

*From* SILESIA  
*to* PENNSBURG

1726-1926

*The Exile Migration  
in Pictures*

# From Silesia to Pennsburg

*The Story of the Migration of the Schwenkfeldian Exiles  
in Pictures as Presented by Members of the Society  
of The Descendants of the Schwenkfeldian Exiles  
at Pennsburg, Pennsylvania, June 5, 1926*



*Published by*  
THE SOCIETY OF THE DESCENDANTS OF THE  
SCHWENKELDIAN EXILES

*Being Vol. 3, No. 3, of*  
THE EXILE HERALD

*Publication Office*  
1231 VINE STREET, PHILADELPHIA

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The basis of membership is descent from one of the exiles. The dues are \$3 a year. This includes payment of subscription to the EXILE HERALD, a quarterly publication.



## A Pageant of Schwenkfelder History

A PAGEANT or "illustrated narrative," in 10 scenes, was given on Saturday, June 5, in the gymnasium of Perkiomen School, under the auspices of the Society of the Descendants of the Schwenkfeldian Exiles, by members of that society and of the Schwenkfelder Churches in the various districts.

The narrative was written by Dr. Samuel K. Brecht and read by Miss Frances Maxwell. Mrs. Carlotta S. Hoffman was director of the pageant, assisted by Mr. Wayne Rothenberger, as stage manager, and committees from each district, with approximately 150 persons participating.

Dr. James M. Anders presided over the meeting and during the intermission in the pageant Dr. E. E. S. Johnson gave a talk on Silesia, as also did Mrs. Irene Maxwell, who had just returned from a visit to points of particular interest in that country.

The "stage property," for the pageant was borrowed from the Schwenkfelder Museum in the library of Perkiomen School and consisted of articles which the Schwenkfelders brought with them from Silesia or used in their early days in this country. The first scene, presented by the Norristown group, showed a Silesian home of 1726, and the second scene, presented by Norristown and Lansdale groups, pictured the same home on Sunday, filled with Schwenkfeld followers holding religious services, since they had been denied the privilege of having any churches of their own. Many attempts were made by Pastor Neander and others to compel them to embrace either the Lutheran or the Roman Catholic faith, until in scene three (presented by the Delaware county group), we see them appealing to Emperor Charles VI at Vienna, for toleration. The Emperor received them kindly and made many promises that violence toward the Schwenkfelders would cease, but the persecutions continued. In scenes four and five, presented by the Lansdale group, we see the Lutherans and Jesuits come into a Schwenkfelder home, followed by dragoons who take away a young baby for baptism by the priest. The dragoons also take away the baby's father and grandfather to prison for refusing to bring the child to the priest for baptism. Persecutions became more frequent and strenuous until emigration was decided upon, and scene five showed them packing their books and such other of their belongings as they could carry with them, preparatory to migrating to Saxony and Pennsylvania. The first to flee was a widow, Barbara Merckel, with her four children. The state of mind of the Schwenkfelders at this time was represented by the singing of "Ach, wie elend ist unsere zeit," by a group behind the scenes.

Scenes six and seven were presented by the Philadelphia group and represented the signing of the oath of allegiance upon

the arrival of the Schwenkfelders in Philadelphia and the Thanksgiving or "Gedaechtnisstag" celebration on September 24, 1734.

Scenes eight and nine were "put on" by the Pennsburg group and showed a meeting of the Haus-Väter, with Christopher Schultz writing to the friends in Silesia. The invitation of Frederick the Great asking the Schwenkfelders to return was also received during this scene.

In scene nine we were shown one of the first schools in session, in a private home, with George Weiss as teacher. Much of the education of the Schwenkfelders at this time was received by correspondence, many original letters in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and German having been preserved and having undoubtedly been the first "correspondence schools" in this country.

For scene ten, Mr. Brecht called on many Schwenkfelder descendants in the audience to form a representative group on the platform, showing that we are following all professions and vocations.

The pageant committee of the Society of the Descendants of the Schwenkfeldian Exiles consisted of Mr. Herbert Heebner Smith, chairman; Mr. Samuel K. Brecht, Mrs. John Farrell, Mrs. Irene Maxwell and Mrs. Amy Shultz Witham. The assistants in the various districts were Dr. E. E. S. Johnson, Mrs. Israel Adams, Mrs. Amos Schultz, Miss Nora Krauss and Mrs. Chester Schultz, for the Pennsburg group; Mrs. Raymond Drescher and Mrs. Herbert Shearer, for the Lansdale group; Miss Sarah Weber and Mrs. George Brecht, for Norristown; Mrs. Amy Shultz Witham, Mr. Samuel Brecht and Mrs. John Farrell for the Delaware County group, and Mrs. Alice Meschter Rudy and Mrs. Carlotta Shultz Hoffman, for Philadelphia.

## SCENE I

### A Silesian Home in 1726

THE interior of a Schwenkfelder home in Silesia in 1726 was very similar to that of the Colonists of Pennsylvania during the same period.

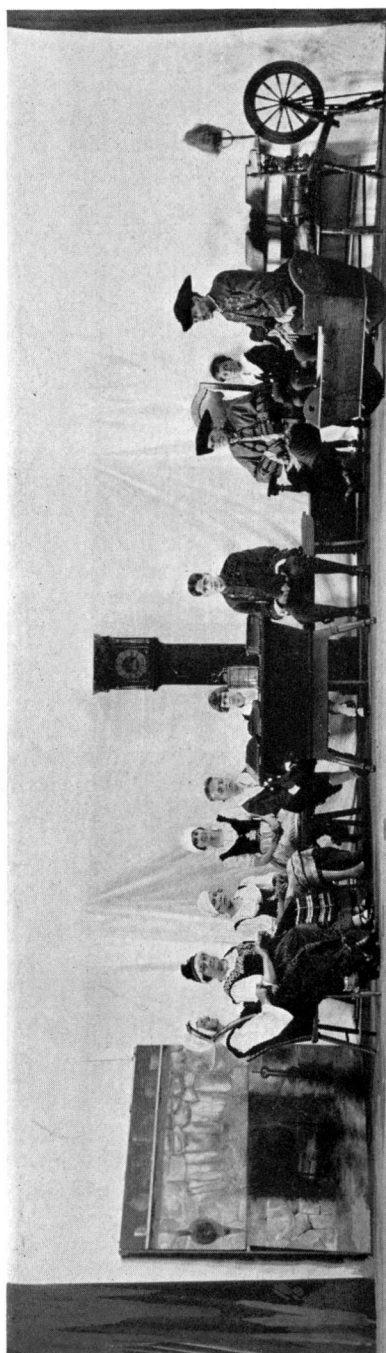
While at the time of the death of Schwenkfeld there were more than 5000 adherents to his cause, on account of being outlawed by the Augsburg Confession, by the Truce of Nuremberg, by the Treaty of Augsburg and by the Treaty of Westphalia, the number was reduced to about 1500 souls at the beginning of the 18th century.

In a letter dated April 3, 1726, written by Adam Wiegner to the Mennonites in Holland he states that during the Mission many more were apostasized and turned Lutheran, so that the number remaining faithful to the cause had been reduced to 95 families and 519 individuals.

They were chiefly tradespeople, or occupied with farming and gardening. Many of them were specialists in cultivating flax, spinning flax, the weaving of Silesian linen, and a few were physicians, notably Dr. Abram Wagner and Dr. Melchior Heebner. That these people led quiet and unostentatious lives is shown by the estimation in which they were held by their neighbors and over-lords.

In a report made to the Mennonites who had a careful investigation made by impartial men, "who had no communication with each other," the investigators unanimously agreed in giving a highly favorable report of them. Even the King of Prussia was so impressed by the report of their condition that he offered to erect linen and veil factories for them in the Province of Brandenburg, if they would move thither. This offer was repeated several times. "The reason why the King of Prussia and the Privy Counsellor want us in Saxony is the spinning and linen work," wrote Adam Wiegner in 1726.

