

**The Philadelphia Riots of 1844
Reporting Ethnic Violence**

Primary Reading

***Reflections on the Late Riots by Candid Writers in Poetry and
Prose. Philadelphia: 1844.***

Regarding both the Kensington and Southwark riots.

Oh! Good people pay attention, and listen to what I say, [3]
Till I relate a sad detail about the Eighth of May,
About the Eighth of May, eighteen hundred and forty-four,
Which left many a man to welter in his bloody gore.

Ye Gods above I pray look down, with pity on our race,
Since those pretended Bible hypocrites, your laws they have disgraced.
They have trampled under foot all both sacred and good,
And set unto the flames the holy house of God:

They've deprived us of justice all in their public schools,
And thought that we'd submit to them like children or like fools.
But in the name of that Tribunal where we all some day shall meet,
We boldly ask for justice, and nothing more we seek,

They have urged us to a course their schools for to refine
With Bishop Hughes our advocate that heavenly Divine. [4]
He's burst the bands of corruption and caused them loud to cry,
Away with Pope and Popery John Hughes we'll crucify.

They brought him to their Court house, his cause for to maintain,
Of which he was an advocate, and thought he was to blame.
But then he boldly stated that to which all freemen should reside,
Equal rights and privileges, for which our fathers died.

In spite of all the opposition they could raise before him there,
By his high fluniential eloquence he caused them to declare,
That in this land of Freedom, of Liberty and Laws,
That no sectarian bigotry shall trample on your cause.

Now his ends he had accomplished, and all things set to right,
Then Bishop Hughes returned home, and all seemed quiet,
Till that outlawed, rebellious crew, the mob they did arouse,
And by their cowardly bigotry broke in the Bishop's house.

Now in the name of common justice, its what are we to do,
Shall we be trampled under foot by this unholy crew?
Who neither seek for justice, the law they set aside,
And in violating Heaven's laws it is their daily pride.

They have held their Pagan meetings our feelings to excite
By the slandering of our religion, in which they take delight.
To excite unto destruction it was their only plan,
O Lord we pray protect us from that cruel heathen clan.

Now those Bible hypocrites stare Heaven in the face, [5]
 And then they take their onward course, their country to disgrace.
 To persecute the Christian Church, as God has said would be,
 He tells us to have patience you suffer all for me.

Now those outraged inhuman beings, our streets they did parade,
 Onward to destruction, where many a man was slay'd.
 Where many a man lay bleeding all in his bloody gore,
 We trust to God in heaven the like we'll ne'r see more.

Now those outraged persecutors all for opinion's sake,
 To banish Roman Catholics their course they then did take.
 By the flaming of their houses, and plundering of their goods,
 They fled amidst destruction to seek shelter in the woods.

To hear the yells of mothers, and the orphans' doleful cries,
 A seeking for protection from Him above the skies.
 Crying, Lord we pray protect us and pity on us take,
 Thus in the land of Freedom shall we suffer for our faith?

To see our venerated clergy by their persecuting shrieks,
 A walking in disguise throughout our public streets.
 Fearful of their vengeance in the name of the Bible and the American Flag,
 Because they possessed that religion that was handed down by God.

Look at this you Native born citizens, and if you have the courage, say,
 That all this was done in your boasted North America. [6]
 And if this be your course to turn friends into foes,
 What shall become of our country, God, He only knows,

They next sought destruction on the holy house of God,
 By burning them to ashes, on which they daily brag.
 Shouting now where is Popery, down goes their cross,
 How God's vengeance shall escape them, to know I'm at a loss.

Crying, no matter what your creed is so you deny that cross,
 And those who will sustain it must suffer with their loss.
 Our Saviour plainly tells us to lift His cross and Him obey,
 And He would bear us up all in a judgment day.

He says you cruel persecutors withdraw your evil force,
 From burning up my churches by your outrageous course,
 So he who persecutes my cross and church, persecutes me also,
 And I shall punish him with misery and woe.

The sisters of charity they banish'd in their wrath,
 Who in the raging Cholera their assistance they sought,
 Who freely risked their lives, their suffering sick to save,
 And free them from a sudden and untimely grave.

There is not a season those females don't take the pains,
 To travel far and near to reach to New Orleans
 There to aid the suffering sick and great care of them to take,

And this they do as a charity all for Heaven's sake.

Now you cruel persecutors I'd have you to beware,
How you insult those holy ones who are under Heaven's care
Beware of God's vengeance, for what he says is true,
That you deal out to others shall be dealt out to you.

They charged the Roman Catholics with destroying that holy book, [7]
Who for eighteen hundred years back great care of it they took,
Who through all vile persecutions that book they did sustain,
And now those lying hypocrites have set it to the flame.

They have built up their bonfires as plainly you may see,
To destroy that holy Bible and our Christian library,
By the flaming of God's altars which may cause their sad downfall,
Over which was inscribed "THE LORD SEETH ALL."

Those words were unmolested by the raging of the flame
By the holy hand of God, we give honor to his name,
To strike terror in their hearts though the flames growing bolder,
Which was smiting to the conscience of every beholder.

O where is that ancient bell! come tell to me I pray,
Whose solemn tones first poured forth the glory of the day,
The glory of that day when our freedom first we won,
When Cornwallis he surrendered to that god-like Washington.

But that bell has been consumed all in the flames 'tis said,
Likewise that glorious miniature called Washington the Brave,
Which was on the temperance flag belonging to that church,
They catch'd and throw'd it in the flames and burned it into dust.

The proud Eagle of Liberty who was seen flying along that way, [8]
Has had its wings pretty well scorched on that church burning day,
Which caused him to droop his wings and seek some other place,
And shout with screams of horror you have brought me to disgrace.

