

A LANCASTER COUNTY BUSINESSMAN AND THE WAR OF 1812

The following is part of a story about a Lancaster County, Pennsylvania family — and its home — from the time of settlement in 1710 until the present. This particular section covers the war years, 1812-15. It centers around the then head of the family, Amos Slaymaker of Salisbury Township.

Since this chapter is lifted from the context of the whole, a brief synopsis of preceding parts is necessary.

Amos was the grandson of the original settler, Mathias, who came from Strasburg, Germany. Mathias' son, Henry, was a farmer, merchant and politician around Revolutionary Lancaster County. Henry, who collaborated with Judge Jasper Yeates in Salisbury Township real estate purchasing, died in 1785. His son, Amos, inherited his father's Salisbury lands and settled there after serving in the Revolutionary War. He married Isabella Fleming whom he called Sibby. Immediately, he picked up his father's rapport with Judge Yeates.

Amos and Yeates had advance and confidential information about a proposed East-West Turnpike, the first such in the United States, from General Edward Hand whose wife was a niece of Yeates. They bought more land and held it "in undivided halves." The turnpike was to run through their property.

Through the influence of General Hand and Judge Yeates, Amos was able to get a toll gate on the turnpike, a license for a stage coach line, appointments as County Commissioner, Justice of the Peace, Militia Brigade Inspector and Postmaster of Salisbury. He mortgaged his holdings to build inns in both Salisbury and Lancaster. Within ten years he paid off his debts and built a mansion next to the inn in Salisbury.

He served in the State Senate from 1806-10 and in the State House of Representatives from 1811-12. After leaving the State House he was concerned in large estate settlements and the running of his farms. Amos sold his interest in the stage line and both of the hotels to his brothers, Henry and Samuel. Samuel or "Sammy" ran the hotel in Lancaster and Henry the one in Salisbury. Amos' son, Henry F., ran a banking business in the Salisbury Inn named "The Sign of John Adam" and another son, Jasper Yeates Slaymaker, was a successful attorney in Lancaster. Amos' youngest daughter was also named Hannah. She was later to be a fairly well known artist.

The Fleming family figures prominently in the story. Daniel Fleming was Amos' brother-in-law and he had sons named Daniel Jr., James and Samuel.

The Cochran's of Cochranville are also mentioned. Hannah Cochran was Amos' sister and her husband was Samuel Cochran, Surveyor General of the Commonwealth. They had two sons and a daughter, Rebecca. The following story begins just after Amos completed his term in the State Legislature.

This piece is based entirely on Amos Slaymaker's personal correspondence and business papers which have been stored over the years and never published. Facts, deductions, and observations below have been gone over painstakingly by Dr. H. M. J. Klein, Professor Emeritus of History at Franklin and Marshall College. George Heiges and M. Luther Heisey, historians of Lancaster, have helped a great deal in research. Charles S. Foltz, European News Editor of *U. S. News and World Report*, Washington, D.C., has very kindly advised as to overall treatment and style. Jack W. W. Loose's helpfulness in research has been invaluable. I owe them all a great debt of gratitude.

Gap, Pennsylvania, Oct. 1958

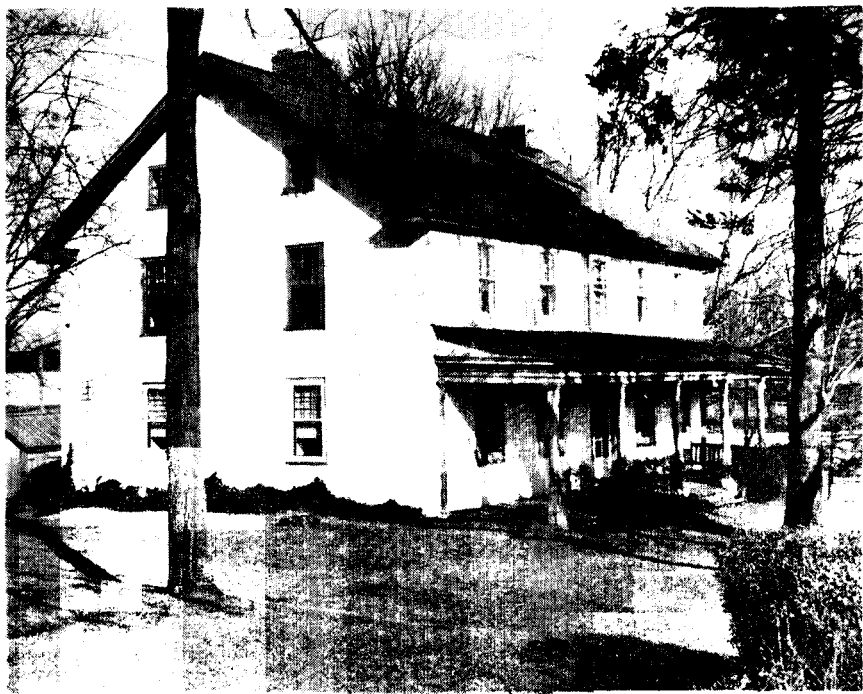
S. R. SLAYMAKER, II

It seemed to Amos Slaymaker that the darkening war clouds, a-building since 1807, were, by the year, as slow in bursting as were Salisbury's summer thunderclouds, hour-wise.

But war finally came. The day of its declaration was June 18, 1812, and President Madison's proclamation of the following day arrived late the same evening in Lancaster County.

