

William Henry

THE LIFE OF
WILLIAM HENRY

OF LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

1729-1786

PATRIOT, MILITARY OFFICER,
INVENTOR OF THE STEAMBOAT

A CONTRIBUTION TO REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

BY

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A Member of the American Philosophical Society

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PREFACE.



WHEN it was first suggested that I should write the Life of William Henry, of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, by those of his descendants who desired a more intimate knowledge of his career than could be learned from fugitive accounts unsupported by documentary evidence, I thought to confine the work within the limits of a brief summary of his eventful early life and his activities during the Revolution.

After a careful examination of the material placed at my disposal, much of it new and all of it of more than ordinary historical and scientific interest, to the student of American history as well as to his posterity, I felt that to restrict its scope to the contemplated brochure would have been a distinct loss to both. It seemed to me that a full account of his unique personality and notable career, savoring almost of medieval romance; his inventive genius, his correspondence with statesmen, and military officers of high rank who figured

prominently in the struggle for independence, and finally his own eminent services to the State and Confederation, warranted not only a deserved tribute to his unostentatious patriotism, too long deferred, but an appeal to a larger audience.

If the book in its necessarily modest proportions fails to reveal the social and domestic side of his life, or his impressions of men of action of that day, it must be explained that he left no diary; and if in any of its parts it appears lacking in continuity, it must be charged to the absence of papers that, through ignorance of their importance to the historian, have been mislaid, perchance destroyed, and no longer available. In its preparation I desire to express my indebtedness to Granville Henry, Esq., of Boulton, Pa., Dr. John W. Jordan, of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Frank R. Diffenderffer, of Lancaster, without whose generous aid in supplying valuable data the book would have been incomplete indeed.

FRANCIS JORDAN, JR.

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WILLIAM HENRY

OF LANCASTER, PA.

CHAPTER I.

HIS ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE.

 WILLIAM HENRY, the subject of this brief but eventful history, was born at the homestead in Chester County, Pennsylvania, on May 19, 1729, and although the exigencies of his youth were discouraging, he left no superficial impress on the time in which he lived.

Indeed it has come to few men even in a more enlarged sphere, within so short a span, to have had conferred upon them so many honors and responsibilities, both civil and military. His scientific achievements, the development of an extraordinary inventive talent, deserve to rank with those of his contemporaries, Franklin and Rittenhouse, as "To Henry belongs the honor of conceiving the idea of utilizing steam as a motive power for

marine navigation, and of building the first steamboat ever built in the United States."¹

We shall learn that he was generous, quick to recognize genius and sympathized in its struggles. He was undemonstrative and made light of his own performances; but in reviewing them it is difficult to refrain from extravagant eulogium of one endowed with so many admirable qualities and withal so modest and unassuming.

He first comes into prominence as Armorer of the State forces attached to Braddock's expedition against Fort Duquesne in 1755; but his military career did not end with the defeat of Braddock, as in the following year, 1756, he filled a similar commission under Forbes, and upon the breaking out of hostilities between the colonies and the mother country, he espoused the cause of the former with enthusiasm, was appointed Assistant Commissary General, served with distinction through the war, and was empowered to act as fiscal agent of the State and Confederation for Lancaster and the adjoining counties. He

¹"Robert Fulton," by Dr. Robert H. Thurston, late professor of engineering, Cornell University, New York, 1891, p. 34.

was elected a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, sat upon the bench as one of its judiciary, served nine years as Treasurer of Lancaster County, the richest and most populous in the state; was a member of many important committees created in the interests of the Revolution, and rounded out his useful, and—if I may employ the word in describing so strong a character—picturesque career as a delegate to the Continental Congress.

Henry's grandparents, Robert and Mary Ann Henry, who were of Scotch ancestry, sailed for America, via Coleraine, Ireland, with their three adult sons John, Robert and James in the year 1722, arriving the same year at New Castle, Delaware, whence, after a brief stop, they proceeded to their plantation in West Caln Township, in the charming environment of Chester County, Province of Pennsylvania. Here both parents died on the same day in 1735, the husband in the morning and the wife in the afternoon, and were buried in the same grave at Boyd's Presbyterian Meeting House.

Of the sons James married Mary Ann, and Robert, Sarah Davis, sisters, who with their eight children removed to Virginia. John,

the oldest son and the father of William whose life we are recording, married, in 1728 Elizabeth, daughter of Hugh and Mary (Jenkins) DeVinne, of Huguenot descent, who in 1723 settled in the vicinity of the Henry plantation. John Henry died in 1747, leaving to the care of his widow, two sons and three daughters, of whom William was the oldest child. The daughters married into the families of Postlethwait, Bickham and Carson.

It was the cherished hope of the father of William Henry that his children should enjoy as thorough a scholastic training as his means and the best local institutions provided, but his early death and the insufficiency of his estate compelled his widow to send William at the age of fifteen to Lancaster, then the largest inland town in the Province, where he was apprenticed to Matthew Roesser, a gunsmith. Henry's mechanical aptitude made him an ideal apprentice, as in 1750 when but twenty-one years of age, he engaged in making arms on his own account, forming a partnership with Joseph Simon, of whom it is recorded, "He was a wealthy Jew of high character,

the ancestor of three prominent Hebrew families of Philadelphia.”²

Henry was progressive and believed in advertising, as the following letter to William Bradford, the well-known journalist and printer, shows :

TO WILLIAM BRADFORD

Printer in Philadelphia,

Be pleased to insert and continue in the Front of your Journal the inclosed advertisement. Inclosed is five shillings.

Yours with respect,

WILLIAM HENRY.

Lancaster 17th July, 1766.

This business association with Simon prospered, as within a short time Henry built a commodious dwelling on the public square, the most eligible site in the town, which he occupied with his mother and widowed sister, and where the former died on October 9, 1777. The announcement of her death copied from a journal of the day reads : “ To-day the mother

² One of his descendants was the beautiful Miss Rebecca Gratz, of Philadelphia, the original of the Jewess in Scott’s “Ivanhoe.” Washington Irving’s encomiums of her mind and person suggested the character to Scott.

of William Henry died in her seventy-fifth year. She was a friend to the poor and needy."

Colonel Henry looked well to the comfort and dignity of his household, and was accustomed to the amenities of good living. Among his papers are receipted bills that tell their own story.

He employed two maids and a "serving man," and paid not only for their maintenance but for their apparel. On December 14, 1778, he paid David Gordon one hundred and seventy-five pounds for a chair (a kind of gig) for Mrs. Henry, and to his hairdresser, one George Meyer an Italian, who addressed him as the Hon. Guglilemo Henry, for adjusting his wigs to the fashion of the day and for other attentions, one pound and five shillings.

In January of 1782 he bought of James Hall, a silversmith of Lancaster, one dozen silver spoons and a silver cream jug for Mrs. Henry, and a pair of gold buttons for Mrs. Rose, his mother-in-law, paying for them seven pounds and ten shillings.

CHAPTER II.

RESCUE OF GELELEMEND, A DELAWARE CHIEF, ON BRADDOCK'S FIELD.



It was while serving with the colonial troops under Braddock in 1755, that Major Henry, as he was then known, met with an adventure in his efforts to save the life of an Indian chief that has no parallel in Indian history, and in our skeptical and prosaic day reads like a romance.

Scoffers have laughed at the sentimental and "impossible" Indian of Cooper's incomparable tales, but in the light of this unadorned story of Indian gratitude, his ideal is more than justified.

Gelelemend (the Delaware word for leader), whose soubriquet among the whites was Killbuck, a Delaware chief, was born in 1737 at Lehigh Water Gap among the Blue Hills of Pennsylvania, where the picturesque Lehigh cuts through the mountain on its way to join the Delaware at Easton.

His grandfather, the well-known Netawat-

wes, chief counsellor of the Turkey tribe of the Delaware nation, had hunted, fished and trapped on both banks of the Delaware, from its source to the sea coast. With the advance of the whites he and his people retreated along the river, making a final stand among the Lehigh hills, where Killbuck first saw the light of day, and where game was still plentiful.

On the breaking out of the colonial wars for the supremacy of the western territory, in which the Indians bore a conspicuous part, Killbuck, who had barely reached manhood, fought under the flag of France, and on Braddock's disastrous field fell into the hands of a party of the Fortieth Regiment of foot, who were about to dispatch him with their bayonets, when Major Henry, at the risk of his own life, rescued him from the infuriated soldiers. This merciful interference, so unprecedented in Indian warfare, overwhelmed the youthful brave with gratitude, and as an expression of this feeling proposed to Major Henry an exchange of names, than which, according to the Indian code, no greater honor could be conferred.

From that time until his death Killbuck



HON. WILLIAM HENRY, JR.,
OF NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.

was variously known as Captain William Henry, William Henry Killbuck and, towards the close of his life, as Old William Henry. No opportunity was allowed to pass without some exhibition of his gratitude; neither time nor distance could efface it, and when Henry passed away this bond of friendship was extended to his descendants.

After the French and Indian Wars he removed to the west bank of the Muskingum in the State of Ohio, where he founded a village on the site of the present town of Sharon.

In 1774 he revisited the scenes of his early life in Pennsylvania, stopping at Lancaster to call upon his old friend Major Henry, who unfortunately was in Philadelphia. Making himself known to his son William Henry, Jr.,³ he requested the latter to convey

³ William Henry, Junior, son of William and Ann Henry, was born at Lancaster, Pa., March 12, 1757. In 1778 he engaged in the manufacture of fire-arms in Northampton County, and in 1808 erected a forge in which the first iron manufactured in the county was drawn March 9, 1809. In 1813 he built the Boulton Gun Works on the Bushkill, which are still continued by his descendents of the name. Mr. Henry was commissioned, January 14, 1788, a justice of the peace and judge of the courts of common pleas and quarter sessions of the county, by appointment of Governor Muhlenberg. He resigned 1814.

to his father the assurances of his unaltered affection.

He declared his people knew how to pay a debt of gratitude, as any one of the name of Henry would discover if occasion required a journey through the West, which he said could be made without fear of molestation.

When about to leave he turned to Judge Henry, and in a manner so impressive as not to be misunderstood, said, "Say to your father, Indian never forgets."

He arrayed himself on the side of the colonies in the Revolution, coöperating with the forces under Col. Daniel Brodhead in defending the Pennsylvania frontier against the depredations of the hostile Indians, and is honorably mentioned by that officer in his correspondence with the military authorities. Pennsylvania, as an appreciation of his ser-

In 1792 he was elected one of the presidential electors of the State and cast his vote for Washington's second term for President. He was active in his judicial capacity in suppressing what was known as the Fries Rebellion of 1798-99, in Bucks and Northampton Counties, Pa., in opposition to the "House Law Tax" passed by Congress, July 9, 1798. In 1795 he was appointed one of the Commissioners to erect the first bridge over the Delaware, at Easton, Pa.

vices, granted him a pension of forty pounds per annum, and the federal government supplemented it with a grant of land, consisting in part of an island in the Ohio River near Pittsburg, still known as Killbuck's Island.

It was a happy coincidence that Colonel Henry and Killbuck met for the second time in Trenton, N. J., in 1784, after the declaration of peace, where Congress then sat, Henry being a delegate from Pennsylvania. Killbuck was also there in a representative capacity, having been selected to adjust certain claims of his tribe for indemnity for lands sequestered by the government. One can readily imagine their cordial greeting, twenty-nine years after that eventful day on Braddock's field; and as Colonel Henry was one of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Killbuck appeared before at least one sympathetic listener.

They never met again. Henry died two years later, and when the news was brought to Killbuck by the Moravian missionary at Salem, Ohio, he sent a message of condolence to Mrs. Henry.

In 1797 William Henry, Jr., was in charge

of a commission⁴ created by Congress to locate a section of public land near Gnadenhutzen, Ohio, a gift from the government to the Moravian Church to reimburse it for losses sustained in the Revolution. It so happened that several of Killbuck's children were living in the neighborhood, and as soon as it was learned that Mr. Henry was one of the surveying party they came into camp, greeted him with unfeigned pleasure and were assiduous in their attentions. Three months were spent in the woods by the surveyors, and during that time daily supplies of venison, bear's meat, wild turkeys and other game were generously provided for the entire party.

In the autumn of 1799 a party of thirty Delawares with their squaws and papposes (Killbuck was living but too old to travel),

⁴ Attached to the commission was the widely known Moravian missionary to the Indians, the Rev. John Heckewelder. He was the author of "The History, Manners and Customs of the Indian Nations of Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States," now regarded as an authority. His daughter, Johanna Maria, born April 6, 1781, at Salem, Tuscarawas County, Ohio, was the first female white child born within the borders of that State. Strange as it may sound in the year 1910, in which I write, I had the pleasure of meeting her in her declining years. She died April 19, 1868.—F. J., JR.

who were on their way to the seat of government, stopped at Nazareth, Pa., to pay their respects to Judge William Henry, Jr., who received them in a friendly manner, and permitted them to encamp on his grounds.

One of Mr. Henry's children thus describes the impression they made on his youthful mind:

“ I well remember my mother's anxiety in consequence of their making numerous fires in preparing their meals. My father provided them with straw upon which they lay, wrapped in their woolen blankets, and the danger from fire was great. I remember how their gaudy accoutrements and the tinsel on their rifles, tomahawks, and scalping knives, attracted my attention. A few of them spoke English, and, boy-like, I tried to imitate their sonorous and guttural sounds. They came to my father's at two in the afternoon, and left the next day at twelve. I heard my father speak of this visit after they had gone, and of others made by the Indians, in recognition of my grandfather's rescue of Gelel-mend, which they cherished as a sacred memory.”

In 1800 Matthew Henry, another son of Colonel Henry, visited his brother, a captain of artillery, United States Army, stationed at

Fort Macinac, Mich. On his way out he called on old Killbuck in Ohio, of whom he writes to his brother John Joseph Henry:

“On the 7th I reached the Indian town of Goshen with Mr. Mortimer and the next morning visited old Wm. Henry, who expressed the greatest satisfaction at seeing me. I presented him with a blanket, which I procured for the purpose, for which he thanked me in an Indian speech, which Mr. Mortimer interpreted. The old man speaks very good English, but his heart was so full that he could not give utterance to his gratitude but in his native tongue.

“He asked particularly about our family and was much interested in my account of your Canadian campaign. When I told him of your lameness he said he thought it would have been more humane had the British killed you rather than to have permitted you to live a cripple. He has three sons here, John, Charles and Christian. John is a remarkably fine, tall, well-made man, with a manly, open and intelligent countenance.

“Charles is married to a white woman, who was taken prisoner when a child near Minisink. She knows nothing of her parentage or native language. He is a kind and affectionate husband, and takes a part in all domestic labor. They are without children.

“I wrote you that I expected to have Charles or John Henry as a guide, but I found them busily engaged in finishing their houses, therefore could not expect them to leave, but Christian, an active and ambitious young man who lives with his father and whose wife is at Fairfield in Canada, readily engaged to accompany me.”

We now approach “the last scene of all of this strange eventful history,” Killbuck’s pathetic letter of farewell—his final tribute to the memory of Colonel Henry. It is addressed to Judge William Henry, Jr., and is in the handwriting of the Rev. John Mortimer, the Moravian missionary, who took the words down as Killbuck dictated them.

GOSHEN, 27 Sept. 1805.

My dearly beloved William Henry:

As you have the same name with me, and I have often heard of your love for me and my family, therefore I send this letter to you to salute you all, from me and my children, and grandchildren, and to assure you of our love for you. My dearly beloved brethern: We are truly poor, needy and undeserving people; think with compassion on us. It is my desire to live entirely for our Saviour, and place my whole confidence in him.

That is all I have to say to you.

WILLIAM HENRY.

He died in 1811 at eighty-two, and was buried in Sharon, where there is still a Moravian congregation, a church he had joined in 1788. He was an intelligent, high-minded man, revered by his people, over whom he exerted a strong influence. After he had learned and recognized the principles of Christianity he expressed regret at the excesses practiced in his early manhood.

With this concluding incident and the death of Killbuck one would suppose our story had come to an orderly close; but the end is not yet, nor likely soon to be. Even as these lines are penned, one hundred and fifty-four years after the initial event they so inadequately describe, the present generation of Killbuck's descendants are perpetuating the traditional friendship.

Still following the chain of incidents connecting this unique tale of Indian fidelity, we are informed that a Mr. Alexander who had edited a newspaper in Pittston, Pa., but had removed to Kansas, encountered an Indian family in that State of the name of Henry, whom he discovered were descendants of Killbuck. The incidents that led to the adoption of the name, as they related them, agreed



WILLIAM HENRY, 3RD,
OF WYOMING,
THE FOUNDER OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA.

in every important particular with the story as it is given in these pages. Mr. Alexander revisited Pittston in 1858, when he communicated the foregoing to Mr. William Henry,⁵ of Wyoming, Pa., a grandson of William Henry, of Lancaster.

Coming down to the present day, we find that in 1873 John Henry Killbuck, a great-great-grandson of Gelelemend was placed in the Moravian Institution for boys at Nazareth, Pa., subsequently entered the Moravian College at Bethlehem, and, after his graduation, the missionary service of that church.

⁵ William Henry, the third of that name, was born August 15, 1796, and died at his home in the Wyoming Valley, May 22, 1878. Having an expert knowledge of metallurgy and indomitable energy, he was the first to recognize the rich mineral resources of the Lackawanna Valley and was the pioneer in their development, his attention being drawn to the locality in 1832, when the valley was covered with a primeval forest. In 1840 he induced his sons-in-law, Selden T. and James Scranton and their kinsman Colonel George W. Scranton, to join him in erecting the first blast furnace on the site of Scranton, and named it Harrison, in honor of General William Henry Harrison the then candidate of the Whig Party for President of the United States. The name of the town was afterwards changed to Scrantonia, and finally to Scranton, now the third city in point of wealth and population in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. History must always regard Henry as its real founder.


Following his marriage to a white woman of excellent parentage, he was assigned to labor among the Indians of Alaska. They have several children, all of whom, as in all preceding generations, both on the male and female line, bear the middle name of Henry.



MRS. ANN HENRY,
BY BENJAMIN WEST.

CHAPTER III.

HIS MARRIAGE TO ANN WOOD.

N January, 1755, William Henry at the age of 26 had the good fortune to marry the clever and admirable Ann Wood, daughter of Abraham Wood, formerly of Darby, Pa. As the tradition runs he met her at a tea-party given at his house by his widowed sister, Mrs. Mary Bickham, to which three young ladies were invited including Miss Wood, and before tea was served some time was passed in Henry's garden. In the meanwhile the latter had placed a broom in the hall in such a position as to obstruct the passage and then awaited their return. The first young woman to enter pushed the broom aside, the second stepped over it, and the third, who happened to be Miss Wood, picked it up and stood it in its proper place. After they had gone Henry remarked to his sister, "Mary, the girl who picked up that broom loves order; she is the one I shall endeavor to win and marry." As it turned out he not only found her orderly,

but a thrifty, singularly clear-headed woman of affairs, with an aptitude for administration not often found in her sex.

After the death of her husband, which occurred while he still held the office of treasurer of the county, she assumed his duties and was subsequently appointed to fill out the remainder of his term, serving four years thereafter, and retired with honor, the only recorded instance of a woman holding such an office in the annals of Pennsylvania. Among the Lancaster County records we find this bill: The County of Lancaster to Ann Henry, one of the Executors of Wm. Henry late Treasurer of Lancaster Co. To my salary as Treasurer of the County of Lancaster for the year 1787, £18.

During her incumbency Rittenhouse was Treasurer of Pennsylvania, and in the frequent exchanges between the state and county there were many opportunities for observing Mrs. Henry's creditable administration. A letter addressed to her by Rittenhouse, in which he makes some precautionary suggestions relative to the disbursement of the public monies, will serve as an example of the cordial relations existing between them.

PHILADELPHIA, November 5, 1789.

Dear Madam:

I have enclosed receipts for the money you last sent by the stage. By some accident it was neglected last week until the wagon was gone. I have not yet answered a letter I received of Mr. Jno. Joseph Henry respecting payment for servants enlisted. The Law is I think still in force, but the business is frequently managed so irregularly that I think when you pay, the receipt ought to mention expressly that the money is to be returned if the vouchers are not satisfactory to the Comptroller General. I would advise you by no means to pay any orders of Orphans Court in favour of pensioners, widows of soldiers, officers or their children. These payments should be made on orders of Council only.

Mrs. Rittenhouse is very well. She gives her best respects to you. Our family has hitherto escaped the influenza, so very common. I hope you have done the same.

I am dear Madam your Affectionate Friend and
Humble Servant

D. RITTENHOUSE.⁶

Mrs. Ann Henry.

