

Mein Name ist Peter Dietrich

Deatrick/Dedrick Family Heritage

Ronald J. Deatrick & Claudia Barnard Coffey

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Thank you to the present day historians of the family,

In Indiana

Bertie Arlington Deatrick, who got the ball rolling in 1940

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story down to this generation

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pictures and inspiration

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error checking and great ideas

It takes a prodigious team to document such an extraordinary family

Ron and Claudia

Aller Anfang ist schwer.
“All beginnings are hard.”

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Preface

From the Fatherland to the New World

A brief lesson in history, geography, the Palatinate Dialect, and the Dietrich family in Germany

According to [Sovereign-Ancestry.com](http://www.sovereign-ancestry.com), prior to unification in 1871, Germany consisted of a loose association of kingdoms: Bavaria, Prussia, Saxony and Wurttemberg.¹

The Dietrich family settled in the Rheinland-Pfalz, principally in the towns of Reichenbach and Skt. Wendel, which were in the Principality of Birkenfeld. Rheinland-Pfalz, or the "Palatinate" as we know it, was in the southwestern section just west of Hessen and north of Badden.

The climate of Birkenfeld is mild with rolling farmland, striking hills and valleys, similar to that found in the Shenandoah Valley and Harrison County, Indiana. The Dietrich family, along with thousands of Palatinate country men and women, might have happily stayed where they were but for the events on All Hallows Eve 1517. On this day Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses against the Catholic Church to the door of All Saint's Church in Wurttemberg in the Palatinate.

This of course led to the Catholic Church condemning Luther as a heretic, resulting in a century of royalty and religious taking sides, which then concluded with war declared in 1618 between the Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of France. This war ended 30 years later and would go down in history as the "Thirty Years War".

¹ <http://www.sovereign-ancestry.com/germany.htm>

The country we call Germany today was in the midst of the fighting. Because the Palatinate was in the southwest area of Germany bordering with the Alsace region of France, the people of the Palatinate suffered mightily. The Peace of Westphalia, which granted Switzerland and the Netherlands independence from the Holy Roman Empire, ended the war in 1648. A devastating plague and draught brought the 1600's to a miserable end.

About this time, North America was opening up lands for settlement, with William Penn and Lord Baltimore offering Pennsylvania and Maryland lands to be farmed and settled to people of all religions. North America needed settlers to clear and develop the land, giving German middle class citizens a chance to own land – a chance they could never have hoped to receive in the Fatherland.

The stage was set for a great migration from Germany to America, with the Palatinate making up a large percentage of the immigrants. Among them, young Johannes Peter Dietrich who would become the originator of one Deatrick/Dedrick line in America.

A Letter from the New World 1711

“God greet you most beloved souls, father, mother, related friends, and neighbors, always with our thousandfold greetings and obedient service. I wish you at this time to learn of my health, and to know that I must make my writing as short as I can compose it. I hope that you have the letters that I wrote from Holland and England. The most essential contents are that we came the 10th of June to New Castle in England, but the 6th I became a very sad widower.

In New Castle we lay five weeks. The 17th of July went aboard the ship and lay eight days at anchor. After that we sailed, under the all-powerful protection of God, safely to land in Virginia. Also did not lose a person. A young son was born on the sea. His father’s name is Benedict Kupferschmied. He worked a year for our dear brother, Christian Bürki. After that we went about a hundred hours by water and land, yet always guided and fed, and the people everywhere have done us much kindness and there is in this country no innkeeper. All go from one place to another for nothing and consider it an insult if one should wish to ask the price.

Brought here hale and hearty, the shoemaker Moritz did not die till he was on his farm. He was well on the whole journey. No one else of us Siebentaler people has died, but of the others though, three Palatines. Of the people among whom we live, however, a good many have died.