Amos was with the family in Salisbury at the mansion. Having wound up winter affairs in Lancaster and with no legislative worries, he was as restful as his kinetic nature would ever let him be. He savored the aroma of new hay and gloried in his expanse of ripening wheat that billowed in the breeze. It appeared to roll down the northeastern slope in light amber waves, lapping around the outbuildings until break-watered by Davis Osler's new white-washed worm fencing, it trickled to halt before the soft tree shaded greensward of pastureland around the house.

Even the martial spirit of many Lancaster Countians a whole month earlier — inspired by Governor Snyder's call for militia regiments to total 14,000 men — had not caused Amos to fear for the existence of the anticipated pleasure of a quiet summer in Salisbury, at his new seat with his growing youngsters.



The home of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Himes Martin on the Lincoln Highway, west of Gap, built by Amos Slaymaker as an inn, "The Sign of John Adams." He used it as a stop-over point for his stages, a bank, a toll gate, and a Justice of the Peace office.

Jefferson's tour of duty had been one long war scare, but nothing had happened. Business had been good over most of the East until 1806 when the two blockades resulting from Bonaparte's Milan Decrees and British Foreign Secretary, George Canning's Orders in Council reduced Yankee trade with both Countries. But still, trade was very profitable for New England ship owners who ran both blockades. However, with the advent of President Jefferson's embargo, the ship owners faced ruin. But the peo-

ple who complained the most about the infringement of American maritime rights, through the British practice of impressment, were not the ship owners anyway — of all people they were the Westerners who forever wore out good land through slovenly agricultural practices. Then they grabbed for more. These “Warhawks” wanted Canada and needed an excuse to fight for it. There were rumors that Madison promised war to the Westerners as a sop for his nomination for President. Plainly Madison’s actions seemed designed to push America into the war. The big leaders in Congress might be Clay, Calhoun and others of national note, but Governor Simon Snyder was part and parcel of the whole pack. His party in Pennsylvania (the tail of the westward pointed Warhawk) had now become known to Amos and his friends as the “Democrats.” They dropped the word “Republican” in correspondence just prior to and during these war years.

Now the summer was ruined — maybe the future too. Of course the boys would have to go. It was only right.

His cousin John, Jr. (son of his father’s brother, John) from Strasburg, had little else with which to occupy himself except to form a company of militia, a rifle company. This was announced in the *Lancaster Intelligencer*.

“With pleasure we state that the Pequea Rangers, a volunteer rifle corps, commanded by Captain John Slaymaker, Jr. of this county, and composed of gentlemen of different politics, on Wednesday last, unanimously resolved to tender their services to the governor for the defense of their country, as a part of the quota of Pennsylvania.”

It all sickened Amos. Free from political duties in Lancaster, he solitarily read his *Lancaster Journal* in the east front room of the mansion, and fretted. He wandered across the pasture to the inn and commiserated some more with passing men of business.

The War of 1812 was for men of Amos’ position, uncalled for, unwanted, unjustified.

Some years before his brother-in-law, Daniel Fleming, looking for greener fields at turnpike’s end, left Lancaster County with his family stuffed in a Conestoga wagon. He went to Greensburg, Westmoreland County, in Western Pennsylvania. There he built a new home and started a store. He kept in close touch with Amos; served with his sons in running errands to heirs involved in Amos’ estate settlements in the Alleghenies.

During the balmy spring, hot summer and crisp fall of 1812, Amos awaited the mail stage from Lancaster with the keenest of anticipation. Well might other communications wait while he fumbled eagerly for his familiarly scrawled name and address on the folded paper sealed with a blob of red wax.

He read Daniel’s letters at the inn where the mail was delivered and discussed the contents with his friends and help. But always at day’s end, he carried them across the pasture to Sibby who was as eager to learn of her brother and his family’s health as was Amos to hear of their business affairs and political news.

By autumn, Daniel was most discouraged with the world situation. On September 22, 1812, he wrote Amos,

My Dear Brother and Sister, It seems a cloudy time. I think the judgments of God are hovering over and around our heads, and it behooves us to mourn for our sins and the sins of our guilty land. Our son Daniel is gone a week ago in Capt. Markle's company of Horse, and Samuel (another son) is to go in about ten days in another troop of horse. We do not expect to see Daniel in less than a year. God (who wields the scepter) only knows what may be the outcome. It is our place to pray earnestly that the Lord would yet be merciful. We have much abused his mercies and his privileges. We have been ungrateful as a Nation, we have been ungrateful individually. Dear brother and sister, pray for us, but I must stop, though with the thought that you and yours may be kept by the Mighty Power of God unto salvation — this shall be the earnest prayer of your affectionate, etc. Brother Daniel Fleming.

N. B. We are all well. I have just the moment heard that Capt. Markle's Company is yet lying over the river opposite Pittsburgh.

Amos and Sibby were glad that Daniel felt for "you and yours" for they worried so much about Jasper and Henry F. Both seemed venture-some. Jasper joined the Lancaster Phalanx (this was a privately raised troop, commanded by Captain James Humes, among a half dozen others in the county which contained many young Lancaster friends of Jasper, such as John F. Steinman Jr., son of the red hot Democrat hardware merchant.)

Unlike Jasper, who spent a lot of time in Lancaster at law, young Henry's friends were from the eastern end of the County so he joined John Slaymaker's Pequea Rangers. Young Henry Shippen was starting a company also -- The Lancaster Jaegers.

