

Items of Interest from the Neue Unpartheyische Lancaster Zeitung, und Anzeigs-Nachrichten

By AUGUST LERBSCHER and ALBERT CAVIN

AS early as 1752, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, boasted of a bi-weekly newspaper, the title of which was *Die Lancastersche Zeitung*; it also bore the English title of *The Lancaster Gazette*. It was a bi-lingual paper, with alternate columns of German and English. The publishers were Henry Miller and Samuel Holland. This paper, established January 15th, 1752, was published for about a year and a half. The last issue, so far as known, was that of June 5th, 1753. At least six copies of this paper, preserved in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, are still in existence.

For nearly a quarter of a century following the discontinuance of this, its first, bi-weekly, the borough was without a local newspaper. It was not until after the British army marched into Philadelphia, in September, 1777, that a second paper was published in Lancaster. John Dunlap, who at that time published in Philadelphia a weekly known as *Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet or the General Advertiser*, fled from that city on the approach of the British. He moved his printing press to Lancaster, where, for about seven months, he continued to publish his paper. The first issue printed in the borough was on November 29th, 1777. The paper was continued until June 17th, 1778, when the British having evacuated Philadelphia, Dunlap lost no time in returning to that city. In view of the fact that the paper was published for so short a time in Lancaster, it could scarcely be regarded as a local sheet.

On February 4th, 1778, Francis Bailey established, what was claimed, in local circles, to be our second newspaper. It bore the title of *Das Pennsylvanische Zeitungs-Blat* (The Pennsylvania Gazette-Journal); and was printed, as its title indicates, in German. Evidently it was not a success, financially, as it survived only about five months. It was discontinued with the issue of June 24th, 1778. A file of it is in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The third newspaper in the borough was a German weekly, established August 8th, 1787. It was called *Neue Unpartheyische Lancaster Zeitung, und Anzeigs-Nachrichten* (New Nonpartisan Lancaster Gazette and News Advertiser).

A complete file of this newspaper, covering the first six years of its publication, is carefully preserved in the library of The Lan-

easter County Historical Society. The first issue is dated Wednesday, August 8th, 1787; and the 314th, Wednesday, August 7th, 1793. Valuable information may be gathered from the numerous advertisements which appeared in it of merchants of the community and of the kind of goods sold. Relative to the social, religious and business life of the town, very little information was given, as the paper devoted most of its space to foreign news and to events occurring in large cities — Philadelphia, New York, Boston, London, Paris, Berlin, etc. The town being comparatively small, the editor doubtless felt that there was no necessity for recording local happenings, — it being taken for granted that the inhabitants knew all that was “going on.” It is greatly to be regretted that more attention was not given to local items, as information of this nature would be an invaluable addition to our history, and help in our efforts to visualize our town as it was in the period succeeding the Revolutionary War.

In Vol. 22, pp. 77-86, of the Proceedings of The Lancaster County Historical Society, published in May, 1918, there appeared an exceedingly interesting and valuable paper entitled “A Newspaper Relic,” prepared by the honorable treasurer of this Society, Mr. Albert K. Hostetter. In this article, reference was made to a number of news items and interesting advertisements that appeared in the *Neue Unpartheyische Lancaster Zeitung, und Anzeigs-Nachrichten*. With great pains and much labor, the author made the translations. Mr. Hostetter started with the first issue of the paper, and continued until December 24th, 1788.

In Vol. 11, pp. 175-194, of the Proceedings of The Lancaster County Historical Society, published in May, 1907, appeared an article entitled “An Early Newspaper.” This, also, is a translation of items of interest appearing in this old German newspaper. It was prepared by the late Dr. Frank Ried Diffenderffer. Mr. Diffenderffer’s translation began with January 28th, 1789, and ended with July 14th, 1790.

