

The Society of the Cincinnati in Lancaster

By C. H. MARTIN

Incorporated in the membership certificate of a society organized by officers of the American Army, at the time of its disbanding in 1783, are these words: "The duty of laying down in peace arms assumed for public defence, and of uniting in acts of brotherly love, affection and bands of perpetual friendship, the members constituting the same."

Herein is found a tie binding a friendship between George Washington, Commander in Chief of the American Army, and many of its officers at Lancaster, which may fittingly be remembered in the month of February.

With the disbanding of the army, on the banks of the Hudson in 1783, an organization was effected to perpetuate the friendships formed under arms during the long and trying struggle to gain independence, and to raise a fund for widows and orphans of their comrades who had lost their lives in the war. It was named after the Roman hero, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus, who was made Consul of Rome, 460 B. C. Messengers arriving to inform Cincinnatus of his election found him ploughing. Later he became a favorite Roman hero. Many who became officers in the American army, 1777-1783, had likewise left their ploughs at the call to arms, which explains the fitting title for this organization.

Section 1, Article 8, of the By-laws of the Pennsylvania Society, states: "The right of membership in the Society vests unalterably in the eldest male of the eldest male line of descendants of original members. The eldest son shall succeed to the right of membership, and after him his descendants, giving preference always to representation through the males in the same degree, and afterwards to the male descendants of females. When the right of membership shall vest in a female it shall be deemed to be in abeyance until there shall be a male of full age to inherit. Priority of claim through female lines shall be according to priority in the male line. The right to membership in the Society may not be waived in favor of another."

This hereditary limitation of membership caused bitter criticism of the Society by Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, Samuel Adams, and others, who saw therein germs of a future aristocracy. These criticisms caused some branches of the general or National Society to disband. A letter by Stephen M. Mitchell, member of Congress, to Col. Wadsworth, dated New York, May 3, 1786, now on file with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, states: "I find the Society of Cincinnati is very generally unpopular and thought to be a dangerous body—hope nothing will be done to render the deserving sons of war unacceptable in the eyes of their brethren." In another letter, on file with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson, writing from Annapolis to George Washington, under date of April 16, 1784, refers to objections raised to the Society.

An original member was required to pay a membership fee equivalent to three months' pay of his rank as officer. This requirement may have been a handicap under economical conditions at the close of the war.

The certificate of original membership is a beautifully illuminated parchment, about 13 x 21 inches. At the top center is a cut of an eagle resting in the center of an oval of sun rays, bordered with curling clouds. At the lower left is a cut of an armored soldier (Roman?), with drawn sword in one hand and staff of the flag in the other. To his left is an eagle, rays of light approaching lightning-flash vividness, the lion, and a few implements of war. These are held in abeyance by the extended right arm of a heroine to whose left, in the lower center of the certificate, are vessels indicative of trade and commerce. At the lower right hand corner is found an Angel of Peace, just emerging from or above a cloud, blowing a trumpet held in her left hand. Her right hand holds a chain to which is attached a seal, portraying the reverse side of the Medal of Gold issued to original members, showing the sun rising, a city with open gates, and vessels entering the port. Fame is shown crowning Cincinnatus with a wreath inscribed *Virtutis Praemium* (Reward of virtue).

In the lower part of the seal are hands clasped or joined, supporting a heart with the motto *Esto Perpetua* (May it be perpetual). Around the margin appears the inscription, *Societas Cincinnatorum Instituta, A.D. 1783* (Society of the Cincinnati, organized 1783). At the lower left hand of the certificate appears a seal representing the obverse of the Society's membership medal, showing Cincinnatus as the principal figure, three Senators presenting him with a sword, and other military insignia, his wife standing at the cottage door, near it a plough and instruments of husbandry. Around the margin appears the inscription, *Omnia Relinquit Servare Rempublicam* (He relinquished everything to save the Republic).

