

## *“A Diary of Trifling Occurrences”* *Philadelphia, 1776-1778*

**P**ERHAPS the most eminently suitable, satisfactory, and generally pleasing Philadelphia wedding of 1772 took place on St. Patrick's Day, when Sarah Logan became the wife of Thomas Fisher. As representative members of two of the wealthiest and most respected Quaker families in the city, bride and groom had so much in common that all their friends prophesied and accurately forecast an ideally happy union.

Thomas, ten years senior to his twenty-one-year-old bride, was the oldest son of Joshua Fisher, a leading merchant and shipowner. Together with his brothers Samuel, Miers, and Jabez, Thomas was a partner with his father in the formidable firm of Joshua Fisher & Sons. Marriages with prominent families strengthened the Fishers' position. Thomas' sister Lydia married Thomas Gilpin, canal pioneer and an original member of the American Philosophical Society, and, except for Jabez, who died a bachelor, all of Thomas' brothers married well. This circumstance, allied with business ability and distinguished character, established the Fisher clan, which had come to Philadelphia as recently as 1746, as one of the community's outstanding families before the outbreak of the Revolution.

Thomas Fisher was a small man with an easy manner, capable in all that he undertook, and, ultimately, the head of the Fisher firm. He carried a Malacca cane and dressed remarkably well, usually wearing a square-cut coat, knee breeches with silver buckles, and a shovel hat. Handsome and gentlemanly, Thomas was a good Quaker, although not a particularly strict one. He had traveled abroad in England and France, was well educated, and an Englishman in all his prejudices and tastes. A conservative who abhorred violence, his sympathies naturally lay with England when the colonies declared their independence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sophia Cadwalader, ed., *Recollections of Joshua Francis Fisher Written in 1864* (Boston, 1929), 17-18.

His wife Sarah was an accomplished woman who remained cheerful despite physical infirmities in the latter years of her relatively short life.<sup>2</sup> She stemmed from an exceptional family. Her grandfather was James Logan, a man whose name in Pennsylvania's colonial history is overshadowed only by those of William Penn and Benjamin Franklin. William Logan, her father, the master of Stenton and of a great town house on Second Street, had also been a man of weight in the colony, a provincial councilor and the link by which Proprietor Thomas Penn had vainly striven to retain the good will of the Quakers. Like the Fishers, the Logan family connections were widespread and seemingly selected with great care as to position, sobriety, and wealth. Through Logan ties, Sarah Fisher had scores of cousins—Pembertons, Norrises, Dickinsons, Emlens, and Smiths, to name but a few.

When the Revolution came, the Fishers remained neutral in accordance with passive Quaker principles, but they were conscientious royalists and this fact was recognized by the patriots. The family suffered severely during the war. Its warehouses were frequently broken open and its goods requisitioned for the American army. The Fishers, in their turn, refused to take Continental money, pay war taxes, or swear allegiance to the new order. Consequently, it is not surprising that they were all arrested just before Howe captured Philadelphia in September, 1777, when the local authorities decided to seize and then to deport to Virginia a small group of the city's leading Quakers suspected of disloyalty. Joshua Fisher was too ill and too old to be moved and Jabez was safely in England, but Thomas, Samuel, and Miers were exiled, as were also their brother-in-law Thomas Gilpin, their three Pemberton connections, Israel, John, and James, and their cousin Samuel Pleasants.

This enforced absence of her "dear Tommy" was the greatest trial Sarah Fisher ever experienced. She remained in Philadelphia in her house on Second Street, just below Dock Street, and there she noted the passing days by keeping a diary. This diary, which she had commenced in October, 1776, was to continue until her severe illness late in 1795, and was eventually to fill twenty-five small notebooks, a

<sup>2</sup> Sarah Logan Fisher died in 1796; Thomas Fisher died in 1810.

record mainly of domestic and family affairs, social gatherings, and religious thoughts.<sup>3</sup>

The first few of her little diary volumes, one of which she labeled "A Diary of Trifling Occurrences," are of unusual interest because of her observations on the Revolution. This material has been edited for publication by the deletion of entries of minor significance, and by the correction of spelling (except of personal names), capitalization, and punctuation. The diary in its printed form begins just after the death of Sarah's father, and its first entry finds Sarah reading letters he had written her in years gone by. Her brother George was in England studying medicine, but her brother Charles and her Uncle James Logan were at hand to console her, and are frequently mentioned in her diary.

The progress of the war left little time for mourning. Too many exciting things were happening. In December, 1776, it appeared that the British army under General Howe would cross the Delaware and capture Philadelphia. News of Washington's successful counterstroke at Trenton was of little comfort to Sarah Fisher, who ardently wanted the city to fall into British hands. In the months that followed, she worried over Howe's inaction. Winter gave way to spring, and spring to summer, and still he did not come. When would Philadelphia be delivered from the "violent people," as she termed the patriots? To her, George III was "the best of kings."

On August 21, 1777, Sarah learned the answer to the riddle of Howe's mysterious departure by sea from New York—the British fleet had arrived at the head of the Elk River in Chesapeake Bay. Two days later she saw Washington at Stenton where he had paused with some of his officers. "Washington appeared extremely grave & thoughtful." The next day he led his army through Philadelphia and across the Schuylkill on his way to defeat at the Battle of Brandywine. Two weeks after the battle, Sarah arose early to see "a most pleasing sight," the entrance of the British army led by Cornwallis. Howe, in his turn, now occupied Stenton.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. 9 of the diary has been missing for many years. The diary was inherited by Sarah Logan Fisher's granddaughter Esther Fisher Wistar, who bequeathed it to her cousin Mary Helen Cadwalader. On the death of Miss Cadwalader it became the property of her sister, the late Sophia Cadwalader. It is now owned by Benjamin R. Cadwalader, who kindly consented to its publication.

The diary, as presented here, continues through the period of the British occupation, and is brought to a close with Sarah's heartfelt cry of woe, "Judge, O any impartial person, what were my feelings at this time," when, on June 18, 1778, the British forces, having done virtually nothing since they repelled Washington at Germantown the previous October, evacuated Philadelphia and returned to New York.

NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT

*November 30, 1776* Morning at home reading old copies of my dear father's letters.<sup>1</sup> Bro. Charles dined with us. Heard that the English had possession of Newark. Afternoon went up to Mammy's. 8 men by order of the Committee of Safety came for blankets; they took two by force. Afterwards 2 men came to us, but they took none. Spent the evening at home with only my Tommy.<sup>2</sup>

*December 1, 1776* Morning went to Meeting. William Brown, Isarel Morris, & Nicholas Waln<sup>3</sup> preached. Jemmy Emlen & Nancy<sup>4</sup> & Bro. Charles dined here. Afternoon my Tommy & self drank tea alone. Heard that Howe's army had possession of Woodbridge. Went in the evening to Meeting, which was mostly silent.

*December 2, 1776* Heard in the morning that Howe's army were on this side Brunswick. The town in very great confusion. A party of armed men went about the city to shut up the shops, & break up the schools, by an order of the Committee of Safety.<sup>5</sup> Dined alone. In the afternoon a company of men came to take Tommy's name down, & to look at our servant boy Jim, with an intention if he was big enough to take him by force for a soldier, but as he was under 15 they left him, tho' they took several others not much older. Sister Fisher came here with her child & nurse for the first time since

<sup>1</sup> William Logan died Oct. 28, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> The Committee of Safety was appointed by the Assembly on June 30, 1775, and was entrusted with the defense of Pennsylvania.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Waln (1742-1813), one of the most striking characters of his day in Philadelphia, gave up a successful law practice after experiencing a remarkable religious conversion in 1772, and became a leading Quaker preacher.

<sup>4</sup> James Emlen (1760-1798) and his young sister Anne, called Nancy, who later married Warner Mifflin.

<sup>5</sup> Fearing that Howe was advancing on Philadelphia, the authorities mustered the Associators on Dec. 2, and closed the shops and schools so that all could concentrate on defense.

her lying-in.<sup>6</sup> Coz. S. Pleasants & Myers<sup>7</sup> drank tea here. Sup'd at Mammy's.

*December 3, 1776* In the morning heard the account of Howe contradicted. Aunt Emlen<sup>8</sup> breakfasted with us. Many people moving out of town, but we are as yet preserved in stillness. Dined alone. Aunt Logan & Polly Emlen drank tea with us. Sup'd alone.

*December 5, 1776* Morning went to Meeting with Sally Waln.<sup>9</sup> John Hunt preached.<sup>10</sup> Dined at Mammy's with a French gentleman named Plean, who treated us with some excellent French wine called Shuback. Coz. Polly Pleasants & Sammy,<sup>11</sup> Debby Morris and my Tommy drank coffee there. In the evening took a walk up to see Peggy Howell, who was come to town to lie in at Aunt Emlen's. Found her much of the opinion that the American army would conquer. Sup'd at Mammy's.

*December 6, 1776* Very busy in the morning cutting up our pork. Sister Gilpin drank tea with us; she & Tommy sup'd with us.

*December 8, 1776* Morning at Meeting. William Brown, Nicholas Waln & Isarel Morris preached. After Meeting heard there was an express come to town last night with an account that Howe's army were within 3 miles of Princeton & on his march. Bro. Charles dined with us. Stepped over in the afternoon to see neighbor Evans, who was in great distress for fear they should force her sons to the camp. In the evening went to Meeting with my Tommy. Thomas Gawthrop<sup>12</sup> preached.

*December 9, 1776* Went up directly after breakfast to Aunt Emlen's to see Peggy Howell, & to try to prevail on her to lie in in town. Heard that Howe's army were at Trenton. Aunt Armitt<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Sister Fisher" was the diarist's sister-in-law Sarah Redwood, wife of Miers Fisher, whose son Thomas had been born Oct. 21, 1776. Anna Wharton Smith, *Genealogy of the Fisher Family* (Philadelphia, 1896), 52.

<sup>7</sup> Miers Fisher (1748-1819), younger brother of Thomas Fisher.

<sup>8</sup> The diarist's mother was born Hannah Emlen, and this reference is presumably to Mrs. George Emlen, widow of Hannah's brother.

<sup>9</sup> Sarah Richardson, who married Nicholas Waln in 1771.

<sup>10</sup> John Hunt was a principle Quaker preacher. He was deported from the city by the patriots just before the British occupation, became one of the "Virginia Exiles," and died in Virginia in 1778.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Pemberton (1738-1821) married Samuel Pleasants.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Gawthorpe was an aged English "public Friend" making a religious visit. He returned to England in 1778.

<sup>13</sup> Sarah's uncle James Logan was married to Sarah Armitt.

drank tea with me. Colly Read<sup>14</sup> sup'd with us, also Myers, Sister Hetty<sup>15</sup> & Bro. Charles.

*December 10, 1776* Went up after breakfast to take leave of Peggy Howell who was going 10 miles over Schuylkill to lie in. Drank tea quite alone, my Tommy at Meeting. Bro. Myers sup'd with us.

*December 11, 1776* In the morning busy getting our beef cut up & salted. Coz. Fielding dined & drank tea with us. Spent an agreeable evening with my beloved Tommy.

*December 12, 1776* Busy in the morning mending clothes. Heard that 2 men-of-war were in the bay, & that several vessels were seen off the Capes; heard also that some of the King's army were at Burlington, & that they were met out of the city by the Corporation. Dined at Mammy's & drank coffee there. In the afternoon an edict came out signed by General Putnam,<sup>16</sup> warning all the inhabitants to be in their houses at 10 o'clock, at the peril of their being sent to jail, & that no physicians are to go out without a pass from Headquarters (tho' the Council of Safety had the day before given the Wardens leave to patrol the city for fear of fire), which edict greatly alarmed the inhabitants. Sup'd at home.

*December 13, 1776* Morning busy with Kitty. General Putnam issued a proclamation declaring that any person that set fire to the city should be capitally punished. The evening before a bellman had gone through the city, ordering every person to go this day & assist in entrenching the city. If they did not, their effects were to be seized, but there were few people [who] obeyed the summons. I did not hear of one person going that I knew. Drank tea with only my Tommy, who to me is always the best of company. Spent the evening agreeably at Sister's, which was the first time since my dear daddy's death. Peggy Edwards & Sally Fisher<sup>17</sup> there.

*December 16, 1776* Morning busy. Coz. Sally Rhoads drank tea with us. In the evening Tommy went up to Mammy's to meet Hugh Roberts & Owen Jones on business.<sup>18</sup> Sally Waln came & spent

<sup>14</sup> Collinson Read (1752-1815).

<sup>15</sup> Presumably a reference to the diarist's sister-in-law Esther Fisher, the wife of Samuel Lewis.

<sup>16</sup> The military governor of Philadelphia was Gen. Israel Putnam (1718-1790) of Massachusetts. He established what was virtually a state of martial law.

<sup>17</sup> Mrs. Miers Fisher. See Note 6.

<sup>18</sup> Owen Jones was engaged in appraising William Logan's estate. The manuscript journal evaluating the estate is owned by The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP).

the evening with me till after 8 o'clock very agreeably. Coz. Sammy Emlen<sup>19</sup> came down to see us while we were at supper & stayed till near 10 o'clock. Heard this evening that 5 men-of-war were in the river, & that General Lee<sup>20</sup> was taken by Howe, which was a great damp to the spirits of some of our violent people.

*December 17, 1776* In the morning took a ride to Stenton with my Tommy; walk over to the mill. Uncle Logan, Bro. Charles, John Lloyd & Thommy Wharton<sup>21</sup> dined with us at Stenton, two of them unexpectedly. Returned to town to tea. Sister Gilpin,<sup>22</sup> Tommy & Father Fisher drank tea with us. Sup'd at Sister Hetty's for the first time since I lost my dear daddy. Heard today that 4,000 English soldiers were at Moorestown.

*December 19, 1776* Morning at home at work. Dined at Mammy's on venison. Uncle & Aunt Logan there. After coffee took a walk with my Tommy to see Grandmother.<sup>23</sup> By the way met with John Foulke,<sup>24</sup> who told us that the disorder among the poor sick soldiers was better, that not above 3 or 4 died of a day, but that there had died 10 of a day, & that the smallpox was broken out among them, which he expected would make great destruction, as not above one in 50 of the Maryland soldiers had had it, many of them not having a bed to lie on or a blanket to cover them. We returned & sup'd at Mammy's.

*December 21, 1776* Morning at home at work. Went up in the afternoon to see Mammy. Phebe Pemberton<sup>25</sup> drank tea there. Sup'd at home. Heard this day that Howe's army were in many

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Emlen (*b.* 1757, never married) was a son of the diarist's deceased uncle George Emlen.