Regarding the land in general. It is almost wholly forest, with indescribably beautiful cedar wood, poplars, oaks, beech, walnut and chestnut trees. But the walnuts are very hard and full of indentations and the chestnuts very small but good. There is sassafras also, and so many other fragrant trees that I cannot describe the hundredth part. Cedar is red like the most

beautiful veined cherry and smells better than the finest juniper. They are, commonly, as well as the other trees, fifty to sixty feet below the limbs.

The land in general is almost everywhere black dirt and rich soil, and everyone can get as much as he will. There are five free years. After that one is to give for an acre, which is much greater than a Juchart with us, two pennies. Otherwise it is entirely free, one's own to use and to leave to his heirs as he wishes. But this place has been entirely uninhabited, for we have not seen any signs nor heard that anything else ever was here except the so-called wild and naked Indians. But they are not wild, for they come to us often and like to get clothes of us. This is done when they pay with wild meat and leather, bacon, beans, corn, which the women plant and the men hunt; and when they, as most frequently happens, guide the Christians through the forest and show new ways. They have huts of cedar bark. Some also can speak English well. They have an idol and hold festivals at certain times. But I am sorry to say, of the true God they do not want to know anything.

With regard to the rearing of cattle. It costs almost nothing for the raising, as the booklet printed at Frankfort says, for all stock pastures in the winter as well as in the summer. And I know of nothing to find fault with in the booklet mentioned regarding these two items, although it writes of South Carolina.

They butcher also no young animals, so one can conclude how quickly the number can increase. The cows give scarcely half so much as with you for the calves suck so long; until they are a year and a half old and in turn have young. We buy a cow with a calf for three pounds sterling or twelve thalers, a hog for one pound, with young or fat; a sheep also for as much. They have but few goats, but I have seen some. Squire Michel told me they wished to bring some here to us. Wild and unplanted tree-fruits are not to be found here so good as Kocherthal writes of South Carolina. I have seen no cherries yet. There are many grape-vines and many grapes on them, of which some are good to eat; and it can well be believed, if one had many together (they would do well). We are going to try to plant them for everything grows up very quickly and all fruit is of very good taste, but we do not enjoy them much yet.

We lie along a stream called Neuse. There six years ago the first (people), English, until two years ago (when) the Swiss people (came), began the cultivation. They are, as it seems to me, rather rich in cattle, all sorts of crops, the finest tree-fruit, and that, the whole year (except for) two months. From the nature of things we were behind in that regard, so that we do not have it yet; but we hope, through God's blessings to get it. We came shortly before Christmas and we have by God's blessing, Zioria, my son-in-law Peter Reutiger, and I, and others besides, much stronger houses than the English; have also cleared land in addition, and the most have put fences around.

It is to be hoped that now from the ground and the cattle we will get enough, through the grace of God who has always stretched out his hand helpfully and has brought us safely and unhindered through so many enemies, spiritual and worldly, and over the great sea. But one thing lies heavy on us which I cannot write without weeping, namely the lack of a true and zealous pastor. For we have indeed cause to complain with Asaph, our sign we see no more, no prophet preaches to us any more, no teacher teaches us any more. We have, indeed, prayers in our houses every Sunday, but the zeal to cleanse away the canker of our old sins is so small that it is to be feared it will consume everything to the foundation, if the pitying God does not come to our help.

If it had pleased the good God to send some of our brethren and sisters or at least Christian Bürki as an instrument, as a physician of body and soul, I should have had good hopes that the light among us would not become an evil smelling lamp, for I do not believe there is a person here, either English, German, or French who would not have loved him heartily; I believe that his profession is especially good here and that he could have an estate according to his wish without doing work in the fields. For of good liquor and such medicine there is the greatest lack in this country, therefore I have a friendly request to make of you, dear brother; namely, as follows.

