

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### *A Cunning Man's Legacy: The Papers of Samuel Wallis (1736–1798)*

Saml Wallis Dead of the Fever so that his Land Fever is Cured. You and I shall never meet him, even after Death. Of course we can never have any other satisfaction for the injuries he has done, or meditated to do us, than what Fate has administered.

—Robert Morris to John Nicholson, Oct. 17, 1798<sup>1</sup>

ONE SEARCHES FOR AN ADEQUATE identification of Samuel Wallis: birthright Quaker, aspiring merchant, bankrupt, debt collector, agent, partner, surveyor, pioneer settler on the Pennsylvania frontier, land speculator, unyielding combatant, spy, conspirator, lay judge. All of these labels are at least partially accurate, but none of them completely captures a complicated and elusive figure whose contemporaries found him a puzzling personality, even as they repeatedly turned to him for help. Robert Morris, lodged in debtors' prison at the time of Wallis's death in 1798, condemned him for malice and duplicity, as also, in more guarded terms, did John Battin, Wallis's upstate Pennsylvania neighbor and fellow Quaker, who had written to Wallis two years earlier, during a controversy pending between them about title to land: "I acknowledge thou art a very Cunning man, but I believe thee will find thee has been too Cunning for thy Self in these matters."<sup>2</sup>

Yet perhaps there is one word comprehensive enough, in both its eighteenth-century meaning and more modern usage, to do this man justice of a kind. Wallis was an adventurer, a synonym, *avant la lettre*, for an

For their hospitality and assistance, both generously provided, the author owes a special debt of gratitude to his friends in Muncy: Malcolm Barlow, Sheila O'Brien, and Linda and Bill Poulton.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Norman B. Wilkinson in his published doctoral thesis, *Land Policy and Speculation in Pennsylvania, 1779–1800: A Test of the New Democracy* (New York, 1979), 248. Wilkinson misplaced the letter in the collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; it is properly located in vol. 3, p. 16, George M. Conarroe Autograph Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> John Battin to Samuel Wallis, Apr. 22, 1796, reel 5, Wallis Papers (microfilm), Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The original letter is now in the collections of the Muncy Historical Society, Muncy, PA.

entrepreneur—someone who engaged, cunningly, to be sure, in risky enterprises for personal profit. As adventurer, he was handicapped by neither scrupulousness nor loyalty to any cause other than his own self-interest. The wonder is that through four decades of devious activity he was able to maintain his membership in the Society of Friends and to count among his consistent patrons a Quaker paragon such as Henry Drinker.

Samuel Wallis was born to Quaker parents in 1736 in what was then Baltimore County, Maryland, but today is Harford County. His parents and grandparents had first settled to the south in Calvert County on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay, near Port Frederick; a record of these Wallis forebears may be traced in the minutes of the Clifts Monthly Meeting and the Spring and West River Monthly Meetings. Shortly before Samuel's birth, his father decided to relocate northward, closer to the then contested boundary between the provinces of Maryland and Pennsylvania, thus enrolling the Wallis family in the Deer Creek Preparative Meeting on the western side of the Susquehanna River and the Nottingham Monthly Meeting in Cecil County on the eastern side. A few facts about the Wallis family may be gleaned from these meeting records during the period of Samuel's youth, including evidence that the Wallises possessed an independent streak that brought them into conflict with the discipline of the meeting. As he neared his twenty-fifth birthday in 1760, Samuel Wallis conceived the notion that he might go to England "on account of trade," but the Deer Creek Meeting delayed certifying to Friends abroad that he could make this move free of obstruction. That same meeting again hesitated six years later when Wallis sought, after the fact, to obtain a certificate of removal to Philadelphia—where, in the interval, having abandoned the trip to England but not the thought of pursuing a career as a merchant, he had financed the purchase of cargoes for sale in Quebec and the West Indies. Unable to cover the heavy load of debt he incurred in these ventures, he languished in debtors' prison in Philadelphia, a bankrupt, until the legislature of Pennsylvania in 1764 acted favorably on his petition for relief by passing a special act releasing him from prison but stripping him of all his possessions except "wearing apparel and bedding for himself, not exceeding ten pounds in value in the whole."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> David W. Maxey, "The Honorable Proprietaries v. Samuel Wallis: 'A Matter of Great Consequence' in the Province of Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 70 (2003): 363–64.

After this unpromising start, Wallis's luck began to change. Two wealthy Philadelphia merchants, Abel James and Henry Drinker, commissioned Wallis, someone who had been imprisoned for debt just a short time before, to collect debts they were owed, instructing him to "press for the payment in the warmest manner." Apparently satisfied with his performance as an enforcer, James and Drinker next relied on Wallis, first as their agent and then as their partner, to assemble land in remote parts of Pennsylvania by actions that often required these fastidious Philadelphia Quakers to turn a blind eye to the methods Wallis employed on their behalf and his. While the relationship between them was not without its troubled moments, Henry Drinker stood by Wallis until Wallis's death in 1798.<sup>4</sup>

Others looking to make their fortune in land acquisition engaged Wallis as their agent, and he soon assembled a stable of backers who supplied him with funds to represent their interests. His connections with these investors over the many years that followed his imprisonment for debt may be traced in a wide variety of collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and elsewhere. The principal source of information about Wallis lies in his own papers, an astonishing array of original material that survived against the odds to throw light on his shady practices. It is the history of that record—its collection, its preservation, the impact on its custodians of an unexpected disclosure, and its final disposition—that will be the subject of this essay.<sup>5</sup>

### *Collection*

Samuel Wallis died in a house located on Philadelphia's Market Street on October 14, 1798, a victim of a yellow fever epidemic that once again ravaged the city. He contracted the disease on his return journey from

<sup>4</sup> James and Drinker to Wallis, June 8, 1765, Muncy Historical Society. See, generally, David W. Maxey, "The Quaker Roots of Samuel Wallis," *Now and Then* 25 (Apr. 2001): 246–54; and Maxey, "Honorable Proprietaries v. Samuel Wallis," 361–95. Various aspects of Wallis's career are also visible in John F. Meginness, *History of Lycoming County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago, 1892); Wilkinson, *Land Policy and Speculation*; Charles Page Smith, *James Wilson: Founding Father, 1742–1798* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1956); Peter C. Mancall, *Valley of Opportunity: Economic Culture along the Upper Susquehanna, 1700–1800* (Ithaca, NY, 1991); and Carl Van Doren, *Secret History of the American Revolution* (New York, 1941).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Wallis is embedded as a recurrent presence in the following collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania: Penn Family Papers; Henry Drinker Business Papers; Jacobs Family Papers; Hollingsworth Family Papers; and James Wilson Papers. As early as 1767, Wallis had a contractual relationship with Reuben Haines, a Philadelphia Quaker brewer; the ties of the Haines family to

