

## CHRISTOPHER SAUR THE THIRD

BY JAMES O. KNAUSS

THE wealthiest and most influential German publishers in colonial Pennsylvania were the Saur's. The firm was started in 1738 by Christopher Saur the first.<sup>1</sup> After his death in 1758 the business was continued and expanded by his son, Christopher.<sup>2</sup> Just before the war for American independence, the third Christopher Saur became associated in the work with his father. While the characteristics and activities of the first two have been described by various writers,<sup>3</sup> little has been said about the youngest of the trio. Yet a study of his activities will enable us not only to obtain one more glimpse of Tory psychology but also to get a fairly accurate idea of the economic prosperity of the Saur's and to add several more names to the list of early American imprints.

Christopher Saur, the third, was born in Germantown on January 27, 1754.<sup>4</sup> While practically no definite facts about his life prior to 1775 are known, the environment and atmosphere in which the youth grew to manhood can readily be described. His father was one of the leading members of the Germantown congregation of Dunkers, being for many years an elder.<sup>5</sup> Thus the son matured under the influence of a sect which was completely opposed to war and to

<sup>1</sup>Oswald Seidensticker, *The First Century of German Printing in America, 1728-1830*, p. 10. I have used the spelling *Saur* since the family almost invariably wrote it thus before the Revolution, although it was usually anglicized to *Sower* by the third Christopher when he wrote in English.

<sup>2</sup>Seidensticker, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup>For instance in Martin G. Brumbaugh, *A History of the German Baptist Brethren in America*; and James O. Knauss, *Social Conditions Among the Pennsylvania Germans in the Eighteenth Century*.

<sup>4</sup>*Genealogical Table Prepared by Charles G. Sower*. Also found in Brumbaugh, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

<sup>5</sup>Brumbaugh, *op. cit.*, pp. 391-393.

all forms of active resistance. This opposition would naturally cause a hesitation to champion any movement which might lead to war. The Dunkers would consequently support the conservative element in most crises and would attempt to appreciate the opponent's point of view. This attitude is well illustrated by three instances in the history of the Saur family. In 1744 the founder of the publishing house declared in his newspaper<sup>1</sup> that it would occasion no surprise if all the Indians of Pennsylvania would ally themselves with the French, since the red men were treated meanly by the so-called Christians of the colony.<sup>2</sup> Again, in July 1758 he showed a sympathetic understanding of the feelings of the Indians toward a government which was very slow to listen to their claims.<sup>3</sup> Seven years later the second Christopher Saur strongly disapproved of violent measures against the enforcement of the Stamp Act. Instead of this he proposed a convention which was to petition the British government for its repeal.<sup>4</sup>

This non-resistant attitude of the Dunkers in addition to their well-known opposition to a specially trained clergy and to higher education aroused bitter enmity among the colonists who disagreed with them. Usually this enmity was directed particularly against the influential Saur family. Their opponents, often under the leadership of Benjamin Franklin who was aided in later years by Reverend Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg,<sup>5</sup> the leader of the German Lutheran Church in America, attempted to undermine the unparalleled popularity of the Saur newspaper. An almost continuous succession of short-lived opposition newspapers appeared. For a long time the ability of the

<sup>1</sup>At that time the paper was called *Der Hoch-Deutsch Pennsylvanische Geschicht-Schreiber*. After various changes in titles, it was finally in 1766 named *Die Germantowner Zeitung*.

<sup>2</sup>Knauss, op. cit., p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>Knauss, op. cit., pp. 148-149.

<sup>4</sup>Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>5</sup>For the feeling of Mühlenberg toward Saur, read an account of the former's letter to Franklin in H. W. Smith, *Life and Correspondence of the Rev. William Smith, D.D.*, Vol. I, pp. 66-67.

Saurs enabled them to defeat all the efforts of their enemies. This prolonged struggle, in which many bitter words were uttered by both sides, continued during all the youthful years of Christopher Saur the third.