<sup>20</sup> Gen. Charles Lee (1731-1782) was captured by the British at Basking Ridge, N. J., on Dec. 13, 1776.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Wharton, Jr. (1735-1778) was disowned by the Society of Friends in 1762 for marrying Susanna Lloyd contrary to discipline. John Lloyd, mentioned several times in the diary, may have been one of Wharton's relatives by marriage. In July, 1776, Wharton was chosen president of the Council of Safety, and on March 5, 1777, was inaugurated president of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania.

<sup>22</sup> Lydia Fisher, wife of Thomas Gilpin (1728-1778).

<sup>23</sup> "Grandmother" was Hannah Heath (1691-1777), who was for many years a Quaker minister and who married George Emlen in 1717. Their daughter Hannah (1722-1777) was Sarah Logan Fisher's mother.

<sup>24</sup> John Foulke (1757-1796) later became a doctor.

<sup>25</sup> Phoebe (1738-1812) was the third wife of James Pemberton, whose house on Second Street adjoined the residence of Sarah Logan Fisher's father.

parts of the Jersies, plundered those that they looked upon as rebels, but were civil & kind to them that were friends to government, & paid for what they took from them.

*December 22, 1776* Morning at Meeting. An Epistle read from the Meeting of Sufferings, entreating Friends not to join in the present measure. Wm. Brown preached a very excellent sermon & prayed for the King. Sally Fisher, Nancy Pleasants & Molly dined with us. Afternoon at Meeting, which was silent. Sister Hetty & Nanny Weber drank tea with us. In the evening at Meeting again, which was also silent. Sup'd at home.

*December 25, 1776* Morning at Monthly Meeting, where Susy Lightfoot<sup>26</sup> appeared in Testimony, entreating young mothers not to make such great preparations for their lying-in as they generally do, & to avoid those formal visitings upon the occasion which are too much made use of amongst us, but rather wished they might be thankful to their Divine Helper who had brought them through that time of difficulty & danger with safety. An extract from my dear father's will was read, wherein he bequeathed £50 to the Women's Meeting to be given to poor widows, a laudable example & worthy of imitation. Friend Lightfoot expressed her great unity with such legacies. Sister Gilpin, Sister Hetty, Friend Lightfoot, Sm. Hopkins, George Dillwyn, & Uncle Logan here in the afternoon. Friend Lightfoot & Sister Gilpin sup'd with us.

*December 26, 1776* A very rainy, snowing, wintry day, so bad that I could not go to Mammy's as usual, but stayed at home, my Tommy reading to me in the afternoon & evening in Lytelton's *History of England*.<sup>27</sup> Cleared up this evening. David Franks<sup>28</sup> came yesterday from New York & brought a York newspaper which we looked upon as a great prize.

<sup>26</sup> Susanna Lightfoot.

<sup>27</sup> This book, *An History of England, in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son*, first published in London in 1772, was long attributed to Lord George Lyttleton or the Earl of Orrey, but is now credited to Oliver Goldsmith.

<sup>28</sup> David Franks, an American-born Jew, was a merchant and army contractor who came to Philadelphia in 1740. He attempted to remain neutral during the Revolution, but was accused of disloyalty by the Americans, and was exiled in 1780. After the death of the diarist's father, Franks occupied the William Logan house on Second Street. Edwin Wolf, 2nd, and Maxwell Whiteman, *The History of the Jews of Philadelphia from Colonial Times to the Age of Jackson* (Philadelphia, 1957), 26, 91.



*December 27, 1776* This morning heard an account of the success of our American army against the English at Trenton on Christmas night, which was a very stormy night. Report says that General Washington crossed the river before day at the head of a large body of his army & surprised the Hessians & English before day, that there was not a sufficient number there to oppose them, & that they surrendered themselves prisoners to General Washington except what betook themselves to flight, that he took about 700 prisoners & some cannon with a thousand stand of arms. This piece of news greatly elated our Whigs, & as much depressed the Tories, but I sincerely hope & believe that before long General Howe will subdue their rebellious spirit & give them but little reason to rejoice. Friend Hallowel, Sally Thomas, Sister Gilpin & Sister Hetty drank tea with me. The two latter stayed till 8 o'clock.

*December 29, 1776* Morning went to Meeting. William Brown & Betty Morris preached. Dr. Bond<sup>29</sup> called here after Meeting & gave us a very melancholy account of the sick soldiers, & says they have the true camp fever which is near akin to the plague. He says 15 or 20 frequently die of a day, that they bury 8 or 10 in a grave, & not above a foot underground. He thinks the disorder will spread & that the inhabitants are in great danger. In the afternoon my Tommy, little Billy,<sup>30</sup> Joshua<sup>31</sup> & myself went down to see Sister Gilpin. In the evening went to Meeting, which was mostly silent, but was a favored Meeting to me. Myers & Sally sup'd here & stayed till 10 o'clock.

*December 30, 1776* Morning set off to go to see Grandmother with Joshua & Jem, but was interrupted by the way, & turned back by a multitude of people going to see the Hessian prisoners march to the barracks. Some people think about 700 marched, with some women & children. They looked but poorly clad, were dressed in blue, & their outside clothes appeared to be dirty. What is remarkable, they say there is not among them one English or Scotch prison-

<sup>29</sup> Dr. Thomas Bond (1712-1784), distinguished Philadelphia physician and a founder of the Pennsylvania Hospital, volunteered his services to the Committee of Safety in 1776 and supported the patriot cause.

<sup>30</sup> "Little Billy" was the diarist's oldest child. His birth is not recorded in the Fisher genealogy (Smith, 46). Billy died Sept. 10, 1780, when about seven years of age, as recorded later in the diary.

<sup>31</sup> Joshua Fisher (1775-1806) was the diarist's second child.

er, but all Hessians. This morning my Tommy conversed with the man who has the care of burying the sick soldiers. He says it is not true that the graves are so shallow, but that they die so fast that he cannot dig graves for them all, & so digs a large hole 15 feet square & 10 feet deep & so buries them two tier, & that the highest coffin is about 5 feet underground. Drank tea alone with my Tommy. Spent the evening very agreeably at Samy Pleasants.

*January 1, 1777* Morning at Meeting, which was silent. Thomas Gawthrop dined with us. Friend Lightfoot & Coz. Samy Emlen here part of the afternoon. Sally Waln drank tea with me & stayed part of the evening. After supper my Tommy read me a paper called the American Crisis,<sup>32</sup> a most violent, seditious, treasonable paper, [written] purposely to inflame the minds of the people & spirit them on to rebellion, calling the King a sottish, stupid, stubborn, worthless, brutish man. Heard today that our army are going in great numbers towards Princeton, intending to make an entire conquest of the English *if they can*.

*January 3, 1777* This morning my Tommy & Bro. Charles took a ride on horseback to Stenton. Sally Waln & myself took a walk to the factory & bought two pounds of cotton. Returned & dined alone. In the afternoon went up to Cousin Sally Emlen's. My Tommy returned in the evening & we sup'd together & were agreeably entertained in reading a York newspaper. An express came in today, which it is said brought word that the English had pursued our army as far back as Trenton & that both armies were engaged there at two o'clock this morning & that General Washington said a few minutes would decide it, & as we have heard nothing from there it is expected that the Americans are surrounded & have nobody left to tell the tale.

*January 4, 1777* Morning took a walk with Joshua & Jem, drank tea at Mammy's, sup'd at home. Very unwell with a pain in my face. This evening a paper came out from the Committee of Safety unlike anything I ever before heard of, except the Spanish Inquisition, declaring that every person who refused the Continental money should be liable for the first offence to forfeit the goods & a

<sup>32</sup> Written by Thomas Paine, *The Crisis*, a series of patriotic political pamphlets, first began to appear in December, 1776, and commenced with the sentence "These are the times that try men's souls."

sum of equal value, for the second offence to forfeit the same & to be banished what they are pleased to call this state, to what place & in what manner they shall judge most proper, that all those who have been imprisoned & whose stores have been shut up by them on the account of their refusing it formerly are to be opened, & they are to be subject to this new law, after having experienced all the rigors of the old one—a most extraordinary instance of arbitrary power & of the liberty we shall enjoy should their government ever be established, a tyrannical government it will prove from weak & wicked men.<sup>33</sup>

*January 7, 1777* Morning at home writing & at work. Coz. Polly Emlen drank coffee with me, my Tommy reading to me most of the evening in the History of England. Bro. Charles & John Lloyd sup'd with us. Heard today, but we can hardly believe it true, that Washington is surrounded by 4 companies of troops, each of them headed by a general.

*January 8, 1777* Morning went to Meeting, which was silent. In the afternoon went to see Sally Allen at William Allen's,<sup>34</sup> where she had come a few days before, being turned out of her house by our troops because her husband had gone over to General Howe. Spent the evening at Sister Gilpin's with my Tommy.

*January 9, 1777* Morning at home viewing the eclipse of the sun. Dined at Mammy's with Coz. Sammy Emlen. Sister Hetty & Sally Fisher there at tea. My Tommy & I sup'd at Uncle Logan's.

*January 11, 1777* Morning at home. In the afternoon went up to Mammy's. My Tommy & I drank tea there. Sup'd at home, my Tommy reading to me in Lytelton's History of England. Very melancholy account of the sick soldiers. It is said & I believe with truth that 53 have been buried of a day. Several of the inhabitants have caught the disorder & died of it, & there continues daily more sick coming in from all parts of the country, that unless prevented by a kind Providence, there appears the greatest probability of the

<sup>33</sup> The Council of Safety took these actions to prevent the depreciation of Continental currency.

<sup>34</sup> "The beautiful Sally Cox" (*d.* 1801) married Andrew Allen in 1768. Allen, a son of Chief Justice William Allen, was at first active in the patriot cause, but resigned from the Continental Congress late in 1776, and in December fled the city to place himself under the protection of General Howe. William Allen was a brother of Andrew's.

disorders spreading in such a manner as to make a real pestilence. May the minds be properly humbled under a deep sense of the calamities that seem to await us.

*January 13, 1777* All day at home busy at work. Sister Gilpin drank tea with us, my Tommy reading to me in the evening in Lyttelton's History of England. Heard today that the Americans had retaken Elizabeth Town with a sloop of soldiers' clothes & that Lord Cornwallis had sent to General Washington to desire a cessation of arms for three months. This news affected my mind, as every little victory or even fancied success makes our violent people still more violent. It seems as if General Howe, owing to his too-great tenderness & humanity, & his very great care not to destroy men's lives, will be a means of keeping us longer under suffering. He appears to have too little intrepidity & martial courage to command such an army against such an ungrateful set of men as those he is come to oppose, who have neither judgment enough to see in its proper light the kindness & lenity shown them by him, nor grace enough to accept it, but still go on working their own destruction & will one day no doubt reap the reward of their works.

*January 14, 1777* Morning took a walk to see Grandmother. Heard a great deal of Whig news, brought from the camp by S. Howell.<sup>35</sup> Drank tea at Sister Hetty's, several there. Politics the prevailing topic of conversation, & indeed it seems at this interesting period to be so at all times & in all companies. George Emlen, Myers & Sally sup'd with us. Further melancholy accounts of the distresses of the sick soldiers. The doctors seem very apprehensive of the disorder spreading among the inhabitants & I have heard they say it wants nothing but hot weather to make it a real plague. Calamities of every kind seem to await us, but this seems to be of a more awful nature than any that has before threatened us.

*January 16, 1777* This morning snowed. We have had a week of fine steady winter weather. Dined at Mammy's with John Dickinson,<sup>36</sup> John Lloyd & Thomas Lightfoot. J. Dickinson seems assured in his own mind that France will never suffer Great Britain to conquer America, but will so far assist us as to bring England to consent

<sup>35</sup> Samuel Howell, a Philadelphia merchant.

<sup>36</sup> John Dickinson (1732-1808), the distinguished political writer, lawyer, and statesman, was a connection by marriage of the Logan family.

to a division of the colonies between them. In the afternoon General Mercer was buried from the City Tavern with all the honors of war.<sup>37</sup> His coffin was covered with a pall, carried by some officers; the drums were covered with black & the music played a solemn dirge. A servant led his horse immediately after the corpse, with the general's saddle, boots & spurs on; 8 parsons attended, with all the Virginia Light Horse, officers & soldiers. He was wounded in two places at the battle at Princeton, but a violent contusion on his head, it is said, occasioned his death. His loss is thought to be very considerable to the American army, as it is supposed he understood the arts of war superior to any officer in the service except General Washington.

*January 17, 1777* In the morning took a walk with my Tommy down to the middle ferry about two miles to see the floating bridge lately made by order of the Congress.<sup>38</sup> We also saw many bursted cannon that had been made at our ironworks, but the iron I suppose not being properly tempered, on its being fired off burst into many forms. We dined by invitation at Myers'. Had an agreeable day. Spent the evening at home. Began today to prepare Joshua & Kitty for the smallpox, being apprehensive they had taken it from a poor woman in the street.

*January 18, 1777* Walked up this morning to see Cousin Sally Emlen, as she had sent me word her child was dying, but found it rather better on my getting there, tho' very ill with the hives. Several good women there administering their advice & skill which gave one some knowledge & insight into that disorder. Doctor Chovet<sup>39</sup> was also there, who gave it as his opinion that the soldier disorder spreading thro' the city was inevitable, & that no physician ought to attend them unless they entirely dropped visiting other patients, as almost every infectious disorder prevailed among them & that he was

<sup>37</sup> Gen. Hugh Mercer (c. 1725-1777) was buried in Christ Church churchyard. In 1840 his remains were transferred to Laurel Hill Cemetery.

<sup>38</sup> The Middle Ferry Bridge at Market Street was erected in December, 1776, on Washington's order to facilitate retreat in the event Howe crossed the Delaware and took Philadelphia. Built by General Putnam, the bridge was composed of buoyant logs which supported a platform of planks. Fred Perry Powers, "Early Schuylkill Bridges," *Philadelphia History, Publications of the City History Society of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1917), I, 268-269.

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Abraham Chovet (1704-1790) was an Englishman who came to Philadelphia from the West Indies in 1773. Noted for his wit, he was a favorite physician among the Quakers.

well assured there had been buried at both ends of the city from a 100 to 150 of a day. In the afternoon drank coffee at Mammy's with my Tommy. Spent the evening at home with Tommy. Bro. Charles sup'd with us.

