

**THE FIRST DECADE
OF PRINTING**

IN
READING, PENNSYLVANIA



PUBLISHED AND DISTRIBUTED BY
**READING NATIONAL BANK AND
TRUST COMPANY**
READING, PENNSYLVANIA

The First Decade of Printing

in

READING, PENNSYLVANIA



By J. BENNETT NOLAN, ESQ.

of the Berks County Bar

PUBLISHED AND DISTRIBUTED BY
READING NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST COMPANY

1930

“GOTTLOB JUNGMANN, Jacob Schneider,
George Gerrish and Francis Ritter!
Though their forms are locked in the
embrace of death, their memory will
always be cherished by their fellow-
craftsmen.”

Toast of Jacob Knabb
Banquet of Printers of Reading
Benjamin Franklin
Birthday Commemoration
January 17th, 1859

Diesen beyden Ehegatten, als Johannes Klatt und seiner ehelichen Haus-
 Frau: Maria Luise Anna angeborne, Wundin ist ein Sohn zur Welt
 geboren, als Joh. Adam ist zur Welt geboren im Jahr unsers Herrn Jesu 1790
 den 14. Tag Octobr. um 9 Uhr im Zeichen de

[Faint, mostly illegible text, likely a church record or additional details.]

Die Taufzeugen waren Adam Frauenfelder u. sein Frau Maria Luise Anna
 Dieser Johann Adam ist geboren in getauft in America, im Staat Pennsylv.
 in der County in Barren Township

[Faint text, possibly a signature or official note.]

[Faint text in a heart-shaped frame.]

[Faint text in a heart-shaped frame.]

[Faint text in the center, possibly a date or location.]

Barton and Jungmann Tauf Schein of 1790



THE FIRST DECADE OF PRINTING
IN
READING, PENNSYLVANIA



FOREWORD

THE PRODUCTION of a bibliography embracing the known imprints which emanated from the early presses of the town of Reading in the State of Pennsylvania has for many years been contemplated by those who seek to revive and perpetuate the local tradition. This little volume represents the fulfillment of a long cherished aspiration.

Bibliographies as a class are seldom inspiring but, with the use of plates illustrating the imprints listed, it is my hope that the pamphlet may not prove too tedious.

These plates, however, are costly and it is not likely that the plan for an effective illustrated bibliography would have been realized without the generous assistance of a local banking institution, the Reading National Bank and Trust Company. There is, to be sure, an element of advertising entering into the publication, but this

is negligible compared with the outlay involved, so that the work must be regarded as a benefaction rather than as an investment.

The time of the definite commencement of printing in this vicinity is probably the year 1788, although as will hereafter be suggested, there is sound reason for believing that a press was set up in Reading at a much earlier date.

The productions of our Reading press in the first decade of its existence, or from 1788 to 1800, are few. So far as we know they consist of four newspapers, fifteen books, sundry taufscheins, or baptismal certificates, one magazine, one play bill, and three almanacs. I have not the assurance to say that the list thus given is a complete one, for newly discovered publications may turn up at any time from sources or collections of which I am ignorant; nor is it possible to know of all the Reading imprints which may lie undiscovered in public libraries or private collections. An element of uncertainty must always exist. Professor Seidenstecker, for instance, in his exhaustive work *The First Century of German Printing in America* cites only eight Reading imprints in the first decade, and yet his work is regarded as authoritative.

The first printed matter in the district now erected as Berks County was the output of the presses of Philadelphia and Germantown. *Brad-*

ford's American Weekly Mercury, established in 1719, the original newspaper of the Middle Colonies, circulated in Reading, although, being in the English tongue, it never attained an extensive subscription amongst the German people who constituted the bulk of our population. Franklin dismisses it rather summarily as, "*A paltry thing, wretchedly managed, and in no way entertaining.*" But then the Sage was not always impartial in discussing rival publications.

The first Pennsylvania German newspaper, the *Philadelphische Zeitung* of 1732 found a readier welcome in Berks, as did Mr. Sauer's German *Berichte* of a somewhat later period. The presses of these several periodicals did job printing as a side issue and it is from these that the printed forms issued in the first courts of Berks County emanated. Indeed, legal forms containing the printed appellations "Berks" and "Reading" appeared contemporaneously with the foundation of our county, having evidently been prepared in advance, although there is no record or tradition of local printing at this early period. Some of these forms are from the press, and carry the insignia of Franklin and Hall, others of James Humphreys of Philadelphia, and others of Sauer of Germantown. Still others were printed in Lancaster.

It is quite within the realm of possibility that some enterprising citizen set up a press in Reading at the period of the foundation of the village, but there is no historical proof in support of this conjecture, nor does there exist a trade mark of a Reading printer upon any book or document prior to the year 1788, generally accepted as the beginning of typography in Berks County.

There remains, however, one episode in the early history of our county so strongly suggestive of the establishment of a Reading printery during the Revolution that I feel that I should give the details as fully as may be, leaving it to the reader's judgment to determine whether or not there is sufficient evidence to warrant the assumption that printing was carried on in Reading during the War for Independence.

About the time when the great Surveyor General, Nicholas Scull, was running the boundaries of the new town of Reading on the Schuylkill, there arrived in Philadelphia a young Scotch printer named David Hall. He had learned his trade in Edinburgh and had been an apprentice of the celebrated Strahan, a friend of Dr. Franklin's, and the man to whom the Philosopher afterwards addressed his much quoted letter,

"Look upon your hands. They are red with the blood of your relations," etc.

Strahan gave the young Caledonian letters of introduction to Franklin and other provincial dignitaries, and we find him presently established as a partner of the firm of Franklin and Hall. Franklin went to England and apparently lost his connection with the enterprise so that when David Hall died in 1772 the business was carried on by his son William and by one Sellers under the title of Hall and Sellers. This William Hall was a stout Whig and printed the script or paper money with which a credulous and impoverished Congress vainly imagined they could settle their obligations.

In the fateful year of 1777, after the disasters on the Brandywine, it became obvious to the patriotic printer that the entry of Cornwallis into Philadelphia was unavoidable, in which event he would inevitably be hung and his property confiscated. In this dilemma Mr. Hall hastily packed his presses upon bullock carts and made his way up the Schuylkill Valley in search of a refuge, which he finally found in the town of Reading. He purchased from Attorney Edward Biddle the fine lot, No. 16, at the Southeast corner of Penn and Callowhill Streets, afterwards occupied by the Mansion House. Mr. Hall took title to this lot on March 15th, 1777, paying there-

for £1800, a large sum for the period. He sold it again to Mark Bird, the iron master, in October of 1778.

Now I can discover no imprint of Hall and Sellers emanating from Reading, nor have I seen in the mass of Continental paper money issued in this trying period any bill marked as printed in Reading. But it is hard to believe that there was a complete cessation of the printing of money at this critical time, and if the script was produced at all, it could only have been by Hall in Reading. It is regrettable that in the absence of more reliable evidence, this interesting query must remain in the realm of conjecture.

Passing now to the authenticated records, I find that the earliest date for any publication printed in Berks County is 1788, in which year a pair of enterprising printers who styled themselves "B. Johnson and T. Barton" established a printing office on the north side of Penn Square almost midway between Fifth and Sixth streets. In 1790, appears a new partner, the celebrated Gottlob Jungmann, and the printery was removed to a location on the north side of Penn Street between Fourth and Fifth streets.