⁶ David Rittenhouse, physicist and astronomer, born in Roxborough, Pa., now part of Philadelphia, April 8, 1732. In 1763 was employed in determining the Mason and Dixon's Line and afterwards fixed other state boundaries. In 1769 the American Philosophical Society appointed him

All her progenitors were substantial, well-educated English Quakers, strong adherents of Penn's propaganda. Her mother's maiden name was Ursula Taylor, a daughter of Philip Taylor, of Oxford Township, near Philadelphia. Ann was born January 21, 1732, at Burlington, N. J., a posthumous child, whither her mother had removed after the death of her husband. Sometime later the widow married Joseph Rose, of the Lancaster bar, removing thither. It was here that Ann Wood became acquainted with William Henry. Her great-grandfather, George Wood, was one of the first settlers of Darby and served in the Assembly. Her grandfather, John Wood, married Jane Bevan, a daughter of John Bevan, an eminent Welsh Quaker and friend of William Penn, who came to Pennsylvania in 1683 and took up a large part of what was known as the Welsh Tract, in Montgomery County, Pa., served on the local bench and in the Assembly, and was a convincing Quaker preacher.

to observe the transit of Venus in Philadelphia; was treasurer of the State of Pennsylvania from 1777 to 1779; in 1791 succeeded Franklin as president of the American Philosophical Society; Director of the U. S. Mint from 1792 to 1795. Died in Philadelphia, June 26, 1796.



THE COAT OF ARMS OF JOHN BEVAN
QUARTERED WITH THE ROYAL ARMS OF ENGLAND.

Notwithstanding he had renounced the pomp and allurements of the world in joining the Society of Friends, he retained his armorial bearings, although he may have been innocent of any desire to draw attention to his lineage, as to which there was some discussion, since his shield was quartered with the Royal Arms of England.

In his "Reminiscences" the Hon. John Joseph Henry, second son of William Henry, testifies to his mother's strong convictions, extensive reading and unusual cleverness, "and yet so tender hearted that of a truth it may be said of her, 'She knew no guile.'"

Dr. William H. Egle, in "Some Pennsylvania Women During the War of the Revolution," thus commemorates her patriotic devotion to the American cause:

"She was a typical matron of that period, of great energy of character and in full sympathy with her husband's active and patriotic life. During that momentous period in our history, her children being young, required her attention, yet she entertained Rittenhouse and Paine when the British occupied Philadelphia, and it is well known that she aided her husband in all the various duties assigned to him,

as Treasurer of the County, State Armorer, Assistant Commissary General and Member of Congress. They were the parents of the distinguished John Joseph Henry who accompanied the expedition to Quebec under General Arnold, an account of which, the best ever written, was prepared by him."

Mrs. Henry died March 8, 1799, and was laid by the side of her husband in the Moravian Cemetery in Lancaster.

Colonel Henry's parents and grandparents had been members of the Church of England, but in the absence of a church of that denomination near their home in Chester County, his father and mother became Presbyterians, although they were not in harmony with the doctrine of reprobation.

Mrs. Henry, however, whose antecedents were Quakers, and she herself one, was not in entire sympathy with the ostentatious ritual of the English Church, but had no wish to return to the Society of Friends as at one time suggested by her husband. Pending this spiritual unrest she met the wife of the clergyman of the Moravian Church, through whom she became an occasional attendant, and was so favorably impressed with its appealing simplicity, that she persuaded her husband to ac-

company her on an occasion when the eloquent Bishop Boehler was announced to preach; and thus it happened that both became Moravians in the summer of 1765, as are many of their descendants to this day.

CHAPTER IV.

WILLIAM HENRY, THE BENEFACTOR AND FIRST PATRON OF BENJAMIN WEST.



HERE is no incident in William Henry's life that displays to greater advantage his generosity and appreciation of genius than the encouragement and material assistance given Benjamin West at the very inception of his career, and before he had really determined upon art as a profession.

Galt in his "Life of West,"⁷ a work inspired by the artist and published in his life time, thus speaks of Henry:

"Henry was indeed in several respects an extraordinary man, and possessed the power generally attended upon genius under all circumstances, that of interesting the imagination of those with whom he conversed."

⁷"Life of Benjamin West," by John Galt, London, 1816. In the preface Galt writes: "It was necessary that the narrative should appear in his own time in order that the authenticity of the incident might not rest upon the authority of any biographer."

He further makes an appreciative acknowledgment of Henry's generous help and discriminating suggestions, and intimates that they were factors in determining West's career.

Although Henry himself was not twenty-four when West first came under his observation, an age when the pursuit of one's own happiness is apt to obscure all other considerations, his sympathies were at once aroused in behalf of the struggling genius. Opportunity alone seemed wanting.

West was then about fifteen, a poor, unlettered tinsmith's apprentice, living in the nearby hamlet of Springfield, Pa., where he was wont to exhibit his undeveloped talent in decorating the fences and barndoors of the neighborhood with drawings, and by an occasional rude painting for a tavern sign-board.

As the first to recognize in these maiden efforts genius of a high order, Colonel Henry invited the boy to his house, assigned a room to his use, and supplied the materials essential to his work. On the walls of this apartment were many little studies, that were permitted to remain until the house was demolished. Here West made a number of excellent at-

tempts at portraiture, of which two examples, Colonel Henry and Mrs. Henry, are in the possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Urged to loftier ideals by Colonel Henry, he made his first attempt at historical painting at the age of eighteen, choosing a subject suggested by his patron, namely the "Death of Socrates." As West had never heard of the Grecian philosopher, Mr. Henry went to his library for a copy of Rollin's "Ancient History"⁸ and drew West's attention to the engraved frontispiece which depicts Socrates in prison, surrounded by a group of sympathetic followers and soldiers, in the act of taking the poison from the hand of a slave. From this picture West drew his inspiration, adding, however, many additional figures, that gave greater unity and balance to the composition.

After making a preliminary study which he submitted to Mr. Henry, he confessed that never having had the opportunity to draw from the nude he was unable to accurately

⁸ The engraving is the frontispiece of Vol. I., Rollin's "Ancient History," published in London and printed for John and Paul Knapton at the Crown in Liedgate St. MDCCXXXVIII.



F. Gaultier del.

J. J. De Witte sculp.

The DEATH of SOCRATES

THE IDENTICAL ENGRAVING FROM ROLLIN'S ANCIENT HISTORY, THAT INSPIRED WEST'S "DEATH OF SOCRATES."

portray the half draped figure of the slave. In this dilemma Mr. Henry sent to his factory for a young man who came from the forge bared to the waist, whose fine physique served as a model.

The identical volume, as well as the painting, are now in the possession of a descendant of Col. Henry.⁹ The canvas, which measures about thirty by forty-five inches, is a memorable performance for a boy of less than eighteen, unread in history, who had never received an hour's elementary instruction in, nor beheld a meritorious work of art, contemporary or medieval and was not even acquainted with the process of preparing his own canvas.

Galt writes of this epoch in West's life:

“Among those helpful to him in his early career was William Henry, of Lancaster, who had acquired a handsome fortune by his profession of a gunsmith. On examining the young Artist's performances, he observed that if *he* could paint as well, he would devote himself to historical subjects, and he mentioned the ‘Death of Socrates.’ The painter knew nothing of the life of the philosopher, and upon confessing his ignorance, Mr. Henry read to him the

⁹ Granville Henry, Esq., of Boulton, Pennsylvania.

account given of this affecting story, from Rollin's 'Ancient History.'

"The suggestion and description wrought upon the imagination of West, and induced him to make a drawing, which he showed to Mr. Henry, who commended it, and requested him to paint it. West said that he would be happy to undertake the task, but, having hitherto painted only faces and men clothed, he was unable to do justice to the figure of the slave who presented the poison, and which he thought ought to be naked. Henry had among his workmen a very handsome young man, and, without waiting to answer the objection, sent for him. On his entrance he pointed him out to West and said 'There is your model.' The appearance of the young man, whose arms and breast were bare, instantly convinced the artist that he had only to look into nature for his models.

"When the 'Death of Socrates' was finished it attracted much attention,¹⁰ and led to one of those fortunate acquaintances by which the subsequent career of the artist has been so happily facilitated."¹¹

Realizing that the colonies offered absolutely no opportunity for the study of art, West decided to pursue his studies abroad, and in 1760 sailed for England.

¹⁰ A contemporary writer declares that the picture at once established his reputation.

¹¹ Galt, pp. 48, 49, 50 and 51.



THE DEATH OF SOCRATES,

THE FIRST HISTORICAL PAINTING BY BENJAMIN WEST, 1757.

Before his départure he had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Henry in Philadelphia, of whom Galt, commenting on this incident, writes:

“While waiting till the vessel was clear to sail, West had the gratification to see in Philadelphia his old friend Mr. Henry, for whom he had painted the ‘Death of Socrates.’ Towards him he always cherished the most grateful affection. He was the first who urged him to attempt historical composition; and above all, he was the first who made him acquainted with the magnanimous tales of Plutarch, perhaps the greatest favor which could be conferred on a youthful mind.”

Col. Henry never ceased to take the deepest interest in West’s rise to eminence. He named his youngest son in his honor, Benjamin West Henry, who studied under Gilbert Stuart and became an artist of no mean ability, and when West succeeded Reynolds as president of the Royal Academy, he invited his namesake to visit him in London.

In the year 1838, Colonel John Trumbull, one of Washington’s youthful aides, who had studied under West in London, and whose

paintings adorn the Capitol at Washington and the Trumbull gallery in Boston, made a special journey from New York to Boulton, Pa., the home of Mr. James Henry¹² (who had inherited the "Socrates" by descent), to look upon the first historical work of his honored preceptor. In the absence of Mr. Henry his family entertained Col. Trumbull, who left a card upon which he wrote: "Mr. Trumbull is highly gratified by the sight of 'Socrates' painted by his friend and master, Mr. West."

Subsequently, Mr. Henry called upon Colonel Trumbull in New York, and in discussing

¹² James Henry, a great-grandson of William Henry, of Lancaster, was born in Philadelphia, October 13, 1809. In 1822 removed to Boulton, Pa., with his parents, where his grandfather, William Henry, Jr., had erected a gun works, and where a few years later he entered into partnership with his father, John Joseph Henry, in the manufacture of arms.

James Henry was a patron of literature, contributing as well essays and critical articles to Dwight's "Journal of Music," the leading paper devoted to that art in Boston, and to the "Crayon" and "Literary World" both published in New York City, his essays covering a wide range of thought.

In 1859 he published "Moravian Life and Character," an appreciation, after years of study, of the history, religious works and lyrics of that denomination. He died June 14, 1895.

the place West occupied in the world of art, Col. Trumbull remarked that in all his studies in continental Europe he had never seen a work of the same character that exceeded in merit the "Death of Wolfe."

CHAPTER V.

SAILS FOR ENGLAND, CAPTURED BY FRENCH PRIVATEER AND LANDED IN SPAIN; REACHES ENGLAND, MEETS WATTS AND BECOMES INTERESTED IN HIS EXPERIMENTS.



IN the year 1759, the firm of Simon & Henry was dissolved, whereupon Henry determined to visit Europe for the purpose of establishing direct connections with the foreign iron and steel makers. Having provided himself with letters of introduction from the Rev. Dr. Barton, rector of St. James Protestant Episcopal Church in Lancaster, to friends in England, he sailed from Philadelphia in December, 1760, on the good ship "Friendship," commanded by the popular Captain Nathaniel Falconer, bound for London. He paid the latter for his passage the sum of twenty-five pounds, for which a receipted bill is preserved among Henry's papers.

In that day every voyage was an event, and

they who ventured to "go down to the sea in ships"—if we may call the cockle shell of that period a ship—were little less than heroes.

Unfortunately his autobiographical sketch written with his own hand in the German language which he had acquired, gives no account of the interesting minor details of his life on ship board. He does say, however, that there were but two other passengers, a man and a woman, members of the Society of Friends, returning to England after visiting the meetings in New Jersey and Pennsylvania in a ministerial capacity, and from his notations it is evident Henry was profoundly impressed with their piety.

As ill luck would have it, as the ship entered the English Channel, on the very threshold of England, she was captured by a French privateer, France and England being at war, and taken into a Spanish port. As here, again, Henry has failed to give an account of his capture and release, we must be satisfied with his simple statement, that after a delay of several months he reached London and obtained lodgings in the family of the Quaker minister whose wife was one of his


fellow passengers and whom he had assisted in getting back to her home.

He found the public mind in England agitated over the attempt of Watts to utilize steam as a motive power, and as Henry had made some experiments of his own in the same direction as early as 1760, the discussions greatly interested him. He met Watts, was courteously received and shown his steam engine in operation, from which Henry conceived the idea, which he afterwards perfected, of applying steam power to boats on our inland rivers.

Having satisfactorily consummated his business he sailed from Portsmouth the latter part of November, 1761, and after a rough passage of forty-two days arrived in Philadelphia before the end of the year, and proceeded to his home.

CHAPTER VI.

INVENTOR AND MAN OF SCIENCE. IS THE FIRST TO APPLY STEAM TO MARINE NAVIGATION.

S the first to apply steam to marine navigation; in other words, as the inventor of the steamboat, erroneously credited to Fitch, Henry must always occupy a prominent niche in the history of scientific achievement. His career in its many parallel incidents recalls his contemporary Franklin. Both were self-taught, they had the same love for scientific research, and the gift of mechanical invention; and both dedicated their lives to the service of the state. Henry's recreative hours were spent in his laboratory, where it was his pleasure to discourse on the scientific questions of the day; and it was there that Mrs. Henry met Joseph Priestley whose "superlative attainments" as she expressed it, in other branches of science she greatly admired, but could not acquiesce to his theology; and it was there also that the German traveller Schoepff found Henry in

1784¹³ experimenting, not alone with steam as a motive power, but delving into the more subtle realms of electricity and magnetism.¹⁴

In 1767 he became a member of the American Philosophical Society, founded by Franklin, whose signature is attached to his certificate of membership; taking his seat on the same evening with his life-long friend, David Rittenhouse. Although Franklin's activities in the field of diplomacy and as agent abroad of the State of Pennsylvania made long absences from the country necessary, so that they met infrequently, he knew and appreciated Henry's scientific attainments. Owing to the latter's unobtrusive temperament the knowledge of his achievements may have been confined to a restricted circle, but none knew

¹³ "During the Revolution the House of Mr. Henry was a place of resort for men of culture and intellectual standing. The host being a man of acknowledged ability and well-known reputation, naturally attracted others of like grade around him." From Harris's "Biographical History of the Eminent Men of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania."

¹⁴ Extract from the minutes of the American Philosophical Society: "1789, April 17, 21 members present, Franklin presiding. A memoir 'On the effects of heat in conducting the Electric Fluid and explaining the phenomena of thunder the Aurora Borealis, etc.,' by the late William Henry of Lancaster, was read."

better than Rittenhouse the qualities of Henry's mind and his undoubted genius.

PHILADELPHIA, February 24, 1776.

Dear Sir:

A second volume of the transactions of our Philosophical Society is now in the press and in good forwardness. It will be a neat and valuable book; have you not something to communicate which you would wish to have inserted? I have the honor to be

Your obedient and humble servant,

DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

TO WILLIAM HENRY, ESQ.,
Lancaster, Pa.,

Henry was a charter member of the Juliana Library of Lancaster, founded 1759, one of the first circulating libraries in the country (as was also the father of Robert Fulton); for a time its librarian, and gave a room in his house for the storage of its books. He devised labor-saving machines that were helpful in his gun works; is credited with the invention of the screw augur,¹⁵ invented a system

¹⁵ For a detailed account of the invention of this indispensable tool by William Henry, the reader is referred to Ree's "Encyclopedia" published in New York in 1820,

of steam heating suggesting that now in vogue, and constructed a steam wheel which had he lived would have been converted into a steam carriage, and from the latter to a locomotive engine requires no extravagant flight of the imagination.

But his claim to an enduring fame as an inventor must rest with his successful application of steam to the propulsion of vessels.

Dr. Robert H. Thurston, late director of the department of mechanical engineering, Cornell University, in his "Life of Robert Fulton," pays a well-deserved tribute to Henry's genius and credits him with the honor of inventing and building the first steamboat. His appreciative sketch compiled from fugitive accounts of Henry's life, would, however, have been amplified had he had access to "the Colonial Records," the published "Archives of Pennsylvania," the collections in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,¹⁶ and to

vol. 1, page 15. The length of the article, which covers some five or eight octavo pages, makes its reproduction here prohibitory.

¹⁶The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has several folio volumes of letters to and from Col. Henry, and his accounts with the state and colonial governments.

material in possession of his descendants.¹⁷ He would have learned, as we have, that he was not unknown to fame. Indeed it is common knowledge, handed down from generation to generation, that his many and engrossing activities in other directions, and his premature death at fifty-seven alone prevented the complete development of his plans for the utilization of steam.

We reproduce from the *Transactions* of the American Philosophical Society of 1768, without abbreviation on account of its importance, a communication from William Henry, describing his invention of a so-called sentinel-register, the motive power of which was steam. The reader will observe that it had been in successful operation for over a year, *i.e.*, previous to 1767.

Here we have the unimpeachable evidence that Henry, if not the very first, was certainly among the first to apply steam as a motive power for any purpose on this continent.

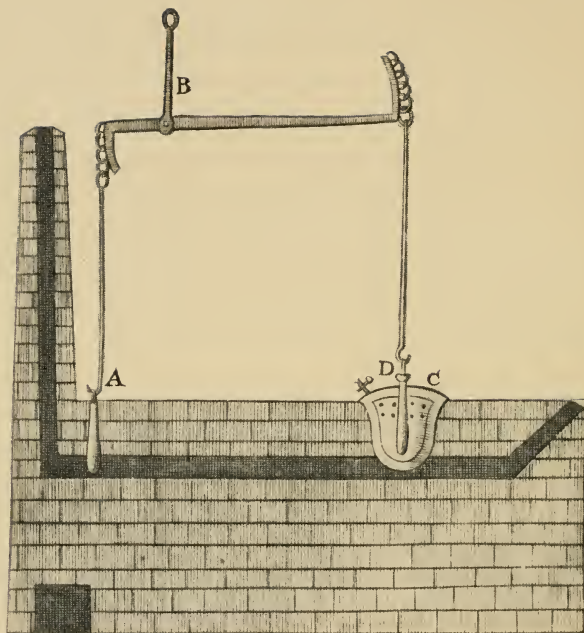
One has but to read his explanatory note to realize his thorough grasp of the principle

¹⁷ Mr. Granville Henry, of Boulton, Pa., great-great-grandson of William Henry, has a collection of letters covering the entire period of the Revolution, from prominent actors in that struggle, to his distinguished ancestor.

governing the elasticity of the air and the power to be derived from its expansion, a scientific truth then in its infancy.

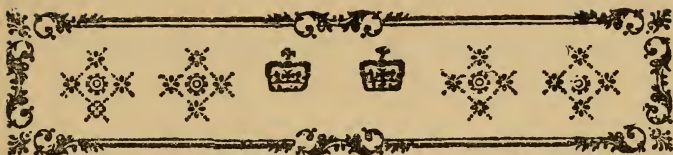
We have every reason to believe, however, that from the point of view of the financier, essentially Colonel Henry's sphere, he regarded its application to marine propulsion as promising great financial returns, and with the hope of attaining that end, applied himself to its solution, of which his steam wheel and sentinel-register were but subsidiary experiments.

Fig 1



THE SENTINEL REGISTER,

A STEAM MACHINE INVENTED BY WILLIAM HENRY, 1767.



T H E

TRANSACTIONS

O F T H E

American Philosophical SOCIETY, &c.

A description of a SELF-MOVING or SENTINEL REGISTER, invented by WILLIAM HENRY, of Lancaster, and by him communicated to the AMERICAN SOCIETY, held at Philadelphia, for promoting USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

The machine consists of the following parts:

1. A, A Door or common register, applied in the flue of a furnace. The door is fitted in a frame, and made to slide easily up and down.

2. B, A Balance or beam, moving on a center; the two arms are of unequal lengths, the longer exceeding the shorter in the proportion of 2 to 1; the extremity of each arm is formed into a segment of

a circle, whose radius is equal in length to each respective arm. These segments must be equal to the greatest rise or fall of each end of the balance when in use.

The length of the whole beam or balance must be regulated by the situation of the register A, and the copper C, hereafter mentioned.

3. C, A Copper vessel, about 13 inches diameter, and 10 inches deep, with a double bottom and sides, which are placed about an inch and a half apart from each other, leaving a space between to contain air. The top or cover is brazed on, and the whole made air-tight. Through the top is inserted a brass cock, and also a brass or copper cylinder, open at both ends, about 2 inches and a quarter in diameter, and 2 feet long, so fixed as to rise 14 inches above the top, and to reach near to the bottom of the vessel.