Edenton, North Carolina, where he had traveled in a desperate attempt to confer with his beleaguered partner in land speculation, US Supreme Court justice James Wilson, only to learn upon his arrival that Wilson had expired a month earlier. As Robert Morris ruefully observed to John Nicholson, Wallis escaped the worst consequences of one disease, “Land Fever,” as he succumbed to the other. Shortly before he left on this fatal expedition, Wallis’s son-in-law and lawyer, writing to him in Philadelphia, put him on notice that “a sacrifice of all your property real & personal will now take place . . . and ruin to you seems to me to be Inevitable unless Exertions of the most serious & Effective nature are Immediately used.”<sup>6</sup> In forty years of scheming, Wallis had come full circle, from insolvency and imprisonment at the beginning of his career to looming financial collapse at the end of it.

Wallis’s principal base of operations was Muncy Farm, a large property he owned in Northumberland County (subsequently part of Lycoming County) on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, about 150 miles northwest of Philadelphia. He built a house on this land in 1769, where he took his bride, Lydia Hollingsworth, to live the following year. Subject to forced departures due to the danger of staying at this remote frontier location during Indian uprisings, the struggles of the Revolution, and brutal winters, they raised their numerous family there. When adverse conditions dictated, the Wallises retreated to Philadelphia or to Lydia Wallis’s family home at the head of the Elk River in Cecil County, Maryland. For all of his extensive investments elsewhere and the alliances he had made with prominent Philadelphia investors, it was the threatened loss of Muncy Farm that would have caused Samuel Wallis the greatest concern. He had put years of sweat labor into owning and improving that property.<sup>7</sup>

After Wallis’s death without a will, an administration was raised in Lycoming County for his estate, and appraisers set about valuing all his

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Wallis lasted through the rest of the century, as documented in the Wyck Association Collection, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA. Significant Wallis material may also be found in the Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, PA, Samuel Wallis Collection (MG-167), and at the Muncy Historical Society.

<sup>6</sup> Daniel Smith to Samuel Wallis, May 28, 1798, reel 6, Wallis Papers.

<sup>7</sup> See Maxey, “Honourable Proprietaries v. Samuel Wallis,” 368–69; Meginness, *History of Lycoming County*, 66–67, 71–74. A valuable contemporary view of Muncy Farm in Samuel Wallis’s ownership and occupancy is found in Norman B. Wilkinson, ed., “Mr. Davy’s Diary, 1794, Part II,” *Pennsylvania History* 20 (1953): 262–65.

personal property, both at the house he probably rented in Philadelphia and at Muncy Farm. Some time necessarily passed before Robert Erwin and John Dunwoody felt relaxed enough to enter the property on Market Street in Philadelphia where he had died. They itemized possessions totaling £475 15s. 11d., more than half of which sum they assigned to a four-wheeled carriage, together with “harness complete for four horses,” one riding chair or sulky, and two horses, seven or eight years old. The house nevertheless appears to have been comfortably furnished, at least for bachelor occupancy. Wallis had close at hand a variety of books and newspapers to read, including two large print volumes of the Bible, “a Book describing the Indian Nations,” a bound volume of William Cobbett’s *Porcupine* newspapers, and a book of charts.<sup>8</sup>

The inventory in Muncy was completed more promptly, a month after Wallis’s death. John Hollingsworth and Daniel Tallman put a total value of £2,457 2s. 11d. on Wallis’s personal estate at Muncy Farm, which consisted of all manner of items, from the miniscule to farm equipment, horses and livestock, mahogany furniture, and basic household goods. This time, the appraisers compiled a much longer list of the books in Wallis’s library. Educated well above average when he arrived in Philadelphia in the early 1760s, Wallis honed his writing skills in the steady flow of reports he submitted to anxious clients employing him as their agent on the frontier. Moreover, as the years passed, he was able to broaden his intellectual interests. If one should avoid judging a book by its cover, so also one should avoid judging a man solely by the books he keeps on his shelves, and yet, whatever else we may think of Wallis, the library list reveals a person of inquiring mind, eclectic reading habits, and considerable culture. Consider, as a sampling, these inventoried entries:

<sup>8</sup> “An Inventory & Appraisalment of the Personal Estate of Samuel Wallis Esq of Muncy Township, deceased made the 9th of December 1798 by Erwin and John Dunwoody, the Property being in the City of Philad,” reel 6, Wallis Papers. It provides insight into Wallis’s politics that he read, and kept for rereading, the issues of *Porcupine’s Gazette*, a daily newspaper launched a year before Wallis’s death in which William Cobbett mounted an unrelenting attack against pro-French and Jeffersonian-Republican factions. Marcus Daniel, *Scandal and Civility: Journalism and the Birth of American Democracy* (New York, 2009), 187–230. Wallis paid eight dollars for an annual subscription to *Porcupine’s Gazette* ending March 24, 1798. Reel 6, Wallis Papers. Wallis is listed at 270 High Street in Edmund Hogan, comp., *The Prospect of Philadelphia and Check on Next Directory*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1796), 188, which may have placed him on the south side of High or Market Street just west of Eighth Street, although a letter was addressed to him in 1798 at “Market, near Seventh Street.” See Lu Ann De Cunzo, “An Historical Interpretation of William Birch’s Print ‘High Street, From Ninth Street, Philadelphia,’” *Pennsylvania History* 50 (1983): 132. [Unidentified sender] to Samuel Wallis, June 23, 1798, reel 1, Wallis Papers.