*January 19, 1777* Morning went to Meeting. Wm. Brown preached & prayed. Had no company to dinner. After tea went with my Tommy to see Nicholas & Sally Waln. Evening went to Meeting, which was silent. Francis Worley sup'd with us. In the afternoon my Tommy read me a paper lately come out called the American Crisis No. 2, addressed to Lord Howe, written much in the same strain that No. 1 was, ridiculing the English for their losing the Jerseys & their not being able to keep the conquests they had gained in such a ludicrous, tantalizing manner that I think if Lord Howe ever sees it, it cannot avoid making him feel he deserves some of it. The news of the day is that our army still go on victoriously, that they have the entire possession of Elizabeth Town, & have cut off all communication between Howe's army & New York. The army it is said are at Brunswick & perhaps in a few days will be obliged to surrender, as it is said they have scarcely any provisions. The account also says that Lord Howe is ill with the gout, & General Howe almost blind with an inflammation in his eyes. If all this is true, the laurels must indeed be plucked from their brows & placed on General Washington's.

*January 20, 1777* This morning went to see Cousin Polly Pleasants, who [is] lying-in of a fine girl & has named it Betsy.<sup>40</sup> In the afternoon took a walk with my Tommy as far as the old fort,<sup>41</sup> the day being remarkably fine for the time of year. Drank tea at Mammy's where we found A. Benezet<sup>42</sup> who entertained us very agreeably. He is one instance among many how careful we ought to be not to let outward appearance prejudice us in disfavor of any person, his being nothing by any means pleasing, yet we find in him a mind enlarged by universal benevolence & true charity, an exten-

<sup>40</sup> Mary and Samuel Pleasants had ten children. Among the youngest was Elizabeth, born Jan. 15, 1777, who died in 1794.

<sup>41</sup> In 1748 the Association Battery was erected to protect the city from French or Spanish attack. The battery was located beyond Gloria Dei Church on ground later occupied by the old Navy Yard.

<sup>42</sup> Anthony Benezet (1713-1784), philanthropist and humanitarian, and a member of a French Huguenot family, became a Quaker in England and came to Philadelphia in 1731.

sive knowledge improved by reading & observation, an unbounded desire of doing good, as far as his situation in life will admit of, & to crown all is a sincere Christian. We spent the evening agreeably at home.

*January 21, 1777* This morning remarkably fine, more like April than the depth of winter. My Tommy took a ride with T. Wharton to see T. Lewsley. Morning took a long walk to see Coz. Sally Emlen. Her child continues to lie very ill. Bro. Charles dined with me. Drank tea alone. Sally spent part of the evening here & hired a new maid. Sammy Fisher<sup>43</sup> sup'd with us. Joshua Cresson's youngest child died today of the smallpox. The infection being so much about occasions my being very anxious about my little boy, what to do for the best, whether to inoculate him or not.

*January 22, 1777* Morning went to Meeting. Betty Morris preached. Mammy dined with us for the first time since my dear daddy's death. Sister Hetty & Sister Gilpin drank tea with us. In the evening walked over to see Myers, where we sup'd. Had an account today that two Friends were put into Gloucester jail for reading the Testimony from the Meeting of Sufferings. My Tommy went in the morning to see Cousin Charles Read,<sup>44</sup> who was taken in the Jerseys & brought to appear before the Committee of Safety for being an enemy as they were pleased to term it, tho' he had been a colonel in the service but a few months ago. He brings very encouraging accounts from the English army, says they are in high health & spirits, & laugh at all our boasted conquests.

*January 23, 1777* Coz. Charles Read breakfasted with us, & entertained me agreeably with an account of the English army. Dined at Mammy's with Myers & Sally. John Lloyd & C. Read spent the evening there. Myers sup'd with us. A resolve came out from the Committee of Safety ordering the barracks master to quarter all the soldiers that should come to town after that order was issued on the non-associators. This wicked resolve is particularly levied against Friends, as the violent people were much enraged at the last publication of the Meeting of Sufferings. If they carry it into execution, it will be an act of violence almost too great to bear, as

<sup>43</sup> Samuel Rowland Fisher (1745-1834), a brother-in-law of the diarist.

<sup>44</sup> Charles Read served at the beginning of the Revolutionary War as colonel of the Burlington County militia, but subsequently turned loyalist.

they are men of very little principle, under no discipline, & so intolerably dirty that even in the cleanest of their houses the stench of their dirt is great enough to cause an infectious sickness. A report prevails in town today, & is believed by some, that New York was taken late last 3rd day night [*January 21*], & that there has been several skirmishes in the Jersies within this few days, in which our army have always been victorious.

*January 24, 1777* Spent the day alone busy at work, my Tommy engaged at Mammy's with Myers, overlooking some deeds. Myers & Bro. Charles sup'd with us. A very rainy, warm, thawing day. The Pennsylvania Light Horse came to town today,<sup>45</sup> & brings account that Fort Washington & Fort Independence<sup>46</sup> [are] taken by our army, that the account of [their] being taken got to New York last 7th day night just as the officers & gentlemen were going to a ball. This news so greatly alarmed them that the soldiers lay on their arms all night, & the inhabitants endeavored to get their effects on board of the men-of-war, but they being hauled up in the docks & quite unrigged it was feared by them that the Provincials would attack New York & burn the ships, & that 3,000 men were called from New Jersey to assist in defending the city, & that 5,000 were ordered from Rhode Island to reinforce the army, but that the Sound was so full of ice that they could not leave Newport. This is a well-told tale indeed. The writer deserves credit for his invention, in adding plausibility to what I believe to be so great a falsehood, tho' many of our violent people are credulous enough to believe it.

*January 25, 1777* Stepped up in the morning to see Mammy, who was ill with a violent cold. Drank coffee there in the afternoon. Colonel Haslet<sup>47</sup> buried from the City Tavern with military honors. He was killed at the Battle at Princeton about 3 weeks ago & buried

<sup>45</sup> This unit, originally known as the Light Horse of the City of Philadelphia, and later as the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, had been discharged by Washington on January 23, 1777, at Morristown, and returned to Philadelphia the next day. *Book of the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, 1774-1914* (Philadelphia, 1915), 17.

<sup>46</sup> These forts were held by the British and protected New York. Washington had ordered an attack on Fort Independence in the hope that Howe would remove some of his troops from New Jersey to reinforce the threatened area. The American attack, however, was too feeble to accomplish anything. Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington. A Biography* (New York, 1951), IV, 384.

<sup>47</sup> Col. John Haslet of Delaware was killed at Princeton on Jan. 3, 1777.



privately, but our Committee of Safety had so much respect for his memory that they had his body taken up & brought to town, to be interred in a manner they thought more suitable for an officer of his rank.

*January 27, 1777* Morning at home busy at work. Bro. Charles & Myers dined with us. Afternoon went up to Mammy's, found her rather better. Sup'd at Sister Hetty's. No political news today, except that many of the country militia who are quartered on Friends have run away, being quite discontented & unwilling to go to the camp. One of them said they told him if he would not come, they would destroy all his grain & lay his fields waste.

*February 7, 1777* In a low state of mind for writing, but find myself not quite easy to omit mentioning some of the visits that [have] been paid us on the sudden & unexpected departure of my dearly beloved mother<sup>48</sup> in order that their repeated advices may be the deeper imprinted on my memory, & make a more lasting impression on my mind.

*February 8, 1777* My Tommy & Bro. Charles went in the morning to Stenton with Thomas Gawthrop's son, who has an inclination to take Stenton. Heard today that the Tories in Maryland were rising with an intention to take the Congress who are sitting at Baltimore. Some of the soldiers in this city are ordered down to defend them.

*February 11, 1777* A very snowy day. My little Joshua inoculated by Dr. Coone<sup>49</sup> in the morning. Bro. Charles drank tea with me. Isaac Wharton called in the evening to us, & brought some account of there having been a battle last 7th day [*February 8*], that General Dickinson attacked a small party of the King's troops & was repulsed, upon which General Washington ordered the whole army to reinforce him, but the event of that engagement is not yet certainly known.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Mrs. William Logan died Jan. 30, 1777.

<sup>49</sup> Dr. Adam Kuhn (1741-1817) was a leader in promoting smallpox vaccination. He was twice arrested by patriot authorities during the Revolution. He later served as president of the College of Physicians.

<sup>50</sup> Gen. Philemon Dickinson (1739-1809) was a brother of John Dickinson. An exaggerated account of a skirmish between Dickinson's troops and a British foraging party near Morristown had reached Philadelphia.

*February 12, 1777* Went to Meeting in the morning. Coz. J. Pemberton<sup>51</sup> preached. Thomas Gawthrop dined with us & Bro. Charles. Sister Gilpin drank tea with me. In the evening my Tommy went to prove my dear Mammy's will, which he got done with some difficulty as B. Chew had lost his office the day before by an act of our new Assembly. B. Chew intends moving his family out of town.<sup>52</sup> He expects those that stay in the city will be starved for want of provisions.

*February 18, 1777* Dr. Khyne [*Kuhn*] called to see Joshua who began to sicken for the smallpox, & told us there had been a letter received in town from Colonel Wayne<sup>53</sup> at Ticonderoga that says he has a garrison but poorly manned, only 1,500 men & they sickly, by no means sufficient to oppose General Burgoyne who he is informed intends crossing the lakes on the ice in order to join General Howe at New York.

*February 19, 1777* Morning at home. Several Friends called to see me. In the afternoon Polly Pleasants came to see me for the first time since her lying-in. Sukey Vaux<sup>54</sup> & S. Morris & Bro. Charles drank tea with me. Coz. Sammy Emlen & wife, Peggy Edwards & her two little boarders spent the evening with us. Coz. Betsy Wall called to see me in the evening from the Jersies. She says they suffered very considerably from the Provincials. They took from them flour & pork to a large amount near £600, including some other things, & behaved with great insolence. They ordered all the flour to be carried to Newtown, where they intend to fix Headquarters when they leave the Jersies, which will be as soon as Howe attempts to move, for they fly before him as they would from a ravenous lion. She also says that the English behaved with the greatest civility, & ordered payment to be made for everything they took from them.

*February 23, 1777* All day at home. Sally Wall & Betsy drank tea with me. In the evening stepped to see Myers' child,<sup>55</sup> who has

<sup>51</sup> John Pemberton (1727-1795) was a very active Quaker who made three religious visits to Europe.

<sup>52</sup> Benjamin Chew (1722-1810) had lost his office of chief justice of Pennsylvania early in the Revolution, but had retained his post as register general, because of his willingness to take care of deeds and wills, until Feb. 11, 1777, when he was disqualified by "An Act Declaring What Shall be Treason." Burton Alva Konkle, *Benjamin Chew* (Philadelphia, 1932), 145.

<sup>53</sup> Anthony Wayne.

<sup>54</sup> Susannah Warder (1749-1812) who married James Vaux on Jan. 9, 1777.

<sup>55</sup> Miers Fisher's child was Thomas Fisher (1776-1798). See Note 6.

the smallpox much fuller than my Joshua, & is besides poorly. Various reports in town. Some say there is an express come to town to inform them that General Howe's army is in motion, & that 3,000 troops are come to Brunswick & that they are carrying on some works at New York which they wish to keep a secret, as they will suffer no person to go into the city or come out, without strict examination.

*February 24, 1777* Snowed all day very steady, & blew hard at northeast. No company at dinner. Sammy Fisher drank tea with us, but told us nothing new except that it is supposed this heavy snow will prevent General Howe's moving his army so soon as many people wished for. His tenderness of disposition & humane benevolence of heart is such that he will never risk the health & lives of his men to gain any conquest that he can by a little delay when the spring advances complete with ease to himself & perhaps with very little loss to his army. How amiable is his character, how fit to rule is such a man who, constantly studious of the welfare of his people, is cautious of running them into any unnecessary danger where their lives might be in a manner sported away, yet when they are called into the field of battle the spirit of ancient heroism is again revived, & we may see the noble fire of loyal Britons glow in their breasts & sparkle in their eyes, panting to subdue the rebellious spirit that is now raised against the best of kings, & anxious to show the world how happy they are under his mild & gentle government which breathes with liberty & peace.

*February 25, 1777* Morning busy knitting. No company at dinner. My Tommy showed me a paper which was taken from the York newspaper containing some excellent remarks on Washington's proclamation,<sup>56</sup> painting in high colors his treachery & deceit, & also his wishing his people to be guilty of perjury in coming to swear allegiance to him & the states of America after they had taken solemn oaths to the King. Can there be a greater instance of a heart depraved by ambition of the lowest kind than this, an ambition that wishes to raise his own fortune by the ruin of those whose souls have too much virtue not to oppose the violent & wicked measures now carrying on. Aunt Logan drank tea with me. My Tommy out in the afternoon & had the pleasure of seeing & conversing with a person

<sup>56</sup> Washington's proclamation, dated at Morristown on Jan. 25, 1777, was issued to clarify the status of friend and foe and to give those who had espoused the British cause an opportunity to renounce it. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Feb. 5, 1777.

lately come from New York, who brings the most agreeable intelligence, & says if this heavy snow had not [fallen], he thinks General Howe's army would have been in motion. He left Amboy on 6th day last [*February 21*] & General Howe was then preparing to set off for Brunswick with 4,000 fresh troops which were landed at Amboy in 3 quarters of an hour, that two large men-of-war were ordered to sea to a certain latitude to convoy the Russian fleet in,<sup>57</sup> that they have at least 18,000 men in the Jerseys in high health & spirits, that they are enraged to the greatest degree against the Americans for their treachery & low-lived cruelty, frequently shooting single horsemen from behind trees on the road from Brunswick to Amboy. This conduct he expects will incense them so much that they will show the Americans no quarter.

*February 27, 1777* Went in the morning to Stenton with my Tommy and Bro. Charles in a sleigh. Found John Davis much vexed at being discharged, & Molly espoused his cause. Called at my return to see Grandmother. Sup'd at home.

*February 28, 1777* Morning busy knitting. Bro. Charles dined with us. Caleb & Polly spent the evening agreeably here. Abundance of Tory news in town today. It is reported there [have] been several skirmishes in the Jerseys. In all of them the English have been victorious. An express came in from Ticonderoga, bringing account that General Burgoyne's army is within three days' march of that place, that the garrison is very weakly manned, not more than 1,000 men there & they have no expectations of holding it. Our army gained this intelligence by making prisoners of two men who [were] sent out by the English to reconnoiter the country & by discovering at night large fires & torches lighted. Should this happy event take place, & Burgoyne gain entire possession of that fort, it will be almost as great a cause of rejoicing as to see General Howe in possession of this city. General Lee it is said has [written] to the Congress urging them in very strong terms to send two or three of their members to New York, that the Commissioners had matters of the utmost importance to lay before them. This letter the Congress rejected with the utmost disdain, calling Lee an infamous deserter who threw himself in the way of the English on purpose to be taken, they disdaining peace

<sup>57</sup> Rumors, rumors! The British having engaged Hessian mercenaries to bolster their army were reported to be negotiating with the Russians for 10,000 troops. Freeman, IV, 94*n*.

unless gained by conquest.<sup>58</sup> How infatuated are they. How blindly led on to their own destruction.

