

Two Swedish Pastors Describe Philadelphia, 1700 and 1702

“AND IT WAS called GLORIA, and in Swedish, *Gudz Ähros Huus*, and in English, House of God’s Glory.” This is part of the entry which Erik Björk, pastor of the Swedish congregation at Christina—now Wilmington, Delaware—made in his records for the first Sunday after Trinity in the year 1700.¹

The church so beautifully christened on that June morning was not in Christina, however, but in Wicaco, Philadelphia County, not far from the southern edge of the town itself. Here Mr. Björk and many of his parishioners had come to join their fellow congregation and its pastor, Andreas Rudman, for consecration services. Present, also, were members of Christ Church in Philadelphia, to do honor to their Swedish friends and neighbors.

Close by the new church, with its foundations of stone, its firm walls of brick, stood the old church, a blockhouse of weathered logs, built as a place of defense against the Indians. Now, for more than twenty years it had served, in Pastor Rudman’s words, as “a house of spiritual defense.”² An even older church, on Tinicum Island, to which the way had grown too long, was still standing, though unused, when Mr. Rudman and Mr. Björk arrived from Sweden in 1697. This, too, was built of logs, in the form of a blockhouse, and the

¹ Manuscript records of Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church, Wilmington, Del., First Book, 65. Pastor Björk usually signed his name in clerical fashion, “Ericus Biörck,” but his bishop in Sweden and most of his colleagues and friends in America called him Eric Biörk. Modern Swedish writers say “Erik Björk,” and this spelling was chosen for use in the present article.

² Andreas Rudman, “Kyrckio-handlingar wid Församlingen Wicaco, ifrån de Swenskes första öfverkomst til America . . .,” a manuscript history of the Wicaco congregation, which remains at Gloria Dei Church. A copy of the manuscript made in 1750 by Peter Kalm, a scholarly Swedish visitor to Philadelphia, was published in Vol. IV of his *Resa till Norra Amerika* (Helsingfors, 1929). Cf. Dr. A. B. Benson’s translation of Kalm’s American notes, *A Journey to North America* (New Haven, Conn., 1937).

date 1649, Mr. Björk recalled, could be read on the canopy over the pulpit.³

Concerning the name of the new church, which today we know as Gloria Dei, or Old Swedes, Philadelphia, Mr. Björk made an interesting observation in one of his letters home: "This year, on the first Sunday after Trinity Sunday, it [*the church at Wicaco*] was consecrated by me with the text 2 Sam. 7:29 . . . and called, for several reasons, by the former one's name, GLORIA."⁴ In this letter alone do we find reference to the name of the original blockhouse church.

Early Pennsylvania comes refreshingly to life in many letters such as this, long treasured in Swedish archives but almost disregarded here, where they were written. These are letters sent home to family and friends by devoted young churchmen transplanted for a while to a new world very far away from the old, and very different. "This land," declares one homesick writer, "seems to me to be only a few years older than when it was created, and with nothing yet in order."⁵ (It is only fair to add, however, that on his return to Sweden some years later, Andreas Hesselius referred to America as *ett Paradis*—a paradise!)⁶

Opportunities for sending letters to Sweden did not come very often, but each one was seized upon gladly, and hurrying pens wrote not only personal news, but also lengthy descriptions of places and people, manners and customs, so that distant readers might see Pennsylvania as with their own eyes.

Of course, the reason these remarkable letters are not better known is that they are written in Old Swedish, a rather formidable barrier, although many of them have now been transcribed in a

³ Quoted by Bishop Jesper Swedberg in "Svecia Nova, seu America Illuminata," a lengthy manuscript dated May 19, 1727, now in the State Archives, Stockholm. A much-abridged version of this important work was published in Sweden in 1732, under the title *America Illuminata*. Rare Book Room, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP). An excellent transcript of the full, original text will be found in the library of the American Swedish Historical Museum (ASHM), Philadelphia. From this transcript, hereinafter called Swedberg MS., 125, Pastor Björk's comments on the church at Tinicum have been taken.

⁴ Erik Björk to Johan Thelin, Nov. 19, 1700, State Archives, Stockholm; transcript in HSP and ASHM. Thelin, in an official memorandum concerning the American congregations, dated Apr. 26, 1701, refers to the church at Wicaco as "Gloria Dej," i.e., "Gloria Dei." *Ibid.*

⁵ Andreas Hesselius to Count Gustaf Cronhjelm, Dec. 1, 1712, transcript from a Swedish publication of the letter in 1780, HSP.

⁶ Swedberg MS., 56, ASHM.

modern hand. Both the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the American Swedish Historical Foundation have good collections of these transcripts, from which the letters here published have been translated.

The great interest felt throughout Sweden in the arrival of letters from Pennsylvania may well have timed the publication in 1702 of Thomas Campanius Holm's *Kort Beskrifning om Provincien Nya Sverige uti America* ("A Short Description of the Province of New Sweden, in America"), which contains excerpts of letters written by Mr. Björk and Mr. Rudman. This soon became a standard reference work and Israel Acrelius used it in preparing his own *History of New Sweden*.⁷

In January, 1833, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania asked one of its vice-presidents, Peter S. Du Ponceau, a fine scholar and an able linguist, to translate the Campanius work for publication.⁸ His work, completed within the year, was printed in the Society's *Memoirs* in 1834,⁹ and portions of it were included, with full permission, in *Annals of the Swedes on the Delaware*, published in 1835 by Rev. Jehu Curtis Clay, rector of Gloria Dei Church.¹⁰

Acrelius, in 1759, Du Ponceau, in 1833, and Clay, in 1835, relied upon the date given by Campanius for the consecration of Gloria Dei Church—July 2, 1700. Actually, the church was consecrated on June 2, not July 2, as there is most faithful evidence to prove, but so high has been regard for these venerable authorities that there is still some disagreement as to when Gloria Dei's anniversary ought to be celebrated.

