

# FROM CAROLINA TO CONNECTICUT: GERMANS AND SWISS IN SEARCH OF GOLD AND SILVER, 1704-1740

This is not meant to be a treatise on early mining in the colonies involving people from German-speaking lands. It is rather a by-product of a comprehensive study of 18th-century immigration, pointing to some figures of fact and fiction who might deserve a closer look by students of colonial history. The frequent references to mineral wealth, to the gold and silver the New Land was expected to yield, and with it the hope for quick riches did not pass unnoticed among adventurers, debt-ridden patricians, and mere tricksters in various parts of the Empire and Switzerland.

Among those whose names appear in the records of the colonies were remarkable men who fit at least one of these characterizations. Frantz Ludwig Michel was an educated adventurer, untrained for prospecting, and might have believed that the minerals he had found were indicative of considerable lodes. Christopher von Graffenried was desperate enough to grab any chance to reverse his bad fortune. Friedrich Redegelt, whoever he really was, emerges as an outright fraud. Johann Heinrich Sprögel was a transatlantic whizzer, free of traditional scruples when business seemed to require it, whose luck tended to run out when he most needed it.

Dreams of silver and gold flowing from the mining projects of Michel and Graffenried in the Carolinas and along the Potomac and Shenandoah remained unfulfilled. There was only one tangible result, albeit unexpected and unplanned: the beginnings of Spotswood's iron works in Virginia. The copper mine at Simsbury, Connecticut, was started as a solid business venture by merchants in Amsterdam and New York. Germans were involved only as contracted experts and mine workers. The discovery of the Perkiomen copper deposits in Pennsylvania has been credited to J. H. Sprögel's efforts to exploit and settle the Frankfurt Company lands which he had acquired through a much criticized legal maneuver in 1708.

The vignettes which follow here might also serve to illustrate the diversity of Swiss and Germans who were drawn to the New Land in the early part of the 18th century. They seem a far cry from the still prevalent image of "Palatiners and Switzers" as droves of ill-used peasants and persecuted sectarians. That some of them were flawed in one way or another should not come as a surprise in schemes which involved dreams of instant riches.

## **The Situation in Virginia and Maryland**

... it is for Certain, there would be in a Short time very rich mines discovered, to the benefit of Great Britain as well as America, and the Spaniards might hang themselves for their Money for the future.

J. H. Sprögel to the Board of Trade

The common knowledge of the gold and silver the Spaniards had found in their colonies had raised hopes for similar discoveries in the the English colonies in America. Indeed, the young Jamestown settlement briefly came under the spell of quick riches when William Hendrick Faldoe, the "Helvetian" who had come to Virginia with German and Polish craftsmen in October 1609, announced the discovery of a "silver-myne". He returned to England and was awarded an eighteen-month contract to develop the mine. When he came back to Virginia with Lord De la Warr, precious time and labor were wasted in the precarious infant colony in a futile search for the deposits. Faldoe was, however, spared the burden of proving his claim, for it "hath pleased god since that time, that the said Helvetian hath died of a burning-Fever, and with him the knowledge of that myne [he] would not reveale unto any one ells of the Colony." As late as 1630 an expedition tried again to find the silver deposits "discovered by a Dutchman," because not all Virginians shared Captain John Smith's reasonable assessment that the Swiss was "a meere Imposer whose real name and background have never been uncovered."<sup>1</sup>

Almost a century went by before other adventurers from German-speaking lands made waves again with their promises and assurances of finding the long-sought mineral wealth. The beleaguered proprietor of Pennsylvania, William Penn, was singularly receptive. On March 16th, 1703/4 he issued a commission to "Colonel Friedrich Redegelt":

Reposing special Confidence in Thy Conduct & Integrity, & being well satisfied of Thy Great Skill & Experience in the Discovering & Working of Mines & Minerals, as well as in other Useful Inventions; I do hereby Constitute & Appoint Thee, Friedrich Redegelt, to be Sey-Master General of the aforesaid Province....<sup>2</sup>

This "colonel," who also claimed to have purchased 10,000 acres of land in Pennsylvania, approached in London the scouts that had been sent out by an emigration society of Langensalza, the High-German Company of Thuringia, to look for a suitable place of settlement in America. On August 5, 1704, Johann Heinrich Kürsten, a woolen draper from Langensalza bought sight unseen 750 acres and Lorenz Christopher Nohren 200 acres from "Colonel Frederick de Redegoldt" in London. Later, in Pennsylvania, both men found out that their deeds, written in German, did "not appear Good."<sup>3</sup> It is possible that Redegeld tried to recruit people in Saxony because on July 7, 1706, Prince Elector August expressly stated in an order that "also miners were to be lured away."<sup>4</sup> Three years later, in July 1709, the British envoy in The Hague passed on to London a petition of "chief mine master" Joh. Joseph Kramer from "Vreybergen in Meissen" (Freiberg, the center of Saxon silver mining) who asked for travel assistance to the New Land for himself and 40 to 50 mine foremen and workers.<sup>5</sup>

The first "Essay Master General of the Province of Pensilv'a and Terr's annexed, in America," as Redegelt signed his tide on the deeds, remains shrouded in mystery. As William Penn's troubles in England increased, Redegelt felt obviously free to commit various frauds and lastly claimed to have found the tincture to make gold. By the time the authorities began investigating his activities he had left for Holland and Germany. When he appeared at the home of the pietist pastor