Salzmann's *Elements of Morality, for the Use of Children* and Madame de Cambon's *Young Grandison* (both as translated by Mary Wollstonecraft); Bartram's *Travels*; Johnson's *Dictionary*; Vicesimus Knox's *Essays Moral and Literary*; William Gilpin's *Three Essays* (on the aesthetic ideal of the picturesque); Priestley's sermon on the human mind; Shakespeare's *Plays*; Unitarian tracts; Gough's *History of the People Called Quakers*; Bolingbroke's *Letters and Life*; Robert Gibson's *Treatise of Practical Surveying*; Milton's *Works*; David Ramsay's *History of the American Revolution*; Thomas Bromley's *Way to the Sabbath of Rest*; Thomas Salmon's *New Geographical and Historical Grammar*; Isaac Watts's *Logick: or, the Right use of Reason in the Enquiry After Truth*; and Izaak Walton's *Compleat Angler*.<sup>9</sup>

Neither inventory made mention of the huge cache of personal papers that Wallis had begun accumulating as far back as when he left Maryland in about 1760, for the very good reason that at his death they had no ascertainable monetary value. Wallis was, in reality, a compulsive collector of documents of all kinds. Sparing himself neither the pain present in the evidence of his early insolvency and imprisonment for debt nor the growing discomfort he felt in the record of his imminent financial collapse in the 1790s, he retained in his papers running accounts with James and Drinker and other investors he acted for; partnership and agency agreements; warrants, surveys, deeds, and patents; bonds and mortgages; incoming correspondence and copies he often made of his own letters; receipts for payment of various debts; bills of lading; legal form books; records of court and arbitration proceedings; travel diaries; settlement agreements; household accounts; ledger books for Muncy Farm; membership certificates for the Union Library and, later, the Library Company of Philadelphia; and pointed queries from Quaker meetings about his conduct. To these papers would be added documentation relating to the tangled settlement of his estate, which stretched over many

<sup>9</sup> "An Inventory and Appraisalment of the Personal Estate of Samuel Wallis Esqr of Muncy Township, deceased, made the 16th and 17th days of November 1798 by John Hollingsworth and Daniel Tallman," reel 6, Wallis Papers. Abbreviated notations in the inventory have in some instances been expanded to identify more accurately particular volumes, many of which were published in England and presumably acquired by Wallis from a Philadelphia bookseller. Joseph Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen and a founder of Unitarianism in England, left his native land and took up residence for the last ten years of his life in Northumberland, Pennsylvania, at the juncture of the west and north branches of the Susquehanna River, becoming at that location a neighbor of Wallis's. See Jenny Graham, "Revolutionary in Exile: The Emigration of Joseph Priestley to America, 1794-1804" *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s., 85, no. 2 (1995): i-xii, 1-213.

years following his death. In summary, Wallis's papers would provide a richly textured picture of his life in Philadelphia and on the Pennsylvania frontier, with all of its twists and turns, from the 1760s through the end of the eighteenth century—as well as privileged access to significant events, relationships, and chicanery during the critical revolutionary and early national periods.

The ruin that Daniel Smith saw fast coming engulfed Wallis's survivors. His house and Muncy Farm, consisting of several thousand acres, were lost in debt enforcement proceedings. His widow, Lydia Hollingsworth Wallis, who died in 1812, took refuge with her daughter, the wife of Daniel Smith, in nearby Milton, Northumberland County. In spite of their misfortune, the family managed to salvage a few valuable possessions, like the mahogany Chippendale furniture that Wallis had commissioned from a Philadelphia cabinetmaker at the time of his marriage.

As for the Wallis Papers, they were passed on in the male line of the Wallis family through succeeding generations. What persuaded Wallis's heirs to keep the papers intact after the protracted settlement of his estate, one can only speculate. Perhaps they shared with him a record-keeping gene, for Wallis's two sons and a grandson both contributed some of their own papers to the collection. No one in this period, as far as we can tell, ever went through the Wallis collection from beginning to end to try to bring a semblance of order to the hodgepodge of items it contained. It is possible, however, that these later family custodians had an informed appreciation of their ancestor's extraordinary, turbulent career, which may go some distance in explaining their decision to hold on to the Wallis Papers.<sup>10</sup>

By the second half of the nineteenth century, when Wallis's great-grandson Howard R. Wallis, a resident of the town of Muncy, took custody of the Wallis Papers, the collection had begun to attract the attention of local historians. In 1868, J. M. M. Gerner launched *Now and Then*, a magazine of history, biography, and genealogy, which was published irregularly in Muncy until being discontinued after 1892. In a valedictory piece he penned for the magazine in 1878, Gerner referred to the "vast quantity of old papers" originally belonging to Samuel Wallis

<sup>10</sup> Meginness, *History of Lycoming County*, 73–80. For the Chippendale furniture Wallis ordered from William Wayne in Philadelphia, see Susan Garfinkel, "Quakers and High Chests: The Plainness Problem Reconsidered," in *Quaker Aesthetics: Reflections on a Quaker Ethic in American Design and Consumption*, ed. Emma Jones Lapsansky and Anne A. Verplanck (Philadelphia, 2003), 60–62, plate 3; and invoice, dated Feb. 17, 1770, submitted by Wayne for "Mahogany case & drawers & table" and "Mahogany desk & castors," reel 3, Wallis Papers.

that were packed in a “very large store goods box . . . now in the possession of, and carefully treasured by a descendant.” Giving his readers only a general description of these records, Gernerd stated that the holding had come to have “historic interest” and that Wallis had “left a legacy of great value,” although it did not appear that Gernerd had explored the box’s contents in any depth—not enough, at any rate, to cause him to question the status of “Our Distinguished Pioneer, Samuel Wallis,” the title of an article he had written for the prior issue of *Now and Then*.<sup>11</sup>

Another local historian, John F. Meginness, delved more deeply into the Wallis Papers, not only in the revision of his *Otzinachson; or, A History of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna*, which, when first published in 1857, contained very little about Samuel Wallis and nothing about his papers, but also for his *History of Lycoming County, Pennsylvania*, published in 1892 and running to some 1,200 pages. A century after Wallis had died, Meginness, drawing on this collection, began to sketch a portrait of him as the “most active, energetic, ambitious, persistent, and untiring land speculator who ever lived in Lycoming County. . . . His energy was marvelous, and his desire to acquire land became a mania, which followed him to the close of his life.” Based on the limited view he had of him, Meginness portrayed Wallis more as victim than villain, overlooking or minimizing in the Wallis Papers his documented career of sharp dealings and contentious disputes.<sup>12</sup>

For the next several decades the Wallis Papers lay dormant in Muncy, in the continued safekeeping of the latest Wallis descendant but neglected by scholars and amateur historians alike. Having completed a stint as president of the Lycoming Historical Society, Dr. T. Kenneth Wood returned to his full-time medical practice in Muncy, where, beginning in

<sup>11</sup> “The Wallis Papers,” *Now and Then* 1 (Feb. 1878); “Our Distinguished Pioneer, Samuel Wallis,” *Now and Then* 1 (Jan. 1878). (The early issues of the journal lacked numbered pagination.) Nineteenth-century local historians necessarily felt the inherent tension between the call for accuracy and a concern for the reputation of the people and places portrayed. David J. Russo, *Keepers of Our Past: Local Historical Writing in the United States, 1820s–1930s* (New York, 1988), 150.