The Christian names of these two men were long unknown, but have lately been ascertained from the tax lists to be Benjamin and Thomas, respectively. Of these pioneers very little is

known. Johnson may have come from Germantown where Christopher Sauer had an apprentice of this name in his printing establishment, but there is no definite proof of the connection. Johnson seems to have been primarily a vendor of hardware, and his business was carried on in the same building which housed the printery. Perhaps he found the returns from the printing business at this early date too precarious to rely upon them entirely for his livelihood. Having in mind the adage of our great Master Printer and Philosopher, "*Keep thy shop and thy shop will keep thee,*" he prudently clung to a business whose emoluments were certain. So late as 1800 we find Johnson removed to Philadelphia, but still advertising his stock of hardware in the Reading journals. He apparently never relinquished his literary predilections, for as the last item in a list of utilitarian objects he timidly inserts "*An assortment of books newly received and for sale.*"

About Barton still less is known but his connection with the printing business in Reading seems only to have endured for a period of five years, or until 1793, after which his name no longer appears.

Sometime in the year 1789 Gottlob Jungmann, Reading's first postmaster, became associated with the printery. This was a man of energy and ability, who soon dominated the firm. John-

son dropped first out of the co-partnership, probably in 1790, to be followed in 1793 by Barton, leaving Mr. Jungmann in possession of the business. At that time he was associated with one John Gruber, a printer who came from Germantown, but later Gruber also retired and Mr. Jungmann conducted the business alone.

Mr. Jungmann and his newspaper, the *Readinger Zeitung*, occupied the local field without competition for seven years, or until May, 1796, when Jacob Schneider founded his printing establishment. This firm was first known as Schneider and Gerrish, being composed of Jacob Schneider and George D. Gerrish.

Of Gerrish (sometimes spelt Gerrisch), little is known. He was the subject of a savage attack in the copy of the Advertiser issued October 16th, 1798, in which an anonymous correspondent writes: "*Are you not the acquaintance of George Gerrish on whose head a reward of \$100 was offered for Horse Stealing in Maryland.*"

Mr. Gerrish soon retired but Mr. Schneider with his *Reading Adler* kept on. Naturally enough, the two printing offices were opposed to each other in politics, Mr. Jungmann being a Federalist and Mr. Schneider a Democrat, and considerable bitterness developed as evidenced by

the acrimonious correspondence which occupied the columns of the *Zeitung* and the *Adler* respectively.

The only products of the press of Barton and Johnson in the year 1788, or at least the only ones which have survived to us, are two quaint volumes entitled, respectively, *A General Description of the Thirteen United States of America* and *Advice to the Fair Sex in a Series of Letters to a Sister*. So far as I know there exist two copies of the *Description of North America*, one in the possession of that renowned bibliographer Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia, and the other in the collection of the late Dr. George Hetrich, of Birdsboro. Of the *Advice to Young Ladies*, possibly the only copy in existence is in the collection of our assiduous local collector, Louis J. Heizmann. Dr. Rosenbach's copy of the *Description of North America* was formerly the property of Governor Samuel W. Pennypacker, who regarded it as the first book printed in Reading. Dr. Rosenbach being the present fortunate possessor of the volume has not unpardonably adopted this view. Inasmuch, however, as both volumes appeared in the same year, and as neither one has any identification as to day or month of issue, the same claim might be made for Mr. Heizmann's book. The first advertise-

ment of either book appears in the *Readinger Zeitung* of April 5th, 1798, in which both books are mentioned contemporaneously.

The four newspapers produced in the first decade, namely, the *Neue Unpartheyische Readinger Zeitung*, *The Weekly Advertiser*, *The Readinger Adler*, and *The Impartial Reading Herald* are hereinafter discussed separately. Their perusal in the files of our local Historical Society will interest and reward the antiquarian and the historian.

The printing of almanacs begun in 1798 has continued to the present day. The only surviving play bill of the period is illustrated in this volume.

A brave attempt was made in the closing years of the century to establish a magazine for circulation in Berks County. This forlorn hope was led by the optimistic Jacob Schneider but it does not appear that more than one number was ever issued. The *Adler* of January 1st, 1799, contains a prospectus of the proposed magazine, stating that it is to be for the advancement of history, geography, and economics and that the good folk of Reading and Berks County are invited to subscribe. By the 8th of January, 1799, the fond publishers announce that the magazine was almost ready, "*beynahe zur Presse fertig.*" On the 1st of February, 1799, this *Readinger Magazine* appeared in all its glory. It embodied an article upon the Con-

stitution of America, a formula for the making of bread from potatoes, and much poesie upon the destruction of the Bastille. The first number was probably the last, as no further reference is made to the ill-starred venture. No copy survives, but if one did, it would be worth its weight in gold, for the *Reader Magazine* has vanished as completely as the famed lost books of Livy.

This completes the list of known printed matter of the period with the exceptions of the *taufscheins*, or illuminated baptismal certificates so dear to the hearts of our German forefathers. These are best to be studied in the admirable and comprehensive collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, who tells us that Reading was the second American place of German printing to print *taufscheins*; earlier printed ones being produced only from the Ephrata press.

The Reading *taufscheins* to 1800 are all of one type. The main text, with blank spaces to be filled out with names, dates and other data, is printed within a large central heart-shaped type border, flanked by two smaller hearts, one at each lower corner. The text was somewhat abridged and the size of the printed portion made smaller in 1797, but the arrangement remained substantially the same.

The decorations are of three general types. First, hand illuminations, as specifically described

under the various items, by Friederich Krebs of Reading; this is the commonest style. Secondly, hand illumination of the Friederich Speyer style, of which only one piece is at hand. Thirdly, rarely found, decorations made with crude wood cuts, in black, probably hand stamped and afterwards illuminated in colors by an unknown individual.

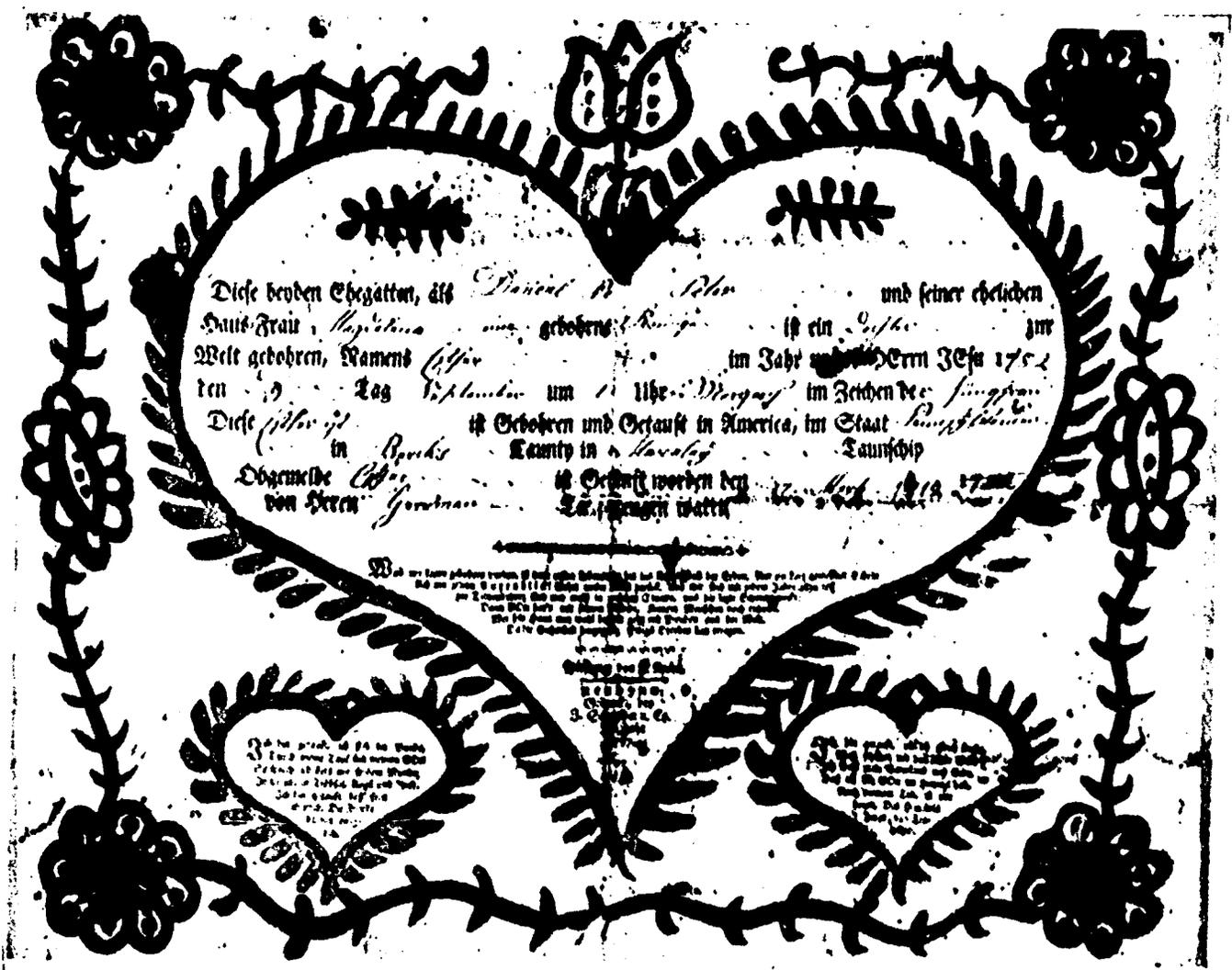
This Friederich Krebs, presumably the distributor and illuminator, worked with a peculiar shade of light green, a red sometimes coming close to a salmon, a dull orange, and, rarely, a dull purple. It is regrettable that the expense of the undertaking precludes the reproduction of these *taufscheins* in the pristine coloring which is their particular charm.

