and the women

who used it from values promoted by affluent members of other benevolent organizations, whose concerns centered more upon fulfillment of gender expectations of submissiveness. Following her first visit to Newgate, Fry’s journal records her fear, not of the prison’s notorious horrors, but of being “exalted” by Friends’ approval of her ministry or by the worldly success of “laudable pursuits”: “Oh, how deeply, how very deeply, I fear the temptation of ever being exalted or self-conceited.”³² Her manual for prison visitors describes the proper “deportment” for a woman engaged in this service:

She must not say in her heart, *I am more holy than thou*; but must rather keep in perpetual remembrance, that ‘*all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God’—that, therefore, great pity is due from us even to the greatest transgressors among our fellow-creatures—and that, in meekness and love, we ought to labor for their restoration.³³

An 1823 report from the London Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline stresses the model of humility shown by Fry’s Ladies Committee: “There is, in the conduct of their plans, so much of quiet feeling and unobtrusive goodness, so much that shuns publicity and avoids praise, that but few are fully acquainted with the efficacy of their labours and the extent of their benevolence.”³⁴

Although Fry never traveled to the United States, her manual for visitors to women’s prisons and her personal example became the prototype for Mary Waln Wistar, whose husband, Thomas, was a charter PSAMPP member. A direct link between Fry and the FPAFP came soon after Wistar’s first visit to Arch Street Prison in 1823. The Philadelphia women had apparently prevailed upon Wistar’s son-in-law and PSAMPP corresponding secretary Roberts Vaux, who was also an honorary member of the London Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline, to open formal communication with Fry, because her response to Vaux, dated June 6, 1824, expressed delight that an association was forming in America, suggested “a regular annual correspondence as by that means we might mutually aid each other from our different experience and observations,” and offered advice to the fledgling group.³⁵ The FPAFP was not a branch of the London group, but it followed the example of its celebrated British model, with similar effects upon the prison system, insisting upon the use of matrons to oversee women, improving physical conditions in the women’s quarters, proposing a separate juvenile facility, and founding the Howard Institution, a sort of halfway house for women, employing congregate housing, with rules differing markedly

from those governing inmates housed under separate confinement within Philadelphia's prisons.³⁶

The existence of close personal bonds between Quaker women engaged in the cause of prisoners on both sides of the Atlantic is supported by correspondence of FPAFP members and news articles in Quaker journals. Boylan has shown how leaders of early female benevolent societies enjoyed a transatlantic correspondence and exchange of publications, and certainly the FPAFP shared this practice.³⁷ Moreover, the practice of looking to London Yearly Meeting for guidance would have made it natural for these Orthodox women to seek spiritual support and encouragement from transatlantic Friends. Women's prison reform in America, however, was not a one-way implementation of Fry's precepts by the Philadelphia women. On the contrary, evidence suggests a genuine exchange of information among these "precious & worthy friends."³⁸ Existing records of the FPAFP reveal that its members greatly respected their British sisters, with whom they shared the practical goal of applying humanitarian principles to improve the condition of imprisoned women, and their correspondence demonstrates that some of the American women traveled throughout Britain and personally knew Fry and her coworkers.³⁹

Ginzberg has shown that antebellum female benevolent associations performed business functions similar to men's within their charitable organizations and gained practical training, professional competence, and authority in the distribution of services.⁴⁰ Although the minutes and records of the FPAFP have been lost, the few existing documents indicate that its structure resembled that of other contemporary women's benevolent organizations in many ways, but the Quaker nature of the FPAFP distinguished it from other female groups in some respects. The FPAFP's 1845 history states that members

held stated meetings every month . . . for the purpose of receiving reports from those of their number who had been appointed to visit the prison, making arrangements for future visits, and conferring together upon the means best calculated to promote the improvement of the degraded objects of their interest.⁴¹

After 1836 they divided into two branches and began visiting at two Philadelphia locations—Eastern State Penitentiary and the recently opened Moyamensing County Prison. Each branch sent annual reports to the PSAMPP, which assisted in practical matters such as providing transportation

for the ladies to Moyamensing Prison, located in the southeastern outskirts of the city. Organized on the model of the Society of Friends' Monthly and Quarterly meetings, the two branches held Quarterly meetings, “at which reports are produced from each body of visitors, giving an account of their labours during the preceding three months.”⁴² Like Fry's London society, they worked within the male power structure, although the Philadelphia women typically did not deal directly with the prison administration. Instead, they used the all-male PSAMPP, whose members included husbands of several of the women, as their voice when petitioning prison authority. Their practice of sending annual reports to the male Society should be viewed in the context of Quaker practice, as stipulated in the 1806 Philadelphia *Rules of Discipline*, that actions of the women's meeting were to be reported to the men's meeting. Although they differed on some important issues, discussed below, the FPAFP appears to have maintained a cordial alliance with the PSAMPP.⁴³

Priorities, Goals, and Challenges

The conviction that even imprisoned women were capable of redemption was a basic tenet shared by the PSAMPP and the FPAFP. A contrasting view is presented by Francis Lieber's introduction to his 1833 translation of Beaumont and de Toqueville's report *On the Penitentiary System in the United States*, dedicated to Roberts Vaux of the PSAMPP. After establishing the vital role females play in the domestic “wife's sphere” of moral influence, Lieber expounds upon the deplorable consequences when women stray from that sphere:

There is, almost without an exception, some unprincipled or abandoned woman, who plays a prominent part in the life of every convict, be it a worthless mother, who poisons by her corrupt example the soul of her children, or a slothful and intemperate wife, who disgusts her husband with his home, a prostitute, whose wants must be satisfied by theft, or a receiver of plunder and spy of opportunities for robberies . . . a woman, when she commits a crime, acts more in contradiction to her whole moral organization, i.e. must be more depraved, must have sunk already deeper than a man.⁴⁴

This grim profile of the female criminal is consistent with an increasing movement in Britain away from the rehabilitation model and toward

deterrence through punishment.⁴⁵ The Pennsylvania System, on the other hand, sought reform through repentance, not punishment. The PSAMPP and the FPAFP agreed on a foundational philosophy of human nature. In 1867, almost forty years after the opening of Eastern State Penitentiary, the report of the Acting Committee of the PSAMPP acknowledged the reality of the social stigma, while continuing to assert that female convicts were by nature redeemable, however bleak their prospects might be:

Of course, not so much hope can be entertained of improvement in females as in males. The former, when they fall, seem to fall below their own hopes. They know how low are rated the erring of their own sex, and they need double assistance to lift them into resolves for good. Yet they are reclaimable, and have been reclaimed—even when sunk to a depth, where modesty shrinks from their contemplation.⁴⁶

The problem, as they saw it, was not the innate corruption of these women, but the almost insurmountable obstacle that society's prejudice posed for a female once she had erred, especially in the case of sexual transgressions. The general approach toward management of women prisoners by the PSAMPP and every mention of them by the FPAFP, from the 1820s throughout the 1860s, agrees with this view of the female criminal, contrary to points made by Nicole Rafter and Estelle Freedman, who argue that the idea of the redeemable "fallen woman" began in the 1840s in New York and with the reformatory movement in the 1870s.⁴⁷ While their accounts describe the transition to a view of criminal "fallen women," the FPAFP from the start had employed a different approach. "Pure women," explains Freedman,

had to surmount an ideological barrier before they reached out to female prisoners. The line that separated the pure woman from the fallen demarcated privilege on one side and degradation on the other. . . . Eventually some women would find the concept of a common womanhood stronger than the boundary of moral purity. A few would cross the line and cautiously enter the "gloomy abode" of women prisoners.⁴⁸

Although historians have noted that desire to exert social control over lower classes may have played a part in motivating Quaker prison reform

efforts, interpretations that consider only class and gender as possible motivators for women's action ignore the religious motivation that drove the quiet achievements of the FPAFP and doubtless contributed to the invisibility of these women in historical accounts. The members of the FPAFP pursued their agenda with purpose but not naiveté, aware that the objects of their aid might disappoint their hopes. However, when their work succeeded, the lady visitors employed the inmates' stories in published religious testimonies. A vivid example is the tract purportedly written by Julia Moore (alias Julia Wilt), who, having participated “in a cruel robbery,” converted and died, probably of syphilis, within Eastern State Penitentiary. In a private letter to FPAFP leader Rebecca Collins, while she was visiting Quaker friends in London, Collins's niece and FPAFP member Mary Anna Longstreth describes the very personal and intense interest of the FPAFP women in Julia's “case”:

On the 10th of this month, poor Julia (at the Eastern Penitentiary) was released from her complicated sufferings. I saw her on the 8th, (in paying my accustomed visits,) and found her extremely ill with Erysipelas in the head, entirely blind, and her face swollen to such a degree that I should not have recognized her. On being informed that I was in the cell, she expressed pleasure and I addressed a few sentences to her, but she was too ill for conversation, and after that time, was insensible. We have, however, good ground for believing that she is among that innumerable company whose robes have been washed & made white in the blood of the Lamb, whose sins have been blotted out, and the New Song put into their mouths. I shall have more to tell thee about her in my next letter.⁴⁹

The FPAFP subsequently published a tract celebrating Julia's conversion and satisfactory death.⁵⁰

The treatment of African American inmates at Eastern State Penitentiary and Moyamensing Prison suggests a fascinating direction for future research to expand upon contributions of several historians. Examining the crime data in Pennsylvania from 1682–1800, Jack D. Marietta and G. S. Rowe conclude that crime by women and by blacks was largely property crime centered in Philadelphia, and that African Americans were the group least able to move out of poverty. Leslie Patrick-Stamp, in her detailed research of records from Philadelphia's Walnut St. Prison, 1790–1835, agrees with this assessment, concluding “that African Americans, especially African-American women,

received a disproportionate share of sentences to the first penitentiary” and that property crimes, stemming from poor employment prospects, rather than crimes of violence predominated.⁵¹ Several historians note evidence of racism in the antebellum North, focused upon fear of disorder and increased crime among blacks. Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Juley’s *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship*, a far-reaching exploration of Quaker responses to racial justice in America, notes that, historically, even benevolence and advocacy were mixed with paternalism and desire to control.⁵²

Adding another dimension to this scholarship, Paul Kahan examined Eastern State’s discharge registers of the 1830s and 1840s for data on literacy of female inmates at admittance and release and concluded that the penitentiary afforded equal access to education regardless of gender or race. While acknowledging disparities in sentence length, numbers of pardons granted, and rates of illiteracy for male and female black prisoners compared with white prisoners, Kahan found that “there is no evidence to demonstrate that blacks and whites were housed separately until 1904.”⁵³

The few FPAFP records that exist suggest that the FPAFP assisted women without regard to the inmate’s race, and the research cited above would seem to confirm that a high percentage of the female inmates visited by FPAFP members would have been African American. The FPAFP 1845 history notes that, of the inmates they placed following release,

Several of these are coloured, and, from some of them, we have received testimonials of their being comfortably provided for, and we are encouraged to believe that they have been strengthened to adhere to the good resolutions formed while they were in prison. One of these individuals has been several years in a public institution in the neighbourhood of this city, where she continues to conduct in a becoming manner.⁵⁴

A rather lengthy “case” is included at the end of the history of the FPAFP as a specific example of the personal approach taken by the visitors and the spiritual rewards available to visitor and inmate alike when the visiting system works optimally. The case happens to describe a dying African American woman imprisoned for theft, but it is presented in the standard manner of the case genre, in which the subject was often white:

Among the circumstances which have afforded us encouragement, is the following, an account of which has been furnished by one of

the visitors of the County Prison. It is the case of a coloured woman, to whom, we believe, divine mercy was extended as at the eleventh hour.⁵⁵

No particular point is made about any unusual treatment or circumstances in the way this case of an African American inmate was regarded.

Beyond their primary focus upon the spiritual condition of imprisoned women they visited, the Philadelphia women seriously considered their practical needs. Their 1845 history describes the importance they placed upon helping inmates become literate so they could “read the Bible for themselves,” but also to deter crime, “Ignorance being a promoter of idleness, and idleness often the parent of crime.”⁵⁶ Humane supervision by their own sex; sanitary, disease-free conditions; job training in a facility for released women—on all issues the Philadelphia women often acted more practically than did the men of the PSAMPP, while observing the Society’s core mission to aid prisoners. Although they obeyed their own “female” standards of principled conduct and, above all, religious codes, they did not allow restrictions imposed by theoretical arguments about prison reform and management to restrict their actions on behalf of women. Those actions, however, were at times impeded by the inertia or conservatism of the Society, which did not always share the women’s view of priorities or procedures. In an early and relatively minor but revealing example of these conflicting values, Roberts Vaux responded for the PSAMPP to Mary Waln Wistar’s request for funds to buy clothing for the female inmates. While noting the PSAMPP’s decision to “relax” its “general rule to avoid furnishing articles of clothing excepting in extreme cases during the winter season,” he informed his mother-in-law that they would grant “less than half the *smallest number* of the articles first mentioned in thy note . . .” and “*very few* of the gowns, will meet the actual demand; the latter I presume will be what are called short-gowns.”⁵⁷ Lest she think him cheap, he went on, rather condescendingly, to explain the principle involved to the well-meaning but naïve women: “The unhappy females whom you visited yesterday, form a circulating medium of poverty, & vice, alternately to be found in the walls of the Alms House, & the walls of the Prison . . . If many of them were ‘*arrayed in purple & fine linnen*’ by an unbounded charity, & set at liberty through the agency of a generous sympathy,” these “habitual offenders” would doubtless sell their garments, indulge in vice, and return to the prison once again. The result would be an unintended inducement to vice and discouragement of “honest industry.”⁵⁸

As with Fry in her prison work, the desire to advocate for female offenders at times brought the FPAFP into conflict with authority. In Fry's case, that authority was the prison system itself, and her poised and informed testimonies before Parliamentary committees increased her celebrity and public respect for her, although she did not always achieve her goals. For the Philadelphia women, conflict was subtle and typically arose with the male prison society, when the women proposed measures that conflicted with the PSAMPP's deeply held principles about appropriate methods of prison management. Fry's advice in her manual that a visiting committee should "be careful to adhere precisely to the rules of the prison" and "strictly" avoid "interference with these gentlemen" may be applied, by extension, to the Philadelphia ladies' approach to transactions with the PSAMPP. Fry's advice is telling: "that the visitors may be at once *wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*" (Fry's emphasis).⁵⁹ In the case of the wealthy white women who visited British prisons as well as the wealthy white Philadelphia Quakers, these words do not caution visitors against the poor and, in Philadelphia, mostly black women they aided. Rather, Fry boldly suggests how women might survive personal risks and negotiate their own agendas in the contested international fields where men debated penal theory. Couched in her characteristic biblical references, Fry's advice urges female prison visitors against the naïve or retiring affect condoned by gender expectations. Examination of the actions and accomplishments of the FPAFP, often in the face of inertia or understated but significant opposition from the male society, reveals the effectiveness of their subtly persistent methods to achieve goals that aligned with the controversial agenda of Fry and her followers across the Atlantic.

The Philadelphia women's persistent and eventually successful petition for the use of matrons to supervise female inmates is one of their most significant contributions to prison reform in Philadelphia as well as one of the most remarkable examples of their subtle approach to effecting change. Their persistence and patience are characteristic of the Quaker process of identifying or "discerning" a concern or leading that should be acted upon. Quaker scholar Hugh Barbour explains that "elders warned Friends to sit with their leadings for a while in patience. Self-will is impatient of tests. [Quaker founder George] Fox wrote, 'Be patient and still in the power and still in the light that doth convince you, keep your minds unto God.'"⁶⁰

Historians have described the horrible conditions of women imprisoned in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America. Facilities for the few female prisoners did not consider women's needs, but some states began

efforts to hire matrons, and Philadelphia made a brief attempt in 1793 at the Walnut Street Prison.⁶¹ Introduced by Fry at Newgate as early as 1817, matrons were required by law in British prisons under the Gaol Act of 1823 and they were clearly indicated in Fry’s 1827 prison visiting manual as necessary to create a humane and smoothly functioning prison environment for women: “It is absolutely essential to the proper order and regulation of every prison, that the female prisoners should be placed under the superintendence of officers of their own sex.”⁶² Hiring a matron, Fry insisted, was more practical because a female was more effective than male turnkeys in maintaining order among women. A matron’s credentials were important:

She ought to be a person of respectable, orderly, and active, habits, —plain in her dress, —gentle, yet firm, in her demeanor, — of sufficient education to enable her to superintend the instruction of the prisoners, — and although not *greatly* elevated above her charge, yet in a station of life so far superior to their own, as to command their respect and obedience.⁶³

The necessity of installing matrons in facilities with female inmates was a staple of Fry’s advice to the associations she mentored through visits and correspondence. In her letter to Vaux advising the Philadelphia women, Fry writes that the British Society has several “principal objects,” including that prisoners “should be under the care of *female* officers.”⁶⁴ The first recorded attempt by the Philadelphia women to introduce a matron responded to an outbreak of “infectious disease” at Arch Street Prison in the spring of 1824. In a letter to the prison’s Board of Inspectors, they requested “construction of a bath-house,” which was granted, and they used this opportunity to urge “the propriety of employing a conscientious matron to preside over the female prisoners, as it would be within her sphere to enforce cleanliness and industry, and to contribute essentially to the right conducting of the whole department on the women’s side of the prison.” The request for a matron was rejected by the Board of Inspectors of Arch Street Prison, which refused the PSAMPP as well when Thomas Wistar proposed to hire Sarah Mayland as a matron three years later.⁶⁵ Over a period of ten years, the women reintroduced their petition, endeavoring to keep the urgency of this issue before those authorized to effect change, mostly presenting their proposals first to the PSAMPP.⁶⁶ Their persistence eventually was rewarded by 1836, with matrons installed in both the newly constructed county prison at Moyamensing and at Eastern State Penitentiary. On the surface, this appears to be a straightforward success story

for the women, working through the male society. However, records suggest a subtext of intrigue, politics, and scandal explaining why the “way opened” at last for the women’s proposal, and how the women might have aided reciprocally the men’s society as a subtle but critical public relations support in the ongoing debate over separate confinement.⁶⁷

Eastern State Penitentiary had been operating only five years when it became involved in a scandal alleging sexual and financial misconduct by prison administration. Charges included accusations that Warden Samuel R. Wood had profited from prison contracts with businesses in which he had personal financial interest and that he had associated inappropriately within the prison with Mrs. Blunden, the wife of his deputy. Further, it was alleged that Wood had violated the rules of separate confinement, allowing the four female inmates at that time, all African American, out of their cells to work in the prison’s kitchen and at parties in the prison, where they served food and engaged in dancing and worse. Because members of the all-male PSAMPP sat on the prison Board of Inspectors and had recommended the hiring of Wood, who was Quaker, the Society must have felt threatened by the scandal’s negative publicity and feared the potential impact upon their embattled separate system, which was at the heart of the prison’s management. Minutes of the PSAMPP are silent about this trouble, though it prompted Judge Charles Coxe, president of the prison’s Board of Inspectors, to resign in protest and led the House and Senate in Harrisburg to conduct a major investigation. In fact, the Society had every interest to keep this embarrassing controversy quiet, since William Crawford from London was visiting Eastern State at that time and preparing a major report to Parliament with his recommendations about the efficacy of the separate system and the competing congregate Auburn System at New York.⁶⁸

Not a word about the investigation is recorded by the PSAMPP, but the essence of the controversy touched the deepest Quaker values of personal and business integrity. The sexual allegations certainly underscored the validity of the FPAFP’s ongoing campaign to hire matrons. In the midst of this challenge to the Pennsylvania System, these Quaker women of the FPAFP must have appeared to be useful allies in validating its respectability in practice as well as in theory. The point of no return had been reached, and the prison administration as well as the PSAMPP had to end the delay. It would have been hypocritical to put the investigation behind them, without reforming the system so as to prevent future abuses in that area. The time was ripe for the women to achieve their most fundamental goal.

In March of 1835 Crawford published his *Report on the Penitentiaries of the United States* in London, praising the Pennsylvania System, recommending it to Parliament and acknowledging with special thanks the assistance of Warden Samuel R. Wood.⁶⁹ Also in March of 1835, two reports on the investigation of Eastern State Penitentiary were published in Harrisburg. The majority report whitewashed the controversy, condemning Mrs. Blunden but exonerating Warden Wood.⁷⁰ Significantly, however, it included requirements for specific changes to check administrative abuses. A minority report, by legislator Thomas B. McElwee, almost blocked from publication, included the full and often shocking testimony in the case.⁷¹ A series of events relating to the employment of matrons then began to happen. Also in March, and doubtless not by coincidence, the women pressed their advantage on a different front. Having learned that the PSAMPP was meeting with legislators in Harrisburg on plans for the new Philadelphia County prison in Moyamensing, the women renewed their request for a matron there, explaining “that the experience of twelve years had confirmed them more and more in the belief, that little expectation could be entertained of raising the female convicts above their deplorable situation, until they should be placed under the superintendence of officers of their own sex.”⁷² The phrase “the experience of twelve years” must have been highly charged for all who read it at that time. By fall a matron was approved at Moyamensing.⁷³ In October the PSAMPP itself petitioned Inspectors at Eastern State for a matron, who was appointed there the next year. Concurrently, the prison inspectors at Eastern State demonstrated their respect for the FPAFP by inviting the women to extend their visits from the county prison to include female inmates at Eastern State. The women recorded their satisfaction tactfully, but pointedly noted the matron they saw there and paid tribute to the male society’s agenda by generously acknowledging the benefit of the separate system as they observed it implemented for female inmates:

It was not long before they perceived, with pleasure, the benefit the prisoners were deriving from their entire separation from each other, and the softening influence of the other officers of the establishment. . . . The system of separate confinement afforded increased facilities to the members of the Association in their labours for the religious instruction of the convicts, and they began to teach them regularly to spell and read. The solitary situation of the prisoners

prevented them from endeavouring to destroy in each other's minds the little good seed which might have been sown, and led them almost unavoidably to reflect on what had been read and said to them during the visits.⁷⁴

In its steadfast insistence upon a system of solitude with labor, the PSAMPP emphasized rehabilitation, although British penologists saw the application of the separate system at Eastern State Penitentiary as a means to deter crime through terror. Fry herself testified to a Parliamentary committee against the separate system, cautioning that, if applied to female prisoners, it must be closely monitored and used with great discretion.⁷⁵ For their part, the FPAFP did not engage in theoretical arguments or public advocacy, but directed their spiritual and practical energies toward working within the existing system, even occasionally acknowledging its success with the women they visited. In 1852, for example, a British publication about the work of Ladies Associations around the world printed a letter from Collins and FPAFP leader Susan H. Lloyd, in which they praised the separate system and linked it directly to the view that female criminals are redeemable: "There, apart from worldly intercourse, shut out from scenes of depravity, and subjected to the softening influences of retirement, left to feel the burden of sin and the just punishment awarded to the transgressor, some of these poor creatures have been led to loathe their vileness."⁷⁶ The sincerity of public statements by the FPAFP supporting the separate system is confirmed by a private letter from Longstreth to Collins, in which Longstreth argues against Charles Dickens's famous indictment of the separate system's threat to inmates' sanity, which had caused concern for the PSAMPP:

Surely when Dickens visited our penitentiary, he must have had glasses, black, blue, or of some dismal colour, over his eyes, to see the gloomy pictures he described in his "notes on America." The female convicts are certainly contented & most of them happy, by their oft repeated acknowledgment—and with the frequent visits of the Matron & her assistant, the Moral Instructor, the Ladies' Committee, the ministers who go out to read & preach to them, they are not too lonely.⁷⁷

The FPAFP therefore appears to have existed in partnership with the PSAMPP, despite some differences in their priorities. Changes advocated by

the FPAFP, such as the institution of matrons, generally did not threaten the prevailing penal philosophy. It was the action of the FPAFP on behalf of *released* female inmates that conflicted with established PSAMPP policy and ultimately caused them to break out, in their understated way, to begin a project of their own.

The 1845 history of the FPAFP records members' recognition that a rehabilitative penal philosophy necessitated some provision to guide a prisoner after her release. Having the opportunity to observe the characters of those they visited, the ladies arranged “situations in private families for several . . . ,” a point that is confirmed by release records of the Eastern State Penitentiary.⁷⁸ The separate system prevented imprisoned criminals from forming associations with other prisoners that could undermine their attempts to avoid temptation or could potentially identify them and lead to public humiliation after release. But the FPAFP, observing that women had no means of supporting themselves following release, took a bold step toward treating freed inmates as individuals by opening a home designed to meet women's needs as they saw them, even though the home's residents would necessarily congregate. That home, the Howard Institution, was founded in 1853. It fulfilled the FPAFP's vision of a facility for released female prisoners that had been proposed as early as 1826. The need for such a facility had long been recognized by Elizabeth Fry but was not realized in England until after her death. In New York City Abigail Hopper Gibbons led a women's affiliate of the New York Prison Association in founding the successful Isaac Hopper Home for discharged women prisoners in 1845.⁷⁹ The FPAFP cited this facility in their argument for a home in Philadelphia. Perhaps they hoped, unsuccessfully, that reference to this innovative facility in New York would subtly goad the PSAMPP, which had been involved for years in debates and discussion comparing the merits of the Pennsylvania and New York systems of prison management. Under the leadership of Lloyd, the FPAFP sought the blessing of the PSAMPP for their project, but it was rejected on principle because plans for the congregate facility violated the PSAMPP's sacrosanct tenet of convict (even released convict) separation.⁸⁰

Not to be deterred by their intransigence, the women notified the PSAMPP that they would open the Howard on their own, with minimal, conditional support from the PSAMPP, which pledged a yearly contribution of \$100, provided it would be used for clothing and not for facility operations.⁸¹ The women affiliated with the New York Prison Association also broke with their male society in 1854 to form the Women's Prison Association

and Home (WPA), which continues its work to this day. Differences in the circumstances of these breaks, however, are revealing. Objecting to the men's attempts to manage their group, the WPA went on to lobby legislators in New York for the facility they desired, making theirs much more visibly an independent action by women. The FPAFP, on the other hand, objected not to its subordinate status as a women's affiliate, but rather to the application outside prison of the separate system mandated by the PSAMPP's penal philosophy.⁸² They insisted upon a system that would fulfill female prisoners' practical needs for life and skills training. The women of the FPAFP quietly but definitively secured the congregate system required for the type of facility they envisioned at the Howard.

