



Major Settlements
of the
Palatine Emigrant
1709ers in
colonial New York
New Jersey
and Pennsylvania

The Palatine Families of New York

*A Study of the German Immigrants
Who Arrived in Colonial New York in 1710*

by
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THE PALATINES' STORY

The background of the great "Palatine" emigration of 1709 has been well-chronicled by such past scholars as Julius Goebel, Sr., Friedrich Kapp, Sanford H. Cobb, F. R. Diffenderffer, and especially Dr. Walter A. Knittle. By mainly utilizing state papers and official government records found in major repositories and libraries in Europe and America, these noted historians did fine work and broke new ground to give us "the big picture" of this great exodus of Germans to the new world.

My own fifteen year Palatine project, however, has approached this same subject-matter from more of a genealogical rather than an historical point of view (although, of course, both go hand in hand). I have studied the emigrants themselves as much as the emigration, and thus have developed strong feelings for the people involved as well as the events. The more I discover about the Palatines from this personal perspective, the more my admiration and respect for these courageous Germans grow, as I see how, after generations of oppression and hardship, in 1709 they finally reached the limit of their endurance and "took the risk" to find a better life in America.

Excellent historical background material on the Palatines, largely unexplored by previous researchers, has been found in the 17th and 18th century churchbooks of the towns and villages where the emigrants resided. These old registers are treasure-troves of data on the local level, for ever so often the Pastors, after recording a baptism, marriage, or burial entry in their churchbooks, would comment on important matters of the day affecting their congregations. Their notations often were written with such poignancy that they capture the spirit of the times and the flavor of life in the local Palatine community better than any other sources I have seen. For example, the churchbooks often reflect the devastation and havoc caused by the repetitive wars fought on German territory - a major factor leading to the 1709 emigration. The Pastor at Partenheim near Alzey wrote:

1635 after March: Shortly after this time, we were ruined and destroyed throughout the land by the Swedish and Emperor's [armies], so that we could not come back again until the year [16]37.

Some years later, the Pastor at Westhofen noted:

1665: In the month of October, the parish was scattered by the Mainz-Lothringian invasion, and the following children were baptised outside the area... From October 1665 to 1669, this churchbook, along with my other best books, were taken to Worms for security...

TO
"THE PALATINES"

IN TRIBUTE

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The plundering continued, as recorded by the Pastor at Kröffelbach:

On Friday 21 Dec 1688, a large French force came here to Cröffelbach, plundered everything here and at Oberquembach, Oberwetz, Niederwetz, Reichskirchen [Reiskirchen] and other villages in the Wetterau, demanded a contribution, and left again for Cassel bey Maintz [Castel near Mainz] and there crossed over the Rhine. I took flight and, through God's help, escaped their hands.

One year later, the Pastor at Ginsheim echoed his colleague:

Because of the soldiers remaining so long in our land, with the French occupying the city of Mainz for two yrs., the German people have a right to complain about the [troop] movements back and forth in these parts: the Saxon and Bavarian armies are encamped in Niederfeld with 24,000 horse and foot [soldiers], the Hessians are on the other side of Mainz, and the Emperor's and [the] Lothringian troops are on the other side of the Rhine below the city.

The churchbooks themselves sometimes did not survive, as noted by the Pastor at Sprantal:

Because in 1693 with the French invasion of Wirtemberg every churchbook - as well as baptism and marriage record - met with misfortune, this new one has been set up by me, the duly called Pastor here, and in it at the beginning is shown in orderly fashion all citizen/inhabitants with their families and the surviving wives and ch., the time of their baptisms, marriages, and burials as later consecrated by me, so that each [subsequent] Pastor at the death of any one of these [inhabitants] can easily set out and record their life history without further research.

It is obvious from these contemporary, local accounts that the 1709ers' families had been living for generations in an area fraught with near-constant wars, which made battlefields of villages, towns, and whole regions.

Besides being at the mercy of invading armies, many of these unfortunate Germans were taxed unmercifully by whatever local Prince had jurisdiction over their particular geographic region, and by 1709 many poor Palatines were bled dry financially by their Lords. This was another reason for the exodus, as evidenced by a portion of a letter written back to Germany in 1749 by Johannes¹ Müller, an emigrant who finally settled in the Mohawk Valley of colonial New York:

Is it still as rough [in Germany] as when we left [in 1709]? As far as we are concerned [in America], we are, compared to taxes in Germany, a free country! We pay taxes once a year. These taxes are so minimal that some spend more money for drinks in one evening when going to the pub. What the farmer farms is his own. There are no tithes, no tariffs, hunting and fishing

are free, and our soil is fertile and everything grows...

