

EXTRACTS FROM MORAVIAN DIARIES AT BETHLEHEM

(Relating to Early Events in Lancaster, Pennsylvania)

Made by Dr. John W. Jordan and Sent by Him to

Hon. Charles I. Landis, at Lancaster, Pa.

DIARY I.

- 1768
Febry. 12 Hopson & Henry with 2 other citizens settled a dispute with Melchoir Schneieder and another.
Febry. 15 Hopson & Henry appointed arbitrators in another case by the Court.
April 13 The Moravian minister and Henry visited the imprisoned negro.
April 17 Henry and Phil. Thomas visited James the negro.
April 18 After execution of the negro James, Wm. Henry called on Mr. Barton, who had been with him on the scaffold, and asked what he had said to him. He expressed himself thankful to those who had taken so much pains with him. "I am a great sinner," said he, "I have deserved the punishment I am to undergo, but I have thrown myself upon my Savior and I believe he has forgiven me all my sins. I am no more afraid to die, but the sooner the better. I know I will be happy hereafter."
- 1769
July 31 Merks from Lititz came with their little lame daughter to Wm. Henry's, to make a trial of electropathy on her.
- 1770
Aug. 14 The Dehes are very thankful for the rescue of their son Joseph, 2½ yrs. old, who had fallen into a cask of water. Wm. Henry's son, passing at the time, observed something moving in the water and curious to see what it was rescued the child just in time.
- 1774
April 8 Two important arrivals in town; one was Gov. Rebstock from Santa Cruz and the other a Captain, on their journey to England. The latter called at once on Bro. Krogstrup, who at once called on the Governor and accompanied them to Wm. Henry and John Hopson.
- April 9** The Governor again visited.

DIARY II.

- 1775
June 12 There was a terrible mutiny in the prison. The prisoners tried to force their way out and the soldiers surrounded the prison. As the prisoners would not desist, they were fired upon; wounded about 20. No one was killed.
- July 20** Fast and Humiliation Day.
Dec. 10 About 400 prisoners of war from Canada arrived. They are to occupy the barracks here.
- 1776
May 17 Fast and Prayer Day.
July 7 Today much excitement. Order received from Philada. that the Militia should be ready in a few days to proceed to Philada. The Committee had many people brought with a guard and necessitated them to sign that they would go, and whoever declined was put in prison. 23 members of the cong. went. Several com-

panies had to remain to protect the town and so many prisoners of war here.

- July 21** Yesterday and today a great many prisoners arrived. There must be 1,000 here.
- Aug. 31** All of our people with the Militia returned, after 6 weeks of service.
- Sept. 8** Some of our people go with the Militia tomorrow. They numbered 14.
- Oct. 20** Today all our people who 5 weeks ago left with the Militia returned from Camp. Not a member of the Battalion went to the Flying Camp.
- Nov. 20** Wm. Henry left for Philada. to attend Assembly.
- Dec. 1** Unquiet these days, because the Royal prisoners here in Barracks had marched off to join Gen. Howe. The Militia ordered to hold themselves in readiness to go to Philada. when ordered.
- Dec. 15** Geo. Schlosser and children arrived today from Philada.
- Dec. 22** At 2 p. m. the whole Militia met in Lutheran Church where Gen. Miffin made a sharp address to them and demanded that all, without exception, go to Philada., and whoever would not obey might expect it would not fare well with them.

1777

DIARY III.

- Jan'y 4** In the evening 900 Hessian prisoners of war were brought here and quartered in the Barracks.
- Jan'y 12** This week several thousand soldiers passed through the town to join the army. The houses, every night, are filled with soldiers.
The whole Militia from Lancaster, which the previous week marched off to Philada., ran away from there and came back again. This was taken very much amiss of them.
- Feb'y 17** Gen. Roberdeau's wife was today buried in Presbyterian churchyard. The Lutheran pastor made a sharp address in German at the interment.
- April 3** Fast Day.
- June 4** This evening at 9, great excitement in the town. The prisoners in the barracks seized the guards, took away their firearms and knocked them down with clubs and tried to escape. The bells of the town sounded an alarm, and drums were beat, and the Militia were gathered around the Barracks. One person was shot and several wounded. Today was the King's birthday.
- Sept. 7** This week the people of the town were full of fear, as reports were received daily that the British army would come to Lancaster. Many removed their best things out of the town, and in one night there were more than 50 wagons from the surrounding country to take things away. It proved to be a false alarm.

