

Christopher Sauer

Pennsylvania-German Printer

His Youth in Germany and Later Relationships with Europe

CHRISTOPHER SAUER is being increasingly recognized as one of the most important figures of colonial Pennsylvania. Indeed, his importance coincided with the spread of German immigrants all along the Atlantic seaboard. With the growing interest in the Pennsylvania-German contribution to early American culture, the life and activities of this German-born founder of one of the most active colonial presses have been given more attention. Most modern histories of the colonial era mention his press. Surviving copies of his publications are eagerly sought and are expensive items of Americana. Because of his versatility in many trades and crafts besides printing, it is a rare treatise on colonial Pennsylvania that does not pay some tribute to him.¹

In the nineteenth century the situation was somewhat different. With American historiography largely dominated by New England writers, the cultural and intellectual achievements of the Middle Colonies were slighted, and non-English language efforts ignored.² Professor Oswald Seidensticker, undoubtedly one of the leading

¹ Mr. Durnbaugh's article received the Colonial Society of Pennsylvania's award in 1957 for the best essay written by a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania on any aspect of our dynamic colonial heritage.

There is no generally accepted mode of spelling Sauer's name. His birth record reads, "Johann Christoph Sauer," and early signatures are the same. In his book imprints his name generally reads "Christoph Saur" or "Christoph Sauer," and "Christopher Sower" for the few books in English. Because he was primarily German in culture, and because English-speaking contemporaries called him "Christopher Sauer" (*Weekly Mercury*, Apr. 1, 1742), he will be so named in this paper.

² For a discussion of this bias, see Richard H. Shryock, "The Pennsylvania Germans as Seen by the Historian," in Ralph Wood, ed., *The Pennsylvania Germans* (Princeton, N. J., 1942), 239-258.

factors in the present renaissance, wrote in 1881 to H. A. Rattermann, the editor of the German-American publication *Der Deutsche Pionier*,

. . . that two people like Francis Daniel Pastorius and Christopher Sauer . . . were so completely cloaked in oblivion, scarcely known any more even by name to a few persons, and had never received a biographical memorial from their descendants, is indeed the best proof that the honorable and laborious project [*publication of the periodical to document the German contribution*] which you have set yourself has full justification.³

Undoubtedly Sauer was the authoritative voice among the German sectarians—the Mennonites, Brethren, and Schwenkfelders, among others—who predominated in the early German migration to Pennsylvania. Motivated primarily by a deep religious concern, Sauer is best known today for his publication of the Bible in German in 1743, the first Bible to be printed in America in a European language, and preceded only by the famous Indian Bible of John Eliot, printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1663. Sauer's Bible was reprinted twice, in 1763 and 1776, by his son and successor, Christopher Sauer II, before the first English Bible was printed in America by Robert Aitken in 1782.⁴

A separatist, Sauer did not join any religious denomination, but was on familiar terms with all. He was keenly critical of the failings of the clergy of the "church people"—the Lutherans, Reformed, and Anglicans—and his opposition was largely responsible for Count Nicholas Lewis von Zinzendorf's failure to unite the Germans of all denominations in Pennsylvania in 1742–1743.

The agency of his two highly successful periodical publications—his newspaper, *Der Hoch-Deutsch Pensylvanische Geschicht-Schreiber*,⁵ and his almanac, *Der Hoch-Deutsch Americanische Calender*—

³ Oswald Seidensticker to H. A. Rattermann, July 13, 1881, published by Rattermann in his "Dr. Oswald Seidensticker und die deutsch-amerikanische Geschichtsforschung," *Deutsch-Amerikanische Geschichtsblätter*, XI (1911), iii, 150. This quotation is my translation from the original German, as are all others, except where noted.

⁴ The chief reason for the delay in printing an English Bible in colonial America was the monopoly held in England.

⁵ Begun in 1739, it was continued until the Revolutionary period under several names by his descendants. It was the first successful German-language newspaper in America, Benjamin Franklin's attempt of 1732 having proved abortive.

soon made him a political power. Dr. William Smith singled him out as the deciding factor in the Quaker victories in the hotly contested elections for the colonial legislature in the mid-eighteenth century.⁶ Sauer's attack on the political motives behind the ostensibly philanthropic Charity School plan begun in 1754 proved to be one of the main reasons why this well-financed project, which had the support of leading men in England as well as in Pennsylvania, never flourished.

His motto, "For the glory of God and my neighbor's good," is evident in the publications from his press, about two hundred of which have so far been identified and listed. This number made his establishment in Germantown one of the most prolific of the colonial era. A stream of devotional and theological literature issued from the press, including the Bible (called by Isaiah Thomas the largest printing venture in America up to that time),⁷ New Testaments, and the first American hymnals for most of the German-speaking religious groups. Sauer had a strong interest in health, and printed considerable medical information, especially in his almanacs; his interest in education is evidenced by his primers and an early work on the raising of children.

In private life, he had an equally strong social concern. His many charitable efforts earned him the name of the "Bread Father," or the "Good Samaritan" of Germantown. It was his practice to meet incoming ships carrying emigrants from Germany, and to give hospitality to the ill and helpless. One of his most noted humanitarian efforts was his campaign to induce the Pennsylvania authorities to take steps to correct the harsh abuses in the lucrative transportation of German emigrants.⁸

While these aspects of Sauer's life are relatively familiar, his role as a transmitter of culture between Europe and America has not been sufficiently recognized. He maintained a wide correspondence with Europeans, especially Germans, and was well known on the Conti-

⁶ [William Smith], *A Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania* . . . (London, 1755), 26-28.

⁷ Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America* (Albany, N. Y., 1874), I, 270 ff.

⁸ Sauer to Gov. William Denny, Mar. 15, 1755, and May 12, 1755, published in Martin G. Brumbaugh, *A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America* (Elgin, Ill., 1907), 376-382 and 382-387; Gerhard Friedrich, ed., "The Good Samaritan of Germantown: Two Christoph Sauer Letters," *American German Review*, VII (1941), iii, 15-19, 33 (the original letters are in the Cassel Collection at Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa.).

nent. A survey of eighteenth-century European publications and scattered documents in European archives reveals little known material on his early life and on his reputation abroad, and provides additional contemporary information about his press and about conditions in colonial Pennsylvania.

The date and place of birth of Christopher Sauer have long been uncertain. Martin G. Brumbaugh, who was one of the first to study Sauer's life and to collect documentary materials, has given his birthplace as Laasphe on the Lahn in the county of Wittgenstein, in the present state of Westphalia; he wrote that 1693 was Sauer's birth date.⁹ A memorial plaque in the Germantown Church of the Brethren repeats this place and year, both of which have been used by most later biographers. However, the late Karl Hartnack, an expert on Wittgenstein history, could not find a birth entry for Sauer either at Laasphe or at nearby Berleburg, which has also been suggested as his birthplace.¹⁰

Gustav Mori, a German expert on printing, who made a major contribution to knowledge about Sauer in his history of the Frankfurt/Main type foundry which supplied Sauer with type, has stated that Sauer was born in 1694 in "Lauterburg in the Palatinate." Although he does not give a source for his assertion, most of his information on Sauer was taken from contemporary letters which he had discovered.¹¹

Neither wholly accepting, nor rejecting, Mori's variant data, recent American research has continued to reflect the uncertainty of Sauer's origins. Felix Reichmann, in an introduction to his bibliography of the Sauer publications, writes: "His birthplace and birthdate are doubtful, (Laasphe on the Lahn, 1693, or Lauterburg in the Palatinate, 1694)."¹² The author of the most recent full study of Sauer, Edward W. Hocker, has stated that "His birthplace is believed to have been a village called Ladenburg or Lauterburg, in the

⁹ Brumbaugh, 341.

