

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE WHISKEY INSURRECTION.

"THE Whiskey Insurrection" is a term which has been usually applied to a series of unlawful and violent acts committed (principally in 1794, but to some extent in previous years) by inhabitants of the counties of Washington, Allegheny, Westmoreland, and Fayette. These illegal and insurrectionary acts embraced an armed resistance on several occasions to the execution of certain State and national laws imposing an excise tax on distilled spirits and stills used for the manufacture of such spirits, a measure which was generally and peculiarly obnoxious to the people of these counties, particularly because they regarded it as calculated to bear with especial and discriminating severity on the industries of this section as compared with other parts of the country.

The first excise tax imposed in the province of Pennsylvania was that authorized in an act of Assembly passed March 16, 1684, entitled "Bill of Aid and Assistance of the Government."<sup>1</sup> As it was found to be objectionable to the sense of the people, that part of the bill relating to the collection of excise duties was repealed soon afterwards, and no similar legislation was had for more than half a century. In 1738 the provincial Assembly passed "An act for laying an excise on wine, rum, brandy, and other spirits,"<sup>2</sup> but this, like its predecessor of 1684, was received with such unmistakable disfavor that it remained in force only a few months from the commencement of its operation. Again, in May, 1744, the Assembly renewed the measure, "for the purpose of providing money without a general tax, not only to purchase arms and ammunition for defense, but to answer such demands as might be made upon the inhabitants of the province by his Majesty for distressing the public enemy in America."<sup>3</sup> This enactment remained in operation but a short time. Another excise law was passed in 1756, but failed of execution; then for nearly sixteen years the people of Pennsylvania were undisturbed by governmental attempts to collect impost duties on spirits.

In 1772 the subject came again before the Assembly, and as a measure of revenue a new act was passed<sup>4</sup> levying a duty on domestic and foreign distilled spirits. At first this law was not executed in reference to domestic liquors, nor was there any energetic attempt made for that purpose, particularly in the old counties of the province; but after Pennsylvania became a State, and her necessities were greatly increased by the Revolutionary war, then in progress, the law was put in execution, and a very considerable revenue obtained in that way, the measure being at that time the less obnoxious because patriotic men were opposed to the consumption of grain in distilla-

tion at a time when every bushel was needed for the subsistence of the troops in the field, fighting for liberty. A large part of the proceeds collected at that time was appropriated to the "depreciation fund," created in this State (as in others, in pursuance of a resolution passed by Congress in 1780) for the purpose of giving to officers and soldiers of the Revolutionary army an additional compensation, a measure which was manifestly just and necessary, because the value of their pay had been greatly lessened by the depreciation of the Continental currency.

After the close of the Revolution, laws imposing excise duties on distilled spirits remained on the Pennsylvania statute-books until 1791, but they were not generally enforced, and were exceedingly unpopular, especially in the western and southwestern portions of the State. During the period mentioned (some seven or eight years prior to their repeal in 1791), though the excise laws of the State were by no means generally enforced, the collection of the revenue tax on spirits was several times attempted, but never successfully executed in the southwestern counties. Such an attempt was made in Fayette, Westmoreland, and Washington Counties in the year 1786, and the consequences resulting to an excise officer in the last-named county are shown in a letter written by Dorsey Pentecost<sup>5</sup> to the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, as follows:

"WASHINGTON COUNTY, 16th April, 1786.

"GENTLEMEN:

"About ten days ago a Mr. Graham, Excise officer for the three western Counties, was, in the exercise of his office in this County, seized by a number of People and Treated in the following manner, viz.: His Pistols, which he carried before him, taken and broke to pieces in his presence, his Commission and all his papers relating to his Office tore and thrown in the mud, and he forced or made to stamp on them, and Imprecate curses on himself, the Commission, and the Authority that gave it to him; they then cut off one-half his hair, cued the other half on one side of his Head, cut off the Cock of his Hat, and made him wear it in a form to render his Cue the most Conspicuous; this with many other marks of Ignominy they Impos'd on him, and to which he was obliged to submit; and in the above plight they marched him amidst a Crowd from the frontiers of this County to Westmoreland County, calling at all the Still Houses in their way, where they were Treated Gratis, and expos'd him to every Insult and mockery that their Invention could contrive. They set him at Liberty at the entrance of Westmoreland, but with Threats of utter Desolation should he dare to return to our County.

"This Bandittie I am told denounces destruction, vengeance against all manner of People who dare to oppose or even ganesay this their unparalleled beha-

<sup>1</sup> Votes of Assembly, i. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Dallas, i. 293.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., i. 299.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., i. 634.

<sup>5</sup> Pa. Archives, x. 757.

vior, and that they will support every person concerned against every opposition. I suppose they depend on their numbers, for I am told the Combination is large.

"I have thought it my duty as a good citizen to give your Honorable Board information of this matchless and daring Insult offered to Government, and the necessity there is for a speedy and Exemplary punishing being inflicted on those atrocious offenders, for if this piece of conduct is lightly looked over, no Civil officer will be safe in the Exercise of his duty, though some Gentlemen with whom I have conversed think it would be best, and wish a mild prosecution; for my part I am of a different opinion, for it certainly is the most audacious and accomplished piece of outrageous and unprovoked Insult that was ever offered to a Government and the Liberties of a free People, and what in my opinion greatly aggravates their Guilt is that it was not done in a Gust of Passion, but coolly, deliberately, and Prosecuted from day to day, and there appears such a desolute and refractory spirit to pervade a Certain class of People here, particularly those concerned in the above Job, that demands the attention of Government, and the most severe punishment.

"I am not able to give the names of all concerned, nor have I had an opportunity of making particular enquiry, but have received the foregoing information from different people on whom I can rely, neither do I think they have as many friends as they suppose, or would wish to make the public believe. I have it not in my Power at this time to be as full and explicit as I could wish on this subject, as I have but Just time to hurry up this scrawl while the carrier is waiting.

"I am, Gentlemen,  
with the highest Esteem and Respect,  
your most obdt. very Humble Servt.

"DORSEY PENTECOST."

"His Excellency The President  
and Members of the Supreme  
Executive Council of Pennsylvania.

"P.S.—I have just snatched as much time as to write a short note to the Chief Justice on the above subject."

The Mr. Graham referred to in the above letter was the excise officer for the district comprising Washington, Westmoreland, and Fayette. Nothing appears to show that he was similarly maltreated in the two latter counties, but the public feeling in them, if less aggressive, was equally determined against the excise, and no collections were made by the officers in this district under the State law during its continuance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "An Act to repeal so much of every act or acts of Assembly of this State as relates to the collection of excise duties," provided, "Section 1. . . . That so much of every act or acts of Assembly as authorize the collection of any duty or duties upon wine, rum, brandy, or other spirituous liquors shall be, and the same are, hereby repealed.

Upon the adoption of the Federal Constitution, it became necessary to provide ways and means to support the government, to pay just and pressing Revolutionary claims, and sustain the army, which was still necessary for the protection of the frontier against Indian attack. "The duties on goods imported were very far from adequate to the wants of the new government. Taxes were laid on articles supposed to be the least necessary, and, among other things, on distilled liquors, or on the stills with which they were manufactured." At the suggestion of Alexander Hamilton, then Secretary of the Treasury, a bill was framed, among the provisions of which was the imposition of an excise duty of four pence per gallon on all distilled spirits. This bill was passed by Congress, March 3, 1791, against the strong opposition of many members, among the most determined and energetic of whom was the representative of this district, William Findley, of Westmoreland. Albert Gallatin and John Smilie, both men of the highest prominence and residents of Fayette County, were among the strongest opponents of the measure, though not advocates of forcible resistance to its execution.

It was argued that the law of 1791 bore more heavily and unjustly on the interests of the region west of the Alleghenies than on those of any other part of the Union. Here a principal product of the farmers was rye. For this there was little home demand, and it could not be transported across the mountains at a profit, except in the form of whiskey. "A horse could carry but four bushels, but he could take the product of twenty-four bushels in the shape of alcohol. Whiskey, therefore, was the most important item of remittance to pay for their salt, sugar, and iron." As a result of these peculiar circum-

"Section 2. Provided always, . . . That nothing herein contained shall be deemed or construed to prevent the recovery of all such duties upon the said articles as are now due to the Commonwealth, nor to release or take away any forfeiture or penalty which any person or persons may have incurred by reason of the said acts of Assembly; but that all prosecutions commenced, or which may be commenced in consequence thereof, may be prosecuted to as full effect as if such acts or parts thereof had not been repealed."

This repealing act was approved Sept. 21, 1791, six months after the passage by Congress of the excise law which brought about the insurrection in the western counties of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> As late as the year of the insurrection, freight in wagons to Philadelphia cost from five to ten dollars per hundred pounds. Salt sold at five dollars a bushel, while iron and steel cost from fifteen to twenty cents per pound. In that fertile region grain was abundantly produced, but there was no market, while farmers east of the mountains were growing rich by means of the general war in Europe. Trade down the Ohio, despite its danger, had then no outlet, the lower Mississippi being in possession of the Spanish. The freight on a barrel of flour to Philadelphia was as much as it would bring in that market. "Wheat," says the Rev. Dr. Carnahan, "was so plentiful and of so little value that it was a common practice to grind that of the best quality and feed it to the cattle; while rye, corn, and barley would bring no price as food for man or beast." The only way left for the inhabitants to obtain a little money to purchase salt, iron, and other articles necessary in carrying on their farming operations was by distilling their grain and reducing it to a more portable form, and sending the whiskey over the mountains or down the Ohio to Kentucky, then rapidly filling up and affording a market for that article.—*Papers Relating to the Whiskey Insurrection, Pa. Archives*, vol. iv., 6.

stances, there was in this section a greater number of stills and a larger amount of whiskey manufactured than in any other region of the same population in any part of the country. "There were very few or no large manufactories where grain was bought and cash paid. There was not capital in the country for that purpose. In some neighborhoods every fifth or sixth farmer was a distiller, who during the winter season manufactured his own grain and that of his neighbors into a portable and saleable article." And thus the people thought "they foresaw that what little money was brought into the country by the sale of whiskey would be carried away in the form of excise duties."<sup>1</sup>

In these western counties a large proportion of the inhabitants were Scotch-Irish, or of that descent, a people whose earlier home, or that of their fathers, had been beyond the sea, in a land where whiskey was the national beverage, and where excise laws and excise officers were regarded as the most odious of all the measures and minions of tyranny. "They also remembered that resistance to the Stamp Act and duty on tea at the commencement of the Revolution began by the destruction of the tea and a refusal to use the royal stamps; that the design was not to break allegiance to the British throne, but to force a repeal of these odious laws. They were, almost to a man, enemies to the British government, and had contributed their full proportion in service in establishing the independence of America. To them no other tax of equal amount would have been half so odious." It can scarcely be wondered at then that among a people holding such opinions the measure was regarded as a most unjust and oppressive one, nor that the more hot-headed and turbulent ones freely and fiercely announced their determination to oppose its execution even to the extremity of armed resistance to the government.

This rebellious sentiment was so wide-spread, so unmistakable in its character, and indicated by such open threats of violence to any officers who might be hardy enough to attempt the collection of the excise duty, that it became difficult to find any proper person willing to take the risk of accepting the office of chief inspector of the Western District. The position was finally accepted by Gen. John Nevill,<sup>2</sup> of Allegheny

County, a man who above nearly all others was, on account of his great personal popularity and unquestioned honesty and patriotism, the proper man for the place. But the confidence and respect of his fellow-citizens proved insufficient to screen him from their insults and violence when against these was weighed the fact that he had accepted an office the duties of which obliged him to attempt the execution of a law which they detested.

The popular excitement increased rapidly, the spirit of resistance became more determined, and soon found expression in a public act which may be said to have marked the commencement of the famous "Whiskey Insurrection." This was a preliminary meeting held in Fayette County, at Redstone Old Fort (Brownsville), on the 27th of July, 1791, composed of people opposed to the execution of the law. At this meeting it was concerted that county committees should be formed in each of the four counties of Fayette, Westmoreland, Washington, and Allegheny, to meet at the respective county-seats and take measures looking to a common end,—successful resistance to the operation of the law. These committees were formed accordingly, and the temper and ideas of the men composing them may be judged from the proceedings had at a meeting of the Washington County Committee, held at the county-seat on the 23d of August, on which occasion resolutions were passed to the effect that any person who had accepted or might accept an office under Congress in order to carry the excise law into effect should be considered inimical to the interests of the country, and recommending to the people of their county to treat every person who had accepted, or might thereafter accept, any such office with contempt, and absolutely to refuse all kind of communication or intercourse with him, and to withhold from him all aid, support, or comfort. These resolutions were printed in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, the proprietor of which paper would doubtless have feared the consequences of a refusal to publish them if he had been so disposed.

Each of the four county committees deputed three of its members to meet at Pittsburgh on the first Tuesday of September following, for the purpose of expressing the sense of the people of the four counties in an address to Congress "upon the subject of the excise law, and other grievances." The meeting of delegates was held at Pittsburgh, as appointed, on the 7th of September, 1791, on which occasion (according to the minutes of the meeting) "the following gentlemen appeared from the counties of Westmoreland, Washington, Fayette, and Allegheny, to take into consideration an act of Congress laying duties upon spirits

<sup>1</sup> Address of Rev. Dr. Carnahan.

<sup>2</sup> "In order to allay opposition as far as possible," says Judge Wilkeson, "Gen. John Nevill, a man of the most deserved popularity, was appointed to the inspectorship for Western Pennsylvania. He accepted the appointment from a sense of duty to his country. He was one of the few men of great wealth who had put his all at hazard for independence. At his own expense he raised and equipped a company of soldiers, marched them to Boston, and placed them, with his son, under the command of Gen. Washington. He was brother-in-law to the distinguished Gen. Morgan, and father-in-law to Maj. Craig and Kirkpatrick, officers highly respected in the western country. Besides Gen. Nevill's claims as a soldier and a patriot, he had contributed greatly to relieve the sufferings of the settlers in his vicinity. He divided his last loaf with the needy; and in a season of more than ordinary scarcity, as soon as his wheat was sufficiently matured to be converted into food, he opened his

fields to those who were suffering with hunger. If any man could have executed this odious law Gen. Nevill was that man. He entered upon the duties of his office and appointed his deputies from among the most popular citizens. The first attempts, however, to enforce the law were resisted."

distilled within the United States, passed the 3d of March, 1791.