Major L'Enfant, who later planned the City of Washington, was selected to prepare the insignia of the Society. It was he who designed the medal, obverse and reverse, which is used as the seal of membership certificates, just described. L'Enfant suggested the bald eagle, peculiar to this continent,

for adoption as the Society's emblem, and made two designs, for which task he was commissioned by George Washington, President of the Society from its incorporation until his death in 1799. L'Enfant's commission was dated October 19, 1783. He proceeded to Paris to supervise the fabrication of the eagles. Franklin was in Paris at the time. Under date of January 26, 1784, he wrote to his daughter, Mrs. Sarah Bache, commenting on the design, saying, "Some find fault with the Latin inscription as wanting classical elegance and correctness, others object to the bald eagle as looking too much like a turkey. For my part", said Franklin, "I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country. He is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead tree where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing hawk, and then robs him. Like many among men—lives by sharpening and robbing. He is poor and often very lousy. He is, therefore, by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America. I am, therefore, not displeased that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey, which is a more respectable bird, a true original native of America." Franklin became an honorary member of the Society, July 7, 1789, in spite of his criticism of the emblem.

The original membership certificate of Stephen Chambers, of Lancaster, is on file at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, located in Philadelphia. The wording of the certificate follows:

Be it known that Stephen Chambers, Esquire, is a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, instituted by the officers of the American Army at the period of its dissolution, as well to commemorate the great event that gave independence to North America, as for the laudable purpose of inculcating the duty of laying down in Peace arms assumed for public defense, and of uniting in acts of brotherly affection and bonds of perpetual friendship the members constituting the same.

In testimony whereof I, the President of the said Society, have heretunto set my hand at Mount Vernon, in the State of Virginia, this 31st day of October in the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, and in the tenth year of the Independence of the United States.

By order
H. Knox, Sec.

G. Washington,
President.

A manuscript, on file with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania of great interest to Lancaster is a membership roster, dated Lancaster August 1, 1783, captioned, 3rd Penna. Regiment, Members of the Cincinnati Society. The manuscript bears the signatures of the following officers of the regiment, their rank, and in some instances the time from which such rank dates. They are as follows:

Rich. Butler*	Colonel	16th July 1776
Jno. R. B. Rodgers	Surgeon	
Geo. Bush	Captain	
Erkurius Beatty	Lieut.	
Andrew Lytle	Lieut.	
Francis Thornbury	Lieut.	
Stewart Herbert	Lieut.	
John McKinney	Lieut.	
David McKnight	Lieut.	20th July 1780
John Pratt	Lieut.	
J. Montgomery	Captain	9th Jan. 1776
Jno. Wilkins	Surgn. Mate	8th April 1780
Wm. Alexander	Major	9th Jan. 1776
Wm. Butler	Lt. Col.	3rd Jan. 1776
Thos. Butler Jr.	Captain	Jan. 3 1776
Jno. Alexander	Capt. 4th Reg.	9th Jan. 1776
Robert Peebles	Lieut.	Apr. 15 1777
Edw. M. Butler	Lieut.	Jan. 28 1779
Robt. Allison	Lieut.	Jan. 21 1776
J. Grier	Major	13th Sept. 1777
James McMichael	Lieut.	

We give a few words of military identification of this list of twenty-one officers of the 3rd Penna. Regiment, who signed the membership roll in our town, evidently due to the fact this regiment was stationed here at the close of the war.

RICHARD BUTLER—

Capt. 2nd Penna. Battalion 5th Jan. 1776. Appointed Indian Agent 17th of May 1778. Major 8th Penna. 20th July 1776, Major Gen. U. S. Levies 1791. Killed Nov. 4, 1791, in action with Indians near Ft. Recovery, Ohio.

JOHN R. D. RODGERS—

Surgeon 1st Penna. 1st Oct. 1779, transferred to 3rd Penna. 1st Jan. 1783.

GEORGE BUSH—

Capt. Hartley's Addtl. Continental Regiment Jan. 13, 1777. Transferred to 6th Penna. Jan. 17, 1781, served to close of the war.

ERKURIUS BEATTY—

2nd. Lieut. 4th Penna. 2nd May 1777. Wounded at Germantown. Regimental paymaster June 1, 1779.

