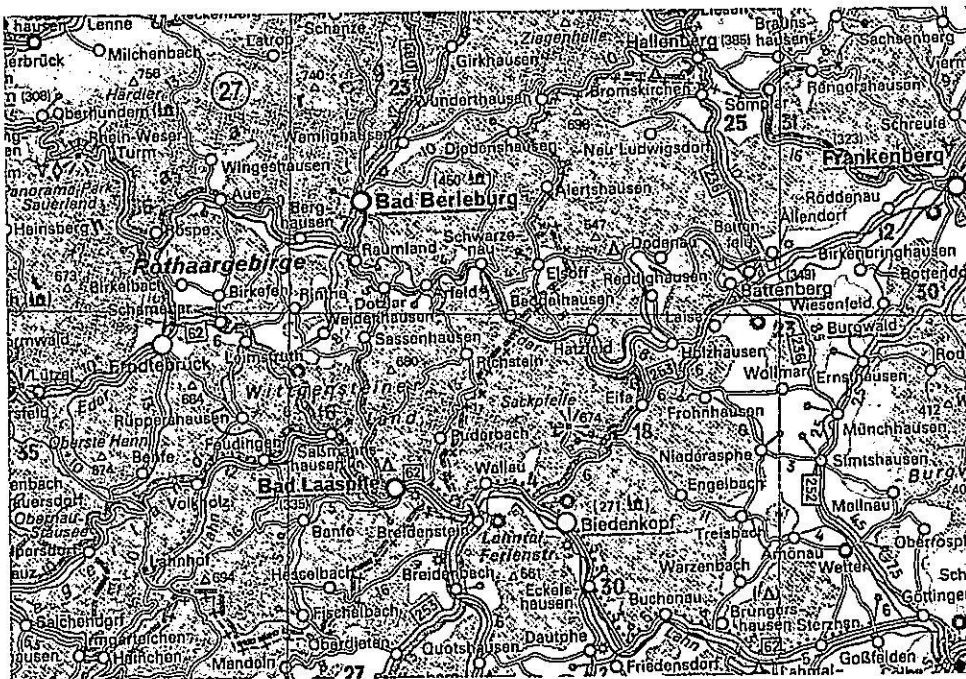


The Early Generations

A-1. **JOHANNES RÖSER** first appears as a resident of Schwarzenau, in county Wittgenstein, Germany, in 1713 (1). Schwarzenau (the modern spelling) is a village situated mainly on the north bank of the Eder River, about seventy miles due east of Cologne, in present day Westfalen. The countryside is quite hilly, reaching altitudes of about 2,000 feet, and is still heavily wooded. The Eder—a stream at Schwarzenau—flows generally easterly, then north to join the Fulda River at Kassel, soon becoming the Weser and emptying into the North Sea at Bremerhaven. About two miles downstream (and southeast) from Schwarzenau lies the ancient village of Beddelhausen, while due east equidistant, beyond an intervening hill, is the quaint village of Elsoff with an Evangelical-Reformed Church that has long served this area.



Map locating Schwarzenau, four miles southeasterly from Bad Berleburg (P-1)

Johannes Röser also appears at Schwarzenau in an undated list (2), possibly for the above year, covering the designation of newly-built houses in County Wittgenstein. Many of the residents of this area were religious refugees who had recently settled there under the friendly protection of Count Henry Albert of Wittgenstein (3), who had built many of these houses. Johannes Röser may have been one of these refugees, who had come from various parts of Germany, France, Holland and Switzerland. But it must be noted that the Elsoff church records indicate that the Röser surname had flourished in nearby Beddelhausen since at least 1621 (4). Unfortunately, the fragmentary records of the Elsoff church do not reveal a connection between our Johannes and the Beddelhausen Rösers (whose surnames usually appear with a double S), which families commonly included a son named Johannes. A German genealogist specializing in Wittgenstein records has no where found any evidence of a connection (5).

Unlike the name Johann, which commonly precedes a distinctive middle name and could be applied to every son in a family, Johannes is usually found as a name in its own right. Our Johannes had a son Johann Bernhard, but this son rarely ever used the non-distinctive Johann (John). Consequently, when the name

Johannes or Bernhard Röser appear in Wittgenstein records we can be reasonably safe in assuming that they refer to different individuals.

In late 1715 Johannes Röser offered to buy the house in Schwartzenu of one Merlat, an insolvent debtor. The house had been on the market for more than a year and the creditors were anxious to get their money. Johannes indicated a willingness to pay cash for the house if the Count “would graciously ... add some meadow and gardens of the princely domain for (Johannes’s) better subsistence.” With help from the creditors a deal was quickly struck, in which Johannes paid 175 Rhenish thalers for the house and the Count leased him three plots of land. These consisted of a stretch of meadow situated before the house—bordering on the foot-path to Beddelhausen (which would seem to place the house close to the Eder River), the so-called “Graffen” garden, and the sloping ground between this garden and the house. The agreement was signed by Henrich Albrecht Count of Sayn-Wittgenstein and Hohenstein on 2 January 1716 (6).

Another record in the Count’s archives, dated 4 June 1721 (2), indicates that Johannes still owned this house, in which “resides the surgeon Knor, who had decided to move within the near future.” Later, in a list of inhabitants of Schwartzenu in 1722, Johannes Röser is mentioned as “living with Blasius Daniel Mackinet”; in the same list there is a separate mention of Bernhard Röser—undoubtedly his son (1). Possibly during this period Johannes was renting his house and living with others in Schwarzenu.

In 1720 Count Henry died and his successors proved to be less tolerant of the various religious sects living in and near Schwarzenu. A period of repression and disillusionment set in, prompting many of the residents to leave the area and, in many cases, go to America (3). It is known that Blasius Daniel Mackinet emigrated to Pennsylvania about 1724 and settled in Germantown. About 1753 Mackinet married the widow Catharina Juliana (Rubenkam) Colladay, who had emigrated to Philadelphia in 1726 from Berleburg, four miles northwest of Schwarzenu. Catharina Juliana’s daughter, Catharina Colladay, was to become in 1763 the second wife of Baltes Reser, grandson of Johannes (7, 8). The surgeon Knor, or perhaps his children, may also have gone to Germantown, Pa., since in 1773 Anna Elizabeth Reser of Germantown, widow of Johannes Röser’s son Bernhard, named her “trusty friends” Jacob Engle and Jacob Knorr to be the executors of her will and the trustees of her real estate.

By 1725 Johannes Röser also had decided to go to America, and he petitioned the Count for permission to sell his property and to leave the country. A record dated Wittgenstein, 8 January 1726, and signed by Count Augustus of Wittgenstein and Berleburg (9), notes that “Since Johannes Röser of Schwartzenu wants to leave the land and to emigrate to the island of Pennsylvania, and has settled everything with Us[he] made the petition to allow him the selling of his property at Schwartzenu; and by special grace we gave the respective permit ...” His son Johann Bernhard had similarly petitioned the Count on 14 March 1725 to sell his house and bakery in Schwartzenu. In a list of Schwartzenu residents it is noted that “Johannes Röser emigrated to America with his son Bernhard in 1726” (1).

Although there are many extant lists of passengers aboard the ships that came to Philadelphia in the 1700s, these lists do not appear regularly until 1727 (10), when the flood of German immigrants prompted the colonial authorities to enact laws to facilitate the control and permanent settlement of these non-British people. Some earlier lists exist, but our Rösers do not appear in them. A possible clue to the Röser’s arrival appears in a superb genealogical account of the Rübenkam Family of Hesse: “Margaretha Catharina (Sartorius) Rübenkam remained in Berleburg with her children for well over a year after her husband’s death [in 1725]. Then in the fall of 1726 with the children [including Catharina Juliana] she joined a group of Wittgenstein emigrants going to Rotterdam, whence they sailed for England and finally for America. They landed in Philadelphia 2 December 1726” (8). The first appearance of the Röser family in America is in a deed dated 27 January 1726/7 (1727 by modern dating), by which Bernhard Reser, baker of Germantown, acquired a sizeable tract of

land in the eastern part of that town. The closeness of the timing, and the subsequent alliance with the Rübenkam/Colladay family, make it seem highly likely that the Röser family also was in this party of Wittgenstein emigrants.

To date no vital records have been found in Germany for Johannes Röser. He was born perhaps 1660; his son Johann Bernhard was born perhaps 1690. No record has been found anywhere of Johannes's wife or of any children other than Bernhard, suggesting the possibility that Johannes was early a widower and may not have remarried. However, it is also possible that, in the turmoil of the times, other sons may have settled elsewhere. If we have estimated his birth date correctly, Johannes was close to—if not more than—65 years old when he came to America. He does not appear in the Pennsylvania naturalization records, suggesting he chose not to afford himself of the benefits of such an act—which included the ability to own real estate. The lack of land records for him in Germantown suggests that he may have given his assets to his son Bernhard in return for a lifetime maintenance. This would also explain the availability of funds which early enabled Bernhard to make substantial land acquisitions in the Germantown area.

The latest record so far found of Johannes Röser's activities in America is his signature on a draft plan (actually a resurvey) of the Lower Germantown Burial Ground, dated 4 February 1744/5. His signature, as John Reser Senr., appears first in a list of 14 witnesses to the survey. His signature is immediately followed by that of his son, Bernard Reser; further down in the list is the signature of his grandson, Baltes Reser (11). Possibly John used "Senr." in consideration of his grandson John, who was already in his teens.

