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COVER ILLUSTRATION: Broadside, 1860, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, available at <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/4911>. This campaign poster encourages voters to support both the Republican presidential ticket and Pennsylvania gubernatorial candidate Andrew Curtin. Yet as author Jack Furniss shows, Lincoln and Curtin's easy coexistence on broadsides belies a more complex political reality. In "Andrew Curtin and the Politics of Union," Furniss argues that Curtin represented a form of Civil War Unionism that was ideologically distinct from Republicanism.

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Christopher Demuth: From “Single Brother” to Celebrated Snuff Maker

ABSTRACT: Christopher Demuth’s early years in the Moravian community of Bethlehem, which included the traumatic transition from its “General Economy,” shaped and helped prepare him for a new career in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Trained in carpentry and millwork, Demuth went on to be the most successful tobacconist in Lancaster, specializing in snuff, which he sold throughout Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. His extensive operation demonstrates Lancaster’s importance as a production and distribution node, as well as the significant role that Pennsylvania tobacconists played in the state and national economy decades before tobacco was grown commercially in the state.

IN OPERATION FROM CIRCA 1770 to 2010, the Demuth Tobacco Shop, 114–116 East King Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is often described as the oldest of its kind in America. Remarkably, for most of those years it was run by one family. Robert (Rupurtus) Hartaffel began the business, but his son-in-law, Christopher Demuth, expanded it and is generally credited as founder. The ownership of the shop is well documented, as is much of the family history, including the career of artist Charles

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Demuth, Christopher's great-great-grandson.¹ However, virtually nothing has been published about Christopher Demuth's youth in the Moravian community of Bethlehem or his early years in Lancaster. Likewise, historians have paid scant attention to tobacco manufacturing in early America, particularly in Pennsylvania.

At first glance, there seems to be little common ground between life in a pietistic community and building a dynastic business in the early days of the American tobacco industry. However, evidence suggests that the two seemingly opposite phases of Demuth's life were closely connected and that living and laboring as part of the Moravian congregation directly shaped his later career. His experiences in Bethlehem, a closed religious community as well as a commercial and industrial center, instilled in him both artisanal skills and an understanding of the Moravians' extensive business connections with the regional economy. When his nonconforming ways prompted church officials to exile him, he was able to use the craft skills and entrepreneurial attitudes he had absorbed in Bethlehem to master the tobacconist trade and build a substantial business in Lancaster.

Demuth's journey from Moravian single brother to snuff maker is a fascinating story with implications well beyond individual or local history. It provides an in-depth picture of the wrenching changes that the Moravian church and its flagship American town, Bethlehem, underwent in the mid-eighteenth century and illustrates on a detailed level the effects of those upheavals. Additionally, a closer examination of Demuth's career is significant because so little work has been done on Pennsylvania's early tobacco industry, despite the fact that, in 1810, Pennsylvania, where tobacco was not yet grown commercially, rivaled Virginia and outpaced Maryland in tobacco manufacturing. Exploring the details of Demuth's operation also highlights the importance of Lancaster as a center of commerce, production, and distribution and reminds us that early Americans

¹ Henry C. Demuth, *Demuth's 1770: The History of a Lancaster Tradition* (Lancaster, PA, 1925); Miloslav Rechcigl Jr., "The Demuth Genealogy Revisited: A Moravian Brethren Family from Czechoslovakia," *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 92 (1989–90): 55–68; Emily Farnham, *Charles Demuth: Behind a Laughing Mask* (Norman, OK, 1971); Betsy Fahlman and Claire M. Barry, *Chimneys and Towers: Charles Demuth's Late Paintings of Lancaster* (Philadelphia, 2007). On the shop, see also Diane Wenger and J. Ritchie Garrison, "Commerce and Culture: Pennsylvania German Commercial Vernacular Architecture," in *Architecture and Landscape of the Pennsylvania Germans, 1720–1920*, ed. Sally McMurry and Nancy Van Dolsen (Philadelphia, 2011), 167–71. On Demuth's business, see Diane Wenger, "Christopher Demuth," in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, vol. 1, ed. Marianne S. Wokeck, German Historical Institute, last modified Aug. 9, 2013, <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=125>.

were deeply involved in business and industry well before the so-called market revolution or the late nineteenth-century industrial revolution.²

Demuth's connection with the Moravian Church came through his parents, Regina and Gotthard Demuth, who were among the Eastern European pietists who found refuge from persecution on Count Nickolaus Zinzendorf's estate in Saxony. Zinzendorf created the village of Herrnhut for the refugees and became the spiritual leader of the group who became known as *Unitas Fratrum* or Moravians. Moravians believed they were called to spread the gospel worldwide; the Demuths embraced that effort and joined the small missionary band that sailed to Savannah, Georgia, in 1735–36. For a number of reasons, the Moravians did not flourish in Georgia, and the Demuths were among the first to leave. They first went to New York but soon relocated to Germantown, Pennsylvania, where Christopher was born on September 19, 1738. Another son, Christian, followed on December 26, 1740.³

The Demuths maintained ties to the Moravian church, and Zinzendorf listed them as members of the Bethlehem congregation when he established the Pennsylvania town in 1741, in spite of the fact that they lived apart from this community.⁴ Under the social and economic system known as the "General Economy," residency in Bethlehem was restricted to church members, and town residents were divided by age, sex, and marital status into "choirs" who lived and worshipped together. They worked communally at various trades and professions, exchanging labor for food, clothing, and tools provided by the church, with profits supporting missionary outreach. Church leaders dictated virtually every aspect of members' lives, including the type of work they did, where they lived, whether they would be sent to the mission fields, and whom they would marry.⁵

² On the timing of the market revolution, see Diane E. Wenger, *A Country Storekeeper in Pennsylvania: Creating Economic Networks in Early America, 1790–1807* (University Park, PA, 2008), 3–8.

³ Gotthard sailed with the initial contingent in 1735; Regina came in 1736. Adelaide L. Fries, *Moravians in Georgia, 1735–1740* (Raleigh, NC, 1905), 47–48, 112, 237; Aaron Spencer Fogleman, "The Decline and Fall of the Moravian Community in Colonial Georgia: Revising the Traditional View," *Unitas Fratrum* 48 (2001): 10. The births are recorded in the "Catalog of Single Brothers and Boys in Bethlehem," BethSB 06:51, Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, PA (hereafter MAB). I am indebted to Alan Keyser for translating these and other Demuth documents from the old German script. I am also grateful to Marianne S. Wokeck, whose astute comments at conferences where I presented papers on Demuth helped shaped my thinking about his business.

⁴ Kenneth G. Hamilton, *The Bethlehem Diary*, vol. 1, 1742–1744 (Bethlehem, PA, 1971), 18.

⁵ Katherine Carté Engel, *Religion and Profit: Moravians in Early America* (Philadelphia, 2009), 32–40; Beverly Prior Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem: From Communal Mission to Family Economy* (Philadelphia, 1988), 10–13; Gillian Lindt Gollin, "Family Surrogates in Colonial America: The Moravian Experiment," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 31 (1969): 655.

The Demuths visited Bethlehem frequently, and Gotthard, who was a carpenter, helped build the town's mill complex. When Gotthard died suddenly in December 1744, Regina was left with no means of support, and she and her sons moved to Bethlehem.⁶ The move gave her the support of the close-knit religious community, but it also meant that she and the boys were separated, as she lived with other widows in the house for "Married People," while six-year-old Christopher and four-year-old Christian entered the Little Boys' Choir.⁷ In 1745, the family was further split when the boys were enrolled in a Moravian boarding school in Montgomery County.⁸ After leaving school, Christian lived in Christiansbrunn, a sister settlement north of Bethlehem, and later moved to the Moravian town of Hope, New Jersey, where he died in 1781. Christopher returned to Bethlehem, where he trained as a carpenter, worked on the town's mills and waterworks, and played trombone for Sunday worship; as he grew to manhood, he became part of the Single Brothers' Choir.⁹

Although they lived in a closed settlement, Demuth and other inhabitants of Bethlehem were not cloistered. Town elders kept in close touch with the mother congregation in Herrnhut. They sent town residents on missionary journeys to far-flung places and occasionally reassigned members to other nearby Moravian settlements where their particular skills were needed. In addition, the Bethlehem congregation was deeply embedded in the local and regional economy. Members engaged in artisanal, commercial, and industrial activities, with proceeds financing congregational missionary work, and they welcomed trade with outsiders. In fact, the volume of these exchanges was large enough to prompt

⁶ Hamilton, *Bethlehem Diary*, 1:27, 34, 146, 151, 213, 215.

⁷ A separate Widows' House was constructed in 1755. See John W. Jordan, "A Historical Sketch of the Widows' House at Bethlehem, Pa., 1768–1892," *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 4 (1892): 101–24.

⁸ "The Moravian School for Boys in Frederic Township, Philadelphia County, June, 1745, to September, 1750," in Abraham Reincke and William C. Reichel, "A Register of Members of the Moravian Church, and of Persons Attached to Said Church in This Country and Abroad, between 1727 and 1754," *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 1 (1873): 401–5.

⁹ "Catalog of the Single Brothers and Boys in Bethlehem," 1762, BethSB06:54, MAB; Mila Rechcigl, "Demuth Family Tree: A Moravian-Brethren Family from Moravia, Czech Republic," last modified Aug. 26, 2002, <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=mila&id=I0064>; Stephen H. Cutcliffe and Karen Z. Huetter, "Perfection in the Mechanical Arts: The Development of Moravian Industrial Technology in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1741–1814," in *Backcountry Crucibles: The Lehigh Valley from Settlement to Steel*, ed. Jean R. Soderlund and Catherine S. Parzynski (Bethlehem, PA, 2008), 175.

the congregation to build a series of “strangers’ stores” and two taverns, the Crown and the Sun, specifically for these visitors.¹⁰ This meant that Demuth and other residents were familiar with the market exchanges between townspeople and non-Moravians, who regularly patronized Bethlehem’s workshops, stores, and mills. They understood the need for these artisanal shops and other businesses to make a profit to support the congregation.

Although they engaged in commercial transactions with outsiders, Moravians’ relations with “strangers” were not always cordial. Because of their pacifism, communalism, acceptance of female leaders, and unorthodox worship practices (which, in early years, focused on Jesus’s blood and wounds), Moravians were viewed with suspicion and, at times, outright hostility.¹¹ When the French and Indian War erupted in 1754, Moravians were further suspect because of their close relationships with Native American converts. Outsiders accused Moravians of siding with the French and Indians or even being papists. This sentiment was somewhat mitigated when natives attacked the Moravian mission at Gnadenhütten in November 1755 and murdered eleven people. But old antagonisms reemerged during Pontiac’s Rebellion (1763) because Moravians showed sympathy and support for Indians, whom by that time most Anglo-Americans regarded as the universal enemy.¹²

All of this meant that life in Bethlehem was not always serene for Demuth and other residents. The war and subsequent uprising had a direct effect on the settlement because it lay so close to the front lines. Mindful of danger, elders erected a palisade and took an inventory of the weapons in town; coincidentally, Demuth was one of the brothers who owned a gun.¹³ The church also opened Bethlehem to refugees, including Christian Indians, and the cost of housing and feeding the extra people strained congregational resources. At the same time, fighting in Europe raged around Herrnhut, so the war touched Moravians on both sides

¹⁰ Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 35; William J. Murtagh, *Moravian Architecture and Town Planning: Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and Other Eighteenth-Century American Settlements* (Philadelphia, 1967), 46–48, 69–73, 79–82; Cutcliffe and Huetter, “Perfection in the Mechanical Arts,” 162.

¹¹ Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Jesus is Female: Moravians and Radical Religion in Early America* (Philadelphia, 2007), 139–41; Paul Peucker, *A Time of Sifting: Mystical Marriage and the Crisis of Moravian Piety in the Eighteenth Century* (University Park, PA, 2015), 26–28.

¹² Daniel K. Richter, *Native Americans’ Pennsylvania* (University Park, PA, 2005), 54–66; Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 137–46.

¹³ Minutes of *Aufseher Collegium*, Aug. 1, 1763, trans. Jeannette Norfleet, BethCong:130, MAB. In spite of their many other restrictions, Moravians were permitted private property.

of the globe. The effects of the war, along with years of imprudent fiscal management by Zinzendorf, created a financial crisis on top of psychological stresses.¹⁴

As church leaders sought to pay off mounting debts, Bethlehem's General Economy came under scrutiny. The leaders had considered ending the communitarian arrangement as early as 1748, but members of the community had mixed feelings about this prospect. While the General Economy may or may not have been intended to be permanent (historians disagree on this point), it had become for some members an important part of their spiritual lives, and they were reluctant to abandon it.¹⁵ Others felt differently; the population of Bethlehem had grown, and there were complaints about shortages of food and clothing, overly austere living conditions, and the unequal division of labor. For some, the enthusiasm for living in separate choirs had waned; they wanted more traditional families. At least a few craftsmen were tired of working under the heavy hand of the church and wished to operate independently, while single brothers, who outnumbered single sisters, may have resented the rule against marrying outsiders.¹⁶ In 1762, two years after Zinzendorf's death, Herrnhut leaders finally ended the General Economy, and Bethlehem transitioned from communal living to capitalism and more orthodox ways of living and worshipping. This did not occur without problems, as Demuth's experience shows. Along with other community members, Demuth grew discontented and even disobedient in these unsettling times, and church leaders frequently chastised him for his indiscretions.

One clash came in July 1762 over Demuth's failure to attend a community Lovefeast where he was supposed to play his trombone.¹⁷ As punishment, the elders temporarily banned Demuth and other errant musicians

¹⁴Hellmuth Erbe, *Bethlehem, Pa.: A Communitistic Herrnhut Colony of the 18th Century* (Stuttgart, Ger., 1929), 104–14; Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 135–46; Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 28–31.

¹⁵Smaby states the economy was meant to be permanent. Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 34. Engel reaches the opposite conclusion. Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 146–53.

¹⁶Cutcliffe and Huetter, "Perfection in the Mechanical Arts," 163. In 1754, according to Gollin, there was "one single Sister for every seven single Brethren." Gollin, "Family Surrogates in Colonial America," 655. Smaby found the adult population between 1754 and 1763 was 44 percent female and 56 percent male. Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 54.

¹⁷The Lovefeast (*Liebesmahl*) is a worship service in which participants "sang hymns and liturgies and shared a simple meal of buns and coffee or chocolate." Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 46. It remains an important custom in the Moravian Church today. See "The Lovefeast," *Moravian Church in North America*, last modified 2003, <http://www.moravian.org/faith-a-congregations/the-lovefeast/>. Music was an important component of Moravian worship. Visitors to Bethlehem frequently commented on the skill of the town's musicians. Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 21–22, 179–80.

from Communion and from playing their instruments.¹⁸ Demuth also ran into trouble because of his attitude in the workshop. When church leaders abolished the General Economy, they allowed some craftsmen to work independently but maintained ownership of such crucial businesses as milling, brewing, linen weaving, and carpentry. Workers in these trades received a set wage from the church rather than working for themselves. This system of paying one set of workers a fixed wage while allowing others to work independently seemed unfair to some participants and was bound to cause problems. To add to the brothers' disgruntlement, as Gillian Lindt Gollin suggests, pay rates in Bethlehem may have been lower than in the rest of the colony.¹⁹ In August 1763, Bethlehem's *Aufseher Collegium* (board of supervisors) learned of growing rebellion among the carpenters. Brother Sturgis had walked out of the shop, and "Brother Demuth did not want to work for fair weekly wage but rather wanted to be paid by the piece."²⁰ The following year (September 1764), Demuth's name again came before the supervisors because he was demanding a daily wage of five shillings. The board offered four shillings, six pence a day, reduced to four shillings in winter, and declared, "if [Demuth] was not satisfied with that he could look for work where he wished, only not in his trade."²¹

About the same time he was complaining about his pay, Demuth was again charged with misconduct in church. Congregational leaders claimed that he was glancing so frequently at the single sisters during worship that he distracted the other musicians. They decided the musicians could no longer play facing the sisters and again barred Demuth from playing. Shortly afterward, Demuth, along with others, was once more held back from Communion.²²

The next year the situation deteriorated further. On July 8, 1765, Brother John Christian Richter, head of the carpenter shop, reported to the supervisors that Demuth had accepted work from two other brothers without informing him, violating shop rules. Richter complained bitterly that "Demuth is trying in every way to be and act independently; his desire

¹⁸ Diary of the Single Brothers in Bethlehem (hereafter Single Brothers' Diary), July 31, 1762, trans. Alan Keyser, BethSB03:2, MAB.

¹⁹ Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 173; Gollin, "Family Surrogates in Colonial America," 656.

²⁰ Minutes of *Aufseher Collegium*, Aug. 17 and 22, 1763, trans. Jeannette Norfleet, BethCong:130, MAB.

²¹ Minutes of *Aufseher Collegium*, Sept. 24, 1764, trans. Jeannette Norfleet, BethCong:130, MAB.

²² When he apologized in writing he regained his trombone privileges. Single Brothers' Diary, Sept. 17 and 21, 1764, and Oct. 20, 1764, trans. Alan Keyser, BethSB03:2, MAB.

is not to work under a master." The board vowed that Demuth "could not and should not be established for himself. If that does not please him, he can go where he wants." Two days later they spoke to Demuth and urged him to comply with regulations, which he promised to do.²³

Historian Beverly Prior Smaby emphasizes that it was not unusual for church leaders to withhold members from Communion if they judged them to not be in proper spiritual condition.²⁴ Demuth seemed penitent, and he was readmitted to Communion each time, but it seems that he could not conform to congregational expectations. The Bethlehem system was meant to control behavior in order to ensure communal and spiritual harmony; if a member acted in ways "considered damaging" to the congregation, the individual was required to leave. Historian Kate Carté Engel sees little evidence of members challenging authority during the General Economy and theorizes that discontents probably left by choice. Likewise, Smaby notes the decision to dismiss unruly congregational members "was not taken very frequently."²⁵ However, dismissal was precisely what Demuth faced. On August 4, 1766, the Single Brothers' diary reported that Demuth, "with whom we have had patience and have so often reminded and warned[, but who] still went his own way[,] received the *Consilium Abeundi*."²⁶ Literally "advice to leave," this command is a traditional way of dismissing a student from university or church school in Germany.²⁷ Four other men were ordered out at the same time; the diary's year-end summary confirms the men's departure, describing them as "harmful and dangerous people."²⁸

Moravian records show that such expulsions may have been rare, but they were not unique. Shoemaker Jacob Musch "left [Bethlehem] in disrepute in 1759." He relocated to Easton and later sued the church (without

²³ Minutes of *Aufseher Collegium*, July 8, 16, and 18, 1765, trans. Jeannette Norfleet, BethCong:130, MAB.

²⁴ Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 17–18.

²⁵ Engel, *Religion and Profit*, 41; Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 23.

²⁶ "Krigte der bekannte Crph Demuth, den wir so viele Jahren mit Gedult getragen, und so oft erinnert und gewarnt worden, und doch immer seinen eigenen Gang fortgegangen ist, Consilium abeundi," Single Brothers' Diary, Aug. 4, 1766, trans. Alan Keyser, BethSB03:2, MAB.

²⁷ *International Dictionary*, s.v. "consilium abeundi," accessed Feb. 27, 2017, http://international-dictionary.com/definitions/?english_word=consilium_abeundi.

²⁸ "Von uns entlassen: Jos Sturzeous, Phil. Stöhr, und Christoph Demuth. Schädliche und gefährliche Leute," Single Brothers' Diary, Dec. 5, 1766, trans. Alan Keyser, BethSB03:2, MAB. Smaby found that single brothers consistently left at a higher rate than single women from 1754 to 1834 (peaking in 1764), but she does not distinguish between voluntary and forced outmigration; Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 67–69.

success) for back wages of £525. Jacob Schoen received *Consilium Abeundi* in 1760 after being chastised for his misbehavior. In 1764 master potter John Michael Odenwald was ordered out following repeated warnings. He had “given himself over to drink” and “finally arrived in such circumstances regarding women that . . . he received the *Consilium Abeundi*.”²⁹

After he left Bethlehem, Demuth wrote back to Brother Matheus to report that he was moving from place to place, staying with other Moravians, and part of a local church. He also confided that he had found someone he wished to marry, if elders consented. The letter shows that although Demuth had been dismissed, he still wanted church approval for his actions; it also suggests that part of his discontent may indeed have stemmed from the scarcity of single women in Bethlehem.³⁰ In March 1767, Demuth wrote to the Bethlehem elders from Lancaster, a borough about seventy miles from Bethlehem. He confessed that “a free spirit” had controlled him and pleaded for forgiveness.³¹ Church leaders absolved Demuth, but they did not want him back. They suggested that he stay in Lancaster or choose a country congregation such as Wachau (Wachovia), North Carolina, where he could easily find work.³² Demuth made one last attempt. In mid-May 1767, he traveled to Bethlehem to ask if he could return and “have a little place” there—meaning, perhaps, a home and a shop where he could be his own master. The brothers warned him they would not tolerate his former behavior, and Demuth left, promising to pray about his situation.³³

²⁹ Joseph Mortimer Levering, *A History of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1741–1892* (Bethlehem, PA, 1903), 380; Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 156–59; and Single Brethrens’ Diary, July 29–30, 1764, trans. Katherine Carté Engel, Bethlehem Digital History Project, http://bdhp.moravian.edu/community_records/catalogs_diary/single_brethren/singlebros1764.html.

³⁰ Demuth to Brother Matheus, n.d., BethCong268, MAB. Demuth does not give a location, but he may have already been in Lancaster. His *Lebenslauf* (a memoir that faithful Moravians wrote, or had written for them, at the end of life) states that he moved to Lancaster in 1766. Memoirs, Lancaster 0095, MAB. My thanks to Scott Paul Gordon for locating Demuth’s memoir and introducing me to the Moravian Archives staff.

³¹ Demuth to Brothers, “. . . und ich mus gestehen das mich ein freygeistisches wesen regired hat . . .” Mar. 1, 1767, trans. Alan Keyser, BethCong543, MAB. There are thirty letters (several from the same writer) requesting forgiveness and readmission in this file, further showing that Demuth’s situation was not unusual.

³² “. . . sich Lancaster oder eine andre Land Gemeine zum Aufenthalt zu erwählen . . . Wo Er in Salem arbeit gnug finden werde,” Single Brothers’ Diary, Apr. 29, 1767, trans. Alan Keyser, BethSB03:2, MAB. On Moravians in “town and country” congregations such as Lancaster, which were not organized communally, see Scott Paul Gordon, “Entangled by the World: William Henry and ‘Mixed’ Living in Moravian Town and Country Congregations,” *Journal of Moravian History* 8 (2010): 7–52.

³³ “. . . jedoch wolte Er bitten wenn es seyn könnte ihm wieder ein plätzgen in Bethlehem zu erlauben,” Single Brothers’ Diary, May 20, 1767, trans. Alan Keyser, BethSB03:2, MAB.

In the end, Demuth opted to move to Lancaster, and there he entered the second phase of his life in a locale that suited him far better than Bethlehem. No longer a single brother in a closed and sometimes stifling community, in Lancaster Demuth found a growing urban center where he could pursue his craft on his own terms, without the close oversight of the elders, and where he could fulfill his desires to become an independent artisan and find a wife.³⁴

Demuth had chosen a good location to realize these ambitions. By the 1770s, Lancaster was home to a lively merchant and industrial community that served local customers and regional markets extending well into the backcountry and to the south. From 1799 to 1813 it was the state capital, by 1800 it was the largest inland settlement in the nation, and in 1818 it was officially designated a city.³⁵ As he settled in, Demuth could take further comfort in the fact that Lancaster had a sizable population of fellow German speakers and an active Moravian congregation. But there were many other denominations as well, so the town offered a different—and perhaps welcome—experience from Bethlehem, where church officials closely scrutinized and, when necessary, corrected members' personal behavior. On the other hand, coming from a homogenous settlement, Demuth may have been shocked by the feelings of some Lancastrians; in those early years, Moravians were, as historian Jerome Wood describes, “a religious minority in a very hostile community.”³⁶ Feelings toward Moravians ran so high, in fact, that prominent Lancaster citizen William Henry in the 1760s agonized about joining that congregation because it would so adversely affect his social and economic status. Reflecting on this decision in his memoir, he recalled Moravians were “a despised people.”³⁷ Besides their communitarian lifestyle, which upset the expected social order and allowed women too much power, and their borderline erotic emphasis on Christ's wounds, Moravians were often criticized because of their desire to unite their church, the German Reformed, and the Lutherans into one denomination. This ecumenical spirit had caused problems in Lancaster years before Demuth arrived. In the 1740s, the Lancaster Lutheran congregation split in two because the minister, Laurentius Thorstenson

³⁴ For unknown reasons, Demuth did not marry the woman he mentioned in his earlier letter.

³⁵ Jerome H. Wood Jr., *Conestoga Crossroads: Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1730–1790* (Harrisburg, PA, 1979), 93–94; “History,” *City of Lancaster*, accessed Feb. 27, 2017, <http://www.cityoflancasterpa.com/visitor/history>.

³⁶ Wood, *Conestoga Crossroads*, 186.

³⁷ Gordon, “Entangled by the World,” 17–19.

Nyberg, and some members were drawn to Moravian theology. The factions resorted to name calling, violence, letters to the press, locking each other out of church, and, finally, legal action. This resulted in a defeat for the pro-Moravian group, who in 1746–48 established their own congregation: St. Andrew's Moravian. By 1758, 254 people were associated with St. Andrew's, fifty-three of them full-fledged members.³⁸

Although he had run afoul of congregational leaders in Bethlehem and might have faced hostility from Lancaster's non-Moravians, Demuth did not give up on the only church he had ever known. He attended St. Andrew's, and that is likely where he met his future wife, Elizabeth "Lisel" Hartaffel, whose family members had emigrated from Germany twenty years before and belonged to the congregation.³⁹ On November 2, 1767, the couple met with Elizabeth's parents, Sophia and Robert Hartaffel, to discuss terms, and on November 12, 1767, they were married by Anglican minister Thomas Barton.⁴⁰

With marriage, a new location, and some maturity, Demuth became a changed man. He was readmitted to the church in 1772, and by 1773 he and Elizabeth were listed among the thirty-two couples in the congregation's Married Couples' Choir. Even before Demuth was reinstated, their children, beginning with Maria (born November 1768), were baptized in the church. By 1779, Demuth was serving as a *Diener* (church officer), and he and Elizabeth remained active members of the congregation for the rest of their lives.⁴¹ Marriage also facilitated Demuth's entry into Lancaster's community of artisans. Demuth's father-in-law, Robert Hartaffel, was a snuff maker; under his tutelage—and drawing on the skills he had learned

³⁸ Mark Häberlein, *The Practice of Pluralism: Congregational Life and Religious Diversity in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1730–1820* (University Park, PA, 2009), 61–72; 98–105; Fogleman, *Jesus is Female*, 206–12; Wood, *Conestoga Crossroads*, 184–87.

³⁹ Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William John Hinke, eds., *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, vol. 1, 1727–1775 (1934; repr., Baltimore, 1980), 360–61; Elizabeth Hartaffel Demuth obituary, "Burials," Lancaster Moravian Church records (photocopy of typescript in possession of congregation), entry #814, LCHSCR:284.6L244cr, Lancaster County Historical Society (hereafter LCHS).

⁴⁰ It is unclear whether Moravian pastor Andrew Langgaard was out of town or if he refused to officiate at the wedding, since Demuth was not yet fully restored to membership. Diary of Lancaster Moravian Church, 1767, MSS., MAB. Elizabeth is referred to as "Lisel" in the diary. On Barton and the Moravian ministers, see Häberlein, *The Practice of Pluralism*, 118–24, 102.