Records of the Howard until it closed in 1917 reveal a leadership structure similar to that of institutions founded by other benevolent groups, as described in Boylan's study of women's organizations. The lessons learned in management, public relations, and fundraising by FPAFP members who served as managers at the Howard were later applied in other executive contexts, for several went on to demonstrate professional competence in their work in other leadership positions.⁸³ Sarah F. Smiley, for example, served as Secretary of the Howard and later used her administrative experience to organize schools for freedmen following the Civil War. Directress Rebecca Collins later led in several areas, including work with sailors, and the WCTU.

The Significance of the Philadelphia Female Association

The quiet achievements of the Philadelphia Female Association affected the prison system and impacted the lives of individual female prisoners as well as lady visitors. Their subtle advocacy for women imprisoned at Eastern State Penitentiary and Moyamensing Prison resulted in the institution of matrons, and their understated yet audacious break from the standards of the male leadership of the PSAMPP in founding the Howard Institution, based on a principle of female community rather than the separate system, were their major contributions to the penal system. Their principal method was, to follow their mentor Elizabeth Fry's dictum, "To avail ourselves of the openings," an opening being "a divinely inspired recognition of some truth."⁸⁴

Public references to the FPAFP or to the Howard in the media named individuals only in order to inform potential donors to whom they might

direct their contributions. The good work done by these women received some public recognition, mostly in publications of the Society of Friends. *The Friend*, for example, praised the practical as well as spiritual work of “An Association of Women Friends,” teaching inmates to read, finding employment after their release, “and endeavouring to instruct them in a knowledge of the great truths of the gospel.”⁸⁵ Joseph John Gurney, a leading British Quaker and brother of Elizabeth Fry, wrote of his travels in North America, where he visited Philadelphia meetings, Quaker homes, and institutions, including Eastern State Penitentiary. He noted his qualified approval of the separate system, whose success, he felt, depended rather precariously upon the continued responsibility and humanity of the administration and the “Christian visitor.” In this context, he singled out for special regard the work of the FPAFP, but refrained from naming either the Association or its individual members:

The females in this prison occupy a distinct gallery, and are under the kind notice of a committee of ladies. Heartily do I hope that these pious visitors will persevere in their praise-worthy, voluntary exertions; for if these should be withdrawn, the objects of their care will be left in a condition of painful destitution, as it regards an effective moral and religious influence.⁸⁶

Dorothea Dix, famed advocate for the mentally ill, recorded her observations from visits to Eastern State Penitentiary in *Remarks on Prisons and Prison Discipline in the United States*. A brief appendix is devoted to “Women Convicts,” where Dix reports that she found twenty well-treated female inmates and a “vigilant” matron, and she alludes to the women’s sewing tasks and lessons provided “by the ladies who visit the prison to give instruction.”⁸⁷

PSAMPP minutes occasionally refer, sometimes even in laudatory terms, to the FPAFP’s activities (“On motion the Secretary was directed to address a note to the Association, expressing the satisfaction of the Society with their labors during the past year”), note the receipt of their reports, cite the number of their annual prison visits, or report their requests: “A communication was received from the committee of ladies who visit the county jail, which was read and laid on the table. On motion, resolved, that the thanks of this committee be tendered to the Ladies Committee for their laborious and useful services and that an order for the sum of Seventy-five dollars be drawn on

the Treasurer in favor of Deborah Howell, towards the expenses of the Ladies Committee.”⁸⁸

Generally, however, the documents of the PSAMPP ignored or understated the contributions made by the women. It appears that the FPAFP was regarded by the PSAMPP, and doubtless by themselves, as a group of religious visitors, not as policy setters. In 1859 the PSAMPP published a thirty-two-page history of their society—*Sketch of the Principal Transactions of the “Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons,” from Its Origin to the Present Time*. Although all the male founders of the PSAMPP are listed by name, not a single mention is made of the FPAFP or their thirty-six-year record of regular prison visits; nor is any particular woman visitor named. The history includes a lengthy account of the PSAMPP and its initiatives, but devotes scant lines to the topic of matrons, which the FPAFP had promoted for so long. The brief reference to matrons does not discuss the origins of this important addition to the Philadelphia prisons. Published six years after the founding of the Howard Institution, this history offers only the following on the subject of discharged convicts:

The mode of caring for discharged convicts, with safety to the interests of the public and due regard to the moral and social welfare of the prisoner, is a problem yet to be solved. It has ever been among the chief concerns of our Society, and will continue to receive their earnest consideration.⁸⁹

Similarly, the *Sketch* of the PSAMPP describes the creation in 1829 of the House of Refuge for juveniles without noting that, as early as 1824, the FPAFP had called for this institution.⁹⁰ Moreover, Roberts Vaux’s 1826 published review of the work of the PSAMPP and of prison reform in Pennsylvania to that point completely ignores the women’s advocacy for this institution in his statement: “During the last four years, several interesting subjects have claimed the attention of the society; among which may be enumerated, the practicability of establishing a house of refuge for juvenile offenders.”⁹¹ Therefore, neither before nor after the creation of the House of Refuge was the FPAFP’s call for this institution acknowledged. Small wonder, then, that this incomplete view of the history of the House of Refuge, with its disparaging interpretation of women’s involvement, has carried down to the present, with a 1982 collection of biographical vignettes of members of the Prison Society giving full credit to Roberts Vaux: “While working on the construction of

the Eastern State Penitentiary Vaux promoted the construction of the House of Refuge to house juvenile offenders. It was his understanding of the magnitude of the problem that led it [to] its becoming a state institution and not a charity of a women's group of the Society of Friends.”⁹²

The women's own account, stated within their 1845 history, sheds light upon their reluctance to own the fruits of their work and their subtle acknowledgment of association with the male society. In 1824, they explain, they wrote to the PSAMPP, advocating a House of Refuge to accommodate the young girls whom they were encountering inappropriately housed within the general, unclassified population of adult women in the Arch Street Prison. Their concern for these girls, they modestly explain, “induced them to exert their feeble endeavours in promoting so desirable an object.” Indeed, the minutes of the PSAMPP do refer to this letter and to the interest of the women, but they do not credit the FPAFP with inspiring the opening of this Philadelphia institution in 1829. The women, however, subtly refer to their involvement: “Whether their limited efforts were of any avail or not, they had the great satisfaction of seeing the important object gained.”⁹³ It may be significant that the ladies were writing their history for publication within the PSAMPP's journal. In addition, in several places within that history, they allude to the generosity of the PSAMPP in donating supplies, clothing, and funds for the work of the FPAFP, and they praise the effectiveness of the separate system as applied to women prisoners. It may be inferred that the FPAFP considered reticence as the most expedient way to present itself. Nevertheless, the FPAFP recognized its own success in achieving the goal of improving conditions for young girls through the attention they brought to the issue and subtle advocacy, which, from their point of view, would have been the main objective.

In the pages of the *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy* (JPDP), the FPAFP and the Howard received somewhat more recognition than in the minutes of the PSAMPP, although in some cases that recognition is anonymous and peripheral. For example, the January 1864 issue compares the useful contribution of “The experienced visitor,” who “learns to fix a just estimate upon the tears and promises” of corrupt female inmates, to the naiveté and inevitable “disappointment” of “the good female visitors who occasionally seek to bring ‘glad tidings’ to the miserable offenders of their own sex” (i.e., “outside” female visitors, not members of the FPAFP). The PSAMPP then proceeds to promote its perennial theme, that use of the separate system must underlie any success story, and that it is this separation (not,

it is implied, any human endeavor) that empowers “the gentle invitation of the faithful visitor to resolve on good.”⁹⁴ Thus, the article pays subtle tribute to the work of the FPAFP within the context of an iteration of the ideology of the PSAMPP. The following paragraph from the seventy-seventh annual report, printed in the *JPD*, calls more specific attention to the affiliation of the PSAMPP and the FPAFP by naming them:

The Prison “Association of Women Friends” (which is recognized by us as an auxiliary in the good work), have continued to be diligent visitors to the females confined in both prisons [Eastern State Penitentiary and Moyamensing], and have entered on the service under a full sense of its serious importance, and with desires that their labors might be promotive of the temporal and eternal good of the visited. In the course of the year they paid 987 visits to the prisoners in the two institutions.⁹⁵

In 1866 the *JPD* published a description of “Philanthropic Institutions of Philadelphia,” which suggests that the PSAMPP recognized that volunteer women’s work with female prisoners was necessarily undergoing a transition. The article presents “a survey of the means of preventing vice and crime” offered by Philadelphia social institutions, including the Howard Home, along with the Magdalen and the Rosine, but makes no special mention of the Howard. Following these brief descriptions is a rather general statement of affiliation:

“The Society for Alleviating the Misery of Public Prisons” may not appear to have any direct connection with such institutions as those to which we have referred, and yet they are all co-workers with our Society, as means by which our Society effects a portion of its good.⁹⁶

In the same issue, within a section describing Eastern State Penitentiary, the PSAMPP published a call for female volunteer visitors to that prison, although this had not been their customary procedure:

The Society seeks the co-operation of females, in their labors in the prisons, especially among the female convicts; and they do not doubt that much of their hope of being useful to that class of prisoners,

has been realized by the faithful labors of women, when and where woman's peculiar adaptability to the work could be most successful.⁹⁷

The article then acknowledges the PSAMPP's gratitude to the FPAFP, though it refrains from naming the Association specifically:

It is gratifying to state that additional means of usefulness have been secured in this department of the Penitentiary, by the renewal of labors by some of the female co-workers with the Visiting Committee [a subcommittee of the PSAMPP], and additional labor from the visitors of the same religious order that attend, at stated periods, the female convicts in the County Prison.⁹⁸

The PSAMPP apparently had begun, in the 1860s, to solicit female volunteers from the community, outside the FPAFP or even the Society of Friends, to visit Eastern State Penitentiary and Moyamensing Prison. In the absence of records of the number of women involved in the FPAFP at that or any other time, it is not possible to determine whether their numbers had diminished and that had prompted the PSAMPP to call for volunteers. However, this is likely the case, since many of the founding members of the FPAFP and of the Howard Institution had died, moved, or made the transition to work in education, Civil War Reconstruction, or other causes by that time, and the PSAMPP does not mention the FPAFP in their minutes after the 1860s.

When Mary Waln Wistar died in 1843, a published memorial celebrated her pious example as a Quaker elder but did not mention her prison work, only praising her commitment “to promote the cause of Truth.”⁹⁹ Two years later, Elizabeth Fry died in England, and her monthly meeting's testimony likewise praised her piety, but only secondarily her prison work. Fry's international fame, of course, had taken on a life of its own by that time. But the virtual anonymity of Wistar and others in the Female Prison Association of Friends in Philadelphia belies their actual contribution to the cause of imprisoned women. Records kept by the prisons and by the Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons give minimal credit to the FPAFP, individually or collectively, although reforms they promoted are among the most significant aids to female inmates to this day. Consequently, the members of the Female Prison Association of Friends in Philadelphia and its achievements have gone unrecorded, but their reforms and presence as female visitors among female

prisoners witness to the concern of these Philadelphia women to “watch and pray.” Their history suggests that rich stories might be uncovered with a shift of perspective that foregrounds women’s spiritual experience.

NOTES

I would like to thank Ann Upton of the Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library; Nancy Halli of Bryn Mawr College Library; and Andrea Reidell of the National Archives at Philadelphia for their insightful and generous assistance on this project.

1. See Negley K. Teeters, *They Were in Prison: A History of the Pennsylvania Prison Society, 1787–1937* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston, 1937), for a detailed history of the PSAMPP, and Michael Meranze, *Laboratories of Virtue: Punishment, Revolution, and Authority in Philadelphia, 1760–1835* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). Sources disagree on the extent to which the Society was Quaker in membership, but generally agree that its philosophy was heavily influenced by Quaker thought.
2. Elizabeth (Gurney) Fry was born into a wealthy Quaker family involved in banking and became a minister in the Society of Friends, but her fame stemmed from her work in prison reform. In America, journal articles praised Fry and presented a detailed account of her work, such as “Mrs. Elizabeth Fry,” reprinted from the *Ladies Monthly Museum* of June 1818, in *The Philadelphia Register and National Recorder*, January 23, 1819, 66–70.
3. See Meranze, *Laboratories of Virtue*; Teeters, *They Were in Prison*; W. David Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemora* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1965); Caleb Smith, *The Prison and the American Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Norman Johnston, “Evolving Function: Early Use of Imprisonment as Punishment,” *Prison Journal* 89, no. 1 (March 2009): 10S–34S.
4. “The Pennsylvania Penitentiary System,” *The Friend*, September 7, 1844.
5. The only generally accessible source for the documents of the FPAFP is “The Role of Women in the Activities of the Prison Society,” chapter 9 in Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 248–75. Teeters includes the letters of the FPAFP taken from the minutes of the PSAMPP, which had copied the women’s letters they had received. The manuscript minutes of the PSAMPP are included within the Pennsylvania Prison Society collection at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Any other contemporary correspondence, reports, and minutes of the FPAFP have not been preserved in any collection to my knowledge. Matilda Wrench, ed., “America,” *Visits to Female Prisoners at Home and Abroad*, edited at the Request of the Committee of the British Ladies’ Society for Promoting the Reformation of Female Prisoners (London: Wertheim and Macintosh, 1852), includes a letter report from the FPAFP. “Female Convicts and the Efforts of Females for Their Relief and Reformation,” *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy* 1 (April 1845), includes a history of the FPAFP written by the members. Leslie C. Patrick-Stamp discusses the FPAFP and their work in her chapter, “Women in Eastern State Penitentiary,” in Marianna Thomas Architects, *Eastern State Penitentiary: Historic Structures Report*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Eastern State Penitentiary Task Force of the Preservation Coalition of Philadelphia, 1995), 126–33. Brief mention of the

FPAFP is made by Estelle B. Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America, 1830–1930* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984), 28. Nicole Rafter, *Partial Justice: Women, Prisons, and Social Control*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1990), 15–16, cites work of the FPAFP but states that lady visitors and early use of matrons did not fundamentally reform early women's prisons because “women were held in institutions designed for men.” The necessity of female guards for female inmates has been a continuing basic tenet of reformers. The research of Anne M. Butler, *Gendered Justice in the American West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), on women in western men's penitentiaries, 1865–1915, discusses the lack of matrons as one of the hardships (228–29). See Mary E. Odem, *Delinquent Daughters* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 4, on female reformers' demand, into the twentieth century, for matrons to guard incarcerated youth.

Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977), 144–45, argues that New England evangelical women's tendency to join multiple societies “suggests that associating under the ideological aegis of evangelical Christianity mattered more to them than the specific goals of any one group.” Anne M. Boylan, *The Origins of Women's Activism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 14–52, presents an excellent discussion of evangelical women's pattern before 1840 of joining multiple benevolent organizations characterized by “shared female experience” and religiosity. Diaries and letters of the Orthodox Quaker members of the FPAFP, most of whom were members of Twelfth St. Monthly Meeting in Philadelphia, however, suggest that personal religious “concerns” figured foremost as motivating factors. Kathleen D. McCarthy presents her concept of “parallel power structures,” women's voluntary associations that provided “mechanisms for achieving peaceful, gradualist, and often fundamental political change” outside traditional male organizations, in *Lady Bountiful Revisited: Women, Philanthropy, and Power* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 23. The idea of “parallel power structures” applies to the story of the FPAFP in many respects. However, the FPAFP was subtly, not overtly, one of the “crucibles in which women have shaped public policies and popular attitudes about gender, class, domesticity, and race.” To the extent that it wielded this influence, it did so as a byproduct of a spiritually driven mission rather than as a recognized goal in itself.

6. See Anne M. Boylan, “Women in Groups: An Analysis of Women's Benevolent Organizations in New York and Boston, 1797–1840,” *Journal of American History* 71 (December 1984): 497–523, for the argument that women's benevolent groups from the 1830s did not lead to feminist organizations and did not act out of a desire to reform ideas about women's sphere. The FPAFP differs in that the women of the FPAFP shared with reform groups a willingness to work directly with criminal and fallen women. Freedman provides a helpful analysis of female benevolent reformers between 1820 and 1860, including Quakers and major figures like Abby Hopper Gibbons (Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, 22–35). While she recognizes that women were religiously motivated by the Second Great Awakening of the 1820s and 1830s and believed in the power of redemption and reform, her emphasis is upon the women as reformers who sought to save the fallen. The women of the FPAFP, on the other hand, saw their work as Christian ministry that served preacher and sinner alike.
7. *Faith and Practice: A Book of Christian Discipline* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1997), 65.
8. Leigh Ann Wheeler and Jean Quataert, “Editorial Note,” “Politics, Activism, Race” issue of *Journal of Women's History* 23 (Summer 2011): 13; Lori D. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*

- (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 1–9; Anne Fior Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 14–15; Anne B. Boylan, *Origins of Women's Activism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 4; Daniel S. Wright, *"The First of Causes to Our Sex": The Female Moral Reform Movement in the Antebellum Northeast, 1834–1848* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
9. Kathryn Kish Sklar, "'The Throne of My Heart': Religion, Oratory, and Transatlantic Community in Angelina Grimke's Launching of Women's Rights, 1828–1838," in *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation*, ed. Sklar and James Brewer Stewart (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 225–33.
 10. Phyllis Mack, "Religion, Feminism, and the Problem of Agency: Reflections on Eighteenth-Century Quakerism," *Signs* 29 (2003): 155–56.
 11. *Ibid.*, 159, 161, 174.
 12. Rebecca Larson, *Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad, 1700–1775* (New York: Knopf, 1999), 294–95.
 13. *Ibid.*, 380 n. 13. Margaret Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America* (Philadelphia: Friends General Conference, 1986), 93–94, explains that notable Quaker women involved in reform movements were mostly Hicksite, and that wealthy Orthodox Quaker men were more inclined than were rural Hicksites to encourage Orthodox women to observe unequal gender distinctions.
 14. For a definition of the "inward light," see Jack Eckert, comp., *Guide to the Record of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting* (Philadelphia: Records Committee of PYM, 1989), 270. For the Hicksite-Orthodox schism see Robert W. Doherty, *The Hicksite Separation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1967); Thomas D. Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); H. Larry Ingle, *Quakers in Conflict* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986).
 15. Bacon, *Mothers of Feminism*, 139.
 16. "Female Convicts," 106, 111. The FPAFP history quotes the Bible, John 15:5.
 17. Rebecca Collins, letter to Mary Anna Longstreth, May 15, 1842, Rebecca Collins Papers, Collection 1196, Quaker Collection, Haverford College. Collins, a member of the FPAFP, wrote from London, where she was visiting Friends, including Fry, to Longstreth, her niece and a member of the FPAFP, who was in Philadelphia.
 18. Elizabeth Fry, *Observations on the Visiting, Superintendence, and Government, of Female Prisoners* (London: Hatchard and Son, 1827), 2. Fry had no desire to contest gender expectations of domesticity. In this way, her ladies prison associations were similar to the organizations of benevolent ladies Boylan describes in *Origins of Women's Activism*, 54–55.
 19. Susanna Corder, ed., *Life of Elizabeth Fry, compiled from her journal* (Philadelphia: Henry Longstreth, 1855), 631.
 20. Gil Skidmore, in *Strength in Weakness: Writings of Eighteenth-Century Quaker Women* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003), 8–9, comments upon the issue of fame for eighteenth-century British women ministers: "Friends were ambivalent about the idea of 'popularity.' In particular there were worries about some ministers becoming personally popular as this, it was thought, would lay the way open to the danger of spiritual pride and of ministering 'in their own strength' instead of relying on a divine call to minister on every occasion." For a colorful example of the criticisms

made of Fry, see Sarah Strangman Greer, *Quakerism, or, The story of my life, by a lady who for forty years was a member of the Society of Friends* (Philadelphia: J. W. Moore, 1852), 145–65. Defending Fry against Greer’s criticisms is an article, “Mrs. Fry and Her Slanderer,” *National Magazine* (NY) 1 (August 1852): 164–67, reprinted without attribution from the *Eclectic Review* (London).

Writing to British Friend Mary S. Lloyd, Elizabeth Fry described a scene that epitomizes the conflict and the tensions she felt: Fry had drawn the attention of the press by attending a dinner given by the Lord Mayor to Prince Albert at the Mansion House in London; she had overcome her misgivings about attending in order to seize the opportunity to talk with Prince Albert about her cause. She explained to Lloyd, however, that she had indicated her disapproval of toasts by refraining from standing, even to toast the queen’s health, and so had remained true to her Quaker principles. Elizabeth Fry, letter to Mary S. Lloyd, February 5, 1842, E. Fry Papers, British Library. Fry’s daughter Katherine, writing to another of Fry’s daughters, Rachel E. Cresswell, described the “courtly scene”: “My impression was and is that we have seen more curiosity about our Mother, but never more attention or respect or so much acknowledged position.” Typed copy of letter from Katherine Fry to Rachel E. Cresswell, January 18, 1842, E. Fry Papers, British Library. An article stating Friends’ concerns about such issues is S.S., “Mixed Associations,” in *The Friend*, July 20, 1833, reprinted in *Quaker Writings: An Anthology, 1650–1920*, ed. Thomas Hamm (New York: Penguin, 2010), 264. It warns against associating with non-Quakers and expending energy on benevolent projects.

21. “Elizabeth Fry,” May 27, 1848, 414. The tension between Gurneyites and Wilburites was being felt among Orthodox Quakers at this time, and *The Friend* was a Wilburite publication. Possibly this conflict influenced their perspective about Fry, the sister of Joseph John Gurney. Hamm, in *Quaker Writings*, 201–26, includes selections by Elias Hicks, Joseph John Gurney, and John Wilbur, which present an excellent overview distinguishing the core beliefs of Hicksites, Orthodox/Gurneyites, and Orthodox/Wilburites.
22. London Yearly Meeting, “A testimony of the Monthly Meeting of Ratcliff and Barking, concerning Elizabeth Fry, of Upton, who died the 13th day of the tenth month, 1845, in the sixty-sixth year of her age, a Minister about thirty-six years,” *Testimonies concerning deceased ministers: presented to the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in London, 1846* (London: E. Marsh, 1846), 16–28.
23. Sydney Smith, “Art. III,” *Edinburgh Review* 72 (February 1822): 353–56.
24. Walter Lowe Clay, *The Prison Chaplain: A Memoir of the Rev. John Clay, B.D.* (1861; reprint, Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1969), 81–85.
25. Lucia Zedner, “Wayward Sisters: The Prison for Women,” in *The Oxford History of the Prison*, ed. Norval Morris and David J. Rothman (New York: Oxford, 1998), 300–301.
26. “Notes by the Way: Interview with the British Ladies’ Society,” *Prisoner’s Friend* 4 (February 1, 1852): 275. Walter Lowe Clay in *The Prison Chaplain* did acknowledge three points of Fry’s “direct contributions to the development of penal discipline”: the use of women to superintend female prisoners, the introduction of Christianity “as the essential basis of reformatory discipline,” and the improvement of conditions for women aboard transport ships. (86). Fry’s innovative use of matrons is discussed by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English Prisons under Local Government* (1922; reprint, Hamden, CT: Archon, 1963), 74. The significance for women of this reform is not always acknowledged, even today. See Robert Alan Cooper, “Jeremy Bentham, Elizabeth Fry, and English Prison Reform,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42 (October–December 1981): 685: “Mrs. Fry was

an activist rather than a theoretician; her views on prison reform were remarkably derivative. . . . Only one original idea in the area of prison reform can be credited to Mrs. Fry: the employment of matrons to administer the female prisoners."

27. For a discussion of the theory that Fry contributed nothing to prison reform, see Cooper, "Jeremy Bentham, Elizabeth Fry, and English Prison Reform." For a discussion of the theory that Fry sought power over men, see John Kent, who attributes Fry's prison "concern" to "the impulse . . . to challenge the prejudices of a masculine superiority." Kent does, however, convincingly note that a religious concern was significant for a Quaker woman and would have provided a justification to pursue her religious work and travels that male Friends could not oppose. Kent, *Elizabeth Fry* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1962), 32–33. Kent's debatable interpretation of Fry's life has been perpetuated through its citation in works such as Freedman's *Their Sisters' Keepers*, 22–24, which appears to accept it as fact. In his "The Rise and Decline of the Separate System of Prison Discipline," *Past and Present*, no. 54 (February 1972): 90, U. R. Q. Henriques is closer to the mark in stating that Fry, like John Howard, was one of a "few great reformers" and that they were characterized by being religious and having "a vocation."

