

HISTORY

OF

SCHOHARIE COUNTY.

CHAPTER I.

THE GERMANS—CAUSE OF LEAVING GERMANY
—PALATINE TENANTS—KOCIERHAL'S PETITION—FIRST IMMIGRATION AGENTS SENT TO GERMANY—HUNTER'S PETITION—REPORT OF BOARD OF TRADE FAVORABLE TO IMMIGRATION—ROBERT HUNTER APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENT OF IMMIGRATION—HIS LETTER OF ARRIVAL AT NEW YORK—APPOINTED GOVERNOR—ACTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL—FEELING OF ENMITY—GERMAN CHILDREN APPRENTICED—SETTLEMENT AT THE "CAMPS"—NUMBER OF SETTLERS—TROUBLE EXPERIENCED—DISCONTENT OF GERMANS—MEETINGS HELD—LORD CLARENDON'S LETTER—EXPEDITION TO CANADA—GERMANS PETITION TO THE KING.

AFTER wandering through the picturesque valleys and over the noble hills of Schoharie County, visiting the many places made historic by the scenes and incidents enacted in the "days that tried men's souls," and after gleaning from family records, official documents, public and private journals, and archives in general, we find ourselves upon a mountain of

facts, from which we can look over the whole territory. From this position let us look back beyond the advent here of the first pioneers, and satisfy ourselves as to whom they were, and the causes that induced them to brave old ocean's calms and storms; and also at what time they came.

Let us not forget, however, that we are treading upon tender ground that has been gleaned by others of riper age and greater ability, nor the natural propensity to condemn where ideas disagree. From this "mountain of facts" we find, regardless of the differences of opinion in relation to the time and the causes which led to the first settlement of Schoharie, that all writers agree as to the *nationality* of those settlers, and ascribe to them those commendable characteristics—Honesty, Frugality and Industry.

Many sections of our country have been the asylums of the religiously and politically oppressed—of those who fled from their homes in the Old World, to enjoy the privileges that conscience craves of the one, and free thought and speech of the other, even if it could only be granted in an unknown wilderness, infested by savages and wild beasts.

It has been conjectured that the Germans who settled at Schoharie fled from their homes to avoid religious persecution; but those who have advanced this idea have been content to

follow in the path marked out by imaginary traditions and self-satisfied conjectures, without taking pains to explore archives that concealed documents left by those sturdy ones to enlighten us.

It is a singular fact, that history is more truthful after the lapse of a century or more from the time the events transpired, than at a nearer date, as all personal animosities, self-interests, jealousies, and all other monitors of fictitious chronicles die out, leaving the field open for the impartial to glean facts as they *were*, without distrust of disapprobation by factions, cliques or communities.

The first settlers of this County were Palatine tenants from the lower part of Germany. They were called "Palatines" from the fact that the lands which they occupied were owned and ruled by officers under the Crown, called "Palatines," and the country over which they presided, as governors, were "Palatinates." By studying the history of that time, we find that the poorer class—the tenants of those officials—were ground down by crown, state and church taxation, so much so that they barely made a living. Yet, the church requirements were more obligatory through *choice* than compulsion, as the people had long been free from the Popish grasp, and, as a mass, were followers of Luther.

In order to give an idea of the cause of the German immigration to this country, we will draw the attention of the reader to a letter,* written by one Joshua Kocherthal, a minister to the Board of Trade in London in 1708. He petitions, "in behalf of himself and the poor Lutherans, to be transported to some of ye Ma^{ts} plantations in America." "We humbly take leave to represent that they are, in number, forty-one—ten men, ten women and twenty-one children; that they are very necessitous and in the utmost want, not having at present anything to subsist themselves; that they have been rendered to this *by the ravages committed by the French in the Lower Palatinat, where they lost all they had.*" †

This small band, on the 29th of June, 1709, was settled upon Quasek Creek ‡ in Ulster

* London Documents.

† Documentary History.

‡ Now Chambers Creek.

County, and was the first German immigration to America.

By referring to European history, the reader will find that in 1702, England, Holland and Germany declared war against France, in support of Charles, Archduke of Austria, to the Spanish throne.

Charles the Second of Spain died in 1700, and Louis the Fourteenth of France, wishing to make Spain an ally, trumped up a candidate for the throne in the person of Philip of Anjou. The war lasted until the year 1713. During the years 1708, '09 the French carried hostilities upon German soil, and devastated the Lower Country, as stated by Kocherthal in his petition. England, possessing a goodly portion of America and receiving but meager supplies from her, embraced the opportunity (as she was but thinly inhabited) of peopling her possessions with the homeless Palatines; and, according to Brown's Pamphlet History, sent agents throughout the Palatinates to induce them to immigrate here; as we of to-day find our Western railroad companies that received large bounties in land from the government sending agents throughout Europe, to induce immigration, that their claims may become settled and produce a revenue. A goodly portion of the Western States, through such agencies, have been peopled, and numberless poor, delving, tenants of the Old World have become landlords here, under the influence of our generous laws. We trust they will continue to come by thousands, as in them we find industrious, energetic and law-abiding citizens.