⁴¹ The couple's membership is confirmed in the congregational catalogues. Membership Catalogues of Lancaster Moravian Church, 1783, 1784, 1785, 1791, 1803, 1804, 1806, 1810, and 1812, MSS., MAB. *Diener* translates as "servant." In Demuth's time, the *Diener(in)* (man or woman) "held a special office or carried out a specified responsibility within the Moravian community." Today the *diener* serves the Lovefeast meal. Glossary, s.v. "Diener," *Bethlehem Digital History Project*, last modified Sept. 2005, http://bdhp.moravian.edu/addtl_resources/glossary.html.

in the Bethlehem carpentry shop and mills—Demuth quickly learned the trade. By 1773 he was listed as a tobacconist on tax rolls.⁴²

Hartaffel may well have welcomed Demuth's help in his business. Tobacco, especially snuff, was a very popular product at the time. Scholars have written extensively on the economic and cultural place of tobacco in America. Wide-ranging studies address the importance of the crop to the survival of European settlers in the Chesapeake, the increasing use of slave labor in its cultivation, the rise of large tobacco companies, and changing attitudes toward tobacco use in the twentieth century.⁴³ Still, there are few scholarly studies of tobacco manufacturing and trade in the colonial and early national years. As Barbara Hahn points out, both historians and the general public usually locate the beginnings of the tobacco industry in the 1880s or 1890s with the rise of "Big Business." Hahn's work focuses on early tobacco manufacturing in Virginia, and she challenges the perception that the South remained exclusively agrarian while the North industrialized. Given Virginia's extensive cultivation of the crop, it is understandable that the state was a leader in processing and shipping tobacco. But Pennsylvania tobacconists such as Hartaffel and Demuth were part of what Hahn describes as a rapidly expanding national "commodity web" of tobacco processing, distribution, and consumption.⁴⁴ In fact, Pennsylvania's output rivaled—and, depending on the calculus used, even surpassed—that of Virginia. In 1810 Virginia manufactured 2,726,713 pounds of tobacco products with a combined value of \$469,000. Pennsylvania's output was just slightly behind—2,186,757 pounds, valued at \$410,910. Maryland manufactured tobacco products worth just \$200,000.⁴⁵ In terms of the percentage of overall production, Pennsylvania held a slight lead over the tobacco-producing states of Virginia and Maryland. In 1810 Pennsylvania accounted for 38.2 percent of the nation's total manufactured tobacco products, compared to Virginia's 37.2 percent and Maryland's 15.8 percent.⁴⁶ While Virginians and Marylanders were processing chewing and smoking tobacco and packing leaves for redistri-

⁴² Lancaster Borough Taxes, 1763–1786, microfilm, LCHS.

⁴³ See, for example, Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680–1800* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1986); T. H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton, NJ, 1985); Barbara Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright: Creating an American Commodity, 1617–1937* (Baltimore, 2011); and Allan M. Brandt, *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America* (New York, 2007).

⁴⁴ Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright*, 53.

⁴⁵ Tench Coxe, "A Series of Tables of the Several Branches of American Manufactures," in Coxe, *A Statement of the Arts and Manufactures of the United States of America for the Year 1810* (Philadelphia, 1814), 29, 44.

⁴⁶ The percentages are shown in Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright*, 48.

bution, in Pennsylvania most of the output was in the form of snuff (Hartaffel and Demuth's specialty) and, to a lesser extent, cigars.⁴⁷

The importance of snuff to the early national economy is shown by Congress's decision in 1795 to tax snuff mills and machinery as part of Alexander Hamilton's fiscal recovery plan. It is also evident in the rapid growth of the industry. The report of the federal snuff tax shows there were twenty-eight snuff mills in the United States, six of them in Pennsylvania.⁴⁸ In the next fifteen years, the industry expanded dramatically. Tench Coxe's 1810 report on manufactures shows Pennsylvania boasted a total of sixty-seven snuff mills, five of them in Lancaster County.⁴⁹

The snuff industry flourished because so many men and women used and became addicted to it. At the age of sixty-eight, Philadelphia resident Elizabeth Drinker recorded in her diary that she had used snuff for "upwards of 50 years." Three years later, she lamented her dependence on snuff: "I wish I could easily leave it off."⁵⁰ Snuff was valued, both in Europe and America, because it could be used by laborers without risk of fire, as well as for its stimulant and medicinal qualities. French missionary Jean-Baptiste Labat in 1742 praised snuff for its power to regulate circulation, heal colds and headaches, treat apoplexy and "black melancholy," and provide relief in childbirth.⁵¹ Philadelphia tobacconists praised the health benefits of snuff in their newspaper advertisements. Richard Bowyer said his product was a "cure for the Headach, and a great Preserver of the Eyes." Christopher Marshall and Son touted their imported Royal Patented Medicinal Snuff as "a Stimulator and Purgative, [which acts] on the Stomach and Lungs as an Attenuator, and on the Blood and Juices as an Alternative."⁵²

⁴⁷ Coxe, "A Series of Tables," 29. By the mid-nineteenth century, tobacco became an important crop for Pennsylvania, particularly in the Lancaster and York areas, but in this early period tobacconists relied on tobacco imported from the South. Stevenson Whitcomb Fletcher, *Pennsylvania Agriculture and Country Life, 1640–1940* (Harrisburg, PA, 1950), 165–66; Daniel B. Good, "The Localization of Tobacco Production in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 49 (1982): 193–94.

⁴⁸ The count was taken between October 1, 1795, and September 30, 1796. "A Statement of the Revenue arising on Mills and Machinery used in the manufacture of Snuff, from the 1st day of October, 1795, to the 30th September, 1796," in *American State Papers: Finance*, 1:564. The snuff tax, like the federal whiskey tax and the 1798 window tax, was wildly unpopular; it was suspended in 1796 and repealed in 1800. See Chauncey Mitchell Depew, *One Hundred Years of American Commerce* (New York, 1895), 420.

⁴⁹ Philadelphia had the most mills (twenty-seven), while Northampton and York Counties had ten each. Coxe, "A Series of Tables," 29, 64, 66.

⁵⁰ Elaine Forman Crane, ed., *The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker: The Life Cycle of an Eighteenth-Century Woman*, abridged ed. (Boston, 1994), 261, 280.

⁵¹ Jean-Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amérique*, vol. 6 (Paris, 1742), quoted in Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence* (London, 1994), 77.

⁵² "Snuff good for the Headach and great Preserver of the eyes . . .," *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Apr. 22,

Snuff can be used orally (“dipped”), but inhaling it into the nostrils was the usual method in early America. Users carried the finely ground tobacco in handy pocket-sized containers; well-to-do snuff takers brandished expensive snuff boxes made of rare woods, ivory, or silver as status symbols. For the elite, there was an etiquette associated with snuff use that included bowing with snuff box extended in the left hand and tapping it several times with the right before introducing a pinch of snuff into the nose, producing a cleansing sneeze. Snuff also had a practical side: inhaling it shielded the user—much as a perfumed handkerchief did—from the unpleasant smells of unwashed bodies and clothing emanating from those nearby.⁵³

Even in these early days, there were people opposed to the use of tobacco, including Philadelphia physician Benjamin Rush, who decried its adverse health effects and the time people wasted using it.⁵⁴ One critic, who called himself simply “An Old Correspondent,” editorialized at length in May 1818 on the “pernicious effects of the use of Tobacco . . . the baneful, the accursed Weed!”⁵⁵ In May 1832, physician A. McAllister castigated those who prescribed tobacco for medicinal purposes or to cure skin diseases such as “scald-head” or other “cutaneous eruptions.” He warned of the sometimes fatal consequences of taking tobacco internally as well as applying it topically and called its use an “indecent practice” that “paves the way to drunkenness.”⁵⁶ The moral dilemma of using a product grown by enslaved African Americans laboring in abysmal conditions seems not to have troubled people at the time, other than perhaps the most ardent abolitionists. On the contrary, the connection between slavery and tobacco was emphasized in the use of African American images on cigar boxes and labels for tobacco and snuff in Europe and the United States.

We know now that those pointing to the health dangers that tobacco posed were correct, but early consumers paid little heed. Because of the high demand, there was money to be made in the tobacco trade, as Robert Hartaffel’s career trajectory illustrates. Hartaffel came to America trained in organ building and repairing, but he gave up making musical instruments, a costly commodity for which there was limited demand, and turned

1756; “Smith’s Royal Patent Medicinal Snuff,” *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Mar. 17, 1763.

⁵³ Eric Burns, *The Smoke of the Gods: A Social History of Tobacco* (Philadelphia, 2007), 120–22; Robert K. Heiman, *Tobacco and Americans* (New York, 1960), 64.

⁵⁴ Benjamin Rush, *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical* (Philadelphia, 1798), 261–70.

⁵⁵ “Old Correspondent” to Mr. Poulson, *Lancaster Journal*, May 18, 1818; reprinted from the *Philadelphia Advertiser*.

⁵⁶ A. McAllister, M.D., *A Dissertation on the Medical Properties and Injurious Effects of the Habitual Use of Tobacco* (Boston, 1832), 11, 16–17.



Fig. 1: Robert Hartaffel purchased this property in 1771. Demuth bought it in 1782, and it remained the Demuth Tobacco Shop until 2010. Photograph, 2007, by Diane Wenger.

to snuff. He even left the organ commissioned by the Lancaster Moravian church uncompleted as he pursued the tobacco trade.⁵⁷ As a tobacconist, Hartaffel did well enough that, by 1771, he was able to buy a relatively new two-story brick townhouse on Lancaster's East King Street to reflect his rising economic and social status.⁵⁸ At twenty-seven by thirty-three feet, with a large, two-story attached kitchen and associated outbuildings, it had ample room for family living as well as sales and work space (fig. 1).⁵⁹

⁵⁷The congregation hired Hartaffel to build an organ in 1756 but lost patience and gave the commission to David Tannenbergh in 1762. In 1751 Hartaffel repaired the organ at Bethlehem, but I have found no evidence that he and Demuth crossed paths there. Raymond J. Brunner, *That Ingenious business: Pennsylvania German Organ Builders* (Birdsboro, PA, 1990), 107. An unfinished organ is listed in Hartaffel's probate inventory, Hartaffel family file, LCHS.

⁵⁸Tax records show that he was living in a rental property before the purchase. Christian Huber and wife Margaret sold the property to Hartaffel on October 14, 1771, for £512. A related deed states that the house had been recently built by John Hoff. Lancaster County Deed Book QQ, microfilm, 327, 331, 337, LCHS.

⁵⁹US Direct Tax, 1798, microfilm, LCHS.

One might expect that, as a German-speaking immigrant, Hartaffel would prefer a vernacular German form, but he chose a modish house built in what architectural historian Bernard Herman describes as “the British-American urban image.” Inside the house, the Hartaffels and, later, the Demuths maintained at least some German customs, including using stoves for heating, but the exterior of the home reflected Anglo-American style. Such duality was part of being a German immigrant (or first-generation German) in colonial America.⁶⁰ For Hartaffel and Demuth, familiarity with German language and culture was an asset since there were so many people of German descent in Lancaster, but they did not limit their customers or suppliers to fellow German speakers. They were also part of the dominant Anglo-American business and political community, where English was the preferred language, and they functioned in both spheres. Although German was his first language, by 1796 Demuth was keeping his business records in English. As historians have argued elsewhere about Pennsylvania Germans, when it came to doing business, “the language of trade transcended ethnicity.”⁶¹

Besides being fashionable, Hartaffel’s new house was in a good location to draw both local and transient customers. King Street was Lancaster’s principal thoroughfare; it was a heavily traveled route leading west to the Susquehanna River at Columbia and east to Philadelphia, the commercial and financial hub of the colonies. The building itself was just one block from the town square, site of the court house, market, and other businesses, and it was next door to the William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, tavern.⁶²

Demuth’s arrival in Lancaster coincided with the early years of the imperial crisis. As tensions with Great Britain grew, many town businessmen became staunch supporters of nonimportation.⁶³ When war came, some businesses—and given the popularity of tobacco, Hartaffel’s shop may have been among them—benefitted from trade with the Continental

⁶⁰ On the contrast between Pennsylvania German and British-American urban styles in Lancaster, see Bernard L. Herman, *Town House: Architecture and Material Life in the Early American City, 1780–1830* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2005), 77–99. Hartaffel’s probate inventory lists a “round iron stove,” valued at three pounds, and Demuth’s inventory includes a stove and pipe worth three dollars. Photocopies, Hartaffel and Demuth family files, LCHS.

⁶¹ Wenger and Garrison, “Commerce and Culture,” 179.

⁶² Jacob Demuth, who took over the shop from his father, had twenty children by three wives. He bought the former tavern and cut a door through the common wall to provide additional space. It is now the Demuth Foundation Museum. Gerald S. Lestz, *Charles Demuth and Friends* (Lancaster, PA, 2003), 9–10.

⁶³ Patrick Spero, “Americanization of the Pennsylvania Almanac,” in *Pennsylvania’s Revolution*, ed. William Pencak (University Park, PA, 2010), 43.

Army, the nearby prisoner of war camp, and the influx of Philadelphians fleeing British occupation. Gunsmiths, builders of Conestoga wagons, tanners, and textile workers, in particular, saw increased business. Historian Jerome H. Wood notes that, as time went on, inflation, shortages, and depreciating currency forced some shops to close. But John B. Frantz and William Pencak argue that the town emerged relatively unscathed; there was no fighting in the area, and, because of the crucial role its businesses played in provisioning the Continental Army, the region prospered, “even if the prosperity was unevenly distributed.”⁶⁴

Still, the war offered those opposed to Moravians another excuse for suspicion and harassment of the group, and the conflict caused individual Moravians again to rethink their pacifist stance and to decide where to put their loyalty.⁶⁵ The church’s official position was that members should avoid politics, but there was a great deal of outside pressure on Moravian men to affirm their allegiance to the American cause and serve in the militia. This was particularly true in communities like Lancaster, where Moravians’ livelihoods and general well-being depended on the good will of non-Moravian neighbors. As a result, many Lancaster Moravians acceded to Patriots’ demands. Some took these actions eagerly, while others acted, as Scott Paul Gordon explains, “out of prudence.”⁶⁶ Whether from patriotism or prudence, Demuth and Robert Hartaffel were among those who complied. The men took the Oath of Allegiance and Fidelity on September 27, 1777, and Demuth served as a private in Lancaster’s Battalion of Associators. His brother-in-law, nineteen-year-old Frederick Hartaffel, went a step further and joined the Pennsylvania Battalion of the Continental Army.⁶⁷

Hartaffel’s business survived the war, but tragedy struck the family in 1782, when both Robert and Frederick Hartaffel died.⁶⁸ Since Frederick

⁶⁴ Wood, *Conestoga Crossroads*, 144–55; John B. Frantz and William Pencak, *Beyond Philadelphia: The American Revolution in the Pennsylvania Hinterland* (University Park, PA, 1998), xxii.

⁶⁵ Moravians living in such noncommunal settlements as Lancaster tended to side with those around them. Bethlehem leaders advocated neutrality but leaned toward Loyalism. By the end of the war, American Moravians supported the Patriot cause. Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 39–42.

⁶⁶ Scott Paul Gordon, “Patriots and Neighbors: Pennsylvania Moravians in the American Revolution,” *Journal of Moravian History* 12 (2012): 111–42.

⁶⁷ “Oaths of Allegiance Index (1777–1789),” Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, accessed Feb. 27, 2017, <http://web.co.lancaster.pa.us/986/Oaths-of-Allegiance-Index-1777-1789>. The men’s service is described in *Pennsylvania Archives*, ser. 2, vol. 13, ed. William B. Egle (Harrisburg, PA, 1887), 335–36; and *Pennsylvania Archives*, ser. 5, vol. 2, ed. Thomas Lynch Montgomery (Harrisburg, PA, 1906), 489–92.

⁶⁸ “Burial Book of Moravian Church, Lancaster,” in *Pennsylvania Vital Records: From the “Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine” and the “Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,”* vol. 1 (Baltimore, 1983), 400.

was Hartaffel's only male heir, Demuth stepped in and took over the tobacco operation. In 1786 Demuth and his family, including five children ranging in age from five to eighteen years, moved in with Hartaffel's widow and her daughters, and he paid taxes on the house, a cow, a horse, a "pleasurable carriage," and the tobacco mill. Three years later, in 1789, he bought the property from his mother-in-law and Hartaffel's other heirs for £450.⁶⁹

A one-story wood "tobacco house," thirty-two by twenty-six feet, stood in the rear of the Hartaffel-Demuth town lot and was accessed by an alley.⁷⁰ This structure was probably where the men processed snuff. The public sales room was on the first floor of the home, facing the street. It was typical for a businessman and his family to live above the shop, and this front room (where the tobacco shop was still located two hundred years later) was a more visible location than the tobacco house. Demuth's probate inventory provides a glimpse into these spaces. His tools included a tobacco press, hook and scissors, five cigar presses, and two brands—presumably to burn a distinctive mark on tobacco casks. The sales room contained paper and wrapping yarn, canisters, scales and weights, and "shelves and shop furniture." Store inventory included over one thousand "Spanish" and "common" cigars ("segars"), pipes, and pipe stems. The overlap between living space and business is evident in the fact that barrels of tobacco were stored in the cellar and garret as well as in the shop.⁷¹

The inventory also lists a sign that would have identified the shop for passersby. At some point, additional advertising came in the form of a wooden carved figure—a man in colonial dress, with tobacco leaf in one hand and a snuff box in the other—which stood in front of the shop.⁷² However, there is no evidence that Demuth advertised in print, as his son Jacob would do when he took over the shop from his father (fig. 2). Rather, Demuth likely relied on fellow Moravians, business associates, and trusted customers to promote his business and help him ascertain the creditworthiness of potential clients whom he did not know personally.

⁶⁹ Lancaster Borough Taxes, 1786, microfilm, LCHS. The sale was subject to Sophia's dower rights and included a provision that she would stay in the home through her natural life. Lancaster County Deed Book QQ, 332, microfilm, LCHS.

⁷⁰ US Direct Tax, 1798, microfilm, LCHS. There was also a smoke house and wood frame barn on the site.

⁷¹ Demuth family file, LCHS.

⁷² "The Tobacco Man" survives in the Demuth Foundation collection; it is attributed to Christopher's son John (1771–1822) and is considered one of the earliest examples of American tobacco shop advertising. Lestz, *Charles Demuth and Friends*, 71; Farnham, *Charles Demuth*, 34–36.

Jacob Demuth,
TOBACCONIST,
 BEGS leave to inform his friends & the public
 in general, that he has the following
SNUFFS
 In bottles, ready for delivery to customer's orders,
 to wit :
No. 1, Ruppee, Macceboy and
Scotch SNUFFS,
 Which he hereby offers for sale, wholesale and
 retail, at his father's, (Christian Demuth's) old
 stand, in East King-street, Lancaster.
 March 4, 397-6222

Fig. 2: In 1818 Jacob Demuth advertised in the *Lancaster Journal* that he had taken over his father's business. Notice the printer's error in writing Christian instead of Christopher. Available online at Franklin & Marshall Digital Collections, <http://digital.olivesoftware.com/Olive/APA/FranklinMarshall/default.aspx#panel=home>.

This seems to have been a satisfactory business strategy. By 1800 Demuth had earned enough income to purchase investment properties in Lancaster, and his total real estate holdings were valued at \$6,472—the eleventh-highest assessment of the 850 taxpayers in the borough—putting him in the top 5 percent of property owners. His King Street property alone was worth \$2,066—well above the average town property value of \$730. By this time, Demuth was one of eight tobacconists in Lancaster, two others of whom were also making and selling snuff, but in terms of real estate, Demuth far outstripped his peers. The nearest competitor was Peter Shindle, who owned property worth just over \$1,000, while the other tobacconists owned considerably less property than Shindle.⁷³

Real estate acquisitions are just one indication of Demuth's increasing success and business acumen. By the early 1800s, he was planning to expand the business and build a larger facility. Sometime between 1801, when he started acquiring materials, and 1815, when it appears on the

⁷³US Direct Tax, 1798, microfilm, LCHS; Richard E. Stevens, comp. and ed., "Lancaster, PA 1800 Tax List," Datasets for Download, last modified Oct. 1, 2009, <http://www.math.udel.edu/~rstevens/datasets.html>. Advertisements in the *Lancaster Journal*, June 10, 1797, show that Peter Shindle and John Gallagher also sold snuff.

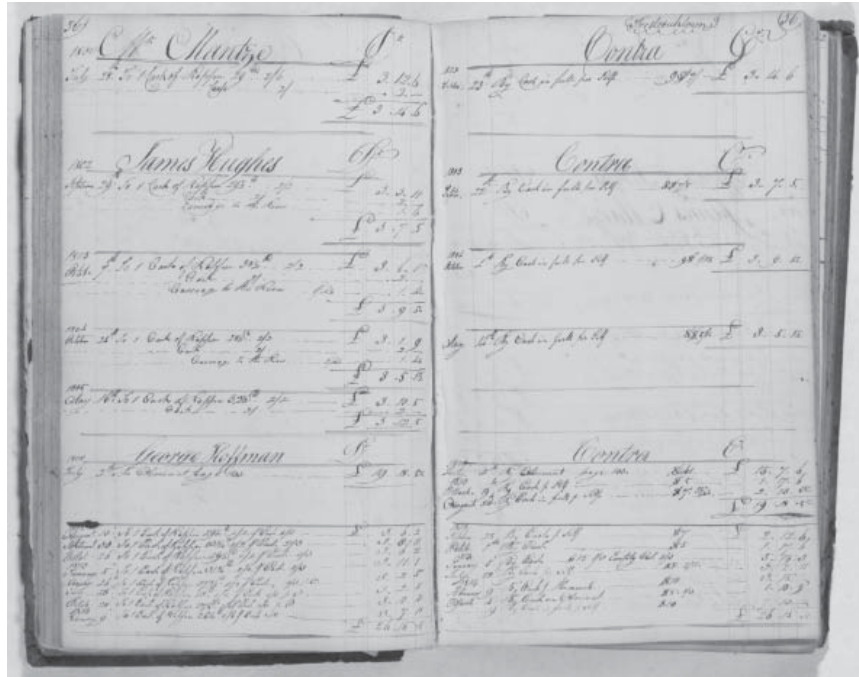


Fig. 3: Demuth kept track of customers' purchases and payments by recording them as debits ("Dr") and credits ("Contra") in his ledger. Jacob Demuth Ledger, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Lancaster direct tax list, Demuth erected a large brick factory behind his home. This was a smart investment, for it protected his equipment and inventory from fire better than the old wooden shop while signaling a message of stability and success to the community. Significantly, he was the only tobacconist in town with such a grand building.⁷⁴

Demuth's ledger, housed in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, provides additional insight into his business operation, production, transportation methods, and role in the regional tobacco commodity web (fig. 3). Unfortunately, the ledger does not capture information about the retail ("walk-in") side of his business, since small cash transactions typically went unrecorded in this era. However, it does provide information on his whole-

⁷⁴ From 1801 through 1805, Demuth purchased 4,680 feet of boards and 31,000 shingles from Joseph Poole and John Mathioud. Because he paid for the materials partly with snuff, the transactions appear in Jacob Demuth Ledger, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Lancaster City Direct Tax, 1815, photocopy, LCHS.

sale business, which was done on a short-term credit basis, and includes customers' names, geographic location, itemized purchases (debits), and payments (credits).⁷⁵

The ledger also shows that about the same time the new factory was going up, Demuth changed his supplier and the type of product he used to make snuff. From 1796 through 1802, his source of tobacco was Jacob Busser of New Holland, Pennsylvania. Busser sold Demuth rolls of plug tobacco in amounts ranging from twenty-five to seventy-five pounds each month, along with smaller amounts of pigtail tobacco. Plug is dried and flavored tobacco that has been formed in a press; pigtail tobacco has been twisted on a wheel and cut into convenient lengths. Both could be used for chewing or smoking, but plug could be grated, using a manual rasp or mill, into snuff.⁷⁶

The source of Busser's tobacco is not stated, but it does not seem he was growing it himself. A writer in the *Lancaster Journal* in 1827 noted that "a number of persons in this county have turned their attention to the raising of Tobacco," and historians generally cite this as the first mention of what would become an important commercial crop in the area.⁷⁷ Busser was not a farmer; tax records describe him as a "tobacconist," and he owned too little land—just one and one-half acres—to farm.⁷⁸ He probably bought tobacco in leaf form in Philadelphia, processed it, and sold it to Demuth, who in turn made some of it into snuff that he sold back to Busser.

Busser disappeared from Demuth's records by 1804, but even before that, in 1802, Demuth began buying tobacco from the Philadelphia partnership of Tunis & Annesley (after 1809, Tunis & Way), which remained his only supplier thereafter. While general storekeepers benefitted from patronizing many different firms to find the right selection of goods at the best price, as a tobacconist, Demuth's main interest was in building a long-term relationship with a reliable merchant who could meet his needs for tobacco and related items.⁷⁹ Tunis & Annesley operated a fleet

⁷⁵ Jacob Demuth Ledger, HSP. There are two inscriptions inside the ledger: "Begun Lancaster November 30, 1796 by Jacob Demuth," and, on the next page, "Begun by Christoph Demuth and son 1796." Unless otherwise noted, all information about his business hereafter comes from the ledger. It is quite possible that other Demuth records are among the holdings of the Demuth Foundation, Lancaster, but this collection is not open for scholarly use.

⁷⁶ Edward Tunis, *Colonial Craftsmen and the Beginning of American Industry* (Baltimore, 1965), 52.

⁷⁷ "Lancaster County Tobacco," *Lancaster Journal*, Mar. 30, 1827.

⁷⁸ Tax returns, Earl Township, Lancaster County, microfilm, LCHS. By 1806 Busser was no longer listed on the county tax records.

⁷⁹ By comparison, Samuel Rex typically patronized various Philadelphia businesses to stock his general store. Wenger, *Country Storekeeper*, 123–25.

of sloops that sailed between Philadelphia and such southern ports as Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Alexandria, Georgetown, Washington, and Baltimore, and tobacco was an important part of their trade.⁸⁰ The tobacco Demuth bought from the firm was different from the tobacco he bought from Busser. It was in leaf form—pressed into hogsheads (large barrels) each weighing over one thousand pounds, but not processed further, as Busser's was. Some was identified as deriving from "Kentucky" or "James River," but the origin of most was not specified. This change, in conjunction with the erection of the factory, indicates that Demuth drastically altered his method of production. Converting plug tobacco into snuff could have been accomplished by simply grinding it in a small, hand-operated mill. In his new structure, however, Demuth had enough space to accommodate enormous hogsheads and to carry out the complex, time-consuming process needed to convert large quantities of leaf tobacco into snuff.⁸¹

There were various ways to grind snuff and power a mill. The 1795 federal report on snuff mills states that Pennsylvania's six snuff mills included "eleven mortars in mills worked by water," one pestle "in mills not worked by hand," and one mill worked by stampers and grinders.⁸² While it is not certain that Demuth's first mill (presumably a small, hand-operated type) is even represented in this assessment, the report suggests the type of equipment he might have installed when he upgraded. It is clear, though, that he did not use water to run the mill, since there was no stream near his property. Logic suggests that he turned to a common alternative at the time: animal power. Indeed, according to family lore, the mill was run by "small donkeys [that] walked in a basement circular treadmill."⁸³

Demuth's records show that he charged two shillings, six pence per pound for his snuff—six pence more than his competitor Peter Shindle

⁸⁰ See, for example, "For Alexandria & Georgetown, The sloop *Patty*," *Philadelphia Gazette & Universal Daily Advertiser*, June 1, 1797; "For Norfolk, Petersburg and Richmond: The schooner *Liberty*," *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 10, 1806.

⁸¹ This typically involved chopping up the leaves, wetting them with a salt solution, and allowing the mixture to ferment for several weeks. Then the product was dried, ground, and sieved; flavoring might be added before the snuff was re-sieved and put aside to age. Carter Litchfield et al., *The Bethlehem Oil Mill, 1745–1934: German Technology in Early Pennsylvania* (Kemblesville, PA, 1984), 63–66. Jacob Demuth's probate inventory included oil of roses, lavender, lemon, and bergamot, all of which could have been used to flavor snuff. Demuth family file, LCHS.

⁸² "Statement of the Revenue arising on Mills and Machinery used in the manufacture of Snuff." Under the category "pestles in mills worked by hand," there is nothing listed for Pennsylvania, although Maryland and South Carolina each had two.

