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A New Map of North America from the Latest Discoveries, 1763, detail
 red: British territory green: French territory yellow: Spanish territory

1687: A French Huguenot (Protestant) reports on his arrival with thirty families to settle in the new town of Oxford, Massachusetts.

1698: Francis Daniel Pastorius, founder of German Town, Pennsylvania (1683), responds to questions from his father in Germany.

1711: Swiss Protestants, newly arrived to create a settlement in North Carolina (New Bern), write to relatives in Switzerland.

1719: The early years of Newburgh, the first German “Palatine” settlement in New York, are described by a Lutheran minister.

1734: A German Protestant clergyman Johann Bolzius, comments on the German Jewish settlers he meets in Savannah.

1756: Gottlieb Mittelberger, returning to Germany after four years in Pennsylvania, dissuade others from emigrating to America.

1758: A small group of French Catholics remaining in Nova Scotia after most had been forcibly removed by the British government, petition for the right to stay in Nova Scotia or settle in Massachusetts.

“I will not praise much nor complain”

Continental Europeans in British America

Selections from letters, petitions, and other documents, 1687-1758

Before 1680, eighty-five to ninety percent of the British colonists were British — English, Scotch, Welsh, and Irish. But after 1680, notes historian Jon Butler, “the British mainland colonies became a haven for non-English Europeans.”¹ They fled war, poverty, and religious persecution. They emigrated to join relatives and fellow church members in fledgling settlements in America. They were even recruited by the British government, desperate to increase its colonies’ population without depleting its home labor supply. The effect on colonial America was transforming.

These selections, written by and about non-British European immigrants, focus on their experience as *minority* residents in the British colonies. Why did they decide to emigrate? How were their new lives influenced by their non-British status? What did they tell their families in Europe? How did they and the British colonists relate to each other? The six groups represented in these seven selections are:

- German Protestants in Pennsylvania
- German Protestants in New York
- German Jews in Georgia
- Swiss Protestants in North Carolina
- French Protestants in Massachusetts
- French Catholics in Nova Scotia.

Narrative of a French Protestant Refugee in Boston, 1687 (excerpts)²

The author of this report arrived in Massachusetts in October 1687 with thirty families of French Huguenots (Protestants) who settled in the new town of Oxford. They were among hundreds of thousands of French Protestants seeking refuge from religious persecution in Catholic France. Many fled initially to England, where the Protestant government encouraged their emigration to America — often funding their passage and providing land at low cost — to supplement the colonial labor supply.

By the goodness of God, I arrived in this favored land in perfect health on the seventeenth of last month, after a passage of fifty-three days — counting from the day we left the Downs, sixty miles from London, to that day we reached Boston — and I may say that few ships make the trip in so short a time. . . .

National Humanities Center, 2009: nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/. Some paragraphing added and spelling modernized by NHC for clarity. Complete image credits at nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/becomingamer/imagecredits.htm.

¹ Jon Butler, *Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776* (Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 19-20.

² Charles W. Baird, *History of the Huguenot Emigration to America* (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1885), vol. II: appendix, pp. 379-395.

The impression that advantages are granted to the refugees is one that needs to be dispelled. At first, indeed, some supplies were given them, but at present, nothing is to be hoped for in behalf of those who bring nothing. At Nipmuck [area of settlement], as I have before stated, lands are given away; and at Narragansett [Rhode Island] they have to be bought at twenty to twenty-five pounds sterling per hundred acres, so that he who brings nothing hither finds nothing. It is quite true that here is very good living here, and that with a very little, once can keep house very comfortably. A family of three or four persons can keep house very nicely upon fifty pistoles [Spanish gold coin]; but nothing less would suffice. . . .

“One is entirely free here, and lives without any constraint.”

One can come to this country and return just as in Europe. One is entirely free here, and lives without any constraint. Those who wish to come to this country should become naturalized in London in order to be at liberty to engage in traffic [trade/commerce] of all kinds, and to voyage among the English islands; without this it cannot be done. . . .

