OF ALL the various aspects of colonial immigration few have been more thoroughly studied or often described than the movement of Germans into Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century. While this migration was still in progress, there appeared in print various accounts of it which have served ever since as the main foundation for all treatments of the subject. Within the past decade there has been a careful reediting of the lists of arrivals in the port of Philadelphia, and an elaborate bibliography of the whole subject of German settlement in the colonies has been published. A formidable total of scholarship has been built up, which ought soon to be compressed into another general account. Meanwhile, however, the collection of facts goes on, and the present author submits in this article a few which seem to add to the knowledge of the subject or to modify some accepted conclusions. Most of these were collected in the course of a search for material on indentured servitude in the colonies generally.

Unlike emigrants from the British Isles, Germans coming to America had to undertake a long and extremely tedious trip before they could go aboard ship at all. The cost of this part of the journey averaged about £3 in English money, but it varied so greatly by reason of unforeseen delays or the dishonesty of agents that many emigrants found themselves on the borders of Holland without money enough left either to continue their journey or to return home. This problem first appeared in 1709 and 1710, when great numbers of those who were bound for New York descended upon the city of Rotterdam and had to be fed by its public charities until the English took them off.¹ Eventually the redemptionist system, apparently invented in the 1720's,

enabled such persons to pay for their passages after arrival in America. But another result of the situation was that the Dutch government, tired of having to support colonists for the English, took restrictive measures which considerably affected the whole trade. “Till of late,” wrote the British Secretary of Legation at The Hague in 1739, “there was but one Merchant at Rotterdam, with his Associates, who was allowed to answer for, & transport These Emigrants.” He was an Englishman named Zachary Hope, a man who more than anyone else was responsible for the beginnings and early development of the trade in redemptioners.²

The Dutch government, which had thus encouraged a monopoly of German transportation in the hands of one man, certainly relaxed its regulations about 1740, for the frontier guards were then ordered to stop only those emigrants who could not produce a “Certificate of some sufficient Subject of This State [Holland] having given Bail for their orderly Passage thro’ & contracted with Them for their immediate Transportation out of it.”³ As late as 1751 the merchant John Dick, who had been employed by the English Board of Trade to procure German settlers for Nova Scotia, was obliged to give a bond to the States-General before his contingent could pass through the country to Rotterdam. Dick had plenty of private troubles as well and reported to the Board of Trade that he had “apprehended as soon as the Affair became Publick, Messrs. Hope & Mr Steadman of this Place, who had hitherto Monopolised that Buissiness would Oppose me as much as Possible, this is now the Case.”⁴ By the late 1760's, though Hope was still in the trade, the monopoly had certainly disappeared, and such Philadelphia merchants as


⁴ Board of Trade Journal, 1750-1753, p. 247. John Dick to the Board of Trade, March 6, 1750; Public Record Office, C.O. 217/9, F 112. These letters of John Dick, which will be much referred to in this paper, are briefly calendared in “Calendar of Papers relating to Nova Scotia,” in Report on Canadian Archives, 1894, by Douglas Brynmer, archivist. (Ottawa, 1895.)
Samuel Howell and Willing and Morris were carrying large numbers of Germans in their ships.  

It is thus plain that the regulations of the government of Holland contributed to the building up of a monopoly in the hands of Hope. After 1739 or 1740 other companies were allowed to sponsor the transportation of emigrants, but Hope and Steadman had found the business so profitable that they bent every effort to keep their dominant position. The methods they used were extralegal; on one occasion they sent representatives to stir up trouble among a group of John Dick's Germans who were approaching the Dutch border, duly provided with the necessary certificate for passage. These emissaries created such doubts and dissensions among the men bound for Nova Scotia that there was a pitched battle between factions of emigrants, and Dick nearly lost his whole contingent. Such methods were common, and the stories of rivalries among emigrant agents in Germany are too well known to require repetition here.

In size the vessels on which emigrants were transported changed very little during the whole colonial period, though there may have been some tendency to use smaller ships more generally in the earlier years than in the later. They varied from thirty-five or forty to three or four hundred tons and in a very few cases more. The greatest number of people came on ships of from one hundred to two hundred and fifty tons, which were of course much smaller than those commonly used in the East Indian trade. Fares were paid and accommodations ordered according to a system by which each adult was counted as one full "freight" or "head" and children were rated proportionately to their age. Thus the Georgia Trustees voted to send out Salzburgers, calling each person over twelve years old one freight, each child from seven to twelve half a freight, and

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7 Dick to the Board of Trade, March 6 and May 29, 1750. C.O. 217/9, F 112 and F 140.

each child from two to seven a third of a freight, while infants under two traveled free of charge. The Board of Trade in arranging for colonists to go to Nova Scotia asked that a ton and a half of shipping be allowed for each passenger carried, but this was certainly a counsel of perfection, for we read that during several years vessels averaging less than two hundred tons usually carried about three hundred passengers at a time to Philadelphia.