"For Westmoreland County: Nehemiah Stokely and John Young, Esqs.

"For Washington County: Col. James Marshal, Rev. David Phillips, and David Bradford, Esq.

"For Fayette County: Edward Cook, Nathaniel Bradley [Breeding], and John Oliphant, Esqs.

"For Allegheny County: Col. Thomas Morton, John Woods, Esq., and William Plumer, Esq.

"Edward Cook, Esq., was voted in the chair, and John Young appointed secretary."

The meeting then proceeded to pass a series of resolutions, censuring the legislation of the late Congress, especially the obnoxious excise law, which they characterized as "a base offspring of the funding system, . . . being attended with infringements on liberty, partial in its operations, attended with great expense in the collection, and liable to much abuse," and declaring that "it is insulting to the feelings of the people to have their vessels marked, houses painted and ransacked, to be subject to informers, gaining by the occasional delinquency of others. It is a bad precedent, tending to introduce the excise laws of Great Britain, and of countries where the liberty, property, and even the morals of the people are sported with, to gratify particular men in their ambitious and interested measures." The meeting also adopted a remonstrance to "be presented to the Legislature of Pennsylvania," and further "*Resolved*, That the foregoing representations [the series of resolutions adopted] be presented to the Legislature of the United States." An address was also adopted, which, together with the proceedings of the day, was ordered to be printed in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*, and the meeting then adjourned.

In reference to this meeting at Pittsburgh, and others of similar character, Mr. Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, said that, being "composed of very influential individuals, and conducted without moderation or prudence," they were justly chargeable with the excesses which were afterwards committed, serving to give consistency to an opposition which at length matured to a degree that threatened the foundations of the government.

On the 6th of September, the day before the meeting of the committees' delegates at Pittsburgh, the opposition to the law broke out in an act of open violence, said to have been the first of the kind committed in the western counties. At a place near Pigeon Creek, in Washington County, a party of men, armed and disguised, waylaid Robert Johnson (collector of revenue for Allegheny and Washington), cut off his hair, stripped him of his clothing, tarred and feathered him, and took away his horse, "obliging him to travel on foot a considerable distance in that mortifying and painful situation." The case was brought before the District Court, out of which processes issued against John Robertson, John Hamilton, and Thomas

McComb, three of the persons concerned in the outrage. The serving of these processes was confided by the then marshal, Clement Biddle, to his deputy, Joseph Fox, who in the month of October went into Allegheny County for the purpose of serving them; but he was terrified by the "appearances and circumstances which he observed in the course of his journey," and therefore, instead of serving them himself, sent them forward under cover by a private messenger. The marshal (Mr. Biddle), in his report of this transaction to the district attorney, said, "I am sorry to add that he [the deputy, Fox] found the people in general in the western part of the State, particularly beyond the Allegheny Mountains, in such a ferment on account of the act of Congress for laying a duty on distilled spirits, and so much opposed to the execution of said act, and from a variety of threats to himself personally (although he took the utmost precautions to conceal his errand), that he was not only convinced of the impossibility of serving the process, but that any attempt to effect it would have occasioned the most violent opposition from the greater part of the inhabitants, and he declares that if he had attempted it *he believes he would not have returned alive*. I spared no expense or pains to have the process of the court executed, and have not the least doubt that my deputy would have accomplished it if it could have been done."

In Fayette County the collector of revenue, Benjamin Wells, was subjected to ill treatment on account of his official position. That Mr. Wells was peculiarly unpopular among the people of his district appears from the letters of Judge Alexander Addison,<sup>1</sup> and from other sources, and he was afterwards several times maltreated, and his house sacked and burned. These acts were done in 1793 and 1794, but the first instance of abuse to him appears to have occurred in the fall of 1791, as the Secretary of the Treasury in his report to the President, after narrating the circumstances of the attack on Robert Johnson, in Washington County, on the 6th of September, continues: "Mr. Johnson was not the only officer who, *about the same period*, experienced outrage. Mr. Wells, collector of the revenue for Westmoreland and Fayette, was also ill treated at Greensburg and Uniontown. Nor were the outrages perpetrated confined to the officers, they extended to private citizens who

<sup>1</sup> Judge Addison, in a letter addressed to Governor Mifflin (Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 62), said, "Benjamin Wells, so far as I have ever heard him spoken of, is a contemptible and unworthy man, whom, I believe, the people of this country would never wish to see in any office or trust with an object of any importance." But it should be remarked in this connection that the judge's opinion, as above expressed, may have been strongly biased by his own well-known personal dislike to Wells. In a communication by Alexander Hamilton to President Washington, the former related that on one occasion when Judge Addison was stopping, during a term of court, at a public-house in Uniontown, "Wells went to the same tavern, but was informed by the tavern-keeper and his wife that he could not be received there, assigning for reason that Judge Addison had declared that if they took him in again he would leave the house."—Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 292.

only dared to show their respect for the laws of their country."<sup>1</sup>

Another outrage was committed in Washington County, in the month of October of the same year, on the person of Robert Wilson, who was not an excise officer, but a young schoolmaster who was looking for employment; and carried with him very reputable testimonials of his character."<sup>2</sup> It was supposed that he was a little disordered in his intellect, and having, unfortunately for himself, made some inquiries concerning stills and distillers, and acted in a mysterious manner otherwise, he was suspected of being in the service of the government. On this account he "was pursued by a party of men in disguise, taken out of his bed, carried about five miles back to a smith's shop, stripped of his clothes, which were afterwards burnt, and having been inhumanly burnt in several places with a heated iron, was tarred and feathered, and about daylight dismissed, naked, wounded, and in a very pitiable and suffering condition. These particulars were communicated in a letter from the inspector of the revenue of the 17th of November, who declared that he had then himself seen the unfortunate maniac, the abuse of whom, as he expressed it, exceeded description, and was sufficient to make human nature shudder. . . . The symptoms of insanity were during the whole time of inflicting the punishment apparent, the unhappy sufferer displaying the heroic fortitude of a man who conceived himself to be a martyr to the discharge of some important duty."<sup>3</sup> For participation in this outrage Col. Samuel Wilson, Samuel Johnson, James Wright, William Tucker, and John Moffit were indicted at the December Sessions, 1791; but before the offenders were taken upon the process of the court,<sup>4</sup> the victim, Wilson (probably through fear of further outrage), left that part of the country,<sup>5</sup> and at the June Sessions, 1792, the indicted persons were discharged.

The demonstrations above mentioned comprise all of the more notable acts of violence which were done in these counties by the opponents of the law during the first year of its existence. On the 8th of May, 1792, Congress passed an act making material changes in the excise law, among these being a reduction of about one-fourth in the duty on whiskey, and giving the distiller the alternative of paying a monthly instead of a yearly rate, according to the capacity of his still, with liberty to take a license for the precise

term which he should intend to work it, and to renew that license for a further term or terms. This provision was regarded as peculiarly favorable to the western section of the State, where very few of the distillers wished to prosecute their business during the summer. "The effect has in a great measure," said Hamilton, in 1794, "corresponded with the views of the Legislature. Opposition has subsided in several districts where it before prevailed,<sup>6</sup> and it was natural to entertain, and not easy to abandon, a hope that the same thing would, by degrees, have taken place in the four western counties of the State."

But this hope was not realized. The modifications made in the law, favorable as they had been thought to be to the western counties, did not produce acquiescence and submission among the people of this section. On the 21st and 22d days of August next following the passage of the modified law there was held at Pittsburgh "a Meeting of sundry Inhabitants of the Western Counties of Pennsylvania," the proceedings of which plainly indicated that the feeling of opposition had not been lessened, but rather intensified. At that meeting there were present the following-named delegates from the western counties, viz.: Edward Cook, Albert Gallatin, John Smilie, Basil Bowel, Thomas Gaddis, John McClellan, John Canon, William Wallace, Shesbazer Bentley, Benjamin Parkinson, John Huey, John Badollet, John Hamilton, Neal Gillespie, David Bradford, Rev. David Phillips, Matthew Jamison, James Marshall, James Robinson, James Stewart, Robert McClure, Peter Lyle, Alexander Long, and Samuel Wilson. The persons composing this meeting were, in general, men of ability and influence, and in this particular the Fayette delegation (comprising the first six named in the above list) surpassed those from the other counties.

The meeting was organized by the choice of Col. John Canon as chairman, and Albert Gallatin, of Fayette County, as clerk. The subject of the excise law was then "taken under consideration and freely debated; a committee of five members was appointed to prepare a draft of Resolutions expressing the sense of the Meeting on the subject of said Law;" and on the second day the resolutions were reported, debated, and adopted unanimously. After a preamble denouncing the excise law as unjust in itself, oppressive upon the poor, and tending to bring immediate distress and ruin on the western country, and declaring it to be their duty to persist in remonstrances to Congress, and every other legal measure to obstruct the operation of the law, the resolutions proceeded, first, to appoint a committee to prepare and cause to be presented to Congress an address, stating objections to the law, and praying for its repeal; secondly,

<sup>1</sup> Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of James Brison, of Allegheny, to Governor Mifflin, dated Nov. 9, 1792.—*Pa. Archives*, 2d Series, vol. iv. pp. 44, 45.

<sup>3</sup> Report of the Secretary of the Treasury; *Pa. Archives*, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> *Pa. Archives*, Brison's letter, before quoted.

<sup>5</sup> "The audacity of the perpetrators of these excesses was so great that an armed banditti ventured to seize and carry off two persons who were witnesses against the rioters in the case of Wilson, in order to prevent their giving testimony of the riot to a court then sitting or about to sit."—*Alexander Hamilton to President Washington*; *Pa. Arch.*, iv., p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Opposition to the law of 1791 was violent, not only in the "four western counties" of Fayette, Westmoreland, Washington, and Allegheny, but also in several other counties of the State, notably Chester, Bedford, Bucks, and Northumberland.

to appoint committees of correspondence for Washington, Fayette, and Allegheny, charged with the duty of corresponding together, and with such committee as should be appointed for the same purpose in Westmoreland, or with any committees of a similar nature from other parts of the Union. The committees appointed for this purpose for the three counties named were composed of the following-named persons, viz.: Thomas Gaddis, Andrew Rabb, John Oliphant, Robert McClure, James Stewart, William Wallace, John Hamilton, Shesbazer Bentley, Isaac Weaver, Benjamin Parkinson, David Redick, Thomas Stokely, Stephen Gapen, Joseph Vanmeter, Alexander Long, William Whiteside, James Long, Benjamin Patterson, Samuel Johnston, William Plummer, and Matthew Jameson.

The final declaration of the meeting was to the effect that, "Whereas, some men may be found amongst us so far lost to every sense of virtue and feeling for the distresses of this country as to accept offices for the collection of the duty, Resolved, therefore, that in future we will consider such persons as unworthy of our friendship; *have no intercourse or dealings with them; withdraw from them every assistance, and withhold all the comforts of life which depend upon those duties that as men and fellow-citizens we owe to each other; and upon all occasions treat them with that contempt they deserve; and that it be and it is hereby most earnestly recommended to the people at large to follow the same line of conduct towards them.*"

It is difficult to understand how men of character and good standing, such as were a majority of those composing the Pittsburgh meeting, could have given their assent to the passage of these extreme resolutions. They were aimed in a general way (as appears on their face) at all who might be even remotely concerned on the side of the government in the collection of the revenue, but in particular, and more than all, at Gen. John Neville, against whom no charge could be brought, except that he had dared to accept inspectorship of the Western Revenue District.

A few days before the holding of the Pittsburgh meeting, an outrage had been committed upon Capt. William Faulkner, of the United States army, who had permitted his house in Washington County to be used as an inspection-office. Being out in pursuit of deserters in the same neighborhood where Johnson was maltreated in the previous autumn, he was encountered by a number of disguised men, who reproached him with having let his house to the government officers, drew a knife on him, threatened to scalp him, tar and feather him, and burn his house if he did not solemnly promise to prevent all further use of it as an inspection-office. He was induced by their threats to make the promise demanded, and on the 21st of August gave public notice in the *Pittsburgh Gazette* that the office of the inspector should no longer be kept at his house.

On receiving intelligence of this occurrence, as also

of the proceedings of the Pittsburgh meeting, the Secretary of the Treasury reported the facts to President Washington, who thereupon, on the 15th of September, 1792, issued a proclamation admonishing all persons to refrain and desist from all unlawful combinations and proceedings whatsoever having for their object, or tending, to obstruct the operation of the laws, declaring it to be the determination of the government to bring to justice all infractors of the law, to prosecute delinquents, to seize all unexcised spirits on their way to market, and to make no purchases of spirits for the army except of such as had paid the duty.

A supervisor of the revenue was sent into the western counties immediately afterwards to gain accurate information of and report on the true state of affairs; but his mission "had no other fruit than that of obtaining evidence of the persons who composed the meeting at Pittsburgh, and two of those who were understood to be concerned in the riot [against Capt. Faulkner], and a confirmation of the enmity which certain active and designing leaders had industriously infused into a large proportion of the inhabitants, *not against the particular laws in question only, but of a more ancient date against the government of the United States itself.*"<sup>1</sup>

In the following April (1793) a party of men, armed and disguised, made an attack upon the house of Benjamin Wells, who was then collector of revenue for Fayette and Westmoreland Counties. His house, which stood on the west side of the Youghiogheny River, opposite the present borough of Connellsville, was visited in the night by these rioters, who, having forced an entrance, finding that Wells was absent, contented themselves with threatening, terrifying, and abusing his family, without proceeding to any further outrage. Warrants for the apprehension of several of these rioters<sup>2</sup> were issued by Justices Isaac Meason and James Finley, and placed in the hands of the sheriff of Fayette, Joseph Huston, who, however, refused or neglected to serve them, and was therefore indicted in the Circuit Court.