Johann Wilhelm Petersen and his wife Eleonora von Merlau near Magdeburg, who were shareholders of the Frankfurt Company, he was sent on his way. Petersen called him an "arch-trickster." Despite attempts by the Prussian civil and church authorities in Berlin and Magdeburg to have him apprehended, Redegelt succeeded in selling more of his pretended estates in Pennsylvania. A schoolmaster in Sudenburg near Magdeburg quit his job after paying the "colonel" dollars in cash, only to find out in Holland that he had been duped.<sup>6</sup> Hermann Groethausen, who purchased 9,000 acres and went to England with his family, was clever enough to see Penn before embarking. When he checked with the proprietor in December 1709, the hoax was exposed and he accepted Penn's offer of 500 acres instead.<sup>7</sup> "Thereupon the scoundrel vanished from sight," Petersen noted in his memoirs, and with him William Penn's first mining projects.

Meanwhile there was some real exploration underway along the Maryland and Pennsylvania frontiers. In February 1707 the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania received a message that an expedition led by Frantz Ludwig Michel was building cabins on the "forks of the Potomac pretending they were in search of ore. Thirty-two-year-old Michel was the adventurous son of a former member of the Great Council of Bern. He had already made a first exploratory trip to Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania in 1701/2. In 1703 he embarked again for America. This time he visited the Carolinas where he became friends with John Lawson, an indefatigable explorer and future surveyor general of North Carolina.<sup>8</sup> Lawson encouraged Michel's mineral search. In his *book A New Voyage to Carolina*, Lawson wrote:

As good if not better Mines than those of the Spaniards in America, lie full West from us; and I am certain, we have Mountainous Land, and as great Probability of having rich Minerals in Carolina, as any of those Parts that are already found to be so rich therein.

He also mentioned Michel's investigation of ore deposits and welcomed the proposed settlement of Swiss by the Ritter Company of Bern, for which Michel served as scout.<sup>9</sup>

After his extended visit of the Carolinas, Michel moved north and explored the northern part of the Shenandoah Valley and other areas along the Potomac. The decision was finally made in Bern to locate the Swiss colony "on the Hed of Potomack River and its branches." In May 1707 George Ritter himself sent a letter to the contact man in the English government in which he expressed the hope "... if we find some minerals, iron, lead, tin, copper, etc., they shall belong to the discoverers," blissfully unaware of the concept of Royal Mines which governed English policy at home as well as in the overseas plantations.<sup>10</sup>

The first reaction at Court and at the Board of Trade was less than promising but the mention of "frontier" and "minerals" created enough of an interest to keep the project alive. Although the Board of Trade had only a vague conception of the unexplored western regions, the representatives of the proprietors, notably of Lady Fairfax and Lord Baltimore, but even the embattled William Penn, monitored western settlement schemes closely. Granting the land that Michel described clearly would have infringed on the Fairfax proprietary, if not also on those conflicting claims of the Maryland and Pennsylvania proprietors.

Frantz Ludwig Michel returned to Europe late in 1708. His enthusiastic reports spurred the Bernese on to renewed activity. In London Michel was joined by Christopher von Graffenried who had left Bern "in all quiet" on May 13, 1709, to escape serious pecuniary difficulties. Graffenried himself wrote enthusiastically of Michel's reports, "what fine rich silver mines he had discovered and found," and "when I considered that I was burdened with rather heavy debts;" the Bernese projects must have looked attractive to him.<sup>11</sup> In the London of 1709 Michel and Graffenried were caught up in the whirlpool of the largest mass migration from the German Rhinelands. Only their repeated emphasis on mineral discoveries and on strengthening the frontier with orderly, small groups of "warlike Switzers" opened for them the doors to the administration, the Board of Trade, and

the proprietors. As to the plans in Virginia, the Queen's approval was expressed in an Order of Council on August 22, 1709: "that the Governor of Virginia doe upon the said Petitioners Arrival there, forthwith Allot unto them certain Lands on the South-west Branch of Potomac..."<sup>12</sup>

At the same time they accepted 650 of the thousands of Germans stranded in London for a settlement scheme in North Carolina where Graffenried was also to take the first contingent from Bern after Lawson and the Carolina proprietors had succeeded in diverting their intentions from the Virginia-Maryland border area. After the numerous contracts and agreements dealing with these settlers were concluded, Michel and Graffenried concentrated on their mining proposals. The proprietors of Carolina were the first to grant them certain privileges. The contract was signed at Craven House on April 6, 1710:

Agreed that the Baron de Graffenried and M<sup>r</sup> Lewis Michel shall have a lease of all royal mines and minerals in the Province of Carolina that they shall discover and work for the term of 30 years, they being at the entire charge. The produce of it to be divided into eight parts whereof four eights are to be paid to the Lord Proprietors the other four eights to the said Baron de Graffenried and M<sup>r</sup> Lewis Michel for the term of 5 years after any such Mines shall be found and opened. But after the afores<sup>d</sup> term of five years then the Lords to have five eights, the said Baron de Graffenried and M<sup>r</sup> Lewis Michel three eights the Lords being to pay the Crown the fourth part according to the Words to the Charter.<sup>13</sup>