*March 5, 1777* Morning went up to Bro. Charles' on some business. He dined with us. In the afternoon Sis. Fisher, Coz. Polly Dickinson,<sup>59</sup> Debby Norris<sup>60</sup> & Bro. Charles drank tea here. My Tommy & I sup'd at Uncle Logan's. Tommy Wharton proclaimed President of the Council, or in other words governor of this state, with some demonstrations of joy from the mob. The cannon fired & bells rang, & an elegant entertainment was prepared for him & his Council at the City Tavern where they dined, & in order to heighten the farce, in the evening [were] fire rockets & bonfires.

*March 9, 1777* Did not go out today. The weather very damp. The frost beginning we hope to break up, & we shall have no more winter, & perhaps our hearts & eyes be rejoiced with the sight of our beloved General before many weeks.

*March 12, 1777* Morning at home. Bro. Charles dined with us. Went in the afternoon to see Sally Waln. Spent the evening at home. Sammy & Myers sup'd with us. Heard today that General Washington was ill with the camp fever.

*March 21, 1777* Morning took a walk with little Billy to see Cousin Polly Dickinson. Dined alone, my Tommy at Stenton. Went in the afternoon to see Coz. Mary Pemberton who has been a long time confined. An account in town today that Isac Allen has [written] to his wife giving her an account that the pontoons arrived at Brunswick on the 6th instant, that a fleet at New York were waiting for sailing orders, destined as was generally thought for Philadelphia, & that he expected to be with her in three weeks.

*March 22, 1777* Cousin Hetty Smith<sup>61</sup> & her little girl spent the day with me. Coz. Jemmy & Bro. Charles dined with us. A

<sup>58</sup> Charles Lee's letter of Feb. 10, 1777, written while a prisoner of war in New York, embarrassed Congress, for Congress saw behind the request an attempt to delude the Americans with hopes of peace, to divide them, and to lessen their war effort and their attempts to obtain French aid. Congress refused to send any of its members to see Lee. John Richard Alden, *General Charles Lee, Traitor or Patriot?* (Baton Rouge, La., 1951), 171.

<sup>59</sup> Mary Norris, daughter of Isaac Norris, James Logan's son-in-law, married John Dickinson in 1770.

<sup>60</sup> Deborah Norris (1761-1839), who married the diarist's brother George Logan in 1781.

<sup>61</sup> Hetty Hewlings married James Smith of Burlington in 1772. Smith was the son of John Smith, who had married the diarist's aunt Hannah Logan.

Friend called here & told my Tommy that he had seen a York newspaper that mentions a packet having just arrived from England which brings accounts that the dispute between England & France is entirely settled, & that from the last advices the English were in possession of Crown Point.<sup>62</sup> Joyful news indeed.

*March 31, 1777* Went to Stenton in the morning with my Tommy. About 2 o'clock that poor unhappy young man was hanged that had engaged pilots to go to New York.<sup>63</sup>

*April 8, 1777* Very little news, except some report of some troops embarking with orders to take in 14 days' water, but little dependence is put upon it, & everything seems still, & perhaps General Howe may take up his summer quarters in the same place with his winter ones.

*April 13, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Wm. Brown preached. An order came out today from the Board of War for men to go round the city & examine what salt provisions, rum, sugar, molasses, coffee, &c each family had, & whatever they had more than sufficient for two or three weeks' use was to be taken from them & applied to the use of the army, as they apprehended some of the inhabitants had stored up provisions for the use of Lord Howe. This arbitrary stretch of power needs no comments; the cruelty of it will sufficiently speak for itself.

*April 14, 1777* Morning at home. Coz. Feilding & Betsy Osborne dined here. Drank tea in the afternoon at Polly Emlen's. Peggy Edwards & her little wards sup'd with us. An express came up today bringing [an] account that 9 men-of-war are in the river, & some say a fleet of transports are seen off the Capes. This afternoon John Donaldson<sup>64</sup> with several others called to know what provisions we had in the house. My Tommy happened to be at the door when they came, & told them he should not give them any satisfaction what he had. They said but little & went away.

<sup>62</sup> Washington had long since abandoned Crown Point in favor of defending Ticonderoga.

<sup>63</sup> "Monday last James Molesworth, a Traitor and a Spy, was executed on the commons near this city. It appears by sundry evidence and his own confession, that he had been sent from New-York to procure pilots for conducting the British fleet up the river Delaware to this city." *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Apr. 2, 1777.

<sup>64</sup> John Donaldson (*d.* 1831) was a member of the Light Horse of the City of Philadelphia, and on this occasion was probably in charge of a detail of it. He was a merchant and insurance broker, and later register general and controller of Pennsylvania.

*April 16, 1777* Morning went to Meeting. Stepped after Meeting to see Sally Rhoads who continues very poorly. Drank tea at Sally Waln's. Polly Emlen & Sally Morris there. Sup'd at Myers'. Nothing new today except that a paper came out ordering that for the better government of the city military law is to be established & three of the Congress are to assist the new President in the execution of it.

*April 18, 1777* No news at all today. The English are again lulled in ease. The toils of war don't suit some of their genius, & they wish, I believe, to protract the time, some perhaps with a view of making their fortunes, some from a dislike of action that may endanger their person, & some from worse motives.

*April 21, 1777* Morning at work. Drank coffee at Sister Hetty's. This morning a paper came out from the Board of War, by authority of the Congress, resolving that 50 people should take from such people as had an overplus of stores of any kind—bar-iron, leather, &c, which &c includes anything they may think proper to take. These things so taken are to be applied to the use of the army, or to be laid up by the Commissary, & the owners to have a small quantity at a time for the use of their families by applying to him. This infernal scheme of robbing people of their private property is, they say, to prevent General Howe's army being supplied by us. But the real reason is that the inhabitants may be distressed in such a manner as to be obliged to leave the city.<sup>65</sup>

*April 23, 1777* Morning at home. In the afternoon Polly Brown & her mother drank coffee with me, but heard no news except that they had taken Joseph Russell's flour from him & had warned Elizah Brown from selling any more.

*April 25, 1777* Morning at home. Drank tea at Coz. John Pemberton's with my Tommy. Called to see Hannah Redwood, who has been ill with a sore throat. Sup'd at Sister Gilpin's. Robert Bowne called to see us in the evening & bring some news not agreeable to my wishes. He says the English he thinks will not move till the middle of May owing to the forage being so scarce that they must wait till the grass is a little grown that their horses may have

<sup>65</sup> The order of the Pennsylvania War Office, appointing a Committee of Fifty to secure provisions and other stores and remove them to the safety of the country, was dated Apr. 17, 1777. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Apr. 23, 1777.

something to feed on, & when they do move he thinks it will be very slow. I have neglected remarking that on the 18 instant, Dr. Smith, Dr. Chovet, young Stedman & Billy Compton were confined in jail for no crime that we can yet hear of but speaking freely & openly avowing themselves to be steady friends to government.<sup>66</sup>

*April 27, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Aunt Emlen drank tea with us. A report in town today that 60 sail of transports are arrived at New York from England.

*May 3, 1777* A report in town in today that the English were about leaving Brunswick, & are going to Staten Island. If this be true, & they really mean to leave the Jersies, what are we to think but that our sufferings are not yet fully completed & the people's minds not humbled in the manner they are to be before our trials are over. How often have we expected them to come to our deliverance, this & the other week, & yet still the time is prolonged, perhaps to answer some great design of Providence, & if affliction & suffering will bring us to a sense of our ingratitude for the uninterrupted series of blessings we have enjoyed for so many years when peace & plenty smiled on our dwellings, let me endeavor patiently to bear that part of the trial that is allotted to me, & kiss the rod that while it smites it may heal.

*May 10, 1777* Morning at home. My Tommy went to Stenton to stay all day. Bro. Charles dined with me. Molly Houlton drank tea with me & Myers sup'd with us. This afternoon some of the Committee of Fifty attended by 30 armed men went to Tommy Gilpin's & demanded the keys of Sister Gilpin, no other person being at home. She behaved with great calmness & presence of mind, refused delivering them up. They said they were come in search of provisions & would force the doors, which they did, breaking open every lock, except one, which they missed. After looking over the cellar, breaking open the countinghouse, & examining every place, & finding nothing, they went over to his store, where they behaved in the same manner, broke open several locks, but found nothing. Ned Evans,<sup>67</sup> who was

<sup>66</sup> Because of the impending danger of enemy attack, Tories and suspected persons were dealt with severely. Dr. Abraham Chovet, Dr. William Drewet Smith, and Charles Stedman, Jr., were compelled to pledge that they would not say or do anything to the injury of the United States, nor correspond with the enemy. J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1884), I, 339.

<sup>67</sup> Edward Evans was a member of the Committee of Fifty.



principal actor, then dismissed the soldiers & told them they had no further occasion for them.

*May 11, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Peggy Edwards & her little wards spent the day with us. My Tommy unwell with a headache. Sister Gilpin drank tea with us. Tea, a very scarce article, sold at £4 a pound, loaf sugar 8 shillings a pound, brown sugar £12 per hundred, coffee 6 shillings per pound, chocolate 5 shillings a pound, beef 3 shillings, mutton 2 shillings, . . . fowls 9 shillings a couple &c, one instance among many of the wretched situation we are in.

*May 21, 1777* Went up in the morning to see Grandmother. Found her much the same, only weaker. Drank coffee with Coz. Sally Emlen. Billy Dillwyn<sup>68</sup> left us this afternoon in order to set off for England in a few days by way of New York, having leave from Washington to pass their lines. Tommy this evening attended a meeting appointed to consider the contents of a letter sent by General Schuler to Friends demanding 1,000 blankets for their soldiers.<sup>69</sup> The Friends concluded to answer the letter, letting him know they could by no means comply with the demand, that they had scruples of conscience not to assist the carrying on of war, that besides the demand was unreasonable as Friends had the same taxes levied on them in common with other people, & as he had said he was unacquainted with Friends' principles, desired his acceptance of Barclay's Apology.<sup>70</sup>

*June 1, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Wm. Brown preached. Sally Fisher dined with us. Afternoon at Meeting again. Wm. Brown preached. This afternoon about 5 o'clock poor dear Grandmother departed this life in great innocence & sweetness of spirit, frequently lamenting during her illness the long lingering & that she could not get away. She fell like a shock of wheat fully ripe, having lived to the age of 86 years with great reputation, & had the satisfaction of looking back on her past life with pleasure, knowing it to be well spent.

<sup>68</sup> William Dillwyn (1743-1824).

<sup>69</sup> Gen. Philip Schuyler (1733-1804) was in command of Philadelphia at this time. Early in May he informed the Pennsylvania War Office of the need for blankets, and the War Office proceeded to assess the public for them. *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* (PMHB), XXVI (1902), 18.

<sup>70</sup> Robert Barclay (1648-1690), author of *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity, as the Same is Held Forth, and Preached by the People Called, in Scorn, Quakers* . . . (London, 1678).

*June 9, 1777* Morning engaged at Charly[']s dividing the linen. Afternoon went with Aunt Logan to drink tea at Aunt Emlen's. Sup'd at home with my Tommy. General Mifflin<sup>71</sup> came to town today & it [is] said is come with orders from General Washington for the militia to be immediately raised, & for the stores to be removed out of the city with the greatest expedition, that General Howe was come to Brunswick in person, & there was the greatest probability of their moving in a few days.

*June 10, 1777* Morning engaged at Charly's dividing the china. Went in the afternoon with Sister Hetty to see Coz. Polly Pleasants. Coz. Mary Pemberton there for the first time since her long illness. Coz. Sammy Emlen & wife came there after tea. We had a little sitting in which he was much favored & spoke very encouragingly to some present. Public orders are given today, it [is] said by General Washington's orders, for a town meeting to be called on matters of importance, & it is generally believed some very violent measures will be fallen upon.<sup>72</sup>

*June 14, 1777* Went to Stenton in the morning with my Tommy, took Joshua. Myers & Sally came in the afternoon. Last night three alarm guns were fired from up the river, & this evening an express came in bringing accounts that the English had moved, that the main body were near Somerset Court House, & that one division was advancing towards Coryell's Ferry,<sup>73</sup> that Sullivan<sup>74</sup> was retreated from Princeton, which news greatly alarmed the people & put them in much commotion.

*June 15, 1777* Very little news today. Many people think the alarm on 7th day [*June 14*] was not much more than a scheme of Mifflin's to get the militia out.

*June 18, 1777* A report in town that Howe moved last night, but which way or with what intentions we cannot hear.

*June 19, 1777* Morning at home. Stepped after dinner to Charly's, but returned home to tea. Spent the evening with my

<sup>71</sup> Gen. Thomas Mifflin (1744–1800) was born in Philadelphia of a Quaker family. He was an early champion of colonial rights and at this time was quartermaster general of the Continental Army.

<sup>72</sup> This meeting was held at the State House on June 11, when General Mifflin addressed the citizens on defense measures.

<sup>73</sup> Coryell's Ferry on the Delaware crossed the river between present-day New Hope and Lambertville.

<sup>74</sup> Gen. John Sullivan (1740–1795).

Tommy at Sammy Pleasants' very agreeably. Some people think & say that Howe's movement was his retreating to Brunswick as they apprehend his coming as far as Somerset Court House was with a view of drawing Washington from between two high hills, where he is very advantageously situated, but if that was the end he wished to answer, he is much disappointed.

*June 22, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Sammy Emlen & John Hunt preached. Coz. Nancy Emlen dined with me. Drank tea alone. Evening at Meeting. Nicholas Waln spoke excellently well. With what power & authority can such a man speak who has gone thro' the religious experience that he has, & whose precepts are enforced by his example. My Tommy set off this morning with Sammy Pleasants to take a ride into Bucks County.

*June 23, 1777* Morning at home cutting out 4 shirts for my Tommy. Coz. Fielding dined with us. Went in the afternoon with Sister Gilpin to see Polly Lewis. Sally Waln came & stayed part of the evening with me. An express came in today bringing an account that General Howe with all his army have actually left Brunswick & gone to Amboy, which conduct appears to be a great mystery to us, or what intentions they can possibly have in thus leaving the Jersies & their friends in it wholly exposed to the ravages & insults of an incensed army, who will greatly exult & rejoice in this retreat of the English. How much to be pitied are those men who had fled to the English for protection, in hopes of soon returning under the shelter of their wing to their families, & who now are obliged to follow them, let them go where they will.