Why does "2 Julii," not "2 Juni," appear in the Campanius work, in a passage quoted from one of Erik Björk's letters? Was the copying badly done? The best way to find out would be to compare the printed text with the original document, but strangely enough this is the one letter quoted by Campanius which is not found in the archives. In the quotations where comparison is possible, some

⁷ Israel Acrelius, *Beskrifning om de Svenska Församlingars Forna och Närvarande Tilstånd* (Stockholm, 1759). Rare Book Room, HSP. Translation by William M. Reynolds for The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, published as Vol. XI of the Society's *Memoirs* (Philadelphia, 1874).

⁸ Minutes of the Society for Jan. 16, 1833, HSP.

⁹ *Memoirs of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, III, Pt. I (Philadelphia, 1834).

¹⁰ Mr. Clay was also a councilor of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

polishing of original spelling and punctuation is found, and one especially caustic reference to the Quakers is deleted, but there is nothing to indicate carelessness on the part of the copyist. Why, then, the "2 Julii"?

There is a more far-reaching mystery here than one might suppose, and no solution for it has yet been found. Thomas Campanius, however, ought to be cleared of responsibility for the wrong date which appears in his work: he almost certainly copied the date he saw, or thought he saw, in Erik Björk's handwriting. The most curious part about it all lies in the fact that in at least three other instances, not connected with the Campanius volume, some significant word written by Mr. Björk has been read and copied by careful and experienced workmen—a different one in each case—as containing the letter "l" where factual evidence shows an "n" should have appeared.

One other matter about which there has been a good deal of discussion, and even unhappiness, also goes back to the quotation from the missing letter, but it is doubtful that Mr. Björk should bear any blame for this. Here is part of his description of Gloria Dei Church as printed in the Campanius text:

Thenna Kyrkia är af samma storlek/¹¹ allenast hörnen afskurne på östra ändan/ och en twärmur påbegynt/ på den wästra ändan/ som dock til en tid blifwer stående ofullbordat/til man får se på hwad sätt Gud behagar med Klockor oss wälsigna: . . .¹²

This church is of the same size [*as the one at Christina, completed the year before*], but with the corners at the east end cut off and a *twärmur* begun at the west end, which for the time being will remain unfinished until we can see how God may be pleased to favor us with bells.

And here is a passage from a letter now in the State Archives in Stockholm, also written by Mr. Björk on the same day as the one just quoted:

Then andra kyrkian är mehrendels lika thenna, allenast på Östre ändan äro hörnen aftagne och på Westre ändan är Een tornmuhr begynder, som nu blifwer stående till få se hwad uthwäg then K.[ära] Guden till kläckor will yppa, . . .¹³

¹¹ The diagonal in early Swedish printing indicates the comma.

¹² Thomas Campanius Holm, *Kort Beskrifning om Provincien Nya Sverige* (Stockholm, 1702), 104. Rare Book Room, HSP.

¹³ Erik Björk to Johan Thelin, Nov. 19, 1700. See Note 4 above.

In general, the other church is like this one [*at Christina*], except that on the east end the corners are cut off, and on the west end a tower [*tornmuhr*] is begun, which now remains at a standstill to see what provision for bells the dear God will make known.

Now the word “twärmur” might be used to describe a transverse wall, or a cross wall, but it conveys no suggestion of a tower. A tower there was, however, as both Mr. Björk, and Mr. Rudman in his description of the building of the church, written in 1700,¹⁴ make very clear. And the original building accounts, which still remain at Gloria Dei, show that it was a planned, integral part of the church structure from the very beginning.

Why Campanius chose to substitute “twärmur” for Mr. Björk’s “tornmuhr” is not easy to understand. Apparently, he could not visualize the church at all from the letter before him. Half a century later, Israel Acrelius, writing his *History of New Sweden* after returning from seven years on the Delaware, and depending upon Campanius as a valued reference source, seems not to have related the description of Gloria Dei he found there to the actual building he had come to know so well. “På wästra ändan lemnades en twär mur . . . allenast påbegynt [On the west end was left a *twär mur* . . . only begun],” he wrote, to the confusion of both translator and reader.¹⁵

A much later Swedish historian, Otto Norberg, realizing that “twärmur” was probably a mistake, decided to substitute a word which seemed to him more meaningful, “hörnmur”—a corner wall¹⁶; conceivably, a buttress—which is as far from reality as the other. And it is much harder to forgive, because Dr. Norberg had full access to all the assembled riches in Sweden’s archives, including Andreas Rudman’s own account of 1700, in which the tower is most explicitly described.

The description of the church found in Clay’s *Annals*¹⁷ comes from Campanius by way of the Du Ponceau translation, which is occasionally marred, as in this instance, by faulty reading of the Swedish text.

¹⁴ See below, p. 201.

¹⁵ Acrelius, 238.

¹⁶ Otto Norberg, *Svenska Kyrkans Mission vid Delaware i Nord-Amerika* (Stockholm, 1893), 19.

¹⁷ Jehu Curtis Clay, *Annals of the Swedes on the Delaware* (Philadelphia, 1835), 82.

A clear view of Gloria Dei's beginnings has been further prevented by a fanciful account of the consecration of the church published in 1895 in *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania*.¹⁸ Often quoted, this has become widely accepted as sober, historical fact. Fortunately, it is now possible to supply, from the first of the letters which follow, a record of that event written by the person most deeply concerned with it, Andreas Rudman.

From the letters chosen for publication at this time, one written by Mr. Rudman and the other by his successor, Andreas Sandel, two widely different personalities emerge.

Musician, poet, idealist, Rudman was scarcely fitted either by temperament or constitution for the strenuous realism of life on the Delaware. But the "zeal for God's glory" he so urgently sought to kindle in others burned brightly in his own frail body, and he labored far beyond his strength to make up to his people for the years they had been without books, teachers, and fellowship with their Church in Sweden. His brief pastorate set a record of accomplishment which would be noteworthy for any period. When at the end of five years he was succeeded, at his own request, by his old friend Andreas Sandel, he was not able to undertake, with his family, the long and hazardous journey to Sweden, but he preached for a time in New York and Albany, at the invitation of the Dutch Lutherans there, and on returning to Philadelphia, preached in the English church at Oxford, northwest of Frankford, Philadelphia County.¹⁹

Early in 1707 Mr. Rudman became minister-in-charge at Christ Church, Philadelphia, where he was well known and loved, when the regular minister, Rev. Evan Evans, went to England for a prolonged stay.²⁰ In this post he was still serving at the time of his death in September, 1708. An entry made by Andreas Sandel in Gloria Dei burial records concludes: "And [Magister Rudman] was followed by the most distinguished persons of the town to Wicaco, where he lies buried before the altar in the church."²¹

¹⁸ Julius Friedrich Sachse, *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania, 1694-1708* (Philadelphia, 1895), 144.