A correspondent in Görlitz wrote on April 15, 1726,—“They have been living here very quietly for a short time and as far as we have been able to observe from their conduct, they live piously and modestly, not making any trouble for anybody. We even think that such kind people, continuing to live a Christian life, can not be but advantageous to any country. They show themselves to be an industrious people who like to work.”



*A Typical Peasant Home in Silesia Before the Persecution*  
(Norristown Group)

MRS. LAURA J. GERHARD  
MISS LILLIAN KRIEBEL  
MISS FLORENCE RITTENHOUSE

MISS MARION WEBER  
ROBERT M. GOTTSCHALL  
KATHERINE LONGACRE  
GEORGE K. BRECHT

JOHN M. BRECHT  
DANIEL M. ANDERS  
RUSSELL WEBER, JR.

## SCENE II

### Church Attendance Is Required

**B**Y the Treaty of Westphalia only three religions were recognized; viz: the Lutheran, the Reformed or Calvinistic, and the Roman Catholic—hence the followers of the Schwenkfeld doctrine were outlawed, but members of this sect being desirable and industrious citizens were tolerated in numerous localities by their rulers.

By the provisions of the Westphalian Treaty, every prince had the right to make his religion the religion of his people, and to banish all who refused to adopt the established creed. Non-conformists were given three years to emigrate.

Having no churches of their own, and being denied the privilege of having any, the Schwenkfelders met in the homes of the older members. Here they conducted their worship by singing, praying, reading the Scriptures and explaining the passages of the Bible, either by comments of their own or by reading the sermons of Michel Hiller, Johann Werner or Erasmus Weichenhan.

Their Sunday services began in the morning. After prayers by individuals, hymns were sung. This was followed by the reading of a prayer from a book of prayer and the singing of another hymn. Prayer and song were again repeated, followed by the reading of a sermon. The congregation invariably stood during the singing of the hymns, many of which were written by the Schwenkfelders themselves and are still preserved. Probably the most noted hymn-writer of the Schwenkfelder faith was Daniel Suderman to whom is credited the authorship of more than 2,500 hymns.

Some of the hymnologists of the Exile Immigrants were George Weiss, Balthasar Hoffman, Christopher Hoffman, Hans Christopher Hübner and Caspar Kriebel.

Following the morning service dinner was served, after which singing and praying were again resumed, followed by the reading of a sermon. The meeting was closed by prayer and song.

In the training of the young they were very strict,—“When they met during the week much singing was practiced and prayer was wont to be offered before they parted.”

This condition of affairs existed when Johann Samuel Neander became pastor of the Lutheran church in Harpersdorf in 1709. At the time of his ordination he was warned of the sort of people with whom he had to deal, but he turned a deaf ear to these warnings. Altho the Lutheran ministers prior to this time



*Announcement by Church Authorities That Church Attendance Is Required  
(Norristown and Lansdale Groups)*

REUBEN KRIEBEL  
 MRS. REUBEN KRIEBEL  
 MRS. LEIDY KRIEBEL  
 RUTH KRIEBEL  
 ETHEL KRIEBEL  
 ELIZABETH KRIEBEL  
 MRS. ISAIAH ANDERS  
 ELLA SEIPT  
 MRS. ERNEST HEEBNER  
 MRS. MORRIS KRAUSS  
 MARION WEBER  
 MRS. ABRAM K. DRESHER  
 GERALDINE KRIEBEL  
 DORIS ANDERS

EVELYN SCHULTZ  
 JACOB KRIEBEL  
 EMMA SCHULTZ  
 MRS. ELLA DRESHER  
 ESTHER KRIEBEL  
 LILLIAN KRIEBEL  
 MRS. EDWIN S. ANDERS  
 WILLIAM A. SEIPT  
 MIRIAM KRIEBEL  
 WILLIAM H. SEIPT  
 RUSSELL WEBER, JR.  
 KATHERINE LONGACRE  
 HERBERT KRIEBEL  
 REV. EDWIN S. ANDERS

REBA HEEBNER  
 RAYMOND DRESHER  
 AMOS ROTHENBERGER  
 DANIEL M. ANDERS  
 MRS. WILLIAM SHELLEY  
 WILLIAM KRIEBEL  
 MRS. AMOS ROTHENBERGER  
 MRS. LAURA J. GERHARD  
 ROBERT M. GOTTSCHALL  
 MRS. WAYNE REED  
 MRS. ANNA DIEHL  
 MABEL REED  
 CLETA KRIEBEL  
 MRS. ABRAM KRIEBEL

MRS. WILLIAM KRIEBEL  
 JOHN BRECHT  
 MARION SCHULTZ  
 MRS. ISAAC SNYDER  
 FLORENCE RITTENHOUSE  
 MRS. JACOB KRIEBEL  
 GEORGE K. BRECHT  
 MRS. HARRY RUBY  
 HARRY RUBY  
 MRS. AMANDA HEEBNER  
 MRS. HERBERT SHEARER  
 ABRAM KRIEBEL  
 ERNEST HEEBNER  
 WARREN KRIEBEL

held that partaking of communion but once a year was all that would be required of the Schwenkfelders, soon after Neander's ordination he announced that the Schwenkfelders must attend church services, and he vowed if they did not do so, all funeral and other church rights would be denied them and he would bring about their utter ruin.

Having been accustomed to denunciations and punishments for more than one hundred years the zealous Schwenkfelders paid no attention to these threats. Thereupon the Lutheran pastor decided to force them to attend his services. He appealed to the magistracy which was Catholic and stated that if the government would support the Lutheran ministers, the conversion of the Schwenkfelders would be an easy matter. He clamored for a royal decree that would permit him to force the Schwenkfelders into his church.

### SCENE III

## Appeal to the Emperor Charles VI at Vienna for Toleration

EARLY in 1718 the government at Liegnitz was directed by the imperial court to send an official report of the Schwenkfelders and an account of their faith. Hence on May 19, 1718, some of the leaders of the sect were summoned to appear before the authorities of Liegnitz for a hearing. The authorities were lenient with them; they were questioned and listened to so courteously that these men shed tears of joy on their way back and thanked God that so much mercy had been shown them. A written declaration of their faith was also demanded which was submitted on May 25, and subscribed to by Balthasar Dietrich, Christopher Seibt, David Seibt, George Jaeckel, George Anders, George Weiss, Balthasar Hoffman, Christopher Hoffman and Hans Jaeckel.

On October 24, 1718, a second hearing was given them at Jauer when George Hauptman delivered his Declaration of Faith. These reports having been transmitted to the imperial Government and adversely considered, on September 16, 1719, by royal decree two Catholic priests were appointed missionaries, as agents of the imperial court, to convert the Schwenkfelders to Catholicism or to blot them out of existence.

In May, 1721, Balthasar Hoffman, Christopher Hoffman, and Balthasar Hoffrichter went to Vienna to plead for toleration, where this mission was maintained for five years. Hoffrichter did not remain very long, but during this time they presented partly by writing and partly by getting on their knees, no less than seventeen memorials.

The Emperor always received them kindly and promised them, at first, cessation of all violence, but that was all the satisfaction they received. More than \$12,000 was spent in maintaining this mission. However, the persecutions continued, and they finally received a friendly warning not to send any more memorial petitions. The Bishopric of Breslau demanded that this band of heretics be removed from the Court.