But perhaps the straw that broke the camel's back was the devastating and bitterly-cold winter of the year 1709. Throughout southern Germany, Pastors abruptly stopped their normal recording of baptismal, marriage, and burial entries in order to mention the terrible weather conditions burdening their congregations. The Pastor at Berstadt wrote:

[In the yr. 1709] there has been a horrible, terrible cold, the like of which is not remembered by the oldest [parishioners] who are upwards of 80 years old. As one reads in the newspapers, it spreads not only through the entire country, but also through France, Italy, Spain, England, Holland, Saxony, and Denmark, where many people and cattle have frozen to death. The mills in almost all villages around here also are frozen in, so that people must suffer from hunger. Most of the fruit trees are frozen too, as well as most of the grain...

The Pastor at Runkel noted:

[1709] Right after the New Year, such a cold wave came that the oldest people here could not remember a worse one. Almost all mills have been brought to a standstill, and the lack of bread was great everywhere. Many cattle and humans, yes - even the birds and the wild animals in the woods froze. The Lahn [River] froze over three times, one after the other...

At Diedenbergen another entry:

[27 Oct 1708] Before Simon Juda [Day], an usually heavy snow fell which broke many branches off the trees, especially in the forests because the leaves were still on the trees, and the snow weighed heavily on them. Then on the day after New Year's, 2 Jan 1709 and for three days [thereafter], we had continuous rain and later snow. Because of the great cold, the Main froze over in four days, the Rhine in eight days, and they remained frozen for five weeks. During this time there was a great lack of wood and flour, since most mills were frozen in. The fodder for cattle was used for two purposes [the humans had to eat it too], and many a piece [of land?] was ruined. One could read in the newspapers of many complaints and much damage in all European countries.

And at Selters, even more:

From the 6th to the 26th of January [1709], there was such a raging cold, the likes of which has not occurred in 118 yrs. according to the calculations of the mathematicians at Leipzig. A great many trees have frozen, the autumn sowing has suffered great damage, and this yr. there will be no wine at all.

Residents of the various Duchies of southern Germany then were in a terrible state from the ongoing wars, oppressive taxation, and devastating winter - all of which contributed to their

desire to emigrate from their "forsaken Egypt," as Johannes¹ Müller of the Mohawk called his former European homeland in his 1749 letter.

Interestingly enough, religious persecution does not seem to have been a major factor in the exodus. Many of the Palatines seemed quite flexible in their religious affiliation; they attended whichever church was geographically convenient or even politically expedient. For example, the 1709er Johannes¹ Heiner was baptised a Catholic, married in the Reformed church, then became a prominent Lutheran lay leader in the Hudson Valley. Also, many emigrants who were noted in Germany and shortly after their arrival in America as Catholics ("Episcopal" is Kocherthal's term for Catholic) soon turned up as full-fledged Protestants in Lutheran and Reformed churchbooks of colonial New York. It is interesting to note that Neuwied and Isenburg, two of the prime German regions of origin for New York settlers, both had atmospheres of religious toleration in the late 1500's - perhaps a contributing factor to the later, theologically flexible viewpoint of many of the 1709ers.

The British government exploited the Palatines' dissatisfaction by waging an advanced and clever public relations campaign extolling the virtues of life in the new world which also fueled the fires of emigration. This was accomplished by the circulation throughout southern Germany prior to 1709 of the so-called "Golden Book," which painted America (called "The Island Of Carolina" or "The Island Of Pennsylvania") almost as the promised land of milk and honey. Its effect is revealed by a marvelous series of manuscripts entitled "Questions And Answers Of Emigrants Who Intend To Go To The New Island, Actum 23 May 1709," found in the Staatsarchives Wiesbaden (Nassau-Weilburg File Abt. 150, No. 4493); these documents are a boon for the genealogist, as they give the name, age, religion, place of birth, length of marriage, and number of children among their statistics for each prospective emigrant. They also enhance our view of the daily lives of the Palatines, as each man is asked several personal questions relating to his reason for leaving as well as how he will finance his journey. The heart-rending responses to the queries are set forth in such a straight-forward, conversational way by the Palatines that they almost seem to make the emigrants come alive again. It is hard not to feel their despair and not be moved by their cautious hope for a better life in a new country. When asked how he first came upon the idea to emigrate and who first gave a reason for the emigration, Christian Schneider aged 25, Lutheran, married 2 years with no children stated:

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People from Altenkirchen. English agents at Frankfurt and writings brought by them.

