

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

Items on Maryland in Early Pennsylvania-German Newspapers

Advertisements and incidental news items in 18th century German-language newspapers of Pennsylvania provide an important source of contemporary material on German immigrants in Maryland, Virginia and other states to the south. Most early Pennsylvania newspapers had a wide circulation in areas settled by Germans outside Penn's colony. Fortunately, many rather complete runs exist of these papers which have also become available in microreproductions in recent years. The following excerpts may serve to illustrate what type of information can be found by the diligent historian or genealogist. Advertisements also contribute much to our knowledge of the social, occupational and commercial conditions in the colonial settlements.

Much has been written about the sufferings of German redemptioners in Maryland and elsewhere and the tragic tales have given rise to the widespread impression that ships' captains and "Palatine" importers were a heartless, cruel lot. There was another side to this story. One instance was known from a public note of thanks which the newly-founded German Society of Maryland inserted in the *Maryland Journal* on August 10, 1784. Captain Claas Kulkens of the Brig *Lavater* was cited for the humane treatment he had accorded his German passengers. The activity of the German Society during that year showed other beneficial results. Its officers worked closely with the firm of Valck, Burger and Schouten, principal agents for the importation of indentured servants. Evidently, the firm agreed in some instances to let newly arrived immigrants find their own employment upon a pledge to refund the cost of transportation as soon as they had earned enough to do so. Such generous handling of these matters represented a risk to the shipping companies as the appeal shows which was published in the *Philadelphische Correspondenz* of January 31, 1786:

"Valck, Bürger and Schouten, Baltimore, call upon the following to pay their obligations for ship passage, they having arrived at Baltimore in the fall of 1784 on the Ship *Capellen tot den Pol*, Captain H. Reyding, and the ship *North America*, Captain T. de Haas, both from Holland, and as they could not obtain employment in the usual manner they were permitted to go free upon signing an agreement to pay the costs of passage:

Johann Georg Winter	Christoph Gärtner
Johann Heinrich Capiton	Johann August Harter
Johann Georg Capiton	Christoph Kesselbach
Peter Winzweiler	Jacob Schmidt
Philip Bauer	Jacob Gross
Anton Miller	Michael Metz
F. Folweiler	Friedrich Wagner
Anton Becker	Franz Cayral
Johann Henrich Brill	Stephan Voght
Gabriel Steinmetz	Johann Henrich Eberhard
Michael Kempf	Peter Oberbach
Georg Koch	Philip Schneider
Samuel Weiser	Michael Bart
Jacob Schönenberg	Joseph Wumps
Johann Peter Glass	Johann Henrich Schwartz"
Johann Fernberg	

Again, on March 13, 1787, a similar notice appeared in the *Philadelphische Correspondenz*. This time Johann Daniel Herrose, contract passenger on the brigantine *Candidus*, Captain A. P. de Haas, arrival August 1786 from Rotterdam, and Margaretha Metzler, on the *North America*, Capt. T. de Haas, arrival September 1786 from Amsterdam, had not yet made any payments for their passage.

The search notices in early German newspapers are particularly valuable because immigrants who were looking for relatives and friends usually mentioned their place of origin in Europe and gave other pertinent information not available in other records. Christopher Saur's *Pennsylvanische Berichte* in Germantown carried many out-of-state advertisements. The issue of January 1, 1752 contains the request of Johann Jost Eigenbrod "Frederick County on Monocacy Creek" for information on the whereabouts of his sister, Sophia Elisabeth, "who arrived in this country last year." On January 16, 1754, Johannes Schnell of Stone Arabia, New York, warns the public against his son-in-law, Johannes Worming, an ex-pastor who was heading for Maryland and Virginia to do some mischief. The *Berichte* of February 16, 1754 bring a notice from Rosina Dorothea Rost, formerly of Waldenburg "aus dem Hohenlohischen" who arrived at Petepsco (sic) on November 12, 1753 on a ship of Captain Rattray and was sold at vendue. She is now looking for her sister and brother-in-law both of whom were sent away into service. Her address was care of John Jansen, Annapolis, Maryland. Gottlieb Gander from Lomersheim, Wurtemberg, tells his friends on March 2, 1759 that he is now established as a linen weaver in Frederick. In the same issue Ludwig Schellbass of the Rohre-Darmstadt region announces himself as a miller "nine miles from Frederick." Turning again to the *Philadelphische Correspondenz* we find Leonard Schwengel on January 21, 1783 as the proud owner of a grist and saw mill in Washington County " five miles from Hagerstown." On January 27, 1784, Daniel Korschner at the Head of Elk in Maryland offers to take letters and messages along to his native Landau where he is going soon. An example of longevity was furnished by Melchior Geisser who died on February 8, 1799 at the age of 110 years in western Maryland. (*Philadelphische Correspondenz*, March 5, 1799).