*July 3, 1777* My Tommy went to the meadow, tho' the Test Act<sup>75</sup> had taken place a few days before, but he returned without any interruption. Drank tea at Sammy Smith's with several agreeable friends. An account in town today that the English have really left Amboy & gone to Staten Island, with what view or intention I cannot tell.

*July 4, 1777* At Children's Meeting. This being the anniversary of the declaration of independence, at 12 o'clock the vessels were all hauled up & fired, & about 4 the firing of cannon began which was terrible to hear, about 6 the troops paraded thro' the streets with great pomp, tho' many of them were barefoot & looked

<sup>75</sup> The oath or affirmation of allegiance which Thomas Fisher had not taken.

very unhealthy, & in the evening were illuminations, & those people's windows were broken who put no candles in. We had 15 broken, N. Waln 14, T. Wharton a good many more, & Uncle Logan had 50 cracked & broken, & all this for joy of having gained our liberty.

*July 7, 1777* Went about 11 o'clock to Stenton with my Tommy & Joshua. Had a very agreeable day. It is said an express has come which brings [an] account that General Burgoyne was before Ticonderoga with 7,000 men, if so, that fort will soon surrender, & that the greatest part of the English are gone to Staten Island, that the baggage wagons are fitted out & the vessels ready to sail, but where they are going we are greatly at a loss to know. If they mean to come to Philadelphia, why did they leave the Jerseys, to have the same length of ground to march back again? But I am tired of conjecturing, & weary of such frequent expectation & disappointment & very much wish to be reconciled to their longer stay.

*July 14, 1777* Spent the day at Stenton with my Tommy. Had no company there, but we had an agreeable day alone. An account in town today that Ticonderoga surrendered to Gen. Burgoyne the 4th of this month.<sup>76</sup>

*July 20, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Did not go in the afternoon; was troubled with the headache.

*July 21, 1777* Was bled in the morning. Sally Waln spent the afternoon with me very agreeably. Nothing new today. A stagnation of public news seems at present to prevail, tho' many people of judgment seem to think that Howe is waiting for Burgoyne to come down in order to form a full junction with him that they may act more powerfully together & strike a greater terror on our people, & as Burgoyne is in possession of Ticonderoga, it is generally thought it cannot be many weeks before he will be down, as there is very little or nothing to oppose him.

*July 22, 1777* Very rainy weather for this several weeks past, which will greatly hurt the harvest. Morning at home at work. Went in the afternoon to drink tea at S. Waln's with Sister Hetty. A further account published of the taking of Ticonderoga & an apology by General St. Clair, who commanded there, for the surrender of that important fort by saying his [soldiers] were not half

<sup>76</sup> In the face of Burgoyne's overwhelming force and artillery, Gen. Arthur St. Clair evacuated Ticonderoga at midnight on July 6.

supplied with arms & had less ammunition.<sup>77</sup> Hancock,<sup>78</sup> it is said, has this day received a letter by express with an account that 160 sail of transports are at Sandy Hook, but where they are bound we could not tell.

*July 24, 1777* Morning at Meeting. Stepped afterwards to see Polly Emlen. Bought a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a pound of nutmegs, the price of them was £4/10 per pound, tho' I got them much cheaper for silver. Mace is at 9 s[hillings] per oz., common brown sugar 7/6 per pound, Bohea tea £2/15 per pound, green tea 16/ per pound, loaf sugar 10 s[hillings] per pound, chocolate 6 s[hillings] per pound, coffee 6 s[hillings] per pound, & everything else in proportion, common linen 38 shil[lings] per yard, a house cloth a dollar per yd., the price Sally Wall gave a few days ago.

*July 25, 1777* Felt very low & poorly, but went to Meeting, but was so unwell was obliged to come out. Stayed at home in the afternoon. John Nancarrow drank tea with us. An account in town today that the fleet has left Sandy Hook, but where they are bound occasions many conjecturings amongst our politicians. Some say to this place, some think to New England, & some imagine they are empty transports gone home.

*July 28, 1777* Morning at home. Drank tea at Friend Wharton's with my Tommy. Not any account of the fleet, except that they were seen last 7th day [*June 26*] off Egg Harbor standing to the southward. But many people apprehend they're coming there to be a feint to draw Washington down here, while they attack another place.

*July 31, 1777* Morning at Meeting. About 6 this morning the alarm guns fired, & an express came in which says that 280 sail appeared at the Capes standing in for our bay. About 11 today another express arrived which says that two divisions have got in the bay & the third was coming in, but whether to believe the account or not we cannot tell, as we have been so frequently disappointed with so many false reports.

*August 1, 1777* All day at home. Spent the evening at Sammy Pleasants'. No further account of the fleet today till evening, when an express came in which says the fleet yesterday morning stood

<sup>77</sup> St. Clair's letter of July 14, 1777, to Congress on the evacuation of Ticonderoga was published in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 23, 1777.

<sup>78</sup> John Hancock (1737-1793) of Massachusetts, president of Congress.

N.E. & have entirely disappeared, which gives great joy to the Whigs & causes them greatly to exult, as they say now that Howe is afraid to come here, & dare not encounter with our troops, & they suppose when he heard that Washington & his army were come down here to oppose him, they were struck with great trepidation & have sailed to some other place where they will not have so powerful an army to encounter with. Such is the great folly & blindness of our poor deluded, infatuated people. But indeed the conduct of Howe may I think be justly said, in the words of the poet, "to be dark & intricate, puzzled with mazes & perplexed with errors." Strangely unaccountable is some of his conduct; perhaps time may unravel the mystery & justify his delays. A very disagreeable account came from Germantown this evening that 2,000 soldiers are there, some of them encamped on Shippen's common & some billeted on the inhabitants, & many of them we hear are at Stenton.

*August 2, 1777* This morning my Tommy rose early & went to Stenton to see what situation things are in there. He returned to dinner & brings me the disagreeable news that one Colonel Morgan's<sup>79</sup> rifle regiment are there, that about a dozen officers have taken possession of the house & the men lie in the barn & about the lane, about 90 of them at the tenant's & behave to him with great insolence, tho' treated my Tommy with great civility, & the Colonel made many fair promises that no damage should be done by his men to the garden, orange trees, &c., but so little reliance is to be put upon what they say that I am in hourly expectation of hearing some disagreeable account from there. It is generally thought there [are] about 9,000 at Germantown. They commit many outrages on the people's gardens, taking their apples, turning their horses into their mowing grounds & every other act of violence that a lawless banditti think fit to show.

*August 6, 1777* My Tommy at Stenton this afternoon. He brings me an account that things are in a better situation than we could expect considering the number of dirty creatures that are there. They do but little damage to the garden, & not any to the house except making it extremely dirty. One company dine in the large

<sup>79</sup> Col. Daniel Morgan (1736–1802) commanded a newly formed body of five hundred picked marksmen. His force was part of Washington's army then en route to cover Philadelphia from attack by Howe. James Graham, *The Life of General Daniel Morgan* (New York, 1856).

back room, & another company upstairs in the large empty room that is there.<sup>80</sup> They find their own provisions & have their own cook, but make use of all our kitchen furniture & cook in the kitchen as well as have many fires out of doors. Several of our former great men were waited upon today by our men of present consequence, with a warrant that either required them to go immediately to jail or to sign their parole. Their crime was nothing more than their having been officers acting under the old government. They have not taken the Test Act, & have taken no active part under the new. Gurney, Tillman, Hamilton & Shippen have given their parole, but Chew & Governor Penn have refused, as thereby they say they acknowledge themselves prisoners of war & are liable to be sent to any of the back counties upon any alarm from the English. They have given them in their great mercy a few days to consider of it.<sup>81</sup>

*August 10, 1777* Tommy returned about 11 this morning with the joyful intelligence that the soldiers went away about 5 this morning, & have left it in a dreadful dirty condition, but have done no very material damage to us, but a good deal to the tenant, taking his apples, turning their horses into his meadow, &c. Engaged two women to come & assist in cleaning the house & yard tomorrow. Did not go to Meeting today. The weather is extremely hot. Sup'd at Sister Hetty's.

*August 13, 1777* Morning at home. T. Gawthrop dined with [us]. Took a ride in the afternoon to Stenton, found them busy cleaning. Heard this afternoon that they threaten taking Stenton for a hospital, which would be dreadful indeed. Yesterday our Congress made a [resolve] that if Benjamin Chew & the Governor would not sign the parole offered them, they should be sent as prisoners of war to Fredericksburg in Virginia, there, no doubt, to suffer all the cruelties inveterate malice could invent. Most certain it is that their infernal Master who so long has presided as general adviser & director of their assemblies did not leave them at that time, for unless they

<sup>80</sup> This room was probably James Logan's former library from which all the books had long ago been removed.

<sup>81</sup> With Howe at sea and supposed to be on his way to attack Philadelphia, Congress, on July 31, 1777, recommended to the Pennsylvania Executive Council that it arrest all crown and proprietary officers, or place them on parole. About thirty persons were affected, including Gov. John Penn, Chief Justice Benjamin Chew, James Tilghman, James Hamilton, Edward Shippen, Jr., and one Captain Gurney. Konkle, 149; Scharf and Westcott, I, 343.

had been entirely influenced by his wicked Spirit, it was impossible they could resolve upon anything so diabolically wicked as this, & it has had the effect they desired, for Chew & the Governor, alarmed at being sent to a distant province, separated from their families & every dear connection that could make life desirable, exposed to all the cruelties of a merciless set of men, have offered their paroles. The Congress have not sat upon it today whether it should be granted them or not, & we hear there was an equal division, 6 against 6, and it is to be reconsidered tomorrow.

*August 14, 1777* My Tommy set off this morning for Penn's Neck in the Jersies. Business of consequence demanded his attention or he would not have left home at this critical time, & about 1 o'clock the man who went with him returned with the very affecting account that as he was going thro' Woodbury he was stopped by a certain James Sparks<sup>82</sup> (a new-made magistrate there & thought to be a very violent man) who demanded to know if he had a pass, & as he had none, he committed him a prisoner to Mark Miller's house, till he had considered further of the matter, & set a guard over him. This account greatly affected me, as I knew not what lengths their malice & ill will might lead them to go, & the dread I had of his being confined in jail, & the sufferings he must unavoidably undergo there greatly heightened the painful anxiety of my mind.

*August 15, 1777* Rose early this morning after passing the night without much rest. Many very kind friends called to see me, & showed their regard by their sympathy with me. Some encouraged me to hope that my beloved husband would be released upon examination as they could have nothing against him; others rather thought, that tho' [nothing] could appear [against] him, they might keep him sometime in confinement, merely to show their power & the badness of their hearts. Thus I remained several hours, sometimes my heart sunk with the prospect before me, & sometimes enlivened with hope. But about 12 o'clock I was most agreeably surprised to see him return. The joy & surprise almost overcame me, for in him . . . [is] centered, I have sometimes been ready to fear, too much of my earthly happiness, for we are told that we are to keep our affections loose to all things here, & the manner of his being discharged was such an additional favor as I very much wish to live under a grateful

<sup>82</sup> In the diary this name has been corrected in pencil to read John Sparks.



sense of. He tells me Sparks released him without any kind of application whatever, but told him this morning that they had considered his case & nothing appearing against him, he was at liberty to return home, & gave him his discharge in writing. This, so unexpected & so pleasing, cannot but excite in me humble thankfulness to Him who has all power in His hands, & gives or denies us blessings according as He sees they may tend to our benefit & improvement.

*August 21, 1777* The weather so warm could not go to Meeting. Drank tea at Sally Waln's, & sup'd at Myers'. An express came in today, which brings an account that the fleet are in Chesapeake Bay, nearly as high as the Head of the Elk, & it [is] supposed they will soon attempt to land, but where their intention is to march to we are greatly at a loss to guess. In consequence of this news we hear General Washington is to march with his army to oppose them, & prevent if possible their penetrating into the country, but vain will be his expectations & fruitless his attempt of that kind.

*August 23, 1777* Went to Stenton in the morning, & on the road heard the disagreeable news that Washington's army is to march that way. At Fairhill woods we met numbers of wagons & light horsemen, & on our getting to Stenton found General Washington's bodyguard had taken possession there. One of his aides-de-camp was in the house, & he told us General Washington would lodge there that night, with many of his principal officers. This we were obliged to submit to, & about 12 the General came, attended by about 20 officers & a number of servants. They dined about 3 on a sheep they got of the tenant & killed after they got there. They behaved civil, were very quiet, & Washington appeared extremely grave & thoughtful.<sup>83</sup> We returned to town in the evening, but left Brother Charles there to stay all night. Those soldiers who were encamped near Stenton did abundance of damage to the tenant in the night, destroyed his corn, potatoes, &c.

*August 24, 1777* At home all day. Betty unwell & the weather very warm. Sup'd at Sister Hetty's. About 10 this morning General Washington with his army went thro' this city to cross over Schuylkill on their way to Maryland, the number supposed to be about 10,000.

<sup>83</sup> Not until Aug. 21 did Washington learn for certain that the British fleet was in the Chesapeake and that Philadelphia must be the goal of Howe's army. Freeman, IV, 459.

*August 25, 1777* A very violent gust in the afternoon. Nothing new today, except that a number more troops marched thro' the city to join Washington.

*August 26, 1777* At Stenton all day. An express came in, which brings an account that the English are landed about 4 miles below the Head of Elk, but where they mean to march to we remain in a state of painful suspense about, anxious to know, yet almost afraid to hear lest our wishes should not be answered.

*September 2, 1777* An affecting, trying scene presented itself this day for our further refinement, as we are told it is thro' suffering we are to be made perfect. About 11 o'clock our new-made council sent some of their deputies to many of the inhabitants whom they suspected of Toryism, & without any regular warrant or any written paper mentioning their crime, or telling them of it in any way, committed them to the confinement, & among their number was my dear husband. Three men came for him & offered him his parole to confine himself prisoner to his own house, which he refused signing. They then told him he must go with them, & be confined to the Lodge. He refused going till he had seen the warrant. Upon which they read over a paper which they called one, which was an order from the Congress, recommending to the Executive Council to fall upon some measure to take up all such persons who had by their conduct or otherwise shown themselves enemies to the united states, & the Council gave orders for the taking such persons as they thought proper. My Tommy thought it best to go quietly with them, without waiting to have a guard sent for him. Coz. James & John Pemberton both refused going, upon which they immediately sent a guard & took them out of their house by force, besides several others of the most respectable inhabitants, viz: Edward Pennington, Joseph Fox, Parson Coombe,<sup>84</sup> Thomas Affleck, Thomas Gilpin, Myers Fisher, Phineas Bond, Thomas Pike, Elijah Brown, William Smith, William Drewet Smith, Thomas Wharton, John Pemberton, Henry Drinker, Owen Jones, Junr., Charles Jervis, Charles Eddy, Isarel Pemberton, John Hunt, Samuel Pleasants.<sup>85</sup> The three last were not brought in

<sup>84</sup> The Rev. Thomas Coombe, assistant minister at Christ Church and St. Peter's.