Something might be said about the format of these earlier Reading publications. The books were all diminutive, as may be noted from the illustrations, and were generally bound in an ornamental stiff paper ludicrously suggestive of the wall paper of our own time. Some, however, were bound in buckram and on the rare occasions when leather was used, it was of a superior quality. A bookbinder, Johannes Walter, plied his trade in Reading as early as 1797 and advertised that he might be found in a shop on North Callowhill Street, now Fifth Street, just above the jail. Our first Reading printers used linen paper of such

excellent quality that it seems likely to outlast the inferior paper of our own decadent age.

No description survives of the original press employed by Gottlob Jungmann, but we have a contemporary account of the crude instrument used by Jacob Schneider and George Gerrish. It was constructed mainly of wood, and the iron parts had been hammered out in a blacksmith shop near Oley Line. Francis Ritter, who married Barbara Schneider, sister of Jacob Schneider, to become the ancestor of a long line of Reading printers, is credited with the construction of this first press. One of the early machines from which the Adler was printed is still to be seen in Kutztown.

The paucity of the list as hereinafter given suggests that there may be omissions, for it seems absurd that two presses should have been operating for a decade with such meager results, yet such was the case. Some Reading publications have undoubtedly disappeared leaving no trace, but in the writer's opinion these omissions are few, and the bibliography as herewith given is substantially complete. One great argument in support of the correctness of the list is that no other publications are advertised in the local newspapers. Books with various titles are announced as for sale, but they are clearly stated to have been printed elsewhere.



Diese beiden Ehegatten, als Daniel B. Sohn und seiner ehelichen
 Hausfrau, Magdalena, geborene [illegible] ist ein [illegible] im
 Welt geboren, Namens [illegible] im Jahr [illegible] dem 2ten 1792
 den 9. Tag September um 11 Uhr Morgens im Zeichen der [illegible]
 Diese [illegible] ist [illegible] im Geborn und gekauft in America, im Staat [illegible]
 in [illegible] County in [illegible] Taunship
 Ehegatten [illegible] ist getauft worden den 17. Sept. 1792
 von Herrn [illegible] Taunship [illegible]

Was er later geboren worden ist und alle Schicksale hat hat [illegible] zu thun, das er [illegible] 9 Jahr
 das er [illegible] 11 Jahr [illegible] das er [illegible] 12 Jahr [illegible] im
 im [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]
 das er [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]
 das er [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]

Gegeben von [illegible]
 [illegible]
 [illegible]
 [illegible]

Ich be [illegible] ist [illegible]
 [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]
 [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]
 [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]

Ich be [illegible] ist [illegible]
 [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]
 [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]
 [illegible] das er [illegible] das er [illegible]

The Schneider Tauf Schein of 1797

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
THE FIRST DECADE OF PRINTING
IN READING, PENNSYLVANIA



BIBLIOGRAPHY OF
THE FIRST DECADE OF PRINTING
IN READING, PENNSYLVANIA

2

1788

A General Description of the Thirteen United States of America. B. Johnson and T. Barton.

One copy in the collection of Dr. A. S. W. Rosenbach, of Philadelphia.

One copy in the collection of the late Dr. George Hetrich, of Birdsboro, Pa.

* Advice to the Fair Sex. B. Johnson and T. Barton.

One copy in the collection of Louis J. Heizmann, of Reading, Pa.

1789

* Die Neue Unpartheyische Readinger Zeitung, 1789-1802. (The New Impartial Reading Newspaper). A weekly newspaper in the German language. Johnson, Barton and Jungmann, February 18th, 1789 to August 18th, 1790. Barton and Jungmann, August 18th, 1790 to June

* Illustrated and described.

25th, 1793. Jungmann and Gruber, June 25th, 1793, to December 31st, 1794. Gottlob Jungmann and Company, January 17th, 1795 to January 29th, 1800. Jungmann and Bruckmann, August 11th, 1802.

Historical Society of Berks County has February 18th, 1789 to August 11th, 1802.

C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa., has February 18th, 1789 to December 25th, 1795.

Library of Congress has January 2nd, 1799 to December 31st, 1800.

Harvard University has March 22nd, November 15th, 1797.

New York Historical Society has May 1st, 1799.

American Antiquarian Society has January 1st, 22nd, 29th, June 4th, 1794.

* The Ready Reckoner (Published in English and in German). Benjamin Johnson.

One English copy in the collection of J. Bennett Nolan, of Reading, Pa.

One German and one English copy in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

One German copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

One German and one English copy in the collection of Louis J. Heizmann, of Reading, Pa.

One German copy in the Cassel collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

One English copy in the Pennsylvania State Library.

* Illustrated and described.

1790

Ein Gespräch zwischen dem kleinen Gorgel, einem armen Mann; und einem gewissen vornehmen Herrn, dem der Name Periander beygeleget worden. Reading. Barton & Jungmann, 1790. (A Dialogue between Little Gorgel, a Poor Man, and a Certain Distinguished Gentleman who has been Given the Name of Periander.)

In this rather tedious production a precocious brat named Gorgel and an old man and a mystical character named Periander wander through thirty-three pages of polemical debate without coming to any definite conclusion in the end. Our Berks County ancestors seem never to have had a satiety of religious discussion.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

One copy in the collection of the John Carter Brown Library, of Providence, R. I.

Das Leben und die Begebenheiten von einem Neger Joseph Mountain. (The Life and Adventures of a Negro, Joseph Mountain.) Barton & Jungmann.

This doleful narrative embodies certain episodes in the life of a negro who was hanged at New Haven on October 20th, 1790, for rape. Advertised in the *Zeitung* of November 24th, 1790. No copy extant.

1791

Die Geschichte des Isaac Childs. (The History of Isaac Childs.) Barton & Jungmann.

No known copy of this work survives, but it is cited by Seidenstecker and is advertised in the *Zeitung*.

1793

Beyspiele Merkwürdigen Bekehrungen in der Geschichte des Baron von Dyherrn und der Johanna Cische. (Examples of Curious Conversions in the History of Baron von Dyherrn and Johanna Cische.)