A useful comparison could be made to Florence Nightingale, although her primary motivation for social reform work differed from that of Fry. Her biographer, Gillian Gill, explains in *Nightingales* (New York: Random House, 2005), 177, that "by the early 1840s, power was already a key concept for Florence Nightingale. She saw that, for all their many excellencies, the women she knew had no desire for power. It did not occur to them to want it. But she did want it and this made her different." Nightingale's ambition to achieve some socially worthy goal differed from Fry's primarily religious impetus toward ministry, although they both employed strategic associations with those in power in to effect social reforms.

London Yearly Meeting, "A testimony of the Monthly Meeting of Ratcliff and Barking," 16.

28. February 11, 1813, and March 20, 1814, in Corder, *Life of Elizabeth Fry*, 197 and 208 respectively.
29. "Watch," January 22, 1859, 159.
30. April 1817, Wistar Collection, Society Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Wistar also quotes Matthew 26:41.
31. Journal of Sarah F. Smiley, February 7, 1858, and June 7, 1858, Quaker Collection, Haverford College.
32. February 15, 1813, *Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry with Extracts from Her Journal and Letters*, ed. by her daughters Katherine Fry and Rachel Elizabeth Cresswell, 2nd ed. (1848; Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1974), 200.
33. Fry, *Observations on the Visiting, Superintendence, and Government, of Female Prisoners*, 20–21. Fry quotes the Bible, Romans 3:23.
34. Quoted in "Female Convicts," 109.
35. Elizabeth Fry, letter to Roberts Vaux, June 14, 1824, Vaux Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
36. See the account of the FPAFP in Wrench, "America," 301: "If the British ladies may not claim the Associations on the other side of the Atlantic as offsets of the English stem, they can refer with pleasure to the correspondence of friends in America engaged in the same work, and carrying it on in dependance on the same Spirit."

“WISE AS SERPENTS AND HARMLESS AS DOVES”

37. Boylan, *Origins of Women's Activism*, 19.
38. Mary Anna Longstreth to Rebecca Collins, November 21, 1842, Letters to Isaac Collins and Rebecca Collins, Collection 1196, Quaker Collection, Haverford College. Longstreth wrote from Philadelphia to her aunt, who was visiting among Friends “both in social and religious fellowship” in London.
39. Sarah F. Smiley, Rebecca Collins, and Mary Anna Longstreth traveled separately to England, Scotland, and Ireland, and Collins corresponded with British Friends and traveled with British Friend Mary Fox.
40. Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 36–66.
41. “Female Convicts,” 113.
42. “Female Convicts,” 115. See Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, “Women’s Meetings,” *Rules of Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in Philadelphia* ([Philadelphia: Kimber, Conrad and Co., 1806], available at <http://www.qhpress.org/texts/obod/womensmm.html> (accessed August 9, 2013).
43. PSAMPP minutes include some references to receipt of reports from the “Ladies Committee.” Pennsylvania Prison Society Records, Meeting of the Acting Committee, vol. 7 (December 8, 1848); vol. 7 (November 28, 1845). References are also made to financial grants and “an annual appropriation” to the “Ladies Committee” vol. 7 (February 14, 1840), vol. 3 (January 23, 1862).
44. Francis Lieber, “Preface and Introduction,” *On the Penitentiary System in the United States*, Gustav de Beaumont and Alexis de Tocqueville, trans. Lieber (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1833), xiv–xvi. Lieber recommends separate female penitentiaries with matrons, xviii.
45. See Mark E. Kann, *Punishment, Prisons, and Patriarchy: Liberty and Power in the Early American Republic* (New York: New York University Press, 2005), 192–97, 266–67, for discussion of reformers’ reluctance to accept the possibility of rehabilitating women.
46. *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy* no. 6, n.s. (January 1867): 17.
47. See Rafter, *Partial Justice*, 49–50, and Freedman, *Their Sisters’ Keepers*, 15–21. Freedman cites the sexual sphere theory and the criticism of male reformers like Lieber in explaining why women were judged so harshly. Leslie Patrick, in “Ann Hinson: A Little-Known Woman in the Country’s Premier Prison, Eastern State Penitentiary, 1831,” *Pennsylvania History* 67 (2000): 362–63, also argues that Rafter does not adequately address the subject of the treatment of women in Philadelphia prisons in the 1830s. Mary E. Odem, in discussing evolving attitudes toward delinquent teenage girls in *Delinquent Daughters*, 3–5, explains that the white purity activists in the mid-1880s continued to see a “fallen woman” as a “victim of male lust and exploitation,” while reformers in the Progressive era perceived such women as delinquents responsible for their sexual behavior.
48. Freedman, *Their Sisters’ Keepers*, 20–21.
49. Longstreth to Collins, May 28, 1843, Rebecca Collins Papers, Quaker Collection, Haverford College.
50. Female Prison Association of Friends in Philadelphia, *An Account of Julia Moore, a Penitent Female, Who Died in the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, in the Year 1843* (Philadelphia: Joseph and William Kite, 1844).
51. Jack D. Marietta and G. S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682–1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 237–73. Leslie Patrick-Stamp, “Numbers

- That Are Not New: African Americans in the Country's First Prison, 1790–1835," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 119 (January–April, 1995): 100, 123–24.
52. Donna McDaniel and Vanessa Julye, *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice* (Philadelphia: Quaker Press, 2009), 135–38. For a discussion of racism in the antebellum North, see Patrick-Stamp, "Numbers"; Elizabeth M. Geffen, "Industrial Development and Social Crisis 1841–1854," in Barra Foundation, *Philadelphia A 300-Year History* (New York: Norton, 1982), 352–55; Marietta and Rowe, *Troubled Experiment*, 244–47; Kali N. Gross, *Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love, 1880–1910* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 33–35.
 53. Paul Kahan, *Seminary of Virtue: The Ideology and Practice of Inmate Reform at Eastern State Penitentiary, 1829–1971* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 49–51.
 54. "Female Convicts," 117. Similarly, the history of the FPAFP, written by the members themselves, notes their concern that the House of Refuge for juveniles (opened in 1828) did not accommodate African American children. These scant references concerning tolerance, however, must be viewed in the context of evidence that racist attitudes were the norm among the benevolent white leaders of the city's institutions. Cecile P. Frey's extensive account of the founding of the House of Refuge for Colored Children in Philadelphia in 1850, for example, explains the concern to provide separately for African American children. A committee report from 1841 had advised the necessity of this institution, citing the "law establishing the House of Refuge contemplates no differences of colour as distinguishing the classes which shall be admitted." On the other hand, the committee (which included Orthodox Quaker Isaac Collins, husband of FPAFP leader and Howard Home Director Rebecca Collins) had lamented that they had "no suitable accommodations for them," implying that the mixture of white and black children was not an option. Within the entrenched racism of this culture, then, it is difficult to imagine that black inmates released to the Howard Home, discussed below, were treated the same as whites. See Frey, *Journal of Negro History* 66 (Spring 1981): 10–25; "Report on the practicability and necessity of a House of Refuge for Coloured Juvenile Delinquents in Philadelphia," *The Friend* 14 [March 13, 1841].
 55. "Female Convicts," 117.
 56. *Ibid.*, 116.
 57. Roberts Vaux, letter to Mary Wistar, n.d., Vaux Family Papers, Collection 684, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The letter must have been written after 1813, when Vaux married Margaret Wistar. Vaux quotes the Bible, Luke 16:19. Short gowns were garments worn with petticoats by working women in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America, and were made of "calico, chintz, striped linen, and linsey-woolsey." Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* (Williamsburg, VA: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2002), 118; Claudia Kidwell, "Short Gowns," *Dress* 4 (1978): 30. Kidwell notes that they were "intended to be given long and hard use" (44).

Wealthy Quaker Sally Wister, corresponding with her friend Debby Norris during the Revolutionary War, notes her chagrin to have been caught in a short gown when Continental soldiers came to call. Kate Haulman, *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 168–70.

58. Vaux, letter to Wistar, n.d., We may infer from Vaux's words, then, that the PSAMPP was being quite restrictive and severe in dictating the quality as well as quantity of clothing funded for female prisoners, and that they certainly intended to maintain control over how their funds were used by the FPAFP. This approach to clothing distribution appears to have been a long-standing PSAMPP policy, referred to in the Visiting Committee Report of 1809 (see Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 68–69), and also by Vaux, *Notices of the Original, and Successive Efforts, to Improve the Discipline of the Prison at Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Kimber and Sharpless, 1826), which states that, in 1788, the PSAMPP noted the particular need for clothing by pre-trial prisoners, who traded clothing for liquor. “No provision being made by law for relieving these distressed objects, or for preventing the abuses of charitable donations, it is at present an evil without a remedy, though it is conceived that a kind of prison dress might be adopted by law.”
59. *Observations*, 23–25. Fry quotes Jesus' directions to his disciples in the Bible, Matt. 10:16: “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”
60. “Five Tests for Discerning a True Leading,” Tract Assoc. of Friends, <http://www.tractassociation.org/tracts/tests-discerning-true-leading/> (accessed August 7, 2013).
61. See Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemora*, 161–65; Kann, *Punishment, Prisons, and Patriarchy*, 197–200; Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, 58–59; Rafter, *Partial Justice*, 13–15. Margaret Fuller had written emphatically about the need for matrons in New York in 1845: *Margaret Fuller's New York Journalism*, ed. Catherine C. Mitchell (Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 88–93.

Zedner, “Wayward Sisters,” 298, 301. Philadelphia prisons were not the first in America to install matrons. The Baltimore penitentiary hired a matron in 1822. By 1845 Dorothy Dix reported matrons in Massachusetts, Maryland, Eastern State and Sing Sing. Freedman, *Their Sisters' Keepers*, 58.

- 62. *Observations*, 26.
- 63. *Observations*, 28–29.
- 64. Fry, letter to Vaux, June 14, 1824, Vaux Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Wrench, “America,” 304–5, gives a brief overview of the evolution of women's prison reform in Philadelphia until that time, stressing that at the time that the FPAFP was formed in 1823, there were no matrons and male keepers used corporal punishment to control female prisoners. She contrasts the situation at the time of her writing, in 1852: “Pious and well-qualified matrons now have charge of them, and prisoners who, under the stern discipline of men seemed hardened against even temporary improvement, have under their kind and mild, but steady and uniform rule, become quiet and orderly, and some of these hardened hearts have been opened to the influences of Divine grace.”
- 65. “Female Convicts,” 112–13. Pennsylvania Prison Society Records, Acting Committee Minutes, “Meeting of the Acting Committee,” March 13, 1827, 2:143–144; “Meeting of the Acting Committee,” May 29, 1827, 2:144–45, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Journalist Anne Newport Royall visited “the prison of Philadelphia” (Walnut St.) and admired the effectiveness of the “amiable” male guard: “He appeared to possess that soft and undisguised charity, that meek-eyed philanthropy, so requisite to one in his place: he spoke to those females, not with the authority of a callous, unfeeling task-master, but with the mildness of a brother.” Royall, *Sketches of history, life, and manners, in the United States* (New Haven, CT: Printed for the author, 1826), 218–19.

66. Women were first admitted into Eastern State Penitentiary in April 1831. In 1831 the Board of Inspectors “expressed their anxiety about the prospect of women in the prison, declaring that it would be advisable to employ a matron to oversee them. On December 3 of that year, the Board approved hiring a matron, but perhaps because there was already a female in residence who was not an inmate, Mrs. Blundin, an underkeeper’s wife, they did nothing immediately about making the appointment.” Patrick, “Ann Hinson,” 363. Patrick cites Board of Inspectors Monthly Minutes, December 3, 1831.

The women also attempted to secure a matron at Arch Street in 1833: “A communication was received from Mrs. Jane Johnson in relation to the employment of a matron at the Arch Street Jail.” Acting Committee Minutes, March 11, 1833, quoted in Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 250.

The Friend, in a long defense of the solitary system in the issues of February 1 and February 8, 1834, commented upon the appropriate management of female prisoners: “the females should be intrusted wholly to the custody of suitable individuals of their own sex, whose services can, of course, be secured for less compensation than those of men.” Vol. 7, nos. 17 and 18.

67. See *Faith and Practice*, glossary, 219: “Proceed As Way Opens: To undertake a service or course of action without prior clarity about all the details but with confidence that divine guidance will make these apparent and assure an appropriate outcome.”
68. See Meranze, *Laboratories of Virtue*, 305–28, for a detailed discussion of the investigation. Meranze argues that misogynist criticisms were directed at Blunden, while the male administrators of the prison were exonerated. Patrick examines in detail the case of Eastern State Penitentiary inmate Ann Hinson in “Ann Hinson,” 361–75.
69. William Crawford, *Report on the Penitentiaries of the United States* (1835; reprint, Montclair, NJ: Patterson Smith, 1969). The British Parliament, in accepting Crawford’s recommendation, sided with the separate system over Fry’s statements against it. For her part, however, Fry did not appear to consider Crawford a rival. In her letter to Augusta Mackenzie, she refers to “Our government Prison inspectors my friends William Crawford and Frederick Hill.” Of Crawford, she writes, “I think him a very valuable & I trust a religious man.” Fry, letter to Mackenzie, October 17, 1835, Fry Manuscripts, Friends Historical Library of Swarthmore College.
70. Mr. Penrose, *Report of the Joint Commission of the Legislature of Pennsylvania, Relative to the Eastern State Penitentiary at Philadelphia* (Harrisburg: Welsh and Patterson, 1835).
71. *A Concise History of the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, together with a Detailed Statement of the Proceedings of the Committee, Appointed by the Legislature, December 6th, 1834, for the Purpose of Examining into the Economy and Management of that Institution, Embracing the Testimony Taken on that Occasion, and Legislative Proceedings Connected Therewith*. By a Member of the Legislature. 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Neall and Massey, 1835). An interesting insight into possible attitudes within the PSAMPP on the case is suggested by a letter from McElwee to Roberts Vaux, in which he states that his minority report is being printed in English and German, but was denied being read in the Senate and House. “Much exertion has been made use of to prevent me from making an adverse Report. I conceived however that I owed a solemn duty to the Comtee as well as to myself & humanity, to report my opinions on this matter. I will send you a copy of each as soon as printed. I write in haste.” March 27, 1835, Vaux Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. His letter, familiarly chiding Vaux (“You owe me two letters”) and signed “Your Friend,” implies that he considers Vaux to be friendly to his side of the investigation. At this time, Vaux was no longer corresponding secretary of the

PSAMPP, having filled this post until 1832, when he was elected a vice-president. “The Minutes do not record his name after 1832 although his death did not occur until 1836. It is possible he retired from public life in 1832, as his name is not connected with any other organization after that date” (Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 155). In the absence of recorded statements, the attitude of Vaux and of the PSAMPP regarding the investigation is intriguing but unknown.

72. “Female Convicts,” 114.
73. Minutes of County Prison Board of Inspectors, November 11, 1835, vol. P632—9/1835-12/1843, Philadelphia Archives; Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 193.
74. “Female Convicts,” 114-15.

In 1869, the PSAMPP proudly pointed to the existence of matrons in the Moyamensing County Prison, though not without considerable condescension: “We cannot doubt that the continued health of the female prisoners in the County Jail is greatly due to free circulation of air and the full benefit of sunshine in the building. Perhaps the superior neatness, purity, and sanitary order of this portion of the Prison is partly due to the fact that two matrons preside over that part of its administration, and all their assistants are females. Almost any man can keep a clean floor, but it takes women to ensure clean corners—and in the corners and out-of-the-way places are concealed the means and elements of disease.” *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy* 8, n.s. (January 1869): 23.

75. Minutes from May 22, 1835, *British Parliamentary Papers: First and Second Reports from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Present State of the Several Gaols and Houses of Correction in England and Wales with Minutes of Evidence and Appendices: Crime and Punishment*, 3 (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1968-71), 338-40. Lucia Zedner, in *Women, Crime, and Custody in Victorian England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 113-14, explains that, in the English debate over solitude’s effects on women, some argued that women were more adaptable to solitude than were men because they were considered “more sedentary and passive in their habits, and therefore better able to withstand this restriction of their mobility.” In 1848, however, John Armstrong argued in “Female Penitentiaries” (*Quarterly Review* [London] 83 [September 1848]: 374) that “it might be questioned whether the female mind would be able to bear so much of solitude after so restless a course of life spent in crowds and revels. But still we conceive a certain share of solitude is requisite for the furtherance of the great work.”
76. Wrench, “America,” 305-6.
77. Longstreth, letter to Collins, January 22, 1843, Rebecca Collins Papers, Quaker Collection, Haverford College.
78. “Female Convicts,” 116. Eastern State Penitentiary inmate records at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia indicate their release and disposition. Several cases note that the women had been released to female Friends, taken into service by female Friends, or recommended to the Howard Home.
79. For discussion of the Isaac Hopper Home, see Lewis, *From Newgate to Dannemora*, 220-29; Freedman, *Their Sisters’ Keepers*, 29-35.
80. Teeters, 252-53 quotes Susan H. Loyd, letter to Executive Board of PSAMPP, October 11, 1852.
81. The Howard managers handled the expenditure of the PSAMPP’s \$100 annual contribution by spending the money on clothing for the women. Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 259-61. On Gibbons and the New York female society, see Margaret Bacon, *Abby Hopper Gibbons* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 60-61; Freedman, *Their Sisters’ Keepers*, 33-34.

82. Margaret Hope Bacon, *Abby Hopper Gibbons: Prison Reformer and Social Activist* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 60–61; Teeters, 253–62.
83. See Boylan, *Origins of Women's Activism*, 56–60. For discussion of women's professional experience, see Ginzberg, *Women and the Work of Benevolence*, 119–20.
84. Fry's daughters comment in her memoir that this was an "expression to be frequently heard from her lips." *Memoir of the Life of Elizabeth Fry*, ed. Fry and Cresswell, 22. "Opening" defined in Earlham School of Religion website, <http://quakerinfo.org> (accessed August 8, 2013).
85. *The Friend* 18 (December 14, 1844): 93.
86. Joseph John Gurney, *A Journey in North America, described in familiar letters to Amelia Opie* (Norwich: J. Fletcher, 1841), 100. At the time, American Orthodox Quakers were moving toward a split, in which Gurney's evangelical teachings figured centrally.
87. Dorothea Dix, *Remarks on Prisons and Prison Discipline in the United States* (Boston: Munroe and Francis, 1845), 105–6.
88. Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons Minutes, vol. 3, 1852–80, April 24, 1861, and Minutes of the Acting Committee of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons, vol. 7, February 14, 1840, Pennsylvania Prison Society Records, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
89. *Sketch of the Principal Transactions of the "Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons," from Its Origin to the Present Time* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Thompson, 1859), 29.
90. *The Act Incorporating the House of Refuge, and Laws Relative Thereto, together with the Rules and Regulations for Its Government and List of Officers, Managers, Etc.* (Philadelphia: Harding, 1829) does indicate considerable involvement for women in the plan for the institution. A "Committee of twelve judicious females" was to be appointed "to assist in the management of the House of Refuge, by imparting advice to the youth confined therein, and by bestowing their attentions and care upon the domestic economy of the establishment" (3).
91. Vaux, *Notices*, 46.
92. Peter P. Jonitis and Elizabeth W. Jonitis, *Members of the Prison Society: Biographical Vignettes, 1776–1830: of the Managers of the Philadelphia Society for Assisting Distressed Prisoners and the Members of the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons 1787–1830*, Haverford Special Collections Manuscripts, Haverford College, 1982.
93. "Female Convicts," 113. The FPAFP history notes that the achievement is limited, because it accommodates only "white children."
94. *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 3 (January 1864): 35–43.
95. *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 2 (January 1863): 32. Through the medium of the annual reports of the PSAMPP, the public may have become aware of the work of the FPAFP, since these reports were generally available. Notice of the 1865 annual report is included in the "New Books" column of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (March 19, 1866, 2) and the brief review includes reference to the "ladies," disproportionately longer than the notice given in the reports themselves: "The ladies connected with the association have the care of the female prisoners, and their efforts to reform the erring and unfortunate of their sex have been crowned with success."
96. *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 5 (January 1866): 253. "The Rosine Society was founded in the spring of 1847 and had for its purpose the care of 'degraded females.'" This was a society with female members. In 1800 the Magdalen Society was begun in Philadelphia by men "to act in restoring to the paths of virtue, to be instrumental in recovering to honest rank in life,

those unhappy females, who, in an unguarded hour have been robbed of their innocence" (Teeters, *They Were in Prison*, 264–67).

97. *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 5 (January 1866): 30. Ibid. The article devotes considerable space to a discussion of the benefits of prison visitors' representing diverse religious backgrounds, in order to accommodate the diversity of prisoners' religious (apparently, Christian) backgrounds. The FPAFP members were not the only women visiting Philadelphia prisons in the 1860s. The annual report of the PSAMPP, in describing the visiting at Moyamensing, notes representation by diverse religions among the visitors: "It is pleasant to say that while ladies of various denominations come to do the good work in the prison and find there some prisoners of their special creed, they have labored in love *with* each other as well as for the prisoner, and added to the benefit of their mission the beautiful example of Christian charity to all. They have not changed, not even modified their creeds, but they have manifested a most beautiful rivalry in attempts to illustrate their particular faith by the benefit of their works on others." *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 6 (January 1867): 18.

However, at the risk of drawing invidious comparisons between "outside" volunteers and FPAFP visitors, the *JPD* in 1867 presented a rather lengthy description of the "peculiar discipline of mind" and "gifts that few can boast" necessary to visit prisoners successfully. The PSAMPP was clearly concerned that the delicacy of novice female visitors would prevent them from gaining the trust of prisoners. They advised speaking one-to-one, directly with the prisoner, rather than through the wicket, maintaining a faithful schedule, and avoiding a "Pharisaical parade of superior sanctity." They frankly state their anticipation of a naïve attitude of "personal repugnance" and racism in lady visitors (who do not approach prison work with the constructive and realistic attitudes of FPAFP members). By printing the dialogue of what they present as a typical scenario, they describe the problems awaiting a new lady visitor, whose good intentions are stymied by the reality of ministering, in her assumed words, in "the cell with a dissolute black thief." *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 6 (January 1867): 51–56

98. *Journal of Prison Discipline and Philanthropy*, n.s., no. 5 (January 1866): 30.
99. "A Memorial of the Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia, for the Western District, concerning Mary Wistar," *Friends' Review* 4 (October 5, 1850): 33.

PHILADELPHIA MERCHANTS,
BACKCOUNTRY SHOPKEEPERS, AND
TOWN-MAKING FEVER

Richard K. MacMaster

Abstract: As the French and Indian War drew to a close, enterprising Pennsylvanians began laying out thirty new backcountry towns. This “town-making fever,” which peaked in 1761–64, reflected a fresh understanding of the frontier, no longer a defensive line, but an open door to land and opportunity beyond current settlements. Backcountry towns drew artisans, mostly young newcomers, priced out of the market for agricultural land. The men who platted these towns hoped they would draw the trade of the vicinity. As nodal points in networks of credit and commerce, these new towns marked the integration of the backcountry in an Atlantic economy.

The Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg visited Lutheran congregations in four recently founded towns in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in May 1769, preaching on successive days in Maytown, “Donnegal” (Elizabethtown), Middletown, and Hummelstown. He observed that these “small villages were not founded until after the Indian War, and then they were established to enable the poor people to live closer to one another so that they might have a better opportunity to defend themselves against the treacherous murderers.”¹ Muhlenberg was right to connect the town-making fever that swept the Pennsylvania

backcountry in 1761–65 with the French and Indian War, but the new towns represented more than a defensive strategy. The men who platted these towns had a different view of the frontier. They saw waves of settlement pushing the frontier further into Indian country and commercial centers springing up in what had been wilderness. It was more than coincidence that town building came at the same time that the Paxton Boys marched on Philadelphia to make the case for not permitting “any Indians of what Tribe so ever, to live within the inhabited Parts of this Province” and for equal representation in the Assembly.²

One of the most potent factors in the transformation of western Pennsylvania in the 1790s proved to be the new towns that sprang up in those years.³ A similar phenomenon changed the economy of the upper Susquehanna as artisans and merchants flocked to the developing towns there, greatly expanding the services available in their rural hinterlands.⁴ A full generation earlier central Pennsylvania experienced a case of town-making fever. Stretching across the Pennsylvania backcountry from Northampton Town (Allentown) to Taneytown in Maryland at least a dozen new towns were laid out and lots sold in 1761–62 alone. Historians have long been aware of this phenomenon. Forty years ago James T. Lemon wrote of a “town-making fever” that led to the founding of more than twenty-nine new towns in the Pennsylvania backcountry between 1756 and 1765, more than in all of Pennsylvania in the previous seventy-five years.⁵

Town-making was predicated on the assumption that a steady and steadily increasing flow of goods from Philadelphia and Baltimore into the backcountry and of backcountry produce to the seaports would require multiple distribution centers. This optimism reflected the generally high prices for wheat, flour, bread, beef, and pork, which lasted until the close of the war and in the case of pork carried it to even higher levels in 1763 and 1764.⁶ With a downturn in the economy in 1765, and “the price of country produce low, and likely to get lower,” town-making slowed, although new towns continued to spring up here and there.⁷

Behind each new town was an entrepreneur who platted a town on a tract of land he owned at some promising location where major roads crossed or where bateaumen would load or unload goods carried by water. The success or failure of his enterprise depended on whether he could sell his town lots and the new towns rapidly attracted artisans and tradesmen. The high price of agricultural land and the comparatively low price of a building lot in

a town appealed to landless laborers and artisans and the presence of one trade made the site attractive for others. William Allen first laid out Northampton Town (later Allentown) early in 1762. That year's tax assessment for Salisbury Township listed thirteen taxpayers in the town, among them two carpenters, two tailors, a baker, a smith, a wagoner, a laborer, an innkeeper, and a shopkeeper who also kept a beer house. By the 1764 assessment the town had grown to twenty-eight taxpayers and added two more tailors, a mason, a butcher, a joiner, another shopkeeper, another laborer, and an innkeeper-shoemaker. Not surprisingly they all had German surnames.⁸ The small villages in Lancaster County that Muhlenberg visited also drew tradesmen. Elizabethtown counted two weavers, two tavernkeepers, a carpenter, a shopkeeper, a shoemaker, a tinner, a saddler, and a cooper by 1769. At least five other early lot buyers were neighboring landowners.⁹

Town founders did not generally announce their motives, limiting their advertisements to extolling the advantages of the site for commerce. Obviously dividing a few acres into town lots to be sold subject to an annual rent would be a source of income, but most town proprietors were sincere in their belief in the economic potential of their towns. Their towns generally began with an existing store, tavern, or mill. With the creation of proprietary towns like Reading, Carlisle, and York as centers of local government, some traders settled there, while others continued to do business at rural crossroads that would in many cases be the site for new towns in the 1760s. Stores, often in connection with taverns, were widely dispersed in the back counties. Both were usually situated at the distance of a day's journey on main highways and at ferries. These stores and taverns were often the location for assembling supplies for the army during the war, which might suggest a greater potential in peacetime. The Sign of the Bear in Donegal, the nucleus of Elizabethtown, for instance, was a collection point for flour and oats for General John Forbes' expedition against Fort Duquesne in 1758 and a company of the Pennsylvania regiment was stationed there "to furnish Escorts to Provision and store Waggons and Beeves" assembled there on their way to the army at Carlisle.¹⁰ Wartime prosperity encouraged the proliferation of rural stores and taverns and many of them opened for business in 1759–62.

Economic development of the backcountry went hand in hand with a new vision of how to understand the frontier. Experience of an embattled backcountry blurred divisions among German, Scotch-Irish, and English settlers as it did any distinction between friendly and hostile Indians.¹¹

Their understanding of the Pennsylvania frontier also changed over time from a defensive line separating them from their Indian neighbors to an ever-shifting boundary between older settlements and land as yet unimproved by settlers, land that lay open to them and required the dispersal of their savage neighbors.¹² The very idea of frontier moved from the common definition as the part of a country “which the enemies find in the front when they are about to enter the same,” or, as petitions to the Assembly in 1755 put it, “expos’d to the inhuman cruelty of the barbarous savages,” to an advancing line of civilization pushing back barbarism.¹³ Even the Proclamation Line of 1763, drawn to protect Indian nations, was seen from the first as permeable, an open road into Indian Territory.¹⁴

Commercial development would be an integral part of this new frontier. Town founders had faith in a rising economy, but they also believed in the future development of the country. Promoting a town at Fort Bedford in 1763, William Trent wrote that “Baltimore in Maryland, a new Town and likely to be a Place of considerable Trade, lays so that what Business they do must go through Bedford.”¹⁵ If any substantial part of Baltimore’s commerce was destined to pass through a town near the headwaters of the Raystown branch of the Juniata River, it followed that western Pennsylvania was also destined to soon be thickly settled. A similar vision inspired an anonymous writer in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* who enthused about new towns in the Pennsylvania backcountry. He had seen an advertisement for a proposed town to be laid out on the Juniata River and took this as his starting point. “And inasmuch as the provisions raised in those inland parts are too remote from marine navigation, to bear the expence of exportation, or encourage the industry of the farmers, the erection of trading and popular towns is become absolutely necessary.” He had a more complex idea than merely to encourage trading centers. The new town on the Juniata could be “the proper place for the erection of a linen manufacture,” in part because the distance from markets would keep down the cost of provisions. “These countries abound in great tracts of fresh land, proper for the produce of hemp and flax, and Cumberland County is seated in great measure by natives of Ireland, who many of them, understand that employment, and would, no doubt, engage therein with alacrity, if properly encouraged.”¹⁶

In August 1759, for example, James Black sold a 498-acre tract with a mill and other improvements on a branch of Conococheague Creek in Peters Township, Cumberland County, to William Smith, who gradually added a store, tavern, distillery, and tanyard, which by 1763 became the nucleus

for "Squire Smith's Town" (now Mercersburg). As an assembly point or rest stop for pack horse trains heading west through the Cove Gap, Smith's Mill was a logical site for commercial development.¹⁷ Robert McCrea of Peters Township was licensed to keep a tavern in "Conococheague," probably at Smith's, in July 1762.¹⁸ Smith's venture testified to his faith in these possibilities, but equally to an understanding that the Pennsylvania frontier was now a safe place for investment. As late as April and May 1758 fifty people were taken captive and five others killed in his West Conococheague settlement.¹⁹ Another raiding party struck the Marsh Creek settlement in western York County in April 1758, killing some settlers along Conewago Creek and carrying others into captivity.²⁰ When General John Forbes began his advance toward the Forks of the Ohio later that year, forts on the Pennsylvania frontier ceased to be posts on a line of defense and became points on a line of communication, serving both as bases where troops and supplies could be assembled for the advance westward and as stations for detachments maintaining the road or protecting supplies.²¹ With the army on the offensive, gaps in the Blue Mountains were no longer entry points for French and Indian invaders, but openings to rich lands that lay beyond waiting to be taken up by enterprising settlers. New towns and backcountry stores would be the bases for a different westward advance.

East of the Susquehanna, Hanover and Bethel townships in Lancaster County (now part of Lebanon County) were also exposed to attacks by Indians in 1758.²² Forbes' Expedition changed all that and brought peace to the frontier, a peace that entrepreneurial Pennsylvanians were quick to exploit. The ashes of burned-out farmhouses were still smoldering and captive settlers on their way to Indian villages when they began to plan their new towns. On a road that skirted the Blue Mountains, where lately volunteers watched at Manada and Indiantown gaps for warrior bands, two new towns took shape in Bethel Township. Frederick Stump built a store and tavern in 1759 and conveyed a lot on Market Street in his new town of Fredericksburgh in Bethel Township in May 1761.²³ William Jones sold lots in Williamsburg or Jonestown, his new town on this same road, in 1761, requiring purchasers to have a substantial dwelling house "Finished and tenantable on or before October 20, 1762."²⁴ Further east "on the Grate Road Leading from Harry's Ferry to Reading Town" lay "Tulpehockin Town in the Township of Heidelberg."²⁵ Further down the road in Heidelberg Township was Schaefferstown. In 1758 Alexander Schaeffer laid out a formal grid of streets and building lots at the intersection of a major east-west road linking Harris's

Ferry and Reading and one leading north-south between Tulpehocken and Lancaster. His new town was first known as Heidelberg Town, and later as Schaefferstown. Schaeffer reserved a prime lot on the central square for himself, where he erected a two-story limestone building for a tavern and store.²⁶ These new foundations were typical of the “town-making fever” that swept Pennsylvania at that time. They were no less typical of many of the new towns in that they were located in parts of the backcountry recently subject to Indian raids.

Founders of these Pennsylvania towns continued platting towns and selling building lots as warfare again drove back the frontiers. In July 1763 letters from Carlisle reported warrior bands traveling through the Cumberland Valley, “burning farms and destroying all the people they meet with.” There were murders near Shippensburg and in Sherman’s Valley. They had passed South Mountain and were raiding York County. The Indians “had set fire to houses, barns, corn, wheat, rye and hay—in short to every thing combustible—so that the whole country seemed to be in one general blaze.” Refugees were streaming to older settlements. “Carlisle was becoming the barrier, not a single Inhabitant being beyond it.”²⁷ More than a thousand refugees filled the little village of Shippensburg.²⁸ The same pattern repeated a year later. Thirteen persons were killed and houses burned in Conococheague in June 1764. “The Indians now appear to bend their force agst. the Frontier, & by burning the Houses intend to lay as much of the Country waste as they can. The Summer opens with a dismal aspect to us.”²⁹ Worse was to come, including the murders of a schoolmaster and his students near Greencastle.³⁰

Settlement had spread beyond the Susquehanna to such an extent that two new counties were created in 1749 and 1750. Cumberland County was the domain of the Scotch-Irish, while York County was more mixed but predominantly German. The new counties demanded a place where local government could be conducted with the erection of a courthouse, jail, and other public buildings and the Proprietor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Penn, authorized two new “Proprietary towns,” as they were called, to meet this need. The town of York already existed, lots having been distributed in a lottery in 1741.³¹ Penn took a personal interest in planning Carlisle, the county town for Cumberland County. With “near fifty Houses built, and building,” in 1751, Carlisle promised to be a considerable place, “a great thorough fare to the back Countries, and the Depositary of the Indian Trade.”³² Never simply an administrative center, Carlisle was intended from the first as a channel for the trade of central Pennsylvania.³³

Shippensburg was already a village when the site of Carlisle was first surveyed and the first Cumberland County Court met there in 1750. The inhabitants argued their right to be the permanent county seat, but in vain.³⁴ It was not until February 1763, however, that Edward Shippen began issuing the first deeds, actually leases, to lots in Shippensburg.³⁵ Lots in "the flourishing town of Shippensburg, Cumberland County," located on "both sides of King's Street in the heart of said town," could be leased from John Piper in Shippensburg or Edward Shippen at Lancaster.³⁶ Another early settlement on Conococheague Creek grew into a town when Benjamin Chambers laid out the town of Chambersburg in 1764, advertising the sale of lots on reasonable terms.³⁷ Henry Pawling's tavern, site of the future Greencastle, was known as an assembly point for packhorse men and Squire William Smith had already established his town further west on a branch of the Conococheague.³⁸ Nearer to Carlisle, Alexander Frazer built a grist mill on Yellow Breeches Creek in 1751 and a decade or so later the new town of Lisburn was laid out on his land. Cumberland County Court licensed John Coulter to keep a tavern at "Lisburn in Allen Township" at their October 1764 session.³⁹

Town-making in York County was also concentrated in 1763–65. Richard McAllister operated a tavern and a store where the high road from Carlisle to Baltimore crossed the road leading to York and Philadelphia. When he announced his intention to make a town there, his neighbors thought it a good joke. McAllister persisted and in 1763 offered lots subject to an annual rent. At the suggestion of an influential neighbor, McAllister's Town became Hanover.⁴⁰ "Richard M'Callister's store at Hanover-town in York county" was broken into on an October night in 1767 and a great variety of calico, linens, handkerchiefs, and other dry goods taken away, together with about six pounds in cash.⁴¹ Records of both store and town are extant.⁴² McAllister's accounts are mainly of small purchases by customers who lived in his immediate neighborhood and at McSherrystown, Abbottstown, Littlestown, Spring Forge, and Mary Ann Furnace. His accounts with his suppliers are more revealing. He ordered "Sundries" of considerable value from David M'Lure, John and Alexander M'Lure, James Sterrett and Son, all of Baltimore, beginning in 1774, and from Baltimore merchants Joseph McGoffin and William Neill, beginning in 1775. He also had dealings with John Montgomery, a merchant in Carlisle. His account with "John Smith, Merchant," presumably the well-known Baltimore merchant of that name, differs from the others in that the amount of McAllister's cash payments greatly exceeded the value of "Sundries" supplied.⁴³

West of Hanover, Patrick McSherry laid out McSherrystown in five-acre lots in 1763, but his first recorded deed for a lot was in June 1765. John Abbott platted his town of Berwick, soon called Abbottstown, on the road leading north to Carlisle in October 1763.⁴⁴ Further north on the same road tavernkeeper John Frankelberger offered eighty-four lots for sale in his town of Berlin (now East Berlin); he had the town site surveyed in September 1764 and an extant Plan of Berlin is dated April 1765. Seven miles southwest of Hanover, on the road from Frederick to York, Peter Kline established Littlestown in 1765. Across the Maryland line some miles further on the same road Raphael Taney laid out Taneytown with the first lots sold in 1762.

In the war-ravaged Marsh Creek settlement, close to Great Conewago Presbyterian Church, David Hunter bought 180 acres of land from Hans Morrison in March 1764 on which he platted his town of Woodstock, later called Hunterstown. Hunter sold the first lots in April to William Galbraith and to Samuel Dickson Jr.⁴⁵ In the same settlement, where the road from Shippensburg to Baltimore crossed the road to York, Samuel Gettys opened a store and tavern in 1761, the nucleus for the later Gettysburg.

New Pennsylvania towns east of the Susquehanna were born on the same wave of optimism in 1760–63 and the same desire to imitate the success of Penn's county towns. Their founders selected sites at river landings, where flatboats and rafts could unload grain from the upper Susquehanna, and at crossroads on the main road from Carlisle to Doylestown and Philadelphia. Many of these new towns followed a road from Harris's Ferry to Reading and Philadelphia along Swatara and Tulpehocken creeks, scenes of recent bloodshed. Thomas Willing, a Philadelphia merchant, sold a tract of 151 acres in Derry Township to John Campbell in 1761. Campbell sold the tract the following year to Frederick Hummel who laid out Frederickstown or Hummelstown on part of the land.⁴⁶ Hummel sold the first lot in January 1763.⁴⁷ The same John Campbell established a town of his own a few miles east on the same road, which he called Campbellstown.⁴⁸

Another road forked off this road near Hummelstown leading northeast through the new town of Lebanon to Reading. George Stites deeded 365 acres "including land platted into Town of Lebanon" to his grandson George Reynolds in 1761 "for the purpose of building a town."⁴⁹ Reynolds and his partner, John Nicholas Henicke, were tavern- and storekeepers in Lebanon. A few miles west of Lebanon Abraham Miller laid out a town in 1762 as Annwill (now Annville).⁵⁰ John Auchebaugh, "an Inhabitant of the Town of Anwell in the Township of Lebanon," petitioned for a tavern license in 1763.⁵¹

Halfway between Middletown and Lancaster, at his Sign of the Bear tavern in Donegal Township, Barnabas Hughes sold lots in Elizabeth Town in October 1763. He had been an army contractor during the war and migrated to Baltimore in 1761, where, in partnership with William Buchanan, he was a successful merchant.⁵²

Other new towns were platted up the Susquehanna. John and Thomas Simpson sold lots in their new town "on the eastern side of Susquehana, about two miles above Mr. Harris's ferry, in the township of Paxton" on a bitter cold day in February 1765, but advertised a second lottery when the weather was less severe. They claimed their town was "the most convenient for trade of any yet formed in the back parts of this province, where the new settlers in Shearman's Valley, on Juniata, and up Susquehana, may easily repair by water."⁵³ John Cox Jr., a Philadelphia merchant, offered lots in Estherton, his new town, further upriver in Paxton Township.⁵⁴

Bateamen taking produce or timber down the Susquehanna would find the river navigable at least part of the year as far downstream as Conewago Falls, where a rocky obstruction made passage difficult. New towns sprang up to take advantage of their need to offload at this point. George Fisher, son of a Philadelphia Quaker merchant, for example, sold the first lot in Middletown, his new town above the Pine Ford where the road from Harris's Ferry to Lancaster crossed Swatara Creek, in 1761.⁵⁵ Another new town began at the riverbank. "You may have heard of a Town being laid out, at the Mouth of Swatara, and upon Susquehanna, called Port Royal," a correspondent of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* observed in 1773. Tickets for the lottery there "sold off in less than a month in Lancaster and Berks."⁵⁶ Town-building fever was evidently still rife in the backcountry. This new town was also a commercial venture. William Breaden obtained a patent in January 1774 for eighty-seven acres in Derry Township, "on which stands the Town of Port Royal," and promptly sold it to Elijah Wickersham, merchant of Middletown, Joseph Leacock of Philadelphia, and Henry Weaver, a miller in Caernarvon Township.⁵⁷ Wickersham and his brother bought out the other patentees. Elijah and Abner Wickersham dissolved their partnership in 1775 and advertised for sale their half of the town of Port Royal, 207 lots deeded and paying seven shillings a year in rent, and a tavern and another house in Port Royal, as well as the two-story log house in Middletown, where they kept their store, and another two-story log house where Forbes and Patton had their store at that time, and six other Middletown lots. They were still Middletown boosters, claiming merchants there traded up the Susquehanna and produce

was brought down the river to Middletown “with many thousand bushels of wheat, rye, and Indian corn annually unloaded here.”⁵⁸

This spate of new towns reflected the commercial development of the county towns in the backcountry, notably Lancaster, York, and Carlisle, as secondary centers for the distribution of manufactured goods and the shipment of wheat, flour, flaxseed, beef, and pork to Philadelphia and a market overseas. Lemon suggested that some of the new towns developed in the 1760s as satellites of the county towns, important as transport centers at major crossroads, and as nodal points in commercial networks linking Philadelphia merchants and backcountry shopkeepers.⁵⁹

Towns, as the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* correspondent argued, became necessary as collection points for the shipment of produce and the distribution of imported goods as well as a market for nearby farmers. Philadelphia and Baltimore merchants were essential middlemen in getting the flour, flaxseed, and iron of the backcountry to consumers in the Atlantic world and in bringing an increasing variety of European and East India goods to backcountry farmers. They depended in turn on backcountry shopkeepers to supply the exports they needed and to alert them to the goods demanded by their customers.

Although a few established merchants, like John Cox Jr., Edward Shippen, and Barnabas Hughes, laid out backcountry towns and others played ancillary roles in their development, much of the impetus for town-making came from local interests, from the tavernkeepers, shopkeepers, and land speculators of the back counties, who were often enough one and the same person.⁶⁰ They seized on the real or imagined advantages of a place on main roads or rivers as a link in the chain that bound them to the transatlantic commerce of Philadelphia and Baltimore. These rural entrepreneurs were not simply retailers of imported dry goods making remittances in country produce. They frequently acted as purchasing agents for city merchants, assembling large orders of flaxseed or flour, and handled other business for their principals in the seaport. These same shopkeepers were the bankers of the backcountry, advancing cash and arranging mortgages. While staking out town lots in a rocky pasture alongside a crossroads tavern or store would add to their annual income, with lot holders paying an annual rental, the founders of backcountry towns primarily aimed at consolidating the trade of their rural neighborhoods.

Merchants in the flaxseed trade with Ireland, who freighted ships that arrived in the Delaware with passengers, were particularly dependent on

backcountry networks. Ships carrying flaxseed, flour, and other Pennsylvania produce to Ireland returned with emigrants. Just as, in Irish historian L. M. Cullen's words, "novel traffics—flaxseed and emigration—gave a new dynamism" to Belfast and Londonderry in the eighteenth century, so the same trade directed settlers to the Pennsylvania backcountry and increased the demand for its produce.⁶¹ Philadelphia and Baltimore merchants and their backcountry networks were dynamic agents for change in this process, facilitating the movement of passengers, redemptioners, and servants, and providing the necessary commercial, financial, and transportation support for the orderly exchange of backcountry produce for manufactured goods. These business networks helped bring the eighteenth-century consumer revolution to the backcountry and also contributed to its peopling.⁶²

James Fullton, for instance, a Philadelphia merchant who freighted both his own ships and vessels owned by Londonderry merchants in the flaxseed and passenger trade, regularly advanced money to Joseph Larimore, a storekeeper at Chestnut Level in southern Lancaster County, and to John Morrison at Marsh Creek and James Hunter in western York County "to buy flaxseed" on his account. York County storekeepers Samuel Gettys, Seth Duncan, and Elijah Sinclair also sent hogsheads of flaxseed to Fullton from 1761 on. He shipped tea, rice, indigo, sugar, and coffee to James Maxwell in "Conogogig" in May 1763 and to Captain David Hunter at his new town in York County by his cousin James Fullton's wagon and to John Abbott and Samuel Gettys, two more York County storekeepers, by Ephraim Moore's wagon in August. In March 1764 Fullton sent John Clark and Robert McCrea "at Conogogigg" fifty pounds of tea, twelve pounds of pepper, a tierce of loaf sugar, a hogshead of rum, a quarter cask of Madeira, a quarter cask of Teneriff, and a barrel of sugar. David Hunter received a similar order by Fullton's wagon in June 1764.⁶³ The mundane transactions in Fullton's ledgers and daybooks remind us that even as fresh alarms sent refugees hurrying eastward from Conococheague and Marsh Creek, backcountry storekeepers in those same settlements were restocking their shelves with goods from Philadelphia.

Fullton also supplied several stores and taverns in "Rocky Spring," Chambersburg, Shippensburg, and Carlisle, and his network of customers and commodity buyers included other shopkeepers in Lancaster, and in Martic, Drumore, Donegal, and Paxton townships in Lancaster County, at Swatara (Middletown), and Harris's Ferry (Harrisburg). He also owned town lots in Middletown and Shippensburg.