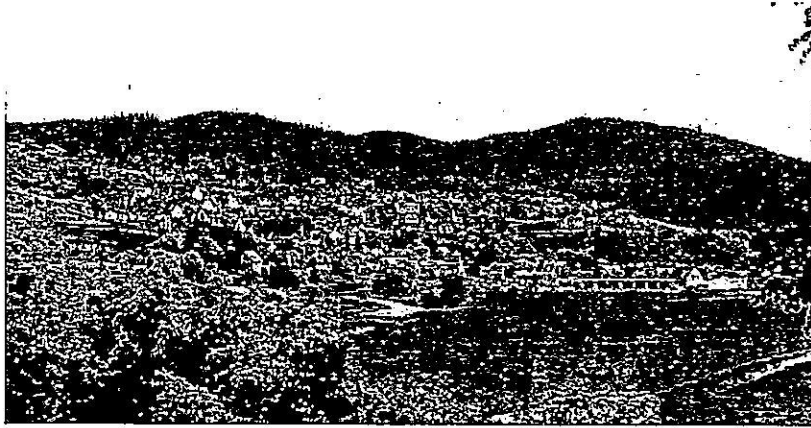
The journal of Christopher Sower (12), minister of the Germantown Church of the (Baptist) Brethren, contains a record of the death of a Johannes Roszer on 26 August 1748. Christopher Sower was the son of Christopher Sower/Saur, famed printer and publisher of the first German-language newspaper (1739) and Bible (1743) in America. Both were born in Laasphe, Wittgenstein, about seven miles south of Schwarzenau; they emigrated to America in 1724 with a group of Schwarzenau Dunkers (as these Baptists were called), settling briefly in Germantown before moving to Lancaster County, Pa. They returned to Germantown in 1731, where Christopher Sower, Sr., erected a large house on Germantown Avenue less than a quarter mile northwest of the Reser property. In a large building behind this house the elder Sower conducted his historic printing activities. Although there is no indication that the Resers were ever affiliated with the German Baptist Brethren, it is likely that the Sowers knew the Rösers in Germany before coming to Germantown. They evidently were close friends in Germantown, as well as being neighbors, for in 1773 Christopher, Jr., was one of the witnesses to the will of Johann Bernhard Reser's widow. There is little doubt in the mind of this writer that Christopher Sower's 1748 reference is to the death of his friend and our ancestor, Johannes Reser. It is likely that Johannes was in his late-eighties when he died.

It is not known where Johannes Reser passed away, but it was probably either in his son's house in Milestown or his grandson Baltes's house in Germantown. His burial place is not mentioned, but it almost certainly was in the Germantown Lower Burial Ground. This tract, although previously reserved for a community burial ground, had erroneously been included in his son Johann Bernhard Reser's first purchase of Germantown land in early 1727. The next year, in recognition of this error, Bernhard signed a quit claim deed to this tract, "Excepting and Reserving unto the sd Bernhard Reser & his heirs forever the liberty & privilege of burying his and their dead on the sd half an acre of land hereby released" (13).

Only known child (RÖSER), birthplace unknown:

+ 1. Johann Bernhard (A-2), b. perhaps 1690, d. mid-June 1761, m. abt. 1719 Anna Elisabeth —.

Views from Schwarzenau and Elsoff, Germany
(Photographs by Edward J. Raser, 11 June 1972)



The quaint village of Schwarzenau, largely located on a hillside overlooking the Eder River valley.



The Evangelical-Reformed Church in Elsoff, two miles east of Schwarzenau, where Baltes Röser was baptized in 1720.



A typical 18th century house close to the Eder River in Schwarzenau; this one said to contain bakery ovens.

A-2. **JOHANN BERNHARD RÖSER** is the only child of Johannes Röser (A-1) so far discovered. His first appearance is in the Elsoff, county Wittgenstein, Germany, church records when, in November 1720, his son Johann Balthasar Röser was baptized in the Elsoff Evangelical-Reformed Church. Assuming that Johann Balthasar was Bernhard's first child (we find no evidence otherwise), Bernhard would have been married about 1719, and born about 1690. So it is likely that Bernhard was residing as a young man with his father Johannes when the family first appeared in Schwarzenau in 1713. Bernhard may have continued to live with his father for a while after his marriage, but in 1722 both of them are mentioned in Wittgenstein Archives records (1) in a way suggesting that Bernhard may have been a separate house owner at that time.

Bernard Röser appears in the church records of nearby Berleburg in 1724 as a sponsor at the baptism of a child of H. Hesse, and again in 1725 as a sponsor at the baptism of a child of M. Gmelin, a baker. In 1724 he appears in the Elsoff church records as a sponsor at the baptism of a child of J. Greber, and again in the same year as a sponsor at the baptism of — Pfeiffer. His connection, or his wife's, with any of these families has yet to be explored. (2)

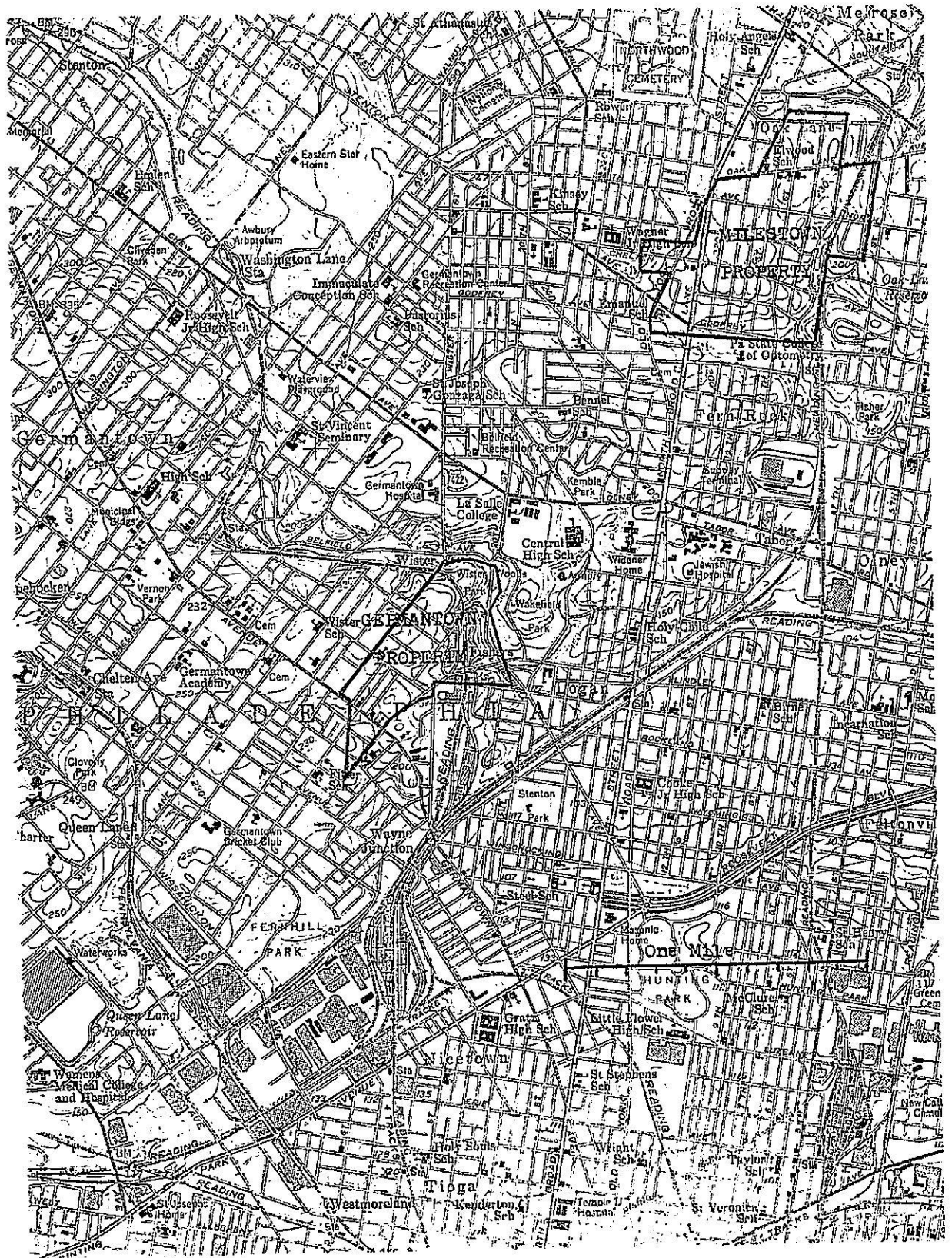
As noted in the account of his father, a period of religious repression and turmoil had developed in Wittgenstein after the death of Count Henry in 1720. By 1725 deteriorating economic conditions had caught up to Johann Bernhard Röser. In a petition to the Count, dated 14 March 1725, he declared that "at these times, when many people are wanting to emigrate from this country, and since in these hard times, when there is only small or no profit at all with baking, I am forced to sell my baker house standing at the bridge in Schwarzenau." He therefore asked the Count for approval of the house sale, admitting that he had already received 115 Reichsthalers for it from the grocer Michael Schultze, on the supposition that the Count would consent to the sale (3). We do not find records of the count's response, but we can surmise that the count did consent, and that Bernhard soon after moved himself and his family into his father's house, where they jointly began planning for their emigration to America.