I have married Christina Christeler, a widow of Sannen. I am her third husband. By the first she has four children. Two died in London. Her husband and one child upon the sea. But the eldest, a boy of thirteen,

named Benedict Plösch, is at Mörigen in the baliwick Nidauw, staying with his deceased father's clientage. And he was alive four years ago. Her father was named Peter Christeler. Christen Walcker, who, with his wife died here in this country and left eight children, said to her that she has a rather large inheritance from her late father, left with her brother Moritz Christeler, for he has received a hundred pounds of it. When you go to Sannen to ask about it, I hope Heinrich Perret will be able to help you; for they have been nearest neighbors. And if it is as Walcker says you can take it into your hands.

Because my wife understands brewing so well and has done it for years, and the drink is very scarce here and neither money nor brewing pots are to be obtained here, otherwise I would not think of such a thing for you to do. But the pot must have two pipes but no worm; and if some reliable people should not be coming, would Mr. Ritter still be so good as to get it to me here; also four pounds worth of spice, such as ginger, pepper, saffron, nutmegs, galangale, cloves, each according to the proportion of the money? For here there is nothing but laurel. I have seen it on trees in the forest. But if there should be nothing to be got from the inheritance, I would most kindly beg you and my father, if he is still alive, to still help me somewhat from my own, for it is very important to me and especially to the women folks, who are very scarce here.

If only more people should wish to come, I advise that they take women with them if they want to have any, for here some of the very best men find no wives, because they are not here.

The journey is easily to be made if one can supply himself properly with old cheese, dried meat, and dried fruit, vinegar, wine, beer, and casks, butter, biscuits, in fine whatever is good to eat and feasible to transport, also a pan or kettle that is narrow at the top and broad below; for when the sea is violent the ship lies over on one side so that things are spilt. Yet I have never heard that a ship has sunk upon the high sea.

Whoever could provide himself with the things named above and should make an agreement with the ship captain that he give him liberty to cook and a good place to lie the voyage would not be hard. For we

had young and old people, all are hale and hearty. Whatever one brings here in the way of wares is worth at least as much again. Linen cloth and glass would be especially needed, and is to be purchased very well in Holland.

Peter Röhrtiger and my two daughters greet you, for we live beside each other. Dichtli is still with me, and I am delivering the greeting of us all to our dear and faithful pastor, to the whole number of honored persons, especially Godfather Kilchmeyer Dreuthart, and Andreas Aescher, Christen Jantz.

I would have much to write. I must break off. Have patience with my bad writing, for whoever sees my hand and labor will believe that I have not written and studied much. Greet for us Christien Bürki and I should be glad if he could hear the contents of this letter. I remain your well affectioned servant and my parents' obedient son until death"².

Dietrich family of Germany

Christy Hyden-Allen, member of the NSDAR through the Dedrick, Balsley, Arnold and Keinadt lines, and author on the compilation "Ancestral Lineages of the Hyden Family of Virginia", states the following regarding the Dietrich family of Germany:

"First found in Prussia, where the family was anciently associated with the political and religious conflicts of the area. They declared allegiances to many nobles and princes of early history, lending their influence in struggles for power and status within the region. The family founded numerous branches, many of which acquired manors and estates in surrounding regions, where they contributed to the prosperity of their society. The name was made famous during the Middle Ages through the folk hero Dietrich von Bern, and the Dietrich-sagas which stem from the life of the Gothic King Theoderich the Great. The prefix "ded," "did," "died," "diet," or "diot" means people, nation, or folk, while the ending "Reich" means realm.

² An example of a letter from America to Germany written in 1711 told of the experiences of the New World. These letters would have been read and reread by the people of the Palatinate, giving them valuable, first-hand information about life in the New World.

Dedrick is the respelling of North German Dedrich, a variant of Diederich.

Many variations exist today. Possible lines are Johannes Peter Diederich and Wilhelm Diederich who came to America on the ship PATIENCE. (Ship List 146C at the courthouse at Philadelphia, PA, Saturday 11, Aug 1750. Present: Thomas Lawrence, Esq., Mayor. The foreigners, whose names are underwritten, imported in the ship Patience, Capt. Hugh Steel, from Rotterdam, but last from Cowes in England, did this day take & subscribe the usual qualification.) My research is based on information retrieved from Chalkley's Chronicles, Valley of the Shadow website library, cemetery headstones & obituary's, U S Federal census records, ACW records, city and county documents, Probate Wills of Peter Deatrick Sr. and William Phillip Deatrick, as well as other researchers shared information and of course family stories which have been handed down.