The negotiations with William Penn turned out to be more involved. It was no secret that the proprietor of Pennsylvania was desperately looking for a way out of his financial straits. In March 1709, he wrote to James Logan in Philadelphia that Michel had visited him: "Pray Scruteny this matter well & let me hear from thee with all the Speed thou canst; for the assurance Michell gives me, makes me sollicitous to pry into that affair, whence help & reward may arrive to deliver me."<sup>14</sup> He had obviously not yet received the letter Logan had addressed to him a few weeks earlier: "There is nothing yet certainly to discover about the mines," and he added a warning

about Michel, ". . . for I fear Mitchell has tricked us all."<sup>15</sup> Penn's earlier dealings with the notorious Redegelt should also have made him more cautious. Graffenried later recalled: "But if I had not been present at the first negotiation, nothing would have come of it, and Mr. Penn would do and conclude nothing, unless it were signed by me."<sup>16</sup> On June 14, 1710, Penn informed Lieutenant Governor Charles Gookin:

Having made a Contract w<sup>th</sup> my friends Lewis Mitchel & Baron Graffenried for the Discovering Opening & working certain Mines within the Bounds of that Province for w<sup>ch</sup> I have Granted to the s<sup>d</sup> Mitchel my Commission w' Such full & ample Powers as may be Necessary to Carry on the s<sup>d</sup> Work: I Doe therefore desire thee to give the S<sup>d</sup> L Mitchel & all persons Concerned for or under him all reasonable Encouragement in the S<sup>d</sup> Design....

The Swiss nobleman's charm had evidently worked for William Penn continued:

Having mentioned the Baron Graffenried I must Particularly recommend him to thy favour and Notice, as a Gentleman of Worth that having made a very good figure, & born very Considerable Offices in his own Country, is now willing to retire, & Plant himself in a Land of more freedom & Ease.<sup>17</sup>

Despite these negotiations with the proprietors of Carolina and Pennsylvania, Michel returned to prospecting in the back country of Virginia while Graffenried accompanied the Swiss colonists to North Carolina though he had also taken care to select two miners from the large crowd of Germans in London to go with him to America.

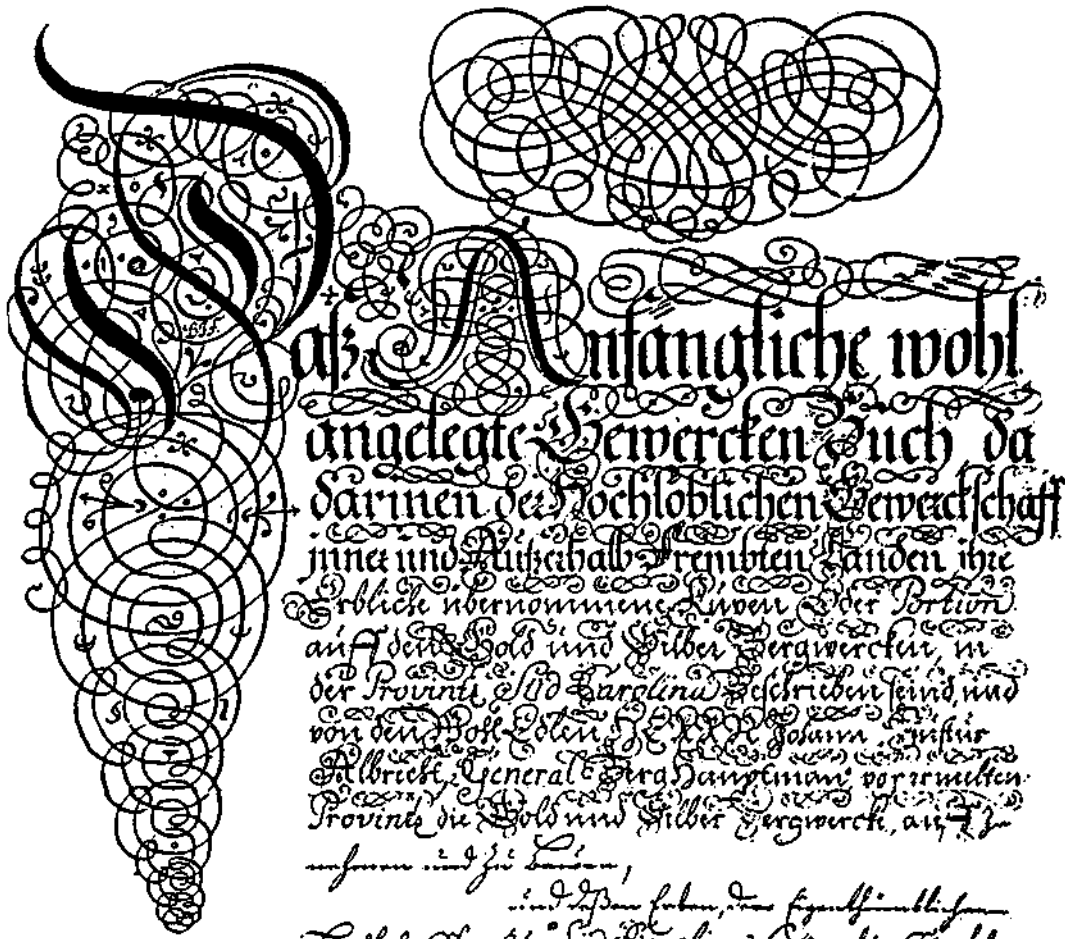
The ensuing events proved that the mining contracts for the Carolinas and Pennsylvania were to remain nothing more than pieces of paper.