German indentured servants were scattered all over the province of Maryland. Many shortened their terms by lighting out and starting a new life of their own in the western parts of Maryland and Virginia. Only a few were apprehended because the German population in the west rarely rejected a runaway. The best the deprived master could do, was to insert a reward notice for their apprehension. In Saur's newspaper of July 16, 1754, Stephen Onjou reports that Nicolaus Gartner, 35 years old, and Conrad Hans, 23 years old ran away from his iron furnace on Gunpowder River, Maryland. The *Staatsbote* of June 9, 1772 printed the appeal of William Giddis of Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland, for the apprehension of Johann Bernhold, his German butcher who had disappeared. The trade in indentured servants was becoming a troublesome business. George Washington who wanted " two hundred families (not much encumbered with children)" was told by merchant Henry Riddell of Piscataway, Maryland, on March 18, 1774 that he " will think no further of importing Germans, the difficulty attending it being so great." Significantly, this statement came a year after the founding of the German Society of Maryland which was taking its first energetic measures to prevent the exploitation of Germans coming to Maryland. There is still a wide open field for case studies on this and other subjects concerning the Maryland Germans. As the old newspaper files become more and more accessible, a systematic search should present a worthwhile challenge to the student of Maryland history.

K. G. WUST

The Last Will of Germantown Printer Christopher Sower of March 23, 1777

The Archives of our Society contain a variety of documents, partly dating back to the 18th century. Among these items is an interesting Last Will by Christopher Sower (1721-1784), son and successor of the pioneer printer, Christopher Sower, senior (1693-1758) of colonial Pennsylvania. This will lists the extensive holdings of the younger Sower just about one year before he was arrested in his house in Germantown for refusing to swear the oath of allegiance and to commit himself to any position toward the warfare that was going on. As an elder of the Dunker (German Baptist Brethren) Church, Sower naturally was opposed to the swearing of any formal oath and to active or passive participation in armed conflict. The revolutionary authorities showed no understanding of the pacifist position of the Dunkers. In his diary, Christopher Sower described in August 1778 how he was forced to leave his home without being able to take even much needed medicines along. "Then I beg'd for nothing more except my spectacles, which was granted. . . . Then they proceeded to sell my effects. . . . And so they have not only broken the Fundamental rule in selling my estate, but have also published me in almost all Newspapers as a Traitor, without any cause and without ever giving me a hearing or a trial."

Sower found a refuge in an old building at Methacton. Some friends of his church gave him small amounts of money and food to subsist on. He actually managed to earn some trifling sums of money by helping out here and there. So he was able to record in the last days of his life, in a feeble hand under the accounts of gifts and alms from his friends: "The above has all been paid."

