

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### *George Trisler (1768-1845) of Frederick, Maryland*

Early in 1788 the well known Maryland printer, Matthias Bartgis, was looking for " a Journeyman Printer, Who is Master of the German language" for his branch office in Winchester, Virginia. It was not until the middle of the year 1789 that Bartgis could send a bilingual craftsman to Virginia. The name of the man who edited, published and partly printed the newspaper and handbills in English and German in Winchester had so far escaped researchers. Recently records in Frederick, Maryland revealed that Bartgis' helper in Winchester was a young man whom he had trained in his Maryland publishing firm: George Trisler, a native of Frederick.

Trisler's parents had come from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to Frederick where George was born in 1768. He grew up speaking German and English and after schooling in the local Lutheran Church he was apprenticed to Bartgis. This remarkable " newspaper king " of the American hinterland beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains entrusted 21 year old George Trisler with his branch business in Winchester. For less than two years, the unexperienced young man struggled with a newspaper that was beset by considerable financial difficulties and by heavy competition. By January 1792, Bartgis sold his *Virginia Gazette* to Richard Bowen, publisher of the *Centinel* in Winchester and Trisler was without a job. Despite the discouraging experience with Bartgis' business, Trisler felt inclined to pursue a commercial career. He entered the mercantile firm of Henry Schroeder in Baltimore as a clerk. Schroeder was one of the leading German businessmen in Baltimore and served for a number of years as a vice president of the German Society. In 1794 Trisler married in Baltimore. A year later returned to Frederick to set up a business of his own. From 1799 to 1803 we find George Trisler once more in Winchester, at first as a partner in the firm of Trisler & Haff and after 1801 as the sole publisher and proprietor of the *Winchester Triumph of Liberty*. Soon after 1803 he seems to have returned permanently to Maryland to open a store in Frederick which remained for decades one of the largest general stores in Western Maryland. He was active in politics, first as a Jeffersonian Republican and later transferred his partisan allegiance to the Jacksonians. Although he was widely known as a merchant, most fellow-citizens considered him as "their poet." Indeed, numerous fugitive poetical productions by him can be found in the early newspapers of Frederick and Winchester, particularly in the files of the *Maryland Chronicle*, the *Virginia Museum* and Winchester *Philanthropist*. George Trisler died in Frederick in 1845.

KW.

### *Additional Items for the Virginia Bibliography*

Since the publication of the bibliography of " German Settlements and Immigration in Virginia " in *The Report* 33 (pp. 47-59), the following additions and corrections have been received:

- Beasley, Ellen, " Appendix " (Report on Research on Isaac Hite and Belle Grove), *Historic Preservation* XX (1968), iii-iv, 73-84.
- Jackson, George Pullen, *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands* (Chapel Hill, 1983).
- [Jenner, Samuel], *Neu-gefundenes Eden, Oder ausführlicher Bericht von Süd- und Nord-Carolina, Pensilphania, Mary-Land & Virginia* ([Bern], 1737).
- Nichols, Frederick D., " Belle Grove in the Developing Civilization of the Valley of Virginia," *Historic Preservation* XX (1968), iii-iv, 7-19.
- Russell, William Greenway, *What I Know about Winchester* (Winchester, Va., 1953).
- [Publ. as Vol. II of *Winchester-Frederick County Historical Society Papers*].
- Smith, George M., " The Trade and Mysterie of Farming," *Historic Preservation* XX (1968), iii-iv, 40-49.
- Stewart, John, " Shanghaing in the Valley of Virginia," *Madison College Bulletin* XXIV (1966), ii, 97-105.
- Wamsley, J. S., "Highland County Syrup Time," *The Commonwealth*, XXIX (1962) iv, 32-6.
- Wust, Haus, " Folklore, Customs and Crafts of the Valley Settlers," *Historic Preservation* XX (1968), iii-iv, 28-29.
- Wust, Klaus, " The Wythe County Germans: Beginnings in the 1740's," *ECK* Feb. 8, 1969.

Our Society is presently collecting bibliographical entries concerning the German element in Maryland not included in the list which appeared in *The Maryland Germans* by Dieter Cunz (pp. 439-449). We are particularly interested in elusive items appearing in local and congregational publications.

A collection of West Virginia material relating to German immigrants and settlements is in preparation.

#### *Babe Ruth's Birthplace in Baltimore*

The birthplace of George Herman Erhardt, better known as Babe Ruth, at 216 Emory Street, Baltimore, has been restored and converted into a baseball museum at a cost of about \$80,000. The house itself and three adjacent row houses form the new museum complex. Babe Ruth was born there on February 6, 1895. Visitors will be shown a film of the Yankee slugger's career. A permanent exhibit of baseball mementoes has been arranged. Erhardt like Frank Frisch, Lou Gehring, Honus Wagner and Heinie Groh, all among the great baseball players of yesteryear, was the son of German-born parents. He died in New York in 1948. During his career he hit 714 major league home runs, a record that still stands.