⁸³ Gerald S. Lestz, *Tobacco, Pro & Con: A New Look at an Old Subject* (Lancaster, PA, 1989), 5.

asked.⁸⁴ Whether Demuth's recipe and technique were better than Shindle's or if he was more skilled at marketing, offered better deals for transporting tobacco, or was catering to a different type of clientele is not clear, but he did not lack patronage. In his community study of Lancaster, Jerome Wood described the late eighteenth-century town as "an emporium for the wide hinterland embracing western Pennsylvania and Maryland, as well as the upper portion of the Valley of Virginia."⁸⁵ Demuth's business dealings demonstrate that this pattern continued into the nineteenth century. His trade was remarkable both for its volume and for its wide geographic reach, extending 250 miles from Lancaster and well into the southern tobacco-growing regions. Of sixty-five customers for whom he recorded locations, over 25 percent came from outside Pennsylvania: twelve were from Maryland (Baltimore, Hagerstown, and Frederick), four were from Virginia (Winchester and Richmond), and two were from Georgetown, "City of Washington." Within Pennsylvania, Demuth attracted customers from as far away as Harrisburg, Hummelstown, Reading, Pittsburgh, and Bedford, as well as many Lancaster County locations.

Most wholesale customers were male tavern keepers or grocers, but storekeepers Susanna Thompson, Mary Black, and Catherine "Citey" Fishbach of Carlisle, Widow Warner of Lititz, Widow Wickersham of Harrisburg, and Widow Mary Long of Lancaster were frequent clients. Dr. George Dawson, who, "having received a Medical Education in Europe," specialized in patent medicines as well as general merchandise, also traveled from Carlisle to buy snuff.⁸⁶ Lancaster druggist Charles Heinitch bought snuff for resale and was one of the few customers who delayed paying his bill for so long that Demuth charged him interest.⁸⁷ Some of Demuth's customers had been with the shop a long time; for example, merchant Benjamin Ogle

⁸⁴ The difference shows up in the daybooks of storekeeper Samuel Rex, who patronized both men, and it was the case even before Demuth built the new factory. Rex recorded his purchases from Demuth in his daybook 1, Historic Schaefferstown, Inc. (HSI), and daybook 2, reel 1: AB5, Leon E. Lewis Microfilm Collection (LEL), Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Library, Winterthur, DE. His purchases from Shindle appear in daybook 5, reel 1: AB7, LEL; daybook 17, reel 1: AB12, LEL; daybook 18, HSI; and daybooks 19 and 21 (#417, box 1, Downs Collection, Winterthur). For a list of Rex's daybooks and their current locations, see Wenger, *Country Storekeeper*, Appendix F.

⁸⁵ Wood, *Conestoga Crossroads*, 93–94.

⁸⁶ Dawson advertised his store offerings and recently acquired medical education in the *Carlisle (PA) Gazette*, Dec. 11, 1800, and June 6, 1804.

⁸⁷ After one year, Demuth charged Heinitch three pounds of interest on a fifty-pound debt. Samuel Rex typically allowed his clients one year before charging interest, but city firms preferred a shorter cycle. Wenger, *Country Storekeeper*, 137.

and tavern keeper Jacob Miller of Frederick-Town, Maryland, had previously done business with Hartaffel.⁸⁸

Demuth sold cigars, chewing tobacco, pipes, and other tobacco-related accoutrements, all obtained from Tunis's firm, but his main product was a coarse variety of snuff known as rappee.⁸⁹ Regular customers purchased rappee and other products on credit every month or so, typically paying for a previous order or settling their accounts when they picked up their newest order. Payments came in promptly enough that Demuth seldom had to add interest on their accounts. Customers occasionally sent their payments by mail, sometimes tearing a note in half and sending the two pieces separately. John and Abraham Miller, for instance, were credited in September 1811 "by ½ of a hundred dollar note" and again on October 12 "by ½ of a hundred dollar note."

General storekeepers welcomed payment in country goods, which they could resell in their shops, but Demuth specialized in one product, tobacco, and thus rarely accepted merchandise in exchange. Having no need for additional products to resell, he preferred cash, even if he had to wait a few months for it to arrive. However, it made good business sense for Demuth to take goods in payment if he needed them for his own use, and he recorded these items as customer credits in his ledger. For example, between 1797 and 1813, Lancaster grocer John Gundaker & Co. bought rappee regularly and received credit from Demuth for "sundry goods," which he and his family presumably used in their home. From 1797 to 1802, James Baxter bought snuff and paid Demuth with forty-eight bushels of oats, a necessity to feed the animals powering the mill. Likewise, when Demuth was building the new factory, he purchased lumber and shingles from Joseph Poole and John Mathioud, both of Columbia, Pennsylvania, and paid them with cash and snuff. Between 1814 and 1817, the Lancaster partnership of Ober & Kline bought rappee and cigars and received credit from Demuth for goods that included a keg of salt and one gross of almanacs. This was a rare instance of Demuth buying something other than tobacco products

⁸⁸ Their outstanding debts appear in his probate inventory, Hartaffel family file, LCHS. Ogle advertised his general and dry goods store in the *Frederick (MD) Political Intelligencer* from 1801 to 1803. By 1805 the store and other properties were put up for sale to cover his debts (*Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 2, 1805); on Oct. 18, 1805, a notice ran in the *Frederick (MD) Republican Advocate* declaring Ogle "an insolvent debtor." In the July 2, 1805, *Frederick (MD) Hornet*, Jacob Miller announced he had taken over the tavern "opposite Mr. Francis Mantz's Store." Mantz was also a Demuth customer.

⁸⁹ Other types of snuff are Maccoboy, a moist and heavily scented product, and Scotch, which is dry, strong, finely ground, and "virtually unflavored." Heiman, *Tobacco and Americans*, 65.

for resale in his shop, likely because almanacs were extremely popular and would have found ready buyers.⁹⁰

Tobacco historians routinely describe snuff as being packed and sold in crocks.⁹¹ Later in the nineteenth century, the Demuth shop sold snuff in stoneware crocks with the inscription “Demuth’s Celebrated Snuff.” These are now collectors’ items. In the early years, however, Demuth packed rappee in wooden casks that held twenty-five to sixty pounds each. He added an extra charge of two shillings for each container, but customers could bring the casks back to be refilled. One buyer, John Samuel Miller of Frederick, had his snuff packed into sacks rather than casks, perhaps because they were lighter to transport. Miller was a good customer; in 1802–3 alone, he bought over five thousand pounds of snuff.

Customers who, like Miller, hailed from Maryland may have arrived by the stage that ran twice a week between Frederick, York, and Lancaster. Stage lines also ran from Harrisburg and Carlisle.⁹² If customers did not have the means to transport their purchases, they arranged with Demuth to have goods shipped to a location of their choice, such as Philadelphia or Baltimore, where they could then be transported by water or overland to their final destinations. In a typical transaction, in 1802 when J. & J. Fackler of Richmond purchased seventy-nine pounds of snuff, the proprietors arranged to have Jacob Lundy haul it to Philadelphia for an additional charge of seven shillings, eight pence.⁹³ They settled their account by mailing Demuth \$120 and sending another \$59 back with Lundy. Other customers, including Miller, paid Demuth to have snuff purchases carried to Columbia and then ferried across the Susquehanna River to Wrightsville. At that point Demuth’s services ended, but carters would have been available to move the goods the rest of the way to Frederick, Hagerstown, or Winchester. Customer William Scott was one of the owners of the Frederick-Lancaster stage line, and he occasionally delivered cash or goods for Demuth. Transportation seems to have been Scott’s specialty. In 1803 he advertised his stage line

⁹⁰ As I argue elsewhere, this was not “barter,” but a sophisticated business transaction in which each product entered in the ledger carried a specific market value. See Wenger, *Country Storekeeper*, 66.

⁹¹ Hahn, *Making Tobacco Bright*, 57.

⁹² “Stages,” *Fredericktown (MD) Political Intelligencer*, June 17, 1803; Henry Shepler informed the public that the old line of the stage between Lancaster, Harrisburg, Carlisle, and Shippensburg would continue; “Henry Shepler, Inn-holder, and Proprietor of the Old Line of Lancaster & Harrisburgh Stages at the Sign of the Golden Lyon . . .” *Kline’s Carlisle Weekly Gazette*, June 6, 1804.

⁹³ The dry goods dealers dissolved their partnership in 1803. John Fackler left the business, but Jacob continued to sell goods. “Dissolution of Partnership,” *Virginia Argus*, Nov. 3, 1802; Dec. 3, 1803.

and announced he had moved to the ferry house at Wrightsville, where he provided ferriage and sold goods to travelers.⁹⁴

Given his insistence on a fair wage in Bethlehem, it is significant that Demuth paid himself an annual salary. The amount he drew ranged from \$133 (or £50) in 1801–4 and increased steadily thereafter. By 1811–13, his ledger reveals that he was earning \$600 a year, paid quarterly.⁹⁵ A period publication by D. B. Warden found that in Pennsylvania between 1815–18, the “average expense for a family for living was \$1 a week.” If this figure is at all accurate, Demuth was paying himself quite well.⁹⁶

The volume of Demuth’s business is evident in the quantity of tobacco he bought (table 1). From 1803 to 1814, he purchased an average of 17,140 pounds of tobacco each year from Tunis’s firm.⁹⁷ By comparison, the Bethlehem snuff mill, built just as Demuth was leaving, ground just between 500 and 1,500 pounds of tobacco annually in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and about 5,000 pounds a year from 1814 to 1821.⁹⁸ Demuth’s purchases plummeted following President Thomas Jefferson’s disastrous Embargo of 1807 and slipped dramatically in 1810–11, when troubled relations with England and France interrupted supply chains, but rebounded dramatically during the War of 1812, as Americans became more reliant on their own manufacturing capabilities.

Demuth successfully weathered the economic downturn caused by the embargo, perhaps because local demand for tobacco products kept the shop afloat, perhaps because he had amassed sufficient wealth by this point to get by on fewer sales. But by 1816 he was well into his seventies and ready to relinquish the business to his son. From July to September, he advertised in the *Lancaster Journal* requesting immediate payments of outstanding debts to Jacob.⁹⁹ However, after leaving business, Demuth did

⁹⁴“Winter Establishment of the Frederick-Town, York and Lancaster Line of Stages,” *Fredericktown (MD) Political Intelligencer*, Dec. 30, 1803.

⁹⁵It was typical of businessmen in this period to mix currencies in record keeping. Demuth generally used pounds, shillings, and pence as his currency of account, but he recorded his transactions with Tunis in dollars, suggesting that the city firm had adopted the new decimal system more rapidly than inland businesses such as Demuth’s. Jacob Demuth Ledger, HSP.

⁹⁶D. W. Warden, *Statistical, Political and Historical Account of the United States: From the Period of Their First Colonization to the Present Day*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, UK, 1819), 35, cited in US Bureau of Labor Statistics, *History of Wages in the United States of America from Colonial Times to 1928* (Washington, DC, 1934), 24–25.

⁹⁷These figures do not include his purchases of plug, pigtail, and Scotch snuff.

⁹⁸Litchfield, *Bethlehem Oil Mill*, 63–66.

⁹⁹“Notice,” *Lancaster Journal*, July 31–Sept. 4, 1816.

Table 1: Christopher Demuth's Purchases of Tobacco, 1803–14

	Hogsheads of tobacco purchased from Tunis & Co.	Total weight of tobacco (in lbs.)	Total spent on purchases from Tunis (including pipes, Scotch snuff, plug & leaf tobacco)	Value in 2015 purchasing power
1803	16	18,577	\$1,602.29	\$34,600
1804	9	11,133	\$1,055.57	\$21,800
1805	17	23,023	\$2,041.19	\$42,500
1806	18	24,173	\$2,033.85	\$40,700
1807	16	21,264	\$2,199.75	\$46,500
1808	11	14,176	\$1,223.24	\$23,800
1809	15	11,417	\$2,016.06	\$40,000
1810	3	4,666	\$519.33	\$10,300
1811	3	4,625	\$422.51	\$7,860
1812	18	25,375	\$2,296.84	\$42,200
1813	18	24,344	\$2,317.56	\$35,500
1814	18	22,917	\$4,121.17	\$57,400
Total	162	205,684	\$21,849.36	\$368,560.00
Yearly average	13.5	17,140.33	\$1,820.78	\$30,713.33

Source: Jacob Demuth Ledger, HSP; 2015 purchasing power determined with <https://measuringworth.com>.

not enjoy a long or comfortable retirement. In December 1816, a stroke left him partially paralyzed, and he died September 7, 1818, at the age of seventy-nine.¹⁰⁰ Reporting on his death, the *Lancaster Journal* described him as “an old and respectable citizen.” A similar notice appeared in the German-language *Reading Adler*, demonstrating his prominence in both English and German-speaking communities.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Demuth's memoir details his failing health. Memoir (*Lebenslauf*) Collection, MAB.

¹⁰¹ Mortuary notice for Christopher Demuth, *Reading (PA) Adler*, Sept. 9, 1818.

Demuth's Bethlehem experience as a single brother, although seemingly contrary to his later life as a prosperous urban businessman, set the stage for that transition. Living and working in Bethlehem furnished Demuth with valuable artisanal skills that enabled him both to transition into a new career and to erect his own factory. Furthermore, he benefited from observing the entrepreneurial attitude of the Bethlehem elders in reaching out to non-Moravian customers and realizing profits, and he emulated this behavior when he went into business for himself. The transition from the General Economy and the two-tier system of paying craftsmen (along, possibly, with the knowledge that he was earning less in Bethlehem than outsider craftsmen) further fueled Demuth's ambition; he longed to receive a better wage and freely choose where and for whom he worked. Irritated by and yet drawn to the Moravian practices, moving to Lancaster relieved him of the close oversight of the Bethlehem elders while still allowing him to enjoy the security of belonging to a Moravian congregation. Although the move out of Bethlehem was not entirely of his own volition, it was he who made the smart choice of Lancaster, which was already a busy commercial node at the center of a network of highways. To be sure, he benefitted from some good fortune after he moved there, including marriage into an artisan's household and the untimely death of the brother-in-law who would otherwise have inherited Hartaffel's business, but much of the credit for his success goes to Demuth himself and to his Bethlehem experience.

While many businesses failed during this time period, Demuth survived by using a number of strategies. At a time when product branding was in its infancy, and with only word of mouth and onsite advertising, he became so well known that his snuff commanded a premium price, and his reputation and trade extended well beyond Lancaster. He was a shrewd businessman who, as was typical practice at the time, extended short-term credit, but when it was time for customers to pay their tabs, he preferred they do it in cash. On the other hand, when Demuth needed a particular item for his home or business and could purchase it by extending store credit, he did so. Recognizing the demand for his product, he expanded his operation and installed more powerful equipment than any of his local competitors had. He cultivated good relationships with his sole supplier of tobacco and with regular customers, many of whom stayed with the firm for years and whose creditworthiness he could generally rely on. He provided transportation arrangements that facilitated purchases for his

long-distance clients, and he diversified his investments by plowing business profits into real estate.

Mindful of his early years in a nontraditional community, Demuth was concerned not only with running his own shop and factory but also with his family's stability and future. He involved his sons and son-in-law in the business, and he bequeathed each of his three surviving children, Jacob, John, and Mary Eberman, two brick houses, along with other city properties, upon his death.¹⁰² Over the next two hundred years, income from the Demuth Tobacco Shop provided the wherewithal for the family to achieve greater social and economic standing, according to Christopher's great-great-grandson Charles Demuth the financial security and leisure to pursue an internationally celebrated career in painting. As tastes in tobacco changed, the family expanded into cigar and chewing tobacco production and discontinued snuff making, while the shop itself became a popular gathering place for locals. Demuth's descendants operated the business until the 1980s, when the last operator of the shop sold the building and business to the nonprofit Demuth Foundation.¹⁰³

Beyond the tale of his compelling personal and religious journey, Demuth's story offers rare insight into early trade practices and manufacturing and shows the importance of tobacco to early American consumers and the national economy. It also reveals the key economic and social role that Pennsylvania manufacturers played in tobacco production and distribution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, even before the crop was grown commercially in the state. Demuth's long-distance sales demonstrate the complexity of market relations in this early period, decades before the so-called market revolution emerged. His dealings also illustrate the primacy of Lancaster as a commercial and industrial center, with merchants and industrialists ideally situated to serve customers in the upper South and throughout Pennsylvania and to disperse goods by a variety of transportation methods throughout those regions. Finally, this case study of Demuth's tobacco business highlights a surprisingly complex and interconnected network of agriculture, manufacture, distribution, and consumption. As part of this circular commodity web, Philadelphia merchants purchased slave-grown tobacco by the hogshead, transported it to

¹⁰² Demuth's son John was also a tobacconist, and son-in-law John Eberman drove the wagon that brought tobacco from Philadelphia. The contributions of family women are not clear, but they may have sewn the sacks that Demuth occasionally packed snuff in and waited on shop customers.

¹⁰³ See Wenger, "Christopher Demuth"; Lestz, *Charles Demuth and Friends*, 9–11; Fahlman and Barry, *Chimneys and Towers*, 119–22.

the North, and distributed it to manufacturers such as Demuth. Demuth, in turn, processed and ground the tobacco into snuff, which he wholesaled to customers locally and throughout Pennsylvania. Ironically, he also sold his signature rappee to merchants from Virginia and Maryland, completing the commodity circle by returning tobacco in a highly processed form to customers living in tobacco-growing states.

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DIANE WENGER

Andrew Curtin and the Politics of Union

ABSTRACT: This article examines the elections and tenure of Governor Andrew Curtin of Pennsylvania, who secured election in 1860 and reelection in 1863 at the head of a centrist political coalition that first dubbed itself the People's Party and later became the Union Party. Although Republicans constituted the largest proportion of Curtin's supporters, his overall success hinged on Democrat and Whig converts who refused to back a straight Republican ticket. The governor appealed to these voters by embodying a nonpartisan patriotism in rhetoric and policy. His campaigns appealed across party lines to loyal Democrats, and in his governance he regularly clashed with Washington over a host of unpopular wartime policies. Curtin's record suggests the fluidity of Republicanism and provides powerful evidence for the underappreciated prevalence and significance of political centrism in wartime northern politics.

GOVERNORS RARELY FEATURE in standard narratives of the Civil War. Yet one, Pennsylvania's Andrew Gregg Curtin, secured a mention in Steven Spielberg's recent biopic, *Lincoln*. The president, wonderfully portrayed by Daniel Day-Lewis, engages in the political dark arts to corral unwilling Democrats to vote for the Thirteenth Amendment. Knowing that Governor Curtin was preparing to declare a winner in a disputed congressional election, Lincoln instructs his surrogates to ask the governor instead to refer the verdict to the House of Representatives. Tommy Lee Jones's perfectly caustic Thaddeus Stevens then informs the incumbent Democrat, Alexander Coffroth, that, once Congress controls the decision, "Coffdrop" will only retain his seat if he votes to end slavery.

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To remove any doubt over whether Governor Curtin would act on Lincoln's request, Stevens asks to which party the governor belongs, helping the trembling "Coffsnott" to spell out the answer: "Re . . . pub . . . li . . . can."¹

In casting Andrew Curtin as a Republican, the movie reflects a common simplification of Civil War-era politics in Pennsylvania. While Thaddeus Stevens and his fiercely antislavery Republicanism are well known, the same cannot be said of Andrew Curtin and his more centrist agenda. Yet Curtin better represented the politics of Pennsylvania. As James E. Harvey of the *Philadelphia North American* explained to Abraham Lincoln in the summer of 1860, "the political organization of Pennsylvania supporting you, is not strictly Republican." Harvey's clarification reflected the fact that Curtin won in Pennsylvania in 1860 for the People's Party and in 1863 for the Union Party, never running explicitly as a Republican. As Harvey informed Lincoln, "the largest infusion" in these parties was "Republican in character," but they campaigned under different labels for a reason. Republicans held power only as part of a larger coalition—one that eschewed the Republican label precisely to avoid association with the radical reputation of men like Thaddeus Stevens. Examining Andrew Curtin's elections and wartime career offers evidence of a type of genuinely centrist politics, the prevalence and importance of which has often gone underappreciated in scholarship on the Civil War.²

State-level studies have often recognized the role of moderates and conservatives in a Republican movement rooted in shifting coalitions, but a recent trend in work on the national Republican Party has depicted a more radical and united institution. Mark E. Neely has noted this shift, suggesting that "with the agenda of Radical Republicans . . . looking more attractive to modern historians, there has been a tendency to draw the president and the radical wing of the party closer together." This process has found its strongest voice in James Oakes's recent work, *Freedom National*.

¹ *Lincoln*, directed by Steven Spielberg (2012; Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment, 2013), DVD. The last book-length study of Curtin is over a century old: William H. Egle, *Andrew Gregg Curtin: His Life and Services* (Philadelphia, 1895).

² James E. Harvey to Abraham Lincoln, June 5, 1860, available at *Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress*, Manuscript Division (Washington, DC, 2000–01), <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/alhome.html> (hereafter *Lincoln Papers*). The majority of the scholarship designates Curtin and the parties he led simply as Republicans. As a small sample: Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York, 2005), 573; Mark E. Neely Jr., *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties* (New York, 1991), 57; William C. Harris, *Lincoln and the Union Governors* (Carbondale, IL, 2013), 7.

Oakes has described the Republican Party—before and during the war—as unwavering in its determination to achieve the moral goal of destroying slavery. Republicans did not have to navigate a move from a war for Union to a war for emancipation because “the two issues—liberty and union—were never separate for them.” He argues that the only shift that took place during the war was “the realization by Republicans that destroying slavery would be much harder than they originally expected.” Pennsylvania’s politics are poorly reflected in such assertions. Curtin’s successes suggest that the strength of the Republican Party lay in its being loosely cohered, often taking different ideological and organizational forms in each state. Outside of New England and Congress—where radical Republicans controlled several key committees—the party’s driving force often came from centrists.³

Northern politicians like Curtin aimed their appeals at a vast and fluid middle ground that existed between the perceived extremes of radical Republicans and antiwar Democrats sympathetic to the South. The national political center consisted of conservative Republicans, war-supporting and generally antislavery Democrats, and a significant number of former Whigs who had formed the basis of Millard Fillmore’s Northern support in 1856 and John Bell’s in 1860. Many of these voters had switched allegiances with each election cycle during the 1850s, as old parties collapsed and new ones emerged with stunning frequency. The outbreak of sectional conflict only increased instability, leading such newspapers as the *New York World* to proclaim that “the sword of war has severed, deep and final, old party lines,” leaving a broad tranche of unattached or only loosely affiliated voters.⁴

³This process probably began with Eric Foner’s canonical *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York, 1970), which brilliantly dissects the various groups and ideologies that came together under the Republican umbrella but overstates the extent to which these coalesced into an organizationally and ideologically united whole by 1860. Mark E. Neely, “Politics Purified: Religion and the Growth of Antislavery Idealism in Republican Ideology during the Civil War,” in *The Birth of the Grand Old Party: The Republicans’ First Generation*, ed. Robert F. Engs and Randall M. Miller (Philadelphia, 2002), 105–6; James Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861–1865* (New York, 2014), xxii–xxiii. For a work focused on the complexity of party politics and the importance of conservatism, see Adam I. P. Smith, *No Party Now: Politics in the Civil War North* (New York, 2006). For older state studies of Pennsylvania, see Alexander K. McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1905); Stanton Ling Davis, *Pennsylvania Politics, 1860–1863* (Cleveland, OH, 1935); and Erwin Stanley Bradley, *The Triumph of Militant Republicanism: A Study of Pennsylvania and Presidential Politics, 1860–1872* (Philadelphia, 1964).

⁴“Republican State Convention,” *New York World*, Sept. 30, 1862.

While spread across multiple loose partisan affiliations, political centrists shared much in common during the war, including the label “conservative.” Eric Foner defined conservative Republicans as those whose “devotion to the Union was the cornerstone of their political outlook,” and who believed that “party and sectional considerations must give way if the integrity of the Union were in danger.” While accurate, this applied to many conservatives who refused to embrace the Republican Party precisely because they saw its perceived acceptance of abolitionism and solely sectional support as a threat to the Union. Most conservative voters shared the almost universal Northern belief in the superiority of a free society, but this did not prevent them abhorring abolitionists and secessionists almost equally for their willingness to risk breaking up the Union over questions of slavery. When war began, conservatives supported a conflict solely for the purpose of restoring the Union. Within these commonalities, differences certainly existed: Republicans proved most able to accept emancipation as a necessary *means* to victory, Democrats worried most fervently about increased infringements on civil liberties, and old Whigs retained hope that compromise might still offer possibilities for reunion. Despite their diversity, this conglomerate still constituted a recognizable political center.⁵

Andrew Curtin sought a formula to reach all such centrist voters and to alienate none. Looking at Curtin’s role in military recruitment, historian William Blair has asserted that the governor failed to articulate “any political ideology.” We may better comprehend Curtin by understanding that he consistently advocated a type of Unionism that sought to enlarge the scope of Republicanism to better appeal to the political center. Within his Republican-dominated coalition, Curtin was known as a “representative of the conservative wing,” simultaneously marking him as a centrist within the larger electorate. In 1860, Curtin largely excised the two most divisive elements of Republican ideology—antislavery and anti-Southernism—from his campaign. Once the war began, Curtin sought to turn patriotism into policy, focusing relentlessly on his fealty to the nation and to the soldiers who fought to protect it. To try and capture all those who supported the Union war for the Union political party, Curtin chose, in his own words, to “avoid the discussion of the policy of the general government, while

⁵Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 187. For a much fuller account of conservatism in the Civil War era, see the forthcoming work: Adam I. P. Smith, *The Stormy Present: Conservatism and American Politics in an Age of Revolution, 1848–1877* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2017).

giving a hearty support to the national authorities in all their measures to suppress the rebellion.” In particular, this meant refusing to embrace emancipation on its own terms. The vast majority of the Northern population supported a war to save the Union, only a minority of whom identified with Republicanism or with a conflict waged to free the slaves. In his third annual message, delivered six days after Lincoln’s final Emancipation Proclamation, Curtin made no mention of the president’s historic document, simply restating the determination of Pennsylvanians to “preserve the government.” As the war took ever more dramatic policy turns, Curtin showed his brand of independent politics by either criticizing measures or accepting them solely as military necessities. He hoped that his actions resonated with the largest proportion of Pennsylvania’s electorate.⁶

Curtin’s brand of Unionism helped attract sufficient numbers of voters outside of the Republican base to secure success in Pennsylvania. In 1860, Curtin received the backing of the most high-profile figure in the state’s Constitutional Union Party, Philadelphia mayor Alexander Henry. John Forney, an influential Douglas Democrat, crossed the aisle after the 1860 election and would be joined by others, including the speaker of the Pennsylvania House, John Cessna, during the course of the war. More important but less prominent were the average conservatives in Pennsylvania who, after backing James Buchanan or Millard Fillmore in 1856, swung the state toward Lincoln and Curtin in 1860 and beyond. This essay will outline the principles and tactics that Curtin employed to reach such voters.