When the young man became of age, the colony was being stirred by the problems which soon led to the War for Independence. He found most of the family's old opponents among those demanding strong measures of resistance to the British government. The position of supremacy held for such a long time by the Saur publishing house had at last been lost to Henrich Miller, an outspoken supporter of the demands of the radicals.<sup>1</sup> These facts would have inclined the young Saur, even if he had not been a Dunker, to favor a conservative attitude toward the royal authorities. The wealth of the family also tended to make him conservative. For all these reasons there would seem to be no room for doubt that he always entertained feelings of lukewarmness to the patriot cause, and yet William McCulloch, a Philadelphia publisher, writing in 1814 declared that "during the first progress of opposition against taxation, Sower 3d was warm in declaring himself in favor of the colonists; and is said to have been active in some cases of preparation for resistance".<sup>2</sup> This statement is probably inaccurate having been made forty years after the event on the authority of a son of the third Saur. In fact, Christopher Saur himself practically contradicted it in a statement made on March 22, 1784, in London to the commissioners who had charge of determining the losses and services of the American Loyalists. In this statement he asserted that he "inherited Loyalty

<sup>1</sup>Miller began the publication of *Der Wöchentliche Philadelphische Staatsbote* on January 18, 1762. See Knauss, *op. cit.*, p. 177. Within four years Miller's publications during the course of a year outnumbered those of Saur. See Seidensticker, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-100.

<sup>2</sup>*Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, Vol. 31, Part I (New Series), p. 158. McCulloch's manuscript edited by Clarence S. Brigham is found on pages 79 to 247, under the title, *William McCulloch's Additions to Thomas's History of Printing*. Presumably McCulloch received this information regarding Saur from the son of Christopher Saur the third, Brook Watson Sower. (See p. 162.)

from his father and was attached to the British Government both from a sense of duty and a thorough conviction of its excellence".<sup>1</sup>

Saur's life as a man of affairs may be said to have begun at the end of 1774, just before his twenty-first birthday. At that time he received from his father, not by legal conveyance but by word of mouth, the land in Germantown on which stood the ancestral home and the printing establishment.<sup>2</sup> Early in the following year, on January 8, he was married to Hannah Knorr.<sup>3</sup> The Saur newspaper, at this time called *Die Germantowner Zeitung*, still bore the imprint of the second Christopher Saur alone, but sometime between April 20, 1775, and March 20, 1776, the name of the publishing company was changed to Christopher Saur and Son.<sup>4</sup> Not later than February 1777, the publication of the newspaper was placed in the hands of the younger Christopher Saur and his eighteen-year-old brother Peter. Thus gradually the young man assumed public control of the business.

Most of the details of his activities between the outbreak of the Revolution and September 25, 1777, when the British captured Germantown, have been forgotten. However, we may readily believe his own statement made in 1784 that he inserted in his newspaper what was favorable to the mother country and took care to avoid every publication which might inflame. He further asserted at the same time that he published the resolutions of Congress only because he

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<sup>1</sup>The original memorial by Saur is found among the Audit Office Records in the Public Records Office in London. The copy which I consulted is in New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 446. Since Saur was trying to obtain financial help from the British government, he may well have neglected to mention any youthful inclinations toward disloyalty. However, Saur's memorial has been found more reliable than McCulloch's Additions, whenever there was an opportunity to check their few contradictory statements.

<sup>2</sup>New York Public Library Transcripts, Vol. 49, pp. 449-450, and p. 455.

<sup>3</sup>Brumbaugh, *op. cit.*, p. 430. Also given in *Genealogical Table prepared by Charles G. Sower*.

<sup>4</sup>The issue of *Die Germantowner Zeitung* of April 20, 1775, was still published by the older Saur while that of March 20, 1776, by Christopher Saur and Son. See Knauss, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

was obliged to insert them for his own safety or because he hoped that their extreme radicalism might cause a reaction.<sup>1</sup> In 1776 he published in pamphlet form a translation of a paper issued by some Quakers in which they gave their reasons for supporting the British government.<sup>2</sup> His activities were so pronounced that the Committee of Safety prohibited him and his father, on December 16, 1776, from printing any political paper.<sup>3</sup> Although later rescinded, this order showed clearly how obnoxious the Saur family were to the Patriots. In those early years of the war, he was also prosecuted because he refused to serve in the militia or to pay the fine required of those who did not serve. As a result the authorities seized and sold his desk which was valued at more than four pounds.<sup>4</sup>

When the British entered Philadelphia on September 26, 1777, Saur removed to that city. Henceforth he was an uncompromising Loyalist, doing everything in his power to help the mother country in her efforts to subdue the colonists. One authority declared that Joseph Galloway persuaded him to resume the publication of his newspaper in Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup> Anyway the firm of Christopher Saur and Peter Saur published in German the proclamation of General Howe dated October 8, 1777.<sup>6</sup> This offered a land bounty to all recruits for the royal provincial corps. The old *Germantowner Zeitung* now became *Der Pennsylvanische Staats-Courier*.<sup>7</sup> This paper was at times extremely bitter and harsh in its attacks on the Patriots. For instance, in the issue of February 18, 1778, there was an article which created much animosity. It declared that if in a country bankrupt merchants became state councillors, and a dismissed

<sup>1</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 452.