Merkwürdige Nachrichte von der Wunderbaren Bekehrung eines Grossen Naturalisten an dem Exempel des George Carl, Baron von Dyherrn. (The Curious History of the Mysterious Conversion of a Great Naturalist after the Example of George Carl, Baron von Dyherrn.) Jungmann & Gruber. Cited by Seidenstecker.

These essays are bound together and seem to have been issued contemporaneously. They embody a pious discourse spoken in his dying hours by a certain Lieutenant General von Dyherrn of the Royal French Service, killed at the battle of Bergen, near Frankfort, on April 13th, 1789.

One copy in Cassei collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

One copy in the Schwenkfelder Historical Library at Pennsburg, Pa.

.....

Weihnachts-Lieder, Gebä^{te}r, etc., für die Kinder in der Stadt und auf dem Lande. (Christmas Hymns, Prayers for the Children in the City and in the Country.) Jungmann & Gruber.

One copy in the collection of J. Bennett Nolan, of Reading, Pa.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

Der Durch Europa und America Aufmerk-
same Reisende, In Absicht zu suchen Wahre Kin-
der Gottes, Johann Leonard Friedrich Richter,
Buchbinder in Altona, 1777 Und zum Dritten-
male Gedruckt, auf Kosten der Liebhaber. Read-
ing, gedruckt im Jahr 1793. (The Attentive
Traveler to Europe and America with the Inten-
tion to Find True Children of God. Johann
Leonard Friedrich Richter, bookbinder in Altona,
1777. For the third time printed at the expense
of book lovers. Reading, printed in the year
1793.) Barton & Jungmann.

This volume is evidently the composition of an itinerant preacher who probably belonged to no regular sect. It was first produced in Germany in 1777, in the town of Altona, a suburb of Hamburg.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

1794

Aerzney Buchlein fur Menschen und Vieh.
(Medicine Book for Human Beings and Animals.)
Jungmann & Gruber.

One copy in the collection of the Historical Society of
Berks County.

Eine Predigt, uber 1. Joh. Cap. 2, V. 28 zum
Abschied, Gehalten in Bern Taunschip den 6ten
October, 1793. (A Sermon of 1 Joh. Chap. 2, V.
28, the Farewell Sermon Delivered in Bern Town-
ship, October 6th, 1793.) Jungmann & Gruber.

This is a farewell sermon probably preached
in the historic Bern Church in 1793, by some de-
parting pastor whose name is unfortunately omit-
ted, but whose efforts had made such an impression
upon the members of his admiring congregation
that they procured his notes and put the sermon
into print.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Potts-
ville, Pa.

1796

* *The Weekly Advertiser*, 1796-1816.

An English weekly. Established May 7th,
1796, by Gottlob Jungmann, with the title of *The
Weekly Advertiser, of Reading, in the County of
Berks*. With the issue of February 1st, 1800, Carl

* Illustrated and described.

A. Bruckmann was taken into partnership under the firm name of Jungmann & Bruckmann. With the issue of August 23rd, 1806, the partnership was dissolved and Gottlob Jungmann became sole publisher. On August 3rd, 1811, a new series was started, with new volume numbering, published by Gottlob Jungmann, and Company. With the issue of June 4th, 1814, the title was changed to *The Weekly Advertiser of Reading, for Berks and Schuylkill County*. With the issue of December 31st, 1814, the publishers became Gottlob & John E. Jungmann. With the issue of September 2nd, 1815, the title was changed to *The Reading Weekly Advertiser for the Counties of Berks & Schuylkill*. The paper was discontinued with the issue of April 27th, 1816, No. 246.

Historical Society of Berks County has May 7th, 1796; April 25th, August 1st, 1807; January 9th, 1808; December 29th, 1810; August 3rd, 1811; April 27th, 1816.

New York Historical Society has May 7th, 1796; December 15th, 1798.

Historical Society of Pennsylvania has October 6th, 1798; December 21st, 1799.

Harvard University has November 11th, 1797; August 29th, 1801.

Library of Congress has November 22nd, 1800.

* Impartial Reading Herald, 1796-1797.

An English weekly. Established July 22nd, 1796, by Jacob Schneider and Company with the

* Illustrated and described.

title of *The Impartial Reading Herald*. There was also a preliminary issue of June 22nd, 1796. With the issue of October 14th, 1796, George Gerrish was admitted to partnership, under the firm name of J. Schneider and G. Gerrish. The paper was discontinued with the issue of January 13th, 1797, Vol. 1, No. 26.

Historical Society of Berks County has June 22nd, July 22nd, 1796; January 3rd, 1797.

1797

* Readinger Adler, 1796-1913.

(Reading Eagle.)

A German weekly. Established January 3rd, 1797, by Jacob Schneider and George Gerrish, with the title of *Der Unpartheyische Reading Adler*. There was also a preliminary sample issue of November 29th, 1796, numbered No. 1. With the issue of January 17th, 1797, the title was altered to *Der Unpartheyische Readinger Adler*, and the publishing firm became Jacob Schneider and Company. With the issue of January 6th, 1801, the title was altered to *Der Readinger Adler*. With the issue of June 29th, 1802, John Ritter was admitted to partnership under the firm name of Schneider and Ritter. With the issue of March 27th, 1804, this partnership was dissolved and the paper was published

* Illustrated and described.

by John Ritter and Company (Charles A. Kessler). With the issue of September 11th, 1810, the title was shortened to *Reader Adler*. The paper was so continued until after 1820. Most of the volumes had general title-pages after 1798.

Historical Society of Berks County has January 3rd, 1797 to December 26th, 1820.

Pennsylvania State Library has September 15th, 1801.

* *Die Geschichte Florentins von Fahlendorn.*
(The History of Florentins von Fahlendorn.)
Jacob Schneider and Company.

One copy in the collection of J. Bennett Nolan, of Reading, Pa.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

One copy in the Cassel collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

One copy in the collection of the Historical Society of Berks County.

One copy in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

One copy in the Pennsylvania State Library.

* *Die Blut-Fahne ausgestecket zur Warnung politischer Wegweiser in America.* (The Blood Red Flag Displayed as Warning to Political Leaders in America.) Gottlob Jungmann and Company.

* Illustrated and described.

One copy in the collection of J. Bennett Nolan, of Reading, Pa.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

One copy in the collection of the Historical Society of Berks County. (Imperfect.)

One copy in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

One copy in the Pennsylvania State Library.

Ein Wahrhafter und besonderer Bericht von dem Zustand des Richard Merrels. (A Fine and Special Report of the Condition of Richard Merrels.) Gottlob Jungmann and Company. Advertised in the *Zeitung* December 27th, 1797. No copy extant.

* Play bill. Jacob Schneider.

Performance of the M'Grath troupe at Reading Theatre.

One copy in the collection of J. Bennett Nolan, of Reading, Pa.

1798

Neuer Hauswirthschafts Calender. (The New Domestic Calendar.) Gottlob Jungmann and Company.

One copy in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, at Worcester, Mass.

One copy in the Pennsylvania State Library.

* Illustrated and described.

1799

Last Words of Martin McLaughlin. Gottlob Jungmann and Company. Advertised in the *Zeitung*. No copy extant.

Neuer Hauswirthschafts Calender. (The New Domestic Calendar.) Gottlob Jungmann and Company.

One copy in the Cassel collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

One copy in the collection of the Historical Society of Berks County.

One copy in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

One copy in the Pennsylvania State Library.

Ein Trauer Gedict uber eine Grausame Mordthat. (A Dirge Over a Cruel Murder.) J. G. Schneider.

Two copies in the collection of Schwenkfelder Historical Library at Pemsburg, Pa.