A second attack was made on the house of Wells, the collector, in the night of the 22d of November by a body of men all armed and in disguise.<sup>3</sup> They broke and entered the house, and demanded a surrender of the officer's commission and official books, and upon

<sup>1</sup> Report of Secretary Hamilton; Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> "Caleb Mount, then a Captain, since a Major of Militia, stands charged before Isaac Meason and James Finley, Assistant Judges, by information upon oath of Benjamin Wells, Collector of the Revenue, and his wife, with being of a party that broke into the House of the Said Collector some time in April, 1793."—*Report of the Secretary of the Treasury to President Washington*; Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 288.

<sup>3</sup> "Indictments having been found at a circuit court holden at Philadelphia in July last, against Robert Smilie and John McCulloch, two of the rioters in the attack which, in November preceding, had been made upon the house of a collector of the revenue in Fayette County; processes issued against them also to bring them to trial, and if guilty, to punishment."—*Hamilton to President Washington*, Aug. 5, 1794; Pa. Archives, iv., p. 100.

his refusal to deliver them up they threatened him, with pistols presented at his head, and swore that if he did not comply they would instantly put him to death. By this means they forced him to surrender his books and commission, and not content with this, the rioters, before they left the premises, compelled Wells to promise that he would, within two weeks, publish his resignation. It does not appear, however, that Wells did resign his office at that time, for he certainly held it in the following year, and was then an object of peculiar hatred to the opponents of the law.<sup>1</sup>

"At last March [1794] Court, in Fayette County," said Judge Addison, "in a publick company at dinner in the tavern where I lodged, some of the most respectable gentlemen of that county, and most strenuously opposed to the Excise law, proposed that a meeting of the inhabitants of that county should be called, in which it should be agreed that they would all enter their stills, provided Benjamin Wells was removed from office, and some honest and reputable man appointed in his stead. I will not say that these are the words, but I know it is the amount of the conversation." This was written by the judge in a letter addressed to Governor Mifflin, dated Washington, May 12, 1794.<sup>2</sup> In a reply to that letter, written by Secretary Dallas,<sup>3</sup> on behalf of the Governor, he says, "The truth is that such general dissatisfaction has been expressed with respect to Wells that, for the sake of the western counties, as well as for the sake of the General Government, it was thought advisable to transmit all the information that could be collected on the subject to the President, and the extract from your letter . . . made a part of the documents."

Finally, about the 1st of July, 1794, the rioters destroyed Wells' house and forced him to vacate his office, the circumstances being as follows: The excise-office for Westmoreland County had been opened in the house of Philip Reagan, whereupon an attack was soon after made upon it by the insurgents. This attack had been expected by the owner of the house (Reagan), who had accordingly prepared for it with a guard of two or three armed men. When the assailing-party approached they were fired on by Reagan's party, among whom was John Wells,<sup>4</sup> son of

Benjamin Wells, of Fayette, and deputy collector under him. The fire was returned, but without effect on either side. Then the party set fire to Reagan's barn, and having burned it to the ground, moved off without making further depredation. In a day or two a much larger party of assailants (numbering about one hundred and fifty men) appeared at Reagan's, and he, knowing the folly of attempting to resist so large a force, and wishing to avoid the shedding of blood, consented to capitulate, provided they would give him assurances that they would not destroy his property nor abuse him or his family. This was agreed to, with the condition that his house should no more be used as an excise-office, and that John Wells should agree and promise never again to act as an officer for the collection of the excise duty. The stipulations were reduced to writing and signed by the parties. The house was then thrown open, and Reagan produced a keg of whiskey, from which he "treated" the assailants. But after they had drank the whiskey they began to grow more belligerent, and some of them said that Reagan had been let off altogether too easily, and that he ought to be set up as a target to be shot at. Some of them proposed that he be tarred and feathered, but others strongly opposed this, and took Reagan's part, saying that he had acted in a fair and manly way, and that they were bound in honor to treat him well after having agreed to do so as a condition to the surrender. Then they drank more whiskey and fell to quarreling among themselves, and the proposition was made to "court-martial" Reagan, and to march him to the house of Benjamin Wells, in Fayette County, and try them both together. This suggestion was immediately acted on, and the party moved towards Stewart's Crossings, taking Reagan with them. Arriving at Wells' house they found that he was absent, and in their disappointment and anger they set fire to his dwelling and entirely destroyed it, with all its contents. Several of them remained hidden near the ruins for the purpose of capturing Wells on his return,—a design which they effected in the following morning. On making him prisoner they demanded of him that he resign his commission as collector, and promise to accept no office under the excise law in the future. These demands were made as the conditions on which his life and safety depended. He accepted them and submitted to all their requirements, upon which they desisted from all further ill treatment and liberated him. This was the end of his career as an excise-officer. He afterwards removed to the other side of the river (at Connellsville) and made his residence there.

<sup>1</sup> "Andrew Robb [Rabb], a Justice of the peace, stands charged by information upon oath before Jacob Beason, another Justice of the peace, with having offered a reward of Ten pounds for killing the Excise man, meaning, as was understood, Wells, the Collector. This fact is stated on the information of the said Collector."—*Pa. Arch.*, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 288; *Letter of Alexander Hamilton to President Washington*.

<sup>2</sup> *Pa. Arch.*, iv., p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> In the accounts which have been usually given of this affair, John Wells has been mentioned as the collector for Westmoreland, and the time of the final abandonment of Reagan's house as an excise-office as being in the month of June; but both these statements are disproved by the report of the Secretary of the Treasury to President Washington, dated Aug. 5, 1794 (*Pa. Archives*, 2d series, iv., 98), in which he says, "June being the month for receiving annual entries of stills, endeavors were used to open offices in Westmoreland and Washington, where it had hitherto been found impracticable. With much pains and difficulty

places were procured for the purpose. That in Westmoreland County was repeatedly attacked in the night by armed men, who frequently fired upon it; but, according to a report which has been made to this Department, it was defended with so much courage and perseverance by John Wells, an auxiliary officer, and Philip Reagan, the owner of the house, as to have been maintained during the remainder of the month."



Soon after the destruction of Wells' house by the insurgents, a United States officer came into Fayette County to serve processes against a number of non-complying distillers, and also against Robert Smilie and John McCulloch, two persons charged with participation in the riotous attack on the house of Collector Wells in the previous November. "The marshal of the district," said Secretary Hamilton,<sup>1</sup> "went in person to serve these processes. He executed his trust without interruption, though under many discouraging circumstances, in Fayette County;<sup>2</sup> but while he was in the execution of it in Allegheny County, being then accompanied by the inspector of the revenue (Gen. Neville), to wit, on the 15th of July last (1794), he was beset on the road by a party of from thirty to forty armed men, who after much irregularity of conduct finally fired on him, but, as it happened, without injury either to him or to the inspector."

The attack on the marshal and Gen. Neville, however, proved to be but the prelude to one of the most daring outrages that were committed during the continuance of the insurrection. The disaffected people were greatly incensed against Gen. Neville for accompanying the marshal to assist in serving the processes, piloting him to the homes of his victims, as they said. On this account the feeling against him became very intense and bitter.

On the day next following the attack on the marshal and inspector (July 16th), at daybreak, "in conformity with a plan which seems to have been for some time entertained, and which was probably only accelerated by the coming of the marshal into the survey, an attack by about one hundred persons armed with guns and other weapons was made upon the house of the inspector (Neville), in the vicinity of Pittsburgh. The inspector, though alone, vigorously defended himself against the assailants, and obliged them to retreat without accomplishing their purpose."<sup>3</sup> They had only postponed, and not abandoned, the execution of their plans. On the following day they reassembled in augmented numbers, amounting, as it was said, to fully five hundred, and on the 17th of July renewed their attack on Gen. Neville's house, which was then defended by a detachment of eleven men from the garrison of Fort Pitt. The result was that after a fight of about an hour's duration, in which one of the insurgents was killed and several wounded, while three of the persons in the house were also wounded, the defending party surrendered, and the insurgents then burned the house to the ground, together with all the outbuildings, occasioning a loss of more than twelve thousand dollars. Gen. Neville had left the

house before the commencement of the firing, and had sought a place of concealment at a distance, wisely concluding that this was the only way to save his life. On the night of the 19th of July he with the marshal who had come to serve the processes (having been repeatedly threatened with death at the hands of the insurgents, and finding that no protection was to be expected from the magistrates or inhabitants of Pittsburgh) made their escape from the place, fled down the Ohio, and proceeded to the East by a circuitous way, the usual routes over the mountains being known to be beset by their enemies.

On the 25th of July the United States mail, near Greensburg, on the road from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia, was stopped by two armed men, who cut open the pouch and abstracted all the letters except those contained in one package. In connection with this circumstance, it is proper to notice a circular addressed by Col. John Canon, David Bradford, Benjamin Parkinson, and others to the militia officers of the counties, dated July 28, 1794, as follows:

"SIR,—Having had suspicions that the Pittsburgh post would carry with him the sentiments of some of the people in the country respecting our present situation, and the letters by the post *being now in our possession*, by which certain secrets are discovered hostile to our interest, it is therefore now come to that crisis that every citizen must express his sentiments, not by his words, but by his actions. You are then called upon as a citizen of the western country to render your personal service, with as many volunteers as you can raise, to rendezvous at your usual place of meeting on Wednesday next, and thence you will march to the usual place of rendezvous at Braddock's Field,<sup>4</sup> on the Monongahela, on Friday, the first day of August next, to be there at two o'clock in the afternoon, with arms and accoutrements in good order. If any volunteers shall want arms and ammunition, bring them forward, and they shall be supplied as well as possible. Here, sir, is an expedition proposed in which you will have an opportunity of displaying your military talents, and of rendering service to your country. Four days' provisions will be wanted; let the men be thus supplied."

Many of the militia officers obeyed the directions contained in the circular, and marched their men to the appointed rendezvous. With reference to the readiness displayed by officers and soldiers to obey these orders, emanating as they did from no responsible authority, Judge Addison said that in consequence of the danger of Indian incursions having often rendered it necessary in this region to assemble the military force without waiting for orders from the government, "it had become habitual with the militia of these counties to assemble at the call of their officers, without inquiring into the authority or object of the

<sup>1</sup> Pa. Arch., 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> A meeting had been held at Uniontown, in pursuance of the suggestions made in March, 1794, at the hotel, as mentioned by Judge Addison, and at this meeting it was agreed by those present that no opposition would be made to the law in this county, provided Benjamin Wells was displaced as collector.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton.

<sup>4</sup> Braddock's Field was the place where the annual brigade musters were held.



call." This habit, well known to the contrivers of the rendezvous at Braddock's Field, rendered the execution of their plan an easy matter. They issued their orders to the officers of the militia, who assembled their men, accustomed to obey orders of this kind given on the sudden and without authority. The militia came together without knowing from whom the orders originated, or for what purpose they met. And when met it was easy to communicate from breast to breast more or less of the popular frenzy, till all felt it or found it prudent to dissemble and feign that they felt it."

At Braddock's Field, on the appointed day, there gathered a vast and wildly excited assemblage, of which a good proportion was composed of militiamen and volunteers under arms. Fayette County was sufficiently represented on the field,<sup>1</sup> though the number from this was less than from either Washington, Allegheny, or Westmoreland. Among the great throng of persons assembled there, very few were favorable to the government and to the execution of the law. Such as were there of this class had come to the rendezvous lest their absence might be made a cause for proscription.<sup>2</sup> But they were compelled, out of regard for their personal safety, to conceal their real sentiments; and some of them had even assumed the rôle of leaders, for the purpose (as they said afterwards when the insurrection had been crushed) of gaining the confidence of the disaffected multitude, and then by organization and judicious management to restrain them from proceeding to outrage and rebellion. The Hon. Hugh H. Brackenridge was one of these, and there were some among the Fayette County leaders, whose course with regard to the insurrection has been similarly explained. There were also present at Braddock's Field on the occasion referred to some who went there merely as spectators, without any strong feeling on either side; but by far the greater part were in full sympathy with the insurgent cause, though probably few of them had any very definite idea of the object of the meeting other than to denounce excise-officers and the government, and to shout in wild acclaim, huzzahs for Tom the Tinker.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Findley in his history of the insurrection says there were not more than twelve men from Fayette County at Braddock's Field on that day, but this statement seems very improbable when it is remembered that Cook, Gaddis, and several others of the prominent leaders of insurrectionists were residents of this county.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Brackenridge, in describing the general feeling prevailing at that time throughout the western counties, says, "A breath in favor of the law was sufficient to ruin any man. It was considered as a badge of Toryism. A clergyman was not thought orthodox in the pulpit unless against the law. A physician was not capable of administering medicine unless his principles were right in this respect. A lawyer could have got no practice without at least concealing his sentiments if for the law, nor could a merchant at a country store get custom. On the contrary, to talk against the law was the way to office and emolument. To go to the Legislature or to Congress you must make a noise against it. It was the *Shibboleth* of safety, and the ladder of ambition."

<sup>3</sup> TOM THE TINKER was a name which the law-breakers not only used individually for purposes of disguise, but also applied to the insurgent

As the rendezvous was but a few miles from Pittsburgh, the people of that place were greatly alarmed lest the company assembled at Braddock's Field should, at the instigation of their leaders, march on the town and destroy it, in a spirit of revenge against a number of officers and friends of the government who lived there. A meeting of the inhabitants of the town had been held on the evening before the day of the rendezvous, at which "a great majority—almost the whole of the inhabitants of the town—asssembled." It was announced to this meeting that a committee from Washington was present, bearing a message to the meeting. A committee of three was appointed to confer with the committee from Washington, and after their conference they reported "that in consequence of certain letters sent by the last mail, certain persons were discovered as advocates of the excise law and enemies to the interest of the country, and that Edward Day, James Brison, and Abraham Kirkpatrick are particularly obnoxious, and that it is expected by the country that they should be dismissed without delay; Whereupon it was resolved it should be so done, and a committee of twenty-one was appointed to see this resolution carried into effect. Also that, whereas it is a part of the message from the gentlemen from Washington that a great body of the people of the county will meet to-morrow at Braddock's Field, in order to carry into effect measures that may seem to them advisable with respect to the excise law and the advocates of it, Resolved, That the above committee shall at an early hour wait upon the people on the ground, and assure the people that the above resolution, with respect to the proscribed

body collectively, and to the secret and dreaded power of the organization, if organization it could be called. As to the origin of the name, Brackenridge says, "A certain John Holcroft was thought to have made the first application of it at the time of the masked attack on William Coughran, whose still was cut to pieces. This was humorously called *mending his still*. The menders of course must be tinkers, and the name collectively became Tom the Tinker." Advertisements were put up on trees and in other conspicuous places with the signature of Tom the Tinker, admonishing or commanding individuals to do or not to do certain things under the penalty of retribution at the hands of the mysterious Tom in case of non-compliance. Menacing letters with the same signature were sent to the *Pittsburgh Gazette* with orders to publish them, and the editor dared not refuse to comply, though he did so unwillingly. Often the persons to whom these threatening notices were addressed were commanded to see that they were published in the *Gazette*, and they always complied; for they knew that refusal or neglect to do so would bring upon them the destruction of their property and endanger their lives.