<sup>2</sup>Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 93. It is to be noted that this is one of the few publications now extant which bears the imprint of young Christopher Saur alone.

<sup>3</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 454.

<sup>4</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 451.

<sup>5</sup>William McCulloch, op. cit., p. 159.

<sup>6</sup>Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>7</sup>Knauss, op. cit., p. 180.

postmaster an ambassador to a royal court, and if the clergymen became political market criers, then the sicknesses of the country would increase. Consequently the publishers of the paper printed the following prescription for the country's ills. A sufficient quantity of lead to be made into pills, add to each pill the usual amount of genuine gunpowder, divide them equally among twenty thousand fine soldiers in addition to suitable small military syringes; aim the instruments at that part of the patient where most of the bad sap is collected.<sup>1</sup> Such an article was intended to arouse to action the readers who favored England but it was so violent that the Patriots republished it in one of their papers, knowing that it would increase the resentment felt toward the Tories in general and toward the Saur's in particular.

Even before the publication of this article an event had occurred which showed clearly how the revolting colonists viewed Christopher Saur the third. On December 5, 1777, he went with a detachment of British soldiers to Germantown, either in the capacity of guide or for private purposes. While there, he was wounded and captured by troops under Captain Nicholas Coleman of the American army, brought before General Washington for special examination, and then kept prisoner until January 10, 1778. On that date he was exchanged for George Luch,<sup>2</sup> a powder manufacturer. The fact that the British were willing to release a maker of such an important article in order to obtain Saur's freedom shows how highly the latter was esteemed.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Das Pennsylvanische Zeitungs-blatt*, published in Lancaster. The issue of May 27, 1778, has a copy of this article. The article is also mentioned by McCulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup>Lusk, according to McCulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup>The episode of Saur's capture is mentioned in his own testimony before the British Commissioners, a copy of which is found in New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 452; also in a note by Hugh Ferguson dated November 30, 1778, found in the Audit Office Records of the Public Records Office, London in Class 13, Bundle 102; also in McCulloch, *op. cit.*, pp. 159, 160.

The departure of the British from Philadelphia in June 1778 meant the ruin of the Saur family. The young men, Christopher and Peter, who had so boldly attacked the colonists in their Philadelphia paper knew that it was useless to attempt to continue business when their enemies were in control. Hence they accompanied the British army to New York. Their father who, so far as it is known, remained neutral during the entire war, returned to Germantown even before the British evacuated Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> He undoubtedly felt that he was innocent of all wrong. However, no matter how guiltless he was, the Patriots were determined to ruin a family which at its best had remained aloof from their cause, and at its worst had attacked them so bitterly. They were further incited against the family by a broadside issued on July 22, 1778, by the influential German printer Henrich Miller.<sup>2</sup> In this he declared, probably correctly, that Christopher Saur, the younger, had been the cause of the loss of his printing presses. For all these reasons the authorities confiscated the Saur property and sold it on Monday, August 24, 1778.<sup>3</sup> Thus came to an end the remarkable publishing house after an existence of forty years.<sup>4</sup>

It may be well to digress here to give some idea of the kind and value of the property thus confiscated. In 1784 Christopher Saur the third listed the items of his father's lost estate with the valuation of each as follows:<sup>5</sup>

Dwelling place, office, printing establishment and other buildings on three and one-half acres of land in Germantown with ninety feet fronting on Main Street . . .	£1000
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Amount carried forward . . . . .	£1000
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<sup>1</sup>McCulloch, op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>A copy of this is found in the library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>3</sup>See the *Staatsbote* of August 19, 1778, for advertisement.

<sup>4</sup>There is hardly any doubt that this confiscation of the older Saur's property was unjust and probably illegal.

<sup>5</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, pp. 468-469.