¹⁹ William Stevens Perry, ed., *Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church, II, Pennsylvania* (Hartford, Conn., 1871), 42.

²⁰ *Ibid.* See also Benjamin Dorr, *Historical Account of Christ Church, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1841), 36.

²¹ Entry by Andreas Sandel in manuscript burial records now lost. A copy made by Peter Kalm in 1750 appears in Vol. IV of his *Resa till Norra Amerika*, 219.

Of Mr. Sandel's long and dedicated service to his parish and to the community there is much to say, but perhaps a better time for this will come in connection with letters written later in his pastorate.

Each of these two men kept a detailed record of his journey from Sweden to America, and Mr. Sandel continued to make occasional entries during his stay here and after his return home in 1719. A translation of Mr. Rudman's journal was published in 1906-1907 in *German American Annals*, where the Swedish text is also given.²² A manuscript translation of Mr. Sandel's journal is owned by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and excerpts from this were published in 1906 in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*.

Upper Darby
Philadelphia

RUTH L. SPRINGER
LOUISE WALLMAN

LETTER FROM ANDREAS RUDMAN

Grace and peace from God, the Father, through
Jesus Christ, by the Holy Ghost

With the opportunity now offered,²³ these tidings are being sent over to my dear friends for their pleasure. They will concern general matters only, and not the principal matter,²⁴ for that report, not yet completed, I have saved for another time.

Now, know first that through God's grace I have got my church finished, after going through unbelievable hardships. With God's help still, the difficulties accumulating daily are safely overcome.

The church is 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 20 feet high. The roof is made of cedar shingles, 18,000 of them. There are six windows, three on each side, 12 feet high. The whole interior is covered with plaster, although the ceiling was first secured with laths. On each side the pews are arranged in two quarters, and in addition there is a

²² *German American Annals, New Series*, IV, V (Philadelphia, 1906, 1907).

²³ Apparently the first opportunity in many months for dispatching mail to Sweden. Both Mr. Rudman, in this letter, from which the date is now missing, and Mr. Björk, in his letters dated Nov. 19, 1700, and unquestionably sent at the same time, tell in detail of the consecration of the new church at Wicaco in early June. A memorandum preserved in Sweden (see Note 4 above) refers to letters of Nov. 19 and 20, 1700, received from the pastors in America.

²⁴ A history of the Wicaco congregation. See Note 2 above.

lengthwise pew under the windows, with an aisle between this and the quarters. The entire chancel and the pulpit are of black walnut, intricately turned. The chancel itself stands three steps higher than the church floor, so that the chancel rail and the pews are of the same height, and the altar rail, as well.

The altar, like the church, is made of brick.

As its form, in time, will show, the tower is joined to the church, though still unfinished, approximately 26 or 28 feet high. In this is our entrance. Above, there is a room for church articles, and over this, a room for the church library. A bell room is to go above this, and also a spire, so that it may reach 80 or 100 feet, in all, if one dare risk so high a tower in this land of fiercely strong storm winds. No more is to be done on the tower, however, until there is some hope of bells. And the congregation has some debts which must first be paid.

In the beginning we thought the church would be too large, but we need all the space now, and a little adjoining room, besides, which is intended for an organ loft and organ. This has a door through the inner wall of the tower room.

The east end of the church is angular, and in the center there is a frame made to hold an inscription in gold letters, facing toward the river, to be seen and read by all who pass by, whether they sail or walk.

To this date, the church has cost £1,000, which in Swedish money would be 20,000 daler, in copper coin. And all this was given and contributed by 80 or so households, or farmers, without the slightest help from outsiders, which is something worth thinking about. It was rather hard on them, but God be praised, they suffered no real want. The outstanding debt is over £100, but I hope now to clear it up this year, or by spring, even though I must continue to deny myself as I have up to now.

The church was consecrated on June 2 of this year [1700] by my faithful colleague, Magister Erik Björk, in the presence of a great number of people.

The church was as full as it could possibly be, for it is no farther than two musket shots from the south side of the town. The people stayed from beginning to end.

There were three sermons. First came the sermon of consecration, in this manner:

1. Sang, "Kommer här och låter oss [Herren Gud prisa. (Come, let us glorify the Lord God)]."

2. The words of consecration were spoken, with an appropriate prayer.

3. The 24th Psalm of King David was read. (Note: Both Magister Björk and I stood before the altar, wearing surplices, and we conducted the service by turns.)

4. "Our Father, who art [in heaven]" was sung.

5. The Sanctus [*Helig*] was read from the manual.

6. A verse, at the pulpit.

7. From the pulpit, after the Introit, was sung, "Kom Helge Ande, Herre god [Come, Holy Spirit, good Lord]." The text was taken from I Par.[alipomenon (*i.e.*, I Chronicles)] 18: 26 (according to our Swedish Bible).²⁵ In addition, at the end of the sermon I Samuel 8, etc., was read. The sermon was then summarized in English for the benefit of the English people [present].

8. The pastors began, "O Gud, wij lofwe tig [O God, we praise thee]."

9. Both of us went again before the altar and there asked God to hear and bless our service and proceedings.

10. The people were enjoined to keep this house holy and in reverence.

11. We concluded with "Glory be to the Father . . . As it was, etc." And then, public confession and the regular service.

At noon the English priest came and gave a sermon, with preceding hymn and prayer.