We publish the Last Will of 1777 here because it sheds light on the property holdings and the printing and type-foundry establishment of Christopher Sower as they presented themselves shortly before the misfortunes of war deprived him and his heirs of the fruits of two great lives in the history of printing and publishing in colonial Pennsylvania:

In the Name of God, Amen! I Christopher Sower of Germantown in the County of Philadelphia, Printer, being in good bodily health and of sound and disposing mind, memory and understanding praised be the Lord for the same Do hereby make my Last will and Testament in manner following, that is to say

FIRST I will that all my just debts and funeral Expenses shall be duly paid and satisfied for which and other purposes herein after declared I do hereby nominate and appoint my two elder Sons Christopher and Daniel Executors of this my Last Will and Testament ITEM, I do hereby declare and devise that the general Plan of this my Will and the chief End and Intention of my own mind, to be pursued by my Children and by all persons who by virtue hereof or otherwise shall have any matter to act, settle or determine respecting the Execution thereof, is that all my Lands, Tenements and Hereditaments and all my Goods and Chattels, Rights and Credits whatsoever shall be equally divided among my seven Children, to wit, Christopher, Daniel, Peter, Catherine, Esther, David and Samuel and by them held and enjoyed in Severally and by their several and respective Heirs Executors and Administrators and that all the particular Devises and Bequests hereinafter contained upon any Question or Difficulty arising in the Execution of this my Will shall be reduced to and explained and determined by the Rules of an equal Division of the whole, so that respect be had to the true value of every part thereof. ITEM I do hereby constitute and appoint my respected Friends Peter Keyser and Peter Libert, both of Germantown aforesaid, Guardians of such of my Children as shall be Minors at the time of my Decease. ITEM, I will and devise that the several Estates hereinafter devised to my Children shall be appraised or valued by seven discreet and reputable Freeholders of the County of Philadelphia, Each of my five elder Children choosing one of the said Appraisers and the said Peter Keyser and Peter Libert to be the Appraisers on behalf of my two youngest Sons, David and Samuel. And whatever the seven Appraisers so appointed and to be chosen as

aforesaid or any four of them shall under their Hands and Seals certify to be the value of each particular Tenement and Lot or parcel of Ground herein after Specifically devised to any of my said Children shall be deemed and taken to be the true value thereof and shall be charged accordingly to the equal Share which the Child to whom it is herein after devised is to take in my real and personal Estate. Provided, nevertheless, That if any of my Children being at the time of such Valuation of full age shall within three months after, or being then under age shall at his or her arrival at the age of twenty-one years think him or herself aggrieved with the Valuation of his or her own part (no Dissatisfaction to be allowed in one of my Children with the Valuation of the Estate of another of them) then he or she shall or may within the Space of three months from the time of his or her arrival at the age aforesaid by virtue of the Devise herein after made to him or her, by public Auction, of which at least four Weeks public notice must be given in two English and One German Newspapers, sell and dispose of the part and parcel of Land to him or her specifically devised to the highest and best Bidder. And whatever Price the Premises shall sell for at such public Auction, the same shall be charged to his or her equal distributive share in my real and personal Estate—ITEM I give and devise unto my said Son Christopher Sower All that my Messuage or Tenement and piece or Parcel of Land whereon I now live situate in Germantown aforesaid joining to Main Street, Lands late of Adam Gruber now of Thomas Saltar, a Road leading to George Danhawers Mill, and John Wisters Land. Together with the Appurtenances To hold to him my said Son Christopher his Heirs and Assigns for ever: Charged nevertheless and chargeable to his equal Share in the Division of my whole Estate with the Sum or Sums of Money which the Premises shall be valued at or be Sold for as aforesaid. ITEM I give and devise unto my said Son Daniel Sower All that my Messuage or Tenement Paper Mill Saw Mill and two parcels of Land near the Falls of Schuylkill on both Sides of Wissahicon Road, Bounded by the said River and Road and by Lands of John Dickinson Esq. and Wife, Jonathan Adams and Doctor William Smith. Together with the Appurtenances. To hold to him my said Son Daniel his Heirs and Assigns forever: Charged nevertheless and chargeable to his equal Share in the Division of my whole Estate with the sum or sums of Money which the Premises shall be valued at or sold for as aforesaid. ITEM I give and devise unto my Daughter Catherine Sower all that my Lot or parcel of Land situate at the Upper end of Germantown aforesaid on the Southeasterly Side of a Road commonly called Keyzers Lane or Abington Road Bounded by the same and by Lands of Jacob Horter, John Engle, Benjamin Keyser and Joseph Keyser. Together with the Buildings thereon erected and the Appurtenances. To hold to her my said Daughter Catherine her Heirs and Assigns for ever. Charged nevertheless and chargeable to her equal share in the Division of my whole Estate with such Sum or Sums of money as the premises shall be valued at or be sold for as aforesaid. ITEM I give and devise unto my Daughter Esther Sower All that my Lot or parcel of Land situate in the Township of Germantown on the South Easterly Side of the Great Road leading to the Falls of Schuylkill Bounded by the same Road and another which divides the Townships Germantown, Roxborough and the Northern Liberties and by Lands of Winard Nice, which I purchased partly of Theobald Endt and partly of George Herger containing near Seven Acres. Together with the Appurtenances. To hold to her my said Daughter Esther Sower her Heirs and Assigns for ever. Charged nevertheless and chargeable to her equal Share in the Division of my whole Estate with such Sum or Sums of Money as the Premises shall be valued or sold for as aforesaid. ITEM I give and devise unto my said Son David Sower All that my Messuage or Tenement and Lot of Ground which I purchased of Thomas Hyam and others Trustees of the London Company's Lands situate in Roxborough Township aforesaid Bounded by the River Schuylkill, the great Road leading from Philadelphia to Reading and by Lands of Samuel Powel and Christian Lashet containing Eighty-three acres and three quarters of an acre. Together with the fishing place and all other the Appurtenances. To hold to him my said Son David, his Heirs and Assigns forever: Charged nevertheless and chargeable to his equal Share in the Division of my whole Estate with such Sum or Sums of money as the Premises shall be valued at or sold for as aforesaid. ITEM I give and devise to my said Son Samuel Sower All that my Messuage or Tenement and Lot of Ground in Germantown aforesaid which I purchased of the Sheriff Samuel