"This Tom the Tinker," says Judge Lobengier, "was a new god added to the mythology at this time, and was supposed to preside over whiskey-stills and still-houses. Whoever stoutly hurraed for Tom the Tinker was of unquestionable loyalty with the whiskey boys; while those who could not were branded as traitors to this new deity and their country." Judge Veech says of the mysterious god that it was supposed "his Olympus was on some of the hills of Mingo or Peter's Creek. But truly he was a multimodal deity, or at least he was Briarean in his functions. His mundane recreations were to destroy the stills and mills and burn the barns of complying distillers, and terrify others into non-compliance. He sometimes warned before striking, but the warnings and blows were always in the dark and of difficult detection." Findley says it afterwards appeared that the term Tom the Tinker did not originate with John Holcroft as was first supposed.

persons, has been carried into effect. Resolved also, That the inhabitants of the town shall march out and join the people on Braddock's Field, as brethren, to carry into effect with them any measures that may seem advisable for the common cause."

The Pittsburgh committee appointed at the meeting above mentioned reported to the leaders at Braddock's Field the resolutions which had been adopted, and that in pursuance of those resolutions some of the men most objectionable to the insurgents, viz.: Edward Day, James Brison, Abraham Kirkpatrick, and Col. Presley Neville, had been driven from the town and had fled down the Ohio. This had been done in deference to the demands of "Tom the Tinker," and the committee's announcement was made to the assemblage in the hope of dissuading the leaders from moving the forces into the town; but it failed to have the desired effect, though it probably curbed their excesses to a great extent.

One of the most prominent of the leaders of the insurgents was Col. David Bradford, of Washington, who at the meeting (or more properly muster) at Braddock's Field made the proposition to march to Pittsburgh and attack the garrison stationed there. This proposition was warmly entertained by the more hot-headed, but was finally abandoned. Bradford, however, insisted that the militia and volunteers should be marched to the town, and in this he was seconded by Brackenridge, who, despairing of success in *opposition* to the project, conceived the idea of guiding and controlling the lawless movement by apparent acquiescence. "Yes," said he, "by all means let us go, if for no other reason than to give a proof to our opponents that we are capable of maintaining the strictest order, and of refraining from all excesses. Let us march through the town, muster on the banks of the Monongahela, take a little whiskey with the people, and then move the troops across the river." The plan was adopted. Officers were appointed,—David Bradford and Edward Cook, generals, and Col. Gabriel Blakeney, officer of the day,—and under their command the entire body moved over the Monongahela road to Pittsburgh. On their arrival there, they were received as the guests of the town, or rather as the guests of the principal citizens, who by a little *finesse*, after treating them freely to liquor, succeeded in inducing the main body to cross the Monongahela without doing any damage. On reaching the south side of the river, however, they set fire to the buildings of Maj. Kirkpatrick, on the bluff opposite Pittsburgh, and succeeded in destroying his barn at that place, though the dwelling was saved. Meanwhile a part of the men not included in the body which had been enticed across the Monongahela had become somewhat riotous in Pittsburgh, and set fire to the town residence of Maj. Kirkpatrick. It had been their intention to destroy his house, as well as those of Neville, Gibson, and others, but the consummation of this design had been prevented largely by the interference of Col.

Edward Cook, of Fayette County,<sup>1</sup> and Bradford, of Washington, two of the principal leaders. If they had succeeded in doing this, there is little doubt that the principal part of the town would have been burned.

An account of the turbulent proceedings at Braddock's Field and Pittsburgh was forwarded without delay to the State and national authorities, and on the 7th of August the President of the United States issued a proclamation, reciting in its preamble that "combinations to defeat the execution of the laws laying duties upon spirits distilled within the United States, and upon stills, have from the time of the commencement of those laws existed in some of the western parts of Pennsylvania, . . . that many persons in the said western parts of Pennsylvania have at length been hardy enough to perpetrate acts which I am advised amount to treason, being overt acts of levying war against the United States;" and commanding "all persons being insurgents, as aforesaid, and all others whom it may concern," to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes on or before the 1st of September following; moreover, warning all persons "against aiding, abetting, or comforting the perpetrators of the aforesaid treasonable acts, and requiring all officers and other citizens, according to their respective duties and the laws of the land, to exert their utmost endeavors to prevent and suppress such dangerous proceedings." At the same time the President called for troops to be raised and equipped in the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey, and to be held in readiness to march at shortest notice, for the purpose of suppressing the insurrection and enforcing the law. The quotas of the States were assigned as follows:

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Total.
Pennsylvania.....	4,500	500	200	5,200
New Jersey.....	1,500	500	100	2,100
Maryland.....	2,000	200	150	2,350
Virginia.....	3,000	300	.....	3,300
	11,000	1500	450	12,950

On the same day Governor Mifflin, of Pennsylvania, issued his proclamation directing that the State's quota of men be armed and equipped as speedily as possible, "and to be held in readiness to march at a moment's warning," and a second proclamation was

<sup>1</sup> Concerning this affair, the following card was published in the *Pittsburgh Gazette*: "We, the undersigned, on behalf of ourselves and the great body of the column that marched from Braddock's Field on the 2d of August, 1794, think it necessary to express our disapprobation of the disorderly proceeding of those of the troops who were concerned in setting fire to the house of Abraham Kirkpatrick, on the hill opposite the town of Pittsburgh, also of the attempt made by others of burning his house in the town, as these acts were not within the sentence of the committee of volunteers in Braddock's Field, and therefore there could be no authority for carrying them into effect. We consider it as a blemish on the good order of the march of the column through the town of Pittsburgh and their cantonment in the neighborhood of it. It has been endeavored to be removed as much as possible by repaying the tenant of Kirkpatrick's his damages." The signatures to this card of explanation and disclaimer were headed by that of Edward Cook, of Fayette County, which was followed by those of fourteen others, all prominent leaders in the insurrectionary movement.

issued, calling together the Assembly of the State in special session. Previously (on the 6th of August) the Governor had appointed Chief Justice McKean and Gen. William Irvine to proceed immediately to the disaffected counties, to ascertain the facts in reference to the recent acts of violence and lawless gatherings, and, if practicable, to induce the people to submit to the law.

The President, on the day next following the issuance of his proclamation, appointed James Ross, United States senator, Jasper Yeates, associate judge Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and William Bradford, Attorney-General of the United States, commissioners on the part of the United States, with full instructions and ample powers, to repair forthwith to the western counties, for the purpose of conferring, at their discretion, with individuals or bodies of men, "in order to quiet and extinguish the insurrection."

Before the great demonstration at Braddock's Field, the anti-excise leaders issued a call (in the latter part of July<sup>1</sup>) for a meeting of delegates from the western counties, to meet at Parkinson's Ferry, on the Monongahela (now Monongahela City), "to take into consideration the situation of the western country." And from the muster-place at Braddock's Field, Col. (Maj.-Gen.) David Bradford issued the following circular:

*"To the Inhabitants of Monongahela, Virginia:*

"GENTLEMEN,—I presume you have heard of the spirited opposition given to the excise law in this State. Matters have been so brought to pass here that all are under the necessity of bringing their minds to a final conclusion. This has been the question amongst us some days, 'Shall we disapprove of the conduct of those engaged against Neville, the excise-officer, or approve?' Or, in other words, 'Shall we suffer them to fall a sacrifice to Federal persecution, or shall we support them?' On the result of this business we have fully deliberated, and have determined, with head, heart, hand, and voice, that we will support the opposition to the excise law. The crisis is now come, *submission or opposition*: we are determined in the opposition. We are determined in future to act agreeably to system; to form arrangements guided by reason, prudence, fortitude, and spirited conduct. We have proposed a general meeting of the four counties of Pennsylvania, and have invited our brethren in the neighboring counties in Virginia to come forward and join us in council and deliberation in this important crisis, and conclude upon measures interesting to the western counties of Pennsylvania and Virginia. A notification of this

kind may be seen in the Pittsburgh paper. Parkinson's Ferry is the place proposed as the most central, and the 14th of August the time. We solicit you by all the ties that an union of interests can suggest to come forward and join us in our deliberations. The cause is common to us all. We invite you to come, even should you differ with us in opinion. We wish you to hear our reasons influencing our conduct."

The events of the first two days of August at Braddock's Field and Pittsburgh and of the two or three succeeding weeks, seemed to mark the culmination of the popular frenzy on the subject of the excise law, and from the 15th of July to the last of August was the period of the greatest excitement that exhibited itself during the insurrection. During the interval of time between the great muster at Braddock's and the day appointed for the meeting at Parkinson's Ferry, great numbers of "liberty-poles" were erected by the insurgents in various parts of the four counties, and upon these were hoisted flags, bearing such inscriptions as "DEATH TO TRAITORS," "LIBERTY AND NO EXCISE." Few persons were found hardy enough to refuse assistance in the erection of these poles, for to do so was to be branded as an enemy to the cause, and a fit subject for the vengeance of Tom the Tinker.

A number of these "liberty-poles" were raised in Fayette County. One was at New Salem, one at New Geneva, one at Masontown, on which a very beautiful silk flag was raised. One was at the old Union Furnace, in Dunbar township, and one at the market-house, in Uniontown. At the raising of this pole, about one hundred men under command of Capt. Robert Ross came in from German (now Nicholson) township to assist. Another pole was raised on the Morgantown road south of Uniontown, on the farm of Thomas Gaddis, who was of the principal leaders of the whiskey boys in this county. The pole at this place and the one in Uniontown were cut down by Gen. Ephraim Douglass in defiance of all threats and intimidation. That which had been erected at New Geneva met the same fate at the hands of Mrs. Elizabeth Everhart (wife of Adolph Everhart) and two or three other women of equal determination. The others named stood bearing their threatening flags and inscriptions until the tide of insurrection began to turn before the menace of military force, and then those who had raised them were glad enough to see them fall, and to deny all agency in their erection.

On the 14th of August, according to appointment, the meeting of the delegates was opened at Parkinson's Ferry. The proclamations of the President and of Governor Mifflin had not been received. Neither the commissioners for the State nor those for the United States had made their appearance, but intelligence came during the progress of the meeting, that the two delegations were on their way from Philadel-

<sup>1</sup> At the meeting of the inhabitants of Pittsburgh, held July 31st, it was resolved that whereas a general meeting of delegates from the townships of the country west of the mountains will be held at Parkinson's Ferry on the 14th of August next, therefore delegates shall be appointed to that meeting, and that the 9th of August be appointed for a town-meeting to elect such delegates.

phia, and that two of the United States commissioners had just arrived at Greensburg.<sup>1</sup>

The first ceremony performed at Parkinson's was the erecting of a tall "liberty-pole," and the hoisting of a flag bearing the inscription, "Equal Taxation and no Excise.—No Asylum for Traitors and Cowards." Two hundred and twenty-six delegates were present from townships in Fayette, Westmoreland, Allegheny, Washington, and that part of Bedford lying west of the Allegheny Mountains, with a few from Ohio County, Va. The meeting was organized by the appointment of Col. Edward Cook and the Hon. Albert Gallatin, both of Fayette County, respectively as chairman and secretary. It soon became apparent that a reaction had commenced, and that the tide of opinion had, with a number of the leaders, begun to set against the adoption of violent measures. It was claimed for some of those who at this meeting developed a strong opposition to the plans of Bradford and other extremists, that their course was prompted by the same desire which had at first induced them to range themselves among the disaffected,—that of appearing to assume leadership for the purpose of curbing the lawless element and diverting its energies from the track leading to open violence and rebellion. But there is little doubt that their action at this time was in no small degree due to their late realization of the fact that the United States government had resolved to put down lawlessness at whatever cost, that it would exert all its powers, if necessary, to enforce obedience, and that as against that power the cause of the insurrectionists was hopeless.

A series of strong resolutions was introduced by Col. James Marshal, of Washington, and supported in an intemperate speech by Bradford, who was replied to in opposition by Albert Gallatin, Judge Brackenridge, Judge Edgar, of Washington, and others. The resolutions were finally adopted, but in a greatly modified form. The second of the series provided for the appointment of a standing committee, to consist of one member from each township, charged with various duties, among which was the drafting of a remonstrance to Congress, praying for a repeal of the excise law. They were also "to have power to call together a meeting, either of a new representation of the people or of the deputies here convened, for the purpose of taking such further measures as the future situation of affairs may require; and in case of any sudden emergency, to take such tempo-

rary measures as they may think necessary." The closing resolution was to this effect, "That a committee, to consist of three members from each county, be appointed to meet any commissioners that have been or may be appointed by the government, and report the result of this conference to the standing committee." The standing committee (consisting of sixty persons) met, and appointed the committee to meet the commissioners of the United States and those of Pennsylvania, as provided by the final resolution. This committee of conference was composed as follows:

For Fayette County: Albert Gallatin, Edward Cook, and James Lang.

For Westmoreland County: John Kirkpatrick, George Smith, and John Powers.

For Allegheny County: Hugh H. Brackenridge, Thomas Moreton, and John B. C. Lucas.

For Washington County: David Bradford, James Marshal, and James Edgar.

For Bedford County: Herman Husbands.

For Ohio County, Va., William Sutherland.