While some scholars have shied away from seeing Unionism as an ideology, it is a useful lens through which to view Curtin’s actions. Gary W. Gallagher and Elizabeth R. Varon, among other scholars, have reminded us why “Union” served as the most emotive word in the nineteenth-century American lexicon. It conjured the founding generation and its fragile experiment in self-government, which now offered Americans unprecedented levels of economic opportunity and social mobility. This thriving “city on a hill” served as a beacon for democracy

⁶ William Blair, “We are Coming, Father Abraham—Eventually: The Problem of Northern Nationalism in the Pennsylvania Recruiting Drives of 1862,” in *The War was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War*, ed. Joan E. Cashin (Princeton, NJ, 2002), 205; “The Pennsylvania Election and the Local Issues,” *New York Herald*, Oct. 11, 1860, accessed online through America’s Historical Newspapers at <http://www.readex.com/content/americas-historical-newspapers>, hereafter America’s Historical Newspapers; Egle, *Andrew Gregg Curtin*, 199; George Edward Reed, ed., *Papers of the Governors, 1681–1902*, vol. 8, 1858–1871 (Harrisburg, PA, 1902), 469.

in a Western world made dark by the tyrannical monarchies of Europe. Within these shared resonances, Rogan Kersh has found clear distinctions between those who argued for a “moral” Union—purged of the sin of slavery—and those who stressed a “sustainable” one. The *sine qua non* of those who, like Curtin, stressed a “sustainable” Union was that the Union represented, in and of itself, the highest moral cause. The power of appeals to Union took institutional shape in the numerous Union parties—including in Pennsylvania—that formed during the war. Historians have not always recognized that these Union parties represented honest attempts to forge more inclusive political movements premised on the most widespread and deeply held allegiance within the nation.⁷

Charting Curtin’s tenure also demonstrates the inadequacy of interpretations that cast the war years as a time when “national government was paramount” and state executives “yielded” to President Lincoln’s federal juggernaut. The war brought increased power and responsibility to government at both the federal and state levels. Curtin regularly used his independent authority to challenge national policy and to cater to the needs of a home front rent by war. Curtin’s actions in these cases, motivated by conviction and calculation, served his political interests. Whether protesting quota calculations and recruitment conditions, reprimanding the president for military arrests, or setting up state funds to care for soldiers’ families, Curtin believed he acted to meet his governing responsibilities and to bolster his image as an independent executive, serving state and nation before party. Undoubtedly, Curtin was a savvy politician, and politics is always a dual enterprise: trying to balance an adherence to personal principles with the need to secure electoral majorities.⁸

⁷ For the significance of Union before and during the war, see Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge, MA, 2011); Elizabeth R. Varon, *Disunion! The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789–1859* (Chapel Hill, 2008); and Rogan Kersh, *Dreams of a More Perfect Union* (Ithaca, NY, 2001), 165. Michael F. Holt has written of the formation of Union parties that “most historians, echoing contemporary Democrats, have regarded this action as a transparently cosmetic attempt by cynical Republicans to lure gullible Democrats and Unionists.” Michael F. Holt, “Abraham Lincoln and the Politics of Union,” in Holt, *Political Parties and American Political Development from the Age of Jackson to the Age of Lincoln* (Baton Rouge, LA, 1992), 338.

⁸ Heather Cox Richardson, *To Make Men Free: A History of the Republican Party* (New York, 2014), 50; W. B. Hesseltine, *Lincoln and the War Governors* (New York, 1948), 274; for another similar perspective, see Laura F. Edwards, *A Legal History of the Civil War and Reconstruction: A Nation of Rights* (New York, 2015), 3. Curtin’s clashes with the War Department led Jonathan W. White to label Curtin a “state-centered nationalist.” Jonathan W. White, *Emancipation, The Union Army, and the Reelection of Abraham Lincoln* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2014), 26. The prevailing depiction of states and governors who yielded to the federal government owed much to historian William Hesseltine, whose 1948 book

A Complex Political Spectrum

To grasp why Curtin's positions resonated, we must briefly sketch the political geography of Pennsylvania. While the Republican *Boston Daily Advertiser* expressed in 1860 the common view that Pennsylvania was the "most conservative . . . of the Middle States," this did not negate the fact that all shades of opinion existed within its borders. At the left end stood a small but determined constituency of white and free black immediatists led by the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society and strongest in Philadelphia, where the influential African American newspaper the *Christian Recorder* was published. While politicians of Curtin's ilk fell well short of their ideal, the unpalatable Democratic alternative ensured that most immediatists adhered to Pennsylvania's Union Party.⁹

The state also boasted such prominent radical Republicans as Thaddeus Stevens, as well as many more equally committed moderate Republicans. These voters tended to have firm antislavery views and to have joined the Republican Party early. Concentrated in the western and northern counties, they formed the basis of the 32 percent of Pennsylvania's votes that John Fremont captured in 1856, providing majorities in all the counties from Washington up to Erie and along the northern border to Susquehanna. Confirming work on the relationship between evangelical Protestant sects and the fledgling Republican Party, this region also contained a majority of the counties most populated with Presbyterian churches, fourteen out of seventeen of which backed Curtin in 1860. The industrial city of Pittsburgh served as the hub of Republicanism in this region. When speaking there in 1860, Curtin's remarks caused "pandemonium" because they "did not come up to the standard of our anti-slavery thought." Pittsburgh's strong Republican identity also reflected the fact that the party had strong attachments to the state's railroad industries and the iron and steel manufacturers that supported it. These areas proffered large majorities to the People's and Union parties, with many moderate Republicans clearly backing Curtin. Radicals backed the governor more

cited above remained the only major work on northern governors until very recently. William Harris and particularly Stephen Engle have begun the process of recovering the vital and active role played by state executives. Engle powerfully demonstrates governors' centrality to the Union military effort. See William C. Harris, *Lincoln and the Union Governors* (Carbondale, IL, 2013); Stephen D. Engle, *Gathering to Save a Nation: Lincoln and the Union's War Governors* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2016).

⁹ *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 8, 1860, 2. For the history of abolitionism in Philadelphia, see Richard Newman and James Mueller, eds., *Antislavery and Abolition in Philadelphia: Emancipation and the Long Struggle for Racial Justice in the City of Brotherly Love* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2011).

grudgingly and resented abandoning their party label, often continuing to refer to themselves as Republicans.¹⁰

The groups to which Curtin most consistently tailored his message consisted of Pennsylvania's political center, made up of conservative Republicans, former Whigs, Know-Nothings, and Constitutional Unionists, as well as fervently prowar Democrats after Fort Sumter. Many of these voters had deemed the Republican Party of 1856, led by John Fremont, as too radical. As a result, they had helped secure 18 percent of Pennsylvania's vote for the last Whig president, Millard Fillmore, then running on the American Party ticket. While the Whig Party collapsed in the 1850s, Whigs remained. These conservatives became, in Adam I. P. Smith's words, the "swing voters of the Civil War era," whose allegiance had to be earned. As a member of the People's Party explained to President Lincoln in January 1861, the "Party is not composed of Republicans alone, nor even in great part . . . I am not a Republican, but an Old Line Whig, with strong American proclivities." Appealing to these voters meant playing down questions of slavery in favor of the tariff and preservation of the Union. Curtin's success with this conservative constituency shone through in winning a majority of the counties that had placed Fremont third behind Fillmore in 1856. These included Curtin's home county of Centre and Philadelphia, which had given Fremont only 10 and 11 percent respectively. Philadelphia, easily the state's most populous and prosperous city, represented a particular coup for the People's Party and was acknowledged as an organizational hub for Curtin and his allies. These dramatic victories stretched the party's strength beyond the Republican base into the state's middle and southeastern counties.¹¹

The Democratic Party's heartland lay in regions along the southern border with Virginia, and particularly along the eastern border with New Jersey and the anthracite mining counties in the northeastern part of the state. The mining regions tended to have high numbers of foreign-born laborers, a constituency that voted overwhelmingly Democratic. Working men in general leaned toward the Democracy, especially the

¹⁰ Egle, *Andrew Gregg Curtin*, 446. On links between evangelicals and Republicans in this period, see Richard J. Carwardine, *Evangelicals and Politics in Antebellum America* (Knoxville, TN, 1997), 235–323; for Presbyterians and Republicanism in Pennsylvania, see William E. Gienapp, *The Origins of the Republican Party, 1852–1856* (New York, 1987), 541; and Michael F. Holt, *Forging a Majority: The Formation of the Republican Party in Pittsburgh, 1848–1860* (Pittsburgh, 1990), 354.

¹¹ R. P. King to Abraham Lincoln, Jan. 18, 1861, Lincoln Papers; John W. Forney to Abraham Lincoln, Jan. 13, 1861, Lincoln Papers.

Irish. Pennsylvania's more than 200,000 Irish residents made up over half the state's foreign-born population, and Democratic politicians assiduously targeted the votes of Irish men. As crude but suggestive indicators of how class and ethnicity factored into political allegiance, four of the five counties with the highest real and personal property values voted for Curtin, compared to only one of the bottom five. Four of the seven counties with the highest foreign-born populations supported the Democrats, as did six of the ten counties with the highest number of Catholic churches. Pennsylvania's Democrats would struggle over how far to support the war, but they nonetheless continued to run competitively throughout the state.¹²

Before the War

Andrew Curtin came from prosperous and prominent stock. His grandfather, Andrew Gregg, served as a Pennsylvania senator during James Madison's presidency, and his father enjoyed a successful career as an iron manufacturer. Trained as a lawyer at Dickinson College, Curtin was admitted to the bar in 1839. While practicing, he spoke widely for Whig candidates throughout the 1840s. When the Pennsylvania Whigs collapsed in the mid-1850s, Curtin, a Presbyterian with old Irish roots, competed unsuccessfully for the 1855 senate nomination from Pennsylvania's Know-Nothing-controlled legislature. The large Irish and German populations of the Keystone State certainly bolstered nativist appeals, but the Know-Nothings also seemed fleetingly to be the only national alternative to the Democrats. Curtin's dalliance with nativism may have helped him once the Know-Nothings became subsumed under his leadership in the People's Party.

The 1855 senate contest also initiated a bitter feud with the Machiavellian former Democrat Simon Cameron. This divide would mark a major fault line in Pennsylvania politics for decades. At some point during the maneuvering for the nomination, the two clashed, possibly over a drunken insin-

¹²Pennsylvania's political geography and information of the breakdown by county of ethnicity, wealth, industry, and religiosity is all based on analysis of the 1860 federal census in comparison with election data taken from tables in Holt, *Forging a Majority*, 355; Bradley, *The Triumph of Militant Republicanism*, 424–29; and Michael J. Dubin, *United States Gubernatorial Elections, 1776–1860: The Official Results by State and County* (Jefferson, NC, 2003). Unless otherwise stated, all newspapers accessed online through Pennsylvania Civil War Era Newspapers at Pennsylvania State University Library, available at <http://digitalnewspapers.libraries.psu.edu/Olive/APA/CivilWar/?skin=civilwar#panel=home>.

uation that Curtin had fathered an illegitimate child.¹³ While they would soon become the two most influential figures in the People's Party, they would remain deeply estranged personally. While the split forced political players to choose sides, it took time for the division to take on an ideological rather than personal character. But especially after war broke out, Cameron became aligned with the more strongly Republican elements within the state, aiding in their attacks on Curtin and attempts to replace the governor with the radical John Covode in 1863.¹⁴

1860: "The Keystone of the Republican Arch"

The 1860 gubernatorial canvass offers a powerful picture of the ideological tenor of the People's Party. Meeting on February 23, 1860, in Harrisburg, the People's Party convention adopted a fascinating array of resolutions. By endorsing a homestead bill and a higher tariff and in stating their heartfelt "opposition to the extension of slavery," convention attendees sounded Republican. But they catered firmly to conservatives by "promising to defend the constitutional rights" of their Southern "brethren" and damning "fanaticism . . . in the form of Northern abolitionism or Southern slavery propagandism." Referring to their organization as an "affiliate" of the Republican Party, they sought to clarify that the Republicans would never interfere with slavery where it currently existed. Know-Nothings gained resolutions protesting the "influx of foreign criminals." When endorsing Curtin's nomination, they proclaimed his "devotion to the Protection of American Industry . . . and his earnest fidelity to the interests of the labor of white men." Curtin, apparently unwilling to vote for Fremont in 1856 and known to oppose the "radicalism of the Republican Party," made the perfect centrist candidate.¹⁵

At the May 1860 Republican convention in Chicago, the People's Party delegates wielded considerable influence but also incurred attacks for their unwillingness to run as Republicans. Early in proceedings, Pennsylvanian

¹³ Alexander McClure suggests only a drunken insult. Cameron's biographer suggests the paternity story. McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, 1:387; Erwin Stanley Bradley, *Simon Cameron, Lincoln's Secretary of War: A Political Biography* (Philadelphia, 1966), 102.

¹⁴ McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, 1:387. The perception of Cameron as a radical was significantly enhanced after Lincoln recalled his report as secretary of war in December 1861, recommending the arming of slaves. See Bradley, *The Triumph of Militant Republicanism*, 150, 186.

¹⁵ "The People's State Convention," *Lehigh (PA) Register*, Feb. 29, 1860; "Mr. Curtin Affiliating with Giddings at Chicago," *Republican Compiler*, May 28, 1860.

David Wilmot suggested that the delegates from Maryland and Texas should not be granted voting rights. Mr. Chandler of Texas quickly retorted, to cheers from the audience, that those from the Keystone State should “Organize yourselves and train under the Republican banner before you accuse us in Texas of not having a Republican organization.”¹⁶ While the Southerners’ charges found sympathy, Pennsylvania’s electoral votes held the key to the presidential election. Curtin believed that William Seward’s past record deemed him too antislavery and pro-immigrant for the tastes of the Keystone State. Using their electoral votes as leverage, Curtin and his followers helped to defeat Seward’s nomination and secure a tariff plank in the national platform. With these goals achieved, Curtin now looked to his own race with renewed optimism.¹⁷

Focusing on the tariff served both to hurt the Democrats and hold the People’s Party coalition together. The panic of 1857 had particularly hurt Pennsylvania’s iron and railroad industries and helped generate almost universal support for a higher protective tariff. This suited Curtin since, with the Constitutional Union Party also now competing for conservative votes, he did not wish to get drawn into the divisive slavery question. Simply attending the Republican national convention had the effect of “souring the ‘Bell’ portion of the Americans” in Philadelphia.¹⁸ As Philadelphian Francis Blackburn explained in a letter to incoming President Lincoln, “the Party in Pennsylvania are thoroughly AntiAbolitionist and it is with difficulty we can keep them solid with the Republican Party.” Blackburn stated incorrectly that the entire party was anti-abolition, but his opinion reflected a real divide. McClure described the contours of the state more accurately, noting that in the “Eastern, Southern, & Central counties” where “the Conservative element predominates . . . the Tariff will be the overshadowing question . . . while in the West the Tariff is regarded as of no greater importance than the Slave Aggressions; and in the North . . . the great question of Freedom overshadows all others.” Thaddeus Stevens and other radical Republicans would cater to crowds in strongly antislavery regions while Curtin, a devoted Whig and disciple of Henry Clay, spoke earnestly of his long and well-known commitment to the protection of

¹⁶ *Proceedings of the Republican National Convention, Held at Chicago, May 16, 17 and 18, 1860* (Albany, NY, 1860), 49–65, accessed online through HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiuo.ark:/13960/t4xg9n354;view=1up;seq=1>.

¹⁷ See McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, 1:399–415; Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, 241–42.

¹⁸ See Russell Errett to Joseph Medill, July 24, 1860, Lincoln Papers.

industry. His Democratic opponent, Henry Foster, struggled desperately to proclaim his earnest support for a high tariff despite the fact that his Democratic colleagues in Congress and the White House had consistently blocked such a measure.¹⁹

Curtin's approach also helped refute Democratic attempts to raise the specter of disunion. Democratic newspapers eagerly branded the People's Party the "Black Republican Party," led by "Andy Curtin and Abolition Republican Sectionalism." In response, Curtin lauded the People's Party's "platform of principles eminently conservative."²⁰ Asserting his fraternal warmth for the sister states of the South, he envisioned a harmonious future where all parts of the country would thrive in concert. Speaking in Philadelphia, he employed a tactic he would use repeatedly during the war as he proclaimed: "That Constitution we so much admire and cherish was made in this City; the Declaration of Independence was first written here . . . and from that time to the present the people of Philadelphia and of the state at large, have ever been loyal to both."²¹ Curtin invoked the founders to broaden his appeal by chaining his party to the unimpeachable cause of Union.

On October 6, 1860, the *New York Times* reported that Pennsylvania's result "would be widely regarded as deciding the Presidential contest." Lincoln followed events closely, requesting and receiving regular updates. Curtin's success, by a majority of 32,114 of the close to 500,000 votes cast, settled Republican nerves. While some Constitutional Union newspapers had defected late in the campaign to support Foster, McClure felt assured that they held "the bulk of the Bell vote for Curtin," especially helping them to a majority in Philadelphia. Democrats hoped that "thousands of conservative men who voted for Curtin will not vote for the Abolitionist Lincoln," but, foreseeing defeat, the Democratic vote dropped off considerably. The *New York Herald* even claimed that the People's Party triumphed because "the vote of the Douglas democracy of Pennsylvania, to a great extent, was cast directly for Curtin." The *Herald* certainly exaggerated, but its coverage reflected the fact that, while he would not officially convert until after the election, John Forney—a journalist, politician, and Douglas's most prominent surrogate in Pennsylvania—was privately known to be working for

¹⁹ Francis Blackburn to Abraham Lincoln, Nov. 24, 1860, and Alexander K. McClure to Abraham Lincoln, June 16, 1860, both Lincoln Papers; analysis of the tariff issue draws on Holt, *Forging a Majority*, 243, 275–80; Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 173–76.

²⁰ "Our Nominee for Congress," *Huntingdon (PA) Globe*, Sept. 26, 1860; "Important Speech of Col. A. G. Curtin," *Philadelphia Press*, Oct. 5, 1860.

²¹ "Serenade to Col. Curtin," *Lehigh (PA) Register*, Aug. 1, 1860.

Curtin's cause. Forney undoubtedly took some voters with him, and he would not be the last notable Democrat to abandon his allegiance.²²

Preceding Lincoln's campaign by a month, Curtin's victory was a vital precursor to gaining the White House. His election demonstrates the importance that a conservative, centrist message played in defeating Democrats in 1860. As the *New York Times* explained, Pennsylvania was "the Keystone of the Republican Arch," but "the slavery question has much less to do with this canvass. . . . Indeed . . . we have serious doubts whether it is not an element of weakness rather than strength." While Republicans formed the majority, the People's Party secured critical swing voters thanks to the diversity of its policy priorities and membership. It provided a vital foundation for the wartime Union Party.²³

The First Term: "To Maintain the Union at all Hazards"

From his election in October to the firing on Fort Sumter in April, Curtin adopted a consistently firm but conciliatory tone, placing him at the conservative end of the Republican coalition. Taking office in the midst of national crisis, the governor's inaugural address on January 15, 1861, sought to reassure Southerners but left no doubt over the inviolability of the Union. He stressed that Pennsylvania, tied to its cherished Southern neighbors by "extensive commerce" and "kindred and social intercourse," recognized "in their broadest extent, all our constitutional obligations." Only when it came to ending his speech did Curtin borrow a phrase suggested by President-Elect Lincoln to add a warning to the fledgling Confederacy, stating bluntly that "Ours is a National Government" and that "the people mean to preserve the integrity of the National Union at every hazard." Curtin's speech, recognized as an attempt to ease Southern concerns without pandering to Southern demands, drew praise from across the political spectrum.²⁴

²²"The Pennsylvania Election," *New York Times*, Oct. 6, 1860; Alexander K. McClure to Abraham Lincoln, Aug. 21, 1860, Lincoln Papers; "Don't Give up the Ship," *Democrat & Sentinel*, Oct. 24, 1860; "The Question of Lincoln's Administration," *New York Herald*, Oct. 20, 1860, Early American Newspapers; for evidence of Forney's pre-election conversion, see Russell Errett to David Davis, Aug. 27, 1860, and David Wilmot to Abraham Lincoln, July 11, 1860, both Lincoln Papers.

²³The Presidency—the Forlorn Hope of the Democracy," *New York Times*, Oct. 12, 1860.

²⁴Reed, *Papers of the Governors*, 8:331, 336. Curtin had written to Lincoln asking if there was anything he wished conveyed. Lincoln responded only that Curtin might communicate "the purpose of yourself, and your state to maintain the Union at all hazards." Abraham Lincoln to Andrew Curtin, Dec. 21, 1860, Lincoln Papers.

As attempts to reach a compromise with the South developed, Curtin showed himself willing to stretch beyond pure Republican principles. Nationally, hopes for compromise rested on Senator John Crittenden's proposals and on the Washington peace conference, meeting in February 1861. Republican radicals were deeply suspicious of the event, urging their states not to participate. Curtin sent seven delegates, who, with the notable exception of David Wilmot, were of a conservative bent. These men made Pennsylvania one of only four Northern states to vote for every provision, including extending the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific coast—a feature of Crittenden's plan and an explicit repudiation of the Republican Party platform. Governor Oliver Morton of Indiana even wrote to President Lincoln of his fears that Pennsylvania's willingness to accept the Crittenden Compromise put at risk the "integrity and future of the Republican party." Despite fervent efforts, Congress firmly rejected these attempts at conciliation.²⁵

Once shots were fired over Fort Sumter, Curtin quickly acted to form as inclusive a governing coalition as possible, identifying soldiers as the perfect manifestation of Union and of his message. Curtin's identification with the troops operated throughout his tenure as both an electoral appeal and a governing strategy. Supporting the soldiers was universally acceptable. Radicals in his own coalition could not object, and it offered no ideological barrier to prowar Democrats tempted to cross the aisle. As a pitch to voters, it embodied a unifying patriotism. As a *modus operandi* for administering his state, it brought regular and increasing conflict with the War Department. In his confrontations with Secretaries Cameron and Stanton, Curtin forcefully stressed his legal rights as Pennsylvania's chief executive and the unofficial political leverage that his position granted.

In the first months of the war, Curtin outshone his War Department foe, Simon Cameron, in harnessing the initial rush of patriotism. When Washington would accept no more soldiers, Curtin persuaded the state legislature to organize and maintain fifteen additional regiments—the Pennsylvania Reserves. Another call for men soon vindicated Curtin's actions. As recruiting in Pennsylvania continued apace, Curtin discovered that Cameron had sent individuals into the state with War Department

²⁵ Robert Gray Gunderson, *Old Gentlemen's Convention: The Washington Peace Conference of 1861* (Madison, WI, 1961), 38, 90; Oliver P. Morton to Abraham Lincoln, Jan. 29, 1861, Lincoln Papers.

authority to privately enlist volunteers. Curtin immediately wrote to President Lincoln, who intervened to stop Cameron's scheme and ensure that all authority over Pennsylvania regiments rested with the governor.²⁶

The removal of Cameron in January 1862 failed to prevent Curtin clashing with the War Department over recruitment. New secretary Edwin Stanton ordered that all new troops should be three-year enlistments and complained to President Lincoln when Curtin continued to accept men for nine- and twelve-month terms. While Lincoln shared Stanton's aim, he nonetheless decided that the soldiers must be accepted; otherwise, he reasoned, "we shall fail perhaps to get any on other terms from Pennsylvania."²⁷ Curtin next went over Stanton's head to protest general order 154, which gave federal recruiting officers the authority to fill up regiments by drawing from state reserve units. Curtin deemed this order "unjust to the people of the States & calculated to demoralize and destroy volunteer organizations." Lincoln passed the letter to Stanton, who complained that the governor's protest was "ill advised, revolutionary and tends to excite discontent and mutiny in the army and in my judgment should be severely rebuked by the President."²⁸ No reprimand followed, and Curtin continued to be a thorn in the War Department's side. When Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia moved toward Pennsylvania in the summer of 1863, Curtin managed to extract a written pledge from Stanton agreeing that emergency troops would be released whenever "I as governor of the State deem the emergency over."²⁹

Curtin flexed his gubernatorial muscles in these disputes because he believed he knew best how to persuade men to serve and to prevent turmoil on the home front. Men always preferred shorter terms of service, and Curtin wanted them to know he understood. When conscription loomed, the governor worried about the impact of a measure that con-

²⁶ J. Matthew Gallman, *Mastering Wartime: A Social History of Philadelphia during the Civil War* (New York, 1990), 15–16. Cameron followers took some revenge by joining Democratic criticism over reports that suppliers had provided substandard uniforms and shoes for Pennsylvania's soldiers. While the accusation reemerged in 1863, two inquiries cleared Curtin of personal wrongdoing. "The State Administration," *Pennsylvania Daily Telegraph*, June 21, 1861.

²⁷ Blair, "We are Coming, Father Abraham," 193.

²⁸ Andrew Curtin to Abraham Lincoln, Oct. 27, 1862, Edwin Stanton to Abraham Lincoln, Oct. 30, 1862, both Lincoln Papers.

²⁹ Andrew Curtin to Alexander Henry, June 20, 1863, box 1, folder 12, Alexander Henry Papers (Collection 278), Historical Society of Pennsylvania; see also Daniel R. Biddle and Murray Dubin, *Tasting Freedom: Octavius Catto and the Battle for Equality in Civil War America* (Philadelphia, 2010), 287–93.

tradicted the American tradition of lauding citizen soldiers and fearing standing armies. When the first state militia draft was set for August 1862, with October elections on the horizon, Curtin found reasons to postpone the draft and then to fiddle figures so as not to enforce it in Democratic mining regions where he believed protests likely.³⁰ With the onset of the federal draft, Curtin regularly badgered provost marshal general James Fry with complaints about Pennsylvania's quotas, explaining that he did not wish to "add much to any feeling of hostility that may exist in the minds of the people against the Draft."³¹ These testy exchanges with Washington regularly featured in Pennsylvania's newspapers, and they infuriated Stanton and his colleagues. Curtin calculated that such squabbles would bolster his reputation with soldiers and civilians at home.

A letter the governor received in 1864 demonstrates the real value Curtin reaped from his obdurate approach toward the War Department. Engaged in a dispute with Washington over mustering out dates, an officer in the reserves wrote to the governor, explaining that "we appeal to you because you first conceived us, brought us into existence, our military father, and have at all times protected and defended us against assault."³² This was exactly the perception Curtin hoped to cultivate. The phrase "military father" is also a remarkable echo of Lincoln's moniker, "Father Abraham," used to great effect in the 1864 presidential election.

Lincoln may have consistently supported Curtin partly because he understood the political importance of his image as soldiers' protector. Years after Lincoln's death, provost marshal general James Fry contributed a chapter to a book of reminiscences on President Lincoln. He told a story of a Northern governor who was "earnest, able and untiring" but who "always wanted his own way" when it came to matters of raising and equipping troops. The governor's dispatches so irritated Secretary Stanton that he brought them to Lincoln's attention. The president replied with one of his famous stories:

³⁰ Bradley, *The Triumph of Militant Republicanism*, 154.

³¹ Andrew Curtin to Edwin Stanton, July 13, 1863, and Andrew Curtin to James B. Fry, Aug. 11, 1863, Executive Correspondence (series #26.8); Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth; Record Group 26, Records of the Department of State; Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg (as viewed on Pennsylvania State Archive microfilm #6269), hereafter Executive Correspondence, PSA.

³² Timothy J. Orr, "We Are No Grumblers: Negotiating State and Federal Military Service in the Pennsylvania Reserve Division," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 135 (2011): 472.

Never mind, never mind; those dispatches don't mean anything. Just go right ahead. The Governor is like a boy I saw once at a launching. When everything was ready they picked out a boy and sent him under the ship to knock away the trigger and let her go. At the critical moment everything depended on the boy. He had to do the job well by a direct vigorous blow, and then lie flat and keep still while the ship slid over him. The boy did everything right, but he yelled as if he was being murdered from the time he got under the keel until he got out. I thought the hide was all scraped off his back; but he wasn't hurt at all. The master of the yard told me that this boy was always chosen for that job, that he did his work well, that he never had been hurt, but that he always squealed in that way. That's just the way with Governor __. Make up your minds that he is not hurt, and that he is doing the work right, and pay no attention to his squealing. He only wants to make you understand how hard his task is, and that he is on hand performing it.³³

It may not have been to Curtin that the president referred, but it seems very likely. The message applied, and there is no doubting that a profound rift existed between Curtin and Stanton. Lincoln certainly grasped much better than his secretary of war that the governor's "squealing" served the needs of his constituency at home and did not impinge on his loyalty or ability. Soldiers had become the heartbeat of Curtin's administration; serving them, and being seen to serve them, was central to his Unionist ideology.³⁴

Curtin's determination to serve his state's troops helped gain the support of Democrats in the Union army. Timothy J. Orr has examined political allegiances among Pennsylvania units and found evidence that "the rise of the Copperheads in 1863 drove many Democratic soldiers into the Republican Party's ranks." One of the soldiers he cites, Captain Francis Donaldson, wrote in 1862 that he was "a Democrat, first, last and all the time," but also that "as long as the rebels are in arms I will sustain the government's efforts to put down the rebellion." The language of these

³³ James B. Fry, "James B. Fry," in *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of his Time*, ed. Allen Thorndike Rice (New York, 1886), 401–2.