Bernhard Röser had married, possibly about 1719, to **ANNA ELISABETH** —. She likely was of a Schwarzenau-area family, and probably was born about 1695, but her surname has yet to be discovered. The Rösers had three children born in Schwarzenau, and were baptized, per the Elsoff church records, as Johann Balthasar on 27 November 1720; Henrich Christian on 20 August 1722; and Sophie Margarete Christine on 23 October 1724 (2). At the time of the family's emigration in the fall of 1726, father Johannes Röser was perhaps 65 years old, son Bernhard about 35, Bernhard's wife probably somewhat younger, and their children approximately six, four and two years old.

Since it was typical in those days, for reasons of personal safety and psychological support, to make such a hazardous journey with a group of similar-minded friends, it is likely that the Rösers joined a group of Wittgenstein refugees known to have left that fall for Rotterdam and England, finally arriving in Philadelphia on 2 December 1726 (4). Many of the group then probably took up temporary winter residence in Germantown, possibly with earlier Wittgenstein emigrants, until they could establish themselves in this new country.

With whom the Röser family first stayed has not been discovered, but the stay apparently did not last long. Bernhard and his father either had money from the sale of their two Schwarzenau houses, or had good credit (probably both), for Bernhard soon was able to assemble a substantial acreage in the southeasterly portion of Germantown. On 27 January 1726/7, **BERNHARD RESER** (as his name is usually given in American records) purchased two tracts totaling 77 3/4 acres (5*); by mid-1729 he had acquired 18 1/2 more acres. The property had cost him a total of £280. In a list of Constable's Returns dated 1734, Bernhard Reser is shown, with 80 acres, as the fourth largest settled landowner in Germantown (6).

The tracts which Bernhard Reser purchased were contiguous, lying in the eastern sidelands of Germantown between the present-day Wister and Logan Streets. To the southwest, the land extended 1100 feet beyond the



Map locating Bernhard Reser's Germantown and Milestown properties in North Philadelphia (P-2)

The Early Generations

Main Street of Germantown (now Germantown Avenue), while to the northeast it extended almost 3000 feet to Wingohocking Creek. The easterly portion of the property extended almost entirely into Bristol Township, and included all of the present-day Wister Woods Park: See the map of Bernhard Reser's Germantown Lands, which delineates his tract purchases and subsequent sale of plots as he subdivided his holdings.

Two changes were made in the bounds of the property soon after Bernhard Reser acquired it. At the original settlement of Germantown a 40-foot strip of land had been left for a road between two of the tracts recently purchased by Bernhard (plot 3). Finding this strip to be "a convenient & very commodious place ... to build on," Bernhard offered to relocate the intended road to a parallel 40-foot strip of land at the northwest edge of his property. On 25 March 1727/8, he obtained a statement from many of his Germantown neighbors that they were agreeable to such an exchange (7). For some reason Bernhard did not act on the matter until five years later, when on 3 March 1734/5 he petitioned the Court of Quarter Sessions to establish the new road. The Court responded favorably two weeks later. A contemporary map of this road-relocation activity shows houses on each corner at the Germantown Avenue end of the originally intended road. For many years the newly-established road (plot 1) was known as Resers Road; about 1779 it was referred to as Reyser's Lane (8). But after Bernhard Reser sold his Germantown lands to John Wister and moved to Milestown, the road was sometimes referred to as Dannehower's Mill Road, Haas Lane and Duys Lane, until it eventually acquired its present name of Wister Street.

The other change in the property was to correct an error in one of the deed descriptions. In 1693 Paul Wulff had deeded to the Germantown community a half-acre lot for use as a public burial ground. The lot was located at the north corner of Germantown Avenue and Logan Street; it was known for two centuries as the Lower Burial Ground before being renamed the Hood Cemetery (plot 14). Bernhard's 1727 deed was based on ancient boundaries, which erroneously included this half-acre lot. The following year the error was discovered, and in May 1728 Bernhard released his claim to the lot for the purpose originally intended, while still reserving to him and his heirs forever the right to bury their dead in this ground (9, 10*).

In order to protect his right to own land and to enjoy the other rights and privileges given to English subjects, Bernard Reser applied for naturalization to the Provincial Assembly, and on 16 January 1729/30, along with John Neagley and John Wistre [*sic*], also of Philadelphia Co., he was favorably recommended by Lt. Gov. Patrick Gordon (11). By an Act of Assembly passed on 14 February 1729/30, Bernard Ressor, John Wister, and many other landowners, mostly of Lancaster County, Pa. (including Christopher Sowers), were officially naturalized (12).


For many years Bernhard lived on the westerly part of his Germantown land, in a stone house located on the east corner of Main Street and Resers Road. The house, of 40-foot frontage with about 30-foot depth, was of two stories and contained his bakery ovens. To the rear of the house, along Resers Road, he eventually constructed two barns and a stable. The land to the east of the house contained a five-acre orchard, while nearby was a framed cider-press house. Other buildings, including brick dwellings, eventually were constructed on his property for sale or rental purposes. Bernhard presents a picture of an industrious craftsman who was able to provide his family with comfortable means.

Bernhard resided on his Germantown property for almost twenty years, and there his older children grew to maturity. In April 1743 his son Baltes married Mary Luckens in a Quaker ceremony. The Luckens family were members of the Abington Monthly Meeting of Quakers, and Baltes had termed himself a Quaker at the time of his naturalization in 1740. While Bernhard's name appears in Abington Quaker records as witness to several marriages, the marriages all involved members of the Luckens family. Bernhard probably was liberal in his religious thinking; he does not appear to have been a member of any established church. His children Sophia and John both were married in Presbyterian churches.

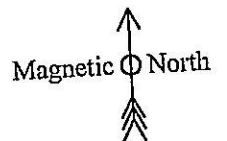
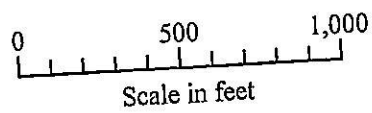
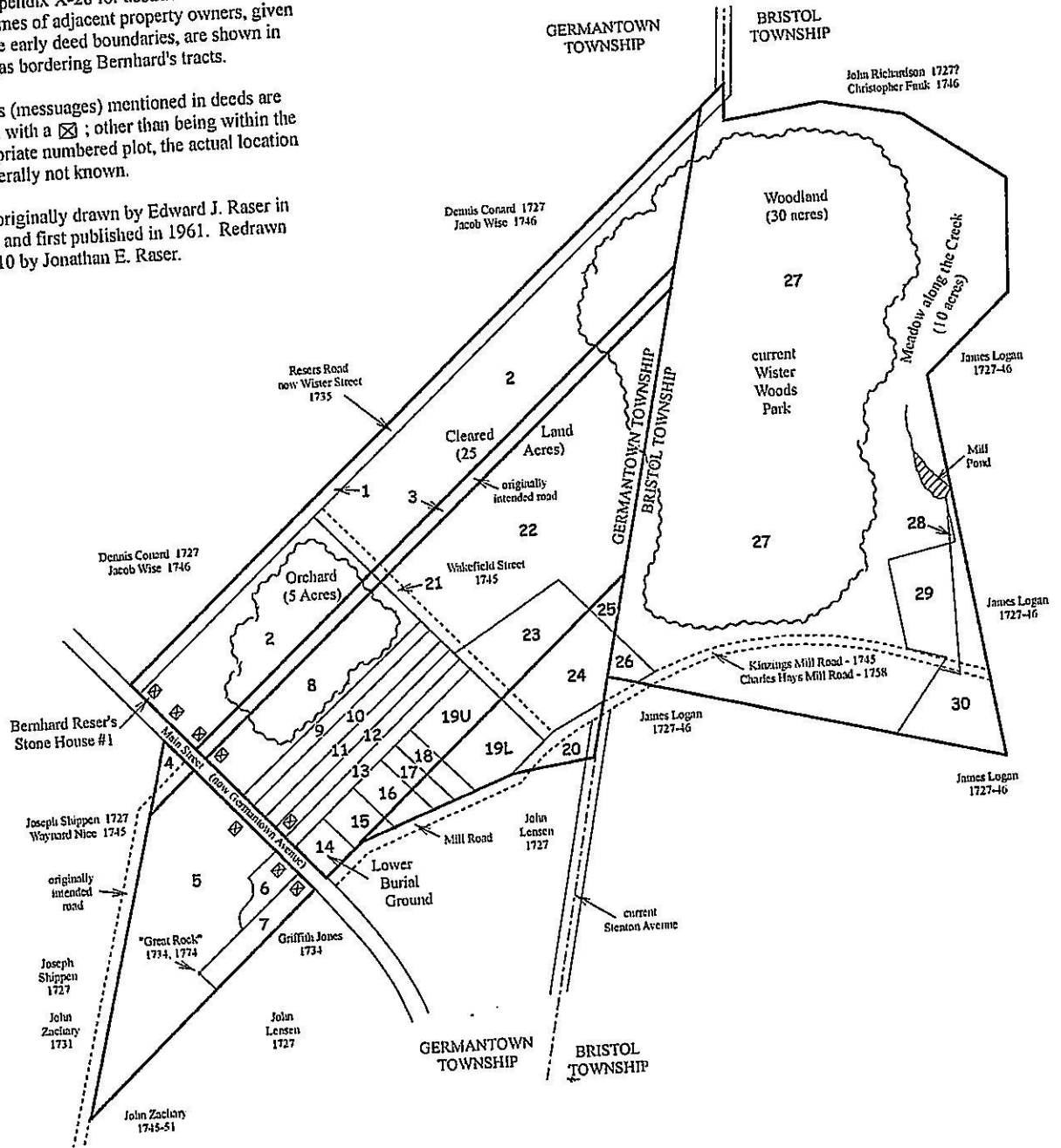
Our Raser Family

BERNHARD RESER'S GERMANTOWN LANDS 1727-1801

In general, purchase lines are shown in bold, while sales lines and colonial geography are lighter. Numbered plots are used to define the extent of land included in various deeds. See Appendix X-28 for abstracts of these deeds. The names of adjacent property owners, given in some early deed boundaries, are shown in the areas bordering Bernhard's tracts.