<sup>12</sup> Meginness, *History of Lycoming County*, 66, and *Otzinachson; or, A History of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna*, rev. ed. (Williamsport, PA, 1889). In this revised edition of the latter work, Meginness produced two new chapters devoted largely to Wallis (chaps. 15 and 16, 319–404), relying on “his old papers now in the possession of Howard R. Wallis, of Muncy.” Samuel Wallis gets even more extensive treatment in Meginness’s *History of Lycoming County*, 61–80, 183–84, 198–200, 290, 540–41, 546, 1,028–29. Meginness failed, however, to trace Wallis’s final and futile trip to Edenton, North Carolina, to confer with James Wilson, as the Wallis Papers would have permitted him to do, and instead repeated the discredited story, given some currency at Wilson’s death, that Wilson committed suicide by taking an overdose of laudanum. *Ibid.*, 76.



1929, he decided to amuse himself, as he put it, by reviving the long-suspended publication of the journal *Now and Then*. A close friend of the Wallis family, Wood was given free run of the Wallis Papers for the purpose, so it soon seemed, of also reviving Samuel Wallis. The collection represented a bonanza for the magazine's creative editor, as he would proceed to write in a series of articles about "a resurrected jury list" in a 1773 ejectment suit that the Pennsylvania proprietors had brought against Wallis, challenging his title to land in Muncy; the Chippendale high chest Wallis ordered from William Wayne in 1770 just prior to his marriage, which the Wallis family then still owned; an early map of Muncy Manor; various letters to and from Wallis; miscellaneous bills that Wallis paid; and the inventories completed after Wallis's death. To mine the Wallis Papers in this fashion was, however, tiring work and not without risk to one's health; Wood later advised a researcher who planned to follow him that if he had asthmatic tendencies, he should bring a mask to cut down on the intake of dust that Wood had absorbed in his system over the years.<sup>13</sup>

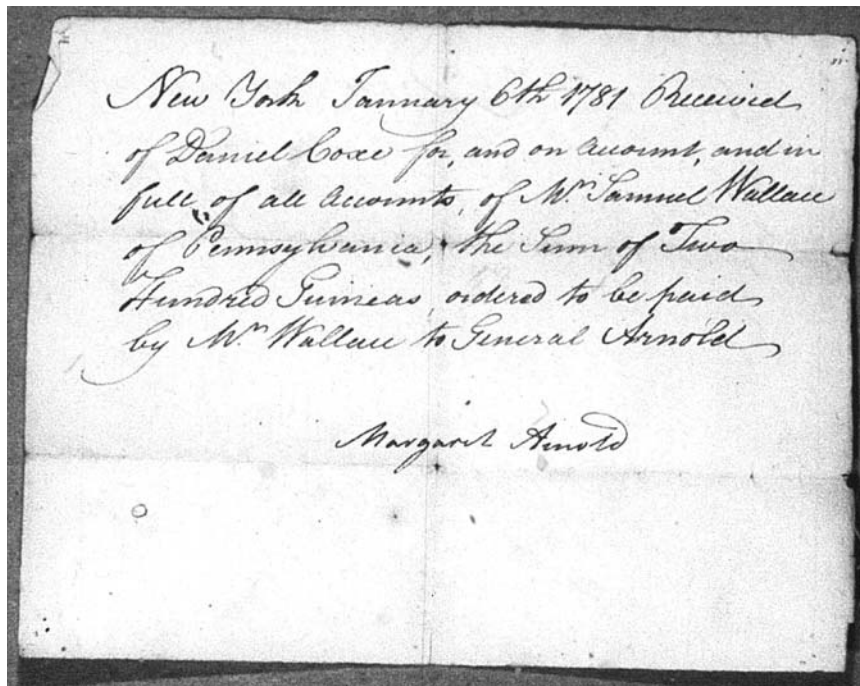
In 1936, Wood made a startling discovery in the Wallis Papers that would have far-reaching consequences. He found a receipt that Wallis obtained for the payment through one Daniel Coxe of the sum of 200 guineas, "ordered to be paid by Mr. Wallace [sic] to General Arnold."<sup>14</sup> The receipt, dated New York, January 6, 1781, was signed by Margaret Arnold, Benedict Arnold's young wife, whose awareness from the beginning—even encouragement—of her husband's treasonable plan historians had debated.

A century and a half after this transaction took place, Wood realized that he might be holding in his hand what amounted to a smoking gun. Why did Samuel Wallis find it necessary to pay a notorious traitor this large sum of money? Wood groped for an explanation that would make Wallis "an innocent party to Arnold's rascality," reasoning that since "January 6th, 1781 was only a couple of months after Arnold's treason and

<sup>13</sup> T. Kenneth Wood, MD, "The Muncy Historical Society," *Pennsylvania History* 22 (1955): 277–81. The articles referred to may be found in published indexes for *Now and Then* on the Muncy Historical Society's website at <http://muncyhistoricalsociety.org/library/now-then>. For Wood's role in reviving the publication, see the memorial tribute to him in *Now and Then* 12 (Jan. 1959): 129–31. For Wood's advice to a subsequent researcher, see Wood to Julian P. Boyd, Jan. 6, 1939 [1938 by mistake], box I-4-216, General Correspondence, 1938 W–Z, 1939 A–B, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, with the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Institutional Records (hereafter, HSP Institutional Records).

<sup>14</sup> The receipt may be found in reel 6, Wallis Papers.

that the money was sent through the British lines to New York by an emissary, the transaction appears pregnant with hidden meaning but not necessarily sinister.” The best that Wood could do in exculpating Wallis was to advance “a purely imaginary explanation”—that Wallis had acted for Arnold in the secret sale of commissary goods assigned to Arnold’s regiment and that, fearing he himself might fall under dangerous suspicion of being Arnold’s accomplice in committing treason, he belatedly moved to settle up the cash balance he owed. It was almost with an audible sigh of relief that Wood noted in conclusion that “no other mention is made, in the Wallis papers, of contact with Arnold.”<sup>15</sup>



The “Smoking Gun”: 200-guinea receipt signed by Margaret Arnold. Reel 6, Wallis Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>15</sup> “Old Letters—Samuel Wallis,” *Now and Then* 5 (1936): 175. For Daniel Coxe, a dyed-in-the-wool Loyalist, see Edwin R. Walker et al., *A History of Trenton, 1679–1929: Two Hundred and Fifty Years of a Notable Town with Links in Four Centuries* (Princeton, NJ, 1929), 141–42.

### *Preservation*

In 1935, at age thirty-two, Julian P. Boyd was appointed librarian of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. He had served a brief apprenticeship as assistant librarian before the Board of Councilors appointed him librarian: the title then used to designate the society's chief operating officer and representative to the scholarly community. Before arriving at the Historical Society, Boyd had been the editor of *The Susquehannah Company Papers* in Wilkes-Barre, supervising the publication of the first volumes of that ongoing project in preparation for what would later be his more significant role as editor of *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* at Princeton, where he also became university librarian.