1800

Neuer Hauswirthschafts Calender. (The New Domestic Calendar.) Gottlob Jungmann and Company.

One copy in the Cassel collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

One copy in the collection of C. W. Unger, of Pottsville, Pa.

THE FIRST DECADE OF PRINTING

One copy in the Library of Congress, Washington,
D. C.

One copy in the collection of the American Antiquarian
Society, Worcester, Mass.

One copy in the Pennsylvania State Library.

The Reader Magazine. Jacob Schneider
and Company. Advertised in the Adler, January,
1800. No copy extant.



**EXEMPLARS
OF
EARLY READING PRINTING**

A
GENERAL DESCRIPTION
OF THE THIRTEEN
UNITED STATES
OF
AMERICA.

CONTAINING,

**Their Situation, Boundaries, Soil and
Produce, Rivers, Capitals, Constitu-
tion, Religious Test and Number
of Inhabitants.**

READING.

Printed and sold by

B. Johnson and T. Barton.
MDCCCLXXXVIII

THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES

This booklet, reputed to be the pioneer of Reading publications, is a quaint and curious volume, and gives a general description of each of the thirteen colonies, or "provinces," as the writer terms them. Since the boundaries of these several districts were not too clearly defined at the period, it is not surprising that a certain vagueness is reflected in the description. For instance, when the writer essays to bound Pennsylvania he says,

"On the North by New York and the Iroquois, on the West by Lake Erie and the Indian Country."

"Ten new states" he tells us *"are clamoring for admission to the Confederation."* These states are to be named Sylvania, Michigania, Rock State, Metropotamia, Illinoia, Saratoga, Polypatamia, Pelissia, and Washington. In addition, three counties in North Carolina have formed the State of Franklin, and a new State is to be erected about the intersection of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Our Reading author anticipated by half a century the view of John C. Calhoun and Jefferson Davis as to state-rights. *"Each state,"* he explicitly narrates, *"retains its own sovereignty and independence; supreme power is lodged in a Congress of Delegates."*

ADVICE
TO THE
FAIR SEX,

In a Series of Letters
to a SISTER,

*Shewing the Folly of assuming
Characters;*

*The Seriousness of Marriages;
A Description of different Suit-
ors, to be shunned by prudent
Females;*

*The Necessity of appearing de-
cent;*

*Portraits of a Miser and Spend-
thrift;*

Reflections on Jealousy, &c.

READING: Printed and sold by
B. JOHNSON and T. BARNARD
MDCCLXXXVIII

ADVICE TO THE FAIR SEX

This edifying volume is written in an admonitory vein which would probably evoke only the ridicule of an irreverent generation. The very names of the characters savor of prudery. The males are christened Love-well, Sir Robert Goodman, and Probus; the ladies are termed Flip-panta, Prudilla, and Flirtina.

The keynote of the volume is well struck in a stanza which adorns one of the earlier pages,

*"Immodest words admit of no defense
For want of decency is want of sense."*

And the scoffing matrons of our own day might well imitate the manner of the tactful wife who, when sadly ruffled by her spouse's bad temper, meekly, retorts,

"Very well my dear, I shall make the tea for you."

A homely strain of censure is suggested in the discreet advice of the eighteenth century mother,

"And now Maria let me advise you that whatever disappointments or disquietudes you may meet with in the nuptial state, never to declare to the world your sufferings."

While we may well doubt whether any of the emancipated daughters of the present day will take the time to read this quaint emanation of the Reading press of one hundred and twenty-five years ago, it is nevertheless certain that they might profit by the perusal.

Readinger Zeitung,

und Anzeigs - Nachrichten.

1 Thaler, jährlich.

Mittwoch, den 10 März.

3 Cent, Einzeln.

Diese Zeitung wird alle Mittwoch herausgegeben von Jungmann und Beckmann, in der Deutsche und Englische Buchdruckerey, für einen Thaler des Jahr; woselbst aller Arten Deutsche und Englische Buchdrucker-Arbeit, sauber, aufs geschwindeste, und um die billigsten Preise, verfertigt werden.

Wir sind alle Republicaner -- Wir sind alle Liberalisten.

Für die Unparteyische Readinger Zeitung.

[Nachfolgende Mittheilung empfehlen wir der Aufmerkamen Nachlese und gereuen Überlegung unserer geliebten Kunden, und den Lesern dieser Zeitung überhaupt.]

Stichtige Verachtungen, der gegenwärtigen Lage Despotischer Regierungen.

Wenn noch zu welchem Zeitpunkt langem in der Wahrscheinlichen Fortdauer des Staats vorgekommen werden, so vermuthet ein höchstbedauerlicher Zustand, daß sich die von dem Staat der Freiheit des Vorgesetzten, das damit verbundenen Vortheilen, in diesem

brachte werden, ohne erst eine ganze Neue Ordnung der Dinge einzuführen, und alle die Nemter von Gewalt und Maschen, mit ihren Creaturen aufzufällen. So gar die Unwahrscheinlichkeit eines solchen Vornehmens half die Revolution anzuhängen.

Nachdem wir diese traurigen Ansichten in der Befragung genommen, welche so eben auf dem Schauplatz von Europa zu Ende gebracht worden, welchen das Gemüthe immer die größte, allgemeine, ja denkwürdigen in der menschlichen Betrachtern, welche neuerlich in diesen Vereinigten Staaten ihren Ursprung genommen haben, und noch immer fortwähren, ohne sich die allerschmerzhaftesten und traurigsten Wirkungen zu machen. Es ist in gewis und wohlthätig, wie unser Vaterland, daß sich nicht als einseitig: der Land glücklich bilden.

Stofflich haben können, so wahrscheinlich sie selbst nicht, nach welchem diese Richter in ihre Urtheile gekommen sind; wenn sie nicht werden die Folge Abgaben auf Zucker, Kaffee und Salz, zu verringern, weil diese Artikel auf alle Classen von Einwohnern, insbesondere aber auf die Armen schwer fallen, so verringern sie, anstatt die vorgedachte zu erreichen, die Abgaben auf Bierdörfer, Kaffee des Vergnügens, und auf Brandwein-Kaffee -- so sehr in der That der Güte, und beantworteten alle Schwierigkeiten und Verbesserungen zum Zweck, mit einem segensreichen Versuch für die Frage zum Eintritte; und wenn ihnen durch ihre Wirksamkeit im Hand, und ihren Rath vorwärts zu Gemüthe gelehrt wird, daß diese unbedeutenden und überflüssigen Schritte eines Eingewanderten des General Vönders der Staaten beabsichtigen, und in einem Bürger Reich, und das Bedenken ihrer Vaterländer.

DIE NEUE UNPARTHEYISCHE
 READINGER ZEITUNG

The month of February in the year 1789 was a memorable one in the history of mankind. Mr. James Wilson, the erstwhile Reading lawyer, secured a ratification for his Federal Constitution at Philadelphia; the Three Estates, in convocation at Versailles, presented to a perplexed Bourbon monarch a memorial containing the strange new suggestion of inherent rights of mankind; and Gottlob Jungmann issued the first newspaper in Berks County.

Mr. Jungmann, never backward in vaunting his own good qualities and those of his productions, occupies much of the first page of the first number with a panegyric upon the venture. First, and somewhat superfluously, he reviews the history of printing from the days of Gutenberg. He then flatters the civic pride of his auditors by extolling their public and private virtues and assuring them that their industry and enterprise have made Berks County a Garden of the Lord (*ein Garten Gottes*). Having thus engendered a feeling of complacency amongst his prospective subscribers, he details the benefits to accrue from the establishment of a journal. Land is to increase in value; new and improved methods of agriculture are to be introduced; old superstitions are to vanish; the schools

are to amplify and prosper; the churches will become more influential. All this for a modest outlay of one dollar, fifty cents in advance.