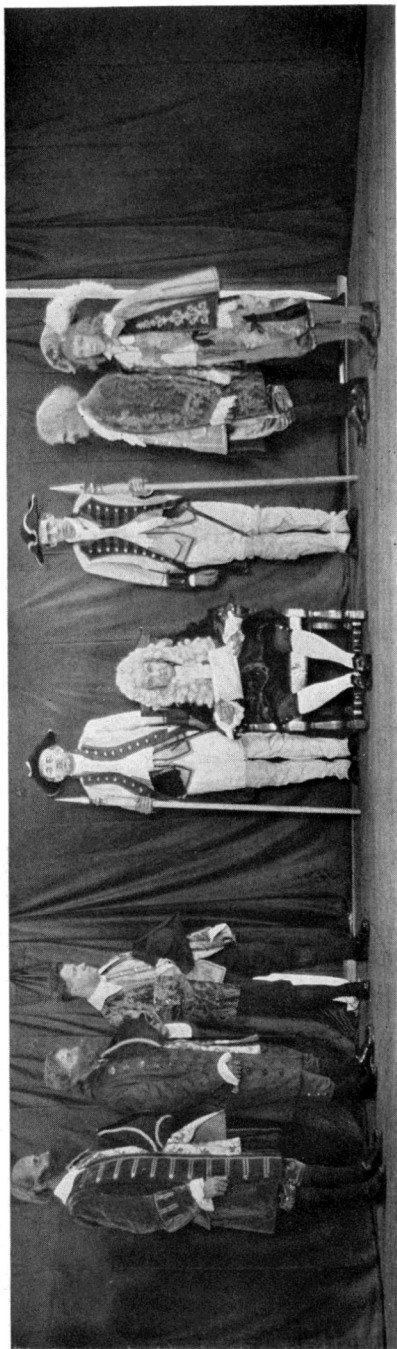
The last petition was handed in on July 28, 1725, and in September a decree was issued by the imperial government that better progress had to be made by the missionaries in converting the Schwenkfelders. Henceforth all its power must be used to accomplish this object.

No one was to be allowed to trespass amongst the Schwenkfelders for fear of seducing or perverting them, and greater stringency was to be exercised in requiring children to attend



preaching and catechizing services. The mission must not be hindered in any form or manner, but all must give assistance with all force and effect.

The deputation fled from the Court for fear of treachery. A reward was offered to anyone who would take Balthasar Hoffman prisoner. The highways were patrolled to prevent anyone escaping, and thus the delegation to the imperial court resulted in failure to secure toleration, but the delegates arrived home safely.



# *Appeal to Emperor Charles VI. at Vienna for Toleration* *(Delaware County Group)*

Emperor Charles VI.....	LLOYD SCHULTZ
Guards.....	{ WAYNE C. MESCHTER HAROLD W. BRECHT }
Papal Delegate.....	WALTER A. SCHULTZ
Page.....	CHARLES HEEBNER SMITH
Ambassadors.. {	Balthasar Hoffman.....SAMUEL K. BRECHT Christopher Hoffman.....JOHN K. RITTENHOUSE Balthasar Hoffrichter.....EARL MESCHTER

## SCENE IV

### The Jesuits Start Persecution

THE Emperor Charles VI concluded that if the Schwenkfelders could be won over as easily as the Lutherans predicted he would force them to embrace the Catholic faith by sending missionaries among them.

By a royal decree issued September 16, 1719, two Catholic priests were appointed missionaries to convert them. The names of these Jesuit Priests were Johann Milahn, who was sent to the Principality of Liegnitz, and Carolus Xavier Regent, who was sent to Jauer.

These missionaries planned to begin their duties on December 6, but were delayed until the 20th. They received a cold welcome upon their arrival in Harpersdorf; the village inn refused to shelter them, and private houses also declined to give them lodging. Finally Milahn took lodgings with the mayor while Regent went to the home of the minister in Zobten.

Investigations began immediately. The first hearing was held in the home of George Hauptman in Lauterseifen; six others were present; they confiscated his library and removed it to Liegnitz. In all their investigations and hearings the Schwenkfelders refuted the arguments of the missionaries with ease.

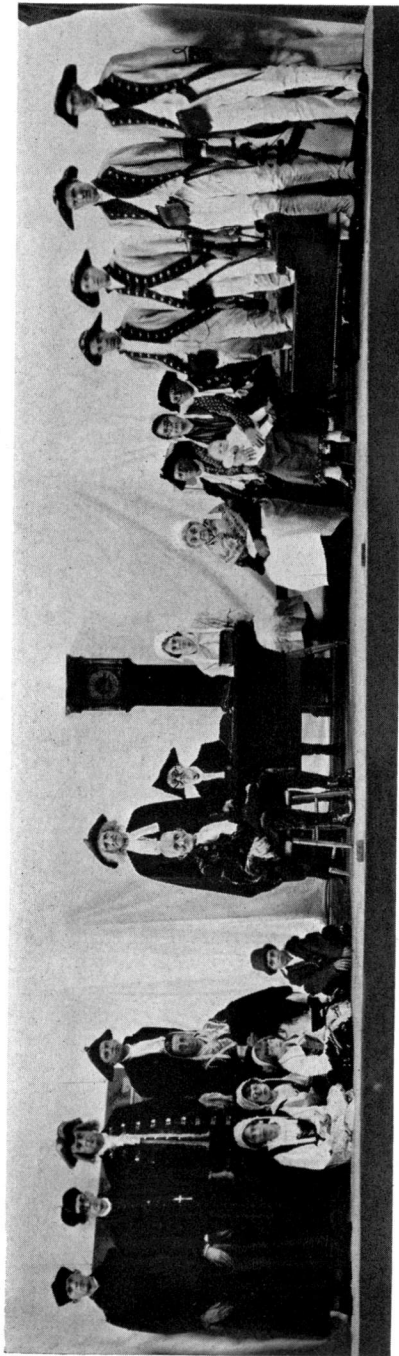
Although the missionaries at first showed mildness, kindness and leniency, requiring only the men to attend the services, when the men refused to respond, the following regulations were announced:—

1. Henceforth women and children are commanded to appear before the priests for instruction in the Roman Catholic religion.

2. When parents refuse to bring their children for instruction they shall be imprisoned, and fines and extortions will be levied.

3. Marriages will not be allowed unless the contracting parties promise to rear their children in the Catholic faith. Those eloping to other districts to be married will be imprisoned on their return, and decent burial in the churchyard will be refused. In 1725 it was ordered that no Schwenkfelder should marry within eight years unless men take Roman Catholic wives, and women take Roman Catholic husbands in wedlock.

4. Mourners would not be allowed to follow their loved ones to the grave, not even to the "Viehweg" or "Potter's Field." This "Viehweg" was really the dumping ground of the village. It is recorded that 200 bodies lie in the "Viehweg" at Harpersdorf, 60 in Lang Neundorf, and 4 in Lauterseifen, where a public highway was run directly over the graves.



*Persecution in the Silesian Home*  
(Lansdale Group)

*Pastor Neander* . . . . . ABRAM K. DRESHER

*Catholic Priests* . . . . . { ERNEST HEEBNER

*Lutheran Ministers* . . . . . { WARREN KRIEBEL

*Dragoons* . . . . . { JOHN ANDERS

*Dragoons* . . . . . { LEIDY KRIEBEL

*Dragoons* . . . . . { LAWRENCE ANDERS

*Dragoons* . . . . . { LAWRENCE ROTHENBERGER

*Dragoons* . . . . . { ALLEN KRIEBEL

*Dragoons* . . . . . { ARTHUR ANDERS

REV. EDWIN S. ANDERS

*Father and Son* . . . . . { WILLIAM H. SEIPT

*Father and Son* . . . . . { WILLIAM A. SEIPT

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { MRS. ANNA DIEHL

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { ROBERT DIEHL

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { MRS. AMANDA K. HEEBNER

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { GRACE SHELLY

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { WILLIAM SHELLY

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { ALMA ROTHENBERGER

*Mother and Child* . . . . . { DORIS ROTHENBERGER

MRS. EDWIN S. ANDERS

In the meantime the Lutherans worked harder than ever. A rivalry sprang up between the Lutheran ministers and the Jesuit priests to see who could **pervert** the most Schwenkfelders, as **convert** them, they could not. Finally the contest became so close that the Lutherans promised the Schwenkfelders protection from the Jesuits.

Early in 1721, Milahn, contrary to instructions, began to compel the women and children instead of the grown men to attend the missionary services.

The first baptism by force took place September 15, 1725, when the child of George Mentzel, only three weeks old, was taken away from the mother's side by dragoons, carried to the priest and baptized. The father and grandfather were imprisoned for refusing to bring the child for baptism at the priest's command.

The usual fines imposed for not bringing children for catechetical instruction were 12 reichsthaler for the first offence, and 24 for the second refusal, in addition to imprisonment and chastisement.

