

THE LIBERALITY OF LANCASTER COUNTY, 1793-94

This county is accredited as generous, always, when responding to a call for assistance. Whether the calamity be war, floods or, as in the present case, disease, its people are ever ready to lend the "helping hand." The recent aid given the war victims of Belgium has not been forgotten. The flood disasters which have occurred in our own State, and also in Ohio, gave to the people of this vicinity an opportunity to help the unfortunate. And if the people of the present generation are generous, it may be well to remember that those of the past were generous also.

Philadelphia, at various times during its earlier existence, was the unfortunate victim of yellow-fever epidemics. In the year 1793 occurred the worst of these catastrophies, it being of such proportions that it became necessary for the city authorities to ask for assistance from the outside of provisions, clothing and money. This appeal was answered by Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland and Virginia. In Pennsylvania the largest contributors by counties were Chester, Bucks and Montgomery, with Delaware and Lancaster next.

Just what Lancaster county did to help the afflicted in the metropolis of its own State can be found on the minutes of the committee who had charge of the affairs at this very se-

rious time in Philadelphia's history. A copy of the published account of the proceedings of this committee is owned by the Lancaster City and County Medical Society. The title page reads:

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee, appointed on the 14th September, 1793, by the citizens of Philadelphia, The Northern Liberties, and the District of Southwark, to attend to and alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted with the Malignant Fever, prevalent, in the city and its vicinity, with an appendix, Philadelphia; Printed by R. Aiken & Son, and sold by . Cruikshank, W. Young, T. Dobson and the other Booksecllers. M.DCC.XCIV. On the blank page opposite is written "The Monies from the Sale of those Books are for the Support of the Orphan Children whose Parents died of the Malignant Fever in Philadelphia, 1793." and across the title page in the same handwriting is the name, Christopher Mayer.

The first reference to our county on the minutes is under date of October 14th, just one month after the committee went into service. This item explains itself by stating that—"A letter was received from Paul Zantzinger, at Lancaster, informing the committee of a collection being made of clothing for the orphans under their care, and that a collection through the county, of cash and provisions was making for the use of the poor, etc." Confirmation of this promise was had on October 22d, the minutes giving the following account: "One," meaning letter, "from Paul Zantzinger, dated Lancaster, 19th instant, informing that the sum of one hundred and ninety-four pounds, six shillings and five pence, hath already been collected, that there is a pleasing prospect of a considerable

supply of flour from the different townships in that county, and that a collection of grain, etc., is making for the relief of the poor. That the sum of fifty-five pounds, two shillings and two pence was raised by the German Reformed congregation of that place for the use of the poor children whose parents belonged to that society in this city and have died of the prevailing disorder (to be under the direction of the trustees) if there be any; if not, that this sum is to be at the disposal of the committee. He also forwarded a very handsome supply of clothing in 38 packages, for the orphans under the care of the committee, which was presented by the benevolent ladies of the Borough of Lancaster." This donation, coming so promptly, must have been much appreciated. If the good people of the borough were quick to respond with the necessary supplies, the people of the county were not slow to contribute their share, as only a few days afterward, October 25th, the committee made this acknowledgment: "A letter was received from Peter Martin, of Cocalico township, Lancaster county, dated 23d Instant, accompanying 12 barrels flour and ten dollars, which the President was requested to answer." On October 29th "The Secretary read an extract of a private letter, informing the committee that the inhabitants of that part of Lancaster county, where the writer resides, are raising supplies, etc., for use of the poor, and requested information in what manner it may be best conveyed; the Secretary is requested to inform him." The last donation for October comes from another township as "Israel Israel delivered thirty pounds, two shillings and three pence, being a collection from the congregation of Leacock township, Lancaster county, for the

use of the sick, etc." Under date of November 4th "A letter was received from Paul Zantzinger, dated Lancaster, the 1st Instant, informing that he had sent five bundles of clothing for the use of the orphans, which have been received." The minutes of November 7th show a large donation from the county, as follows: "A letter was received from the Governor covering a check for 86 67-100 dollars from the congregation of Chestnut Level, handed to him by the Reverend Dr. James Latta.....Two other letters were received: One from Christian Lover, from Lampeter township, Lancaster county, with 14 barrels of flour; part of a donation from that township; and one from Frederick Seiger, Lancaster county, with 14 barrels of flour; a donation from the inhabitants of Earl township, which were delivered to Henry DeForest."