<sup>85</sup> Congress and the local authorities, hard pressed by the imminence of enemy attack, feared that leading Quakers in the city were in communication with the British and therefore ordered their arrest. The prisoners were confined in the Masonic Hall on Lodge Alley, above Second Street on the south side.

till next day, & in that time sent a remonstrance to the Council, but were refused to be heard & were conducted to the Lodge by Lewis Nicola.<sup>86</sup>

*September 3, 1777* Went early in the morning to see my dear husband & his fellow prisoners. Found them in much better spirits than could be expected, but being conscious of their innocence & the integrity of their hearts, & having sweet peace of mind for their companion, it enabled them to bear their confinement with that resignation & cheerfulness which their persecutors will never find, for guilt will always stare them in the face for thus persecuting innocence.

*September 4, 1777* This day our Friends sent up a remonstrance to the President & Council, wrote in a very spirited manner, representing the unjust, cruel & arbitrary treatment they had experienced, & demanding to be heard by them & to know the crime for which they had been thus confined, & this evening they had an answer letting them know if they would take the Test they should be discharged, but accused them of no crime, so that according to that proceeding, the greatest criminal by taking the Test they propose may be absolved all punishment. But they have further resolved that if they will not comply they shall be all sent prisoners to Augusta County in Virginia, about 300 miles distant & without being heard. This cruel & wicked resolve they have represented in very strong terms to the Congress, but whether it will have any effect or not, Heaven only knows, & to Him that reigns there I wish to fly to for help, & depend on no other arm for relief in this time of severe trial & difficulty, when my husband, in whom is centered too much of my earthly comfort, is likely to be torn from me by the hands of violence & cruelty, & I left within a few weeks of lying-in, unprotected & alone, without the sweet soother of all my cares to be with me in that painful hour. Oh, can any pen paint my feelings at this time. But sometimes a gleam of hope darts in on my mind that Providence will interpose & by some means unknown yet to us prevent these cruel men putting their arbitrary wicked designs in execution.

*September 5, 1777* After passing the most distressed night I ever knew, I rose early & went to see my dear husband, not knowing how long I might have that privilege. Found them very calm &

<sup>86</sup> Col. Lewis Nicola, the "Town Major," was in command of the newly organized Veteran Invalid Corps.

composed, trusting in their innocence & confiding in that Hand that can & will at all times protect them. Heard nothing today from Council or Congress, no answer returned to their remonstrance, but this evening some rumors gave me a little reason to hope they would not be sent, as we hear the time that was fixed for their going is prolonged, & I hope by a little delay people's eyes may be more opened to see the cruelty of their persecutors, & they perhaps get in confusion among themselves.

*September 6, 1777* A great number of the remonstrances printed & thrown about streets, which may inform the lower rank of people of the injustice of their confinement.<sup>87</sup> Our Friends very much engaged today in writing an address to the inhabitants, which is to be printed & thrown into everybody's house, which I hope will be of service. This evening they heard by a Friend that the Congress has recommended it to the Council to give them a hearing, but no time was fixed, & we hope it will be complied with & their innocence be made appear to the world, while their persecutors perhaps may be confounded by their own counsels.

*September 7, 1777* 1st day [*Sunday*] & the 6th of our Friends' confinement. Very low indeed all the morning. Went in the afternoon to see my dear husband & returned in rather better spirits seeing him so calm & composed & appearing to have got above the fear of man. This morning came out in the newspaper a number of resolves come out from the Congress giving their reasons for apprehending our Friends, & ordering that 11 papers that they had belonging to Friends, & which they apprehended to be of a criminal nature, might be published, & accordingly this afternoon they were printed & appeared to be nothing more than divers testimonies that have been [written] at different times for this two years past, & which they say show a disposition inimical to the cause of America, but the last paper, number 11, being sent they say by General Sullivan, & taken by him on Staten Island, appears to be a notorious forgery, it being a paper signed Spank Town Yearly Meeting when no yearly meeting ever existed there, & is so different from all the rest that any impartial person must see how great a falsehood it is.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup> This was the remonstrance of Sept. 4, 1777, which was sent to the "President and Council of Pennsylvania" in the names of Israel Pemberton, John Hunt, and Samuel Pleasants, and which was printed by Robert Bell. Copy at HSP.

<sup>88</sup> These papers were printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Sept. 10, 1777.

*September 8, 1777* Went again in the morning to the Lodge Prison to see my dear Tommy & his fellow sufferers. Found them much engaged in writing, & in the afternoon saw a very spirited remonstrance which they had sent in the morning to the Council & which is to be published tomorrow,<sup>89</sup> & in the evening they received a letter from Timothy Matlock<sup>90</sup> informing them.

*September 13, 1777* Words can but faintly express the distress & anxiety of my [mind] since the day before yesterday when was torn from me by the hands of violent cruel men my dearly beloved husband, tho' he & his friends had done everything in their power by spirited remonstrance & messages to get the liberty of being heard. Yet that was denied them, & no other crime alleged against them than that they looked upon themselves to be subjects of Britain. This they thought accusation sufficient to send them 300 miles distant, where their wives & friends could have little opportunity of hearing from them, & much less of seeing them. They were dragged into the wagons by force by soldiers employed for that purpose, & drove off surrounded by guards & a mob. Two of the Light Horse were their principal attendants, viz: Samuel Caldwell & Alexander Nesbitt,<sup>91</sup> besides several others inferior to them in office. Yesterday I heard twice from my dear Tommy, & he writes me word his mind is much favored with calmness & resignation to the Divine Will, & whatever may be permitted to befall them, he trusts it will turn out for the best, and tho' my mind is but little desirous of hearing what passes out of doors, I cannot help remarking that the very day our dear Friends were sent away Washington met with a great defeat near Wilmington, & yesterday the remains of his army crossed Schuylkill in great haste.<sup>92</sup> It is said to go to the Swedes ford where it was supposed that General Howe would attempt to cross.

*September 16, 1777* My mind so deeply affected with the absence of my beloved husband, & my heart so much sunk with the

<sup>89</sup> This remonstrance was dated "Mason's Lodge, September 9th, 1777, 10 o'clock P.M." and declared the innocence of the twenty-two men who signed it and protested against the arbitrary proceedings of the authorities. Copy owned by HSP.

<sup>90</sup> Timothy Matlack (1730-1829), an active and prominent patriot, was secretary of the state of Pennsylvania. *PMHB*, IV (1880), 93. On Sept. 9, he had sent the prisoners the resolutions of the Supreme Executive Council, which had named them as enemies to the American cause and had ordered their removal to Virginia.

<sup>91</sup> Caldwell and Nesbitt had been detailed from the Light Horse, or First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry, to escort the "disaffected" Quakers to Reading on their way to Virginia.

<sup>92</sup> Howe defeated Washington at the Battle of Brandywine on Sept. 11, 1777.

gloomy prospect before & the little probability there is of our meeting with each other soon again, that I have little encouragement to write, & nothing but the expectation that it may one day be pleasing to my dear Tommy to look over could induce me to do it at this time of anxiety & distress. But in regard to the movements of either army I know little of them, except that Howe has made Wilmington Headquarters & taken Dr. McKinly<sup>93</sup> with several other officers prisoners & confined them to their houses with a strong guard set over them. Washington, it [is] said, is over Schuylkill waiting for Howe's advancing, the town in much confusion, people moving their families & goods out of town. It is said several men-of-war are at Reedy Island. Had a letter today from my dear husband by Alex Nesbitt dated from Reading, & wrote an answer by the same person who returned immediately. Very low indeed this morning & sunk almost below hope.

*September 21, 1777* Solitary & alone, & feeling as weak as if almost unable to support the painful anxiety of my mind, I attempt to write, to say something that may perhaps be agreeable some distant day to my beloved Tommy to look over. Yet what can I say but that I feel forlorn & desolate, & the world appears like a dreary desert, almost without any visible protecting Hand to guard us from the ravenous wolves & lions that prowl about for prey, seeking to devour those harmless innocents that don't go hand-in-hand with them in their cruelty & rapine. In regard to public affairs, I can just remark that two nights ago the city was alarmed about two o'clock with a great knocking at people's doors & desiring them to get up, that the English had crossed the Swedes ford at 11 o'clock & would presently be in the city. Had I not had my spirits too much depressed with the absence of my dear companion, the scene would really have diverted me—wagons rattling, horses galloping, women running, children crying, delegates flying, & altogether the greatest consternation, fright & terror that can be imagined. Some of our neighbors took their flight before day, & I believe all the Congress moved off before 5 o'clock, but behold when morning came, it proved a false alarm. The English had only made their appearance opposite

<sup>93</sup> Dr. John McKinly, the first president of Delaware under the Constitution of 1776, was captured by the British at his home in Wilmington the night after the Battle of Brandywine. *PMHB*, XXXIV (1910), 9.

the Swedes ford, & some of our people whose fears had magnified it into a reality that they had crossed brought the alarm to town, & terror & dismay spread itself amongst them. Thus the guilty fly when none pursue.

*September 22, 1777* About 12 o'clock this day came one Capt. Drury & Tom Bradford<sup>94</sup> & demanded blankets or old carpets for the soldiers. I told them I had none, that I had never given them any, but that they had robbed me of what was far dearer than any property I had in the world, that they had taken from me my husband, & that I could by no means encourage war of any kind. This they treated very lightly & said they must search the house & desired me to send some person with them. This I positively refused, upon which they both went upstairs, & tho' there was a carpet on every floor & a blanket on every bed they came down & in a complaisant manner told me they had had the pleasure of viewing my rooms, but saw nothing that suited them. This I looked upon as a singular favor & an encouragement to trust still further to that Hand that had hitherto mercifully supported me. Walked up in the afternoon to see Coz. H. Pemberton & Sally Emlen, with my dear little boy.

*September 24, 1777* Walked over early this morning to Father Fisher's where a distressing scene presented itself. One Capt. Hamilton<sup>95</sup> by order of Lieutenant Colonel White, commander of the city, came there with armed men & forcibly broke open the store door & took away a large quantity of goods & said it was by General Washington's orders, that they wanted them for clothes for the soldiers, & very unwillingly let any be taken out for the family use. This arbitrary conduct of theirs is I believe unprecedented before in any age or country whatever. Drank tea at Sister Hetty's with Coz. Polly Pleasants & several other suffering sisters.

*September 25, 1777* About 10 this morning the town was alarmed with an account that the English were on full march for the

<sup>94</sup> Thomas Bradford (1745-1838), joint publisher with his father of the *Pennsylvania Journal*, was subsequently deputy commissary general of prisoners in the Continental Army with rank of lieutenant colonel. Captain Drury is not identified.

<sup>95</sup> "Capt. Hamilton" was evidently Washington's aide Lt. Col. Alexander Hamilton, whom Washington had sent to Philadelphia to supervise the collection of blankets and shoes for the army. John C. Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington* (Washington, 1933), IX, 245.

city & were at Germantown. People in very great confusion, some flying one way & some another as if not knowing where to go, or what to do. I was much favored not to be at all fluttered, tho' it was an event I had so long wished to take place. We remained in expectation of them all day, but in the evening heard they were to encamp near the city, & not to come in till morning. The night passed over in much quiet, tho' many people were apprehensive of the city's being set on fire, & near half the inhabitants, I was told, sat up to watch.

*September 26, 1777* Rose very early this morning in hopes of seeing a most pleasing sight. About 10 the troops began to enter. The town was still, not a cart or any obstruction in the way. The morning had before been cloudy, but nearly the time of their entrance the sun shone out with a sweet serenity, & the weather being uncommonly cool for the time of year prevented their being incommoded with the heat. First came the light horse, led along by Enoch Story<sup>96</sup> & Phineas Bond,<sup>97</sup> as the soldiers were unacquainted with the town & the different streets, nearly 200 I imagine in number, clean dress & their bright swords glittering in the sun. After that came the foot, headed by Lord Cornwallis. Before him went a band of music, which played a solemn tune, & which I afterwards understood was called "God save great George our King." Then followed the soldiers, who looked very clean & healthy & a remarkable solidity was on their countenances, no wanton levity, or indecent mirth, but a gravity well becoming the occasion seemed on all their faces. After that came the artillery & then the Hessian grenadiers, attended by a large band of music but not equal in fineness or solemnity to the other. Baggage wagons, Hessian women, & horses, cows, goats & asses brought up the rear. They encamped on the commons, & but for a few officers which were riding about the city, I imagine to give orders & provide quarters for their men, in 3 hours afterwards you would not have thought so great a change had taken place. Everything appeared still & quiet. A number of the inhabitants sat up to watch, & for fear of any alarm. Thus was this large city surrendered to the English without the least opposition whatever, or even firing a single gun,

<sup>96</sup> Enoch Story held a city office under Howe during the occupation. In 1778 he was attainted for treason and went to England. *PMHB*, I (1877), 7.

<sup>97</sup> Phineas Bond, Jr. (1749-1815), nephew of Dr. Thomas Bond, was a loyalist. After the British evacuated Philadelphia he went to England, but returned as British consul general in 1786.



which I thought called for great humility & deep gratitude on our parts.

*October 9, 1777* Almost 2 weeks back in my journal. . . . But little done by the English that we know of except last 7th day a pretty heavy engagement, in which it is said the English lost about 60 killed and had about 200 wounded & the Americans a much larger number.<sup>98</sup> Yesterday an express came in which brought word that Lord Howe arrived before Chester at 9 o'clock the evening before, & an express also came in from General Clinton at New York to inform General Howe of 3,000 fresh troops having arrived at New York from England, that General Burgoyne had defeated the Northern Army near Stillwater & was on full march for Albany, where he expected to be in 24 hours, that he had killed 700, wounded 1,100, & taken 1,000 prisoners, with all their baggage & artillery. A most agreeable piece of intelligence to all the real well-wishers of America,<sup>99</sup> & as great a damp to its pretended friends, such as Washington, the Congress, Council, & all the group of what shall I call them—perhaps infernals would not be too harsh a name, for surely their characters deserve to be stamped with the blackest dye—who wish to raise their own fortunes by sacrificing thousands of lives & the total ruin of their country.