Through the side of the innermost vessel, near the top, are some holes made, whereby the air in the cavity between the two bottoms and sides, may communicate with the air in the inside of the vessel.

4. D, A Phial 2 inches diameter, and 7 inches deep, corked and sealed, with a hook fixed in the cork, by which the phial is to be suspended.

These are the principal parts of the machine, which are to be applied as follows,

From the furnace let there be an horizontal flue, of a convenient length. In the walls of the flue,

the frame, in which the register slides, is fixed perpendicularly, so that when the register is down, the flue is closed, when the register is drawn up, the flue is opened, and the higher it is raised, the more is the passage of the fire enlarged.

To the shorter end of the balance, which is supported on a proper fulcrum, at a convenient height, the register is suspended by a chain and a rod; the chain is just long enough to wind over the segment of the circle, at the end of the beam. The register is made so heavy, as to descend by its own weight.

At the distance of 2, 3, or more feet from the register, and on the flue of the furnace, the copper vessel C is fixed, so as to receive a heat from the fire passing through the flue. The end of the longest arm of the balance extends directly over the cylinder fixed in the copper, and to it the phial D is suspended, so as to hang within the tube, and by such a length of chain and rod as will allow it to be about 2 or 3 inches immersed in the tube, when the balance is an equilibrio. On the same end of the beam on which the phial is suspended, a weight is hung sufficient, with the weight of the phial, to over balance the register, and raise it, and consequently open the flue. When the flue is opened to a due degree, the register is held in that situation, until so much water is poured into the copper through the cock, as will fill one-third of the vessel;

then shut the cock, and pour water into the cylinder, until it rises high enough to float the phial. By pouring water into the cylinder, the air in the vessel is compressed, and finding no way to escape, as the vessel is air-tight, it resists the water, and prevents its occupying the whole space; and therefore the upper part of the vessel is apparently empty. The phial is loaded with shot, so that it will swim about one third above the water. When the water rises in the tube, the phial rises with it, in which case the register A is so balanced, that it descends, and closes the flue.

After this description, the principles on which the Sentinel-Register acts, must be obvious to every person acquainted with the elasticity of the air, and that this elasticity is increased by heat. For when the fire in the furnace is increased, the degree of heat in the flue is also increased; this increases the elasticity of the air contained between the double bottom and sides of the copper, and consequently of that, which occupies the space above the water, as there is a communication by means of the holes already described. The elasticity of the air being increased it expands, and by its expansion forces the water up the tube; the water being raised, carries the phial with it, whereupon the register preponderating descends, closes the flue, and by lessening the draught of the chimney or flue, deadens or checks the fire in the furnace. By this means again the

heat in the flue is diminished, the air in the cavity becomes cooler, and consequently less elastic, whereupon the water descends in the tube, and with it the phial to its stationary point. By the descent of the phial the register is raised, and opens the flue; by which means it stands as a Sentinel over the fire, and preserves an equal degree of heat.

That this will be the effect of the machine, I can attest, having used it for more than a year.

It is submitted to the curious, whether this machine might not be usefully applied, 1st, to regulate the heat of chymical and alchymical furnaces, where long digestions, and a uniform degree of heat are required; 2dly, in the making of steel, and in burning of porcelain ware, in which a due regulation of the fire is of great importance; 3dly, in green or hot houses, and in apartments for hatching chickens, according to the Egyptian method. With a little alteration it might be applied to the purpose of opening doors, windows, and other passages, for a draught of air, and thereby preserve a due temperature of the air in hospitals, &c.

Dr. Thurston further declares in his "Life of Fulton":

"Many other inventors were now studying the problem of steam as a motive power in different parts of the civilized world. Among these, none

were as ingenious or as persistent or as successful as those of the then British Colonies, later the United States of America. Among these was a group of New York and Pennsylvania Mechanics who, seemingly each more or less familiar with the work of the others, struggled on persistently, and finally successfully. A nucleus consisting of *one* of these men and his friends and coadjutors, became, ere long, the germ of the great movement which in the early part of the nineteenth century resulted in the final application of the powers of steam to the propulsion of steam vessels,—first on the rivers of the United States and the harbours of Great Brintain, then on all the oceans. The *Originator* of this sudden movement in the United States seems to have been a man unknown to fame, and one of whom few records are preserved. Our own information, hitherto unpublished, comes from an indistinctly traced source; but its facts have been fairly well verified by independent historical investigation.

“William Henry was born in Chester County, Penn., in the year 1729 his father, John Henry, with his parents, and two brothers—Robert and James¹⁸—emigrated to this country from the north or Ireland in or about the year 1719 or 1720. The father of James, Robert and John was a native of

¹⁸ Robert and James Henry married sisters named Mary Ann and Sarah Davis, who resided in Chester County. Robert subsequently removed to Virginia.

Scotland, but for a short time previous to his coming to this country had resided in one of the northern counties of Ireland. Upon the arrival of the family in Pennsylvania they settled in Chester County, where, as before stated, the subject of our sketch was born. At an early age he became a resident of Lancaster, Penn., where he learned the business of a gunsmith, and in a few years became the principal gunsmith in the province. During the Indian wars which desolated Pennsylvania from 1755 to 1760, he was appointed principal armourer of the troops then called into service.

“In the year 1760 he visited England. Having a mechanical turn of mind, the inventions and the application of steam by Watt being then much discussed, the idea of its application to the propelling of boats, vehicles, etc., so engrossed his mind that on his return to his home in Lancaster he began the construction of a machine, the motive power of which was steam. In 1763 Mr. Henry completed the machine, which was attached to a boat with paddles, and with it he experimented on the Conestoga River, near Lancaster but the boat, a stern wheeler, was structurally weak and unable to resist the pounding action of the engine.

“This was the first attempt that ever had been made to apply steam to the propelling of boats. Notwithstanding the ill luck that attended the first attempt in an undertaking of the practicability of

which he had not the least doubt, he constructed a second model, with improvements on the first."

Doctor Thurston continues:

"An intelligent German, Herr Schoepff, who travelled through the United States in 1783-1784 whilst staying for a time in Lancaster, became acquainted with Mr. Henry. He says: 'I was shown a machine by Mr. Henry, intended for the propelling of boats, etc., "but," said Mr. Henry, "I am doubtful whether such a machine would find favor with the public, as every one considers it impracticable to make a boat move against wind and tide"; but that such a boat *will* come into use, and navigate on the waters of the Ohio and Mississippi he had not the least doubt, though the time had not yet arrived of its being appreciated and applied. I omit to mention other electrical and magnetic experiments which occupy Mr. Henry's leisure hours, in an agreeable and useful manner, all of which indicate him to be a gentleman of refined mind and deep study.'

"A sketch of the machine with the boilers, etc., made by Mr. Henry in 1779, is said to be still in the possession of his heirs.

"John Fitch (for whom his biographer claimed the honour of the invention of the application of steam to the propulsion of boats) was a frequent visitor at Mr. Henry's house, and according to the belief of his friends obtained from him the idea of the steam-

boat. Fulton, then a young lad, also visited Mr. Henry to examine the paintings of Benjamin West; and the germ that subsequently ripened into the construction of the 'Folly' was possibly due to those visits.¹⁹

"William Henry, though unsuccessful with the experiments with his first boat on the Conestoga River, thus very probably originated the idea of the steamboat at least five years before Fulton was born. The following extract may throw some light on the subject:²⁰

"Dec. 2nd., 1785. At a special meeting of the

¹⁹ Mrs. Alice Crary Sutcliffe, a great-granddaughter of Fulton, in her "Robert Fulton and the Clermont" published by the Century Company, 1909, under the heading "Early Experiments of William Henry and John Fitch" remarks: "Fulton must have already been familiar with some of the early attempts toward steam navigation, through his Lancaster townsman, William Henry."

²⁰ The Lancaster "Pathfinder" contains the following item in one of its numbers for 1858: "Immediately opposite the home of William Henry was the residence of Robert Fulton's father (the same building which is now owned by Mr. Emmanuel Shaffer and Mr. Abraham Erenannen) at this time, 1777, Robert Fulton was twelve years of age and between school hours was a daily visitor at Mr. Henry's works, aiding and assisting him in making astronomical and mathematical instruments for the famed mathematician, astronomer and philosopher, David Rittenhouse, of Germantown, Philadelphia. Is it any wonder that in 1749, when West was eleven years of age and in 1777 when Fulton was just twelve, that the

Philosophical Society, John Fitch was personally presented to the members. Desirous of having the opinion of men of weight at that period, he consulted several, among whom was Mr. Henry, of Lancaster, 'Who informed me,' says Fitch, 'that he was the first person who had thought of applying steam to vessels; that he had conversed with Mr. Paine, author of "Common Sense" and some time after with Mr. Ellicott.' Mr. Henry, thinking more seriously of the matter, was of the opinion that it might be perfected, and accordingly made some drafts, which he laid before the American Philosophical Society."²¹

After the death of William Henry in 1786, a controversy arose between Mr. James Rumsey of Virginia, who had also invented a steamboat (afterwards found to be impracticable), and John Fitch, as to their respective claims to priority. Referring to Rumsey's claim, Fitch makes the acknowledgment that "although Rumsey might claim precedence, as far as he was concerned, Mr. Henry was long before Rumsey in making a draft and preparing a model of a Steam Boat, although he did not publically announce it."

master mind of the noble citizen William Henry, Esq., did arouse and excite to action the natural genius of West and Fulton?"

²¹ "Inventor's Guide," by J. G. Moore.

Subsequently Mrs. Henry in behalf of Fitch's claim, made affidavit to the year when he visited her husband. She also mentions that the latter intended to submit his model to the American Philosophical Society, often made the depository of new inventions, long before his death. The document which follows will be found in the United States Patent Office Report for 1849-50.

This is to certify that Mr. John Fitch called upon William Henry, Esquire, my late husband in his life time, about two years and a half since (1785), when Mr. Fitch showed to him drafts and a model of a machine to propel a boat through the water; and further, that I have frequently heard of Mr. Henry applying steam as a means to urge boats through the water by force of it, and that he had proposed laying a model of a machine for that purpose before the Philosophical Society *long* before Mr. Fitch called upon him.

Witness my hand this 12th day of May 1788.

ANN HENRY.

Test. Jno. Jos. Henry.

It thus appears that Fitch's biographer is culpably misleading in his indirect and half-hearted acknowledgment of his indebtedness to Henry.

In the absence of accurate information even Dr. Thurston's account of Fitch's interview with Henry, although essentially correct in its minor details, differs in one very important omission, namely, when Fitch, who was on his way to Kentucky to develop his land purchase, called upon Henry at his home in Lancaster in 1785, Henry ingenuously permitted him to examine his perfected model; at the same time he took the opportunity of informing Fitch that he had experimented with his steamboat as early as 1760, and had discussed its possibilities, particularly as to its ability to make headway against wind and tide, with Andrew Ellicott, and later with Thomas Paine who had considerable mechanical ingenuity, in 1778; but added, with that modesty which was characteristic of him, coupled with an unwillingness to inflict an injury, even though it recoiled upon himself, that as he (Fitch) had proclaimed his invention to the world, he would not claim it.²²

Dr. Thurston thus concludes his summary of Henry's connection with the invention of the steamboat.

²² From records in the possession of Col. Henry's descendants.

“Fitch evidently made the first successful experiment in the propelling of boats by steam; but William Henry had probably the honour of originating the idea, and building the first steamboat ever built in the United States. Fitch improved on Mr. Henry’s model, and Fulton improved on both.

“Thus a group of alert, intelligent, enterprising men, in this little town, were all interested in the solution of a new problem.

“So much progress had been made that the outcome could hardly be doubted. Papin had, early in the eighteenth century, actually built a steamboat; Jonathan Hulls in 1737 secured British patents on another form; William Henry had put his little boat on the Conestoga River in 1763; the Conte d’Auxiron had launched a steamboat on French waters in 1774; ten years later Oliver Evans and James Rumsey came forward with their peculiar systems of propulsion; and John Fitch appeared about the same date, 1785.

“Fulton was born at Little Britain, Lancaster County, Penn., in 1765. He was of Irish descent, his father having come from Kilkenny when quite a young man. The Fultons had, although living in the then wilderness, distinguished families for their neighbours. The family of Benjamin West lived in the adjacent county; and the home of William Henry, close by, was a rendezvous for many interesting and stimulating acquaintances and a most enjoyable society.”

CHAPTER VII.

ENTERS PUBLIC LIFE AND ESPOUSES AMERICAN CAUSE.



FOLLOWING Colonel Henry's return from Europe there was an uneventful interregnum, during which he resumed the direction of his gun works, gathered up the threads of his neglected scientific investigations, and was honored with civil appointments by the state and county.

While in no sense a politician, his name invariably came up for consideration as one whose unswerving integrity and intelligent grasp of affairs made him available for the highest honors in the gift of his townsmen; and by steady gradations he became one of Pennsylvania's distinguished representatives.

He was Assistant Burgess of Lancaster continuously from 1765 to 1775, but what may be called his first entry into public life, was his appointment by the Assembly in 1771 a Canal Commissioner.

To her honor be it said, Pennsylvania was

one of the first of the colonies to consider the subject of internal improvements, and to her belongs the credit of seriously contemplating an inland waterway as early as 1762. Under the act creating the commission it was instructed to "examine the different branches of the Susquehanna, Schuylkill and Lehigh Rivers, to measure by the most direct course and distance between them, to observe the soil and other circumstances in the intermediate country and report how far the said waters are and may be navigable up the branches thereof, and whether the opening and communication between them for the purpose of navigation or land carriage be practicable."

On September 24, 1771, the commission, which was composed of John Sellers, Benjamin Lightfoot and Joseph Elliott, reported to the Assembly, whereupon Lightfoot resigned and William Henry was appointed in his place. On January 18, 1772, Samuel Rhodes and Surveyor General Lukens were added to the commission, and two weeks later David Rittenhouse.

Thus Henry pursued the even tenor of his active life until the distant rumbling of the storm about to break over the colonies aroused his patriotic spirit.


We are fortunate in having at our command the journal of a Lancaster chronicler of Revolutionary events from which we shall draw liberally in noting Colonel Henry's connection with that stirring period. Thus, when it was seen that a conflict was inevitable, Lancaster assumed an importance and bustle quite foreign to its usual air of peaceful serenity. Many Philadelphians rented houses there to escape the vicissitudes of the war, and later it became the seat of the state government, and the depot, from its position and affluence the most important in the colonies, for every description of war material. When the news came of the clash between the militia and the British at Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, it set the town aflame.

Amid these exciting scenes no one was more actively engaged than Colonel Henry either in a civil or military capacity, and his prominence made his house the center of interest for the patriotic of all classes, where the latest information could be had of the military situation. A sentinel paced before his door, officers of the army were coming and going, and delegates to Congress and members of the Assembly mingled in the anxious and busy throng.

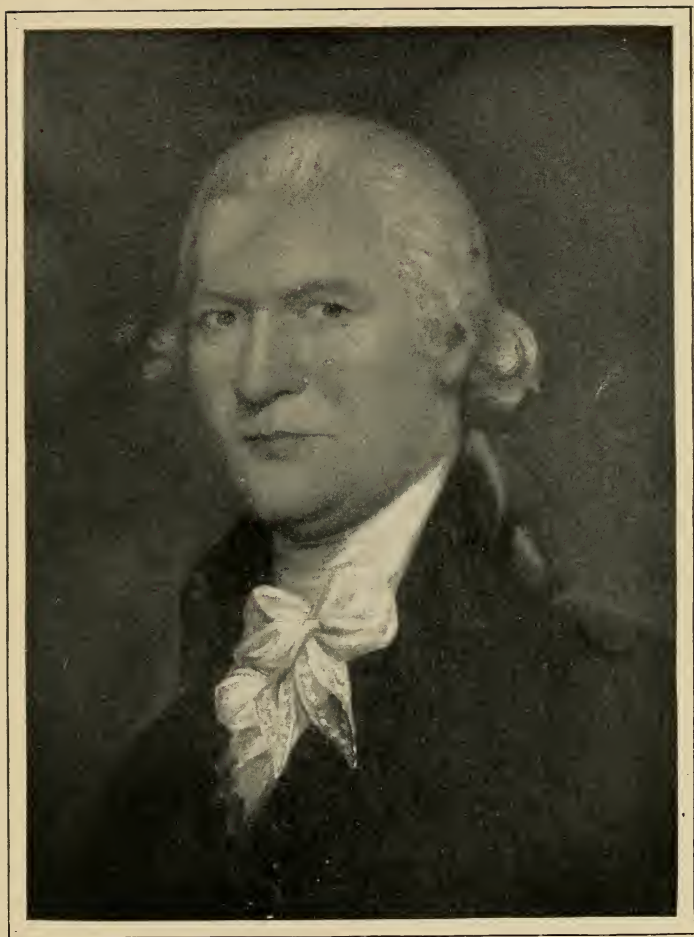
“No man played a more conspicuous or important part in our local history during the Revolution than William Henry. Nowhere was there a more ardent or more trusted patriot,” writes Frank R. Diffenderffer, of Lancaster, in his “The Story of a Picture.”

CHAPTER VIII.

JOHN JOSEPH HENRY JOINS ARNOLD'S EXPEDITION AGAINST CANADA, IS TAKEN PRISONER AND CONFINED IN QUEBEC.

N view of what he saw and heard going on all about him and in an element so intensely patriotic, it was not surprising that among the young men of Lancaster to volunteer at the first call to arms was John Joseph Henry a youth not seventeen, the second son of William Henry, who enlisted without his father's consent but with his mother's knowledge and assistance in Captain Smith's Company of Colonel Thompson's Battalion of Riflemen; and it is said that when the Company was officially inspected by Colonel Henry who went to Reading, Pa., for the purpose, his son's presence in the ranks was not discovered. Smith's Company was ordered to join Arnold at Cambridge, Mass., where the latter was drawing together a force for the invasion of Canada.

On the eleventh of September, 1775, this



HON. JOHN JOSEPH HENRY,

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER.

PRESIDENT JUDGE OF THE 2D JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

little army of eleven hundred men marched to Newberryport, Mass., where it embarked on transports and proceeded up the Kennebec River as far as Fort Western. Here it followed the Indian trails northward, blazing its way through an almost impenetrable wilderness and encountering incredible hardships. The weather was piercingly cold and the clothing of the men afforded no protection against the rigors of a Canadian winter. Henry's inventory of his scanty outfit, which was better than most, is almost grotesque in its meagreness:

“ It consisted of a round-about jacket of wool, a pair of half-worn buckskin breeches, two pairs woolen stockings, a hat with a feather, a hunting shirt, deer skin leggings, a pair of moccasins and a pair of tolerably good shoes which had been closely hoarded.”

Many died from exposure, and one third of the command under Colonel Enos deserted under the pretence of a lack of provisions. Henry was among those who dropped from the ranks exhausted, and in recalling this incident, writes: “ As I sank by the roadside, Arnold, who was riding in the rear of the

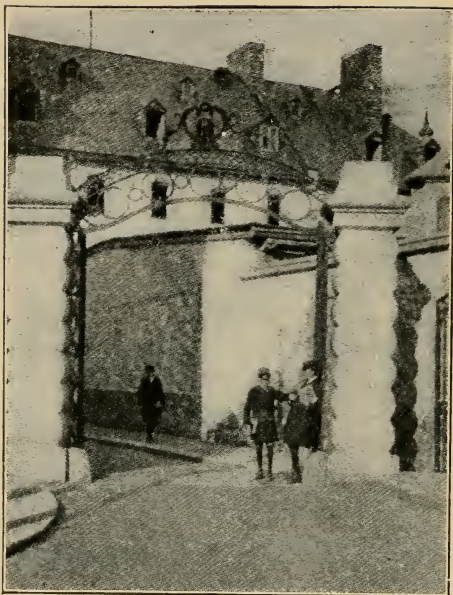
army, approached me, and having ascertained my condition—he knew my name and character—dismounted, ran to the riverside and hailed the owner of a house which stood on the opposite bank. The good Canadian in his canoe quickly arrived and at Arnold's request took me to his home, where after three days of generous treatment I recuperated sufficiently to rejoin the army;" but not before Henry had tried in vain to prevail upon his benefactor to accept two silver dollars, the last of his little horde.²³

On the fourteenth of November the remnant of the army emerged from the wilderness and encamped under the walls of Quebec, where it was subsequently joined by the forces under Montgomery, who took command in the investment of the city.

What followed is known to every student of American history. Through a series of unaccountable blunders, at the very moment when victory seemed assured, the expedition suffered a disastrous defeat.

Early on the morning of December 31,

²³ Henry mentions meeting Aaron Burr on the march, who was a "cadet" on Arnold's staff. Burr was then about twenty-one years of age.



THE MONASTERY OF ST. FRANCIS, QUEBEC,
WHERE JOHN JOSEPH HENRY WAS CONFINED.