Belying his comparative youthfulness, polished manners, and southern charm, Boyd had determined to shake up a venerable institution whose board of councilors was staffed by members of Philadelphia's inbred elite. His declared objectives as librarian were to improve and expand the works the society published, to add substantially to its collections, and, generally, to reach beyond the boundaries of parochial Philadelphia to a larger statewide and national constituency. Boyd's pursuit of this ambitious program in the midst of the Depression, not surprisingly, brought him into conflict with his conservative board and curtailed his tenure at the Historical Society.<sup>16</sup>

During Boyd's honeymoon period with the board, he sold the councilors on the investment he recommended making in the new technology of microfilming. He reported in the October 1935 board meeting that he had had "the matter under consideration for some months"; that other libraries had been microfilming successfully; and "that it has been clearly proved that micro-photography is immensely cheaper than photostating and that in considering the reproduction of a single large collection . . . a large part of the initial cost of equipment can be saved." In its next meeting, the board authorized an expenditure of \$325 "for the purpose of [buying] the Zeiss camera equipment, as recommended by the Librarian."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See Sally F. Griffith, *Serving History in a Changing World: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia, 2001), 97–148.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 113–14; Oct. 28 and Nov. 25, 1935, box I-2-9, Board Minutes, May 1933–June 1936, HSP Institutional Records.

Now it was up to Boyd to demonstrate in practice that microfilming could be used on the grand scale to bring an entire collection, otherwise unavailable, within the society's holdings. He saw the chance to do so when he attended the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association held in Williamsport and Lewisburg at the end of October 1938. After the concluding session on Saturday, October 29, the members left Williamsport to visit the Muncy Historical Society and its recently rehabilitated building, which housed museum exhibits. As a newly elected member of the association's council, Boyd attended all the sessions and joined the group that went to Muncy. On the Monday following, he sent a letter to Dr. Wood telling him "how much I enjoyed my visit to your wonderful Historical Society, and how grateful I am for the many hospitalities showed to me by you and Mrs. Wood." He wrote that he was also impressed by Wood's remarks on Saturday morning about the value of the Wallis Papers, which had led Boyd that same day to write to Howard R. Wallis proposing that the Historical Society of Pennsylvania be allowed to microfilm the entire collection at its cost. If Wallis agreed, "we could all then rest easy in the assumption that in case of a fire there would be no loss of the very valuable information contained in his trunks."<sup>18</sup>

In taking the next step, Boyd had to confront a local issue of self-esteem, since he found Wood offended that his nominal successor as president of the Muncy Historical Society had taken upon himself the assignment of obtaining approval from the Wallis family, which Wood thought he alone was capable of doing. Nevertheless, this contretemps straightened out, approval was forthcoming, as Boyd confirmed in his report to the Board of Councilors on December 20 under the heading "An Experiment in Microphotography":

For the first time during the installation of our Photographic Department, we are in a position to demonstrate on a relatively large scale the value of microphotography in the preservation of historical information in cases where it is not possible for the Society to obtain original documents. In Muncy, Pennsylvania, there exists in a private home, constantly subject to the hazards of fire and other destructive agencies, a collection of several

<sup>18</sup> For the report on the 1938 meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, see J. Paul Selsam, "The Seventh Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Historical Association," *Pennsylvania History* 6 (1939): 1-5. Boyd to Dr. T. Kenneth Wood, Nov. 1, 1938, box I-4-216, General Correspondence 1938 W-Z, 1939 A-B, HSP Institutional Records.

thousand documents of Samuel Wallis, who was probably the outstanding land agent in the central part of the State in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. . . . His papers are, therefore, extremely important in revealing the characteristics of one of the chief forms of investment in that period. These papers cannot be secured by gift or purchase, but the owner is willing to permit us to microfilm the entire collection or such portion of it as may be worthy of recording. . . . In this sense, the microfilm camera makes it possible for families who have a justifiable pride in their documentary heritage to keep their papers and, at the same time, to meet the purposes of an institution such as this.<sup>19</sup>

Wood wrote Boyd from Muncy at the beginning of January that “all is arranged for your convenience.” Wood could not estimate, however, how many papers would have to be photocopied and urged Boyd to come prepared with a dozen filing cases. He also found appealing Boyd’s idea that the collection be sorted out and put in chronological order as it was microfilmed, which he said the Wallis custodian would permit. The extent of the task before Boyd convinced him that he needed help onsite; fortunately, he was able to recruit Edwin Wolf, then a young assistant to Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach in the rare book business (and, later, for many years the librarian of the Library Company of Philadelphia), to accompany him in a support role.<sup>20</sup> The two of them, traveling to Muncy in the dead of winter when that upstate community is often locked in arctic conditions, spent five days painstakingly photographing over ten thousand separate items in the Wallis Papers. The result of their labor, seven reels of film, was in a real sense their handiwork, for a researcher now scrolling through the microfilm at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania will repeatedly observe the hands of these two collaborators anchoring in place particular exhibits.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Wood to Boyd, Saturday [Nov. 5, 1938], box I-4-216, General Correspondence 1938 W–Z, 1939 A–B, HSP Institutional Records; Report of Librarian, Dec. 20, 1938, box I-2-10, Board Minutes, Sept. 1936–Dec. 1940, HSP Institutional Records.

<sup>20</sup> Wood to Boyd, Jan. 6, 1939 [1938 by mistake], box I-4-216, General Correspondence, 1938 W–Z, 1939 A–B, HSP Institutional Records. For Edwin Wolf’s participation, see Griffith, *Serving History in a Changing World*, 134. In a conversation at lunch with the author of this article at the Franklin Inn Club in Philadelphia in the mid-1980s, Wolf emphatically recalled joining Boyd in the expedition to Muncy to microfilm the Wallis Papers.

<sup>21</sup> The seven reels of microfilm may be found at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania under the call numbers XR 93.1–93.7, and it is to this microfilm collection that reference has been made throughout when citing the Wallis Papers.