Seeing the opportunity offered of peopling the American possessions, Robert Hunter, a man of official ambition, conceived the idea of immigrating a large colony of the Germans, and petitioned the London Board of Trade to that effect. The board made the following report "To the Queen's Most Gracious Majesty," on the 5th of December, 1709, which was approved January 7th, 1710.

From this second immigration came the pioneers of Schoharie County. As we shall be under the necessity of referring, in several points, to the above mentioned report, we will copy a portion of it, leaving out that which will be of no service to us, it being too monotonous for the matter-of-fact American reader:—

"May It Please Your Majesty: "In obedience to your Majesty's commands, signified to us by the Right Hon^{ble} the Earl of Sunderland, we have considered the proposals made to us by Colonel Hunter, for settling 3,000 Palatines at New York and Employing them in the Production of Naval Stores, and thereupon humbly Represent to your Majesty—

"That the Province of New York being the most advanced Frontier of Your Majesty's Plantations on the Continent of America, the Defence and Preservation of that place is of the utmost importance to the security of all the Rest; and if the said Palatines were seated, they would be an additional strength and security to that Province, not only with regard to the French of Canada, But against any Insurrection of the scattered Nations of Indians upon that Continent, and, therefore, we humbly propose that they be sent thither.

"By the best Information we can gett, the most proper Places for the seating them in that Province, so as they may be of benefit to this Kingdom by the Production of Naval Stores, are on the Mohaques River and on the Hudsons Rivers, where are very great numbers of Pines fit for Production of Turpentine and Tar, out of which Rosin and Pitch are made.

"First—In relation to the Mohaques River: Your Majesty was pleased, by your order in Council of the 26th June, 1708, to confirm an Act, passed at New York, the 2nd of March, 1693 for vacating several Extravagant Grants, whereby large Tracts of Land are returned to your Majesty, and among the rest.

"A Tract of Land lying on the Mohaques River, containing about 50 miles in length and four miles in breadth, and a Tract of land lying upon a creek which runs into the said River, which contains between 24 and 30 miles in Length. This last mentioned Land, of which Your Majesty has the possession, is claimed by the Mohaques, but that claim may be satisfied on very easy terms.

"The Objection that may be made to the seating of the Palatines, on the fore-mentioned Mohaques River, is the Falls that are on the said River between Schenectady and Albany, which will be an interruption in the Water Carriage, but as that may be easily helped by a

short land carriage of about 3 miles at the west, we do not see that this objection will be any hindrance to the seating of them there, In Case there be not an opportunity of doing it more conveniently in some other part of that Province.

* * * * *

"We therefore humbly offer that the Governor or Commander in Chief be Directed upon their Arrival to Seat them all, either in a Boddy or in different Settlements, upon those or other Lands as he shall Find most proper and that they be Encouraged to settle and work in Partnership, that is, 5 or more families to unite and work in common.

"That the Governor be likewise Directed to grant, under the Seal of that Province, without fee or Reward, 40 acres per head to each family, after they shall have repaid, by the produce of their Labour, the charges the publick shall be at in settling and subsisting them there, in the manner as hereinafter proposed: To have and to hold the said Lands, to them and their heirs forever, under the usual Quit-Rent, to commence and be payable after seven years from the date of Each respective Grant; and further, that in every such grant there be an express Proviso that the Lands so granted shall be seated and planted within a reasonable time, to be therein prefixed, or, on failure thereof, such Grant to be void and to revert to the Crown. And for the better preventing those people from falling upon the Woollen Manufactures, it will be proper that in every such grant, a Clause be inserted, declaring the said Grant to be void, if such Grantee shall apply himself to the making of Woollen or such like manufacture.

"As these people are very necessitous, they will not be able to maintain themselves there till they can reap the benefit of their labour, which will not be till after one year at the soonest. We therefore humbly offer, that they be subsisted, the men and women at the rate of 6^d sterling a head p^r day, and the children under the age of 10 years, at 4^d Sterling p^r day, which as we are informed, will be sufficient.

"When their houses shall be built and the ground cleared for making their settlements, they may then be Employed in the making of

Turpentine Rozin Tar and Pitch, and that this will be beneficial not only to the said Palatines, but to this Kingdom.

* * * * *

“As these Palatines are ignorant in the Production of those Stores, it will be necessary that three or four persons well skilled in the doing thereof (if to be had) be sent from hence, to instruct the said Palatines there, and that they be allowed £200, New York money, per annum each, during their being employed in this work.

“In case no such persons can be found here, then We propose that Mr. Bridges, Surveyor-General of Your Majesty’s Woods on the Continent of America, who was sent 4 or 5 years ago to New England to instruct the People there, be Directed to go to New York for that purpose, and that he bring with him 3 or 4 other persons, the most skillfull he can get, who may assist him in the instructing the said Palatines, and for their pains therein have a Salary of £100 per annum during such their employ and stay at New York.

