

SOME NOTES ON AMERICAN HISTORY

By GEORGE H. RYDEN*

A. *Richard Henry Lee's Resolution and the Declaration of Independence.*

When the time for severing our ties with the mother country was approaching, the Pennsylvania delegation in Congress comprised seven men, only two of whom were radical, namely, Benjamin Franklin and John Morton. (Originally there were nine members in the delegation, but two had resigned). The others either opposed independence altogether or counselled a postponement of the question until a more propitious time. John Dickinson, the "Scholar of the Revolution", and the great antagonist of John Adams in Congress on the issue of independence, favored a delay. Robert Morris, later to become known as the "Financier of the Revolution", and James Wilson, a prominent Philadelphia lawyer, were of the same opinion as Dickinson. Charles Humphreys and Thomas Willing also opposed independence. As a matter of fact the instructions from the Pennsylvania Assembly to the Pennsylvania representatives in Congress were at best only lukewarm for such a drastic act as severance of the political ties with England. During this time the Three Lower Counties on the Delaware, New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, later to form the State of Delaware, were represented in Congress by three men, Thomas McKean and Cæsar Rodney, who favored independence, and George Read, who opposed it. The Three Lower Counties belonged, of course, to the same proprietorship as Pennsylvania, but had a separate legislature, which was dominated less by the conservative element than the Pennsylvania Assembly.

The time of crisis was at hand on June 7, 1776, when Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, introduced his famous resolution "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent States, etc., etc.," and

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although a great debate ensued on the 8th and 10th of June, with John Adams, of Massachusetts, leading the forces for the resolution and John Dickinson, of Pennsylvania, leading their opponents, the matter of voting upon the resolution was postponed three weeks to July 1st at the request of the South Carolina delegation in order to give the delegates time to receive fresh instructions from home. In order to satisfy the radicals, who chafed at the postponement of a vote on Lee's resolution, and who wanted to gain time by having a Declaration of Independence ready as a piece of propaganda to win adherents to the patriot cause at home and abroad in case Lee's resolution for separation should finally pass, Congress on the next day (June 11) appointed three committees, one to draw up the Declaration, one to prepare a frame of government, and one to prepare a plan of treaties to be proposed to foreign powers. Jefferson immediately set to work on the Declaration, Dickinson on the Articles of Confederation, and John Adams on the Plan of Treaties. Already on June 28 Jefferson's draft of the Declaration was submitted to Congress but was tabled until Lee's resolution could be taken up for consideration on the appointed day, July 1st.*

Then came the great day, July 1st, with the radicals confident of victory and the conservatives holding their lines for dear life against independence. Congress, resolving itself into the Committee of the Whole with Benjamin Harrison, of Virginia, in the chair, proceeded to consider Lee's resolution for separation. All day the struggle lasted with the two great antagonists, John Adams leading the radicals and John Dickinson the conservatives. The latter insisted that a stable government ought to be established and treaties with foreign nations negotiated before the actual separation should be con-

* Trumbull's famous painting erroneously called "The Signing of the Declaration of Independence" is an attempt to reproduce the scene on June 28 when Jefferson, accompanied by the other members of the committee, Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston, is submitting the draft of the Declaration at the table of the President of Congress, John Hancock.

summated, whereas John Adams argued that separation was coming late enough as it was. Finally, late in the day a vote was taken in the Committee of the Whole on the resolution with the result that it carried with nine states in favor of separation and two against (South Carolina and Pennsylvania), with New York's delegation not voting and Delaware's vote divided because of Cæsar Rodney's absence from Philadelphia. Having won their fight in the committee the radicals pressed for a completion of their victory by demanding a formal vote to be taken by Congress immediately after the dissolution of the Committee of the Whole House. The President of Congress, John Hancock, having resumed his chair, the chairman of the committee, Benjamin Harrison, reported the resolution favorably to Congress, but again at the request of South Carolina postponement of the final vote was granted for one day only. On this memorable first day of July the Pennsylvania delegation had cast five of its seven votes against independence, but nevertheless Pennsylvania found itself on the losing side. Fortunately a letter has been preserved telling of the great struggle. It was written by Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, to James Warren, from Philadelphia, on the 2nd of July and reads as follows: "I have only time to inform you that yesterday was agitated in Congress the great question of Independency; and as the facts are as well known at the Coffee House of the city as in Congress, I may inform you that, in a Committee of the Whole House, it was carried by nine colonies."