After that, the other congregation [*from Christina*] and the most notable among the English were given refreshments according to our means and supplies, and all had to talk for a long time about

²⁵ The Gustav II Adolf, or Gustavus Adolphus Bible of 1618 (from the 1541 Version), then in use in Sweden and on the Delaware, in which the verse cited by Pastor Rudman reads: "Nu HERRE tu äst Gudh/ och tu haffuer sådana godh ting sagdt til tin tienare. Tagh nu til at welsigna tins tienares huus/ at thet bliffuer ewiñerligha för tigh. TY hwadh tu HERRE welsignar/ thet är welsignat ewinnerligha." (Cf. the King James Version, I Chronicles 17: 26, 27.) Pastor Björk, however, in his account of the consecration services, says that he preached from II Samuel 7:29, which in both Swedish and English closely resembles the text from Chronicles.

the pleasing, Godly, and Christian manner in which everything went on and was done.

Now! thought I, all the difficulties are over! But the Evil Spirit rests not, but daily with one or another problem besets me. And yet, praise God, I overcome all through Jesus.

And now, to tell of progress in religion.

When we held our services in the old church, which was a [house of] defense, or blockhouse, we had to get along as best we could. Two sermons were preached every Sunday and the young people were taught and examined. The first year I divided the congregation into groups, and summoned each group, both the young and the old, for examination. The older people were reluctant, at first, but that made no difference. What each and every one could do was written down, so that later it could be seen what progress they had made.

The second year, I gathered the groups at appointed places and went to them, making in this way a visitation to see where they lived and how, what kind of houses they had, and what progress they had made after obtaining books. I found incredible improvement in reading, especially among the young people.

The third year, which was this summer, I did the same thing, going from house to house through the whole congregation, which was a tremendous task, they are so widely scattered.²⁶

Now that this church is finished, a catechetical examination is held every Sunday. First, a prayer is offered, and then two chapters from the Bible, Old and New Testament, are read, and I expound immediately any difficult passages they contain. In closing, "O Gud, wij lofwe tig [O God, we praise thee]." After this we have matins, with explanation of the catechism, etc. Between sermons, examination goes on, so that all may hear and learn, and thereby, with God's blessing, much has been achieved. I have come to the conclusion that more is accomplished with one good examination than with ten sermons, however earnest and devout.

²⁶ Mr. Rudman's records of these pastoral visitations may well have been sent to Sweden. There is, however, a somewhat abbreviated transcript of them at Gloria Dei Church, and this is in effect a congregational census, of great interest and value. It has been published in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, II (1878), 224-228.

In the summertime, the school children (in the winter, which is very hard here, not all of them can come—only part of them) are given something to learn, either one of King David's psalms or a hymn from the psalmbook [*hymnal*], etc., or a portion of some especially meaningful chapter from the Bible to work upon before the next Sunday, to recite from memory, and I explain everything plainly and clearly for all to hear.

After this come baptisms and public confession, and then high mass, so that our service lasts from eight o'clock until two, yes, three in the afternoon. As a result, I am quite faint and exhausted by the time I get home, especially since I cannot eat anything before service.

There is one thing I take to heart most deeply. I drive the people to read and come more and more to a knowledge of God, but the supply of books is such that three or four people have to use one book. Nor will they carry their psalmbooks to church with them, for fear of injuring them on the way, so that although they, and I, want to use the books, they are unwilling to bring them. Those who have become so rich as to have two psalmbooks carry one with them.

How can Swedish hearts be kindled to righteous flame?

What could be accomplished if each church in Stockholm and elsewhere, as well as the curates and pastors and other God-loving souls, would give a hundred daler in copper coin, for buying psalmbooks and religious works to send over here! The money would not be wasted. Or if they who could spare one psalmbook or other book would give it! I am certain that if someone zealous for God's glory would take this upon himself, he could gather together a wonderful collection of psalmbooks.

For example, a pastor could ask his congregation each to bring on a certain Sunday one book selected from his own good supply of books and at the close of service give it to be sent over here. But who is going to undertake this?

The reason I so urgently want psalmbooks is this: In the early days our people could sing well, but in the time of Magister Fabritius, who was a German and preached in Dutch, there was little or no singing. The English sang but little, the Quakers, not at all, deeming it to be vanity, even a sin. Among such have our people lived.

At our coming [in 1697], when we would begin a hymn, an old person here and there would join in, but the young people could not. They heard the glory, they saw the devotion, they tasted the sweetness, they found a longing to learn. But what misery! They had no psalmbooks. We brought a large number with us from Sweden, given by the late King, but they went only a little way, supplying psalmbooks to less than half the households.²⁷

The present King, Carl XII, whom may God preserve, bless, and counsel, has also, with similar royal grace, sent books over, but as yet they lie unbound, and may well remain so for another year or two. A good, pious, and learned man, Johan Kelpius, has undertaken the work, but in a whole year's time he has succeeded in binding only the Bibles. When will the rest be finished?

Binding, here, costs as much as one would pay for the book itself in Sweden. And I can assure you that according to the standards of bookbinding, in ornamentation and such matters, they are badly done. The [Swedish] Secretary in London had some binding done there.

The reason there are no bookbinders here, where all sorts of other craftsmen are found, is that there is no scholarship here, and nothing counts but chopping, digging, planting, plowing, reaping. He who isn't able to do these things doesn't come here, except for some who are well-to-do. About these, below. All the books they require are sent over from England, bound, and so they have no need of bookbinders.

Is there no one who out of love for God and his fellow-man will do something for us in our need? God would reward him. Oh, that I were in Sweden! Every step in this business would be perfectly easy for me.

²⁷ At the very time this letter was being written a Philadelphia printer named Reinier Jansen had on his press a pamphlet containing the words of two hymns written by Pastor Rudman as a gift for his beloved congregation on New Year's Day (Jan. 1), 1701. (In Sweden, from 1559 on, the year was reckoned from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, and the pastors who came to America kept their church and personal records accordingly.) These hymns, one of eleven verses and the other of six, to be sung to familiar tunes, helped in part to make up for the lack of psalmbooks which Mr. Rudman so deplored. Holy Trinity (Old Swedes) Church, Wilmington, is fortunate in having both microfilm and photostat copies of this pamphlet and of another, containing six of Mr. Rudman's hymns, made from originals in the University Library at Helsinki.

One Dr. Thomas Bray, bishop over all the English congregations in America, has collected a large sum of money in England for buying books and sending them over, annually.²⁸ To [be able to] provide all the provinces with Swedish libraries [*libraries from Sweden*] as he has provided libraries in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, etc., yes, that is a goal! He came to this country himself, this summer, and visited his churches.