Even though our Society has published two articles containing translations from this old German paper, it may be entertaining as well as profitable, to issue another. It should be remembered that the *Neue Unpartheyische Lancaster Zeitung, und Anzeigs-Nachrichten* was published during one of the most important periods of our national existence, — that of the adoption of the Federal Constitution, and the early years of the infant Republic; and as there was no paper printed in English in Lancaster at this time, the old German publication has become almost our only source of local information during this era. With this thought in mind, we have endeavored to translate all items that have any bearing on local affairs, avoiding, so far as possible, trespassing upon the admirable work of Mr. Hostetter and Dr. Diffenderffer.

The items are as follows, with dates of issue of the paper :

August 8th, 1787.

Died, at Ephrata, on the 26th of last month [July] the famous doctor Gideon Eckstein, in the 71st year of his age. He was born in the Duchy of Wurtemberg, and came to this country 50 years ago. He has been a member of the Solitary Seventh Day Brethren of Ephrata ever since.

August 15th, 1787.

On last Sunday, the regular harvest sermon was delivered in the Lutheran church. On this occasion the pastor, the venerable Mr. Heinrich Muhlenberg, preached to a large congregation. His text was taken from Psalm 104, verse 24. In his sermon he reminded his hearers of the many blessings God had bestowed in general; and especially this year — the harvest being plentiful and the crops filling the barns. Before and after the sermon, the local musical youth sang hymns of thanks and praise.

On the day before yesterday (August 13th), the new church hall of the Evangelical [Moravian] Brotherhood, at Lititz, was dedicated. It must afford great pleasure to the lovers of public worship to learn that Pennsylvania is forging ahead in this respect. This new prayer house is one of the most beautiful in our country, especially so far as the interior furnishings are concerned. The arrangement is excellent and most suitable, and kept within lovely and simple style. If the spirit which seemed to animate the congregation at the dedication will remain at all times in this church, then every impartial judge must admit that the building, although imperfect, nevertheless will be a true copy of that spirit. The lovely simplicity of the service, the harmony of the vocal and instrumental music, as well as the excellent and harmonious organ manufactured by Mr. David Tannenberger, in addition to the devout singing of the entire congregation, made one's heart feel sublime (thrill with emotion). This could be noted on the faces of practically all present, and it made the festival of the Lititz [Moravian] Brotherhood one of the most acceptable services in the public worship of the church. The deeply affecting and edifying sermon of the Rev. Klingsohr, the baptism of an adult, the many musical numbers, and the love feast for all, were inspiring to the large congregation present, which consisted of the most prominent people of all religious denominations of Lancaster borough and county, from far and wide.

You, the highly praised advocates and defendents of tolerance in Germany, should have seen at this place how all Christian religions and sects, including their teachers, have attended the solemnities with all their heart and soul, and in the greatest spirit of

unity and cordiality. The greatest silence and order prevailed throughout the proceedings, as well as during the sermon, — including the baptism, the rendering of the vocal and instrumental music, and the love feast. Everyone went home satisfied and affected.

August 22nd, 1787.

A week ago last Thursday, the venerable Mr. Weinland, pastor of the Evangeiical Lutheran congregation of Germantown, was married in Lancaster to Miss Hoff, daughter of Mr. George Hoff, clockmaker.

One week ago to-day, we had a thunder storm, accompanied by heavy rain and a small fall of hail, a few miles from Lancaster. Some of the hailstones were oblong in shape, and as large as a thumb. The storm caused considerable damage to the buckwheat, corn, trees and fences. The storm was so violent that several trees were uprooted, and fences were carried away. The most singular thing about it was that Lancaster borough was hardly affected by the storm.

September 19th, 1787.

At the election held last Saturday, the following were elected officers of the corporation of the borough of Lancaster:

Burgesses.

HENRY DERING, ESQ.
EDWARD HAND, ESQ.

Assistant Burgesses.

ADAM REIGART
JACOB KRUG
GEORGE MOSSER
CASPER SCHAFFNER
JACOB FREY
WILLIAM ROSS

} Esquires

Secretary.