In 1721, on May 28th, a number of children were called to Liegnitz and placed in the Tower because they did not attend catechetical instruction, but were released the next day. On December 12th, fifteen persons were called to the magistrate's office and imprisoned for not attending instruction, one of whom was the sister of Christopher Schultz. They were released in a few days, but the Burgomaster came the next day and caused three women, including Miss Schultz to kneel on the floor during very cold weather, and placed them in the stocks without having any straw or other covering on the floor.

Neander called Caspar Weiss, father of George, into his study and kept him standing six hours without letting him sit down, in order to question him regarding his belief. Caspar Weiss was at this time an aged man and in poor health.

## SCENE V

### The Flight from Silesia

THE Imperial Decree that no more supplications would be received and the renewed zeal of the Jesuits in carrying out their determination to force the Schwenkfelders into the Roman Catholic Church destroyed the last hope of being able to remain in their homeland.

On October 17, 1725, the collective Schwenkfelder congregations in Silesia addressed a communication to the Mennonites in Haarlem asking them to intercede for them with the "High and Mighty Lords, the States General," and if they thought advisable, also to His Royal Majesty, the King of Great Britain, so that "Our Liberty of conscience may be restored, on account of our faithfulness and respect rendered during more than two hundred years to the House of Austria, and ask that enough mercy be shown us so as to allow us to sell our real estate and personal estates and leave the country."

No reply having been received, on December 3, 1725, and again on January 14, 1726, the Secretary of the Schwenkfelders wrote urgent appeals to the Mennonites that they ask the States General to appeal to the Imperial Government.

Emigration had doubtless been decided upon some time previous, for Adam Wiegner writes in one of his letters, "We do not know when to begin our migration, but need constrains us to look out in time for some country where we may find an asylum and where we may take refuge as Exiles."

The first Exile to flee was the widow, Barbara Merckel (née Yeakel), who with her four children, went to Friedensdorf, October 17, 1725. During the night of February 14, 1726, seven families fled to Saxony, to Görlitz and to Berthelsdorf.

On Saturday night after Easter, 1726, having once more fed their cattle in their stalls, they turned their backs forever on their homes, and with their possessions on their backs, or in wheelbarrows, they set their faces and steps westward. They settled in and about Görlitz, Berthelsdorf, Hennersdorf and Herrnhut, under the protection of Count Zinzendorf, having previously secured permission to settle in his domains. All told, 170 families migrated from Silesia to Saxony.

After the first refugees arrived at Görlitz, where they were well received by the Senate and Pastor Schaeffer, through the intercession of Pastor Schwedler, the authorities at once wrote to the Emperor asking whether they might harbor the Schwenkfelders, to which reply was received as follows: "The Schwenkfelders may be tolerated, but not protected; they are not to buy any real estate, nor to hold public worship. They must be peaceful and quiet and avoid giving offence."

Zinzendorf and Pastor Schaeffer were glad to receive them for they were anxious to help those in need. Business men were glad because they recognized in the exiled Silesians, a desirable class of people, industrious, moral, quiet, and not inclined to meddle in the affairs of others.

That they were well received and everywhere respected by the authorities is shown by the following: Soon after they settled in Görlitz the little boys began to throw mud at some of the women, as they walked through the streets, in consequence of which, a regulation was passed imposing a fine of ten dollars for molesting in any way, any of the Schwenkfelders, and a like fine to be imposed upon any one refusing to reveal such offences when known. This stopped the mudthrowing.

In many ways they now thought they had found a permanent home. Upon inquiry they were told that they might rent real estate in Görlitz but not buy it. They were also told not to hold any public worship nor private meetings.

In Berthelsdorf and vicinity, Zinzendorf seemed to give them more property rights, as many of them bought estates or farms and built houses which have been identified.

However Regent did not forget them after they had fled to Saxony. He was constantly trying to make trouble for them so as to get power over them. However, their departure from their Silesian homes had affected the industries of the country and was prejudicial to its interests. Regent was charged as being an enemy to the country, by driving away such a class of industrious and peaceful subjects. That is why he tried to secure a forced return of the refugees in order that criticism against him might be allayed. It was the work of the Jesuits that finally made it necessary for them to remove from Upper Lusatia to Pennsylvania.

Provoked by their defeat and by the protection given the Exiles by Zinzendorf, the Jesuits planned vengeance. The Elector of Saxony, Frederick I, dying in 1733, the Jesuits applied to his successor, Frederick II, for the enforced return of the Schwenkfelders to Silesia. The Court minister at Dresden gave them a hint of this demand and advised them to move to another place. And in April 1733, an imperial edict issued at Dresden addressed to the syndic at Bautzen, the superior office of Lusatia, to the effect that the "Consilium Abuendi" should be pronounced to the Schwenkfelders by Count Zinzendorf and he must see to it that the decree is carried out. Zinzendorf told them that he was powerless to protect them any longer but that they would be given one year's time to leave.

A conference was held on June 8, and it was decided to look for a new home at once.



*The Exiles Fleeing from Silesia*  
(Lansdale Group)

WILLIAM S. KRIEBEL  
MABEL REED  
RAYMOND DRESHER  
ELIZABETH KRIEBEL  
MRS. WILLIAM KRIEBEL  
MIRIAM KRIEBEL  
ESTHER KRIEBEL  
MRS. WAYNE REED  
RUTH KRIEBEL  
MRS. LEIDY KRIEBEL  
WISMER KRIEBEL

MRS. ELLA DRESHER  
MRS. ANNA DIEHL  
ROBERT DIEHL  
ETHEL KRIEBEL  
DORIS ANDERS  
WILLIAM H. SEIPT  
REV. EDWIN S. ANDERS  
JESSE H. SNYDER, JR.  
HENRY HUNSBERGER  
REBA HEEBNER  
MRS. AMANDA K. HEEBNER

MORRIS KRAUSS  
HERBERT KRIEBEL  
MRS. AMOS ROTHENBERGER  
WILLIAM SHELLY  
GRACE SHELLY  
MRS. EDWIN S. ANDERS  
DORIS ROTHENBERGER  
MRS. WILLIAM SHELLY  
ALMA ROTHENBERGER  
WILLIAM A. SEIPT  
MRS. ERNEST HEEBNER

MRS. ISAAC SNYDER  
EMMA K. SCHULTZ  
MRS. MORRIS KRAUSS  
AMOS ROTHENBERGER  
EVELYN SCHULTZ  
ELLA SEIPT  
HARRY RUBY  
HENRY SEIBERT  
MRS. ABRAHAM DRESHER  
MARION SCHULTZ  
GERALDINE KRIEBEL

ELLA SCHULTZ  
CLETA KRIEBEL  
MRS. JACOB KRIEBEL  
MRS. HERBERT SHEARER  
MRS. ABRAHAM KRIEBEL  
MRS. REUBEN KRIEBEL  
REUBEN KRIEBEL  
ABRAHAM KRIEBEL



In the meantime the reply from the Mennonites in Holland had been received. This gave them no encouragement for an abiding place there. Their friend Hänish of Görlitz advised them to secure a refuge in Poland through a mutual friend, but fate was against them. Several had made a trip to Hamburg to look for a place there. Brandenburg, Wiesenburg and Isenburg were tried in vain. They visited the King of Kothen in Anhalt, but were again disappointed. No satisfactory place could be found in the Old World, hence they turned towards America, against the expressed advice of the Mennonites.

In the meanwhile Count Zinzendorf was trying to find a home in America for the Moravians and looked with favor to Georgia which had recently been formed and was planned as a home for religious refugees. He therefore asked the Schwenkfelders to go to Georgia with him, and they agreed to do so if he could arrange with the king that they should have liberty of conscience in everything, their own land, and free transportation.

Zinzendorf entered into negotiations with the English minister at Copenhagen and the German agent of the trustees for transporting his colony to Georgia. However, he was unable to accomplish his plan in time and the Exiles decided to migrate to Pennsylvania, where several of their number had already been transported and doubtless sent back a favorable report.

They therefore sold their homes in Berthelsdorf, with the exception of one house in which they held their services and consequently no one would purchase it.