The Committee of Sixty, after having appointed and instructed the committee of conference, adjourned to meet at Redstone Old Fort (Brownsville) on the 2d of September.

The commissioners for the State arrived at Pittsburgh on the 17th of August, and those appointed by the President came immediately afterwards. On the 20th the two bodies met the committee of conference which was appointed at Parkinson's Ferry. At this meeting preliminary proceedings were taken, which resulted in propositions by both bodies of commissioners, who declared explicitly that the exercise of the powers vested in them to suspend prosecutions, and to promise a general amnesty and pardon for past offenses, "must be preceded by full and satisfactory assurances of a sincere determination in the people to obey the laws of the United States." The members of the committee who took the most prominent part in the proceedings were Gallatin and Cook, of Fayette; Bradford and Marshal, of Washington; and Brackenridge, of Allegheny County. All these, with the exception of Bradford, were in favor of acceding to the propositions of the commissioners, and this was found to be the sense of the committee; but they had no power to act, further than to report the result of the conference to the standing Committee of Sixty. That committee had adjourned to meet at Redstone Old Fort on the 2d of September, as before mentioned, but upon the conclusion of the conference with the commissioners at Pittsburgh the time of their meeting was changed and made five days earlier,<sup>2</sup> though this change

<sup>1</sup> In a letter written by William Findley to Secretary Dallas, dated Aug. 23, 1794, he mentions that he was present at the meeting at Parkinson's, and says, "Messrs. Yates and Bradford came to Greensburg the morning of the meeting, and wrote by express to me of their pacific intentions and authority, which being communicated to the meeting had a salutary effect, and a committee of discreet men were appointed to confer with the commissioners at Pittsburgh, but unfortunately the newspapers came next morning with the President's proclamation and the orders for an armed force as a substitute for judicial proceedings; this irritated and inflamed those even who had been formerly moderate and regular, and greatly increased the difficulty of accommodation."

<sup>2</sup> Following are extracts from a communication addressed by the committee of conference to the United States commissioners:

"PITTSBURGH, Aug. 22, 1794.

"GENTLEMEN,—Having in our conference at considerable length stated to you the grounds of that discontent which exists in the minds of the people of this country, and which has lately shown itself in acts of opposition to the excise law, you will consider us as waiving any question

of time gave great offense to Bradford and other extremists. The change of time was made in deference to one of the conditions imposed by the commissioners, viz.: "It is expected and required by the said commissioners that the citizens composing the said standing committee do, *on or before the first day of September next*, explicitly declare their determination to submit to the laws of the United States, and that they will not, directly or indirectly, oppose the execution of the acts for raising a revenue on distilled spirits and stills."

Accordingly, on the 28th of August, the standing committee (the committee of sixty) met at Brownsville, to receive and act upon the report of the committee of conference. Of the sixty members of the committee, fifty-seven were in attendance, of whom twenty-three were from Washington County. Judge Alexander Addison said<sup>1</sup> "that the minds of all men appeared to be strongly impressed with a sense of the critical situation of the country, and the minds of almost all with a fear of opposing the current of the popular opinion," and that "these impressions were greatly increased by the appearance of a body of armed men assembled there from Muddy Creek, in

of the constitutional power of the President to call upon the force of the Union to suppress them. It is our object, as it is yours, to compose the disturbance. . . . We have already stated to you in conference that we are empowered to give you no definite answer with regard to the sense of the people on the great question of acceding to the law, but that in our opinion it is the interest of the country to accede, and that we shall make this report to the committee to whom we are to report, and state to them the reasons of our opinion, that so far as they have weight they may be regarded by them. It will be our endeavor to conciliate not only them, but the public mind in general to our views on this subject. We hope to be assisted by you in giving all that extent and precision, clearness and certainty to your propositions that may be necessary to satisfy the understandings and engage the acquiescence of the people. . . . As we are disposed, with you, to have the sense of the people taken on the subject of our conference as speedily as may be, with that view we have resolved to call the committee to whom our report is to be made at an earlier day than had been appointed, to wit, on Thursday, the 28th instant, but have not thought ourselves authorized in changing the place at Redstone Old Fort, on the Monongahela.

"By order of the Committee,

"EDWARD COOK, Chairman."

—*Papers Relating to the Whiskey Insurrection; Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d Series, vol. iv. pp. 190, 191.

Less conciliatory but more curious was the reply of the Ohio County (Va.) committee to the United States commissioners, viz.:

"PITTSBURGH, Aug. 23. 1794.

"GENTL.—Having Considered your Letter of this Date since the Departur of the speachel Comatie delegated from Westmoreland, Washington, Featt & Aleganie countis, in Pensilvenea, & Considering our Selves a Justifyable representation of those inhabitants of Ohio County by whome we were Delegated, & a part of that speachel Comitie to whom your proposals wear mead and Accepted yesterday, and the day posding and relying on the faith alr'dy pledged by you and Accepted by the Speachel Comatee, we d'clin entering any further on this Bussens, untell we Consult our Constituents & the Comatee of Safety.

"We are, Gentl., with esteem,

"Your most Obed. Humble Serv't,

"ROBERT STEPHENSON,

"WILLIAM SUTHERLAND,

"WM. MCKINLEY."

—*Ibid.*, p. 203.

<sup>1</sup> In a deposition before Richard Peters, judge of the United States District Court.—*See Pennsylvania Archives*, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 390.

Washington County, to punish Samuel Jackson<sup>2</sup> as an enemy to what they called their cause."

The business of the meeting was opened by the submission of the conference committee's report and a speech upon it by Mr. Gallatin, who urged the adoption of a resolution in acceptance of the terms offered by the commissioners, and set forth the danger of using force in resistance to the law, the impossibility of these western counties contending successfully against the force of the United States, and the evident necessity of submission. "Mr. Gallatin, although a foreigner who could with difficulty make himself understood in English, yet presented with great force the folly of past resistance, and the ruinous consequences to the country of the continuance of the insurrection. He urged that the government was bound to vindicate the laws, and that it would surely send an overwhelming force against them. He placed the subject in a new light, and showed the insurrection to be a much more serious affair than it had before appeared."<sup>3</sup> Mr. Brackenridge followed Gallatin in an argument to the same end, though urged in a different manner. Then Col. Bradford delivered a speech in opposition to the various arguments of Gallatin and Brackenridge, alluding to the revolutions in America and in France as models for imitation, and as inducements to hope for the success of these counties against the government, which he said was rendered reasonably certain on account of their peculiar situation, as separated from the eastern country by almost insurmountable natural barriers. His whole speech was manifestly intended to keep up the opposition to government, and to prevent the adoption of the resolutions proposed by Mr. Gallatin.

The leaders, with the exception of Bradford and a few others of less prominence, had fully made up their minds to abandon the wreck of the insurrection, but the followers had apparently at that time little thought of submission, and were as violent and determined an

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Jackson was a Quaker of great respectability, a man of some wealth, and in part owner of a paper-mill on Redstone Creek. He was conscientiously opposed to the use and manufacture of whiskey, and naturally sided against the insurgents. This caused them to regard him as a foe, and the enmity was increased by a remark which he had made concerning the meeting at Parkinson's Ferry, calling it a "*scrub congress*." It was for this offense that the Muddy Creek men now visited him, took him prisoner, marched him to Brownsville, and arraigned him before the Committee of Sixty. Violence might and probably would have been done him but for the interposition of Judge Brackenridge, a member of the committee, but an acquaintance and personal friend of Mr. Jackson. On the appearance of the latter the judge took the matter into his own hands. He addressed the meeting, saying that Samuel was certainly very culpable for having applied so disrespectful an epithet to such an august and legitimate assemblage of the sovereign people, but that it was probably from lack of thought and reflection more than from sinister design, and that on this account the proper punishment to apply to him would be to pay him in his own coin by stigmatizing him as a "*scrub-Quaker*." The effect was just what the judge had intended. Tom the Tinker's boys yelled with delight, and after admonishing the scrub-Quaker to be more careful of his language in the future, allowed him to depart with no other maltreatment than the jeers of the Muddy Creekers and their compatriots.

<sup>3</sup> Judge Wilkeson.

opposition as ever, and so strong an influence did this exert, even on the leaders who knew that the cause was hopeless, that they dared not openly and fully avow their sentiments and place themselves on record. "Such was the fear of the popular frenzy that it was with difficulty that a vote could be had at this meeting. No one would vote by standing up. None would write a yea or nay, lest his handwriting should be recognized. At last it was determined that *yea* and *nay* should be written by the secretary on the same pieces of paper, and be distributed, leaving each member to chew up or destroy one of the words while he put the other in the box," thus giving each member an opportunity of concealing his opinion, and of sheltering himself from the resentment of those from whom violence was to be apprehended, or whom he wished to avoid offending. In this way a balloting was had, and in the adoption of the resolutions by a vote of thirty-four to twenty-five. When this vote was declared, so strongly in opposition to his views, Col. Bradford withdrew from the meeting in anger and disgust.

It was by the meeting "Resolved, That in the opinion of this Committee it is the interest of the people of this Country to accede to the proposals made by the Commissioners on the part of the United States. Resolved, that a Copy of the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the said Commissioners."

But instead of giving the assurances required by the commissioners, the Committee of Sixty showed a disposition to temporize, and in the hope of obtaining better terms they further "Resolved, That a Committee be appointed<sup>1</sup> to confer with the Commissioners on the part of the United States and of the State of Pennsylvania, with instructions to the said Committee to try to obtain from the said Commissioners such further modification in their proposals as they think will render them more agreeable to the people at large, and also to represent the necessity of granting further time to the people before their final determination is required . . . That the said Committee shall publish and communicate throughout the several counties the day at which the sense of the people is expected to be taken. That on the day thus published the following question be submitted to the citizens duly qualified to vote, according to the election law of the State, of the Counties of Westmoreland, Washington, Fayette, Allegheny, and that part of Bedford which lies west of the Allegheny mountains, in Pennsylvania, and of Ohio County, Virginia,—*Will the people submit to the laws of the United States*

<sup>1</sup> The following letter from the chairman of the meeting was addressed to the United States committee:

"BROWNSVILLE, 29th August, 1794.

"GENTLEMEN,—Difficulties having arisen with us, we have thought it necessary to appoint a committee to confer with you in order to procure, if possible, some farther time, in order that the people may have leisure to reflect upon their true situation.

"I am, Gentlemen, your most obt. Humble Servt,  
"EDWARD COOK."

*upon the terms proposed by the Commissioners of the United States?"*

The persons appointed to form the committee under these resolutions were John Probst, Robert Dickey, John Nesbitt, Herman Husband, John Corbly, John Marshal, David Phillips, John Heaton, John McClelland, William Ewing, George Wallace, Samuel Wilson, and Richard Brown.

The meeting continued in session at Brownsville for two days, and adjourned on the 29th of August. It was the last meeting of the kind held during the insurrection, and virtually marked its close, as the meeting held at the same place three years before (July 27, 1791) had marked its opening, that being the first public meeting held in opposition to the excise law. Thus it may be said that the famous insurrection was born and died at Redstone Old Fort, in Fayette County.

The committee appointed at the Brownsville meeting met the commissioners of the United States and those of Pennsylvania in conference at Pittsburgh on the 1st of September, at which meeting "it was agreed that the assurances required from the citizens of the Fourth Survey of Pennsylvania [the four western counties] should be given in writing, and their sense ascertained in the following manner:

"That the citizens of the said survey (Allegheny County excepted) of the age of eighteen years and upwards, be required to assemble on Thursday, the 11th instant, in their respective townships, at the usual place for holding township meetings, and that between the hours of twelve and seven, in the afternoon of the same day, any two or more of the members of the meeting who assembled at Parkinson's Ferry on the 14th ultimo, resident in the township, or a justice of the peace of said township, do openly propose to the people assembled the following questions: Do you now engage to submit to the laws of the United States, and that you will not hereafter, directly or indirectly, oppose the execution of the acts for raising the revenue upon distilled spirits and stills? And do you also undertake to support, as far as the laws require, the civil authority in affording the protection due to all officers and other citizens? *Yea or nay?* . . . That a minute of the number of yeas and nays be made immediately after ascertaining the same. That a written or printed declaration of such engagement be signed by all those who vote in the affirmative, of the following tenor, to wit: 'I do solemnly promise henceforth to submit to the laws of the United States; that I will not, directly or indirectly, oppose the execution of the acts for raising a revenue on distilled spirits and stills; and that I will support, so far as the law requires, the civil authority in affording the protection due to all officers and other

<sup>2</sup> The citizens of Allegheny County were required to "meet in their respective election districts on the said day, in the same manner as if they were assembled in townships."

citizens.' This shall be signed in the presence of the said members or justices of the peace, attested by him or them, and lodged in his or their hands.

"That the said persons so proposing the questions stated as aforesaid do assemble at the respective county court-houses on the 13th inst., and do ascertain and make report of the numbers of those who voted in the affirmative in the respective townships or districts, and of the number of those who voted in the negative, together with their opinion whether there be such a general submission of the people in their respective counties that an office of inspection may be immediately and safely established therein; that the said report, opinion, and written or printed declarations be transmitted to the commissioners or any one of them at Uniontown on or before the 16th instant."

On the part of the United States, the commissioners agreed that if the assurances should be given in good faith, as prescribed, no prosecution for treason or any other indictable offense against the United States committed in this survey before the 22d of August, 1794, should be commenced before the 10th of July, 1795, against any person who should, within the time limited, subscribe such assurance and engagement, and perform the same, and that on the 10th of July, 1795, there should be granted "a general pardon and oblivion of all the said offenses;" but excluding therefrom every person refusing or neglecting to subscribe the assurances and engagement, or who having so subscribed, should violate the same, or wilfully obstruct the execution of the excise laws. On behalf of the State of Pennsylvania, the commissioners, McKean and Irvine, promised that if the proposed assurances should be given and performed until July 10, 1795, there should then be granted (so far as the State was concerned) "an act of free and general pardon and oblivion of all treasons, insurrections, arsons, riots, and other offenses inferior to riots committed, counseled, or suffered by any person or persons within the four western counties of Pennsylvania" subsequent to the 14th of July, 1794, but excluding from its operation every person refusing or neglecting to subscribe to such agreement, or violating it after subscribing.