. . . There are several French families here that have bought them [tracts of land] on very reasonable terms. M[onsieur] de Bonrepos, our minister’s brother, has purchased one at a distance of fifteen miles from this place, and within one league of a very pretty town, having a considerable trade, which they call Salem, for sixty-eight pistoles of ten *livres* of France each. The house is very pretty, and was never built for fifty pistoles. There are seventeen acres of land, completely cleared, and a small orchard. M. Légaré, a French merchant—a goldsmith—has purchased a property twelve miles south of this place, on the sea-coast, where he has a very pretty house, and twelve acres and a half of land, for eighty pistoles of ten *livres* of France each. Besides, he has his share in the common lands, to which he can send his cattle for pasture, and where he can cut wood for his own use, and to sell here, as he can readily send it by sea. Similar opportunities occur daily; and of farms on lease, as many as are wanted may be had, and at low prices. . . If our poor refugee brethren who understand farming should come here, they could not fail to live very comfortably and gain property; for the English are very lazy, and are proficient only in raising their Indian corn and cattle.

There are not over twenty French families here in Boston, and they are diminishing in number every day, because they go off into the country to buy or lease lands and attempt a settlement. Others are expected this spring from every quarter. Two young men have just arrived from Carolina, who give some account of the country. In the first place, they say, they have never before seen so miserable a country, nor an atmosphere so unhealthy. Fevers prevail all the year, from which those who are attacked seldom recover . . . They bring us also the tidings that, before their departure, a ship had arrived from London with one hundred and thirty persons on board, including the crew; of whom one hundred and fifteen died so soon as they landed, all from malignant fevers which spread among them. Some eighty persons are coming from Carolina to settle here, or in New York. M. Gaillard, whom my father knows, has arrived in Carolina with his whole family; also, M. Brie, of Montpelier. . . .

“The English who inhabit these countries are, as elsewhere, good and bad.”

The English who inhabit these countries are, as elsewhere, good and bad; but one sees more of the latter than of the former class, and to tell it to you in few words, there are all kinds, and consequently all kinds of life and manners. It is not that strife and quarrels occur among them, but it is that they do not lead a good life. There are some that practice no other formality of marriage than that of taking each other by the hand; and they live together peaceably; there are others, sixty years of age, who have not yet been baptized, because they are not members [of the church]. . . .

There is nothing to fear from the savages, for there are very few of them. The last wars they had with the English, twelve years ago, reduced them to a small number, and consequently they are not in a condition to defend themselves.

Letter of Francis Daniel Pastorius, founder of German Town, Pennsylvania, to his father in Germany, 1698 (excerpts)³

Francis Daniel Pastorius, founder of the first German settlement in Pennsylvania (1683), wrote several accounts of the colony to persuade his countrymen to emigrate. "It is truly a matter for amazement," he exclaims, "how quickly, by the blessing of God, it advances, and from day to day grows perceptibly." In this letter, he answers five questions about German Town and Pennsylvania submitted to him by his father.

I received in proper condition, on April 25, 1698, my honored father's latest, of August 15, and I was greatly rejoiced by the sight of his dear handwriting. But to answer his questions submitted, I would wish that my pen could reach down to the uttermost depth of my soul, for so should I do the same with more satisfaction than is the case now. Nevertheless I do not doubt that my honored father will supply by his keen apprehension that which is not perfectly expressed on this paper:

1. Now as to the first question, concerning the ordering of the civil government.

. . . In my German city, Germanton, there is an entirely different condition of things [i.e., different government than that in Philadelphia]. For, by virtue of the franchise obtained from William Penn, this town has its own court, its own burgomaster and council, together with the necessary officials, and well-regulated town laws, council regulations, and a town seal.

The inhabitants of this city are for the most part tradespeople, such as cloth, fustian, and linen weavers, tailors, shoemakers, locksmiths, carpenters, who however at the same time are also occupied with the cultivation of the soil and the raising of cattle.

This region would be sufficient to maintain twice as many inhabitants as are now actually there.