*October 19, 1777* Rather in better spirits today owing perhaps in some measure to the good company that dined with me, which was Becky Jones, Debby Morris & Hannah Cathrall, Nicholas & Sally Waln. Father Fisher & Debby Morris drank coffee with me. General Howe about 1 o'clock entered the city with many of his troops, & has left Germantown & its neighborhood, & his lines extend but about two miles out of the city, except down in the Neck. This piece of conduct is beyond our comprehension what it can mean, for he has left it with so much the appearance of precipitation that many of the soldiers' fires were left burning, & but very few of the country people had time to move their goods.<sup>100</sup> Our poor tenant is

<sup>98</sup> Battle of Germantown, Oct. 4, 1777.

<sup>99</sup> The diarist's pleasure in recording Burgoyne's triumphs contrasts sharply with her failure to mention an event which was so soon to occur: on Oct. 17, 1777, Burgoyne surrendered his entire army to Gen. Horatio Gates at Saratoga.

<sup>100</sup> Howe withdrew his army from Germantown to the protection of a more defensible position just north of Philadelphia where a fortified line was constructed between the Schuylkill and the Delaware.

like to be a great sufferer on his returning to Stenton. After having brought one load of his goods, hogs, &c., he was taken prisoner by the American light horse on this side Fairhill, with his man Primes, his wagon & 5 horses. They abused him a good deal & threatened to shoot him, but after some time he by some stratagem escaped into the woods & got safe to town, but as the Americans have now possession of Stenton, he expects his cows, sheep, pigs, potatoes & his little all that the English have left him will go. As to poor Stenton house, I expect little else but that it will be destroyed, not only because we are generally known to be steady friends to government, but General Howe's having made it his Headquarters will render it more obnoxious to them, & no doubt it will be propagated that we entertained him with open heart & arms, when in reality we knew nothing of his coming till he had possession of the place, & it is more than probable, if they should have an engagement near the city & be defeated, they will endeavor in their retreat to do all the mischief in their power to those persons' effects who have befriended the English. Bro. Charles narrowly escaped being taken prisoner by them, going to Stenton on some business of consequence in the morning. He stayed without knowing it till after the light horse passed Stenton. Upon some of them coming up to the house he hid himself, & escaped by coming after dark thro' by-roads to town.

*October 20, 1777* Took a walk in the morning to see Sister Hetty & Sister Gilpin with my dear little son. Read a letter at noon from Coz. James Pemberton<sup>101</sup> to Dr. Park,<sup>102</sup> which affected my mind with the gloomy prospect of their long confinement as he mentions that no probable means appeared of their relief, & that they were strictly guarded, & prevented the liberty of seeing & conversing with their friends, tho' many valuable ones lived near, that they had not yet had an answer from the Congress or Governor Henry, but expected little relief from it when they did. Drank tea at Uncle Logan's. A very heavy firing this afternoon indeed, which was more heavy than any I ever heard, but everything is kept so extremely secret that tho' the firing was but 9 miles off I could not learn what it was.

<sup>101</sup> James Pemberton (1723-1809), Quaker merchant and philanthropist, together with his brothers Israel and John, were in exile in Virginia with the diarist's husband.

<sup>102</sup> Dr. Thomas Parke (1749-1835).

*October 21, 1777* Morning busy. Bought two live hogs, a quarter of beef, & a bushel of turnips.

*October 22, 1777* Yesterday a very large body of men, in numbers supposed to be about 3 or 4,000, crossed the river in flat-bottom boats which had come up from the fleet for that purpose, landed at Cooper's Ferry under the command of General Grant,<sup>103</sup> an able & experienced officer. Their intentions, it is said, [are] to destroy a large magazine at Haddonfield, & then proceed to Red Bank to attack a fort built there which greatly annoys the shipping.<sup>104</sup>

*October 23, 1777* 8 o'clock in the morning & one of the heaviest firings I ever knew, that one 2d day afternoon [*October 20*] nothing to compare with it, & which afterwards I learned was at the fort. Very bad news today. A number of poor wounded Hessians brought over from the Jerseys & from the fort at Red Bank where an unsuccessful attack was made the day before. I have mentioned that the troops were commanded by General Grant, but it was a mistake, for it [is] said that Count Donop,<sup>105</sup> one of the Hessian commanders, entreated General Howe to let him have the command as the Hessians had done nothing of consequence this campaign. He went, poor man, & was one of the first that fell. He was wounded mortally by grape shot through his body, & some say was left on the field of battle. About 200 were brought over, miserably wounded indeed, & 70 were killed. It [is] said the reason of their defeat was owing to there being a much larger number of men in the fort than was expected. Almost equally unsuccessful were the English this morning at Mud Island Fort. After firing for several hours from their mortar battery on Province Island in so heavy a manner & with so little intermission that made the very houses shake, & after losing many men, just as the fort had ceased firing & the grenadiers were preparing to enter by storm, the *Augusta* man-of-war of 64 guns with a sloop-of-war<sup>106</sup> of 16 guns that had been playing on the fort took fire by some accident, & by the time the boats had got the men all well out, both blew up with such a prodigious noise that many people in this city thought

<sup>103</sup> Gen. James Grant.

<sup>104</sup> Having taken Philadelphia, it was now necessary for Howe to reduce the American forts on either side of the Delaware below the city to permit the British fleet to come up and supply the army. The defenses at Red Bank were known as Fort Mercer.

<sup>105</sup> Col. Carl von Donop.

<sup>106</sup> The *Augusta* was wrecked by an explosion, and the *Merlin* was destroyed by fire.

it was an earthquake, tho' the explosion was 9 miles distant. This unfortunate affair prevented their gaining the fort, & was a most grievous disappointment to the poor soldiers, for most of them left all their clothes & blankets & all their tents in the fleet when they marched from the Head of Elk, little expecting to be 4 weeks in this city without having their ships up; & what is [of] more consequence, provisions [are] so extremely scarce, by reason of the lines being so contracted, that unless prevented by a kind interposition of Providence, there is every reason to fear we shall suffer for want of bread, not a barrel of good flour to be bought at any price, & the bakers say they have not more than will serve them 10 days, nor one mill within the lines to get more, except Masters who only grinds what people send. Then, scarcely any meat in market, nor [a] pound of butter or an egg at any price; a very small quarter of pork weighing about 8 or 10 pounds cost me 22/6, & a pound of sausage 2/6. Sometimes by walking down to the ferry you may get a pound or two of butter that is brought over by stealth, but if you get it as a favor you must pay a silver dollar. Not any wood to be had at any price. Many families of the first rank have not half a cord in the world, & know not where to get more. Such is the lamentable prospect of distress that the rich have not for themselves, nor have they it in their power to relieve the cries of the poor, for money will not procure the necessities of life, for as the English have neither the command of the river nor the country, provisions cannot be brought in. If all these afflictions & prospects of deep distress are but a means of properly humbling us, perhaps the great design may be answered.

I cannot avoid mentioning one piece of barbarous cruelty of the Americans, such as I believe is unheard of before. At the time the man-of-war was on fire & the English were doing what they could to save the men's lives by taking them out in boats, [the Americans] kept a continual firing on them, when it is well known in many countries that when a vessel has been on fire the enemy has assisted in relieving the poor sailors rather than see them burnt alive, but my countrymen (I am sorry to call them mine) seem to possess a more than savage barbarity.

Spent an agreeable afternoon, at least as much so as I could in my dear Tommy's absence, for the loss of his company embitters every pleasure.

*October 24, 1777* Morning busy. Sent a tub of broth to the poor wounded Hessians. Sister Fisher, Sammy Smith & his wife drank tea with me. Polly Brown called to see me in the morning & told me Richard Waln was sent prisoner by the Americans to New York. He was taken up by them for being a Tory, & had his choice either to go to jail, to take the Test, or be sent there. He chose the latter, no doubt being in hopes the Jersies would soon be in possession of the English & he be restored to his family.

*October 29, 1777* Sent to market today, but nothing to be bought but a very little ordinary poor beef & some pork at one place at 2/6 a pound, & potatoes at 10 per bushel.

*October 30, 1777* Morning at home, busy mending clothes. Went in the afternoon to see Molly Reeves with Sally Waln. Cow ran away, which I fear will prove an almost irreparable loss.

*November 1, 1777* Low & distressed this morning & not without great reason. The prospect of suffering for want is such that it is dreadful to think what the distresses of the poor people are & must be. Everything almost is gone of the vegetable kind, plundered, great part of it, by the Hessians, as there can be nothing brought into the city except from down in the Neck, the English lines not exceeding 2 miles any other way, & in the Neck the people have generally lost their all. Fences torn down, cows, hogs, fowls & everything gone. Several that I have heard of have been digging their potatoes &c., & 10 or [a] dozen soldiers digging by his side, without asking any leave or thinking of any pay, telling the owners when they remonstrate to them that they have enough for them. Butchers obliged to kill fine milch cows for meat, mutton or veal not even heard of. Had some expectation of buying a cow, but the man had so many appliers that I was disappointed, & he sold her for £25 without a calf & no extraordinary one [either]. Sent to market to get anything, but nothing to be had but poor beef at 2/6 a pound; a very ordinary shin of beef cost me 5. One woman gave 7 hard dollars for a quarter of pork, common fowls 15 a couple, neither eggs nor butter at any price. One woman walked 2 miles out of town only for an egg . . . a thing she could neither borrow nor buy. Ordinary sour flour sold at £3 a hundred. Such is the dreadful situation we are reduced to, & no prospect of any amendment, no wood to be procured, but what a few private people cut. B. Chew's wife yesterday told me that she was reduced

to three sticks, but had that day had permission to cut some from Coz. Pemberton's place, & had sent her own servants to cut it.

But now after feeling & being very much discouraged at the prospect of want, & having lost our cow & no milk scarcely to be procured, not any butter or eggs at any price, & the prospect of my little children having nothing to eat but salt meat & biscuit, & but very little of that, sunk me almost below hope, I say after being in this situation, Neida Preston came almost at the risk of her life (she living several miles without the lines) with 3 pounds of butter & 3 dozen of eggs. My heart revived at the sight of them, & I could not but think it was an encouragement to me not to distrust the care & kindness of Providence, who gives or denies us these blessings according as He sees they may tend to our benefit, & as a further encouragement at noon I heard my beloved husband & his fellow prisoners were well & were to remove by permission of Congress to Isaac Zane's.<sup>107</sup> Even this small relaxation of their rigor led me to hope it might prove one step towards their releasement. In the afternoon Thomas Clousdale bought me two cows for £15 apiece. One gives a gallon of milk a day now & will calve about March next, the other is expected to calve in about a month, so that when the milk of the first fails I shall have the last fresh, & as cows are so hard to be procured, I was glad to get one at any rate, for those cows that are within the lines & are not stole by the soldiers the butchers buy for beef, & will give almost any price for them. Indeed I am often encouraged in believing & hoping that in this time of close trial & separation from my beloved husband, I am helped by a superior aid, as I could not support myself in the manner I am favored to do, when besides the anxiety of being separated from my dearest Tommy & the thoughtfulness naturally arising from an expectation of being hourly confined to my chamber, I have to think & provide everything for my family, at a time when it is so difficult to provide anything at almost any price, & cares of many kinds to engage my attention. Stenton I have done all I can for, & when you have done your part you must leave the rest & endeavor to be resigned.

<sup>107</sup> Isaac Zane, Jr., owner of the Marlboro Ironworks near Winchester, Va., and a patriot colonel, was the son of Isaac Zane, prominent Philadelphia Quaker merchant. Isaac, Jr.'s eldest sister, Hannah, was the wife of John Pemberton, one of the exiles. *DAB*; Carl Bridenbaugh, *The Colonial Craftsman* (New York, 1950), 24-26.

*November 5, 1777* Morning busy in getting a barrel of ship stuff opened which my Tommy had bought in the summer for the cow, but which turned out to be sweet enough to make bread of. How little did my dear husband think, when he provided those barrels of ship stuff for the cows, that we should be glad & rejoiced to make use of them for ourselves, but we now are thankful we have any flour to eat that is sweet. Aunt Logan drank tea with me. Sister Hetty & Tommy Robison here in the evening. Felt a little poorly, but ate hearty supper & went to bed well. Next morning at 4 o'clock dear little Hannah born.<sup>108</sup>

*December 5, 1777* Now may I acknowledge with humble gratitude that I have been favored to get well thro' my lying-in to have a lovely little girl, & every way have been supported & been enabled to bear up thro' every trial & difficulty far beyond what I could have expected, that hard things have been made easy to me. Oh! may I by a careful walking & steady conduct endeavor to show my gratitude for all these mercies, & frequently hearing from my beloved husband has greatly tended to ease my mind of many anxious thoughts, & which I esteem as one of the greatest favors I have enjoyed. Now [that] I am deprived of his conversation, to receive letters from him is one of the greatest consolations I can receive, & to hear he enjoys his health & has liberty of 6 miles is an additional satisfaction.

Many affairs of consequence in the political way have happened since my confinement. On the 16th of the 11th Mo. [*November*] Mud Island Fort taken, without any loss on the side of the English. On the 21st Red Bank Fort taken, without any loss of either side, the Americans leaving it on the approach of the English. On the same day, two hours before day, the Americans set their fleet on fire, & some of the vessels fired on the town. With a dreadful noise indeed, two of the vessels blew up with an explosion like an earthquake, & what made [it] appear more terrible, it being before day, I did not know the cause, but thought if the town was set on fire what I should do with myself & little children, yet I was supported under it with great calmness, tho' my bed at times shook under me, & the

<sup>108</sup> Hannah (1777-1846) married James Smith of Burlington in 1810. Smith, 62. She "adopted the narrowest ideas & strictest practices of Quakerism and was a preacher in her 'teens." Cadwalader, 18.

windows rattled very much. This day about 1 o'clock in the morning, General Howe [left the city] with a large body of men, intending as it is supposed to attack General Washington who is encamped near White Marsh.<sup>109</sup> Bro. Charles went to Stenton, & found everything safe as it was when the English left there.

*December 6, 1777* Heard nothing today from the army but that they had marched thro' Germantown. Peggy Edwards, Fra. Story, Hannah Pemberton, Nancy Emlen drank tea with me. Coz. P. Pleasants sent to borrow our chaise to go out to John Shoemaker's to endeavor to get some flour &c for her large family of little children. A very great scarcity of that & everything else in town, & no money likely at present to pass but hard money, & few, very few, families even of the first rank have much of that & the poorer kind of people are likely to be in a most distressed situation. Potatoes are 15 a bushel, butter a dollar & 10 a pound, common Irish butter 3/9 a pound, cheese the same price, mutton 4, turkey 20, geese 12, very small fowls 7/6. Flour £5 a hundred, & what is to be bought of that very ordinary. Such is the distressed situation we are in.