The Pennsylvania commissioners left Pittsburgh on the 3d of September, and Messrs. Yeates and Bradford, United States commissioners, proceeded east soon afterwards. Both bodies were requested by the Governor and the President respectively to remain until after the announcement of the result of the popular vote;<sup>1</sup> but for some reason they did not comply, and only James Ross remained to carry the signatures to Philadelphia.

On the day appointed, September 11th, elections were held in (nearly) all the townships or election districts of the four counties. The result in Fayette was announced as follows:

<sup>1</sup> See Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. pp. 260, 261.

"UNIONTOWN, September 16, 1794.

"We, the subscribers, having, according to resolutions of the committee of townships for the county of Fayette, acted as judges on the 11th instant at the meetings of the people of said county, respectively convened at the places in the first, second, and third election districts where the general elections are usually held (no judge or member of the committee attending from the fourth and last district, which consists of the townships of Tyrone and Bullskin), do hereby certify that five hundred and sixty of the people thus convened on the day aforesaid did then and there declare their determination to submit to the laws of the United States in the manner expressed by the commissioners on the part of the Union in their letter dated the 22d day of August last; the total number of those who attended on that occasion being only seven hundred and twenty-one,—that is to say, something less than one-third of the number of citizens of the said three districts. And we do further certify that from our previous knowledge of the disposition of the general body of the people, and from the anxiety since discovered by many (who either from not having had notice, or from not having understood the importance of the question, did not attend) to give similar assurances of submission, we are of opinion that the great majority of those citizens who did not attend are disposed to behave peaceably and with due submission to the laws.

"ALBERT GALLATIN. JOHN JACKSON.

"WILLIAM ROBERTS. ANDREW RABB.

"JAMES WHITE. THOMAS PATTERSON.

"GEORGE DIEUTH [DEARTH?]."

But notwithstanding the favorable report of the judges of election, it appears that the United States commissioners regarded the proceedings in Fayette County as being peculiarly unsatisfactory. In their report to the President<sup>2</sup> they said, "The county of Fayette rejected the mode of ascertaining the sense of the people which had been settled between the undersigned and the last committee of conference at Pittsburgh (September 1st). The standing committee of that county directed those *qualified by the laws of the State*<sup>3</sup> for voting at elections to assemble in their election districts<sup>4</sup> and vote by ballot whether they would accede to the proposals made by the commissioners of the United States on the 22d of August or not. The superintendents of these election districts report that five hundred and sixty of the people thus convened had voted for submission, and that one hundred and sixty-one had voted against it; that no judge

<sup>2</sup> Papers Relating to the Whiskey Insurrection; Pa. Archives, Series 2, vol. iv. pp. 257, 258.

<sup>3</sup> The agreement of the committee with the commissioners was, not that *qualified voters by the law of Pennsylvania* alone should vote on the proposition, but that the question should be submitted to "*the citizens of the said survey of the age of eighteen years and upwards.*"

<sup>4</sup> It was in Allegheny County alone that the agreement with the commissioners contemplated voting *by election districts*. In Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland they were required to vote *by townships*.



or member of their committee had attended from the Fourth District of the county to report the state of the votes there, and that they are of opinion that a great majority of the citizens who did not attend are disposed to live peaceably and with due submission to the laws. But it is proper to mention that *credible and certain* information has been received that in the Fourth District of that county (composed of the townships of Tyrone and Bullskin), of which the standing committee have given no account, six-sevenths of those who voted were for resistance. . . . The written assurances of submission which have been received by the commissioners are not numerous, nor were they given by all those who expressed a willingness to obey the laws. In Fayette County, a different plan being pursued, *no written assurances were given* in the manner required."

In regard to the non-compliance with the methods prescribed by the commissioners, the failure in Fayette County to signify the submission of the people by individual subscription to the terms, and the very light vote cast here, Mr. Gallatin, in a letter to Governor Mifflin,<sup>1</sup> dated Uniontown, September 17th, said, "It was an effort too great, perhaps, to be expected from human nature that a people should at once pass from an avowed intention of resisting to the signing a test of absolute submission, and to a promise of giving active support to the laws. The change would be operated only by degrees; and after having convinced the understanding of the more enlightened, it was not so easy a task to persuade those whose prejudices were more deeply rooted and means of information less extensive. The great body of the people, which consists of moderate men, were also for a time, from a want of knowledge of their own strength, afraid to discover their sentiments, and were in fact kept in awe by a few violent men. This was one of the principal reasons which prevented so many from attending the general meeting on the day on which the sense of the people was taken, to which may be added, in this county, the unconcern of a great number of moderate men, who, having followed peaceably their occupations during the whole time of the disturbances, did not think themselves interested in the event, and were not sufficiently aware of the importance of the question to the whole county. Although, however, all the warmest persons attended, we had a very large and decided majority amongst the voters, and a great many of those who had come with an intention of testifying their intention to resist, were convinced by the arguments made use of, though their pride would not suffer them to make a public retraction on the moment, and they went off without giving any vote.

"A very favorable and decisive change has taken place since, and has indeed been the result of the event of that day. The general disposition now seems

to be to submit, and a great many are now signing the proposals of the commissioners, not only in the neighboring counties, but even in this, where we had not thought it necessary. We have therefore thought the moment was come for the people to act with more vigor, and to show something more than mere passive obedience to the laws, and we have in consequence (by the resolutions of this day herein inclosed, and which, we hope, will be attended with salutary effects) recommended associations for the purpose of preserving order, and of supporting the civil authority, as whatever heat existed in this county was chiefly owing to what had passed in the neighboring counties."

The resolutions referred to in the letter were those passed at a meeting of the township committees of Fayette County, held on the 17th of September, at Uniontown, and of which Edward Cook was chairman. As stated by Mr. Gallatin, they recommended township associations in this and adjoining counties to promote submission to the law, and in their preamble recited that "It is necessary to shew our fellow-citizens throughout the United States that the character of the inhabitants of the western country is not such as may have been represented to them, but that on the contrary they are disposed to live in a peaceable manner, and can preserve good order among themselves without the assistance of a military force." Evidently the opponents of the law had at last begun to realize that successful resistance to the government was hopeless, and that voluntary submission was better than that enforced by infantry, cavalry, and artillery. But the knowledge came too late to prevent the exercise, or at least the menace, of the military power. Upon a full knowledge of the result of the meetings held on the 11th of September in the townships and election districts of the disaffected counties, the United States commissioners reported to the President, narrating the events connected with their mission, and concluded by saying that although they firmly believed that a considerable majority of the inhabitants of the four counties were disposed to submit to the execution of the laws, "at the same time they [the commissioners] conceive it their duty explicitly to declare their opinion that such is the state of things in that survey that there is no probability that the act for raising a revenue on distilled spirits and stills can at present be enforced by the usual course of civil authority, and that some more competent force is necessary to cause the laws to be duly executed, and to insure to the officers and well-disposed citizens that protection which it is the duty of government to afford. This opinion is founded on the facts already stated [the accounts of the unsatisfactory result of the township and district meetings], and it is confirmed by that which is entertained by many intelligent and influential persons, officers of justice and others, resident in the western counties, who have lately informed one of the commissioners that what-

<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, iv. 316.

ever assurances might be given, it was in their judgment absolutely necessary that the civil authority should be aided by a military force in order to secure a due execution of the laws."

The commissioners' report caused the President to decide, unhesitatingly, to use the military power, and to extinguish the last vestige of insurrection at whatever cost. In taking this course he had (as he afterwards said to a committee from these counties) two great objects in view: first, to show, not only to the inhabitants of the western country, but to the entire Union and to foreign nations, that a republican government could and would exert its physical power to enforce the execution of the laws where opposed, and also that American citizens were ready to make every sacrifice and encounter every difficulty and danger for the sake of supporting that fundamental principle of government; and, second, to effect a full and complete restoration of order and submission to the laws in the insurrectionary district. In pursuance of this determination the forces were promptly put in motion, and on the 25th of September the President issued a proclamation, which, after a preamble, setting forth that the measures taken by government to suppress the lawless combinations in the western counties had failed to have full effect; that "the moment is now come where the overtures of forgiveness, with no other condition than a submission to law, have been only partially accepted; when every form of conciliation not inconsistent with the well-being of government has been adopted without effect," proceeds,—

"Now, therefore, I, George Washington, President of the United States, in obedience to that high and irresistible duty consigned to me by the Constitution, 'to take care that the laws be faithfully executed,' deploring that the American name should be sullied by the outrages of citizens on their own government, commiserating such as remain obstinate from delusion, but resolved, in perfect reliance on that gracious Providence which so signally displays its goodness towards this country, to reduce the refractory to a due subordination to the law: Do hereby declare and make known that, with a satisfaction which can be equaled only by the merits of the militia summoned into service from the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, I have received intelligence of their patriotic alacrity in obeying the call of the present though painful yet commanding necessity; that a force which, according to every reasonable expectation, is adequate to the exigency is already in motion to the scene of disaffection; that those who have confided or shall confide in the protection of government shall meet full succor under the standard and from the arms of the United States; that those who, having offended against the laws, have since entitled themselves to indemnity, will be treated with the most liberal good faith, if they shall not have forfeited their claim by any subsequent conduct, and that instructions are given accordingly. . . ."

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The forces called out for the exigency amounted to about fifteen thousand men, in four divisions, one division from each of the States of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, as before mentioned. The Virginia and Maryland troops (commanded respectively by Gen. Daniel Morgan, of the former State, and Brig.-Gen. Samuel Smith, of Baltimore) formed the left wing, which rendezvoused at Cumberland, Md. The right wing (which was rendezvoused at Carlisle, Pa.) was composed of the Pennsylvania troops, commanded by Governor Mifflin, and those of New Jersey, under Governor Richard Howell, of that State. The commander-in-chief of the whole army was Gen. Henry Lee, Governor of Virginia, the "Light-Horse Harry" of Revolutionary fame, and father of Gen. Robert E. Lee, the Confederate commander in the war of 1861-65.

In his instructions from the President, the commander-in-chief was directed to "proceed as speedily as may be with the army under your command into the insurgent counties, to attack and as far as shall be in your power to subdue all persons whom you may find in arms in opposition to the laws. You will march your army in two columns from the places where they are now assembled, by the most convenient routes, having regard to the nature of the roads, the convenience of supply, and the facility of co-operation and union, and bearing in mind that you ought to act, until the contrary shall be fully developed, on the general principle of having to contend with the whole force of the counties of Fayette, Westmoreland, Washington, and Allegheny, and of that part of Bedford which lies westward of the town of Bedford, and that you are to put as little as possible to hazard. The approximation, therefore, of your columns is to be sought, and the subdivision of them so as to place the parts out of mutual supporting distance to be avoided as far as local circumstances will permit. Parkinson's Ferry appears to be a proper point towards which to direct the march of the columns for the purpose of ulterior measures.

"When arrived within the insurgent country, if an armed opposition appear, it may be proper to publish a proclamation inviting all good citizens, friends to the constitution and laws, to join the standard of the United States. If no armed opposition exist it may still be proper to publish a proclamation exhorting to a peaceful and dutiful demeanor, and giving assurances of performing with good faith and liberality whatsoever may have been promised by the commissioners to those who have complied with the conditions prescribed by them, and who have not forfeited their title by subsequent misdemeanor. Of those persons in arms, if any, whom you may make prisoners, leaders, including all persons in command, are to be delivered to the civil magistrates, the rest to be disarmed, admonished, and sent home (except such as may have been particularly violent and also influential), causing their own recognizances for their good

behaviour to be taken in the cases which it may be deemed expedient. . . . When the insurrection is subdued, and the requisite means have been put in execution to secure obedience to the laws, so as to render it proper for the army to retire (an event which you will accelerate as much as shall be consistent with the object), you will endeavor to make an arrangement for attaching such a force as you may deem adequate, to be stationed within the disaffected counties in such a manner as best to afford protection to well-disposed citizens and the officers of the revenue, and to suppress, by their presence, the spirit of riot and opposition to the laws. But before you withdraw the army you shall promise, on behalf of the President, a general pardon to all such as shall not have been arrested, with such exceptions as you shall deem proper. . . . You are to exert yourself by all possible means to preserve discipline among the troops, particularly a scrupulous regard to the rights of persons and property, and a respect for the authority of the civil magistrates, taking especial care to inculcate and cause to be observed this principle,—that the duties of the army are confined to attacking and subduing of armed opponents of the laws, and to the supporting and aiding of the civil officers in the execution of their functions.

“It has been settled that the Governor of Pennsylvania will be second, and the Governor of New Jersey third in command, and that the troops of the several States in line on the march and upon detachment are to be posted according to the rule which prevailed in the army during the late war, namely, in moving towards the seaboard the most southern troops will take the right, in moving towards the north the most northern troops will take the right. . . .”

In addition to his military duties as commanding officer of the expeditionary forces, Gen. Lee was also charged to give countenance and support to the civil officers in the execution of the law, in bringing offenders to justice, and enforcing penalties on delinquent distillers, and “the better to effect these purposes” the judge of the United States District Court, Richard Peters, Esq., and the attorney of the district, William Rawle, Esq., accompanying the army.

President Washington, with Gen. Henry Knox, Secretary of War, and Gen. Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, left Philadelphia on the 1st of October, and proceeded by way of Harrisburg to the headquarters of the right wing of the army at Carlisle. From that place, on the 11th he went to Chambersburg, and thence by way of Williamsport to Fort Cumberland, where he arrived on the 14th, and where he reviewed the Maryland and Virginia troops, composing the left wing; after which he proceeded to Bedford, Pa. (which was then Gen. Lee's headquarters), reaching it on the 19th, and remaining there two or three days, then returning east, and arriving at Philadelphia on the 28th.