This town lies two hours' distance from Philadelphia, and includes not only six thousand acres (morgen) by the survey, but twelve thousand morgen of land have also been assigned to us by William Penn for the establishing of some villages. As to the taxation and tribute of the subjects, in this country, it is treated as it is with the English nation, where neither the king himself nor his envoys, bailiffs, nor governors may lay any kind of burden or tax upon the subjects, unless those subjects themselves have first voluntarily resolved and consented to give a specified amount, and, according to their fundamental laws, no tax may remain in force for longer than a single year.

2. To come to my honored father's second question. What form of government have the so-called savages and half-naked people? Whether they become citizens and intermarry with the Christians? Again, whether their children also associate with the Christian children and they play with one another, etc.?

It may be stated in reply, that, so far as I have yet gone about among them, I have found them reasonable people and capable of understanding good teaching and manners, who give evidence of an inward devotion to God, and in fact show themselves much more desirous of a knowledge of God than are many with you who teach Christianity by words from the pulpit, but belie the same through their ungodly lives, and therefore, in yonder great Day of Judgment, will be put to shame by these heathen.

We Christians in Germanton and Philadelphia have no longer the opportunity to associate with them, in view of the fact that their savage kings have accepted a sum of money from William Penn, and, together with their people, have withdrawn very far away from us, into the wild forest, where, after their hereditary custom, they support themselves by the chase, shooting birds and game, and also by catching fish, and dwell only in huts made of bushes and trees drawn together. They carry on no cattle-breeding whatever, and cultivate no field or garden; accordingly they bring very little else to the Christians to market than the pelts, the skins of animals, and the birds which they have shot, and fishes, nor do they

³ Francis Daniel Pastorius, *Circumstantial Geographical Description of the Lately Discovered Province of Pennsylvania, Situated in the Farthest Limits of America, in the Western World*, 1700; in *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey, and Delaware, 1630-1707*, ed. Albert Cook Myers (New York, Scribner's, 1912), pp. 360-448; in series *Original Narratives of Early American History*, gen. ed. J. Franklin Jameson.

associate much with the Christians; and certainly no mutual marriage-contract between us and them has yet taken place. They exchange their elk and deer-skins, beaver, marten, and turkeys, ordinarily, for powder, lead, blankets, and brandy, together with other sweet drinks.

In the business of our German Company, however, we now use in trade Spanish and English coins, as also the Dutch thalers; with this difference only, that that which is worth four shillings on the other side of the sea, passes for five here.

3. Concerning the third question: How our divine worship is regulated and constituted in this place?

The answer is that, as experience testifies that by the coercion of conscience nothing else than hypocrites and word Christians are made, of whom almost the entire world is now full, we have therefore found it desirable to grant freedom of conscience, so that each serves God according to his best understanding, and may believe whatever he is able to believe.

It is certain, once for all, that there is only one single undoubted Truth. Sects however are very numerous, and each sectarian presumes to know the nearest and most direct way to Heaven, and to be able to point it out to others, though nevertheless there is surely no more than a single One Who on the basis of truth has said: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. . . .

*“we have therefore found
it desirable to grant
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his best understanding”*

4. Concerning the fourth question: How our German Company and Brotherhood is at present constituted?

It should be stated that this same company was started by some pious and God-fearing persons, not so much for the sake of worldly gain, but rather to have a Pella or place of refuge for themselves and other upright people of their country, when the just God should pour out His cup of wrath over sinful Europe

With this intention they arranged to purchase from the proprietor, through me, about thirty thousand acres of land in this country, of which the third part is now cultivated, but two-thirds still lie waste.

The principal members are, by name : Doctor Jacob Schiitz, Jacobus von de Walle, Doctor Weilich, Daniel Behagel, Johann Lebrunn, Doctor Gerhard von Maastrich, the Syndic of Bremen, Doctor Johann Willhelm Peters of near Magdeburg, Balthasar Jabert of Lubeck, and Joannes Kemberler, a preacher at the same place. Of these partners some were to have come over here to me and helped to bring the undertaking to the desired result, but up to this time that has not happened, because they fear the solitude and tediousness, to all of which I, thank God! am now well accustomed, and shall so remain accustomed until my happy end.