Morris situate on the South Westerly Side of the said Main Street and on the northwesterly Side of the aforesaid Road leading to the Falls of Schuylkill Bounded by the said Street and Road and by Lands of Justus Fox and of the said Christian Lashet. Also all that my other Lot of Ground which I purchased of Hannah Rawlinson situated on the Northwesterly Side of the aforesaid Road to Schuylkill, Bounded by the same and Lands of Henry Hill Esq., John Keyser and William Tusten Containing One Acre and three quarters, be it more or less. To hold the said Messuage or Tenement and two several lots of Ground with the respective Appurtenances unto my said Son Samuel Sower his Heirs and Assigns for ever: Charged nevertheless and chargeable to his equal Share in the Division of my whole Estate with such Sum and Sums of Money as the Premises shall be valued at or Sold for as aforesaid. ITEM I will that my whole Apparatus of the Printing Bussiness shall be appraised by three Master Printers, One to be chosen by my said Son Christopher, another by my said Son Peter and the third by the Guardians of my younger Children. And being so appraised I give and allow the same to my said two Sons Christopher and Peter who shall as near equal as can be divide among themselves every Assortment of Types, the Presses, Moulds and Matrices for a Letter-Foundery and all other Tools Implements and Materials to the Printing Business belonging and Shall be charged with, each of them one Moiety of the Sum found by the said Appraisers. ITEM, Whereas I have not devised any part of my Real Estate to my said Son Peter, because he rather seems to decline settling in or near Germantown, so I will that his Seventh part of my whole Estate as near as can be guessed at, Shall as soon as possible be made up to him in Cash, deducting the Moiety of the Value of the Printing Office in order to enable him to make any purchase of Land elsewhere, whether he be then of Age or not. ITEM, Whereas a considerable part of my personal Estate consists in printed Books: and if either of my said two Sons Christopher and Peter should for his own private Advantage undertake to reprint any of these Books whilst a considerable number of the same Sort belonging to my Estate remains on hand and unsold the Interest of all my Children must be greatly affected thereby. For preventing of which I will and direct, that if either of my said Sons should think proper to reprint any Such Sort of Books altho it was under the Pretense of Additions or Improvements in matter and form he shall be obliged to take all such Books of the same Sort belonging to my Estate to himself at the Common Price for which they are sold to Stationers or Bookbinders and the Amount thereof shall be charged to his distributive Share or Seventh part of my Estate. And in case he should refuse to comply with the above Directions he shall forfeit to my other Children his full Share and Dividend in all the printed Books that shall belong to my Estate at the time of my decease and in the Monies which shall from time to time arise by the Sale thereof. Anything in this my Will before or after contained to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding. And for the better enforcing this Direction I will that my Son Daniel and the Guardians of my younger Childrend at the Delivery or Assignment of my printing Office to my Sons, Christopher and Peter shall take Bonds from them for the Performance thereof. And I further will and direct that the said Stock of printed Books shall be sold either at my said Dwellinghouse by my Son Christopher or elsewhere by any other person or persons whom my said Executors and the Guardians of my younger Children shall intrust therewith keeping always the same Price at which I usually have sold them or as near to it as can be. And the Sale of these Books Shall in the same manner go on from time to time untill they are all sold or untill the 20th day of March, 1788 when my said Son Samuel shall come to age and then the whole Stock remaining on hand shall be sold by public Auction giving first four Weeks Notice thereof in the English and German Newspapers. And for as much as the Keeping such large Quantity of unbound Books, the taking care thereof that they may not be destroyed or damaged by Rain, Snow or Vermin, I will and direct that my said Son Christopher or whoever shall be intrusted with the Care and Management thereof shall from time to time be allowed a premium of Ten per cent upon the Amount of the Sales thereof. For and in Consideration of which Premium he or they shall also answer to my Estate such bad debts as shall happen by their Selling Books on Trust to indifferent Persons. ITEM I will and devise that the said Guardians of my younger Childrens shall take care of and manage the Interest and Shares of them in my Estate and for that purpose inspect the Accounts of my

