

THE FRENCH RACIAL STRAIN IN COLONIAL
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The history of the French settlers in provincial Pennsylvania presents peculiar difficulties in narration because, unlike that of the English, the Germans, and the Scotch-Irish, it is concerned with a minor racial element whose story is somewhat obscure. This difficulty is increased by the fact that they did not, as in the case of the major racial elements or even of smaller strains like the Welsh and Swedes, settle in a compact and clearly defined community. In fact, nowhere in Pennsylvania did they constitute a dominant racial group imposing their language and customs on a given section of the province, but were promptly and completely merged with their neighbors wherever they happened to locate. They brought no new religious sect to the colony, but united freely with those already present. Their history is not that of mass settlement, nor even that of small communities, but rather that of the impress of individual character and influence upon the larger racial elements by which they were surrounded. In a few cases they settled in small groups, but never in such numbers as to constitute an organized community with a distinctive and continuous history. Their influence upon the progress of the province was considerable, however, and was out of all proportion to their numbers. This was due to the fact that they were a selected group characterized by superior moral and intellectual attainments and by marked economic aptitude.

No attempt has been made hitherto to describe the French settlers as a distinct racial strain in the heterogeneous population of colonial Pennsylvania. Staple-

ton and Laux have written about the Huguenots, which included only a part of the French immigrants. It is true that in the colonial period an overwhelming majority of the French settlers in Pennsylvania were Huguenots and these would naturally come in for the greater share of attention, but the Catholics are equally entitled to be included in any description of the French population of the province. While the earlier French immigration to Pennsylvania was composed almost entirely of Protestants, the later immigration was Catholic and was induced by causes quite different from those which brought the Huguenots to the colony.

Although the French settlers of colonial Pennsylvania were few in comparison with the English, the Germans, and the Scotch-Irish, it may be stated at the outset that they were much more numerous than has ordinarily been supposed and are entitled to greater recognition than they have hitherto received. If, like the Welsh, they lost their national identity and were merged with the surrounding population, this does not lessen the fact that there was a considerable strain of French blood in the province. The tendency to minimize the French element of the population may be attributed partly to the fact that these immigrants did not settle in distinct groups in Pennsylvania as they did in Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, and South Carolina, and are therefore difficult to trace; and partly to the fact that they were so closely identified with the German and Swiss immigrants that they have not been accorded separate treatment by the historians. With the possible exception of South Carolina none of the thirteen colonies received so large a number of French settlers as did Pennsylvania, and this is especially true of the Huguenots. According to Laux, the number of Huguenot immigrants coming to Pennsylvania exceeded those in South Carolina.¹

¹ Laux, "The Huguenot Element in Pennsylvania," p. 1.

While in the face of conventional history this claim may seem to be extravagant, it is nevertheless supported by an array of facts strong enough to leave little doubt that it is not far wrong, if any.

The causes of French emigration to colonial Pennsylvania, though partly political and economic, were chiefly religious. An overwhelming majority of these immigrants were Huguenots, whose compelling motive was the desire to enjoy religious liberty. No doubt in the case of many there was mixed with this motive the hope of greater economic opportunity and of more political liberty, and a few were probably influenced by the spirit of adventure. The religious motive, however, was paramount, and serves to illustrate how prevailing was this motive with the early settlers of Pennsylvania, which attracted a greater diversity of religious sects fleeing from persecution than did any other of the thirteen American colonies. In the case of the French Catholics, the motive was either political or economic, sometimes mixed with the spirit of adventure. With this element of the French emigrants, who were the last to come, the religious motive was not present, as they were not persecuted at home and had nothing to fear from the government on religious grounds. During the troublous period of the French Revolution and its aftermath, some sought refuge in Pennsylvania as political exiles fleeing the terrors of the guillotine. In the case of the unhappy Acadian Catholics who settled in the province, it was simply a matter of having been forcibly wrested from their homes by the British government and turned loose to shift for themselves. Let us now proceed to describe in some detail the French settlements in the province, taking up first the Huguenot and then the Catholic immigration.