### **The Shareholders' Book [Gewercken-Buch]**

Before returning to his prospecting camp on the Potomac, Michel had gone over to the Netherlands where he met with a German head miner, Johann Justus Albrecht, in order to work out a contract for the personnel to be recruited in German mining areas. Albrecht was hired as *Berghauptmann* (inspector of mines) and charged with the procurement of

the necessary tools. As it turned out, he was not an ordinary chief miner but a crafty, first-class public-relations man. He traveled to Siegen where the mining industry was in a depressed state and workers were looking for jobs. He spent a considerable time to have mining implements made to order. He also contacted prospective workmen. His credentials seemed impressive. Siegeners were awed by this self-assured man who claimed to have been appointed to develop mines and smelters for gold, silver and other metals on behalf of Her Majesty of Great Britain in the colonies of Carolina, Virginia and Pennsylvania. In order to create local good-will, Albrecht grandly signed a donation contract for the benefit of the three Reformed ministers in Siegen in which he promised them an annuity of 350 rix dollars in perpetuity from the proceeds of the American mines. This "document" was duly sealed by the imperial notary and signed by leading Siegen citizens as witnesses in the presence of the overwhelmed main beneficiary, the Rev. Johannes Daniel Eberhardi, inspector of the Reformed Church in Nassau-Siegen.<sup>18</sup> If we may believe Graffenried's apology, written several years after the events, Albrecht did arouse some suspicion and by order of the imperial administrators who were then in charge of the Siegen territory he was detained and all his belongings and utensils were impounded. Upon intervention of the English envoy he was released.<sup>19</sup>

In May 1712 Albrecht was in London and busy designing a fancy shareholders' book (*Gewercken-Buch*) of the mines with the intention of selling shares. By this time he had promoted himself to *General Berg-Hauptmann* [chief inspector of mines] of the gold and silver mines in the province of South Carolina.<sup>20</sup> But he was also growing impatient. No orders to proceed to America were forthcoming from Graffenried. The latter had no sooner somewhat consolidated his German and Swiss settlement at New Bern, North Carolina, than an Indian attack practically wiped out the colony. Graffenried himself barely escaped with his life. He did ask Michel by letter to inform Albrecht not to come with



Als Anfangliche wohl  
 angelegte Gewercken Buch da  
 Sarnen der Hochloblichen Gewerckschafft  
 inna und Außhalb Fremden Länden ihre  
 Erbliche ibernommene Quoten der Portion  
 auff dem Gold und Silber Bergwercken in  
 der Provinz Süd Carolina beschrieben sind und  
 von dem Hoch Edlen Herrn Johann Justus  
 Albrecht General Pirag Hauptmann vornehmten  
 Provinz die Gold und Silber Bergwercke, an  
 fangen und zu Ende,

und haben sehen, dass folgende  
 Landtschaften zu Süd Carolina so in fünffte Jahren  
 an/ in Anno, fünfften Junii Unterzeichnet und  
 Jhesu mit einem so vollkommen außrichtigen  
 besagten General Pirag Hauptmann auf  
 Recht und Ordnung Privilegium und  
 Antil bey gungigen besprechung nach  
 dem so in dem Buche gegeben in der  
 Portugalschen Residenten Stätte.  
 London den 26 May  
 Anno 1712 .7.

Cover page of Johann Justus Albrechts "Gewercken Buch" of 1712.  
 (Virginia State Library)

his company without express orders. Michel, however, eager to get some more work started, advised the head miner instead to come over with one or two others to have a look for himself.<sup>21</sup>

Albrecht returned to Siegen immediately. Twelve skilled miners and their families, complete with a Reformed minister and a schoolmaster, responded to his call. Thanks more likely to the earlier clarification of his activities by the English envoy than to Albrecht's public relations efforts, the emigrants were granted leave without trouble from the authorities.<sup>22</sup> The retired pastor, seventy-year-old Joh. Heinrich Häger, was particularly eager to join the group because his son, Joh. Friedrick Häger, had left Siegen in 1709 and was installed with the blessings of Anglican Church as minister to the Palatines in the Hudson Valley. Little did he realize the distances in America. There is no record of any meeting of father and son. The Siegen area had provided a number of emigrants in 1709. There must have been an awareness of available land in America because the Hägers, father and son, had close and friendly relations with the Behagel family who were the heirs to the late Daniel Behagel's share in the Frankfurt Company lands in Pennsylvania.<sup>23</sup> The fact that the Siegeners came with their families was unusual for contract labor.