During the night between the first and the second of July strenuous efforts were made by the radicals to secure a unanimous vote by the states when the resolutions should be taken up for final action on the 2nd, but in vain. On that day New York's delegation remained silent as on the day before on account of its instructions to vote neither affirmatively nor negatively. Thomas McKean's efforts to locate Cæsar Rodney were, however, successful, and that active patriot, although suffering from cancer on his face, rode eighty miles from Dover,

Delaware, on horseback, arriving in time at the Independence Hall in Philadelphia to join McKean in out-voting George Read and thus placed Delaware with the majority. After much doubt and hesitation the South Carolina delegation decided to ignore its instructions and cast their state's lot in with the majority also. But what could Pennsylvania do with only two men in favor of independence and five against? It was finally settled in this wise: James Wilson left the opposition and joined Morton and Franklin, and with Robert Morris and John Dickinson purposely staying away from the session that day, it was possible for Wilson, Morton and Franklin to outvote Humphreys and Willing, who opposed the resolution to the bitter end. There were only three individual votes cast against the resolution in the whole Congress on the 2nd of July and those were by Reed, of Delaware, and Humphreys and Willing, of Pennsylvania. The other ten delegations voting on the resolution cast unanimous votes within each group.

The radical leader from Massachusetts, John Adams, had at last won his fight; John Dickinson, the conservative leader from Pennsylvania and Delaware had suffered defeat. And several years elapsed before the latter could regain the prestige he had lost for opposing separation. As a matter of fact he immediately went into the army and only when Delaware had reclaimed him as her son and elected him governor did Pennsylvania honor him by electing him to the same office. But it was as Delaware's representative that he later gained such renown as the Chairman of the Annapolis Convention, and in 1787 as the protagonist of the small states in the Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia.

But his name is missing from the signatures on the engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence, not because he opposed eventual separation from England, but because he thought the Lee resolution inopportune, and had not felt justified in attending the session of Congress on the 2nd of July and voting for it. As we shall see, he was no longer a member of the delegation from

Pennsylvania when, on August 2nd, the engrossed copy of the Declaration was ready for signatures. The radicals in Pennsylvania had seen to it that he was not returned to Congress when the time for electing another delegation came around.

Thus we have seen that Pennsylvania's decision, like that of Delaware and that of South Carolina, was a belated one, the victory for the radicals having been won with nine states in the Committee of the Whole House the day before. But though South Carolina, Delaware, and Pennsylvania merely fell into line with the majority, their favorable decisions helped the cause tremendously, for without these states, especially Pennsylvania and South Carolina, it is difficult to conceive of a successful prosecution of the war for independence. Forming as she did the connecting link between the six states to the north and northeast and the six states to the south and southwest, Pennsylvania was a veritable keystone and was aptly called, therefore, the "Keystone State."

But there was still one state missing to make the vote unanimous for Lee's resolution for separation. Not until July 15 did New York's delegation vote to join the rest of the states. On that day the New York delegation received new instructions from the New York Assembly, sitting at White Plains, advising the delegates to vote for independence.

Separation from England having finally been effected by the passage of the Lee resolution on the 2nd of July by the votes of twelve states (New York not voting), Congress immediately proceeded to consider Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence, which was to be an announcement, a justification and an explanation to the world of the act of separation already consummated, which draft had lain on the table since June 28th. The radicals, now called patriots, needed more adherents at home and were also anxiously looking for aid from abroad as well. A document of propaganda, such as the Declaration was meant to be, was absolutely necessary

to combat the tories, as the "bitter enders" among the native conservatives were now called, and if it could be so worded as to attract powerful nations in Europe to aid the patriots in their struggle against the English king and his armed forces so much the better. In this connection it may be said that scholars have estimated that during the eight years of struggle for independence about one-third of the native Americans were out and out supporters of the cause of independence, one-third were tories or "bitter end" opponents of this cause, and one-third were neutral.