1775, in the midst of a driving snow storm an attempt was made to carry the city by assault. Leading an attack on the first barrier the gallant Montgomery fell mortally wounded and "after a display of the greatest valor," nine hundred Americans were made prisoners, young Henry among them.

They were confined in the ruined monastery of St. Francis, an enormous building quite unsuited to the purpose, which is still pointed out as the American prison.

The horrors of that winter are graphically told by Henry in his account of the campaign. Here for nine months they suffered from inadequate protection from the biting weather, as many of the rooms were without heat. Contaminated water and insufficient and improper food were additional factors that soon caused an outbreak of scurvy to which Henry was one of the first to succumb. Happily it cannot be charged that these conditions were the result of design, but to a want of preparation and to some indifference.

As a prisoner Henry apparently fared better than his companions. His disposition was generous, his manner frank and engaging and he had the happy faculty of making

friends. His youth and unfortunate plight excited the commiseration of the commandant, General Sir Guy Carleton, and in Col. McDougal he discovered a friend whom he had met at his uncle's house in Detroit three years before, whose kindness helped to ameliorate the hardships of his confinement. Captain Prentice, who was in direct charge of the prisoners, was another from whom he received attentions that seemed prompted almost by affection.

After an ineffectual attempt to escape by a group of officers and including Henry, the offenders were ordered to be manacled. When it came to Henry's turn to have the irons riveted by the blacksmith Captain Prentice called out: "Never mind that lad." He repeatedly pressed Henry to accept loans of money, offering to wait for repayment until he returned to his home, which, although the temptation was great, were gratefully declined.

Early in August, 1776, Captain Prentice brought the welcome news that General Carleton had determined to send them by sea to New York, under parole, for exchange. Before their departure Captain Prentice ob-

tained permission for Henry and his friend Boyd²⁴ to revisit the scene of their disastrous assault.

On August 10 they set sail in five transports, convoyed by H. M. Frigate "Pearl," Captain McKenzie,²⁵ and after an uneventful voyage, arrived in New York Bay, September 11, anchored three miles south of Governor's Island, and witnessed the partial destruction of the city by fire. Here they experienced a vexatious detention of several weeks on shipboard, from which they were not released until October 1, when they were transferred to shallops, and after a dangerous pull across the bay of ten hours landed at Elizabethport, N. J., within the American lines. Words are incapable of describing

²⁴ Boyd returned to the army, rose to the rank of Captain, and took part in Sullivan's Campaign against the Indians in 1779. Sent in advance with a reconnoitering party, they were ambushed. Boyd was taken prisoner, put to the torture, his body horribly mutilated, and in that condition forced to run the gauntlet before death came to his relief. His remains, which were scattered over a considerable area, were recovered and buried the day after the affair.

²⁵ Henry met Captain McKenzie's son, who was a British officer, in Quebec when he was a prisoner. They met again, which happened to be in Lancaster, where the fortunes of war had made McKenzie a prisoner.

their manifestations of joy at their restoration to liberty. Many threw themselves upon the earth and wept!

Walking through the town Henry, who was penniless, was recognized by a wagoner from Lancaster, who informed him that his parents had abandoned all hope of ever seeing him and from whom he accepted an unsolicited loan of two silver dollars. This god-send enabled him to join his companions, Colonel Nichols and Colonel Febiger, in chartering a wagon that took them as far as Princeton, where they had the pleasure of calling on the eminent patriot and divine, Dr. Witherspoon, who entertained them.

The next morning, finding it impossible to procure a conveyance, they managed though suffering much physical distress, to walk to Bristol, where they persuaded a farmer who had given them an excellent supper, to drive them to Philadelphia, arriving about two in the morning, and put up at the "Crown and Harp." Here they were among friends. With funds supplied by his kinsman, Mr. Owen Biddle, one of the Supreme Council of Safety, Henry exchanged his well-worn buckskin leggings and moccasins for a civilian's

dress, the same day set off in the stage for Lancaster, and a day later was restored to the much needed care of his mother, after a year of almost continuous suffering.

Immediately upon his return he was informed of his appointment to a lieutenancy in the army as a tribute of his heroism, followed soon after by an offer of a captaincy in the Virginia Line, through the influence of the gallant Colonel John Morgan,²⁶ whose soldierly qualities Henry emulated. Both profers of a military life had to be declined. His wound, which had impaired the use of one of his legs so that he walked with a perceptible limp until his death, made the acceptance of either impossible. This was a staggering blow to all his hopes, and in his hours of suffering and despondency, self-destruction seemed to offer the only panacea. He was in the heyday of youth, in spirit chivalric, in temperament a soldier, believing that fame awaited him in a military career.

Although it may be said that he regained

²⁶ At seventeen, Morgan was a wagoner in Braddock's army. Commanded a battalion of riflemen in Arnold's Quebec Expedition, was taken prisoner, rose to the rank of Brigadier General and elected to Congress.

his health his recovery was slow and discouraging, and he was never afterwards robust.

“ He bound himself an apprentice to John Hubley, esq., Prothonotary of the county of Lancaster, as a clerk in the office for four years; he pursued his business with the closest application, and discharged the duties of that office with unabated care and strictness, and when the labors of the day were over, his nights were consumed in study, endeavoring to make up in some measure for the neglect that his education had suffered by his becoming a soldier.”²⁷

Entering the law office of Stephen Chambers, Esq., one of the leaders of the Lancaster County Bar, whose younger sister he afterwards married, he was admitted to practice in 1785, and raised to the bench in 1793 by appointment of Governor Mifflin, as President Judge of the Second Judicial District of Pennsylvania, succeeding his father's friend, Judge Wm. Atlee,²⁸ his circuit consisting of the Counties of Chester, Lancaster, York and

²⁷ “ A Biographical History of Lancaster County; being a History of the early Settlers and Eminent Men of the County, by Alexander Harris, Lancaster, Pa., Elias Barr & Co., 1872.”

²⁸ Judge Atlee was the first president judge of the district under the new state government. Henry was the second.

Dauphin. His wounds breaking out afresh he retired in 1810 after serving seventeen years, and died April 15, 1811, in his fifty-second year, a beloved and honored gentleman.

The only authentic account,²⁹ indeed the only account of Arnold's memorable invasion of Canada, was given to the world by Judge Henry himself, who years after the event retold the story at the request of his children. The little volume, to which he gave the title "The Campaign against Quebec" and dedicated to his daughter, was written with the aid of notes and memoranda while confined to his room with illness. It describes in simple but effective words the hardships and sufferings of the band of heroes who traversed the wilderness of Maine from Cambridge to the St. Lawrence in the autumn of 1775.³⁰ He was never able to revise the work, which was published by his widow in 1812.

²⁹ A new biography, some additional notes and a good index were added to a second edition prepared by his grandson, Aubrey Henry Smith, Esq., of the Philadelphia bar and published in 1876. Both are out of print.

³⁰ Of this march through the wilderness a British authority remarks: "The Canadians viewed it with astonishment, but it served no good purpose," which was alas! too true.

Of Henry's account Justin H. Smith writes:

"A good many reports of the march have come to us from members of the expedition, besides various items and scraps from participants who did not write full accounts. Of all our first hand reports the one most commonly known and relied upon by those who have written on the subject is probably that of John Joseph Henry, one of the riflemen, who became in later life President of the Second Judicial District of Pennsylvania.³¹ There are sufficient reasons for the vogue of this narrative. It is much more readable than most of them: it was published in book form as early as 1812, while few of the others got into print until many years later, or have ever come before the general public, and finally, the high character and standing of the author seemed to place the seal of truth upon its face."³²

³¹ Judge Henry's son, Dr. Stephen Chambers Henry of Detroit, Michigan, served as surgeon in the war of 1812 and was made prisoner at Hull's surrender of Detroit. He was eminent as a physician and filled many offices of honor and trust.

³² "Arnold's March from Cambridge to Quebec," by Justin H. Smith, pp. 24-25.

CHAPTER IX.

CIVIL AND MILITARY APPOINTMENTS, AUTHORIZED TO MANUFACTURE ARMS FOR THE CONTINENTAL ARMY; ENTERTAINS JOHN HART, DAVID RITTENHOUSE AND THOMAS PAINE DURING BRITISH OCCUPATION OF PHILADELPHIA.



COLONEL HENRY'S civil and military appointments were many and important. Indeed it is not surprising that he eventually sank under the weight of their exactions. He was first commissioned a Justice of the Peace in 1758. At the age of thirty-six he was Assistant Burgess of Lancaster, an office he filled continuously from 1765 to 1775.

We have already learned that he was made Canal Commissioner in 1771. In 1774 he was appointed a member of the Committee of Observation. He was Justice of the Peace and Assistant Justice of the County Courts, during 1770, 1773 and 1777.

In 1776 he was sent to the Assembly, and in 1777 was made one of the Council of Safety of Pennsylvania.

In 1780 he was commissioned President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, Quarter Sessions and Orphans' Court under the act of January 28, 1777, and in the same year he was sent as a delegate to the commission that met in Philadelphia in January to regulate prices under the call of the meeting at Hartford of October 20, 1775.

He became Treasurer of Lancaster County in 1777, for which he was unusually well qualified, and held that office until his death in 1785, the most critical years in its financial history. His noteworthy administration of its affairs was certainly not undertaken for its emoluments, which were never compensatory nor commensurate with its responsibilities, which the emergency had vastly expanded, covering as we shall learn, a wide field. In one of his letters to the Hon. Joseph Reed he mentions that his salary as Treasurer (£25 per annum) would hardly cover the expenses of two journeys to Philadelphia. Evidently he did not consider the salary important, as

the County Records show that he permitted it to accumulate for six years, from 1779 to 1784, and then drew it in a lump sum.

His civil appointments terminated with his election by the Assembly to the Congress of 1784-85-86.

His military career dates from the beginning of the struggle, with the appointment of Assistant Commissary General and disbursing officer of the government for the District of Lancaster, where extensive orders for supplies were placed with the people of the surrounding country; and in a larger sense was the trusted and confidential adviser of the Board of War and the civil authorities in matters pertaining to the maintenance of the army and the welfare of the State.

From a careful examination of his voluminous and hitherto unpublished correspondence with the Board of War, the State officials and the generals of the army, the pervading sentiment on his part is that of unswerving patriotism, and on theirs of unqualified confidence in his sagacity and executive ability.

There are letters from Washington, Gates, Wayne, Hazen, "Lighthorse" Harry Lee,

Timothy Pickering and Benjamin Stoddart, setting forth the vital necessities of the army and soliciting his coöperation. There are others from the Board of War dating almost from the discharge of the first gun in the conflict and ending only with the declaration of peace, all fraught with historical interest; and those from the Honorable Joseph Reed throw additional light on the actions of that maligned, but patriotic statesman.

“All through the Revolution Henry was very active on the side of the Colonies, and his correspondence in 1779, as chairman of the Committee on the Supply and Regulation of the Flour market, shows him to have been a good writer and a shrewd practical business man.”⁸³

As Assistant Commissary General and fiscal agent he was clothed with large discretionary powers quite apart from the routine duties of his office. Among his multifarious responsibilities he engaged transportation and supplies of every description, and the arming of the troops.

⁸³ From Harris, “Biographical History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.”

Thus, as soon as the startling intelligence reached Philadelphia that the British fleet with General Howe's army on board was sighted off the Delaware Capes, Thomas Wharton, Jr., president of the Board of War, despatched the following letter to William Henry:

PHILADELPHIA—
IN COUNCIL, July 31, 1777.

Gentlemen:

I have received certain intelligence that the Enemy's Ships to the number of two hundred and twenty sail was seen within a few Leagues of the light house³⁴ yesterday about ten o'clock, and it was expected they would get into the Cape in the afternoon. Since that time the wind has been very favorable for them. It becomes now absolutely necessary for us to be on our guard and to do all we can to oppose the Enemy, but put it out of their power to distress the good people of the State. I therefore request that you will immediately order six hundred and eleven wagons out of your County to repair to this City, for the purpose of removing stores, provisions, etc, etc. As you value the interest, happiness and peace of your Country, I entreat

³⁴ Cape Henlopen Light, built by the British government in Queen Anne's reign and still in use.

you to exert yourselves in this matter, and forward them as fast as possible without waiting for any particular number to come together.

I am with respect gentlemen

Your very humble servant

THOMAS WHARTON

President.

To

William Henry, Esq.

and others, the Magistrates

of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Having ascertained that Howe's demonstration was in the nature of a feint, President Wharton countermanded the order for the wagons one week afterwards.

IN COUNCIL, PHILADELPHIA, August 7, 1777.

Gentlemen:—

The fleet of the enemy not having made its appearance at our Cape since Thursday evening last, it is doubtful whether the wagons ordered from your County will be wanted, and as the expense will be enormous, you are therefore hereby directed to stop the wagons from coming down until further orders. You will please give notice to the Service Wagon Masters in your County (by express, if

necessary) of this order that it may be effectually complied with.

I am with respect gentlemen

Your very Humble Servant,

THOMAS WHARTON, *President.*

To

William Henry, Esq.

and others, Judiciary of

the County of Lancaster.

A British account of this manouvre states that when Howe reached the capes he was informed that the obstructions in the Delaware were impassable, whereupon he adroitly headed for the Chesapeake, which he ascended after many difficulties as far as the head of Elk River.

On September 6, 1777, news of his approach was communicated to Colonel Henry by President Wharton of the Board of War. In the same letter he was notified that by resolution of the board he had been authorized to manufacture arms for the colonial troops and was directed to proceed with the work at once.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 6, 1777.

Sir:

Council passed a Resolve the 22d ult. which is here enclosed, and I must beg your particular attention to it. I intended the day after the Resolve was passed to have set off for Lancaster in company with Mr. Hubley, and expected to have had the pleasure to deliver you the Resolve myself, but the appearance of the Enemy, in the Bay of Chesapeak prevented and I really forgot it until this minute. Very likely Mr. Hubley mentioned it. If he did, I hope you made a beginning to employ workman to make arms.

I am with great respect,

Sir, your very Humble

Servant,

THO. WHARTON, Jun.

President of the Board of War.

W. Henry, esq.

Anticipating Howe's obvious movement against Philadelphia the Congress which sat there adjourned to meet in Lancaster on September 27. In the meantime Howe crossed the peninsula, and on the eleventh of September met and repulsed Washington at the Brandywine, who had hurried across the Jerseys for the protection of Philadelphia.

As the loss of this battle meant the loss of Philadelphia, the British without much further opposition entered the city on September 26, and on the next day Washington, who had retired to Pennypacker's Mills, thirty miles northwest of the city, sent the following letter to Colonel Henry authorizing the impressment of supplies of all kinds for his needy troops.

Sir:

You are hereby authorized to impress all the Blankets, Shoes, Stockings, and other Articles of Clothing that can be spared by the Inhabitants of the County of Lancaster for the use of the Continental Army, paying for the same at Reasonable rates or giving Certificates.

Given at Camp at Pennypacker's Mill, this 27th day of Sept., 1777.

GEO. WASHINGTON.³⁵

To William Henry, Esq., Lancaster.

As previously arranged, the Congress reassembled in Lancaster on the twenty-seventh of September, the Board of War, the State Government and the Treasury having preceded it,

³⁵ From the "Henry Collection," Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

and on the same day for prudential reasons the Congress, Howe having threatened Lancaster, adjourned to meet in York, Pa.

Among those who sought a domicile in Lancaster during the British occupation of Philadelphia were David Rittenhouse, the eminent astronomer and physicist, Treasurer of the State, and Mrs. Rittenhouse; John Hart, a member of the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Thomas Paine, the political essayist, all of whom were for a considerable time guests of Mr. Henry, who entertained them from a patriotic sense of duty. Rittenhouse, however, who was his warm personal friend remained until the evacuation of the city in the summer of 1778.

Of this visit Rittenhouse writes :

“ While we continued in the Borough of Lancaster we made our home at the house of William Henry, at that time Treasurer of the rich and populous County of the same name, a situation helpful to my office with its connection to that of the County Treasury, and one which was also the more agreeable by reason of Mr. Henry’s being a person of very considerable mechanical ingenuity.”

John Joseph Henry in his "Reminiscences" also refers to this visit:

"My greatest recreation in my distressed condition [he was recovering from the effects of his imprisonment of nine months in Quebec] was to get into the chamber of Mr. Rittenhouse, whose conversation enlivened my mind, for he was most affable."

CHAPTER X.

THOMAS PAINE.



THE addition of Paine to Colonel Henry's family circle was unfortunate. His indolent and intemperate habits were not the qualities that go to make a desirable guest. Moreover, he made no secret of his deistical opinions and these Mrs. Henry, who was a devout Christian, strongly combated. Finally his presence became so intolerable that she appealed to her husband, for the sake of his children, who were unavoidably present at the discussions and witnessed Paine's idiosyncrasies, to request him to withdraw. To this Colonel Henry was at first disinclined to accede. He recognized the marvelous influence Paine's patriotic essays had upon the public mind and was averse to any act that might interrupt the efforts of his pen. The fifth number of his "Crisis" was commenced at Henry's house, and we have authority for the statement that Paine took three months in its preparation.

We are quoting substantially from the extremely interesting "Reminiscences" of John Joseph Henry written in 1809, and, as affording a character study at close range, we shall now quote Judge Henry's own words, covering the period when Paine was his father's guest. It must be remembered, in explanation of his unreserved criticisms, that his "Reminiscences" are addressed to his children and were not written for publication.

"I knew Paine well and that personally, for he was a guest in the house of my father when Generals Howe and Clinton were in Philadelphia. When my wound had so far mended in 1778 as to permit my hobbling about on crutches, I would sometimes go to Paine's room and sit with him, as I often did with Rittenhouse. I found Paine a man afflicted with a supercilious pride, and an imaginary importance which made his society undesirable. He was of that class who, with a small amount of learning domineered as if he were a Johnson. It was his daily habit to take a walk in the morning until twelve, make an inordinate dinner after which he would retire to his chamber and take a nap of several hours in a big arm chair wrapped in a blanket, with a bottle of spirits and a tumbler within easy reach of his hand. His indolence was amazing. His manu-

script lay upon the table covered with dust. To-day a few lines would be added, and in the course of a week a dozen more, and so on. His "Crisis" was dated March 21, 1778, and, although a short political paper, was not published until three months later. His essays were not, as you might suppose, the spontaneous outburst of an elevated patriotic spirit, and one at least of his acts, while in the government service, approached dangerously near the border line of treason. It is true Generals Washington, Gates, and Greene acknowledged the patriotic sentiment aroused by his publications, and wrote commendatory letters, but they had no personal knowledge of the writer, and were ignorant of his infirmities. He had been appointed by Congress to inspire the people through his essays with a feeling of indignation against the despotism of the King and his ministry, and was successful, and was rewarded for this service by the appointment of Secretary of Foreign Affairs. This office he treated as a sinecure. He never went to York, where Congress then sat, except occasionally, and staid for a day or two. He failed to understand what was meant by a conscientious performance of duty, and his utter disregard of the common decencies of life estranged his associates, among them the late David Rittenhouse, one of the best of men, Treasurer of the State; the Hon. George Bryan, vice-president of the Council and a man of great learning; Jonathan Sergeant, Attorney Gen-

eral of Pennsylvania, and your grandfather, and many other gentlemen of character during '77, '78 and '79."

Judge Henry continues :

" He made friends but could not retain them and as showing the estimation in which he was held by his contemporaries, I give the following story of an encounter with Paine, which I heard from Colonel Samuel John Atlee, one of the participants—an eminent patriot and a man of note among us—a short time after it happened.

" Clothier-General Mease, of Philadelphia, had invited a number of gentlemen of the army to dine with him in the city, among whom were General Francis Nichols, Colonel Atlee, Colonel Francis Johnson and several members of the Legislature, of whom was Matthias Slough, of Lancaster. All the gentlemen heartily approved of Paine's political essays, for they were to a man good Whigs, but his general bearing inspired a feeling of repugnance.

" As you may readily suppose, the excellent wine of General Mease exhilarated the company. When returning to their lodgings Colonel Atlee observed Paine coming towards them down Market Street. ' There comes " Common Sense," ' says Atlee to the company. ' D—n him,' says Slough, ' I'll " Common Sense " him.' As he approached the party they

took the wall. Slough tripped him and threw him into the gutter.

“You may think this act cruel and unnecessary, yet these men were some of the most eminent in the State, who staked their all on the issue of the war.

“Do not permit anything I have said to lead you to undervalue the sagacity of your grandfather, for he was wise but of so benevolent a mind that in the common affairs of life he held this principle as true: ‘You should consider everyone as possessing probity until you discover him to be otherwise.’

“From these observations you will readily perceive how easy it was to impose upon my father. This explains why he continued to entertain Paine.”