In his report to the councilors immediately after his return, Boyd specified that “700 feet of film, comprising about 5,600 frames, were required to photograph this collection, conservatively estimated at 10,000 documents but most probably amounting to 12,000 in number.” The cost to the society of the trip to Muncy, everything included, came to \$140, well under the \$250 authorized by the board. Yet Boyd was chagrined in submitting his report to note that “the photographing was done in a manner which I am sure will evoke strong criticism from historians who will make use of the film now and in the future.” Given the constraints to which Boyd and Wolf were subject in Muncy, and not being permitted by the owner to bring the collection to Philadelphia “for the purpose of putting it into some systematic classification before photographing,” he explained, “we were obliged to microfilm the documents as we came to them,” a circumstance, Boyd conceded, that “will enormously complicate their use and their being catalogued, but there was no alternative.” Despite his pledge to try “to remedy this defect as much as possible” by introducing some order to the microfilm collection, it has stayed in the same chaotic condition, much to the frustration, as Boyd correctly anticipated, of historians attempting to use the microfilm.

From Boyd’s report to the councilors in January, it is apparent that he and Wolf occasionally paused in this extended exercise to focus on what they were photographing. The documents pertained in his accounting “to land speculation in the period 1769–1798, but also including much that relates to Wallis’ privateering and mercantile affairs in Philadelphia before and during the Revolution (including some early marine insurance contracts and documents showing Wallis’ relations with Benedict Arnold).” That last parenthetical reference is tantalizing, for the only document that would appear inferentially to fall in that category is the Arnold-Wallis receipt for 200 guineas that Wood had previously discovered. Had Wood alerted Boyd to the presence of this smoking gun in the Wallis Papers? Very likely he did, but whatever the basis for Boyd’s statement to the board, he had obviously elevated conjecture to fact in assessing Wallis’s relationship with Arnold.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Report of Librarian, Jan. 16, 1939, box I-2-10, Board Minutes, Sept. 1936–Dec. 1940, HSP Institutional Records. Wood reported on the microfilming in “Safeguarding the Wallis Papers and Luminary Files,” *Now and Then* 6 (Jan. 1939): 115.

### *Disclosure*

Carl Van Doren has not always been granted the credit he deserved as a groundbreaking historian of his era. The winner of a Pulitzer Prize in 1939 for his biography of Benjamin Franklin, and the author of critically acclaimed books to follow on historical subjects, he sometimes received grudging recognition by academic historians as “a pioneering and patriotic popularizer.” That whiff of condescension may be detected in his entry in *American National Biography*, the successor to the *Dictionary of American Biography*: “None of his books . . . with the exception of his *Franklin*, is now very much read, perhaps because he tried to excel in too many insufficiently related fields and, as he himself admitted, he lacked a solid foundation in historical and critical theory.”<sup>23</sup>

But Julian Boyd had no hesitancy in recognizing him as a first-rate historian when in June 1938 Van Doren wrote to him at the Historical Society to ask his assistance on the Franklin book, then nearing publication. By 1939 they were both corresponding on a first-name basis and exchanging ideas. One proposal floated by Van Doren was the publication under Historical Society auspices of an elegant facsimile edition of Indian treaties originally printed by Benjamin Franklin, to which he agreed to contribute an introduction. That undertaking would enhance Boyd’s scholarly credentials, but, because of associated cost concerns and delays, it created further tension between him and the society’s board.<sup>24</sup>

It soon became Julian Boyd’s turn to propose to Van Doren the subject of Van Doren’s next major work. At a party held at New York’s Hotel Astor in late 1938 attended by Randolph G. Adams, the director of the Clements Library at the University of Michigan, Boyd encouraged Van Doren to undertake a full-fledged treatment of Benedict Arnold’s trea-

<sup>23</sup> *American National Biography*, ed. John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, 24 vols. (New York, 1999), s.v. “Van Doren, Carl,” 22:203–4. See Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin* (New York, 1938). During the interwar period, professional historians found “galling” their recurrent failure to win a lay audience and correspondingly disdained popularizers and debunkers who were successful in doing so. Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The “Objectivity Question” and the American Historical Profession* (New York, 1988), 192–94.

<sup>24</sup> The Van Doren-Boyd correspondence began in June 1938 and may be traced in box I-4-215 and box I-4-226, General Correspondence, 1938 S–W, and 1939 T–W, HSP Institutional Records. Boyd put the proposal for the Indian treaties book before the board at its September meeting, attributing the idea to Van Doren. Report of Librarian, Sept. 19, 1938, box I-2-10, Board Minutes, Sept. 1936–Dec. 1940, HSP Institutional Records; Carl Van Doren and Julian P. Boyd, *Indian Treaties Printed by Benjamin Franklin, 1736–1762* (Philadelphia 1938), of which only five hundred copies were printed. See Griffith, *Serving History in a Changing World*, 131–32.

son, utilizing for the first time the extensive collection of the papers of General Sir Henry Clinton that the Clements Library had recently acquired.<sup>25</sup>

Arnold's treason, when it came to light, was so notorious that inquiries were immediately initiated in both this country and England; consequently, the broad outlines of the plot he engaged in for the better part of two years were known and publicized in official reports. As early as 1835, Jared Sparks, a historian and later the president of Harvard, published an impressive, balanced biography that explored Arnold's complicated personality and motives; Sparks relied heavily in his book on "a large number of original papers in manuscript, which have not before been inspected," including the correspondence found in the public archives in London between General Clinton and the ministry he reported to concerning Arnold's defection and its aftermath. Arnold's place as an arch villain was thus ensured in American history and folklore as scholarly and polemical studies, articles, novels, and speculation of all kinds have flowed forth about him and his treason.<sup>26</sup>

What, then, did Carl Van Doren aim to accomplish? As he gained access to the Clinton Papers, he concluded that, more than simply concentrating on Arnold's treason, he needed to develop a detailed and comprehensive study of American resistance to the Revolution. However, in retrospect, his principal achievement, which he realized thanks to substantial assistance from the staff of the Clements Library, was to identify the network of conspirators, spies, and messengers for hire who assisted Arnold in the plot to betray the American cause. The publication of Van Doren's *Secret History of the American Revolution* removed the shield of anonymity from Arnold's undercover allies.

<sup>25</sup> Van Doren, *Secret History of the American Revolution*, vii (acknowledgment); Randolph G. Adams to Van Doren, Oct. 10, 1941, box 15, folder 4, Carl Van Doren Papers, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library (hereafter, Van Doren Papers).

<sup>26</sup> Jared Sparks, *The Life and Treason of Benedict Arnold* (Boston and London, 1835), vi. Sparks did not have the opportunity, however, to consult the Clinton Papers, which were eventually acquired by the Clements Library. For the unwillingness of Clinton's family in the late nineteenth century to permit further access to this collection after a researcher found intimate private letters revealing Clinton "as somewhat of a philanderer," see R. Langton Douglas's letter to the editor of the *New York Times Book Review*, Nov. 9, 1941, 2. As recent examples of the fictional treatment of Arnold's treason, see John Ensor Harr, *Dark Eagle: A Novel of Benedict Arnold in the American Revolution* (New York, 1999), and Robert Zubrin, *Benedict Arnold: A Drama of the American Revolution in Five Acts* (Lakewood, CO, 2005).