However, that the merciful God has so graciously preserved my honored father together with his dear ones in this recent devastation of the French war, gives me occasion to extol His everlasting goodness and fervently to beseech Him to protect you still further, with gentle fatherly care, from all chances of misfortune, but especially that He will bring us ever more and more into His holy fear and obedience, so that we may feel abhorrence to offend Him, and, on the contrary, may strive to fulfill His holy will with happy hearts. . . .

5. Concerning the fifth question: Whether William Penn, the proprietor of this country, is easy of access, and if one might address some lines of compliment to him.

It may be stated, that this worthy man is a good Christian, and consequently entirely averse to the idle compliments of the world. But he who wishes to exchange sensible and truthful words with him, either by mouth or by letter, will find him not only easy of access, but also prompt in reply, since he is, from his heart, sweet-natured, humble, and eager to serve all men. . . .

. . . All must have an end, and therefore this letter also, in closing which I greet my honored father a thousand times, and kiss him (through the air) with the heart of a child, perhaps for the last time, and most trustingly commend you with us, and us with you, to the beneficent protecting and guiding hand of God; and I remain

My honored father's
Truly dutiful son,
Philadelphia F[rancis]. D[aniel]. P[astorius]. 30 May 1698.

Letters of Swiss Protestants in North Carolina to their families in Switzerland, 1711 (excerpts)⁴

In 1710 a Swiss nobleman, Baron Christoph von Graffenreid, established the settlement of New Bern in North Carolina with plans to mine the region's silver and also provide a refuge for hundreds of Swiss and German Protestants who had fled to England, escaping war and religious persecution. Within four years his settlement in America had failed and he returned to England. In his published account of New Bern, he included several letters from the first settlers to the colony's supporting society in Switzerland.

HANS RUEGSEGGER, letter to his son, 8 April 1711_____

With friendly greeting I inform you that I with my household arrived safe and sound in Carolina, and that with happiness. But on the twenty-sixth of February, my son Hans, with a great longing for the Lord Jesus, died. On the contrary my daughter has a fine young son, born the last of July, 1710. We are in a very good and fat land. I am in hopes that within a year I shall have over a hundred head of horses, cattle, swine. If one would present me with the whole lowland, in order that I should go back again to Switzerland and take up the former service, I would not do it on account of the freedom of conscience. If my son Uhli would venture to go upon the journey, he should turn whatever he can into money, and if he has not married since my departure, let him take an honorable honest girl to wife, even if she has not much temporal means, if only he can pay the passage over. Whoever desires to come over here, he can call upon Mr. Ritter in Bern [Switzerland]. If you, my son, wish to undertake this journey, keep God always before your eyes, and also if you do not wish to come, so that we may enjoy and see one another sometime up above with spiritual eyes in Heaven.

“If one would present me with the whole lowland, in order that I should go back again to Switzerland and take up the former service, I would not do it on account of the freedom of conscience.”

But if you will come, I will inform you how you shall do. Buy a few hundred steel tobacco pipes with the stems and four thalers worth of Arau knives and several brass knives. From these you can get twice the price of the half in Rotterdam. In England and Carolina as much again. On the sea provide yourself with something besides what there is upon the ship in the way of food and drink, for one must not save, by hunger or thirst. If my brother-in-law Hans should want to go with you he can do it. I am in hopes if I stay well to provide five or six households with food and drink for possibly a year long. I will not tell anyone he should go upon the journey. Whoever has not the leading from God, he may stay in Switzerland. If my brother-in-law, Peter Seeman, and Uhli Küntzi should have a desire for the journey, they can make it. Our Count Von Graffenried will supply them with good land; after this he will give them a four-year lease, supply them with stock and furniture, so that they can thenceforth be well supplied their life long, if they have luck.

⁴ Christoph von Graffenried's Account of the Founding of New Bern, written ca. 1716, publ. 1920, eds. Vincent Todd & Julius Gobel, published for the North Carolina Historical Commission by the University of Illinois Press, 1920.