CHAPTER XI.

LANCASTER IN 1777.

POLITICAL conditions in Lancaster at this time (1777), as reflected in the Journal, were much disturbed by the incautious criticisms of the Confederation and the refusal to take the oath on the part of those who sympathized with the Crown; in consequence of which they were subjected to indignities and in some instances to imprisonment. Many arrests were made without process of law, a procedure Col. Henry condemned and corrected.

One of the prominent sympathizers was the Reverend Thomas Barton, rector of St. James', whose tory activities became so conspicuously offensive that his arrest was determined upon and its execution assigned to Colonel Henry in the following order:

COL. JOHN CAROTHERS TO WILLIAM HENRY, 1777.

CARLISLE, Sept. 25th, 1777.

Sir,

Two of the Justices of this Country have informed me that in the Course of the Examination

of a Witness, touching a Plot or Combination of several People to destroy the public Magazines at Lancaster, York and Carlisle, The Revd. Thomas Barton of Lancr., Clerk, is named as one at least privy to that conspiracy. He is also charged with carrying on Correspondence with the Enemies of this State, and of the United States of America. I am persuaded this intelligence ought more properly to have been communicated to Bartram Galbreath, as your County Lieut., but lest he should not be at home, I have been advised to communicate to you, Sir, as one of the Justices of Lancaster County, tho' I am not personally acquainted with you, I make no Doubt but that you will cause Mr. Barton to be secured in such a manner as your prudence shall direct, on rect, of this letter.

I am Sir,

Yr very Hbbs. Servt.,

JNO. CAROTHERS, *lieut. of C. C.*

GEORGE STEVENSON TO WILLIAM HENRY, 1777.

CARLISLE, 25th Sepr, 1777.

Dear Sir:

Inclosed you will receive a Letter from John Corrithers, Sepr, our County Lieut., by which you will know that Mr. Barton's name is brought on the Carpet as being privy to the Tory Plot, and corresponding with our enemies.

Mr. Batwell is also accused of being a principal

Leader. A party of Militia have taken him, and I suppose by this Time he is lodged in York Goal. It is a Pity that men who have been employ'd in preaching the Gospel of Peace should be found engaged in such base Plots.

Have you done any Thing towards securing David Copeland, the man I spoke of to you at Lancaster? I wish he were secured; he is a material Witness—having been much employed carrying letters & Messages among the Conspirators. I shall be glad to know what you shall have done in Consequence of Mr. Carrithers's Letter.

I am Sr,

yr most Hble Servt,

GEO. STEVENSON.

Directed,

To William Henry, Esquire, Lancaster.

Favored by Col. Culbertson.

Although Colonel Henry and Doctor Barton were temperamentally antagonistic they had long been friends, and before, and for a time after his marriage, Henry had been one of his parishioners, which made the contemplation of his arrest embarrassing as well as painful. The inference is, however, that the doctor escaped the extreme penalty intended for him, probably through the forbearance of

Colonel Henry, as from the Journal we are informed that on October 13, 1778, having disposed of his real estate to his son-in-law, Zanzinger, he was permitted to leave with his wife for Boston, and thence to England.

From the Journal of the same year we are also told that when Lancaster received the news of the return of Mr. Silas Deane from France after successfully negotiating treaties of alliance and commerce with that country—a compact so vital in its bearing upon the future conduct of the war—it was acclaimed by the people with every manifestation of approval. “Salutes were fired, and in the evening an illumination, the expenses of which,” so the Journal reads, “were paid by Col. Henry out of his own pocket.” This was one of his many acts to cheer the drooping spirits of the people and to keep alive the embers of patriotism.

CHAPTER XII.

ARMS FOR THE TROOPS THE CRYING NEED OF THE HOUR.



FROM the following letters covering the years 1777-'78-'79 it will be seen that the crying need of the hour, and one which threatened serious consequences if not promptly met, was an adequate supply of arms for the troops impatiently waiting to take the field, or to replace weapons lost or destroyed in action. To meet this demand, which was pressing from every quarter, Henry's gun works located on Mill Creek, outside the Borough of Lancaster, where what is known today as the "Old Factory Road" crosses that stream, and the best equipped in the colonies, were working night and day to their utmost capacity, and the Board of War, realizing the gravity of the situation and the importance of keeping his works in uninterrupted operation, exempted his workmen from liability to military duty.

FROM RICHARD PETERS, SECRETARY BOARD OF
WAR, TO WILLIAM HENRY.

WAR OFFICE
YORK, NOV. 7, 1777.

Sir:

The Board have sent an order to the Commanding Officer at Lancaster to Collect from the militia returning all Continental Arms and Necessaries. As the Virginia Militia are returning from Camp I have to request your assistance in getting back any arms furnished them at Lancaster, if they should be carrying them home. Perhaps as the General (Washington) may not have attended to this matter they may not, as they ought to do, have deposited their Arms at Camp.

I am your obt. Servt.,

RICHARD PETERS
Secretary Board of War.

William Henry, Esq.

FROM "LIGHT HORSE" HARRY LEE DATED
CHARLESTON, VIRGINIA, WHO IS CHAFING TO
GET INTO THE SADDLE.

CHARLESTON, February 8, 1778.

Dear Sir:—

I am exceedingly anxious to join the army. We wait for nothing but carbines. Be pleased to send per bearer such as may be ready and expedite the completion of the remainder engaged.

I have the honor to be Sir with highest esteem
your most obedient and most humble servant.

William Henry, Esq.

HARRY LEE

GENERAL HORATIO GATES PRESIDENT OF THE
BOARD OF WAR TO COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY,
IN WHICH HIS PRESENCE IS REQUESTED IN
YORK, WHERE THE CONGRESS AND THE BOARD
OF WAR WERE ASSEMBLED.

WAR OFFICE, 13th April 1778.

Sir:—

The board of War request you will come to
York, as soon as the business you are engaged in
will permit, and they desire you will tell me, by
return of the Bearer, when we may expect to see
you.

HORATIO GATES, *President.*

William Henry, Esq.

FROM GENERAL ANTHONY WAYNE, AT VALLEY
FORGE, TO COLONEL HENRY, PROTESTING
AGAINST AN ORDER OF THE SUPREME EXECU-
TIVE COUNCIL OF PENNSYLVANIA TO TRANSFER
ARMS INTENDED FOR HIS DIVISION, TO THE
MILITIA.

CAMP MOUNT JOY

14th May 1778.

Dear Sir:—

Col. Bayard informs me that after having the
Arms, Bayonets &c., prepared to send to Camp

which was furnished for the use of my Division by you, they were stoped by order of the Council for the use of the Militia in case they should be called out—and that they can't be forwarded unless his Excellency gives a particular order for it. I wish you to Advert to the Return & order from the Board of War—and from His Excellency Gen'l Washington thro' me for a Certain number of Arms, Bayonets and Accoutrements for the use of my Division—this will certainly justify you in furnishing them in preference to any other order from any other person whatever.

I communicated the contents of Col. Bayard's letter this morning to His Excellency who expressed just surprise at the order not being complied with and ordered me to Request you to forward those articles together with the Espontoons with all possible Dispatch. Col. Bayard will present you with another order from the Adj't General for an additional number of articles which I wish you to furnish the Soonest possible as we have numbers of men that can't take the field without them.

Interim I am Dear Sir

Your Most Obt

Hum. St.

ANTY. WAYNE B. G.

Wm. Henry, Esq.,
Lancaster.

Wayne, whose impetuous temperament would not permit him to submit calmly to what he considered an injustice, invoked the authority of Washington, who, on the same day, sent the following letter to Colonel Henry, suggesting a plan to meet Wayne's requisition.

CAMP AT VALLEY FORGE,
May 14, 1778.

Sir

I find from a letter from Lieut. Col. Bayard to General Wayne that a parcel of arms to which you had made or fixed bayonets were retained by the Governor and Council of Pennsylvania because the muskets belonged to the State. I have written to Governor Wharton upon the subject and have informed him that if the muskets do belong particularly to the State, you will replace them with an equal number of Continentals, many of which you have to repair, this I desire you will do.

If the espositoons for the officers are finished be pleased to send them down; if they are not, let them be completed as soon as possible.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

William Henry, Esq.

Lancaster

The following letters from Richard Peters, Timothy Pickering, the Supreme Executive Council and Commissary Lukens have reference to supplying the troops with arms.

YORK, PENNSYLVANIA,
WAR OFFICE,
May 19th 1778.

Sir:—

You will please to deliver to the order of Hon. Council of Pennsylvania one hundred *Common* Rifles (without Bayonets) if you have or can procure that number speedily. A light corps from Camp is expected at Lancaster and you will keep in view the providing them with what they want for Frontier Business. We mention this as we have to the Council lest your stock should be exhausted by this order.

By order of the Board.

RICHARD PETERS.
Secretary Board of War.

William Henry Esq.
Superintendent of
Arms and Military Acoutrements.
Lancaster.

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FROM TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR,
TO COL. HENRY.

WAR OFFICE,
YORK, PA., May 26, 1778.

Sir,

Major Lee informs us that he has conversed with you relative to the manufacture of carbines for his corps. You doubted your ability to undertake it at this time on account of the multiplicity of your business. But we are so anxious to get this corps equipped, because of the very great advantage which must result from it, we cannot but express our wishes that some part of your present business might be for a while suspended, and this engaged in. Major Lee wants a hundred carbines; but thirty furnished in a short time will enable him to take the field. To make this last number we desire you to set some of your people at work immediately, for no part of your business appears to us of equal importance. The particular size and construction you and Major Lee will agree upon.

We are, sir,

Your obedient servants.

By order of the Board

TIM. PICKERING JUN.

William Henry, Esq.

FROM TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR,
TO COLONEL HENRY.

WAR OFFICE, June 8, 1778.

Sir:—

General Washington informs us that 1700 cartridge boxes are wanted in his army to furnish those who are destitute. Pray send immediately all you have, and set as many hands at work as possible in making more.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant
TIM PICKERING, JR.

Wm. Henry, Esq.

FROM THE SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO
COLONEL HENRY.

PHILADELPHIA, July 15, 1778.

Sir:

The Council have ordered the Lieutenants of the counties of Lancaster and Berks to call on you for what arms may be necessary to put into the hands of the militia now ordered into service from these Counties, and if arms cannot be had at Carlisle, the Lieut's of York & Cumberland will also apply to you to make up their deficiencies. These demands you will please to comply with as far as may be in your power.

CARLISLE, 31st, July 1778.

Sir:—

As. Genl. McIntosh wants in his army six hundred muskets with their Bayonets, and as I judge impracticable that such a number can be put in order at the time of our departure, I pray you to send at Lancaster to Mr. Henry for to have immediately 3 hundred muskets ready, which number fail us. Perhaps you know of some other place not far off Carlisle where it is possible to find some muskets ready if Mr. Henry cannot supply this number. I pray you will please do your endeavor; it would be necessary the muskets be here on Monday or Wednesday.

I have the honor to be Sir,

Your most Obedt. most hble sert.

LE CHEVE. DE CAMBRAY.

Major Lukens.

To this letter which was forwarded to Col. Henry, Major Lukens adds the following postscript:—

(P. S. by Major Lukens)

Col. De Cambray is to have the direction of the Artillery in the Western expedition. He is left

here by Gen. McIntosh to get all things forward that are necessary for the command.

CHAS. LUKENS.

W. Henry Esq.

FROM ASSISTANT COMMISSARY LUKENS TO
COLONEL HENRY,

in which, among other articles, is a Reguision for Tomahawks for Colonel Brodhead Commanding the forces on the Pennsylvania frontier.

CARLISLE, Aug. 5, 1778.

Sir

Yours of the 3d by Sergt. Bradley came safe to hand. Am very glad to hear you have expectation to send the Articles they wrote for. I must again Trouble you; since Col. Brodhead's arrival here he has desired that he may be furnished as Speedily as Possible 1500 Powder Horns and Shot bags Compleat, for Rifle men. The other Articles he wants are as follows; tho' am apprehensive you have them not; 1000 Small Hatchets or Tomahawks, 15000 flints, 1500 Canteens of wood or tin. The Powder Horns and Shot bags I hope you can send, and if any of the Other Articles so much the better.

I am with Respect

Your Humble Servant

CHAS LUKENS

C. M. Stores.

Wm. Henry, Esq.

CHAPTER XIII.

IS MADE SUPERINTENDENT OF ARMS AND
ACCOUTREMENTS, AND ASSISTANT COM-
MISSARY GENERAL.



IN addition to his other duties, Colonel Henry established workshops in Philadelphia, Lancaster and Allentown and elsewhere in the State, for making boots, shoes, hats and accoutrements for the army, and with the aid of Assistant Commissaries superintended their manufacture—industries second to none in their important bearing upon the efficiency and physical condition of the troops; and the Board of War, relying upon his known executive ability, gave him complete control of this department, appointing him Superintendent of Arms and Accoutrements, and Commissary General of Hides for the States of Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. His commission follows:

[SEAL]

By the Board of War and Ordinance of the United States of America, to William Henry Esq. of Lancaster in the State of Pennsylvania. By Virtue of the Authority given us by Congress in their act of the 23. instant, herewith transmitted, you are hereby appointed Commissary of Hides for the States of Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland. You will proceed immediately in the faithful and diligent discharge of that duty, as pointed out in the following instructions and such others as the Board may from time to time think proper to give you. You will correspond with the Board and the Clothier General, informing him and us of all material transactions in your Department.

As there will be no Continental agents to interfere with you in your district, and the whole business is committed to your care, we expect your utmost exertions will be used, in procuring immediate and constant supplies of shoes for the troops, who without great dilligence in the commissaries of hides, we fear will greatly suffer.

Given at the War office the Fifth Day of August, Anno Domini 1779, in the Fourth Year of our Independence.

By order of the Board.

RICHARD PETERS,
Secretary.

FROM WILLIAM SHANNON TO COLONEL HENRY,
APPLYING FOR THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT
COMMISSARY.

PHILADELPHIA, June 24, 1779.

Sir:—

I wrote you a few days ago by a Transient Person and a Stranger, nearly of the same import as this; a doubtfullness of its safe Conveyance has induced me to trouble you a Second Time. I have acted in the Hide Department under Colonel Ewing, for the last ten months past, during said time had no great degree of Comfort, yet, the difficulties of any business is lessened as a Knowledge thereof is acquired; besides if I can be employed to my satisfaction in this department, shall not think of going into any other. I, a few days ago, applied to the Board of War, to know if they had any business for me. They informed me that you were appointed to direct a principal part of the Hide Department, and they requested I would immediately write you, desiring that no appointment might be made in the Department until the Board and you were satisfied with respect to my abilities and other qualifications for the Business, alledging if they were equal to the Task, I might serve with more advantage than an inexperienced Person.

You will probably think from my repeated applications (if they should come to hand) that I am

very fond of office, but I assure you that it is only a desire to effect with certainty what with one attempt might have been very uncertain.

Please indulge me with a few lines on this subject and direct them to the War Office.

I am Sir,

Your unknown friend,
and humble servent,
WM. SHANNON,
D. C. of Hides.

William Henry, Esq.

FROM HON. TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF
WAR TO COLONEL HENRY IN RELATION TO
SHANNON'S APPLICATION.

WAR OFFICE, June 28, 1779.

Sir:—

Soon after your departure from this city, Mr. Shannon, whose letter is enclosed, made known to the board his desire to continue in the hide department. As we were pretty much strangers to his character, we wrote to two gentlemen at Camp, who are probably best acquainted with it, for information. Their answer is not yet arrived. Upon his principle maintained in his letter we thought it would be proper to employ him; specially for the purpose of finishing the business and contracts which upon Mr. Ewing's resignation will remain unsettled. Appearances are in his favor; and if qualified for the

business, an old officer is to be preferred to a new one. The purpose of this letter is to notify you of Mr. Shannon's request and of the steps we have taken, that you may reserve a place for him, in case the evidence of his good character are satisfactory to you; for we mean not to control your appointments.

We find that some persons who contract to supply shoes for the army are guilty of great impositions on the public. Besides the badness of some of the leather, the shoes are pinched in every part and very unfaithfully put together, the stitches in many for sewing the upper leather to the inner sole are three quarters of an inch long and upwards. We might pursue some other mode to obtain shoes; and either buy the leather and cut the shoes, before they are delivered the Shoe-makers; or get a number of pattern shoes made, of the necessary different sizes, and deliver to every contractor, and in this case all the shoes not made according to the pattern should be rejected. In the first case they may deceive by changing the good public leather for their own of an inferior quality; and they may do their work badly, and it would be difficult to apply a remedy to these evils. In the other case if the shoes are of bad leather, or badly made the public have only to refuse them, the fear of which would induce contractors to make good ones; however, your long experience in this business will enable you to decide

on the most proper mode of conducting the business ; and we wish to be favored with your sentiments as soon as possible, with such information as shall enable us to direct the measures most expedient to be pursued for procuring shoes in all cases falling under our notice. We shall be glad to receive the pattern Cartridge box as soon as you can get it made.

We are, Sir with great regard,
your most obedient servant,
By order of your board,
TIM. PICKERING.

William Henry Esq.

FROM TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR,
TO WILLIAM HENRY, ESQ.³⁶

WAR OFFICE, May 3, 1779.

Sir:—

By Mr. Henry's (William Henry Jr) return in March it appeared that he had then on hand upwards of three thousand pairs of shoes. About that number we now want for a particular purpose ; and as we know not of any considerable issues since, we presume you have at least that number now by you. They are to be packed in bags which we shall send you by the first conveyance. In doing this care

³⁶ Pickering was a graduate of Harvard and one of the very few statesmen (among them Jos. Reed, who was an alumnus of Princeton) who figured in the Revolution, that had had the advantages of a collegiate education.

should be taken to place the heels inwards, otherwise they will soon wear holes in the bags. As these bags are finally to be carried on pack-horses, one hundred and sixty pairs in a bag will be sufficient, tho' they would hold near 180 pairs. The method taken by the Clothier General is to tie six pairs in a bundle, pressing them close together, by which means they take much less room. Upon receiving the bags you will be pleased immediately to pack the shoes and have them ready when called for.

We are sir, your obedient servants,

By order of the Board,

TIM. PICKERING.

William Henry, Esq.

WAR OFFICE, May 10, 1779.

Sir,

We on the 7th inst. desired you to send to Estherton 200 bayonet sheaths, 200 bayonet belts, and 200 cartouch boxes; after fulfilling this order, you will be pleased to pack up without delay, all the remaining cartouch boxes, bayonet belts and bayonet sheaths, also all the muskets with bayonets fit for service, in your possession, and send the same to the head of Elk, directed to Col. Henry Hollingsworth D.Q.M. there with a request to him to forward the same as expeditiously as possible to Alexandria in Virginia, where they are to be delivered to the officer commanding the Virginia newly raised

line at that place. Send by this express, or the first conveyance a return of the Arms and accoutrements you shall be able to send to Alexandria; or if you cannot exactly ascertain the numbers of each, favor us with an estimate as near the truth as possible, as thereby we shall regulate the issues for the same purpose from hence

We are Sir,
Your most obed't Sevants,
By order of the Board.

RICHARD PETERS
Secretary of the Board

William Henry, Esq.

FROM RICHARD PETERS, SECRETARY OF THE BOARD
OF WAR, TO COLONEL HENRY.

WAR OFFICE
May 24 1779

Sir:

There being a pressing Demand for Arms in Maryland we are obliged to order the three hundred Muskets without Bayonets to the Head of Elk direct to the care of Col. Henry Hollingsworth or if you can, & we should prefer your doing it, to Baltimore directly to the care of Jas Calhoun Esq. D.Q.M. there. Either of these Gentlemen to inform Govr Johnson of their receiving the Arms which are to be subject to his disposition. Use every degree of Expedition as the arms are wanted

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for the Maryland Militia for the immediate defense of the State.

Your obt Servants
RICHARD PETERS
By Order of the Board

William Henry Esq.
Lancaster.


WE ARE PRESSED ON EVERY SIDE FOR ARMS. Do exert yourself to get as many as possible fit for service. If you have Cartouch Boxes of the old construction that will any wise answer the present Emergency send them with the Arms, to Govr Johnson & inform us how many you send. He wants Six Hundred.

9 o'clock at night

We have considered further & you are to send the Arms to Elk to the care of Col. Levi Hollingsworth. Let him know he is to inform Govr Johnson of the Receipt of them.

CHAPTER XIV.

REED-HENRY CORRESPONDENCE ON THE ALARMING FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY.

N the following correspondence between Col. Henry and the Hon. Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania from 1778 to 1781, the all absorbing subject of discussion is the deplorable condition of the treasury and the difficulties attending the collection of revenue for war purposes, on which alone success depended.