In the mean time, after the departure of the Hon. James Ross, United States commissioner, from Pittsburgh and Uniontown, carrying with him to Philadelphia the reports of the elections of the 11th of September, the people of the four counties began to realize that the results of those elections might very probably be regarded as unsatisfactory by the government, and that very unpleasant consequences might ensue by the ordering of the military forces into this region. Upon this a general feeling of alarm became apparent, and spread rapidly. A meeting of the Committee of Sixty (otherwise termed the Committee of Safety) was called and held at Parkinson's Ferry on the 2d of October, Judge Alexander Addison being their secretary. At this meeting William Findley, of Westmoreland, and David Redick, of Washington County, were appointed a committee to wait on the President of the United States and to assure him that submission and order could be restored without the aid of military force. They found the President on the 10th of October at Carlisle, where he had come to review the troops of the right wing of the army, as before mentioned. They there had several interviews with him, in which they informed him of the great change that had taken place; “that the great body of the people who had no concern in the disorders but remained quietly at home and attended to their business had become convinced that the violence used would ruin the country; that they had formed themselves into associations to suppress disorder, and to promote submission to the laws.” In reply to this, the President said that as the army was already on its way to the western counties, the orders could not be countermanded, yet he assured the delegates that no violence would be used, and that all that was desired was to have the inhabitants of the disaffected region come back to their allegiance.

This reply was final and ended the mission of the committee. They returned and made their report at another meeting of the Committee of Safety, which was held at Parkinson's on the 24th of October, and of which Judge James Edgar was chairman. At this “meeting of the committees of townships of the four western counties of Pennsylvania and of sundry other citizens” it was resolved, “First,—That in our opinion the civil authority is now fully competent to enforce the laws and punish both past and future offenses, inasmuch as the people at large are determined to support every description of civil officers in the legal discharge of their duty.

“Second,—That in our opinion all persons who may be charged or suspected of having committed any offense against the United States or the State during the late disturbances, and who have not entitled themselves to the benefits of the act of oblivion, ought immediately to surrender themselves to the civil authority, in order to stand their trial; that if there be any such persons among us they are ready to surrender themselves to the civil authority accord-

ingly, and that we will unite in giving our assistance to bring to justice such offenders as shall not surrender.

"Third,—That in our opinion offices of inspection may be immediately opened in the respective counties of this survey, without any danger of violence being offered to any of the officers, and that the distillers are willing and ready to enter their stills.

"Fourth,—That William Findley, David Redick, Ephraim Douglass, and Thomas Morton do wait on the President with the foregoing resolutions."

The four committee-men appointed by the meeting to carry the renewed assurances to the President met at Greensburg preparatory to setting out on their mission, but at that place they received intelligence that the President had already left Bedford for Philadelphia, and that the army was moving towards the Monongahela, and thereupon they decided to await the arrival of the forces, and to report the action of the meeting to the commander-in-chief, as the President's representative.

There was no delay in the movement of the army. The New Jersey and Pennsylvania troops, composing the right wing, marched from Carlisle on the 22d of October, and proceeded by way of Bedford, across that county and Somerset, and along the road skirting the northeastern part of Fayette, to what is now Mount Pleasant, in Westmoreland, at which place the advance brigade arrived and encamped on the 29th. The centre corps (of this wing) encamped on the farm of Col. Bonnett, in Westmoreland, near the line of Fayette County, and the rear went into camp at Lobergier's Mills on the 30th. At these places they remained encamped about one week. Following is an extract from a letter<sup>1</sup> written from the rear brigade, dated Jones' Mill (in Westmoreland, near the northeast line of Fayette County), Oct. 29, 1784: "I am distressed at the ridiculous accounts sometimes published in our papers. I assure you that there has not been a single shot fired at our troops to my knowledge. The whole country trembles. The most turbulent characters, as we advance, turn out to assist us, supply forage, cattle, etc. From Washington we hear of little but fear and flight; a contrary account as to one neighborhood (Pidgeon Creek) has been sent down, but no appearance of an armed opposition, and this the only part of the country where the friends of government are not triumphant. Our army is healthy and happy; the men exhibit unexpected fortitude in supporting the continued fatigues of bad roads and bad weather."

The left wing of the army moved from Fort Cumberland on the 22d of October, and took the route marched over by Gen. Braddock thirty-nine years before, to the Great Meadows, and from there to Union-

town, at which place Gen. Lee arrived on the last day of October, and the main body of the left wing came up and encamped there the same evening.

The committee-men, Findley, Redick, Douglass, and Morton, who, as before mentioned, had been met at Greensburg with the intelligence of the departure of the President from Bedford, which decided them to wait the arrival of the army, went to the headquarters of the right wing at Bonnett's farm on the 30th of October, and presented the resolutions of assurance to Secretary Hamilton, who accompanied the division of Governor Mifflin. The secretary examined them and returned them to the committee, with the remark that, "for the sake of decorum, it would be best to present them to the commander-in-chief." This was what the committee had intended to do, and learning that Gen. Lee was then at or near Uniontown they immediately left for that place, and arriving there on the 31st of October, laid the business of their mission before him, he having full power to act in the name of the President. Secretary Hamilton also came over from the right wing, and arrived at Uniontown on the same evening.

Gen. Lee received the committee with great politeness,<sup>2</sup> and requested them to call on him on the following morning. At the appointed time he gave them his reply, which they embodied in their report, dated Uniontown, Nov. 1, 1794.<sup>3</sup> It was as follows:

"GENTLEMEN,—The resolutions entered into at the late meeting of the people at Parkinson's Ferry, with the various papers declaratory of the determination of the numerous subscribers to maintain the civil authority, manifest strongly a change of sentiment in the inhabitants of this district. To what cause may truly be ascribed this favorable turn in the public mind it is of my province to determine. Yourselves, in the conversation last evening, imputed it to the universal panic which the approach of the army of the United States had excited in the lower orders of the people. If this be the ground of the late change,—and my respect for your opinions will not permit me to doubt it,—the moment the cause is removed the reign of violence and anarchy will return.

"Whatever, therefore, may be the sentiments of the people respecting the present competency of the civil authority to enforce the laws, I feel myself obligated by the trust reposed in me by the President of the United States to hold the army in this country until daily practice shall convince all that the sovereignty of the Constitution and laws is unalterably established. In executing this resolution I do not only

<sup>1</sup> Papers Relating to the Whiskey Insurrection; Pennsylvania Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 433.

<sup>2</sup> The committee, however, were not very well pleased with their reception by Gen. Lee. One of their number, Mr. Findley, said (in his "History of the Insurrection," p. 199), "Indeed, though we were treated politely in other respects and employed to assist in the fixing of necessities for the army, and consulted about the ground on which it should encamp when it advanced farther into the country, yet we did not meet with that candour and frankness with which we had been treated by the President at Carlisle."

<sup>3</sup> Pa. Archives, 2d Series, vol. iv. p. 437.

consult the dignity and interest of the United States, which will always command my decided respect and preferential attention, but I also promote the good of this particular district.

"I shall, therefore, as soon as the troops are refreshed, proceed to some central and convenient station, where I shall patiently wait until the competency of the civil authority is experimentally and unequivocally proved. No individual can be more solicitous than I am for this happy event, and you may assure the good people whom you represent that every aid will be cheerfully contributed by me to hasten the delightful epoch.

"On the part of all good citizens I confidently expect the most active and faithful co-operation, which in my judgment cannot be more effectually given than by circulating in the most public manner the truth among the people, and by inducing the various clubs which have so successfully poisoned the minds of the inhabitants to continue their usual meetings for the pious purpose of contradicting, with their customary formalities, their past pernicious doctrines. A conduct so candid should partially atone for the injuries which in a great degree may be attributed to their instrumentality, and must have a propitious influence in administering a radical cure to the existing disorders.

"On my part, and on the part of the patriotic army I have the honor to command, assure your fellow-citizens that we come to protect and not to destroy, and that our respect for our common government, and respect to our own honor, are ample pledges for the propriety of our demeanor. Quiet, therefore, the apprehensions of all on this score, and recommend universally to the people to prepare for the use of the army whatever they can spare from their farms necessary to its subsistence, for which they shall be paid in cash at the present market price; discourage exaction of every sort, not only because it would testify a disposition very unfriendly, but because it would probably produce very disagreeable scenes. It is my duty to take care that the troops are comfortably subsisted, and I cannot but obey it with the highest pleasure, because I intimately know their worth and excellence.

"I have the honor to be, gentlemen,

"Your most obedient servant,

"With due consideration,

"HENRY LEE."

This reply, or address to the people, was printed and circulated extensively in every part of the four counties.

After a stay of a few days at Uniontown and Mount Pleasant respectively, the two columns of the army moved on in obedience to the general orders of the commander-in-chief, as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS,

"UNION (BEESEY'S) TOWN, NOV. 2, 1794.

"The army will resume its march on the morning of the 4th, at the hour of eight, when a signal-gun will be fired. They

will advance in two columns, composed of the respective wings. The right column will take the route by Lodge's to Budd's Ferry, under the command of his Excellency Governor Mifflin, who will please to take the most convenient situation in the vicinity of that place for the accommodation of the troops and wait further orders. The left column will proceed on the route to Peterson's, on the east side of Parkinson's Ferry, under the orders of Major-General Morgan; they will march by the left in the following manner: Light corps, cavalry, artillery, Virginia brigade, Maryland brigade, the baggage to follow each corps, and the public stores of every kind in the rear of the Virginia brigade. On the first day the light corps and artillery will march to Washington Bottom, fourteen miles; the Virginia brigade to Peterson's farm, twelve miles; the cavalry under Major Lewis will move with the commander-in-chief; the bullocks to precede the army at daylight. On the second day the column will proceed to the camp directed to be marked out between Parkinson's and Budd's Ferries.

"Should Brigadier-General Smith find the second day's march rather too much, he will be pleased to divide the same into two days. The quartermaster-general will immediately take measures for the full supply of forage and straw at the different stages. The commissary will place the necessary supply of provisions at particular intermediate stages where issues will be necessary; guards over the straw as soon as the van reaches the ground, and to see the same fairly divided amongst the troops. [Here follows the assignment of straw to each brigade, to the cavalry and artillery, and directions for making out the pay-rolls for one month's pay from the commencement of service.] The inspector and muster-master-generals of the respective line will also make pay-rolls for the general staff, to be countersigned by the commander-in-chief previous to payment. HENRY LEE."

"By the Commander-in-Chief.

"G. H. TAYLOR, *Aide-de-Camp*."

Under these orders the left wing marched from Uniontown, and the right wing from its camps at Mount Pleasant, Bonnett's, and Lobengier's, at the appointed time, and moving to the vicinity of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers, in Westmoreland County, went into camp at the place designated, between Parkinson's and Budd's ferries. From his headquarters, "near Parkinson's Ferry," on the 8th of November, the commander-in-chief issued an address or proclamation to the inhabitants of certain counties lying west of the Laurel Hill, in the State of Pennsylvania," the tone of which was a little after the manner of a conquering chieftain addressing the people of a subjugated province. "You see," he said, "encamped in the bosom of your district a numerous and well-appointed army, formed of citizens of every description from this and the neighboring States of New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, whom the violated laws of our common country have called from their homes to vindicate and restore their authority. . . . The scene before your eyes ought to be an instructive one; it ought to teach many useful truths, which should, for your own happiness, make a deep and lasting impression on your minds. . . . Those who have been perverted from their duty may now perceive the dangerous tendency of the doctrines by which they have been misled, and how unworthy of

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their confidence are the men by whom, for personal and sinister purposes, they have been brought step by step to the precipice from which they have no escape but in the moderation and benignity of that very government which they have vilified, insulted, and opposed. The friends of order may also perceive in the perils and evils that have for some time surrounded them how unwise and even culpable is that carelessness and apathy with which they have permitted the gradual approaches of disorder and anarchy."

The general then proceeded to recommend to the people to manifest their good intentions by taking and subscribing an oath (the form of which he prescribed) to support the constitution and obey the laws, and by entering into associations to protect and aid all government officers in the execution of their duties. He further recommended to all men able and willing to do military duty, and truly attached to their government and country, "to array themselves into regiments, one for each county, and to place themselves under such officers as may be selected by the Governor of the State, known to be firm friends to order and right, upon the express conditions of holding themselves in constant readiness to act in defense of the civil authority whenever called upon, receiving for their services the same pay and subsistence as is allowed to the militia of the United States when in actual service." He then concluded his proclamation as follows: "In pursuance of the authority vested in me by the President of the United States, and in obedience to his instructions, I do moreover assure all who may have entitled themselves to the benefit of the amnesty proffered by the commissioners heretofore sent by him to this district, and who may not have forfeited their title by subsequent misconduct, that the promise will be faithfully and liberally observed, and that all possible endeavors will be used to prevent injury to the persons or property of peaceable citizens by the troops, whose sole province it is to subdue those, if any there should be, hardy enough to attempt an armed resistance, and to support and aid the civil authority as far as may be required. To the promulgation of these, my orders, I with pleasure add my assurances that every exertion will be made by me—and, from my knowledge of the officers and soldiers of the army, I am persuaded with full success—to carry these wise and benevolent views of the President into complete effect."

The entire army remained in the neighborhood of Parkinson's Ferry for several days, after which the main part of the troops moved down the Monongahela River, and on the 15th of November a detachment was marched from the vicinity of Parkinson's to the town of Washington, accompanied by Secretary Hamilton and Judge Peters, and taking with them a large number of prisoners<sup>1</sup> which had been taken in

the eastern part of Washington County. All the prisoners taken by the army excepting three were taken in that county and Allegheny, under Gen. Lee's special orders,<sup>2</sup> issued for that purpose to Gen. Irvine and other officers in command of cavalry.

The time indicated in this order (Thursday morning, November 13th) was the time when most of the arrests were made by the military.