By the end of September 1713, the miners were in London. Albrecht was unable to find a passage for them. Graffenried, a virtual refugee from the disaster that had befallen his colony in North Carolina and, as no more funds from his associates in Bern had reached him, also a fugitive from creditors, arrived at just about the same time in London. He had spent some time in Virginia and had learned discouraging things about Michel activities. On the other, hand Governor Alexander Spotswood had shown keen interest in the mining prospects. Graffenried had not expected to find Albrecht and his miners in London. Despite his own predicament, his sense of responsibility came briefly back to him and he tried to help them. The personal savings of the miners were running low. Graffenried tried in vain to persuade them to

return to Siegen for the winter but they feared rightly that the authorities would not re-admit them. After much vexation Graffenried found temporary work and shelter for some of them and got their agreement to serve four years in exchange for their passage. The agent for Virginia, Nathaniel Blakiston, whose aid Graffenried had enlisted, found space on a ship leaving for Virginia early in 1714. While the Swiss entrepreneur was still hoping that the miners would eventually be engaged in the purported silver mines, Blakiston was confident that Governor Spotswood would welcome them for his own purposes.<sup>24</sup>

The Siegeners arrived in Virginia on April 28, 1714. Spotswood paid the captain the balance of 150 pounds still owed on their transportation, allegedly from his own pocket. Thus they were his personal indentured servants. Informing the Board of Trade of their arrival, the governor disguised their real purpose by reporting that they were placed on the frontier and equipped with cannons and rifles. The palisades in which he fenced in the entire group was given the name Germanna in honor of both their homeland, Germany, and Queen Anne. The beginnings at Germanna were extremely hard for the Siegeners, and their life was a far cry from Albrecht's golden promises.<sup>25</sup> In November 1715, when the young Huguenot John Fontaine visited Germanna, he confided to his diary: "The Germans live very miserably." Although Spotswood used public funds for their support as frontier rangers, the miners and their families suffered considerably. It was not until March, 1716, that anything resembling the work for which these men had chosen to go to America was begun. At that time, as Albrecht testified later in Essex County Court, Spotswood "did put under my command eleven laboring men to work in mines or quarries at or near Germanna." Fontaine, who was again in the area on August 25, 1716, recorded "after dinner we went to the mines, but I could not observe that there was any good mine. The Germans pretend that 'tis a silver mine." According to Albrecht, who signed as "Holtman John Justice Albright" and Hans Jacob Holtzklaue, the schoolmaster, the work con-

tinued only until December 1718.<sup>26</sup>

The miners, well aware of their four-year contract, began to grow restless in 1718. Spotswood, in one of his moves that five years later brought about his removal from office, had personally acquired the Germanna tract in 1716, thus making the Siegeners technically his tenants even after their indenture expired in April 1718. Three of the Germans, John Fischbach, Johann Hoffmann and Jacob Holtzklau, obtained their naturalization in order to be able to acquire and hold land on behalf of the group. In 1718, a warrant was issued to these three men for more than 1,800 acres on Licking Run to which they removed themselves in the following year and founded Germantown. The erstwhile miners turned into versatile farmers, soon adding cash-producing tobacco to their crops. Head miner Albrecht was not among those who settled on Licking Run. The last record found of him in Virginia is his affidavit of May 1720 describing the actual work done by the miners.<sup>28</sup>

#### **The Situation in Connecticut**

In the Simsbury area of Connecticut, northwest of Hartford, copper deposits were discovered as early as 1705. Mining operations began about 1713 but they were hindered both by lack of investments and the disadvantage of having to be carried out secretly, since English regulations prohibited the smelting and refining of copper in the colonies. Two New York merchants, Andrew Fresneau and Charles Crommelin, and several Amsterdam investors headed by Abraham Sydervelt acquired part of the Simsbury copper mines and works. They began to recruit miners in Germany.<sup>29</sup>

In July 1718, three men from Altenau near Clausthal in the Harz, George Henckel, Heinrich Henckel and Christopher Michael, were contracted by the firm Benelle & Company for seven years to work in developing the Crommelin mine. In Amsterdam they boarded the ship *Henry and Margaret*, Capt. Nicolas Tinmoth, for New York. Benelle & Co. paid the captain 225 guilders for their ocean fare.<sup>30</sup>

On October 17, 1720, master miner Johann Jacob Lutthroth signed a contract in Amsterdam for five years with Andrew Fresneau. In April 1721, more Germans received contracts from Fresneau, namely the master refiner Christian Müller and smelter workers Hans Vogt, Sr. and Jr., and George Wilhelm Morick. In July 1721, a six-year contract was signed for work in Fresneau's enterprise by Elias Hoffmann, overseer of the workmen and by the following individuals:

Anones Grasteyn  
Hans Heinrich Keller  
Johann George Fricke  
Heinrich Godücke  
Matthias Otto  
Michael Hoffmann  
Zacharias Auwenhof  
Hans Peter Holthan  
Daniel Ziechelsen

Of all the contract workers named only four were unable to write their names and made their marks (the two Vogts, Grasteyn and Keller).<sup>31</sup>

There were no doubt others from Germany at Simsbury whose contracts have not been preserved. The Lutheran pietist lay preacher, Johann Berndt van Dieren, who had been entrusted by the court chaplain, Anton Wilhelm Böhme, in London with a large barrel of books to be distributed among the German settlers on the Schoharie in New York, reported to Böhme on May 26, 1721: "Still another volume of sermons by Mr. Spener I gave to New England to the silver mine, where there are many Germans who have neither books nor a preacher. They promised me to encourage one another diligently to listen to the word of God."<sup>32</sup> It is strange that van Dieren also came away with the impression that it was a silver mine although it was widely known that the deposits yielded only copper.

Before the men hired in 1721 arrived, Andrew Fresneau had separated from his Amsterdam partners and on May 11, 1721, the General Assembly revived an extended for seven more years the mining privileges of the now divided partners. Abraham Sydervelt appeared before the legislature on behalf of the Dutch proprietors and Jacob Lutthroth

represented Fresneau.<sup>39</sup> The latter works for smelting and refining on Hopmeadow Brook. The place where the crushing mill and furnace stood was named Hanover by the workmen.