The jubilant patriots in Congress now set to work on the Declaration with a will. The draft was debated section by section, certain sentences were eliminated altogether, to the chagrin and dismay of the draft's author, Thomas Jefferson, and additions were made here and there. The debate occupied three days, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of July, and when the Committee of the Whole House was satisfied with its work the Declaration was favorably reported to Congress on the 4th and adopted by that body the same day. No signatures were affixed to the Declaration on the 4th, however, as the draft, with its interpolations and corrections, was still in a rough form, like any present day document which has just come through the ordeal of criticism and debate. On the 3rd of July John Adams, after reciting Lee's resolution in a letter to his wife, had written as follows: "You will see, in a few days, a Declaration setting forth the causes which have impelled us to this mighty revolution, and the reasons which will justify it in the sight of God and man." And so we find that immediately after the adoption of the Declaration on the 4th it was ordered that it be printed and that copies of it "be sent to the several assemblies, conventions, and committees, or councils of safety, and to the several commanding officers of the continental troops; that it be proclaimed in each of the United States and at the head of the army." The Declaration was printed in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*

also as early as the 6th of July and in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on the 10th.

Not until after New York had joined in support of Lee's resolution and the Declaration, on the 15th of July, was Congress ready to move to have the Declaration and the Resolution engrossed on parchment, the former to serve as a sort of a preamble to the latter. This action was taken on July 19th and by August 2nd the parchment, which we may now see on exhibition in the Library of Congress in Washington, was ready for signatures. By that time the personnel of the Pennsylvania delegation, as intimated above, had been altered, for on July 20th there appeared in Congress a new delegation from Pennsylvania which had been appointed after the radicals had secured complete control in the state. Franklin, Morton, and Wilson had been returned, and also Robert Morris, although he had not voted for Lee's resolution. Dickinson, Humphreys, and Willing were not re-elected, but five new men appeared in their places and in the places of Edward Biddle and Andrew Allen, who had resigned from Congress before the separation question had reached the critical stage. The new men from Pennsylvania were George Ross, George Clymer, Dr. Benjamin Rush, James Smith, and George Taylor, and although they had had no part in the vote on the Resolution or the Declaration, their signatures were affixed with those of Franklin, Morton, Wilson, and Morris on the engrossed copy of the Declaration on or after the 2nd of August. Two other men signed the Declaration, who were not members of Congress on the 4th of July, namely, William Williams, of Connecticut, who reached Philadelphia the latter part of July, and Matthew Thornton, who signed some time after his arrival from New Hampshire on November 4, 1776. There were seven members of Congress, who were present on the 4th, but who never signed the Declaration. Four of these were of the New York delegation, George Clinton, John Alsop, R. R. Livingston, and Henry Wisner. John Rogers, of Maryland, who also was present in Congress on the 4th, never signed, and the two dele-

gates from Pennsylvania, Willing and Humphreys, in attendance on the 4th, were not in a position to sign on or after August 2nd for the reason that they were no longer members after July 20. On the other hand, there were members of Congress, who, though absent from Philadelphia on the 4th, nevertheless signed the document on the 2nd of August or later. They were the two delegates from Maryland, Chase and Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, who were attending the Maryland Convention at Annapolis on the 4th, George Wythe and Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, who were in attendance upon the Virginia State Convention on the same day, and Mr. Hooper, who had been expected in Philadelphia a long time by his colleague, Hewes, of North Carolina, but who had not arrived by the 8th of July when Hewes is inquiring about him, as we learn from a letter that has been preserved. Thomas McKean, of Delaware, though present in Congress on the 4th of July, shortly afterwards hurried to his military post and, according to his testimony given shortly before his death, he did not affix his signature to the Declaration until sometime in the year 1781. McKean's colleague, George Read (the only member remaining in Congress after July 20 who had voted against Lee's resolution on the 2nd of July) also signed the Declaration on or after August 2nd.

From the above analysis it can easily be seen that the engrossed copy is misleading when we read that it was unanimously adopted on the 4th of July and when one naturally assumes the signatures on it were affixed also on that date by the members present. As a matter of fact, the engrossing and signing of the document seems to have been an afterthought and the resolution to bring this about, as has already been said, was not passed until July 19, four days after the New York delegation adhered to Lee's resolution and the Declaration of Independence. It is a fact that the 4th was not considered the birthday of the nation by the Fathers at all; only after popular enthusiasm for the philosophy of the Declaration had given it an importance out of all pro-

portion to its real historical significance did the date of its adoption become regarded as the time of the actual act of severance of political ties with England. The framers of the propaganda document did better than they knew. To prove that the Fathers regarded the 2nd of July as the actual birthday of the United States one need only quote a part of another letter from John Adams to his wife dated July 3rd, the day *after* the Resolution was passed and the day *before* the Declaration was adopted. John Adams says: "The 2d day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore."