*Richard Butler, whose name heads this list, was one of five brothers who served in the Revolution, all of them being officers. He was killed in the battle with Indians on the Maumee River in Ohio Territory, when St. Clair was defeated. The Cincinnati medal, which he wore on his breast, was taken from his body by the savages. Years later the Cornplanter Indians returned the medal to his widow. Further reference is found in "The Butlers of Cumberland County."

ANDREW LYTTLE—

Quartermaster 1st Battalion of Miles' Penna. Rifle Reg. Apr. 1, 1776. 1st Lieut. Jan. 20, 1777.

FRANCIS THORNBURY—

Ensign Hartley's Addtl. Continental Reg. Feb. 2, 1778. 2nd Lieut. 25th May 1780, 11th Penna. Reg.

STEWART HERBERT—

Ensign 12th Penna. Oct. 16, 1776. 1st Lieut. Jan. 9, 1778. Transferred 6th Penna. July 1, 1778. Wounded and prisoner at Green Springs, Va., July 6, 1781, later transferred to 1st Penna. Jan. 1, 1783.

JOHN MCKINNEY—

2nd Lieut. 9th Penna. Mar. 1777. 1st Lieut. Mar. 18, 1778, served to June 3, 1783.

DAVID MCKNIGHT—

2nd Lieut. 9th Penna. Aug. 10, 1779. 1st Lieut. July 23, 1780.

JOHN PRATT—

Ensign 4th Penna. July 1, 1779. Lieut. May 1, 1780, served to June 1783, later served as Capt. U. S. Army.

JAMES MONTGOMERY*—

2nd Lieut. 2nd Penna. Battalion Jan. 5, 1776. 1st Lieut. May 21, 1776. Capt. of Independent Co., Penna. Artillery, Dec. 2, 1776.

JOHN WILKINS—

Surgeon's mate, 4th Penna. Apr. 8, 1780; transferred to 1st Penna. Jan. 1, 1783.

WM. ALEXANDER—

1st Lieut. 6th Penna. Battalion Jan. 9, 1776, Capt. 7th Penna. June 1, 1776, Major 3rd Penna. Apr. 16, 1780.

WM. BUTLER—

Capt. 2nd Penna. Battalion Jan. 5, 1776. Major Sept. 7, 1776. Lt. Col. 4th Penna. Sept. 30, 1776.

THOS. BUTLER—

1st Lieut. 2nd Penna. Battalion Jan. 6, 1776. Capt. 3rd Penna. Oct. 4, 1776. Later an officer in the U. S. Army.

JOHN ALEXANDER—

2nd Lieut. 6th Penna. Battalion Jan. 9, 1776. 1st Lieut. Feb. 10, 1776. Capt. 4th Penna. Mar. 20, 1777.

ROBT. PEEBLES—

2nd Lieut. 7th Penna. Apr. 24, 1777. 1st Lieut. Apr. 16, 1779. Reg. Q. M. Sept. 8, 1779.

EDW. BUTLER—

Ensign 9th Penna. July 1, 1778. Lieut. Jan. 28, 1779. Later an officer in the U. S. Army.

ROBERT ALLISON—

Private 7th Penna. 1777. Ensign 11th Penna. Feb. 1, 1778. Lieut. Mar. 16, 1780.

*The medal of the Society of the Cincinnati, given to Captain James Montgomery, is at present owned by his great-great-granddaughter, Mrs. Lewis T. Lampe, of Lancaster, Pa.

JAMES GRIER—

1st Lieut. Thompson's Penna. Rifle Battalion June 25, 1775.
Capt. 7th Mar. 1776, 1st Continental Inf. Wounded at Brandywine.
Major 10th Penna. Oct. 23, 1777.

JAMES MCMICHAEL—

Sergeant 2nd Battalion Miles' Penna. Rifle Reg. Apr. 22, 1776.
2nd Lieut. Penna. State Reg. Jan. 1777. 1st Lieut. June 20, 1777.

This roster or membership subscription list is endorsed or backed "Members State Society of Cincinnati". The fact that a list of twenty-one officers signed at Lancaster shows the importance of our town as a center of military activities in those days.