PHILIP GLONINGER

Last Friday evening we had a very severe thunderstorm, accompanied by wind and a heavy downpour. A man by the name of Adolph Beck, or Becker, 14 miles from here, was killed by lightning while sitting at a table near a window. A dog, which was under the table, was also killed. The woman was unharmed.

Last Friday a week ago, at the House of Assembly, the bill for the support of Paul Hausman (insolvent debtor), former col-

lector of public taxes and a prisoner in the local jail, was read for the third time. Mr. Hubley proposed an improvement of the first clause, which read that the said Paul Hausman shall be let go free as a common insolvent debtor.

October 10th, 1787.

Warwick, Lancaster county, Pa. October 6th. Died, one week ago to-day, in the 34th year of his age, Mr. William Coleman, late manager of the Speedwell iron works. A large concourse of people attended his funeral on the Tuesday following. He was buried in the local Lutheran graveyard. The services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Schulz. Throughout his life Mr. Coleman sustained the character of a well-respected man. Friends and neighbors mourn his early death.

We hear that the College of New Jersey [now Princeton University] has conferred the degree of Doctor of Theology on the Rev. Mr. Henry Muhlenberg, principal of our local German High School, and on the Rev. Mr. William Hendel, vice-principal of the same institution.

Letters which have arrived on the last mail packet from London inform us that on the 18th of July in Lambeth [Palace] chapel the Rev. Charles Inglis, D.D., formerly of New York, was consecrated Bishop of Nova Scotia with a yearly income of 2000 pounds. The Bishop is married to the only daughter of Mr. Joseph Galloway of Philadelphia. [Bishop Inglis taught school in Lancaster in 1757].

December 5th, 1787.

Colonel Hubley presented to the Assembly a bill prepared by the trustees of Franklin college, Lancaster, Pa., wherein they petition the House to rent to the said institution two lots of ground and the storehouse situated in the borough of Lancaster. Upon motion, and special request, the bill was read the second time and turned over to Messrs. Will, Hubley and Richards.

Last Thursday, the esteemed Assembly of this state adjourned. It will convene again on Tuesday, February 3rd, 1788.

December 12th, 1787.

Died, at Lititz, Pa., on December 4th, in the 83rd year of his age, Matthias Gottfried Hehl, the venerable bishop of the [Moravian] Brethren Church. He served the [Moravian] Brethren Church in various capacities during the last fifty years. In later years he was the pastor and helper of the Lititz congregation. For 31 years he was the inspector of the western city and county congregations. His funeral was held on Sunday, December 9th. It

was attended by many people of all classes and denominations. The congregation listened to a funeral discourse, the text of which was taken from I Timothy, I chapter, 15th and 16th verses.

December 26th, 1787.

During the last few weeks, the following things have happened. Abraham Newcomer, while riding home, fell from his horse not far from here, and was found dead in the road.

Four miles from here the house and barn of a widow burned down. The fire started in the bake oven, and owing to a strong wind made quick progress. The house was burned to the ground, and its contents destroyed.

Last week, a number of boys, while playing in the street, found the head of what appeared to be a new-born child. A woman, who was suspected was arrested and confessed that she had given birth to a child four weeks ago. She buried it at a certain place, which she revealed, but until this time the body has not been found. She was imprisoned in the local jail.

A week ago to-day, local citizens expressed their joy over the acceptance of the new Constitution by firing cannon and tolling bells. It is the belief of all honest citizens that should the Constitution be accepted by all the states it would be of great benefit to the land.

January 2nd, 1788.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

Bakers are informed that the corporation of the borough of Lancaster has fixed the following prices:

	Lb.	Oz.
An extra fine 6 pence loaf of bread shall weigh.....	3	3
A medium fine 6 " " " " " "	3	6
A 6 pence loaf of rye or corn bread " "	3	15

January 9th, 1788.