The Huguenot emigration to America was but a single phase of that larger emigration of these oppressed people who, under the sufferings endured at

the hands of Louis XIV, culminating in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, fled from religious persecution to Holland, Germany, Switzerland, England, Ireland, and America. Of the hundreds of thousands of these excellent people who thus became exiles from their native land, a relatively small number escaped to the New World, and of these the majority settled in other colonies than Pennsylvania. A respectable number, however, came to Pennsylvania, where they were welcomed by the authorities, became excellent citizens, and incidentally added still further to the racial diversity of the province. Penn extended to the Huguenots a cordial invitation to settle in his domain, and his agents in Europe encouraged them to come hither.²

In sharp contrast with the English and German emigrants to Pennsylvania, very few of the French settlers came to the colony directly from their home land; but had previously emigrated to other countries and from these found their way, often in the second generation, to America. This was especially true of the Huguenots, practically all of whom came indirectly from France. The Catholic French, on the other hand, except in rare instances, came directly from the mother country. A further source of emigration of settlers of French stock to Pennsylvania was that from the neighboring British colonies, especially from New York and New Jersey. This immigration was chiefly Huguenot and constituted a respectable number of French settlers in the province. A contingent of Catholic French settled in Pennsylvania following the dispersion of French Neutrals, or Acadians, deported by the British from Nova Scotia in 1755. A few settlers in the province came from Bermuda and the West Indies, among whom were John and Elliston Perot and Daniel Roberdeau. When the islands of St. Christopher,

² Laux, *op. cit.*, p. 10; Montgomery, "History of Berks County," pp. 17-18.

Guadeloupe, and Martinique, which had become a refuge for oppressed Huguenots, were made penal colonies to which Huguenots were exiled by the French government, many of these unhappy people fled from the indignities imposed upon them to the hospitable soil of Pennsylvania. This particular group settled chiefly in Philadelphia. Such were the sources whence originated the French emigrants to Pennsylvania in the colonial period.³

The French constituted one of the original elements of the population of Pennsylvania, which not only began to come early but continued in a fairly constant stream throughout the whole colonial era. It appears that even Peter Minuit himself, founder of the Swedish settlement on the Delaware, was of Huguenot extraction and it is certain that some of the pioneer settlers in New Sweden were of French stock.⁴ In fact it was the French who effected the first settlement within the present limits of Pennsylvania. In 1623 a small company of Huguenots who had been brought to New York by Jesse de Forest effected a settlement on an island in the Delaware a short distance below the falls. This settlement, however, was soon abandoned. When the Swedes and Dutch ruled the Delaware region, from 1638 to 1664, a few French settlers were scattered throughout that region. Among these were Jean Paul Jacquet, Alexander Boyer, Joos de la Grange, Jacques Hypolite, and Jean de Haes. Jacquet was appointed by Peter Stuyvesant Vice-Director of the Dutch government on the Delaware in 1655.⁵

There were French settlers in Philadelphia almost from the beginning, and some of these became influen-

³ Laux, *op. cit.*, p. 20; Stapleton, "Memorials of the Huguenots in America, with Special Reference to Their Emigration to Pennsylvania," pp. 42-43.

⁴ Fosdick, "The French Blood in America," p. 291.

⁵ Fosdick, *op. cit.*, pp. 290-292; Laux pp. 9-10; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.

tial in the affairs of the city and colony. Among the early citizens of the borough were Edmund Du Castle, John de La Vall, Andrew Doz, and Samuel Robinett. Gabriel Rappe, Nicholas Reboteau, and Andrew Imbert are recorded as taking the oath of allegiance September 10, 1683.⁶ In 1692 arrived James de la Plaine and Antoine Duché, the latter being the father of Rev. Jacob Duché who made the opening prayer of the First Continental Congress.⁷ Andros Souplis (Supplee) arrived in the city in 1684 and was the progenitor of the Supplee family in America. Another early arrival was Isaac Roberdeau, whose son Daniel was a Major-General in the Revolution and a member of the Continental Congress. One of the most distinguished families of Philadelphia was that of the Boudinots. The founder of this family in America was Elias Boudinot, who settled in New York in 1686. His son, Elias II, located in Philadelphia in 1736 and was the father of Elias III, who became an eminent lawyer, President of the Continental Congress in 1782, and director of the Philadelphia mint from 1795 to 1805. Elias Boudinot III was also the first president of the American Bible Society and a philanthropist whose long and useful life exhibited the highest type of citizenship. Another distinguished Huguenot family was that of Hillegas. The Philadelphia representative of this family was Michael Hillegas, Jr., who was Treasurer of the United States from 1776 to 1789 and the progenitor of numerous descendants of great respectability. Stephen Girard, born near Bordeaux, France, May 24, 1750, of seafaring parents, began life by running away from home and, at the age of fourteen, shipping as a cabin boy for the West Indies. Later he became captain and shipowner and in 1777 made Phila-