¹⁰ Karl Hartnack, "Christoph Sauer / ein groszer Laaspher," *Das schöne Wittgenstein: Heimatbeilage der Wittgensteiner Zeitung* (1938), vi, 35.

¹¹ Gustav Mori, *Die Egenolff-Luthersche Schriftgiesserei in Frankfurt am Main . . .* (Frankfurt/Main, 1926), 24.

¹² He gives, however, the date 1694 on the title page. Felix Reichmann, comp., *Christopher Sower Sr., 1694-1758, Printer in Germantown. An Annotated Bibliography* (Philadelphia, 1943), 1.

Palatinate, ten American miles from Heidelberg, but his early years were spent in Laasphe.”¹³

Using Mori's statement, an attempt was made to determine the actual birth place and date of Christopher Sauer. There is no "Lauterburg" in the Palatine area of Germany. "Lauterbourg" in Alsace, just inside the present French border, revealed no record of Sauer. However, in German script "Lauterburg" could be a misreading of "Ladenburg," which is a small Palatine town on the Neckar River northwest of Heidelberg, as Hocker mentions. In older times the town was called "Laudenburg." An examination of the church books of the Reformed parish there shows a baptismal entry on February 2, 1695, for "Johann Christoph Sauer," the infant son of the Reformed pastor John Christian Sauer and Anna Christine Sauer.¹⁴ Evidence is strong that this child was Christopher Sauer, the Pennsylvania printer.

That the infant was christened "Johann Christoph" is not inconsistent, for there are records of several early signatures of Sauer's using "Johann," even though this form never appears on the title pages of his publications. It was not uncommon at the time to give a child a first name after that of the father or mother, for the sake of tradition; the name by which he was known was the second, or middle, name.

In September, 1758, in the first issue of the Sauer newspaper published after his father's death, Christopher Sauer II gave his father's age at death as "in the 64th year."¹⁵ Accepting the custom of considering a person to be in his sixty-fourth year after he has attained his sixty-third birthday, simple arithmetic would place Sauer's birth date in 1695, rather than in 1693 or 1694.

A reference in one of Sauer's later letters from Pennsylvania adds a corroborative note. He writes of a sister and brother-in-law living in Alzey, a town near Worms.¹⁶ The church records at Ladenburg and Alzey reveal that an Anna Margaret Sauer, an older sister of Johann

¹³ Edward W. Hocker, "The Sower Printing House of Colonial Times," *Pennsylvania German Society Proceedings and Addresses*, LIII (1948), 5-6.

¹⁴ At that time, all births (baptisms), marriages, and deaths (burials) were recorded by the churches, rather than by the civil government directly. *Kirchenbuch, Reformiertes Pfarramt, Ladenburg/Neckar*, 95. Dates given in this article are not corrected from Old to New Style.

¹⁵ Given in translation in Brumbaugh, 398.

¹⁶ Mori, 40-41.

Christoph Sauer, married a citizen of Alzey and moved to that town.¹⁷ Other family information strengthens the belief that the Pennsylvania-German printer was "Johann Christoph Sauer," born in Ladenburg/Neckar, probably late in January, or possibly February 1, 1695.¹⁸

Sauer's father, John Christian Sauer, was born in 1642 in Rotenburg on the Fulda in Hesse. A student of theology at Marburg for three and a half years, he became a pastor and schoolmaster at Stift Neuburg in 1681, transferring to Ladenburg that same year. He remained there until 1695 when he moved to nearby Feudenheim, now a part of greater Mannheim.¹⁹ There is a record of a son, John George, born to him and his first wife, Anna Elizabeth, in December, 1682. His wife died, and was buried on July 30, 1684, three weeks after the death of a fourteen-day-old daughter. Sauer was married again on February 24, 1685, to Anna Christine, the widow of a Mr. Meckely. Their children were Jacob, born on January 26, 1686, and buried on March 25, 1689; John Louis, born on March 4, 1688; Anna Margaret, born on February 1, 1689; and Johann Christoph, baptized on February 2, 1695.²⁰

The strife involving the burial of another infant son of Pastor Sauer on July 27, 1693, is a poignant illustration of the bitter confessional battle between Reformed and Catholic adherents in the Palatinate. This was the time of the destructive French invasion of the Rhineland in the War of the Palatinate (1688-1697), and the Catholic minority were not slow in using the French occupation of Ladenburg to recover church property lost during the Reformation. A particularly painful episode occurred when the father superior of the Capuchin order, which had taken possession of the main Reformed church, disrupted the burial services which Pastor Sauer was conducting for his own son. When the women in the burial procession

¹⁷ Kirchenbuch, Reformiertes Pfarramt, Ladenburg/Neckar, 77; Kirchenbuch, Reformiertes Pfarramt, Alzey, 108.

¹⁸ Other birth entries in the church records at Ladenburg indicate that infant baptism was customary there two to three days after birth. As Sauer's father was a Reformed pastor, it is likely that there was no delay in the baptism.

¹⁹ Specialia Fasc. XVII, 19-21, Reformiertes Pfarramt, Ladenburg/Neckar; Heinrich Neu, *Pfarrerbuch der evangelischen Kirche Badens von der Reformation bis zur Gegenwart* (Lahr/Schwarzwald, 1939), II, 514.

²⁰ Kirchenbuch, Reformiertes Pfarramt, Ladenburg/Neckar, 53, 67, 73, 77, 95, and other unpaginated references.

protested violently, the Catholic dignitary was forced to allow the body to be interred, but he later had the grave desecrated.²¹

Six years after the Sauers had moved to Feudenheim, the elder Sauer died at the age of fifty-nine, and was buried on August 14, 1701.²² Now comes a gap in the records. The next references to the family are in the county of Wittgenstein in 1713. The presence of families named Sauer in the two main towns of this area, Laasphe and Berleburg, tends to support the conjecture that the widow Sauer might have taken her children to be with relatives.

The county of Wittgenstein enjoys an importance in the history of the early eighteenth century out of proportion to its size or wealth. It was one of the few areas which permitted comparative freedom of conscience in a day in which the three established churches—Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed—diverted some of their mutual hatreds to a combined repression of religious dissenters. The policy of the ruling count, Henry Albert, seems to have been a mixture of economic calculation to attract artisans and settlers to help rebuild his tiny territory still suffering from the ravages of the Thirty Years' War, and a genuine sympathy for nonchurch separatists, a sympathy influenced, in part, by his Huguenot wife. As a result, Wittgenstein became a place of asylum (a "Pella") for religious refugees from all of Germany and from other European countries.

The little village of Schwarzenau was the center of settlement for these newcomers. It was there that the group who became known in America as the Church of the Brethren was formed in 1708. Later, Berleburg became the citadel of separatism, the outstanding symbol of which was the eight-volume German translation of the Bible, published from 1726–1742, which was much used in colonial America.

Christopher Sauer's name first appears in the Wittgenstein records as a tailor in Schwarzenau in 1713. Around 1720 he married Marie Christine, the widow of a Pastor Gross. Her dowry was a hut in the "Garsbach" near Schwarzenau; Sauer sold this property in 1721.²³ A census list of June 4, 1721, lists a tenant in the house in Schwarzenau which Sauer had bought from the organizer of the Church of the

²¹ Memorial by Sauer, Badisches Generallandesarchiv, Karlsruhe, Abt. 210, Ladenburg-Stadt, F. 382, 23–24.