Houses (messuages) mentioned in deeds are shown with a ; other than being within the appropriate numbered plot, the actual location is generally not known.

Map originally drawn by Edward J. Raser in 1950, and first published in 1961. Redrawn in 2010 by Jonathan E. Raser.



The Early Generations

During his years in Germantown, Bernhard occasionally assisted his neighbors in legal matters. He served as executor of Johannes Legrom's 1737/8 will, and witnessed the wills of Abraham Ashman in 1742/3 (along with Blasius Daniel Mackinet) and of John Richardson in 1743. He supported the Germantown Lower Burial Ground by subscribing £2 for building a stone wall around the burial ground in 1738, and with his son Baltes signed the Rules and Regulations governing use of the burial ground which were adopted in 1751 (13).

Bernhard's Germantown property was developed steadily, and remained largely intact until 1745. Only three small tracts had been sold during the intervening years. In May 1734 he had sold to a friend an acre lot, containing a building and quarry, across Main Street from the Lower Burial Ground. The next year he sold three acres along Wingohocking Creek to Christian Kinzing. Kinzing was a miller, and on this land he built and operated a grist mill for many years. Much of the flour which Bernhard used in baking may have been ground in Kinzing's Mill. Another small lot, with a house, was sold to the widow of George Striker in 1739. Over the years it appears that Bernhard erected a number of buildings along Main Street for sale or rental purposes. By 1745 two brick tenements stood southeast and within 200 feet of his house, while other buildings were located on Main Street closer to the Lower Burial Ground.

During the winter of 1744–45 Bernhard Reser made plans to sell his Germantown lands and relocate about two miles northeasterly to property he had purchased in Bristol Township. This new location was on the east side of Old York Road, in an area known as Milestown. In March 1736 Bernhard had made a sizeable loan to John Lucan (Luckens), Jr., for which he received a mortgage on 42 acres of Lucan's unimproved land near Milestown. The loan went unsatisfied, and Bernhard soon acquired title to the property (14*). In March 1739 Bernhard bought three more acres on the north side of his Luckens tract, which extended his Old York Road frontage northward by 600 feet. Various Luckens family members owned considerable property nearby; among them was Matthias—brother of the above mentioned John Luckens—whose daughter Mary Luckens married Bernhard Reser's son Baltes in the spring of 1743.

Probably as a consequence of Bernhard's plan to subdivide and sell some of his Germantown property adjacent to the Lower Burial Ground, the boundaries of the cemetery were resurveyed in February 1744/5. The survey document was witnessed by John Reser, Senr. (A-1), Bernard and Baltes Reser, family members and friends (15*). By the spring of 1745 Bernhard had divided his Germantown Main Street and Mill Road (now Logan Street) frontage into lots. On 25 March 1745 six deeds were drawn up covering the sale, or rental with option to buy, of nine of these lots. Only one outright sale was accomplished, and while all the remaining options apparently were exercised eventually—the last two so far discovered were exercised almost 65 years later (16*)—they provided little in the way of cash for use in making further land purchases in Milestown.

Nevertheless, in late April 1745 Bernhard purchased from Daniel Toy a "messuage and [78-acre] plantation of land" a quarter-mile east of the Old York Road, which extended his Milestown holdings northward a half mile to present-day Oak Lane. The tract cost £350, and may have been financed in part by son Baltes Reser, who four months later bought his father's remaining land on the southwest side of Germantown Main Street. Bernhard appears to have moved temporarily to Milestown during the summer of 1745, probably to make preparations for a permanent move. During the winter he is again recorded as being of Germantown. However, beginning in March 1746 Bernhard usually is identified as being of Bristol Township, suggesting he had permanently relocated to Milestown. Bernhard still owned the bulk of his property on the northeast side of Germantown Main Street, but he moved quickly to dispose of it.

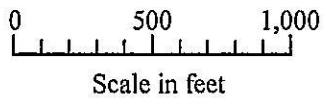
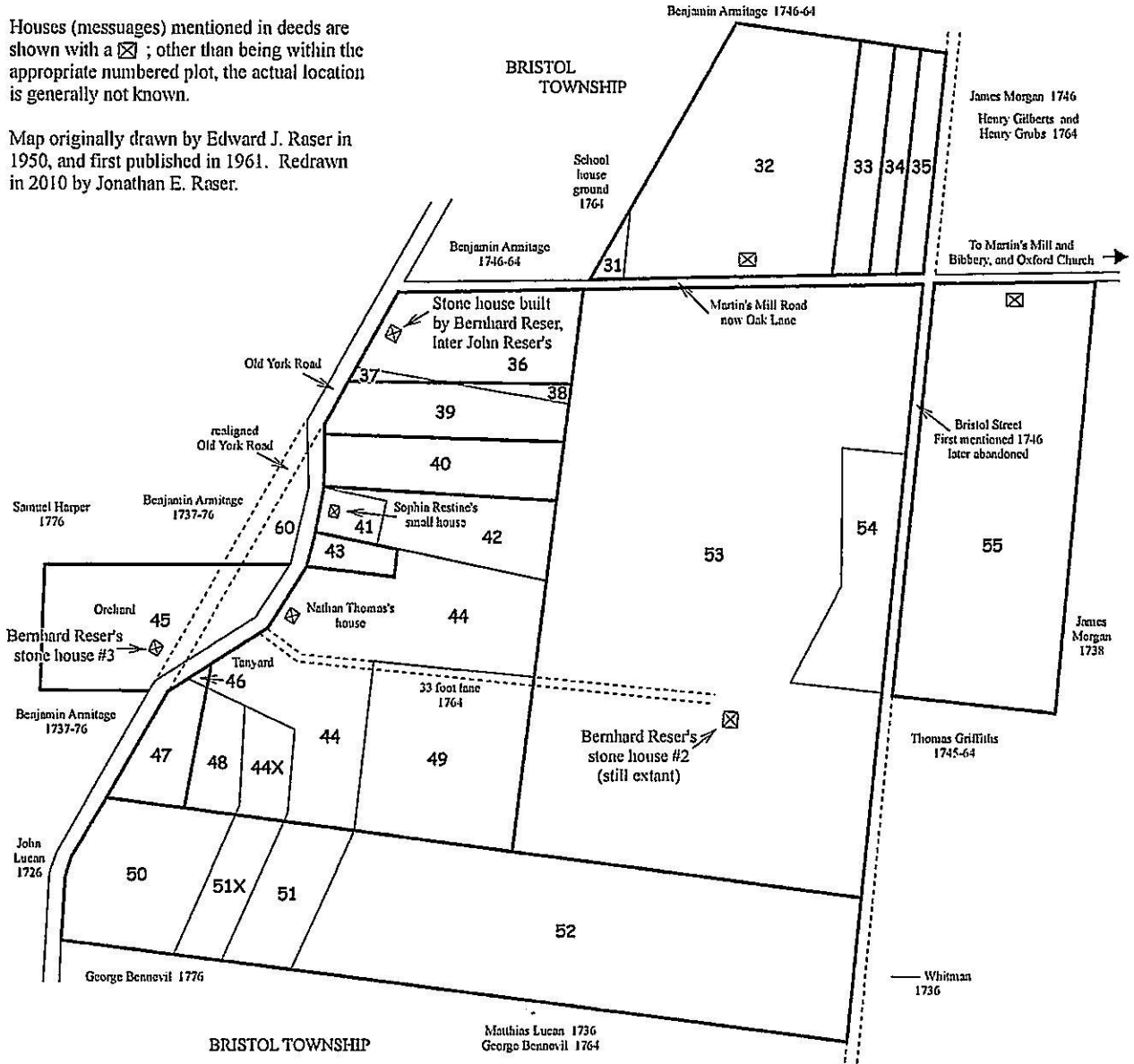
In both the *The Pennsylvania Journal* and *The Pennsylvania Gazette* of 26 June 1746, advertisements appeared in which Bernard Reiser offered for sale "his Place in the German Town, containing about 70 Acres, 30 of which is Woodland, about 26 cleared, 5 Acres Orchard and 10 Meadow ... with a large Stone Dwelling House, two brick Dwelling Houses, a Stone Barn with a Dwelling House in it, and a Frame Barn, a Stone Stable, and framed Cyder Press House, with a Press in it. For the Title and Terms of Sale, enquire of Balthas

BERNHARD RESER'S
MILESTOWN LANDS
1736-1784

In general, purchase lines are shown in bold, while sales lines and colonial geography are lighter. Numbered plots are used to define the extent of land included in various deeds. See Appendix X-28 for abstracts of these deeds. The names of adjacent property owners, given in some early deed boundaries, are shown in the areas bordering Bernhard's tracts.