On April 13, 1734, a great conference was held when George Weiss read a paper giving a history of the past and present condition of the Schwenkfelders and promulgated stringent rules that were to govern their conduct, during the journey, and after their arrival in Pennsylvania. Not being permitted to leave in a body, on April 20 the first family left Berthelsdorf, and in small companies others followed to Pirna, the place of embarkation on the Elbe River. All having arrived by April 28, they took ship at Pirna on the afternoon of April 29 bound for Altona, where after they arrived on May 17 and disembarked. Here they remained for eleven days. In Altona the Mennonite brethren, the van der Smissens, procured lodging for them, caring for all their wants during their stay there, and provided all the necessities for their further trip to Haarlem, without taking any remuneration for their services.

They left Altona in three vessels which soon parted on account of storms, and they did not meet again until they arrived at Haarlem. Upon their arrival in Haarlem they were met by the von Buyuschanse Brothers, their wives and Melchior Schultz, and other friends came out in boats to meet them. The

von Buyuschanse brothers provided lodging for them and protected them from intrusion by placing a guard before their house with instructions to admit no one except on business or by permission. They also made a contract with John Stedman, Captain of the St. Andrew, for conveying the group to Pennsylvania at their own expense at the following rates: Persons over fifteen years of age, 36 rix-dollars; persons under fifteen, 15 rix-dollars, and children under four, free. They thrust all kinds of provisions on them against their strong protest, saying to these who could afford to pay for their passage, that they should help their poorer brethren upon their arrival in Pennsylvania. They also gave them a poor fund of 224 rix-dollars.

For fifteen days they lived upon the generosity of the von Buyuschanse brothers, and on the evening of June 19 left for Rotterdam. On the 21st they embarked on the St. Andrew, but an entire week elapsed before they got away. On July 17, they arrived in the harbor of Plymouth, where they remained twelve days, and finally on July 29 they started their long journey across the Atlantic, where after an eventful voyage the St. Andrew arrived in Philadelphia on September 22, 1734, where the company was met by George Scholtz, who had landed in Philadelphia three years before.

Christopher Schultz, one of the sixteen-year-old passengers, kept a complete diary of the entire voyage, a translation of which can be found in the Genealogical Record of the Schwenkfelder Families.

## SCENE VI.

### Signing the Oath of Allegiance—Court House, Philadelphia, September 23, 1734

THE Provincial Council of Pennsylvania adopted the following resolution on September 14, 1727, which resolution was in force when the exiled Schwenkfelders arrived in Pennsylvania:

"Resolved that the masters of vessels importing Germans and others from the continent of Europe, shall be examined whether they have leave granted them by the Court of Great Britain for the importation of these foreigners, and that a list be taken of all these people; their several occupations, and place from which they came, and shall be further examined touching their intention in coming hither; and that a writing be drawn up for them to sign, declaring their allegiance and subjection to the King of Great Britain and fidelity to the Proprietary of this Province and that they will demean themselves peaceably towards all his Majesty's subjects, and observe and conform to the laws of England and of the Government of Pennsylvania."

All males over sixteen years of age were obliged to take the oath and declaration as soon after their arrival as possible, being marched to the Court House, although in a number of instances they were qualified at the official residence of the magistrate.

"Signing the Oath of Allegiance" therefore means conforming to the above regulations.

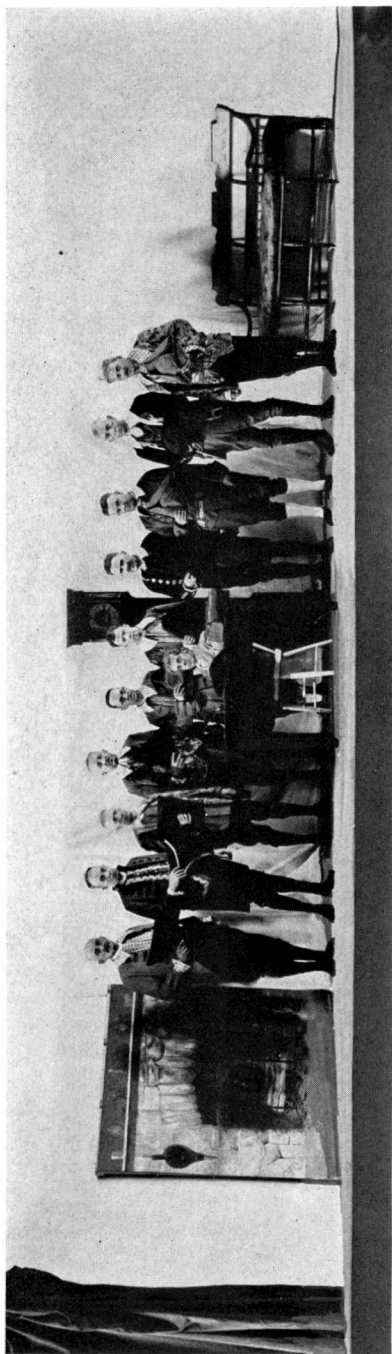
Altogether six groups of Schwenkfelders migrated to Pennsylvania, from 1731 to 1737.

The First Schwenkfelder to arrive was George Scholtz, who arrived in Philadelphia, October 14, 1731, on the "Snow Lowther." George Scholtz lived in Philadelphia for a time but finally settled in Maryland, and most of his descendants are scattered through the southern and western states. George Scholtz signed the Oath of Allegiance on the day of his arrival.

The Second group of 11 Exiles arrived in Philadelphia, on the "Pennsylvania Merchant," on September 18, 1733. Of this group four signed the Oath of Allegiance.

A diary of this voyage was kept by one of the passengers, David Scholtz, who was but 16 years of age, and who afterwards became quite renowned in the vicinity of Goshenhoppen as a scrivener and surveyor.

The Third, or Main Group, that is by far the largest number of Exiles to come to Pennsylvania, arrived on September 12, (old style), 1734, on the "St. Andrew," John Stedman, Captain,



*Singing the Oath of Allegiance  
(Philadelphia Group)*

<i>Signers</i>	<i>Descendant</i>	<i>Signers</i>	<i>Descendant</i>
<i>Christopher Jackle</i> .....	SAMUEL YEAKLE	<i>Melchior Kriebel</i> .....	SAMUEL K. BRECHT
<i>Christopher Seibt</i> .....	MARVIN G. SCHULTZ	<i>Georg Anders</i> .....	SAMUEL A. SEIPT
<i>Georg Drescher</i> .....	HERBERT H. SMITH	<i>Hans Wiegner</i> .....	GEORGE K. HEEBNER
<i>Melchior Meyster</i> .....	EARL MESCHTER	<i>Abraham Jackle</i> .....	WAYNE C. MESCHTER
<i>Georg Scholtze</i> .....	LLOYD SCHULTZ	<i>Christopher Scholtze</i> .....	WALTER A. SCHULTZ

and consisted, all told, of 167 men, women and children. Of this number 55 males sixteen years of age or more signed the Oath of Allegiance. Five men were sick upon arrival and could not go to the Court House to sign the Oath. The St. Andrew landed on September 22, and on the next day the male passengers went to the Court House and subscribed their names to the Oath of Allegiance.

A complete diary of this voyage was also kept by one of the young passengers, Christopher Schultz, who was also only sixteen years of age, and who later became the great leader and organizer of the Schwenkfelder Society.

The history of the Schwenkfelders in Pennsylvania starts with the arrival of this group, and the occasion we are celebrating today is the 200th anniversary of the departure of this group from Silesia in 1726. From Silesia they fled to Saxony, where they were under the protection of Count Zinzendorf, the great Moravian leader, for eight years, and after he was not permitted to protect them any longer they departed in 1734 for Pennsylvania.

Christopher Schultz in his diary says that the Silesians who could not take the Oath because of conscience were quite readily excused and were allowed to pledge their allegiance with a clasp of the hand.

The Fourth Group of arrivals contained the lone member Melchior Scholtze, a brother of the first George Scholtze, who arrived in Philadelphia on June 28, 1735, in the Brigantine, "Mary of Philadelphia" and who also signed the Oath of Allegiance.