Johannes Willig aged 32, Lutheran, born in this country (Nassau-Weilburg), married 8 years with 1 daughter, replied:

Because he's poor and has nothing more than he can earn by hard labour, he seeks something better. At Grossen Linden he had a book about the Island.

When he was asked the same question, Johannes Linck aged 30, Lutheran, born Cöpern in Hamburg an der Höhe, married 6 years with 1 son and 1 daughter, answered:

He cultivated in the winter and the grain was bad. He knows he can no longer feed himself. He had heard of books about the Island and resolved to go there. First heard of this from people from Darmstadt who are going.

Hans Georg Gäberling aged 40, Lutheran, came here from Lindheim an der Straße, married 16 years with 3 daughters, responded:

Poverty drives him to it, in spite of working day and night at his handwork. Otherwise he has no special desire to emigrate. He heard of books in Braunfels and at Altenkirchen which Schoolmaster Petri at Reiskirchen brought to the village on his deer-hunting.

Georg Philip Mück aged 32, Lutheran, born in this country, married 8 years with 1 son and 2 daughters, similarly replied:

Poverty brought him to it. He can hope for no harvest which the wild animals have eaten. There have been people from the Pfalz in the village, and he heard about it from them first.

Johannes Flach aged 30, Catholic, came to Nassau-Weilburg, married 10 years with 3 sons, noted:

Poverty and no expectation of [ever obtaining] land. Wild animals have eaten everything. Has heard most about it at Frankfurt. He and G. Stahl bought a book for 3 Batzen in which there is writing about the Island.

When asked another question, whether he received advice about this and from whom, Philip Adam Hartmann aged 31, Lutheran, born in this country, married 8 years with 1 daughter, responded:

No [advice]. Only from God, because people so advise it.

And to this same query, Philips Petri aged 42, Lutheran, born in this country, married 12 years, 2 sons and 2 daughters, answered:

No one advised him, but people everywhere are talking about it!

Another question was asked as to what he actually knows about the so-called New Island? Christian Schneider replied:

Nothing, except that it is undeveloped and could be built up with work.

Johannes Willig added:

The place is a better land, if one wants to work.

Philip Adam Hartmann responded to the same query:

By work one could earn in one yr. enough to live on for two years.

Georg Philip Mück answered:

The Queen of England will give bread to the people until they can produce their own.

And Valentin Nomsboth aged 37, Reformed, came from the Braunfels area, married 12 years with 2 sons, said:

There is supposed to be a good land there, and, in a few years, one can get both bread and land.

The prospective emigrant was then asked who told him such and under what circumstances? Christian Schneider answered:

From a book from English agents with a carpenter from Essershausen, but he hasn't read it. The carpenter quoted from it to him.

The emigrant was then asked a final question. From where does he think he will get the means for this journey? Johannes Willig said:

He wants to sell what little he has.

Hanß Georg Gäberling noted:

He wants to sell his livestock.

Johann Philip Hetzel aged 36, Lutheran, married 16 years with 4 daughters and 2 sons, answered:

He wants to sell his few sheep.

Wentzel Dern aged 40, Lutheran, born in this country, married 14 years with 3 sons and 4 daughters, answered:

He wants to sell his cow, but leave his other possessions with friends.

Johann Wilhelm Klein aged 25, Lutheran, married since Christmas, gave an important response:

The Queen will advance it to the people.

Johann Adam Fehd aged 30, Lutheran, born in this country, married with 1 son, put his trust elsewhere:

He must have God's help!

But perhaps the most important yet most intangible factor in the emigration was the character and psychological make-up of

the 1709ers themselves. They seemed to have within their souls some special spark, some sense of daring and adventure which enabled them to gamble their lives and families on an unknown fate and set forth across a mighty ocean to a strange land. Several emigrants were noted in churchbooks prior to 1709 as "vagabondus" and thus were already on the move. Some exhibited a genuine landhunger and a desire to better their lot even before leaving Germany, as exemplified by a few of the responses to the Nassau-Weilburg questionnaires. And then there were those hearty souls who found their way to colonial N.Y. who were simply dreamers, as shown by this rather caustic comment of the Pastor of Welterod:

[1709] In this year the winter was terrible cold and because of its fury the spring crops of nut, cherry, and apple trees are almost gone... A particularly deceptive spirit this year broke out among many people, especially those more or less lazy and indolent fellows who left their fatherland with wife and children to travel to England from where they were to be transported to Carolina in the West Indies or America, about which land they allowed themselves to dream again of great splendors where one should almost believe that breakfast bread would rain into their mouths. Moreover, they would not let themselves be deterred from their calm delusion through more accurate representation of the facts. Out of my congregation here, for example, a single, miserably lazy fellow babbled about this with his wife and 3 children then left from here - namely Johann Curt Wüst from Strüth. There were others there who came back again after repenting of their foolishness, but he is not found among them.

I say, "Thank God for the dreamers!"

One of the discoveries in my finding over 500 of the 847 New York Palatine families in their German homes is the fact that so many emigrants originated in areas outside the boundaries of what we think of today as the Palatinate. Many New York settlers were found in the Neuwied, Isenburg, Westerwald, Darmstadt, and Nassau regions as well as the Pfalz - proving again that the term "Palatine" was more of a generic reference (meaning "Germans" in general) rather than a literal description of their precise, geographic origins. The Pastor of Dreieichenhain, midway between Darmstadt and Frankfurt, substantiates the widespread origins of the 1709ers in an utterly fascinating entry in his churchbook:

The year 1709 began with such severe and cold weather and lasted such a long time that even the oldest people could not remember ever having experienced such a winter; not only were many birds frozen and found dead, but also many domesticated livestock in their sheds. Many trees froze, and the winter grain was also very frozen...

In this year 1709 many thousands of families from Germany, especially from Upper and Lower Hessen, from the Pfalz, Odenwald, Westerwald, and other dominions, have departed for the so-called New America and, of course, Carolina. Here, from out of the grove, (...) families have departed with them [the families being those of Johann Henrich Michael Vatter, Friedrich Filippi, Christoffel Schickedantz, Christoffel Jost, and Tobias Schilfer]. [Here are] details of those who have joined together here and there in Germany and departed in 1709 for the New World:

From the Pfalz	8,589 persons
From Darmstadt area	2,334
From Hanau, Ysenburg, and neighboring Graf- schaften and Wetterau districts	1,113
From Franckenland	653
From the Mainz area	63
From the Trier area	58
From the Bishopric of Worm, Speyer, and neighboring Grafschaf- ten	490
From the Kassel area	81
From the Zweibrücken area	125
From the Nassau area	203
From Alsace	413
From the Baden country- side	320
Unmarried craftsmen	871
	(15,313)

Not all of these people went farther than to England and Ireland; very few got to America. And because England and Ireland didn't suit them, they all, except those who died on the way, returned, as did some of the above mentioned Hanau families, and that after two years. The Catholics, however, were all sent back.

Just how and where this village Pastor obtained these numbers and his information intrigues me greatly, but no source is revealed in the Dreieichenhain churchbook. However, the extract does indeed give a good, although undoubtedly incomplete, picture of the overall geographic breakdown of the origins of the emigrants from contemporary eyes.

The first trickle of German emigrants left for New York with Pastor Joshua Kocherthal in 1708 and settled near Newburgh on the Hudson River. Then, about February or March 1709, large groups began leaving their German homes for Rotterdam and thence to England. There are records of their departure. Some obtained letters of recommendation or birth certificates from officials to bring with them on their trip, such as Gerhardt¹ Schäfer and Ulrich¹ Simmendinger. Others tried to dispose of their property in an orderly and legal manner and obtain lawful permits to emigrate, such as

Peter¹ Wagener of Dachsenhausen and the many 1709ers who left the Nassau-Dillenburg region. As these Germans left their homes, very often the local Pastors made mention of their departures in their churchbooks. For instance, the registers at Bonfeld in the Kraichgau have an entire page detailing the emigrants from the village (such as Jost¹ Hite, Simeon¹ Vogt, and Hans Michael¹ Wagele) in 1710 as well as later years. The Pastor at Wiesloch noted that Conrad¹ Dieffenbach emigrated with the family of Georg Bleichardt¹ Hauck to the West Indies 15 May 1709, the minister at Leonbronn mentioned that Margaretha, Lorentz¹, and Georg¹ Däther went to England, and the Treschklingen register augmented the Bonfeld churchbook by stating that Hans Jost Heid (Jost¹ Hite) emigrated with wife and child with other people to Pennsylvania in the so-called new world in 1709. Sometimes such a churchbook entry was quite a story filled with intrigue, as at Massenheim:

Let it be known that this Spring many people left the country for English America, namely the Island of Carolina, including also from here Matthaues Koch and his wife Christina together with their 4 children who went thither and with them his mother Johann Henrich Aul's wife, between 60 and 70 years of age. [Frau Aul, the mother of Matthaues Koch,] went secretly in the night, forsaking husband and children here and going to England, without doubt to find her grave in the ocean. On 27 Nov 1710, Johann Henrich Aul, a master cooper whose wife left him and went with her two sons of a 1st marriage to English America, married to Anna Margaretha Freund; Herr Aul was freed [from his first wife] as she had been cited by the government in three principalities and has not appeared.

The trip down the Rhine to Holland took anywhere from four to six weeks. A personal account of an emigrant's journey from Alsheim to London in 1709, from the Stauffer notebooks kindly sent to me by Klaus Wust, describes in detail what probably was a typical route:

In the year 1709, I, Hans Stauffer, removed on the 5th of Nov with wife and children Jacob, 13 yrs., Daniel 12 yrs., Henry, 9 yrs., Elizabeth with her husband Paulus Friedt and one child, Maria by name, and myself, eight, we set sail from Weissenau on the 8 day of Nov. At Bingen we remained one day, and we left on the 10th day of Nov. At Hebstet, we set sail on the 11th day of Nov. Neuwied, we set sail on the 12th day of Nov. At Erbsen, we set sail on the 13th day of Nov and came to Millem. There we had to remain one day. On the 15th day, we left Millem. At Eisen we lay two days. On Nov 17th we sailed away [to Erding]. And on the 20th day of Nov, we left Erding and sailed half an hour under Wiesol. And on the 21st we went to the shore. There we had to remain until the wind became calm. And on the 22nd of Nov, we sailed as far as Emrig. There we had to remain until the wind became calm. And on the 24th of Nov, we left Emrig and

came to Schingen Schantz, and sailed to Arm. During the night [we sailed] to Rein and on the 28th of Nov to Wieg, and thence we came to Ghert on the 29th of Nov. On the first day of Dec, we came to Amsterdam. And on the 17th of Dec we left Amsterdam and sailed half an hour before the city. There we had to remain until the wind became favorable and calm. And on the 19th day of Dec, we came to Rotterdam. There we had to wait until the tide was ready for sailing. Thirteen days we had to remain. On the 29th of Dec we sailed from Rotterdam nearly to Brielle. There we had to remain until the wind was favorable. On the 20th day of Jan we left Brielle and sailed to London. We sailed six days on the sea to London.

As the Germans assembled in Holland awaiting transportation to England, ever so often they participated in a baptism performed by a Dutch Pastor of their host country. For example, at the christening of a child of Jeremias Schletzer sponsored by eventual New York settlers Benedict¹ Wennerich and Maria Elisabetha² Lucas in April of 1709, the Pastor of the Rotterdam Lutheran Church noted that the party was from the Palatinate, professing to go to Pennsylvania; and at the baptism of a child of Dirck Luijkasz (Dieterich¹ Laux?) in September 1709, the Pastor of Rotterdam Reformed Church recorded that the parents were outside the Eastgate, coming from the Pfalz, and going to England. Similar entries concerning these German emigrants are found in the Rotterdam Catholic registers and the Brielle Reformed churchbooks.

The Palatines encamped outside Rotterdam were in a miserable condition, and shacks covered with reeds were the only shelter they had from the elements. The Burgomaster of Rotterdam took pity on them and appropriated 750 guilders for distribution among the destitute. Meanwhile, the British government employed three Anabaptist Dutch merchants, Hendrik van Toren, Jan van Gent, and John Suderman, to supervise the loading and sailing of the emigrants to England (the five Rotterdam Embarkation Lists are a product of their labours); but the Palatines continued to arrive in Holland in increasing numbers at the rate of nearly a thousand per week. On 14 June 1709, James Dayrolle, British Resident at the Hague, informed London that if the British government continued to give bounty to the Palatines and encourage their migration, half of Germany would be on their doorstep, for they were flying away not only from the Palatinate, but from all other countries in the neighborhood of the Rhine!