On December 26th of last year, the newly-built school house in New Holland, for the general use of all religious denominations, was solemnly dedicated. After the clergy, trustees, school children and others, had assembled at the parsonage, they marched in procession to the school house. The singing of various hymns preceded the sermon delivered by the Rev. [Frederick Valentine] Melsheimer, whose text was taken from the third chapter of Solomon, 14-17 verses. The good order which prevailed, the singing of the children, and the solemnity of the occasion, made a deep impression on the assemblage. It was a pleasure as well as an encouraging hope for better times among the Germans. With

bright prospects for the future in every heart, those gentlemen who have assisted so benevolently in this undertaking deserve the thanks of the public because they have broken the ice in this community and have given a praiseworthy example to others for imitation. Let us hope that this will be productive of good results, and that each small rural town in the surrounding country, which supports from three to four taverns to the detriment of youth, may build a similar institution. May our dear Germans convince themselves, once for all time, that schools bring physical and mental benefits; that they assure a political freedom and liberty of conscience; that they elevate us to an enlightened nation; and that they will enable our children and our children's children to enjoy the inestimable rights and privileges purchased with so much blood that we might become free citizens of America.

One week ago yesterday, New Year's day, Mr. William Reichenbach, professor of mathematics in the local Franklin high school, entered into the holy estate of matrimony with Mrs. Graff, widow.

January 30th, 1788.

The public is warned to be on the lookout for counterfeit Spanish dollars, which are now in circulation. They are of the year 1786 and well made; and the smartest may be deceived if he does not examine them closely. They may be distinguished from the genuine ones by the following characteristics.

On the obverse, the nose and mouth are larger than the genuine pieces.

The S in Carolus is smaller and not very well minted. The figure II is larger and the L is deeper in comparison with the other letters. The number 86 is not as full as on the genuine, and is rather crude.

On the reverse, the crown is larger and not as full and deep as on the genuine. The heads of the pillars are larger and heavier. The metal seems to be very good until the pieces are rubbed, which makes them resemble copper-colored coins. They weigh the same as the genuine.

March 5th, 1788.

The public sale of Mr. [Matthias] Slough's real estate has been set for Wednesday, the 7th of May.

March 19th, 1788.

On the 7th of this month, at Manheim, in this county, there was arrested for theft and robbery a suspicious character. At the present time he is in the local prison. He claims to be George Sinclair. He is a tanner by trade, and came here from Chester

county. He hails from Pennfield, Province of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia. He had three accomplices, who were well equipped with horses and loaded pistols. They fired at the people of Manheim when an effort was made to arrest them. These three fled when their comrade was shot, and fell from his horse, and they saw that the citizens of Manheim had also armed themselves. Bills of exchange, amounting to 433 pounds sterling made out by people in Nova Scotia, were found on Sinclair's person. His horse, which has been taken into custody, is a large dark brown animal, of English breed, and it is presumed that it was stolen in New Jersey.

We inform our readers, with much pleasure, that two more of the above-mentioned band were arrested in Chester county on the 8th of this month; and, at the present time, are lodged in West Chester jail. One calls himself John Wilson; the other James Wilson. One was riding a strong beautiful brown horse, about 15 hands high; the other, a pretty black roan horse, almost as high. Thirty pounds of money were found on them. It is surmised that they belong to the family of Doans, who have committed many robberies in this state.

April 16th, 1788.

Died, last Saturday, in the 24th year of his age, Mr. Anton Stiemer, from pleurisy. He was a printer by trade and a useful member of the community; a loving son to his aged parents who survive him; a true brother to his sisters. He was loved by all who knew him. He was buried the day before yesterday. A large concourse of people attended his funeral.

April 23rd, 1788.

FIFTEEN GUINEAS REWARD.

On the night of the 12th of this month, George St. Clair [Sinclair] escaped from jail in the town of Lancaster. He is five feet, five or six inches tall; has short black hair, is of dark complexion, and about 28 or 29 years of age. He has on his person, or has taken with him, a cotton jacket, a pair of corduroy trousers, and a high round hat, with a broad black band. At the same time, there escaped with him a certain Stephen Hall, who is about five feet, five or six inches tall, has short red hair, is good looking, and is about 32 years old. He wore an olive colored short coat and vest, with sleeves, and a pair of home made woolen overalls.