²² Kirchenbuch, Reformiertes Pfarramt, Mannheim/Feudenheim, 240.

²³ Hartnack, 35.

Brethren, Alexander Mack. Sauer himself was at this time living in Laasphe.²⁴

In Laasphe Sauer's only child, Christopher Sauer II, was born on September 26, 1721.²⁵ Hartnack interprets the fact that this birth is not registered in the Laasphe church to mean that Sauer was already a separatist.²⁶ Sauer's name appears on a census list of the inhabitants of Schwarzenau and Christianseck in December, 1723,²⁷ but the next listing, taken in June, 1733, notes that "Christopher Sauer's hut is unoccupied."²⁸ It had been unoccupied for some years, however, for in 1724 Sauer had joined the beginning stream of oppressed Germans who emigrated to Pennsylvania, stimulated by wide propaganda of religious freedom and economic opportunity.

The first of many Sauer letters to cross the Atlantic was written to his friends in Wittgenstein from his new home in Germantown on December 1, 1724. He told of his voyage by ship from Rotterdam via Dover to America. It had taken six weeks and three days from England to Philadelphia, where they anchored on November 1, 1724. After minimizing the dangers involved in the ocean crossing, he described the country, prices, Indians, labor, and wages of the territory, which is "a very good and blessed land, like an earthly Paradise."²⁹

A second letter written on August 1, 1725, repeats part of the information given in the first letter, in case the earlier one had not arrived safely, and further describes conditions in Pennsylvania. Evidences of journalistic ability which was later to find an outlet in his newspaper are seen in this keen and detailed report on crops, wages, prices, real estate, religious conditions, and many other matters. Of interest are his descriptions of his lodging in Germantown where he enjoyed a large room, kitchen, and attic, a garden, cellar,

²⁴ Fürstlich Sayn-Wittgenstein-Hohensteinisches Archiv, Laasphe/Lahn, N 72, Neuangebaute, Actum Schwarzenau, Archive hereafter cited as FWA Laasphe.

²⁵ Manuscript diary of Christopher Sauer II, quoted in Brumbaugh, 387.

²⁶ Hartnack, 35.

²⁷ FWA Laasphe, W 58, Wittgenstein—Verzeichnis der Untertanen—Landesviertel Elsoff.

²⁸ FWA Laasphe, CI/I, Canonen der Neuangebauten.

²⁹ Christopher Sauer to his friends (copy), Dec. 1, 1724, Cod. Ms. Hist. 821, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitäts-Bibliothek, Göttingen. Published in English translation by R. W. Kelsey, "An Early Description of Pennsylvania. Letter of Christopher Sower, written in 1724, Describing Conditions in Philadelphia and Vicinity, and the Sea Voyage from Europe," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XLV (1921), 243-254.

stable, corn, two pigs, fruit trees, and free wood, all for a yearly rent of twenty-seven florins. He wrote that he had been doing little tailoring, since that involved traveling from home to home, and that he busied himself with making clocks and repairing pots and pans. His wife combed wool to augment the family's income.³⁰

Christopher Sauer's letters provided a powerful stimulus to emigration from Wittgenstein. The contemporary manuscript diary of Charles Hector Marquis St. George de Marsay, a French mystic and author living in Wittgenstein, tells of the effect of these letters in Berleburg in 1725:

. . . there came letters from Pennsylvania from a man well known to us, who long lived at Schwarzenau and was married to a widow of the Pastor Grohr [*Gross*], our friend who had lived with us at Gersbach [*Garsbach*]. These letters contained a description of Pennsylvania that it was like an earthly paradise. The man reported that one could buy a considerable piece of land for 200 or 300 *Reichstaler*, from which one could comfortably have his living, and which was already cultivated. The country had abundance and was fruitful in all necessary things. There was complete freedom. One could live there as a good Christian in solitude, as one pleased, and if one wanted to work a little, especially craftsmen, and among them also clock-makers, then one could earn his livelihood with abundance.

Our old widow, the mother of the tailor Sauer, who had written the letter, and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Gruber, who was at the time with her daughter in Berleburg, resolved to leave for Pennsylvania, with her daughter and yet another daughter who had a family. Other families decided the same, at least one hundred persons from this area, all people whom we knew.³¹

Unhappily, the group met a tragic end, which may have acted as a deterrent for others besides Marsay and his wife who had planned to leave the Old World.

As we were then ready to leave, there came letters from Pennsylvania, which reported that all of the poor people, whom we knew, had suffered

³⁰ Sauer to his friends in Schwarzenau, Aug. 1, 1725, Fürstlich Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburgisches Archiv, Berleburg, K 36 (unpublished), hereafter cited as FWA Berleburg. His traveling companion John George Käsebier also wrote, reporting that Sauer had been very ill for more than a week on board ship, a fact which Sauer had not mentioned in his two letters. Käsebier also wrote dramatically of a near shipwreck off the American coast, which Sauer had dismissed lightly. Käsebier did not have the chance to learn much of his new homeland, for he died within two months. John George Käsebier to Count Casimir, Nov. 7, 1724, *ibid.*, K 36 (unpublished).

³¹ "Das Leben des Herrn Charles Hector Marquis St. George de Marsay," 294 ff., bound manuscript in the private library of Dr. J. F. Gerhard Goeters, Bonn/Rhine.

much misery on their trip, as hunger, thirst, and scarcity of all help had cost the lives of the majority of them on the ship. Among this number were the good old widow Gruber and her unmarried daughter.³²

Thirty years later Sauer himself wrote:

. . . when I came to this Province and found everything to the contrary from where I came from, I wrote largely to all my friends and acquaintances of the civil and religious liberty, privileges, etc, and of the goodness I have heard and seen, and my letters were printed and reprinted, and provoked many a thousand people to come to this Province, and many thanked the Lord for it, and desired their friends also again to come here.³³

Following a farming venture in Lancaster County, Sauer returned to Germantown, after his wife had left him and their son in 1730 to join the Ephrata Community movement led by Conrad Beissel. There she became a subsuperintendent under the name "Sister Marcella." In Germantown, Sauer continued to make clocks, sold drugs, and was a joiner and cabinetmaker, to mention a few of his many trades.³⁴

About this time Sauer began his efforts to establish a press for his fellow immigrants. To appreciate this remarkable undertaking, it should be recalled that Sauer had no training at all as a printer. The technical difficulties of establishing a press in colonial America seemed overwhelming. He first turned to Halle, the center of pietistic activity in Germany, where many religious books, including the Bible, were printed. In 1735 Gottlieb August Francke, son of August Herman Francke, the founder of the Halle institutions, wrote to Frederick Michael Ziegenhagen, the Lutheran chaplain of the royal court in London:

. . . I recently received a letter from Germantown in Pennsylvania dated June 15 [1735] from a John Christopher Sauer, who is probably not unknown to Your Reverence. . . . This same Sauer suggested that type for printing be purchased here and sent to him, and that he would repay Your Rever-

³² *Ibid.*, 300. The catalogue of the Berleburg publisher and book dealer John Jacob Haug lists a pamphlet possibly describing this migration. *Nachricht einer im Jahr 1726 sehr unglücklichen Schiffahrt einer deutschen Gesellschaft nach Pensylvanien* (Berleburg, 1727), in Johann Jacob Haug, *Catalogus* . . . (Berleburg, 1727).

