

AUGUSTINE HERRMAN, LANCASTER COUNTY'S FIRST MAP MAKER

By HERBERT H. BECK

AUGUSTINE HERRMAN was one of the leading figures of the lower Susquehanna Valley in the seventeenth century. He was the first man to chart this part of Eastern North America. He named Cecil County, Maryland, which adjoins Lancaster County; he named Bohemia and the Bohemia River within that county in which he was an extensive landowner. He was the first naturalized citizen in America, and he seems to have been the man who started the tobacco industry.

These facts, which are of deep local interest, have been collected, verified and compiled by one of Augustine Herrman's countrymen, Dr. Leon Zelenka Lerando, Professor of Modern Languages in Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, and a member of the Czech Ausland Institute in Prague. Dr. Lerando's elaborate publications on the subject of Augustine Herrman appeared in *The Tyden (The Week)*, a Czech journal printed in English, in 1927. It is from this source, and incidentally from the fertile pen of Mrs. Elizabeth Lehman Myers of Bethlehem, who called the writer's attention to the subject, that some data on Augustine Herrman's career of general prominence in our great inland peninsula between the Delaware and Susquehanna is brought before The Lancaster County Historical Society.

Herrman's map of the Lower Susquehanna Valley was published with a paper entitled "The Location of the Susquehanna Fort" by D. H. Landis, in Vol. XIV, pp. 81-117, of the Proceedings of The Lancaster County Historical Society. The original of this map is in the British Museum; a photostatic copy of it is in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. From the latter source Mr. Landis had two copies made, one of which he presented to The Lancaster County Historical Society. This map charts a region of the upper Chesapeake extending northward to a point well above the Conestoga in Lancaster County. The paper by Mr. Landis contains considerable information on Herrman which supplements the data disclosed by Dr. Lerando's research.

Augustine Herrman, according to Th. Capek in *The Czechs in America*, was the son of Abraham Herrman or Herzman, who was a pastor in the church of the *Unitas Fratrum* (early Moravians) at Mseno near Prague. In 1621, six weeks after the battle of White Mountain, which terminated the reign of the protestant leader, Frederick "the Winter King," who with other Czechs fled with them, the father, mother, Augustine and three sisters took refuge about Zittau in Saxony. Augustine seems to have been the baby of this exiled family. Though recorded elsewhere as having been born in 1605, Herrman in his will, written in 1684, gives his age as sixty-three. This would place him in his mother's arms when the flight was made in 1621. This was a century before the persecuted followers of the martyr, John Hus, were befriended and reorganized into the modern Moravian Church by Count Zinzendorf at Herrnhut, Saxony. Zittau is not far from Herrnhut and formerly the region was predominantly Slavonic for Lusatia (Upper and Lower) belonged to the Czech State.

The young Augustine Herrman who landed at the port of New Amsterdam was a versatile, resourceful man, well educated and qualified for leadership by his energy, enterprise, vision and eloquence. This character, generally recognized by his contemporaries, is recorded later in William Penn's letter of September 16th, 1681, in which Herrman is addressed as "represented man of substance & reputation in the part of the bay."

At New Amsterdam Herrman soon became a prominent man of business and public affairs. As a member of the Council of Nine Men he was the writer and probably the author of a letter of the Council to the States General (July 26th, 1649) complaining against the misgovernment of Stuyvesant. In business Herrman engaged in extensive transactions between the colonies and adjacent islands. He traded on the Delaware, in Virginia and New Jersey, and visited Corsica, Sardinia, the Antilles, Barbadoes, Brazil and Surinam. In January, 1659, he undertook a long voyage to Curacao and Buenos Ayres, taking on sugar, cotton and horses in exchange for the furs he brought from his Indian traders at home. On December 24th, 1658, he requested as "the first beginner of the tobacco trade" the permission to take a voyage to the Dutch and French islands in the West Indies. This, with let-

ters of recommendation to the governors, was granted him. (Dutch manuscripts, number 204, Albany). As administrator Herrman treated with the Indians, and acted as ambassador of the Dutch government to Maryland, Massachusetts, Virginia, Rhode Island and other colonies.

As a man thus equipped with business and legal sense, wide travel and experience, Herrman won the interest and friendship of Lord Baltimore, who seems to have induced him to leave New Amsterdam for Maryland. It is possible, too, that he was partly influenced by the clever people of New Amsterdam who, according to Stuyvesant's quoted letter, were desirous of having their sphere of control enlarged into the region of New Amstel and Altena on the South River. At the time Herrman moved, which was shortly after 1659, he was not only one of the most prominent but also one of the richest men of New Amsterdam. He went from the society of educated men and civilization into a "farr Remote, then unknown Wilderness, solely alone, amidst a multitude of Barbarous Indians voyd of any other neighborhood." (Herrman Manuscripts, Maryland Historical Society). He moved into hardship and danger, knowing perfectly well that his new home at the head of the Chesapeake was on contested ground claimed by the New Netherlanders and also by Lord Baltimore. With this in mind he retained several properties in New Amsterdam and remained in touch with his friends there; though later, in 1682, he maintained that during his embassy of 1659 he "Got the first impression that all this continent did undoubtedly belong to his Royal Majesties' Dominions of Great Britains, which was the first acquaintance with Maryland & created in him a resolution to remove himself thereinto, if he & his posterity might enjoy on Chessopeakeside, that Tract of Land now called Bohemia (because born in that country, Prince Ruppert's countryman) and Appoquinimin for his sons by the name of St. Augustine on Delaware." (Penn Manuscripts, Pennsylvania Historical Society).

