

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to Edward C. Carter, II, the former Librarian of the American Philosophical Society, for permission to use the accounts in its manuscript collections and for his friendliness and hospitality. About 1991, I purchased microfilms of the account books in the American Philosophical Society's collections, and I had my part-time secretaries and my research assistants over the years enter these accounts into a computer. Later, I had my research assistants check the entries. Beginning in May, 1997, I compared these computer entries against the originals at the American Philosophical Society. I also used miscellaneous manuscript accounts at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Library Company of Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania, the Free Library of Philadelphia, the files in the Papers of Benjamin Franklin at Yale University's Sterling Library, and accounts published in various journals, especially PMHB. I am indebted to the manuscript departments of these various institutions and to their librarians. Since the American Philosophical Society contains most of Franklin's accounts, I used its library at least once a week and sometimes three times a week for over two years. During those years, Elizabeth Carroll-Horrocks, Manuscripts Librarian, and Scot DeHaven, Assistant Manuscripts Librarian, always seemed glad to see me and told me that my requests were no trouble. (Of course I knew better, but I respected their professionalism.) Indeed, I came to know all the staff of that great library--and they all made me feel welcome. The staff has changed, but the APS remains a wonderful place to work.

Roy E. Goodman, Curator of Printed Materials and Bibliographer at the American Philosophical Society, tried to keep me current with the Franklin scholarship that crossed his desk and with the Franklinists who came to work at the APS. Roy has a special gift for facilitating scholarly exchange between persons who study at the APS library--even between persons who seemingly have little expertise in common. Occasionally at the APS I had the great privilege and pleasure to chat with Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., and with C. William Miller.

Under the direction of Barbara Oberg, The Papers of Benjamin Franklin at Yale University became another friendly haven for me. It of course continues as such with Ellen Cohn as editor-in-chief. I always liked working there because of the friendliness and knowledge of Barbara Oberg, Claude-Anne Lopez, Ellen Cohn, Jonathan Dull, Karen Duval, and Kate Ohno. Every person on the staff of the Franklin papers is an expert on the Philadelphia genius--and each is the greatest single authority on many areas of Franklin studies.

I used the Library Company of Philadelphia much more frequently for the "Documentary History of Benjamin Franklin" than for the "Accounts," but John E. Van Horne, Director, and James N. Green, Librarian, always made me welcome, helped me, and, when they could, had lunch with me.

Typists who worked for me part-time and did the initial typing are (chronologically) Joann Civarelli, Pat Beazley, and Deborah Lehman. The research assistants who read the typescript against the original Amy Ott, Lisa Herb Smith, and Amy Moreno, though all my subsequent research assistants have done some research on the accounts.

The index is primarily the work of my part-time secretary Deborah Lehman and my research assistant in 1998-99, Amy Moreno.

Finally, none of the typists or research assistants deserve the blame for the errors that exist. I have examined the originals of all the accounts. I am more familiar than they with Franklin's handwriting and with the persons and places mentioned, and I had the great advantage

of using their work when examining the original manuscripts. I am responsible for all errors--and, unfortunately, I know better than anyone that my best efforts, in the case of materials with so many inconsistencies and difficulties as Franklin's accounts, contain numerous errors. Before examining the original manuscripts, I have sometimes sat with the secretary who typed the account and the research assistant who proofread it, and we would take turns reading the account aloud. When the three of us would be defeated by a particular word or passage, we would venture guesses--and Eureka!--sometimes the guess would be incontestably correct! How stupid we felt not to have deciphered the word or passage before! But much more frequently, we failed. Usually I could resolve the undeciphered or simply wrong words when checking the originals. On many occasions, however, I simply gave what I thought was the most likely possibility. As I said in the introduction, a careful scholar dealing with an important matter should just use my accounts as a guide to check the original.