“It will be likewise necessary that there be Supervisors appointed to reside among the said Palatines to over see and keep them at work, with a Salary of £100 per annum each. As to the number of the said supervisors we humbly conceive it cannot well be regulated here, for that will Depend in a great measure upon the number of the Palatines settlements, and On the Distance they may be one from the other. Therefore we are of opinion that this be left to the Discretion of Your Majesty’s Governor after his arrival there.

* * * * *

“And we further offer that the Premium given by an Act made in the 3d and 4th year of Your Majesty’s Reign to encourage the Importation of Naval Stores from Your Majesty’s Plantations in America, be paid to such factor or Agent to and for the sole Benefit of such Palatines, who were the Manufacturers of such Stores, in like manner as Premiums are allowed to other Importers of Naval Stores from those parts.

“Lastly, we humbly offer that the said Palatines, upon their arrival there, be Naturalized without fee or Reward, that they may enjoy all

such privileges and advantages as are Enjoyed by the present Inhabitants of that Province.”

While the Palatines were in London, Brigadier Robert Hunter was appointed to superintend the transportation of them by Queen Anne. They set sail some time between the approving of the report (January 7th, 1710) and the 14th of June following. After their arrival, Hunter addressed the following letter to the board of trade in London:—

NEW YORK, * July 24th, 1710.

“*My Lords:*

By a small vessel bound for Lisbon, I gave your Lordships notice of our arrival here (June 14th). Since that time all the Palatine ships, separated by the weather, are arrived safe, except the Herbert Frigate, where our Tents and Arms are. She was cast away on the East end of Long Island, on the 7th of July, the men are safe, but goods much damaged. We still want the Berkley Castle, which we left at Portsmouth. The poor people have been mighty sickly, but recover apace. We have lost above 470 of our number.

“Soon after our arrival, I sent the surveyor † with some skillful men to survey the land on the Mohaks river, particularly the Skohare, to which the Indians had no pretense—being Col. Bayard’s grant—they however, by the instigation of some ill-intentioned men, at first refused to suffer it to be surveyed, upon pretense of its having returned to them, after the resumption, but have been better advised since. So at this time he is actually surveying of it. These lands, however, I believe will be no ways fit for the design in hand, being very good Lands which bears no Pines and lyes verry remote. I shall however be able to carry it on elsewhere, for there is no want of Pines, but the Pine land being good for nothing, the difficulty will lye in finding such a situation as will afford good land for their settlements near the Pine lands. I am in terms with some who have lands on the Hudsons River fitt for that purpose, which I

* London Documents, XVIII.

† Augustus Graham was the surveyor that was sent to Schoharie to survey the land, and his bill—now in the office of the Secretary of State—amounted to £121, being employed one hundred and twenty days at twenty shillings per day.

intend to view next week in company with Dr. Bridges, who is now with me, and gives me good encouragement."

On the same day of Hunter's arrival at New York (June 14th,) he was appointed Governor of the "Province of New York and its dependencies." Thus we find this the second immigration of Germans arriving at New York in June and July, 1710.

We find that the city council had the fact of the arrival brought before them, by Mr. Beekman, its President, on the 13th of June and "desirred the council to give their opinion what measures are proper to be taken with respect to them," and "that the mayor of ye city having petitioned to the board from himself and the corporation, setting forth that there is just cause to believe that there are many contagious distempers among them, which they are apprehensive, will endanger the health of the inhabitants of the city if they be landed, in any part thereof," etc. In council, June 16th, it was ordered that certain officials "doe draw upp a Scheme, for ye Ordering, Ruling, and Government of ye Palatines, and that it is the opinion of this board, that Nutten Island (now Governors) is the properest place to put the Palatines," etc.

Huts were constructed, and the Germans kept upon the Island until other provisions could be made for them. New York city at that time, was mostly Holland or Low Dutch, yet under English government. They were not on the best of terms with the Germans, or High Dutch. Whether enmity had existed towards each other at home, as a people, or was an offspring of selfish commercial dealing here, we are unable to say; but by preserved letters of business transactions between the two branches of Dutch, which it is unnecessary to copy, we find that their early intercourse at New York was marked by ill feeling; and from the tenor of their communications, we are led to think that the Germans were very distrustful of the honesty of their neighbor Hollanders.

Among the Germans at Nutten Island were many children, quite a number of whom were orphans, made so, no doubt, by the sea voyage, as stated by Hunter. The Government having the whole in charge, to provision etc., we find

that the council ordered, (so as to retrench expenses) on the 20th of June, the following:—

"There having been severall Proposals made for the taking many of the Palatines children for a Term of years, and there being many Orphans who are unable to take care of themselves to work and many who by sickness are Rendered incapable of doing any service for some time & in that condition would be a great expense and there being noe prospect of Settling them this summer by reason its soe much advanced, His Excellency does appoint Doctor Staats and Mr. Van Dam or either of them to take such Proposals for Placing out the orphans and other children whose Parents have a numerous Family, entering into an Instrument in Writeing, to Cloathe, Victual and use them well, and to deliver them to the Government when called for."*

We find that the boys were apprenticed until the age of seventeen, and the girls until fifteen years of age. Thirty-four were bound out in 1710—twenty-five in 1711—three in 1712—and one in 1714.

