

Daniel Herman, Pioneer

by Dr. Stewart W. Herman

In the spring of 1709 Daniel Herman, aged 28, reached England from Holland with Mary his wife, their four-year-old daughter, Apalonia, and their two-year-old son, Christian. The head of the family was listed among the "husbandmen and vinedressers." Their religion was marked "Reformed."

This sparse information is contained in a compilation of names made at St. Catherine's Church on May 6, 1709 by two Lutheran clergymen stationed in London. They were the Danish pastor John Tribbeko and the German pastor George Ruperti. This roster and three subsequent ones in May and June identify several hundreds of "poor Palatine Protestants" who came to England in search of refuge and re-settlement. A few other Hermans, either Lutheran or Reformed, are listed but none appears to be in any way related to Daniel.

The total number of refugees straining London's resources about that time rose to an estimated 40,000 souls. Many of them - destitute or nearly so - had to camp at Blackheath on the edge of the city for weeks or months until passage elsewhere could be arranged. The public houses were both overcrowded and overpriced. As an emergency measure, one thousand army tents provided temporary shelter and a food ration of eighteen cents per day sustained the exiles. In all likelihood Daniel, young and unlettered, grimly but gladly accepted such public assistance.

Advance notice of this spring flood of emigrants was attached to a

report from the British resident in the Hague, named Dayrolle. Dated December 24, 1708, it enclosed an undated plea for assistance in behalf of Palatines who were moving, or would soon be moving, down the Rhine to Rotterdam. The Dutch themselves no doubt strongly supported the plea, perhaps even initiated it. The Mennonites especially were deeply interested in the fate of their persecuted co-religionists. Mr. Dayrolle was most sympathetic and - perhaps motivated by the Christmas spirit - suggested to his government that the impoverished wanderers might be carried to England on troop transports which were then ferrying British soldiery to Holland in the war against Louis XIV, who in large measure was responsible for making so many people homeless.

In brief review, there were reasons both old and new for the sudden increase in the number of emigrants in 1709. Among the old reasons were the unremitting persecution of non-conformists in the Reformed parts of Switzerland, sporadic war and repression in Germany's unstable Rhineland (Palatinate) and, not least, an economic depression aggravated by the ruinous severity of recent winters. Among the new reasons were the enticing lure of an open door to a new world, the friendly support of Dutch sympathizers and the benevolent policies of Good Queen Anne who had recently ascended the British throne with a Protestant consort at her side. No doubt most, if not all, of these reasons worked upon Daniel Herman, too, as he joined the avalanche of people from all parts of Germany and Switzerland moving down the Rhine to the English Channel.

Where did Daniel Herman come from? Taking all circumstantial evidence into account, it now appears that his point of departure for America must be sought either in the German Palatinate below Heidelberg or in the Emmenthal area of Bernese Switzerland. Possibly both! Whether his birthplace can ever be precisely located is extremely doubtful. A Swiss origin, however, is strongly suggested by his settlement among other Swiss in Pennsylvania, the description of his eldest daughter as Swiss at her marriage to Gabriel Carpenter and the family's very close ties in Lancaster County to the Zimmerman (Carpenter) family who were definitely Bernese and Reformed.

Strangely enough, this conclusion as to Swiss origins was drawn only after efforts to locate Daniel's European home were begun in 1972. . .in Germany! Until then it was tacitly assumed in the family that "Pennsylvania Dutch" signified *German-German* background. The equal likelihood of *Swiss-German* ancestry was never entertained, perhaps because the name does not sound particularly Swiss.

A brief comment regarding the name Herman may be in order. Whether as a first or last name, its derivation stems from that ancient hero Armin - latinized Arminius - who entered Valhalla as the only Germanic general who ever defeated a Roman army (9 A.D.), forcing

the imperial legions to withdraw permanently from the Elbe to the Rhine. Consequently, there are legions of his namesakes - by no means his descendants! - in Germany today, and a small sprinkling in Switzerland too. Mostly Hermann or Herrmann. The doubling of the r's and n's seems to have become increasingly common in the 18th and 19th centuries, that is, after Daniel left Europe.