The names of original members of the Society as shown by the Society's records, whose residence was given as Lancaster County at the time of joining, and a few other Lancastrians whom I found were members, with brief personal reference and rank through which eligible for membership, are as follows: (Further reference to rank, etc., may be found in the volume Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army, by Heitman. This list is arranged alphabetically. The authority given for membership is indicated. Trowbridge refers to Chas. R. Trowbridge, Secretary of the Penna. State Society during recent years, late resident of Easton, Pa., to whom I had intended to submit a copy of this manuscript for criticism, but his death on January 6, 1937, occurred before it was completed).

BEVINS, WILDER—

2nd Lieut. 4th Penna. Jan. 1777, 1st Lieut. May 11, 1779. He was among Lancaster troops on march from York, May 26, 1781, to the south, aiding in the maneuvering which resulted in the capture of Cornwallis. Other prominent Lancastrians in this group were Capt. John Doyle, Lieut. Stewart Herbert, Lieut. Weitzel, Capt. John Steele. (From diary of Lieut. Wm. Feltman, Lancaster, entitled "Diary of Pennsylvania Line." Mr. Worner, former librarian of this Society, advised that the obituary account states Lieut. Bevins, was a member of the Cincinnati).

BOUDE, THOMAS—

Appointed Capt. Sept. 23, 1777, and at the close of the war received Brevet Commission of a Major. Represented Lancaster in the Congress of the United States, 1801-03. Died at Columbia, Oct. 24, 1822. (Trowbridge).

CHAMBERS, STEPHEN—

Capt. of a company in the 12th Penna. Reg. Killed in a duel at Lancaster, May 26, 1789. Further references found in Mr. Worner's paper, Vol. 34, No. 7, 1930, of our Society. His original membership certificate is on file at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It would have been photostated, had not some one foolishly covered it with varnish. (Trowbridge)

DOYLE, JOHN—

DOYLE, THOMAS—

John was a Capt. under Major James Moore. His commission was dated July 16, 1776. Thomas was appointed Lieut., commission dated Jan. 7, 1777. Further reference is found in Egle's Notes and Queries, 3rd Ser., Vol. 2, p. 166, and in the scrap book of our

Society. Some of these commissions were presented to our Society about two years ago. Following the war Messrs. Doyle conducted a hat store at North Queen and Grant Streets, Lancaster. (Miss Ferguson—State Genealogist)

GILCHRIST, JAMES—

Ensign in the 5th Penna. Later Lieut. and Captain. He resided at Lancaster when joining the Cincinnati but later moved to Philadelphia, where he died Mar. 8, 1795. Brief reference is found in Vol. 20, p. 65, of the Proceedings of our Society. (Trowbridge)

HAMILTON, JAMES—

Capt. in company 1st Penna. Reg. line 1776. Taken prisoner Nov. 2, 1777. Later, after release, promoted to Major 2nd Penna. Line Dec. 10, 1778. Later removed to Charleston, S. C., where he died. (Ellis & Evans, p. 45) (Trowbridge)

HAND, EDWARD—

Well known to Lancaster students of history. His services in the Revolutionary Army need no further reference here. (Trowbridge)

HERBERT, EDWARD—

Secretary Trowbridge gives Mr. Herbert's name as Edward. I was unable to find account of an Edward Herbert, but Heitman records both Stewart Herbert and Thomas Herbert as officers in the Army.

HUBLEY, ADAM, JR.—

HUBLEY, BERNARD—

This family is well known to students of Lancaster history. No reference to their services in the Revolutionary Army is necessary here. Adam died in Philadelphia of yellow fever in May, 1798. Bernard removed to Northumberland, where he died in 1808. John W. Lippold recently presented a very fine paper on the history of this family to our Society. (Trowbridge)

KITTERA, JOHN WILKES—

Was Captain of a company on guard duty at Reamstown, Lancaster County. Soon began study of law, and upon admission to the bar practiced at Lancaster. He was our first representative in the Congress of the United States after the adoption of the Constitution, serving from 1791 to 1801. (Ferguson)

LYTLE, ANDREW—

One of the members of the Society of Cincinnati who signed the roster at Lancaster, Aug. 1, 1783. Reference to his services are found in the Proceedings of our Society, Vol. 13, p. 143. He served as Captain under Col. Proctor. (Trowbridge)