The Swedes' being so widely spread out hinders me dreadfully. They don't live all in one place, but some are sixteen miles up in the woods, among the Quakers and other sects (for here there are fanatics almost without number. Because there is freedom of conscience, here they have gathered together, of every opinion and belief.) Some live 10, 12, 16, or 20 miles [away]; some, above the church, some, below. Nearly half of them moved to the other side [of the Delaware], up and down, hither and thither, in what is called West Jersey.²⁹ That side doesn't belong to Governor Penn, and so they are under another governor. During the winter only a few of these are able to come to church. The weather and the roads are altogether different from those in Sweden. The people who live on the other side cannot come over without being in gravest peril from the floating ice which follows ebb and flood and sometimes breaks large boats right in two. The ice lies piled up on capes and islands in mountainous heaps. Who in Sweden would believe this!

For fourteen days, now, it has been cruelly cold—cold of the piercing sort. And the wind is biting and sharp enough to blow one down. We have hard frost these nights, yes, with ice on the puddles and elsewhere. On the 12th [of November] it snowed so that cattle must henceforth be kept close and fed indoors.

This, I tell myself, means that only a few can come to church, now. Yes, it means that during this time I cannot have matins or

²⁸ Dr. Bray's office was not that of bishop, but of commissary, a post for which he had been selected by the Bishop of London, whom he represented in American affairs. The library he established for Christ Church, where some of the original books may still be seen, is admirably described by Louis G. Washburn in *Christ Church, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1925). In 1701, Dr. Bray obtained the charter incorporating The Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

²⁹ At this period Swedish families in West New Jersey belonged either to the Wicaco or the Christina congregations, according to where they lived, and had to cross the Delaware River to attend church services. Some years later a Swedish pastor was appointed for West New Jersey, and two parishes were established there, both of which he served.

celebrate any apostles' days at all. I have decided to announce on Sunday, however, that a certain holy day will fall on such and such a day of the week, when the congregation will be expected to have prayers at home, in their houses, before work, and to have their children read the Gospels and Epistles. Anyone who has a book of family sermons [*postilla*] should read from that. And then, in the Lord's name [they should] go to their work. The next Sunday after I shall expound, instead of the catechism, the Gospel or Epistle for the holy day, as time and the state of the congregation permit.

The reason why our people are so widely scattered, aside from other reasons which I shall give in a detailed history of the Swedes from their first beginnings [here], is that they are farmers and countrymen, who have cattle, etc., and therefore must have space. When the English arrived, they did not all come empty-handed. Some were wealthy capitalists, who usurped property the Swedes held, especially along the water, cleared the land and made it bald, and crowded the Swedes, who had neither the will nor the understanding to strive with them. Therefore, they sold their precious land along the water and had to go up into the country. For the most part, they were cheated. They have more land now, in the woods, but gain no more income, for they haven't the least understanding of business, except to sell oxen, sheep, etc. The English grasp more and more for themselves, until now they have nearly everything. They are of a different nature, crafty, subtle, and shrewd, wherefore most of them pull themselves upward and have the country under them. Many a one who didn't possess a groat or half a mark is now richer by several hundred pounds.

If anyone were to see Philadelphia who had not been there [before], he would be astonished beyond measure [to learn] that it was founded less than twenty years ago. Even Uppsala, etc., would have to yield place to it. All the houses are built of brick, three or four hundred of them, and in every house a shop, or *Gatbodh*,³⁰ so that whatever one wants at any time he can have, for money.

If a young merchant with a good understanding of business were to come here from Sweden, he could grow unbelievably rich in a short time. The Swedes who are here understood nothing of the

³⁰ A "street shop," that is, a house with a shop window opening upon the street. Its shutters could be closed at will.

art of business, but only order goods and then take from the land, penny for penny. Yes, and more. They send their meal, beer, etc., to the villages, and get in return sugar, wine, corn-brandy, syrup, etc., for which the price has been increased to an intolerable degree. For it is the Englishman's principle that he must make a profit on everything, and he defends himself thus: "You have to live; I have to make a living."

The Quaker is to be admired, however, for he allows no one to haggle with him, and no one offers to haggle. A virtue entirely renounced by the Swedes in Old Sweden! This, [may] God mend. A tradesman must gain a little for the risk he takes, and can live on that, but most of them demand without conscience, especially in dealing with some simple person. By contrast, the Quaker asks no more of one than of another, and if some simple person or anyone else misreckons and the Quaker discovers it, he gives it back of his own accord, yes, even after a week's time or more. The tradesman in Sweden, however, stands and haggles and haggles endlessly, and if he can outwit a[nother] tradesman he is very likely to boast of it afterward. Such [conscientiousness] as that [of the Quaker] is never heard of there. Oh, that uprightness and brotherly love would someday shine out and grow warm in my dear Sweden, which if I forget, so may my right hand be forgotten. Psalm 137.³¹ But I wish my country would someday forget, yes, kill and crucify that unbrotherly, unloving spirit. I am truly grieved when I think upon it.

More at the next opportunity.

And now I commend you, Reverend Herr Magister Brinck, Herr Wiström of Stockholm, Herr Jerler of Uppsala, my highly esteemed dear mother, in Gävle, Mrs. Magdalena Bram, and Herr Thelin of Göteborg, all my intimate and confidential friends, together with my respected, highly esteemed dear mother, to the protection of the Most High, asking you to send this letter from one to another, that all may be participants therein if they wish, remembering how toilsome it would be to write like this to each and every one individually, taking hours needed for many other demands. And if God should will that they all be lost, all the labor would be wasted. If anyone

³¹ Gustavus Adolphus Bible, Psalm 137:5, "Om iagh frögäter [*sic*] tigh Jerusalem/ så warde mijn höghra hand förgätin."

would like to keep this, I ask that he make a copy of it and permit the letter itself to remain with my dear mother, in Gävle.

I am, always,

Your most faithful intercessor and friend,

And. Rudman
Pastor at Wicaco
in Pennsylvania

LETTER FROM ANDREAS SANDEL

God's grace be with you, one and all. Amen.