Amos knew the true state of the Lancaster County militia well from his days as Brigade Inspector of the Second Brigade, 4th Division, which job he was glad to be done with. It was now carried on by Rev. Sample's son, Nathaniel Jr. of Strasburg. Amos had commented many times to Sibby about the general hopelessness of the Militia, had in his possession the full copy of the report of Feb. 8, 1811 made out by Thomas McKean Jr., who struggled to head up the entire militia of the Commonwealth. This report to the Governor stated plainly and openly that

The Brigade Inspectors generally represent the want of a disposition on the part of the Captain in complying with their official duty, in consequence of which, they incur considerable difficulty and great delay in making returns to me. They also represent the Arms with few exceptions, as being out of order, occasioned by the deficiency of the funds appropriated by law for repairing them, and also by the neglect on the part of individuals who possess them. I am your Excellency's Obedient servant,

T. McKean, Jr.



(Left) Jasper Yeates Slaymaker, son of Amos Slaymaker, named after his father's benefactor. A member of the Lancaster Bar, he died in his mid-thirties. During the War of 1812 he served in the Lancaster Phalanx, a privately raised company of militia commanded by Captain James Humes. (Right) Henry Fleming Slaymaker. He helped his father in business; later inherited the major share of Amos Slaymaker's estate. In the War of 1812 he was a captain in the Pequea Rangers, a company raised and commanded by his uncle, John Slaymaker, Jr.

Taken from silhouettes

Jasper and Henry, age 23 and 25 respectively, by this time thought Amos had no idea of what they were getting into. For he knew war's trials as they never could—knew too, how inept commanders worsened them. And Amos realized well the incompetency of the social gay birds who formed the outfits which were to be lumped into the 98th Regiment of Penna. Militia under Lt. Col. Nathaniel Watson. Henry had no business being a captain either and only was made one because his uncle John took care to see that he was made one. Jasper was a private, but he dressed like an officer. The boys both looked handsome in their uniforms — slight of stature, but very trim in light blue slack-like trousers, tunics tight at the waist of darker blue with crossed white belting — all topped off with be-plumed stove pipe top hats minus the brims.

If Lancastrians ever thought that gaiety as well as regal solemnity had gone with the Capital to Frogtown (their derisive nick-name for the new capital site on the Susquehanna at Harrisburg) they were mistaken. For the War of 1812 ushered in the biggest rounds of balls, public orations, military parades, days of prayer that the borough had witnessed before or indeed since. The long civic "emotional jag" was a most incongruous phenomenon for Lancaster arms did very little throughout. What with all of the gathering of units and preparations, the Governor never called troops from Lancaster for service on the Niagara frontier. They would have to be content with more drilling and parades.



Slaymaker Hotel (Pennsylvania Arms) on East King Street in Lancaster, west of North Christian Street, and now the site of McCrory's Store. It was used as the Lancaster stopping place for the stage coaches. Amos later turned it over to his brothers. It was the scene of many festivities during the war years 1812-1815.

But soon the town's chauvenists got a break. Early in December word arrived of Decatur's Azores victory over the British frigate "Macedonian." There was a huge celebration in town; the boys joined their outfits in parading amidst the biggest display of flags ever placed, all illuminated by torch light to the tune of massed bands whose martial renditions were punctuated by rifle salutes and loud huzzas. Church bells rang. The Court House was illuminated as never before; its Cupola was festooned with flags.

The Democrat *Intelligencer* reveled in the good news and reported festivities with a gusto.

The Constitutionalist *Journal* made no reference to the celebration.

The Decatur victory gave the town not only the reason for its biggest blowout of the war, up until that time, it provided at last, a death, always a prerequisite for any well rounded military commemorative affair.

The *Intelligencer* of December 19th stated that a meeting of the "young men of Lancaster was held at Slaymaker's Hotel for the purpose of taking action on the death of Lieut. John Musser Funk of the United States Navy." He was a native of Lancaster, killed aboard the ship "United States" in the Azores battle.

At the meeting at Sammy's Hotel, Captain Henry Shippen, Jr. presided. There was a secretary and they came up with the idea of suggesting that the men of the borough wear crepe on their left arm for thirty days.

This first loss of the war was followed in the succeeding spring by another, although it is stretching the point to call Thomas Landerkin's demise a war casualty. He came from Chambersburg, not Lancaster, had served at Buffalo and had the misfortune to die while in Lancaster.

Be that as it may, he was a veteran and the town was more than anxious to commemorate any death it could. The Citizens gave him the best they had to offer. "His remains, escorted by the local volunteer companies, United States regulars who were in town and," as the *Intelligencer* went on to say, "a large concourse of citizens were interred with military honors in the grave yard of the English Presbyterian Church on E. Orange St."

And so continued Lancaster's revelry in arms.

The *Intelligencer* again trumpeted news of victory on October 2, 1813 upon receipt of word of Commodore Perry's great triumph on Lake Erie. The paper went on to describe the celebration.

About nine, the ringing of bells announced the glorious news, the joyful citizens, with martial music and lighted candles, paraded the streets til near midnight, and a number of houses were illuminated. At four the next morning, the cheerful bells awoke the happy citizens. About ten, the volunteer companies of Captains Humes and Shippen, with an excellent band of music, enlivened our streets by firing repeated volleys in honor of the splendid victory and in the evening there was a general and splendid illumination.

Henry F's absence from the business in Salisbury caused Amos much bother because he had to fill in himself in many small estate settling duties.

He complained of the unreliability of what help he could get. Then too, he needed more than just messengers to run settlement errands, for confidential matters had to be handled discreetly at the termini of the various routes taken to get to the heirs, whether they be in Western Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia or more local points.

Daniel Fleming very much wanted to see Amos in person — was impatient for Amos to make the trip, and was getting just a bit edgy in his letters as he complained that so far as he was concerned

I had given up all thought of ever crossing the Mountains again, but found I could get nothing done . . . I have it in view to go down sometime this winter (then Nov. 2, 1812). I do wish you to write to me and let me know at what time it would suit best, and I will endeavor to go as near the time you set as possible. I hope I shall not have to go more than once, and wish to have it over if possible before spring.