SAMUEL JACOB GABLEY, letter to his family, 8 April 1711_____

With service, duty and greeting, dear and faithful father, mother, brothers and sisters, children and relatives, and all good friends. With regard to myself, I live well and happy and would not wish to have remained at home. I am also married to Margaret Pfund of Zweysimmen. As far as the land is concerned it is very hot, many brooks, and much forest. The natives or Indians are black, half naked, yet clever and sociable, unbelievers, unsuited for work. I will not praise much nor complain. If one has money and property, gold and silver, he can be master just as in Europe, but I will say that for a workman or a poor man it is better there than here. He can get land as much as he needs. He can keep as much stock as he is able. Swine cost nothing to keep. Cattle go the whole year on pasture, become fat and good to butcher by themselves. They make no hay. It is true that many a one has up to a thousand head or more of cattle and hogs.

The land is uncultivated, yet is to be hoped tolerably fruitful; but yet I would not cause any one to come here, nor would I advise it, because of the costly and difficult journey over the fearful and wild sea. Yet we arrived safely and suffered little sickness, and for my part, did not get here so badly. For old and young it is hard, nevertheless we got a young son on the sea. The great God has kept all. To be sure it has cost much and gone slowly in these expensive, hard, war times.

If it should come about that more people should come into this country, I beg you send me a half dozen readymade shirts, a few sheets plus ten ells of linen cloth and ten thalers in money, a hale dozen knives of Barbli and an axe that has been tested, and pack it together and give it to certain people that they may have care of it, so that nothing may spoil for me on the sea. Buy me at Rotterdam or in England a jacket and trousers. With this I commend you to God. Greet the pastor for me and his whole house,

MICHAEL ZIORIEN, letter to his family, ca. April 1711_____

With a thousandfold greeting, I wish all true friends, neighbors, and acquaintances God's grace and blessing. I and my wife, two children, and my old father have, the Lord be praised, arrived safe and sound in Carolina, and live twenty English miles from New Bern. I hope to plant corn enough this year. The land is good, but the beginning is hard, the journey dangerous. My two children, Maria and Hansli died at Rotterdam in Holland and were buried in the common burial place.

This country is praised too highly in Europe and condemned too much. I hope also in a few years to have cows and swine as much as I desire. Mr. Graffenried is our landgrave [count]

"This country is praised too highly in Europe and condemned too much."

CHRISTEN ENGEL, letter to his family, ca. April 1711_____

. . . The greatest failing and lack here in Carolina is that too few people are here, and no good mills. There is one being built by us people who are in Carolina. No one has any desire to be back in Switzerland, for one can eat but little meat in Switzerland, but here in Carolina I need have no anxiety from this year on, that every year I should not butcher thirty or forty to fifty swine, more if I wish. And if Cousin Haldmann would give me the whole meadow of the estate with everything belonging to it, I should not want it for I have meadow and forest enough for the swine and arable soil, one adjoining the other. If I only had money so that I could buy a half dozen cows, and also as many swine, a few horses, I would ask nothing more of temporal blessing than good health and afterwards eternal life, as I wish for all mankind. I would also wish that the poor neighbors were with us and then they would not need to suffer hunger if they would only be willing to work a little. Therefore whoever has a desire for it, let him just venture boldly under the protection of the Most High. To be sure they do not give one a ready built house and cleared land. Each one can labor for it and clear it himself. The journey is certainly hard and was hardest for me. But after the rain comes sunshine. And now we are, the Lord be praised, all as well as we have never been before.

Description of the German refugee settlement in Newburgh, New York, 1719-1749 (excerpts)⁵

Thousands of German refugees settled in British America in the 1600s and 1700s, many fleeing war in the Rhineland-Palatinate region near France. The first "Palatine" settlement in New York was Newburgh in the Hudson River Valley, established in 1709 by about fifty refugees with support from the British government. By the 1740s many of the original German settlers had left the struggling settlement, and more English and Dutch settlers had arrived. A stark description of the settlement's early years is presented in this 1749 petition from a Lutheran minister who was dismayed at the growing religious diversity in the community, resulting in the Lutheran church building being used for services of other denominations.⁶ He appeals to the governor of New York to order the church building and land to be assigned permanently to the Lutheran Church, but in 1751 they were assigned to the Episcopal Church and its English trustees.