⁶ Jenkins, "Pennsylvania Colonial and Federal," vol. I, p. 302; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁷ Laux, p. 11.

delphia his home. Here as shipowner, merchant, and banker, this eccentric man amassed the enormous fortune of ten million dollars, became the first multimillionaire in America, supported the credit of the government at a critical stage in the War of 1812, bequeathed about nine million dollars to philanthropic enterprises, and as the founder of Girard College for orphan boys left an enduring monument to his memory. Other prominent Philadelphians of French descent were Peter S. Du Ponceau, Elliston and John Perot, the Chevalier family (descendants of Pierre Chevalier), the Garrigues family, Peter Delage, David Montandon, Pierre Le Colle, Paul Casser, and John Stephen Benezet. The last named was the first treasurer of the city of Philadelphia. That there were numerous Huguenots in Philadelphia at an early date is attested by the records of Christ Episcopal Church, the Reformed Church, and St. Michael's Lutheran Church, of that city. No well-balanced history of Philadelphia could be written without taking into account the achievements of the French element of the population. In the neighboring hamlet of Germantown some of the earliest settlers were Huguenots, among whom may be mentioned Jean Le Brun, James De la Plaine, Jean Dedier, Wigard Levering and Gerhart Levering. From Gerhart Levering were descended the Rt. Rev. J. Mortimer Levering, Bishop of the Moravian Church, and Hon. Joshua Levering, Prohibition candidate for the presidency of the United States in 1896. Wigard Levering, a man of prominence in his community, was the founder of Roxborough.⁸

While the French settlers constituted a minority element everywhere in Pennsylvania, they were neverthe-

⁸ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-52; Weiss, "History of the French Protestant Refugees," vol. I, pp. 375-6; Baird, "History of the Huguenot Emigration to America," vol. II, pp. 80-81, 123; Fosdick, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-307, 316.

less widely diffused over the province and it would be hard to find any considerable area where there was not a sprinkling of them; and in the aggregate their numbers were greater than has ordinarily been supposed. They were most numerous in the German counties, but were present in respectable numbers in the English counties and were not wanting in the Scotch-Irish counties. Their history is chiefly that of the Huguenots and is closely intertwined with that of the Germans, as the great majority of them came to Pennsylvania from Germany on the same ships which brought the Palatines and many of them had already become Germanized in speech and customs to such a degree as to render it difficult to trace them as a separate race. Let us try to discover their footmarks as they spread over the province and effected settlements here and there.

Quite a number of Huguenots located at an early period in Montgomery county in the Perkiomen Valley and along the lower Schuylkill. Among these were the families of Hillegas, Leshire, Lingel, Griesemere, Transue, Desmond, Labar, Reboteau, de Bleama, Somaine, Boyer, De Frain, Pechin, and Purvance. Other Huguenots settling in this region at a somewhat later date were the families of Tricot (Trego), Dubois, Desmond, Le Fever, Le Bar, Shuette (Shuey), le Quay (Quay), Missamer, Bliem, Begonet, Loreaux (Lora), Le Shar (Leshar), Vautie, Retteau (Rettew), Perdeau (Barto), and De La Cour (Delliker).⁹

The first distinct colony of French emigrants to settle in Pennsylvania, and almost the only instance of anything approaching group settlement by them, was that established by Madame Ferree in Lancaster county in 1712. Penn, through sympathy with this estimable widow lady whose husband had been killed in France and whose acquaintance he had formed in

⁹ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

England, had generously given her two thousand acres located in the Pequea Valley in Lancaster County. She bought two thousand additional acres in the vicinity and established a sort of center for Huguenot refugees. Accompanying Madame Ferree were her three sons, Daniel, John and Philip, and her three daughters, Catharine, Mary and Jane, and her son-in-law, Isaac Lefevre, the husband of Catharine. As a result of this settlement there was soon a flourishing colony of Huguenots in the northern part of Lancaster county. Madame Ferree had a numerous group of descendants, some of whom were highly distinguished. Among these were Major-General John F. Reynolds and Admiral Winfield Scott Schley. Isaac Lefevre was the ancestor of a numerous and respectable posterity. The French settlement in the Pequea Valley was augmented by some Huguenot families whom Penn had induced to emigrate to Pennsylvania to cultivate the grape and to lay the foundations of a wine industry. When it was found that the soil was not favorable to this industry in the Schuylkill valley, where this beginning of grape culture was made, this group of Huguenots joined Madame Ferree's settlement in the Pequea Valley. Among them were families named Dubois, Boileau, Larroux, De La Noe (Delano), and Dore.¹⁰