All other birds have sung my fame from the top of every tree,
O because I was an emblem on the banner of the free,
O but how can I return to those little ones who sung,
The sweetest notes of Liberty whenever I came home.

O but I will bid adieu to that City of disgrace,
And I will take my wings and fly to some other place,
I will fly to Baltimore where I'll have no foes to dread,
Where that Religious persecutor dare not show his bloody head.

To see them smash the silent tombs with great rapidity,
To destroy the silent mouldering bones of Bishop Hurly,
But that holy saint of piety who rests all in the Heavens,
God has protected him from the fury of those ravens.

They done their best endeavours this angels bones to find,
But that was all in vain, for God had led them blind,

Till they came across the mouldering bones of an innocent lady
Which they treated with violence and shouted we have got Hurly.

Now in the name of God in Heaven look at this I pray,
Then dare to raise your head without a blush and sanction I say,
For of all the cruel outrages that ever I have read
Are nothing to plundering the silent graves and rooting up the dead.

The smoking of God's altars has inflamed the lofty skies, [9]
With the Orphans' Asylum which to God for vengeance cries,
The fatherless and motherless they have driven to despair,
We pray to God in Heaven, of them He will take care.

To see the vultures tearing open those graves it is said,
And smashing silent tomb-stones all in demoniac rage,
O Lord when shall the day come when before thee they shall appear,
To render an account for all they have done here.

Saying come unto me you righteous in heaven for to dwell,
Begone from me you cursed unto a burning hell,
Unto a burning hell which is the fruits of your evils,
For evermore to dwell with the devil and his angels.

When that heathen shout was given which may curse their own creation,
At the downfall of the cross, that emblem of salvation,
O Lord have mercy on them like the persecuting Jew,
Father, pray forgive them, for they know not what they do.

O! you readers pray excuse me, when in horror now I write,
To see our glorious constitution a bleeding in our sight,
To see its institutions forsaken and despised,
By those Bible worshippers who vengeance daily cry.

They have renewed their scene of bloodshed on the 7th day of July,
Which enrages all good citizens and caused them loud to cry,
That this the land of freedom the home of the brave,
With sword in hand we boldly stand our country for to save,

From the persecuting violence of such a cruel mob. [10]
Who style themselves Republicans, and despite the laws of God,
They have brought their loaded cannons, and placed them on the Green,
To blow up that holy edifice which God has plainly seen.

O! God of Mercy! pray look down and check their evil course,
Or ages yet unborn shall regret that evil force
Who raised up in rebellion to the laws of God and man;
Shall we lay beneath the vengeance of this outrageous clan?

No! Americans arouse to the rescue of the laws,
To support your constitution, likewise your country's cause,
For should this course continue, as God forbid it should,
Our streets would be incrimsoned with the gores of human blood.

They have slayed our noble citizens who turned out with pride,

To save that constitution, for which our fathers died,
 From the hands of those tyrants who liberty despise,
 Who cling beneath the stars and stripes as traitors in disguise.

When that raging fire was started, which caused death on every side,
 By the roaring peal of cannon to which they did reside,
 To hear the shouts of woman whose cries has rent the skies,
 Some crying for their children, and others for their lives.

The widow for her husband, in sorrow makes her moan,
 The sister for her brother, and the mother for her son,
 To see the wringing of their hands, and the tearing of their hair,
 A crying to God for mercy, to fly we know not where.

To see that bloody massacre which on us brings disgrace, [11]
 To see death and destruction as stare us in the face,
 We see nothing but Civil War, and every thing that's bad,
 Which may fetch on us a scorge beneath the holy hand of God.

Should the father of his country have risen from his grave,
 And look'd upon this bloody scene, what think you he'd have said?
 O once this was a happy land the land of joy and peace,
 Now religious persecution has brought it to disgrace.

Now you cruel persecutors, explain it if you can,
 How do you expect heaven by slaying your fellow man,
 Remember proud Lucifer, who in heaven did rebel,
 For which he received the sentence of an everlasting hell.

Those bible monarchs and church burners, would fain to heaven ride blood shod,
 Over the massacred bodies of the worshippers of God,
 O! but what a foolish idea to think that there they'll reach,
 We have the words of God for it, Heaven is not for such.

Behold around its traitors, our glorious flag we see,
 And said they fell beneath it fighting for Liberty,
 O! but such outraged hypocrisy, may heaven check its course,
 And cause them for to yield beneath our country's lawful force.

God bless that noble General Cadwallader and his men,
 Who fought and died like heroes, our rights to maintain,
 Against that powerful savage force, who numbered ten to one,
 They fought and gained the victory, God bless them every man.

Its for our lives and property, to them we are in debt, [12]
 And for their noble bravery which we never shall forget,
 For should they have retreated, and gave victory to their foes
 What would have been the consequence, God he only knows.

To see those noble heroes commanded by the brave,
 May heaven guide their footsteps, more honor may they have,
 For they are well deserving like the heroes of Old,
 To wear upon their breasts medals of pure gold.

To hear that warlike hero, called Captain Mallory,
Who led the Germantown Blues to death or victory,
Throughout this scene of carnage, those words he loud did say,
"Bear off the wounded men, ram home, and blaze away."

Its for those noble military their part so well did play,
That those rebels from their cannon were forced to run away,
From the charge of Captain Snyder, who was ordered on to go,
And rescue the instrument of death from that outrageous foe.

O! I have something to Say of Captain Collohan-and his men,
Who turned out to aid the law our rights for to maintain,
They were insulted and abused by the violent hand of those,
Who are traitors to their country and God's outrageous foes,

They were stationed in St. Philip's church by their officer's command,
And got orders to protect it from that outrageous band.