The petition of Michael Christian Knoll, Minister of the Lutheran Protestant Congregation in the City of New York, and the Consistory of the said Church [12 May 1749]:

HUMBLY SHEWETH

That great numbers of Protestants formerly residing within the Dominions of the Prince palatine of the Rhine [Germany], being driven out of their native Country by the Hardships Occasioned by War, were obliged to betake themselves for a Refuge to the British Dominions, and were graciously received and encouraged by her late Majesty Queen Ann —

That many of the said Palatines arriving within this province of New York, some of them obtained Letters patents from his late Majesty King George, the first bearing date the eight Day of December [1719] for two thousand one hundred and ninety Acres of land at a place called Quassack in Ulster County, whereof five hundred acres were granted to Trustees for the Use Benefit and Behalf of a Lutheran Minister forever.

That the said Grantees [German Palatines] immediately entered upon the said Lands, but the same Lands being very poor and entirely new and uncultivated, and very hard to clear, they were put to great Difficulties to support themselves and Families by their Labour thereon, and could make little or no Improvement upon the said Glebe [land set aside for the church], nor otherwise contribute to the support of Religion and the public Worship of God among them for a great number of years.

That during these Exigencies, the Lutheran Congregation of New York, at their sole expense, supplied them twice a year by their Minister, who at stated Seasons attended upon them to preach and Administer the Holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper among them.

That no profits could arise from the said Glebe till within about sixteen years last past, and during the whole Time no more has been received for the services done on the said Glebe by the Lutheran Ministers of New York, for preaching & administering the Sacraments for near thirty years last past than about five hundred schipels of Wheat. . . .

That during the Time aforesaid the said Lutherans have built a small Church upon the premises: But so it is, may it please your Excellency, That the Lutheran Inhabitants living on the said granted Lands being now reduced to a small number, having some of them sold their Lands and bought elsewhere, the present Inhabitants have taken Occasion therefrom to deprive your petitioners of the said Church and Glebe, and have lately hindered your petitioner Michael Christian Knoll from performing divine Service in it, and forbade the Tenants to pay the Rents to your said petitioner, pretending that the said Glebe and Church have reverted to the Crown for Want of Lutheran Inhabitants to enjoy them . . .

⁵ Petition of Michael Christian Knoll to George Clinton, governor of New-York, 12 May 1749; in *The Documentary History of the State of New-York*, ed. E. B. O'Callaghan, vol. III (Albany: Weed, Parsons & Co., 1850), pp. 583-585.

⁶ E. M. Rutenber & C. W. Tice, *History of the Town of Newburgh* (E. M. Rutenber & Co., 1859), pp. 30-31.

Commentary on German Jews in Georgia by a German Protestant clergyman, 1734 (excerpts)⁷

In 1734 the town of Ebenezer was founded in Georgia by Protestant Lutherans from Salzburg, Austria, fleeing war and religious persecution. Their chaplain, Rev. Johann Martin Bolzius, comments in his journal on meeting a Jewish couple in Savannah.

Thursday, *March 14*. Last Night we Prayed on shore for the first time, in the *English* Chapel, made of Boards, and used for divine Worship, till a Church can be built; the Use of which is allowed us, during our Stay here. The Inhabitants join with us, and show much Devotion. The *Jews* likewise, of which there are 12 Families here, come to Church, and seem to be very devout: They understand the *German* Tongue. Though the Chapel is but of Boards, it is very convenient, and pleases the *Saltzburgers*. . . .

Thursday, *March 20*. *The Jew* and his Wife, who were before mention'd, are so very willing to serve us and the *Saltzburgers*, that it surprizes us; and are so honest and faithful, that the like is hardly to be found, as appears by the following Example. *The Jew's* Wife had by Mistake, and in the dark, taken of a *Saltzburger's* Wife a Crown piece for a Half-crown piece, because the *Saltzburger's* Wife had given her it for no more: when the next Day the *Jew* saw the Money, and his Wife told him she had taken it for half the Value, he went to the *Saltzburger's* Tent, and asked for the Woman, and paid her the other Half-Crown with these Words; "God forbid I should have any Goods in my House that are not my own, for it will have no Blessing." This made a great Impression on the *Saltzburgers*.