At all events, Herman - with one r and one n - is somewhat easier to trace or identify, despite the fact that at least one of Daniel's sons succumbed to the widespread practice of translating or anglicizing the surname. Daniel's good friend, Heinrich Zimmerman, for instance, hastened to become Henry Carpenter, and may have influenced the change of Herman to Harman. Daniel Jr. and his descendants used the latter form, whereas the brothers who moved to York County retained the original spelling.

The difficulty of tracing such names back to places of origin in Europe long after family ties had been broken is compounded by the fact that bureaucratic paperwork was less well developed and the personal records of the first emigres are very scant, especially in the case of the expulsion or voluntary departure of whole families who were officially regarded as good riddance. Brief inquiry at the *Heimatstelle Pfalz* in Kaiserslautern, Germany, which specializes in preserving information about Palatine emigration, produced some Herman marriage data in local church registers of the late 1600s which in turn led to Switzerland. A South German genealogist suggested Kirchardt or Hilsbach in the Kraichgau below Heidelberg as villages in which Swiss expellees had found refuge and the surname Herman was known. All such clues bore an obvious relation to the massive influx of Swiss exiles into the Palatinate from Berne in the latter half of the 17th century, especially in 1671. Could Daniel himself have spent his early years in the Palatinate before setting out on the voyage to America?

The most promising reference, and the only one which bore good fruit, was to the church at Bammental near Sinsheim, where banns were published on Feb. 28, 1686, announcing the betrothal of Christian Herman, son of Daniel Herman from Traubental (spelling unclear) in Berne Canton, Switzerland, to Barbara, daughter of Hieronym Goenerer of Muellendorf, Canton Thun. They were married at Gayberg near Bammental in April 1686. It was the *only* Herman entry in the parish register, clearly suggesting that the two young Swissers had no doubt found temporary employment in the vicinity and then found each other.

The fact that Barbara was living in the parish did not necessarily imply that Christian lived there too. A subsequent stab at hunting for additional Hermans in nearby parishes turned up a sizeable family across the hills in Reformed church records at Leimen but there was no trace of a connection, Swiss or otherwise. Until further evidence is brought to light, one can only speculate that the Daniel who went to

America in 1709, having been born in 1681, may at most have been a nephew of the Christian who married Barbara in 1686 and therefore a grandson of Daniel of Traubental.

Meanwhile investigation had moved to Switzerland itself, impelled by the recurrence of the forenames Christian and Daniel which appear with exceptional frequency among the Hermans on the Pequea. Unfortunately, according to the best Swiss authorities in Berne, a place by the plausible name of Traubental does not exist and, in fact, had never existed, - not only in the Canton of Berne but in any of the other 21 cantons. As the spelling in the Bammental register was badly blurred, conjecture suggested Trubtal in the Emmenthal which had been, so-to-speak, notorious as a last stronghold of beleaguered Anabaptists in the Canton of Berne. In fact remnants of the *Taeufer* still flourish quietly not so far away.

Of all the places in the world for an ancestor to come from, the village Trubtal in the parish of Langnau - set deep in a peaceful valley among verdant hills and studded with photogenic farms - is certainly one of the most beautiful! Inquiry revealed that the name Hermann (double n) indeed existed in the vicinity but not of very long standing. The lexicon of Swiss family names, by the way, contains no Herman but describes Hermann as belonging generally to immigrants from Germany in the early 1800s. The only Herman in any of the Swiss records seemed to be a Vyt Herman of Vynigen who in 1538 attended a disputation in Berne between Anabaptists and Reformed. Was he Anabaptist or Reformed? A subsequent visit to Vynigen elicited no Vyt (David) Herman data, since the carefully preserved records do not go back beyond 1660. Moreover, no lingering memory of the name remains in the small village today, although Hermann is prominently represented in nearby Burgdorf.