It devolved upon Col. Henry, as Treasurer of Lancaster County, to select for this unwelcome task competent and trustworthy men, no easy matter, as his letters explain, in a community lacking anything approaching unanimity of sentiment favorable to the war.

It will be seen that their relations were close and confidential, permitting entire freedom of expression.

For example in his letter of December 19,

1780, after commending Colonel Henry for imprisoning a collector of revenue for embezzlement, Reed declares that if he were "an absolute prince for one minute, he would employ the time in issuing an order for his [the embezzler's] execution"; and that he placed the utmost reliance upon Colonel Henry's discretion, one has but to read their interesting exchanges at what was perhaps the most discouraging period in the history of the struggle.

In no single instance is there a word in Reed's letters inimical to the conduct of the war, or in disparagement of its leaders. Every line breathes a spirit of loyalty, and a deep personal interest in the result of the contest. And yet inconceivable as it must appear in the light of his correspondence and official acts, Reed's attitude during the war became the subject of a heated and acrimonious dispute, many years after his death, in which he was charged not only with supineness, but with downright disloyalty.

This discussion was renewed with great bitterness when the Civil War between the states was at its height, and although a kinsman came ably to his defence, the evidence he produced was not regarded at the time as suffi-

cient. Other documentary evidence was afterwards discovered that ameliorated the allegations, if they did not disprove them.

PRESIDENT REED TO COLONEL HENRY, 1779, IN
WHICH HE MAKES ACKNOWLEDGMENT
OF COL. HENRY'S SERVICES TO THE
STATE.

Sir,

We find ourselves under a Necessity of troubling you to negotiate a Piece of Business which you will find expressed at large in the enclosed Minute of Council. We have no Instructions to give as to Price, but that if there are Regulations in the County, we would have you conform to them. If not we will give £20 per ct. for good merchantable Flour. You will please to correspond with Mr. Turnbull, our Agent hereupon, & call on him for Money with which he will supply you. Our intention is in the first Place to purchase suitable Clothing for our Officers, of which they are in great Want, & of which they are very deserving. And then apply the Residue to the Purchase of a Quantity of Salt to be distributed among the Counties, with a due regard to the Persons & Counties who furnish Flour or Wheat for the Expence.

You will greatly oblige Council by your Exertions on this Occasion, & what will be a more powerful Inducement to you, it will be a great Addition

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to the many Services you have already rendered the State.

I am, Sir,

With much Esteem,

Your obed. Hbble. Servt.

JOS. REED.

Council Chamber, Aug. 25, 1779.

To William Henry, Esq., Lancaster.

FROM BENJAMIN STODDARD, SECRETARY OF WAR,
TO COL. WILLIAM HENRY.

WAR OFFICE, Nov. 3d, 1779.

Enclosed you have additional instructions from the Board to the Commissaries of Hides and a list of the different commissaries and the several districts to which they are appointed.

Major Hitfield Commissary for the State of New York and the district where the army lies, having near ten thousand hides on hand, and not being able to furnish more than 1500 pairs of Shoes monthly, is ordered to send 2000 immediately to Philadelphia to be delivered to your Assistant You will therefore be pleased to issue the necessary orders to him in consequence of this unexpected supply and should it be in your power to dispose of more, probably you may be furnished from the same channel:

I am Sir your most obedient servant

BEN. STODDARD.

Wm. Henry, Esq.,
Lancaster, Pa.

Secretary of War.

COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY TO PRESIDENT REED.

Sir:— LANCASTER, November 27, 1779.

I am informed one John Musser³⁷ of this Town has lately purchased a Tract of land of about 500 Acres, commonly known by the Name of the Conestoga Mannor, of John Penn, late Governor, of Pennsylvania, for nine Pounds the Acre hard Money. At the Time the Lands in this part of the province was purchased of the Delaware Indians this was Reserved and a Deed was made to them and their Heirs, etc., the Indians who resided on it were killed by a Number of People in a former war and the Deed fell into the hands of John Hay, then Sheriff of Lancaster County, who delivered the same to Mr. John Penn.—This piece of Land was afterwards claimed by Sir William Johnston in behalf of the Heirs, in consequence of which the use of the Land was given to Mr. Thomas Barton who is gone over to the Enemy. Mrs. Susana Wright could give I believe a more satisfactory Account of this affair than I can. It may be proper perhaps to inquire into this Affair. I have therefore thought it my Duty to give all the Information I have been able to collect.

I am with due Respect,

Sir, your obed't hum. Servant,

WILLIAM HENRY.

His excellency Joseph Reed, Esq.

³⁷ This is the same John Musser who was afterwards arrested for unlawfully trafficking in British merchandise.

This and the following letters to and from Colonel Henry and President Reed treat of the prevailing financial conditions.

LANCASTER, April 25th, 1780.

Sir:—

The question you are pleased to put to me in your favor of the 18th inst. is not a little embarrassing, for in the Course of my Answer I shall not only be obliged to accuse my Employers but myself also. The Board have been rather remiss, but they have their Excuses. Their Pay will not support their Horses while in Town, much less themselves and pay for their Services. I have often observed, when they come to Town, they hurry home before the Business is done, which I thought ought to have been done. I have often taken the Liberty to tell them so, and received for Answer, their Pay would not support them. I do not say their Reasons were good, but it is a Certainty, they are such as influence the Minds of most Men. I could wish the Assembly could be convinced, "that it is private Interest that executes Government," as well with Regard to the Board as the Treasurers. My Pay will scarce clear the expenses twice to Philadelphia.³⁸ There

³⁸ From a bill rendered Col. Henry by Adam Weaver, proprietor of the stage line between Lancaster and Philadelphia, we find that in the year 1783 Mrs. Henry was charged £2 (about \$10) for passage to and from Philadelphia.

are a Number of Difficulties to be encountered in this County which none of the others have to strive with. There are several of the Townships, which have not more than two or three Persons who have taken the oath of Allegiance, and therefore not capable in Law to act as Assessors or Appraisers. This gives the Board much Trouble and takes much time, before People can be found, who will act, and those are generally of the lowest Character. Some Collectors have employ'd others at their own Risk and will suffer by it. I am indebted at this Time to the State between Sixty & Seventy Thousand Pound, which I have laid out in purchase of Leather and Paying Workmens Wages at the Shoe-Factory at Philadelphia, Allentown and Lancaster. Pressed by the Board of War and the Clothier General, as I am to make the utmost Exertions to furnish the Army with Shoes and Boots by the opening of the Campaign, I hope, Sir, you will excuse the Liberty I have taken, as it was done only with an Intent to further the Service. The whole of the Factorys must have stop'd for want of Pay and Materials, if I had not supported them with Money. I do not even draw Commissions on the Money furnished the Factorys. I this Day write to the Clothier General, who will draw 200,000 Dollars from Congress, and replace what I have used. There is yet Fourteen Townships out of Thirty three to settle for the first Tax for 1779—as soon as they have settled, I will

go to Philadelphia and settle with the State-Treasurer, which I expect will be about the 15th of May next or Sooner, if I can settle here with the Board and Collectors.

I am Sir
Your obed't & hum. Ser.

WILLIAM HENRY.

His Excellency Joseph Reed Esq.

COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY TO PRESIDENT REED,
1780.

Sir:—

In a letter from Col. Atlee, of the 1st inst., I have the following Paragraph from your Excellency's of the 22 ult:

“The Deficiencies of Lancaster County in the Taxes is become a most serious Consideration. The Treasurer informs us that only Three Townships have paid off their Fifteen Million Taxes, while the Counties here which have been invaded, distressed & plundered, have paid off their Fifteen Million, their Forty-Five, and Three of their Monthly Taxes. Is not this melancholy?—I am sorry Mr. Rittenhouse has not understood my last Letter to him on that Subject, though perhaps the Fault may be my own; be that as it may, the Fact is, that the whole of the First Tax for 1779, except a Ballance in the Hands of Three of the Collectors (who are sued) is paid into my Hands; and I have paid at Sundry Times ab £163,000 to the Treasurer, and

by his Order, etc: and have Orders of Congress for more than the Amount of the First Tax. At the time I wrote to the State Treasurer there were but three Townships who had made their first Payments on the second Tax for 1779, Since which Three others have each made a small Payment; But there lays an order of the Treasurer in Favor of Col. Blaine for 150,000, in the hands of Mr. Slough, 30,000 of which I have discharged. I was obliged to include Col. Atlee £1,500 to forward the Pennsylvania Volunteers, except which I have not lent or laid out any Monies, either in Trade or otherways, belonging to the public. I beg leave to observe, that there seems to be more expected from Lancaster County than was in our Power to perform. The Act Levying the second Tax for 1779, was made in November last, and the Laws were not sent up till January. To my Knowledge the Commissioners began to lay the Tax by the Act published in the News-paper, and as they received Instruction from Council which differed from the Method they had pursued were obliged to Order the Returns to be made over again. The Weather then set in so severe that there was no Travelling till April. The Taxes were laid as soon as the Returns could be got in; and the Appeals were held in May and Collectors appointed.

That Philadelphia City & County Taxes are so far forward is no Merit in their Board of Commis-

sioners, as the Snow was not a fourth Part of the Depth there that it was here; besides, there is little Difficulty in procuring Assessors, Appraisers & Collectors in Philadelphia City & County, etc., to what there is here where there are few people in many of the Townships but such as are disaffected. I hope, Sir, you will do me the Justice to believe that I have done, & am doing, all that is in my Power to forward the Collecting the Taxes. The large Sums owing by the Quarter Masters & Commissarys of Purchases, etc., will very much lessen the Sum of Money expected from the Taxes of this County.

I am, with due Respect, Sir,

Your most hum. Serv.

WILLIAM HENRY, C. T.

His Excellency Joseph Reed, Esq.

COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY TO PRESIDENT REED,
1780.

Sir:—

The provision and Forage at this place being nearly expended Majr. Wirtz informed the Commanding officer Lt. Colo. Temple that he could not engage to furnish the Troops with a sufficient Quantity of provisions, forage etc. The Colonel applied to me as a Magistrate for Press Warrants to enable Mr. Wirtz to take those articles where they might be found, but as the Laws would not support me in granting such Warrants, I informed the Colonel

that I would write to the President and Council concerning the Affair. It is certain they cannot be supported here without Hawling the Hay ten or Fifteen mile, as the Hay in the neighborhood of Lancaster has been chiefly consumed by the Horses purchased for the French Army and by the Horses kept here, etc. and those who have Hay Cattle etc., will not part with it without Specie or Continental Money. Why is not the New State Money made a Legal Tender?—many would gladly take it, if they could pay their debts with it. If the persons who may refuse to take the New Continental Money are admitted to Bail, the Severity of the Law, published for Consideration, will be evaded, Trials will be put off from Court to Court etc. Would it not be better that the offender should be Committed without Bail or Main prise till the ensuing Sessions or if he choose it till a Court for that purpose should be called by himself.

Soap, Candles and Vegetables are not furnished the Troops here, and they complain much for Want of them.—One of our Collectors I have sent to Jail for having speculated with the Money.

I am Sir,

Your very obedient,

& hum. Servant,

WILLIAM HENRY.

His Excellency Joseph Reed Esq.

Philadelphia. Express.

PRESIDENT REED TO COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY.

Sir:—

I duly received your favor of the 3rd inst. & should be sorry that anything in my Letter to Col. Atlee of the 1st inst. should be construed into a suspicion of the Delay of Taxes in your County to arise from any Neglect much more misconduct in you. I assure you I have ever entertained far different sentiments & should have done you much Injustice if I could have supposed you to employ the public Money in trade or otherwise. Mr. Rittenhouse's Report was made in writing & I presume on competent Authority—my remark was general having no particular Person in View nor do I know why Col. Atlee sent the Paragraph to you unless he supposed you would use it as a stimulus to the Commissaries, Collectors & others.

But I cannot agree with you that more is expected from Lancaster County than it can perform, because no more is expected than the Law has appointed & which her own Representatives have thought she could raise within a given Time. I beg to know, my good friend, why Lancaster County cannot pay her taxes proportionally with other Counties—has she suffered by the enemy—has Famine, Pestilence Tempest or bad seasons deprived her of the Means—you will agree with me in the negative. Are not her Lands good & the County populous? did she not at the last Review

of Property appear so considerable as to have almost double the number of Representatives of most of the other Counties—even those who have contributed more to the public Necessities than she has done? You will also agree with me in this. But I fancy I can throw some light on the subject. There is not a week but some People from your County are purchasing Gold & Silver in the city, and that is hoarded up as too sacred to be touched for Taxes. The Collectors finding Opposition & Difficulty neglect their Duty & the Commissaries do not care to be the only severe People & so all is slow tedious & dilatory. If vigor & seasonable exertion could once take place all these Difficulties would vanish.

The Commissaries proceeded to lay the Tax you observe & were mistaken till they were set right, but the real Fact is they undertook to dispense with the Law & tax on a system of their own, in this way Delays would be perpetual & inexcusable.

The Inclemency of the Winter we can readily admit as a Reason but it is now several months since the snow disappeared & is there not at this Moment a great arrearage; surely there is—the Want of which we feel most sensibly. The large sums owing by Q. Master's & Commissaries will doubtless be a Bar of no inconsiderable Nature to ready money Taxes but they will go to liquidate the Demands of Congress & so far be useful. I fear there will be great abuses & shall be glad of your Opinion what preventive may be used.

Far from doubting your Zeal & activity in the Business, I can only wish that all concerned in the Collection of Taxes had half of it & I am persuaded our affairs would be in a more promising Condition.

I am with much esteem,

Sir your obed. & very

Humble Serv.

JOSEPH REED.

July 19, 1780.

William Henry, Esq., Lancaster.

THE HON. JOSEPH REED TO COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY, REQUESTING HIM AND OTHERS TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE AT LANCASTER FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTITUTING REFORMS IN THE EXECUTION OF THE LAWS AND FOR THE DISCUSSION OF KINDRED SUBJECTS.

IN COUNCIL

PHILADA. September 22d 1780

Sir:—

The Assembly having in their present Session taken into mature deliberation the state of this Commonwealth, and being apprehensive that difficulties and obstructions in the execution of some of the most necessary and important Laws have occurred, and perhaps real grievances exist, which with due attention and care may be removed have nominated

the Hon. Mr. Bayard, the Speaker of the House, and Mr. Rittenhouse, the Treasurer of the State, to accompany the President of the State, into your County, with a view of meeting some of the principal Gentlemen, and receive such information as may be necessary on the above and other interesting Subjects.

In Consequence of which you are requested to give notice to the undermentioned publick officers, to meet them at Lancaster on the eleventh day of October next, *where your own attendance will be expected*, and you will bring with you a Return of the payments of the Several Townships of their Taxes so as to exhibit at one view the present State of the Taxes in your County. And if any Collectors have money in hand or can by a vigorous exertion make any payments to you in the meantime, you will have a good opportunity to pay the same to the Treasurer without the Trouble and expense of a Journey to this City.

I am Sir,

Your obedient and very humble

Servant

JOS REED,

President.

To William Henry Esquire

Treasurer of the County of Lancaster

Persons to be requested to attend—

1. One of the Commissioners of the Taxes at least;
2. The Lieutenant of the County;
3. The Excise Officer;
4. The first or second Justice of the Quarter Sessions, as may be most convenient;
5. The Commissioner of Purchases of the Specifick supplies
6. The Prothonotary of the County with a state of the Fines, Penalties, Licenses, Monies, and the publick dues accruing in his office since his appointment.

PRESIDENT REED TO COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY,
1780.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor by express & was obliged to detain him till I had laid the matter before the Assembly who can alone effect the cure for that terrible disease which pervades all our departments & makes public Business an invidious & insupportable Burthen. They have concluded to remove the Cavalry to Lebanon if it can be done & send the Invalid Horses over the Susquehanna. As to press Warrants, the Law appointing Mr. Wirtz gives him the Power required, which ought & must be the Rule of his Conduct & in which I hope he will be fully supported. I am told the State Money will be made a

legal tender but I very much doubt whether that will extend its Credit—coercive measures will I fear never create public Confidence. Your Letter has been read in the House but with what Effect I cannot say.

The Troops you say complain much of wanting Soap Candles and Vegetables, & we complain very much that the People of Lancaster and other Counties will not pay their taxes to enable us to procure them these articles. Are not both Complaints reasonable. Our Treasury is at the lowest possible ebb; even the first officers of the State are obliged to borrow Money for their Support & this in the rich & plentiful State of Pennsylvania, for such it is notwithstanding all its Complaints. I am glad you have sent a Collector to Prison for peculation—if I was an absolute Prince for one Minute I would employ it in giving orders for his Execution. Of what avail are Laws or of what Consequence is Government unsupported & left to struggle with every pitiful waste & disgrace which a private Gentleman would shudder at. Do my good friend open the eyes of those about you. It is Madness & Folly of the most pernicious kind to go on thus. Your Members dare not vote for the only Measure that will relieve us because they are afraid of doing their duty, & disobliging their Constituents. But I must not express what I feel or believe In due time they will know who understand & pursue their true Interests.

All I can say is that whatever hardships & Inconveniences the People of your County suffer from the Troops they must thank themselves. In time I hope they shall do better.

I am Sir, Your Obed. & very

Humble Serv.

JOSEPH REED.

W. Henry, Esq. Lancaster.

Colonel Henry's prominence is shown in the following letter from President Reed, introducing the Count de Deux Ponts.

Sir:—

This will be delivered you by the Count de Deux Ponts, a Colonel of a Regiment in the Service of the King of France, now at Rhode Island. I must request your Attention & Civility to him, not only on Acct. of his own Merit, which is very great, but as he may have some Influence on some of his poor deluded Countrymen who cannot be weaned from their absurd Attachment to Great Britain. For this Purpose I would wish if it is practicable he could have Opportunities to converse with the German Clergymen & such Persons of Influence of that Nation as might tend to remove Prejudice, convince them of the Utility & Honor of our Independence, show them the Certainty of its being established, & the Necessity of their supporting cheerfully the War for

the attainment of that glorious Object—reconcile them as British Officers have been doing with so much Industry for some time past.

Your Care herein will do the State a real Service & oblige

Sir your Obed. Hbble. Serv.

JOSEPH REED.

P. S. He proposes to go to Lebanon & Reading. I shall be glad if you would give him Letters to suitable Persons there.

Indorsed,

1780, December 21st, to Wm. Henry, Hon. Wm. Atlee, Hon. Samuel Atlee, Esq., Philip Marsteller, Col. Valentine Eckhart & Henry Haller.

COLONEL HENRY TO PRESIDENT REED, IN WHICH HE REQUESTS A DETAIL OF TROOPS TO GUARD THE MAGAZINES FROM AN ATTEMPT TO BLOW THEM UP BY THE BRITISH PRISONERS.

LANCASTER, March 7, 1781.

Sir:—

I was present at the Examination of one of the Light Dragoons who overheard some of the British prisoners, who had some Conversation concerning the Magazines at this place, and they agree that they might be blown up with Ease. I am of their opinion, and wish a guard could be kept here, as there are


a number of disaffected People in this Town; and a great Number of the prisoners will be sent to the Barracks, as they have a putrid Fever amongst them in the Jail; the Barracks are near the Magazine. Could not Colo. Hubley be ordered to keep a Company of Militia on Duty for that purpose? The Amunition is by no means safe, and I understand the Quantity is considerable.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient & hum. Servant,
WILLIAM HENRY.

His Excellency Joseph Reed, Esq.,
President of the Supreme Executive Council,
Philadelphia.

CHAPTER XV.

THE REED-HENRY CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED; THE REVOLT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA TROOPS.

HE year 1781 opened with the advantages of the war rather in favor of the British, with the gradual impoverishment of the country as a formidable ally.

In addition to this disquieting outlook, the disaffection of a part of what was known as the Pennsylvania Line, encamped with the army at Morristown, N. J., precipitated a dangerous situation. They declared they would serve no longer unless their grievances were redressed. Their pay was in arrears, the provisions furnished poor and insufficient, and their inadequate clothing gave no protection against the severe weather. In an attempt to suppress the disorder, one officer was killed and several officers and privates wounded, followed by the withdrawal of thir-

teen hundred Pennsylvanians, who marched to Princeton. This tragic affair occurred January 1, 1781.

The news of the outbreak was received with keen satisfaction at the British headquarters, where it was thought to foreshadow the dismemberment of the American forces. Every preparation was made to welcome the insurgents into the British ranks, to whom messengers had been sent by General Clinton offering immunity, the protection of the British army and the payment of the wages due them by Congress. But the temper of the men was misunderstood; their patriotism had not abated; the British overtures were spurned, and the messengers delivered to the American authorities.

As soon as possible, Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, hurried to the scene, and after appealing to the men and promising redress, those whose enlistments had not expired returned to camp.