Amount brought forward . . . . .	£1000
One and a quarter acres of land nearly opposite and fronting the same street, with a stone dwelling house and frame barn, etc.	250
Two lots in Bowman's Lane . . . . .	213
About one-half acre of land in Northern Liberties, adjoining the Schuylkill with saw and paper mill . . . . .	700
Stone house and two and a half acres of land near the above . . . . .	110
Eighty-three acres of woodland in Roxboro Township with small house fronting the Schuylkill and a shad fishery . . . . .	800
Six and one-half acres of meadow and upland with hayhouse fronting Keyser's land in Germantown . . . . .	100
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Total real estate . . . . .	£3173
Bonds and Mortgage to Conrad Good . . . . .	245
Other bonds . . . . .	945
Cash notes and book debts . . . . .	300
Three printing presses with English and German type . . . . .	1100
2900 Folio Bibles <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	1812-10
3100 New Testaments <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	310
2400 Lutheran Song Books <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	300
1100 Books called Garden of Paradise <sup>4</sup> . . . . .	103- 2-6
1500 Palterspil (sic) <sup>5</sup> . . . . .	187-10
1800 Teaders Sure Guide <sup>6</sup> . . . . .	150
5000 Psalters <sup>7</sup> . . . . .	187-10
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Amount carried forward . . . . .	£5640-12-6

<sup>1</sup>This was the third edition of the German Bible, published by Christopher Saur the second in 1776. The first edition appeared in 1743, the second in 1763. (See Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 93.) The third Christopher Saur declared that his father still had about 500 copies of the second edition in 1777. (See New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 480.)

<sup>2</sup>The Saur's published their seventh edition of the New Testament in German in 1775. (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 90.)

<sup>3</sup>*Vollständiges Marburger Gesangbuch*, fifth edition in 1777. (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 97.)

<sup>4</sup>This may be a publication which has escaped the notice of the bibliographers.

<sup>5</sup>*Das Kleine Davidische Psalterspiel*, fourth edition in 1777. (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 97.)

<sup>6</sup>This may be a publication which has escaped the notice of the bibliographers.

<sup>7</sup>*Der Psalter des Königs und Propheten Davids*, fifth edition in 1768 (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 73.)



Amount brought forward . . . . .	£5640-12-6
6000 Lutheran Catechisms <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	125
600 Books called the Spiritual Flower Garden <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	60
500 Reformed Song Books <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	75
Drugs, Paints, Oils, etc. . . . .	80
2 Large Iron bookbinder presses . . . . .	20
4000 Ft. of boards . . . . .	18
3000 Dressed cedar shingles . . . . .	15
Household furniture and implements of husbandry . . . . .	400
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Total personal property . . . . .	£6433-12-6

To this inventory of the older Saur's estate should be added the property of the young man as follows:<sup>4</sup>

Nineteen and a half acres of land situated in Bristol Township and consistng of wood- land, meadow and some arable land . . . . .	£ 168
Book debts, estimated to have amounted to at least . . . . .	300
3000 Primers <sup>5</sup> . . . . .	24-10
300 copies of the Death of Abel <sup>6</sup> in German . . . . .	13-10
A bond and mortgage from Martin Harts- back . . . . .	90
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Total . . . . .	£ 596

This list shows that the Saur's were among the wealthiest Germans in the colonies. In fact, it is quite probable that no other German family of pre-revolutionary days had property which was valued at more than £10,000.<sup>6</sup> How much the annual income of the family was cannot be ascertained, although the younger Saur estimated that the printing office, book

<sup>1</sup>The Saur's printed this in 1777. (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 97.)

<sup>2</sup>Teerstegen's *Geistliches Blumen-Gärtlein Inniger Seelen*, Sixth edition in 1773. (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 86.)

<sup>3</sup>Third edition in 1772. (Seidensticker, op. cit. p. 84.)

<sup>4</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, pp. 450-451.

<sup>5</sup>No mention of this primer published by the third Saur is made by any bibliographer.

<sup>6</sup>Geszner's *Der Tod Abels*, published in 1776. (Seidensticker, op. cit., p. 94.)