Houses (messuages) mentioned in deeds are shown with a ☒; other than being within the appropriate numbered plot, the actual location is generally not known.

Map originally drawn by Edward J. Raser in 1950, and first published in 1961. Redrawn in 2010 by Jonathan E. Raser.



The Early Generations

COMPARABLE AREA OF MILESTOWN, 1876

The City Atlas of 1876 shows the Milestown/Oak Lane area overlaid by the proposed modern street grid, and with many of the ancient property lines still extant. The eventual extension of Broad Street into this immediate area resulted in the destruction of most of the colonial houses on the easterly side of Old York Road—then known as the Cheltenham or Willow Grove Turnpike. Bernhard Reser's former country house is shown at the proposed intersection of Chelton Avenue and Eleventh Street. When later constructed as Chelton Avenue, the street was deflected somewhat more southerly east of 13th Street so that this house survived. (P-3)



Reiser, living on the Premises" (17). When the advertisements produced no results, Bernhard returned to his Germantown house, probably to better arrange a sale. He subdivided the entire property into lots, and on Monday, 20 October 1746, "being the Fair day at Germantown," he exposed the lots to sale at public auction. Of five lots on the northeast side of Germantown Main Street, he described the first as being of six perches [99 feet] width, and 53 perches [875 feet] depth, "whereon [his] dwelling house stands, which being of stone contains forty foot front, and about thirty foot deep, two stories high, besides two barns, both very large, ... with other out houses, and a good orchard; on the north westerly side is a 40 feet lane or street ..." (18). John Wister, a wealthy merchant in Philadelphia, was high bidder and purchased the entire offering for £1,150. Mr. Wister rapidly sold the developed portions of this land, but the woodland remained in the Wister family for over 150 years. This woodland was eventually acquired by the city of Philadelphia, becoming the present-day Wister Woods Park.

Mention often was made of Bernhard's Germantown house for decades after its sale. In May 1747, when the house was being rented by Engelbert Lock (a Moravian supporter), a Moravian Synod meeting was held here. A contemporary reporter said the meeting house "is a bakery with rooms enough to lodge all the deputies, and a fine hall for sessions, with two doors for entrance" (19). This leaves little doubt that Bernhard's bakery was a part of his house. In July 1749 Lock sold the house to John Theobald Ent, who used it as rental property. In August 1753 Ent unsuccessfully tried to sell the house, "the former residence of Bernhart Roser, baker" (20). In April 1758 Ent advertised a tavern for sale, "sign of the White Horse, formerly Bernhart Roszer's" (21). Finally, in August 1761, he sold the house to Adam Haas. The deed states the property was in Haas "actual possession," indicating Haas had been renting the building for some time. In all likelihood Haas was already operating the *White Horse Tavern* here in 1758; he is known to have traded under that name for three decades after he had bought what was Bernhard's original house. Bernhard's former house lot is described in the 1798 Federal Direct Tax (commonly known as the "Windowpane Tax") as containing a two-story stone dwelling 34 by 36 feet with 27 windows and 369 lights (panes), along with another two-story stone and frame dwelling 24 by 22 feet with 7 windows and 84 lights. (22)

In the spring of 1746 Bernhard moved from Germantown for the last time. By April 1747 he had purchased five more tracts in Milestown, bringing his holdings there to a total of 179 acres. Three houses were located on the property, which now represented an investment of £834. Facts suggest that he established the seat of his Milestown estate in the house in the southern part of the 78-acre rectangular plantation he had purchased from Daniel Toy in 1745 (plots 53, 54). A 1750 map of "Philadelphia and Parts Adjacent" shows a "Reazer" house approximately at this location (23). In 1747 he sold a 20-acre tract, bordering the west side of the plantation, to John Kraft Riestine, his son-in-law. Since the tract could have blocked his access to Old York Road, the deed contained the provision that Bernhard Reser and Elizabeth his wife retained the right and privilege of passage in and along a thirty-three foot road which continued from this house, westward through the 20-acre tract, to its "entrance into the Great road."

From August 1746 Bernhard is increasingly referred to as "yeoman," which suggests he likely had retired from baking and had begun to devote himself to developing his large estate. On 2 August 1746 Bernhard Reiser, yeoman, acquired the indentured service of Owen Kerigan, a servant who had just arrived from Ireland on the ship *George*. Kerigan's passage had been provided by one Nathaniel Ambler, and for a consideration of £16 paid to Ambler, Kerigan indented himself to Bernhard for six years of service (24). The nature of Kerigan's intended service was not specified, suggesting it was for general labor. Ever since March, Bernhard had been purchasing more land on the east side of Old York Road; by the end of November 1746 he had solidified his York Road frontage to over 3,000 feet, and extended his Martin's Mill Road (later renamed Oak Lane) frontage to over 2,000 feet. It seems highly likely that Bernhard's intent was to use Kerigan to help him develop this large tract. The use of indentured laborers also was in the plans of other family members at this time, for on that same day Bernhard's son Baltus, as well as son-in-law John Restine, each made arrangements with indentured servants to work for them and be taught the trade of a tanner.

The Early Generations

In early 1747 Bernhard completed the expansion of his Milestown estate by purchasing a 26 1/2 acre tract, with a house (plot 55), bordering the east side of his property. Possibly he had made this purchase as an investment opportunity, for two years later he sold the tract, with five more acres, to Jacob Mock. The 1750 map of the area shows the Mock residence somewhat northeast of the Reazer house.

John Kraft Restine established a tanyard on the 20-acre tract (plots 44, 46, 51) which he had purchased from Bernhard in 1747. For some undiscovered reason, in September 1754 Bernhard reacquired by sheriff's sale his son-in-law's plantation and tannery, but at a substantial financial loss (25). He immediately tried to sell or lease the property (26), but apparently found no one to meet his terms, for in December he advertised that he now "conducts the tannery formerly operated by his son-in-law" (27). It is likely that the business was increasingly run by his neighbor, Nathan Thomas, tanner, for in May 1760 Bernhard sold him the Restine tract, which, according to the deed, already was "in [Thomas's] actual possession" (28).

By the late 1750s Bernhard Reser was about 70 years old and planning to fully retire. He had his eyes on a house on an 8 1/2 acre lot fronting on the west side of Old York Road—opposite the former Restine tract—that was owned by his friend and neighbor, William Wilson (plot 45). Wilson had bought this property in 1743 from Benjamin Armitage; when Wilson tried unsuccessfully to sell it in 1753 the advertisement stated that about "half of said land is meadow and orchard, and the other half is woodland, well timber[ed]; there [is] a good stone house, shop and kitchen thereon under one roof, and a constant stream of water runs thro' the lot and near the house" (29). Wilson was not only interested in selling this house and lot, but also in buying Bernhard's present house and its extensive surrounding lands lying east of the lots fronting on Old York Road. In January 1760 Bernhard bought Wilson's lot for £250 and soon moved with his wife into the house (30). Bernhard had agreed to sell his estate to Wilson, but possibly Wilson needed time to secure the necessary funds, for the sale was not finalized until several years later.

Bernhard did not live in his new residence for long, as in mid-June 1761 he passed away. The preceding October he had written his Last Will and Testament, noting that he was then "indisposed in Body but of perfect ... understanding ..." (31*). In the will he gave his widow the use of the house "wherein I now dwell," as well as any income that could be derived from its lot and a dozen more acres of land and meadow lying southeast of the house (plots 47, 48, 50). He also willed that a tract at the southeast corner of Oak Lane and Old York Road be deeded to his son John (plots 36, 38). John Reser (J-1) actually had been settled on this land for some years, and in the stone house built there earlier by his father he operated the *King of Prussia* tavern. Bernhard willed that the remainder of his land be sold and the proceeds divided equally among his wife and five children, except for Sophia Restine, whose share was to be reduced by £250—the amount Bernhard had lost years before by pledging security for her husband John.

In April 1764 Bernhard Reser's executors sold 152 acres of Bernhard's Milestown plantation, containing two houses, to William Wilson—being the land Bernhard had agreed before his death to sell to Wilson (32). Wilson held the property until his own death in 1776, immediately after which his executors advertised it for sale, stating that it contained "a large stone dwelling house and stone kitchen joining it," as well as "a log tenement that rents for Six Pounds a year" (33). The property was purchased by Richard Mason, a Philadelphia merchant, who in 1783 sold the bulk of the property, including the stone house, to John Nice (34). The house with 88 acres of land, subsequently known as Buttonwood Valley Farm, long remained in the Nice family.