The Fifth Group consisted of eight arrivals who came to Philadelphia October 19, 1736, in the Brigantine, "Perth Amboy," and of this group Andrew Beer (Beyer) signed the Oath of Allegiance.

The Sixth Group of fourteen souls arrived in the St. Andrew, John Stedman, master, on September 26, 1737. Of this group, Abraham Wagner, Christopher Hübner, and Christopher Krauss signed the Oath of Allegiance.

## SCENE VII

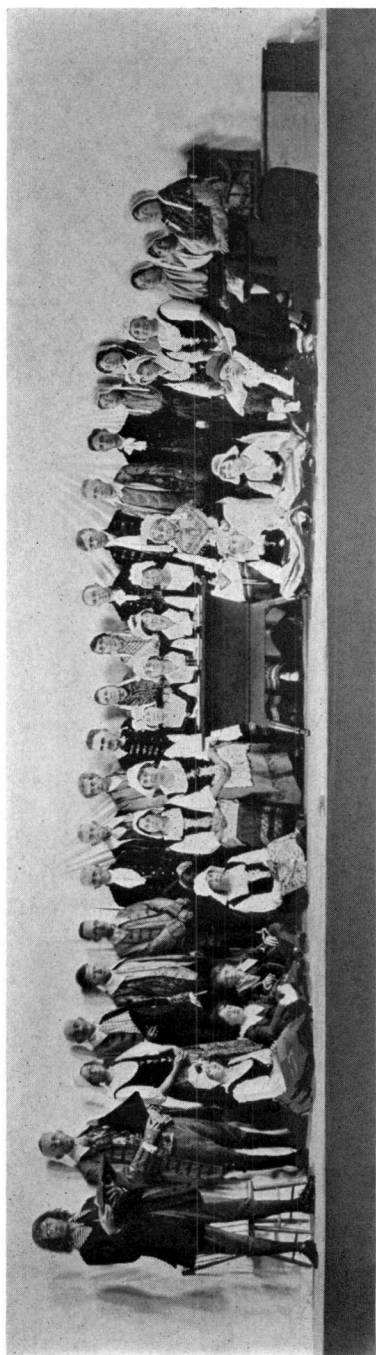
### The First Gedaechtnisz Tag Celebration, Philadelphia, September 24, 1734

THE Third or Main Group of Exiles arrived in Philadelphia on September 22, 1734; the next day they went to the Court House to sign the Oath of Allegiance, and on the following day, September 24, they observed a day of Thanksgiving. The service was led by their pastor, George Weiss, who had been selected as their leader on the trip to Pennsylvania.

This was the origin of the Schwenkfelder Memorial Day services which have been held continuously ever since. Just where the first service was held is not known, as no records have been found. The Court House then stood at the present Second and Market Streets, Philadelphia. The band may have met in the Friends' Meeting House close by, in one of the other churches, or perhaps in the woods. Bread, butter, apple butter, and cider were served for the midday meal on this occasion, and, with the exception of the cider which has been replaced by water, the same menu has been served on each succeeding Memorial Day.

Concerning the custom among the Schwenkfelders of observing this day of praise and prayer, the late Governor Samuel Pennypacker said, "There were many sects that were driven to America by religious persecutions but of them all the Schwenkfelder is the only one which established and steadily maintained a Memorial Day to commemorate their deliverance and give thanks to the Lord for it. To George Weiss belongs an honor which cannot be accorded to John Robinson, William Penn or George Calvert. The beautiful example set by the German was followed neither by Pilgrim nor Quaker."

From the very beginning the ministers who spoke on these occasions wrote an outline of their sermons, and added many historical notes which are a mine of information to the historian. Bound volumes of these sermons are preserved in the Historical Library at Pennsburg. George Weiss also wrote a hymn which was frequently sung on these occasions.



*Thanksgiving Celebration—The First “Gedaechtnisz Tag”—Philadelphia, September 24, 1734*  
*(Philadelphia Group)*

Mrs. John Farrell	Mrs. Samuel Seipt	Rev. Harvey K. Heebner
Miss Margaret Roberts	Miss Ida Heebner	Edith Hoffman
Kyrel Meschter	Mrs. Elmira Heebner Clark	Mrs. Edwin S. Anders
Loretta Meschter	Earl Meschter	Raymond S. Dresher
Everett Meschter	Mrs. Nellie Meschter Brown	Mrs. Ella A. Dresher
Robert Heebner	Mrs. Alice Meschter Rudy	Morris Krauss
George K. Heebner	Mrs. Carlotta Shultz Hoffman	Mrs. Morris Krauss
Samuel Yeakle	Marvin G. Schultz	Wilbur K. Seipt
Mrs. Amy Shultz Witham	Wayne C. Meschter	Rev. Edwin S. Anders
Miss Mary Seipt	Walter A. Schultz	Harry Ruby
Samuel A. Seipt	Carlotta S. Hoffman	Mrs. Harry Ruby

## SCENE VIII

### The Heintze Correspondence—The Decree of Frederick The Great

THE Schwenkfeldian Exiles were noted for their intense literary activity. They brought with them from Silesia a large number of books and were very zealous in preserving and disseminating their views on religious matters. During the eighteenth century large numbers of books, sermons, and commentaries were copied in the most careful and accurate manner,—many written in such a neat hand that they resemble the printed page. Many of these manuscripts were bound in large volumes by Christopher Hoffman, one of the Exiles. Large numbers of hymns were also copied and bound together in folio volumes with a most comprehensive index. Many of these pages have illuminated initial chapter and paragraph letters, and title pages that are works of art.

The large number of these bound manuscript volumes still extant is an indication of their indefatigable industry and diligence, for the work is carefully done and required a prodigious amount of time.

The large correspondence carried on with the friends left behind in Silesia is another index of their energy. The Exiles not only wrote letters to their friends in Silesia but they kept copies of the letters sent, and since these copies are preserved, together with the replies, the complete correspondence of the period is extant, preserved in part in a large bundle of loose letters, and in part in the so-called "Christopher Kriebel Letter-Book." Much of this correspondence is known as the "Heintze Correspondence," because the correspondent in Germany was Carl Ehrenfeld Heintze, a Buerger living in Probsthayn. The principal correspondents in Pennsylvania were Christopher Schultz and Christopher Kriebel. "The Kriebel Letter-Book" contains 338 pages comprising more than 60 letters. Christopher Kriebel began making copies of the original letters in his book in 1765 and completed it in 1792 at the age of 72. He named the book a "Schriften Sammlung" and the fact that it is the only book of its kind makes it doubly valuable. He states that the object of copying these letters was that posterity might read them and profit thereby.

In February 1770, a packet of 40 letters was sent by the friends in Silesia to their respective friends in Pennsylvania. These letters were received in Pennsylvania in October of the same year. The stories of famine and suffering related in some of the letters are very touching.

While the friendliest relations existed between the correspondents at first it was somewhat marred in later years when



Heintze's faith began to waver. The intense zeal shown by both Schultz and Kriebel in their controversy with Heintze is remarkable. Neither of them entered this controversy in a half-hearted way, nevertheless it is free from slander. That the European correspondent was overwhelmed by their arguments is shown by a letter from Heintze, in which he states that when they write again they shall make their letters smaller as "The postage costs so much."

The most unusual document received by the Exiles during this period was the invitation by Frederick the Great for the Exiled Families to return to Germany and have their property and homesteads returned to them.

An original imprint of this Edict is deposited in the Schwenkfelder Historical Library at Pennsburg, Pennsylvania. It reads as follows:—

"Edict to provide for the re-establishment of the so-called Schwenkfelders in Silesia and other provinces of his Royal Majesty; De dato Selowitz the 8th of March, 1742.

"We, Frederick, by the Grace of God, King of Prussia, Margrave of Brandenburg, Arch Chamberlain, and Elector of the Holy Roman Empire, etc., etc.