Here we are led to think, undue advantage was taken of the poor Germans by Government officials. We cannot believe that they would have immigrated under the protection of a foreign government, unless great inducements were offered for doing so. If they had not been assured of their little effects and families being retained, and also their freedom granted to support and maintain them, we do not believe they would have listened to England's entreaties. Apprenticing the orphans was right, as they had no one to care for them; but taking children away from their able-bodied parents, was inhuman, and uncalled for. The Government knew their situation and the expense likely to occur from transporting and settling the Palatines, and if they did not wish to support the children, they ought not to have taken them nor their parents under its protection. By a petition to the Crown in 1720, to which we will draw the reader's attention hereafter, this act of apprenticing children, is spoken of among a long list of grievances, and also the promise made to them of "forty acres of land to each person,"

* Historical Documents.

with necessary utensils, etc., upon their arrival; but after being huddled together upon Nutten Island until November, Hunter wrote to the Board of Trade, that he had purchased a tract of 6,000 acres of Robert Livingston "for the settlement of the Palantines," and upon the 14th of November, 1710, he wrote to the same:—

"I have now settled the Palantines upon good lands upon both sides of the Hudson's River, about one hundred miles up, adjacent to the Pines. I have planted them in five Villages, three upon the East side of the River upon 6,000 acres I have purchased of Mr. Livingston about two miles from Row Lof Jansens Kill. The other two on the West side near Sawyer's Creek, as your Lordships will observe by the inclosed sketch No 10 compared with your maps.

"The lands on the West side belong to the Queen. Each family hath a sufficient Lot of good arable land, and ships of 15 foot draught of water can sail upp as far as the Plantations. They have already built themselves huts, and are now employed in clearing off the grounds. In the Spring I shall set them to work preparing the Trees, according to Mr. Bridges direction."*

Thus it will be seen by the foregoing letter, that the Germans were settled at Livingston's Manor, in November 1710, in five villages or encampments, which originated in the place being called "the Camps." Livingston was a man of large means, for those days. He owned a mill and brew-house, and made a contract with Gov. Hunter to supply "the camps" with provisions at the Governments' expense. Such supplies were to consist of "For each person of them, each day, the quantity of Bread, equal to one-third of a Loaf of bread of such sort and assize which is comonly at the prise of four pence half penny in the city of New York, and one quart of Beer such as is usually called Ships beer, of the Prise of three pounds for each Tun, All which is to be delivered to the commissary of the Palantines." The first account, for the subsistence of the Palantines, shows that the first arrival at "the camps" was Oct. 6th, 1710, and

*Documentary History.

the number of persons 213. "On Jan. 1st, 1711, they numbered 1,434. In June 1711, there were, upon the east tide of the river, four villages—called 'dorfs'—namely—Hunters-town, Queensbury, Annsbury, and Haysbury, containing 1,189 Palantines." On the west side, there were three, Elizabethtown, Georgetown, and Newtown, with 614, making 1,803 Palantines at "the camps." Over each of these villages, or "dorfs", was placed one of their number, to keep a correct account of their condition, wants, etc., and was required to make a report to the commissary, at the beginning of each month. Those overseers or head men were called "List-masters," and were, in the order of the villages, just mentioned—"John Peter Kneiskern, John Conrad Weiser, Hartman Windecker, John Christopher Tucks, John Christopher Gerlach, Jacob Manch and Philip Peter Granberger."

In the spring of 1711, the Germans became dissatisfied with the lands upon which they were located, and asked to be taken to those which they had been promised—namely—Schoharie—or—as called by them "Schorie." Here, it will be observed, that the Germans first speak of a "promise" to be taken to "Schorie." During their discontentment at the "camps" they were firmly determined to leave them, and go to "Schorie," stating that the Governor and other officials had deceived them, by promising them while in England, to locate them in Schoharie, and to give to each forty acres of land, with necessary implements, etc. The officials denied making such a promise, but as to the forty acres of land, admitted, that they were to have it *after* paying for it, together with the expense the Government had been to for transportation, in tar and pitch. But the Governor and council of New York had made arrangements to begin the manufacture of tar and pitch at this time, yet upon attempting to set them to work, the overseers found the Palantines "resolute in disobeying orders," in fact, mutinized. Secretary Clarke, in writing to the London Board of Trade says:—

"About a fortnight ago his Excel^{ty} having received information from their Overseers and other Officers that these people had taken a Resolution neither to work in making Pitch and Tarr nor to remain on the land they

are settled upon for that purpose, but even by force, If they could not otherwise effect it to remove to Schohary (a tract of resumed lands) and that they had actually hindered the Surveyor from laying out more Lots to them" also "By their deputies they returned for answer that when the surveyors came to lay out more land, the People called them out, told them 'twas worth nothing, they would have no more, so that 'twas needless to survey it and that they would have the land at Schohary which the Queen had ordered them by their contract.