One person whose cover Van Doren's work decisively blew away was Samuel Wallis. Wallis had lingered in protective obscurity for 160 years after Arnold had departed West Point in frantic haste to take refuge with the British in New York. With the possible exception of T. Kenneth Wood, who discovered in the Wallis Papers the receipt signed by Arnold's wife, no one had suggested that Wallis was implicated in Arnold's treachery, much less that he had conspired with Joseph Stansbury and Jonathan Odell, two prominent Loyalists, to carry messages back and forth between Arnold and the British commander in New York. In fact, the Clinton Papers established to a high degree of probability that Wallis had been in the employ of the British from an early stage in the Revolution, dating almost certainly from the British occupation of Philadelphia, and that, for a year after Arnold had fled to the enemy, he maintained a surreptitious correspondence in which he continued to provide intelligence to the British in New York. Wallis had carefully concealed his tracks, leaving in his papers, whether by accident or not, the 200-guinea receipt as the sole telltale clue to his perfidy. That sum, paid to Wallis as Arnold's agent, represented the first down payment on the negotiated compensation General Clinton promised Arnold in return for the latter's defection.<sup>27</sup>

From the nineteenth century onward, Wallis family members have occupied respected positions in the Muncy community. If, even before Van Doren's disclosure, Samuel Wallis's reputation for fair dealing might have been questioned, the reputation of his descendants who had custody of his papers remained above reproach. For the latest custodian of the Wallis Papers to wake up one morning in late 1941 and learn that a distinguished historian's book had just established that his ancestor was a traitor of the darkest dye, acting in cahoots with Benedict Arnold, had, therefore, to have come as unsettling news. Even so, Howard R. Wallis may not have been totally unprepared for such a revelation. Although Samuel Wallis had excluded from his papers compromising correspondence with Arnold and the British, a trunk in the Wallis attic in Muncy did contain that one damning piece of evidence Dr. Wood had discovered and disclosed in the pages of *Now and Then*. If Howard Wallis required a further reminder of the awkward transaction between Samuel Wallis

<sup>27</sup> Van Doren, *Secret History of the American Revolution*, 217–20, 274–80, 409–13, 427–28; John Bakeless, *Turncoats, Traitors and Heroes* (1959; repr., Da Capo Press, 1998), 294–301. See also Van Doren to Boyd, May 5 and May 15, 1940, box 20, folder 1, Van Doren Papers.

and Arnold, involving the payment of a large sum of money, he got it when the receipt was flagged for attention in the WPA's Pennsylvania guide, published a full year before Van Doren's book. In the entry under Muncy, a writer for the guide described the Wallis Papers as filling "five trunks in the attic of Howard R. Wallis," with one item singled out: a "receipt for 200 guineas paid to General Benedict Arnold by Wallis on January 6, 1781, . . . in the handwriting of Arnold's wife, Peggy Shippen," and delivered four months after "Arnold had fled from his post as commander of West Point and joined the British."<sup>28</sup>

Howard Wallis might have learned by still another route that trouble was in the offing. Through all of 1940, Van Doren was hard at work on his new book. He wrote Boyd in May that he had just gotten to the bottom of the "mysterious Arnold-Wallis receipt you sent me" and that Wallis was "in the Arnold conspiracy up to his neck: literally up to it if he had been found out." In August, when the threat of war was on everybody's mind, he regretted that the book hadn't yet been published "in view of Fifth Column talk now! But maybe it is as well, for fear that this might be taken as anti-British, which it is not. The British come out fairly well. It is the Americans of the story who were rats."<sup>29</sup>

Both Van Doren and Boyd were understandably sensitive to the repercussions the book would have in Muncy once it did come out, and Van Doren made a special effort to cultivate Dr. Wood and perhaps even to warn him of what lay ahead. Wood was delighted to receive an unsolicited letter from Van Doren in January 1941 praising *Now and Then* as a valuable source of information for his work, which "has taken me into a somewhat detailed study of Revolutionary activities in the back counties of Pennsylvania, where many things were going on that have been overlooked." What came as music to Dr. Wood's ears was to read in this letter that, while "not at liberty to divulge his present line of historical research," Van Doren—a "truly great modern historian," in Dr. Wood's estimation—had made extensive use of *Now and Then*, "your very useful

<sup>28</sup> Writers' Program, Work Projects Administration, *Pennsylvania: A Guide to the Keystone State* (New York, 1940), 521. The body of the receipt does not appear, however, to be in Margaret Arnold's handwriting, only her signature.

<sup>29</sup> Van Doren to Boyd, May 5, May 15, and Aug. 21, 1940, box 20, folder 1, Van Doren Papers. President Roosevelt in a fireside chat of May 26, 1940, sounded the alert about "new methods of attack": "The Fifth Column that betrays a nation unprepared for treachery. Spies, saboteurs and traitors are the actors in this new strategy" (online at Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center website at <http://www.mhric.org/fdr/chat15.html>).

and interesting magazine”; what’s more, Van Doren had purchased for his library the bound volume of the journal that just happened to contain Wood’s discovery of the Arnold-Wallis receipt.<sup>30</sup>

Together Van Doren and Boyd went to Muncy at the end of June 1941 as Wood’s guests. Boyd made a formal presentation to the Muncy Historical Society, but whether Van Doren said anything publicly about his forthcoming book cannot be determined. He did, however, send another letter to Wood thanking him profusely for the “really grand time I had in Muncy . . . a really perfect evening and a grand night’s sleep,” while also congratulating him on the Muncy Historical Society: “I do not know how it could serve its Community to better purpose, or how there could be a local historical society better fitted to the quality of its officers and members to serve the ends of general history.” Not ready to stop there, he added that *Now and Then* was “the only local history magazine I have listed in the General Bibliography of my ‘Secret History,’ though I have consulted hundreds of such magazines.” According to Wood’s appended editorial note, the manuscript of the Van Doren book had gone to press; the author had informed Wood that he had written “the last word on the day he started for Muncy.”<sup>31</sup>

As soon as the *Secret History* appeared that fall, Wood wrote Van Doren that he was engrossed in reading it, “page by page, and word by word.” Nor did the revelations it contained about Wallis, which Wood called “the meat of the coconut for me,” seem to take him by surprise. Yet the silence that otherwise reigned in Muncy has to be regarded as deafening. Not a word appeared in *Now and Then* about a book that, commanding a national readership, changed radically that community’s perception of its most famous eighteenth-century resident. Until his death in 1950, Carl Van Doren kept sending billets-doux to Wood and the Muncy Historical Society, but in those letters he tactfully omitted any mention of the unforgettable contribution he had made to Muncy history.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Van Doren to Wood, Jan. 28, 1941, in “Miscellany,” *Now and Then* 6 (Jan. 1941): 318–19.