The Dietrichs trace their origin to Dietrich Von Bern, 454-526, the Champion of Civilization, and King of the Ostrogoths in southern Europe. Members of the family were leaders in the Crusades, in peace and in war, and in the Reformation they helped to make history. The Dietrichs are prominently mentioned in the annals of Germany, and six distinct families in the German Empire have coats of arms. The Dietrich Family of Berks County is descended from Johannes, Adam and Conrad Dietrich. A Johannes Dietrich came to America on the ship "Phoenix" in 1751, about 1760 settled in Greenwich township, where he died in 1785, in which year his widow, Barbara took out letters of administration.

While doing my research on the Baltzli/Balsley, Keinadt/Coiner, Baber, Hiden/Hyden, Arnold, Butler, Chesnut, Fox, Engleman, Offlighter, Pugh, Diddle and East families, I discovered many other families that married into these lines, which brings me to the Dedrick line. Some speculation provides a method to build a working hypothesis for building relationships in the current absence of documentation. I apologize for any errors and welcome any corrections as needed."

Peter's Family in the Palatinate

Research indicates the possibility that Johann Peter Dietrich, who came to America on the *Patience* in 1750, may have been a son of Johann Jakob Dietrich and Maria Dorothea Carius. Johann Wilhelm Dietrich, who was born Sept. 25, 1734 to Johan Jakob and Maria Dorothea Dietrich, may have been the Johann Wilhelm also on the ship *Patience*, and thus Peter's brother.

Additional immigrants to America from the Palatinate prior to Peter and Wilhelm's arrival were Johan Phillip Dietrich, who arrived in Philadelphia on the "*Frances & Elizabeth*" in 1742 and Philipp Nicol DIETRICH who came to Philadelphia on the ship "*Leslie*" in 1749. Johan Jakob and Maria Dorothea also had sons by these names: Johann-Phillip, who was born July 13, 1724 and Philipp Nicol born August 16, 1728.³

What's in a name?

Why are there so many variations of the name Dietrich in North America?

In the case of Johan Peter Dietrich, the name changes were not by his choice. This homonymic spelling resulted when clerks and scribes of army bases, county offices, etc., wrote down his name as they heard it. While Peter Dietrich was fluent in the dialect of the Germany Palatinate, he did not speak English which led to a communications disconnect as well. Peter's children then took different name spellings as well, which is why we have all the name variations today. The family members

³ See the chapter at end of book for complete family tree information.

who stayed in Virginia took the spelling of Dedrick and Detrick, and in Indiana, this line took the name Deatrck.

According to Pfälzisch – The Palatinate Dialect,⁴ "Pfälzisch, the Palatinate dialect, has interesting deviations from the standard German, possibly attributed to the Frankish (French) language of its neighbor.

"A Pfälzer (a man from the Palatinate) uses preferably the "b" instead of the "p", "d" instead of "t" and "g" instead of "k". Thus, the word "Tür" (= door) is rather spoken as "Diir/ Deer" or the word "richtig" (= right) is spoken as "rischdisch"."

In addition, the vocals "ö", "ü", "eu/äu" is replaced by "e", "i" and "ai", which leads to the pronunciation of the German word "Möbel" to "Meebel/ Meewel", the word "Hügel" into „Hischel, Hiechel, Hiwwel" and so on. It is also typical for this dialect for the sound in the end of the word to be omitted.

These are some of the reasons for the various name alterations to Peter Dietrich - Peter Teterich, Teeter, Devirex, and so on.