Things were clearly getting out of hand. The immigrants were coming over so fast that it was impossible to care for them and dispose of them. The British, victims of their own too-successful p.r. campaign, tried to turn back many Palatines, especially the Catholics, and by late July refused to honor their

commitments to support the German arrivals. Many of those arriving after that date, if not sent back, made their way to England by private charitable contribution or at their own expense; this latter group probably never was catalogued or enrolled on any shipping list as were the earlier arrivals at Rotterdam.

The Palatines arriving in England beginning in May 1709 continued to have problems there. London was not so large a city that 11,000 alien people could be poured into it conveniently without good notice or thorough planning. The Government attempted to cope with the trying situation but was hard put to provide food and shelter for the emigrants. 1,600 tents were issued by the government for the Palatine encampments formed at Blackheath, Greenwich, and Camberwell; others were quartered at Deptford, Walworth, Kensington, Tower Ditch, and other areas. Pastor Fred Weiser has sent on a genealogical source indicating the Palatine's travail in London: some interesting marginal notes found in the family record of the 1709er Arnold Altlander/Altlanden family of Plänig near Alzey mention that one of the children born in 1706 "fell blessedly asleep in the Lord Christ and was buried at Derthforth near London," while another child born in 1708 "was buried in London on the heath." Palatine deaths in England were not uncommon as their places of shelter were as crowded and unhealthy as they had been in Holland. Occasionally an emigrant's marriage or baptism was recorded in a British source, such as the Savoy German Lutheran Churchbook in London; this material has been transcribed and published by John P. Dern in his valuable London Churchbooks And The German Emigration Of 1709. Mr. Dern and his late colleague Norman C. Wittwer also found several Palatine baptisms (including one in Johann Peter² Zenger's family) registered at St. Nicholas Church in Deptford.

While the emigrants waited in England, the Board of Trade ordered two German Pastors, Pfr. John Tribbeko and Pfr. Georg Andrew Rupert, to compile a record of those encamped in London. Their rolls are known today as the four London Lists, but they cease in June 1709 when the Palatine emigration simply got too big to chronicle. The longer they lingered, the worse conditions became for the 1709ers; so, as in Rotterdam, they had to depend on alms and charity to survive in their camps at Blackheath and environs. At first the London populace looked on the Palatines in a rather kindly way, but gradually the novelty of their presence wore off. As the poorer classes of Londoners realized the emigrants were taking their bread and reducing their scale of wages, mobs of people began attacking the Palatines with axes, hammers, and scythes, and even the upper classes became alienated

from the Germans, fearing they were spreading fever and disease. To alleviate the situation, groups of Palatines (labelled "Catholics," although some definitely were not) were sent back to Holland from whence they were to return to Germany. Dr. Knittle has published two such "Returned To Holland Lists" dated 1709 and 1711. Working from a clue found in the Groves Papers at the Public Record Office in Belfast, I employed Peter Wilson Coldham to search for similar lists dated 1710, which eventually were found in the Treasury Papers in the London Public Record Office and published by John P. Dern and myself in 1981 in Pfälzer-Palatines as a tribute to the late Dr. Fritz Braun of the Heimatstelle Pfalz.

The dispersal of the Palatines continued. Some were sent to other parts of England where, rather than receiving their expected grants of land, they were made daylabourers and swineherds. Others were dispatched to Ireland, where many became tenants of Sir Thomas Southwell near Rathkeale in County Limerick (my small book The Palatine Families Of Ireland concerns these 1709ers and their descendants). Then, some emigrants were sent to North Carolina where they joined the Swiss settlement of Christopher von Graffenried, while a few others went to Jamaica and the West Indies. Plans also were instituted to transport a group of Germans to the Scilly Isles, but this scheme appears to have come to naught.

Of the 13,000 Germans who reached London in 1709, only an estimated quarter came on to New York. The idea of sending the Palatines there sprang from a proposal sponsored by Governor-Elect Robert Hunter of New York, probably made originally by the Earl of Sunderland. It was their thought that the 1709ers be used in the manufacture of naval stores (i.e. tar and pitch) from the pine trees dotting the Hudson Valley and thus earn their keep in the colony. It also was acknowledged that a strong Palatine presence in the new world would act as a buffer against the French in Canada and strengthen the Protestant cause in British America. No real time-limit to the length of service of the Germans was specified, but it was apparent they were to be employed until the profits had not only paid their expenses, but also repaid the government for their transportation and settlement. They allegedly signed a covenant to this effect in England which noted that, when the government was repaid, forty acres of land would be given to each person, free from taxes and quit rents for seven years.