MCCONNELL, ROBERT—

Served as 1st. Lieut. in the 4th Continental Artillery, later Captain. He removed to Philadelphia, where he died, Mar. 11, 1816. (Trowbridge)

MCCURDY, WM.—

Reference to his services are found in the Proceedings of our Society, Vol. 27, p. 78. He died in Lancaster in 1822. (Trowbridge)

MCMICHAEL, JAMES—

One of the officers who signed the roster at Lancaster, Aug. 1, 1783. References to his services are found in our Society's papers, Vol. 27, p. 62, Vol. 29, p. 27, Vol. 32 p. 83. He died in Philadelphia, 1790 or 1791. (Trowbridge)

MARSHALL, JOHN—

Reference to his services are found in the Proceedings of our Society, Vol. 7, p. 183, Vol. 16, p. 12, Vol. 27, pp. 113-162, Vol. 29, p. 111, and in Volumes 30 and 32. He died at Huntingdon, Pa., Oct. 13, 1799. (Trowbridge)

MIFFLIN, THOMAS—

Not a resident of Lancaster when he became a member of the Cincinnati, but removed here when Lancaster became the Capital of Pennsylvania. Governor of Pennsylvania 1790-99. Died at Lancaster, Jan. 20, 1800, buried at Trinity Church. (Ferguson)

MENTGES, FRANCIS—

Lieut. in Capt. Dehuff's company. Lieut. Col., later Major in the Penna. line. Removed to the western section of Pennsylvania, where he died after 1800. Further reference, Ellis & Evans, p. 54. (Trowbridge)

MURRAY, JOHN—

Capt. of Company in the 2nd Reg. Miles' Battalion. (Ellis & Evans p. 54). Died in Dauphin County, Feb. 3, 1798. (Trowbridge)

MYTINGER, JACOB—

1st Lieut. in Von Heer's Independent Company Light Dragoons. He removed to Huntingdon County, Pa. (Trowbridge)

PATTERSON, JOHN—

Captain in the 2nd Penna. Regiment. Many references to his services are found in the Proceedings of our Society, in Volumes 1, 3, 12, 20, 25 and 27. (Trowbridge)

SHAFFNER, CASPAR—

Cornetist, later a Lieut. Asst. town clerk, Lancaster, 1760-62, town clerk 1763-75, burgess 1777. "Americana" magazine, for the first quarter of 1935, contains a fine cut of Shaffner's preliminary certificate of membership in the Cincinnati. (Ferguson)

STEELE, JOHN—

His services in the Revolutionary Army need no further reference here, as they have been well recorded in the Proceedings of our Society. (Trowbridge)

STRICKLER, JOHN—

Ensign, 2nd Penna. in 1777, later 1st Lieut. and Lieut. in the 3rd Penna. line. He was the ancestor of the late Chas. G. Strickler, Lancaster. Reference to his membership in the Cincinnati is found in the paper on the life of Major Hamilton, in the Proceedings of our Society.

WEITZEL, JACOB—

Ensign in Patton's Additional Continental Reg. Also Ensign 11th Penna. Reg. under Col. John Proctor in the Sullivan Expedition. Later a 2nd and 1st Lieut. Removed to Sunbury, where he died June 9, 1830. (Trowbridge)

Geo. B. Porter, a son of Andrew Porter, Lancaster, was Governor of Michigan Territory. The account of his death states he, too, was a member of the Cincinnati. For many years the original membership certificate of Peter Muhlenberg hung on the walls of the home of Miss Mary Muhlenberg, 226 Lancaster Avenue, this city, where following her death in 1926, I had the pleasure of seeing it as arrangements were being made for the sale of

personal effects. This certificate was forwarded to a member of the Muhlenberg family in California.

In Dr. J. L. Ziegler's story of the Donegal Presbyterian Church, p. 26, is found the statement that "James Anderson, IV (the great-grandson of Rev. James Anderson, first pastor of the Donegal Presbyterian Church) died June 7, 1815, and was buried at York, Pa. His son, Joseph Tate Anderson, was a druggist in Marietta, Pa. He was a member of the Society of the Cincinnati."