⁴ <https://exploreheidelbergpfalz.wordpress.com/geschichte/pfalzisch/>

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Deatrick/Detrick/Dedrick Family Heritage

The following is the presumed story of the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of Peter Dietrich, on leaving home and family to come to America.

The stories in this book are collected from documented research and family lore. How Peter Dietrich and his descendants felt about the events happening around them can only be imagined.

Chapter 1

The Journey

Johann Peter Dietrich

They called it the Promised Land. In America, with hard work and thrift, a body could “git” his own land. In America, it didn’t matter who you were; it just mattered what you could do.

As with most families of the Palatinate, the Dietrich family would have begun to plan for their sons, Wilhelm and Peter, to leave for America at least a year in advance. For most families, it would take that long to get the coinage together.

Some families were known to have sold their farms in the Palatinate to ensure money for the voyage and purchase of land⁵ in North America, but Wilhelm and Peter would be traveling under the “redemptioner” design. Upon arrival in North America, 16 year old Wilhelm would work off his voyage cost by signing a contract to work as an indentured servant for five to seven years, and 10 year old Peter would likely become an apprentice, signing up to this program until his 21st birthday.

There were advantages to becoming an indentured servant or apprentice. In addition to having the ocean voyage paid, the servant would live in an established home – most likely another Palatinate family already in America. Along with becoming experienced in a valuable trade, the apprentice would learn the lay of the American land, while having a roof over his head, clothes to wear and food to eat.

Even though the voyage would be paid, there would still be a need to pay customs charges in Rotterdam and Cowes, England, and to buy the food they would need for the period up to and including the six to eight

⁵ Though some land was free and other at little cost.

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week journey. They would have planned to leave through Rotterdam, which would allow this program, as shippers in Hamburg and Bremen would demand full cash payment.⁶

The practical plans having been made, it was left to the family to deal with the emotional pains of the leave-taking. Peter's parents and siblings⁷ were surely like all other families who sent their loved ones away for a chance at a better life. It would have been hard to say goodbye, but it was the best, sometimes the only course of action, a parent could take.

Between 1727 and 1775, approximately 65,000 Germans landed in Philadelphia and settled in the regions of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. Every single one of these travelers surely had mixed feelings about the excitement of a new land and the sadness at leaving the Fatherland.

The voyage itself was so punishing that it was considered unusual for the ship to arrive at port with all passengers surviving the passage. Those who made it to the American shore found numerous opportunities but many hazards. This was the land to which Peter and his brother were destined.

We can only imagine young Peter's last day at home in early summer 1750 in the Palatinate. The farmland around Reichenbach was just greening to its full glory. Peter could hear the voices of the household as he awoke this Ascension Monday. On feeling the warmth of the house this early morning, Peter thought; we'll soon be getting the Summer Kitchen ready. But then he thought with a pang of sadness, I won't be

⁶ To finance their passage, many of the penniless before 1820 became "indentured servants," also known as "redemptioners." The typical indentured service contract made out with the captain of a ship provided that the fare had to be paid together with an additional 12% premium no later than fourteen days after arrival. If a passenger was not able to wipe out the debt -- perhaps with help from a relative or a friend in America -- then the captain was at liberty to "sell" the passenger into a form of servitude, often together with his wife and children, for three to four years. Estimates suggest that half of all early German immigrants financed their passage in this manner. To be sure, only non-German harbors, in particular Rotterdam and Amsterdam, permitted this manner of passage. Shippers in Hamburg and Bremen demanded cash payment. *"The German Americans"*

⁷ Please go to Ancestry.com for information on Peter and Wilhelm's family tree.

here. Peter figured if he thought too much about the endeavor he was undertaking, it would be almost too much to bear.

Just as he was thinking through all this, he heard his older brother, Wilhelm, call to him from the door. "Hurry, Peter, get your things together and don't forget your travel documents! We have chores to do and we need to leave as early as we can."