Another attempted group settlement of Huguenots in Pennsylvania was promoted by two English speculators, Sir Mathias Vincent and Dr. Daniel Coxe. These two men bought ten thousand acres each, bordering on the Schuylkill and within the present limits of Chester county. Their tracts included the present townships of East and West Vincent. After inducing some Huguenots and perhaps others to settle on his tract, Dr. Coxe became discouraged at the meagre results accomplished and abandoned the project. Sev-

¹⁰ Laux, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-108; Watson's Annals, Vol. II, p. 118.

eral families settled on Vincent's land, but the expectations of both these proprietors failed of realization.¹¹

A colony of Huguenots was established as a small but distinct settlement in the Oley Valley in Berks county within the present townships of Oley and Alsace. These were the pioneer settlers in Berks county and located there between 1704 and 1710. Of this group a few had previously settled in New York, chiefly at Esopus, whence they migrated to Pennsylvania. Among the early Huguenot settlers in this region were Daniel Bartolet, Isaac De Tirsch (De Turk), Jean Le Dee, Jacques de La Planch (Plank), Jean and Peter Bertolet, George de Bonneville, and the five Le Van brothers. John Keim, who was of Huguenot extraction, is believed to have been the pioneer Frenchman in this community, having settled on Manatawny Creek in 1698 where "it is quite probable that he acted in the capacity of a promoter and pioneer for the rest." Some of the descendants of the pioneers at Oley still reside on the old homesteads which they have retained in the family from generation to generation down to the present day.¹²

A considerable body of Huguenots, numbering about fifty families, settled in the Lehigh Valley. Though the great majority of these arrived after 1735, there were some who came at a much earlier period. Among these were Samuel De Pui, who settled near the Delaware in 1697, and Isaac Santee who located above Easton in 1685. De Pui, who had settled originally at Esopus, located near Stroudsburg in Monroe county. John Bartelme (Bartholomew) settled in Northampton county in 1737 and was the ancestor of a numerous posterity. In this county located also Peter Le Barre (Le Bar)

¹¹ Keith, "Chronicles of Pennsylvania," Vol. I, p. 133.

¹² Laux, *op. cit.*, p. 15; Montgomery, "History of Berks County," p. 18; Rupp, "History of the Counties of Berks and Lebanon," pp. 144, 147; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-69.

with his two brothers, Charles and Abraham, in the vicinity of the Delaware Water Gap about 1730. These three brothers became the progenitors of over seven thousand descendants, among whom were Colonel Abraham Le Bar, Commandant at Easton Ferry during the Revolution, and Major Marion Le Bar, who was killed at the Battle of Paoli, September 20, 1777. Other early settlers in the Lehigh Valley were Paul Balliet, John Jacob Michelet (Mickley), Jean Philip Vesqueau (Wesco), Louis La Rose (Laros), Egidius Grim, Jean Franz Clewell, Matthias Weiss, George Rupp, Casper Tonnelier (Kiefer), John Daniel Jaquet, Henry and Daniel Tournet (Dorney), Abraham, Samuel and Nicholas Vautrin (Wotring), and many others. There was quite a colony of Huguenots in the vicinity of Bristol, the majority of whom had migrated from New York and New Jersey.¹³

Lancaster county received a considerable number of French immigrants, chiefly Huguenots, at an early period. Attention has already been called to the colony established by Madame Ferree in the Pequea Valley, but there were many other settlers of French extraction scattered throughout the county. Among these were Peter Bezellon, Martin Chartier, Joseph Jessup, and Captain James Letort, who were pioneer settlers in the Conestoga Valley, where they located as fur traders about the year 1700. The records of the Reformed Church and of the Trinity Lutheran Church of the city of Lancaster contain many names of Huguenots. Among the Huguenot families of Lancaster city and county may be mentioned those of Mathiot, Forney, Hubele, Roller, Bonnett, Marchand, Bouvier, De Beau (De Bow), Du Tay (Douty), Surnois (Sumey) Fortineaux (Fordney), Beauchamp (Bushong), La

¹³ Roberts, "The First Huguenot Settlers in the Lehigh Valley," pp. 7-20; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80; Laux, "Colonel Stephen Balliet," pp. 4-18; Balliet, "Record of the Race of the Balyards," pp. 9-19.