³³ Sauer to Gov. William Denny, Mar. 15, 1755, quoted from Brumbaugh, 377.

³⁴ Julius F. Sachse, *The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania, 1708-1742; 1742-1800* . . . (Philadelphia, 1899-1900), I, 126 ff., 212 ff.

ence for the expense. However, as there is already too much to do otherwise, this request of his cannot be granted. Besides this, I doubt whether a printing establishment in the West Indies would be of special value.³⁵

A unique pamphlet discovered in Laasphe provides information on the next steps in Sauer's efforts to found a press. It contains letters from Pennsylvania, including one from Sauer in November, 1738, in which he wrote:

Wherewith can I find, however, words to praise the good God. I am highly indebted to Him! May my all be for His service and the glorification of His name! This has been my desire and longing in humbleness, in return for the great goodness which I have experienced during my presence here, and my whole life long. Therefore I have also wanted to establish a German printing press here in this country, which X bought for me and sent here. I could find no more convenient vehicle to make this known throughout the entire country than first printing an almanac [*Der Hoch-Deutsch Americanische Calender*] of which I send only the title page, along with another printing of a translation from the English [Benjamin Padlin, *Eine Ernstliche Ermahnung* . . .].³⁶

Two other letters in the same publication refer to Sauer and his press and to his difficulties with the Ephrata group about their hymnal which he was printing—the first book to leave his press.³⁷ The Padlin broadside is considered by some scholars, on the basis of Sauer's letter, to be the first issue of his press.³⁸ It was reprinted in

³⁵ W. J. Mann and others, eds., *Nachrichten von den vereinigten Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Gemeinen in Nord-America, absonderlich in Pensylvanien* . . . (Allentown, Pa., 1881-1896), I, 58-59, usually known as the *Hallesche Nachrichten*, as it will be cited hereafter.

³⁶ (No. III) "J.C.S. Schreiben aus Germantown in Pensylvanien de dato den 17. Novembr. 1738," *Abdruck einiger wahrhaften Berichte und Briefe eines sichern Freundes zu Germantown in Pensylvanien vom 17. Novembr. 1738* . . . (Berleburg, 1739), 9, hereafter cited as *Abdruck einiger Berichte und Briefe*; FWA Laasphe. The same material is also published in the separatist periodical *Geistliche Fama*, III, xxv, 74-96.

³⁷ (No. II) Germantown, Nov. 16, 1738: "We now have here a German printing press, which Sauer established. The Seventh Day Baptists are having a large hymnal printed combining old and new hymns." *Abdruck einiger Berichte und Briefe*, 6. (No. IV) Germantown, Nov. 20, 1738: "Sauer's newly-started printing press is causing him trouble. His experience is more dearly bought than in some of the other things which he has tried before. He has to print a large hymnal for the Sabbatarians. They are very critical and particular about it, as one hears. Therefore, it causes much trouble." *Ibid.*, 10.

³⁸ See Reichmann, No. 6, and [Stan. V. Henkels], . . . *The Extensive Library of the Hon. Samuel W. Pennypacker* (Philadelphia, [1907]), Pt. 5, 53.

Europe in 1739 in a supplement to a Crefeld publication.³⁹ This immediate reprinting of one of Sauer's publications was to be repeated often, and indicates the importance attached to his press abroad. A German publication of this period is of interest. In Frankfort in 1739, a report from America was printed in which a group of German-born residents of Pennsylvania warned against too hasty emigration. Sauer's signature was the second in the list of fourteen signers.⁴⁰

A series of letters written in 1740 answers the questions which have long surrounded the establishment of the Sauer press and the securing of the type for it. The editorial deletion of the name of the person who secured the "press" (actually a set of type) for Sauer—the "X" in his 1738 letter—has created speculation. Tradition has it that Jacob Gass secured the press, which some have thought was once used in Berleburg.⁴¹ However, Sauer built his own press, and used type sent him by Christopher Schütz. Schütz (1693–1780), a member of the Inspirationists, official of Homburg on the Höhe, and composer of hymns, in 1740 answered a request from Dr. Henry Ehrenfried Luther of Frankfort/Main for information about Sauer. Luther was the new owner of the type foundry which had supplied Sauer with his type. Schütz was the son of Dr. John Jacob Schütz, one of the Frankfort pietistic group led by Philip Jacob Spener. The elder Schütz had participated in the land scheme which resulted in the settlement of Germantown in 1683.

In his letter to Luther, Christopher Schütz wrote that he had first become acquainted with Sauer ten years earlier when Sauer had written to thank him for sending quantities of hymnals and religious books

³⁹ *Lebens-Beschreibung von Conrad von Beuningen, Gewesenen Bürgermeister in Amsterdam: Als auch eine Ernstliche Ermanhung an Junge und Alte, Zu einer ungeheuchelten Prüfung ihres Hertzens Zustandes . . .* (Crefeld, 1739), 31–35, in the private library of Dr. Martha Haeberlin, Bad Nauheim.

⁴⁰ *Glaubhaftes Send-Schreiben aus Pensylvania in America . . .* (Frankfort/Main, 1739), in the collection of Dr. Martha Haeberlin. The signers were: Henry Graff, Amweil; Christopher Sauer, Germantown; John Bechtel, Germantown; John Adam Gruber, Germantown; Lawrence Schweitzer, Germantown; John Eckstein, Germantown; Jacob Baumann, Germantown; David Deschler, Philadelphia; John Wüster, Philadelphia; Christopher Henry Kalcklöszer, Germantown; George Bentzel, Germantown; Blasius Daniel Mackineth, Germantown; Anthony Benezet, Philadelphia; John Benedictus Müntz, Falckner Schwam.

⁴¹ Brumbaugh, 354; Sachse, I, 319; Douglas C. McMurtrie, *A History of Printing in the United States . . . Middle and South Atlantic States* (New York, 1936), 68–83, 419.

to Pennsylvania for free distribution among the German immigrants. In the course of the correspondence, Sauer had written that

. . . he and some good friends of his had long considered establishing a small German printing press there, to print perhaps an album [*Stammbuch*] and almanac. He would then not only always print theological matter in the almanacs but also introduce home remedies for all sorts of illnesses. In this way he would try to alleviate the great need in both areas. He thought if he just had a half-hundred weight of type it could be started.⁴²

Schütz had asked Dr. Luther's father, then the owner of the type foundry, to send Sauer some type; the amount and kind was left to the judgment of the type manufacturer. Five to six hundredweight were cast and sent to Germantown sometime before the autumn of 1738. Much of it was defective, however, and replacements and an antiqua type were sent later, in the summer of 1740. This shipping of type to the New World was of importance in Frankfort as well as Pennsylvania. Two contemporary German publications mention the incident as praiseworthy,⁴³ and Dr. Luther used the transaction as the basis of repeated appeals to the city council to have his taxes reduced.