Peter sighed to himself, if one more person reminded him about those documents; he was going to throttle them. Peter wondered if Wilhelm was sad at all about leaving. If he was, he didn't sound like it. As he and Wilhelm came downstairs, he saw his papa and mama standing together in the kitchen, his papa's arms around his mother's shoulders. Quickly, as she heard them come in, Dorothea turned around to see her boys, her face brightened and a smile coming to her lips, but not before they saw the tears she was wiping from her eyes.

"Hurry you two." She said. "Do your chores quickly so you have time for a good breakfast before you leave." Have you both got your travel documents?" But then just saying this made it so real. Her voice broke and she quickly turned back to cooking. No one was going to be sad today.

She had already said goodbye to her older sons, and now it was time for the two younger boys to leave. The family didn't want it to be this way, but they all realized, even ten year old Peter, their future was in America, not here in the beautiful Palatinate. A long drawn out religious war, a plague, bad weather, royalty and religion had conspired to send so many of their countrymen away. She was comforted in knowing her two middle sons would see their older brothers. Phillip and Nicolaus were already in William Penn's colony, Pennsylvania. Nicolaus had already finished his indenture while Phillip began his last year. She knew they would help the boys find a good location in the German community to work off their indentures.

They had exciting plans for ten year old Peter though. In Germany, one had to purchase an apprenticeship, and even after that cost, one could not guarantee he would be his own master. But in America,

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apprenticeships were free. True, it did mean Peter would be apprenticed until he was 21 years old, much longer a time than the indenture of her older boys, but he would be an artisan at the end of the term. Even better, he would be provided food, clothing and a roof over his head. They hoped Peter would learn to love to be a blacksmith as his mother's grandfather had been, and with his love of animals they hoped Peter could be a farrier someday, both trades that would stand a man in good place in the world. They hoped Nicolaus would help Peter find a good apprenticeship, in a home with a family speaking the German dialect of Rheinland-Pfalz, so Peter would not be lonely and would have a surrogate Palatinate family in America.

This had all been explained to Peter, but sometimes he could only think about being so far from his family and his home. All he knew in his ten years was family, cousins, church, and the beauty of the countryside. But Jacob had talked to him sternly and told him of the good things and reminded Peter he must not look sad in front of his mother and his younger brothers. Peter thus kept his head high with a determined look in his eyes. Secretly he was very glad Wilhelm would be with him. He wouldn't want to take this journey so far alone.

After a hearty breakfast, many kisses and hugs, even from his father who professed to be stern with his children, Peter faced west; resolutely not looking around even when his favorite dog tried to follow. He told himself he would see them again, that is the only way he could get through this.

Peter and Wilhelm kept up a fast pace as they walked southwest through the Pfalzer Forest and the Nahe Mountains; arriving at the Rhine River in good time. Here they left the Rheinland-Pfalz sailing up the Rhine to the port of Rotterdam. In Rotterdam, they learned that a seasoned ship named the "Patience" would shortly be making its annual voyage to Philadelphia. The ship's captain told them the cost for Wilhelm would be ten pounds and for Peter five pounds, which would give them each a "bedstead" measuring two feet wide by six feet long in the ship's hold. This would be their home for the six to eight weeks journey; if it was God's will for them to have a safe and smooth journey. This was

not the only cost though. They had to each procure their food for the journey and also pay customs costs in Rotterdam and again in Cowes in England.

Rarely did the immigrants have money enough to make this costly journey, but they knew that through the redemptioner program, land and economic opportunity, freedom on how to live and worship, the opportunity to be judged on what one could do, not who one's last name, would await them after their time of service.

Peter and Wilhelm had a bit more space in the hold than the families going to America, many with small children, furniture and tools to share their small space. Such a cacophony of sound Peter had never heard when they all got settled into the hold, as the *Patience* finally left for Cowes, England and from there sailing for America under Captain Hugh Steele. While enroute, Peter took note of his shipmates and the ship; he learned that the *Patience* was a three masted, 200-ton ship, had 8 guns, and a crew of 16. He also discovered there were 266 "freights" (which is what the captain and crew called their passengers), aboard the ship – and thought with wonder he had been called many things but never a "freight".