Tour, Oberlin, Coquelin, Bleim, Delore, Ranck, Simonett, Parrett, De Pons, Detar, Villard, Lapierre (Germanized to Stein), Duey, Martine, Picquart, Fleury, Chateau, Rockey, Le Roy, and others.¹⁴

Early Huguenot settlers in Lebanon county were Jacob Kieffer, George Philip de Haas, Isaac Couchet, George Laroux (Lerew), and Abraham Raiguel. Huguenots located at various places along the Tulpehocken and the Swatara, among whom were John Pontius, Jacob and Herman Achey, Simon Bennech, and Jacob Le Baiseur (Bayshore).¹⁵

When settlements extended beyond the Susquehanna into the present county of York, a number of Huguenots found their way into that region. Included among these were Jacob Dutill, Franz Ludwig Berrot, Jean Voturin, Jacob Noel, and Jean Moreau. Beginning about 1750, Huguenots entered present Adams county. Prominent among these were James Pettit, Abraham Larve, and Daniel Renolle, all of whom settled in the eastern part of the county. A decade later the Conewago colony was formed by the emigration to this region of a considerable number of Huguenots from New Jersey.¹⁶

Huguenots were also found in Western Pennsylvania, as indeed all over the province. Most of these were descendants of immigrants who had located in the eastern part of the colony upon their arrival, though there were some who went immediately to the trans-Allegheny region. Jean Cessna settled in Bedford county at an early period. Many Huguenots, including in their number Frederick Pershing, settled in Westmoreland and Somerset counties. Fayette county became the home of Albert Gallatin, Charles Alexandre Mestrezat, and other Huguenots. Gallatin, who was

¹⁴ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-97.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-123.

¹⁶ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-130.

French Swiss and from the city of Geneva, founded New Geneva on the Monongahela river and was the means of inducing other Huguenots from his homeland to locate in Fayette. Some of the pioneer settlers of Allegheny county and of Pittsburgh were of Huguenot lineage and included such men as Col. Stephen Bayard, Dr. Felix Bruno, Antoine Dreyvault (Dravo), and the Large and Rutan families. Antoine Dreyvault became a very prosperous citizen of Pittsburgh, built a fine mansion, entertained Lafayette in 1825 and later Louis Philippe when in exile, and founded a numerous and highly respectable family.¹⁷

During the French and Indian War the British governor of Acadia (Nova Scotia) resolved upon the expulsion of the seven thousand French neutrals from that region, and proceeded to transplant them to the British colonies to the southward. Of this number four hundred and fifty-four were sent to Pennsylvania, where they arrived on three ships November 18, 1755, and were set on shore without any provision being made for their maintenance. Their plight was desperate and many of them died soon after their arrival. Anthony Benezet exerted himself in their behalf and the Assembly voted money to relieve their immediate necessities. A large number perished, however, from privation and neglect, some were distributed among the various townships and put to work, and others escaped to Canada and the West Indies; but some remained to swell the number of French settlers in the province. Their identity was soon lost in the general mass of the population, but a melancholy interest attaches to them because of the hard lot they were compelled to undergo in being forcibly taken from their homes, deprived of their property, and exiled to uncongenial surroundings and severe sufferings in a

¹⁷ Stapleton, *ibid.*, pp. 130-131; Laux, "The Huguenot Element in Pennsylvania," pp. 17-18.

strange land. Their tragic fate has excited the compassion of posterity and was immortalized by Longfellow in his stately poem of *Evangeline*.¹⁸

During the Revolutionary War thousands of French aided the American colonies in winning their independence, and when the struggle had ended some of these remained in America and became citizens of the new republic. Among those who thus took up their residence in Pennsylvania were Major Peter S. Duponceau, Dr. Felix Bruno, Louis Crousillat, Simon Vallerchamp, Pierre Javin, and Frederick de Samo. Other prominent Pennsylvanians of French extraction who came at a somewhat later period were John James Audubon, Pierre du Simitiere, and Stephen Girard.¹⁹