Most of the Palatines boarded ships for New York in December 1709, but the convoy really never left England until April of 1710. The German emigrants sailed on eleven boats, and Governor-Elect Hunter accompanied the group. The voyage was a terrible

one for the Palatines: they were crowded together on the small vessels, suffered from vermin and poor sanitation, and were forced to subsist on unhealthy food. Many became ill, and the entire fleet was ravaged by ship-fever (now known as typhus) which eventually caused the deaths of many passengers. John P. Dern will publish the results of his research with Norman C. Wittwer on the Palatines' journey to America, the convoy that accompanied them, their route of travel, etc., which will greatly enhance our knowledge of this little-known aspect of the 1709er story.

The Palatines who arrived in the summer of 1710 found that colonial New York was hardly the paradise propounded in the Golden Book back in Germany. The New York City Council protested the arrival of 2,500 disease-laden newcomers within their jurisdiction and demanded the Germans stay in tents on Nutten (Governor's) Island offshore. Typhus continued to decimate the emigrants. Altogether about 470 Palatines died on the voyage from England and during their first month in New York. Many families were broken up at this time; Hunter apprenticed children who were orphans as well as youngsters whose parents were still alive! The Governor's record of his payments for the subsistence of the 847 Palatine families 1710 - 1712 survives today as the so-called Hunter Subsistence Lists.

On 29 September 1710, Governor Hunter entered into an agreement with Robert Livingston, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to purchase a tract of 6,000 acres on the east side of the Hudson for the purpose of settling Palatines there to manufacture naval stores. In October, many of the Germans began going up the river, clearing the ground, and building huts on the Livingston Tract. Gradually, small, distinct settlements appeared at East Camp called Hunterstown, Queensbury, Annsbury, and Haysbury; the villages on the west side of the Hudson were Elizabeth Town, George Town, and New Town. Other 1709ers remained in New York City, and many of this group eventually made their way to New Jersey.

The Palatines grew increasingly dissatisfied with their status, which bordered on serfdom, and strongly demanded the lands promised them in London. Their rebellion was put down by the Governor, who disarmed the Germans and put them under the command of overseers and a Court of Palatine Commissioners, who treated them again as "the Queen's hired servants." Dissension continued, as the Palatines bickered with their commissaries and found fault with the irregular manner in which they were being subsisted with inferior food supplies. The situation grew worse due to trouble in the naval stores program: the knowledgeable James Bridger was replaced with Richard Sackett who seemed to know little about tar-making. In

1711, many Palatines took part in an abortive British expedition against the French in Canada, further delaying tar extraction.

To add to this sad state of affairs, in England the Whigs, who had largely sponsored the Palatine settlement in New York, were superseded in office by the Tories, who proceeded to dispare the 1709er Whig project and bring about a House of Commons investigation and censure in 1711. Hunter then lost financial backing in his efforts to support the Germans and had to withdraw the Palatine subsistences in September 1712. After all the British promises, the Germans were abandoned to suffer their own fate, although the Governor still attempted to keep some control over them by requiring the Palatines to obtain permits if they wished to move elsewhere in New York or New Jersey. Johann Friederich¹ Hager, the Reformed German clergyman sent to minister to the Palatines by the Society For The Propagation Of The Gospel in London, described their terrible plight in a poignant letter dated 6 July 1713 written to the Society:

Pray do not take it ill that I trouble you with these lines. I have written several times, but I do not know whether the letters have come to hand. Thus have I likewise received none from my father, I do not know how long since, and therefore cannot be sure whether he is alive or dead.

The misery of these poor Palatines I every day behold has thrown me into such a fit of melancholy that I much fear a sickness. There has been a great famine among them this winter, and does hold on still, in so much that they boil grass and ye ch. eat the leaves of the trees. Such amongst them have most suffered of hunger as are advanced in yrs. and too weak to go out labouring. I have seen old men and women crie that it should have almost moved a stone. I am almost resined with this people. I have given the bread out of my own mouth to many a one of these, not being able to behold their extreme want. Where I live there were two old people that, before I could be informed of their necessitous condition, have for a whole week together had nothing but Welsh turnips, which they did only scrape and eat without any salt or fat or bread; and in a word, I cannot describe the miserable state they are reduced to, and above all that, have we no hope of any alteration; for one hears no news here, nobody receives any letters, which also hinders me now from drawing a Bill of Exchange for my half year's salary, due Ladyday 1713. The knife is almost put to my throat, whilst I am in a foreign country without either money or friends to advance one any. I had sown and planted some ground at my own charges, but it has now twice been spoiled. I have served hitherto faithfully as Col. Heathcote and others can bear witness with a good conscience and should I now be forsaken in this remote land without any pay, or means of subsistence, having neither received anything hitherto from my people nor anything being to be expected from them for the time to come. They cry out after me: I should by no means forsake them for they should otherwise be

quite comfortless in this wilderness. Sir, I entreat you to recommend my case as much as possible, for I do not know where to turn myself otherwise...