There were many, many people from the Palatinate, all with a dream for a better life and few with money, especially after the customs costs to be paid before they sailed in earnest for the New World. The hold was so densely packed there was no privacy, and he saw and heard many people get sick, not just the nausea that came to many as they adjusted to the rocking of the ship on the ocean, but some really ill, sick enough that they wasted away and died. Those grieving families had to leave their loved ones buried at sea. It was heartrending to watch, especially for parents who lost small children.

Peter and Wilhelm had faced the beginning of many small trials as they signed up for the voyage. For the first time but not for the last, the clerk writing down their last name would write it as it sounded, not as it had been listed in the church and town listings, so Johan Peter and Johan Wilhelm Dietrich became Johannes Peter and Willhelm Diedrich.

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Finally after weeks of misery, bad water and little food, they finally arrived at the busy port of Philadelphia on a steamy Saturday, August 11, 1750. Thankfully, there was no infectious disease this journey so the ship could dock. Mid-morning, the passengers in the hold heard the booming voice of Captain Steele: "All men and boys over the age of 10, come with me. Everyone else, stay on the ship. Men, bring your papers with you."

When all were assembled, the women and children watched their men leave them, and must have felt quite alone and perhaps unsure, as they waited for their return.

On their walk to Philadelphia Hall, Peter and Wilhelm felt good to have solid ground under their feet again. Peter felt quite grown up as he joined the men in making their oath to the British Crown and signing the paper of allegiance. As they walked along Front Street behind Captain Steele, they were part of the multitude of the hustle and bustle amid the business around the warehouses. They surely would have noticed the comparison between the general 'busyness' here, and remembering their quiet villages of the Palatinate, knew they were truly in a "New World".

Turning down Second Street and seeing the Court House topped with its cupola and weathervane, they might have felt quite overwhelmed as they marched up the front steps and through the portico to wait for the white-whigged officials to administer the oath. As most of the men likely did not speak or understand the English language, there would have been someone to translate the oath to the German Palatinate language. But, as the clerk read a section of the oath, all the new immigrants had to repeat it, until the entire oath was given and repeated.

Philadelphia City Hall, Oath of Allegiance, August 11, 1750

"We subscribers, natives and late inhabitants of the Palatinate upon the Rhine and places adjacent, having transported ourselves and families into this province of Pennsylvania, a colony subject to the crown of Great Britain, in hopes and expectation of finding a retreat and

peaceable settlement therein, do solemnly promise and engage that we will be faithful and bear true allegiance to his present majesty, King George II, and his successors, kings of Great Britain, and will be faithful to the proprietors of this province, and that we will demean ourselves peaceably to all his said subjects and strictly observe and conform to laws of England and this province, to the utmost of our power.”

Upon taking the oath, the passengers were required to sign their names on two pieces of paper. Many of the passengers signed in their own language. For those who could not sign their name, a clerk wrote it out as he heard it, for the immigrant to sign with an X next to the name.

After signing the oath the men were escorted back to the ship. Those passengers who did not have enough money to pay for their trip to America were “hired” by merchants for a definitive period of time until the debt for passage to America was paid. Sturdy and strong men, women and all but the very youngest children were put to work at once.

“When a ship carrying immigrants from Germany arrived in the port of Philadelphia, bells were ringing in the city to alert the citizenry that there was a boat loaded with immigrants in port. The citizens would come to the boat to welcome the passengers and also to find indentured servants to fill their labor needs. The German people of Philadelphia who were expecting relatives from the homeland would greet the ship with fruit and other foods. All Germans in this country at that time had experienced the trip across the ocean and were well aware of what the passengers needs were. The established citizenry was also looking for news from the homeland.” *The Colonization of North America, 1492-1783.*

Families were often divided on arrival, as children were ‘sold’ to pay the family’s passage, this would be the case with Peter who would be separated to go with his master until his 21st birthday. He would be separated from his brothers.