Just as the Declaration of Independence has become an awe-inspiring document so the so-called Liberty Bell for no reason at all has been elevated to the position of a sacred object. There was no public announcement and reading of the Declaration on the 4th (it would have been difficult even for its principal author, Thomas Jefferson, to have read it to the public without laboriously recopying his much revised draft), and consequently there could have been no ringing of the bell on that day proclaiming to the world the birth of a new nation. As one writer says: "There is no shadow of authority even for associating the ringing of the bell with the announcement of the agreement upon independence. The mythical legend of the blue-eyed boy waiting outside the door to give the signal to the man in the bell tower is the product of the fertile imagination of one of Philadelphia's early romancers, George Lippard, who first gave currency to it in his appropriately called 'Legends of the Revolution,—The 4th of July, 1776.'" It was not until the 8th of July that the Declaration was publicly proclaimed in

Philadelphia, although, as we have seen, it was printed in one of the local papers two days before. An eminent diarist and eye-witness, Christopher Marshall, writes as follows: "July 8th Monday. Warm sunshine morning—Went in a body to the State house Yard, where, in the presence of a great concourse of people, the Declaration of Independence was read by John Nixon. The company declared their approbation by three repeated huzzas—Fine starlight, pleasant evening. There were bon fires, ringing of bells with other great demonstrations of joy upon the unanimity and agreement of the declaration." John Adams somewhere refers to this public proclamation and remarks that the bells of Christ Church rang on the occasion.

B. *The Genesis of Wilmington, Delaware.*

Wilmington, Delaware, one of the oldest cities in America, is located on ground marking the first permanent settlement by white men in the Delaware River valley. It had its origin in the building of Ft. Christina by the Swedes in 1638, and consequently is almost twice the age of the United States. From this early settlement of Europeans in America, there gradually evolved the little hamlet of Christinahamn (Christinaport), which the Dutch later re-named Altona. Under the English this developed into the village of Willingtown; and in 1739 the borough of Wilmington. The community was under Swedish sovereignty from 1638 to 1655, and under the Dutch from 1655 until the fall of New Netherlands in 1664. Thenceforth the lands on which Wilmington now stands belonged to the English. The Duke of York's laws were supreme until the arrival of William Penn in 1682, when Philadelphia became the source of authority, remaining so down to the Revolution. Thus, the Wilmington community, during its long history, has been governed under the flags of four nations—Sweden, Holland, England, and the United States.

Not a little romance surrounds the beginnings of Wilmington. For a background of the story one must

look beyond the Atlantic to the land of the Sagas and the Vikings. During the seventeenth century, Sweden, under the reign of the House of Vasa, ranked as one of the first powers of Europe, and, like the English, French, and Spaniards, her statesmen took a considerable interest in commercial as well as territorial expansion. The greatest of Sweden's kings, the hero of the Thirty Years' War, Gustavus Adolphus, interested himself particularly in colonization projects and entertained visions of a "New Sweden" across the western sea. A little over three hundred years ago, on June 6, 1626, "The South Company" was chartered by the king while he was engaged in the invasion of Poland, and later, while involved in the Thirty Years' War in Germany, he chartered "The New South Company". His untimely death upon the battle field of Lützen in 1632, however, prevented the immediate realization of his plans. Nevertheless, in 1637, the late king's chancellor, Oxenstierna, then acting as regent during the minority of Gustavus's daughter, Christina, and while Sweden was still a major participant in the Thirty Years' War, authorized at Stockholm the formation of "The New Sweden Company". Shares of stock were sold in Sweden and Holland, and in the same year two ships were fitted out for the first expedition. The ships, *Key of Kalmar*, belonging to the Swedish government, and *Gripen*, the property of the Company, sailed from Gothenburg in November, 1637, with Peter Minuit as director. Minuit, who had organized and served a term of years as the first governor of the New Netherlands Colony at New Amsterdam (now New York), was instructed not to settle on lands already occupied by Europeans, to avoid especially the limits of New Netherlands, and to purchase from the Indians if feasible the lands on the west side of the South River (Delaware) from Minquas Kill (Christiana) to the falls of Trenton. No women went on the first expedition. The only passengers were Swedish officers and soldiers who were instructed to erect a fort and begin trade with the natives. Their cargo consisted of "several thousand yards of duf-

