

The American Society of Lancaster County for the Promotion of Domestic Manufactures and National Industry.

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

The Lancaster Journal of Friday, February 28th, 1817, contained the following notice:

"The citizens of the borough of Lancaster, and gentlemen from the country who may happen to be in town and are friendly to domestic manufactures, are invited to a meeting at Col. Slough's tavern this evening at half past 6 o'clock.

"The exertions that are making by our trans-Atlantic brethren to suppress the manufacturing of every thing from a hob nail upwards in this country, call loudly for counter exertions on our part.

"Policy, patriotism and self-interest demand effort. The example set by our fellow-citizens of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Washington and other places, ought to be followed; and it is anxiously hoped that in the county of Lancaster, where so many useful manufacturing establishments are in operation, the citizens will not be backward in giving countenance to the exertions of their brethren in other sections of the United States."

In response to this appeal, a number of persons friendly to domestic manufactures, met at Col. Jacob Slough's tavern on Friday evening, February 28th, 1817. Robert Coleman was appointed chairman, and Samuel Carpenter, Esq., secretary. A society was organized; and a committee, consisting of Samuel White, Joseph Ogilby and James Humes, was appointed to prepare a constitution¹.

The Lancaster Journal of Monday, March 24th, 1817, contained the following:

"At a meeting of the inhabitants of Lancaster county, friendly to the protection and promotion of domestic manufactures, convened at the court house on the 17th inst., pursuant to public notice, the committee appointed for that purpose reported a constitution for the government of the 'American Society of Lancaster County for the Promotion of Domestic Manufactures and National Industry', which was read, approved and unanimously adopted. Every inhabitant of the county of Lancaster who feels an individual interest in the encouragement of any branch of home manufacture, or who, elevated above the sordid considerations of personal aggrandizement, extends his views to the ultimate welfare and real independence of his country, must feel a deep concern in the prosperity and spread of this society. The close of the late war found the United States a thriving manufacturing people. Factories of great variety and value were set on foot in different sections of the country. The talent, enterprise and capital of the nation were, to a considerable degree,

¹ Lancaster Journal, Wednesday, March 5th, 1817.

embarked in the patriotic struggle of making the United States wholly independent of foreign countries in all articles of the first necessity, and in many of mere luxury and elegance. In the hour of war and affliction, the fostering hand of government was promised to these benefactors of the nation; liberal encouragement was unsparingly proffered to all who should engage in this great national object. But no sooner is peace concluded, our ports thrown open to the European nations, our markets inundated with the products of foreign climes, and a general depression in the price of all articles made at home threatens ruin to every domestic manufacturer, than we find Congress reluctant to redeem its pledges; and undertakings of vast expense and national promise are suffered to languish and die for want of proper encouragement. Petition upon petition has been forwarded to Congress, but no adequate relief has yet been afforded. Acting without concert, our efforts have not been crowned with success. With a view of remedying this obvious disadvantage, societies have been formed in several of our sister States and in the eastern and western sections of our own State, the objects of which are to embody the public sentiment on the subject of the encouragement of domestic manufactures and national industry, and to make a common cause in the prosecution of objects of such high importance. It cannot be supposed that the people of Lancaster county, prompted as they are by every consideration of patriotism and interest, will want zeal in the promotion of so much public utility and private advantage.

"The society, acting as it will do, in cooperation with similar associations throughout the union, offers a flattering and sure prospect for the accomplishment of the purposes for which it is intended . . . It is desirable that every information which it may be in the power of any person to give relative to the manufacture of all articles made within the county, may be furnished the society.

"With regard to the quantity and value of any article manufactured, the capital engaged, the number of hands employed, their sex and ages, and every other matter which may shed light upon this subject, all persons concerned in any of the numerous branches of domestic manufacture carried on in the county of Lancaster are earnestly requested to furnish the information, in writing, to Mr. Samuel White, secretary of the society."

Persons who wished to become members were requested to apply to Mr. Joseph Ogilby, treasurer of the society.

At the second meeting of the society, held in the court house on Monday, March 17th, 1817, Robert Coleman was appointed chairman, and Samuel White secretary. The committee submitted the constitution, which was unanimously adopted.² It was as follows:

CONSTITUTION

OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER FOR THE PROMOTION OF DOMESTIC MANUFACTURES AND NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

ARTICLE I.

This society is formed under the name and description of "The American Society of the County of Lancaster for the Promotion of Domestic Manufactures and National Industry."

ARTICLE II.