Schütz also quoted from a letter he had received from a friend in Pennsylvania:

Our friend Sauer is a wise and much esteemed man here in this country. He has built a two-story stone house in Germantown, besides a lathe and a glazier workshop, which is very spacious. This summer he erected a building for his book-printing establishment, and also a place to burn lampblack, which he needs partly for his printing press, the remainder being sold retail and wholesale. He currently carries on six trades, namely: 1) surgeon and bloodletting, plus a small apothecary shop, which I reckon only as one; 2) clockmaking, as he makes large and small clocks, receiving 10 *Reichstaler* for the small ones, that only show the time, but 40 to 50 *Reichstaler* for the others; 3) the lathe-shop, where he receives 12 to 13 shillings or German *Kopfstück* for a spinning-wheel; 4) the glazier shop, where he also makes the frames, and the lead grooves, for one of which he receives 30 to 40 florins; 5) the printing press, wherewith he has already earned at least 1000 florins,

⁴² Schütz to Dr. Luther, Oct. 4, 1740, in Mori, 35-37. The correspondence in Mori is given in English translation in Edward W. Hocker, "The Founding of the Sauer Press," *Germantown History*, II (1938), vi, 137-154.

⁴³ Münden, *Dankpredigt zum dritten Jubelfest der Erfindung der Buchdruckerkunst* (Frankfort/Main, 1741), and Müller, *Beschreibung des gegenwärtigen Zustandes der Freien Reichs-, Wahl- und Handels-Stadt Frankfurt am Main* (Frankfort/Main, 1747), cited in Mori, 30-31.

besides what the journeyman printers cost; the lamp-black manufacturing etc.

His family consists of three persons, namely he himself, his wife, and their son, who is now twenty-some. Because his wife has been living in the large cloister of the Seventh-Day Baptists at Ephrata, Lancaster County, he has in her place an elderly woman as a servant, who keeps house for him. However, he can spare his wife easily, and lives now much more quietly, than when she was with him.⁴⁴

Sauer himself wrote to Dr. Luther in September, 1740, evidently answering queries sent to him by the Frankfort manufacturer. He told of other colonial printing presses, and wrote of his plans for his own press. Because of his intimacy with the English revivalist George Whitefield, Sauer expected that he would soon be printing in English as well as in German, but his treasured plans for printing a quarto Bible were hampered by the high cost of paper. In describing the policy of his press, Sauer wrote: "I would rather serve my neighbor and glorify God in that way than to gather a large earthly fortune for myself or for my son, who is now twenty years old (and agrees with me perfectly on this matter)."⁴⁵

A month later he wrote Luther again in the same vein:

My small printing shop, now started, is dedicated to God, and I hope that during my and my son's lives, that nothing shall be printed except that which is to the glory of God and for the physical or eternal good of my neighbors. What ever does not meet this standard, I will not print. I have already rejected several, and would rather have the press standing idle. I am happier when I can distribute something of value among the people for a small price, than if I had a large profit without a good conscience.

An explanation in this same letter of how he had invented a new kind of ink is important for his statement that he had made his own press. A printer in Philadelphia claimed that he knew the formula for a better ink than was being used. Sauer wrote:

I was very eager to learn this [art], and asked this person what he would demand from me for teaching it. . . . When I asked again, . . . he demanded that I should make for him a press exactly like mine, which I had made myself. I said that I would consider it until I came again. That evening in bed I thought to myself, "You have carried on twenty-six trades

⁴⁴ A friend in Springfield Manor, Pa., to Schütz, Oct. 6, 1739, in Mori, 36-37.

⁴⁵ Sauer to Luther, September, 1740, *ibid.*, 37-38.

and crafts without any teacher, and made almost all of the tools necessary for them. Why should you now pay so dearly for this knowledge?" The next morning I had an idea how to make the ink, and made some right away as good and even cheaper than the old.⁴⁶

This correspondence with friends in Germany sheds additional light on the beginnings of Sauer's printing career—the religious motivation behind his press, the fact that his type was secured from Frankfort, and the information that he constructed his own press. Having established his press, Sauer inevitably became involved in the religious disputes which arose among the German colonists.

In 1741 and 1742, Count Nicholas Lewis von Zinzendorf, the leader of the renewed Moravian Brethren, visited the American colonies, bringing with him the sharp controversy which his activities had caused in Europe. He is perhaps best known for his initiative in several synods called to unite the German religious groups in Pennsylvania. The German sectarians viewed Zinzendorf's efforts as an attempt to establish his personal leadership, and the Lutheran and Reformed clergy were even more disturbed, especially when several of their congregations defected to him. A chief protagonist in this intense religious struggle was Sauer, who had been a close friend of August Spangenberg, Zinzendorf's forerunner in America. Two European publications provide valuable source material on this controversy, especially on Sauer's role in it: John Philip Fresenius' collection on the Moravians, *Bewährte Nachrichten von Herrnhutischen Sachen*,⁴⁷ and the Moravian-sponsored collection, *Büdingische Sammlung*.⁴⁸

The third volume of the work by Fresenius, who was a Lutheran pastor in Frankfort, contains almost eight hundred pages of reprinted pamphlets and letters. Fresenius states in his introduction that the writers were trustworthy men from Pennsylvania who had firsthand knowledge of Moravian matters. The longest article may

⁴⁶ Sauer to Luther, Oct. 11, 1740, *ibid.*, 38–39.

⁴⁷ Johann Philip Fresenius, *Bewährte Nachrichten von Herrnhutischen Sachen* . . . (Frankfort/Main and Leipzig, 1747–1748), III, iii, 87–872. The third section of his third volume is devoted to the Moravians in America: "Americanische Nachrichten von Herrnhutischen Sachen," and will hereafter be cited as Fresenius, *Nachrichten*.

⁴⁸ *Büdingische Sammlung einiger in die Kirchen Historie einschlagender sonderlich neueren Schriften* (Büdingen, 1742–1744). For our purpose, materials in the twelfth section of Vol. II (722–938) are important, and are hereafter cited as *Büdingische Sammlung*.

have been written by Sauer.⁴⁹ In a letter written by Sauer to a friend in Germany in 1747, the printer states that he "and [John Adam] Gruber sent our thoughts about Zinzendorf's kingdom. Mine was about seven quires long, and Gruber's three, closely written."⁵⁰ Several articles by Gruber appear in the Fresenius collection, which was published in 1748, soon after the material was sent to Europe.

The Schönfeld controversy was the major skirmish between Sauer and Zinzendorf. Early in 1742 the Count sent Sauer a note asking him to print an enclosed open letter in the Germantown newspaper. The message was aimed at combatting the numerous rumors circulating about Zinzendorf's activities and intentions. Zinzendorf challenged anyone who had a complaint against him to make it public.⁵¹ John Henry Schönfeld replied with a letter to Sauer and a statement to be published accusing Zinzendorf of unjustly imprisoning Schönfeld's sister-in-law in Herrnhut (Oberlausitz) and of inciting the authorities of Hamburg-Altona to imprison Schönfeld and his party when they left the Moravian community in Germany.⁵²

Zinzendorf had Benjamin Franklin print a letter of reply in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, in which he complained that Sauer had printed false reports about the synods and denied Schönfeld's allegations.⁵³ The next development in the newspaper battle was a letter from a Jacob Weiss supporting Schönfeld, also printed in Franklin's paper.⁵⁴ At this point, Zinzendorf appealed to the Pennsylvania government for redress of his damaged honor.⁵⁵ He followed this with a letter to Sauer, Schönfeld, and their supporters, in which he requested a

⁴⁹ "Ausführliche Nachricht, welchergestalt die Herrnhutische Sache in diesen Americanischen Landen, sonderlich in Pensilvanien, Eingang und Aufnahm gesucht und gefunden . . .," in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 1, 97-236.

⁵⁰ Sauer to a friend, Nov. 16, 1747, in Mori, 40.