It was customary in the German trade to measure the interior accommodations and allot them according to rule. Pennsylvania passed an act in 1750 which, as explained by John Dick, required that a "Bed Place" six feet square be provided for each four whole freights, so that they might sleep in pairs, by turns, with fair comfort or sleep all at once by crowding. A freight, however, was a passenger above fourteen years of age; children between four and fourteen counted as half a freight, and those under four were not counted at all. Thus, even according to this rule, there sometimes occurred such incredible overcrowding as that on one of Dick's own ships sent to Nova Scotia which measured 223½ freights. The merchant put 228½ on board, but the actual number of souls was 322. It was claimed, nevertheless, that the ship was much less crowded than many which went to Philadelphia, and from the chorus of protests against the abuse it may be inferred that this was probably the truth.

Provisions for feeding passengers during the voyage was made by dividing them into "messes" of four, five, six, or sometimes as many as eight persons and allotting food in fixed amounts to each mess. In 1735 the Georgia Trustees drew up a scheme for victualing passengers which may be quoted in full as a model of what was considered good and liberal provisioning for one week:

10 Dick to the Board of Trade, Feb. 23, 1750/1; C.O. 217/11, G 69. The act is in Pennsylvania *Statutes at Large*, vol. V, pp. 94-97.
11 John Dick, *loc. cit.*
12 *Georgia Colonial Records*, vol. III, pp. 408-9. The trustees in arranging for the transportation of persons "on the Charity" were extremely liberal. For example, they once paid £6.16.6 "for the Charge of inclosing the twenty One Cabins between Decks" and £8.10 "half Charge of the
On the four Beef days
Four Pounds of Beef for every Mess of Five Heads
And Two Pounds and a half of Flour
And half a Pound of Suet, or Plums.

On the two Pork Days
Five Pounds of Pork
And two Pints and a half of Pease, for every Five Heads

And on the Fish Day
Two Pounds and a half of Fish
And half a pound of Butter, for every Five Heads.
The whole at Sixteen Ounces to the Pound
And allow each Head Seven Pounds of Bread, of Fourteen Ounces to the Pound, by the Week.
And Three Pints of Beer, and Two Quarts of Water, (whereof one of the Quarts for Drinking, and the other for boiling Victuals) each Head by the Day, for the Space of a Month; and a Gallon of Water (whereof Two Quarts for Drinking, and the other Two for boiling Victuals) each Head by the Day after, during their being on their Passage.

Most menus such as this, it may be noted, contained cheese, which was occasionally promised for whenever the weather was such that a kettle could not be boiled for cooking other food.

Such a schedule of feeding as that drawn up by the Georgia Trustees can hardly be regarded as scanty, but neither was it typical of what most emigrants might expect. Surely most shiploads of Germans received no such fare, but as a matter of fact they did not want it and would have viewed it perhaps very much as we should nowadays. When John Dick was reproved by the Board of Trade for his inadequate provisioning and sent a schedule much like the one quoted, he replied that "however Agreeably it might suit with the Constitutions of Britons, Experience has Evinced the Contrary with these sort of Palatines, Especially where there are Women & Children, as their Chief Diet at home is upon Vegitables, Flower, Oatmeal, Eggs, Fish, Butter, Cheese, &c." The Board relented, and Dick took some of his recruits out with him in the city of Rotterdam to choose their own provisions, which they did much more in accordance with their own inclinations.
with his ideas than with those of the Englishmen. When one contemplates the diets furnished on well-favored ships, especially in the seventeenth century, it seems a miracle that any passengers ever survived a voyage through the tropics.

Ships setting out for the colonies were victualed on some such scales as these usually for twelve weeks, or for fourteen if the owners were liberally inclined. But it is to be noted that this provisioning was for "freights" or "heads" and not really for persons. When Dick sent out the Speedwell, victualed for 162½ freights for fourteen weeks, there were actually 229 souls on board, many of whom must have been boys just under fourteen with lusty appetites. Thus the provisioning of ships in the redemptioner trade, in which many children were carried, was usually not as adequate as that of ships carrying indentured servants, even though the same general principles might be followed. The horrible experiences of various emigrant ships which were kept at sea too long and ran out of food have often been described, but in most cases it was not the insufficiency of provisions but their bad quality or the dishonesty of captains that made most trouble for the unhappy passengers. Most ships, after all, performed their voyages comfortably within the twelve weeks allotted.