Because these *Jews* show a great Love for us, and have promised to see us at our Settlement, we hope we shall preach the Gospel of *Jesus Christ* to them with good Success. They were both born in *Germany*, and talk good *German*. They have taken very well what we hitherto have spoke to them. . . .

Wednesday, *April 3*. *The Jew*, of whom mention hath been made above, hath shown us and the *Saltzburgers* so much Goodness, that we could desire no more; and though we offered him a Sum of Money for his Labour and Pains, yet he refused to accept of it: Wherefore the *Saltzburgers*, that are still here, resolve to Till his Ground, and to clear it of Trees, and so make good again what he hath neglected for their Sake. We have had several Discourses with him concerning Judaism, and given him some Passages out of the Holy Scripture to consider on, which seemed to make a strong Impression on him.

Warning from a German immigrant to others considering emigrating to America, 1750 (excerpts)⁸

In 1750 the German schoolmaster and organist Gottlieb Mittelberger traveled to America with four hundred other emigrants. Distressed by the fate of many who were sold into indentured servitude by "Dutch man-dealers and their man-stealing emissaries," he returned to Germany in 1754 and published an account to dissuade others from emigrating to America.

[Preface] . . . But the most important occasion for publishing this little book was the wretched and grievous condition of those who travel from Germany to this new land, and the outrageous and merciless proceeding of the Dutch man-dealers and their man-stealing emissaries; I mean the so-called newlanders, for they steal, as it were, German people under all manner of false pretenses, and deliver them into the hands of the great Dutch traffickers in human souls. These derive a large, and the newlanders a smaller

⁷ Journal of Rev. Johann Martin Bolzius, 1734, as published in *An Extract of the Journals of Mr. Commissary Von Reck, Who Conducted the First Transport of Saltzburgers to Georgia: and of the Reverend Mr. Bolzius, One of their Ministers. Giving an Account of their Voyage to, and Happy Settlement in that Province*, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1734.

⁸ Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania in the Year 1750, and Return to Germany in the Year 1754, Containing Not Only a Description of the Country According to Its Present Condition, but Also a Detailed Account of the Sad and Unfortunate Circumstances of Most of the Germans That have Emigrated or Are Emigrating to That Country*, 1756 (tr. by Carl Theo. Eben; Philadelphia: John Jos. McVey, 1898).

profit from this traffic. This, I say, is the main cause why I publish this book. I had to bind myself even by a vow to do so. For before I left Pennsylvania, when it became known that I was about to return to Württemberg, many

*“to prevent other innocent souls
from leaving their fatherland”*

Württembergers, Durlachers and Palatines, of whom there are a great number there who repent and regret it while they live that they left their native country, implored me with tears and uplifted hands, and even in the name of God, to make this misery and sorrow known in Germany, so that not only the common people, but even princes and lords, might learn how they had fared, to prevent other innocent souls from leaving their fatherland, persuaded thereto by the newlanders, and from being sold into a like slavery. And so I vowed to the great God, and promised those people, to reveal to the people of Germany the pure truth about it, to the best of my knowledge and ability. I hope, therefore, that my beloved countrymen and all Germany will care no less to obtain accurate information as to how far it is to Pennsylvania, how long it takes to get there; what the journey costs, and besides, what hardships and dangers one has to pass through; what takes place when the people arrive well or ill in the country; how they are sold and dispersed; and finally, the nature and condition of the whole land. I relate both what is good and what is evil, and I hope, therefore, to be considered impartial and truthful by an honor-loving world.

When all this will have been read, I do not doubt that those who may still desire to go there, will remain in their fatherland, and carefully avoid this long and tedious journey and the fatalities connected with it; as such a journey involves with most a loss of their property, liberty and peace; with not a few even a loss of life, and I may well say, of the salvation of their souls. . . .

How miserably and wretchedly so many thousand German families have fared, 1) since they lost all their cash means in consequence of the long and tedious journey; 2) because many of them died miserably and were thrown into the water; 3) because, on account of their great poverty, most of these families after reaching the land are separated from each other and sold far away from each other, the young and the old. And the saddest of all this is that parents must generally give away their minor children without receiving a compensation for them; inasmuch as such children never see or meet their fathers, mothers, brothers or sisters again, and as many of them are not raised in any Christian faith by the people to whom they are given.

