

An Early Threshing Machine in Lancaster

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

LATE in the summer of 1806, a threshing machine, invented in Scotland, was erected at David Witmer's mill in Lancaster county, Pa. The machine was capable of threshing 35 bushels of oats in an hour, of threshing and cleaning 100 bushels of wheat in eight hours, and of threshing other grain in proportion. The owner notified the public that he intended to thresh every Monday, from 10 to 11 o'clock, for four consecutive weeks, in order to give persons desirous of seeing the machine in operation an opportunity to gratify their curiosity.

That the machine would serve the farmers in Lancaster county satisfactorily is evident from the following testimonial which appeared in *The Intelligencer and Weekly Advertiser* of Tuesday, September 9th, 1806:

“Witmer's Tavern,
“September 3rd, 1806.

“We, the subscribers, having seen the threshing machine lately erected by Mr. David Prentice, at Mr. David Witmer's, in operation, do hereby certify, that, in our opinion, the workmanship is well executed, and that the machine will answer the purpose for which it is intended, to the fullest extent.

“Henry Witmer, James Crawford, Thomas Evans, John Harman, Michael Rine, Peter Root (miller), John Buckwalter, Abraham Carpenter, Samuel Herr, John Herr, Henry Herr, Henry Miller, Jacob Neff, Jr., Samuel Miller, John Kendig, Francis Kendig, Henry Bowman, Daniel Witmer, John Carpenter.”

The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence Celebrated in Lancaster

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

ON June 20th, 1826, Select and Common Councils of the city of Lancaster passed a resolution recommending the mayor to call a town meeting for the purpose of making arrangements for the celebration of the semi-centennial of American Independence. A meeting for that purpose was held on Thursday evening, June 22nd. Nathaniel Lightner, mayor of the city, was chosen chairman, and John Mathiot was appointed secretary. The object of the meeting was stated by James Buchanan; after which a com-

mittee, consisting of George Musser, Henry Keffer, George L. Mayer, Dr. Samuel Humes, Jacob Snyder, John Reitzel, Jonas Dorwart, James Johnston, Frederick D. Hubley, Samuel Dale, Robert Evans, Christopher Hager and Philip Messenkop, was appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the celebration.¹

Thomas Wentz, William Buck, John Ihling, William Frick, William Whiteside, Henry Carpenter, Peter Reed, Jr. and Jeremiah Mosher, Jr., were appointed a committee to solicit subscriptions.

Tuesday, July 4th, 1826, the fiftieth anniversary, or first jubilee, of American Independence, was celebrated by the people of Lancaster city in a manner worthy of the great events which that day commemorated. At six o'clock in the morning, the city battalion of volunteers, under the command of Major Hambright, assembled; and after performing a variety of military evolutions in the principal streets of the city, marched to the court house at nine-thirty, where an oration was delivered by Reah Frazer, Esq., a member of the Lancaster Phalanx.² At the conclusion of the oration, a procession was formed and proceeded to Trinity Lutheran church, escorted by the militia, under the direction of chief marshal George L. Mayer and his aides, Henry Carpenter and Henry Eichholtz. At the door of the church the militia opened, and the civic procession passed through into the building, which was filled to overflowing. The gallery fronting the pulpit was reserved for the soldiers.

The Republican Telegraph of Saturday, July 8th, 1826, stated:

“Two thousand persons, it is supposed, were present, of whom at least eight hundred were ladies, who, on this, as on every other occasion, manifested that patriotic ardor for which the American fair sex has ever been distinguished, and greatly contributed to the splendor and beauty of the scene.”

The ceremonies in the church were introduced by an anthem, composed for the occasion, and sung by the Moravian choir. The anthem was as follows:

Come, joyful hallelujahs raise,
The tribute bring of grateful praise:
Exalt, extol the wondrous love
Of Him who lives and reigns above.
His blessings and His mercies all
Our songs and sweetest anthems call,
The riches of His bounteous hand,
Still cheer and crown our favor'd land.
He is our God and our defense

In danger He our confidence;
In happiness our guard and guide,
He ever will for us provide.
His matchless goodness He displays,
To brighten and to bless our days.
Then let us join His name to sing
And hallow'd hymns harmonious bring.
O, tune thy harp, and strike thy lay,
America! Columbia!

At the conclusion of the anthem, a prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. Christian L. F. Endress, pastor of Trinity Lutheran church, followed by the reading of the Declaration of Independence, by Cyrus S. Jacobs, in a masterly style. An oration was delivered by William Jenkins, Esq., which, for matter and manner, was equal to anything of the kind ever presented in Lancaster.³

The Rev. John G. Herman, pastor of the Moravian church, made the concluding prayer, after which the choir sang the following anthem, accompanied by the doxology:

All glory to the sov'reign God
And father of compassion!
To God, our help and sure abode,
Whose gracious visitation,
Renews His blessings ev'ry day,
And taketh all our griefs away:
Rejoicing, hallelujahs sing,
Jesus, Jehovah, is our king,
And give Him all the glory!

The ceremonies in the church were closed by the benediction, pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Herman.