In September 1883 the Nice family hosted a centennial celebration on the "old Nice homestead" property, attended by 266 direct descendants of John Nice. The guests were photographed in front of the old house, and a long article shortly appeared—with a sketch of the house—in an area newspaper (35). The article noted that an addition had been made to the kitchen in 1812, but otherwise "Many things about it are still intact, notably the large meat smoking room in the rear end of the parlor, [and] the large fireplaces about which so many

Bernhard Reser's Milestown Stone House



Buttonwood Valley Farm Configuration, about 1883

Bernhard Reser's country house, purchased in 1745, was sold out of the family in 1764. In 1783 the property was acquired by John Nice; it remained in the Nice family a century later when 266 direct descendants gathered for a family reunion in September 1883 and were photographed in front of the house. The above photo appears to have been taken about the same time. A newspaper account of the reunion noted that it was known that an addition had been made to the kitchen (at the right end of the house) in 1812, but otherwise many things about the house were still intact. The Nice family sold the property in 1884. (P-4)



Transformed Configuration, January 1995

Probably before the end of the century, the house underwent a radical transformation. As indicated in the above similar-aspect photograph, among various alterations, the house was greatly enlarged at both ends, dormer windows were added to the third floor, the central chimney was capped, and the end chimneys were heightened. (P-5)

Views of Bernhard Reser's Transformed Stone House
(Photographs by Edward J. Raser, January 1995)



View of left entrance door area



View of right entrance door area



View of front of house from the northeast

winter evenings were spent ...” About 1900, Mrs. Anne deBenneville Mears, an Old York Road historian, noted in her manuscript material that the former Nice house was “still standing, but transformed” (36). To this day the remodeled house remains at 1035 Chelton Avenue, barely recognizable from the outside, but with a number of inside rooms exhibiting their ancient origins.

Anna Elizabeth, Bernhard’s widow, probably remained in the family house on York Road for some years. Her children Sophia Restine and John Reser lived nearby, but about 1770 John moved his tavern business to downtown Philadelphia. By this time Anna Elizabeth was getting on in years. Possibly because of her age, a strained relationship with daughter Sophia Restine, or the desire of her children Baltes Reser and Magdalen Hogermoed to have her live near them in Germantown, in June 1773 she purchased from Magdalen and her husband a stone house with about three acres of land on the southwest side of Germantown Avenue—about 125 feet southeast of present-day Johnson Street. Anna Elizabeth probably remained in her newly-acquired Germantown house until her death about three years later.

Tax records indicate that Anna Elizabeth, after her return to Germantown, rented her Milestown property to neighbors Nathan Thomas and Joseph North, both of whom were tanners (37). But in March 1775, widow Reser having authorized sale of the property by auction, it was advertized as containing a stone dwelling house, “a good stone barn, about 39 feet by 20, with convenient stabling under the same, a stone spring-house and good bearing orchard,” as well as substantial meadow and woodland (38). Joseph Spenser acquired the property (plots 45, 47, 48, 50) for £620, seemingly a good amount, but the Revolutionary War was underway and inflation was already beginning to show its effects.

On or about 23 February 1776 Anna Elizabeth Reser passed away. She was buried two days later in the Lower Burial Ground in Germantown (39). While no record has been found of the burial place of husband Bernhard, there is little doubt that his remains lie with Anna Elizabeth in the Lower Burial Ground—in land which he had reserved in 1728 for burial use by family members.

In October 1773 Anna Elizabeth had written her will (40*), in which she gave £100 to be divided between the two sons of her deceased daughter Elizabeth Endt when they came of age. She also gave an annuity to Catherine Adams Hogermoed, the widowed mother of her son-in-law, and placed her own house and lot in Germantown in trust with her executors, they to use the rental income to support her daughter Magdalen Adams (A-5) during her lifetime and Magdalen’s children until they reached maturity. Ultimately, the remainders of her estate were to go to Magdalen’s descendants.

The remainder of John Bernhard and Anna Elizabeth Reser’s Germantown real estate, much of which was at rent, was sold from time to time over the years. The ultimate disposition of some of the property has yet to be discovered. Widow Elizabeth Reser’s house and lot in Germantown remained in trust for her Adams grandchildren for many decades. Finally, in 1833, a court-administered settlement enabled her granddaughter Elizabeth (Adams) Smith and husband to buy out the interests of the other shareholders in this property (41).

- Children (RESER), the first three born in Schwarzenau, Germany (2), the remainder in Germantown, Pa.:
- + 1. Johann Balthasar (A-3), bpt. 27 Nov. 1720, d. Dec. 1773, m. (1) 6 Apr. 1743 Mary Luckens, m. (2) 30 Jan. 1764 Catharine Colladay.
 - 2. Henrich Christian, bpt. 26 Aug. 1722, his sponsor was Henrich Christian Sander, rentmeister [bursar] at Wittgenstein (2). No further record, possibly died young.
 - + 3. Sophie Margarete Christine (A-4), bpt. 23 Oct. 1724, d. Apr. 1785, m. 26 Jan 1745 John Kraft Riehstein/Ristine.
 - + 4. John (J-1), b. abt. 1728–35, d. Aug. 1793, m. (1) by 1757 Hannah Armitage, m. (2) 10 Apr. 1782 Rebecca (Braden) Charlesworth.
 - + 5. Magdalene (A-5), b. abt. 1730–40, living in 1817, m. betw. 1760–69 Mathias Adams Hogermoed.
 - + 6. Elizabeth (A-6), b. abt. 1730–40, d. abt. 1765/6, m. 13 May 1762 Theobald Ent.

A-3. **JOHN BALTHASAR** ("Baltes") **RESER** is the eldest known child of John Bernhard Reser (A-2) and Anna Elisabeth——. His name first appears in the records of the Evangelical Reformed Church of Elsoff, county Wittgenstein, Germany, when as Johann Balthasar Röser he was baptized on 27 November 1720. His sponsor at the baptism was Valentin Bätzel, court lay tax assessor from nearby Dotzlar (1). He had been born in Schwarzenau, where the Rösers had resided at least since 1713. Young Baltes celebrated his sixth birthday while emigrating with his parents to America in late 1726.

Between 1727 and 1729 his father, John Bernhard, acquired about 96 acres at the southeast end of Germantown, PA. Here Baltes Reser grew up in his parent's large stone house (long since demolished) on the northeast corner of present-day Germantown Avenue and Wister Street. Here his father established and operated a bakery until about 1746, when he removed to the Milestown area of northern Philadelphia.

A Baltazar Resser, Junior, appears in a list of residents of Philadelphia County who were naturalized by an Act of Assembly (Pennsylvania Provincial Assembly) passed on 19 May 1739 (2). A Baltes Rezer also appears in a list of those naturalized by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court during late September 1740; he was among those identified as "Quakers, or such who conscientiously scruple to take an Oath ..." (3). I am inclined to believe that these actions both refer to our Baltes Reser. The significance of the "Junior" is not known, but it is possible that Johannes Reser, Baltes's grandfather (who was still living), had Balthasar as a middle name, even though it never appears in the limited number of records we have of him. It is also conceivable that the first record actually reads "Senior" (the early handwriting is often extremely difficult to read), in which case the two records could actually be of grandfather and grandson.

In August 1745 Bernhard Reser sold all of his remaining Germantown land on the southwest side of Germantown Main Street (plots 5X, 61–63) to his son Baltes, who had previously set up a tannery business on the property (4*). Possibly Baltes had learned the trade from John Legrom, currier and tanner, who had operated a business on the property adjoining Baltes's new tract since 1734, when Bernhard had sold Legrom an acre lot (plot 7). Bernhard and Legrom evidently were close friends (Bernhard was the executor of Legrom's 1737/8 will), and Legrom may have agreed to teach Baltes the tanner's trade. By this 1745 purchase Baltes acquired a somewhat over seven-acre tract with a house and gardens, other buildings and orchards, as well as the tanyard.

To help him in his trade, in mid-August 1746 Baltel [*sic*] Roser paid one Nathaniel Ambler £15.15 for five years of indentured service of Thomas Duke, who had just been imported by Ambler from Ireland on the ship *George*. Baltes's obligation was to teach Duke the trade of a tanner and give him the customary dues at the expiration of his service (5). Baltes probably used help during most of his years in the tannery business—in 1769 he was taxed on three servants, and in 1772 on two negroes (6).

In May 1747 Baltes extended his original homelot to the southwest by the purchase of a 14-plus acre tract from William Nice (plot 66). In mid-November 1751 John Zachary, also a tanner, bought from one William Shippen the twelve-acre tract (plots 64, 65) which bordered the southeast side of the tract that Baltes had earlier purchase from Nice. Within the following week, Baltes and Zachary had worked out an exchange of lots which improved Baltes's access from his homelot to the property he had acquired from Nice.