From the dates of acknowledgment which follow so closely, one after the other, it can easily be seen that the assistance given from our county was actuated by a willing spirit and a cheerful promptness. Getting fourteen barrels of flour to Philadelphia by a wagon was not the simple task of sending it down on a railroad. However, the new turnpike, the first one in the United States, was just being completed, so that the difficulties of transportation were somewhat modified at this time.

Reverting again to the minutes, November 12th gives this statement: "A letter from Paul Zantzinger, accompanying ten barrels of flour, six of which were manufactured at Rudy Hare's mill three miles from Lancaster, and four barrels at Christian Stoner's mill, two miles from thence, from wheat collected in the vicinity of Lancaster." The item for November 14th reads: "Also another letter

from William Smith and Frederick Sieger, dated Earl district, Lancaster county, 21st ultimo, informing that the inhabitants of that township had collected a parcel of wheat for the purpose of being manufactured into flour for the use of the poor; and requesting that the committee would give instruction how and to whom the same shall be directed."

The record of November 21 gives Robert Coleman special recognition. Whether he established a precedent or just adhered to a custom already established, we do not know. However, the custom seems to be in vogue up to the present time though, as a matter of fact, not a large number of people follow the good example. The liberality of Mr. Coleman is reported in his statement that "a letter was received from Robert Coleman, Esq., Associate Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Lancaster county, dated Elizabeth Furnace, November 12, covering a draft on the State Treasurer, for the amount of his salary for one year as Associate Judge; to be applied to the use of the afflicted under the care of the committee; which was delivered to the treasurer, to be appropriated accordingly." No mention is made that Mr. Coleman was seeking reappointment to the official position he was holding at this time.

On November 23rd a belated acknowledgment of a donation was made: "Eighty-five dollars and twenty-five cents were received from A. H. Middleton, treasurer of Woodbury Committee, on the 20th October, and seventy dollars and fifty-one cents from Lancaster borough, by the hands of Paul Zantzinger, on the 2d November, which were omitted to be entered in the minutes of that date." The

county now takes the lead in contributions. The committee on November 26th had the following to consider: "Two letters were received, one from Frederick Sieger, dated Earl township, Lancaster county, 18th instant, inclosing sixty-five dollars, for the use of the orphans, and inform the committee that sundry parcels of flour had been sent, and desiring receipts therefore; as the waggoners had neglected to deliver those given to them; the other from New Holland, in the same township, dated the 15th instant, signed by Henry Moeller, minister of the Lutheran Church, inclosing eighteen pounds, ten shillings, a donation from the benevolent farmers of Alleghany and Muddy Creek, exclusive of those in their congregations, who have made their donation in wheat: These donations are particularly designed for the orphans: The secretary is directed to deliver them to the orphan-committee, and the president is requested to answer the letters." Another township sends its donations on November 20th: "Thirteen barrels of flour were received from the inhabitants of Mannheim township, Lancaster county, accompanied by a letter from Martin Mayer, which was answered." The donations for December came from several new sources. Under December 2d is noted: "A letter was received from John Bauchman, dated Conestogo township, 27th ultimo, informing that fifteen barrels of flour are on the way; and covering nine pounds and ten shillings, being the amount of a donation raised in that township, for the use of the poor. The president is requested to answer it as soon as the flour is received." From among a large list of contributions received by the committee on

December 21st, one only came from this locality, being "Ninety-two dollars and four cents from Leacock township, Lancaster county, by the hands of Jacob Johns." The minutes for December 24th contain two items which show further proof of the liberality of the county: "Sixty-four dollars and ninety-seven cents from the west end of the township of Little Brittain, in Lancaster county, received by the hands of Levi Hollingsworth;" and "Forty-one dollars and seventy-five cents from Donegal township, Lancaster county, by the hands of John Whitehill, Esquire." The last one for this month is on December 28th, and is for "Forty-five dollars and twenty-five cents from the inhabitants of Carnavon township, Lancaster county, delivered by Edward Bonsall." The report for January 11th 1794, shows that "Twelve barrels of flour were received from Donegal township, Lancaster county, forwarded from Jacob Graybill's mill, accompanied by a letter from Paul Zantzinger, Esquire, at Lancaster." According to the minutes the "considerable supply of flour from the different townships" which Paul Zantzinger mentioned in one of his letters, up to this time had not been received. The reason for this is explained under date of January 18th: "The following parcels of flour have been received as donations from Lancaster county, and as the whole were not entered in the minutes at the time they were received, Resolved, that the list be now inserted, and is as follows:

Donations In Flour Received From Lancaster County.

