

Signers And Ratifiers Of The Constitution Of The United States

By MRS. CHARLES M. COLDREN

Of the eight Pennsylvanians who attended the Constitutional Convention in 1787, and became signers of that immortal document, seven are shown on the plate opposite page 178. The upper four bear a direct connection with Lancaster either as trustees or patron (Benjamin Franklin) of old Franklin College. These pictures were secured through the United States Constitution Sesqui-Centennial Commission of Washington, D. C.

THOMAS MIFFLIN. Portrait by Charles Willson Peale, courtesy Independence Hall Museum, Philadelphia, Pa. Buried in Trinity Lutheran Churchyard, Lancaster, Pa.

ROBERT MORRIS. Portrait by Gilbert Stuart, courtesy Lieut. Colonel Robert Morris. Buried in Christ Episcopal Churchyard, Second Street above Market, Philadelphia, Pa.

GEORGE CLYMER. Portrait by Charles Willson Peale, courtesy Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pa. Buried in Friends Old Meeting Burying Ground, Hanover and Montgomery Streets, Trenton, N. J.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. Portrait by Duplessis, courtesy New York City Public Library. Buried in Christ Church Burial Ground, Fifth and Arch Streets, Philadelphia, Pa.

GOVERNEUR MORRIS. Portrait by James Sharples, courtesy John S. Turnbull. Buried in St. Anne's Episcopal Churchyard, 140th Street and St. Anne's Avenue, New York City.

JARED INGERSOLL. Portrait by C. W. Peale. Buried in Third Presbyterian Churchyard, Fourth Street near Pine, Philadelphia, Pa.

JAMES WILSON. Portrait by Leopold Seyffert, courtesy United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Buried in Christ Episcopal Churchyard, Second Street above Market, Philadelphia, Pa.

THOMAS FITZSIMONS. No portrait found. Buried in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Churchyard, Fourth Street above Spruce, Philadelphia, Pa.

RATIFIERS FROM LANCASTER COUNTY

Five men who ratified the Constitution of the United States, and one who was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, who are buried in Lancaster, were honored at a memorial service held Sunday afternoon, December 12, 1937, in the churchyard of St. James's Episcopal Church. The service was held in

observance of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Pennsylvania's ratification of the Constitution of the United States. The graves of these men were marked by a wreath given by Donegal Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, who had charge of the program.

The five who ratified the Constitution for the State were: Jasper Yeates, jurist; Stephen Chambers and Robert Coleman, all buried in St. James's Cemetery; Sebastian Graff, Moravian leader, formerly buried in the Moravian Cemetery and later moved to the Lancaster Cemetery; John Hubley, formerly buried at Trinity Lutheran chapel and later moved to Woodward Hill Cemetery. The delegate was Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, son of the Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, patriarch of the Lutheran church.

The wreaths were placed by the following at St. James's Cemetery; Dr. Herbert H. Beck, president of the Lancaster County Historical Society, on the grave of Robert Coleman; Major W. Sanderson Detwiler, representing the Sons of the American Revolution, on the grave of Stephen Chambers, and Mrs. Rollin L. Charles on the grave of Jasper Yeates. Colonel Daniel B. Strickler gave a short address. Dr. C. G. Twombly closed the service with prayer.

Following the service at St. James's the group went to the Lancaster Cemetery, where the Rev. Robert J. Pilgram, descendant of the Hon. Andrew Graff, brother of Sebastian Graff, placed the wreath on Graff's grave. The Rev. F. H. Splies, pastor of the Moravian church, offered prayer.

The final part of the program was held in Woodward Hill Cemetery, where the group gathered at the graves of John Hubley and Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg. Melvin Hubley, a direct descendant of John Hubley placed the wreath on his ancestor's grave, and Mrs. Mary R. Stockton, a collateral descendant of Muhlenberg, placed the wreath on Muhlenberg's grave. The Rev. A. B. MacIntosh, pastor of Trinity Lutheran church, offered prayer.

Victor J. Ault, Eagle Boy Scout, member of troop 22, sounded taps at each grave, and Herbert Kraybill was the flag bearer.

Lancaster County had an additional five sons at the convention, who were selected as delegates from other counties. The men and the counties they represented were: Henry Slagle, York; James Marshel, Washington; William Brown, Dauphin; John Boyd, Northumberland; and John Baird, born in a portion of Lancaster County which was later incorporated in Dauphin County, who represented Westmoreland.

WHO THEY WERE

John Whitehill voted against the adoption of the Constitution, but he was an ardent patriot both before and after the Constitution was created.

John Whitehill was a Salisbury Township man. He was born there December 11, 1729, son of James Whitehill, a prominent pioneer. He held a number of offices in the years before the ratification convention, and showed

"indomitable courage and vigor of intellect, and was ever tenacious of republican principles." He belonged to the Jeffersonian school of statesmen. He was afterward associate judge of Lancaster County, appointed by Governor Mifflin in 1791. He was a presidential elector in 1796, and was elected to the Eighth and Ninth Congresses, where he continued to show marked ability. When he died in Salisbury in 1815, he left a large landed estate. He was buried at Pequea Presbyterian church.

Major Hubley brought military experience and the grim knowledge of war to his consideration of the Constitution. He was a Lancaster man, a Christmas baby—December 25, 1747, and the son of a distinguished family. The major studied law under Edward Shippen, was admitted to the bar in 1769, and became, next to Judge Yeates, its most popular member. He was one of Lancaster county's delegates to the Philadelphia convention which met to adopt a State Constitution on July 15, 1776, and on August 5 became a member of the General Pennsylvania Council for Safety, created by the State Constitution. He was appointed Commissary of Continental Stores on January 11, 1777, with the rank of major. He was also given charge of the Pennsylvania stores, and a few days later the Supreme Executive Council authorized him to employ all the shoemakers among the Hessian prisoners here, to make shoes for the army.

Sebastian Graff, born in Germany, settled in Lancaster, where he became a shopkeeper. Sebastian the younger was born here in 1744, and was baptized by the minister of the Moravian church. He was a member of the Committee on Observation during the Revolution, and was a delegate to the provincial convention of January 23, 1775. He was a member of the convention which framed the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1789-1790, and under that form of government was elected to the State Senate in 1790. Graff was married to "the now-widow Catherina, born Young," on March 11, 1766.

Stephen Chambers achieved a brilliant career as a soldier, lawyer and ironmaster, and died in Lancaster, May 16, 1789, from wounds suffered in a duel with a local physician, Dr. Jacob Reiger. Chambers was one of the founders of Lancaster Lodge No. 43, Free and Accepted Masons, and served as the first Worshipful Master from September, 1785, to June, 1787.

Jasper Yeates was chairman of the Committee of Correspondence for Lancaster County. He was appointed by Governor Thomas Mifflin, on March 21, 1791, to sit as a justice in the State Supreme Court. He remained on the bench until his death at Lancaster, March 14, 1817.

Robert Coleman was the leading ironmaster of Pennsylvania. He served in the General Assembly from 1783 to 1784, and as a member of the State Constitutional Convention of 1789-1790. He died in Lancaster, August 14, 1825.

Three of the above, Judge Jasper Yeates, John Hubley and Stephen Chambers, were members of the first Board of Trustees of Franklin College.