<sup>7</sup>Objection may be raised to these figures since the valuation was made by Saur when he was presenting his claims to the British government for indemnification for losses sustained. From all that is known, the estimates are conservative. McCulloch, op. cit., p. 156, declares the losses aggregated thirty thousand pounds.

store, and drug shop made a yearly *net* profit of at least one hundred and eighty pounds.<sup>1</sup>

When Christopher Saur the third arrived in New York in the summer of 1778, he opened a store.<sup>2</sup> He soon discontinued this business, as he declared in 1784, "for no other reason than because it interfered with his constant attendance at headquarters". Like many of the Tory refugees in New York, he worked in all possible ways for the success of the mother country. Since his family had been so noted, he became the most influential and the best known of the German American Loyalists. At least one British military leader, J. Graves Simcoe, Lieutenant Colonel, commanding the Queen's Rangers, used superlatives in praising him. Simcoe said, "He (Saur) possessed in the highest degree the confidence of the Loyalists and from his situation among them, his character and his connexions, I am confident no one British American subject that I have ever met with during the active course of the war could have been more eminently useful to this country or was more zealous in his endeavors to be so."<sup>3</sup> Most of his activities may be grouped under three general headings: attempting to rouse and encourage the Loyalists in the sections under the control of the Patriots, procuring intelligence for the British army, and trying to persuade the home government to take such steps as would aid in detaching the mass of people from the Patriot leaders.

Saur had been in New York less than six months when we find him engaged in the first of these activities. In the fall of 1778, he sent a man to York County, Pennsylvania, to induce the Tories to associate in the service of the British government.<sup>4</sup> The messenger, who is known only by the initials "A. F.," returned in December of that year with a verbal answer that there

<sup>1</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 451.

<sup>2</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, pp. 447 and 466.

<sup>3</sup>Public Records Office, Audit Office Records, class 13, bundle 102. The letter is dated January 2, 1784, at Exeter.

<sup>4</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 463.

were numerous people in Pennsylvania who were loyal and desired to aid the king. Officers of the militia of three counties, York, Northumberland, and Lancaster, sent assurances by A. F. that they were willing to do anything which General Clinton, the commander-in-chief of the British army, would order them to do. The lieutenant colonel of the York County militia and Captain Martin Weaver of Northumberland County promised to raise a complete battalion for service, if Clinton would give them the least encouragement. Saur transmitted this information to the commander and on receiving a favorable reply dispatched A. F. to the leaders with the answer. These immediately took steps to organize the Loyalists and to secure information concerning Patriot activities. Thus the Association was started which occupied much of Saur's attention for the next three years.<sup>1</sup>

It soon became apparent that the most active of these organizers was Colonel William Rankin of York County, presumably the anonymous lieutenant colonel mentioned in Saur's first communication to Clinton on the subject in December 1778. Rankin was soon planning the destruction of the Patriot stores at Carlisle and proposed to give aid to Colonel John Butler in his onslaughts on the Pennsylvania frontier.<sup>2</sup> Before the end of the summer of 1779 he reported that his party numbered eighteen hundred men.<sup>3</sup> During the ensuing fall and winter the Patriots captured several of the plotters and Chief Justice McKean of Pennsylvania conducted a personal investigation in York and Lancaster Counties without however discovering the

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<sup>1</sup>From the Clinton papers, now in the possession of William L. Clements, Bay City, Michigan. After all these papers are catalogued, their final repository will be the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan. All material in this article from the Clinton papers was obtained through the courtesy of Mr. Clements and Miss Jane Clark, the librarian of his private library. She transcribed for me all of the relevant material which was catalogued and some which has not yet been catalogued. It may be added that the uncatalogued part of the Clinton papers may still contain other important Saur items, although the probabilities of this are small.

<sup>2</sup>Letter of March 1779 from Saur to Clinton—in the Clinton papers.

<sup>3</sup>In Saur's "Narrative" which he later prepared for Clinton—in the Clinton papers.

seriousness of the plot. Despite these counter activities, Rankin reported that his party amounted to six thousand men in February 1780.<sup>1</sup> Both Saur and he now began to urge the advisability of having some British troops landed on Chesapeake Bay to co-operate with the Loyalists. At the same time, Saur approved of Governor Franklin's plan to lead the New Jersey Provincial Brigade and other provincial corps into Sussex County, New Jersey, where it was hoped they would be reinforced by fresh recruits and from where they could then form a junction with Rankin's Pennsylvania frontiersmen.<sup>2</sup> The latter suggestion was apparently too fantastic to receive Clinton's serious consideration, but the idea of landing troops on Chesapeake Bay was kept in mind for future action.