As already noted, the emigres who fled from Switzerland were not exclusively Anabaptists. Some disaffected members of the Reformed state church were emigrating also, as the pastor of Langnau reluctantly noted in a report to his superiors on this subject in 1692. They were not leaving on account of conversion to "heresy" but for reasons of sympathy, intermarriage or just general opposition to an oppressive government or in hope of better prospects abroad. People in this category were sometimes called *Halb-Taeufer*, literally semi-baptists. It is not inconceivable that Daniel Herman might have been so characterized in view of the fact that he and his family registered as Reformed in London and eventually established a Reformed affiliation in America but seem to have traveled with Anabaptist countrymen to America and settled next to them in Lancaster County. Certainly the dozen families of the first Pequea colony were not only Swiss but most of their names can be traced to the Emmenthal whither they had fled from Zurich in 1653.¹

How, when or where the Daniel Herman family first set foot on

American soil is as yet unknown but his name occurs among the 37 Swiss and German settlers in Lancaster County as of 1710.² The listing also carries the names of the Swiss Anabaptist pioneers under Hans Herr who had recently arrived in Philadelphia on the *Maria Hope* and within a month had tentatively agreed upon the general location of their future home about 60 miles west of the city.

The fact that Daniel's very first tract adjoined this Swiss colony along the Pequea and that he took possession of it at approximately the same time encourages the supposition that he and his neighbors were by no means strangers. It is not too farfetched to assume that they were already acquainted back in Emmenthal or that good fortune had brought them together somewhere along the hazardous way down the Rhine, in Holland, in London or even on the transatlantic voyage.

The *Maria Hope* left London on June 29, 1710 and arrived in Philadelphia on September 24, carrying 94 passengers and crew. It happened to be, except for the first few weeks in European waters, a relatively brief and favorable trip, according to the diary of Samuel Guldin.³ Unfortunately the ship's full list of names is lost and there is no record of Daniel Herman's arrival on that or any other ship in those days before such lists were more carefully filed. Let it be noted that a full year had elapsed between Daniel's registration in London and the *Maria Hope's* departure!

Just where the Pequea group passed that blessedly mild first winter in America is not known: most probably at Germantown near Philadelphia where Dutch and German Mennonites had settled in 1683 and had only recently - 1708 to be exact - built their first church of logs. The following spring, on April 27, 1711, an extensive tract of small hills and dales stretching five miles from about Strasburg to West Willow in what is now Lancaster County was parceled out among the members. Daniel Herman obtained a warrant immediately adjacent to the north-eastern edge of this so-called 10,000 acre grant.

There is no evidence that Daniel's tract was in any way related to the main Pequea settlement, which incidentally included at least one colonist who was not Anabaptist. Nevertheless there is no doubt that he established his family on an adjacent tract in the same year, namely, 1711. The first documentary evidence of his presence occurs in an authorization to survey 200 acres on Jan. 15, 1715/16 "at the request of Daniel Herman, late of Bohemia in Maryland, now of Chester Co.," from which of course Lancaster County was later spun off. The warrant, signed by Penn's agents, stipulates that the proposed patent "has not been already surveyed nor appropriated nor is seated by the Indians" and that Daniel would agree to pay the proprietors 20 pounds for the 200 acres and a yearly quit rent of one shilling sterling for each hundred acres. The actual survey of that year⁵ on the above warrant shows Daniel Herman with 477 acres on Pequea Creek, adjoining Peter Bellar and across the creek from John Funk and Martin Kendig, Menn-

onites from Berne and Zurich respectively.

The rather startling reference to Bohemia, Maryland, seems to indicate that Daniel first went to Augustine Herrman's manor of that name and perhaps spent some time there. However the likelihood of any kinship with the flamboyant and lavishly hospitable Augustine is, for many reasons, exceedingly remote. (cf. *Augustine Herrman* by Earl L. W. Heck, William Byrd Press 1941). To begin with, the First Lord of Bohemia Manor came from what is now Czechoslovakia.

This does not exclude the possibility, however, that Daniel may have taken the "water level" route into Pennsylvania which some early travelers, especially those with families or heavy baggage, sometimes preferred.⁶ To do this he would either have disembarked at New Castle, now Wilmington, Delaware, before reaching Philadelphia, or, more likely, he would have returned there after attending to formalities with Penn's agents in the Quakers' city. Striking west from New Castle, he would have cut across Bohemia Manor in the northeastern corner of Maryland along a road built by Augustine Herrman and known as "the old man's path," . . . forerunner of the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal which the "old man" foresaw when he built his home nearby. Could it be that Daniel and his family stopped there for a while, even for a winter. . . or longer?

The third stage of the journey followed the Octoraro Creek upstream to a gap in the Pennsylvania hills (today's Gap), then turned westward down the Pequea. The only travel alternatives available to him were two main Indian trails from Philadelphia directly westward, both of which were mere tracks unsuitable for carts laden with household goods.