President Reed refers to this "unhappy discontent" in his letter of January 27, 1781, to Colonel Henry and, in order to guard against a recurrence, to stimulate enlistments, which

had practically ceased in consequence, and to inspire a renewal of confidence, he appoints Colonel Henry a special paymaster with instructions to give careful attention to the interest of both the State and its soldiers.

Here again is brought to our attention Colonel Henry's availability as a trusted agent for negotiating important measures.

Indeed, whenever it became necessary to select a man in whom absolute confidence could be placed, or in any capacity demanding a nice discretion, which his calm and judicial temperament permitted him to exercise, Colonel Henry was chosen by the Supreme Executive Council or the Board of War. As an illustration of the confidence reposed in his versatile qualities as an executive, the board authorized him to negotiate and purchase a controlling interest in an undeveloped lead mine in the southwestern part of Pennsylvania, and in 1780 he was made chairman of a committee composed of Vice-President William Moore of the State, Colonel John Bull and himself to regulate the price of flour.

IN COUNCIL,
PHILADELPHIA, January 27, 1781.

Sir:

The late unhappy discontent of the Pennsylvania Line, which has terminated almost in a very considerable Reduction, have rendered it necessary for us to adopt some plan of recruiting, by which like difficulties may not occur in future. Many soldiers have been attested by their officers and others, with so little formality, as to open a door to innumerable Complaints, both on that score, and the payment of the Bounty. To obviate these in future, we have adopted the plan in the inclosed printed paper, and depending on your accuracy, and regard to the Publick Interests have nominated you to attest the new inlisted Recruits, as well as to pay them the Bounty, for which purpose we enclose you an order of the State Treasurer on the County Treasurer, for the sum of Five hundred pounds State Money, to be paid to officers and soldiers agreeable to our plan. The Commanding Officer of each Regiment is to give you a list of the officers appointed by him to Recruit, and you will be carefull to take receipts for the levy money, and double Receipts for the Bounty as well as double inlistments and attestations, from the soldiers. The Receipts to be filled up, agreeable to the fourth Article of Instructions.

The Council purpose to recommend to the Assembly, to make a generous allowance for your

service, and we request your care, that every Attestation be duly returned to the Board, that this important service may be conducted with fairness to the Soldiers, and a due regard to the Interests of the State.

I am Sir

Your obedient and very

humble Servant

JOS. REED

President.

To William Henry Esquire
Lancaster.

CHAPTER XVI.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH HON. JOSEPH REED, HON. WILLIAM MOORE, GENERAL ANTHONY WAYNE AND JUDGE WILLIAM ATLEE.

PRESIDENT REED TO COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY,
Sir:—

Your several Favors of the 3d & 7 & 12th Inst. have been received & would have answered sooner but for my Indisposition. We are sorry to find the Officers of the Army decline accepting the two Dollars, as we hoped in their distressed State for Want of Pay & Necessaries that this Sum would not have been beneath their Notice. If as a Symptom of finding themselves in a more comfortable State of Finance we should rejoice to hear it, but if it is too little for the Officers we think it too much for the Serjeant. Mr. W's Conduct has been the Subject of much Consideration & we are partly determined to remove him, but the Difficulty is to appoint the Successor—We really have a Reluctance to appoint Persons to Offices who have declined them in Days of Difficulty & are also disinclined to the Government; but if suitable Persons of another

Character cannot be had we must appoint the others—You may depend upon it some Thing will be done shortly on this Subject.

With respect to the Guard at the Magazines we supposed the Property to be of the United States, & have accordingly made strong Representations to the Board of War, accompanied with an Extract from your Letter & also from Col. Hubley on that Subject—As soon as any Determination is had we will let you know.

As Col. Atlee is now going home we hope he will put his Lieutenants Accounts in such Train as that you may receive the Money which may be due the Public from that Quarter. We are most exceedingly distressed for Want even of small Sums, the Treasury being deplorably low & not in any likely Way to be recruited very soon.

You may depend upon it that no Use will be made of your Name in any Proceedings which respect Mr. W.

We are very apprehensive that Congress will order the Convention Prisoners to the Number of 2500 or 3,000 to be stationed at Lancaster & York. We have wrote to our Delegates & done every Thing in our Power to prevent it, but we fear with little Effect. A Representation from the Inhabitants of Lancaster to their Members of Assembly would probably have a good Effect if the Measure appears

to them disadvantageous to the State in general or the Town in particular.

I am Sir,

your Obed. Hbble. Ser.

JOS. REED.

P. S. You will please to pay the Recruits their second Bounty as it becomes due, Council having given Directions for that Purpose which we hoped you had received.

March 13, 1781.

Lancaster's proximity to the seat of war made her very susceptible to its ravages. The county was the granary of the State—we might almost say of the country—and as the struggle dragged its slow length along, the heavy drain upon its resources manifested itself in discontented murmurs. Every house in the town, public and private, was crowded to the eaves with refugees, soldiers and prisoners of war, as many as three thousand British officers and men being confined there at one time, the privates in the barracks, and the officers under parole in public houses, and in private families. This large addition to the normal population was the cause of considerable distress, as indicated in Colonel Henry's interesting letter of the twenty-sixth

of April to the Hon. William Atlee, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, from which we get a glimpse of the conditions from which the citizens as well as the prisoners suffered. Judge Atlee was a native of Lancaster.

LANCASTER, 26th April, 1781.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor of the 23rd inst., with a paper, for which I am much obliged. Five hundred and two prisoners of war arrived here last week and one hundred and fifty-four this day. They are in the Barracks under a subaltern and a guard of twenty men. Several of them I intend to send to jail, for they have been in our service and deserted. We will not be able to furnish meat for them—not even two-thirds of the allowance—therefore, would it not be well to give more Bread and less meat? This matter is worthy of your attention before you leave Philadelphia. Our town is now in distress for want of meats of all kinds. Mrs. Atlee and the children are well. Your Servant was taken ill, the Doctor says with Jail fever, but he will be removed to the Hospital in the Barracks.

I am with due respect Sir,

Your Humble Servant,

WILLIAM HENRY.

Hon. Wm. Atlee.

Colonel Henry's letter to Samuel Hodgdon, Assistant Adjutant General at Philadelphia, brings to our attention the culminating dangers arising from an empty treasury. In this instance a company of dragoons whose term of service had expired but had not been paid, asked to be allowed to retain their horses as payment on account, a measure Colonel Henry strongly recommended, and when refused threatened, and actually did take forcible possession of their mounts and accoutrements.

Colonel Henry was apprehensive that the British prisoners, taking advantage of the incidental confusion, might attempt to rush the guard, overpower the small garrison and make a break for freedom.

LANCASTER, the 30th April, 1781.

Sir:

In consequence of orders from the War Office Major Green the commanding officer here ordered the Dragoons to deliver up their Horses with their accoutrements. They by their sergeant's requested that they might keep them for a few days till General Armond returned from Philadelphia, but as Major Green's orders were peremptory he would not agree to their proposal. The Dragoons refused

to obey orders and marched off from their parade, and on their being threatened with the infantry said they would go to York, and filed off that way. However, by the prudent management of the officers they agreed to deliver up the horses and accoutrements immediately. Major Green and several other officers requested that the sale should be postponed till Saturday, to which we have agreed. The horses and accoutrements are still in the hands of the men. I believe that if they were allowed to bid for their horses they would go off much higher than they will for cash. A meeting among the troops here may be attended with serious consequences and if possible should be avoided, at least till the prisoners could be removed. What has happened today must have given them (the prisoners) high pleasure. I hope this day's work will not have an evil effect on the infantry here. If it should the consequences are evident. If the officers and foot soldiers were permitted to purchase it would be more agreeable to the whole.

Your most obedient and humble servant,

WILLIAM HENRY

Samuel Hodgdon, Esq.

Here follows a characteristic letter from General Anthony Wayne who was then in Lancaster to Colonel Henry, urging the equipment of a company of dragoons.

LANCASTER, 16th May, 1781.

Dear Sir:—

Your known attachment to the American cause, and the readiness with which you have on all occasions exerted your self to promote the true interest of our Country, leaves no room to doubt but that everything in your power will be done for the immediate equipment of the dragoons belonging to this State. I have, therefore, called for fitting out Sixty Horse of Col. Moylan's regiment, whose services to the southward is of the last importance.

I have the honor to be your obedient, humble Ser.

ANTHONY WAYNE.

Brigadier General.

William Henry, Esq.

COLONEL HENRY'S REPLY TO GENERAL WAYNE'S
LETTER OF THE SAME DATE.

LANCASTER, May 16th, 1781.

Sir:

I am honoured with yours of this day. It would give me real pleasure to have it in my power to equip the sixty-eight Dragoons with the Articles mentioned in Major Fontleroy's Return, but my situation with respect to business done for the public is not the most agreeable. I have advanced a large sum of money belonging to Pennsylvania, for the United States and do not know when I can be repaid:—it is true I have some leather in hand be-

longing to the United States perhaps sufficient to furnish leather accoutrements for Sixty Dragoons and that is all. If his Excellency the President in Council could give orders for equipping the Dragoons before mentioned I think it might be done in two or three weeks and the accounts may be kept without throwing the State into any confusion in their settlement with Congress. The value of leather made use of may be passed to the Credit of the United States and the workmanship be charged.

I am Sir,

Your most obedient
and Humble servant,
WILLIAM HENRY,

To. B. General Wayne.

HON. JOSEPH REED TO COLONEL HENRY, RELATIVE TO GENERAL WAYNE'S REQUISITION FOR THE EQUIPMENT OF SIXTY DRAGOONS.

General Green's repulse at Camden, S. C., is also noted as well as General Marion's movements in the same state.

IN COUNCIL
PHILADELPHIA, May 21st, 1781.

Sir:—

General Wayne has transmitted to us and the Board of War a copy of your letter to him of six-

teenth inst., wherein you observe that if Council will give orders for equipping the Sixty dragoons you will provide them in two weeks. You must be sensible that this mode of turning over the money from State to Congress is not perfectly agreeable to us, and we wish to avoid it as much as possible, but in the present case we are so anxious to do everything in our power, that we consent to it upon the following terms, which your known punctuality in business assures us you will comply with, viz. That you furnish the Board of War immediately with a return of the money expended, and if there are any former monies under the same predicament to include them, and at the same time forward an order on the Board in favor of Mr. Rittenhouse which being negotiated with the Treasurer of the United States it may enable us to take credit in his books for the sum and you at the same have credit with Mr. Rittenhouse.

General Greene has received a small Check at Camden in consequence of a sally made by Lord Rawdon, but it is not of much consequence, as he immediately reinvested the place—his loss is one hundred and three killed, wounded and missing—the Enemy lost Sixty Prisoners, other losses not known. General Marion surprised a Post of one Hundred Men (Seventy three British troops), a few days before. General Greene seems assured of

final success at Camden, which we hope a few days will realize.

I am Sir

Your obedient and very
humble Servant,

JOS. REED.

President

William Henry Esq
at Lancaster.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM COLONEL WILLIAM HENRY TO THE
HONORABLE JOSEPH REED, PRESIDENT
OF PENNSYLVANIA, SUGGESTING A PLAN
TO AVERT FINANCIAL DISASTER.



HIS remarkable letter is in reply to a request for a plan to relieve the monetary stringency. The situation was becoming desperate. The war chest was empty, with no visible means for its replenishment. The troops had not been paid, and while some were murmuring others were in open revolt at the long-delayed arrival of the paymaster. It was in this extremity that President Reed appealed to Colonel Henry, whose recommendations on a former occasion, when the conditions were less acute, had received the thoughtful consideration of the Council. Thus far no one had shown any capacity to cope with the financial problems precipitated by the war. It is true Robert Morris had raised money on his personal credit but had formulated no plan to provide for a permanent revenue, or for plac-

ing an European loan. Henry's letter, which antedates by a year Morris's subsequent recommendations, suggests both, and exhibits a knowledge of the fundamental law governing the issue of paper money, and of finance, quite unusual at that day, "the very absence of which," according to a British estimate, "that had brought the Confederation face to face with bankruptcy." It will thus be seen that Henry was far in advance of his day in his grasp of the financial situation confronting not only his own country but Europe.

This letter President Reed submitted to the Supreme Executive Council, and its suggestions subsequently adopted by Robert Morris; in which connection it is interesting to note that what Lord Liverpool advocated in his letter to the King in 1818 is more than foreshadowed by Henry thirty-seven years before.

Premising that the basis of all paper currency must necessarily be specie, Henry proposes a clear and feasible plan for its accumulation by the enactment of laws requiring the payment of certain licenses, and duties on imports in coin, and further recommends as a

basis of security for placing a loan with foreign bankers, the revenue from an excise tax. This latter he strongly urges as a moral as well as an economic measure, and taking it as a whole the letter is original and masterly and worthy a minister of finance of our own day.

LANCASTER, the 26th day of May, 1781.

Dear Sir:—

It is paying me a greater compliment than my poor abilities have any claim to, to ask my opinion on the present intricate state of our affairs. I will, however, give it without further apology.

The principal reasons why our paper money is in so little repute with the people seems to be the following:—Government has no specie to circulate with the paper, nor can it at any time exchange a considerable part of it for specie. The natural basis of all paper credit is specie, and the value we put in paper is in proportion to the quantity of specie it will purchase. Therefore some method should be taken to procure at least a part of the revenue in specie. This is not impracticable. Why cannot tavern licenses, marriage licenses, and licenses for distilling grain be paid in specie? The petitioner has one whole year to provide the money, and his private interests will stimulate him to it. It is true, as the laws now stand, no man is obliged to take a

license for the distilling of grain, but would it not be good policy to enact such a law, and thereby oblige the owners of stills above a certain size to have them registered in the county where they live? This would enable the Government to form an estimate of the amount of this part of the revenue, which I am persuaded it cannot do at present. Under the late Government the excise on spirituous liquors was said to be worth £6,000 per annum. If the licenses aforesaid were raised 50 per ct. this would bring in a handsome revenue without distressing the subject, and would be attended with good consequence to the people at large in preventing numbers of dram-shops being kept, which at present are a nuisance; and it would be ample security to any gentleman, at home or abroad, for a payment of a sum of money to answer the present emergencies of the Government. Might not all fines and forfeitures in courts of justice be paid in specie? And duties on foreign imports might be paid in specie, or merchandise suitable for the support of the army. The Government has put paper into the hands of the people, and ought to receive it again in taxes, though not at a depreciated value. To prevent this the taxes ought to be laid in specie, payable in wheat, at a certain value in proportion to the distance from the market, or the value in paper to be ascertained by council, weekly; and to prevent fraud in collectors, they ought to give printed receipts to the people,

and deliver in to the commissioner of the tax the amount of all moneys by them received, and the time when, which would enable the commissioner often to district the collectors. The same method would be of use in collecting militia fines, and prevent numerous abuses which have happened. Collectors of taxes and militia money ought to be punishable with fine or imprisonment, or both, for extorting more from the people than the law requires, which there is every reason to believe is practiced, especially among the Germans.

When I wrote in favor of the tender law, as it is called, I meant such a one as would in some degree have been adequate to the purpose, which the present one is not. It is too tedious in its operation to be of any use. At present the best calculated would not answer any good purpose, therefore it ought to be repealed. If the tender act is repealed Government may then receive the money outstanding for unpatented lands at specie value, which it ought, and it will not be necessary to hold these moneys, as a fund for the £500,000 for that will depreciate to very little before it can be collected in taxes. But I have, perhaps, said more than enough.

I have the honor to be your friend and humble servant,

WILLIAM HENRY.

To his Excellency Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania.

Quoting again from the Journal of October 26, 1781, it is recorded that great excitement prevailed when the joyful news reached Lancaster of the capture of the British Army at Yorktown, "Church bells rang all day, salvos of artillery were fired and a constant discharge of small arms continued until late at night. All houses were illuminated."

COLONEL HENRY TO PRESIDENT MOORE, OF THE
SUPREME EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF PENN-
SYLVANIA.

LANCASTER, January 7, 1782.

Sir:—

Colonel Antil has return'd Seventy-Seven Men of his Regiment, (exclusive of Six killed before York, in Virginia,) belonging to the Pennsylvania Line, who have not received the Gratuity allowed by a Resolution of Assembly of the 8th March, 1781. Gen. Hazen has certified to me that the said Return is true, etc. The people insisted on having the Nine pounds State Money paid in Specie, as the State Money was a legal Tender when the Gratuity was given, and at present was not. I refused payment at that Rate, and left the Matter to be determined by Council, alledging that the Money was better now than at the Time the Line

received the Gratuity, etc. They were extremely clamorous and pressing for the Money, aludging that the New England Men of their Reg. had received a Gratuity of 24 Specie Dollars each; several of them agreed at last to receive the Exchange (that is one for Three here) in Lieu of the Nine Pounds State Money, which I agreed to and have paid them at that Rate; but still the Matter is to be determined by Council, whether they are to have the State Money paid in Specie or not. I have given them very little Encouragement, telling them that if theirs was to be made good, the remainder of the Line would expect the same would be done for them, etc.

You will be pleased to determine this affair as soon and explicit as possible. I have paid the Widow of one of the Men killed before York, in Virginia, as her Husband was entitled to it in his life Time, Col. Antil having certified that she was the Wife of the deceased. There are a Number of State Certificates for the Depreciation of the Soldiers Pay in the Hands of the Men here, would it not be the Interest of the Government to order them to be purchased? They are sold for Two Shillings and Six pence in the pound, to Storekeepers, etc. I have paid off Mr. Rittenhouses' Orders, and should be glad he would draw any Money he may want in these Parts, as there are but few good Opportunities of Sending Dollars (which is the Principal part of

the Money which comes in for the Taxes) to Philadelphia. The Gold I can send conveniently.

I am, Sir, Your very obedient,
& humble Servant,
WILLIAM HENRY.

His Excellency, William Moore, Esquire, President of Council, Philadelphia.

FROM COL. WILLIAM HENRY TO PRESIDENT
MOORE OF PENNSYLVANIA IN WHICH HE
DESIRES A SETTLEMENT OF HIS ACCOUNTS.

LANCASTER May 29th 1782

Sir.

I have advanced £2,448. towards Recruiting the Pennsylvania Line, forty-eight pounds more than I have orders for. The Recruiting Service goes on but slowly. I should for my part be glad to have my Accounts settled, and perhaps it would be prudent for Col. Thompson to have his settled with the officers, as there is little more to be done at present. I returned yesterday from Carlisle, where I was summoned to give evidence in behalf of the State in General Roberdeau's action for Damages sustained in carrying on the Lead Works in Juniata. The Jury found for the State generally.

I am, Sir,
Your Obedt. hum. Servt.
WILLIAM HENRY

His Excellency
William Moore Esq.

Sanctioned by Washington as an act of courtesy, the British in 1782 established a warehouse in Lancaster for the purpose of supplying the prisoners with articles, principally delicacies, not otherwise obtainable. This was British merchandise, and in the course of time it was discovered that the store-keeper, through one John Musser, was surreptitiously selling it to the people of the county for the benefit and profit of the prisoners, at less than they could buy from the local shop-keepers, exacting coin in payment, thus inflicting two serious injuries: depleting the country of its specie, and by under-selling the dealers destroying their livelihood.

Colonel Henry, who was not slow in grasping the situation, submitted the facts to the Hon. William Moore, President of the Supreme Executive Council, in the following letter:

LANCASTER, June 25th, 1782.

Dear Sir:—

You remember Lord North said in Parliment that the mode of carrying on the war in America must be altered, but I am afraid we are not acquainted with the method they intend to persue. They harrass our trade at sea and thereby prevent our getting specie.

They are taking every possible method of drawing it out of the country.

A large quantity of British goods said to be for the use of the prisoners of war have been brought to this place, Philadelphia, and York, by permission.

These are procured at the store by the prisoners and then hawked about the town and country and sold to the inhabitants. This money of course centres in their store. There is still if possible a greater evil. There are some gentlemen in Philadelphia who have agreed to furnish the British paymaster with money to pay the prisoners which I am informed takes £3000: per month. The last payment has been made in bank notes, which of course must be changed to specie. This money also centres in the hands of the British storekeeper, for he has everything in greater perfection and cheaper than the local merchants have and is sure of the custom of the prisoners.

But how are these evils to be remedied? Very easily. We have nothing to do but prevent them from keeping a store in our country, and then if we do go on furnishing them with specie for their paper they will be obliged to pay it out again among us.

I am informed the gentlemen who furnish the pay-master with money have 2d on the dollar and this on £36,000 per annum is a handsome profit, though poor America does loose the principal.

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I do wish something could be done in this matter.
If there is not, the consequence is obvious,

I remain dear Sir

Your Humble Servant

WILLIAM HENRY.

To His excellency,

WILLIAM MOORE,

President of Pennsylvania.