⁵¹ Zinzendorf to Sauer, Feb. 2, 1741/2, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 21, 512-513 and 513-515, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 11, 851-853; *Der Hoch-Deutsch Pensylvanische Geschicht-Schreiber*, No. 19.

⁵² Schönfeld to Sauer, February or March, 1742, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 22, 515-521, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 12, 854-858; *Der Hoch-Deutsch Pensylvanische Geschicht-Schreiber*, No. 20.

⁵³ Zinzendorf to Franklin, Mar. 16, 1741/42, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 23, 521-524, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 13, 860-862; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, No. 692.

⁵⁴ Weiss to Franklin, Mar. 21, 1742, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 24, 524-525, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 14, 862-863; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, No. 693.

⁵⁵ Zinzendorf to Penn's "secretary," Mar. 27, 1742, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 25, 526, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 15, 864.

meeting to determine who was in the right, failing in which he would have to bring the case before the authorities.⁵⁶

Sauer answered Zinzendorf's letter several days later, defending his position and suggesting that the Count was being un-Christian in worrying about his honor and in appealing to the authorities. He declared that the reports in his paper were truthful and gave names of witnesses who would testify to their accuracy.⁵⁷ Zinzendorf sent a brief reply saying that the insults and blasphemies he had suffered would be settled by the authorities.⁵⁸ In the middle of the controversy, Sauer wrote to a friend in Germany that if he had printed everything "pro and con, it would have been a comedy."⁵⁹

The news of the controversy reached Europe where it was published in newspaper articles and reprinted in periodicals. One article mentioning Sauer appeared in a Dutch newspaper at Haarlem in 1743.⁶⁰ Sauer wrote later that the report in this article that he and his friends were taken into court was either a misunderstanding or willful addition. Governor George Thomas of Pennsylvania had told him, however, that the count had complained about the report of the synod which had appeared in the Germantown newspaper.⁶¹ The second article, datelined London, was printed in Amsterdam,⁶² and reprinted in the leading German journal of church history, the *Acta historico-ecclesiastica*.⁶³ Six other letters written by Sauer to friends in Germany from 1740 through 1747, dealing mainly with the Moravians, were published in the Fresenius collection.⁶⁴

Despite Sauer's opposition to Zinzendorf, he did print several items for the Moravians. Among those mentioned in European

⁵⁶ Zinzendorf to Sauer and others, Mar. 27, 1742, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 26, 527-530, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 16, 865-867.

⁵⁷ Sauer to Zinzendorf, Apr. 8, 1742, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 28, 534-540.

⁵⁸ Zinzendorf to Sauer, Apr. 8, 1742, *ibid.*, No. 29, 540-541, and *Büdingische Sammlung*, No. 12a, 858-859.

⁵⁹ Mar. 26, 1742, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 49, 768.

⁶⁰ Haarlem *Donnerstags Courant*, Mar. 7, 1743; it is translated into German in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 1, 164-165.

⁶¹ Sauer to A. G. [Andrew Gross?], Nov. 20, 1744, in *ibid.*, No. 61, 815.

⁶² Amsterdam *Saturdags Courant*, Mar. 23, 1743; it is translated in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 1, 165-166.

⁶³ "Herrnhutiana. Bericht und Gegenbericht von einer durch den Herrn Grafen von Zinzendorf in Pensylvanien erhobenen Klage," *Acta historico-ecclesiastica* (Weimar, 1743), XLI, xi, 779-782.

⁶⁴ Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, Nov. 1, 1740, No. 45, 749-762; Mar. 26, 1742, No. 47, 765-769; Nov. 16, 1742, No. 53, 788-790; July 21, 1744, No. 60, 806-809; Nov. 20, 1744, No. 61, 809-818; Nov. 16, 1747, No. 65, 837-839 (excerpt; for the entire letter, see Mori, 39-41).

sources were several broadsides announcing Zinzendorf's plans for establishing schools, and announcements of sermons.⁶⁵ Sauer returned one because it spoke of "German townships" which did not exist in Pennsylvania, explaining that "honest people in Germany would think that there was something to it if it appeared in print."⁶⁶ His remark indicates that he was fully aware that his publications were being read in Germany. In an earlier letter he had written: "I have had no time to print for him [Zinzendorf], except a small hymnal of six quires for beginners, which I considered innocent, when he first came here." This was the first Moravian hymnal to be printed in America, *Hirten Lieder von Bethlehem*.⁶⁷

Several of the booklets and pamphlets Sauer printed during the Moravian controversy by critics of Zinzendorf's group were reprinted in European publications. Fresenius not only published letters, but also reprinted some of the briefer Sauer imprints, as did the *Geistliche Fama*, the separatist periodical printed in Berleburg. In 1741 Sauer printed a warning from John Adam Gruber, his neighbor and friend, which was reprinted in these two publications.⁶⁸ A year later he printed two more pamphlets by Gruber aimed against Zinzendorf's activities which also found republication.⁶⁹

Although the Ephrata Community sent official delegates to the first synod organized by Zinzendorf, the two groups soon clashed. Several leaders of the Cloister wrote polemics against the Moravians, which Sauer printed, and which were included in Fresenius' writings.⁷⁰ Among them was the tract written by John Hildebrand

⁶⁵ Reichmann, Nos. 36, 37 and 39.

⁶⁶ Sauer to A. G. [Andrew Gross?], Nov. 20, 1744, in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 61, 816-817.

⁶⁷ Mar. 26, 1742, *ibid.*, No. 47, 768, and No. 1, 138; Reichmann, No. 38.

⁶⁸ *Einfältige Warnungs-und Wächter-Stimme an die gerufenen Seelen dieser Zeit* (Germantown, 1741), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 4, 297-303, and *Geistliche Fama*, III, xxix, No. 8, 113-114; Reichmann, No. 21.

⁶⁹ *Ein Zeugniß eines Betrübtten . . .* (Germantown, 1742), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 6, 314-320, and *Geistliche Fama*, III, xxix, No. 8, 105-112; Reichmann, No. 30; *Kurtzer doch nöthiger Bericht . . .* (Germantown, 1742), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 10, 381-391; Reichmann, No. 29.

⁷⁰ *Mistisches und Kirchliches Zeugniß Der Bruderschaft In Zion . . .* (Germantown, 1743), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 16, 410-446; Reichmann, No. 52. Appended to this were [Israel Eckerlin's] *Unpartheyisches Bedencken Ueber das Bekehrungs-Werck der Herrnhutischen Gemeine In Pensylvanien* (Germantown, 1743), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 17, 446-462; Reichmann, No. 52; and John Hildebrand's *Ein kurtzer Bericht . . .* (Germantown, 1743), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 18, 462-474; Reichmann, Nos. 43 and 52.

against the Moravian policy of encouraging marriages among their members; Hildebrand upheld the celibate practice of the Ephrata Brotherhood.⁷¹

From another source, additional information is supplied on Sauer's relationships with the Moravians. Samuel Guldin, a Swiss Reformed pastor, wrote from Pennsylvania in 1743 to a pastor friend in Switzerland, enclosing his booklet against the Moravians, which Sauer had printed. "The first two parts were already written by February 24, 1742, at the time of the two conferences which he [Zinzendorf] arranged here. But Sauer, the printer in Germantown, delayed the printing without reason, otherwise they would have been printed during his [Zinzendorf's] presence here." He explained further that the Moravians had written satires against the Swiss Reformed at Conestoga and against him individually, but Sauer had refused to print them.⁷²

Although his press was turning out a variety of publications, Sauer's printing of his quarto Bible in 1743 lay closest to his heart, and was regarded in Europe as a significant achievement. It had been a monumental task.⁷³ He had taken the thirty-fourth edition of the Halle printing of Luther's version for his text, adding to the Apocrypha the third and fourth books of Esdras and the third book of Maccabees from the Berleburg Bible. Sauer had been an agent for the sale of this separatist version, which, however, was too large and expensive for most German settlers in America. Because of this addition from the Berleburg Bible, and one small change of wording in Job, Sauer's Bible was vehemently denounced by the Lutheran and Reformed clergy, who were, furthermore, agents for Dutch and German Bibles.