³⁴ The governor in the story was named as Curtin by James Matlock Scovel in an article entitled "Recollections of Lincoln and Seward," in *Overland Monthly*, 2nd ser., 38 (1901): 270. The story also appears in McClure's *"Abe" Lincoln's Yarns and Stories: A Complete Collection of the Funny and Witty Anecdotes that Made Lincoln Famous as America's Greatest Storyteller* (Philadelphia, 1900). Stephen Engle has also recently identified Curtin as the governor in the story. See Engle, *Gathering to Save a Nation*, 479. For the Stanton-Curtin rift, see John W. Forney to Abraham Lincoln, Sept. 14, 1864, Lincoln Papers.

men expresses a desire to vote Union more than Republican. Jonathan W. White has captured this phenomenon in a recent study, averring that such sentiments best conveyed the rejection of a party that “appeared unpatriotic and anti-soldier.” Many of these men saw their desertion of the Democracy as temporary. John White Geary, a Democrat who backed Curtin in 1863 and even succeeded him as a Republican governor in 1867, wrote as late as 1864 that he longed for the day when the party’s “gallant sons return to the fold, and democracy shall be like truth.” By downplaying the Republican element of his coalition and cloaking himself in Unionism, Curtin made it especially easy for soldiers of any political hue to support him.³⁵

Conservative soldiers could also applaud Curtin for his defense of the man most hated by radical Republicans: the general from Pennsylvania, George Brinton McClellan. In March of 1862, Curtin wrote to Lincoln that he and the masses had “entire confidence in the fidelity and ability of General McClellan.”³⁶ In September, at the Altoona conference of loyal war governors, he successfully defended “Little Mac” against radicals, such as Governor John Andrew of Massachusetts, who wanted his removal.³⁷ It was little surprise when, a few days after the conference, Curtin received a letter from the general, praising the governor and the people of Pennsylvania for the support they offered in the “defence of their frontier.” When Lincoln removed McClellan from command, the Curtin press immediately denied rumors that the governor had complained to the president about the decision.³⁸

It may well have disappointed Curtin when McClellan supported Democrat George Woodward in the 1863 election. Fortunately, the endorsement came only on the day of the vote, and it did not stop the

³⁵Timothy J. Orr, “A Viler Enemy in Our Rear,” in *The View from the Ground: Experiences of Civil War Soldiers*, ed. Aaron Sheehan-Dean (Lexington, KY, 2007), 181; J. Gregory Acken, ed., *Inside the Army of the Potomac: The Civil War Experience of Captain Francis Adams Donaldson* (Mechanicsburg, PA, 1998), 146; White, *Emancipation, the Union Army, and the Reelection of Abraham Lincoln*, 4; John White Geary to Mary Church Geary, Oct. 24, 1864, John White Geary Letters, 1859–1865, vol. 2, Geary Family Papers (Collection 2062), Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

³⁶Andrew Curtin to Abraham Lincoln, Mar. 3, 1862, Lincoln Papers.

³⁷For more detail on the Altoona conference, see Stephen D. Engle, “‘It is Time for the States to Speak to the Federal Government’: The Altoona Conference and Emancipation,” *Civil War History* 58 (2012): 416–50.

³⁸“Letter from General McClellan—The Valor of Pennsylvania Acknowledged,” *Christian Recorder*, Oct. 11, 1862, accessed online through Accessible Archives at <http://www.accessible-archives.com> (hereafter Accessible Archives); “Gov. Curtin and Gen. McClellan,” *Pennsylvania Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 21, 1862.

Philadelphia Press from misleadingly reprinting the laudatory 1862 letter to Curtin from McClellan, under the headline “Gen. McClellan Endorses Governor Curtin.” As much as radicals despised him, McClellan remained popular with soldiers and embodied a conservative Unionism. Until he became the Democratic presidential nominee on a peace platform in 1864, he was exactly the sort of figure with whom Curtin wished to be associated.³⁹

Emancipation Politics

Once President Lincoln issued the final Emancipation Proclamation, Curtin could no longer entirely avoid questions of race. Even so, when Curtin delivered his 1863 inaugural—six days after Lincoln’s message—newspapers keenly noted that the governor made no mention of emancipation. The *New York Herald* stated that Curtin “refused to touch it,” while the *Philadelphia North American* added, “nor indeed is the policy of the national government in any respect spoke of.” Curtin most likely shared the views of his closest ally, Alexander McClure, who had spent the first years of the war regularly advising President Lincoln that any definitive move on emancipation would ensure electoral oblivion.⁴⁰ This opinion was borne of an appreciation of the extremes of opinion within his state. Many Democratic soldiers, and some Republican ones, resented emancipation and feared its consequences. Tom Crowl, of the Eighty-Seventh Pennsylvanian volunteers, expressed the not uncommon view that “This Nigrow freedom is what is playing hell . . . We never enlisted to fight for Nigrows.”⁴¹ On the other hand, many of Curtin’s constituents heralded the end of slavery and fought, physically and rhetorically, to achieve

³⁹ “Gen. McClellan Endorses Governor Curtin,” *Philadelphia Press*, Oct. 13, 1863. Democratic chairman Charles Biddle wrote to McClellan on September 2, 1863, asking for an endorsement. It is not clear why McClellan took nearly six weeks to grant it, but his previous good relations with Curtin may have been a factor. See Charles J. Biddle to George B. McClellan, Sept. 2, 1863, box 39, folder 3, Biddle Family Papers (Collection 1792), Historical Society of Pennsylvania. For McClellan’s ideological position and appeal, see Ethan S. Rafuse, *McClellan’s War: The Failure of Moderation in the Struggle for the Union* (Bloomington, IN, 2011).

⁴⁰ “Miscellaneous News,” *New York Herald*, Jan. 11, 1863, Early American Newspapers, and “Message of Governor Curtin,” *Philadelphia North American*, Jan. 8, 1863, accessed online through 19th Century U.S. Newspapers at <http://www.gale.com/19th-century-us-newspapers/>; McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, 1:532.

⁴¹ Quoted in Dennis W. Brandt, *From Home Guards to Heroes: The 87th Pennsylvania and its Civil War Community* (Columbia, MO, 2006), 163. For a detailed discussion of Union troops’ views on emancipation, see Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), 75–118.

it. Difficult as it was, when finally addressing the issue of slavery, Curtin sought a middle ground. The positions he staked, and the rhetoric he used, offer important markers for placing him on the ideological spectrum of his era.

The *Christian Recorder*—the Philadelphia-based organ of the AME Church—praised Curtin’s defense of emancipation at a Union League meeting in March 1863. The governor argued that slaveholders had forfeited their property rights and that, legally, “property” was now fair game to the Union army. Curtin assured his audience that no influx of black labor would ensue because “the free negro does not seek a Northern climate . . . he is constrained by a law of nature . . . the negro will not only remain in, but go to the South . . . as its climate is adapted to his physical conformation.” Curtin did not sound *anything* like an abolitionist. But the *Christian Recorder* could understandably celebrate his role in a meeting in which the overall message proclaimed the downfall of slavery.⁴²

The question of black enlistment also brought a definite, if distasteful, endorsement. Pennsylvania had one of the largest free black populations in the United States, and this community responded vigorously to calls for troops. A recruiting committee including Frederick Douglass and Octavius Catto helped spur more than eight thousand black men from Pennsylvania to serve in the Union army.⁴³ Curtin came to endorse this process, but in unpalatably pragmatic terms. Curtin admitted that much did “revolve around the massive woolly head of the nigger,” and he stated that “when the rebels were on our soil, I would have armed black and white, and yellow men; I would have equipped the clovenhoofed gentleman himself.” Curtin used the analogy of a willingness to arm the devil more than once, and it hardly represented a glowing endorsement of black service. He went on to report that the African Americans he had armed “went apart, by themselves; they worked in the trenches, and so conducted themselves that when they passed through the city gentleman cheered and ladies waved their handkerchiefs.” Curtin recognized here the segregated, limited, noncombat nature of their service, which he still praised.⁴⁴ Overall, the *Christian Recorder* mostly supported the governor. Curtin was criticized in 1864 for having taken no steps to remove any of the odious

⁴² “The Speech of Governor Curtin,” *Philadelphia Press*, Mar. 12, 1863; “Union Meeting in Philadelphia,” *Christian Recorder*, Mar. 21, 1863, Accessible Archives.

⁴³ Biddle and Durbin, *Tasting Freedom*, 290.

⁴⁴ “Speech of Governor Curtin,” *Philadelphia Press*, Oct. 7, 1863; “Andrew Curtin at Home,” *Central Press*, Oct. 23, 1863.

black laws of the state, but black regiments were reported leaving for the front with “three cheers” for the governor, and they returned in 1865 to a “welcome home” event at which Curtin was the honored guest.⁴⁵

The sources are not available to know Curtin’s inner feelings on race, but the limited nature of his public endorsements continued to differentiate him from the radicals. Indeed, the *Pittsburgh Gazette*—a Cameron organ—attacked Curtin in the summer of 1863 for surrounding himself with counselors who complained that the conflict had become “a negro war” and that “for every South Carolina rebel they would hang a Massachusetts abolitionist.” Democratic newspapers claimed that “Curtin is not ultra abolition enough for Cameron and his crew” and that “supporters of Curtin . . . indignantly repudiated the epithet ‘Abolitionists.’”⁴⁶ Supporting emancipation after the fact had not dislodged Curtin from his centrist footing.

The Home Front

Curtin understood that political success depended on recognizing the symbiotic relationship between the home front and battlefield. William Blair has suggested that Curtin’s disinclination to implement the draft came from his belief that it “ran contrary to civilian concerns” and that the governor “paid more attention to the needs of home.” In one sense, this is true. When Curtin pressed for emergency troops to be mustered out, he explained that “the furnaces, workshops, and mines in which they were employed are standing idle.” But Curtin did not believe that his duty to serve the civilian realm conflicted with his obligations to the army.⁴⁷ Curtin appointed state agents to cater to the needs of Pennsylvania soldiers. One of them, R. Biddle Roberts, explained his experience of this intertwined relationship: “I devoted my time always first to the soldier, but in many instances the desires of the civilian were so blended with the welfare of the soldier . . . the widow in quest of her late husband’s back pay . . . the anxious wife, parents, or other relative, in quest of some lost one

⁴⁵ “The Colored Men in this State Have Been Loyal to the Government,” *Christian Recorder*, July 30, 1864; “The Departure of the 6th U.S. Colored Regiment,” *Christian Recorder*, Oct. 17, 1863, and “Colored Soldiers! Welcome! Welcome!!” *Christian Recorder*, Oct. 28, 1865, Accessible Archives.

⁴⁶ “The Governor in his National Relations,” *Pittsburgh Gazette*, July 28, 1863; “The Abolition Convention Today,” *Lebanon (PA) Advertiser*, Aug. 5, 1863; and “The Abolition Party,” *Lancaster (PA) Intelligencer*, Oct. 27, 1863.

⁴⁷ Blair, “We are Coming, Father Abraham,” 192, 206; Andrew Curtin to Darius Couch, July 23, 1863, Executive Correspondence, PSA.

who has given up his life in the field.”⁴⁸ Reports like these may have also helped Curtin grasp reasons and ways to cater for the largest nonvoting constituency in his state.

Curtin clearly made an effort to acknowledge the contributions of Pennsylvania’s women to the Union war effort. Judith Giesberg has uncovered some of the practical steps the governor took to help working-class women. Deprived of husbands, many had to manage farms and families on their own, often writing to Curtin asking for “money, furloughs, and discharges.” As men died in unprecedented numbers, requests poured in for help to retrieve and bury the bodies of fallen sons, brothers, and fathers. Curtin and his agents helped where they could, both on an individual basis and by setting up larger schemes. In 1862 the governor secured legislation to transfer wounded soldiers back to the state for treatment closer to loved ones. In 1864 he helped initiate an asylum for soldiers’ orphans, and, as Giesberg discovered, in 1865 Pennsylvania set up a program that reimbursed families for expenses incurred in the harrowing task of recovering the bodies strewn across Southern battlefields. These women recognized the limits of Curtin’s actions and were always “careful to characterize their work as patriotic.” They understood that only their direct relation to the war effort entitled them to assistance.⁴⁹

Letters between Annie Cabeen and her soldier sweetheart Joseph Lea suggest the political efficacy of Curtin’s actions. Annie feared a Democratic victory, and after the election Joseph told her that “I almost think I would have voted for Curtin if you had asked me, you seemed so deeply interested in his election.” Pennsylvania laws prevented Annie Cabeen, a woman, and Joseph Lea, a soldier in the field, from physically voting for Curtin in 1863. But there were doubtless other similar exchanges that yielded votes. Curtin nodded to this by regularly ending his 1863 stump speeches by thanking those who had “poured out Christian consolation,” adding “God Bless the women of Pennsylvania!” The *Philadelphia Press* reported that the audiences he spoke to were often populated by “bright-eyed women, who were anxious to hear an argument by which to convert some doubting husband,

⁴⁸ *Report of Col. R. Biddle Roberts, Pennsylvania State Agent at Washington, D.C.* (1863), accessed online through HathiTrust digital library.

⁴⁹ Judith Giesberg, *Army at Home: Women and the Civil War on the Northern Home Front* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2009), 34, 43, 150–51. It is unclear how many requests were granted, but many letters quoted neighbors receiving support. For details of the orphans’ asylum, see Reed, *Papers of the Governors*, 8:465.

brother, or lover.”⁵⁰ Like Curtin’s negotiations around the draft, these actions must be seen as both civilian and military, nonpartisan and political.

1863

Curtin faced reelection in a year when emancipation, conscription, and black military service all signified a distinct turn to a harder form of war. Radical Republicans began talking of a Reconstruction that would force the South into a permanent and substantive accommodation to black freedom. Democrats attacked measures they deemed unconstitutional and crippling to hopes that the rebellious states could return peacefully to the Union. Yet, if one listened to Curtin and his surrogates, one could be forgiven for thinking it was still 1861. Curtin’s Union Party clung to the patriotic dogmas that had united voters of all parties in the aftermath of the firing on Fort Sumter. Curtin focused relentlessly on the immediate task of winning the war, ignoring or criticizing controversial measures while classing them as solely military necessities. Hoping to appeal to Democrats appalled at the rise of a peace wing within their own party, he even courted the idea of installing a War Democrat as his successor.

Curtin’s health suffered during the war, and, in his third annual address, he made public his intention not to seek reelection while privately attempting to ensure that General William Franklin, a loyal Democrat, would replace him.⁵¹ General Franklin was described by his biographer as “conservative in politics, social values, and military strategy.”⁵² To hatch this plan, McClure secured from President Lincoln the promise for Curtin of a “first class” foreign posting. The governor gratefully accepted, but the Democrats proved in no mood to nominate a candidate who might prove unwilling to berate the administration. Franklin gained only seven votes at the Democratic convention, which instead chose George Woodward,

⁵⁰ Letters between Joseph Lea and Annie Cabeen, box 2, The Papers of the Buxton, Lea & Marshall Families ca. 1855–1965, Accession #11412, Special Collections Dept., University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; “Speech of Governor Curtin,” *Philadelphia Press*, Oct. 7, 1863.

⁵¹ It is not clear what his condition was, but McClure and Wayne MacVeagh both agreed that “in the spring of 1863 there was every indication of a general and final breakdown of his physical system.” Quotation from McClure, *Old Time Notes of Pennsylvania*, 2:41; see also Egle, *Andrew Gregg Curtin*, 159–61.

⁵² Mark A. Snell, *From First to Last: The Life of Major General William B. Franklin* (New York, 2002), xiii.

a Democrat of more dubious loyalty.⁵³ This prompted Curtin to risk his health and seek reelection. Curtin's succession plan is inconceivable within traditional interpretations of Union parties as indistinguishable from Republicans, but it chimes easily with his consistent attempts to broaden the base and change the nature of the Republican coalition.

From the start of his administration, Curtin had embraced attempts to fuse with wavering Democrats. Immediately Curtin appointed a number of Democrats, and, in the state elections of 1861, he led attempts to merge the People's Party with the most prowar Democrats under a Union Party label.⁵⁴ The People's Party endorsed a number of Democratic candidates in marginal seats in a move that drew attacks from both radical Republicans and strongly partisan Democrats who wished to keep clear water between the parties. The Republican *Pennsylvania Daily Telegraph* assailed the fledgling Union Party movement as a "false appeal" by those who really seek "the destruction of the Republican Party," while the *Democrat and Sentinel* urged Democrats not to join the Union movement in an editorial entitled "When the Greeks bring us gifts we fear them." The attacks from Republicans belie the scholarly perception that Union movements served only to strengthen Republicanism. The *Huntingdon Globe* demonstrates how Curtin's centrism allowed him to retain the support of former Democrats only willing to back a Union candidate. The *Globe* endorsed Stephen Douglas and Curtin's opponent, Henry Foster, in 1860. By 1863, the paper backed Curtin and the Union Party but opposed the "double dyed Republican party." Such endorsements would not shield Curtin from Republican anger at his *volte-face* on reelection.⁵⁵

Simon Cameron fused personal vendetta and ideological opposition in leading Republican attempts to replace Curtin with radical Republican

⁵³ Abraham Lincoln to Andrew Curtin, Apr. 13, 1863; Andrew Curtin to Abraham Lincoln, Apr. 14, 1863, both Lincoln Papers. Franklin's biographer mentions his candidacy for governor as a Democrat but not Curtin's support. Snell, *From First to Last*, 271–73. Report of the convention in "The Democratic State Convention," *Lebanon (PA) Advertiser*, June 24, 1863.

⁵⁴ Curtin appointed Reuben C. Hale as quartermaster general as well as selecting Democratic general George Cadwalader as major general of the Pennsylvania Volunteers. He appointed Craig Biddle to his personal staff and Charles Biddle as colonel of the Pennsylvania "Bucktails" reserve regiment. Information collated from *Jeffersonian*, June 20, 1861, 2, and Biddle Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁵⁵ "Our New Allies—Look Out for Old Frauds," *Pennsylvania Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 27, 1861; "When the Greeks bring us gifts we fear them," *Democrat and Sentinel*, June 5, 1861; "Regularly Nominated Democratic Ticket," *Huntingdon (PA) Globe*, Oct. 2, 1860; *Huntingdon (PA) Globe*, June 25, 1862, 2; and "The Contest is Not Between Republicans and Democrats," *Huntingdon (PA) Globe*, Oct. 7, 1863.

John Covode. The *Pittsburgh Gazette*, a Cameron organ, launched a vitriolic campaign against Curtin, praising hostile “Republicans” and berating the “Union Party” were it to renominate the governor. The *Gazette* asked readers to consider whether Curtin was “not more strongly inclined to the Peace Democracy, than to ourselves.” The irate Cameron wrote privately to President Lincoln, averring that “there are many good Republicans and pious Christians who would see him [Curtin] in Hell.”⁵⁶ Curtin’s renomination showed his strength with conservative Republicans and other Union Party backers. Faced with the Democratic alternative, radical Republicans had no option but to grudgingly endorse his candidacy.

Pennsylvania’s Democrats lampooned the Lincoln administration but stayed predominantly loyal. For their candidate, they chose sitting Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice George Woodward. Woodward’s judicial status lent weight to criticisms of unconstitutional actions taken by the Lincoln administration. But as a sitting justice in 1862, Woodward had ruled it unconstitutional to allow soldiers to vote in the field. Preventing men from voting in an election where one is the candidate represented terrible politics, and the judgment drew derision from the Union press while enhancing Curtin’s “soldier’s friend” appeal.⁵⁷ The official Democratic platform lambasted arbitrary arrests and restrictions on freedom of speech but also denounced the intimation that the party would “ever consent to peace upon any terms involving a dismemberment of the Union.” The convention defended its right to consider any measures to restore the Union and reiterated how many Democrats had sacrificed their lives for a limited war to “defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union.” Woodward’s campaign chairman, Charles Biddle, attempted to personally prove the party’s patriotism by temporarily resigning his position to help defend the state from Lee’s invasion. As traditional custom dictated, Woodward largely stayed quiet, but his two sons fought for the Union, and, in the week before the vote, he made known his support for the war’s continued prosecution.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ “Political Effects of the Legislation of 1862,” *Pittsburgh Gazette*, July 27, 1863; “Popularity of the Governor,” *Pittsburgh Gazette*, July 29, 1863; Simon Cameron to Abraham Lincoln, Sept. 18, 1863, Lincoln Papers. Democrats eagerly picked up on the *Gazette*’s attacks, arranging for their publication as a campaign pamphlet. See Joseph P. Barr to Charles J. Biddle, Aug. 18, 1863, box 39, folder 2, Biddle Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁵⁷ White, *Emancipation, the Union Army, and the Reelection of Abraham Lincoln*, 15–16.

⁵⁸ “Proceedings of the Democratic State Convention,” *Daily Patriot & Union*, June 18, 1863; George Woodward to Charles Biddle, July 6, 1863, box 39, folder 1, Biddle Family Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; “Woodward Shuffling,” *Evening Telegraph*, Oct. 5, 1863. For a more detailed

Curtin may have blunted the effectiveness of Democratic indictments by his own willingness to criticize the administration. On January 28, 1863, Albert Boileu, editor of the *Philadelphia Evening Journal*, was arrested and taken to Fort McHenry for an article that praised Jefferson Davis and questioned Lincoln's capacity to restore the Union. Boileau's case quickly became a partisan football. On February 12, 1863, Curtin responded with a message that railed against traitors but also stated that the "courts of justice are open," that only Congress had the right to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, and that anyone accused of treason deserved a fair trial. Republicans took offense at what they saw as an unseemly bid for conservative support. Democrats remained suspicious but welcomed the missive, with a Representative Glenn claiming in the Pennsylvania Assembly that "the words of Governor Curtin . . . must have sunk and scorched like molten lead in the hearts of those" who "defend the usurpations of the President." Curtin's shot across the administration bow was heard beyond his state, and the Democratic *New York World* paid the governor a qualified compliment by claiming that his message had earned him a "backseat among the defenders of the rights of free speech."⁵⁹

As the campaign approached, Curtin's relationship with the troops began to yield real dividends. The mass of the soldiery could not vote, but Secretary Stanton agreed to grant as many furloughs as possible to help "carry the election in Pennsylvania."⁶⁰ Even those who could not get home still found ways to voice their support. Timothy Orr has noted the many soldier resolutions in Pennsylvania newspapers that threatened Copperheads and offered Curtin the "highest encomiums" in the early months of 1863. These missives from the front continued throughout the fall, as soldiers praised the governor's loyalty and love for the troops. On August 28, 1863, the Third Division, First Army Corps, praised "the Hon. Governor, who has a heart overflowing with gratitude toward the widows and orphans whose husbands and fathers have died tru [*sic*] and patriotic soldiers." In the week before the election, a soldier in the Sixth Pennsylvania

discussion of Woodward, see Arnold Shankman, *The Pennsylvania Anti-War Movement, 1861-1865* (Rutherford, NJ, 1980), 129.

⁵⁹"Gov. Curtin on Military Arrests," *Altoona (PA) Tribune*, Feb. 24, 1863; "Brief Paragraphs," *Erie (PA) Observer*, Feb. 21, 1863; *Republican Compiler*, Feb. 23, 1863, 2; "Arbitrary Arrests," *New York Times*, Feb. 14, 1863; *The Legislative Record: Containing the Debates and Proceedings of the Pennsylvania Legislature for the Session of 1863*, 807, accessed online through HathiTrust Digital Library; *New York World* quoted in Arnold Shankman, "Freedom of the Press during the Civil War: The Case of Albert D. Boileau," *Pennsylvania History* 42 (1975): 313.

⁶⁰Edwin Stanton to William Meredith, Sept. 28, 1863, box 74, folder 7, Meredith Family Papers (Collection 1509), Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Reserves publicly begged his sibling to vote for the “the right hand man of the United States—Governor Andrew G. Curtin.” Just in case civilians still struggled to grasp their message, the troops published replica votes. Nearly all mirrored those of the Fifth and Tenth Pennsylvania Reserves, which recorded lopsided Curtin victories of 310 to 12 and 383 to 9. From the confines of camp, the rank and file offered all the support they could short of actually casting a ballot.⁶¹

Reelection: “Our Country, Right or Wrong!”

In mid-September, the Union Party State Central Committee issued an address, written by Curtin’s campaign chairman, Wayne MacVeagh, to the people of Pennsylvania. The title—“Our Country, Right or Wrong!”—seemed to openly acknowledge discontent with Republican governance. Adopted by the Democratic Party during the war with Mexico, the phrase had long been attacked by abolitionists such as Wendell Phillips for its “trespass” on the “domain of morals.”⁶² Atop Curtin’s campaign, it offered an inspiring but also temporally limited message. A resounding call to patriotism, it asked people to recognize that “the destiny of free government throughout the world” lay at stake. The full address also celebrated the end of slavery, but it climaxed by acknowledging persistent divisions: “If . . . anything is left undone, which some think ought to have been done, or anything has been done which some think should have been left undone, we reserve these matters for more opportune discussion in the calmer days of peace.”⁶³ This represented a traditional invoking of military necessity. But by hinting that measures might be revisited once the war passed, it placed an additional layer of doubt on the steps taken. As the Union Party slogan, it invited waverers to embrace Curtin’s coalition.

Wayne MacVeagh, chairman of the committee, led across the state a band of speakers who used this centrist message to appeal to conservatives, especially Democrats. MacVeagh opened a meeting in Lancaster proclaiming that all loyal Democrats were “declaring their fealty to the

⁶¹ Orr, “A Viler Enemy in Our Rear,” 176; “Political,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Aug. 28, 1863, *America’s Historical Newspapers*; “Listen to the Voices of the Brave Tioga Soldier Boys,” *Tioga County Agitator*, Oct. 9, 1863.

⁶² W. Caleb McDaniel, *The Problem of Democracy in the Age of Slavery: Garrisonian Abolitionists and Transatlantic Reform* (Baton Rouge, LA, 2013), 229. It also served as the wartime motto for the *Boston Courier*, a conservative newspaper. See Thomas H. O’Connor, *Civil War Boston: Home Front and Battlefield* (Boston, 1997), 53.

⁶³ “Our Country, Right or Wrong!” *The Alleghenian*, Sept. 17, 1863.

Union.” Repurposing much opposition rhetoric, he stated that “if you desire peace, you will vote Curtin; if you would prevent another draft, you will vote Curtin”; otherwise, he warned, “all this effort to maintain the old Union, and to preserve the old Constitution, shall have been in vain.” The emphasis on the *old* Union and Constitution surely represented an attempt to reject Democratic claims that the meaning of the war had shifted from Union to emancipation. MacVeagh maintained that restoring the Union remained the purpose of the war. The next speaker, Greene Adams, drove the message home. An old Whig lawyer from Kentucky, Adams admitted that he still owned slaves but accepted that the institution was doomed. He urged Pennsylvanians to recognize the larger goal and join him in serving “the cause of Union” by reelecting Curtin.⁶⁴

If slaveholders did not sufficiently convey the inclusive message, Union Party podiums also regularly hosted Democratic converts. Few embodied Curtin’s message better than Colonel Thomas C. MacDowell, until 1862 the editor of the fiercely Democratic *Harrisburg Patriot and Union*. MacDowell told voters, “I have been a Democrat all my life . . . I am a Democrat still . . . I take back nothing that I have ever cherished in the way of principles; I sacrifice nothing that I have ever loved.” But MacDowell feared Democratic victories could produce Confederate recognition from Europe, leading to the permanent destruction of the Union that both parties cherished. For this reason, he urged Democrats to “stick to the government; stand by those who are administering it for the time being; and if there are any abuses, I will, after a while, in more peaceful times, join hands with you to reform all those abuses.”⁶⁵ With enthusiasm or reluctance, all were encouraged to recognize that, for now—“Right or Wrong”—the only option was to support Curtin and the Union.