Amos' inability to satisfy his brother-in-law's business requests cannot be taken to indicate a lack of concern, for he was always interested when money was to be made. And the Fleming clan, who wanted Amos to remain their arbiter, as he had been in the old Salisbury days, was reaching the stage that intrigues a family's lawyer so greatly — old age.

It was just that so many other of Amos' clients were reaching the same stage; young Henry, his good right arm, was parading, dancing at the balls, and Amos was as busy again as he had been before his legislative days.

But busy or not, Amos and Sibby went over the second parts of Daniel's letters most intently, as they covered the real war in the Northwest Niagara frontier — after, that is, estate business was fully discussed in the first parts.

The news about the Fleming boys was such as to make them happy that young Henry and Jasper had no one to shoot back at them when they fired their guns into Lancaster's skies. Better have the boys doing nothing than in the shooting war which was being so disastrously prosecuted on the Canadian border. There the British and Indian's presence alike threatened again to repeat the depredations against western settlers of the 1750's and 70's. It was horrible to think about. Thank the All Good God, their own home was not threatened.

"We have not had any particular word from our boys," Daniel wrote them on Nov. 24, 1812, "that is out with the militia since the latter end of last month. They were then well . . . God have mercy on our Guilty Nation"

Then on July 30, 1813, he wrote of hearing

yesterday that there are handbills in circulation giving an account that Fort Meigs is again besieged, if so I have no doubt but our boys will be taken then God only knows what may be the

result. If our people suffer Fort Meigs to be taken, it will be a fatal stroke, I fear. I mourn for the situation of our country, we are plunged into great troubles and difficulties, but I think I am not like many others, either approving or disapproving, in toto, all the measures of our rulers, I rather think it a dispensation of Providence and do not look for much better times without a reformation among ourselves . . . (Note: Fort Meigs was situated at the mouth of the Maumee River on Lake Erie. Defended by General Harrison, it was a staging area for United States expeditions against Canada).

After launching into vivid condemnation of the sins of the people, "Cursing, swearing, swaining and debauchery of every kind" and agreeing with God's manifest vengeance "on such a nation," he finished quite touchingly by writing that he prayed that the country would not have to say "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved . . . I remain your affectionate brother, Daniel Fleming. N.B. I send this by Mr. Lancy Fisher, who is a trusty hand, if you can send the money by him, it will be a great obligation to me . . ."

Daniel had a marvelously developed Calvinistic facility for meditating on God and money at the same time.

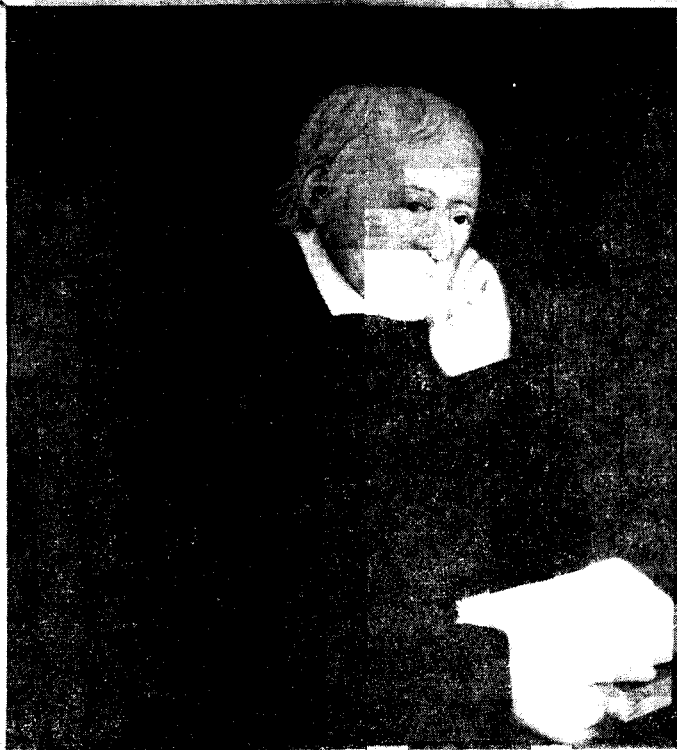
Their letters were read widely in Salisbury, in the mansion when friends called, in the inn, at Leacock after Church — old friends were anxious to hear first hand of the Flemings who were at the scene of action.

During 1812, the newspapers were months late with many inaccurate accounts of the three abortive American advances into Canada. The bad showings of militia did not surprise Amos. His disgust with the war was only exceeded by his fear of its outcome. He was at one with the *Journal's* editor who rarely printed news of the war and when he did it was to point up what was wrong with its prosecution, as when the *Journal* noted that Government wagons carrying money through Lancaster for the Army in Ohio to the tune of "seven hundred thousand dollars . . . for the support of our unprofitable war. The money to be sure, is all borrowed! But it must be repaid sometime; and then our farmers and mechanics will be better able to count the cost."

Again, when two hundred wagons loaded with cotton passed through town, Editor William Hamilton let go in the same vein — "Most of the wagons were from Savannah, Georgia, and the expense of transporting the cotton over land instead of by water, to the New England States, was tremendous."

Prices of necessities for the inns and the mansion sky-rocketed; brown sugar sold for thirty-two cents a pound near the end of 1813.