When the Reign of Terror of the French Revolution caused many eminent Frenchmen to flee for their lives to less dangerous climes, a goodly number of these found their way to Pennsylvania. Though most of them returned to France when it appeared safe to do so, nevertheless a few remained as permanent residents. A party of French refugees came to Pennsylvania in 1793 and established a colony of political exiles on the North Branch of the Susquehanna in the present county of Bradford at a place they named Azilum (Asylum). Chief among the promoters of this project were Viscount Louis Marie de Noailles and Omer Talon. De Noailles, who was a brother-in-law of Lafayette, had commanded a regiment under Rochambeau at the siege of Yorktown, and Talon was a Paris banker who had held a high government post under the monarchy and was a member of an illustrious French family. These two men formed a company, bought 2400 acres of land, laid out the village of Asylum into lots, and made arrangements to receive colonists under the personal supervision of M. Talon. A number of

¹⁸ Shea, "The Catholic Church in Colonial Days," pp. 433-434.

¹⁹ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

houses were built of hewn logs, lots were cleared and improved, the fields were partially cultivated, a grist mill, a brewery, a theatre and a tavern were erected, a bakery was set up, a small Catholic chapel was built, stores were opened with goods brought directly from Philadelphia, a weekly post was established, and in a short while the settlement began to assume the appearance of an ordered community, albeit in the wilderness. The settlers were men of station and culture who had been accustomed to living in luxury and therefore found it difficult to adapt themselves to the conditions of pioneer life. They endured their privations, however, with the cheerfulness and fortitude characteristic of the gallant French people. When conditions in France permitted them to return in safety, most of them hastened to avail themselves of the opportunity; but some of them removed to Philadelphia, several to other parts of the United States, and a few remained at Asylum. Those remaining were the La Porte, Prevost, Homet, and Lefevre families. The Hon. John La Porte, Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, member of Congress and Surveyor General of the Commonwealth, was a descendant of one of these families. The town of Asylum, which in 1796 consisted of about fifty log houses and sheltered about forty families, was visited in 1795 by Louis Philippe, Talleyrand, and the Count de la Rochefoucauld. Though the settlement lasted only about ten years, the village and township of Asylum in Bradford county remain to this day as permanent memorials of this romantic episode in the history of the Keystone State.²⁰

Many emigrants of Huguenot extraction came to Pennsylvania along with the Germans from German

²⁰ Ingham, "A Short History of Asylum, Pa.," *passim*; Murray, "The Story of Some French Refugees and their 'Azilum,'" *passim*; Godcharles, "Daily Stories of Pennsylvania," pp. 892-894; Egle, "History of Pennsylvania," pp. 424-426.

Switzerland, from the Palatinate, and from the Rhine country generally. These had been driven from France at different times by religious persecution and a large percentage of them had become Germanized in language and customs. Many of them had even exchanged their French names for German equivalents. As a result of these circumstances there was a considerable number of French immigrants to Pennsylvania who were counted among the German element of the population, whereas they were really French. A large number of Huguenot companies came to the province on the emigrants ships from Rotterdam, whence they had embarked after having come from Switzerland, from Alsace and Lorraine, and from Holland; and many such lists are on record. Inasmuch, however, as they came on the same ships with larger numbers of Germans and so many of them had undergone the process of Germanizing for a generation or two, they were customarily lumped together with the "Palatines" and their French origin was overlooked. It is customary to regard Rupp's lists of "Thirty Thousand Immigrants" as recording the arrivals of Germans in the province, whereas a goodly percentage of these names were those of the French who accompanied the Germans to the New World. Most of the French immigrants to Pennsylvania settled in the German counties and were absorbed by the Germans in much the same way as the early Welsh settlers were absorbed by the English. This has led to the minimizing of the French racial strain in colonial Pennsylvania upon the part of historians.²¹

So common was the practice of translating French names into German that it seems advisable to call special attention to this process in order to bring into clearer relief the statement that the number of French

²¹ Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 9, 20; Montgomery, "History of Berks County," pp. 17-18; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-40; Laux, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3, 9, 12.

immigrants to Pennsylvania has been underestimated by conventional history. Instances of changes undergone in names to illustrate this point may be given as follows: Duchere to Deisher, Capelle to Shappel, De La Cour to Delliker, Vautrin to Wotring, Leseeq to Lessig, De Tirck to Deturk, Le Shar to Leshar. Instances of the actual translation of French names into their German equivalents are noted in the change of Tonnelier to Kiefer and of Lapierre to Stein, which serve to illustrate a not uncommon practice. To a less degree, French names were Anglicized to conform to the English pronunciation in the eastern counties where the English predominated. Thus de la Planch becomes Plank, Barthelme becomes Bartholomew, Fortineau becomes Fordney, and Baiseur becomes Bayshore. Many more such instances might be given, but these serve to illustrate the practice, and also to show that any enumeration of the population of Pennsylvania in the early period on the basis of mere names would result in an underestimate of the French element.²²