fels and other cloth, several hundred axes, hatches and adzes, several hundred knives, dozens of tobacco pipes, mirrors and looking glasses, gilded chains and finger rings, combs, ear-rings and other ornaments for the Indians. Spades, hoes and other implements were also loaded on the ships for use in the country."

Arriving in the Delaware in March, 1638, the little expedition sailed up Minquas Kill and cast anchor at "The Rocks". Indian chiefs were invited on board the *Key of Kalmar*. The lands extending southward to Duck Creek and northward to the Schuylkill were purchased from them, the Indians duly placing their marks on the deeds. Having built a fort close by "The Rocks", the colonists named it for their young queen. The river likewise received her name, and the colony, begun under such modest circumstances, became known as "New Sweden". Nine more expeditions were sent over from Sweden during the following fifteen years. Trade with the Indians gradually developed. With the arrivals of civilians and their wives, a small hamlet called Christinahamn (Christinaport) soon grew up outside the walls of the fort, and the lands on both sides of the Christina were rapidly put under cultivation. Within the fort religious services were held on Sundays and court sessions on weekdays from time to time as circumstances demanded. Before the end of Swedish rule on the Delaware the colony embraced both shores of the river, tiny settlements being established as far north as the Schuylkill. John Printz, the most successful of the Swedish governors, decided, upon his arrival at Ft. Christina in 1643, to build a governor's mansion, fort, and church on Tinicum Island (present site of the Corinthian Yacht Club near Philadelphia) and from that date "Printzhof" supplanted Ft. Christina as the "capitol" of the colony. Swedish sovereignty lasted, however, only until 1655, for Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor at New Amsterdam, came into the Delaware with a considerable force in that year and seized the Swedish posts. The capture of Ft. Christina occurred after a siege of several days. Stuy-

vesant placed several guns on the high ground now occupied by "Old Swedes" cemetery and also trained the guns of his ships upon the fort. The Swedish governor, Rising, after several fruitless parleys with Stuyvesant, surrendered on condition that his force be permitted to march out with honors of war and return to Sweden, and with the additional assurance that the Swedish civilians might retain their lands upon taking the oath of allegiance to the Dutch authorities.

The Dutch changed the name of the fort and hamlet to Altona and a Commissary representing the New Amsterdam government resided there. More attention was paid by the Dutch, however, to the development of New Amstel (later New Castle), and Altona consequently suffered a decline. Nevertheless the Swedes and Dutch continued to cultivate the lands along the Christina, and, when the Duke of York's authority became established, their ownership of these lands was confirmed by his governors. That the religious and social life of the community did not disappear is evidenced by the fact that a Swedish Lutheran church was built at Cranehook (near the Marine Terminal) in 1667, which was not abandoned until "Old Swedes", erected within a stone's throw of the old fort, was dedicated in 1699. Though Swedish sovereignty had long ago disappeared, the Swedish State Church continued to supply clergymen to "Old Swedes" and to three or four other parishes in the Delaware region until after the Revolution.

Following the arrival of William Penn in 1682 English settlers gradually predominated in the Wilmington area as elsewhere in the Delaware valley. A few intermarried with the Swedes and Dutch, including a Thomas Willing, who, by his marriage to Catherine, the daughter of Andrew Justison, became the owner in 1731 of considerable property on the Christina between what is now West and French streets. Between the present West and Market streets Willing laid out streets at right angles after the model of Philadelphia, and sold a number of lots. The first house on Willing's plot was built