In order to keep up the courage of the frontier Association and to induce more of his German countrymen to renounce their support of the revolutionary government, Saur published a sixteen page pamphlet in small octavo entitled, *Zuschrift an die Deutschen in Pennsylvanien und benachbarten Provinzen*.<sup>3</sup> It was dated April 14, 1780, at New York, and copies of it were dispatched to Pennsylvania before May 1. Before publication it was revised and approved by General Knyphausen.<sup>4</sup> This pamphlet is a passionate appeal to the Germans to return to the allegiance of their king. The plea, while neither very well organized nor strikingly original, is by no means a weak composition. Saur continually stressed the former prosperity of the Germans under British rule in contrast with their distress since the outbreak of the rebellion. He bitterly attacked Paine's *Common Sense*, the radical New Englanders, the German ministers who misled

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Welding's Report, February 29, 1780, and Saur's letter to Major André, May 1, 1780—both in the Clinton papers. The figures may well be exaggerated.

<sup>2</sup>Saur's letter to Major André, dated New York, May 1, 1780—in the Clinton papers.

<sup>3</sup>Public Records Office, Audit Office Records, class 13, bundle 102. This copy is the only one known to have been preserved. It is apparently not mentioned in any bibliographical list.

<sup>4</sup>Saur's letter to Major André, May 1, 1780—in the Clinton papers.

their congregations, the Continental Congress, and the foreign nations, France and Spain. Finally, with the fervor of an orator and an evangelist, he urged the Germans to refuse to obey the government and to unite to defeat the rebels. The whole address may be considered the valedictory of the Saur family as colonial printers. In style and language, the young man consciously or unconsciously imitated his grandfather when his newspaper was the greatest German journal of colonial days. This is especially noticeable in his use of Scriptural quotations. Despite the apparent sincerity of the plea, nothing was accomplished, maybe because the pamphlet could not be distributed widely, but more probably because a large majority of the Germans were Lutherans and Reformed, denominations who were always opposed to the sectarians whom Saur represented. In all likelihood the chief reason for its failure lay in the fact that many Germans, like other nationalities, had through five years of hardship become completely opposed to reunion with England, an idea which many Tories could not grasp.

For at least four months after April 1780, General Clinton was apparently too much occupied with other affairs to communicate with Saur.<sup>1</sup> However, when the theatre of war shifted to Virginia in 1781, the commander decided to recommend a diversion northward from the Chesapeake country to aid the Pennsylvania and Maryland Loyalists.<sup>2</sup> To explain this plan to General Phillips, the commander in Virginia, it is quite probable that Clinton sent Saur to that colony in May 1781. This assumption is based on the fact that Saur went at Clinton's orders on a secret mission to Virginia in that month. Secrecy was of such importance that he was introduced to the officers on board the transport under the fictitious name of Captain

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<sup>1</sup>See Saur's Narrative in the Clinton papers.

<sup>2</sup>See Clinton's Observations to the British commissioners on the losses of the Loyalists in the Clinton papers. See also the Clinton letters in B. F. Stevens, *Clinton-Cornwallis Controversy*, Vol. I, pp. 450 and 487.

Longstreet.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for the Loyalists, Lord Cornwallis, who succeeded Phillips as commander in Virginia, did not find it expedient to adopt the plan suggested by Rankin and Saur, and approved by Clinton.<sup>2</sup> Hence the high hopes for the success of the Association entertained by its chief sponsors were never realized. Presumably it was disbanded after the surrender of Cornwallis in October 1781.

Saur encouraged other groups of Loyalists besides those ready to form military associations. The Mennonites and Dunkers of Pennsylvania, especially from Lancaster County, asked him in August 1780 to petition the commander in chief to give them directions how to conduct themselves as loyal subjects of the king. They also inquired whether they would be permitted to enjoy their religious principles as heretofore. If the commander did not feel authorized to answer these questions, the Mennonites and Dunkers desired to have their address forwarded to the throne. Saur in sending this petition to Clinton took the opportunity of declaring that these sects had from the first commencement of the struggle desired to have instructions from the royal authorities and that they had held several meetings for the purpose of discussing conditions at one of which he himself had been present.<sup>3</sup> What action, if any, was taken in reply to this petition is not known.

The most interesting of all of the attempts to encourage loyalty in which Saur was known to have taken an interest was the one in which "the Revd. Mr. Mühlenberg" was approached.<sup>4</sup> Presumably this was Heinrich Melchior Mühlenberg, the organizer of

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<sup>1</sup>Public Records Office, Audit Office Records, class 13, bundle 102.

<sup>2</sup>Clinton's Observations, in the Clinton papers.