The religious affiliations of the French emigrants to Pennsylvania in the colonial period were overwhelmingly Protestant. It appears probable that over ninety per cent of this racial group were Huguenots. There was, however, a respectable number of Catholics, especially toward the close of the period. Inasmuch as in this era most of the French came to Pennsylvania to escape religious persecution, the immigration was chiefly Huguenot. The Catholics, not being persecuted at home, had no occasion to leave their country for religious reasons and only a small number of them emigrated. Thus it happened that most of the immigrants were Protestants, who had embraced the doctrines of Calvin. The religious denomination in Pennsylvania with which the Huguenots had most in common and

²² Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52, 88-97; 116-123; Laux, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

with which they most readily affiliated was the Reformed Church, which had a strong following among the German element of the population. It appears that they did not establish in the province churches of their own, but united with the churches already established in the communities where they settled. As the Lutheran Church was the most numerous religious body among the German population of the province and as the Huguenots settled mostly in the German counties, it followed naturally that many of them joined the Lutherans. Some of them, in fact, had already joined the Lutheran or the Reformed Church before emigrating to America. Some of the Huguenots united with the Moravians at Bethlehem and elsewhere; others with the Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Quakers. Among the records of Christ's Episcopal Church and of St. Michael's Lutheran Church of Philadelphia, of Trinity Lutheran Church of Lancaster, and of the First Reformed Church of Lancaster, and of various other churches, especially of the Reformed, occur many French names. Some had united with the Church of England during their temporary sojourn in that country and, upon their arrival in Pennsylvania, continued this relationship. A few Huguenots who had found refuge in Ireland accompanied the Scotch-Irish in the migration to Pennsylvania and settled with them on the frontier, and from these the Presbyterians received recruits. The Huguenots were a people of sterling worth and added an element of strength to the moral and religious life of the communities in which they settled.²³

The Catholic population of colonial Pennsylvania was inconsiderable in numbers and consisted chiefly of Germans, Irish, and English. The French Catholics represented a small though eminently respectable ele-

²³ Keith, "Chronicles of Pennsylvania," Vol. II, pp. 521-522; Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51, 90-91.

ment of the population. The Acadians were Catholics, as also were the settlers at Asylum. It is probable that the French immigrants to Pennsylvania during the period of the Confederation were nearly all Catholics and that a considerable number arrived at this time. From 1781 to 1790 the French racial element was greatly strengthened by this substantial Catholic immigration.²⁴

Because of their ready assimilation with the German and English elements of the population and of the Germanizing and Anglicizing of many of their names, it is difficult to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to the number of French settlers in Pennsylvania in the colonial period. Stapleton gives a list of over six hundred distinctive French surnames of Huguenots alone found in Pennsylvania. If to these were added the French Catholics of the province, this number would be still further increased. Given a reasonable birth rate and it seems probable that by the time of the Revolution, and especially by the time of the first census in 1790, there were some seven or eight thousand people of French blood in Pennsylvania. The facts adduced in the foregoing pages support this statement and lead to the conclusion that this is a conservative estimate. The figures given by Rossiter, in estimating the French population of Pennsylvania on the basis of French names, are particularly untrustworthy in view of the extent of the practice of Germanizing and Anglicizing on the part of the French, and his estimate of 2341 is ridiculously small and needs a radical upward revision.²⁵

The French racial strain in colonial Pennsylvania was not only larger than has commonly been supposed

²⁴ Shea, "The Catholic Church in Colonial Days," p. 446; also Shea, "Life and Times of the Most Rev. John Carroll," pp. 52, 68, 257.

²⁵ Stapleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-157; Rossiter, "A Century of Population Growth in the United States," p. 117.

but constituted a particularly desirable element of the population which contributed worthily to the political, economic, and social progress of the province, and later to that of the commonwealth. The names of Hillegas, Roberdeau, Gallatin, Boudinot, Girard, and others, serve to show that no adequate history of Pennsylvania could be written which failed to take into account the services rendered by the French element of the population.

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342 *French Racial Strain in Colonial Penna.*

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