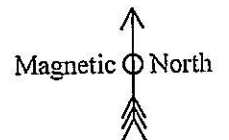
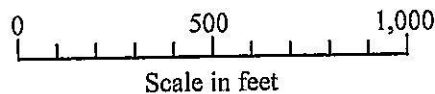
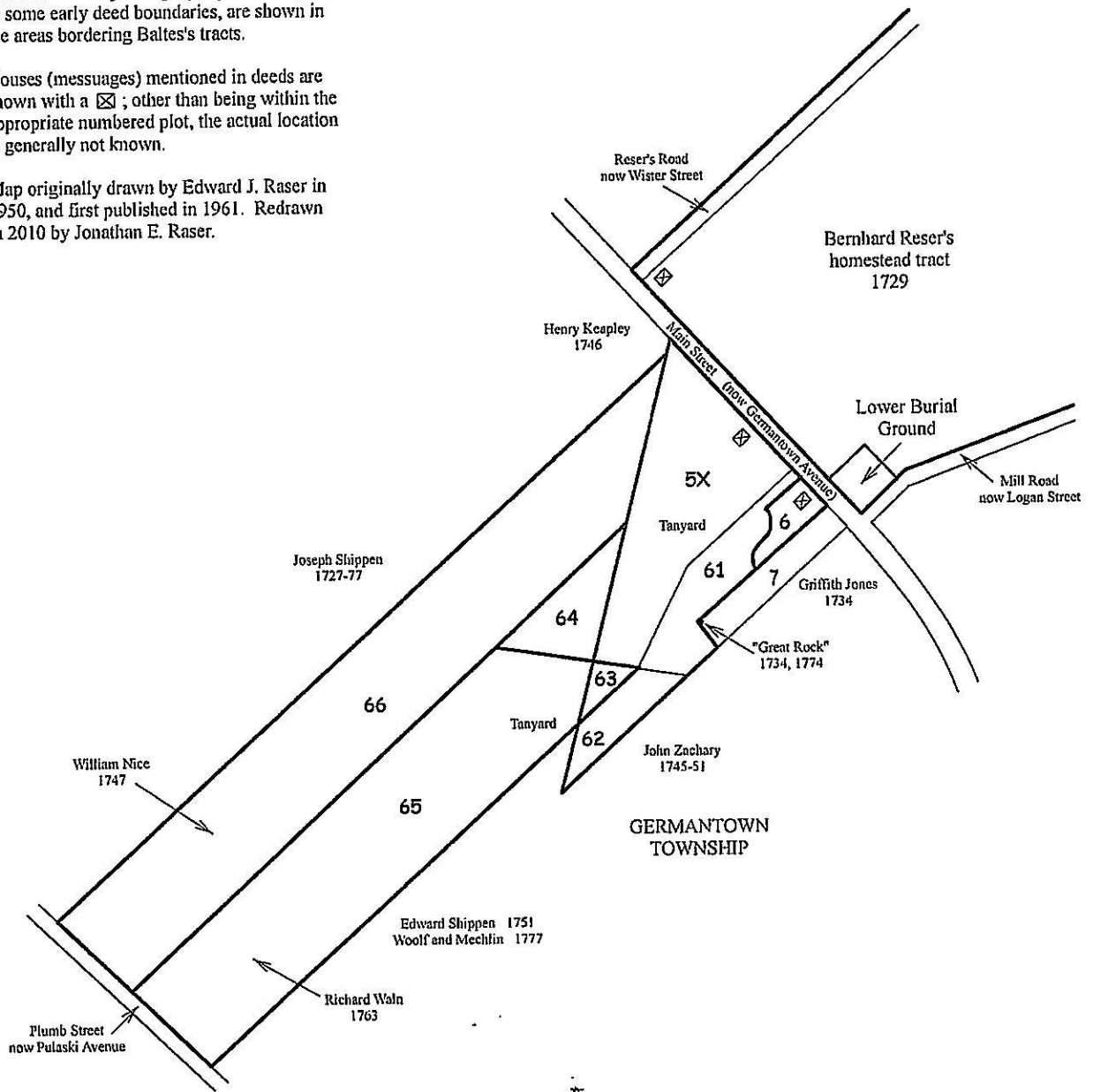
Baltes Reser and John Zachary appear to have been close friends, and may even have worked together in a loose tannery partnership. In addition to having adjoining property, in November 1752 they jointly bought a ten-plus acre tract in the Northern Liberties of Philadelphia. But in April 1754 John Zachary (also known as Johannes Zacharias) died. In his will he named his wife Catharine, brother-in-law Jacob Rupp, and "my trusty Friend and Neighbour Baltes Reser" as his executors (7). A July newspaper notice of Zachary's decease stated that his widow was continuing to operate his tannery business (8). She probably was being assisted by Daniel Ent, a tanner who lived on adjoining property, as in August Daniel Ent married the widow Zachary.

BALTES RESER'S
GERMANTOWN LANDS
1745-1777

In general, purchase lines are shown in bold, while sales lines and colonial geography are lighter. Numbered plots are used to define the extent of land included in various deeds. See Appendix X-29 for abstracts of these deeds. The names of adjacent property owners, given in some early deed boundaries, are shown in the areas bordering Baltes's tracts.

Houses (messuages) mentioned in deeds are shown with a ☒; other than being within the appropriate numbered plot, the actual location is generally not known.

Map originally drawn by Edward J. Raser in 1950, and first published in 1961. Redrawn in 2010 by Jonathan E. Raser.



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In December 1762 John Zachary's executors sold most of his Shippen-tract purchase to Richard Waln. The next month Baltes sold his half interest in the Northern Liberties tract that he owned jointly with Zachary, and in February 1763 used the proceeds to buy back the ten-plus acres that Waln had purchased two months earlier from Zachary's executors (plots 63, 65). As a result of this consolidation, Baltes's property now extended from Germantown Avenue southwest to Plumb Street (present-day Pulaski Avenue) in a tract that was approximately 600-foot wide and 2400-foot long. Baltes continued as a master tanner on this tract, located on the southwest side of Germantown Avenue between the present-day Reger and Logan Streets, during the rest of his life.

Baltes Reser was active in civic affairs—his name appears from time-to-time in Germantown histories. In February 1744/5, as Balltes Reser, he was one of the witnesses to a resurvey of the Lower Burial Ground (9). In 1755, when the residents of Germantown united to provide a potters field, Baltes Reser acted as trustee on behalf of the community when he purchased the land from the county sheriff (10*). The wording of this deed led to considerable uncertainty in later years as to who actually owned the ground (11).

In 1759 Baltes Reser was one of seven persons who founded the Germantown Union School, later known as Germantown Academy. He was a member of the group that purchased land for the school on 1 January 1761 (12); he subsequently was a member of the building committee, and a manager of the school for several years (13, 14*). Baltes Reser also was one of the founders of the Fort St. David's Fishing Company (an exclusive social club), at the Falls of the Schuylkill, in 1763 (14). He probably was involved in the founding of the Lower Ward Fire Company in 1764; in 1768 he was their Inspector of the Fire (15). At least for the year 1764, he was treasurer of the Germantown Library Company, which was the first library formed in Pennsylvania (in 1754) among non-English-speaking settlers (16).

It is apparent that Baltes Reser was held in considerable trust by his Germantown neighbors. He was named as an executor in the wills of Godfryd Leibgeb, mason of Germantown, in 1747; John Zachary, tanner of Germantown, in 1754; Matthias Gmelin, glazier of Worcester Township, now in Montgomery County, in 1755; Wilhelm Hoffnan, blacksmith of Germantown, in 1757, and John Everhard, butcher of Germantown, in 1758. His name appears frequently as a witness to other wills, as appraiser of decedents' estates, and as witness to real estate transactions of neighbors and relatives. Some of these people are mentioned in Elsoff church records, and it is likely that one or more of them may have accompanied the Röser family to America in late 1726 (17*).

Baltes Reser indicated he had Quaker persuasions at the time of his naturalization in 1740. He subsequently was mentioned in the records of the Abington Monthly Meeting of Friends. At the meeting of 28th, 1 mo. 1743 it was noted that Baltes and **MARY LUCKENS** had declared their intentions to marry at the two previous meetings, and that they were now free to proceed. A certificate dated 6th, 2 mo. (April) 1743 shows they were married that date in a Quaker ceremony in Germantown. They signed their marriage certificate as Baltes Raser and Mary Raser; the 55 witnesses (who signed as follows) included Anne Lucken, Bernard Reser, John Reser, Sophia Roeser, Daniel Mackenet, John Reestine, John Zacharias and Christian Gmelin (18). It was subsequently recorded at the meeting of 25th, 4 mo. 1744 that "Baltas Reser & his wife, acknowledged, & Condemned their being too early & indecently familiar before marriage, [their acknowledgment was] accepted" (19).

Mary Luckens was born about 1724/5, the daughter of Matthias and Ann (Johnson) Luckens. Matthias was the son of Jan Lucken who, along with twelve other families from Krefeld in Germany, emigrated in 1683 and became the *original settlers* of Germantown (20). During his lifetime Jan Lucken acquired extensive tracts of land—much of it located some distance from Germantown—and in 1721 had sold to his son Matthias 150 acres in the Milestown area. Matthias Lucken, in his will of 18, 9 mo. (November) 1741, left his daughter Mary, and her heirs and assigns, two other tracts of land he owned in Germantown (21). Mary became entitled

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the land upon her marriage to Baltas Reser in 1743. In 1746 and 1748, Mary and Baltas disposed of these properties, the larger tract having been at rent—with an option to buy—since mid-1745 (22).