Mr. Jungmann's fond hopes were only partially realized. When he removed from Reading in 1816 he devoted considerable space in the Advertiser to a melancholy review of his career in Reading and of the lack of appreciation in the community which he had sought to serve. Comparatively few, he declares, had shown enterprise enough to subscribe for his paper and many of those subscribers had neglected the formality of payment. The postmastership had been given to him when it could only be conducted at a loss; when emolument began to accrue, the office was bestowed elsewhere.

In the writer's possession is a letter written in 1799 by Pastor Friederich Schmidt of St. Michael's Lutheran Congregation in Philadelphia, to his son, a member of the Reading Bar.

"Mr. Jungmann has not yet paid me for the calendar calculation he got last year."

The reverend gentleman was an astronomer of a sort and had made calculations for Mr. Jungmann's calendars which Jungmann could not, or did not see fit to pay. Ready cash was apparently a rare item in the equipment of this first Reading printery.

Finally, in April, 1816, the disillusioned editor announces that he is "bent to leave these

parts for a new and distant country, if God pleases."

This "distant country," Kentucky, was remote indeed, for at that period it was as far from Reading as Liverpool is in our day.

Gottlob Jungmann's epilogue is written in the issue of the *Readinger Adler* for June 25th, 1833.

"Died at Louisville, Kentucky after a few hours' illness, Gottlob Jungmann, in the 67th year of his age. Many years ago the publisher of the Reading Weekly Advertiser. Also on the following day, Mrs. Catharine Jungmann, consort of the former, in the 67th year of her age."

Appropriately enough, his wife, the partaker of all his tribulations in Reading, who shared in the perilous emigration to the Ohio, went with him on the last journey, from which there is no return.

Poor Gottlob Jungmann! His was the usual fate of pioneers of culture in a community as yet unregenerated from the primitive. One wonders whether in his Western home he ever regretted the pleasant German village on the Schuylkill, or whether he harbored resentment towards an unimaginative and close-fisted community which begrudged the outlay of one dollar a year for the securing of their news from a printed sheet rather than by the traditional method of the gossip of the street.

WEEKLY ADVERTISER,

OF READING, IN THE COUNTY OF BERKS.

Printed by JUNG MANN & BRUCKMANN, Price One Dollar per Annum, payable half-yearly, in Advance

SATURDAY EVENING, 19 OCTOBER.



OFFICIAL RETURNS from the General Election Districts of Berks County:

	Bechtel	Keck	W. R.	W. M.	W. S.	W. N.	Parrell	White Horse	M. H.	W. H.	W. S.	W. H.	TOTAL
GOVERNORS													
Thomas M'Keon,	1309	375	147	250	120	252	247	126	304	443	57	77	3718
Simon Schneider,	522	234	290	176	19	221	137	145	103	67	63	30	2007
NEW ASSEMBLY													
Daniel Ruff,	1282	367	141	271	125	320	251	126	376	413	55	77	2694
John Hoff,	1292	352	136	256	125	242	243	125	371	241	55	77	2512
Valentin Beck,	1110	338	194	260	125	371	246	125	370	419	54	77	3217
Blas Hedge,	1217	362	127	271	124	373	243	127	376	443	54	77	3044
Jacob Schaefer,	1217	329	110	250	124	250	235	126	374	437	15	77	3354
Peter Speer,	98	19	41	33	4	200	12	0	0	84	37	2	462
OLD ASSEMBLY													
Jacob Eppler,	524	246	203	177	14	215	128	143	92	63	64	30	2000
Jose Adams,	526	245	212	177	14	223	129	143	92	75	64	31	2016
Wm Wiman,	522	246	303	181	14	223	144	143	91	75	61	20	2058
Wm Dree,	522	243	300	177	14	221	133	143	92	76	64	20	2019
Wm Dree,	536	246	303	177	14	217	130	144	91	75	64	20	2005
SHERIFFS													
Conrad Peger,	798	244	150	286	35	428	242	122	108	24	67	21	2568
George Marx,	692	147	201	121	7	106	25	79	111	50	12	2	1779
Daniel Kayser,	346	107	52	39	9	75	69	36	161	19	0	27	1043
Peter Klein,	162	300	28	114	29	114	36	50	145	222	23	25	1315
Henry Beyer,	72	4	4	22	0	12	27	67	0	4	10	0	224
Peter Amundt,	263	57	77	55	13	10	23	19	0	30	4	13	703
Nicholas Seitzinger,	347	22	47	105	62	66	25	51	36	4	13	21	801
John Meyer,	227	27	30	0	3	39	25	36	0	0	0	0	302
Philip Klein,	26	60	39	0	0	5	9	0	0	14	0	12	210
Anthony Schneider,	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75
CORONERS													
Henry Beyer,	466	163	134	110	49	141	63	83	110	58	50	22	1461
Freeman Leichter,	317	98	75	22	22	112	102	55	22	27	0	41	662
Daniel Cylar,	316	90	70	117	29	123	106	00	21	67	0	12	1101
George Goumar,	324	124	116	140	28	150	80	55	22	27	42	12	1259
Peter Nagle, Junr,	356	100	91	122	26	87	26	63	103	113	26	43	1210
Daniel Evans,	244	142	56	22	42	65	70	7	67	57	24	21	1000
Christopher Shetter,	402	208	120	111	29	107	29	45	02	75	24	0	1275
Henry Dietl,	262	108	60	37	10	25	36	10	112	53	8	11	941
William Wiman,	174	82	45	53	15	25	54	12	27	51	12	7	548
COMMISSIONERS													
Henry Beyer,	267	223	146	66	16	151	92	110	216	213	22	51	2246
Henry Beyer,	267	223	146	66	16	151	92	110	216	213	22	51	2246
Conrad Peger,	200	121	22	174	26	222	22	10	50	2	8	0	1006
Victrick Maurer,	56	51	50	54	0	27	12	20	15	15	7	3	248

THE WEEKLY ADVERTISER

In spite of Mr. Jungmann's constant complaint about the tardiness of his subscribers in the matter of payment, he seems to have been encouraged enough after seven years of experiment in the journalistic field to start an English newspaper and on May 7th, 1796, the *Reading Advertiser* made its bow to the English speaking public of Berks and adjoining counties. The *Advertiser* appears to have enjoyed a fair measure of the public patronage and endured until the issue of April 27th, 1816, considerably above the average of longevity for a newspaper of the period.



1961

THE

(No. 2)

IMPARTIAL

REDAVIN GHERARD.

General correspondence of Theobald and Orleans, 11 rue de la Harpe, Paris 5th.

(Publication of 1961/1962)

FRIDAY, September 16th, 1961.

This paper will be published every Friday Morning by JACOB SCHNEIDER, and Co. at the new printing office in London, at the sign of the Duke's per Annum, whereof half a Dollar is to be paid in Advance, every day till A Dollar is paid yearly.

SCHUYLKILL BIBLIO LOTTERY

SCHEME of a Lottery for raising any needed Dollars, a Lottery is made of the Lotteries of 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000.

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THE IMPARTIAL READING HERALD

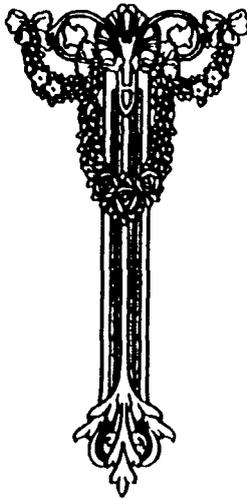
It has been claimed that the *Reading Herald* was the original newspaper in the English language to appear in Berks County, but as the first number is dated June 22nd, 1796, and that of the *Advertiser* May 7th, 1796, it would appear that the claim of the *Advertiser* to be the pioneer English newspaper is well-grounded.