Whoever captures and delivers the man named George St. Clair [Sinclair] shall receive ten guineas; and five guineas will be given for the arrest and delivery of Stephen Hall.

JOHN OFFNER,
Prison master.

May 7th, 1788.

The trustees of Franklin high school will meet on Friday, June 6th, at Lancaster, for a yearly meeting. At this time they will hand in the subscription money for the school.

JOSEPH HUBLEY,
Secretary.

June 18th, 1788.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

On Thursday night, the 12th of this month, there escaped from the local jail one John Brown, who is 5 feet, 9 inches tall; Gottfried Yentzer and Michael Steffer, both Hessians, about 5 feet, 9 inches in height; John Woods, 5 feet, 6 inches tall; and a Negro named Joseph, who belonged to James Moore, in Martic township.

Whoever takes in the said prisoners and locks them up in any of the prisons of Pennsylvania, shall receive for each one 20 shillings reward; and if they are brought to Lancaster, 1 guinea, besides compensation for expenses.

JOHN BURG,
Jailor of Lancaster county.

June 25th, 1788.

Last Tuesday, died at Lititz Mr. Samuel Tannenberger (son of the famous organ builder, David Tannenberger), in the 23rd year of his age. He is mourned by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. He was esteemed for his good behavior and genial disposition.

July 9th, 1788.

Those citizens of Lancaster who have at all times proven to be defenders of freedom and friends of good government, could not resist the strong impulse to show their joy for the great and glorious Revolution on last Friday, which was the anniversary of independence; as well as their pleasure to hear the certain news that Virginia has been added as the tenth pillar to the American government. [Virginia was the tenth state to adopt the Constitution, in 1788]. The artillery fired a salute of one cannon at day-break, and reveille was sounded. Following this, the bells on the public buildings of the town were tolled. This was repeated at every hour during the day. At half past eleven, the second cannon was fired, after which the volunteers, with their arms, assembled at the court house for parade. At twelve o'clock, the artillery fired thirteen cannon, which were followed by thirteen volleys from the small arms carried by the infantry, and thirteen huzzas. At one o'clock, the artillery fired ten cannon in honor of the ten states

which have approved the new government; and these were followed by ten volleys from the smaller arms.

A number of citizens proceeded to Gerber's spring, situated a short distance from the town, on the banks of the Conestoga, where splendid refreshments were awaiting them. After partaking of the good things to eat and drink, they sat on the lawn in groups; and, in a spirit of perfect harmony, joy and politeness, toasts were drunk as follows:

1. To the new Constitution.
2. To the States which have accepted the new Constitution.
3. To the American Congress.
4. To the President of the Republic of Pennsylvania.
5. To his excellency General Washington.
6. To the Marquis de Lafayette and all other honorable foreigners who fought for the defense of American freedom.
7. To the memory of those officers and soldiers who fought for the defense of our freedom.
8. May the spirit of freedom and independence always guard our rights and liberty!
9. May the President of America possess at all times the virtues and wisdom of a Washington!
10. May a feeling of general prosperity unite the farmer, the merchant and the mechanic!
11. May the foes of the welfare of this community never find room in the councils of American government!
12. To the farmer, manufacturer, artist and scientist.
13. May justice, freedom, prosperity and peace be the inheritance of each American!

Following the toasts the assemblage was entertained with a number of patriotic songs, after which they returned to the borough.

The patriotic citizens of Lancaster were not content to enjoy themselves while some of their neighbors were in need of the necessities of life. They, therefore, made up a subscription with which a quantity of flour was purchased and distributed to the poor and needy of the borough. This enabled the widow and the indigent poor, with a tear of thankfulness, to mingle their joy with that of their benefactors.¹

(To be continued)

¹ This is the first description in a local paper of the celebration of Independence Day by the citizens of Lancaster.

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