DIARY IV.

- Sept. 15** This week the Militia, 1st and 2nd Classes, left here to join the main army.
- Sept. 22** The Congress and Council came in these days to Lancaster. The former, however, went on Saturday to Yorktown, as the Council and Assembly were in session here.*
- Oct. 5** This week it was pretty quiet in the town.
- Oct. 12** Sennef and wife with 7 children from Philada. came here. He is to remain here for some time as tailor for the Continental army.
- Oct. 20** At 9 o'clock in the evening, the people of the town all of a sudden began to shoot lively, because an express messenger is said to

* There is lack of accuracy in this item, because the Congress met in Lancaster Sept. 27, 1777. H. F. E.

have brought the news that the English had left Philada. and returned to their ships and that Gen'l Washington with his army had taken possession of the city.

Oct. 21

Today the entire day spent in shooting for joy and in the evening all houses were illuminated, and at the Court House various flags were thrown to the breeze. Some people had their windows smashed in and their goods spoiled, because they had set no lights in their windows. All this joy was dampened by the arrival of an express messenger from Camp, contradicting the former news: that Gen. Howe was still in Philada.

Oct. 22

14 members Lititz congregation brought here under strong guard. They had been taken by force and brought to a house 4 miles from Lititz and lodged in a Quaker Meeting house full of Militia people. They were badly treated and had to remain there until evening, when Bro. John Hopson went bail for them and afterwards all came to the parsonage at Lancaster.

Oct. 23

At 10 o'clock the Lititz brethren appeared at the Court House, where they were detained until 4 p. m., when finally they were told to return home until they received orders to appear.

DIARY V.

Many Mennonites and Dunkers were also brought to the town. They also lodged in the Quaker Meeting house.

This week several of our members had to pay L. 42 because they did not wish to go with the Militia. Guards have been posted all around the town, so that no one can leave or enter without a pass.

1778

Feb'y 1

After preaching, read the communication which all the clergymen received from Congress in that all Ministers shall encourage their respective congregations to give a voluntary offering for the sick soldiers in the Hospitals, and thus manifest the spirit of love.

April 17

Today very unquiet in town. Court was in session all day and many soldiers from Virginia passed thru here.

May 1

This evening the cannon were fired off 12 times because news reached here thru Mr. Dean who arrived from France that the French had entered into an alliance with the Americans. Many windows broken in various houses. There was much joy among the people and much noise!

May 11

The cannon were again discharged as on May 1st and the Court House illuminated to signify the joy of the people for the alliance.

May 17

Bro. John Ettwein arrived this afternoon from Yorktown and visited Wm. Henry. Towards evening 2 Schwenkfelders, who had been waiting to confer with him about a petition to the Assembly, met him.

May 19

Bro. Ettwein delivered his petition to the Assembly, after he had spoken previously to different members. His petition was well received and the members appeared universally inclined to be favorable to it.

May 23

President Wharton died last night after he had been ill of inflammation of the throat 14 days. Today, Bro. Ettwein visited Vice-President Bryan, who gave him letters to the Justices of the Peace of Northampton Co. relating to the Moravians.

DIARY VI.

May 24

Before preaching, Justice Hubbley called on Bro. Krogstrup and requested him to announce the Funeral of President Wharton, in the church.

A written request was also received from Secretary Matlack, of the Council, an invitation to attend.

At 4 o'clock the burial of President Wharton took place. The coffin containing the remains was borne by several members of the Council to the Lutheran Church, placed in another box, and interred in a grave which was walled. Nothing was sung or or spoken, but during the procession the cannon were discharged 42 times just outside the town, and afterwards the small arms were fired off 3 times by the military officers outside of the church. Today many soldiers came from Camp, who are to protect the frontiers against threatened Indian forays.

May 28

A Hessian soldier named Giesenschlager has been coming frequently to our meetings. He is expecting to be exchanged.