When the Hanover works failed and together with Fresneau's other property at Simsbury were attached in 1725, 1,700 pounds of "black copper," i.e. unrefined, were among the assets listed.<sup>34</sup> Little is known of what happened to the workmen whose contracts had not yet expired. A local history lists Caspar Hoofman who remained in Simsbury and died there in 1732. The master refiner, J. Christian Müller, married a local woman and also stayed behind.<sup>35</sup> His name and that of Luttroth appear among the signatures of a letter written on April 27, 1725, by leading Lutherans in New York to the Amsterdam Lutheran consistory in support of appointing Job. Berndt van Dieren as their pastor.<sup>36</sup> This is the last record found so far of members of the short-lived German mining community in Connecticut.

#### The Situation in Pennsylvania

Johann Heinrich Sprögel came to Philadelphia in August 1700 with the transport of immigrants from Saxony and Holstein gathered by Daniel and Justus Falckner. Like the Falckners, he was the son of a Lutheran clergyman who was much respected in pietist circles. From the beginning Sprögel showed a definite inclination toward business. He obtained his naturalization in 1705 so that he could trade without hindrance." That he was not only interested in trading in merchandise is evident from the intelligence reports of the Saxon resident in London, Carl Christian Kirchner. In 1706, Kirchner stated that Sprögel had returned from Pennsylvania with the Lic. Mentze, the scout for the High German Society of Langensalza, "with the secret intention of bringing peasants and artisans from Saxony."<sup>38</sup> When that scheme came to naught, Sprögel turned to Rotterdam where he had no trouble obtaining credit on account of his father's reputation. In October 1707, he acquired his ship, a small one at that, but it was an auspicious beginning.<sup>39</sup> Back in

Pennsylvania he had hedged a larger project. With the connivance of David Lloyd he prepared the takeover of the 25,000 acres of land belonging to the Frankfurt Company. This huge tract had remained unoccupied for more than two decades since its acquisition by a number of pietist investors. Several of the absentee shareholders had died and the remaining ones and the heirs, several of them known personally to Sprögel, showed little interest.<sup>40</sup> The acting administrator, Daniel Falckner, was beset by personal problems. It was now or never. There were potential emigrants with some means in the Palatinate and adjacent areas getting ready to leave. Sprögel also prepared the move politically. In his 1708 petition "on behalf of the German Nation: in support of a general naturalization bill before the House of Parliament," he stressed the need for a naturalization free of charge and cited the cost of emigration, particular of moving household goods overland and down the Rhine.<sup>41</sup>

The takeover of the Frankfurt Company lands was delayed by one of the mishaps for which Sprögel's unsavory business career became known. He was captured by the French with his ship *Prince George*. Although he soon made his escape from Dunkerque to Rotterdam and was back in Philadelphia late in 1708, valuable time was lost. The transfer of the Frankfurt Company lands was pushed through the court in December 1708. William Penn referred to it as the "notorious case of the Frankford Company, the Abhorrence here of all men of Law that have heard of it..." and Franz Daniel Pastorius called Sprögel "worse than the worst Land-Pirate in the world." He had won the land but lost respect and friends.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the emigration of 1709 turned out to be a feverish, almost hysterical mass movement which was diverted from Penn's colony by the British authorities.

But there were other benefits to be reaped besides the piecemeal sale of tracts when emigration from Germany intensified again in 1717 and 1719. Mineral deposits were discovered in the Stone Hill on Sprögel's land. He sent samples of the ore to England and Germany for testing. By 1723, he had found inves-



tors willing to back the opening of a copper mine. A company of sixteen partners was formed. Sprögel went to Clausthal in the Harz Mountains to procure miners but he was also still looking for prospective settlers. A number of reports praising the land and extolling the wealth of ores at the Perkiomen mine are said to have appeared in Breslau in the journal of the Society of Arts and Natural Sciences between 1720 and 1727, but so far the reports have not been located. In the absence of reliable records, it can be said that the development of the mine stalled because it did not really go into production until 1740.<sup>43</sup> Sprögel was again in Germany in 1739 where he might have contacted the expert ore miner Christopher Geist, but when Geist and his mine workers arrived on the ship Lydia in September 1740, they found that Sprögel had died a few months earlier.<sup>44</sup>

Sprögel's interest in mines is attested to by a memorial on trade between the colonies, Great Britain, and the king's German dominions which he submitted to the Board of Trade in October, 1731, while he was in London:

They say that the Royall Mines belongs to the King, which is the reason, that the People in America do not care to discover any, neither will the Indians do it, they Say, it will kindle a War, if they are discovered, and it is Known by experience, that if any body agrees with one particular Indian, to discover Such a place

they presently threaten to Kill him. Now that there is a great deal of Oar in America, whe not onely See by the Spaniards to their greatest Advantage, but is likewise Known by experience that in the Northern part of America all Manner of Oar is found, especially Copper Oar very rich and which Some upon Tryall yielded 19 Gran of Gold out of ½ Ountz of Copper, and the more Soutward, the richer the Oar is.