The diseases which afflicted passengers and were frequently noted on arrival of the vessels in colonial ports were due fundamentally to lack of proper ventilation. Whenever there was even a moderate sea running, all passengers had to be battened down below decks in their "Bed Places" of six feet square for each four freights. There was often no intake of fresh air whatever, and the situation created by two or three hundred seasick individuals, cooped together without access to the outer world, defies imagination. John Harrower gave one description of "the odest shene betwixt decks that ever I heard or seed. There was some sleeping, some spewing ... some daming, some Blasting their leggs and thighs, some their liver, lungs, lights and eyes, And for to make the shene the odder, some curs'd Father, Mother, Sister, and Brother." After a sufficiently long time of confine-

13 Dick to the Board of Trade, C.O. 217/11.
ment worse afflictions than seasickness visited the passengers, and many immigrants on arriving in America were put under quarantine.

There was, however, definite recognition of the problem of ventilation. When the Board of Trade prepared to send its settlers to Halifax in 1749, it summoned a certain Mr. Sutton, inventor of "Sutton's Air Pipes," and asked him to give an estimate for fitting up the transports with his device. He offered to do the job in three weeks for £30 per ship or £35 "if with the furnace." The board accordingly directed the equipment installed on eight of the twelve transports and had ventilators cut on the other four. Apparently Sutton had worked out a system of forced-draft ventilation that could even be connected with a furnace for heating the air. Thereafter the governor of Halifax and the board itself were very much impressed on finding the English on the transports arrived in excellent health, while John Dick's Germans, who came on ships without ventilation, were all sickly. For the next year's contingent Dick was ordered to have ventilation provided, and an Englishman was sent to Rotterdam to install the apparatus on the vessels which were to carry the Germans. This enlightening experiment seems to have made no immediate impression on other merchants in the trade, although late in the 1760's, after quarantine legislation had been passed by Virginia and Maryland, the transporters of convicts opened up portholes on their ships, thereby securing enough ventilation to reduce the amount of jail fever commonly imported along with their cargoes.

Thus there was no real need for the diseases, epidemics, and misery suffered by so many of the Germans. An intelligent and humane supervision such as was given by the Board of Trade under Lord Halifax, by the Georgia Trustees, or by occasional private merchants and captains would have prevented most of

15 Board of Trade Journal, 1742-1749, pp. 393, 397, 398, 402. In the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. XIX (April, 1749), p. 185, it was stated that the ventilators for the Halifax ships had been designed by the Reverend Dr. Hales and that only one child had been lost on the voyage. For a curious design of a ship's ventilator, with a bellows worked by a heavy pendulum which swayed with the ship's motion, see ibid., vol. XXXIII, p. 340.


17 Archives of Maryland, vol. XIV, pp. 411-413.
the woes. For a healthful voyage even before the era of ventilation it was necessary only to use decent care in providing food, cleanse the ship thoroughly before starting and frequently during the voyage with vinegar, have a little luck with the weather, and above all avoid overcrowding. Everyone knew that fresh food or even a small amount of lemon juice would eliminate danger of falling prey to scurvy. The Georgia Trustees, according to a man who traveled out in one of their ships, "were so careful of the poor people's health, that they put on board turnips, carrots, potatoes, and onions, which were given out with the salt meat, and contributed greatly to prevent the scurvy." In 1741 it was stated that of some fifteen hundred people who had gone to Georgia at the expense of the Board of Trustees not more than six had died in passage.¹⁸ The sufferings of many Germans who came to Pennsylvania were certainly due to the inequities of their transporters and not to unavoidable circumstance.

Stories collected by Diffenderfer and others have amply set forth the injustices to which redemptioners were subject. Briefly stated, these included the plundering of baggage either at Rotterdam or on the voyage, the charging of survivors with the passage money due from dead redemptioners, the forcing of agreements for indentured service upon Germans ignorant of English and hence unaware of what they were signing, the gross overcharging of all redemptioners for the cost of their passage, and the separating of families upon arrival. These were grievous abuses, and they cannot be explained away or denied. One of them, however, has been greatly exaggerated in all modern accounts; this was the abuse of overcharging, and the exaggeration has risen from a failure to take account of several factors entering into the problem.