Illness limited Curtin’s personal appearances, but when he did take the stump he eloquently invoked the Union cause and said nothing to alienate conservatives. He dutifully repeated the campaign slogan that “I accept all that is bad as well as all that is good in the Government, for I am for the Government, right or wrong.” But he focused mostly on the positive and substantive associations of Union. Opening with a paean to the troops, he reminded his audiences that “for the Government, your neighbors have

⁶⁴“The Canvass for Governor,” *Philadelphia Press*, Sept. 18, 1863.

⁶⁵Macdowell was briefly imprisoned in 1862 for material suspected of inciting civil unrest. John A. Marshall, *American Bastille: A History of the Illegal Arrests and Imprisonment of American Citizens during the Late Civil War* (Philadelphia, 1876), 501; “A Democrat on the Stump for His Country,” *Evening Telegraph*, Sept. 28, 1863, “Speech of Thomas C. MacDowell,” *Evening Telegraph*, Oct. 13, 1863.

bled and eat the dust.” Again and again, he proclaimed, “I thank my God that I have one virtue of which I can boast—loyalty to my country.” On election eve in Philadelphia, he drew on the historical ballast of the founders: “here, this night, on the sacred ground where the Government was formed . . . I praise my God that he directed and controlled me that I have been and am faithful to my country.” In a perilous present, harkening to a shared and sacred past made for a resonant rallying cry. Come election day, he had no doubt that “Pennsylvania will declare her fidelity with the ballot-box, as she has done with the cartridge-box.”⁶⁶

Andrew Curtin won reelection by 15,335 votes, less than 3 percent of the more than 500,000 cast. This halved his 1860 majority but reversed Democratic successes in 1862. Campaign manager Wayne MacVeagh put the victory down to “the mute eloquence of disfranchised soldiers whose appeals came from camp, hospital and field to fathers, brothers and friends at home.”⁶⁷ The absence of most of the military vote certainly helped to make it an impressive and far from certain result. The victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg undeniably raised Curtin’s prospects, but the boost these offered may well have been enhanced by his close bond with the state’s soldiers.

Conclusion

State-level incarnations, including Pennsylvania’s Union Party, paved the way for the National Union Party that reelected President Lincoln. By 1864, the Republican label had faded steadily, to the extent that Michael Holt has found that 83 percent of congressional races that year registered as Union against Democrat, not Republican against Democrat. Holt has argued that when Lincoln embraced the Union moniker, it reflected his desire to reorient his party away from an appeal based solely on “hostility toward the South and the Democratic party” and to “replace the Republican party with a new bisectonal organization to be called the Union party.”⁶⁸ Holt makes a bold claim, but it certainly reflects the tenor of attempts to expand Republican politics in Pennsylvania. Curtin himself

⁶⁶ “Speech of Governor Curtin,” *Philadelphia Press*, Oct. 7, 1863; “Speech of Governor A. G. Curtin,” *Philadelphia Press*, Oct. 12, 1863.

⁶⁷ Egle, *Andrew Gregg Curtin*, 163.

⁶⁸ Michael Fitzgibbon Holt, “A Moving Target: President Lincoln Confronts a Two-Party System Still in the Making” (conference paper, Annual Symposium of the Abraham Lincoln Association, Springfield, IL, Feb. 12, 2004), 2; Holt, “Abraham Lincoln and the Politics of Union,” 330.

had been reported attending, in early 1863, a New York meeting arranged by Thurlow Weed to discuss the formation of a “new party” at a national level made up of “war democrats and conservative republicans.” Voices from elsewhere expressed similar desires. In September of 1863, the governor of Oregon, Addison Gibbs, implored Lincoln to form a National Union Party ticket. Explaining that the Pacific Coast hinged on an alliance of Republicans and Douglas men under a “Union” label, he warned that a “Republican” presidential ticket would bring disaster. In that case, Gibbs suggested, “we may learn when it is too late that there is something in a name.”⁶⁹

Even a cursory examination of the heated debates at the 1864 National Union Party convention reveals clear splits over the present and future direction of Lincoln’s coalition. Radical Republicans faced off against delegates from the border states of the lower North and Midwest over whether to admit representatives from the Southern states and whether to choose Andrew Johnson or Hannibal Hamlin as the vice presidential candidate. In both cases, the radical Republicans lost. The attempt to recast the party as a national movement was captured by Robert J. Breckenridge of Kentucky—a former Whig slaveholder—who opened the convention promising that “as a Union Party I will follow you to the ends of the earth, and to the gates of death. But as an abolition party—as a Republican party—as a Whig party—as a Democratic party—as an American party, I will not follow you one foot.” In a dramatic manifestation of the transformative nature of war, Breckenridge accepted the end of slavery. But a profound schism with radicals remained over what should happen next: Did emancipation necessitate moves toward establishing black social and political equality? What type of Reconstruction should Southern states undergo before they could rejoin the Union? On these issues, the National Union Party of 1864 stood deeply divided. Those who stressed the Union nature of the party, and the centrism that held it together, backed conservative solutions to these problems.⁷⁰

Curtin’s appearances in the 1864 campaign showed how easily his rhetoric fitted the presidential race. A typical account stated that he “entered into no discussion of political topics, but confined himself to exhortations to the people to perform their duty to their country, to the soldiers in the

⁶⁹“Personal,” *Philadelphia Press*, Feb. 16, 1863, “Gov. Curtin and a New Political Party,” *Philadelphia Press*, Feb. 17, 1863, “Abolition in Disguise,” *Democrat and Sentinel*, Feb. 25, 1863; Addison C. Gibbs to Abraham Lincoln, Sept. 24, 1863, Lincoln Papers.

⁷⁰*Proceedings of the National Union Convention, Held in Baltimore, Md., June 7th and 8th, 1864* (New York, 1864), accessed online at HathiTrust Digital Library.

field, to themselves.” The frustration this produced suggests its effectiveness. Democrats complained that neither Curtin nor his press “say one word about State policy . . . they are mute as mice upon the subject of the Tariff, the question of emancipation and negro equality, the suppression of free speech and the press, arbitrary arrests, &c.” Avoiding these issues allowed those indifferent or opposed to Republicanism to stand with the Union. The National Union Party embraced this strategy, featuring emancipation prominently in only 28 of 213 pamphlets and broadsides. In doing so, Union parties cast doubt—politically advantageous, to be sure, but real—over the future permanence, or at least nature, of the Republican project.⁷¹

Politicians and voters during the Civil War genuinely struggled to come to terms with policies that had been unthinkable four years earlier. Union parties cast these unprecedented measures as military necessities because that represented the only basis on which a majority of people could conceive them as constitutionally justified and desirable. Curtin clearly shared these doubts. As well as ignoring emancipation and publicly criticizing arbitrary arrests, he wrote privately to Lincoln, describing the suspension of habeas corpus as a “heavy blow” and the draft, though necessary, as “very odious in the state.”⁷² As a politician, he also understood that how he explained and justified policy mattered almost as much as the policy itself. To speak with approbation of controversial measures would lose support from conservatives. By understanding Lincoln’s policies as measures to suppress the rebellion, these voters sustained the government under the Union Party banner.

Curtin reinforced his political messages with governing choices, showing the important ways that governors served as influential party heads and powerful executives. In repeated clashes with Washington, Lincoln sided with Curtin because he recognized that the growth of the federal government had not diminished the political relevance of the states. Election results in a federal system remained beyond the president’s control. Lincoln needed Pennsylvania’s support and had little option but to trust Curtin’s loyalty and accommodate the sometimes obstructive positions he took. On the home front, Curtin’s actions to cater to all who

⁷¹ “Meeting at Haddonfield—Speech of Governor Curtin,” *Daily Evening Bulletin*, Nov. 5, 1864; “The ‘Soldiers’ Friend,’” *Lancaster (PA) Intelligencer*, Aug. 25, 1863; for a discussion of the 1864 strategy and for the calculations, originally worked out by Adam I. P. Smith, see Philip Shaw Paludan, “War is the Health of the Party,” in *The Birth of the Grand Old Party*, 63–65.

⁷² Andrew Curtin to Abraham Lincoln, Sept. 18, 1863, and Sept. 4, 1863, Lincoln Papers.

supported the war effort helped prevent civil strife and complemented his inclusive Unionist message.

For the likes of Charles Sumner or Thaddeus Stevens, the war was an opportunity to reshape what America meant; it was not about restoration but revolution. For Curtin, it was about maintaining “the Union at all hazards.” As a former Whig who flirted with the Know-Nothings before becoming a Democrat in the late 1870s, it seems deeply unlikely that Curtin secretly served a radical cause. He may have entertained a dream of many Old Whig conservatives who, in the aftermath of their party’s collapse, hoped to move “toward a combination with conservative Democrats in a new Union party.”⁷³ Slavery’s imminent demise may have only increased the incentive to now craft a cross-party appeal wrapped in the banner of Union. A political crisis had precipitated the Civil War, a dramatic failure of moderates to find common ground. The centrist approach taken by Curtin, and adopted nationally in 1864, may have seemed to offer the best hope to win the war, heal old schisms, and reestablish peace and prosperity.

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⁷³ Michael F. Holt, *The Rise and Fall of the American Whig Party: Jacksonian Politics and the Onset of the Civil War* (New York, 1999), 774.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

“To Friends and All Whom It May Concerne”: William Southeby’s Rediscovered 1696 Antislavery Protest

ABSTRACT: Pennsylvania Quaker William Southeby wrote one of the earliest American critiques of slavery in 1696 and continued agitating against the institution until his death in 1722. Scholars have been restricted in their attention to Southeby because his 1696 protest and all but one of his other writings have been lost to history. This article reproduces and analyzes a recently discovered transcript of his 1696 address made in 1791 by another Quaker abolitionist, James Pemberton, along with Southeby’s other known antislavery essay, from around 1714. Both documents shed new light on the contentious early history of abolitionism.

IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, when enslaved black people were the primary opponents of slavery, Quaker William Southeby was among the few white spokesmen against slavery and slave trading. A few other Friends had publicly criticized slavery before Southeby, but he was the first to make antislavery an ongoing concern. As an essayist and political lobbyist, Southeby was America’s first white abolitionist. He penned one of the earliest antislavery writings in 1696 and continued agitating against slavery into the 1720s.¹ Very few of Southeby’s writings are extant, how-

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¹In 1934 historian Thomas E. Drake remarked that William Southeby “has, of course, long been recognized as the leading antislavery Friend of the day.” Thomas E. Drake, “Cadwalader Morgan, An Early Antislavery Friend,” *Bulletin of Friends Historical Association* 23 (1934): 97 (quotation); H. J.

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ever, so scholars have been unable to examine the antislavery arguments he advanced, and he has received less attention than such successors as Ralph Sandiford, Benjamin Lay, John Woolman, and Anthony Benezet. The fate of Southeby's original manuscript from 1696 remains a mystery, but a handwritten copy made in 1791 by James Pemberton, another Quaker abolitionist, has been recently identified at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.²

With this text of Southeby's 1696 address, "To Friends and All whom it may Concerne" (doc. 1), we can now appreciate the complexity of the arguments he contributed to early antislavery discourse.³ Southeby's wide-ranging discussion brought together arguments from such earlier essayists as Quaker founder George Fox and Irish Friend William

Cadbury, "Another Early Quaker Anti-Slavery Document," *Journal of Negro History* 27 (1942): 210; Thomas E. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America* (New Haven, CT, 1950), 19; Kenneth L. Carroll, "William Southeby, Early Quaker Antislavery Writer," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 89 (1965): 422; J. William Frost, ed., *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery* (Norwood, PA, 1980), 33; Jean R. Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery: A Divided Spirit* (Princeton, NJ, 1985), 4, 19, 22; Brycchan Carey, *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1657–1761* (New Haven, CT, 2012), 97; Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, CT, 2016), 12.

²The Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 484A) consist of thousands of documents taking up fifty-two linear feet of shelving at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. James Pemberton's transcript of Southeby's 1696 protest is located in folder 18 of volume 54, with other materials from 1791. The archivist who filed the document clearly did not realize that it included the text of an important document that scholars had believed was lost. Meanwhile, scholars of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century antislavery would have little reason to look for Southeby's writing in the papers of James Pemberton from a century later. Nicholas Wood came across the document while researching the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings' antislavery activity; he was apparently the first scholar to recognize its significance.

³On Quaker antislavery, see Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*; Sydney V. James, *A People among Peoples: Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA, 1963); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY, 1966), esp. 292–332, 483–86; Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823* (Ithaca, NY, 1975), esp. 213–54; Jack D. Marietta, *Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748–1783* (Philadelphia, 1984), 113–28, 273–88; Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*; J. William Frost, "George Fox's Ambiguous Anti-Slavery Legacy," in *New Light on George Fox (1624 to 1691)*, ed. Michael Mullett (York, Eng., 1993), 69–88; Thomas Slaughter, *The Beautiful Soul of John Woolman, Apostle of Abolition* (New York, 2008); Geoffrey Plank, *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom: A Quaker in the British Empire* (Philadelphia, 2012); Maurice Jackson, *Let this Voice be Heard: Anthony Benezet, Father of Atlantic Abolitionism* (Philadelphia, 2009); Jonathan Sassi, "With a Little Help from the Friends: The Quaker and Tactical Contexts of Anthony Benezet's Abolitionist Publishing," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 135 (2011): 33–71; David Waldstreicher, "The Origins of Antislavery in Pennsylvania: Early Abolitionists and Benjamin Franklin's Road Not Taken," in *Antislavery and Abolitionism in Philadelphia: Emancipation and the Long Struggle for Racial Justice in the City of Brotherly Love*, ed. Richard Newman and James Mueller (Baton Rouge, LA, 2011), 45–65; Katherine Gerbner, "We are against the traffick of men-body': The Germantown Quaker Protest of 1688 and the Origins of American Abolitionism," *Pennsylvania History* 74 (2007): 149–72; Gerbner, "Antislavery in Print: The Germantown Protest, the 'Exhortation,' and the Seventeenth-Century Quaker Debate on Slavery," *Early American Studies* 9 (2011): 552–75.

Edmundson, as well as the authors of the Germantown protest of 1688 and the Keithian pamphlet of 1693.⁴ Southeby also offered several arguments against slaveholding and the slave trade not found in other essays at the time. His efforts inspired a briefer antislavery statement by fellow Quaker Cadwalader Morgan, and these two documents helped persuade the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (PYM) to issue its first official statement discouraging the slave trade in 1696. The PYM, however, did nothing to encourage liberating black people who were already enslaved. One scholar, who lacked access to Southeby's 1696 text, concluded that Morgan's anti-slavery address and the PYM advice "were representative of a new strain of antislavery thought in Atlantic Quakerism," which emphasized "that Quakers would be better off without slaves, not that slaves would be better off free, a sharp contrast to the humanitarian-based antislavery arguments of the 'Germantown Protest' and the [Keithian] *Exhortation*." However, the text of Southeby's 1696 address reveals that he expanded humanitarian arguments against slavery, demonstrating that this strain of antislavery discourse had never "disappeared from debate in the orthodox Meeting for decades," as previously assumed.⁵

While building on the work of his predecessors, Southeby was also a transitional figure, anticipating the more provocative antislavery discourses of some of his successors. The PYM's 1696 advice against slave trading might have represented a watershed moment, but many Quakers openly flouted this counsel and expanded their involvement in slavery and slave trading. As a result, Southeby in 1712 challenged Friends and the Pennsylvania legislature to live up to the young colony's promise by abolishing slavery. When this failed, his antislavery rhetoric became increasingly heated, as seen in his only other extant antislavery writing, from around 1714 (also published here for the first time, as doc. 2). After several more years of agitation, Southeby became the first Quaker in the Delaware Valley whose monthly meeting threatened to disown him on account of his antislavery efforts.

⁴George Fox, *Gospel Family-Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families, Both of Whites, Blacks and Indians* (1676); William Edmundson, *Journal of the Life . . . of William Edmundson* (1715); Edmundson, *Letters* (1676); "Germantown Friends' Protest Against Slavery, 1688," all reprinted in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 35–69; *An Exhortation and Caution to Friends Concerning Buying or Keeping of Negroes* (1693), reprinted in J. William Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania* (Norwood, PA, 1980), 213–18.

⁵Gerbner, "Antislavery in Print," 575. Gerbner points to John Hepburn's *The American Defence of the Christian Golden Rule* (1715) as reviving the humanitarian aspect of Quaker antislavery.

By the time James Pemberton rediscovered Southeby's 1696 protest, nearly a century after it was written, Friends had adopted antislavery as a central part of their collective identity, disowning unrepentant slaveholders. However, in the decades after Pemberton's death in 1809, Quaker meetings retreated from active abolitionism. Southeby's early writings and activism thus represent abolitionism's contingent and contentious status rather than its inevitability within the Society of Friends.

* * *

Originally a Roman Catholic, Southeby first arrived in Maryland in 1659. He became a Quaker and lived among Friends on Maryland's eastern shore, where he participated actively in the Third Haven Monthly Meeting and met traveling minister William Edmundson. In 1676 Southeby welcomed newly arrived Quakers in Salem, West New Jersey, informing them of meetings in Maryland and participating in a Salem disciplinary case. By 1684, he moved from Maryland to Kent County, Delaware, taking part in the government of Pennsylvania and the Lower Counties as a member of the Provincial Council and other offices. He relocated to Philadelphia by early 1686 and was elected to the Assembly in 1688.⁶ Southeby was neither wealthy nor among the Quaker elite, but he had earned a reputation that kept him busy in meeting affairs; he represented the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting at the Yearly Meeting between 1695 and 1709, and he served on Yearly Meeting committees.⁷ He was especially active as a member of the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, with "his true gifts," according to historian Kenneth L. Carroll, "in the area of reconciliation." This was reflected in his appointments by the Quaker meeting to resolve disputes and, initially, in his efforts against slavery.⁸

A handful of Quakers preceded Southeby in speaking out against slavery. In the 1670s, several traveling ministers had voiced concern about the growth of slaveholding among Friends in the English colonies of Barbados, Virginia, and Maryland. George Fox in *The Gospel Family-Order* (1672) reminded Quaker slave owners "that Christ dyed for all, . . .

⁶ Carroll, "William Southeby," 416–19; Salem Monthly Meeting minutes, 1676–1696, 8, 17, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA; Craig W. Horle et al., eds., *Lawmaking and Legislators in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1991, 1997), 1:683–85.

⁷ Carroll, "William Southeby," 416–22; Horle, *Lawmaking*, 1:683–85; Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (Men's) minutes [PMM mins.], 1684–1719, Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, PA (hereafter QC).

⁸ Carroll, "William Southeby," 419–20.

for the Tawnes and for the Blacks, as well as for you that are called whites.” He recommended that Friends offer the enslaved Africans instruction in Christianity and free them after a term of years. William Edmundson in 1676 reacted similarly to the institution of slavery, suggesting its incompatibility with the Christian religion.⁹

Friends who agreed with Fox and Edmundson hoped that the founding of Pennsylvania in 1681 by Quaker leader William Penn offered an opportunity to create a society based on the principles of justice and the Golden Rule. The arrival in 1684 of the ship *Isabella* with 150 enslaved Africans for sale, however, began a period of extensive slave importations. Affluent Quakers and other Pennsylvania settlers purchased African men and women as laborers, and Friends who emigrated from the West Indies brought enslaved workers with them.¹⁰

While many Friends saw no problem with buying captive people, in 1688 a group of Germantown Quakers submitted a protest against the slave trade and slavery. Five years later, in 1693, the schismatic followers of George Keith, who in the early 1690s split with Orthodox Quakers in the Delaware Valley, published *An Exhortation and Caution to Friends Concerning Buying or Keeping of Negroes*. The Germantown and Keithian protestors viewed the slave trade as a blight on Penn’s “holy experiment.”¹¹ By 1696 Southeby agreed, recommending that “there may be a Law made against bringing any more of Slaves into this country.” Historians have known that Southeby in 1712 was the first to call on the Pennsylvania legislature to emancipate all slaves; with this text of his 1696 essay, we now know he was the first to call for a law against slave importation as well. He addressed his essay “To Friends and All whom it may Concerne,” indicating his early desire to influence policy both within and beyond the Society of Friends.

In this paper, which he submitted with a copy of Fox’s *Gospel Family-Order*, Southeby made multiple arguments against slavery and the slave trade, all based upon his belief that involuntary bondage was wrong and against God’s will. Like other Quaker antislavery authors, Southeby

⁹ Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 46–49; Edmundson, Letters (1676), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 66–67.

¹⁰ Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 1–33; Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*, 15–22, 32–39; Jean R. Soderlund, “Black Importation and Migration into Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1682–1810,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133 (1989): 144–46; Gary B. Nash and Jean R. Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees: Emancipation in Pennsylvania and its Aftermath* (New York, 1991), 3–16.

¹¹ Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 11–15; Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*, 17–19.

referred prominently to the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12), indicating that slavery contradicted God's doctrine, "whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them."¹² Southeby affirmed, like Fox and Edmundson before him, that Africans "are of the same mold" as Europeans and that Christ died for all mankind. Also similar to Fox's advice to limit the servitude of Africans, Southeby suggested that, at a minimum, slaveholders should free their slaves after "reasonable Satisfaction for what they cost."¹³ Agreeing with the more recent Germantown protest and Keithian pamphlet, Southeby stated that purchasers were implicated in the violence used to enslave people in Africa and compared slavery in North America with captivity of English people by Turks. Southeby further noted, however, that slaves who converted to Islam became free, making Turkish slavery "more justifiable." He reinforced the alarm of the Germantown Quakers and Keithians against rising slave imports, warning that if Africans remained enslaved, "God will heare their Cry, and also avenge it on their oppressors."¹⁴ Nevertheless, he took a cautious approach in this 1696 essay to convince his colleagues through example and careful argument rather than strident accusations.

While building upon previous essays that had initiated antislavery discourse among Friends, Southeby also engaged proslavery arguments in a way that helps us understand how increasing numbers of colonists rationalized purchasing and holding enslaved people. In this paper, Southeby used his gifts of reconciliation by gently pointing out the inconsistencies within proslavery arguments and suggesting how slave owners could make amends with their enslaved Africans through manumission. While making intellectual and moral arguments, he kept his focus on people—black and white—and on the negative impact slavery had on their lives. In this 1696 essay, Southeby took a moderate rhetorical approach more similar to Woolman's *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (1754) than to Ralph Sandiford's *The Mystery of Iniquity* (1730) or Benjamin Lay's *All Slave-Keepers, That Keep the Innocent in Bondage, Apostates* (1737).

¹² Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 19–20; Carroll, "William Southeby," 422; Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 39; Edmundson, Letters (1676), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 67; "Germantown Friends' Protest," in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 69; Robert Piles essay (1698), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 71; *Exhortation*, in Frost, *Keithian Controversy*, 214–15.

¹³ Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 48–49; Edmundson, Letters (1676), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 66–67; *Exhortation*, in Frost, *Keithian Controversy*, 213.

¹⁴ "Germantown Friends' Protest," in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 69; *Exhortation*, in Frost, *Keithian Controversy*, 214, 217, 218.

Southeby began by discussing his own experience, as he considered purchasing enslaved Africans because of the scarcity of white indentured servants.¹⁵ He acknowledged but then rejected slave buyers' justification that they were "no wayes concerned in the originall cause of their bondage" and challenged the notion that "a secret hand of God" might be at work to convert enslaved Africans to Christianity. Southeby noted that he understood the appeal of the argument to purchasers, but then he took the standpoint of the enslaved blacks, writing how "being kept Slaves during term of Life, both of them and their posterity, I say this appears to me to be a barr to stop them for ever comeing trewly to own Christianity." This proslavery rationale lost force even further, he contended, because enslaved Africans could not gain freedom in the English colonies through conversion.

Southeby then answered several questions that were likely part of discussions among Friends and other colonists about slavery and the slave trade. To the question, "what shall we doe with those we have already," he answered that one must treat enslaved people as one would want to be treated and make an agreement with them for manumission. Responding to the question, "How shall we as things are here carry on our business," he stated that, without slaves, colonists would work "with more peace, and a clearer Conscience," though not "so high & full as now many by the oppression of these poor people doth." He also warned against "intending to multiply young negroes as a portion for their Children and posterity after them." The abolitionist watched as his neighbors explored and rationalized ways to wealth through slavery, and he tried to convince them that African men, women, and children had the same right to freedom as whites. His essay acknowledged that abolition would involve an economic cost to individuals, but he presented it as a moral imperative that would serve "Christianity, the Countrey, and the good Government thereof."

A paper by Philadelphia Quaker George Gray, written sometime between 1693 and 1700, further suggests the nature of debate among Friends about slavery. Gray was a minister and slaveholder who emigrated in 1692 from Barbados, where he owned a plantation and kept

¹⁵ Cadwalader Morgan advanced similar personal arguments in July 1696 and Robert Piles in 1698; Cadwalader Morgan essay (1696), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 70; Robert Piles essay (1698), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 71. See also Thomas E. Drake, "Cadwalader Morgan: Antislavery Quaker of the Welsh Tract," *Friends Intelligencer* 98 (1941): 575–76; Henry J. Cadbury, "An Early Quaker Anti-Slavery Statement," *Journal of Negro History* 22 (1937): 488–93.

shop. His essay is undated, but it probably circulated soon before or after Southeby's 1696 paper, perhaps either inspiring or responding to Southeby. Both men employed Fox's *Gospel Family-Order* as a text, but whereas Southeby used that essay as a starting point to demonstrate the injustice and immorality of slavery, Gray emphasized Fox's call for instructing enslaved Africans in Christianity and good behavior. Gray wrote, "it is a Grief unto the faithfull to See & heare how Rude blacks are and more especially on first days [i.e., Sundays] when they gett Liberty & go in Companies neer the Town to Daunce & drink & have Merry Meetings." Thus Friends must restrain their slaves, "bringing them to Meeting & haveing Meetings with them in their familys." Contrary to Southeby's argument that black people would be unlikely to convert if enslaved by Christians, Gray asserted that most important for blacks was the inner freedom that they would obtain through conversion, not outer freedom through manumission.¹⁶

Despite the sentiments of slave owners like Gray, Southeby believed that he and like-minded Friends had the opportunity to end slavery in Pennsylvania. He was convinced Quakers could abolish the slave trade and slavery by law. He was unsatisfied by ameliorative measures, such as the advice to educate African workers in Christianity that Fox and Edmundson had given Quaker slaveholders who faced a hostile government in Barbados.¹⁷ Indeed, in the hands of apologists, these measures became props for slaveholders rather than steps toward abolition. Each of Southeby's arguments assumed the right of all people to physical and legal freedom. He wanted to end the practice of slavery, not reform it.

Southeby's protest precipitated formal action after he presented it in April 1696. First, it inspired another Friend, Cadwalader Morgan, to submit an additional statement against slavery in July. Morgan asserted that he had decided slavery was morally wrong "about two years ago, at which time I had not heard of others writing ab^t it." After learning "that there are divers y^t [who] are not fully satisfied concerning it," Morgan issued his brief antislavery testimony, which reiterated some of Southeby's points. Morgan's description of his own decision not to buy slaves also indicates

¹⁶ For a full discussion and transcription of Gray's text, see Frost, "George Fox's Ambiguous Anti-Slavery Legacy," 77–84; quotations on 83.