From 1715 onward the documentary trail of Daniel Herman becomes much easier to follow. After the original warrant of January 15, a land grant map of the Strasburg area dated March 15, 1715 shows his acreage. On Oct. 24 of the same year he is listed in John Taylor's "Account of Lands in Chester Co." as having 450 acres in Strasburg Township. (Note: There seems never to have been a "Strasburg Township" in early days but the term was sometimes used).⁷ On Dec. 30, 1717, this tract of 450 acres was formally patented to him. In 1718, the earliest assessment in the county, Daniel Harmer (sic) of Conestoga Township is rated at 35 pounds and 3 pence. From then on he appears quite regularly on the tax lists of Conestoga or East Conestoga townships in amounts ranging from 20-50 pounds. In 1730 Daniel rounded out his tract on the Pequea with the purchase of 100 acres from William Evans. See *Deed Book Q-494, dated May 6, 1754, as well as surveyor's sketch in John Taylor Papers, Item 2700, in Historical Society of Pennsylvania* and in July 1735 with 50 acres from a James Woll. Meanwhile, as early as 1722 the Land dOffice Day Book records the survey of another tract of 617 acres for Daniel Herman, which was eventually patented to him by the Penns on March 13, 1733 (Deed Book

A-6-288). The delay between authorization of survey and issuance of patent - ten years - seems to have resulted from a veritable land rush at this time and the consequent difficulty of processing a backlog of paperwork. The new acreage was located on Conestoga Creek in the re-aligned Conestoga township, several miles due north of the first homestead. It cost 123 pounds 12 shillings; 1 shilling per acre per year quit rent. The same Day Book records his 1733 payments in four instalments in about seven weeks, of which at least 17 pounds was in gold. These holdings, totaling a little over 1200 acres, enabled Daniel, beginning about 1738, to grant 300 acres to each of his four sons.

From the meagre evidence available Daniel Sr., in contrast to a majority of his Anabaptist neighbors, seems to have entered fully into the political activities and social responsibilities of his new homeland. He signed a petition for the establishment of a new county. Not more than 12 to 15 "German names" appeared among 182 signatories. The following year, in 1729, Lancaster County was founded and he with his eldest son Christian were naturalized, being counted among those early settlers who between 1700 and 1718 had "contributed to the enlargement of the British Empire" and "have always behaved themselves religiously and peacefully." In 1733 he, with many outstanding citizens, signed a petition for clemency for a boy and girl accused of killing their illegitimate child. The defendants' story was that the baby was stillborn and they were guilty only of concealing the birth and burying the body in the woods.

A few years later he, Christian, Maria and Salmena were present at the first public act of record in the County, namely the civil wedding of Mary Carpenter (Zimmerman) to Daniel Fiere at Postlethwaite's Tavern, presided over by Justice of Peace Emanuel Carpenter, the bride's brother. This prominent hostelry on the Conestoga trail near Rockville had been chosen as the site of the first courthouse after the erection of the County in 1729, but within a decade the court moved a few miles northeast to Lancaster.

Of all his neighbors Daniel seems to have been closest to Henry Carpenter who had been christened Heinrich Zimmerman.^s Was this affinity the fruit of deep Swiss (Bernese) and Reformed roots, or simply of some mutuality of temperament? Carpenter is known to have possessed an unusually bold and adventurous spirit. He was regarded as an unruly youth in Switzerland, he fought under Louis XIV, he was apprenticed to a doctor and became engaged to marry before running off to America for two years, 1698-1700. Upon returning home he married his fiancée Salome (same name as Daniel's youngest daughter), actively promoted the idea of colonization in America, which led to the founding of New Bern, N. C., and had to flee from Switzerland with his wife and two children for political reasons in 1706. For a few years he then practiced medicine in Philadelphia. He first acquired some land in Lancaster County in 1710, before buying 572 acres in 1712

adjacent to Daniel Herman's Pequea tract on the west.