* * * * *

"His Excellency replied. That as to the lands at Schorie, its the malace of those who would have them for their slaves that put them on demanding it, for that those lands the Indians had not yet parted with, nor were they fit for their labor, no pine being within Twenty miles of it, that it would be impossible to subsist them there, or defend them against ye French and French Indians & besides they had obliged themselves to settle on such lands as he should assign them and then desired their final answer, which was, that they would have the lands appointed them by the Queen.

"Whereupon his Excellency in writing told them that since neither their duty or allegiance or regard to Her Maj^{ty} unparalleled Charity in goodness in taking them up and providing for them when they were starving, and abandoned by the world beside, had been of any force to keep you within the bounds of their duty, and since they had no regard to a solemn contract signed by them, he was come to require & enforce the execution of it, Copies and Translations of which they had in their own language, and that they must give their final answer the next day at four in the evening.

"A few minutes after the deputies were gone, His Excellency was informed that a body of three or four Hundred of them were then passing the brook, the Deputies, among whom were the Captains, returned to him, and in appearance seemed softened, and then went to the people who were drawn up on the hill above the house, towards whom his Excell^{ty} marching with his detachment.

"One of the commissary's who had been with them told him they had come to pay their com-

pliments to him, so his Excellency walked up to them, and asked them what they meant by appearing in arms, they told him what they told the Commisary.

"Thereupon his Excellency ordered them home to their habitations and being gone about a mile they discharged all their firelocks.

"But their saying they came to pay their compliments was only a pretence, for they told two of their officers, as they were going home, that they came to relieve their Deputies in case they had been confined. The next day the Deputies came according to order with their answers which begins indeed with a desire that his Excellency would assist them, that they might be settled in the lands of Schohary, but they soon forgot their humble style and told his Excellency that they had rather lose their lives immediately, than remain where they are, that they are cheated by the contract, it not being the same that was read in England there, they say it runs thus, 'that seven years after they had forty acres a head a piece given them, they were to repay the Queen by Hemp, Mast trees, Tarr and Pitch, or anything else, so that it may be no damage to any man in his family.' Upon these terms they will perform the contract, but to be forced by any other contract to remain upon the lands all their lives and work for her Majesty for the ship use, that they will never consent to doe. What does it signify, they say, to promise them this land that they shall make pitch and Tarr. They will be obedient to the Queen, but they will have the promise kept that Mr. Cast read to them in High Dutch in England, and upon that land which was promised them they will be there, and if they cannot they desire three or four men may goe for England and lay their case before the Queen. They say likewise there are a great many things promised them—Clothing, household goods and working tools wch they desire to have." "They say further their people dye for want of care and proper remedies and desire money to subsist themselves and lastly they say Mr. Cast told them he'd make them slaves and therefore desire his Excell^{ty} to appoint another in his room.

"Whilst his Excell^{ty} was talking to the Deputies he received information that there was a great body of men in arms on the other side of

the brook and having by that time a re-enforcement of seventy men more, he marched the detachment immediately and passed the brook, the Palatines were run home to their houses. His Excellency marched to the first village and ordered them to bring in all their arms, which they did immediately except a few. He could go no further that night, but the next morning marched to ye other three villages on the same side of the river and disarmed them all and then returning to Mr. Livingston, sent orders to the villages on the other side to bring in their arms that day to the storehouse to be transported to him, which I believe they have done."*

The letter is lengthy, and having given an idea of the Germans discontent and the extent of the mutiny, we will not copy the remainder, as the writer, in substance, "wonders how a people can be so ungrateful to the Queen," and that "Its hardly creditable that men who reap so great a benefit as they doe by these people—not only by the consumption of their provisions, but by the increase of strength, should be so malicious to possess them with notions so injurious to themselves and prejudicial to Her Majesty's Interest but yet it is so."

Whom those were that "possessed" the Germans we are unable to tell, but we are satisfied that John Conrad Weiser, the List-master over Queensbury, urged their disobedience, as we find he was a very "malicious" man, in the officials' estimation after removing to "Schorie." Without doubt, great advantage was taken by the officials over the Germans, especially by Mr. Livingston, in furnishing the supplies; as he was a shrewd, money-making man, and as more modern "government contractors" do, stinted in quality if not in quantity, to the detriment of the stomachs of the Palatines. Various interested men wrote to the London Board of Trade in regard to the "maliciousness" of the Germans, and without doubt that honorable body had discussed the matter. Being aware, however, of the temptations held out for money-making, a portion, at least, of that body, took a fair view of the matter and one in particular, Lord Clarendon, wrote to Lord Dartmouth in regard to Mr. Livingston, as follows:—

"I think it is unhappy that Col. Hunter at

* London Documents.

his first arrival in his Government fell into so ill hands, for this Livingston has been known for many years in that province, for a very ill man. He formerly victualled the forces at Albany, in which he was guilty of most notorious frauds, by which he greatly improved his estate. He has a Mill and a Brew-house upon his land, and if he can get the victualing of those Palatines, who are so conveniently posted for his purpose, he will make a very good addition to his estate, and I am persuaded, the hopes he has of such a Subsistence to be allowed by Her Majesty, were the chief, if not the only Inducements, that prevailed with him to propose to Gov. Hunter, to settle them upon his land, which is not the best Place for Pine Trees. The borders of Hudson's River above Albany, and the Mohawk River, Schenectady, are well known to be the best places for Pines of all sorts, both for numbers, and largeness of Trees. * *