The cost of transporting one person from Europe to America did not vary much from five pounds sterling during the whole colonial period. If a merchant loaded a cargo of indentured servants, the cost to him would certainly be less than five pounds per head, but this figure may be considered as a good standard

¹⁸ Francis Moore, "A Voyage to Georgia, begun in the year 1735," in Georgia Historical Collections, vol. I, p. 87; "An Impartial Inquiry into ... the Province of Georgia," in ibid., p. 155.
to set up for purposes of comparison. A great mass of evidence shows that redemptioners in Philadelphia sold for amounts ranging from as low as £10 in 1722 to around £20 in 1772, with the average in the 1750's being about £15. In view of these facts it has been claimed that the redemptioners were outrageously exploited and that captains of ships contrived always to doctor their accounts so that the helpless emigrants might be sold at great profit. It is not to be denied that they often did so, but the practice was certainly not so frequent as authors intimate.

The first factor which these accusations leave out of account is the value of Pennsylvania currency, in which all the quotations are given. After about 1720 this money never had the value of sterling, and consequently all merchants had to be careful to give due attention to the rate of exchange. John Dick wrote to Hugh Davison in Nova Scotia, who had undertaken to see that he was remunerated for his charges, "... as to the Currency of Nova Scotia I am quite a Stranger to it but hope you'll take care that I am no Sufferer; the £170 Philadelphia money makes £100 sterling." This was in 1750; in 1748 one hundred pounds sterling would purchase one hundred and eighty pounds of Pennsylvania money. We know that two years previously Irish redemptioners had been sold for thirteen pounds each, a fact not indicating any exploitation whatever. Again, we have from the year 1775 a redemptioner's agreement, made in England, by which the subject was bound by indenture that was to be void if £14.14.0 sterling was paid within fourteen days of arrival in the colony. It appears that the emigrant could not find the money, and on the back of his indenture was recorded his transfer to one Thomas Cloudsdale for £20. Probably the difference in amount was due not to exploitation but to the rate of exchange, and it is likely that in this instance the captain had the worst of the bargain.

Evidence on this point is reviewed by C. A. Herrick, *White Servitude in Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1926), pp. 201-3. In the Huntington Library is a "List of Servants belonging to the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, and taken into His Majestys Service," which gives the amounts of "consideration money" paid for more than 600 servants in the early 1750's and confirms other evidences. A photostat of this document is in the possession of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

John Dick to Hugh Davison, C.O. 217/9, F 160.

Document in the Pennsylvania Historical Society, "Indentures of Apprentices."
There is no available evidence to trace the fluctuations of the rate of exchange; if there were, it would no doubt be found that much of the variation in the price of redemptioners between 1720 and 1776 was a result of these fluctuations rather than demand for servants.

According to John Dick it was customary for the Rotterdam merchants to add about fifteen per cent to the cost of passage “as an Indemnity for the Charges & laying out of the money,” or in other words as interest on the deferred payment. A further charge for the transportation of baggage was commonly added, and throughout most of the eighteenth century the Pennsylvania head tax of one pound was paid by the immigrant himself. Thus the actual charges might add up to seven or eight pounds sterling or more, payable in Pennsylvania, for the passage of one redemptioner. It was by no means necessary that a captain be dishonest in order to collect £15 in Pennsylvania currency to redeem such an amount as this.

It would be foolish to assert that overcharging was never practiced or that captains were always just and honest. Indeed, there is plenty of evidence to the contrary. Making allowances for the rates of exchange, however, we perceive that the trade in redemptioners was not so profitable as, for example, the trade in indentured servants. By 1774 Robert Morris thought it so “troublesome and precarious” that he ceased to employ his ships in it.2 A shipload of redemptioners, like a shipload of passengers, brought no such returns as a cargo of slaves or servants, though it was perhaps better than a load of mere ballast. Serious illnesses or a large number of deaths aboard ship might be impossible to balance financially by increases in prices on the rest of the cargo. Yet, precarious as the trade may have been, many merchants avidly sought full complements of redemptioners to pay the way of their ships going to the colonies and took means both fair and foul to stimulate the emigration of such people from Europe.

The latest and soundest attempt to arrive at an estimate of the volume of German immigration during the eighteenth century is that made in the introduction to R. B. Strassburger’s Pennsylvania

German Pioneers. From 1727 incoming Germans were required to be registered and take an oath before the mayor of Philadelphia, and various lists made in the course of these transactions have survived. It is plain that not all German passengers signed these lists; the number coming on 178 ships is known, however, and proves to be 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) times as many as signed the lists for those ships. The number shown on the lists for this period multiplied by 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) is 65,040, which is given as an estimate of the total number of Germans reaching Philadelphia between 1727 and 1776.\(^{23}\) Occasionally the editors seem to treat this figure as applying to the whole colony, though in strictness it should apply only to the port of Philadelphia. In either case it is too small.