at the corner of Market and Front streets. This house remained standing until 1825 and was occupied in its latter years as a tavern. But Willingtown grew very slowly; by 1735 only fifteen or twenty houses had been erected. In that year a William Shipley, from Ridley, Pennsylvania, purchased four plots of ground from various owners. The largest of these plots was one of eight acres lying between Market and West, above Second and below Fifth, conveyed to Shipley by Andrew Justison, Thomas Willing, and their wives for the sum of 104 pounds. Shipley, wealthy and much more enterprising than Willing, was also an influential member of the Society of Friends. Through his leadership a considerable number of Quakers came from Pennsylvania and bought lots from him, some of them building homes on what soon became known as Quaker Hill. With their arrival a new era for the urban community on the Christina began. Among these early Quakers may be named Edward Tatnall, Thomas West, Oliver Canby, and John Ferris. Edward Tatnall was the father of Joseph Tatnall, founder of the Tatnall flour mills on the Brandywine and first president of the Bank of Delaware. A great grandson of the first Tatnall, Henry Lea Tatnall, became interested in painting and has been called the "Father of Wilmington Art". Thomas West, who is said to have built the first house on Quaker Hill, was a distant relative of Lord de la Warr for whom the state was later named, and an uncle of the celebrated painter, Benjamin West. Oliver Canby was the first of the Quakers to engage in the milling business on the Brandywine. John Ferris was the grandfather of Benjamin Ferris, the well-known historian of the early settlements on the Delaware.

The Quakers built substantial houses. The most imposing of the early ones was Shipley's, which he built on the corner of Fourth and Shipley. Having a keen eye for business he also built a market house which extended on Fourth Street half way toward Market Street. The market, he realized, would enhance the value of the

neighboring property and be a means also of encouraging trade. When the market house was completed a notice was given by Shipley and twenty-eight other citizens that market days for the "public sale of all sorts of victualing" would be Wednesdays and Saturdays. A rival faction wanted the town market located on Market Street near Second, insisting that the Shipley market house was too far removed from the inhabitants of the lower town. Both sides appealed to Governor Penn to settle the dispute. The quarrel became so serious, in fact, that the downtowners threatened to destroy the Fourth Street market house. Even the pastor, vestry, and members of "Old Swedes" parish joined in the controversy, sympathizing, however, with the Shipley faction, and in their separate petition to the governor stated that the lots leased by the parish and other lands belonging to their glebe were nearer the Shipley market house and would consequently become more valuable if the market were located there. The governor settled the difficulty by referring the question to the people themselves, who were to vote on it under the charter, which he granted them in 1739. The voting in December of that year resulted in a compromise between the downtowners and uptowners. It was decided to hold the Wednesday markets in the lower part of town and the Saturday markets in the Shipley market house. Ever since this vote was taken, 188 years ago, Wilmington's famous markets have been held on Wednesdays and Saturdays, although the locations of the markets have been shifted from time to time. At present, parts of King, Madison, and Walnut streets are given over to these activities. The Wilmington market is a unique institution the traditions of which are as old as the government itself.

The lack of an official government for determining market days and preserving the peace had long been felt not only by the inhabitants of Willingtown, but also by the farmers living in neighboring hundreds and even across the Pennsylvania line in Chester county. Accordingly, on June 10, 1736, a petition to Governor Penn was

drawn up and signed by 103 inhabitants and freeholders praying the proprietor for a borough charter. Three years and more later, on November 16, 1739, a charter was granted, stipulating among other things that the free holders and tenants enjoying the franchise should by vote decide where and when to hold their markets, and that the name of the borough should be Wilmington, in honor of Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington, a friend of the governor. Enjoying the confidence of both George I and George II, the earl had held important posts in the cabinet. He had also been speaker of the House of Commons at one time and for a short period held the office of Prime Minister. It is interesting to recall that Wilmington, N. C., was also named for the earl at this time.

The first borough election under the charter for the purpose of electing officers was held in 1740. William Shipley was elected Chief Burgess, a fitting honor to one who had virtually founded modern Wilmington. Other offices filled were those of Second Burgess, High Constable, six Assistant Burgesses, and Town Clerk. Penn's charter remained in force until 1809 when the legislature passed an amendment to it defining the boundaries of the borough and providing for a town council of thirteen members. In 1832 the legislature granted a charter converting Wilmington from a borough into a city. It provided for a mayor, a city council of fifteen members, and other officers. In 1883 this charter was somewhat amended and is still in force. Dr. John McKinly, the first president (governor) of the State of Delaware, served several terms as Chief Burgess before the Revolution. Hon. Richard H. Bayard, eldest son of James A. Bayard, Senior, began his political career as first Mayor under the charter of 1832.