"Be it known to all to whom these presents may come: Whereas we do hold nothing to be so contrary to Nature, Reason, and Principles of the Christian Religion as the forcing of the subjects' consciences, and persecuting them about any erroneous doctrines which do not concern the fundamental principles of the Christian Religion. We have, therefore, most graciously resolved that the so-called Schwenkfelders, who were exiled through an imprudent zeal for Religion, to the irreparable damage of commerce and of the country, be recalled into our Sovereign Duchy of Lower Silesia. We have therefore, thought fit by these presents to assure all those who possess the said doctrine, upon our Royal word that they shall and may safely return not only into our Sovereign Duchy of Lower Silesia, but also into all our provinces, peaceably to live and trade there, since we not only do receive them into our special protection, but also will give them all necessary supplies for the promotion of their commerce. And all those who, several years ago, were deprived of their habitations and estates in our country of Silesia, shall be reinstated without any compensation in case those estates are not paid for by the new possessors. Such as will settle in our villages shall have farms assigned to them, and care shall be taken to provide them employment, and those who choose to live in towns shall, besides several ordinary Free years, have places assigned them gratis for the building of their houses, for which purposes they need only apply to our Military and Domainen Chambers.

"We do therefore command our Superior Colleges of Justice and Finance, as also all mediate Princes, Lords, Magistrates, etc., carefully to observe the same.

"In Witness whereof we have signed this present Edict with our own hand, and caused our Royal Seal to be affixed.

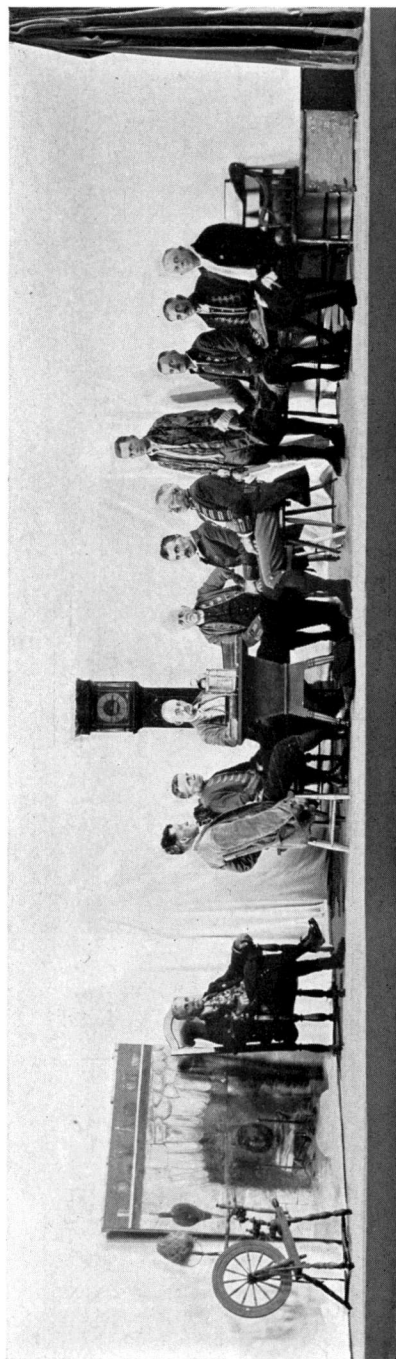
"Done at Selowitz, March 8th, 1742.

[L.S.]

"VON COCCEJI.

"FREDERICK,

"Per Graf von Münchan."



### House Fathers Considering Edict of Frederick the Great

Messenger.....WARREN G. SCHULTZ  
 Christopher Schultz.....OWEN S. GERHARD

#### Haus-Väter (House Fathers)

ALLEN FUNK	AMOS K. SCHULTZ	OSCAR KRAUSS	HENRY S. HUNSBERGER
MILTON S. BIELER	JOSEPHUS GERHARD	MILTON SCHULTZ	CALVIN G. KRIEBEL
		HENRY R. SEIBERT	

## SCENE IX

### The Early Schwenkfelder Schools—Origin of the Correspondence Schools

THE fact that very few of the Exiles "made their mark" when they signed the "Oath of Allegiance" proves that nearly all of them were able to read and write, and in those days the test of literacy was the ability to sign one's name. In the words of the late Governor Samuel W. Pennypacker, "they were the most intelligent group of religious exiles that came to the shores of Pennsylvania."

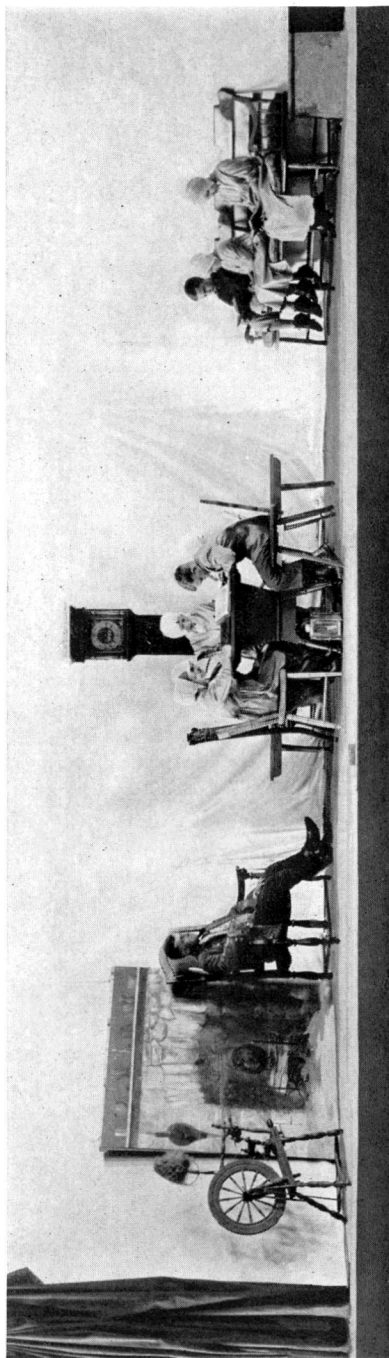
It is likely that the education they received before coming to Pennsylvania was obtained by private study and by tutoring. We know this from the biographical accounts of Rev. Christopher Schultz. After the arrival in Pennsylvania this same method of instructing the youth was followed, George Weiss being the first teacher or catechist who rode from District to District at regular intervals to meet the young people in their homes and to instruct them.

We also know that some of the young people received a good deal of their education by correspondence, as the children who were catechised by George Weiss, and later by Christopher Kriebel and others, were encouraged to propound biblical questions to each other by letter and receive answers to them in a similar manner. Many of these letters are preserved, some written in Latin but the majority in German.

Balthasar Hoffman gave Christopher Schultz lessons in Hebrew by correspondence, as is evidenced by original letters still preserved. Four languages are used in these letters—Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and German. This is undoubtedly the beginning of the Correspondence Schools in this country.

However, in 1764 the "Haus Väter" decided that the time had now come when the Schwenkfelders as a group should start schools of their own. In the fall of this year two schools were opened in private houses, one in the Goshenhoppen District and the other in Skippack. School houses were built later, the first in Towamencin in 1765, another in Hosensack in 1790, and the third near Clayton in Washington Township, Berks County. These buildings were also used for church services. The first public houses built by the Exiles were school houses intended primarily for school purposes, and only incidentally for religious services, although they were all used later for this purpose.

The schools established in 1764 continued until 1823 when they went out of existence because of the growth of the subscription schools.



*Early Schwenkfelder School in Session  
(Pennsburg Group)*

*Christopher Schultz*.....OWEN S. GERHARD

*School Children*

SARA KRIEBEL	HELEN LEFEVRE	FOSTER SCHULTZ	DOROTHY SCHULTZ
LIZZIE KRIEBEL	MAE BIELER	ROBERT SCHULTZ	ELVA SCHULTZ

The Schwenkfelder Parochial Schools reached their apex in 1790-2 when George Carl Stocks, a graduate of the University of Halle, was the teacher in charge of the Hosensack Academy, agreeing to teach English, German, Latin, and Greek, in addition to higher mathematics. Stocks left the school to enter the Lutheran ministry. In the afternoon of New Year's Day, 1791, Stocks delivered a sort of baccalaureate sermon which was a masterpiece and which is still preserved in his own handwriting written in fine German script.