The civic procession then formed in front of the church, in open order. The militia, marching through them, took the right of the line, in which order the procession moved to the banks of the Conestoga, about a mile distant, at which place a sumptuous dinner was prepared for the city battalion by Mr. Ross Simpson. The soldiers opened their ranks, and the civic procession, bearing a handsome and appropriate flag, moved through them, exchanging salutes. From this place, the citizens proceeded up the stream a few hundred yards to a point where a bountiful dinner was prepared by Mr. William Russel. Two rows of tables, connected by a semi-circle at the head, were covered with canvas, which protected the company from the sun. Nearly two hundred persons sat down to dinner.

Mayor Lightner presided at the dinner, assisted by Jonas Dorwart and Henry Longenecker as vice-presidents. After the cloth was removed, the following toasts were drunk:

1. *The Day we Celebrate*—the Jubilee of our Independence. Ere the next jubilee, may the trumpet of liberty have sounded through the nations, and the world be emancipated from tyranny!

2. *The Memory of General George Washington.*

3. *Thomas Jefferson*—The Venerable Author of the Declaration of Independence. The misfortunes of his old age have rendered him ten-fold dearer to the American people.

4. *The Navy and Army of the United States.*

5. *The President of the United States.*

6. *The Governor of Pennsylvania.*

7. *The Surviving Heroes of the Revolution*—the Last Reliques of the Band which Achieved our Independence. May they descend to the grave full of days and full of honors!

8. *The Hero of New Orleans*—the Washington of our Second War for Independence.

9. *General Lafayette*—the Hero of Two Continents. May he survive to witness that grand revolution which shall subvert tyranny and proclaim liberty to every kingdom in Europe!

10. *The Surviving Officers of the Continental Army.* In their old age they have asked that justice from their country which they should have received whilst in the vigor of youth. May their claim upon the people of the United States never again meet a cold repulse before an American Congress!

11. *The Republics of South America.* We hail them as younger sisters, and trust that their future conduct may cast no disgrace upon the family.

12. *Greece.* The defense of Mossolonghi has proclaimed to the world that the modern Greeks are the legitimate descendants of the heroes of Marathon and Thermopylae.

13. *The Independent Yeomanry of our Country.* An intelligent people are the only legitimate sovereigns.

A "Volunteer" was given by Mayor Lightner, as follows:

The City Battalion of Volunteers. Their gentlemanly deportment and correct military discipline, have on this, and every other occasion, excited the admiration of their fellow citizens.

A committee, consisting of Adjutant John Longenecker, Sergeant Withers and Mr. Stambaugh, responded with the following toast which had been drunk by the battalion:

Our Fellow Citizens, Celebrating on the Banks of the Conestoga. May the love of liberty which now animates them be cherished in the hearts of their descendants with corresponding enthusiasm at the next "Grand Jubilee"!

Volunteers were given by the following gentlemen: Jonas Dorwart, Henry Longenecker, George Musser, George L. Mayer, Henry Carpenter, Henry Eichholtz, John Ihling, John Risdell, Wil-

liam White, Cyrus S. Jacobs, George Daley, Robert Elliott, Mathew McKelly, Christian Bachman, C. Hager, George Hambright, Dr. Abraham Carpenter, William B. Fordney, Jacob Rathfon, C. Burg, R. Lake, Samuel Herman, Martin Shreiner, Jr., James Stone, Dr. John Miller, F. D. Hubley, Evan R. Evans, John B. Mayer, Christian Eggert, George Beckel, S. D. Orick, H. G. Long, Henry Keffer, William Ihling, Jacob Kauffman, William M. Grier, Daniel Fuller, Henry Flick, Edward H. Brien, T. Logan, Henry Bear, Alexander Reynolds, Stacy Swem, Joseph B. Myers, David Longenecker, W. M. Wiley, John Shumard, George Stauffer, John C. Cassal, Col. Slough, George Heckert and Gilbert Rodman, Jr.

The Republican Telegraph of Saturday, July 8th, 1826, stated:

“Between five and six o'clock, the pleasure boat, Edward Coleman, passed down the Conestoga, on board of which was the band attached to the city battalion of volunteers, playing national airs, who received nine cheers from the citizens, who were drawn up in a line on the bank of the stream. Immediately after the city battalion passed the line, they were saluted and cheered by the citizens, and took the right of the procession, in which order the whole company marched into the city, and after saluting, the militia were dismissed in good order. The whole proceedings were conducted with an order and regularity which reflect great honor on the city of Lancaster, and we trust that the next jubilee will find our citizens in the full enjoyment of as much happiness, as a great portion of liberty, and as well disposed to unite in celebrating that great and eventful day which proclaimed liberty to the fairest portion of the universe.

“A small part of our citizens passed the day in a very agreeable manner, at the house of Mr. Joseph Hubley, a short distance north of the city. Another part dined at the house of Mr. Leonard Eichholtz, where a dinner was prepared for them in Mr. Eichholtz's usual good style.”

¹ Lancaster Journal, Friday, June 30th, 1826.

² Reah Frazer's oration was published in the Lancaster Journal of Friday, July 7th, and the Republican Telegraph of Saturday, July 15th, 1826.

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