This ends the list of Lancastrians, of whom I could find accounts, who were members of the Cincinnati during the period that George Washington was its president, from the institution of the Society in 1783 to his death in 1799.

George Schaffner, born at Lancaster, Pa., enlisted as a private in March, 1776, in Captain Abraham De Huff's company, Colonel Samuel John Atlee's regiment, Pennsylvania Riflemen; later became sergeant, and on August 11, 1776, ensign of his company; captain, Feb. 8, 1778; major, Dec. 1, 1781. A founder of the Society of Cincinnati in France. This account is found in Andre Lasseray's *Les Francais sous les Treize Etoiles 1775-1783* (Paris, 1935), Vol. 1, pp. 149-152.

The original membership of the Pennsylvania Society numbered 290 in 1783, approximately one-sixth of whom were Lancaster residents, or officers of the 3rd Penna. Regiment who signed the membership roster at Lancaster. The 1,300 members of the National Society at present, stands in sharp contrast with a membership of 2,379 following the founding of the Society. Rev. Mr. Trowbridge, secretary of the Pennsylvania Society for many years to his death about January 1, 1937, advised me that the latest roster does not show any member now residing at Lancaster. This may be explained by the difficulty in qualifying in view of hereditary limitations found in primogeniture.

What became of most of the beautiful gold medals bestowed upon original members and membership certificates, time may explain.

Franklin and Marshall College

Its Sesqui-centennial

By M. LUTHER HEISEY.

The Lancaster County Historical Society salutes and congratulates Franklin and Marshall College on the attainment of the grand old age of a century and a half. The progress, in large measure, of the Society has been due to the influence and assistance of college men. Her first president was an "F. and M." man. Her president for the last thirteen years is a member of the faculty.

In recognition of our debt of gratitude to the college, the Society, sometime in October, will erect a tablet on the campus as a memorial to Benjamin Franklin and three of the trustees of the first College Board; because they were also members of the Constitutional Convention, which met in the same year in which the college came into being. With Franklin, were Trustees Thomas Mifflin, Robert Morris and George Clymer.

The Society has erected a memorial tablet in honor of the first college president, Rev. Henry Ernst Muhlenberg; tentative plans have been made for the erection of a similar tablet to the second president, Rev. Frederick Valentine Melsheimer. The life-story of these prominent educators has been told in our Proceedings.

Franklin and Marshall College is the third oldest college in Pennsylvania and the thirteenth oldest college in the United States. Since 1853 it has grown and expanded in the western part of the city, on the eminence known as "College Heights," the highest point in the city. Before that time the college occupied humbler quarters in different parts of the town. There is no significance in the fact that the school started in the "brew house," located on Mifflin Street, west of Duke Street, in 1787; the next year the school moved into the Store House, located on North Queen Street, near James Street, which building the State Legislature donated to the college; in 1839 the school was moved to the building of the Lancaster County Academy on North Lime Street, north of Orange Street. The last two buildings are standing to this day, each converted into four dwellings.

On March 10, 1787, the General Assembly of Pennsylvania passed an act entitled, "An Act to incorporate the German College and Charity School in the borough of Lancaster." In the preamble it is stated that "the citizens of this state of German extraction have eminently contributed, by their industry, economy and public virtues, to raise the state to its present happiness and prosperity," and that "a number of citizens of the above description, in conjunction with others, from a desire to increase and perpetuate the blessings derive to them from the possession of property and a free government, have applied to this House for a charter of incorporation;" . . . "whereas the preservation of the principles of the Christian religion and of our Republican form of government in their purity depend, under God, in a great measure on the establishment and support of suitable places of Education, for the purpose of training a succession of youth, who, being enabled fully to understand the grounds of both, may be led the more zealously to practice the one and the more strenuously to defend the other."

Franklin and Marshall College has kept the faith in the principles laid down for the school in its formative period.

This college had on its first Board of Trustees four signers of the Declaration of Independence. It is the only college that ever had a former president of the United States (James Buchanan) as president of the Board of Trustees.