Acting upon the information contained in Colonel Henry's communication to President Moore, William Bradford, Jr., Attorney General of the State, authorized the arrest of Musser and the seizure of the merchandise.

PHILADA July 8 1782

Dear Sir:

Inclosed you will receive an attachment against certain Goods in the possession of John Musser in Lancaster, supposed to be British. Information has been lodged with Council that this man carries on a clandestine & dishonorable trade with the British Store & that at this time there is a large quantity of Goods packed up in flour Casks in his house or possession. I have to request that you will immediately upon the receipt of the enclosed send for the Sheriff or one of the most active of his officers, and give him directions for executing the Attachment with all possible Expedition & Secresy. I am clearly of opinion that he has a right to break open outer

or inner doors, if necessary for the Execution of the writ; and that if any opposition be made he ought to raise the posse comitatus & force obedience from those who attempt to oppose him.

Every endeavor ought to be used to stop this ruinous trade, and Council have desired me to ask your assistance in this business as a person on whom they can fully rely.

I am Sir

Your most obedient
& very humble Serv.

WM BRADFORD JUN.

William Henry Esq.

P. S. If the Sheriff should be fortunate enough to seize the goods before they are removed, he must store them in some safe and secure place (as he will be answerable for them), make an inventory, & return the inventory & his answer to the writ on the 24th Day of next September.

From Colonel Henry's letter of July 29, 1782, to the Honorable George Bryan, we are informed that the instructions of Attorney-General Bradford representing the Supreme Council of Safety had been complied with.

LANCASTER, July 29, 1782.

Dear Sir:—

I happened to be abroad when your favor of the 15th inst. came to hand. By orders from Council

I have taken into my possession all Goods, Wares and Merchandize belonging to Mr. Taylor, the British Storekeeper here; except made up Uniforms; also his books and papers. This has given much disquiet to the Speculators here.

Evidence and much circumstantial to corroborate it can be produced. I do not Care to take Depositions, unless they were Official. This affair has made much Noise and I believe will make much more. Would it not be well for Council to order the Deposition of the Evidence to be taken and sent down, or is it best to wait and let the affair take its Course? I am of the opinion Mr. Taylor will appear and plead Gen'l Washington's permission at the Supreme Court, if permitted, which is given in such general Terms, that it will cover the supplying of the Prisoners with any kind or rather with every Kind of Goods. Mr. Taylor confessed the Goods came from New York. The Entry made in one of his Books, is the only Proof which can be made of his having sold Goods directly to the people of this place and this will not amount to positive proof, for the Entries are not dated at Lancaster; it is true the day of the Month is mentioned, but the year I believe is not. Will it not be necessary first to investigate the affair prior to the Tryal of Taylor, before the Supreme Court—as this is the only Charge in his Book against any of the Inhabitants for Goods.

We have disagreeable Accounts from the West-

ward; Hannah's Town is burnt & several of the Inhabitants killed, and Four or Five taken prisoners or rather missing.

I am

Dear Sir

Your most obed' hum. Serv'

WILLIAM HENRY.

To the Honorable George Bryan Esquire.

In making the seizure a quantity of wine was confiscated, the personal property, it was claimed, of the British officers, prisoners of war on parole, who appealed to Colonel Henry, as well as to the President of the State for its release, which was afterwards granted.

LANCASTER, 2d July, 1782.

Sir:—

As I understand that you, by an Order from the Supreme Council of Pennsylvania, have seized upon all the Goods, etc., that remained in Mr. Taylor's store, I beg leave to inform you that the Wine is not his property but actually purchased for the Officers & sick Soldiers. The reason why it was left in Mr. Taylor's Cellar is owing to the Officers not having a proper convenience at their Quarters, and they took it out as it was wanted for use. I therefore hope you will order it to be given up.

Whatever has been the Cause for taking this step,

it certainly never can be attributed to the Officers, and I must think it hard indeed, if they are to lose any of their private property, particularly under the sanction of General Washington's Passport, mentioning Table stores in which wine is most certainly included.

I am, Sir,
Your most obed' humble servant,
ALEX' ARBUTHNOT,
Cap. 80th Reg.

Will'm Henry, Esqr., Lancaster.

Indorsed,

Read in Council, July 5th, 1782.

General Moses Hazen writes to William Henry, in which he expresses the fear that if some provision is not made to pay the troops a civil war may be the consequence. He presents his compliments to Mrs. Henry, to whom he was indebted for courtesies when stationed in Lancaster.

POMPTON
23d Feby. 1783.

Dear Sir:—

Before this will reach you I judge you will be in possession of the money I left you a power to receive, in which case I beg to remit the Ballance, over what may be due to you, to Col. Clement Biddle at Philadelphia, or his order.

I do most sincerely congratulate you and my friends at Lancaster on the present flattering prospects of peace. The conduct of the State of Rhode Island by their disregarding the call of Congress in not passing the impost act is reprobated here by all orders & degrees of men, and that of Virginia Repealing the same act once passed is no less unaccountable. What may be the consequence of an Honbl Peace without funds established for the payment of debts due to the Army & other public creditors, is hard to say—there are some politicians who openly suggest that the Army will not quietly lay down their arms until they see a disposition in the people to do Justice to them and other public creditors.

A little time must now determine whether we have another campaign or not.

Compliments to Mrs. Henry, and beg you will believe me to be Dear Sir

Yours most sincerely

MOSES HAZEN

William Henry Esq.

That General Hazen's fears were well founded is shown in the following disturbing letter from Colonel Henry to President Dickinson, in which he announces the departure of a mutinous body of armed troops for Philadelphia, bent upon getting their long overdue

pay, either by fair means or foul. Fortunately before they reached the city they were intercepted by a committee of citizens who persuaded them to disband, after assurances of redress.

LANCASTER, June 17th, 1783.

Sir:—

Eighty armed soldiers set off this morning for Philadelphia to Co-operate with those now in the City in such measures as may appear to them the most likely to procure their pay (or perhaps to possess themselves of money at any rate) I have thought it my duty to give the most timely information possible that the City may not be surprised. I am informed that part of Gen'l Armond's Corps will be here to-morrow on their way to Philadelphia, and am of opinion from what has transpired from some of the men who are still here, that they will follow the others to the City and share the same fate. They have thrown out several threats that they will rob the Bank, the Treasury, etc.

I have the honor to be

Your obedient Humble Servant,

WILLIAM HENRY.

His Excellency

John Dickinson

President of Penna.

Unperturbed by impending financial disaster, it is refreshing to observe State Treasurer Rittenhouse's interest in a comparison of the temperatures of Philadelphia and Lancaster.

FROM DAVID RITTENHOUSE TO COLONEL HENRY.

Dear Sir:—

I enclose a receipt for £810 on account of cash advanced by you to the recruiting officers. All the other receipts I had before delivered to the Post. I have not yet received the £100 to be repaid by Mr. Slough. Perhaps you meant to have it deducted from your last payment as I gave you credit for it some time ago.

I wish our thermometers could be compared together. If they agree it would appear that the air is warmer at Lancaster than here. At 3 o'clock on Saturday last the mercury stood at almost 94, at the same hour Sunday at 93, and On Monday at 91 in my observatory with all the windows open. The same difference has been observed before.

I am Dear Sir,

Your most obedient Servent,

DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

Wm. Henry, Esq.

Rittenhouse and Henry had much in common to make their intercourse agreeable; in

temperament, as well as in their scientific pursuits, they were congenial spirits, and that the former regarded Henry with no common sentiment we have but to read the concluding lines from his letter to Henry of June 10, 1784. The body of the letter which is omitted refers to routine matters connected with the State Treasury.

Shall we never see you in Philadelphia again? I have many things to say to you, but hate writing too much to converse with you by letter.

I am Dear Sir,

Yours affectionately,

DAVID RITTENHOUSE.

When the war was in progress Colonel Henry's visits to Philadelphia were frequent, where they never failed to meet, but as a delegate to the Congress of 1784-85 his engagements took him to Trenton, and finally to New York, where he was stricken in December of 1785. Hearing of his illness Rittenhouse wrote to Jno. Joseph Henry, expressing the hope that his father would recover. Referring to his father's intimacy with Rittenhouse, Judge Henry, in a contribution to

Rees' Encyclopedia states: "During a course of many years my father was in the habit of communicating all his discoveries in the various branches of mechanical science to Dr. Rittenhouse."

From the night they took their seats together as members of the American Philosophical Society in 1767 until Henry's death they enjoyed an uninterrupted friendship.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IS ELECTED TO THE CONGRESS OF 1784, '85
AND '86 AND DIES IN OFFICE—SUM-
MARY OF HIS CAREER.



COLONEL HENRY received many honors and deserved them; the last to be conferred was his election by the Assembly of Pennsylvania to the Congresses of 1784, '85 and '86, which convened in Trenton and New York.

It gave him pleasure to find among his coadjutors his old friend and compatriot Hon. Joseph Reed. An extract from the minutes of the General Assembly showing the result of the election of delegates, is given below.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, November 16th, 1784, A.M.

Agreeable to the order of the day the House proceeded to the election of Delegates to represent this State in the Congress of the United States for the ensuing year, and the ballots being taken it appeared that the Honorable Joseph Reed, Cadwallader

Morris, William Montgomery, Joseph Gardner and William Henry of Lancaster, Esquires were duly elected.

Extract from the Minutes,
J. WALLUS,
Assistant Clerk of the General Assembly.

We have found that he served on at least two committees, Coinage and Indian Affairs, for both of which he was singularly well equipped; and that he took an active and intelligent interest in the transactions of Congress we have the testimony of his letters. From among them we select one to the Hon. George Bryan, and two written in conjunction with Mr. Gardner, who was also a delegate from Pennsylvania, to the Hon. John Dickinson, President of the State; one of which is a reply to a memorial of the merchants and traders of Philadelphia petitioning Congress to prevent further depredations by the corsairs of the Barbary Coast. Immunity had to be purchased, an imposition that the young republic was the first power to successfully resist and punish.

HON. WILLIAM HENRY AND JOSEPH GARDNER TO
PRESIDENT DICKINSON, 1785.

NEW YORK, February 7th, 1785.

Sir:—

The Wyoming dispute rests at present, and we hope will do so for some time—we have seen Mr. Wilson and rec' by him some additional papers to those brought on by Mr. Hervy, relating to that unhappy dispute.

The Report of a Committee upon your Exc's letter, with your enclosures, relative to the appointment of additional Comm'rs for settling & adjusting the accts. of the Citizens of Penn. against the United States, remains undetermined until a report is brought in to prevent frauds supposed to be practiced by some persons having unsettled accts., and stated to Congress by Mr. Denning, Commr. in this state, which we hope will be made to morrow.

The first report, as brought in, and which we have reason to believe will pass, comes up fully to the Idea of the Legislature as expressed in the act, and we hope they will see the propriety of a further suspension of the operation of that Law rather than suffer the state to be reproached with an unfoederal measure, especially as the objects of it can suffer

very little by a delay of a week or 10 days, and perhaps not half that time.

We are, with due respect,

Your exc'ys very humble serv'ts.,

WILLIAM HENRY,
JOSEPH GARDNER.

His exc'y the President of Penna.

COUNCIL TO DELEGATES IN CONGRESS, 1785.

IN COUNCIL,

February 17th, 1785.

Gentlemen:—

We enclose a Copy of a Memorial lately presented to us by the Merchants & Traders of this City concerning Captures by Barbary Corsairs.

The matter is of so much Moment, that we desire you will immediately bring it before Congress, & endeavor to have the most proper Measures adopted for preventing the mischiefs that are apprehended.

Your obe'd & very humble Servant,

JOHN DICKINSON,
Presid't of Pennsylvania.

To The Honorable Delegates of Pennsylvania in Congress.

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MEMORIAL OF MERCH'TS OF PHILADELPHIA, 1785.

*To his Excellency the Presid't and the H'ble the
Supreme Executive Council of the Common-
wealth of Pennsylvania.*

The Memorial of the Merch'ts & Traders of the
City of Philadelphia by their Committe:

Respectfully Sheweth,

That the Capture of an American Vessel by the
Corsairs of Barbary gives this Committee Real &
Just apprehensions of future depredation, on our
trade from the same quarter.

Upon an occasion so extremely Important, it is
the duty of this Committee to entreat that Council
will Represent to Congress the Necessity of en-
deavoring Speedily to conciliate the states of Barbary
to us by presents, as it is practiced by most of the
Commercial Nations in Europe, or by treatys to be
entered into with them as shall be deemed expedient
by the Wisdom of that Body.

We trust the Necessity of the Case will Induce
Council to takè the earliest opportunity of Laying
this business before the United States in Congress,
in such manner as shall appear to them most likely to
produce the Remedy prayed for.

Philadelphia, 17, February, 1785.

J. M. NESBITT,
THO'S FITZSIMONS,
J. ROSS,

MORDECAI LEWIS,
JOHN NIXON,
TENCH COXE,
GEO. CLYMER,
SAM'L HOWELL,
JOHN WILCOCKS,
ISAAC HAZLEHURST,
CLEMENT BIDDLE.

To His Excell'y the Presid't & the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania.

DELEGATES IN CONGRESS GARDNER AND HENRY
TO PRESIDENT DICKINSON, OF PENN-
SYLVANIA.

NEW YORK, March 9th, 1785.

Sir:—

We have been honored with your Excellency's favor of February 17th date, enclosing the Memorial of the Merchant's and Traders of the City of Philada., expressing their apprehensions of further depredations on their trade by the Barbary Corsairs, if speedy and effectual measures are not taken to prevent them, which has been laid before Congress—and we are happy to inform you, Sir, & thro' you the Merchants of Philadelphia, that Congress have not been inattentive to this very important concern, to which we believe they are well disposed to give every relief in their power. Our ministers abroad have long since been authorized to negotiate with the

States of Barbary (in common with others) treaties of amity & commerce, which we have reason to know have only been rendered ineffectual heretofore (with the Barbary States) for want of a sum of money, which custom has made absolutely necessary to purchase them.

Congress have lately appropriated for this purpose a sum of money not exceeding eighty thousand dollars, subject to the draughts of our ministers. A Gentleman well recommended for his integrity and personal knowledge of the country, will be charged with fresh dispatches to Europe in a short time, respecting this business, who may probably be employed to carry into effect the wishes of Congress at the Court of the Emperor of Morrocco.

Altho' we ardently wish as much as possible to satisfy the anxiety of the merchants upon this subject, yet we request that no extracts may be taken or published, as the matter is yet sub judice, and any premature publication may have a tendency to delay, if not prevent, the proposed negotiations, and draw the unwary merchants into a snare, by mistaking the intention for the fact. There is little reason to doubt but that Great Britain will use all her influence to prevent any such treaties being made. As soon as Congress have taken their final determinations upon this subject, we will have the honor of communicating them as far as our injunctions of secrecy will admit.

Mr. Marbois, in the name of the King, his master, has made a demand of Longchamps; this has been under consideration for several days as the order of the day, and has been postponed; when this great national question may be discussed is uncertain, but there appears no disposition to hurry.

No moves have been made by the Connecticut Gentlemen upon the Wyoming business, and we remain in the dark what the wish of the State is in the affair. If any determinations of the house take place, we will be much obliged by your Excell'ys communication upon that subject. Gen'l Knox is appointed Secretary at War. The treasury is not yet formed—no official acctts from Jarvais or Osgood whether they will serve or no. We are,

With great respect, Sir,

Your Excell'ys

most obt. & Very

h'ble Serv'ts,

JOSEPH GARDNER,

WILLIAM HENRY.

FROM COLONEL HENRY TO HON. GEO. BRYAN.

NEW YORK, the 25th March 1785.

Dear Sir:—

The principal business now before Congress is the Disposing of the lands lately purchased and the making of a second purchase. Much time has been spent by a Committee of one from each of twelve

states on the first and it is probable the lands will be sold by Districts of ten or twelve miles square to the highest bidder, above such price as Congress may fix for the acre. A number of districts will probably put up to the sale in the different states perhaps nearly in proportion to their demand. The Commissioners are authorised to make the second purchase to the Mississippi and as the Indians have offered those lands for sale there will probably be little Difficulty in purchasing them. Commissioners are appointed to hold a treaty with the Creeks, Cherokees &c.

The place for holding the federal Court for Massachusetts and New York is not yet Determined.

Longchamps' affair was to have been brought forward this day but is again gone off by an adjournment to next Monday. Your French Pamphlet came very apropos, as it has run through a number of able hands since, and is now in Mr. Jay's.

What is our assembly about? Have they passed the law for regulating Elections? If this is not done I (think) they will not hold their seats another year.

I am sir, your Hum'l Serv't

WILLIAM HENRY.

The Honorable George Bryan.³⁹

While attending the Congress in New York

³⁹ George Bryan was born in Dublin, Ireland, 1731, died in Philadelphia, January 27, 1791. 1765, delegate to the Stamp Act Congress. 1777, Vice-President Supreme Exec-

in 1785, Colonel Henry became ill of a lung disorder, compelling his return to Lancaster, where he died December 15, 1786, at the age of fifty-seven, having barely passed the meridian of life. Three days afterwards his remains were followed to the tomb in the Moravian Cemetery by a concourse of citizens from the town and countryside, together with the clergy of the Moravian, Episcopal, Lutheran and Reformed churches. He was survived by his wife, a daughter and six sons.

The recollection of his own deficient education, the result of adverse circumstances, not from incapacity, strengthened his determination that his children should enjoy what he had been deprived of. What he lost in his youth, however, his alert mind as it matured, made up in an almost insatiable appetite for books, which he gratified to the extent of his purse, utilizing as well the library he helped to found. His literary studies ran to the sciences which he absorbed, reading everything

utive Council of Pennsylvania, and on the death of President Wharton, President of the State. 1780, Assistant Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. He was opposed to the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

within his grasp, with little or no mental effort. He was a close student of the intricacies of political economy and of history, and he confesses in his autobiography, that in his early manhood, unconsciously following a tendency of the day to treat flippantly all religious thought, he read and was disposed to accept the teachings of the deistical writers of the French school and their American plagiarists, all of whom, however, he lived to denounce.

Hence we cannot wonder that he contemplated the education of his children with extreme solicitude; his sons upon attaining the proper age entered Franklin College and his daughter the Moravian Institution at Bethlehem, Pa.

He thus writes to Bishop Seidel of that institution in relation to one of his children who was ill there of scarlet fever, and also mentions having received a letter from his son John Joseph Henry from Quebec written a short time before the assault on that city.

LANCASTER Dec. 23, 1775.

Dear Bishop Seidel:

I know that you will excuse me in giving you the trouble to thank the Sisters who have the care

of my children, and particularly to Sister Esther, for the attention she has given to My dear Betsy. Her letters were much appreciated. My little son Nathaniel has been suffering from the same disorder, and is not expected to recover. I shall be glad to hear at every opportunity what progress to recovery My dear Betsy is making.

I enclose thirty shillings, which please ask Sister Gerhart to lay out as she thinks best for Betsy.

I have received a letter from my son John (Joseph) at Quebec, he was then well. With great respect, I have the honor to be

WILLIAM HENRY.

Colonel Henry was of commanding presence, tall, vigorous and muscular with prominent features. Although the expression of his face was stern, it belied the innate gentleness of his nature as all the recorded acts of his life, as they have passed in review before us, exhibit a self-sacrificing and tender solicitude for the welfare of others.

That he was unable to resist the first onset of disease was largely due to his impoverished vitality. The harassing anxieties, inseparable from a conscientious performance of his military and civil duties, coupled with the constant and fatiguing journeys to Philadelphia

and New York and the towns adjacent to Lancaster, all taken in the public service, were contributory factors in hastening his early and inopportune death, entailing upon the republic in its formative period the loss of a wise counsellor, one of its very few able financiers, and the world of science a genius whose partially developed powers left much to be expected of him.

To say that his services, which were often of incalculable value to the Confederation and to Pennsylvania, were tendered without considering the compensation as of paramount importance, is but to do him justice. As disbursing officer of the government and treasurer of the county, vast sums for that day passed through his hands and left no stain nor the vaguest suspicion of venality. As a matter of fact, although he died leaving what was then a handsome fortune (which an audit in the Lancaster County Orphans' Court shows to have been £22,455.7.5), his estate was in a measure embarrassed by reason of the tardiness of the government in making settlement for large personal advances made during the Revolution, for which his heirs were not reimbursed until 1811. It is not too much to say

that he pledged his fortune on the issue of the contest, and gave his life to the State.

In summing up the story of his life it will be gratifying to those who have been interested in the recital of his achievements, and noted his unfaltering zeal in promoting the struggle for liberty, to learn that he was permitted to witness its successful outcome.

It is true, he was one of many who contributed to that end, but none exceeded him in unselfish devotion, or were actuated by loftier motives of patriotism and love of country. In the words of a contemporary writer, "He was one of the notable figures of his time."

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