On June 15, 1792, Stocks left Goshenhoppen for Philadelphia in company with Balzer Schultz, probably on foot or horseback. On his return Mr. Schultz recorded a large part of the conversation he had with Stocks during the journey. This is, of course, in German. He had the following words of commendation for the Exiled Families:

"I may travel about the world wherever I please, and may live to a good old age, nevertheless, I must bear testimony to you people that I have mingled with all kinds of sects, and religious bodies, because I have traveled about the world so much, and have met all sorts of people, but I have not met with any people with whom I am so well content as with you. I have lived so long amongst you and have observed your conduct of life, and must say that I have never heard any profanity amongst you. I have never heard any blaspheming; I have never seen a drunkard in your midst, and although I have heard of some I have never seen any. You are charitable and well disposed towards everybody, especially towards the poor. You are diligent and orderly in your dealings, but not prodigal. You do not waste so much on pride and extravagance in clothing as is commonly done in the world. You keep yourself aloof from the world and worldly affairs. You try to keep your children from the world and worldly affairs also, because you do not permit them to attend public playhouses during the week, much less than on Sunday, but instead you instruct them in the Holy Scriptures which is a very noble thing to do. And I must say that you try to mold yourselves to your own standard of Christian living."

## SCENE X

### Professions and Vocations as Represented by the Exile Descendants

IN a report of the occupations of the Schwenkfelders prior to their migration to Pennsylvania we learn that the list contained the following: spinners, 29; day-laborers, 9; carpenters, 5; dealers, 6; shoemakers, 3; linen-weavers, 3; farmers, 3; cabinetmakers, 1; tailors, 1.

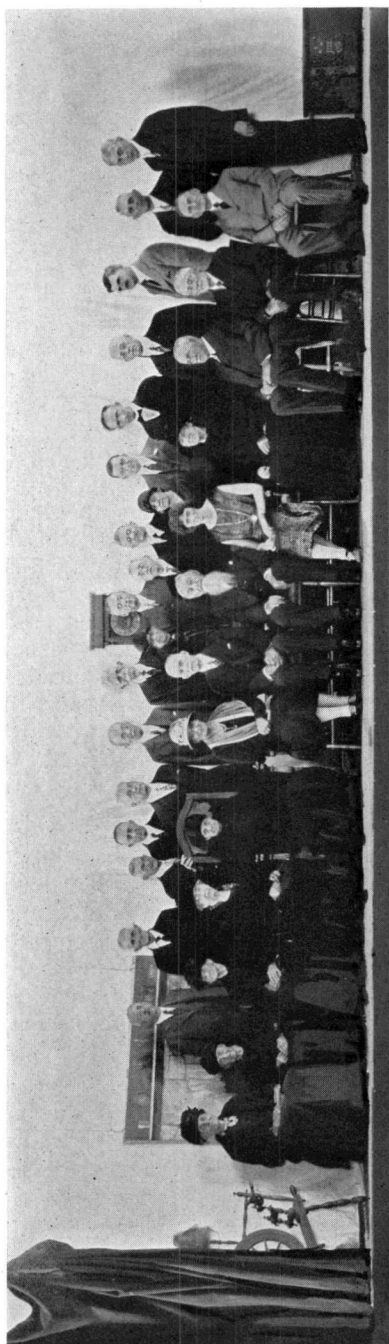
Nothing is said in this list regarding their literary ability nor of their physicians. At least two of the Exiles were quite noted physicians, viz: Dr. Abram Wagner, who settled in Worcester, and Dr. Melchior Heebner, who settled in Frederick Township. While most of them engaged in farming after their arrival here, they were pioneers in many fields in addition to building their homes.

Today there is hardly an occupation or profession in which the Descendants of these Exiles is not prominently found. While the sect was from the beginning opposed to war and forbade any of its members to engage in military activity, those descendants who did not adhere to the denomination entered the military ranks. The Revolutionary War produced at least two captains, Captain Balthaser Heydrick and Captain Christopher Wiegner. Others participated in the War of 1812, and in the Mexican War. Then we have General John F. Hartranft and Brigadier General John M. Oliver, in addition to many others who held commissions in the Civil War; and the late World War contains the list of hundreds of the Descendants, many of whom paid the supreme sacrifice.

Known chiefly as an agricultural people, they have proven some of the best farmers in the country with their model farms and scientific methods of agriculture, and numerous county agents. The list of descendants who have become famous in other lines is too numerous to mention. The medical profession contains hundreds, with numerous men of international fame, such as Dr. James M. Anders, Dr. De Forest Willard, the late Dr. John M. Lee, and Dr. Solomon Schultz, the specialist in diseases of the mind. The text books written by these men are not only used extensively in the medical colleges in this country but also in those abroad.

Several descendants have graced the Governor's Chair: of our own state can be mentioned Governor John F. Hartranft and Martin G. Brumbaugh, the latter now president of Huntingdon College.

The list of college and university professors is large, as the original Exiles were noted for their educational foresight and



*A Representative Group of the Exile Descendants*

MISS EDITH FREYER  
 MRS. JOSEPH K. SCHULTZ  
 MRS. SARAH K. BRECHT  
 MRS. ELLEN SHULTZ  
 MRS. CARRIE E. WHITE  
 MRS. IRENE MAXWELL  
 DR. JAMES M. ANDERS  
 JOSEPHUS ROBERTS  
 MISS FRANCES MAXWELL  
 MISS LUCINA K. SCHULTZ

EDWIN K. SCHULTZ  
 OWEN K. SCHULTZ  
 HIRAM A. KRIEBLE  
 WILLIAM S. KRIEBLE  
 REV. EDWIN S. ANDERS  
 HIRAM M. ANDERS  
 REV. LEVI S. HOFFMAN  
 CHARLES K. MESCHTER, Ph.D.  
 FRANK S. YEAKLE  
 HOWARD W. KRIEBEL

MRS. HENRY S. KRIEBLE  
 HENRY S. KRIEBLE  
 REV. OSCAR S. KRIEBEL, D.D.  
 MISS MAE T. LONGAKER  
 OSCAR S. SCHULTZ  
 REV. HARVEY K. HEEBNER  
 DR. JOHN W. GROFF  
 WESLEY BEYER  
 RAYMOND A. SCHULTZ  
 REV. ELMER E. S. JOHNSON, D.D.

ability, and they transmitted these traits to their descendants. Dr. Chester David Hartranft, the distinguished scholar and profound theologian, presided over Hartford Theological Seminary, and Rev. Elmer F. Krauss held a similar position in the Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago.

Perkiomen School, founded as Perkiomen Seminary by the Reverend Charles Wieand, has for the past thirty years been successfully conducted by Dr. O. S. Kriebel, and ranks as one of the best preparatory schools in the country.

The legal profession and the bench have had many distinguished Exile Descendants. The members of the Wagner family have furnished an unusual number of distinguished Judges, of which our own Judge William Porter is a brilliant example. Christopher Heydrick also served with distinction on the Supreme Court of the State. Senators and congressmen, as well as statesmen in our assemblies and legislatures, are found on the list. Artists, poets, scientists, specialists in the U. S. Department of Plant Industry, and in scientific laboratories contain patronymics of the Exiles.

Nor is the list any smaller in the line of manufacturers,—notably The Heebner and Sons Agricultural Works, known all over the world, and the Krauss Brothers, whose machines and organs are scattered throughout the country. Manufacturing of preserves, bags, belting, cotton goods, printing devices, calculating machines, lithographic processes and labor saving devices are credited to many of the Exile Descendants.

The literary field has been embellished by the pens of the Exiles. Distinction has been attained by the editors, poets, fiction and short story writers.

The banking and commercial world contains hundreds who have attained the pinnacle of success. The credit of the nation has been sustained on numerous occasions by their advice and assistance in maintaining stability.

While it is impossible to mention more than a few of the Exile Descendants who have reached the acme of the professions and occupations this scene contains a representative group.



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