Backcountry customers, like any business associates, needed to be nurtured by personal contacts. Every three months Fullton made a tour through

Lancaster, Cumberland, and York counties and into Maryland to settle accounts. Each time he recorded "My Expences in the Country" along with "Sundry accounts received at their homes." His travels took him to nearly all the principal Scotch-Irish settlements in the lower Susquehanna valley and interestingly his contacts outside of the Philadelphia mercantile community were exclusively with Scotch-Irish businessmen. Whatever he did with this knowledge, he was in a position to know a great deal about backcountry Pennsylvania. A few of his extant letters refer to taking passengers on board ship at Londonderry for the voyage to America, but none mention information shared with them when they reached Philadelphia, even in the case of his own relatives. Although without documentation, one might think that Fullton used his backcountry network to inform emigrant families about land prices and prospects in one settlement or another.⁶⁴

In his first years in business Fullton attempted to supply a broad range of dry goods, hardware, wine, and rum to his customers. By the 1760s he concentrated on wine, rum, sugar, lemons, and other West Indian products, supplemented by Irish linens shipped by his Londonderry correspondents. At the same time he was buying flaxseed, iron, staves, and flour to ship to Ireland and flour and other articles for the West Indies. This meant that his backcountry customers necessarily dealt with other merchants for some of their store goods and sold them hemp, iron, and other produce.⁶⁵

Storekeepers in the new towns east of the Susquehanna invariably traded with firms in Philadelphia. Farm surplus went to market in Philadelphia by wagon over roads that were little more than rutted trails. Even iron was hauled in wagons. "The traveler who headed west from Philadelphia would find the road rutted and muddy, thanks to heavy use by hundreds of Conestoga wagons loaded with produce."⁶⁶

Surviving account books and other business papers make it possible to identify some business connections. William McCord, one of Fullton's Lancaster customers, for instance, stocked his shop with dry goods from partners Isaac Whitelock and Benjamin Davies, and Isaac Wikoff. McCord, in turn, supplied other backcountry shopkeepers, such as Hannah Haines in Maytown, James Knox and James Dysart in Paxton Township, James Dowdall and George Erwin "Stoarkeeper," in York, extending the network in both directions.⁶⁷ Lancaster merchant John Cameron's accounts illustrate the workings of one such network. He relied on Philadelphia merchants Mease and Miller, Clement Biddle, and John and David Rhea for dry goods and, in turn, supplied George Stevenson and Usher and Donaldson in York, John Lowden "at Susquehanna," Caleb Johnston, Joseph Solomon, and William

McCord, shopkeepers in Lancaster, James Patterson, John Allison, and James Fullton in Donegal Township, as well as Joseph Spear at Carlisle, who made his remittance in deer skins and beaver pelts.⁶⁸ Cameron sent iron to White and Caldwell from Curtis and Peter Grubb's Hopewell Furnace and from Thomas Smith and Co. at Martick Forge.⁶⁹ He shipped flaxseed to Carsan, Barclay & Mitchell and hemp from Samuel Bethel "at Susquehanna" to Henry Keppele.⁷⁰ John Cameron was bankrupt at his death in 1770, and the silks, chintz, boulting cloths and so on from his store were sold at vendue in Philadelphia.⁷¹ Robert Wallace, who kept a store and tavern at Blue Ball, credited Henry Weaver in 1767 for "haling 6 hunderweight of goods from Philadelphia" and for cash for the goods "payd to Calip Fulk for me." A few other entries indicate Caleb Foulke was his primary Philadelphia contact.⁷²

British merchants advanced goods to merchants in Philadelphia and Baltimore on long credit and they in turn supplied country storekeepers with goods on equally long credit. The credit and marketing system in the Atlantic world enabled shopkeepers with little capital, but considered good risks, to finance their operations by drawing ultimately on British merchants. Storekeepers in the new towns were especially likely to be overextended. When sued for debt, the sheriff distrained their property, usually their real estate, as they had no other means to pay. Lancaster County courts issued 88 *fieri facias* decrees between May 1762 and May 1765 in behalf of thirty-seven different Philadelphia merchants authorizing seizure of assets belonging to twenty-four backcountry shopkeepers. David Franks, Matthias Bush, Bernard Gratz, and Benjamin Levy, for instance, sued Barnard Jacobs in 1762 for 2,125 pounds 16 shillings sixpence for goods sent to his Schaefferstown store.⁷³ Levy, Franks, and Bush advanced goods worth 1,306 pounds to Moses Jonas, "chapman and dealer," and levied on his Middletown lots when he defaulted.⁷⁴ Partners Owen Jones and Daniel Wister seized a house and lot in Williamsburg from George Newman when he failed to pay a much smaller sum. They were owed 1,400 pounds by George Reynolds and John Nicholas Henicke, shopkeepers in the Town of Lebanon. Michael Killian, a Middletown shopkeeper, owed Owen Jones 698 pounds and the sheriff seized two houses and lots there in payment.⁷⁵ Reynolds and Henicke were also indebted to Henry Keppele, David and Philip Benezet, Isaac Meyer, Marcus Kuhl, and Moses Heyman for a total of 2,200 pounds, all levied on their Lebanon property.⁷⁶

Carlisle still looked eastward over Harris's Ferry to commercial links with Philadelphia. Between 1763 and 1775 twelve Cumberland County residents, including five Carlisle shopkeepers, mortgaged property to Philadelphia

merchants to secure debts and only three, all local merchants, mortgaged property to Baltimore merchants.⁷⁷ Robert Callender, Indian trader of Carlisle, borrowed money from the Trustees of the College of Philadelphia in 1762, mortgaging acreage on the Conodoguinet to secure payment.⁷⁸ Andrew Greer, Carlisle shopkeeper, mortgaged Lot 196 on North High Street to Daniel Clark, merchant of Philadelphia, and John Woods, shopkeeper of Carlisle, mortgaged his property to William Gough of Philadelphia, both to secure payment of money and goods advanced them.⁷⁹ John Glen, merchant of Carlisle, mortgaged land to cover book debt to John and Lambert Cadwalader, Philadelphia merchants, in 1767.⁸⁰

An equal and opposite force drew the trade of Carlisle and the western shore to the new commercial center of Baltimore. Its rise was due in part to the migration of several merchants from Carlisle to Baltimore beginning in 1760.⁸¹ Although Thomas Penn had located the Cumberland County town so far north precisely to link its trade to Philadelphia, farmers and shopkeepers sought more cost-effective markets in York and Baltimore and built roads accordingly.⁸² Baltimore claimed a lion's share of the trade in grain, flour, and flaxseed within the Cumberland Valley, where by 1770 no fewer than eight major roads led south to Baltimore.⁸³ In 1771, a Philadelphian could write that:

Baltimore town in Maryland has within a few years past carried off from this city almost the whole trade of Frederick, York, Bedford, and Cumberland Counties, its situation on the West side of the river Susquehannah and its vicinity to these counties will always be a prevailing inducement with the inhabitants of those parts to resort to Baltimore for trade, rather than to be at the expense of crossing the river Susquehannah and afterwards to drag their wagons along a road rendered almost impassable by the multitude of carriages which use it, and the insufficiency of our road Acts to keep it in repair.⁸⁴

Another Philadelphian observed that "immense quantities" of wheat and flour "are now carried to Baltimore in Maryland" and "that, not only all the Inhabitants to the westward of Susquehanna, but also a large tract of the country adjacent, on the east side of said river, transport their commodities to that growing town."⁸⁵

Carlisle merchants with ties to Baltimore significantly dealt with their former fellow townsmen William Buchanan, John Smith, and William Neill.⁸⁶ One Carlisle shopkeeper, Ulster-born John Montgomery married Sidney Smith,

John Smith's younger sister, in 1755. William Buchanan married another sister. Unlike Smith and Buchanan, he remained in Carlisle.⁸⁷ The operations of a backcountry merchant were meticulously recorded in Montgomery's one surviving store ledger. He evidently relied on William West, James Fullton, Samuel Purviance Sr., and his own brother-in-law John Smith for his stock-in-trade and offered a bewildering variety of textiles and every other article from six-plate iron stoves to Philadelphia beaver hats. Customers of every social class appear to have demanded cloth of many different kinds, weaves, colors, and quality. They paid him in as many different ways: cash, credit for work performed, bills of exchange, cash paid to his creditors, turnips, cider, wheat, corn, whiskey, furs, and deerskins. Flaxseed was not a major item in his store credits, but he charged Robert Miller for "Carriage of Flaxseed to Phila. and goods back." Montgomery oversaw the Cumberland County interests of Philadelphia merchants Adam Hoops and James Fullton and of John Smith, "Merchant in Baltimore Town," paying taxes, collecting rents, keeping their Carlisle property in repair, and marketing their share of the tenant's crops on their plantations. Carlisle was still a frontier crossroads. John Boyd, who bought a "sett of Philadelphia china cups & saucers" and a "China pint bowl," settled his account with 397 pounds of fall deerskins. Joseph Spear, the Indian trader, sent furs to Philadelphia through Montgomery. The town was also a center for education. John Creigh, schoolmaster, was paid for schooling Montgomery's young daughters and charged for a copy of John Dickinson's *Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer*. He also paid the Reverend John Steel for schooling his son Sammy and his nephew John Smith Jr. By 1773 the minister's school had become the Carlisle Grammar School, with John Montgomery as one of its original board of trustees.⁸⁸ Mortgages of land on Sherman's Creek to John Montgomery, merchant and shopkeeper of Carlisle, indicate his widespread custom.⁸⁹ He was also a man of influence in high places. John Wilkins complained that "Mr. MtGomery" had been able to obtain a lot on the square in Carlisle reserved for the Proprietor, "although he had convenient Lotts and houses in town," by using his connections in Philadelphia.⁹⁰

Shippensburg and Chambersburg were in many ways satellites of Carlisle. Both new towns would seem to have an even closer relation to Baltimore firms, since the distance there by road was so much less than to Philadelphia. Samuel Jack and Robert Boyd of Chambersburg, shopkeepers, mortgaged real estate to Alexander M'Clure and William Goodwin, merchants of Baltimore, to secure payment of a bonded debt in 1773, but Samuel Jack mortgaged other property the same year to Caleb and Amos Foulke of Philadelphia.⁹¹

In all but the smallest hamlets several stores vied with each other to provide fabrics in the fashionable color and weave that even backcountry consumers demanded and the hardware and tools farmers needed.⁹² But these new towns were more than distribution centers for country produce and dry goods. They reflected a level of rural prosperity that permitted specialized trades to flourish. Residents of these new towns were nearly all artisans and craftsmen. With just twenty-seven inhabitants in 1770, for instance, “Williams Burgh Town” or Jonestown in Bethel Township, Lancaster County, counted four weavers, a turner, a tailor, a tanner, and a smith. A year later, with still only twenty-seven residents, “Jones Town” had added a doctor and a cordwainer.⁹³ Middletown, with sixty-eight taxpayers on the roll in 1777, was home to five weavers, three masons, three tailors, three joiners, and three tanners, two hatters, two gunsmiths, two shoemakers, a blue dyer, a skin dresser, a potter, a cooper, a wheelwright, a tobacco spinner, and a tavernkeeper.⁹⁴

New towns provided places where landless Pennsylvanians, whether artisans or laborers, could live and work. Muhlenberg noticed another trend in his 1769 visit to these backcountry towns. “In former times these remote regions were inhabited almost exclusively by Irish settlers, but wherever the Germans became deeply rooted, work hard, and manage to make both ends meet, the Irish gradually withdraw, sell their farms to the Germans, and move farther. Within the last ten years the Germans have increased considerably in these regions.” The readiness of German settlers to buy lands already improved by Scotch-Irish settlers meant that there would always be families from Paxton and Donegal and other older settlements with money in hand looking for suitable lands on the Pennsylvania frontier, in Virginia, or the Carolinas. This was not a new phenomenon. The Corporation for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers had expressed concern ten years earlier that Presbyterians “either from a Love of variety, or from the fair Prospect of more commodious Settlements on the Frontiers of this or the Neighbouring Provinces” were selling their farms to “Strangers from Europe, who incline at their first arrival to purchase or hire cultivated Lands,” with the result that “one of our most promising Settlements of Presbyterians, may in a few Years, be entirely possessed by German Menonists, or Moravians, or any other Society of Christians.” German immigration reached a peak at mid-century with some 35,000 Germans arriving in 1749–54 and, after interruption by the Seven Years’ War, resumed with 1,000–3,000 a year after 1763. While some came with money to buy land, most were redemptioners and many of them had to accept a few years of indentured servitude to pay

their passage. For those who came in the peak years their term of service was over when new towns began springing up and migrants in the 1760s were predominantly young men in their twenties, unlikely to have brought money with them. The new towns, whose inhabitants were “young newcomers and for the most part poor,” gave recent immigrants a chance to amass enough capital as artisans to buy a farm.⁹⁵ And the cycle would continue, creating pressure to open new lands to settlers.

Within a few years, essentially between 1758 and 1765, backcountry entrepreneurs and city merchants who depended on them for produce to shipped to Europe and the West Indies and who supplied the “assortment of European and East India goods” on their shelves had transformed the landscape of the Pennsylvania borderlands with small towns on all the main roads. This network of new towns, linked together with the commercial hubs of Philadelphia and Baltimore, primarily served the interests of commerce. They also reflected a new self-confident attitude among Pennsylvanians to push back the frontiers and develop the lands that lay beyond.

NOTES

1. Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstein, eds., *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1945), 2:391.
2. *A DECLARATION AND REMONSTRANCE OF the distressed and bleeding Frontier Inhabitants Of the Province of Pennsylvania, Presented by them to the Honourable the GOVERNOR and ASSEMBLY of the Province* (Philadelphia, 1764). Reprinted in John R. Dunbar, *The Paxton Papers* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957), 101–10.
3. R. Eugene Harper, *The Transformation of Western Pennsylvania, 1770–1800* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991), 81.
4. Peter C. Mancall, *Valley of Opportunity: The Economic Culture of the Upper Susquehanna, 1700–1800* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 178.
5. James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 29 and 143.
6. Anne Bezanson et al., *Prices in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1935), 40, 69.
7. *Pennsylvania Journal*, March 21, 1765.
8. Charles Rhoads Roberts, *History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania* (Allentown: Lehigh Valley Publishing Co., 1914), 1:388–90.
9. Donegal and Mount Joy townships tax lists, Lancaster County Historical Society, Lancaster, PA (hereafter LCHS).
10. Sylvester K. Stevens, ed., *The Papers of Henry Bouquet* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission, 1951), 2:31–32; “Military Letters of Captain Joseph Shippen,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 36 (1912): 457.

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11. I have used the term "Scotch-Irish" in preference to "Scots-Irish" or "Ulster Scots." It is a purely American term, in common usage since the mid-eighteenth century. Edmund Burke, for instance, wrote of backcountry settlers: "These are chiefly Presbyterians from the Northern part of Ireland, who in America are generally called Scotch-Irish." Burke, *An Account of the European Settlements in America* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1757), 2:216.
12. Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), 110–14, 172–73.
13. Patrick K. Spero, "Creating Pennsylvania: The Politics of the Frontier and the State, 1682–1800," PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2009, 24, 191.
14. Colin G. Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 98.
15. William Trent to William Peters, February 20, 1763, Penn Papers, Add MSS, 1:110. Historical Society of Pennsylvania (hereafter HSP), Philadelphia.
16. The "new town on Juniata," a tributary of the Susquehanna, was probably Bedford, possibly Huntingdon, both then in Cumberland County. "Anglus Americanus," *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, March 20–27, 1769.
17. Cumberland County Deeds, 2-A, 140, Cumberland County Court House, Carlisle, PA (hereafter CCCH). The Woman's Club of Mercersburg, *Old Mercersburg* (Mercersburg, 1912; reprint, Williamsport, PA: Grit Publishing, 1949), 39–40.
18. Cumberland County Tavern Licenses, 1762.013. Cumberland County Historical Society (hereafter CCHS) Carlisle, PA.
19. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 13, 1758; Calvin Bricker Jr. and Walter L. Powell, *Conflict on the Conococheague, 1755–1758* (Mercersburg, PA: Conococheague Institute, 2009), 49.
20. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 13 and 20, 1758; James Everett Seaver, *A Narrative of the Life of Mary Jamison The White Woman of the Genessee* (New York: American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, 1918), 24, 308.
21. William A. Hunter, *Forts on the Pennsylvania Frontier, 1753–1758* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1960), 474.
22. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 3, 1758.
23. Lancaster County Deeds, H-1-295, R-1-495, Lancaster County Court House, Lancaster, PA (hereafter LCCH).
24. *History of Lebanon County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago, 1883), 185.
25. Nicolaus Housegger, Petition, February 1763, Liquor License Papers, LCHS.
26. Diane E. Wenger, *A Country Storekeeper in Pennsylvania: Creating Economic Networks in Early America, 1790–1807* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), 16, 36–39.
27. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 21, July 28, and August 4, 1763.
28. C. Hale Sipe, *The Indian Wars of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Telegraph Press, 1929), 441.
29. John Armstrong to Governor John Penn, June 6, 1764, *Pennsylvania Archives*, 1st series, 4:175–76.
30. David Dixon, *Never Come to Peace Again: Pontiac's Uprising and the Fate of the British Empire in North America* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 223–24.
31. Paul Erb Doutrich, "The Evolution of an Early American Town: Yorktown, Pennsylvania 1740–1790," PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1985, 17–18.
32. Judith Anne Ridner, "A Handsomely Improved Place: Economic, Social, and Gender Role Development in a Backcountry Town, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1750–1815," PhD diss., College of

- William and Mary, 1994, 26–27. See also Merri Lou Scribner Schaumann, *A History and Genealogy of Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania 1751–1835*, 2nd ed. (Dover, PA: privately printed, 1998).
33. Indian trade was seen as the lifeblood of the new town. Governor James Hamilton wrote in 1752 that the trading partnership of George Croghan and William Trent “drew a great deal of trade to that part of the country, and made money circulate briskly,” but their unexpected bankruptcy “will, I fear, retard the progress of the town.” Hamilton to Thomas Penn, June 19, 1752, Penn MSS, Official Correspondence, V, 183, HSP, as quoted in Nicholas B. Wainwright, *George Croghan Wilderness Diplomat* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 45.
34. Judith Ridner, *A Town In-Between: Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Early Mid-Atlantic Interior* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 32.
35. *History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Beers, 1886), 260–62.
36. *Pennsylvania Journal*, March 7, 1765.
37. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 19, 1764; I. H. McCauley, *Historical Sketch of Franklin County* (Chambersburg, 1878), 22.
38. Henry Pauling was licensed to keep a tavern in Antrim Township in July 1762. Cumberland County Tavern Licenses, 1762.002, CCHS
39. Cumberland County Tavern Licenses, 1764.001, CCHS; *History of Cumberland County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Beers, 1886), 300.
40. John Gibson, ed., *History of York County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Beers, 1886), 574.
41. *Pennsylvania Journal*, October 15, 1767.
42. McAllister kept his store accounts from 1773 to 1781 in a ledger that already was stamped “Paul Zantzinger, Lancaster.” The first sixty-nine pages are missing. It was understandably accessioned as Paul Zantzinger Ledger, MG-2, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, PA. McAllister's Store Book, 1781–85, and Rent Roll, 1782, are in McAllister Papers, MG-81, Pennsylvania State Archives. Harrisburg.
43. Paul Zantzinger Ledger, 248, 375, 400, 408, 446, 464, 493, MG-2, Pennsylvania State Archives.
44. York County Deeds, 2-G-252, York County Archives.
45. *Ibid.*, B 485–44.
46. In deeds for town lots from Frederick Hummel and his wife it is Frederickstown, but it is Hummelstown on William Scull's 1770 map, as it is today. Lancaster County Deeds, H-1-100, X-1-42. LCCH.
47. William H. Egle, *History of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883), 416.
48. His widow deeded her half of his extensive land holdings to his brother Patrick Campbell in 1776, who sold a 352-acre tract to ironmaster Peter Grubb three years later with the caveat that John Campbell had divided part of the property into lots, “for the purpose of erecting a town or village, and sold several during his lifetime.” When Grubb sold the land in 1780 to Robert Coleman, another ironmaster, it included “a village called Campbell's Town.” Lancaster County Deeds, Q-1-462, R-1-658, S-1-519, LCCH.
49. Lancaster County Deeds, G-1-95, LCCH.
50. W. H. Egle, *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883), 227.
51. John Auchebaugh, Petition, May 1763, Liquor License Papers, LCHS.

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52. Lancaster County Deeds, O-1-368, LCCH. Richard K. MacMaster, *Elizabethtown, The First Three Centuries* (Elizabethtown, PA: Elizabethtown Historical Society, 1999), 26.
53. *Pennsylvania Journal*, February 14 and March 7, 1765.
54. *Ibid.*, March 21, 1765.
55. George and Hannah Fisher to Godlieb David Ettelin, March 1, 1761, Lancaster County Deeds, O-1-445, LCCH.
56. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 22, 1773.
57. Lancaster County Deeds, Q-1-202, LCCH.
58. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 8, 1775.
59. Lemon, *Best Poor Man's Country*, 133-34.
60. On storekeeper-tavern keepers, see Diane Wenger, "Delivering the Goods: The Country Storekeeper and Inland Commerce in the Mid-Atlantic," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 129 (2005): 60. Daniel Thorp found tavern keeping and storekeeping was the practice in rural North Carolina, but less common in urban areas where the larger population allowed people to specialize. Daniel B. Thorp, "Doing Business in the Backcountry: Retail Trade in Colonial Rowan County, North Carolina," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., 48 (1991): 391.
61. L. M. Cullen, "Merchant Communities Overseas, the Navigation Acts and Irish and Scottish Responses," in L. M. Cullen and T. C. Smout, *Comparative Aspects of Scottish and Irish Economic History 1600-1900* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1976), 172; Thomas M. Truxes, *Irish-American Trade 1660-1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 39; R. J. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America 1718-1775* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1996), 223-27. On the flaxseed trade, see also Richard K. MacMaster, *Scotch-Irish Merchants in Colonial America: The Flaxseed Trade and Emigration from Ireland, 1718-1775*, 2nd ed. (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2013).
62. Marianne Wokeck noted the role of merchant networks in resettling emigrants in *Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 177.
63. Ledger A (1761-1765), November 26, 1761, December 15, 1761, September 1, 1763, November 19, 1763; Day Book (1763-1766), May 11, 1763, June 13, 1763, August 29, 1763, November 11, 1763, March 3, 1764, June 25, 1764, April 1, 1765, and passim. James Fullton Papers, Historical Society of York County, York, PA.
64. Ledger A (1761-65), January 3 and February 27, 1765, Fullton Papers.. James Fullton to John Fullton and Ephraim Campbell, December 19, 1766, and June 30, 1767, James Fullton Letter Book, LCHS.
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CHARACTER SKETCH

SILENCE DOGOOD AND THE LEATHER-APRON MEN

Allan Kulikoff

Abstract: This article plumbs the origin and meaning of Benjamin Franklin's use of the phrase "leather apron man" in his first "Silence Dogood" essay, written in 1722 as a youth of sixteen. Wearing leather aprons had long been a marker of plebeian craft labor and class hostility: shoemakers and carpenters, as Shakespeare knew, wore leather aprons; gentlemen did not. From a genteel perspective, calling someone a "leather-apron man" constituted an insult. In his Silence Dogood essay, Franklin transformed the meaning of the phrase "leather apron," turning it into a proud badge of honor, marking the virtuous labor of handycraftsmen. Although Franklin supported the aspirations of "leather apron men" his entire life, his working-class identity did not endure; nor did he ever use the phrase again in his known writing.

Barely sixteen, Benjamin Franklin published a remarkable series of essays in his brother James's newspaper, the *New England Courant*. Every reader of Franklin's autobiography knows the story. Once his father withdrew him from school, he worked for his father, a candle and soap maker. He disliked the work, and his father—fearing he would run away to sea—took him around Boston's workshops. Benjamin finally agreed to an apprenticeship with his brother James, a printer. The experience did not go well for

either brother, but Benjamin—surrounded by a group of writers dubbed the Couranteers—read widely, practiced writing, and secretly submitted contributions to the *Courant*; he kept his authorship secret until he completed the essays.¹

In these essays, Franklin took on the voice of a middle-age widow named Silence Dogood. Her name parodied Cotton Mather; author of the popular *Bonifacius: An Essay Upon the Good* (1710). Mather never kept silent. Nor did Silence Dogood—who championed women, lamented the decline of virtue, and claimed Harvard College was a bastion of elitism, gentility, and ignorance—stay silent. She wrote as she spoke, turning her contributions into a dramatic monologue, full of speech ordinary readers would understand.²

These essays, an astonishing achievement for a seasoned writer, much less a sixteen-year-old, have long fascinated literary historians and scholars. Franklin used the term “leather apron man” in the first essay he wrote; it has elicited little comment. Historians have presumed that he meant artisans, men who made shoes or built houses or printed books. Franklin, several commentators have argued, identified with leather-apron men throughout his long life and remained a member of the “leather-apron class” with a “leather apron outlook” himself.³ But no one has plumbed the origin or the meaning of the term, presuming that Couranteer Nathaniel Gardner invented it a few months before Franklin appropriated it. The story is more complex than this, and its end result shows Franklin, even at his young age, a master satirist, one capable of changing the meaning of words.

In his first two essays, Franklin told Silence Dogood’s life history, one that in some ways resembled his own. Orphaned at birth (her father fell overboard as they emigrated from England), she attended school for a short period. Before her hard-working mother died, she had apprenticed her to a young, unmarried minister. He trained her intellectually and gave her the run of his library, where she learned to love reading. When she reached adulthood, he proposed and she accepted, but seven years later, he died, turning her into an unhappy, if loquacious, widow.

What models could Franklin have drawn on to sketch Silence Dogood, with her egalitarian ethos, salty language, and sharp tongue? Although Dogood’s ideas originated in such works as Daniel Defoe’s *Essay Upon Projects* and the anti-aristocratic Couranteers’ essays, particularly those in women’s voices, finding the origin of her persona and biography proves more difficult. Moll Flanders, protagonist of the Defoe novel, appeared in January 1722,

three months before Franklin wrote the first Dogood essay. Moll's class location and spunkiness resembled Silence's, but her biography was quite different (including stints of working as a prostitute and immigration to the colonies). Franklin probably came across the novel long after he had finished the essays. Aristocratic English women had long debated female education and women's role in society, yet the class differences between these writers and Dogood remained vast. Nor did she come across as a scold or shrew, stock figures in English folklore and drama. Franklin thus drew an original character, perhaps the most vivid fictional sketch by an eighteenth-century colonist.⁴

Colloquial, profane, humorous, and sympathetic, Silence Dogood willingly took on established leaders and ideas. Franklin particularly gave Silence a keen awareness of class differences and an anti-aristocratic political position. She lambasted clergymen (by implication the three-generation family of Mathers, all clerics), Harvard students, fancy dress, overspending, and elite funeral orations, among others, critiques the young Franklin probably shared.