<sup>3</sup>Christian Musselmann's Report, dated September 1, 1780—in the Clinton papers. In Saur's note appended to this report, he briefly discusses the two sects, estimating the Dunkers to consist of three thousand church members and the Mennonites of two or three thousand families.

<sup>4</sup>Letter of Saur to Major André, November 5, 1779—in the Clinton papers. Reverend Mühlenberg might have been either Heinrich Melchior or one of his three sons, but the probabilities favor the former, as mentioned in the text.

the German Lutheran Church in America. At the request of Major André, Saur wrote to him in the fall of 1779. Mühlenberg refused to enter into any correspondence with the British until they had definitely explained to him the manner in which it could be conducted. According to him this hesitation was due to the fact that the times were very perilous. Saur reported that his agent informed him that Mühlenberg had received him kindly and directed him to various houses where he was hospitably entertained. So far as we know, there the matter was dropped, but the incident opens up some interesting vistas of speculation. Was the famous Mühlenberg family leaning toward Toryism, despite all the apparently reliable information that the historians have heretofore had? Or was Mühlenberg trying to uncover the methods and agents of the royal secret service? Anyway, there is no evidence that Saur was enthusiastically in favor of approaching the old opponent of his family.

The second of his activities, the collection of intelligence for the British army, was probably to a large extent allied with his attempts to organize the Loyalist Association in York County, although Rankin and his associates were by no means Saur's only sources of information. Almost at the beginning of the Association in March 1779, its leaders sent an account of the material for the Patriot army, stored at Carlisle.<sup>1</sup> It consisted of ten thousand stand of arms, several wagon loads of gunlocks, a cannon forge, a number of cannon already completed, large quantities of flour, beef and pork, and between eight hundred and nine hundred tons of powder. In the same report, they expressed the belief that a member of the Supreme Executive Council would tell them all about the proposed expedition against Butler.<sup>2</sup> About a year later in February 1780, it was reported that the

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<sup>1</sup>Saur to Clinton, March 1779—in the Clinton papers.

<sup>2</sup>If this referred to General Sullivan's expedition against the Iroquois, the Loyalists' hopes were apparently not realized.

provision stores at Carlisle were exhausted but that the military stores remained. The report continued that only two provision stores were known to exist, both in Maryland.<sup>1</sup> Saur himself summed up his information in a letter to Major André dated May 1, 1780.<sup>2</sup> He claimed that the Germans were particularly tired of the war, that there was no longer a German newspaper in the colonies, due to the fact that they refused to read rebel literature.<sup>3</sup> He further reported, on the authority of a member of the Supreme Executive Council, that the Pennsylvania government was unable to collect taxes or even, in some localities, to find a collector. Saur in all of the reports made these accounts of the gloomy conditions among the Patriots the basis of a plea for immediate aid to the Association.

Saur also suggested means of obtaining information. For instance, on September 9, 1780, he sent proposals to General Clinton to open a correspondence with Peter Miller of Philadelphia.<sup>4</sup> Miller, who according to Saur was a noted friend to the British government and had a wide circle of acquaintances, would "collect, discover and transmit every transaction of Congress and every other important occurrence in that city or province that may come to his knowledge". Apparently these proposals were never accepted.

There seems to be no doubt that Saur furnished much information of which no detailed record has survived. His own statement declares that he procured intelligence for three successive commanders: Howe, Clinton, and Carleton.<sup>5</sup> General Clinton himself several years later wrote that he had often received information from the German printer.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Welding's Report, February 29, 1780—in the Clinton papers. The truth of the report was confirmed by A. F.

<sup>2</sup>In the Clinton papers.

<sup>3</sup>Of course, the reason for the decline of the newspapers was the condition of the country, *not* the German aversion to Revolutionary sheets.

<sup>4</sup>In the Clinton Papers. This Miller is probably not the famous Peter Miller of the Ephrata Cloister.

<sup>5</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 447.

<sup>6</sup>Sir Henry Clinton's Observations in the Clinton papers.



After the surrender of Cornwallis in October 1781 Saur apparently concentrated most of his energies on attempts to secure liberal concessions from the home government so that the colonies could be induced to return to their former allegiance. To efforts of this kind presumably belongs his trip to England at the beginning of 1782. The voyage was made in order "to forward a memorial to the foot of the throne".<sup>1</sup> After his return to New York, he sent to Joseph Gallo-way suggestions how "to produce peace between Great Britian and the colonies on the most certain and lasting foundation". The communication is dated October 17, 1782.<sup>2</sup> In it, the writer insists that England must repeal all the acts of Parliament binding on the colonies and pass instead "one general and generous act," by which the king's supremacy would "remain over America as it does over Great Britain and Ireland". In this way the people would soon repudiate their revolutionary leaders. His whole idea was summed up in two sentences. "The voice of the present rulers in America is not the voice of the people at large." "Something real must be done to support the people at large." Again as in the pamphlet, the thought is not original, and yet the author wins our respect by his evident sincerity.