My Lord, upon the whole matter, I am of the opinion, that if the Subsistence proposed, be allowed, the consequence will be, that Livings-ton and some others will get Estates, and the Palatines will not be richer."*

The Germans became convinced, no doubt, that they had been deceived, either by their misunderstanding the contract in England or the dishonesty of those who read it to them, and resolved to keep quiet, at least until after the contemplated campaign against Canada. In June of 1711, a secret expedition was started from New York city, both by sea and land, to take Quebec from the French. A land force was to form a junction with the fleet before the city, and capture the fortress. In July, Gen. Nicholson started with the land force, and was joined at the "Camps" by 300 of the Palatines, under the command of Capt. John Peter Kneiskern, Conrad Weiser, Hartman Windecker and J. Christopher Tucks. The vessels encountered a heavy storm and were driven back, and a few of them were wrecked and failed to reach Quebec. The land force waited impatiently for the vessels and at last decided to return, which they did in the latter part of the August following. They found that their families had been poorly provided for and were upon the verge of starvation which

* London Documents, XVIII.

again aroused them to a sense of the injustice with which they were dealt, and a deeper desire to remove from the "Camps." Some of them became "unwary," and settled upon lands belonging to others, and "ye justices" were ordered to cause them to return to their own settlements, and in May, 1712, a detachment of troops was ordered among them, as they "will not obey orders without compulsion."

Upon the 6th of September, 1712, the Governor wrote a letter* to Mr. Cast, one of the commissioners, the substance of which we will here give; and we desire its special notice, as reference will be given to it again. He says:—

"I have at length exhausted all of my credit I was master of, for the support of the Palatines; and have thereby, I assure you, embarrassed myself with difficulties, which I know not how to surmount, if my bills of exchange be not paid. * * * *

"When you call the people together, and communicate together the present state of my affairs, you will tell them, that I wish they would accept any employment they may get from farmers, and others in this Province, and New Jersey, for their own, and their families support, until they are recalled by Proclamation or other public notice." * * * *

Upon learning the situation of affairs from Mr. Cast, the discontent became greater, and since they were obliged to seek employment elsewhere, and that, too, at the close of the year, they concluded to embrace the opportunity of seeking the "promised land Schorie," and after years of "dhrouble" even in that imaginary paradise, they sent a petition to King George—as their devoted Queen Anne had gone to her rest—laying their grievances before his Majesty, which we will here copy as it gives us the true dates, to verify in a measure that which we have already noticed.

"The Condition, Greivances and oppressions of the Germans In His Majesty's Province of New York In America, 1720:—

"In the year 1709 was her late Majesty Queen Anne most graciously pleased to send a body of between 3 and 4000 Germans to New York under the Inspection and Care of Robert

Hunter, then Governor there, with particular Orders & Instructions to settle them upon lands belonging to the Crown, and such as was most proper for raising Tarr & Pitch and other Naval stores.

"Before they left England they were promis'd 5 pounds in money pr. head, of which they have received nothing at all. It was likewise promis'd that on their arrival there, Each of them should receive Cloaths, Utensils, tools and other Conveniency's belonging to Husbandry, all which were sent with them from England for their use but of these they have received but little.

"They were moreover to have a grant of 40 acres of land to each person but it was never perform'd.

"On their landing at New York they were quartered in tents on the comon & divided in six companies over each of which was a Captain appointed to Command them, (of which number John Conrad Weiser arrived here in London 1718) with an allowance of £15 per annum each but not one farthing has been hitherto paid to them.

"About the same time took the Govern'r without & against their consent many children from them and bound them to several of the Inhabitants of that province till they should arrive to the age of 21 years, particularly two Sons from Captain Weiser, one of twelve and another of 13 years of age by which means they were deprived of the comfort of their Childrens Company and Education as well as the assistance & Support they might in a small way have reasonably expected from them.

"In the fall of that year, those that were living [then it must be observed that during their voyage thither and after their landing a great number of them died] were removed to a tract of land belonging to one Mr. Livingston where they liv'd in houses, erected by themselves, till the Spring following, when they were ordered to the woods to make Tarr & Pitch and continued there nearly two years, but as the land was improper to raise any sort of naval stores in any Considerable Quantity their labors turn'd to a different account and the profits of building & Improving the lands fell to a private person, they not being able to make more than 200 barrels of Pitch and tarr. The small prospect they had

* Documentary History.

of being in a Capacity to serve the nation, who had so generously & Charitably advanc'd very great sums of money for their relief & Support and the Impossibility there was of raising Corn, Cattle & other provisions for their subsistence on such ordinary & allmost barren land oblig'd them to petition the aforesaid Governor that they might be put in possession & settle on the land Call'd *Schorie* which the Indians had given to the late Queen Anne for their use, he answered that tho the lands was theirs he could nor would not take it from them, neither could he settle them there, because it would oblige him to maintain to many Garrisons.