In this state of complete disenchantment with the war during late 1813, Amos decided that pragmatism was the better part of patriotism. He gave out the word to young Henry that continued full time duty with the militia served the best interests of neither the family nor the country. After



Amos Slaymaker, Esq., Lancaster County business man and politician (born 1755, died 1837). Founded a stage coach line from Philadelphia to the West after serving in the Revolutionary War. From 1812 war period on, he was concerned mainly in estate settlements and the running of farms. He was in Congress in 1814-15; earlier he had been in the House and Senate of Pennsylvania.

Painting by Hannah Slaymaker
From White Chimney's Collection

all, one was not by law required to stay at militia soldiering day and night. He remembered some legislation designed to tighten up on active duty requirements of the state militia which he had voted against when in the State House. He did not blame himself for contributing to military delinquency because, he told himself, you could not regulate volunteers anyway lest they no longer be volunteers. He was steeped in a firefighter philoso-

phy about militia duties as learned in the Revolution.

Henry F. Slaymaker's name ("for my father") began to appear on reams of business papers once again during late 1813.

Henry himself was becoming tired of playing war in Lancaster anyway, thus he acceded to his father's demand not unreluctantly. Not only was he influenced by his father's opinions to the point of not having a mind of his own, there was yet another factor in his growing aversion to war — his close friendship with his cousin James Fleming.

As noted, since the Fleming's removal to the west, the two young men had kept up a steady correspondence, an informed, literate correspondence which bespoke in both, a pronounced penchant towards Dickinson College bred logical thought, undiluted by the religiously fundamentalistic bent which colored their parents' deductions. James' letters in 1807 revealed his deep hatred of "his holiness, little Simon Snyder." He deplored the British Orders in Council but even more the American Embargo. His prewar letters then, clarified for Henry and Amos also, the asinine handling of events leading up to hostilities. Thus James' descriptions of the resulting war itself caused Henry to be the more predisposed than he otherwise would have been to stay out of it.

After describing for Henry his uncomfortable stage coach trip from the mansion in Salisbury, where he had been visiting with his father in December, 1812, back to the West via Chambersburg, he got down to events at the front. Henry read avidly, sharing the letter with the family before rushing on horseback into Uncle Sammy's hotel, where, over drinks with his officer friends, he could hold stage's center reading it aloud to the group.

"I found when I came to Chambersburg that the news of the volunteers of the state returning was a truth — I afterwards met them in gangs strung along all the way from Chambersburg home — all looking like tired and war-torn soldiers (sarcasm?) and all railing out against Gen. Smith — saying that he was a coward and they believed a traitor — and that they were all willing to cross the line and fight had they had a Commander to lead them on. However their story seems to be much contradicted. I have seen several gentlemen who were at the camp (who had went out merely as lookers on) and who say that Gen. Smith could not possibly get a sufficient number of volunteers to cross to oppse the British forces and thought he acted prudently in not crossing with the few who had volunteered. What the truth is . . . it is yet hard to form an idea of, as there are so many contradicting stories, but I am of opinion that he had not a force sufficient to go over — however, I need not enlarge on the subject as you will see a more correct statement in the public papers than I can give you from which you will be more able to judge.

(Note: James was speaking of Gen. Smythe whose abortive operation at Niagara was part of the Montreal Campaign of 1812).

The latest news from the Army of Gen. Harrison is that a body of his troops amounting in number to 520 men having set out on a scout expedition to be accom-

plished in 20 days. Destination not yet known. Amongst them are my brothers Samuel and Daniel and Humphrey Fullerton who is promoted to adjutant of the Regiment. My father has received letters from both of them and will be able to inform you of particulars — I hope to hear of Harrison and his men effecting something before they come home — I should be sorry indeed to hear of their returning as the rest of our Pennsylvania volunteers have done. There are great expectations of Harrison, as his men are all healthy and in good spirit and are pleased with their commander.

James closed his letter by noting that he need go no further inasmuch as his father, "being a guest of Uncle Amos, now at your mansion, will give you the news of this country better than I can, but as soon as I have anything new from the army, I shall lose no time in giving you the information. Give my best respects to your brother, not forgetting my good little friend Hannah . . . Your affectionate cousin, James Fleming."

The land campaign of 1812 in the West had been a flop. At Detroit, General Hull and his 2000 troops had been defeated. At Lake Champlain militia troops failed miserably — retreated back to Plattsburg, N. Y. There was the Niagara fiasco too, the flotsam and jetsam of which James Fleming had reported to Henry F. and family.

In early 1813 there was another American defeat near Detroit, offset by the U. S. capture of York (Toronto) and burning of same.



Battle of Lundy's Lane from an old print. Although this savage battle in the summer of 1814 ended in a deadlock, the Americans were never to attempt another invasion of Canada.

Then after all of this woe came Perry's great victory on Lake Erie, which enabled General William Henry Harrison to take his army across the Lake to defeat the British at the Battle of the Thames. (Note. This was the expedition to which James Fleming referred in his letter.)

By and large though, the abortive effort to capture Canada caused no upset in Salisbury for the inhabitants never really cared about the attempted conquest anyway. The Lake Erie victory came in the nature of an unplanned-for holiday in the town, which when spent, left the citizens to live in day to day normalcy as before. As if to keep going the victory celebrations and hence enliven the work-a-day dullness of living — which by rights should have been spiked with a more militant sense of urgency — Sammy came up with a novel idea. He invited a distinguished artist, one Thomas Birch, to exhibit what the *Intelligencer* called "his superb picture" — a painting of Perry's Naval battle in oil — in Slaymaker's Hotel. Great crowds appeared and many left subscriptions for 26" x 19" engravings (priced \$5.00) of the painting, which were to be executed by Alexander Lawson and published by Joseph Delaplain of Philadelphia.