Up to this time Gottlob Jungmann occupied the field alone, but now a rival appears in the person of Jacob Schneider, who came from Exeter Township, in Berks County. Mr. Schneider entered actively into the printing business, founded a newspaper, issued books, and in general made all the competition and trouble that he could for Gottlob Jungmann. He was associated in the beginning with George Gerrish. Schneider, like Jungmann, followed the approved journalistic

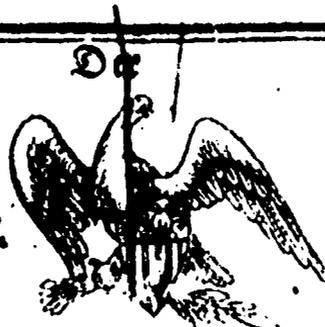
tradition of dabbling in politics and was seldom out of office. He held successively the offices of Register, Recorder, member of the Legislature, and Associate Judge. He brought himself and the town of Reading into the limelight in the year 1799, during the uprising against the federal tax on house windows, which has come down to us under the name of the Fries Rebellion. At this time Mr. Schneider's editorials were found so objectionable by the militia officers who were then garrisoned at Reading, that they took him forcibly from his office and horsewhipped him in Penn Square.

The Impartial Reading Herald struck a new note in Berks County journalism, being edited in a lighter vein than the ponderous, semi-religious publications which preceded it. Some of the poetry which it printed is decidedly broad and would scarcely pass the censorship even of our own more liberal age. In spite of this modernity,

or perhaps because of it, the paper had a brief career, being discontinued with the issue of January 13th, 1797.



Readinger.



Adler.

Die Ehre welche wir wünschen, ist, daß man von uns sagt: "Wir suchen das allgemeine Beste ohne Parteilichkeit."

Ein Exemplar des Jahrs.

Dienstag, den 18 November.

Des Vents einzeln.

Diese Zeitung wird alle Dienstage herausgegeben von Johann Miller und Comp. in der deutsch- und englischen Buchdruckerei in Reading, zum Schilde des Doc. Franklin; — wo allerley Buchdrucker-Arbeit geschnitten und sauber verfertigt wird.

Häuser, Lotten u. Ländereyen zu verkaufen.

Die Unterbeschiebene welches ist und der Stadt Reading zu sehen, so dinst er folgenden Eigenthum zum Verkauf aus, nämlich:

Das Haus, welches er wechelt, unter Colkewhill-Strasse, dem Post-Kontor gegenüber. Das Haus ist sehr bequem und wohl und gearbeitet, mit einer zwey-stöckigen Küche und drei gute Stuben mit dem Speisestube; auf der man sich sehr bequem hat auch eine kleine hübschere Küche und Speisestube. — Die Lotten sind in Front und 270 Fuß tief.

Das Haus an der Hauptstrasse, im Dist. von Charles Street, ist das ehemalige Wohnhaus von Herrn ... ebenfalls 27 Fuß in Front und 270 Fuß in die Tiefe.

Das Haus und Lott an der Hauptstrasse, gelegen an das Haus des verstorbenen John ... im Dist. von Judah Thomas.

Das Haus und Lott mit einer halben Lette Grund in der Haupt-Strasse — im Dist. von Samuel ... Das Grundstück in der ... Strasse, enthaltend 27 Fuß in Front und 270 Fuß in die Tiefe, ist an ... und ... Grundstück gegenüber.

Das Lott an der ... Strasse, welches zum ... ist.

in Striche, von ... 100 ... abgetheilt auf einem ... besteht: Es ist ein großes Grundstück zwey ... hoch; vor ... ist auch eine neue ... darauf ...; oberselbe 100 ... haben ... im Dist. von John ... Daniel ... und Jacob ... das Land ... von Jacob ... Philip ... und anderer. Es ist ... unter dem Namen ... Land und war ... 1770 ...

Der ... ist sehr ... für ... der ... ist ... zu ...

William ...

Den 14ten Oct. 1806.

Nachricht.

Dem ... der ... des ... sind ...

Die königliche Einrichtung von England.

Alle, ... waren ... menslich, die ...

... welche den ...

... während ...

... die ...

... die ...

... die ...

DER READINGER ADLER

The Readinger Adler, by far the most celebrated and influential paper ever published in Berks County, was started in 1796 by Jacob Schneider and George D. Gerrish. Its long and honorable career which terminated in 1913 merits a more extended discussion than can be given in this brief treatise. *The Adler* in its time was acknowledged as one of the leaders in the German press of America. It changed its format many times, but always maintained the symbol of the eagle as given in the early exemplar herewith reproduced.



**T H E
READY RECKONER,
O R T H E**

TRADER'S SURE GUIDE,
Adapted to the use of all who deal by
WHOLESALE OR RETAIL:

EXHIBITING AT ONE VIEW,
The Amount or Value of any number of
quantity of **GOODS** or **MERCHAN-**
DIZE, from 1 up to 10,000,
*At the various prices, from 1 Farthing to
1 Pound.*

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,
Tables of Interest at 5, 6, and 7 per Cent.
A Table shewing the weight and value
of **GOLD** and **SILVER**, as they now
pass in Pennsylvania and New-York.

A L S O

A Table shewing the value of *Continental
Money*, as fixed by an Act of the
General Assemblies of Penn-
sylvania and Maryland.

AN AMERICAN EDITION.

Corrected & compared with several Editions.

R E A D I N G :

Printed and Sold by Benjamin Johnson :
M,DCC,LXXXIX.

THE READY RECKONER

It is not probable that any of the issues of our Reading press was a brilliant success from a financial point of view. Numerically small as the publications appear to us now, they had an exasperating habit of remaining upon the producers' shelves. Sometimes the same item is advertised over a course of years, and the disappointed editors openly express their resentment over the lack of appreciation in the community.

But if any of the primitive productions paid for itself, it was probably the *Ready Reckoner*, produced in English and German in 1789. The success of this venture lay in its practical utility, for it filled a real need amongst our people.

At the time of its production, in 1789, the Confederation was laboring under the burden of an elastic and uncertain currency. Each State issued its own pounds, shilling, and pence. There was no parity and a very elusive standard of value. Barter between citizens of different States was invariably attended by perplexity and debate. A "Reckoner," therefore, which gave the comparative values for Pennsylvania and her bordering States of New York and Maryland, was a necessity to all tradesmen. Under these circumstances, the price of the volume, "Three shillings with allowance," does not appear excessive.

READING THEATRE,

(UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR. M'GRATH.)

On Thursday Evening, February 7, will be acted,

THE MORAL AND HISTORICAL PLAY OF GEORGE BARNWELL,

OR,

THE LONDON MERCHANT.

"Be warn'd, ye youths, who see my sad despair,
"Avoid lewd Women, false as they are fair,
"By my example learn to shun my fate,
"How wretched is the Man that's wife too late;
"Ere innocence and fame and life be lost,
"Here purchase wisdom cheaply at my cost."

Preceding the Play, will be spoken, A HUMOROUS PROLOGUE, in Character of
AN AMERICAN TAR.

After the Play, BROTHER M'GRATH will have the honor of delivering

A MASONIC ADDRESS,

IN HIS CHARACTER OF

A MASTER MASON.

Song---by Mrs. M'GRATH:---"I'd rather be excus'd!"

To which will be added, the AMERICAN FARCE of

THE TRUE BORN YANKEE,

OR,

A TRIP TO NEW-YORK;

With SONGS incidental to the PIECE.

The whole to conclude with "BUCKS HAVE AT YE ALL!"

By Mr. MORTON.

Characters, in Play and Farce, by Mr. M'GRATH, Mr. Morton, Mr. Ormsby,
Mrs. M'Grath, &c.