She introduced herself so a reader might "judge whether or no my Lucubrations are worth his reading." As she wrote in her first essay, mimicking Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *Spectator* in more colloquial language, "The Generality of People, now a days" judge essays by "who or what the Author of it is, whether he be *poor* or *rich*, *old* or *young*, a *Schollar* or a *Leather Apron Man*." These juxtapositions subtly deny class privilege: poor and rich, old and young, scholar and leather-apron man appear on the same plane. In her ninth letter Silence lambasts rich lawyers and clergy; rich ministers, in particular, supported by their congregants, "see nor feel nothing of the Oppression which is obvious and burdensome to every one else." No wonder Franklin hid his authorship from his brother until he finished the series. He hinted, none too subtly, that as a poor youth, scholar, *and* leather-apron man, he deserved the same respect as anyone, no matter age or class, who had attained his accomplishments.⁵

Where did the seemingly strange term "leather-apron men" originate? "Leather apron" had been a common colloquial term in England for at least a century and a half, found in two Shakespeare plays, a polemical work on the evils of fashion, Restoration farces, and even religious tracts. It pointed to the apron—with its useful pockets for nails and small tools—tradesmen (blacksmiths, carpenters, and others) wore; as servant runaway ads in the 1710s and 1720s show, artisan-servants often wore one. But it also marked the lowly status of craft work, at least in the minds of gentlemen, playwrights, aristocrats, and clergymen.⁶

In two early plays Shakespeare uses “leather apron” in ways that go beyond identifying a piece of clothing workers wore. *Julius Caesar* (1599) opens when tribune Flavius orders a carpenter and a shoemaker “Home you idle Creatures, get you home; you ought not to walk/Upon a labouring day, without the sign of your profession.” Then, tribune Murullus demands of the carpenter, “Where is thy Leather Apron, and thy Rule?/What dost thou with thy best Apparell on?” A leather apron and a rule marked a carpenter in Shakespeare’s day—and he presumed much earlier in Caesar’s Rome.⁷

In the *Second Part of Henry VI* (1590), Shakespeare used “leather apron” to satirize the social order. George Bevis and John Holland, followers of Jack Cade who led a 1450 rising against rural taxes and gentry extortion, talk sardonically about rebelling against their betters, local rulers, *and* the king and his court. Shakespeare took a decidedly negative view of Cade’s violence. But he did relate Cade’s (and his followers’) demands in a way that may have elicited approval among workers in his mixed-class audience. Bevis tells Holland that “*Jack Cade* the Clothier means to dress the Commonwealth and turn it and set a new Nap on it.” In response, Holland puns, “So he had need, ’tis thread-bare. Well, I say, it was never a merry World in *England*, since Gentlemen came up.” Bevis parries his wit: “O miserable Age! Virtue is not regarded in Handycrafts Men.” Understanding the rich demeaned handycrafts men, Holland replies, “the Nobility think scorn to go in Leather Aprons,” and Bevis puns back, that “the King’s Council are no good Workmen,” turning rulers into workers. “True,” Holland replies, “yet it is said, *Labour in thy Vocation*; which is as much as to say, let the Magistrates be labouring Men; and therefore we should be Magistrates.”⁸

In the seventeenth century, leather aprons continued to mark craft workers. In 1660 William Houlbrook, accused of being a Jesuit, insisted he was a carpenter, and proved it by coming “out with my Lether Apron before me.” A 1605 advice book for youths related the story of a worker whose friends “fild him with liquor,” then took him “into the Church-porch,” laying “him all along on his backe upon a bench.” He nonetheless appeared graceful: a red cap set “upon his head,” topped by a peacock feather, with “his leather apron turn roun together, and wound about his middle, his hammer hanging (hanger like) by his side.”⁹

Class hostility, similar to that Shakespeare evoked, permeates the meaning of “leather apron,” particularly pointing to those who stepped out of their lowly status, taking on the identity of their betters. A 1592 discourse on the evils of commoners wearing expensive clothing complained about

upstarts who had fetched “their pedigree from their fathers ancient leather apron,” upending the natural, hierarchal order and undeserving of high rank. A 1672 farce related the tale of a doctor who took up smithing. “Gentlemen,” a character explained, “you’ll find him . . . with a leather Apron, and a Hammer by his side, as if he were a real Smith; and he studies as much to be a Farrier now, as formerly a Physician; and as his drink was altogether Wine before, now Farrier-like he studies all sorts of Ale, and drinks them soundly too.” Four decades later, an advice book aimed at young gentlemen warned against London sharpers: the same con man “who one time appears like a Country-Man, at another look like some Mechanick, perhaps, with a Leather Apron, and a Rule stuck by his Side.”¹⁰

Class loathing permeates Thomas Jevon’s popular 1686 farce, *Devil of a Wife*. In that play, a shrewish wife of a lord faces a cobbler claiming to be her genteel husband. Sir Richard, her husband, has disappeared. Thinking she sleeps, she spies “stinking Leather Breeches, and a Leather Apron, here are Canvas Sheets, and filthy ragged Curtains, a beastly Rug, and a Flock Bed.” When the cobbler, named Jobson, insists on his high pedigree and threatens to take his strap and “teach you a little better Manners, you saucy Drab,” she accuses him of “astonishing Impudence!” and threatens to have him hanged. Seeing the source of the stench, she cries, “Oh, soh, how the Beast [Jobson] stinks of Cheese, Leather-Apron, Pitch, Grease, foul Linnel, and old Shoes,” thus defining a cobbler by his vile odors.¹¹

In 1702 libertine and satirist Thomas Brown lampooned this class reversal. Lily C., dead and living in Hell, writes her friend, a furniture maker turned almanac maker, conjurer, and fortune-teller. “As ingenious a Mechanick . . ., as he that Invented a Mouse-trap,” her friend had taken up astrology—that “Noble Science of Heaven-peeping”—becoming famous as he fleeced his clients. But he did well because astrology was “a kind of Liberal Science,” open to all, “from the whimsey-headed Scholar, to the stroling Tinker; therefore your Leather Apron and the Glue-pot are no disparagement to your pursuit . . ., any more than it is a Scandal to a Mountebank to be first a Fool, and then a travelling Physician . . ., by long Study and Experience, in the Noble Arts of Poetry and Physick.”¹²

The first published use of “leather-apron *men*” in England dates from 1710, appearing in a religious tract published by a religious dissenter. It had likely reached Boston before Franklin wrote the first Silence Dogood essay. The author claimed that dissenters posed no danger to church men (those who adhered to the Church of England). Dissenters did seek to maintain religious

toleration by keeping supporters (both churchmen and dissenters) in public office. New persecution, which he feared, would thrust some dissenters into greater opposition while turning "Occasional Conformists" who wished to protect their status into "constant Churchmen." Soon, if "Occasional Conformity should continue, in ten or twelve years the Dissenters would have none but Leather-Apron Men left among them."¹³

The matter-of-fact use of "leather-apron men" built on earlier understandings of "leather apron" and suggests the term required no explanation. The author meant it as an insult—gentlemen and merchants were more desirable church members than workers. Franklin may not have seen the pamphlet, but he surely read Nathaniel Gardner's March 1722 dialogue his brother published. Gardner satirized Cotton Mather's position on inoculation, making Academicus, Mather's supporter, a learned but obnoxious buffoon. Rusticus, who opposed inoculation, asks Academicus for "a Word with you," to which Academicus responds, insultingly, "*Good now, what Business can you have with me? Do you understand Latin?*" Having none of that, Rusticus will "talk in English, *broad English*," but Academicus dismissed his opponents as beneath him: "*I intended to let you knew that I am a Man of Letters, and that . . . all the illiterate Scribblers of the Town (the Leather Apron Men) are proud and vain Fellows,*" and "'tis not possible for them . . . to speak a Word of Truth." Gardner thereby mocked Academicus's (and Mather's) insults, making him appear a small-minded man who loathed all those lacking his learning.¹⁴

"Leather apron" and "Leather-apron men" probably had come into colloquial New England speech, along with the East Anglian twang and Latinate constructions, long before Franklin picked up on it. Even as early New Englanders listened to sermons given in the London "standard" dialect and read books and tracts published in that city, they heard dialects from other parts of England and incorporated elements of all into their speech. By the early eighteenth century, they emulated London's diction and vocabulary. The London connections and London imprints found in the *Courant's* library intensified that language exchange, as did sailors who regularly piled into Boston. At least five of the Couranteers, moreover, had emigrated from Britain or had traveled, worked, or attended university there. All these elements, linguistic and personal, fed into Silence Dogood's monologues.¹⁵

If Franklin hardly invented the term "leather-apron men," he remarkably turned a class-based insult into a badge of honor. He severed it, and indeed Silence Dogood's entire repertoire, from debates over inoculation, the personal invective those works contained, and the genteel satires of Restoration

comedy. Thus separated, “leather-apron man” became an honorific title, a calling, standing beside that of merchant, farmer, and clergyman. As an apprentice, journeyman, and master craftsman, Franklin identified himself as a printer or tradesman, a man who wore a leather apron. In 1727, the year after he returned to Philadelphia from London, he may have named the group of budding intellectuals he founded the “leather-apron club” and petitioned public authorities in their name, but by 1731 he had changed the club’s name to the Junto.¹⁶

Did Franklin have an “enduring working class identity” and celebrate “both his own and others’ labour and craftsmanship,” as Simon Newman has argued? The Junto, the Philadelphia mutual aid and debating society he founded, included master craftsmen, along with men awkwardly positioned between craft and gentility (a surveyor and a clerk), among its members. He did take pride in his craftsmanship and that of others, as depictions of craft work in his memoirs suggests, and he had his grandson Benjamin Franklin Bache trained as a printer. He bequeathed to Bache, by then a prominent Philadelphia printer, all his types and printing implements.¹⁷

That identity as a leather-apron man remained strong. In a 1729 pamphlet espousing paper money, he deemed “Labouring and Handicrafts Men” like himself “the chief Strength and Support of a People.” Such a man “earned his Bread with the Sweat of his Brows.” Franklin included “*Brickmakers, Bricklayers, Masons, Carpenters, Joiners, Glaziers*, and several other Trades immediately employ’d by Building, but likewise to *Farmers, Brewers, Bakers, Taylors, Shoemakers, Shop-keepers*,” the entire free populace of Philadelphia and its hinterlands, save merchants, gentlemen, apprentices, servants, and waged laborers. Paper money would “encourage great Numbers of Labouring and Handicrafts Men to come and Settle in the Country,” thereby increasing its productivity, foreign trade, and consumption, as artisans took advantage of the lower prices a greater supply of money brought. His 1747 tract, *Plain Truth*, which he signed “Tradesman of Philadelphia,” urged the creation of a voluntary militia during wartime, with officers elected by the tradesmen-members. During that war, he organized a lottery to prepare Philadelphia’s defense, then paid most of its proceeds to hard-pressed workers building batteries. Tradesmen reciprocated by protecting his Philadelphia house, when a crowd sought to pull it down, after he appeared to support enforcement of the Stamp Act.¹⁸

Transforming the phrase “leather-apron men” from insult to honorific title raises questions about the class boundaries of the term. Could apprentices, servants, and slaves—all of whom worked, metaphorically, wearing leather

aprons—be counted as leather-apron men? Franklin, at age sixteen, clearly included himself. The leather-apron men depicted in the English texts all worked independently, hiring themselves to clients or selling what they made. By implication, the term excluded dependents. As a master printer, Franklin may have shared that vision: in his 1729 pamphlet, he failed to mention either apprentices or journeymen explicitly. By the mid-1730s, his own household included servants, teenage apprentices, and a nephew (a son of James, with whom he had sparred) who served as Franklin's printing apprentice. The relations between nephew and uncle resembled those of Franklin and his brother—contentious and bickering, mostly over the privileges nephew James thought he deserved.¹⁹

Although Franklin supported the aspirations, labor, and political demands of craftsmen his entire life, he did not have that “enduring working-class” identity that Newman ascribes to him, at least after he retired from setting type and running his press at age forty-two. The phrase “leather-apron men” never appears in his voluminous surviving writings after the publication of the Silence Dogood letters. Nor did Franklin return to full-time printing, even while ambassador to Louis XVI's court. He did establish a printing operation there, where his press printed thousands of diplomatic documents (passports, bonds, loan certificates, social invitations), some personal bagatelles, at least one hoax, and a few longer works. Along with his myriad diplomatic responsibilities, Franklin bought a press, hired a type founder, and bought a foundry. He designed types, forms, and documents; he did set some type and sometimes run the press. But he hired printers to do much of the physical labor of setting type and running the press. He played a gentleman *and* a wild American who wore a fur cap, a man of leisure who built a huge wine cellar and hobnobbed with ladies and lords.²⁰

Franklin portraiture suggests that Franklin reinvented himself as a gentleman. Eighteenth-century portrait painters stood between craftsmanship and artistry; if they wanted to sell paintings, they had to portray subjects just as their sitters desired. If Franklin had wished portraits to depict him as a leather-apron man, he would have insisted a portraitist show him in that manner, much as John Singleton Copley painted silversmith Paul Revere. Revere wore shirt sleeves (sign of a workman), sitting before his tools. Franklin dressed in genteel clothing in all his portraits. His first portrait, painted by Robert Feke around 1746, pictured him as a bewigged gentleman, in ruffled sleeves, standing with his right hand holding his hat and pointing to the ground and his left hand empty, inside his waistcoat. The stance suggested virtuous character and gentlemanly leisure, not the labors of the

middling sort. It originated in classical statues and had become fashionable in portraits of gentlemen and merchants. Three later portraits—painted in London by Benjamin Wilson (1759), Mason Chamberlin (1762), and David Martin (1767)—portrayed him as a new style gentleman. He had become a philosopher (what we would call scientist), conducting electrical experiments or writing at a desk, a lightning strike in the background, but still bewigged and dressed in elegant genteel clothing.²¹

Franklin, along with the Couranteers and many of his later friends, both colonists and English, struggled toward a new class identity, neither proletarian nor gentleman, neither leather-apron man nor merchant. In the eighteenth century it had no name. Their wealth and prominence far exceeded that of the middling sort. Like leather-apron men, they valued labor over unproductive leisure; they dressed like gentlemen but ran businesses; they read widely, corresponded with one another, and practiced philosophy, but had no university appointments. Marx would have considered them capitalists; we might—inaccurately—call them middle class.

Franklin understood these ambiguities of class. While in France, besieged by potential immigrants, he wrote *Information to Those Who Would Remove to America* (1784). He urged hard-working farmers and artisans to emigrate. Americans honored husbandmen and “the Mechanic, because their Employments are useful . . . ; and he is respected and admired more for the Variety, Ingenuity, and Utility of his Handyworks, than for the Antiquity of his Family.” Americans valued highly useful men whose “Ancestors and Relations for ten Generations had been Ploughmen, Smiths, Carpenters, Turners, Weavers, Tanners, or even Shoemakers,” more than men who “could only prove that they were Gentlemen, doing nothing of Value, but living idly on the Labour of others.” Men “of moderate Fortunes” could “secure Estates for their Posterity.” Poor migrants “begin first as Servants or Journeymen; and if they are sober, industrious, and frugal, they soon become Masters, establish themselves Business, marry, raise Families, and become respectable Citizens.” Who were the “persons of modest fortunes”? The subtext of the pamphlet encouraged immigration of men, who already had a small fortune, ready to engage in manufacturing or commercial farming. Only they could accumulate eight or ten guineas needed to procure frontier land (about \$1,660 to \$2,100 in 2012 dollars, \$21,000 to \$26,500, when compared to an unskilled laborer’s wage).²²

This excursion into the history of a phrase and its later reverberations in Franklin’s life reveals a crucial element of his character. His egalitarian

and leather-apron persona lasted his lifetime, but it jostled with many others. Franklin—rubbery, slippery, a master of disguises, a taker of pseudonyms—wore many often contradictory masks, not only pretending to be a menagerie of different people, from an Arab potentate to a German prince, but playing in real life many characters. He acted as a rebellious apprentice, a worker worth his hire, a conniving printer bent on chasing his opponents out of business, a community activist who sought city improvement and justice for workers, a moralist bent on perfection, an effete gentleman, an experimental philosopher, a wild American wearing a ratty fur cap, an abolitionist, and so many more. In Silence Dogood, his first persona, sixteen-year-old Franklin found a way to express, with humor and wit, his egalitarian inclinations and his love of strong, quirky people. That he created many other, often contradictory, persona only adds to his achievements.

NOTES

1. J. A. Leo LeMay, *The Life of Benjamin Franklin*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), chap. 5. All Franklin texts quoted in this essay, unless otherwise indicated, may be found in <http://franklinpapers.org/franklin>; in addition, the full set of Silence Dogood essays (with facsimiles of the *Courant* issues) is reprinted at “The Electric Ben Franklin,” <http://www.ushistory.org/franklin/courant/index.htm>.
2. William Pencak, “Representing the Eighteenth-Century World: Benjamin Franklin Trickster,” available at http://www.trinity.edu/org/tricksters/trixway/current/vol%203/vol3_1/Pencak2.pdf; Lemay, *Life of Benjamin Franklin*, 1:67, 74, 142, 144–45.
3. Major interpretations include Arthur Bernon Tourtellot, *Benjamin Franklin: The Shaping of Genius, The Boston Years* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), chaps. 13–14; Douglas Anderson, *The Radical Enlightenment of Benjamin Franklin* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 16–26, and Lemay, *Life of Franklin*, 1: chap. 7. Both Walter Isaacson, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2003), 3 (quote), 127, 149, 425 (quote), 493, 532; and Simon P. Newman, “Benjamin Franklin and the Leather-Apron Men: The Politics of Class in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia,” *Journal of American Studies* 43 (2009): 161–75, view Franklin’s life and political position as that of a “leather apron man.”
4. Daniel Defoe, *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders* (London, 1722); Dan Cruickshank, *London’s Sinful Secret: The Bawdy History and Very Public Passions of London’s Georgian Age* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2010), chap. 4, esp. 84–86; Moira Ferguson, ed., *First Feminists: British Women Writers, 1578–1799* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), esp. 1–19.
5. Lemay, *Life of Benjamin Franklin*, 164–65.
6. This analysis is based on searches of Google Books, Early English Books Online, Eighteenth-Century English Books, Early American Imprints, and Early American Newspapers, first series.

7. William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* . . . (London: H.H., Jun., for Hen. Heringman and R. Bentley, 1684), 2.
8. *Second Part of Henry VI*, in *The Works of Mr William Shakespeare* (London: Jon Tonson, 1709), 6:1509–10; Ellen C. Caldwell, “Jack Cade and Shakespeare's ‘Henry VI, Part 2,’” *Studies in Philology* 92 (1995): 24–35, 44–62, 68–70.
9. William Houlbrook, *William A Black-smith and no Jesuite* . . . (London, 1660), 42; Nicholas Breton, *An Olde Mans Lesson, and a Young mans Love* (London: E. Alld for Edward White, 1605), 48–49.
10. Robert Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart courtier: or, A Quaint Dispute between Velvet Breeches and Cloth-Breeches* . . . (London: John Wolfe, 1592); John Lacy, *The Dumb Lady, or, The Farriar Made Physician* . . . (London: Thomas Dring . . ., 1672), 10; S. H. Misodolus, *Young Man's Counsellor, or the Way of the World Displayed*. . . (London: Robert Gifford, 1713), 59.
11. Thomas Jevon, *The Devil of a Wife, or, A Comical Transformation* . . . (London: J. Heptinstall, 1686), 28, 43.
12. *Letters from the Dead to the Living*, in *The Second Volume of the Works of Mr. Thomas Brown* . . . (London: B. Bragg, 1707, 1st ed. 1702, 1703), 131–32.
13. *The Danger of the Church Enquir'd Into* . . . (London: A. Baldwin, 1710), 7–8.
14. [Nathaniel Gardner], *A Friendly Debate; Or a Dialogue Between Rusticus and Academicus* . . . (Boston: J. Franklin, 1722), 1; Lemay, *Life of Benjamin Franklin*, 137–39, 487.
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INTERVIEW

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Abstract: The Pennsylvania Historical Association has recently undertaken an oral history project, with the goal of interviewing and recording the stories of key leaders in the field of Pennsylvania history. Fittingly, our first interview features Dr. John B. Frantz, one of the association's most dedicated members. It was conducted by Dr. Karen Guenther, a former student of Dr. Frantz and also a dedicated member of the PHA, on November 20, 2013.

GUENTHER: Hello, this is an interview for the Pennsylvania Historical Association. I'm Dr. Karen Guenther, and this is Dr. John Frantz, who is a long-time member of PHA, if I am correct.

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: Okay. So this is part of our oral history interviews with prominent people in PHA to get the record before it's not possible to do so.

FRANTZ: (laughs) I think it would be possible for a long time yet.

GUENTHER: As long as your mother lived, I would think.

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: Tell me a little bit about your background. I know you're the son of a Reformed minister.

FRANTZ: Well, I was born in New Haven, Connecticut, and then my parents moved to Woodstock, Virginia, where I spent my early childhood, then moved to Baltimore, Maryland,

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where I went to Baltimore public schools, elementary school, and then we moved to Pottstown, Pennsylvania, where I went to junior high school and received a scholarship to The Hill School, a private preparatory school. That was very, very good discipline for me, because at the public school, no matter what you did, within reason, you stayed there; but at The Hill School, if you didn't perform, you were sent elsewhere. I really enjoyed the athletics at The Hill School. The football team had an excellent staff of coaches. The head coach, the line coach, the end coach, the backfield coach, and sometimes the director of athletics would come out and serve as the centers coach. That was my favorite time at The Hill School, the fall during football season. Then I went to Franklin and Marshall College and majored in history. I appreciated the teaching of Professor Fred Klein and Professor Glenn Miller. I belonged to Future Teachers of America, thinking that I would teach history in high school and perhaps do some coaching. Toward the end of my time there, I looked around for teaching positions and decided on a position in Baltimore County, Maryland, at North Point Junior High School. There I taught the core curriculum, which emphasized American history and literature, especially American literature. I taught for one year, but the students asked me so many questions for which I didn't have answers that I decided I should go back to school to learn more. So I went to the University of Pennsylvania, thinking I would earn a master's degree and return to high school teaching, but the university generously gave me an award that covered all my tuition and fees, and because I liked the ability to be able to study exactly what I wanted to study, which was American history, rather than the college experience where your curriculum has to be very broad, I decided I liked it there. I stayed and did all of my course work in one year, and studied for my comprehensive exams for the next year. I didn't know what Uncle Sam had in mind for me at that time, because the Korean War was going on and the draft was operative, but I had messed up my knee, and it turned out that they didn't want me in the United States Army. Previously, I had been dismissed from the Air Force after basic training. They said that the reason was that I had spots on the chest x-ray, but I think they mixed up my knee with my chest and no wonder they threw me out. So I was never called. I felt somewhat bad about that, because my friends had served, but they told me I hadn't missed anything. So that made me feel a little better. I received opportunities to teach at several high schools and also several colleges. Jobs were plentiful at that time. So I decided I would return to

Franklin and Marshall College and become an adjunct faculty member in history. I was there for two years. In my second year, I was an assistant football coach, which I enjoyed. It was a pleasure to work with the head coach, Woody Sponaugle, and assistant coaches George McGinness, Bill Iannicelli, and Mike Lewis. That was a good experience for me. After two years at Franklin and Marshall, I came to Penn State in 1961, and I decided that I liked it here at Penn State. I liked the big school better than the small school. I had a lot more freedom, and the administrators were so busy doing whatever it is that administrators do that they didn't interfere with what we did in the classroom and didn't bother about what you did in your spare time. I remained on duty here until 1998. After I retired from teaching (in fact, the very next day), I moved into another office and became business secretary of the Pennsylvania Historical Association for a second time. I had been business secretary in the early 1960s to the mid-1960s and was asked to do that again toward the end of my teaching career at Penn State, but said that I couldn't handle that again while I was teaching, but when I wasn't teaching anymore, I would. They still wanted me to do it. So I did that until about 2008 when I passed it on to my former student and very efficient business secretary, Karen Guenther, who continues to hold that office and who continues to do very well. So that's basically a mini-biography.

GUENTHER: What was it like growing up the son of a minister?

FRANTZ: My parents were very, very good about that. Teachers were not as understanding. They had higher standards for my behavior than sometimes I did, and so they requested that my parents come to the junior high school from time to time and informed my parents that I should not have done whatever it was I had done that had disturbed them because I was a minister's son. My mother responded that she agreed that I shouldn't have done whatever it was that required their attendance at the school, but not for that reason. And so, at home it was not a problem, but at school sometimes it was. But it never, never really bothered me; I was proud of what my parents did, and I knew they were doing good work, and I was proud of that.

GUENTHER: Your mother was a teacher, too, correct?

FRANTZ: My mother became an English teacher. She had been an English teacher before she married. She was an English teacher at Schaefferstown High School, and then taught in religious education classes in Virginia and again in Baltimore, Maryland. When I was in college and when my

brother was about to be in college, she became a librarian and an English teacher in Pottstown Junior High School. She continued that for about twenty years. She retired when my father did in 1974. My father never really retired; when he resigned as minister at Trinity Church in Pottstown in 1974 after a thirty-one-year ministry there, he served as interim minister for about ten congregations and was doing that right up until the time of his death in 1986.

GUENTHER: What sports did you play in college? I know you mentioned about playing football. Were there any other sports that you played?

FRANTZ: Baseball.

GUENTHER: Baseball? I gather football is how you injured your knee.

FRANTZ: Yes. And maybe baseball, too. Sliding into second base, might have torn a few things that way.

GUENTHER: I don't think sliding into second tears ligaments as much as football does. Now, you were a tight end, correct?

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: Which, back then, it was more of a lineman than it is today, correct?

FRANTZ: Yes. Much more blocking. We played the Wing-T, and we had a wing back. But, as you said, it was more linemen blocking—single blocking, double team blocking, depends on where the defensive tackle lined up.

GUENTHER: You didn't have too many crossing routes or anything often.

FRANTZ: We had some plays that involved some crossing, but more often it was in passing plays going out and watching what the defensive halfback did. If he came up, then the right end was supposed to curl around behind him, and the tailback was supposed to watch that. If the defensive halfback came up, then he was to throw it to the end. If that didn't happen, then I was to take out the linebacker—which happened sometimes.

GUENTHER: If he didn't take out you first.

FRANTZ: I know.

GUENTHER: How has college sports changed since you were an undergraduate back in the late '40s/early '50s?

FRANTZ: It's much more wide open. Spread formations, numerous wide outs. Penn State currently uses the tight end more as a pass receiver than what happened when I was playing. The tight end was primarily a blocker at that time, especially when we had very, very tall left ends and very, very fast halfbacks. There is much more emphasis on television, much more

emphasis on money, especially for the Division I schools. Franklin and Marshall played other schools such as Lafayette, Muhlenberg, Gettysburg, Johns Hopkins—and so it wasn't really “big time.” When I first came to Penn State, I didn't have any committee assignments, and I didn't have graduate students, so I would go out and watch practice. As I watched from afar, thinking maybe I could have made it here, but then I saw them come off the field—people like Dave Robinson, and they blocked out the sun.