When Wilhelm and Peter heard their names announced to come to the deck to meet family, they believed that was the sweetest sound they ever heard. Before leaving the ship, Wilhelm and Peter had to again show their papers. Peter now understood the very importance of these

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papers he had been reminded about so many times. He certainly would not have wanted to be left behind on the ship. A passport that all citizens of Germany and Switzerland were supposed to have stating the community each immigrant came from did not have any dangerous plague or infectious diseases and also stating each immigrant had paid all the taxes necessary to allow him to travel freely. The second document was a letter of recommendation issued by the pastor of the immigrant's home church.

Upon arriving on deck, Wilhelm and Peter would have been overjoyed to see their brothers, Nicolaus and Phillip. Nicholas came to America in 1742 on the "Francis & Elizabeth" at the age of 18 and Phillip came to America on the "Leslie" last year, 1749, at the age of 21. Nicolaus had already served his apprenticeship and was now seeing Anna Shafer, whom he met at Benders Church in Adams County, Pennsylvania. The two planned to get married when Anna fulfilled her service in 1752. In the meantime Nicolaus was working hard to get his land, home and farm ready.

Peter would never forget how good fresh water and hot food could taste after so many weeks in the ship. He felt like he was getting out of prison. As they left in Nicholas's wagon for the Pennsylvania interior, they had noticed how fresh and new the city of Philadelphia looked, in comparison to the old cities back home in the Father Country. Now driving along the Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia to Lancaster, the boys saw the many trees still standing even after the fields had been cleared for farming. They also noticed how neat and clean the farm houses were, some made of limestone but many more cabins built from the felled trees. Almost every farm had larger barns than homes, along with the large cleared fields.

Another difference Peter noticed was that in the Fatherland, the farm house and the barn were located in a village but here in America; citizens did not form small villages but instead built on large acreage. The farmers here were more individual and independent and they found the virgin land with its rich soil yielded a very large bounty. The work ethic, crop and animal knowledge and rich virgin soil together would give

the newcomers from Germany and the Palatinate a chance to become productive citizens of America in a very short time.

After their visits, it came time to part again. Nicolaus was taking Wilhelm to meet his new master right away, and would then be taking Peter further south to meet his new master the next day. They would be taking the Great Wagon Road south to the Shenandoah Valley, where there were many iron mines, furnishing the materials a blacksmith would need. Peter and his new master would be working with Miller's in Augusta, Virginia and Zane's in Frederick, Maryland; both located between the Blue Ridge and North Mountains of the Shenandoah Valley.

Both Wilhelm and Peter were not ready to leave family again, but agreed they were taking their next steps in a future their parents wanted for them. They were relieved to learn they would continue to speak the dialect of the Palatinate, but knew it would be to their benefit to learn English. They had seen that the Germans kept a close knit community and had simply moved their entire way of life to a new world, keeping the best ways of the old world as well.

Peter would learn of the hardships on the frontier and come to respect fully his master, a sometimes stern taskmaster, as had been his papa. Peter learned of the same traits of the German people; those of thriftiness and self-reliance; of love of liberty but, unlike the Quaker brethren, a willingness to fight for their liberty. They had no wish to go back to a life serving the nobility. They would be their own masters and judged on what they could do, not who they were. Peter would always hold dear the deep love and respect for God that the Palatinate community carried out with love and respect in work and in play.

The German immigrants took immediately to the frontier, because that was where the best land could be obtained at a cheaper price, but there was a cost. The German people became a buffer between the resentful Indian Nations and the cities along the coast. Ironically, one of the reasons so many German people came to America was a result of the wars with the French in the 1600's, the Thirty Years' War. Now just as Peter came to America, a new war with the French was heating up – the

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French and Indian war. This would affect the people of the American frontier, just as the earlier war had so tragically affected the people of the Palatinate. This war would not upset Peter, but he would not escape the next one.