After leaving Stockholm in the ship *Hedwig Sophia* I was two months on the way between Sweden and England, from the 21st of August to the 17th of October [1701].

In London I waited upon the Swedish Resident, the Honorable Mr. Leyoncrona, and showed him my letter of introduction from the Royal Chancellery in Stockholm. Through its contents, he immediately arranged for me to obtain a passport from the English government, which I received promptly from Mr. Charles Hedges, assistant secretary to the King of England, acting in the King's behalf. In addition to this passport, Mr. Leyoncrona gave me his own letter of introduction to Mr. Willjam [*William Penn*],³² Governor of Pennsylvania.

I sought immediately a ship to take me to the place just named, and found that one would depart from London on November 12. In consequence, I had only a little more than three weeks there. This ship, named *Hedwig Sophia*,³³ and commanded by Captain John Lowden, a Quaker, was very large. Although its destination was Maryland, not Pennsylvania, I was constrained to take passage, for there was no other ready to go to Pennsylvania, and this Maryland lies adjacent thereto. The ship carried piece goods, clothing, shoes, etc., and some salt and iron, but there was less cargo than ballast, because they were going after tobacco. Besides myself, there were other passengers, one of them a young woman; all were from England. We were five in number. Each of us had to pay £9, sterling,

³² Except where noted in the text, spellings of personal and place names have been modernized.

³³ A slip of the pen. In his journal Mr. Sandel calls the ship *Josiach* (*Josiah*).

which is something over 30 riksdaler, for the Swedish riksdaler is not reckoned at more than 57 pence, or [57] 3-öre pieces. A pound is 4 crowns, and each English crown is worth somewhat more than a Swedish riksdaler.

Between England and Pennsylvania, up to the time I reached Philadelphia, I spent eighteen weeks, from November 13, 1701, to March 18, 1702. We were on the open sea, away from land, for eleven of those weeks, from December 7, when we sailed from the little town of Kous [*Cowes*], which lies on the Channel and belongs to England, to the morning of February 21, when at the first light of dawn we found ourselves close to the land of Virginia.

What further concerns this journey would be too lengthy to describe. And who could comprehend the hardships that must sometimes be endured in such great waters, especially at that season of the year, the cruelest of the winter, when we were on the sea? Our worst and most prolonged storm extended throughout the Christmas holidays. Before it began we had come about 300 Swedish miles [*nearly 1,900 English miles*],³⁴ but when for 13 days we were unable to carry any sail, because of the fierce storm, with its rain, snow, and hail, and the ship could only lie and toss and be hurled about by every wave, we were driven back 50 Swedish miles. Those in charge of the ship, the captain, the first mate, and the second mate, all were veteran seamen, and they said that not for a very long time had they experienced such a storm.³⁵ How often I remembered, then, the comfort and peace in which many in Sweden celebrate the Christmas festival!

After the storm we picked up a continuing northwest wind which drove us too far south, so that by the 13th day of Christmas it was no longer cold, but very warm. Every now and then we had rain, thunder, and lightning, and the warmth continued until we were within 100 [Swedish] miles of land, when it turned extremely cold.

In addition to the great number and variety of fish we often saw, such as bottlenoses, porpoises, etc., we occasionally sighted huge whales, which, when they show themselves above the surface, spout water high into the air.

³⁴ The Swedish mile is approximately 6.21 English miles.

³⁵ A day-by-day narrative of this storm at sea is given in Mr. Sandel's journal.

When we came to Virginia we dropped anchor at a place called Patuxent, where the ship had to clear customs, etc. This was on a bay (a broad inlet [*wijk*]) which goes up into the country through Virginia and Maryland, and is 100 Swedish miles long, though becoming ever narrower. It runs to the west of north, is called Kesenpigg [*Chesapeake*], and is about 7 Swedish miles across at its widest point.

Up these waters we sailed, through Virginia and into Maryland, where, on March 1, we came to anchor at a place called Herring Bay. And there I left the ship.

This Herring Bay is a place where Englishmen dwell, here and there along the shore, planting tobacco and nothing else. They don't take time to sow grain, except for a little wheat and maize. They drink water, and most of them have a very hard life. Those who possess greater means and are of a higher standing buy corn and malt from Pennsylvania. Tobacco is to them what cabbage is to Sweden. Tobacco isn't expensive there, but the cost of getting it from [*sic*] England is high, and it sells for 3 öre, in copper coin, a skålpund.³⁶ First, it is forbidden to send over a small quantity (though ways of doing so could be found). Secondly, if a person should be permitted to send over one hogshead [*literally*, "*oxhead*"], about 200 dr.,³⁷ copper coin, reckoned in Swedish money, would have to be paid just for freight to London, after the English King takes for each pound 18./., copper coin, in duty.

From Herring Bay I went by shallop to a little town called Annapolis, which is in Maryland. The Governor of Maryland lives there.

On March 10 we arrived at Bohemia, and were guests of an Englishman who had a Swedish wife. She spoke pure Swedish, but he taught their children English.

From this point I now had to proceed by land, although I sent my baggage across, in a cart, to the bay called Delaware River, which runs to Pennsylvania. Here the land is narrowest, not more than one Swedish mile, and there are always boats to carry goods to Philadelphia.

³⁶ A measure of weight, 425 grams, somewhat less than our pound.

³⁷ Abbreviation for daler.

I, myself, rode overland to Christina, where the first Swedish congregation is, and came, on March 12, to Magister Björk, pastor of that congregation. On March 18 I rode to the other congregation, Wicaco, where the pastor was Magister Rudman, whose successor I was to become on the following Palm Sunday, when my passport and recommendations were read before the whole congregation.

When I first got here I engaged board and room for three weeks in Philadelphia Town, in order to become acquainted with the English and also because I found, as soon as I arrived, much work to do in connection with the approaching Easter holy days. I stayed in the home of a physician, Dr. Sober,³⁸ where two English clergymen also had room and board.³⁹ We gave 12 dr. a week for everything.

After this I moved into the parsonage at Passyunk, which lies three quarters [of a Swedish mile] from the church,⁴⁰ and went for my meals to the home of a Swedish widow, Maria Rambo,⁴¹ paying, for board alone, 5 dr., copper coin, every week.