*December 8, 1777* Several called here. Received two sweet letters from my dearest Tommy. In the evening Henry [came] from Stenton & brought me 3 large jars of honey & a pot of butter which was very acceptable indeed, & if we can but be favored to get flour, bread & honey will be an excellent substitute for many other things that we have been used to. My cow calved, & sow pigged last night. Two of the pigs the sow killed, [so] that she has but 4 left, but hope to raise them that they will supply us with some fresh provisions. What a favor, an undeserved favor, to be so well off at this time of scarcity. George Mann came up in a shallop with provisions, from whom I bought a large hog, a quarter of beef & a goose at a very reasonable price in paper money, considering the extravagant price things are.

*December 9, 1777* Last night the English army that had marched out on 5th day night [*December 6*] returned without doing anything material. It is said they had a small skirmish with the Americans, had 5 or 6 killed & about 70 wounded. The most they did was plundering & ruining many people. Those who had always been steady friends to government fared no better than the rest. Jos.

<sup>109</sup> In this brief sortie Howe sought unsuccessfully to provoke an engagement with Washington.



Morris lost everything almost he had, nothing left but the shirt on his back, & many, very many, others served in the same manner. One very honest man who had always been a steady friend to government & had refused the continental money had his house entirely burnt down. Such is the poor protection we meet with.

*December 10, 1777* Morning took a walk to see Sally Waln, P. Pleasants, Uncle Logan, it being a very fine day. Drank coffee at Sister Fisher's, with nurse & my baby. A large body of men marched out last night, crossed over Schuylkill, but where they are gone we cannot learn.<sup>110</sup>

*December 14, 1777* Wm. Brown & Nicol. Wall came with the news of Dr. Smith's<sup>111</sup> arrival, which was very surprising to us, & could not but encourage us in hoping soon to see our beloved husbands follow.

*December 15, 1777* Rose pretty early this morning & went to see Dr. Smith, to hear what account he brought from my Tommy, & find he gives rather a poor account of his leaving our Friends. He says the person who had the care of them had frequently told them they might go when they pleased & where they pleased, that they had conferred together several times upon what was best to be done, whether to take that leave & return home, or wait for a full clearance from Congress, that they were divided in their sentiments. Some intended to go to Fairfax Quarterly Meeting & so home, & some to stay, & among those who chose to stay was my dear husband. Thus are we likely to be longer separated & perhaps greater punishment inflicted on them for the others' having come away. Yet however hard the trial, I cannot wish my Tommy to do anything but what he is perfectly easy with.

*December 25, 1777* Christmas Day. Sent for Sister Fisher & her little Tommy to come & dine with me on a fine turkey. . . . Heard an account today of our mill being burnt down.

*December 26, 1777* Morning writing to my Tommy. Bought a barrel of flour at £4.10 a hundred. Felt very anxious to know how I should get a supply of hard money when what I had was gone & had some thoughts of selling my best Wilton carpet to raise some.

<sup>110</sup> This foraging expedition of three thousand men under Cornwallis returned to Philadelphia on Dec. 16 with much plunder. Scharf and Westcott, I, 369.

<sup>111</sup> Dr. William Drewet Smith, one of the Virginia Exiles.

*December 27, 1777* Morning Uncle Logan called here. Looked everywhere I thought likely for the medals belonging to the Library. Uncle very anxious to find them.<sup>112</sup>

*December 28, 1777* Snowed this morning for the first time this winter. Could not go to Meeting. Coz. Feilding dined & drank tea with me. Very great distress on account of paper money not passing.

*December 30, 1777* Very poorly with the colic in the morning. An officer came to desire & insist on taking up his lodgings here, which I was obliged to consent to & gave him my front parlor to lodge in & removed all my furniture upstairs, & gave some more ordinary.

*January 2, 1778* Walked out in the morning to see Coz. Betty Norris. Called to see Coz. Polly Pleasants. Found her in very good spirits owing to a letter she had seen to P. Bond giving as she told me an account that when our dear banished Friends received the resolve of Congress that they were to be removed to Staunton, they petitioned the Board of War for leave to return home, that the Congress had permitted them to remain at Winchester, & it was thought would soon permit them to return home. This most agreeable piece of intelligence could not but greatly delight me.

*January 6, 1778* Morning out with S. Wall buying linen & calico. Drank tea with R. Hunt. Received 5 letters from my dear Tommy in the evening which gave an account of their having received orders to go to Staunton, &c.

*January 18, 1778* Cleared up after a heavy rain, very cold. Had one of my little pigs killed today. Becky Jones, H. Cathrall dined with me & T. Robison, & Sally Fisher. They seem to have some hopes of seeing our dear banished Friends before many weeks. Bro. Charles came home this afternoon after an absence of 4 weeks, having been down in the Lower Counties. Owen Jones & several others drank tea with me. Owen says the accounts he has heard are that the Council intended to send for the Friends to offer them the Test, & if they refused to take it, to conduct them as prisoners of war to this city & then seize their estates—such is the report we hear. Oh, what a state of painful anxiety am I in.

<sup>112</sup> James Logan was trustee of the Loganian Library. His brother William Logan had purchased from William Dilwyn "sundry medals" for £29 10s. These medals were devised to James Logan by William Logan and were evidently intended to be added to the Loganian Library. William Logan Inventory, 33, Logan Collection, HSP.

*January 28, 1778* Lieutenant Apthorp,<sup>113</sup> our lodger, dined by invitation with Bro. Charles. He appears to be an agreeable, modest young man, is about 22 & is the oldest of 14 children. Wrote in the afternoon to my Tommy & informed him I intend visiting him in the spring. Several of the banished Friends' connections intend going should no prospect of their release appear in the spring. Nothing but an ardent affection & strong desire to see my beloved husband could induce me to think of undertaking such a journey, which will be attended with great difficulty if not danger. A voyage to England would appear a trifle to it.

*January 31, 1778* A very warm, heavy rain. Sent Betty to market, but she bought but little & was asked 30 shillings for a middling turkey, 15 shillings for a couple of fowls, 3/6 for mutton, 2/6 for veal. J. James called & dined with me, but could give me but little intelligence. Dr. Park called to take leave of me, intending to set out next 3rd day [*February 3*] to see our dear banished Friends. Was sitting all alone when he came in my little back room, & he opened the door so much as my dear Tommy used to do that I could not but think deeply of my lonely situation.

*February 21, 1778* A very fine day. Walked out in the morning with my little son to Samuel Kerr's shop,<sup>114</sup> & bought several little things. Called at Sister Fisher's, found her distressed many ways, one maid married & the other likely to be & she expecting every hour to be confined to her chamber. Becky Jones drank tea with me. Had in the evening three barrels of flour from John Shoemaker, one of which I spared Sister Fisher.

*March 1, 1778* Had a very bad pain in my face last night. Took a dose of laudanum which affected my head a good deal, as I could not go to sleep, being disturbed with the child. About noon had word sent me that Sister Fisher had a fine son & was quite brave.<sup>115</sup> J. Parish dined with me. Sally Waln spent the afternoon with me upstairs.

<sup>113</sup> Lt. Charles Apthorpe of General Howe's own regiment, the 23rd Regiment of Foot (Royal Welsh Fusileers). *A List of the General and Staff Officers and of the Officers of the several Regiments serving in North America* . . . (New York, 1778), 20.

<sup>114</sup> Samuel Kerr was one of the many merchants who came to Philadelphia in the wake of the British army and occupied stores deserted by patriot merchants who had fled the city. *PMHB*, LXI (1937), 167.

<sup>115</sup> This infant son of Miers Fisher died Aug. 1, 1778. Smith, 52.

*March 15, 1778* Morning at Meeting. Wm. Brown & Betty Morris preached. Coz. Feilding dined here. Stepped about an hour with Sally Waln to see S. Fisher. Returned home & drank tea quite alone. Betty went to see her new-married daughter. Spent the evening with Sister Fisher in her chamber, sup'd on caudle. Very bad accounts of the licentiousness of the English officers in deluding young girls.

*March 17, 1778* A great parade before General Howe's door with the soldiers, it being St. Patrick's Day, & the anniversary of my happy marriage.

*March 20, 1778* A very fine day. Morning engaged in looking after the garden. Joshua at school. Hannah went to take a walk & enjoy the fresh air. Drank tea at Sister Fisher's with S. Wall. There heard the distressing account that some man had come from near Winchester, who says T. Gilpin died 3 days before he left home. This dreadful distressing account we hope is not true. What a terrible account it will be if it is.<sup>116</sup>

*March 25, 1778* Had my clothes stolen.<sup>117</sup>

*May 29, 1778* A fit of illness & many engagements has prevented me continuing my journal to this time, & now have to take notice & thankfully mention that on the time when every prospect appeared most gloomy, & I could see neither on one hand or the other any hope of relief, way was made where there appeared no way, & dear banished Friends were restored to their families & honorably discharged. My beloved husband returned to his welcome home the 29th the 4th Mo. [*April*] with health of body & peace of mind, which unspeakable favor I earnestly wish I may ever keep in grateful remembrance.

And now another severe trial is likely to befall us. The English, who we had hoped & expected would have stayed & kept possession of the city, are near leaving us & it is said are going to New York, & we may expect some great suffering when the Americans again get possession. Great preparations are making for their going somewhere. All their baggage, provisions, stores of every kind are putting on

<sup>116</sup> The account was true. Thomas Gilpin, the diarist's brother-in-law, died Mar. 2, 1778.

<sup>117</sup> Sarah Fisher advertised in the *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette* on Apr. 3, 1778, offering ten guineas reward and describing the lost clothing in detail. She never recovered the stolen garments, which included the principal part of her wedding trousseau. Cadwalader, 20.

board their ships, & many expect they will wholly leave us in a very few days.

*June 2, 1778* All day at home busy writing. The prospect of the English leaving us more & more distressing.

*June 4, 1778* Very cool weather. At Meeting in the morning. Drank tea at home. Admiral Gamble arrived at Sandy Hook.<sup>118</sup> A large vessel with goods consigned to us, & part of Friends' provisions on board below, which will occasion some perplexity & trouble.

*June 6, 1778* This morning my Tommy came home & brought me the agreeable intelligence that the Earl of Carlisle, Gov. Johnston & Eden were arrived with Lord Cornwallis, who are appointed Commissioners of Peace, & are come over with very full powers to treat with the Americans.<sup>119</sup> This account gave me much pleasure, as I could not but hope it would greatly alter the face of affairs. Lord Cornwallis with a large retinue of servants [are] billeted on Nicholas Waln, & have possession of almost the whole house.

*June 8, 1778* Busy at work in the morning. My Tommy at dinner informed me that the army are busily preparing to move & everything gives us reason to believe they are really a-going, which made me very dull indeed. Not that I would wish to put too much confidence in armies, but having so long enjoyed the greatest tranquillity & peace under the British Government, the apprehensions of again coming under the arbitrary power of the Congress are very dreadful. Drank tea at Warder's. Walked up in the evening with my Tommy to Coz. John Pemberton's whom we found very unwell. He seemed desirous Friends in general should wait on these Commissioners as messengers of peace, & inform them how much they wished to promote so good a work. Called in our way at P. Pleasants'. Found her quite of the same opinion, that it was Friends' absolute duty to wait upon the Commissioners.

*June 9, 1778* This morning my Tommy & Father Fisher waited on Gov. Johnson, were received with great politeness, & treated with much openness. He showed them the articles of treaty,

<sup>118</sup> Adm. James Gambier (1723-1789) arrived at Sandy Hook on May 26, 1778, with twenty-three ships under his convoy. Gambier served as second in command of naval units under Lord Howe. *New-York Gazette and The Weekly Mercury*, June 1, 1778.

<sup>119</sup> Appointed under the new Conciliatory Acts of Parliament for negotiating peace, the arrival on June 6 of this ill-fated peace commission—the Earl of Carlisle, Gov. George Johnston of New York, and William Eden—delayed Clinton's evacuation of the city for a few days.

which are humiliating indeed. If Independence is but given up in name, everything is granted they could desire or ask.

*June 10, 1778* Morning at home. My Tommy, his brothers, & S. Pleasants waited on Lord Carlisle, Johnson & Eden. The former was much engaged & could not see them, the latter they met at Gov. Johnson's, where they were received politely. This morning dispatches were sent out for the Congress by Johnson's secretary but he returned in a few hours, General Washington not permitting him to go on, as he had no instructions from Congress for that purpose.

*June 11, 1778* At Meeting in the morning. Called at Nanny Powell's. Drank tea at Coz. P. Pleasants' with Sister Hetty, my Tommy & Joshua. Capt. Ford greatly exasperated indeed. Col. Prescott<sup>120</sup> wishes for peace on any terms. Lord Cathcart<sup>121</sup> set out today with the dispatches to Congress. They were taken from him & forwarded by General Washington.

*June 12, 1778* Morning at Sally Waln's. Found her a good deal distressed on account of the imposition of Lord Cornwallis' servants, who really behave with great insolence. Took a ride in the afternoon with my Tommy & Joshua down in the Neck. Saw great devastations indeed. Fences much destroyed, soldiers cutting the grass & bringing it away by horse loads—such is the wanton destruction that is made of our property. Apthorp, our lodger, tells me that he expects the whole army will leave the city in a few days, as what he calls the battalion wagons are this day gone over, & which he says they cannot do without here.

*June 14, 1778* Morning at Meeting. Wm. Brown & Nicholas<sup>122</sup> preached. My Tommy waited on Governor Johnston to Meeting. At home the remainder of the day. The English very busily engaged in sending everything away. The Commissioners' & Lord Cornwallis' baggage all packed up & sending away, which makes the affair look more serious than it ever yet has done, & the prospect is gloomy indeed.

*June 15, 1778* Engaged in buying several little matters at shops, & getting some necessaries from the store. The Hessians all

<sup>120</sup> "Col. Prescott" was presumably Col. Richard Prescott of the 7th Regiment of Foot (Royal Fusileers). Capt. Ford has not been identified.

<sup>121</sup> William Schaw Cathcart, tenth Baron Cathcart, entered the army in 1777 and later attained the full rank of general. He died in 1843. *PMHB*, XI (1887), 139.

<sup>122</sup> Nicholas Waln.

crossed the river today & all the British troops, except the grenadiers & light infantry, who are left to guard the city, & the tents in the Jersies make a beautiful appearance from Market Street wharf. My Tommy this morning waited on several of the Commissioners.

*June 17, 1778* Apthorp took leave of us this evening &, he says, expects the whole army will leave us about 4 tomorrow morning.

*June 18, 1778* This morning about 6 the grenadiers & light infantry left us, & in less than a quarter of an hour the Americans were in the city. Judge, O any impartial person, what were my feelings at this time.