GUENTHER: They were a bit bigger than you.

FRANTZ: Yes. Then I changed my mind. I would have been killed.

GUENTHER: You would have been practice squad.

FRANTZ: Yes. Or intramural.

GUENTHER: What professors influenced you when you were at Franklin and Marshall and Penn?

FRANTZ: Especially Glenn Miller and Fred Klein. I should mention that I spent my first year at Swarthmore College. That was at the beginning of the Korean War. And Swarthmore College did not get an ROTC unit, so I had contemplated joining the Navy or transferring to another school that had an ROTC unit.

GUENTHER: Gee, you mean the Quakers didn't have an ROTC unit?

FRANTZ: They had Navy V-12 during World War II, but they decided they wouldn't continue that during the Korean War. And so that was one of the reasons why I transferred to Franklin and Marshall College.

GUENTHER: So it's not like F&M pirated you from Swarthmore because you were such a good football player.

FRANTZ: No. Those two professors were very influential. The career guidance person or associate dean (whatever he was) tried to encourage me to go into German to prepare to teach German or teach biology, but I said no, I didn't want to do that. I wanted to teach history. I went to talk to Glenn Miller and Fred Klein. They said if you want to teach history, aim for the top; there is plenty of room there. I don't know if this was the top, but it was close enough. And I enjoyed teaching history right here at Penn State.

GUENTHER: So was there anyone memorable while you were at Penn?

FRANTZ: My advisor, Wallace Davies, was a very, very good advisor. He was willing to let me write on what I wanted to write on. He had his students select their own topics instead of assigning them something he was especially interested in. Roy Nichols, Pulitzer Prize winner for his book on the pre-Civil War period, Franklin Pierce, I think, was a very dramatic

instructor. He would give the speeches as if he were the character in that particular time period. He would end his classes dramatically. You'd be taking notes, you'd look up, and he was gone. It wasn't like he stayed around to answer questions. In fact, he didn't answer questions during his lectures either. One person dared to do that, he asked him how he knew about something or other, and he stared down the student and said, "Because I was there." That took care of that. Other instructors were not as memorable as my advisor, who was a very good lecturer, and Roy Nichols, who as I said was a very good lecturer also.

GUENTHER: How did you come about choosing your dissertation topic?

FRANTZ: It was something with which I was familiar. I had sat around my grandfather's table with my uncle and my father. And as long as I kept my mouth shut and behaved well, I could stay there. And they were interesting. They talked about Goshenhoppen, New Goshenhoppen, Tulpehocken. At the time, I thought they had a special language all their own. But they were interested in history, my grandfather especially. He took the time to have me learn the names of the presidents, which I could recite while still in grade school. He in a way was a genealogist; he wrote a history of the Frantz family in this country. He had never been to Europe, so he didn't know the details of the European background of the family, but he could trace the family through its arrival here in 1738. He had the genealogical line all mapped out, and he even went into some of the sidelines—who had married whom, and this got him interested in genealogy as well. So I just naturally was inclined toward history and developed a love for it that continued that into school. In junior high school I had a very good American history teacher. At The Hill School, the history experience was not as good as it was in junior high school or in college. We studied Hicks's college textbook. We had quizzes. We had no research papers—despite the fact that the class had between twelve and fifteen students who could have been taught how to do a bibliography, how to outline papers, and so on, but that came in college and graduate school. So I just continued my love for history, especially in graduate school, where I did not have to be distracted by geology and biology and some of the other courses of study in which I was not as much interested. I had German as my foreign language and had a very, very good instructor in German at The Hill School. I took German in college my first year, but I got in the wrong line to register, and by Thanksgiving I learned that I was in the second half of fourth-year German, but it was too late to transfer back to the first half, so I just stayed in it.

That fulfilled my college foreign-language requirement. But it was very good for me to have had that training in German and use German as my second language in graduate school. The other was Spanish, which I never use, unlike German—which I continue to. To answer your question specifically, my grandfather, uncle, and father who were ministers talked about Pennsylvania's religious history, so it was natural that I wrote on that.

GUENTHER: I know what that's like, because I actually had a second major in Spanish as an undergrad, and so when it came time to meet the language requirements, I had the second major—and I didn't have to take the test. And then the other language was German, because I needed that for what I was doing. Although with the Quakers it wasn't quite as important.

FRANTZ: But it stood you in good stead.

GUENTHER: Yes. It's actually come in handy lately with working with the church records. So, I have a list of questions here . . . why did you come to teach at Penn State? I think we've already talked about that.

FRANTZ: Well, I was interviewed at the end of the hall in the hotel in New York at the American Historical Association meeting. Chairman/department head Robert Murray interviewed me. He told me that if I came to Penn State, I would be teaching on television, which is how they intended to begin teaching the survey courses, at least some of them, some sections of them, and I asked, how do you do that? He said we don't know; we never did it either. So it was an experiment, and I enjoyed doing it. I could do some different things on the closed-circuit television that were more difficult to do in the classroom, such as using visuals. There was a very good staff who prepared graphics and illustrations to be shown on the closed-circuit television. You could use music—for example, I had Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* prior to a discussion of the War of 1812. And you could use comedy like Stan Freberg's "United States of America," a takeoff on American history. That kind of got the students' attention, and, after I had their attention, I could hit them with the serious stuff. I enjoyed doing the television in contrast to some of my colleagues who didn't want any part of it. We would have maybe 12 or 15 teaching assistants in the individual rooms, and they would conduct discussion with them. We would have 45 minutes of lecture and then 30 minutes discussion session. I would always bring some of the students into the television studio so they could see how it happened (and, in some cases, how it didn't happen). It was good for me and a few other instructors who taught on closed-circuit television to have a live audience there. In time, though,

the Ford Foundation grant that had financed some of this ran out, and the university didn't support the television operation to the same degree as the Ford Foundation had, and then too the students expressed a desire to have their professor right there in the room with them, and that was fine with me. Although I thought the television instruction was better for the students because they had the opportunity to have discussions with their teaching assistants in their rooms rather than being herded into a big lecture hall such as the Forum, which seated 400 students and be talked at for 75 minutes or 50 minutes, whichever schedule we were on. In time, we broke down those big sections into discussion classes that were held at the end of the week with teaching assistants. So we got back to that small group learning situation.

GUENTHER: Right. That's one thing, when I was at the University of Houston, we had monster sections we called them that had 600 students in an auditorium, and as TAs there were three of us for the class. And when it was test time, you got 200 exams to grade—if you were lucky. Unless you had a prof that assigned research papers; then you had 200 research papers to grade.

FRANTZ: That was a challenge, I'm sure.

GUENTHER: Especially as poorly as they wrote! But at the same time, there were also some set up with discussion sections as well. We would have four of the discussion sections, with about 30 students each, and you'd have more TAs in a class like that. The discussion sections would be anything from reviewing previous material or discussion of outside readings for the class. It was great to have the chance to work with the students in a more intimate relationship, because you could remember their names. Of course, when you're going from four sections of 30 versus 200, and you could actually put a face to the name when grading the paper, which helped a lot.

FRANTZ: Some say you shouldn't do that, that it undermines your objectivity.

GUENTHER: Right, but when you're handing it back it makes a difference.

FRANTZ: Sure.

GUENTHER: Especially when you have twenty Smiths.

FRANTZ: And when the students came in to talk to you, it's helpful to know who they were.

GUENTHER: Right.

FRANTZ: And remember their particular work. Well, before we went to those large sections—or returned to those large sections (perhaps they had them

before I came here), Bob Murray, the department head, called me and asked if I would like to have the honor of having the first super-super section. I said, what is that? He said, well, your enrollment exceeded the capacity of the room to which we assigned you, so we are transferring your class to the Forum—which, as I said, seated 400 students. I asked, is this a question? He said, no. So that's what I did.

GUENTHER: Would you like to have the honor, or would you like to have a job?

FRANTZ: Right.

GUENTHER: It could have been worse. Today it could have been in Bryce Jordan, the University's basketball arena.

FRANTZ: Yes. But I thoroughly enjoyed my teaching here, because I enjoyed the freedom to operate my classes the way I wanted to, I enjoyed the freedom to teach what classes and what sections I wanted, indeed, in time, I was even able to tell the scheduling officer when I would like to have my classes. I wasn't particular about that, except when he started scheduling me for early in the morning.

GUENTHER: I remember that.

FRANTZ: Any time during the day or evenings was fine.

GUENTHER: Not before 10:00.

FRANTZ: Right. And I worked with some good people. Department heads were very cooperative and very pleasant, so it was a good experience.

GUENTHER: What types of relationships did you have with the other history faculty at Penn State?

FRANTZ: We would get together periodically, and, in the early years, even the wives would meet, I think it was on a monthly basis. In time that changed, and I don't know whether the wives still get together, but I kind of doubt it. Following football games some of the faculty members would get together, and it would rotate from one faculty member's home to another, which I thought was surprising. I can't imagine that happening now. I doubt that happened at the University of Pennsylvania. I know it didn't happen at Franklin and Marshall College. But it pleased me, because I was interested in sports, and it was good to know that my colleagues weren't always interested only in intellectual matters but they also shared my interest in Penn State football. There was when I came here a group known as the Pie Club, and Bob Murray would take a group of people over to West Halls in the afternoon, and they would sit and talk. I was invited but usually felt I was too busy, had too much to do, and seldom went along

with that gathering. Perhaps I should have done more of that, but I just didn't. But it was an example of how faculty members could get along with each other. There may have been some tensions; there may have been some politicking in the department; but I remained aloof from it, partly because I didn't know anything about it.

GUENTHER: Don't ask, don't tell . . .

FRANTZ: That was a good thing.

GUENTHER: What special committees or projects were you involved with on campus?

FRANTZ: Initially, I was assigned to the library committee, but not having had much experience as a full-time faculty member, I really didn't know what I was supposed to do and probably didn't handle it well. Later on I was on the undergraduate studies committee and the graduate studies committee. I was in the Senate for one term and didn't care to continue in the Senate, because I felt that they didn't make much of an impact on university policy. I think my most rewarding activity for the department, in addition to my teaching and research and writing, was serving as associate head for the Commonwealth Campuses. The department head normally had attempted to go to other campuses and to communicate with people during the year, but some of them found they just had too much else to do and that they couldn't do this as frequently as they wanted to, to the extent they wanted to. So one of the department heads asked me to do this in lieu of a committee assignment. Now that particular department head gave me committee assignments anyway, but subsequent ones honored that agreement, and that would be my committee assignment. So I would go to the other campuses. I would try to hit each of the Penn State campuses on which we taught history campus at least once every two years, talk with the history people at those campuses, and sit in on their classes if that was agreeable to them. There was one instructor who always wanted to have lunch with me, but he didn't want me to sit in on his classes—which was okay; it was his class. I would learn from how they were presenting the material and what material they were presenting, and then listen to whatever concerns they had. Sometimes I had the impression that they felt the grass was greener here at University Park, but then I reminded them that yes, sometimes they taught larger numbers of students than we did and more sections than we did, but they did not have master's candidates and doctoral candidates, so there was a lot of reading of master's theses and doctoral dissertations they didn't do.

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GUENTHER: Yes.

FRANTZ: Maybe they would have rather done that than what they were doing.

GUENTHER: Plus, I know just from one semester when I was at Berks Campus replacing Bill Pencak, there's not nearly the type of department politics involved at a branch campus or Commonwealth Campus like there is at the main campus.

FRANTZ: And not as many people.

GUENTHER: Not as many people . . . I mean, literally, I was the history person.

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: And before then it was Bill.

FRANTZ: That was often the case.

GUENTHER: And now it's the case on a lot of campuses. Maybe two at the most. And obviously you don't have to worry about votes and stuff like that.

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: But at the same time, it's nice to have a colleague to talk to if you have a question: "Well, how is this in your class?" Talking to people in different disciplines is not always the same because you have different teaching styles.

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: I don't do labs in my classes, for instance.

FRANTZ: Right. So some of those instructors on other campuses became good friends. I keep in touch with some of them even though I haven't done that for quite a few years now. But that was a rewarding experience also. And that reduced my teaching schedule sometimes. One of the instructors who I met on another campus was Bill Pencak, and I told the department head at that time, Gary Gallagher, that he should be here. So they made that arrangement, that Bill would come here and he'd have a teaching schedule and also be editor of *Pennsylvania History* and that my teaching schedule would be reduced somewhat because of my assignment as associate head of the Commonwealth Campuses for the history department. And that worked out well.

GUENTHER: Plus, it's another early Americanist there.

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: Which makes a difference. I know how lonely it gets when you're the only one. (laughter) What changes did you see at Penn State while you taught there?

FRANTZ: Do you mean the entire university or the history department?

GUENTHER: Just in general.

FRANTZ: Well, the university increased in size in terms of student enrollment. It was perhaps about 14,000, maybe a little more, when I came here, and during the almost 40 years that I was here it increased to about 40,000. It's more than that now. So there were many, many more students. In the history department in terms of students, we went through cycles. We had a large number of students when I came here. As I said we did closed-circuit television in which some of us were involved when I came here. There was a period of student unrest when the students wanted the instructor right in the room where they could get at us, which was fine with me. Our enrollment declined at one point, and our classes were not as large as they had been, but in time, in the 1980s and 1990s, the numbers came back again. So we went through that cycle of large enrollment, lower enrollment, never disastrously lower, and then large enrollment again. We expanded the faculty, included some additional areas of history that we hadn't covered previously, such as environmental history, and in the case of my own teaching, I divided the course in early America that had been Colonial and Revolutionary America at the upper level, and I maintained that teaching the two together made the colonial period merely the prelude to the American Revolution whereas the colonial period could be taught really as the expansion of Europe and could even be a category of European history. That passed the department and gained the department's approval. And so we had one course on the colonial period of American history and one course on the Revolutionary period of American history. And we went through various changes in terms of the survey course, should it end here in 1865 or should it end at 1877. When I came here, I just missed the time when we had uniform texts in European and American history. Apparently the personnel couldn't agree on the texts, and I was told that faculty members would look at a textbook and determine its validity on the basis of how it handled their specialties. Not being able to agree, they decided to let everybody pick his own textbook.

GUENTHER: I'm sure the bookstore loved that.

FRANTZ: Yes. More women were employed in our department and others, and so there was that very, very significant change. I remember a department head telling one of the women who taught part time that he really didn't want full-time women faculty members because they just got married and had children and leave anyway, which didn't go over very well. The department outgrew that point of view and hired quite a few women. Then,

too, there developed a practice of spousal hiring, so that if a department wanted one spouse, that department cooperated with another department and hired the other spouse as well so the couple could move together. That was something that was unheard of when I came here. The physical environment of the campus changed, as there was a tremendous building campaign underway. The Forum was one of the new buildings. The Forum had eight classrooms arranged in the shape of a pie. It had much more audiovisual equipment that you could use if you wanted to, and there was a staff that would prepare it and present it if you wanted to use that staff. Other buildings included the new Willard Building. That replaced the Armory. The destruction of the Armory was very controversial. Some students climbed up in trees to try to prevent the demolition. This building that had served as the place where the ROTC people drilled, the place where dances had been held, and it was kind of a landmark on campus. But it went, and a very useful classroom building was constructed on that site. The Bryce Jordan Center was presented as an academic convocation building, but actually it was to be an arena for basketball and other kinds of activities, concerts by various groups in which students were interested, and that has made a tremendous difference.

GUENTHER: They hold commencement there now, right?

FRANTZ: Frequently.

GUENTHER: Okay. Because I know when I graduated, it was at Beaver Stadium.

FRANTZ: Yes. Sometimes commencement exercises are held on other sites, but often at the Bryce Jordan Center. I think the largest crowd was when President Bill Clinton spoke at the graduate student commencement. They filled that building, and I was fortunate on that occasion to walk with one of our PhD candidates. I wasn't his major advisor, but for some reason or other his major advisor did not walk with him, and he asked me to walk with him. So I had a conversation with President Bill Clinton. It wasn't very long, of course. I thanked him for being here, and he was his gracious self. I think all of us were thanking him for coming to the Penn State campus and so on. Just as I walked across the stage, Mike's sister took a picture—Mike Gabriel was the student—his sister took a picture of Mike getting his diploma from the president of the university at the time. Of course, it was a wide-angle lens, and she caught me with the president, which is an interesting picture to have. The stadium, of course, moved from its location near the Nittany Lion statue to the eastern part

of the campus. The East Halls dormitories were constructed, and it's said that it is the largest dormitory complex in the world, housing about 7,000 students. University dormitories elsewhere North Halls, West Halls, housed about another 4,000, so that now leaves about 30,000 students living elsewhere. And that has caused significant changes in the community, as the developers have come in to construct high-rises and apartment houses. And the old property owners open their homes and, in some cases, bought houses specifically to be renovated for the use of students.

GUENTHER: Right.

FRANTZ: So those are some of the changes that I observed since I've been here at Penn State.

GUENTHER: How has your family influenced your life and career?

FRANTZ: Well, as I said, my grandfather, my uncle, and my father influenced my interest in history. My wife has been very tolerant of my coming home late from the office for dinner, and she has tolerated my time spent reading, researching, and writing. Our daughter actually came in and sat in on several of my classes and served as a very helpful critic on how I was doing what I was doing. She said that I could have talked her into being an historian, but as my parents always let me decide what it was I wanted to do, so I let her decide what she wanted to do. She initially went to the University of Pennsylvania to study architecture (my brother is an architect), and that was her initial decision. She is talented artistically and musically and in other ways as well, but very early in her time at the University of Pennsylvania she lost her interest in architecture, possibly due to the first instructor she had in architecture, and became interested in psychology. Her undergraduate degree is in psychology, her master's degree and doctor's degree in psychology at the University of Florida, earned a Fulbright fellowship to the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, and a post-doctoral fellowship at the Scripps Institute in La Jolla, California; and then joined the faculty at Georgia State University in Atlanta, where now she is a tenured faculty member and a full professor in the department of neuroscience. She writes articles, publishes articles, writes grant proposals, and has brought in over \$2.5 million to her department, which causes her department head to be very fond of her.

GUENTHER: Yes, we don't find that kind of money in history.

FRANTZ: No, and we don't have to write grant proposals all the time, either, because we don't have that much money in history. So, she organizes a program to interest high school students in neuroscience that she runs in the summers. She says that in her purely academic activities, her research,

her writing, her publications, her teaching, she follows the example of her father, and then in organizing her summer program she follows the example of her mother, who ran the Central Pennsylvania Festival for the Arts for ten years here in State College.

GUENTHER: What led you to get involved in the Pennsylvania Historical Association?

FRANTZ: That happened very early here in my time at Penn State. When I came to Penn State, I was on a two-year terminal arrangement. That didn't mean that I had to stay for two years, and I was constantly looking around more stable employment opportunities. Phil Klein, who was a former president of the Pennsylvania Historical Association and remained very active in the association, was very helpful to me in many ways. He read some of my early articles and may even have contacted the editor concerning one of them. I'm not sure about that. I suspect that he was helpful in that way, too. But he suggested that I go to the Pennsylvania Historical Association meeting. I think it was in Bethlehem that year in the early 1960s, maybe even as early as 1963, 1962—probably '62—and talk to people because it was not a sure thing that I could stay here. Normally people were here for two years and then went elsewhere, which is why I was here at that time, because someone had fulfilled his two years and moved on. And so with Phil's encouragement I went to the Pennsylvania Historical Association, and it was not unusual for Penn State faculty members to go. We usually had a contingent of significant size going to the Pennsylvania Historical Association. So when I was there he would introduce me to people, and I would find some people on my own to talk to, ask if you need anybody in your history department. Nothing came of those inquiries, but it was an interesting experience, similar to what I had gone through previously when I was at Franklin and Marshall and needed to find a more stable position, because I had some experience in talking with people about possible job opportunities. When I became a faculty member here at Penn State, I was asked to be business secretary. At that time—we'll probably talk about changes in the Pennsylvania Historical Association later on.

GUENTHER: Yes.

GUENTHER: What offices have you held? Or is the shorter list what ones haven't you held?

FRANTZ: I held every office except treasurer. As I said, I was business secretary, and I was a member of the council. I asked for one year off after I resigned from the business secretaryship, and then became a member of the council,

an elected member of the council, and almost continuously from there on I've been on the council of the Pennsylvania Historical Association. At that time, as it was set up, there were three vice presidents, and I became I think the 3rd Vice President, then of course in a few years the 2nd, then the 1st Vice President decided he did not want to be president. He had become involved in a controversy at his institution through no fault of his own, but he had enough to do being concerned about that and so he asked if it would help me to become nominated for president of the association. I said no, it wouldn't help me, it would take a lot of time, but he resigned anyway, and I became president. This was in 1984. I had arranged programs, been on the program committee, and I think it was in 1984 or 1985 convention I think I handled both the local arrangements as we met in Pottstown and the program.

GUENTHER: Yes, that was 1984.

FRANTZ: All right. And it was the 200th anniversary of the founding of Montgomery County, and so we had a good convention. We had a session on the history of Montgomery County by a local judge, a Montgomery County judge, Judge Taxis, who had written on Montgomery County history. We had sessions on the deindustrialization in Pennsylvania, which was a timely topic as large employers in southeastern Pennsylvania, including Pottstown, such as Bethlehem Steel, Firestone, and so on were pulling up stakes and sending their operations elsewhere, including China. And I did this several times, was on the local arrangements committee for the conventions in State College twice, most recently I think it was 2008.

GUENTHER: 2007

FRANTZ: 2007. And we had good conventions here. I was on the program committee several times. I was the associate editor for the journal with Bill Pencak, and what else . . . that might be it. Then, as I said, when I stopped teaching in 1998, I was asked to be business secretary again, and so I did that for another about ten years and enjoyed that. Primarily because it kept me in touch with my colleagues. When I'd sent out the annual bills, sometimes I would put notes on them, and when the members paid their bills, some wrote notes on their invoices. And it was very interesting to be able to stay in touch with them.

GUENTHER: What changes in PHA have you seen since you first became involved?

FRANTZ: Quite a few. When I first became involved, it was somewhat of an old boys club, people were elected and reelected to membership on

council and at some point, I think in the 1960s, we passed a resolution that changed maybe the by-laws that a member of the council could serve two terms and then would have to go off the council for at least one year before being eligible for reelection. And that provided for some new blood to come onto the council, as some people after their two terms did not care to be reelected and had to be replaced. That was I think a good move for the council; we were able that way as I said to get some new people onto the council and get some new ideas and so on and so forth. In addition, we divided the position of secretary. There was no such office as business secretary; you were the secretary. You handled the business, you handled the correspondence, and everything that a secretary does. But I was a bit reluctant to accept the office, because while I handled the survey courses when I first came to Penn State, when I entered the tenure track position after two years, I had new courses to prepare, and of course there's always the need to do research and desire to do research and writing and publishing. So I thought this would be somewhat of an added burden. But Phil Klein explained to me that they gave this position to new people, and if they could handle it, they kept them here. If they couldn't handle it, they sent them elsewhere. I liked it here, so I decided I would handle it, and kept that position for maybe three years. That's how I got into the Pennsylvania Historical Association, and, as time passed, I learned to know people who were in it. They were good people and interesting people, and I enjoyed being with them. So I continued my interest in the Pennsylvania Historical Association.

I had thought that in doing all that a secretary should do was taxing, and so I proposed that we divide the office into corresponding secretary, who would handle minutes and so on and so forth, and a business secretary, who would send out the invoices, receive the payments, and keep track of all that in cooperation with the treasurer. So we divided those two offices. I remained business secretary, and Charlie Glatfelter became the corresponding secretary. And in the mid-1980s, Charlie Glatfelter proposed that we make some changes in the constitution, and he prepared a draft of a new constitution which provided for a president who would serve not three years as previously but two years, and there became only one vice president. And the other changes, such as business secretary and corresponding secretary, continued as they had then according to the earlier changes that we made. I think this has worked out well. Beyond that, we had kind of been waiting for presidents. The retiring president became then the

chairman of the nominating committee, and normally the nominating committee recommended people who then at the business meeting were elected to their offices. I can remember only one case in which there was rejection of a nominee. So, the new constitution worked out well. But as Charlie Glatfelter said, we never really knew what to do with retiring presidents, and so recently there was a change I think in maybe 2010 that we changed the by-laws so that the retiring presidents were no longer automatically members of the council but that they could be elected members of the council. I think perhaps this has resulted in a decreasing interest in the minds of ex-presidents in the association, as some of them don't attend the meetings of the association as regularly as previous presidents had. And maybe that's because they, too, have too much to do. But anyway, that's how we're operating now. And so retiring presidents, former presidents, can be elected to the council, which is what has happened.

GUENTHER: Yes, I was actually on the executive committee when we had discussions about this, and I think one of the issues was that really only one past president ever came on a regular basis. You might know who it is . . . (laughter)

FRANTZ: Yes.

GUENTHER: But that's what's happened. They've almost kind of distanced themselves. I often have to hunt some down to get them to pay their membership dues. So, yes . . . "oh, it just got on the pile of bills to be paid . . ."

FRANTZ: Well, another change is the greater involvement of women. As I said, when I came into the Pennsylvania Historical Association, it seemed somewhat like an old boys' club, with the same people in office and other people coming and going. But, in time more women were elected to council, and indeed women have been elected to the presidency. Betty Geffen was the first female president back in 1981.