Later Carpenter obtained a large tract on Conestoga Creek and again Daniel Herman, with his 617 acres of 1722, was his next neighbor. There were eight Carpenter children, all of whom were sent to the Germantown Academy to learn English. The eldest son, Emanuel, became Justice of Peace in 1735, Judge of Court of Common Pleas in 1759, and is reputed to have been a good friend of Benjamin Franklin. The second son, Gabriel, married Apalonia Herman, Daniel's eldest daughter, about 1730, who was recorded as being a "Swiss girl." Taking his activity and interests into consideration, it is obvious that Henry and family were always Swiss Reformed rather than Mennonites. In 1750 they established Carpenter's Cemetery (near Brownstown) and later built a church "for all denominations" which subsequently became Mennonite. Is it too farfetched to surmise that Daniel Herman and Henry Carpenter, as neighbors and close friends, were bound by a mutuality of interests and common ties which included homeland, religion, family relationships and even certain traits of character?

It is not clear that either man ever moved his home base from the Strasburg-Lampeter area. Following the distribution of land to his four sons, there is good reason to believe that Daniel Sr. remained with or near Daniel Jr. on the old homestead and died there in 1752.

Daniel and Mary had a total of eight children according to his last will which names four sons and four daughters. The actual chronological order and approximate birth dates probably are: Apalonia, 1705; Christian, 1707, both born in Europe, then Maria 1711, Sarah 1713, Salmena (or Salome) 1715, Nicholas 1717, Emanuel 1718, Daniel Jr. 1719. The main partition of land occurred in 1738-1739, just about the time Emanuel turned 21. The two older boys received one half of the 618 acres along Conestoga Creek. Probably they were already living there. The two younger ones each received one-half of the 600 acres on the Pequea, Daniel Jr. evidently taking over, or preparing to take over, the homestead where his father still lived.

The broad outlines of the original Herman tract have been accurately located in Lampeter Township on the north side of the Pequea. Roughly speaking, it is bounded on the west by the old Strasburg-Lancaster pike, on the north by Rochdale Road, and on the east by Bowman Road. But the only relic of four generations - more than a century - of Herman ownership is a small cemetery atop a hill on Leaman Road across from a one-room Amish schoolhouse. The family graveyard was re-discovered in 1971, so overgrown with tall locust trees, thorny briars and thick bushes that the inscriptions on two remaining tombstones could be read only with difficulty. Their significance was immediately apparent.

One was of John "son of John and Elizabeth Harman" born Nov.

19, 1774, died Aug. 2, 1857. The other, several feet distant, was of Esther "consort of John Harman," 1774-1847. The fact that all the surrounding acreage except for the graveyard itself had been sold away more than 30 years before the interment of John's body indicates that it must have been a family burial ground containing earlier generations of Hermans and/or Harmans. Indeed, the Amish owner of the fields around the cemetery recounted in 1971 that an elderly neighbor named Metzler, since deceased, repeatedly declared that "the first pioneer" in the area was buried there but that in 80 years he did not remember anyone showing any interest in the forlorn spot. When the undergrowth was finally cleared away it became evident that any other markers had disappeared along with whatever enclosure there may once have been. . . and that groundhogs had made themselves at home.

Pinpointing the original homestead proved to be a more difficult assignment than finding the tract. From the high graveyard on its commanding hilltop one can count well over a dozen farms now occupying Daniel Herman's 1200 acres. For a start, it would be logical to assume that the burial place was located fairly close to the homestead, probably not more than a couple hundred yards away. Also, that the first cabin would have been situated near a good spring and not far from the Pequea waterway. This reasoning finds unexpected reinforcement in one of the earliest maps of Lancaster County - Scott's excellent map of 1824 - which shows "Harman's Run" meandering through the center of Daniel's tract on its way to the Pequea. In all probability his house stood somewhere along that spring-fed rivulet. The only missing piece of the puzzle is the exact site of the first log cabin and incidentally of its successor which was built by Daniel Jr. nearby in 1752 and about which much more is known. Harman's Run unfortunately has three small branches, but assiduous title-searching may yet unlock the mystery of the first cabin site.

A similar mixture of known and unknown beclouds the personal facts regarding Daniel and several members of his immediately family, especially the daughters, who have left no papers and about whom no church records are known to exist. For non-Mennonites it was a day of an itinerant and largely "irregular" ministry by men who either appointed themselves or were recruited by neighbors to serve as "pastors." Two of the very first Reformed ministers were John Philip Boehm and J. C. Tempelman.⁹ Boehm was a schoolmaster from Worms who left Germany in 1720 and in 1725 began to conduct services for Reformed families scattered among the Mennonites in "remote" Conestoga, especially at Falckner Swamp, Skippack and Whitemarsh northwest of Philadelphia. He was ordained in 1729. As we have already seen, "Conestoga" originally encompassed the territory of a couple counties drained by the creek of that name.