The commander-in-chief, at Uniontown, on the 1st of November, had announced his intention "to hold the army in this country until daily practice shall convince all that the sovereignty of the Constitution and laws is unalterably established." In a few days after his forces marched northward from Uniontown he became so convinced, and at once began to make arrangements for the return of the army. The notification of the reopening of the inspection-offices was made on the 10th,<sup>3</sup> and they were accordingly reopened ten days

put the damned rascals in the cellar, to tie them back to back, to make a fire for the guard, but to put the prisoners back to the farther end of the cellar, and to give them neither victuals nor drink. The cellar was wet and muddy, and the night cold; the cellar extended the whole length under a large new log house, which was neither floored nor the openings between the logs daubed. They were kept there until Saturday morning, and then marched to the town of Washington. On the march one of the prisoners, who was subject to convulsions, fell into a fit, but when some of the troops told Gen. White of his situation he ordered them to tie the damned rascal to a horse's tail and drag him along with them, for he had only feigned having the fits. Some of his fellow-prisoners, however, who had a horse, dismounted and let the poor man ride. He had another fit before he reached Washington. This march was about twelve miles. The poor man who had the fits had been in the American service during almost the whole of the war with Great Britain." Findley relates many other instances of barbarous treatment inflicted on prisoners by the soldiery, but it is not improper to say that his statements may have been a good deal exaggerated, as there is to be seen through all his narrative an unmistakable disposition to place in the worst possible light every occurrence or act done by the army, particularly all which could by any assumption be supposed to have been authorized, encouraged, or countenanced by Secretary Hamilton or executed by Brig.-Gen. White.

<sup>2</sup> The following are extracts from Gen. Lee's orders to Gen. William Irvine:

"HEAD QUARTERS NEAR PARKINSON'S FERRY,  
"November 9th, 1794.

"Sir,—From the delays and danger of escapes which attend the present situation of judiciary investigations to establish preliminary processes against offenders, it is deemed advisable to proceed in a summary manner in the most disaffected scenes against those who have notoriously committed treasonable acts; that is, to employ the military for the purpose of apprehending and bringing such persons before the judge of the district [Judge Peters], to be by him examined and dealt with according to law; to you is committed the execution of this object within that part of Allegheny County to which you are advancing. . . . The persons apprehended ought to be leading or influential characters or particularly violent. You will find a list (No. 3); this paper comprehends witnesses. The individuals are to be brought forward and treated as such. Direct all who may be apprehended by you to be conveyed to your camp until further orders. Send off your parties of horse with good guides, and at such a period as to make the surprises, however distant or near, at the same moment, or intelligence will precede them and some of the culprits will escape. I presume the proper hour will be at day-break on Thursday morning, and have therefore desired the operation to be then performed in every quarter.

"I have the honor to be, sir,

"With great respect,

"Your most obedient servant,

"HENRY LEE."

<sup>3</sup> "The announcement by Inspector Neville was as follows:

"Notice is hereby given that on Thursday, the 20th instant, an office of inspection will be opened at Pittsburgh for the county of Allegheny, at

<sup>1</sup> "On Thursday, the 13th of November," says Findley, in his "History of the Insurrection," "there were about forty persons brought to Parkinson's house, by order of Gen. White [of New Jersey]. He directed to

later without opposition at the principal towns of the four counties. The withdrawal of the army was announced, and the order of its return march directed, in orders by Gen. Lee, dated "Headquarters, Pittsburgh, Nov. 17, 1794," viz.:

"The complete fulfillment of every object dependent on the efforts of the army makes it the duty of the commander-in-chief to take measures for the immediate return of his faithful fellow-soldiers to their respective homes, in execution of which no delay will be permitted but that which results from the consultation of their comfort.

"On Tuesday morning, at the hour of eight, the Pennsylvania Cavalry will be ready to accompany his Excellency Governor Mifflin, whose official duties renders his presence necessary at the seat of government.

"On the next day the first division of the right column, consisting of the Artillery and Proctor's Brigade, under the orders of Maj.-Gen. Irvine, will commence their march to Bedford, on the route commonly called the Old Pennsylvania road.

"The following day at the same hour the New Jersey Line will move under the command of his Excellency Governor Howell, who will be pleased to pursue from Bedford such routes as he may find convenient.

"On the subsequent day at the same hour the residue of the Pennsylvania Line now on this ground will march under the command of Brig.-Gen. Chambers, taking the route heretofore mentioned, and making the same stages as shall have been made by the leading division. Maj.-Gen. Frelinghuysen, with the Elite Corps of the right column, will follow the next day and pursue the same route.

"Brig.-Gen. Smith, with the Maryland Line, will move to Uniontown, agreeably to orders heretofore communicated to him, and from thence to proceed on Braddock's road to Fort Cumberland, where he will adopt the most convenient measures in his power for the return of his troops to their respective counties.

"Brig.-Gen. Matthews will move on Wednesday next to Morgan Town, from thence to Winchester by way of Frankfort. From Winchester the troops will be marched to their respective brigades under the commanding officers from each brigade.

"As soon as the public service will permit afterwards, the Elite Corps of the left column, under Gen. Darke, will follow on the route prescribed for Brig. Matthews, and be disbanded as they reach their respective brigades.

". . . The corps destined for the winter defense will move without delay to Bentley's Farm, on the west side of the Monongahela, near Perry's Ferry, where they will receive orders from Maj.-Gen. Morgan.

the town of Washington for the county of Washington, at Greensburg for the county of Westmoreland, and at Union Town for the county of Fayette. All distillers are required forthwith to enter their stills at the office of the county in which they respectively reside, and to do further what the laws prescribe concerning the same, of which they may receive more particular information from the officer of inspection with whom entry is made.

"JOHN NEVILLE,

*Inspector of the Revenue, District of Pennsylvania, Fourth Survey.*  
"Nov. 10, 1794."

On the 27th of November the inspector announced that he was "directed to notify all persons in the counties of Allegheny, Fayette, and Bedford against whom suits have been commenced in the court of the United States for neglecting to enter their stills that upon their coming forward immediately to the collectors of each county and paying one year's arrearages upon the capacity of the still and the costs of suit, a bill of which will be furnished, the actions will be discontinued."—*Pennsylvania Archives*, iv., pp. 449, 481.

"The Virginia Cavalry will take the route by Morgan Town, from thence to Winchester by Romney's; the commandant will receive particular instructions as to their time and manner of march.

"The right column will receive their pay (still-due) at Bedford, the Maryland Line at Fort Cumberland, and the Virginia Line at Winchester. . . ."

The army moved on its return in accordance with these orders. The right column marched from Pittsburgh, by way of Greensburg, Ligonier, and Stony Creek, to Bedford, and thence by way of Fort Lytleton, Strasburg, and Shippensburg to Carlisle. The troops of the left column returned by different routes, the Virginians marching up the Monongahela Valley into their own State, and passing on by way of Morgantown to Winchester; and the Maryland brigade starting from its camp at Pierce's Ferry, thence moving southeastwardly through Fayette County and its county town, to the Great Crossings of the Youghiogheny, and from there to Fort Cumberland by the same route over which it had advanced.

The corps left, under command of Gen. Morgan, to remain in this region through the winter for the preservation of order, and to assist, if necessary, in the execution of the laws, was placed in camp at Bentley's, on the southwest side of the Monongahela. This force was composed in part of troops who had come from the East under Gen. Lee, and partly of men enlisted in the western counties, as advised in the proclamation of the commander-in-chief of November 8th, and authorized to the number of two thousand five hundred men by an act of Assembly of the 29th of the same month. Of those who were thus enlisted, Findley, in his "History of the Insurrection,"<sup>1</sup> says that many of them were reported to have been among the most troublesome of the insurgents; that the people in the neighborhood complained "that many of them, for some time at first, demanded free quarters and such things as they stood in need of without pay, and that some of the officers committed indictable offenses; but when the persons against whom the offenses were committed commenced prosecutions they settled the disputes amicably and behaved well for the future. And when the people took courage to refuse to submit to impositions, the soldiers ceased to demand free quarters, or to be otherwise troublesome." But the tenor of the orders issued by Gen. Morgan<sup>2</sup> to the

<sup>1</sup> Appendix, p. 321.

<sup>2</sup> They were as follows:

"General Orders.

"CAMP, BENTLEY'S FARM, NOV. 30, 1794.

"The General anticipates the happiest issue that the army he has the honor to command will afford to the laws and friends of good order and government in the four western counties of Pennsylvania. The willingness with which the citizens have enrolled themselves to co-operate with the army in the restoration of obedience to the laws are pleasing evidences that the unhappy delusion which lately pervaded this country, under the auspices of the friends to anarchy, are at an end.

"The General hopes that the army now hutting for winter-quarters will consider themselves as in the bosom of their friends, & that they will vie with each other in promoting the love and esteem of their fel-



troops under his command, and the well-known character of that general in the matter of the enforcement of discipline, render it probable that the above statements of Mr. Findley, like many others made by him in disparagement of the army and its officers, ought to be received with some degree of incredulity.

Gen. Morgan's forces continued in their cantonments at Bentley's Farm (with small detachments at Pittsburgh and Washington) until the following spring, when, order being fully restored and established, the last of the troops marched eastward across the Alleghenies, and the western counties were left in full possession and exercise of their former rights and powers.

Gen. Lee remained in the West for a considerable time after the departure of the main body of the army, and on the 29th of November, in pursuance of authority delegated to him by the President, he issued a "proclamation of pardon" as follows:

"By HENRY LEE, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Major-General therein, and Commander-in-Chief of the Militia Army in the Service of the United States.

"A PROCLAMATION.

"By virtue of the powers and authority in me vested by the President of the United States, and in obedience to his benign intentions, therewith communicated, I do by this, my proclamation, declare and make known to all concerned that a full, free, and entire pardon (excepting and providing as hereafter mentioned) is hereby granted to all persons residing within the counties of Washington, Allegheny, Westmoreland, and Fayette, in the State of Pennsylvania, and in the county of Ohio, in the State of Virginia, guilty of treason or misprision of treason against the United States, or otherwise directly or indirectly engaged in the wicked and unhappy tumults and disturbances lately existing in those counties, excepting nevertheless from the benefit and effect of this pardon all persons charged with the commission of offenses against the United States, and now actually in custody or held by recognizance to appear and answer for all such offenses at any judicial court or courts, excepting also all persons avoiding fair trial by abandonment of their homes, and excepting, moreover, the following persons, the atrocity of whose conduct renders it proper to mark them by name, for the purpose of subjecting them with all possible certainty to the regular course of judicial proceedings, and whom all officers, civil and military, are required to endeavor to

low-citizens, and pointedly avoid every species of spoliation on the property of the inhabitants.

"The officers commanding fatigue parties are particularly directed not to suffer the sugar or other trees producing fruit or comfort to the farmer to be cut down for building, or any other purpose whatever. The burning of fencing, where there is such an abundance of fuel so easily procured, is strictly forbid, and a violence offered to the person or depredation on the property of any individual by the soldiery will be punished in the most exemplary and summary manner.

"DANIEL MORGAN."

apprehend and bring to justice, to wit: [Here follows the list of excepted persons, given below.]

"Provided,—That no person who shall hereafter wilfully obstruct the execution of any of the laws of the United States, or be in anywise aiding or abetting therein, shall be entitled to any benefit or advantage of the pardon hereinbefore granted; and provided, also, that nothing herein contained shall extend or be construed to extend to the remission or mitigation of any forfeiture of any penalty incurred by reason of infractions of, or obstructions to, the laws of the United States for collecting a revenue upon distilled spirits and stills.

"Given under my hand, at Head Quarters in Elizabeth Town, this twenty-ninth day of November, 1794.

HENRY LEE.

"By order of the commander-in-chief.

"G. K. TAYLOR, *Aid-de-Camp*."

The names of the persons excepted by the terms of this proclamation were

Benjamin Parkinson,	George Parker,
Arthur Gardner,	William Hanna,
John Holcroft,	Edward Magner, Jr.,
Daniel Hamilton,	Thomas Hughes,
Thomas Lapsley,	David Lock,
William Miller,	Ebenezer Gallagher,
Edward Cook,	Peter Lyle,
Edward Wright,	John Shields,
Richard Holcroft,	William Hay,
David Bradford,	William McIlhenny,
John Mitchell,	Thomas Patton,
Alexander Fulton,	Stephenson Jack,
Thomas Spiers,	Patrick Jack, and
William Bradford,	Andrew Highlands,

of the State of Pennsylvania.

William Sutherland,	John Moore, and
Robert Stephenson,	John McCormick,
William McKinley,	

of Ohio County, Va.

With reference to the cases of those who were made prisoners by the cavalry, as well as of many proscribed but not captured, formal investigations were made under the direction of Judge Peters, in the course of which it was made apparent that information had been made against many who had really been guilty of no offense against the government. Many of those arrested were taken to Pittsburgh. Some were released through the interposition of influential friends, while others less fortunate were sent to Philadelphia, where they were imprisoned for some months.

Of those who were arrested while the army was in this region, one, and only one, was of Fayette County. This was Caleb Mounts. He was taken East with the forces of the right wing, but it was afterwards found that he was innocent, having been in Kentucky at the time when the riotous proceedings occurred. In regard to the taking of this person, Findley says, "Isaac Meason, a judge of Fayette County, followed

Judge Peters near forty miles into Bedford County, and offered himself and Judge Wells, of Bedford, both of them acknowledged friends of the government, as bail for the prisoner, but was absolutely refused. As Mr. Meason knew that the prisoner was guilty of no crime, which evidently appeared to be the case by no bill being found against him on his trial, he and Mr. Wells complain of the judge for not admitting him to bail on their application. Judge Peters being well known to be a man of feeling and humanity, his conduct in this and several other instances can only be accounted for from his apprehension that it was necessary that a considerable number of prisoners should be brought down in order to prevent the inflammatory part of the army from committing outrages at leaving the country." This last remark of Findley seems too clearly absurd to require contradiction. Only two prisoners were taken by the army in Westmoreland County. One of these was afterwards discharged for the reason that no bill was found against him. The other, a very ignorant man of most violent temper, and said to be subject to fits of temporary insanity, was found guilty of setting fire to the house of the Fayette County collector, Benjamin Wells, and was sentenced to death, but was reprieved, and finally pardoned by the President of the United States. The principal witness against this man on his trial was said to have been a chief leader of the rioters who attacked Wells' house, but one of those included in the pardon of the commander-in-chief.

In August, 1795, general pardons to those who had been implicated in the insurrection and who had not subsequently been indicted or convicted were proclaimed by President Washington and Governor Mifflin, in pursuance of the agreement made in the previous year at Pittsburgh by the United States and Pennsylvania commissioners.