¹⁷ Fox, *Gospel Family-Order*, in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 53–55; Edmundson, Letters (1676), in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 66–67.

the way black resistance informed white antislavery from its inception. As a pacifist, he was not sure how he could react if he bought a slave who “must be corrected, or would Run away.”¹⁸

The Philadelphia Monthly Meeting then referred the documents from Southeby and Morgan to the Yearly Meeting, which established policy for Quakers in the Delaware Valley and surrounding areas. In response to these most recent articulations of Quaker antislavery, but also reflecting the positions of Fox and Gray, the PYM issued its first formal statement on the subject:

Whereas Several Papers have been Read Relating to the Keeping & bringing In of Negroes, which being duly considered its the Advice of this Meeting that Friends be careful not to Encourage the bringing in of any more Negroes, & that such that have Negroes be careful of them, bring them to Meetings, or have Meetings with them in their Families, & Restrain from Loose & Lewd Living as much as in them lies, & from Rambling abroad on First Days or other Times.¹⁹

As “the first institutional attempt to limit slave trading in America,” this advice represented an important milestone, albeit limited in some ways. While Southeby could hope that this advice against slave importation would be effective, the meeting’s decision otherwise ignored his focus on liberty and instead emphasized the control and Christian education of enslaved people. With its leadership dominated by such slaveholders as Samuel Carpenter, James Fox, Anthony Morris, Phineas Pemberton, and Edward Shippen, the PYM reached a compromise that discouraged but did not ban the slave trade. Many Quakers continued importing slaves despite the meeting’s advice, which included no enforcement sanctions.²⁰

Unable to curb demand for enslaved laborers in Pennsylvania, Southeby targeted the supply. In 1698 he was one of nine members of the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting who signed a letter on behalf of the meeting to Friends

¹⁸ Cadwalader Morgan, *Quaker Protest Against Slavery*, Merion, PA, 1696 5th month 28th, available online through “Quakers & Slavery,” http://tritych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/ref/collection/HC_QuakSlav/id/19; also in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 70. When citing Quaker sources, we have preserved the practice of numbering rather than naming months. Because the Julian calendar began in March prior to England’s transition to the Gregorian calendar in 1752, 5mo indicated July.

¹⁹ Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Men’s) minutes, 23 7mo 1696, QC; published in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 74.

²⁰ Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 98 (quotation); Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 19; Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*, 19, 34–35, 47–49; Gerbner, “Antislavery in Print,” 575.

in Barbados, the island through which many African captives bound for North America passed. They wrote, "It haveng been the sence of our yearly meeting that many negroes in these parts may prove prejudissial several wayes to us and our posterety, it was agreed that endevors should be used to put a stop to the importing of them." Importation had continued, nevertheless, so Philadelphia Friends asked their Barbados colleagues "that no more negroes may be sent to this River to Friends or others," and that they would ask their neighbors to cooperate as well so "that if possible A stop may be put theyrto." Signed by slaveholders Samuel Carpenter, James Fox, and Anthony Morris as well as abolitionist Southeby, this letter clearly represented another compromise of opinions that, unfortunately, did little to stem slave importation.²¹ In 1700, when William Penn, also a slave owner, recommended that Quaker slaveholders take their enslaved workers to meetings for worship, the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting decided to set up a monthly meeting of worship for enslaved Africans, designating Southeby "to give publick notice."²² He remained engaged with the controversy over slavery, but he had not convinced the slaveholding leaders who dominated the Pennsylvania government, the PYM, or his own monthly meeting to abolish slavery in the Quaker colony.

In 1712, frustrated within Quaker meetings that prioritized group consensus, Southeby took his antislavery efforts into the political realm. He petitioned the Pennsylvania Assembly for "the Enlargement," or emancipation, of enslaved Africans. He tried to push the center of discussion from the slave trade to slavery itself, taking a risk by going outside the Yearly Meeting. He took a more provocative approach, but he remained consistent with his 1696 stand that everyone should be free. The lawmakers, dominated by Friends, responded that "it is neither just nor convenient to set them at Liberty." Primarily in response to the 1712 New York rebellion by enslaved Africans, the Pennsylvania Assembly did place a prohibitive twenty-pound duty on imported slaves, which the Crown subsequently annulled.²³

²¹ Philadelphia Monthly Meeting to the General Meeting of Friends in Barbados, the 30th. of 8th mo '98, (copy), Parrish and Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 1653), box 1, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), reprinted in Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 72; Cadbury, "Another Early Quaker Anti-Slavery Document," 211–12; Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*, 36.

²² PMM mins., 29 1mo 1700, QC; Carroll, "William Southeby," 423.

²³ *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1753), 2:110, accessed online through HathiTrust Digital Library, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.35112203943966;view=1up;seq=121>; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 106–23; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 41–42; Horle, *Lawmaking*, 1:685.

Southeby also supported appeals of the Chester Quarterly Meeting to obtain a stronger stand in the PYM against the slave trade. The PYM delegates, led by clerk of meeting Isaac Norris and other wealthy slaveholders, declined taking action themselves and instead wrote to the London Yearly Meeting (LYM) for advice. In response, the English Quakers denounced Friends' importation of Africans "from their Native Country and Relations" as neither "a Commendable nor allowed Practice." Though establishing no sanctions against importers, they advised Quakers that the slave trade was inconsistent with the Golden Rule. Again reflecting the influence of black resistance on white antislavery, they also warned: "the Multiplying of Negro slaves among you may be of dangerous Consequences considering the Peaceable Principle we profess."²⁴

Southeby lauded the LYM's antislavery advice in an address to the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting (doc. 2), probably written in 1714. No longer willing to compromise on the issue of slavery, and with more vehement rhetoric than his 1696 essay, he expressed his initial disappointment that Pennsylvania Quakers had chosen to consult outsiders rather than setting an antislavery example on their own: "more & better fruits may Reasonably bee expected from us then from other places, being so many ministers & other Ancient friends that came out of england to live hear, theyrfore wee ought to bee exemplary to other places and not take liberty to do things because others do them." However, he added, "in Another Respect I am Realy glad wee did send for england to friends About it so y^t all that desires to know theyr Advise About it may bee satisfied that they do not Allow nor have unaty with this evel practis of Keping people and theyr posteraty slaves for ever nor y^e danger that may follow." Slaveholding Pennsylvanians could no longer complacently assume that English Quakers would sanction their actions.

Southeby seems to have interpreted the London epistle more expansively than the English Friends intended. While the LYM stated that the African slave trade was not an "allowed Practice," it did not explicitly forbid slaveholding. Southeby advocated abolishing slavery itself, not just the African slave trade, and read that meaning into the LYM's advice, implying that the English Quakers did "not Allow" slavery at all. He concluded his address by venting his frustration with the Philadelphia leadership, writing, "and though you strive to discurriddg mee for being so plain with you,

²⁴Frost, *Quaker Origins*, 76; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 116–18.

but seing it is Realy & trewly for y^e promotion of truth & Righteousness in y^e earth & having the countenance & unaty of sum of y^e best of men in it, I am not much concernd for y^e frownes or displeasure of Any that may Apose it.”²⁵ He clearly felt marginalized, but confidently believed he was on the right side of the issue.

In the ensuing years Southeby continued pressing Quakers to enforce and expand the antislavery advice issued by the 1696 PYM and the 1713 LYM. In 1716 he published and distributed several antislavery papers without permission of the Quaker overseers of the press. When the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting ordered him to stop distributing the papers and “to condemn his disorderly printing,” Southeby acquiesced, “but not so fully” as the meeting desired. In 1717, he published yet another paper. Friends threatened him with disownment but avoided taking that step against a colleague who had worked many years to uphold Quaker testimony and discipline.²⁶ Though the seasoned abolitionist apparently stopped publishing antislavery essays, he kept up the fight. Eight months before his death in 1722, he sent another petition “about Negroes” to the Assembly, which the legislators read and laid on the table.²⁷ At the time of Southeby’s death, antislavery agitation remained a minority position within both the Society of Friends and Penn’s Holy Experiment, although Ralph Sandiford, Benjamin Lay, and others would continue the struggle.

* * *

Nearly a century after Southeby composed his 1696 antislavery protest, James Pemberton found it “among the papers of the Yearly Meeting,” likely as part of his work of copying the PYM minutes. This project was something of a family tradition, begun by his grandfather, Phineas Pemberton, in 1696.²⁸ By 1781 James had taken over the job, combining the earlier

²⁵ Despite Southeby’s rebuke of the meeting leadership, he remained active in Philadelphia Monthly Meeting affairs through 1715, assisting poor Friends and serving on oversight committees and as representative to the quarterly meeting. PMM mins., 1711–1715, QC.

²⁶ PMM mins., 27 2mo 1716, 25 3mo 1716, 29 9mo 1717, QC; Carroll, “William Southeby,” 426–27. Copies of Southeby’s publications have not been found.

²⁷ *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania*, 2:299; Horle, *Lawmaking*, 1:685.

²⁸ Phineas Pemberton (1650–1702) had been appointed the PYM’s first regular clerk in 1696 and instructed to compile “soe many of the minutes & papers as are fit to be Recorded and can be had” from the preceding years. PYM minutes 1681–1710 (rough), [p. 33] (23 7mo 1696), QC. Phineas died in 1702, and others continued the task of transcribing loose minutes on scraps of paper into a formal minute book. After 1729, the task was continued by Phineas’s son, Israel (1685–1753), whom

minutes transcribed by his father, grandfather, and other clerks into a new “fair” copy of all the minutes from 1681 to 1746.²⁹ In creating this copy, Pemberton apparently also referred back to the original loose minutes and miscellaneous papers of the PYM, where he found William Southeby’s antislavery address.

Although Southeby’s letter was not included in the PYM’s formal minutes, it is no surprise that James Pemberton took the time to transcribe it for his own use; he was not only a clerk but also an active abolitionist. Beginning in the 1750s, Pemberton and his brothers actively supported a broad reformation in Quaker policy that, among other things, endorsed the type of antislavery policies that Southeby had advocated decades before. For example, Israel Pemberton Jr. served as clerk for the PYM in both 1754, when it issued *An Epistle of Caution and Advices Concerning the Buying and Keeping of Slaves*, and 1758, when it adopted a disciplinary policy imposing sanctions on those who purchased or sold slaves and instructing “such Friends as who have any Slaves to sett them at Liberty.” Influenced by John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, the PYM suggested that the French and Indian War was evidence of divine retribution and that Quakers had a sacred duty to follow the Golden Rule and free their slaves.³⁰ James Pemberton had succeeded his older brother as clerk of the PYM by 1776, when the Quakers adopted the policy of disowning members who continued holding slaves.³¹ Pemberton had also joined the Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings (PMS) in 1756, which soon expanded its focus from promoting Quaker peace testimony to efforts against slavery.³² For example, in January 1776 Pemberton served on a PMS committee that issued *The Antient Testimony & Principles of the People Called Quakers*, outlining the Quakers’ pacifism and opposition to the current rebellion while also suggesting that the imperial crisis was

the PYM instructed “to provide a suitable fair Book, and therein to cause fairly and truly to be entered all the minutes of this Meeting.” PYM minutes 1681–1746 (fair), 339–40 (20–24 7mo 1729), QC.

²⁹ James Pemberton began his version of the PYM minutes with a transcription of a letter by his grandfather Phineas from around 1700, giving a brief overview of the history of Quakerism in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. James dated his transcription 13 3mo 1781. PYM minutes 1681–1746 (fair), [unpaginated material at front], QC.

³⁰ PYM minutes vol. 3, 51–53 (17 9mo 1754), 121 (27 9mo 1758, quotation), QC; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 58, 61–62.

³¹ PYM minutes vol. 3, 353–55 (27 9mo 1776), QC.

³² Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings Minutes, vol. 1, 30 (24 9mo 1756), QC (hereafter PMS minutes). On the PMS’s antislavery activities, see also Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 84–113; Nicholas P. Wood, “A ‘Class of Citizens’: The Earliest Black Petitioners to Congress and Their Quaker Allies,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 74 (2017): 109–44.

the “Dispensations of Divine Providence” for the colonists’ sins, including slaveholding.³³

The Pennsylvania legislature adopted a gradual abolition law during the war for independence, but other Americans revived the Atlantic slave trade with the return of peace.³⁴ Pemberton increased his antislavery activities, and the PYM and PMS petitioned the Confederation Congress against the Atlantic slave trade in 1783, 1785, and 1786.³⁵ Given Pemberton’s long experience in antislavery activism, it was natural that members of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (PAS, established in 1775) asked him to join their restructured group and serve as vice president in 1787. He became president of the PAS three years later and remained active in both the PAS and PMS until shortly before his death in 1809.³⁶

Based on his antislavery activities, Pemberton undoubtedly took great interest in his discovery of Southeby’s 1696 manuscript. Unfortunately, it remains unclear how he used the transcript he made—or what he did with the original. The PAS and PMS frequently published antislavery literature or had it inserted in newspapers, but there is no evidence that Pemberton did so with Southeby’s letter. We can only speculate on what Pemberton thought about Southeby’s address.

From one perspective, Southeby’s 1696 protest, along with the PYM advice issued in response, represented an early milestone in the history of Quaker antislavery. Indeed, when the British abolitionist Thomas Clarkson created a visual map of the course of antislavery, he included “Qua[ker] Pennsylvania 1696” as one of the earliest “rivulets” that combined to form the antislavery ocean that led Britain and the United States to abolish the Atlantic slave trade in 1808.³⁷ However, James Pemberton’s own experience and his reading of the PYM minutes would have pre-

³³ PMS minutes vol. 2, 53 (19 1mo 1776).

³⁴ Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 99–136.

³⁵ Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 90–94.

³⁶ PAS General Meeting minutes 1787–1789, 7–8 (23 4mo 1787), AmS. 01, Pennsylvania Abolition Society Papers (Collection 0490), HSP; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 124–25; Richard Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism: Fighting Slavery in the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2002).

³⁷ The fold-out “map” was generally sewn into the front of Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament*, 2 vols. (London, 1808), and can be viewed through Yale University’s Beineke Library website at <http://brbl-dl.library.yale.edu/vufind/Record/3439900>. On Clarkson’s connections to Quakers, see Dee E. Andrews and Emma Jones Lapsansky-Werner, “Thomas Clarkson’s Quaker Trilogy: Abolitionist Narrative as Transformative History,” in *Quakers and Abolition*, ed. Brycchan Carey and Geoffrey Plank (Urbana, IL, 2014), 194–208.

vented him from adopting a simple narrative of unrelenting antislavery progress. He knew that slaveholding Quakers had ignored the toothless PYM advice from 1696 and frustrated Southeby's desire for more effective reforms. They had similarly stifled the efforts of Southeby's antislavery successors, including Ralph Sandiford and Benjamin Lay.³⁸ Only during the French and Indian War did the PYM take effective action against slave trading and slaveholding.

Pemberton may have seen parallels between Southeby's position within the PYM at the turn of the eighteenth century and the Quakers' position in the early republic. Quakers as a group had finally embraced the ideas previously confined to such radicals as Southeby, but most white Americans—like most Friends a century before—typically gave only lip service to such ideals while declining to take significant action. Every state south of Pennsylvania—as well as New Jersey and New York—still clung to the institution in the 1790s. Some Friends, like Pemberton's kinsman Warner Mifflin, found it “instructive” to reflect on how slow Quakers had been to adopt antislavery and recognize that they “must not expect more from the worlds [*sic*] people, than those of our own Society.”³⁹ For Mifflin and Pemberton, this type of reflection led not to complacency but instead to a conviction that constant agitation could eventually sway the public to embrace antislavery measures as Friends had. By the time Pemberton died in 1809, every northern state had initiated programs abolishing slavery (often very slowly), and Congress had banned the Atlantic slave trade, but slavery was nonetheless much more deeply entrenched in North America than during Southeby's time.⁴⁰

Other considerations should also discourage us from assuming a straightforward trajectory of progress from Southeby's generation that continued through Pemberton's time to the Civil War. Not only was the Society of Friends' embrace of antislavery in the eighteenth century slow, but Quakers as a corporate group also backed away from abolitionism during the nineteenth century. After 1830, Friends (both Orthodox and Hicksite) disowned members they deemed too radical when it came to antislavery. As J. William Frost writes, “by 1840 all the major yearly meetings . . . had closed their doors to abolition lectures, and soon several

³⁸ On the halting progress of Quaker antislavery, see Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*.

³⁹ Warner Mifflin to James Pemberton, 3th Day of 2mo: 1787, vol. 47, Pemberton Family Papers, HSP.

⁴⁰ Adam Rothman, *Slave Country: American Expansion and the Origins of the Deep South* (Cambridge, MA, 2005).

prominent abolitionists had either been disowned or resigned from meeting.”⁴¹ A biographical sketch of William Southeby published in 1855 by the Orthodox journal *The Friend* indicates this renewed conservatism. The author praised Southeby for being among the earliest Quakers to recognize slavery’s sinfulness but also criticized him for going “so far as he did in the matter” without the concurrence of the monthly or yearly meetings. By being “impatient” and acting alone, Southeby “stirred up unnecessarily unkind feelings, which did not increase his own comfort, nor advance the testimony he wished to promote.”⁴² Some of the most influential nineteenth-century Quaker abolitionists, including Lucretia Mott, followed Southeby’s path in pushing the boundaries of what Friends’ meetings would tolerate.⁴³ Southeby’s writings and activism are thus best understood as part of the long, contested, and uneven history of antislavery dissent and activism among Quakers and American society at large.

Document 1: William Southeby’s 1696 Testimony Against Slavery⁴⁴

To Friends and All whom it may Concerne

I having had and kept men Servants above twenty years, that is White men, such as bound themselves for term of years, but now at this place not having that conveniency to have such, have oftentimes been considering the purchase of these negroes, but upon serious consideration, it appears to me to Contradict our Great Law-giver’s holy precepts and self-denying doctrine, where he saith, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them—Mat: 7:12;—I have also considered these negroes

⁴¹ J. William Frost, “Why Quakers and Slavery? Why Not More Quakers?” in *Quakers and Abolition*, ed. Carey and Plank, 29–42 (quotation on 37); Ryan Jordan, *Slavery and the Meetinghouse: The Quakers and the Abolitionist Dilemma, 1820–1865* (Bloomington, IL, 2007).

⁴² “William Southeby,” *The Friend* 28 (1855): 301–2. John Richardson, editor of *The Friend* since 1828, may have written the article.

⁴³ Carol Faulkner, *Lucretia Mott’s Heresy: Abolition and Women’s Rights in Nineteenth-Century America* (Philadelphia, 2011).

⁴⁴ Transcribed by J[ames] P[emberton], Philad: 9: 11mo 1790, vol. 54, folder 18, Pemberton Family Papers, HSP. A note on the transcription: When Pemberton transcribed Southeby’s manuscript, he preserved the original’s archaic spellings while underlining them, much as a modern scholar might add “[sic].” For example: “Countrey” and “trewly.” Our transcription preserves the archaic spellings (and misspellings) but without replicating Pemberton’s underlining, except his underlining of the Golden Rule, which presumably reflected Southeby’s original emphasis. Pemberton’s care in reproducing archaic spellings, along with his experience producing transcripts of various documents as part of his work as a clerk in the PYM and PMS, suggests that his transcription can be regarded as accurate.

To Friends and All whom it may concerne,

I having had and kept men servants about twenty years, that is What more, such as bound themselves for term of years, but since at that place not having that conscientious to have justly, have often been considering the purchase of their negroes, but upon serious consideration, it appears to me to contradict our great Lawgivers holy precepts and self denying doctrine before hand, Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them mat. 7. 12; I have also considered these negroes being brought here for sale, and would have indulged the purchase of them, as being no wayes concerned in the original cause of their bondage, not as to the violence when they are first taken to be sold for slaves, as also that they might ^{that is well} have been with some then in their own Country, so as that there might be a secret hand of God and that there is more probability of coming to know Christianity there in their own Country, as also that there might be a secret hand of God, ^{that is well} to infer it to be so for the cause aforesaid. I say for these reasons I would have indulged the purchase of them to be ^{that is well} bought, and might ^{that is well} have been dispensed with, and I believe many honest men have made this the maine objection, to solve this matter, but then this occured on my mind, that the very act of buying bearing upon these poor blackamoors minds of being kept Slaves during term of life, both of them and their posterity, I say this appears to me to be a bar to stop them, for ever coming freely to own Christianity, or at least to believe us to be truly followers of our great Lawgiver Christ Jesus who said, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye unto them, and to love our neighbour as our self, is to answer the Law and the prophets, nor can we be altogether clear of the

Exod. 21. 16. He that smiteth a man bloweth him, if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death. Lev. 19. 18. He that smiteth into his neighbour, shall give unto him as he hath done.

First page of William Southeby, "To Friends and All Whom It May Concerne," 1696, vol. 54, folder 18, Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 484A), Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Full document available at <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/14675>.

being brought here for sale, and would have indulged the purchase of them, as being no wayes concerned in the originall cause of their bondage, nor as to the violence that is used when they are first taken to be sold for Slaves, as also that they might live better here with some then in their own Countrey and that there is more probability of coming to know Christianity then in their own Countrey, as also that there might be a secret hand of God in itt to suffer it to be so for the cause aforesaid.⁴⁵ I say for these reasons I would have indulged the purchase of them to be tolerable, and might honestly be dispensed with, and I believe many honest men have made this the maine objection to solve this matter; but then this opened on my mind, that the very act Slavery bearing upon these poor blackamoor's minds of being kept Slaves during term of Life, both of them and their posterity, I say this appears to me to be a barr to stop them for ever comeing trewly to own Christianity, or at least to believe us to be trew followers of our great Lawgiver Christ Jesus who said, whatsoever ye would that men should doe unto you, doe ye unto them, and to love our neighbour as our self, is to answer the Law and the prophetts,* [*Southeby/Pemberton's footnote*: Exod^s 21:16: Hee that Stealeth a man & selleth him, if he be found in his hand, hee shall surely be put to death—Rev. 13.10, hee that leadeth into Captivity, shall goe into Captivity] nor can we be altogether clear of the first violence used in taking of them to be Slaves, because we receive them, which still encourages the first violente Act in takeing of them; Besides suppose any of them should turn Christians, yet no remedy, they must still be Slaves; the Law of England has more of Christianity in it which gives freedom to them who believe in Christ, and are baptized, besides if we justifie this buying of Slaves, we can not condemn the Turk for makeing Slaves of us, but must justifie them in itt, nay they are more justifiable then we, for they have their liberty of freedom, if they turne to mehometizm their Religion; but if we professing ourselves Christians and to own Christs holy self denying doctrine, we ought to be more examplery to the Turks, and to these poor Blacks; and whereas it may be said, what shall we doe with those we have already, I say mind Christ's doctrine, Doe as ye would be done by, if you were violently taken and were in their condition; at least agree with them for to serve you so long 'till they make reasonable Satisfaction for what they cost, which no doubt but they will

⁴⁵ Followed by a deletion: "as also that there might be a secret hand of God." The phrase appears later in the sentence and presumably represents an error introduced and corrected by Pemberton while copying Southeby's manuscript.

readily assent to, and serve with more cheerfulness and be more honest in their places, they are of the same mold that we are of, and Christ tasted death for them as well as us, and hath given talents to improve as well as us, and if we have a measure of that Divine Love ruling in us that was so large & incomprehensible in him to all mankind, we must manifest it in some degree, or elce no true Disciples; If carnall reasoning take place, that will be ready to say, How shall we as things are here carry on our business, the Planter his planting, the merchants[,] Brewers, Bakers, Bolter and other trades their callings to advance our trade and calling, we hardly know how to carry it on without Slaves, Truely I believe we may doe it with more peace, and a clearer Conscience in the Sight of God, though we may not live altogether so high & full as now many by the oppression of these poor people doth, and I really believe if there be not some remedy for them, to ease them, God will heare their Cry, and also avenge it on their Oppressors; Let us honestly work ourselves with Such Servants as we have & our Children when able; I hope if this be accepted as most agreeable to Christianity, there may be a Law made against bringing any more of Slaves into this countrey, for I desire these may, both as a Friend to Christianity, the Countrey, and the good Government thereof.

When I writt these lines I had nothing in my mind of anything being written or printed, nor had never seen any such thing that I doe remember; but what is here written is singly to discharge my Conscience in the Sight of God.

W.S.

Philadelphia 12th: 2^d mon 1696⁴⁶

Postscript

It is also my advice & Caution to all Such as are intending to multiply young negroes as a portion for their Children and posterity after them, that they be really considerate before the Lord in it, for I undoubtedly believe, that the time is come, and coming that one nation shall not oppress, nor one people another; nor make Slaves of Each other, neither that the Great and merciful God will have respect to any one Sort of People more than to another, either because they are Black or White or Taunie, nor for any outward, or meer notional profession of any manner of Religion but as they fear him and come sincerely to bow to his holy Gift of Grace which he hath given to all mankind to profitt withall, and hath tasted death for

⁴⁶ Old Style date under the Julian calendar, corresponding to 4mo (April) 1696 under the modern Gregorian calendar.

every man that comes into the world, and Christ the beloved Son of God is in all by this manifestation of his holy Grace and Light as Saith the Apostle, male & female[,] bond & free, Sithian & Barbarian, and we that were of the race of the Gentiles have great cause to believe this Doctrine that were as wile branches who have received of this great mercy and universall loveing kindness being accepted in the beloved Sonn, in whom all the nations of the Earth are accepted, for it is onely through his name that Salvation is without respect of Persons, and this is he who rules and reigns in Righteousness, in Justice and true Judgment, sitting on the throne of David.

[*Followed by Pemberton's comments:*]

William Southbe is supposed to be the author of the foregoing Address, from the original of which found among the papers of the yearly meeting of Friends of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, this copy is transcribed.

JP

Philad: 9: 11mo 1791

[*Docketed by Pemberton:*]

William Southbe

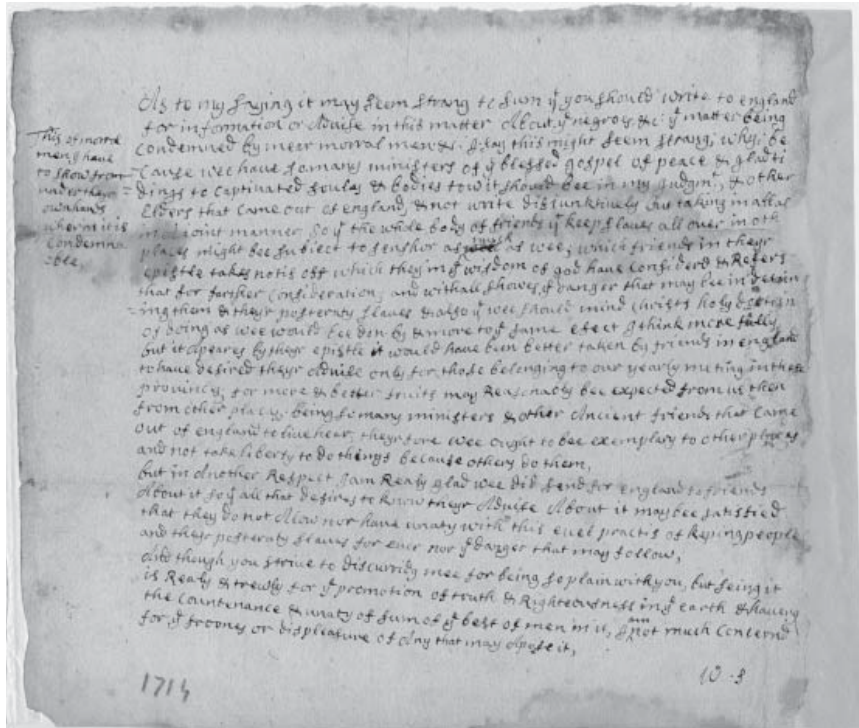
Testimony against Slavery

2 mo 12. 1696.

Document 2: William Southeby's circa 1714 Paper Relating to Negroes⁴⁷

As to my saying it may seem strang to sum y^t you should write to england for information or Advise in this matter About y^e negroes &c: y^e matter being condemned by mear morral men &c: [*In margin:* This of morral men I have to show from under theyr own hands wherin it is condemnable,] I say this might seem strang; why; because wee have so many ministers of y^e blessed gospel of peace & glad tidings to captivated soules & bodies to wit should bee in my judgm^t, & other Elders that came out of england, & not write disjunktively but taking in all as in A joint manner so y^t the whole body of friends y^t keep slaves all over in oth[er *MS torn*] places

⁴⁷ Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Miscellaneous Original Papers 1682–1737, HV 1250/S 3.2, 229, QC. Marked in pencil on front and reverse: 1714. Docketed on reverse: Wm Southbeys paper Relateing [*sic*] to Negroes. The authors are grateful to J. William Frost for suggesting that we include this document for publication.



