

# THE GARDEN OF PENN- SYLVANIA

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Since Lancaster county did such a noble part in helping to lay the foundation of the new federation, what did it merit and what was the reward? Its modesty would ask for none but its reputation claimed for it the title of "the Garden of Pennsylvania." At the present time it is not unusual to hear it referred to as the "Garden Spot" but that the name should have clung so closely to it ever since 1779, possibly earlier, does seem rather surprising. The authenticity of this fact can be found in a letter written in New York by Dr. John Abraham DeNormandie to his friend in London, Joseph Galloway, March 29, 1779. This letter is signed with initials only. At first it was supposed that John Anthony DeNormandie, a Tory of Bucks county, had written it but on closer examination the decision is that John Abraham DeNormandie is the author. The New York Public Library, the owner of this letter, is the authority for the following statement: "After comparison with a letter in this division, dated 1784, October 15, and signed, "Jno. Ab: DeNormandie;" and examination of the "Annals of DeNormandie . . . collated, translated, and explained by Arthur Sandys," Cambridge, 1901, p. 141-142; 145-150, there is conclusive evidence that the letter to Joseph Galloway is written by John Abram DeNormandie." Facts mentioned in the first paragraph indicate

that the letter was sent to England in care of "Our friend Mr. Fisher," who was about to leave for London. The part of this lengthy communication pertinent to our country is the extract herewith given.

" \* \* \* Our affairs in America are hardly to be described; Faction and discord among the leaders of the present unneutral system predominate in every Province, particularly in Philadelphia, the present capital of America, of this you will be fully informed by their own publications and the testimony of our Friend. Poverty & Famine are making hearty strides over this once happy Quarter of the World and however improbable this may appear to proper requirements with the plenty and fertility of America I do assure you it is a fact; and from persons who have lately come in, I am assured that in Lancaster county, the Garden of Pennsylvania, wheat cannot be purchased under fifty shillings pr. Bushel hard Money, and that Continental cannot purchase it, that the Crops in the Ground are trifling as the Farmers have no encouragement for raising Grain; that Continental Money notwithstanding the various threets made use of to support its credit, is declining in every colony, and in some of them is openly refused.

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No doubt affairs had a gloomy aspect at the time DeNormandie gave his pessimistic views. John Abraham DeNormandie was a native of Bucks county. For some years he practised medicine in Philadelphia. Later he was a justice of the peace for Bucks county, but this commission he resigned in 1773, owing to his intention to remove to Geneva, in Switzerland. "During the war of the Revolution he was chosen and appointed to select sites and establish army hospitals.

Like all the members of his own, and Bard family, he had no sympathy with the war or its objects, but performed his duty with zeal and ability, obtaining the esteem of General Washington and the commendation of the authorities." (1) Owing to his intention to leave the country, he began to dispose of his property, when he found it was illegal according to "an act for the further security of the Government." In August, 1778, he made application "To the Honorable, the Representatives of the Freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met" to be relieved of the penalties concurring with the sale of his property. (2) At this time he declared himself to be a "Burgher, citizen, and subject of Geneva," as he held an estate there which had been left him by a relative. His petition was heard with favor and granted, and the sale was allowed to continue. In his letter to Galloway he showed plainly that his sympathies were with Great Britain. This was natural under the circumstances as Galloway was an ardent loyalist, though at first he had identified himself with the cause of the colonies.

Joseph Galloway was a nephew of the Joseph Galloway who had married Hannah Cookson, of Lancaster. (3) He was born in Maryland. He went to Philadelphia, and there took up law as a profession. Later he made his home in Bucks county. He was a member of the Assembly and at one time Speaker, also a member of the first American Congress. In 1776 he joined the British army, taking up their cause, and in 1778 went to Eng-

1—Annals of de Normandie; pages 145-148.

2—Penna. Archives, second series; Vol. 3, page 198.

3—Lancaster County Historical Society; Vol. 18, page 259.

land.(4) This accounts for the letter being sent to him at London.

Does it not seem strange that we are indebted to the loyalists for the first known reference of our county's well-known titles? If it was "the Garden of Pennsylvania" during the dark times of the Revolution how much stronger is the claim during times of prosperity? The Poverty and Famine" mentioned by DeNormandie passed it by, while plenty came and lingered. So, by right of inheritance and by virtue of thrift, Lancaster county has been able to retain, since 1779, the appellation, which the gentleman of Geneva mentioned to his friend, the loyalist in London—"the Garden of Pennsylvania."

4—Davis' History of Bucks County; Vol. 1, page 113.

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