Tempelman was a "pious tailor" from Heidelberg who located further west in Chanastocka (Conestoga) in 1721 and, upon urging by

his neighbors, began a ministry among them about 1725 also. He was not ordained until 1752, the year of Daniel Herman's death. He was probably the nearest, perhaps the only, Reformed minister actually resident in Daniel Herman's vicinity during the first 20 or more years of his life in America. It may be that neither the Hermans nor the Carpenters approved of this kind of ministry, or, if they accepted Tempelman's ministrations, all records of it are lost. In any case, nothing is known as to when or by whom Daniel's children were baptized, when or where most of them were married, when their mother died or where she and her husband are buried. The probability is, however, that they and some of their children rest in the family cemetery on the hilltop overlooking the old homestead.

The present Pequea Reformed Church traces its origins to services held by the "pious tailor" in private homes and to a log church - Deutsche Reformirte Kirche - built about 1730 on a hill overlooking Pequea Valley about 1-1/2 miles southeast of Strasburg on the road to Mine Hill. It was located a few miles from the Herman homestead and until 1862 it was the only Reformed church in southern Lancaster County. A 1734 German Bible of this early congregation is now in possession of the church at New Providence.¹⁰ Reformed services a little closer to Daniel Herman's Conestoga tract were conducted at Zeltenreichs (now New Holland), organized in 1746. The first regular pastor there was Rev. J. B. Reigert in 1748. In short it would appear that the Hermans remained effectively "unchurched", except for the occasional ministrations of preachers on horseback, for well over a generation.

It might be added that the village of Strasburg began to take form not far from Daniel's homestead, even during his lifetime. But there was no church there. First there was nothing but a roadside tavern established by Edward Daugherty in 1724 or 1725 in the modest structure which still exists as the humble annex of Sandstone House (27 East Main St.) and was once known as "The Spread Eagle," still later as the Musselman house.¹¹ It seems to have been John Miller who sponsored further development after buying up the Dougherty tavern, the same John Miller, son of Jacob Miller, who ran the first freight wagon to Philadelphia in 1716 and later acquired the Emanuel Herman farm from Daniel Jr. in 1754. In those days Strasburg was known by the distinctly unflattering name of Bettle Housen and only regained its present name toward the end of the century.

Despite a series of setbacks it kept growing. First it prospered as a stop on the Conestoga Road until a new road was built further north. Later it became a busy way station between canals until the plan for "non-stop" canal failed to materialize. When bypassed by the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad, it even built its own spur in 1832. That too eventually expired but was recently revived and survives today as a prime tourist attraction. Although the first tax list in 1759 contained only 32 names, the village kept pace with Lancaster and even outstripped

ed the county seat for a while. In fact, Daniel's great grandson owned a house and lot on Main St. in 1793 but Lancaster proved to be the principal magnet of his generation. Today the picturesque little burrough contains many 18th and 19th century houses, some of which Daniel Herman and his sons must have watched as they grew.

NOTES

1. H. Frank Eshleman, *Historic Background and Annals of the Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of Southeastern Pennsylvania and of Their Remote Ancestors, from the Middle of the Dark Ages, down to the Time of the Revolutionary War*, p. 191.
2. Jacob I. Mombert, *An Authentic History of Lancaster County*, p. 422.
3. "Hans Herr's Ocean Voyage." *Mennonite Research Journal*, Oct. 1960.
4. Pennsylvania Land Office Records, D-65-178.
5. *Ibid.*, D-110-251.
6. Charles D. Spotts, *They Called it Strasburg*.
7. Lancaster County, Recorder of Deeds, *Deed Book A-5-273*.
8. E. S. Walker, *Genealogical Notes of the Carpenter Family*, 1907 (Springfield, Ill.).
9. W. J. Hinke, *Ministers of the German Reformed Congregations in Pennsylvania and Other Colonies in the 18th Century*.
10. Spotts, *op. cit.*, p. 58.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

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