William Southeby's c. 1714 Paper Relating to Negroes, Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, Miscellaneous Original Papers 1682-1737, HV 1250/S 3.2, 229, Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, PA. Courtesy of Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford College.

might bee subject to sensor as well much as wee; which friends in their epistle takes notis off which they in y^e wisdom of god have considered & Refers that for farther consideration; and withall shoves y^e danger that may bee in detaining them & theyr posteraty slaves & also y^r wee should mind Christs holy doctrin of doing as wee would bee don by & move to y^e same effect I think more fully but it Apeares by their epistle it would have been better taken by friends in england to have desired theyr Advise only for those belonging to our yearly meting in these provinces; for more & better fruits may Reasonably bee expected from us then from other places, being so many ministers & other Ancient friends that came out of england to live hear, theyrfore wee ought to bee exemplary to other places and not take liberty to do things because others do them,

but in Another Respect I am Realy glad wee did send for england to friends About it so y^t all that desires to know theyr Advise About it may bee satisfied that they do not Allow nor have unaty with this evel practis of Keping people and theyr posteraty slaves for ever nor y^e danger that may follow,

And though you strive to discurridg mee for being so plain with you, but seing it is Realy & trewly for y^e promotion of truth & Righteousness in y^e earth & having the countenance & unaty of sum of y^e best of men in it, I am not much concernd for y^e frownes or displeasure of Any that may Apose it,

W. S

Spring Hill College
Lehigh University

NICHOLAS P. WOOD
JEAN R. SODERLUND

BOOK REVIEWS

A Divinity for All Persuasions: Almanacs and Early American Religious Life. By T. J. TOMLIN. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. 220 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$78.)

Scholars of early American history commonly note that most families of that time were likely to own only two books, if they were privileged to own books at all: a Bible and an almanac. Almanacs were stitched pamphlets, published annually, that offered readers a one-stop resource for purposes of practical living, entertainment, and moral education. Each included a calendar, times of sunrise and sunset, notices of astrological events, and sundry poetry, pious tales, jokes, recipes, and medical and agricultural advice. Despite their prevalence, almanacs remain early America's most understudied form of print media. In *A Divinity for All Persuasions*, T. J. Tomlin remedies this neglect with an immensely useful and comprehensive analysis of the genre, focusing on almanacs published in British North America between 1730 and 1820.

In *A Divinity for All Persuasions*, Tomlin argues that almanacs were infused with "pan-Protestantism," a set of core religious doctrines and dispositions held in common by the majority of early Americans (3). Tomlin directs this argument to book historians and to American religious historians: the former have overlooked the almanac's deep religious dimensions, while the latter have exaggerated the period's sectarianism. The almanac offers a vantage for recognizing that everyday Americans were more religious, and shared far more religious commonalities, than scholars have heretofore acknowledged. Dependent on small profit margins, almanac makers were highly attuned to consumer demand. Almanacs thus offer a privileged window into early America's "collective religious sensibility" (119).

"Pan-Protestantism" is a capacious term. At times Tomlin describes it as nearly equivalent to the taken-for-granted mentality of the long eighteenth century, so omnipresent as to be unremarkable and unquestioned. Thematic chapters demonstrate how this pervasive, generic Protestantism was defined by, among other things, an interest in astrology consonant with Protestant natural philosophy; a concern for death, the afterlife, and eternal judgment; and appeals to the religious authorities of reason, the natural world, and the Bible. In chapter five, however, Tomlin escalates the stakes of his argument. Here he advances what we might call a "strong" pan-Protestantism: more than just a given worldview, it was in fact a "radical vision" and a "clearly articulated stream of thought" animated by a spirit

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of religious liberty and the principles of “inclusion, unity, and openness” (101–2). Protestants saw that they differed on denominational particulars, but, believing that they were more united than divided, they enthusiastically supported religious liberty.

Despite its emphasis on inclusion and unity, *A Divinity for All Persuasions* also examines pan-Protestantism’s exclusions. In two closing chapters, Tomlin reveals how the authorial eye of the almanac gazed with equal parts horror and fascination upon Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and atheists. Tomlin argues that this posture toward religious others worked dialectically to shore up pan-Protestant identity.

Yet Tomlin leaves largely unexamined those Protestants excluded from the pan-Protestant consensus. For instance, he presents pan-Protestantism as rigidly orthodox. In his account, almanac makers distanced themselves from those corners of astrology deriving from folk traditions that historians have labeled “occult” (which nonetheless long coexisted syncretically with Protestant Christianity). Pan-Protestantism also appears to have overlapped with the old-light religious establishment, keeping itself aloof from the hotter sort of Protestantism ascendant in this period. It seems that few if any almanac makers identified as Methodists or Baptists. Of evangelicalism and revivalism, Tomlin says only that almanacs were “unaffected by these developments in American church life” and that almanacs condemned religious enthusiasm as a perversion (98, 117). Ultimately it remains unclear whether almanacs represented a true Protestant groundswell or might be viewed more accurately as a product of an elite Protestant hegemony. Using Tomlin’s evidence, almanacs might also be read as representations of a certain image of Protestantism curated by those respectable, old-light laymen who controlled the means of production in early America. Some discussion of the tensions and internal limits of “pan-Protestantism,” as well as more evidence of almanacs’ reception, would have been welcome additions to this compelling study.

A significant contribution to early American religious and book history, *A Divinity for All Persuasions* is historiographically ambitious, intensively researched, and well written. It deserves to be read as the authoritative book on the subject of early American almanacs.

Duke University

SONIA HAZARD

Holy Nation: The Transatlantic Quaker Ministry in an Age of Revolution. By SARAH CRABTREE. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015. 276 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$45.)

In *Holy Nation*, Sarah Crabtree charts the beliefs and values of the Religious Society of Friends during the age of revolution. She focuses particularly on the intersection of religion with the politics of nation and empire throughout the Atlantic world. Crabtree argues that Quakers embraced and appropriated the

Zion tradition to ensure consistent belief, attitudes, and common purpose during the years of the war for independence, the French Revolution, and Napoleonic Wars. She posits that, by comparing themselves to the “Israel of old,” Quakers likened their suffering and devout belief to that of the Israelites. The Society of Friends saw themselves as a distinct and chosen people. As the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries unfolded, Quakers argued that their beliefs fell under God’s law, not the laws of empires or nation-states. The Friends’ pacifist beliefs and “guarded education” of young members placed them at odds with growing states. However, Crabtree explains, Quakers found themselves unable to remain united in agreement about Friends’ place in the world.

Crabtree draws on the journals, sermons, notes, and correspondence of the Society of Friends’ traveling ministers to make her case for the Friends’ creation of a holy nation and its eventual dismantlement by a nineteenth-century schism. Her arguments draw from the society’s spiritual elite and the messages of the yearly meetings rather than the monthly meetings of average Friends. While it is not clear how monthly meetings interpreted these messages, Crabtree does present the reaction of new governments to the greater Society of Friends.

Her argument deftly unfolds over five chapters, taking the reader through an evolution of the society during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Early chapters explore the rise of the Zion tradition and its use by traveling ministers to instill common values and language among society members. She explores the ironic way that Quaker ministers coopted the language of militarism to make a case for “lamb-like warriors” fighting against violence and war. Quakers’ rhetoric not only confounded those in government but also struck blows against traditional masculinity.

Crabtree breaks fertile ground with her look at the Quaker-only schools that placed young Friends behind “walled gardens” to provide an education that would promote Quaker values. Using students’ commonplace books and other school records, she reconstructs a curriculum that taught students to question authority and embrace their ability to change the world, an education that fledging republics were unlikely to embrace. As Crabtree discovers, those same students went on to be active in significant reform movements of the early nineteenth century. As the new century began, the Society of Friends moved toward a new use of the Zion tradition, emphasizing charity as an integral part of God’s work.

Cosmopolitanism threads its way through the last part of the book, as Crabtree explores how the Society of Friends served French and British thinkers as a model for good government, rational religion, and moral economy, even when the reality of the society did not reflect those ideals. Quakers briefly offered an alternative to the inevitable march towards fixed national citizenry. *Holy Nation* offers a glimpse of what might have been had the Hicksite schism not divided the Society of Friends.

Appalachian State University

NEVA JEAN SPECHT

Between Sovereignty and Anarchy: The Politics of Violence in the American Revolutionary Era. Edited by PATRICK GRIFFIN, ROBERT G. INGRAM, PETER S. ONUF, and BRIAN SCHOEN. (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015. 313 pp. Notes, index. \$45.)

The field of the American Revolution is garnering more scholarly attention than in years past, with the publication of some high-profile texts (Claudio Saunt's *West of the Revolution* in 2014 and Kathleen DuVal's *Independence Lost* in 2015) and a substantial conference in 2013 on the topic at the McNeil Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. We have yet to see where this attention will lead. It has been decades since such scholars as Bernard Bailyn, Gordon S. Wood, and Alfred Young set the parameters of a debate that pitted an exceptional, ideologically driven, radical revolution (often called the neo-Whig argument by its critics) against an unfinished, materially driven, conservative revolution that left many peoples outside of its consideration (often called the neo-Progressive argument). Many scholars hope that the recent attention to the field will lead to narratives that transcend this seemingly intractable binary. This volume, which comes out of a 2010 Ohio University conference on violence and sovereignty during the American Revolution, highlights both the possibilities and the limitations of the new thinking in the field.

In his introduction, Peter Griffin writes optimistically about the potential implications that these essays, written by an array of scholars at different stages of their careers, have for reinterpretation of the revolution. Each can be taken singly with profit, and none of the works attempts a sweeping reconsideration of the period. Griffin suggests that these disparate pieces indicate a broader narrative that reflects new interpretations of the revolutionary period. Weaving together their different arguments on the important connections between violence and authority, state legislatures, religion, slavery, and the political imagination, he argues that the authors employ three approaches: an emphasis on "Atlantic state formation," the importance of negotiation, and "state-centered outcomes," each of which is "starting to reshape the field" (8). In his own piece, Griffin argues that the violence of the Paxton Boys in 1763 was a gruesome riff on state formation practices seen in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Great Britain and that the revolutionary period should be understood with these Atlantic structures of state transformation in mind. Readers may be skeptical of his argument, as these analyses seem to harken back to the Imperial School interpretation of the 1930s—an interpretation often critiqued in the field of Atlantic history. It is questionable whether a slight reinterpretation of such scholars as Charles McLean Andrews is the solution to a moribund historiographical field.

Taken individually, all of the essays are worth contemplating, and many of them will interest students of Pennsylvania history. Jessica Choppin Roney's

explanation of how secondary, non-state institutions informed the creation of Pennsylvania's 1775 Militia Bill is an ingenious explication of a thorny historical problem. Peter Thompson provocatively argues that chattel slavery influenced Patriot methods of persecuting Loyalists. Jeffrey L. Pasley claims that the frontier violence of the Whiskey Rebellion, with its traditional aims of correcting authority, was confronted and overwhelmed by a modern state that used violence with the full imprimatur of democratic revolution behind it. Peter Onuf sums up the volume, insisting that the legitimacy of a sovereign state rests on both a viable form and its capacity to rule. All of the works indicate energy flowing into the study of the American Revolution, yet they remain within a paradigm of neo-Whig and neo-Progressive, in which the field has been for quite some time.

Dickinson College

CHRISTOPHER J. BILODEAU

Upon the Ruins of Liberty: Slavery, the President's House at Independence National Historic Park, and Public Memory. By ROGER C. ADEN. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015. 243 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$27.50.)

In his new book, Roger C. Aden recounts the saga of Philadelphia's President's House monument and its problematic commemoration from 2002 through 2011. *Upon the Ruins of Liberty* recalls the chronicle of George Washington, in a presidential mansion located within spitting distance of the Liberty Bell, bending laws to accommodate his own personal dependence on slavery. It is such an egregious episode that, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the National Park Service (NPS) buried its memory—along with the building's foundations—beneath, of all things, a public restroom. The site remained unrecognized until a coalition of historians, preservationists, and activists demanded that the site be commemorated, or perhaps even reconstructed. What they they got was a bit of both, a mélange of confusing interpretive contrivances wedged into one of Philadelphia's busiest street corners, leaving visitors with an unclear impression of what any of it means.

Upon the Ruins of Liberty is Roger C. Aden's attempt to untangle this convoluted narrative, in part by sifting through the layers of conflict that make the story of the President's House so compelling. Aden, a professor of communication studies, is not a natural raconteur. He is primarily concerned with making the lessons of public history and memory relevant to his field and laying bare the challenges of confronting difficult pasts at heritage sites, which he terms "public memory places." Though not everyone will appreciate the book's frequent forays into the theoretical contexts that undergird Aden's analysis, its prose shifts often enough between narrative and exegesis to keep readers interested. These

shifts model Aden's method, which he refers to as "re-collection." The point, he explains, is not necessarily to focus on a singular location, but rather to understand how "persons and places interact within the complex process of meaning-making at memory sites" (14).

PMHB readers will appreciate the sources that Aden brings into play. He scours newspapers, scholarly books and journals, travel blogs, visitor studies, NPS reports, and his own interviews with various stakeholders for any and all indication of how people have responded to the President's House project since its inception. He even explores proposed monument designs that were not built, as well as the 780 evaluation cards filled out by people who reviewed them. This is important work that hedges against the tendency to study people who build monuments rather than those for whom they are built. Aden discovers that the monument's historical treatment of slavery—the burning core of the President's House controversy—did not occasion a predictable bifurcation of audiences by race. In fact, visitors sustained a remarkably dynamic conversation about race and power during the site's excavation.

It is this facet of Aden's book, in fact, that leaves me wanting more. The President's House episode was just one of several in Philadelphia during those years wherein high-stakes conversations about the history of slavery figured prominently in heritage settings. Understanding why that was seems vital to plumbing the particularities of the President's House story. Aden sees the national context, and he gestures at the complex relationship between race and urban development in postwar Philadelphia, but there is a deeper regional story here that gets lost in the mix. That the mix is so thick, though, is a credit to Aden's vision, and good reason to engage this first stab at one of the weightiest public history controversies of our time.

Temple University

SETH C. BRUGGEMAN

Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad. By ERIC FONER. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015. 301 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$26.95.)

Gateway to Freedom is a generously illustrated book based on Sidney Howard Gay's recently discovered "Record of Fugitives." It situates New York City as both the hub of an extensive Underground Railroad (UGRR) network and a treacherous place for freedom seekers. Referring to William Still's *The Underground Railroad* and Gay's journal among other sources, Eric Foner explains New York City's pivotal role and provides context for famous escapes, kidnappings, and rescues.

Gay's "Record of Fugitives" emerges alongside the works of William Still, Wilbur Siebert, and Levi Coffin as a major primary source in UGRR literature. Don Papson and Tom Calarco's *Secret Lives of the Underground Railroad in New York City*, an annotated publication of Gay's journals, adds helpful detail when read in conjunction with *Gateway to Freedom*. Distinguishing abolitionists, the antislavery movement, and the Underground Railroad movement, *Gateway to Freedom* outlines the relationships that defined the New York Vigilance Committee and the UGRR and clarifies how the UGRR operated in the city and along the northeastern metropolitan corridor. The African American leadership of the Vigilance Committee emerges as a major conduit for freedom seekers. The book details public legal actions of the committee and of other prominent New York abolitionists. From the internal strife of the Vigilance Committee to the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society and the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Foner parses the committee's permutations and reformations. *Gateway to Freedom* clarifies the causes and results of schisms between New York and Boston, Garrisonians and Tappanites, and the committee and subsequent antislavery societies.

This book extends Larry Gara, Charles Blockson, and David Blight's critique of Harvard-trained historian Wilbur Siebert's seminal work, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom*. Foner's claim that the detailed maps contained therein are "largely a product of [Siebert's] vivid imagination" demands both substantive examination and proof, as Siebert's maps are too valuable to be readily dismissed (12).

Foner highlights multiple legal strategies adopted in the fight against slavery, with an excellent discussion of opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1793 and the support of such legal doctrines as "the freedom principle." New York's reaction to the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 exposes the complicated relationship between New York state and the economy of slavery.

This exploration of Gay's papers brings the reader closer to understanding the reality that underlies legends of the Underground Railroad. Foner observes that the "heroic work" of New York's white abolitionists "would not have been possible without the courage and resourcefulness . . . of blacks, from the members of the Vigilance Committee to the black churches that sheltered runaway slaves and ordinary men and women who watched for fugitives on the docks and city streets and took them into their homes" (230). Even as the book describes the indispensable work of black abolitionist Louis Napoleon, the author laments the lack of information about "black men and women whose names are lost to history" (230). The future work of New York historians will be to add these names to the foundation laid by *Gateway to Freedom*.

University of Maryland, College Park

CHERYL JANIFER LAROCHE

Abraham Lincoln, the Quakers, and the Civil War: "A Trial of Principle and Faith."

By WILLIAM C. KASHATUS. (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2014. 180 pp. Illustrations, bibliography, index. \$37.)

In *Abraham Lincoln, the Quakers, and the Civil War*, William Kashatus explores aspects of the largely unknown relationship between the sixteenth president of the United States and the Religious Society of Friends. The author contends that Lincoln and American Quakers shared similar religious sensibilities and a steadfast belief in the immorality of slavery. Friends and President Lincoln both struggled to reconcile their principles to the ever-increasing harvest of death produced by civil war. The conflict posed serious fundamental problems for pacifist Friends, who grappled with mandatory military service required by the draft and the use of violence in the name of emancipation. Lincoln, and later Congress, made accommodations for Quaker conscientious objectors, but their moral dilemma remained unresolved. Kashatus explains that the president and Quakers were friends in common affliction. They both endured great emotional and spiritual challenges throughout the war and found great comfort and guidance in each other.

Though much of this book is valuable to the reader, there are some surprising oversights that detract from the author's work. Kashatus deftly presents Friends' beliefs and the various divisions within their religious society, but an explanatory footnote or an appendix would have been helpful in providing background information on the origins of Quaker schismatic sects and the role of Friends' Yearly Meetings. Quakers periodically visited Lincoln during the war, and, according to Kashatus, provided him with reassurance and spiritual guidance. While Kashatus makes it clear that these visits fortified and strengthened the chief executive at critical times, their impact on actual policy formation still remains unclear.

Kashatus's effort to establish a close connection between Lincoln and Quakers does not stand on solid ground. He asserts that the president's knowledge of his Quaker ancestry "may have inspired him to adopt some of their peculiar practices [and that] Lincoln exhibited many Quaker traits in his own lifestyle such as refusing to swear oaths, pretend affection, or remove his hat in deference to people in positions of authority. He also demonstrated a preference for simplicity—another quality associated with early Quakers—by dressing in plain black-and-white clothing; writing speeches, addresses, and letters noted for their austerity and brevity; and shunning the use of titles for people, including himself" (6). However, Lincoln did swear oaths—to be a member of the Illinois legislature, to be admitted to the state bar, to be a member of the US House of Representatives, and to be president of the United States. With regard to plain dress and speech, Lincoln was very conscious of his image, position, and reputation. His humble Western origins led him to dislike pretense. To suggest that the religious affiliation of some ancient kin "may have" influenced him is quite a stretch.

Kashatus overplays Quaker influence upon Lincoln. In his retelling of the *Trent* affair, he points to the neglected role of John Bright, a British Quaker, abolitionist, and member of the House of Commons. While Lincoln did correspond with Bright, who played an important part as an ardent pro-US spokesman in Parliament, non-Friends Prince Albert, US ambassador Charles Francis Adams, and US secretary of state William Henry Seward were certainly much more influential in peacefully resolving the diplomatic crisis between Britain and America. Moreover, considering the remarkable volume of British imports of American wheat at the time, it is possible that Midwestern Quaker farmers were actually more important than John Bright. The author notes Lincoln's friendship with Pennsylvania Quaker and secretary of agriculture Isaac Newton, "who endeared himself to the president because he befriended Mrs. Lincoln, preventing embarrassing public disclosures of her extravagant expenses" (84). Yet Kashatus does not explain exactly what Newton did or how it was connected to his faith.

This book needs a judicious editor. It contains some oddities in capitalization, a peculiar use of italics, and an outdated figure for the Civil War's death toll—620,000, when the latest scholarship has that figure at 750,000. *Abraham Lincoln, the Quakers, and the Civil War* is an insightful volume but could benefit from additional research and knowledgeable editing.

West Chester University

STEVEN GIMBER

Klezmer: Music and Community in Twentieth-Century Jewish Philadelphia. By HANKUS NETSKY. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015. 175 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$64.50.)

The klezmer revival of the late twentieth century drew attention to this important area of Jewish music both through performance and through scholarship. Most writing on klezmer has focused largely on the revival itself and on its antecedent practices in the New York region. Hankus Netsky's monograph on klezmer in twentieth-century Jewish Philadelphia provides an important counterpart to this literature, drawing attention not only to Philadelphia's distinctive and creative Jewish musical tradition but also to the particularity and vibrancy of its broader Jewish culture.

The book is divided into two sections. The first, "The Klezmer Musician," grounds Philadelphia's klezmer scene in Europe; the second, "Musical Traditions," is a historical ethnography of klezmer in Jewish Philadelphia, primarily though not exclusively in the mid-twentieth century. Netsky, a major contributor to the klezmer revival, follows in its intellectual tradition in the book's first section. Indeed, the first chapter, "The Klezmer Mystique," frames the central topic of

the book as part of a long history of Jewish musical discourse and practice dating back to the Bible. Subsequent chapters further posit a certain continuity of Philadelphia's Odessa-influenced twentieth-century Jewish music with older currents of Jewish thought and expressive culture rooted in eastern Europe. This continuity is opposed by a stark discontinuity, also inflected by klezmer revivalism—the death of traditional Jewish music in Philadelphia in the wake of midcentury suburbanization and class mobility. These continuities and discontinuities are too starkly drawn and would benefit from a more nuanced view of the multiplicity of influences on Jewish life and musical practice in Philadelphia's Jewish community and its European antecedents.

Netsky's meticulous reconstruction and analysis of the Philadelphia *sher*, a social dance practice with an associated lengthy musical medley that was common at weddings and social events through the 1960s or so, is the centerpiece of the "Musical Traditions" section and is the highlight of this book. His textured ethnographic writing presents information about the *sher* and related repertory that is not found in any other scholarly work. It is a sensitive overview of a musical practice in transition, showing that even traditions that have been folklorized are dynamic and responsive to changing social contexts. Furthermore, Netsky's focus on the working lives of Jewish musicians in Philadelphia, and the many contexts in which they performed, is an important addition to the growing body of literature on musical labor.

Klezmer: Music and Community in Twentieth-Century Jewish Philadelphia is an excellent ethnography. The book could benefit from focusing less on a narrative of assimilation and more on musicians' creativity in hybridizing multiple influences within a Jewish context. It is clear from Netsky's ethnography that Jewish musicians in midcentury Philadelphia navigated a complex and diverse urban environment. Closer dialogue with the excellent literature in recent years treating these themes would result in a richer, more nuanced theoretical frame for this historical record.

Northwestern University

MEREDITH R. ASKA MCBRIDE

City of Steel: How Pittsburgh Became the World's Steelmaking Capital during the Carnegie Era. By KENNETH J. KOBUS. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. 291 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$45.)

The story of Andrew Carnegie and Pittsburgh was once the stuff of popular histories and novels. Decades ago, this industrial transformation fired the imagination, but, as heavy industry's importance began to recede in the United States, so did public interest. Kenneth J. Kobus's book is a welcome addition to

the literature of the iron and steel revolution, restoring that history to its proper importance.

Kobus approaches his subject from a perspective different from other authors. A third-generation steel worker, he worked his way through the ranks of Jones & Laughlin Steel Company and earned an engineering degree from the University of Pittsburgh. Later, he served in various managerial positions for a number of Pittsburgh steel plants. Kobus draws from this wealth of expertise and experience to discuss the revolution in steel.

He begins *City of Steel* with a remarkably clear description of techniques that preceded large-batch steelmaking. His discussion of the wrought iron puddling process and crucible steelmaking is clear and concise, accompanied by excellent photographs and illustrations. His treatment of blast furnace pig iron production and the development of fuels and transportation is also quite accessible.

However, the chapters on Bessemer and open hearth steelmaking—the heart of massive change in the iron and steel industries—are less straightforward. Here, Kobus's capacity to clearly relate complex processes for non-expert readers deserts him. Perhaps this is inevitable; these are complex and technically demanding methods. Nonetheless, following the development of Bessemer converters at the Edgar Thompson Works and the complicated metallurgical discussions of open hearth steelmaking at Homestead and Duquesne is difficult.

The author does an excellent job of tying the narrative together in his final chapter, demonstrating the scope and significance of the iron and steel industry's transformation. Kobus does not shy away from the criticisms that other writers have levied against Andrew Carnegie. However, the book concludes that Carnegie was nevertheless a visionary, despite being technologically unsophisticated, an absentee owner, and hypocritical with regards to labor policy.

Readers interested in Pittsburgh's industrial development during the late nineteenth century should be prepared for some dense reading. However, the experience is ultimately rewarding.

University of Toronto

JOHN N. INGHAM

Running the Rails: Capital and Labor in the Philadelphia Transit Industry. By JAMES WOLFINGER. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.)

James Wolfinger's *Running the Rails* is an insightful and engaging analysis of Philadelphia's mass transit system during its almost century-long period of private ownership. It nimbly shifts from national context to local example and raises interesting questions that should engage both labor and urban historians.

The first chapters detail the nature of transit work and the effective consolidation of Philadelphia transit into a monopolistic trolley company. Wolfinger then proceeds chronologically, documenting local management's methods to tame and subordinate labor and showing how they largely dovetailed with national trends. Workers' ambitions and strategies also evolved with the times, though the author only scratches the surface of this topic. In each era, workers and management offered different answers to "the labor question—who will work for whom and under what conditions" (7).

At the turn of the century, the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company routinely used private and state terror. Workers tapped into class solidarity and rider anger to mobilize community support. These efforts were facilitated by the almost unique way transit "production," and scabbing, took place on the city streets, accessible to strikers and supporters. The culmination was a weeks-long general strike in 1910, one of several little-known stories Wolfinger recounts. Subsequently, a new company CEO, Thomas Mitten, was hired to implement National Association of Manufacturers-style labor policies that emphasized welfare capitalist incentives over violence now seen as counterproductive. The central figure of the book and the cause of Philadelphia's underdeveloped mass transit system, Wolfinger's Mitten seems part charlatan and part flawed visionary. He encouraged workers to buy company stock, convincing them to work harder to support its value. Unfortunately, we only hear workers' voices through the pages of management's in-house newsletter.

Mitten's death, concurrent with the Great Depression, the National Labor Relations Act, and a long-running bankruptcy that brought ruination to the worker-owners, ultimately led workers to repudiate his company union. In a last-ditch effort to forestall recognition of the Congress of Industrial Organization's Transport Workers Union (TWU), the company whipped up racist sentiment among white bus and trolley operators and fomented Philadelphia's notorious 1944 "hate strike," only quelled when President Roosevelt sent in troops to run the system and threatened to draft strikers. Elsewhere, Wolfinger has noted that this was the first time since Reconstruction that the federal government mobilized troops in support of civil rights.

Wolfinger also ably links the postwar Philadelphia story to national ones: on the one hand, suburbanization, underfunding, and deferred maintenance; on the other, greater union power in alliance with Democratic Party politicians. If earlier financial tension counterposed the expansive needs of urban development against penny-pinching shareholders and bondholders, now the union increasingly found itself the scapegoat for the system's decline and higher fares. At this point, working-class producers became alienated from their working-class consumer brethren. After the system's conversion to public ownership, transit strikes became more common. Wolfinger treats this period almost as an epilogue, but

since his focus throughout is on “the labor question,” it would have been useful to discuss how these struggles unfolded for employees facing public rather than private owners.

Running the Rails chronicles the evolution of management strategies to dominate labor, framed by both local and national economic, political, and ideological developments. It is also a timely story about the struggle over who should bear the costs and reap the rewards of a public good: citizens and business denizens, workers, managers, or bond- and shareholders.

CUNY Graduate Center

MARC KAGAN

Contributors

JACK FURNISS is a PhD candidate in history at the University of Virginia. His dissertation, “States of the Union: The Political Center in the Civil War North,” uses the careers of Northern governors to rediscover and reevaluate the role of centrist politics in governance and ideology during the Civil War era. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Library Company of Philadelphia, The Huntington Library, the Kentucky Historical Society, the New York State Library, and the Filson Historical Society have supported his research.

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