"The said Governor thought fitt sometime after to visit all the villages, where they were settled and view the people there, who with one Consent apply'd to him again, humbly praying they might go and inhabit the above promis'd land, upon which he in a passion stamped upon the ground & said, here is your land (meaning the almost barren rocks) where you must live and die.

"The second year after our arrival were orders sent to them to detach 300 able men to serve on the late unfortunate expedition against Canada, which they willingly & Cheerfully did, and on their return, were their arms taken from them, tho all that went on the expedition should have kept them by her late Majesty's particular Order without paying them any wages or Sallery, (notwithstanding they were put on the Establishment of New York and New Jersey or both, & the money received by the said Governor) they marched home, where they found their family's allmost starved, no provisions having been given them during their absence.

"The Winter following did the Inhabitants of the frontier Town of Albany desire the Governor that they might have (being fearfull) the assistance of some of them to strengthen ye Garrison of that town from Invasion of the Indians in Conjunction with the French of Canada, which the Governor agreeing to, they went accordingly, but were never paid.

"In the second year of their abode at Livingston's on the pitch wood, three of their people were sent down to Col. Hunter, Petitioning that he would be pleased to order them their full allowance of provisions, which they never

hitherto had, to which he answered that they should return home & he wou'd send orders after them, and about 8 days after came this surprising message from him, that he had not received any subsistance for them from England, & therefore every one of them must shift for himself, but not out of the province.

"This was the latter end of the year and winter just at hand which is very severe, there being no provisions to be had, & the people bare of Cloaths, which occasioned a terrible Consternation amongst them & particully from the women and children, the most pityful Cryes and lamentations that have perhaps ever been heard from any person under the most wretched and miserable circumstances, so that they were at last much against their wills, put under the hard & greeting necessity of seeking releif from the Indians. Upon which some of their Chiefs were suddenly dispatch'd away to the Indians by whom they were kindly received, & to whom they open'd their miserable condition & that being wholly cast off by the sd Governor, & left destituted of the means of living elsewhere, they intreated them to give 'em permission to settle on the tract of land call'd *Schorie* which they immediately granted, saying, they had formerly given the sd land to Queen Anne for them to possess and that nobody should hinder them of it, and they would assist them as farr as they were able. Whereupon these chiefs returned to the people acquainting them of the Indians favorable disposition.

"This put the people in some heart & finding it absolutely necessary to embrace that opportunity so providently bestowed on them all hands fell to work and in 2 weeks Clear'd a way thr' the woods of 15 miles long with the utmost toyle and labor, tho almost starved & without bread. Which being effected 50 family's were immediately sent to *Schorie* when being arrived & allmost settled they there received orders from the Governor, not to goe upon that land & he who did so shou'd be declared a Rebell.

"This message sounded like thunder in their ears, and surprised them beyond expression, but having seriously weighed matters amongst themselves & finding no manner of likelihood of subsisting Elsewhere but a certainty of perish-

ing by hunger, Cold, etc., if they returned, they found themselves under the fatal necessity of hazarding the Gov^{rs} Resentment, that being to all more Eligible than Starving.

“In the same year in March did the remainder of the people (tho treated by the Governor as Pharao treated the Israelites) proceed on their journey & by Gods assistance, travell'd in fourtnight with sledges tho the snow which there covered the ground above 3 foot deep, Cold & Hunger, Joyn'd their friends and Countryman in the promised land *Schorie*.

“The number of Germans who came hither to search for bread for themselves, their wives and children, were more than the land already granted them by the Indians cou'd supply with settlements & some of the people of Albany endeavoring to purchase the land around em from the Indians on purpose to close them up, and deprive them of any rang for their Cattel, they were obliged to solicit all the Indian Kings there adjoining for more land, which they willingly granted 'em & sold 'em the rest of the land at *Schorie* being woods Rocks and pastaridg for 300 pieces of Eight.

“No sooner had Governor Hunter notice of their settlement and agreement with the Indians but he ordered one Adam Vroman to endeavor to persuade the Indians to break the agreement made.

“Upon the first settlement of this land the misery's of those poor & almost famished Creatures underwent were incredible, & had it not been for the Charity of the Indians, who shew'd them where to gather some eatable roots and herbs, must inevitably have perished, every soul of them, but what God said in Anger to Adam was in mercy fulfilled viz Thou shalt eat the herbs of the fields, when they continued about one year on this land, build small houses and huts and made other Improvements thereon, with their bloody sweat & labor and under the most greivous hardships & dayly hazard of their lives from the French & Indian Enemy's, as well as from those more dreadful ones, Cold & Hunger, severall Gentlemen Came to them from Albany, declaring they had bought that land of Gov. Hunter & if they intentioned to live thereon they must agree with them, to which demand these poor people answered. That the

land was the Kings and that they were the Kings subjects and had no power to agree to anything about his Majesty's lands without his special order, upon which these Gentleman said, Wee are Kings of this land, but the Germans reply'd that their King was in England, & that the land shou'd not be taken from them without his Majesty's particular order.