Having been left to their own resources, the more restless and adventurous of the Germans stole away in late 1712 to the Schoharie Valley, which at one time was a land considered for Palatine settlement. They bought lands from the Indians there, but also bought more trouble as the Native-Americans' title to this property was dubious and led to years of litigation. Slowly, the Palatines carved homes out of the frontier, and eventually seven, distinct villages were settled in the Schoharie region. Frank E. Lichtenthaeler in his excellent article "The Seven Dorfs Of Schoharie" has identified them as:

<u>Named by Conrad Weiser's Journal</u>	<u>Named by Simmendinger:</u>
1) Kniskern-dorf.....	Neu-Heidelberg
2) Gerlachs-dorf.....	Neu-Cassel
3) Fuchsen-dorf.....	Neu-Heessberg
4) Schmidts-dorf.....	Neu-Quunsberg
5) Weisers-dorf (Brunnendorf).....	Neu-Stuttgardt
6) Hartmans-dorf.....	Neu-Ansberg
7) Ober Weisers-dorf	

The Palatines had not been permitted to bring their Hudson Valley tools with them to Schoharie, so they fashioned ingenious substitutes: branches of a tree for a fork used in haymaking, a shovel from a hollowed-out log-end, and a maul from a large knot of wood - examples of their determination and imagination.

By the time of their naturalization in 1715, the 1709ers were spread out in colonial New York to a large extent. About this time, Ulrich¹ Simmendinger began gathering family data concerning his compatriots which he would eventually publish in 1717 upon his return to Germany (see his section for further details). Simmendinger's fascinating pamphlet detailed the families at East Camp, those at Rhinebeck and on the west side of the Hudson (lumped together in his "Beckmansland" locale), the Germans in the Schoharie settlements, those in New York City, and groups in New Jersey at Hackensack and on the Raritan. These latter New Jersey Germans (who Dr. Knittle erroneously put as Schoharie residents of Kniskernsdorf) settled in the colony after subsistence was withdrawn in 1712. N.J. Lutheran congregations in fairly close association were formed at Millstone, Rockaway, and an area known as "The Mountains." Excellent data on them may be found in John P. Dern's Albany Protocol, Simon Hart and Harry J. Kreider's Lutheran Church In N.Y. And N.J. 1722 - 1760, and Norman C. Wittwer's The Faithful And The Bold.

Troubles with the New York colonial government continued as Hunter made plans to clear the Palatines from their Schoharie

settlements. In 1718, Johann Conrad¹ Weiser, Gerhardt¹ Walrath, and Wilhelm¹ Scheff were sent to London to plead the Palatine cause; however, the lack of agreement among the three delegates, their lack of financial resources, and Hunter's powerful influence in London made their case ineffective, and they returned to New York. Finally, in 1722/23, Hunter's successor, Governor William Burnet, purchased land in the Mohawk Valley for some of the Palatines, and they eventually settled in this area on the Stone Arabia and Burnetsfield Patents. About this time, fifteen German families left the Schoharie Valley to settle in the Tulpehocken region of present-day Berks County, Pennsylvania. Others continued to follow, and by 1730 the 1709er emigrant families were found in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Connecticut, and the Carolinas.

This, then, is a necessarily brief background of the Palatine story. I especially recommend Dr. Walter A. Knittle's book Early Eighteenth Century Palatine Emigration, which has helped me greatly, for a fuller picture of their travails and dispersal. That the Palatinēs survived in America is no less a miracle than is their emigration! They left hardships in Germany to find new hardships here. The 1709ers never found the promised land of milk and honey of the Golden Book, but they did find a wilderness ready to be tamed and transformed into liveable communities by perseverance and hard work. Their story is a tribute to their fortitude and quality of character which enabled them to find the inner strength to meet the terrible difficulties they faced in their new life in a new world. The Palatine families of New York met the challenge head on and not only survived, but established a secure and important place in American life.