The officers of this society shall consist of a president, two vice-presidents, two secretaries, three counsellors and a treasurer, who shall be chosen annually, by ballot, from among the resident members of this county; and the

² Lancaster Journal, Saturday, March 28th, 1817.

persons having the greatest number of votes shall be declared duly elected and shall immediately succeed to their respective offices. The election shall take place at the regular meeting, on the second Wednesday of May, in every year; and the secretary shall, ten days previous thereto, give public notice of the time and place when and where the said election shall be held, in at least two of the public newspapers of this county, except at the first election.

ARTICLE III.

There shall be elected annually a corresponding committee, to consist of twelve members, whose duty it shall be to correspond with such other societies as have been or may hereafter be instituted in the United States with similar views, or with individuals and the general and state governments, and to receive and communicate all information which may be necessary to promote the objects of this institution. The election to be in conformity to the preceding article.

ARTICLE IV.

Every member of this society shall subscribe to the constitution, and be deemed pledged to promote its objects.

ARTICLE V.

Whenever five members shall, over their signatures, request the president, or in his absence either of the vice-presidents, to call a meeting of this society and express the object they have in view, it shall be his duty to cause public notice to be given in at least two newspapers printed in this borough naming the time and place of such meeting, which shall not be more than ten days nor less than five days thereafter; and in the event of the president or vice-president refusing to call such meeting, any twenty members may call one on giving notice as above.

ARTICLE VI.

A general meeting of this society shall take place four times in each year in the borough of Lancaster, viz. on the second Wednesday in May, August, November and February, and it shall be the duty of the secretary to give at least ten days notice, in two or more newspapers in this county, of the time and place of such meeting.

ARTICLE VII.

Each member shall pay into the hands of the treasurer, for the benefit of the society at the time of subscribing to the constitution, one dollar; and it shall be the duty of the treasurer to report, in writing, the state of the treasury, with the receipts and disbursements, to the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VIII.

The society may adopt such by-laws, and alter and amend the same from time to time, as it may deem fit or proper.

ARTICLE IX.

At all general meetings of the society not less than fifteen members, exclusive of the presiding officer and secretary, shall form a quorum and be competent to do business.

ARTICLE X.

Any person subscribing to the constitution, and paying his subscription, may become a member of the society.

The following persons subscribed to the constitution: Henry Bear, Daniel Buckley, Edward Coleman, James Coleman, Robert Coleman, William Dickson, John Eberle, Michael Graff, James

Humes, Samuel Humes, Jr., William Kirkpatrick, Jacob Miller, Benjamin Ober, Joseph Ogilby, George B. Porter, Adam Reigart, Daniel Reigart, John Reynolds, Matthew Waddel, Jr., Samuel White and John Whiteside.

Others doubtless subscribed later, as the names of one of the counsellors and of several members of the committee of correspondence, do not appear in the above list.

The officers were elected as follows:

President, Robert Coleman.

Vice-presidents, William Kirkpatrick and James Humes.

Secretaries, Adam Reigart and Samuel White.

Counsellors, Charles Smith, George B. Porter and Edward Coleman.

Treasurer, Joseph Ogilby.

Committee of Correspondence, Daniel Buckley, Casper Schaffner, William Dickson, Jacob Duchman, Samuel Humes, Jr., Cyrus Jacobs, John Landis, Jacob Miller, Benjamin Ober, John Reynolds, John Rohrer (Lampeter) and John Swar.

A meeting of the society was held in the court house on Wednesday, May 14th, 1817. The Lancaster Journal of Monday, June 2nd, announced that the next meeting of the society would be held in the court house on Wednesday, June 18th, 1817. Whether the meeting was held as advertised, is not known. Neither is it known how long the society continued to exist, as subsequent issues of local papers contain no references to it.

Hat Made by a Lancaster Woman Exhibited at Franklin Institute

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

THE Lancaster Journal of Friday, October 22nd, 1824, contained an announcement that a hat of grass, made by Mrs. Hopkins, of Lancaster city, was on display at the first annual exhibition of Franklin Institute. The hat was made from a species of grass never before used for that purpose. Soon women, and a great number of children at the public school in the city, mastered the art of plaiting the straw.

The grass from which the hat was made grew abundantly, at that time, in Lancaster county. Joel Lightner, Jr., was the first to suggest its adaptability to the making of hats and bonnets, and he forwarded a quantity of it to the public school. It was, when dry, of a greenish color, but, after a number of experiments, it was changed almost to the shade of Leghorn straw.