The Curtain to be raised at half past Six o'Clock.

TICKETS, at half a dollar each, to be had of Mr. Ball, of Mr. M'Grath, and
at Mr. Schneider's Printing-Office. No money to be taken by the Door-keeper.

In order to accommodate families, CHILDREN UNDER TEN YEARS
OF AGE will be admitted on Half-Tickets in half-price.

PLAY BILL OF THE READING THEATRE

This quaint play bill was presumably printed at Jacob Schneider's printing office, since the announcement is made that tickets to the performance may be procured there. The performance was given in the old Reading Theatre, which has passed so completely that no one can with any certainty say where it actually stood. There is a tradition that it was in the neighborhood of Seventh and Chestnut Streets, near the southwest corner, where stood the old Reading Academy. There is, however, no definite historical knowledge upon this point.

“Brother M'Grath” who gave the performance was the pioneer of the itinerant theatrical managers who introduced the drama to rural Pennsylvania. Some writers have referred to him as the Tait Wilkinson of the United States. Seil-

hamer in his history of the American stage pays a tribute to his versatility, terming him "Poet, singer, actor, dramatist, and manager."

Christopher Charles M'Grath made his American debut in 1786 at Charleston and seems to have led a starveling existence, wandering about with his troupe through Maryland and Pennsylvania with the sheriff always close upon his heels. He appeared in York in November, 1791, and announced that he proposed to give in the Pennsylvania inland towns

"Dramatic entertainments properly regulated to convey not only rational and elegant amusement, but productive of real utility in polishing the tastes, improving the manners and cultivating the genius of the rising generation."

But, a hard-headed and unappreciative public obstinately refused to take enough tickets at half a dollar apiece to make Mr. M'Grath's venture a successful one from the financial standpoint.

In York an honest countryman had to buy cakes for the leading lady so that she might sufficiently recruit her strength to continue the performance.

M'Grath died in Reading, February 23rd, 1799.

The play bill is undated but the performance was probably given in 1798.



Die
Geschichte
Florentins v. Fahlendorf.

Eine lehrreiche
und
Anmuthige Begebenheit.

Von
Heinrich Stilling.

In drey Theil.



Erster Theil.

Reading:
Gedruckt, bey Jacob Schneider und Comp.
Im Jahr 1797.

DIE GESCHICHTE FLORENTINS VON FAHLENDORN

The last decade of the Eighteenth century was essentially a period of romanticism. In Great Britain the anonymous Wizard of the North was issuing the rapid and brilliant succession of the Waverly novels. In Germany Goethe at the height of his powers set the standard in prose and poetry for his country-men.

It is not surprising, therefore, that this rising flood of sentimentalism should extend to the remote county of Berks, and that our local printers should pause in their monotonous task of producing newspapers and religious articles to reflect somewhat of the current cult.

An evidence of this is found in the novel of Florentins von Fahlendorn, produced in Reading in 1797 from the press of Jacob Schneider. In this tale the hero passes through a career of love episodes and hairbreadth escapes, ending in an orthodox and happy marriage. The scene was laid in Germany but the hero wandered as far as Philadelphia. The story may have pleased our Berks County ancestors, but with the perspective of one hundred and forty years, it appears singularly insipid. Such as it is, it was widely advertised and seems to have attained a fair measure of success.



Alles hat seine Zeit.

1799.

Südwestlicher Prospect von Meading

The Cover of the Jungmann Calendar

CALENDAR 1798-1800

The Calendar like the Reckoner had an important place in the life of a people whose newspapers had a very limited circulation. The Calendar was constantly referred to for information upon the seasons, the changes of the moon, the sitting of the courts, and all other matters essential to the routine of a primitive community.

The wood-cut upon the cover constitutes the earliest pictorial representation of Reading, although drawn nearly sixty years after the foundation of the town. In the Calendar of 1798 an optimistic and imaginary stone-arched bridge is shown spanning the river. In the later issues the bridge disappears. The first bridge that actually spanned the Schuylkill was a wooden covered structure erected in 1816, but a lottery was sold and a bridge projected in 1797. The picture on this early Calendar reflects the elusive hopes of the first bridge planners.

Die Blut = Fahne

ausgesteckt zur Warnung politischer
Wegweiser in America,

oder

Eine getreue Erzählung
einer großen Anzahl Handlungen der abscheulichsten
Grausamkeiten, solche als nie ein Auge gesehen, nie
eine Zunge ausgesprochen, oder die Einbildungskraft
gedacht, ehe die
Französische Revolution
ihren Anfang genommen hat.

Welchem

Ein unterrichtender Versuch
der diesen schrecklichen Thatsachen bis auf ihren wahren
Ursprung nachforschet, beygefügt ist.

Ausgezieret mit vier treffenden Kupferstichen.

Von Peter Porcupine.

„ Ihr werdet euer Vaterland in den Abgrund eines immer-
„ fortdauernden Gräuels und Schande stürzen und die Ge-
„ schichtsbücher eurer so hochgerühmten Revolution, werden
„ zu einer Blut = Fahne dienen, die Nationen des Erds-
„ kreises zu warnen, sich vor einem so schrecklichen Verder-
„ ben zu hüten. ”

(Aus des Abt Maury's Rede vor der National-Assemblee.)

Reading,
Gedruckt bey Gottlob Zungmann und Comp.

1 7 9 7.

DIE BLUT-FAHNE

This is a semi-political treatise depicting certain episodes in the French Revolution. It was produced in Reading in the interest of the Federalist party, as opposed to those anti-Federalists who affected to condone the Jacobins because they saw in them an expression of the same struggle for liberty which our own country had maintained in 1776.

The production is of peculiar interest because it marks the advent into Berks County in the closing years of the century of that stormy political petrel, William Cobbett, of Ireland, better known as "Peter Porcupine."

"Porcupine" was the Pennsylvania Junius, a master of biting invective, restrained by no scruple of sentiment or decency if the annihilation of a political opponent were to be achieved. His great rival was Benjamin Franklin Bache, editor of the *Aurora*, the organ of the anti-Federalists in Pennsylvania. Bache, in one number of the *Aurora* made a bitter attack upon President Adams, terming him the "Duke of Braintree" and in an unlucky moment alluded to his own illustrious ancestor, Benjamin Franklin. "Porcupine," perceiving his opportunity, rushed delightedly into the fray. After one hundred and twenty-five years his savage satire is still trenchant and apposite.

“Everyone will, I hope, have the goodness to believe that my grandfather was no philosopher. He never made a lightning rod, nor bottled a single quart of sunshine in his life. He was no almanac maker, no quack, no chimney doctor, no ambassador, and no printer’s devil. Neither was he a Deist, and all his children were born in wedlock.”

Why “Porcupine” came to Berks County for a medium of publication remains a mystery. But as Gottlob Jungmann was a political appointee and owed his postmastership to a Federal President, he could not well refuse a publication in the interest of his party.



CONCLUSION

This brings my task to a close. The assembly and perusal of these worn yellow relics of a by-gone age has been a source of pleasure to me, and I trust that the result will be of value for further research in this interesting field.

The bibliography and descriptions are as complete as they can be made after diligent study of the probable available sources. The examples selected for illustration give a fair idea of the early typography employed in our county.

It is to be regretted that the scope of this treatise does not permit of a more amplified treatment of the interesting personality of our early printers. Some of them, indeed, survive only in their names. Enough material, however, might be gathered for an interesting monograph upon Gottlob Jungmann and Jacob Schneider and it is my hope that this production may spur our local typographical association to erect some memorial to these illustrious pioneers. With the passing years, their memory has been allowed to lapse almost into oblivion, but a belated recognition is still feasible and such a movement would most fittingly be sponsored by the members of that printing profession which these primitive craftsmen founded in our community nearly a century and a half ago.

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