The parsonage stands in a pleasant spot, close to the high bank of a river that has an ebb and flow of 6 feet. Round about the parsonage are oak trees, palm [*sic*] trees, walnut trees, etc.

Concerning our church I shall not write a great deal, because Magister Rudman has already sent a lengthy description which I remember having seen in Sweden. It is a very fine church, with six large windows, brick walls, pews made of cedar, and a pulpit of walnut. It cost about 20,000 dr., copper coin, reckoned in Swedish money. In the summer we expect to build a sacristy and a porch.

As for the government in this country, it is, praise God! very good and peaceable. Here they know almost nothing of levies, or of soldiers, navies, and such. Governor William Penn has now journeyed to London, but he will either return, himself, or send another in his place.

³⁸ Dr. Charles Sober was one of the founders of Christ Church.

³⁹ Rev. Evan Evans, minister of Christ Church, and Rev. John Thomas, his assistant.

⁴⁰ In 1695 the Wicaco congregation bought parsonage land on the Schuylkill River, north of the present Passyunk Ave., and it was here that Mr. Sandel lived. Mr. Rudman, however, lived much nearer the church, on property given him by his wife's family. We are greatly indebted to Rev. Carl Thurman Smith, of Philadelphia, an outstanding authority on early land records, for deeds, maps, and other materials for use in our work and, especially, for his kind interest and good counsel.

⁴¹ Maria (Cock) Rambo was the widow of Andrew Rambo, whose farm adjoined the parsonage land.

There are a great many religions here, and among them the best and the nearest to our own are the Protestants, otherwise called Churchmen, or Church of England. The highest personages in England, including the King himself, are of this religion. Between these and ourselves there is almost no difference. Formerly, they held with the Calvinists, but now they are completely departed from them. As regards the Lord's Supper they seem in their books to agree with Calvin, but in their discourse they are considerably milder. They like the Swedish pastors very much, and give us greater honor and respect than one could ever have supposed. The clergymen who were staying at Dr. Sober's are of this faith. We often associate with them, and they have frequently called upon Magister Rudman to preach in English in their church. They are of the utmost civility, and it is the greatest pleasure to associate with them.

Next to these are the Presbyterians, who do not differ greatly from the Church of England except in this respect, that they do not have written prayerbooks, but compose their prayers themselves, holding that a person cannot pray thoughtfully when he is reading the prayers out of a book. There are few or no degrees of rank among their clergy, such as archbishop, etc.

And then there are Anabaptists, whose heresies are well known.

The Quakers exceed in numbers all the rest. In their writings they are rather harsh. The Protestants have set up in patent type all their [*the Quakers'*] errors, taking them from their own books. These [broadsides] are sometimes displayed here, in the market place in town, but they [*the Quakers*] refuse to admit anything. They do not celebrate the sacrament of the altar, they never sing, they never pray, either at home or in church, or before or after meals. As for outward ceremony, they never remove their hats when they meet anyone.

There are also the Apostles, who were on the Labady [*Labadist River*] at Bohemia when I arrived in this country. Following the apostolic example they hold everything in common. They do not observe Sunday or holy days. Their number is now quite small.

The Sabbatarians observe Saturday as Sunday, and cause a good deal of vexation. When I am on my way to church on Sunday morning it offends me very much to see them going with plow in hand.

There are many others, but time does not permit my telling of them.

Philadelphia is, a very pretty town, not more than 20 years old, but having, nevertheless, 500 large, stone [*i.e.*, *brick*]⁴² houses and many distinguished people. The governor and his court, the mayor, the magistrates, officers, secretaries, lawyers, etc., and many merchants, go splendidly dressed, and all those who are of the English Church, or Protestants, are very friendly toward us. They are exceedingly sorry to have Magister Rudman leave them.

Our Swedes, of whom there are over ninety families, or households, in my congregation, are for the most part prosperous, praise God! for this is a very fruitful land for wheat, rye, corn, and oats, which they sell to the English for a good price. One of our people is a magistrate, and sits in the court in town.⁴³ Formerly they [*the Swedes*] were conscripted as captains, but now there is no military here. They till the fields, dress very nicely, live soberly, and are diligent in their work.

Everything here is very costly, and most expensive of all, or nearly so, are laborers. One cannot hire a farmhand for a year, if he is to clothe himself, for less than 300 dr., copper coin. There aren't many, however, who employ farmhands, for they have another means, bought slaves, or bondmen, whom they call servants. Most of these come from England. Three weeks before I arrived here a Swedish servant girl was sold in Maryland. I talked with her, and she told me she was born in Stockholm. A lady whom she accompanied to Germany died, and so the girl went on to France and later to England, where she worked as a servant for about two years. On the street she was lured by false promises, as many have been, into coming to this country, and on reaching Maryland she was sold for a period of five years. I gave her a Swedish psalmbook [*hymnal*] and a catechism, and she begged me to persuade some Swedish person to buy her from the master she then had, saying she would work for him for six years. Magister Björk intends to buy her after he is married this September to a Swedish woman and sets up housekeeping.

They are also accustomed here to buying blackamoors, who are very numerous. They are quite expensive, but are sold for life. If

⁴² Although Mr. Sandel writes *sten* (stone) here, his meaning is obvious. The Swedish word for brick is *tegelsten*, literally, "brick stone."

⁴³ Justice Otto Ernest Cock.

the owner, therefore, wants to sell them to someone else after having them for several years, he will get his money back again. There is, however, the very serious question of the master's responsibility before God for having them baptized and brought into the Church. If they are permitted to become Christians, they must be freed from slavery after seven years, in accordance with the English law. These slaves are not dealt with any more harshly than other laborers, although some masters may be rather more strict. I know of a Swede in my congregation who paid 1,000 dr., copper coin, last spring, for a black woman.

In Maryland, two Swedish clerks have been sold.

There are cultured and distinguished Swedes in this country, too, one of them named Baner.⁴⁴ And there is Alderman Golding's brother, a young merchant; and one named Linmeyer.