GUENTHER: She succeeded you, I think.

FRANTZ: No, she preceded me.

GUENTHER: She preceded you. Okay.

FRANTZ: She preceded me. Betty Geffen of Lebanon Valley College. Since Betty's term, there have been numerous women elected president who have done very, very well, of course. Janet Lindman is the current immediate past president, Marion Roydhouse, Susan Klepp, Leslie Patrick, and Rosalind Remer. I think those are the female presidents who have served. And that's been good, too. It has opened the association even more. Those are the major changes that I remember in the association. In fact, it's been

it's been a very pleasant association—personal association because we all seem to get along so well together. I served also on the board of directors for the Pennsylvania German Society, and it seemed there was always contention within that group. Too many Germans, I don't know. The Pennsylvania Historical Association normally arrives at decisions in the manner of the Friends, by consensus.

GUENTHER: We generally don't have too many knockdown, drag-out fights in council.

FRANTZ: No.

GUENTHER: And I know just from my brief time on the German Society's board of directors. There was definite animosity there between certain elements and others. Too much drama, I'll put it that way.

FRANTZ: Too much drama, right. I remember one president yelling at another former president in the halls of the meeting. 100th anniversary of the creation of the Pennsylvania German Society. Wondering how this had happened and how will we survive. I still wonder about them.

GUENTHER: Yes. I know one of their recent publications was on *taufscheins* in Berks County, and I got the book and looked at it. I worked with them when I was an intern at the Historical Society of Berks County, and they didn't include any of the *taufscheins* at the Historical Society of Berks County in the book. And I talked to the archivist there and asked what's going on, and she said they wanted to have them for free at no charge, and they basically were not going to be a part of it. I actually have to review this for PMHB, and it's like how do I put this in here that I know the backstory.

FRANTZ: Tell it like it is, Karen.

GUENTHER: I can just say, well, it would have been nice if they had looked at these 500 which include examples such as blah, blah, blah that weren't included.

FRANTZ: You know whose decision that was.

GUENTHER: Oh, I know whose decision that was. Yes. And it wasn't the authors of the book. I think I have one final question here.

FRANTZ: Let me say, too, concerning the Pennsylvania Historical Association, there are increasing numbers of young people involved. And as I said at the recent banquet, as I spoke about Gerry Eggert, and it's important that we have more and more young people involved in the association. They're making an impact and expressing their points of view very freely. It's not like they are not at all intimidated by the people who have been in the

association a long time, which also is very good. They have ideas, and they express them.

The emergence of the executive committee has made council meetings more efficient. It began informally as my successor as president, Charlie Glatfelter, Bob Crist, and I met at Bob's house in Camp Hill to discuss various aspects of the association's activities. In time, it came to include all of the officers who now gather several weeks before the council meeting. Among other duties, they determine what issues require the full council's attention. For many years, the council functioned as a "committee of the whole," discussing at length almost every detail of the association's operations. This caused council meetings to last far into the night. Now, the executive committee and the association's committees have the leeway to handle more of the details. Furthermore, program committees now schedule council meetings for late afternoons, instead of after the evening banquet, which may contribute to council members' greater alertness and certainly enables them to get more rest prior to the next day's sessions.

Another change has provided more exact financial reporting. Longtime treasurer Richard Wright's report to the council consisted of telling us that the treasury was in good shape, and if it wasn't, he would make it so. And I'm sure that he would have. I suspect that it was he who secured a bequest for the association that formed the basis of our endowment. His father, Ross Pier Wright, preceded Richard as treasurer. He is said to have commented that the sheriff would never foreclose on the Pennsylvania Historical Association. Father and son were prominent Erie businessmen and loyal members of the association. Charlie Glatfelter and Bob Blackson succeeded Richard Wright and were meticulous in recording the association's income and expenses and in reporting our financial situation to the council, as is our current treasurer Tina Hyduke.

GUENTHER: All right. One final question. If you had to identify one thing as your legacy, what would it be?

FRANTZ: Perseverance in the association. You stay with it. You become involved and continue to be involved. Continue to do what you can to help the association, whatever that might be.

GUENTHER: Thank you for your time.

FRANTZ: It's been a pleasure.

BOOK REVIEWS

Andrew Newman, *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists, and the Media of History and Memory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013). Pp. 328. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$45.00.

Andrew Newman aims to unravel the fundamental complexities of Native American sources written by nonnatives and how those records oftentimes do not catch the entire context of cultural meaning. In this case Newman analyzes four contentious episodes between the Delaware Indians and the early settlers of New York and Pennsylvania. Uncovering the myths behind the *Walam Olum*, the Dido Motif, the Great Treaty of Peace, and the Walking Purchase of 1737, Newman successfully illustrates how the media of history and memory was contested between colonists and Indians in the past and how they continue to be disputed by scholars and the courtroom in the present. He skillfully threads his narrative around the central question: "To what extent might we consider written representations of Native American oral

forms as records not only of spoken language but also of the sometimes distant historical events that were spoken of" (6)? Newman finds his answer in the unwritten context of the records and representations that were used to negotiate understanding between whites and Indians. These events, recorded by Euro-Americans and used as factual information for decades, failed to have native peoples "speak to us fully, without mediation, to circumvent the processes of negotiation involved in reading for the 'real' Native Americans in writings by non-Indians" (53).

Concerned with the idea of the "chain of memory," Newman demonstrates how various Native American material culture—wampum, landmarks, and relics—possess important messages that are often overlooked because their meanings are not easily interpreted. They also require confidence in sources that are not always present in the written record. Despite the reliance on memorization, Newman believes that the "chain of memory" is closely linked to the stability of group identity and strongly attached to the landscape where it originated. These memories are maintained through apprenticeship and carried forward by subsequent generations, even during times of encroachment and removal. And although not completely transportable, "the parts of the chain that have become visible, so to speak, are sufficient to allow the inference that it extended deeply into the precolonial past" (194). Memory, however, is not without its weaknesses. Indeed, Newman candidly points out that, over time, memory will exaggerate, lose detail, and distort, but oral traditions often retain specific details that can be collaborated by later generations. Thus, when memory and documentation overlap, it provides stronger evidence that native traditions possess historical time more so than the above weaknesses do to invalidate them.

One of Newman's greatest contributions is his ability to provide a balanced interpretation of how a common experience between natives and colonists ultimately diverged into two completely separate understandings. Whether it be over a misinterpretation over words and phrases that the Indians believed were mutually understood in the Walking Purchase of 1737, a dubious historical narrative that the Delaware defiantly claim to be false in the *Walam Olum*, the trickery of the first land transaction between the Dutch and Delaware known as the Dido Motif, or the centuries-old story of William Penn meeting Delaware leaders under the elm tree outside Philadelphia negotiating the Great Treaty

of Peace, Newman cites all as significant challenges to native memory and oral traditions. One of the conflicting reasons for misunderstanding is largely based on the written language. Writing has often been used as the defining determinate for civilization, and "human memory," according to James Logan, a Proprietary agent for Pennsylvania, "was short and weak" (146). Therefore, Newman explains, too much significance has been placed on the western value of writing and "to check oral traditions against the documentary record for inconsistencies is to hold them to an unrealistic standard" (62).

The danger of denying the association of native oral traditions with historical events, according to Newman, is to not recognize native self-determination. In fact, Newman goes to great lengths to demonstrate that known native traditions and memories can oftentimes be verified within the documentary sources if carefully consulted. Here the author reveals how native oral traditions can be evaluated without being recorded by the colonists themselves. The Dido Motif, for example, is not extant in North American colonial papers, but the story has tradition among the Delaware. The existence of this tradition is not because it pertains to a specific event; rather, it is used by the Delaware to explain their entire experience of removal by Euro-Americans. At the same time, the *Walam Olum* migration story is largely recognized only among nonnatives because the written record of it was preserved, but it is not received by the Delaware as being authentic. Newman believes that a balance between the two ends of the spectrum is possible, but native oral traditions that were not attested to by colonists must first be accepted to avoid the "whole problem of the spoliation of the Indian's rights by the white invader" (68).

In an exciting and continually evolving field of inquiry, Native American history finally has a compelling guide on how to approach the difficulty in interpreting indigenous sources and how they may be applied alongside traditional, written documents. *On Records* provides clear and concise explanations on the nuances of language, culture, and understanding, and how they all contributed to the miscommunication between natives and colonists in early American treaties, land transactions, and in the Delaware's ancient claims of creation.

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Jan Stievermann and Oliver Scheiding, editors. *A Peculiar Mixture: German Language Cultures and Identities in Eighteenth-Century North America*. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013). Pp. vi, 284, Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$69.95.

This book proceeds from a conference in Mainz, Germany, in 2009. The conference observed the three-hundredth anniversary of large-scale emigration from the Palatinate and other parts of what is now southwestern Germany. Many but not all of the emigrants eventually settled in British America, especially the colony of New York. The title of the book is appropriate, for not only were the settlers “a peculiar mixture” but the book’s contents are a peculiar mixture as well.

In an informative introduction, coeditor Stievermann explains that this volume attempts to build on “the theoretical insights and findings of recent revisionist scholarship.” Furthermore, he notes that it “seeks to contribute to modernizing and further advancing the study of transatlantic German cultures and identities during the colonial period” (2). The book achieves these objectives as nine authors use interdisciplinary approaches “to explore new facets in the sociopolitical, religious, cultural, and literary history of the fast-growing community of German speakers in the middle colonies after 1709” (5). These approaches enable the authors to move beyond the traditional emphasis on New England’s importance in American history and the “nation or denomination-centered framework of interpretation” (2) and to consider American history in a transatlantic context. Viewed in this way, Stievermann contends that being German in America was complex. To immigrants in different situations it had diverse meanings. German immigrants in America, he claims, were “anything but homogeneous” (11). To some extent their identity depended on developments in Europe, and for many it changed over time. Their ethnic identity was “fluid” (9), not stable. The authors’ presentations are organized into three groups of three essays each.

The section on “Migration and Settlement” begins as Marianne Wokeck re-evaluates the “1709 Mass Migration” as “a transformative episode in the history of population movements” (23). Although there had been other large-scale movements of European people, she claims that this one was significant in that it “marked the beginning of a new stage in westward migration” (36). It established precedents in the organization of “transatlantic migration routes” (37). Also, it raised questions for the immigrants concerning their identity as they settled among people of other ethnic groups.

Rosalind Beiler describes the little-known role of “Information Brokers and Diplomats” in assisting the Palatines and Swiss Mennonites in their movement to British America during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. They obtained permission for emigrants “to cross political borders, . . . helped to arrange transportation, . . . and sought the funding” (48) necessary to enable them to reach their destinations.

Many historians have written about the hostility between European settlers and the Native Americans, but Philip Otterness tells a different story. Because the Palatines who moved to the valleys of the Schoharie Creek and the Mohawk River during the early eighteenth century received harsh treatment from their Dutch and English predecessors, they turned to the Indians for help. Otterness believes that without it, they may not have survived. In time, their relations became so close that the Germans and the Indians adopted some aspects of the ethnicity of the other. For example, some Germans, including Conrad Weiser, learned the Iroquois language, and some Indians learned to speak German. Even the French and Indian War did not fracture their relationship.

Cynthia Falk opens the section on “Material Intellectual Cultures in the Making” by providing through the New York Germans’ architecture and other objects what she considers “a necessary corrective to the prevailing focus on Pennsylvania in the study of German communities in early America” (85). Although both groups “adopted some elements of the Old World culture,” and “borrowed from other New World” groups that surrounded them, the smaller number of German immigrants in New York and other factors, such as the weather, “made New York’s Palatine settlements markedly different in character from Pennsylvania communities” (89, 93).

Shifting from material to intellectual culture, Patrick Erben complains in his essay on “(Re) Discovering the German Language Literature of Colonial America” that this branch of scholarship has not received the attention it deserves. He charges that what little there has been “was marred by nationalistic agenda” (18). He declares that the German-speaking immigrants “brought with them a rich literary, cultural, and religious tradition” that they recorded in “a variety of genres” (117). His intention is not merely to fill a gap but to show literary relationships that he suggests could be achieved “by means of translation and translingual textual exchange” (119). As examples, he points to the letters and books that were passed between German and English pacifists and to the similarities to be found in the poetry of the German Johannes Kelpius and the English Edward Taylor.

Wider cultural exchanges are discussed in Matthias Schonhofer's essay on "The Correspondence Network of Gotthilf Ernst Muhlenberg," Lancaster's Lutheran pastor from 1780 until his death in 1815 and an early American botanist. This essay describes Muhlenberg's use of letters "as a tool for scientific research . . . and the development of his web of contacts" (151). In 1784 he began to exchange specimens with German botanists. Because of what he called "unhappy troubles in the Old Countrie" (158), he expanded his correspondence to include Englishmen. In the early nineteenth century his interests turned exclusively to American plants "that could persist in our free air" (162). This German pastor and botanist expressed his desire to build "a national botanical tradition" (169). Despite his desire to fulfill "the promise of independence" (169), he and other American scientists remained dependent on Europe, demonstrating that continued interaction between the two cultures was essential.

The section on "Negotiations of Ethnic and Religious Identities" begins with Marie Basile McDaniel's essay on the "Divergent Paths" that Germans in America took in expressing who they were. Her point is that "German identity reflected the personal availability, strength, familiarity, and appeal of German individuals, communities, and institutions." It also involved the German speakers' repulsion . . . for the assertion of otherness by Anglo-Pennsylvanians" (186). They "revealed their identity through their choices of names, . . . marriage partners, executors of their estates, wills, church affiliations, and types of work. . . . Some associated with other German speakers and participated in a German speaking community." Other Germans "networked with non-Germans." "And a very small percentage occupied a liminal space between both groups" (202).

Jan Stievermann emphasizes a more cohesive group of German immigrants in his essay entitled "Defining the Limits of Liberty: Pennsylvania's Peace Churches during the Revolution." To historians of Pennsylvania's history, the account of the horrible treatment that members of the peace churches received at the hands of the so-called patriots is a familiar story. Stievermann insists that the refusal of the Mennonites, Amish, Dunkers, Schwenkfelders, and Moravians to support the War for American Independence stems not from their loyalty to Britain's King George III but from their understanding of the Christian scriptures. Pacifism was an integral part of their religion. They protested that William Penn had promised them religious liberty and charged that the revolutionary committees had denied them that liberty and had become "despotic" (219). The Pennsylvania legislature required them

to swear oaths to support its war effort, provide supplies, pay taxes, and serve in the military. When they declined, government officials fined them, confiscated their property, jailed, and even banished some. This experience reminded them of the “non-resistant martyrdom” (220) that their Anabaptist ancestors had suffered in Europe. Although the postwar Assembly withdrew the offending laws, many members of peace churches withdrew from political involvement. Several contingents of Mennonites actually left the new nation and settled in the Canadian province of Ontario. For the majority German “church people,” Lutherans and Reformed, their participation in the French and Indian War and the Revolution served as catalysts “toward fuller integration into Pennsylvania’s political culture” (213).

Such political and military developments have characterized historical analyses of early American history, according to Liam Riordan. Instead, he uses “Cultural History” in general and the “Pennsylvania German *Taufscheine*” during the revolutionary period in particular to interpret ethnic identity. Early *Taufscheine* were written and drawn by folk artists in bright colors on paper. Initially, they contained only traditional Pennsylvania art forms. The writing was broken, which is why sometimes they are called *fracturschriften*. Riordan contends that they filled the need to “document . . . family identity” (254) as many recorded the birth and baptism of children in an age when government statistics were deficient or nonexistent; however, nonbaptizing religious groups created them also. They were especially prevalent in southeastern Pennsylvania but existed far beyond. They may have had European antecedents, but “Pennsylvania *taufscheine* represent a clear departure from Old World prototypes” (253). Most were prepared between 1770 and 1840. Riordan contends that the “Pennsylvania Germans created and purchased *taufscheine* to reflect their newly assertive sense of ethnic particularity” (249). Whether they did so deliberately or unconsciously is an open question. During the nineteenth century, *taufscheine* began to be printed, mass produced, and sold commercially in German communities and in others as well. These changes and the inclusion of some English art forms indicate a broadening of Pennsylvania German identity.

The contents of this book demonstrate scholarship at its best. All of the essays are well written—clear and concise. Most authors provide fresh interpretations, especially Wokeck, Beiler, and Otterness. Schonhofer develops a distinctive topic to make a relevant point. All of the essays are documented fully. Several use unusual source material, including Falk, McDaniel, and Riordan. Erben provides a bibliography that is specific to his topic as well

as suggestions for further research. Riordan includes illustrations and a map to help readers to understand his text. Editors Stievermann and Scheiding identify the authors' qualifications and provide a detailed index.

JOHN B. FRANTZ, EMERITUS
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Jennifer Graber. *The Furnace of Affliction: Prisons and Religion in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). ISBN 978-0-8078-3457-2. Cloth. \$42.00.

The Furnace of Affliction examines the role of religion in the first decades of the nation's penitentiaries. Specifically, Jennifer Graber sets out to determine whether or not religion was at the heart of reformative incarceration in the early prisons of New York State. Close connections between New York and Philadelphia reformers is immediately apparent, beginning with Quaker Thomas Eddy, who lead efforts at New York's Newgate Prison. Eddy took great inspiration from his Philadelphia friends who advocated nonviolence, spacious gardens, and a paternalistic philosophy. Eddy's efforts in New York failed and his influence had peaked and waned by 1804.

This time signified a transition in both the form and philosophy of religion's influence—perhaps the most dramatic turning point in the book. Graber shifts her focus from religious reformers (chiefly Quaker in the early decades) to Protestant chaplains who become more important as the years unfold. In this new era, the narrative of reformative incarceration shifts from one of quiet and peaceful reflection to a “furnace of affliction” in the words of the influential Baptist chaplain Reverend John Stanford, who led religious work at Newgate. Reverend Stanford's philosophy and approach to prisoners was crucial to the larger shift in expectations for punishment. Stanford promoted “a theology of redemptive suffering” that basically endorsed the increasing use of violent means to discipline and punish inmates (58).

The penitentiary system never worked as it was intended; inmates refused to be silent and obedient; guards violated rules; reformers fought with inspectors over what was right. This dynamic was repeated again and again as Auburn Penitentiary was to be built upstate with more modern design to accommodate the growing number of inmates subject to reformative incarceration. This time Boston's Reverend Louis Dwight became

the driving force in shaping the institution's approach to religious—and penal—redemption. The state used Reverend Dwight (as it had Reverend Stanford) in this marriage of convenience that helped gain public approval for an increasingly expensive, ineffective, and violent institution made more humane by the presence of religious leaders charged with eliciting weeping confessions from inmates.

The book's thesis might best be illustrated in chapter 4 on Sing-Sing, where the relationship between religion and the state falls apart. Sing-Sing was thought by many at the time to contain the most dangerous, unreformable criminals. This was in no small part due to its New York City location and diverse population of immigrants, free blacks, and other unwanted, despised groups. The keepers at Sing-Sing—first Elam Lynds, later Robert Wilste—embraced violent tactics for disciplining this allegedly unruly crowd. They believed religious men and reform narratives undermined their authority and were not rooted in reality. This attitude was put on trial as a great scandal involving prisoner abuse, excessive force, and unauthorized use of violence drew statewide and even national attention. While the governor fired Wilste and called for major changes, including mandatory Sunday school and an expanded library, religious leaders celebrated but never regained significant authority.

Readers of this journal in particular will wonder how this account of New York differs from accounts of punishment in Pennsylvania. I can say with confidence: very little. This fact is exacerbated by the book's lack of concern about penal labor—the chief distinction between penitentiaries in Pennsylvania and New York in the first place. Insights of interest include the tremendous influence of Boston's Reverend Dwight over New York's prisons, the tireless if idealistic and futile efforts of Thomas Eddy—truly a brother to many in Pennsylvania's Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons (PSAMPP), as well as the numerous voices of former inmates captured in publications throughout the antebellum period.

Graber's analysis of the central issue at hand—religion—is careful and nuanced. But after Eddy, the idealism was lost. *The Furnace of Affliction* shows how central the Christian teachings of suffering and redemption were in shaping penal code, state by state, in the young nation. Religious men were not only complicit in the creation and expansion of punishment but their work served as crucial justification, providing a moral basis to physical and mental abuse. No matter how devout or sincere in their teachings about redemption, in their work with inmates, or in their advocacy for more humane treatment of inmates, religious men were part of the problem—not the solution.

By exposing the religious mission of American punishment and the widespread embrace of suffering as a constitutive part of punishment in public opinion, *The Furnace of Affliction* is a call to action for those concerned with the state of prisons and rate of incarceration in contemporary American life. As long as reformers, chaplains, inspectors, and others believed that prisoners should suffer for their crimes, there was little hope in affecting a dramatic transformation away from penal violence (181). Only by *rejecting* the belief that those convicted of crimes *must suffer* will the chain of ineffective, excessive, and expensive punishment ever be broken—and the hope for a more-just justice system be restored.

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Robert J. Gangewere. *Palace of Culture: Andrew Carnegie's Museums and Library in Pittsburgh* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011). Pp. 320. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$35.00.

Palace of Culture chronicles Andrew Carnegie's vision of educating the people of Pittsburgh through a library and institute. Increasing in importance since its inception in 1896, Carnegie's vision grew to becoming a major resource for more than just the people of Pittsburgh. Robert Gangewere, editor of *Carnegie Magazine* for thirty-one years, presents an in-depth history of the Carnegie Institute from inception to present day. Sprouting from just a library, music hall, and science museum, the Institute now includes a natural history museum, art museum, science center, the Andy Warhol Museum, and the Carnegie International Art Exhibition. From political turmoil to budget cuts, the Institute's over-100-year history of ups and downs is covered in an easy-to-read manner. Careers of directors, trustees, and administrators from each collection are laid out by the author in detail. Also, the history and importance to the Institute's educational and research goals of each division (library, museums, music hall, and so on) are told.

The book begins with an introduction to Andrew Carnegie. For someone not very familiar with the Pittsburgh philanthropist's story, it provides not only an introduction to the man himself, but works to explain why he saw a need to create the Carnegie Institute and Library for the people of Allegheny City, Pittsburgh's North Side. As a young boy Carnegie borrowed books

from retired businessman Colonel James Anderson's personal library. When the books were donated to the public library, young Andrew suddenly was to be charged a fee to read books previously read for free. Unhappy at the change, Andrew wrote a letter to get the new procedure reversed, succeeding in his attempt (p. 6). When the Carnegie Libraries were built, the phrase "Free to the People" above the entrance remained a personal reminder of his early life (p. 108).

Gangewere does an excellent job of presenting integral information to the discussion of museum theory and practice through the lens of an immensely popular institute founded by one of Pittsburgh's historical giants. Carnegie's desire to uplift people in Pittsburgh was the primary reason for creating the Institute. His personal philosophy was that working-class people could be uplifted through education and culture if given the opportunity (p. 4). He hoped that "nothing in the gallery or hall will give offense to the simplest man or woman (p. x)." In saying this, Carnegie touches on current battles within museum theory and practice. He wanted to prevent people from being alienated by using complicated, lofty scientific language or covering certain topics. Even today certain subjects are avoided at museums and science centers to avoid controversy. However, the information can be presented at these institutions without prejudice to foster a discussion between the visitor and docent or guide. Without complete information a visitor may leave confused about a subject rather than curious about learning more. If we avoid a discussion on aspects of history or biology, for example, because it makes people uncomfortable, how can they learn the whole story? An example would be an exhibit on biology without presenting evolutionary theory. While controversial, evolution is interwoven in the fabric of biology. While not a best practice, this view allowed for the creation of the Carnegie Institute that we enjoy today.

Another section relating to public history theory discusses the Carnegie Science Center and Buhl Planetarium. "New Directions" cuts deep into the discussion in how museums/science centers need to appeal to the community while being educational. Under the leadership of Seddon Bennington, the museum embraced the mantra of "share science." The same idea applies to history. Public history is about sharing history with everyone and getting people interested in learning about the past. Without the community participating in and embracing a museum or science center's programs, it is simply a building and parking lot. "Culture" needs to be consumable to working-class people, which is possibly why Carnegie did not wish to offend anyone.

If the language was too technical, the target audience would tune out all the information being presented, thus defeating the whole purpose of Carnegie's Institute. The last few paragraphs mentions a controversy involving science centers. Some think it is a mistake to make science "fun" (p. 263). Gangewere includes a social historian's quote that making science accessible to all is the same as "dumbing it down, reducing it to the level of games and distractions for young children and their adult equivalents" (264). The entire section fits in with any museum science class in graduate or undergraduate school discussion of methodology and deserves a larger discussion.

In the end, Andrew Carnegie did build a "Palace of Culture," not only for the people of Pittsburgh to enjoy some of the best collections available to the public, but for all. Making a place where people can gather to view dinosaur skeletons and Egyptian artifacts, and check out books redefined the museum model. Taking large private collections of upper-class individuals out of a personal palace and into a public one revolutionized how museums/institutes were founded in the future. Through his vision it became a literal palace, holding its treasures for generations to come. Carnegie wanted to educate the working class of Pittsburgh; instead he changed how everyone was educated.

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