The reference to Prince Ruppert is explained by Dr. Lerando in this way: The famous Winter-king Frederick the Palsgrave, husband of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King James of England, was the father of Prince Ruppert, who was the Crown Prince

of Bohemia. As such he was always accepted by the Czech Protestants who went into exile after the battle of White Mountain which terminated the independence of the Czech kingdom in 1621. Naturally he never had any chances to regain the throne which King Frederick had lost. But in England, where Prince Ruppert continued to live, he was treated as Prince Royal, and Prince Ruppert Land was named for him. Thus Herrman alluded in his petition to his being a compatriot of Prince Ruppert in order to win some consideration in England.

Then follows Herrman's agreement with Lord Baltimore: "Having made Proffer to Caecilius the first absolute Lord proprietary of the Province of Maryland to make an Exact Mapp of the Country if his Lordship would Please to grant unto him the aboves, Lands for an Inheritance to his Posterity and the Priviledges of a Manor," (Penn Manuscripts). Herrman was assured, by letter dated September 10th, 1660, that his Lordship accepted the proposal. (Herrman Manuscripts, 7, Maryland Historical Society). Thereupon it was recommended to Hon. Phillip Calvert, then Governor, to grant Herrman one tract, about 4000 acres, and another of 1000 acres of "good plantable land."

Lord Baltimore declared Herrman's map, which fulfilled this agreement, to be "the best of any country whatsoever drawn." It figured in many boundary disputes and was a work of the utmost importance in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

Having obtained these lands from the Lord Proprietor, Herrman, now a free denizen of Maryland, but still a burgher of New Amsterdam, desiring to be absolutely certain of his title and property and knowing that the Indians claimed the land for themselves, in 1660, "bought all the Land thereby with permission of Governors & Counsell, of the Susquehanna Indians—who claimed the Property." He "met with the great men out of the Susquehanna Fort at Spesutie Island upon a Treaty of Souldiers as the Record will testify."

Spesutie Island, the picturesque scene of this important purchase, as ascertained by the writer in his duck-shooting experiences in its region, is generally recognized by baymen as the land line which separates the Susquehanna Flats from the Chesapeake. The island lies about ten miles south of Havre-de-Grace, where

the river broadens into vast shallows which are almost continuous beds of vallisneria, the favorite food of many wild-fowl. Since John Smith in 1608 first recorded in his log-book the multitudes of fowl he saw there, the Susquehanna Flats have been known as one of the greatest feeding resorts of ducks, geese, and swans in Eastern North America. It is doubtful if there is a similar patch of land in the continent which has viewed as many wedges, lines and irregular companies of flying wild-fowl as has Spesutie Island. To the naturalist and the sportsman Spesutie Island is as colorful as it is picturesque to the historian.

It is possible too that by his act on the island Herrman was not only desirous of winning safe title to his land but also the good will of the Indians, for he informs us that in 1661 he "took Possession and Transported his People from Manhattan"—"to Seat and Inhabitt with Great Cost and Charges in the midst of Danger." (This and other quotations above from Herrman's Memorandum or Journal, Maryland Historical Society).

The great estate, which was granted Herrman and which he picked out for himself, lay at the head of the bay between the Elk, Bohemia and Back rivers. Soon after the patent for Bohemia Manor was obtained, which was on October 12th, 1663, Herrman began to increase his estates, adding to them in the east, evidently with the intention of creating a solid block of land from Chesapeake Bay to the South River. After a time, with the help of his sons, this plan was realized.

This land extension scheme was part of what seems to have been Herrman's great ambition. From all reports and documents his aim was to become more than a great landowner and merchant-prince. Ultimately he hoped to be an absolutely independent proprietor, a real lord, who for his various public services would finally be awarded an elevated position akin to that of Lord Baltimore and William Penn. His estates could actually compete favorably with many a European principality and barony. He was perfectly aware of the great possibilities of transportation and commerce over his lands and he seems to have foreseen and even contemplated a Chesapeake-Delaware canal. Herrman wished to establish his estate as a "fidei commis" which would be inherited by right of primogeniture and which never could go out of the

family. This desire he never denied. There is ample proof of his ambition not only in his numerous last wills but also in the Journals of the Dankers and Sluyters. (Edition of the Long Island Historical Society).

That Augustine Herrman was the first alien naturalized by a Colonial law in any of the English Continental Colonials of North America seems to be well established by Dr. Lerando. Herrman's naturalization, it is shown, was accomplished by an act of the legislature of Maryland in 1666. This act was finally carried into effect by a patent of naturalization issued by the Proprietor, November 15th, 1669 (Old Style). Furthermore Dr. Lerando clearly points out the difference between denization and naturalization, which some previous writers have confused, and hence is able to show the incorrectness of their claims that there was an earlier case of naturalization than that of Herrman.

Herrman proposed to Lord Baltimore to erect a town in New Bohemia and to call it Caecilton for his Lordship, whose name was Caecilus. He suggested that the new county be called Caecil County. (Herrman Manuscripts, 7, Maryland Historical Society). Thus he is regarded as the "illustrious founder of Cecil County of which he originated the name." (Johnston. History of Cecil County).

Our illustrious neighbor and first map maker is buried at Bohemia Manor on what was originally his great estate in Cecil County, where his well marked grave may be seen to-day.