Sauer sent copies of the first edition to Dr. Luther at Frankfurt, who had supplied the type. One shipment of twelve copies had an unusual fate. The ship on which they were sent, the *Queen of Hun-*

⁷¹ *Schriftmässiges Zeugniß von dem Himmlischen und Jung-fräulichen Gebähungs-Werck* . . . (Germantown, 1743), in Fresenius, *Nachrichten*, No. 19, 474-503; Reichmann, No. 46.

⁷² Samuel Guldin to Pastor Lutz of Diesbach, Switzerland, Nov. 4, 1743, Bürger-Bibliothek, Bern, H/VIII/314. His booklet was . . . *Unpartheyisches Zeugniß über die Neue Vereinigung Aller Religions-Partheyen In Pensylvanien* (Germantown, 1743); Reichmann, No. 45.

⁷³ For information on the printing of the Bible, see Reichmann, 4-7 and No. 42; Sachse, II, 1-68; John Wright, "The Saur Bible," in his *Early Bibles of America* . . . (New York, 1894), 28-54; Edwin A. R. Rumball-Petre, *America's First Bibles* . . . (Portland, Me., 1940), 14 ff.

gary, Joseph Falkner, captain, was captured by French and Spanish pirates off the French coast. The cargo was auctioned off at public sale. By accident, Dr. Luther learned the name of the person who had bought the Bibles and repurchased them. Luther had a Latin description of this event and a dedication printed and placed in the front of the Bibles, which he called the "Apostle Bibles."

This Holy Book is up to this time without example in the West Indies, as it has previously been published there neither in the English, Dutch, nor any other language [*Luther did not know of Eliot's Indian Bible*]. It has now been successfully printed there with God's aid for the first time, and in the German language, and that with type from the Luther type foundry, which has flourished since the earliest time of printing under Egenolff, a type founder of first rank, and which is still flourishing today. The publisher of this novelty and rarity, Christopher Sauer, a most famous man in that area because of his talent and industry, entrusted this book with eleven other copies to a ship sailing across the ocean to Europe.

The *Queen of Hungary*, which was the name of the ship, under the English captain Falkner, however, fell into the hands of French and Spanish pirates off the cape of St. Malo, after having the greatest part of the voyage behind her. The pirates sold by public auction the ship, and all of her cargo of goods, among which were the twelve copies of this book, which might be called the twelve "apostles of the Indians." Two years later, through the praiseworthy providence of God, they were freed from their imprisonment by an unhoped-for accident, and all of them were forwarded undamaged to the Luther type foundry, to which is owed their existence.

So go forth then, Book, distinguished with the name "apostle" because of your miraculous fate, and embellish and increase, with your brothers which have been won back to freedom, the most flourishing libraries, after the intention of the donor, whose name follows not printed but in his personal signature,

Frankfort/Main, January 1, 1747

Luther, PhD.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Translated from a German translation of the Latin original in Mori, 29. A variant dedication reads: "This Holy Book, never before printed in the Western World in either English, Dutch, or any other language, but now under Divine protection, for the first time in German, and by types from his own foundry, is presented with the hope that it will give pleasure as a rarity, and on account of its coming from a remote land, to the library of the illustrious Heinrich de Bunan, Count of the Holy Roman Empire, Privy Councilor of His Christian Majesty, and of the Imperial Court, and Ambassador of the same to the Orders of the circle of the Rhine and Lower Saxony, by Heinrich Ehrenfried Luther, IND ✚ C.W.A., Frankfort-on-the-Main, July 1747." This translation is taken from Wright, 38-39.

The Bibles were then given to outstanding European libraries and private collections, except for the one which Luther kept for himself.⁷⁵

Sauer's relationships with the clergy of the Lutheran and Reformed churches were also noted abroad, since Europe remained the major source of financial and moral support for these denominations. They looked to the Netherlands and Germany as their ecclesiastical homes, just as the Anglicans sought direction from England. As a result, there was a steady flow of letters, reports, and appeals for support. In European collections of this material and in publications of these sources, there are numerous references to Sauer, who was regarded as a handicap to the growth of their New World congregations. Sauer's influence among the Germans was great largely because of the power of his newspaper and almanac in which he was quick to criticize the clergy. That his criticisms were usually to the point is borne out by the even sharper complaints in the reports of the Lutheran and Reformed clergymen themselves, whose work was often hampered by disreputable ministers who sometimes came to America after being expelled from their parishes in Europe. Although there was some accord in this area of criticism, the ministers disapproved of Sauer's Bible and cautioned their congregations against his unorthodox views.

In 1742, John Philip Böhm, often considered the founder of the Reformed Church in America, wrote to the classis of Amsterdam, which was supporting his efforts. In referring to his own pamphlet against the Moravians, he showed the importance of Sauer's having the German Gothic type for printing:

But as the Lord liveth, I could not have any but English [*Roman*] letters [*type*]. (The German printer [*Sauer*] excused himself; he was not altogether just.) As a result, where there is one of our High Germans who can read it,

⁷⁵ Now in the possession of Luther's descendant, Dr. Martha Haeberlin, Bad Nauheim. In this copy Luther noted the destinations of the gifts: St. Petersburg, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Berlin, Hannover, Dresden, Gotha, Weimar, Braunschweig, Cassel, and Stuttgart. Both Wright and Rumball-Petre attempted to list the locations of these "Apostle Bibles." There are now copies in the following places: Gotha, Wolfenbüttel, Stuttgart, Hamburg, and Bad Nauheim. Other copies containing dedications by Luther but not "Apostle Bibles" are in Copenhagen, Dresden, and Frankfurt.

there are perhaps twenty who cannot read it [*Faithful Letter of Warning* . . .].⁷⁶

A colleague, Caspar Lewis Schnorr, who was later expelled from his Lancaster parish for immorality, wrote to Amsterdam asking for several hundred Bibles for distribution. The Bibles were now the more necessary, he wrote, because

. . . an arch-sectarian master named Sauer in Germantown, two hours from Philadelphia, among other things, said in his printed almanac that Job would not be worth reading, except for these few words therein, "I know that my Saviour liveth!" He also calls universities foundations of the Devil. One can see therefore, that he falsifies the entire Bible. I preach against it every place I go, and tell them not to buy it, because the Holland Classis has promised to send me a quantity of Holy Bibles.⁷⁷

Later Sauer tangled with Michael Schlatter, a Swiss Reformed pastor who had been sent to Pennsylvania by the Reformed authorities of Germany, with Dutch assistance, to try to straighten out the confused situation of the Reformed congregations there. Richard Peters, the secretary of the provincial council in Philadelphia, wrote to Holland in 1750 that Sauer had sought to blacken Schlatter's reputation.⁷⁸ Two issues of Sauer's newspaper containing articles about Schlatter are in the Reformed Church archives in The Hague.⁷⁹

The patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, considered Sauer a thorn in the flesh. In 1745 Muhlenberg wrote to the "fathers" at London and Halle:

Among the trials I reckon 1) that the German printer here, Christopher Sauer, seeks to vilify me and my office in secret and in public, because I have reminded my congregation that they should take care if they buy any of the new Bibles, to see if he has interpolated any of his own observations,

⁷⁶ Böhm to the classis, Nov. 17, 1742, Pennsylvania Portfolio, No. 47, Archive of the Reformed Church, Amsterdam; translated and published in William J. Hinke, ed., *Life and Letters of John Philip Boehm, Founder of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, 1683-1749* (Philadelphia, 1916), 371.