<sup>31</sup> Van Doren to Wood, June 29, 1941, in “Recalling a Red Letter Day,” *Now and Then* 6 (Oct. 1941): 342. Van Doren wrote to Boyd congratulating him on “a very pointed and graceful talk in Muncy. Don’t let yourself tell you otherwise.” Van Doren to Boyd, July 3, 1941, box 20, folder 2, Van Doren Papers. *Now and Then* was listed in the bibliography of the *Secret History of the American Revolution*, 498, and specifically cited several times, most notably, as the source for the Arnold-Wallis receipt. *Ibid.*, 279.

<sup>32</sup> Wood to Van Doren, Nov. 7, 1941, box 19, folder 4, Van Doren Papers, about Wood’s reaction to the book. See Van Doren to Wood, May 14, 1942, *Now and Then* 7 (July/Oct. 1942): 83; and Van

### Closure

The days of Dr. T. Kenneth Wood's rummaging in the Wallis Papers, or, for that matter, anybody else's doing so, were over. This collection of original documents was henceforth off limits to all but a select few. To the extent that *Now and Then* continued to publish articles about Samuel Wallis, it drew on past issues of the journal or on the Wallis material in the Muncy Historical Society's own collection.

Such remained the case until the spring of 2002, when the Wallis Papers, which had stayed in the Wallis family's uninterrupted possession for all of two centuries, were suddenly consigned for sale to an auctioneer in suburban Philadelphia. In a series of regular monthly sales of its varied inventory, the auction house brought on items from the Wallis Papers largely at random. Liquidating the collection in this piecemeal fashion necessitated going over to the following year. No attempt was made at these sales to put Samuel Wallis in context other than as a pioneer Pennsylvania settler and land speculator. To obtain the best price for the famous 200-guinea receipt, prospective bidders should have received ample notice of Wallis's concealed relationship with Benedict Arnold; and in the absence of any such notice, one may reasonably question whether this document of great historical value was meant to be included in the sale.

Faced with the dispersal of the Wallis Papers, the Muncy Historical Society mounted a rescue operation and bid successfully on a number of items that had strong local associations. At the auction, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania added to its early nineteenth-century holdings from outside the Philadelphia region by buying the day books of Wallis's younger son, Samuel Hollingsworth Wallis, a physician in Muncy who kept meticulous track of his patients and their consultation of him; a volume of cases and legal precedents belonging to Wallis's older son, John; and account books of Wallis's grandson Cowden, who owned and operated a general store at midcentury.<sup>33</sup>

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Doren to Wood, Apr. 14, 1950, *Now and Then* 9 (Oct. 1950): 234, in which Van Doren recalled Wood's kindness when he and Julian Boyd visited Muncy. As a lone qualification to the deafening silence in Muncy, Wood's son-in-law, Marshall R. Anspach, reviewed Van Doren's follow-up book, *Mutiny in January*, remarking that, as in his *Secret History*, the author had again disclosed "an unknown course of double dealing." *Now and Then* 7 (Oct. 1943): 149; Van Doren, *Mutiny in January: The Story of a Crisis in the Continental Army Now for the First Time Fully Told from Many Hitherto Unknown or Neglected Sources, Both American and British* (New York, 1943).

<sup>33</sup> E-mail, Mar. 7, 2011, to author from Lee Arnold, senior director of the library and collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, who represented the society at the initial auction sale. The

Julian Boyd was prescient, though in a way that he could not have expected, when he urged the councilors of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in the 1930s to underwrite the cost of purchasing micro-filming equipment and then the modest additional cost of spending five days in Muncy to preserve on microfilm the Wallis Papers against the “hazards of fire and other destructive agencies.” While the integral collection of the papers in Muncy is now lost, history and historians are not yet done with Samuel Wallis. It is not enough that Carl Van Doren unmasked him as a traitor, for any number of questions remain to be investigated about his enterprising career. Were the very qualities that recommended him as a resourceful agent to a diverse group of land speculators such as Henry Drinker, Reuben Haines, Timothy Matlack, and James Wilson the same as those that made him a trusted intermediary in the negotiations between Benedict Arnold and the British in New York? How to account for the seeming ease with which he passed in and out of Philadelphia when the British occupied the city or traveled to New York, after Arnold’s treason but before the British left that city, to pursue in person a commercial claim? Who among those closest to him, starting with his wife, took full measure of his capacity to dissemble? One is left to ponder, for example, what the volatile Robert Lettis Hooper Jr. could possibly have had in mind when late in life he wrote to Wallis, a friend of long standing:

What a World have you & I had to Wade through and what a Blessing it is that We have had so much Fortitude to support our Selves under such recurrent Difficulties as have happened to us. I will assert for you & my self, that we were Sanguine, Just, an[d] Liberal in every Negotiation; that . . . our Individual Characters [have] brought us into the Great Spheres of Life we have filled, and if we have failed in the Performance, the Integrity of our Minds have not—can not, leave us.<sup>34</sup>

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Wallis Family Business Papers, as thus assembled, are catalogued as Collection 3134; a finding aid for that collection may be found by going to: [http://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy\\_files/migrated/findingaid3134wallis.pdf](http://hsp.org/sites/default/files/legacy_files/migrated/findingaid3134wallis.pdf). The author was present at two of the Wallis sales in 2002.

<sup>34</sup> Hooper to Wallis, New York, Apr. 18, 1790, reel 3, Wallis Papers. The two were business acquaintances at least as early as 1769. Hooper to Wallis, Oct. 10 and Dec. 8, 1769, reel 6, *ibid.* To get some sense of Hooper as a loose cannon, see Robert L. Brunhouse, *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1760–1790* (Harrisburg, PA, 1942), 48–49; and for biographical detail about him, see also Walker et al., *History of Trenton*, 598–600.

Reading microfilm is, admittedly, never the same as reading original documents. It can be a tedious, frustrating process that researchers approach only as a last resort. But for those on the trail of Samuel Wallis, that cunning man of persistent mystery, the record is still there to consult at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in the seven reels of microfilm that Julian Boyd and Edwin Wolf traveled to Muncy to obtain.

*Gladwyne, PA*

DAVID W. MAXEY