Executors and provide that such of my Children as have more than their Seventh part of my Estate in lands and person Estate Shall well and sufficiently secure the Overplus in their Hands to their younger Brothers and Sisters, and in particular that the Account of the Sales of my printed Books shall at least once a year be settled and the Shares of the said Children paid or secured to them repectively. And in the year 1788 or sooner if all my printed Books shall be sold before that time then a final Settlement of all my Estate shall be made between my said Executors and the Rest of my Children. And I will that the aforesaid Guardians Peter Keyser and Peter Libert shall be handsomely allowed and paid for their Trouble in the Premises (*One line omitted because of crease in paper making it illegible*) than their younger Brothers and Sisters can obtain, shall in consideration of the equal Share left them administer gratis on my Estate. ITEM if any of my Children shall die under age unmarried and without Issue, I will that the particular Estate in Land herein before given or assigned to him or her shall by my Executors and the Guardian of my Children be sold at public Auction after a previous notice of at least four Weeks given in the English and German Newspapers. And I do hereby impower and authorize them the said Christoper Sower, Daniel Sower, Peter Keyser and Peter Libert and the Survivors and Survivor of them upon Receipt of the Purchase Money by proper Deeds and Assurances in the Law to grant and convey the Fee simple and Inheritance of the Premises to the Purchasor or purchasors thereof. And the Monies arising by the Sale of such landed Estate and all other such Childs Monies and Effects part and Share in my Estate the Hands of my Executors or of the Guardian of such Child shall be equally divided among my surviving Children and the Issue of such of them as Shall then be dead. Such Issue taking such part as their deceased Parent would have taken if living. Lastly I do hereby revoke all other Last Wills by me heretofore made and published declaring this to be my Last Will and Testament only.

In Witness whereof I have hereunto set my Hand and Seal the Twenty-third Day of March in the Year of our Lord One thousand Seven hundred and Seventy-Seven.