But these affairs were all right for Sammy and the excitement loving townspeople of Lancaster, who enjoyed the war at a distance. Amos continued to worry, for he realized that it might not remain at a distance if the British-sponsored Indians should collapse the defenses in Western Ohio. Stories of his father and the threatening experiences of his own youth came to mind when he read a letter to Henry from James, during the spring of 1813. It read —

Dear Henry, As I promised to give you the news of the West when anything worth notice would take place, I once more take the liberty of addressing you with a short account of the Battle with the Indians. Encl'd I send you a partial list of the killed and wounded which you will find correct except the death of Findley Cochran who died since of his wounds.

Capt. Markle has got home on Saturday night (on furlough). He left the Expedition at Dayton, Ohio. He brought a number of letters from our friends and neighbors living amongst them . . . Samuel (his brother Samuel Fleming) in the army, had seven spells of sickness but has got able to walk about. He started with the expedition, and went on within fifty miles of where the Battle was fought, but got so bad that he could not ride and they were obliged to send him back to Greenville where he lay til the detachment returned. Daniel was in the battle and has escaped, unhurt except getting his feet frozen, which is the case with two-thirds of the men. They all suffered severely from the cold weather and want of provisions — having no tents with them, they had to make their bed in the snow and in the open air — and at one time were entirely out of provisions when fortunately a supply of half a ration apiece came to their relief.

I have a letter also from Humphrey Fullerton. He was in good health except getting some of his fingers frosted. Having lost their 2nd Lieut. he has to perform the double duty of First and Second Lieut. and is also adjutant to the Regiment.

Capt. Markle speaks of his men in the highest terms and says every man acted with coolness and intrepidity and braveness. As the stage is just about starting I shall cut my letter short . . . In haste, I sign myself, your affectionate cousin, James Fleming. (Note: James referred to the Battle of the Thames. It was very important because Tecumseh's death in battle resulted in the Indians deserting the British. The battle also brought on the American capture of Detroit, a victory which compensated for Hull's defeat.)

At least the militia were beginning to behave like soldiers. Too bad about the two Fleming boys, Daniel and Samuel. Daniel Sr. though could not say anything harsh about young Henry Slaymaker's being back in Salisbury, for after all, he had seen fit to keep his oldest boy, James, out of hostilities in order to help in family business. In fact both boys were a big help in their father's mutual estate operations and took turns in making frequent trips back and forth across the Mountains.

Of course Henry was technically standing by if needed by the militia. Jasper too was ready, more nearly so, as he stayed in Lancaster with Sammy where he was rapidly becoming a very successful attorney. Handsome and with a handle like "Jasper Yeates" prefixing his proper name, he could not very easily fail. During the main patriotic celebration he was tapped as a speaker and was well known for his orations from the Court House steps.

As 1814 wore on, Amos and young Henry became increasingly absorbed in estate work and banking. The farming operation was going well and the war's ill wind carried some good for grain prices rose. The war seemed further away, 'though they were reminded of it by the days of "fasting, humiliation and prayer," called by the President, the Governor, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

Amos was beginning to enjoy family life for the first time in many years. The Cochrans often drove up from Cochranville to the mansion on Sundays for dinners that were truly sumptuous. The home was tomb-like no longer. The floors were covered with the latest rage, oriental rugs, brought in by the Yankee blockade runners. A handsome grandfather clock stood in the rear hall. The children all had horses, little Hannah a pony. Her father was very proud of her first faltering strokes in oils. She stayed apart from the others much of the time, dabbing away with her paints. Sibby was forever writing letters to and getting them from Hannah Cochran, whose attractive and altogether loveable daughter, Rebecca, was spending so much time as guest at the Mansion "to help Aunt Sibby" as she wrote her brother, Stephen. She spent a lot of time with her favorite first cousin, young Henry. Sometimes they rode horseback along the dusty backwoods roads. He took her to some of the balls in Lancaster. She was 21; he was 25. While visiting friends in Newport, Delaware, Rebecca wrote to her mother in the middle of August, in 1814 that Henry F. had "just come in for me," preparatory to their both leaving before daylight the next day from Wilmington for Philadelphia on the ship "Liberty." One of her friends was

going also by steamboat. She mentioned seeing "all the soldiers in Wilmington."

Yesterday all the men from both encampments marched into Wilmington where they quartered until this morning, and before I left this morning, seen them all march away. I would not have missed the sight for something handsome, I will perhaps never see the likes again. Four thousand men under arms. Poor fellows, I pitied them yesterday, they were everyone wet to the skin, however, they got very good quarters as they had all the churches, the Town Hall, and Academy, and Mrs. Dickinson's fine house. Indeed I don't suppose there was a house in town that had not more or less of them. A number of them were at Sammy Phelps . . . at Mrs. Black's we had an excellent view of all the men.

In mid-August of 1814 Sibby wrote to Hannah telling her that Amos had been "over at the inn most of the afternoon and that the Lancaster stage which came in late brought the news. Amos was very upset and came to the house to tell us at once."

The stage which rolled down the hill from Lancaster that mid-summer's day could have brought no news anymore earth-shaking than that which spilled from the mouths of the excited travellers.

With the entire family around him, hanging on every of his words, he told them that a large British Fleet was sighted in the Chesapeake — a fleet of warships and transports carrying the pick of British troops — now free with the defeat of Bonaparte, to humble the United States. It all seemed preposterous. The faraway war, the unreal war, the needless war was now at their doorsteps. Amos stood in the front doorway on the classically pillared porch and looked down the lawn. When Howe invaded, his family stood to lose all, but by good fortune they had been spared. There was so much more to lose now. What would happen to them? He had hoped against hope that the western campaign, which had fluctuated so indecisively throughout 1813, despite the victory of Harrison, would end in some sort of truce before Napoleon fell.