In these lengthy observations Sprögel also urged the British government to ease the restrictions placed on colonial manufacturing. With respect to craftsmen who came to the colonies, Sprögel found "that the People who transport themselves, generally take more delight to live upon a Plantation rather than to follow their Usual Trade," because farming enabled them to work for their own livelihood whereas crafts and manufacture were difficult on account of the general lack of cash in the colonies. The Crown's insistence on "Royall Mines" prompted him to remark that "if this reservation must extend itself to the American Plantations, where there are actually Royall Mines, and that his Ma<sup>ty</sup> do not improve them, nor give the Subjects Encouragement to improve, then the Nation will reap no more benefitt of that which they have, as of that which they have not, which is against that good Intent the Crown reserved for, and therefore deserves a Serious Consideration."<sup>45</sup>

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith*, ed. by Edward Arber and A. G. Bradley (Edinburgh, 1910), 482; William Strachey, *The Historic of Travell into Virginia Britania (1612)*, ed. by Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund (London, 1953), 131.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Marianne S. Wokeck, one of the editors of the William Penn papers, drew my attention to the Redegelt appointment document, for which I would like to thank her here. The document was not included in the published papers but is available on microfilm \* 11:209, Hist. Soc. of Pa.

<sup>3</sup> *Minutes of the Board of Property of the Province of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1893), I, 468 & 686.

<sup>4</sup> Staatsarchiv Dresden, loc. 9905, p. 25, "Eine Langen Salzer Compagnie betreffend..." Photostats in Library of Congress.

<sup>5</sup> Public Record Office, S.P. 84/232, fo. 325. A search of the Freiburg and other Saxon records for Kramer con-

ducted in 1983 by Dipl.-Ing. Hofmann, Archivist of the Freiberg Mining Academy, provided no clues.

<sup>6</sup> (Johann Wilhelm Petersen), *Lebens-Beschreibung Johanes Wilhelmi Petersen*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt, 1719), 220, 244-53.

<sup>7</sup> *Mm. Board of Property I*, 538-9, 595-6.

<sup>8</sup> Michel (1675-1720) sent frequent reports and letters from his travels in the English colonies over the years. J. H. Graff, "Franz Michel von Bern und seine Reisen nach Amerika 1701-1704," *Neues Berner Taschenbuch auf 1898* (Bern, 1897), 59-144. For an annotated English translation by William J. Hinke, see *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* [hereafter, *VMHB*] XXIV (1916), 1-43, 113-41, 275-303. *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1852) II (Minutes of the Provincial Council, 1700-1717), 420-22.

<sup>9</sup> John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina* (London, 1709), 163, 205-6

<sup>10</sup> Charles E. Kemper, "Documents Relating to Early

Projected Swiss Colonies in the Valley of Virginia," *VMHB XXIX* (1921), 1-17; Geza Schtz, "Additions to the History of the Swiss Colonization Projects in Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review X* (1933), 13341.

<sup>11</sup>Von Graffenried (1661-1743) wrote apologetic accounts of the events from 1709 to 1713 in German and in French. For transcripts of both versions and English translations see Vincent H. Todd, *Christopher von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern* (Raleigh, NC, 1920) [quoted passage on pp. 119 and 223]. For the best description and evaluation of Graffenried's American activities see Hans Gustav Keller, "Christopher von Grafenried und die Gründung von Neu-Bern in Nord-Carolina," *Archiv des Historischen Vereins des Kantons Bern XLII* (1953), 251-90.

<sup>12</sup>*VMHB XXIX*, 16-17.

<sup>13</sup>William L. Saunders (ed.), *The Colonial Records of North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC, 1886) 1,723.

<sup>14</sup>*The Papers of William Penn*, ed. by Mary Maples Dunn, Richard S. Dunn, et al. (Philadelphia, 1981-87) IV, 639. William Penn to James Logan, 3 March 1709.

<sup>15</sup>*Papers of Wm. Penn TV*, 632. James Logan to William Penn, 3 Feb. 1708/9.

<sup>16</sup>Todd, *Graffenried*, 386.

<sup>17</sup>*Papers of Wm. Penn TV*, 674-5. William Penn to Charles Gookin, 14 June 1710.

<sup>18</sup>Kirchenarchiv der Ev. Reformierten Kirchengemeinde, Siegen, sub L 3 19

<sup>19</sup>Todd, *Graffenried*, 349-50.

<sup>20</sup>Acopy of the *Gewerckenbuch* was bound into "Spotsylvania County, V Court Order Book 1724-1730." Virginia State Archives. I owe thanks to Dr. George Fenwick Jones of Baltimore for drawing my attention to it.

<sup>21</sup>Todd, *Graffenried*, 386.

<sup>22</sup>Auswanderung 1713 Nassau-Siegen, Staatsarchiv Münster.

<sup>23</sup>The relationship Häger-Behagel dated back to the times when the elder Hager taught at Hanau. See John F. Haeger to Society for Propagating the Gospel, 12 July 1712, Hugh Hastings (ed.), *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York* (Albany, 1901-06) HI, 1962-3.

<sup>24</sup>Todd, *Graffenried*, 257-9; Robert A. Brock (ed.), *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, 1710-1722* (Richmond, 1882) II, 66.

<sup>25</sup>*Spotswood Letters II*, 70.

<sup>26</sup>*The Journal of John Fontaine*, ed. by Edward Porter Alexander (Williamsburg, VA, 1972), 88.

