

The Chronicles of Early Times, *Freeman's Journal*, 17 October 1787

CHAPTER XIV: And he reported to them faithfully all that had been done, and how the enemies of the mill [Bank of North America] had been put to flight.

10. So the mill was rebuilt, and the friends thereof shouted for joy.

11. Then said Robert the Cofferer [Robert Morris], ye do well to rejoice, for a great work hath been wrought this day amongst us. Perceive ye not how the mill is constructed, so that henceforth we shall be able to grind our adversaries even to powder.

12. And when the multitude were dispersed, there remained yet a few chosen men, amongst whom were James the Caledonian [James Wilson], Thomas the Roman [Thomas FitzSimons], George the Climberian [George Clymer], and Gouvero the cunning man [Gouverneur Morris], and others to whom they might impart all things.

13. And when they had shut to the door of the place in which they were assembled, Robert opened his mouth and spake, saying:

14. Know ye not, that although the mill hath been rebuilt, yet many of the rulers of the people and agents who have adhered to and joined us in building the mill have done so because they expected to receive of the corn when it is ground; others absented themselves through fear or did not oppose us because of dismay. All these rulers may the people change and appoint others to represent them, so that of our mill there may not be left one stone upon another that shall not be again thrown down.

15. But against all these things have I been careful to provide for heretofore in my bed, when deep sleep falleth upon men. I foresaw that after the mill was rebuilt these things would be, and my heart was sore troubled within me, insomuch that my sleep fled from mine eyes.

16. And I gat me up and called upon Gouvero, saying, arouse from thy slumbers, O thou who art cunning to devise, for danger lieth in wait for us.

17. So he arose and gat himself up, and I opened to him all my fears and showed him that after the workmanship of the mill, which had then been begun to be rebuilt was finished, there was danger lest the people should a second time destroy the mill, and take away all the customers thereof to the country mill, for I saw that they could not both stand together.

18. And Gouvero said, fear not these things, neither be dismayed, I also have thought upon these evils and have found a remedy therefor.

19. Then said I, blessed art thou amongst men, O Gouvero! for thy stratagems are wise, thy councils are deep, and thy cunning exceedeth all things!

CHAPTER XV: 1. And Gouvero furthermore added and said,

2. Thou knowest the state of our nation and of our country, that oftentimes when the people from the country round about had brought their corn to our mill, so that it was collected in large granaries, and when the people of other nations who wanted of this corn and came hither from the four winds under heaven, riding upon the waters of the great deep, in ships laden with gaw-gaws, and chains, and bracelets, and rings, and jewels, and mantles, and mantlets, and wimples, and cringing pins, and caul, and round buttons like the moon, and mufflers, and ornaments for show and not for use, and headbands and tablets, and bonnets, and all manner of gauzes, silks, embroidery, and gay apparel, thou knowest, I say, that the corn thus gathered together was taken from our mill and exchanged with the foreign merchantmen for these things, so that there hath been a great dearth of corn in our land.

3. Thou also knowest that many whose hearts went out after these things, and were set upon gay attire and apparel, and neglected to perform those things which afore time they had been exercised in, and whereby they had earned unto themselves and to their families corn in moderate competency, straightway betook themselves to our mill, where they gat them corn upon the promise of themselves and their friends, that it should be restored to us with usury, by the space of thirty days, at the end of which period they could again draw corn, and with a part thereof repay what they had before received, and so on with facility continuing after the same manner, until corn became so plenty in their houses, that they forgot they had but little at the first. And they also forgot the rock from whence it had been hewn—so they said everyman to his fellow: “lo, I am rich and increased in goods, give me thy note, and I will also give thee mine, whereby we may go to the managers of the great mill, who assemble themselves weekly together on the fifth day of every week, and there continue to receive from them corn, that we may live as beseemeth us, for lo! it is there in great abundance, and whosoever can borrow his neighbor’s note may have thereof as much as he willeth. Blessed be the mill where corn may be thus had in plenty!”

4. So they forgot themselves and did eat, and consume, and waste corn in abundance, but thou also knowest that while their hearts were merry, destruction came upon many of them as a whirlwind, and as a thief in the night, and that in their fall many who had given and endorsed notes fell also. Nay, that so great was the rage for wasting of corn, that every man was upbraided and esteemed as nothing who wasted not corn in like manner with themselves, until it became general throughout all the country and regions round about—insomuch that notwithstanding the managers of the mill whom thou hast appointed, required for surety such as they esteemed to have much corn of their own in store to pay withal, and never let any of the sons of men fall in an unfavorable moment, while our notes or endorsements were thought to be insecure, yet even we are in danger of losing corn also in some cases.

5. These things, and others of like kind, have brought on a day of general calamity. There is no corn in our land to repay the corn which was lent to us by other nations in the day that we went out to battle against our enemies, and every man’s inquiry hath been pursuing the cause

thereof. Now thou knowest that as it is unnatural for all men to blame their own folly as the cause of their adversity, so the people sought to lay the blame on something else.

6. And it came to pass that it was not long ere the covenant [Articles of Confederation] which had been made between and amongst the twelve tribes and the tribe of Manasseh [Rhode Island], in the day that the Lord delivered them and saved them from the hands of their enemies, was held out [by] many as the cause of all the evils which had come upon the land, and they cried out every man saying, let us alter this covenant, for it hath caused much evil, as ye all behold even at this day.

7. Thou rememberest that under this covenant a wall was built around our mill, and some supposed it would have secured it from the people, but it was weak and the people trampled it down, moreover they said that the wall stood upon improper ground and withal was of none effect.

8. Now therefore let us take away the covenant from before the eyes of the people, and let us make a firm league, so shall we have a wall around our mill that the people may not approach or injure it; and it shall be built on good ground, the right whereof shall not be questioned or disputed at all forever.

9. We will therein also take away from the country mill both the upper and the nether millstones, and will make cornerstones thereof for the wall which shall be built around our mill. And the walls of the country mill shall be pulled down and destroyed, and the dam thereof shall be broken up and removed, so that the water may run freely to our mill, and the place where it now stands shall know it again no more.

10. And the things which Gouvero had said pleased me well, so we communed together on the way whereby all these things might be accomplished.

11. And I got the rulers of the land to appoint me to be a deputy to meet deputies from other tribes who might choose to assemble for the purpose of revising the great covenant, and proposing alterations therein, and with me Thomas the Roman, James the Caledonian, George the Climberian, and Gouvero the cunning man, all of whom are chosen friends and managers of the mill, and *Jared* [Ingersoll] also who is not of our sheepfold was appointed, but it behooved us so to do that we might succeed the better.

12. And now behold you see how the thing hath prospered, for most of the tribes have appointed deputies and they are shortly to be convened together.

13. But inasmuch as we are all of us brethren of the mill, except *Jared*, and lest peradventure the rumor should go abroad that we have been chosen to represent the interest of the mill and not of the tribe by whom we have been chosen, let us also have Benjamin of the house of Frankland added to the number of the deputies, we shall nevertheless have a majority in the

deputies from our tribe, and his name will give respect to our councils—for Benjamin was highly revered by all the people.

14. Now they considered that Benjamin was an old man and full of days, and that his body was feeble and bowed down with years, and supposed that his outgoings to the meetings of the deputies of the tribes would not be frequent, and the thing which Robert had proposed pleased them well, and it was done as he had desired.

1 For other examples of attacks on Robert Morris and James Wilson, which mounted after ratification. For the relationship of the Bank of North America to Pennsylvania politics, see Brunhouse, *Counter-Revolution*, *passim*.

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