(Signed) CHRISTOPHER SOWER

Signed, Sealed and Declared by the Testator Christopher Sower for and as his Last Will and Testament in the presence of

(*First witness illegible due to crease in paper*)

Thomas Langstroth
Edmund Longstroth

A New Source of German American History

For more than two centuries the London archives of the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge have preserved a valuable yet almost entirely overlooked source of early German American history, which is soon to appear in the *Wormsloe Foundation Publications* of the University of Georgia Press. This source is the *Salzburger Letterbooks* of Henry Newman, the secretary of the S. P. C. K., who was instrumental in sending several transports of persecuted Salzburg Protestants to the Colony of Georgia. Although a New Englander of Puritan origins, Newman became an Anglican and spent all his adult life in the service of the S. P. C. K. in London. This philanthropic society had been founded in 1698 by Dr. Thomas Bray for carrying the Gospel to the underprivileged classes of Great Britain, but it also took an interest in the welfare of oppressed Protestants on the European continent. English concern for the persecuted Salzburger soon expressed itself in legislation; for Parliament resolved to send persecuted Protestants to Georgia under the same favorable conditions being granted English subjects. In this worthy endeavor the S. P. C. K. played a leading role, a role that is clearly portrayed in the letters transcribed into Newman's Salzburger letterbooks.

The original letterbooks in the S. P. C. K. archives in London consist of 253 closely written folio-sized pages of outward correspondence from the years 1732 to 1739 and 383 similar pages of inward correspondence from the years 1732 to 1735. The forthcoming edition of these letters will follow the exact wording, spelling, and capitalization of the originals and will deviate from their punctuation only where clarity demands.

Of chief interest to Americans are the letters dealing directly with the Georgia Salzburgers, the first transport of which gathered at Augsburg during the summer of 1733 and departed from that city on October 31 under the conduct of Baron Philipp Georg Friedrich von Reck, the 23 year old nephew of the British-Hanoverian envoy at Regensburg. The letters to, from, and about von Reck give a detailed account of the first transport's journey from Augsburg to Charleston and Savannah.

A year after the first transport departed, Urlsperger organized a second under the conduct of Johann Vat, a citizen of Biel in Switzerland, whose letters well depict the difficulties caused by the many tolls on the Rhine. Whereas his party arrived quickly and safely in Georgia, his letters reveal that not all had gone well with the first transport after their arrival and that the land assigned them had not measured up to the glowing expectations of the settlers and of their benefactors in Europe. Even Boltzius and Gronau, normally so docile and obedient, at last agreed with their congregation that the original location was hopeless and that the settlement would have to be moved; and their letter in this correspondence, backed by those of Vat and of Samuel Quincy, the Anglican minister at Savannah, finally prevailed upon the Trustees to move the wretched survivors to a more fertile and accessible place.

Although these letterbooks contain letters from James Vernon, Stephen Hales, Thomas Wilson, Thomas Coram, John Wesley, Samuel Wesley, Sr., John Whitelamb, Richard Lowther, George Whitefield, James Oglethorpe, and other English benefactors both in England and America, by far the larger part are by Germans, including Gotthilf August Francke, Baron J. von Reck, Baron von Hugo, Christian von Münch, Heinrich Guerdes, Johann Georg Morell, Heinrich Butjenter, Christopher Ortmann and many more. These letters also make informative references to various Germans who played a role in America, such as Daniel Weisiger, Andreas Gottfried Dietzius, Christian Ernst Thilo, Andreas Zwiffler, Peter Böhler, and August Gottlieb Spangenberg. Above all, they give the only complete and accurate lists of the members of the first three Salzburger transports, with the age, sex, origin, and profession of most of them. Letters from Johann Tobler of Rehetobel and Johann Heinrich Labhart of St. Gall give early information on the designs of the citizens of St. Gall to transport some of their excess population to Georgia or South Carolina, a scheme that ended in a disastrous attempt to found a city of New Windsor on the Savannah River. The letters from Germany also throw some light on the conditions that encouraged so many impecunious Palatines and other Germans to seek a new start in the new world.

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