⁷⁷ Schnorr to the Amsterdam classis, Mar. 15, 1745, Pennsylvania Portfolio, No. 49, Archive of the Reformed Church, Amsterdam.

⁷⁸ Peters to John Gronovius, Apr. 6, 1750, Synodal Archive of the Reformed Church, The Hague, 74/II, No. 16, 239-243.

⁷⁹ *Pennsylvanische Berichte*, Feb. 1, 1751, and Nov. 1, 1752, Synodal Archive of the Reformed Church, The Hague, 74/II, No. 30, 367-370, and No. 31, 371-374.

as he takes every opportunity in his almanac and newspaper to defame the Lutheran denomination.⁸⁰

But relationships were not always estranged. Pastor John Frederick Handschuh noted in his diary of 1752 that “. . . Christopher Sauer sent me today a large Bible for our church [in *Germantown*], which was sent to him twelve years ago by a councilor in Frankfort/Main [Dr. Luther], along with two others, to be given to churches in Pennsylvania.”⁸¹

Through the years Sauer had other contacts with Europe. A letter which he wrote in 1747 to a business friend in Germany, quite likely Andrew Gross in Frankfort/Main, gives a good picture of Sauer's business contacts and interests. He tells of sending ninety of his Bibles on several different ships to be exchanged for Berleburg Bibles, and of acting as an agent for the Pennsylvania Schwenkfelder group in securing books from Germany. His difficulties in obtaining good type from Dr. Luther are mentioned, and his correspondent is cautioned not to pay the Frankfort manufacturer more than he is owed.

Much space is devoted to the recent return from Germany of two friends, Andrew Frey and John Christian Siebenberger, who had been persuaded by Count Zinzendorf to go back to Germany with him when he left Pennsylvania. They had become disgusted with the excesses at the Moravian settlement at Herrnhag near Frankfort and had returned to America.⁸² Frey, a member of the Brethren Church before and after the Moravian interlude, wrote a narrative of his experiences which Sauer published in 1748.⁸³ This polemic was republished in Germany in 1749 “after the Germantown copy,” with a new preface.⁸⁴

Other earlier Sauer publications had been reprinted in Europe. In 1743 the *Geistliche Fama* reprinted a part of Sauer's booklet against

⁸⁰ Muhlenberg to the fathers, Mar. 6, 1745, in *Hallesche Nachrichten*, I, 92.

⁸¹ Handschuh diary, Jan. 12, 1752, *ibid.*, II, 80.

⁸² Sauer to a friend, Nov. 16, 1747, in Mori, 39-41.

⁸³ *Andreas Freyen seine Declaration oder Erklärung . . .* (Germantown, 1748); Reichmann, No. 94.

⁸⁴ *Andreas Freyen seine Declaration oder Erklärung . . . Nach dem Germantowner Exemplar abgedruckt und jetzo mit einem neuen Vorbericht versehen* (Frankfort/Main and Leipzig, 1749); in the Haebler collection. The book even found an English translator, and was published in London in 1753. *A True and authentic Account of Andrew Frey . . .* (London, 1753), British Museum.

Conrad Beissel. This was the history of a certain Dr. Schotte, a Scottish religious extremist about whom Sauer wrote in the evident hope of discrediting Beissel. The editor added a footnote: "This story, along with the above letters, and the immediately preceding conclusion, was borrowed from a small octavo booklet printed in America, which was written in the year 1739 against a Pennsylvanian Sabbatarian. . . ." ⁸⁵ The *Geistliche Fama* also published a thirteen-verse poem, "Song of Praise at the Arisen Hope of Better Times," which is noted as having been written in 1738 and printed in 1742 at Germantown, which would almost certainly make it a product of the Sauer press. ⁸⁶ Since it is printed along with three other pieces written by John Adam Gruber, it is likely that it also came from Gruber's pen.

A rather unusual clue to Sauer's fame in Europe is the publication in 1750 of a satire against the Moravians, with the imprint of "C. Saur" of Germantown. The actual printer was Hemmerde at Halle, who claimed that the manuscript was sent to Sauer in America at Easter and returned before Michaelmas (September 29). Any doubters were to ride by "airship" to Germantown and ask the "honest printer" himself. ⁸⁷

Additional European interest in the Germantown printer is reflected in a leading German journal of church history which in 1751 printed a long article by Sauer on the conversion of the Indians by a Scottish missionary and an account of the Ephrata Cloister, and included considerable information on Sauer himself in an editorial introduction. ⁸⁸ The Community of True Inspiration in Germany, often called the Inspired, also reprinted one of Sauer's publications, his translation of one of John Bunyan's tracts, which John Adam

⁸⁵ "Eine kurtze und wahrhafft Historie von Doctor Schotte . . .," *Geistliche Fama*, III, xxix, No. 9, 115-128; taken from Sauer's *Ein Abgenöthigter Bericht* . . . (Germantown, 1739); Reichmann, No. 10.

⁸⁶ "Lobes-Schall bey aufgeganger Hoffnung besserer Zeiten," *Geistliche Fama*, III, xxix, No. 8, 100-104.

⁸⁷ Nicholas Freiherr von Pillendorff (pseud.), *Erweiterte Vorschläge zu einem dauerhaften Frieden* . . . Gedruckt zu Germantown bey C. Saur [Halle, 1750]; Reichmann, No. 123.

⁸⁸ "Copey eines merkwürdigen Schreibens des Herrn Sauer in America . . .," *Acta historico-ecclesiastica* (Weimar, 1751), XV, iii, 210-226; translated also in Felix Reichmann and Eugene E. Doll, *Ephrata, as Seen by Contemporaries*, Pennsylvania German Folklore Society Publications, XVII (1952), 45-48.

Gruber, Sauer's nearest neighbor in Germantown and one of the Inspired prophets in Germany, sent to his friends.⁸⁹

Christopher Sauer died on September 25, 1758, after a remarkable career in America. During his thirty-four years here he had been in the forefront of many of the important controversial issues of his day, both political and religious. Through his position as the proprietor of a foreign-language press, and through his own intellectual interests, he inevitably occupied a unique position in the interchange of culture between colonial America and Europe. About one fifth of the publications of his press were translations or reprints of European books, largely theological or devotional in nature. These productions helped to maintain America's European ties. On the other hand, many of Sauer's purely American works were reprinted in Europe, bringing ideas from the New World to the Old. Christopher Sauer was unquestionably one of the significant figures in colonial Pennsylvania.

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⁸⁹ *Das angenehme Opfer . . . verfasst von dem berühmten Prediger und treuen Diener Jesus Christi, Johann Bunyan . . . zu Germantown gedruckt 1755 . . .* (Büdingen, 1758), copy seen in the Wittgensteinische Synodal-Bibliothek, Laasphe/Lahn. The Sauer imprint is listed in Reichmann, No. 161.