So far as money is concerned, it isn't counted, here, so much as it is weighed. . . . [*There follows a detailed listing of coins used in Pennsylvania, with their Swedish equivalents.*]

Now to such matters as the weather and food and drink. I can find no difference between the food and drink here and that in Sweden except that here they have a greater variety of good beverages. One, made from apples, is called *zeider*, and then there are flip, punch, etc., which they make of beer or water, spirits, and sugar.

It is now quite warm here, but I can remember many times when I have felt it just as warm in Sweden.

I haven't had much fish, although it is plentiful here—herring, for example, as large as Swedish bream, and perch in three varieties, one that is not red. The red perch is therefore called Swedish perch. Neither the tiny Baltic herring nor salmon is found here.

Among the birds there are no larks, but most of the other kinds are found. There are gray and black squirrels, but no red ones.

As for the savages, they are of different tribes, those who live in Pennsylvania being of one tribe, those in Maryland of another, etc., and they speak differently and so one cannot understand the other. These in Pennsylvania really have no government at all. There is

⁴⁴ Milton Rubincam, of Washington, D. C., eminent genealogist, states that Baron Isak Banér was a representative of one of Sweden's noblest and most powerful families. He lived in West New Jersey, where he married Maria Jaquet and had several children, who were taken to Sweden after their father's death in 1713. Their descendants, writes Mr. Rubincam, reside in Sweden to this day.

one they call sachem, or king, but in everyday life they show him no more respect than they do the rest, and when they get drunk they would as soon beat him up [*sic*] as any other. When trouble develops between them and other savages, however, their king has to lead them. He died the other day. I saw his queen. She had blackened her eyes with soot, or something of the sort, as a sign of mourning for her husband, but she was dressed like the others, and shown no special honor. There are no distinctions, for there is neither high nor low.

Their religion is as good as nothing. They tell me they pray to the Evil One, and offer sacrifice, because he makes trouble for them, but they do not pray to the One who is Good, because, they say, "He never does me any harm."

They wear a square piece of cloth, red or blue, thrown around their body, covering their loins. Otherwise they are naked. All of them smear themselves all over with an oily substance, bear grease, which makes them brown. When they wish to adorn themselves for coming into town they daub broad red streaks across their faces and paint themselves accordingly. And then they think they look pretty fine.

They have only one wife, but when the husband no longer loves her he abandons her and takes another.

They cradle their children between two boards put together on their back. All the savages have very straight, fine bodies.

Do you wonder how these heathen folk survive the winter, when it gets so cold here, and they go so bare? When a child is little the mother takes it every morning to some place where there is water with ice, and washes the child in the cold water, to toughen it.

These are quite hardy people, and they eat all sorts of coarse food. They have no horses, cows, goats—only swine; and they maintain themselves by fishing. The men go off into the forest and stay the whole winter, five or six months at a time, hunting, and then in the spring they come home and sell the skins to the Christians.

The men do not concern themselves about farm lands, but then they don't care to cultivate much ground, only enough so that they can plant a little maize.

The forest wilderness is so great that these savages tell many times of running for three or four months toward the west without finding any sea. A savage runs so hard in the forest he could tire out a horse in a day, being able to keep on running all day without faltering.

They can always find their way, wherever they are. Even if they were in wild forest a hundred miles away and left something there, they could find it again the next year.

A Swede, when he was a little boy, went out to pick berries in the forest, and a savage seized him. Now he lives among these wild heathen and won't return.

No one can persuade a savage to become a servant to a Christian.

They are more loyal to us than to the English. When some Swede arrives and the heathen hear of it, they come and take him by the hand. They are so faithful to the Swedes that if one of them should hear that a Swede was in any kind of danger he would be willing to run a hundred miles to warn him.

When one tribe goes to war with another, however, they are very cruel. There is no open warfare now, as in former times, but they quarrel with one another. When they take a prisoner they have been accustomed to burn him alive with hot irons, after biting off his nails, but the Swedes say they do not hear of this now.

Just before the Christians came to this country the savages were engaged in a great—and old—war among themselves concerning the hunting grounds, the only reason for the fighting. They have no fixed markers to separate one land from another. After that conflict many thousands of bodies were found. Without a doubt it was by God's special providence that they were annihilated in this fashion. And the same providence of God was made manifest in that when the Christians came the heathen had been laid low by illness as grass before the scythe, and so were destroyed.

Thesesavages have houses made of bark instead of logs. Their money is red and brown stones, small and round, which they string on a cord.

What I have written about the heathen applies only to those who live in Pennsylvania. The others, who live in Maryland, Nova Franca [*Canada*], Virginia, etc., are said to have better order, with government and the like.

This brief account of various matters is hastily written, this time, both because the ship that will carry it over is about to depart and because of the many duties heaped upon me. I have probably forgotten something which should have been included, but if anyone wants to hear about one subject or another he can let me know and I'll see to it that he is satisfied.

I had thought to write all of this to all my friends and relatives, as well as to my patron, but neither time nor circumstances will permit me to do so. It is therefore my respectful request that Herr Brother-in-Law would be pleased to let this make the rounds from Lofstad to Hållnäs, Väslund, Torstuna, Biskopskulla, Tuna, etc., and then go to Mr. Hierpe, the merchant, in Stockholm, and that it may also be sent to Governor Collin, in Öland.

All of you who read this, accept from it my heartiest greetings. There is nothing I desire more than that this letter may find all of you in good circumstances.

I thank God that He was pleased to give me a safe journey and to bless me with good health on the way and after I reached this country.

Unto Almighty God's most gracious protection I commend all who may read this letter. And to all I remain

Your most dutiful and most willing servant,

Andreas Sandell⁴⁵

Passyunk's
parsonage in
Wicaco's parish
in Pennsylvania, June 17, 1702

P.S.—Anyone who would be willing to afford me pleasure by giving me word of my family's welfare, and of any changes in Sweden, should direct his letter to Göteborg, to Postmaster Jean [*Johan*] Thelin, and it will go promptly.

Should anyone wish to know how to address me in English, he may write as follows:

These for the Reverend Mo:r And. Sandell
Swedish Minister i Pennsylvania
London,
Pennsylvania Philadelphia and Passajung.

⁴⁵ In later signatures only one "l" appears.