June 8

June 13

Bro. Krogstrup visited some of our members from Lebanon who are in prison. They were brought here with 8 Mennonites because they cannot take the test oath. Wm. Henry also visited them and then called on Pres't Bryan on their behalf.

June 15

July 16

Near 500 soldiers came from Camp for the defense of the frontiers. The Sennefs, Continental tailor, left for Philada., taking a hearty farewell.

Aug. 6

The Court released from prison Geo. Bohler (Lebanon) and Kittering and others without their having taken the oath, because they have been confined 3 months.

Oct. 9

Mother of Wm. Henry died today in her 75th year. (Buried in St. James P. E. Ch. Yard.)

Dec. 13

This week the British soldiers taken prisoners (Saratoga) passed thru here to Virginia, among them were many officers. There were about 5000 in number.
(Diary for 1779 missing.)

DIARY VII.

June 19

Tomorrow will be a very unquiet day in town, on account of the news received that the English will retire from Philada.

June 21

During these days, various persons who visited their friends in prison were detained, because they would not take the oath which was demanded of them on such occasions. Wm. Henry sent word to the Prison Keeper that he should let the people instantly depart (which took place) and he forbid him to do anything of the kind in future to persons who desired to visit their friends, and the prisoners who sit there because they will not or have not taken the oath, are not to be treated as though they were murderers or thieves.

July 4

In the evening, the cannon were discharged and the Court House illuminated.

1780

DIARY VIII.

Jan'y 10

There has been intensely and continued cold weather this week. Have heard of several persons who were frozen to death. Many soldiers passed through here on way to Virginia and Carolina; also English prisoners who were captured at Stony Point, among them women and little children, who suffered much from the cold. Cold continued during these days. January 20 was the coldest we have yet had; several persons were frozen to death on the road. A lad 10 years old who came to the city to get medicine for his sick father on the way home was frozen to death and brought home sitting on the back of the horse dead and stiff.

May 13

One of the Cavalry men here was instantly shot dead by the guard at the Barracks because he wished to remove a prisoner by force.

Sept. 28
Oct. 26

The Militia, over 800, left here for Jersey.
Today was a very exciting day here, as it was a day of rejoicing on account of the capture of the English army. The Church bells were rung all day, and the cannon fired off 13 times and constant discharge of small arms continued until late in the night. All houses were illuminated. Many windows smashed because no lights had appeared in them.
(Diary 1782 missing.)

1783

DIARY IX.

April 7
April 22

In these days peace between England and America was confirmed. Today the Proclamation of Congress regarding an Armistice was publicly read at the Court House, on which occasion all the bells in the town were rung and a salute of 13 guns fired.

May 11

In these days all the British prisoners from here went to New York.

Dec. 11

Thanksgiving Festival of Peace. The town very quiet, no disorder observed, neither was there any uproar and disturbance made with illumination.

1784

Feb'y 16

Today Festival of Peace celebrated. All the bells were rung and in the evening the Court House was illuminated and different sorts of paintings exhibited. Everything passed off orderly.

Nov. 24

At the prison there was an exhibition of fireworks. Nearly all the people had collected there. We could see the rockets from our house and several of them very nearly alighted on our roof.

1785

Jan'y 10

Wm. Henry came last evening (Jan'y 1st) on a visit from Trenton. Wm. Henry tomorrow morning takes the stage for Philada. and from there to New York as a member of Congress.

July 16

After an absence of 6 months at Congress, Wm. Henry arrived here today on a visit.

(Diary 1786, all months except Oct., Nov., Dec., are missing.)

1786

DIARY X.

Oct. 6

Wm. Henry at home sick.

Dec. 15

At 6:30 a. m. Wm. Henry unexpectedly passed to his eternal rest.

Dec. 18

Burial of Wm. Henry. Thirty members from Lititz and a very large number of people of all denominations accompanied the corpse to the last resting place, also the three ministers of the Lutheran, Reformed and Episcopal Churches. In the sermon which followed, the Church could scarcely contain the hearers. Rev. Herbst preached on Psalms LXXIII, 25, 26, who spoke with power and impressiveness. Altho the Church was very much crowded, yet there was great silence and perfect attention manifested by all. Afterwards, the above mentioned three ministers made a friendly visit to the parsonage.