Petition of French Catholics (Acadians) in Nova Scotia to avoid forced removal or receive refuge in Massachusetts, 1758 (excerpts)⁹

In 1713 after Queen Anne's War, Britain acquired from France the Canadian maritime territory of Acadia, including Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and part of New Brunswick. Forty years later, with the outbreak of the fourth intercolonial war — the French and Indian War — the British forcibly removed most of the French Acadians to other territories (some ultimately settling in French Louisiana). One group of about 130 French Acadians had fled to the woods of Nova Scotia near Cape Sable. After suffering through a brutal winter, they petitioned the governor of Massachusetts Bay, Thomas Pownall, for support in their appeal to remain in Nova Scotia or receive official refuge in Massachusetts. Although Pownall was sympathetic, the provincial council refused their appeal since Britain was again at war with France. Pownall then sent the petition to the governor of Nova Scotia, recommending compassion for the desperate French Acadians.

[Pownall's prefatory note] . . . As for the case of the poor people at Cape Sables, it seems very distressful and worthy any relief can be afforded them. If Policy could acquiesce in any measure for their relief, Humanity loudly calls for it — I send you a copy of their petition and in the Copy of the Journal of Council which I also enclose, You will see that Genl. Amherst was willing to relieve them, could it have been done here — but by the same you will see the Council could by no means advise me to receive them.

⁹ Papers Relating to the Forcible Removal of the Acadian French from Nova Scotia, 1755-1768, *Selections from the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia*, ed. T. B. Akins (Halifax, Canada: 1869); pp. 305-307. Full text online from Nova Scotia Archives & Records Management at www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/deportation/default.asp?Language=English.

PETITION

Cape Sable [Nova Scotia], September 15, 1758

To His Excellency THOMAS POWNALL, Esq[uires] and Honourable Council in Boston

Dear SIRs:

We, your humble petitioners, have taken this opportunity to write to you these few lines, hoping they will obtain the happy end for which they are designed; and we hope above all things that your Excellency and worthy Council will have compassion on us, your poor distressed fellow creatures, and grant to us this humble request that we earnestly implore of you; and that it might please your Excellency and worthy Council to take us under your Excellency's Government and, if it might please your Excellency and Worthy Council to settle us here in this land where we now live, we shall ever hold it our bounden duty to love and honour you with our last Breath, and We will assure your Excellency and worthy Council that we are heartily willing to do whatever you require of us as far as we are able to perform.

We are also willing to pay to your Excellency's Government our Yearly Taxes. We are also willing to support and maintain the War against the King of France as long as we live, and if ever any damage should be done here on our Territories by the Savages, it shall be required at our hands, we are in all about 40 families which consist of about 150 Souls, the savages that live between here and Halifax do not exceed 20 men, and they are also willing to come under the same Government with us and to pay their yearly taxes to your Excellency's Government.

And if we shall be so fortunate as to obtain so much friendship with your Excellency as to be received into your Excellency's Government, we will send in two men

"we would rather die here than go to any French Dominions to live"

with a list of all our names and the Savages will send in two likewise with a list of their names, and we will all submit to do whatever you require of us; and if any others should desert from elsewhere, Savages or French, and come to us, we will in no wise receive them unless they get from under your Excellency's hand liberty; and now to conclude, if we should be so unfortunate as to be denied this, our humble request, we will submit to your Excellency's goodness to do with us whatever may seem good in your sight; only this we beg, that if we may no longer stay here that we may be received into New England to live as the other Neutral French do; for we had all rather die here than go to any French Dominions to live. We beg that your Excellency will send us word what we shall do as soon as you can, and we will do it as soon as you send, and if it be our hard fate to come away from here, we will obey your Excellency and come though it would be to us like departing out of this world.

Dear Sirs, Do for us what lays in your power to settle us here and we will be your faithful subjects till death.

With no response to their petition, the French Acadians appealed to the governor of Nova Scotia, who ordered them to be brought to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and then transported to France, where none of them had ever lived.