

Description of Tuesday May 8th events from *A Full and Complete Account of the Late Awful Riots in Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: John B. Perry, 1844.

Great excitement prevailed throughout the city, in consequence of the riot and bloodshed, on the following day, Tuesday 7th. An immense meeting of the Native American party was held in the State House Yard. The meeting was called at half past three, P. M. The meeting was organised by the appointment of the following officers. [12]

President—Thomas R. Newbold.

Vice Presidents—A. De Kalb Tarr, Rev. John Gihon, of the Universalist church, Thomas D. Grover, J. C. Green, and J. D. Fox.

Secretaries James L. Gihon, A. R. Peale, and Lewis C. Levin.

The President opened the meeting with a few appropriate remarks, in which he deprecated all violence, and exhorted the meeting to maintain a strict decorum on the occasion, and in their deportment as native Americans. He was followed by W. Hollingshead, who spoke in an easy and quiet manner, exhorting the meeting to adhere firmly to the principles of the Native American doctrines, and urging forbearance towards opponents as the best mode of securing the success of those doctrines. He was enthusiastically applauded.

Mr. Levin was loudly called for, but did not appear. Col. C. J. Jack, then came forward, and made a speech, in which he said, that he had been a long time opposed to the influence of foreigners in elections, and had, at least two years ago, urged upon the citizens the necessity of organising a regiment of Native American volunteers, to sustain the native citizens and the laws against the aggressions of foreigners. He had been, he said, in some degree, a marked man in consequence of the expression of such principles; but he did not shrink from personal Consequences, and hoped yet to witness the eradication of every party principle or institution in the land which was not purely American. Col. Jack was much applauded. The Rev. John Perry, next came forward, and submitted a series of resolutions, referring to the late tumult in Kensington, urging the adoption of peaceable measures to secure the objects of the party; proposing that a collection be taken up among Native Americans for the benefit of the families of those who were killed or wounded during the riot of Monday night; approving of the resolutions passed at the meeting held on Monday evening, at the Assembly Building, and proposing that this meeting should adjourn until Thursday next. [13]

The resolutions, excepting the last, were adopted by acclamation. When the vote was about to be taken on the adjournment, a great number of voices cried out, "adjourn to Second and Master streets now"- "let us go

up into Kensington," and a hearty shout was given to the proposition. Few persons voted for the adjournment to Thursday next, while the "noes" were given in a voice of thunder and with great applause. A motion was then made to adjourn to Second and Master streets forthwith. The President asked leave to make a few remarks upon this motion, but the meeting became impatient. He, however, obtained an opportunity to exhort them again to a peaceable deportment, and expressed a hope that if they did go up into Kensington they would remain perfectly quiet and comport themselves as good and orderly citizens. The motion to adjourn to the scene of the riot in Kensington was then carried by acclamation, and in a few minutes the thousands who composed the meeting were on their way in high spirits for the place designated.

Continuation of the Riots—More Bloodshed.—The scene of the riots of Monday afternoon, in Kensington, was quiet during yesterday morning, and many families were removing from their dwelling. In the early part of the afternoon large numbers of people were gathered in various quarters, but were peaceable and orderly. Between four and five o'clock the crowds of individuals became great, until they numbered in the aggregate at different points two or three thousand. The greater part of them, were however, considerably below the scene of the riot. After the adjournment of the Native American meeting, which was held in the State House Yard, a large body went into Kensington in procession, with a banner and flag. They immediately repaired to the market house, when great excitement ensued, and the rioting was renewed. Shots were fired from several of the houses opposite, and one young man killed, and several wounded. The houses from which the shots were discharged were assailed.

[14]

The house of the Hibernia Hose Company was attacked, and a borrowed carriage taken out, but not injured. The firing during this, was continued from the houses, and a number were wounded while standing near and in the market house. Down to six o'clock the following were the killed and wounded as far as could be ascertained.

The excitement in the vicinity of the infected districts was tremendous. Throughout Kensington and the Northern Liberties, the side-walks, and almost every corner of the street, were crowded with persons going to, and returning from the scene of the riot, or standing in groups discussing the progress of events, or listening to the relations of those who had witnessed any part of these lamentable occurrences. Rumors of the number of killed and wounded were flying about in every direction, with such exaggerations and coloring as the imaginations of the relators prompted. It was stated, that at the firing on the commencement of the affray, some eight or ten persons fell—some killed, and others wounded.

[16]

A man named Hunneker was said to have been killed, and his body lay in the market for a long time without his friends being able to recover it. Whenever a party approached for the purpose of carrying off the slain,

or rendering succor to the wounded, they were fired upon front the houses, and compelled to desist. We give these only as rumors, of course, as we were not disposed to approach near enough to ascertain the fact, and run the risk of receiving a bullet, while the fight lasted. In addition to the persons named who were hurt, we have been informed that a young man, named Maitland, residing somewhere in South street, was shot through the head and killed.

At about one o'clock yesterday, General Cadwalader issued orders for [17] the assembling of the whole military force of the first brigade, for the suppression of any riotous attempts that should be made during the evening. He had been waited on by the Sheriff, on Monday night, but declined issuing orders at that time. He, however, afterwards satisfied himself that the emergency had arisen when a resort to military force became necessary, and he convened the officers of his brigade yesterday morning, at the Military Hall, Library street, where, after a long discussion, a resolution was unanimously adopted, expressing the readiness of the officers to obey the call of General Cadwalader, upon the requisition of the Sheriff, whenever the former should be satisfied the emergency had arisen which demanded their aid in preserving the public peace. General Cadwalader repeated, that by an actual observation of the scene of riot on the previous night, that military force alone could prevent or suppress further riots, and issued his orders at once. The meeting was numerously attended, and although a difference of opinion prevailed upon some delicate points of propriety, all agreed to give a cheerful and effective response to the orders of the General, whenever he found it necessary to issue them. Mr. McMichael, the Sheriff, was present, and stated that it would be futile to invoke the civil posse, as the rioters were well armed and desperate, and could only be over-awed by an imposing and active military force. [18]

About dark, General Cadwalader, with his brigade, proceeded to the spot, and took a position near the scene of the conflagration. The appearance of the military had the effect to produce quiet, and from the time they arrived the firing almost entirely ceased.

Half-past Twelve o'clock- The fire was raging when the military came upon the ground, having enveloped some twenty or thirty buildings, and the Washington Market house in flames. The firemen refused to approach the scene of conflagration, for fear of being fired upon, until military escorts guarded three or four hose carriages and two engines to the ground. Some water was thrown upon the smoking ruins, which prevented the fire from extending beyond the row of frames to the west and north of the market house, but they, together, with the market, were reduced to a heap of ashes.

At one o'clock, all was quiet. General Cadwalader leaped the fence of the Catholic Church in the neighborhood, which it was reported was filled with armed people, found that the report was incorrect; and took possession of the building. He stationed guards in different positions, so as to

form a cordon around the district in which the riot has been raging; both the belligerent parties have dispersed, and if the military remain upon the ground, all the disturbance will be at an end.

It is now to be hoped that the citizens will not approach the ground to-day; that the idle and mischievous rumors of arms in the Catholic church and school house, will be discontinued, since General Cadwalader has taken possession of the same; and that the military may remain in the vicinity for the purpose of acting promptly in suppressing another outbreak, should any disorderly symptoms appear. [19]