Townships.	By Whom Forwarded.	Waggoner's Name.	
Warwick.	J. Gingriect.	M. Miller	14
Cocalico.	P. Martin.	E. Barr	12
Manor.	V. Rummel. } J. Goodman. }	A. Hare	11
Lampeter.	C. Lower.	14
	C. Yoredy.	C. Doner	14
	John Smith.	7
Ditto, and Strasburg.		E. Moore	13
			— 48
Earl.	F. Seiger.	J. Brightenstein	14
	..	P. Werrentz	14
	..	H. Tanny	11
	15
			— 54
Manheim.	J. Baughman.	L. Holl	14
	M. Mayer.	B. Bastian	13
			— 25
Conestoga.	J. Baughman.	J. Bar's team	15
Donegal.	J. Graybill's mill.	V. Wishaupt	12
Neigh. of } the borough }	R. Hare's do. 6 } C. Stover's do. 4 }	J. Stigelman	10
Rapho.	M. Kauffman.	13
Brought to the city, and put down by the waggoners, without giving an account from what township they were sent,			22

This accounting shows that the farmers were liberal in their offering and counteracts the statement made in 1779 concerning our county "that the crops in the ground are trifling, as the farmers have no encouragement for raising grain." On February 1st the last donation from this county is recorded. It reads: "Eighteen dollars and thirty-five cents from New Holland, Lancaster county, by the hands of Frederick Seiger. And sixty-two dollars from St. John's Church, Salisbury township, Lancaster county, by the hands of John Hopkins and James Henderson."

The total amount of money sent to the assistance of Philadelphia, as given in the summary was \$1,265.77. However, the contribution sent from Caernarvon township was accidentally counted in with those sent from Berks county, so that by adding \$45.25 to the amount just mentioned, Lancaster county's part was \$1,311.02. To Leacock township belongs the credit of sending the largest sum of money, exclusive of the borough. Earl township was next, though first in sending the largest supply of flour. The reason for the largest contributions coming from the eastern section of the county is given in the census of 1790. This places the population of the entire county at 36,147, with Cocalico and Earl townships as the most thickly populated. From the report in general it appears, however, that each section responded generously to the cause of the afflicted.

This was not the only time that the good people of the county of Lancaster were called to the assistance of Philadelphia. As previously mentioned that city had a number of yellow fever epidemics to contend with. No doubt, help from this locality was asked on many of these occasions, but

one reference only will be necessary to prove this supposition. This was in 1797, when our Revolutionary patriot General Hand was urging the people to send supplies to the afflicted in Philadelphia. In "The Hive" of October 11th, 1797, printed by William Hamilton, which paper is the property of this society, is the following:

Fellow Citizens and Brother Farmers
of the County of Lancaster.

The calamity with which it has pleased God to visit the city of Philadelphia, has reduced many industrious families to the utmost distress, and calls loudly for the benevolent aid of the charitable and well disposed in every quarter of the State. The Citizens of Philadelphia have done much for the alleviation of the public distress; fall short of the object. Let me, therefore, humbly request of you, my neighbors, whose humanity I am well assured of, to contribute to the relief of our afflicted brethren, in grain of any kind fit for the food of man, according to your several circumstances; a small quantity from every man, who can afford it, will, when collected, form a magazine worth transporting, and may save the lives of many of our fellow mortals, who without it may perish of famine.

If you approve the measures as I am confident you will, early contributions should be made and the grain deposited in some central place in every township, to be thence transported by some persons appointed for the purpose, to the city or its vicinage, to be disposed of by those who have the care of the poor.

EDWARD HAND,
Lampeter Township, Oct. 10th, 1797.

The reverend gentlemen of the clergy of every denomination in Lancaster county are respectfully de-

sired to give all the publicity in their power to the foregoing address, and to recommend the speedy adoption of the proposed measure to their respective congregations; so that the collections may be made and forwarded in time to answer the benevolent purposes for which they are intended.

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