But now the worst had happened. The British were going to attack—invade the vital East Coast.

Rumor had it that the British were to land at Washington or Baltimore. On August 20, word reached Lancaster that General Winder, commanding the tenth military district which covered the soon-to-be-attacked areas, had called urgently on Governor Snyder for 5,000 Pennsylvania Militia.

Henry left for Lancaster on horseback, the day after the information of the attempted invasion had been received. He planned on staying with Sammy and Jasper until a specific call to action came for the Regiment, or for the portions of it that their respective outfits made up.

On August 26, a second shock wave struck the populace of city and county with as much force as the first. The British had landed near Washington. Militia who opposed them broke and ran before engaging the enemy, who in turn took Washington City and burned the government buildings.



Samuel Cochran, Surveyor General of the Commonwealth during the War of 1812 period. He was Amos Slaymaker's brother-in-law.

Painted by Jacob Eichholtz in miniature on wood.
From White Chimney's Collection

Shortly after word of the arson was received in Lancaster, notice from the Governor in Harrisburg was published to the effect that he expected all militia of the counties of Dauphin, Lebanon, Berks, Schuylkill, York, Adams and Lancaster to respond to a forthcoming call to arms with alacrity — “superior to local feelings and evasives that might possibly be drawn from an imperfect military system.”

This total of 5,000 men then were to rendezvous at York on Sept. 5, so as to be ready for the march to the Washington-Baltimore area.

Concurrent with the news of the burning of Washington, a general town meeting was called in Lancaster. Amos took the first stage from Salisbury to Lancaster on Monday, Aug. 29, early in the morning.

The horses ahead wheezed and puffed, the stage creaked, jolted uncomfortably as it slowly rumbled up the Salisbury hill. The sun in the rear impelled a great ray of light on the hay fields and pastures on either side of the turnpike, so that the morning’s dew seemed to Amos to glisten, to sparkle, to render a pastoral scene that should have been familiar, something breathtakingly new. It must have been that he had been too busy of late years to appreciate that part of his little world of whose making he had no part. The years had gone so fast — he was 54 and quite white now. Yet, he thought, this emergency was so much like 1777 — it made him smile. All of his accomplishments from that time until the present could be done away with by uncontrollable forces of the kind which could have prevented his ever having begun in the first place.

Yet something was different. His Lancaster County world was busier, more populated. This very road evidenced not only the county’s growth, but the Country’s as well, as its traffic day in and out wound from his toll-house westward — implacably as if by a Divine command that would brook no counter order. Maybe in far off London, George Canning and the Regent would realize that in the end their troops could not change United States Destiny. Oh, that’s the difference, he thought, the United States . . . there were no Tories today! There was no question of anyone’s loyalty. He did not like the war and wanted it to stop, but no one questioned his loyalty as they had that of his mother’s family 38 years ago.

As he gazed out of the joggling coach’s window later, amid his musings, he noticed bonneted Mennonite farm women together with their men in black wide-brimmed hats hoeing corn. They were still not warriors, but there was no question anymore of their taking their Crown oaths seriously. Time itself had changed that. He knew too that they would never dare to sell food to the enemy again were he to keep his foothold in Washington.

The coach was rumbling over Witmer’s Bridge and the Conestoga. The square was barely a mile away. He felt calmer now than he had for the last few days. The United States would prevail this time because God had given the country time these past years . . . time to grow up.

As the coach rumbled into the East King Street traffic he looked out of the window to see a huge crowd milling around the Court House. He would go to the Hotel first to pick up his close friends. Perhaps Samuel Cochran and Dr. Duffield would be there. Then they would push through the crowd and find seats in the Court House. During the emergency he paid Sammy at the rate of \$1.00 per day with 50 cents for "supper and bed."

The jam-packed meeting was windy and almost day long. A list of resolutions was drawn up containing many "Whereases" and "Resolveds," the tenor of its entity being that all privately raised companies should heed the Governor's call and head for the York rendezvous to be prepared for the March on the Baltimore area. Throughout the session, Amos thought over events of the year before. Then a light British Naval force had scouted the Chesapeake area and there had been momentary panic in Lancaster, but by the time he heard of the threat, it was over. Both Henry and Jasper had gone to Elkton, Md. with their respective companies, but the blow never fell. Perhaps, Amos mused, this threat would never materialize. But whether or not it would he planned on staying in Lancaster so as to be at the center of news reports.

Henry Shippen's volunteer Company had left directly for Baltimore on receipt of the first word of Washington's burning. Jasper had gone on to York, but Henry's unit remained in Lancaster.

During the fortnight that followed all was confusion. Night and day troops from all over the seaboard marched through Lancaster, some going to protect Philadelphia from possible invasion, as well as to the main danger point, Baltimore. All together over 1000 men passed through Lancaster.

Amos stayed up late at the hotel every night during the emergency. At last report, Jasper was still in York — Henry remained in Lancaster. Word was that the British had re-embarked after burning Washington. The next objective was to be Baltimore, and rumors were flying thick and fast about an engagement between British General Ross' troops and defending militia near Baltimore.

Amos received what the *Intelligencer* was to headline the next day as "The Glorious News" at 5 o'clock September 15, 1814. An express rider clattered into the square and up to the Court House bringing word of the battle before Baltimore in which British General Ross had been killed on Sept. 12. The British had "retreated" back to their shipping, harrassed by American militia. The next day the British ships bombarded Ft. McHenry unsuccessfully. The emergency was over, Jasper would soon be back, thought Amos, so he and Henry went back to Salisbury.