In the first place, let us consider another piece of evidence from John Dick. In 1752 the Board of Trade wrote to him criticizing him because his shiploads of emigrants for Nova Scotia had sailed so late in the season. Dick replied with a denial, and to prove his point he submitted a list of all ships with German emigrants which had cleared from Gosport during the year, together with the dates of their sailing, their destinations, and the number of freights on board.\(^{24}\) A summary of his list is as follows:

<table>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of ships</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of freights</td>
<td>868(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td>2344</td>
<td>1713</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>271(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be remarked parenthetically that these are almost the only figures which show Germans going in large numbers to ports other than Philadelphia; they tend to confirm the opinion of A. B. Faust that the number arriving by sea in South Carolina has been underestimated.\(^{25}\) But Dick’s letter does not by any means indicate all the ships carrying Germans which went to America in that year and cleared from places other than Gosport; nineteen arrived in Philadelphia alone, as shown by the lists in Pennsylvania German Pioneers. One ship noted by Dick as going to Philadelphia does not appear in the Pioneers lists; from the eight


\(^{24}\) John Dick to the Board of Trade, December 22, 1752. C.O. 217/13, H 106. It will be remembered that Rotterdam ships were required before starting for English colonies to clear at an English port.

other ships, which Dick describes as carrying 2,179 “freights” to Philadelphia, only 826 persons took the oath on arrival. When it is remembered that 2,179 freights probably meant nearly 3,000 souls, the proportion of passengers who signed the lists appears smaller than the editors of those lists decided was usual. The example here is of course not sufficient to refute their calculations.

We now find, however, that when the editors of the lists in Pennsylvania German Pioneers stated that the number of passengers on 178 ships was known, they were not quite accurate, for in most cases what they knew was the number of “whole freights.” This was quite a different matter, for only persons over fourteen were counted as whole freights. Because of the fewness of instances in which both figures are included it is very difficult to discover just what relation the number of freights generally had to the number of passengers. For nine ships, five of which, loaded with Germans, were sent from Rotterdam to Halifax by John Dick and four come from the lists in Pennsylvania German Pioneers, the ratio works out at 1.28 passengers for every whole freight. This sampling is far too small to prove a rule, but it certainly indicates that freights must be distinguished from passengers in any estimate of total immigration.

“A List in the Number of Palatines arrived in the Port of Philadelphia from the Commencement of the Year 1740 to 19th November 1750”\(^{26}\) reads as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1740</td>
<td>870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1741</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1742</td>
<td>890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1743</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1744</td>
<td>1609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1745</td>
<td>0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1746</td>
<td>676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1747</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1748</td>
<td>1061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1749</td>
<td>8778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>3869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no indication of the source from which these figures were taken, of the name of the writer, or of the purpose for which

\(^{26}\) Pennsylvania Historical Society; Penn MSS: Land Grants, vol. 7, p. 73.
they were written. It is therefore hard to receive them with full confidence. Yet they are correct at least in that the largest importations were in 1749 and in that no Germans arrived in 1745. Furthermore, they check fairly well with the lists for the year 1750 in Pennsylvania German Pioneers. They may be considered to be fairly accurate.

There is considerable discrepancy between the two sets of figures for 1749. The editors of Pennsylvania German Pioneers state that in that year twenty-two ships arrived, bringing only 6,787 Germans, the largest number on any ship being 550. They deal rather harshly with the historian Proud for reporting that there were twenty-five ships, some of them carrying six hundred souls each, totaling about twelve thousand. The manuscript of the quoted statistics appears to indicate that there were twenty-five ships in 1749; in fact, in Pennsylvania German Pioneers itself are mentioned twenty-four, for on page 409 are noted two, ignored in the summary, which because of sickness did not immediately land their human cargo. Furthermore, in stating that there were only 6,787 passengers the editors neglected to distinguish between passengers and freights; only twelve of their lists include the actual number of persons on board. The 550 freights set down as the most on one ship probably was the equivalent of at least 600 persons. Another vessel arrived with 503 freights, which must have been not far from 600 people. Perhaps Proud was not ill-informed after all, but we may still doubt his 12,000 total. No doubt the 8,778 given in the unidentified source above is nearer the correct figure than the 6,787 in Pennsylvania German Pioneers.

The upshot of these rather laborious computations is that in view of the difference between passengers and freights the total number of Germans who entered the port of Philadelphia between 1727 and 1776 must be more than the 65,040 given in the most recent and authoritative estimate. A closer figure, perhaps, is 75,000.

\[2^\text{Vol. I, p. xxxi.}\]