<sup>27</sup>*Fontaine*, 102; Essex County, VA, Deeds (1718-1721), 180. For the continuation of Spotswood's iron production see Lester J. Cappon, *Iron Works at Tuball* (Charlottesville, 1945), esp. pp. 3-16.

<sup>28</sup>For the Germanna colony and sources see Klaus Wust, *The Virginia Germans* (Charlottesville, 1989), 20-24, 256. The 1714 colony of Siegeners is one of the best researched German groups in colonial America. The basic study still remains William J. Hinke, "The First German Reformed Colony in Virginia: 1714-1750," *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society II* (1903), 1-17,98-110, 140-50. Several publications on family records have been issued by the Germanna Foundation, Box 693, Culpeper,

VA 22701 which has acquired the original Germanna tract, now the site of Siegen Forest and the Germanna Community College.

<sup>29</sup>Benjamin Trumbull, *A Complete History of Connecticut* (New London, CT, 1898), 23-6; Noah A. Phelps, *History of Simsbury, Granby and Canton 1642-1845* (Hartford, CT, 1845), 113-7.

<sup>30</sup>Gemeentelijke Archivdienst Amsterdam, Notar. Arch. #8565 (2 items, unnumbered, dated 20 July 1718).

<sup>31</sup>GA-Amsterdam, N.A. #6443, Nos. 454, 455, 456; #6440, No. 559; #6442, Nos. 210,215.

<sup>32</sup>Johann Berndt von Düren to the Rev. A. W. Böhme, 26 May 1721. The letter was forwarded by Böhme to Inspector Neubauer in Halle. Franc. Archiv Halle, A144, p. 8714 and C 229, Nr.7.

<sup>33</sup>*The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut from May, 1717, To October, 1725* ed. by Charles J. Hoadly (Hartford, 1872), 85-7,371-2.

<sup>34</sup>Phelps, *Simsbury*, 117.

<sup>35</sup>Phelps, *Simsbury*, 117.

<sup>36</sup>*The Lutheran Church in New York 1649-1772 — Records in the Lutheran Church Archives at Amsterdam, Holland*, transl. Arnold J. H. vanLear (New York, 1946), 128,138.

<sup>37</sup>Job. Heinrich Sprögel (1679-1740) and his brother Ludwig Christian were both active in business and politics. The brother even was a member of the Assembly. Neither one has left any personal papers which could give their side of various controversies. The meagre sources on Job. Heinrich include the anonymous article "The German Tract," in *The PerkiomenRegion VI* (1928),2-21,esp.pp. 3-5. A reproachful letter to him by Benjamin Furly, dated 5 April 1709, appeared in the *Penns. Mag of Hist. & Biogr. XXVII* (1903), 367-7.

<sup>38</sup>Staatsarchiv Dresden, loc. 2249, pp. 19-20. Kirchner Report, 23 March 1706.

<sup>39</sup>GA-Rotterdam, ONA 1169 (171), 828-33, 15 Oct. 1707; 1169 (175), 847-9; 1169 (176), 850-3, both 18 Oct. 1707; 1498 (101), 2304, 25 Mar. 1709.

<sup>40</sup>The Frankfurt Company began in 1682/83 as German Company, a grouping of several purchasers of Pennsylvania land, in whose service Franz Daniel Pastorius went to Philadelphia in 1683. The stockholders reorganized their company in 1686 under its final name. Except for the son of Balthasar Jawert, none of the members or their heirs emigrated to America. The 25,000 acres of land remained unoccupied. In 1700 the stockholders replaced Pastorius as administrator by Daniel Falckner, Johannes Kelpius and Johannes Jawert Kelpius declined such worldly activity and Jawert moved to Maryland, which left Falckner alone to settle the property with purchasers.

<sup>41</sup>A copy of Sprögel's petition was preserved among the papers of John Archdale, one of the proprietors of Carolina who also promoted the bill for naturalization in 1708. Library of Congress, Archdale Mss., 52.

<sup>42</sup>Samuel W. Pennypacker, *Pennsylvania Colonial Cases* (Philadelphia, 1892), 171-8. For the unsuccessful counter moves by Pastorius and Jawert before the Provincial Council on March 1, 1708/9 see *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, 1700-1717* (Philadelphia, 1852),

430-1; Pastorius' "Exemplura sine Exeraplo...", in which he condemned Sprögel's takeover, was printed on pp. 74-79 of Samuel W. Pennypacker, *The Settlement of Germantown* (Philadelphia, 1899). For Penn's reaction see *Papers of Wm. Penn IV*, 688.

<sup>43</sup>N. F. Schmidt, "The Old Perkiomen Copper Mine," *The Perkiomen Region I* (1922), 30-2; George W. Geist, "The Story of the First Pennsylvania Copper Mine," *The Perki-*

*omen Region II* (1923), 3-7. The latter article appeared first in *The Mineral Collector* XIV, No. 6. in August 1907.

<sup>44</sup>Ralph Beaver Strassburger (benefactor) and William John Hinke (editor and compiler), *Pennsylvania German Pioneers* (Norristown, PA, 1934) I, 277-9.

<sup>45</sup>P.R.O., C.O. 5/1325, fos. 335-46. The quotes here are on fos. 335,338 and 339. A transcript of the document was published in *VMHB XXXVI* (1928), 54-9.