One other event of Saur's life in New York may be recorded here, for it indicates how highly he was valued and esteemed by the British authorities. It also gives us a glimpse of the more personal side of the man's character. Some time after his removal to New York; he had occasion to go aboard a prison ship. There to his surprise he found, almost destitute of clothes, Captain Nicholas Coleman who had captured

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<sup>1</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 49, p. 448, and p. 462. On the latter page, there is the additional information that Saur borrowed twelve guineas for the trip from Joseph Fox, which had not yet been repaid in 1784. McCulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 160, also mentions the trip.

<sup>2</sup>Public Record Office, Audit Office Records, class 13, bundle 102. The proposal is signed, "Pro bono publico," a fact which would lead one to believe that it was originally written for a newspaper.

him in Germantown in December 1777. Saur immediately furnished him with clothes and within a few days secured his release and that of two of his comrades. He succeeded in doing this without any exchange of prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

When Saur's activities for the restoration of English supremacy ended at the close of the Revolution, he became an exile like so many of his fellow Tories. He went to London on the evacuation of New York and remained there almost two years.<sup>2</sup> While there, he vigorously and successfully pushed the claims of the Saur family for indemnification for the losses suffered in the Revolution. He himself was granted an annuity of forty pounds a year.<sup>3</sup> He put in claims for property losses of a total value of more than seven thousand pounds. This included more than twenty-five hundred pounds for himself and more than forty-five hundred for his three brothers and one sister.<sup>4</sup> The claims commissioners allowed him the sum of 1289 pounds and each of the four others 518 pounds. None of these claims had been paid in 1789, except 448 pounds 8 shillings to Christopher Saur the third.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the annuity and to the claim granted to him, Saur was also made postmaster of St. John, New Brunswick, and King's printer for the province.<sup>6</sup> To this province in which thousands of his fellow Loyalists had settled he came in May 1785.<sup>7</sup> He ran

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<sup>1</sup>McCulloch, *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230, obtained the information from B. W. Sower, son of Christopher Saur the third.

<sup>2</sup>McCulloch, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 6, pp. 187 and 189.

<sup>4</sup>New York Public Library Loyalist Transcripts, Vol. 11, pp. 276, 280, 330. His father and two of his brothers and sisters had died immediately after the Revolution and hence were naturally not included in the claims. This valuation is fully three thousand pounds less than the original valuation by Saur. Presumably the decrease is due to the refusal of the claims commissioners to consider certain types of losses. (See Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*, p. 302.)

<sup>5</sup>McCulloch, *op. cit.*, pp. 160 and 214, declares that each of the second Saur's children was allowed 700 pounds, but that Christopher and Peter received nothing because they were accidentally omitted in the schedule. Although B. W. Sower, son of the third Saur, made this statement to McCulloch, it is unquestionably wrong.

<sup>6</sup>*Winslow Papers, A. D. 1776-1826*, edited by Rev. W. O. Raymond, p. 329 note.

<sup>7</sup>*Genealogical Table prepared by Charles G. Sower.*

true to family traditions by immediately starting the publication of a newspaper, *The Royal Gazette and Weekly Advertiser*.<sup>1</sup> He lived in New Brunswick for the next fourteen years. Up to 1790 he resided in St. John, then he moved to French Village in King's County. Here he erected a two story log house which served as a residence and printing office. In 1792 he was an unsuccessful candidate for member of the house of assembly.<sup>2</sup> On March 22, 1799, John Ryan succeeded him as King's printer,<sup>3</sup> and shortly thereafter he left New Brunswick and went to his youngest brother Samuel who was established in the printing business in Baltimore. Here he died of a stroke of apoplexy on July 3, 1799.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>J. W. Lawrence, *Foot-Prints, or Incidents in the Early History of New Brunswick*, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup>Raymond, *op. cit.*, p. 328, note.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 419, note.

<sup>4</sup>This date is given in the *Genealogical Table prepared by Charles G. Sower*.

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