The rest of the war for Amos was anti-climax as was the end of the Revolution before it. For once the immediate region was safe, the normal scheme of things need not be upset by the young men's having to run hither and yon with the militia.

He was not back in Salisbury long when he received word that Jasper's Phalanx would have to stay in Baltimore, where they had finally gone, but

too late for the battle, for an extra three months. Since it was fairly well established that the British would not be back, he thought this foolish in the extreme. But at least Henry could get back to banking, estate settling and farm management. Amos did need young Henry for he heard of the possibility of John Whitehill's retirement from the U. S. Congress. He had been waiting his turn, and this would probably be it. He had always got on well with old Judge Whitehill and the entire family. If anyone should get first priority in filling his son John's boots in the House of Representatives in Washington City it should be Amos. He must have the estate settlements run well, for they were by this time getting big and quite complicated. He trusted Henry more and more over anyone else around him. Henry always did exactly as he was told. Jasper was so important in Lancaster that Amos was beginning to feel uncomfortable around him. Jasper's notes and letters seemed at times to patronize the family in the manner of Samuel Cochran's.

Wartime revelry in Lancaster interested Amos not at all and news of another big solemn meeting at Sammy's hotel in September went by with no comment in any of his correspondence. It was all more of the same — another death to make the most of — Col. James Gibson of the City had been killed at Ft. Erie while leading a charge on British Batteries. Since Jacob Slough had run a meeting of commemoration at his White Swan Tavern across the Square, Sammy felt as though he should cause a meeting to be held in his hotel also. This he did, going Slough one better, by asking an old soldier of the Revolution to chairman the meeting which resulted in a resolution by those present for the wearing of crepe for thirty days.

More celebrating on Tuesday, December 6 was the order of the day when Jasper's Phalanx returned amid loud cheers, gun salutes, bonfires and band music.

In February there was still another celebration — a monster one — on the borough's receipt of the news of Jackson's great victory at New Orleans.

The last "big parade" took place on February 20, 1815 when the confirmation of peace arrived. With the treaty of Ghent, it was all over. The *Intelligencer* described the jubilee on Tuesday morning as being ushered in by the ringing of bells and the beat of reveille. All business appeared to be suspended, except that of providing transparencies and decorations for the evening's illumination, which was general, and was superior in brilliancy to any we have ever witnessed.

The jubilee was continued on Wednesday in honor of the immortal Father of his Country (Washington's Birthday). The different volunteer companies paraded and performed many evolutions and firings in a truly soldierlike manner. They were accompanied by a band of musicians, composed of gentleman amateurs. The ringing of bells, the repeated volleys of rifles, musketry and pistols, the variety of music and the shouts of the populace, were calculated to fill the mind with extraordinary emotions.

An appropriate and excellent oration was delivered in the Court House to the Washington Association pursuant to their request, by Jasper Slaymaker, Esq. after which about eight members of the Association sat down to an elegant dinner at the house of Col. Slauch.

In the evening, a splendid ball was given at Mr. Cooper's (Red Lion Tavern) which was attended by a large and brilliant assemblage of ladies and gentlemen.

It gives us pleasure to add, that in the rejoicings of two or three days no accident of importance has occurred and the utmost harmony has prevailed.

In spring information was received concerning the terms of the peace treaty. Amos was unhappy about the outcome as he had been with the war itself. None of the issues over which it was fought were settled. All territory taken by either side was to be returned. The Canadian boundary settlement was to be determined later. Impressment, of course, ended with the war.

But Amos was too close to the event to see the real results of the war — namely the rapid development of American industry, fostered by the blockades and the embargo. Later in Congress he was to vote with Calhoun and Webster for their "American System" — internal improvements sponsored by the Federal Government to aid private enterprise, paramount among which was the proposed Second Bank of the U. S. Little did he thank the war for bringing all of this about.

Discouraged as he was with the war, he never lost faith in the nation's future, having lent his credit to the government by endorsing notes in the Georgetown Bank for it when in financial difficulties, for the speedy defense of New Orleans.

In summation, the war was an unpleasant, worrisome event which interrupted, but in no way curtailed, his main occupation — the settling of estates and the management of his property.

His sister, Hannah Cochran, in a letter to her boys in boarding school, reflected the feelings of all of his family with the advent of final peace.

Dear Boys, How pleasing it is to see spring once more unfolding her charms and the face of nature resume its long wished for appearance. And likewise with it peace unto our land again. I hope and pray that the sound of war may no more be heard in our land and that everyone may turn their hearts to the Bountiful Giver of all our blessings with thanksgiving and praise. There surely never was a time that the land throughout had more reason to rejoice and give thanks than the present when we have peace and the prospects of a plentiful year of the Bounties of Providence . . . adieu from your ever affectionate, Mother,

Hannah Cochran

Of course gaiety has often attended the beginnings of wars as it always has their ends. Lancaster in the War of 1812 ran true to form. But there was a quality in the fun at the finish which brooked little of the spirit of Thanksgiving that one would expect to be prevalent at a conflict's conclu-

sion. Rather the three day Jamboree in February ended on a note commensurate with that struck at a highly successful beer party when the guests, at very long last, are forced to sing "Good Night Ladies."

But Amos knew little of the final Civic Fling and cared less, even though Jasper played an impressive part — for he had taken his place two months before at the seat of the nation's government, dank, cold, foggy and burned out Washington City, D. C.