“Sometime after did these gentleman send the Sheriff with some others upon the land and to take the sd Captain by force, dead or alive, but he having timely notice of it was on his Guard so they were prevented.

“These Gentleman finding the Inhabitants resolut in keeping possession of the lands, they had thus improved and from whence they drew the only support to themselves and familys fell on an other project which was Clandestinely and basely to endeavor to sew Enmity betwixt them and the Indians and if possible to persuade them (for Money or Rumm) to put them in possession of the land and declare them rightful owners thereof, but in this they also fail'd, tho not without great trouble & charge to those poor people who were forced to put themselves on the mercy of the Indians by giving them out of their nothing and begg of them, that since they had so long suckled them at their breast, not to ween them so soon and cast them off.

“In the spring of 1715 the Gentleman from Albany sent a man to affix some papers on the land, Containing in Substance that whoever of the Inhabitants shou'd see those papers must either agree with them or leave the land.

“This with their threatenings being done in the Spring, the best planting time for Indian corn (the chief of their subsistance) damp'd the spirits of these poor people—slackened their Industry & did 'em great damage.

“In the year 1717 came the Governor to Albany and sent orders to the Inhabitants of the land *Schorie* that 3 men of every village shou'd appear before him on a day appointed and particularly the above mentioned Captain Weiser.

“When they appeared before him, he said that he would hang John Conrad Weiser and ordered them to answer him the 3 following questions viz:—

“1st, Why they went to inhabit the land *Schorie* without his order?

"2d. Why they would not agree with the people of Albany?

"3d. Why they concerned themselves so much with the Indians?

"Their answer to the first question was, that his Excell^{ty} had ordered them to shift for themselves & denied them further subsistence, the utmost necessity and poverty forced them to remove thither to earn their bread for the maintenance of their wives and children and that they continued their settlement on the same motives in expectation of His Majesty's Grace and His Excell^{ty} favor.

"When they mentioned his Majesty the Governor in a passion said What Great Britian & Mr. Leivingston added, here is yr King, meaning the Governor. Whereupon they beg'd his pardon, and that he would forgive them their Ignorance and Inadvertency.

"To the second question they returned their answer that the people were so many, the land so small and the wages so bad, that it was impossible to agree with the gentleman on their extravagant terms, especially after the vast expense and labor they had had, not mentioning, that the Indians had given it to the Crown for their use and that there was no direction immediately from his Majesty to confirm it to them, they being sent over with a promise of so much land pr head and if they served any body it must be the King and not a privat person.

"They answered to the 3d point, that because they lived on the borders of the French as a Frontier & were liable to their dayly insults against whom they could scarcely stand, they were obliged to keep fair with the friendly Indians amongst whom they dwelt, which was the only way to be protected and live in peace.

"Governor Hunter then ordered that those who wou'd not agree with or turn tenants to those Gentleman from Albany, to whom he had sold the land for 1500 pistoles shou'd remove from their habitations and Improvements & that they should make two lists, one of those that wou'd agree the other of those that wou'd not agree with the Gentleman & and that he soon expected an order from England to transplant them to another place, but no such thing was performed.

"They then most submissively remonstrated

with the Gov. how hard it would be to leave & abandon their houses, lands and Improvements for nothing beside that they were indebted for other necessary's, thereupon Gov. Hunter answered, that he would send 12 men to examine their works and Improvements and give them money to pay their debts but it was never performed.

"The winter following they sent 3 men to New York to the Governor humbly beseaching him to grant them liberty to plough the lands or otherwise take care of them, but he answered, What is said is said, meaning the Prohibition of plowing at Albany

"This was a thunder clap in the ears of their wives & children and the lamentations of all the people increased to such a high and their necessity's grew so great, that they were forc'd for their own preservation to transgress those orders and sew some Summer Corn and fruits or Else they must have starv'd.

"These Gentleman have thrown one of their women in Prison at Albany, who still continues there also a man for ploughing the land and will not release him till he gives One Hundred Crown's security, the same has also happened to others.

"The Governor sent orders, that all the Germans should take their oaths of being faithful and withal to pay 8 shillings pr head, which they willingly agreed to, in hopes of a settlement, but this with all the promices formally made, unto them was in vain."

[Endorsed] "Greivances of the
Palentins in New York
Rd Aug 20th 1722."

CHAPTER II.

THE FOREGOING CHAPTER REVIEWED—EXPENSE OF GERMANS—REVIEW OF THE GERMAN MOVEMENTS—LOCATED AT SCHORIE—THEIR HARDSHIPS—JUDGE BROWN'S ACCOUNT—FIGHT—INDIANS OF WHAT TRIBE—HUNTING GROUNDS—KA-RIG-HON-DON-TEE THE CHIEF—SALE OF LANDS BY GOV. HUNTER—SCHUYLER AND COEYMAN'S PURCHASE—GOV. HUNTER'S DEFENSE TO THE BOARD OF TRADE—BAYARD'S VISIT TO SCHOHARIE