Baltas Reser and his wife appear occasionally in the period 1746–59 in the Abington Monthly Meeting records, usually as witnesses to marriages of Luckens family members or their close relatives (23). On 3d, 10 mo. 1746, along with Baltas's father, they witnessed the marriage of Mary's widowed mother, Ann (Johnson) Lukins, to Thomas Nedrow, yeoman of Philadelphia City. Ann (Johnson) Lukins was the daughter of Dirk Jansen/Johnson, yeoman of Germantown. In his will of 1755, Dirk ordered his executors to place £200 at interest for the benefit of his daughter Ann and her husband Thomas Nedrow (24). After Ann's decease, if Nedrow survived her (which he did), half the amount was to be divided equally among Dirk's grandchildren, namely Dirk Lukens, Daniel Luckens, Mary Reser, Hannah Spencer & Rebecca Lukens ... The other £100 was to remain at interest for Nedrow's benefit, and after his death, was to be divided equally among the grandchildren.

In July 1761, Yellias Dohr, locksmith of Germantown, having some time ago emigrated from Germany and now knowing of possible overseas heirs, bequeathed "all my wearing apparel, Bedding, Household Goods & Cencels [to] my esteemed friends Baltas Reser ... & Mary his Wife ... " He further bequeathed all of his financial assets to their son Baltas Raser, Junior (25). Dohr died in late 1762, after which Baltas and wife presumably received Dohr's personal effects.

The Abington Friends records note the burial of Mary Reser, wife of Baltas, in the Friends Burial Ground in Germantown on 7th, 4 mo. (June) 1762 (26); she probably died in the family house in Germantown. Since Mary died soon after her grandfather Dirk Jansen/Johnson's death, and before her mother and step-father died, it is not clear whether her children shared in the £200 bequest. However, Thomas Nedrow, in his December 1791 will, gave monetary bequests to Mary's three surviving children, namely Matthias and Daniel Reser, and Elizabeth Mahorter (27). Ann, wife of Thomas Nedrow of Bristol Township, was buried in the Friends Burial Ground in Germantown on 25 September 1786 (28).

By license dated 5 October 1763, Baltas Reser married second to **CATHARINE COLLADAY**. The recorded license, and the published version in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, name the parties as Balser Reser and Catherine Colloby (29); the Colloby misspelling misled previous family researchers for many years. A family record of now unknown source gives the actual marriage date as 30 January 1764. Early 1764 records of the Abington Monthly Meeting complain of Baltos Razer's "marriage by a priest [i.e., in a non-Quaker ceremony] after being precautions." Declining to appeal the testimony signed against him, Baltas was read out of the Friends Meeting on 30 July 1764 (30).

Catharine Colladay was born 30 May 1735 in Germantown, PA, the daughter of Jacob Colladay and Catharina Juliana Rübenkam. Jacob Colladay had come to America in 1710 as a young child with his widowed mother; they lived in New York state for some years before relocating to the Germantown area. Catharina Juliana Rübenkam had come to America in 1726 with her widowed mother, in a party that probably included Baltas Reser, his parents and grandfather. Jacob Colladay married Catharina Rübenkam in Philadelphia in 1727; after Jacob's death in 1750, his widow married Blasius Daniel Mackinet. This was the same Mackinet with whom Johannes Röser (A-1) was living in Schwarzenau in 1722! Strong ties continued between the Mackinet, Colladay and Reser families over the decades. Sometime after 1760, at the request of Sarah (Colladay) Meng—Catharine (Colladay) Reser's younger sister—Blasius Daniel Mackinet wrote a fascinating account of the immediate German origins of the Colladay and Rübenkam families (31*).

From June 1765 to late 1772 Baltas Reser accumulated five mortgage loans against his property. In four of them, totalling £924.12, he had mortgaged the same northwest half of his property, which contained his dwelling house and tanyard (32); in the fifth, for £400, he mortgaged the southeast half, which also contained a

house (33). Eventually all of the mortgages were satisfied. Germantown tax assessment lists between 1769–72 identify Baltes as a tanner with 36 acres of land, a dwelling and tanyard, three horses and three cattle. In 1769 he also was taxed on three servants, and in 1772 on two negroes—whether the negroes were the same as the servants, and whether they were free or not, remains undiscovered (6).

Baltes and Catharine had four children before Baltes passed away in December 1773—probably in his Germantown house. He was buried 23 December in the Germantown Friends Burial Ground (16, 34). In his deathbed will of 17 December 1773, “being sick & weak in Body,” he named his children Matthew, Daniel and Elizabeth by his first wife Mary, deceased, and “Barny, Susey, Sally and Caty” by his second marriage, and appointed his “trusty friend William Colliday and my beloved Wife Catharina” to be his executors (35*). The children of both marriages all adopted the Raser spelling of the name.

At the time of Baltes’s death, the children by his marriage to Mary Luckens were young adults and able to care for themselves. In his will, Baltes “only ... bequeath[ed] unto them” £10 each. In contrast, all of Catharine Reser’s children were young—Bernard, the oldest, was only nine years old. Baltes bequeathed to his wife Catharine 1/3 of all of his property, real and personal, giving the remaining 2/3 to their four children in equal shares. He instructed his executors to sell his house and lands in the best manner to satisfy his debts.

On 7 February 1774 the executors offered at public auction “the stock of [Baltis Raser], consisting of several valuable young horses, suitable for carriage or saddle, milch cows, wheat and rye in the ground, threshed rye, Indian corn, hay and straw, a quantity of cyder and vinegar, a parcel of soal leather, a riding chair and sleigh, sundry implements of husbandry, viz. waggons, carts, plows, harrows, sleds, &c. with a great variety of valuable household and kitchen furniture ... ” (36). The 1774 Germantown tax list shows Baltus Razor’s estate included 33 acres, four horses and two cows (37).

In April 1774 the executors additionally advertized for sale “the dwelling house of ... Baltis Raser, deceased, situate on the main street of Germantown, with about 33 acres of LAND adjoining, seven acres of which is extraordinary meadow ground, well watered; the house is built of stone, two stories high, four rooms on a floor, and well finished, two kitchens, and an excellent spring and spring house adjoining; there are on the premises a convenient tanyard, bark and mill houses, currying shop, &c. — Also a good stone barn and stables, and a young bearing orchard, of good fruit.” Interested parties were to apply to Catharine Raser, on the premises, or to William Colliday, in Vine Street, Philadelphia (38). The advertisement produced only one sale; in late July the executors sold a 2 1/4 acre tract, which included the former Stricker-townlot with its two-story stone house on Germantown Avenue opposite the Lower Burial Ground (plots 6, 61). It was not until three years later, in May 1777, that the remaining 3 3/4 acre tract with Baltes’s house and tanyard finally was sold to Leonard Nuts, a tanner. Four months after this sale the property was occupied by British troops—in early October the Samuel Mechlin house, on adjoining property, was used by the British as a field hospital to tend their soldiers wounded in the Battle of Germantown.

Catharine Raser already had removed to Philadelphia city when she was granted a tavern license there on 3 November 1775 (39*). She had settled in a building on the northwest corner of Second and Race Streets, owned by her stepfather, Blasius Daniel Mackinet; here she operated a tavern and inn for many years—seemingly up to the time that Mackinet’s daughter Magdalene sold the property in 1794 (40). Mackinet had bought the property in 1762 from George Dillwyn (41), it having been owned earlier by Dillwyn’s sister Sarah. It is of interest to note that from early 1748 to mid-1750, during Sarah Dillwyn’s ownership, Benjamin Franklin had resided in this house (42).

No description of the house during Catharine’s occupancy has been found, but in 1808 this three-story brick house was surveyed for insurance purposes and “was said to be seventeen feet across the front and thirty-nine feet deep. The first floor was then occupied as a grocery store; the second included three rooms

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with chimney breast closets [and windows]. The third story also had three rooms [with] closets and cased windows. The garret was undivided, but plastered. In the two-story back building, twelve by twenty-nine feet in size, there were two rooms on the first floor, one of which was a parlor with plain mantel, the other the kitchen. Upstairs were two rooms finished like the parlor, common winding stairs, and board partitions" (43*).

Catharine's son Bernard grew up on this property as a teenager, and undoubtedly worked for his mother to help run the inn. Being very close to the waterfront, the tavern must have been frequented by seamen and local shipping merchants. Probably through these contacts Bernard was attracted to the sea, and after some years as a seaman he rose to become a ship captain. Catharine's nephew, William Colladay, Jr., who likely also worked for her in the inn, eventually followed a similar path, and by 1798 William's brother Daniel also had become a seaman.

Catharine appears as "Razer, Widow, 405 Race St.," and "Razer, Mrs., innkeeper, the corner of Second and Race-streets" in the first Philadelphia city directories, both published in 1785. She appears in tax lists during the 1780s as Widow Razer, innkeeper, usually being taxed for a cow, 20 ounces of silver plate, and £800 for the dwelling—the latter suggests Mackinet gave her use of his property in return for her assuming all tax liabilities (44). In 1790, in the first US census, Catharine Raser is listed between Vine and Race Streets, with a household of one male 16 and over (son Bernard), and five females—Catharine, her three daughters, and possibly a Colladay niece (45). Next door was William Colladay, called house carpenter in tax lists; he probably was her brother and the father of William, Jr. In the directories of 1791–94 she is listed as innkeeper, 114 North Second Street—the generally mentioned address of her inn.

During 1784–85 it appears that Catharine and her two older children engaged in speculative land investment. On 1 July 1784 Catherine, Bernard and Susannah Razer each purchased warrants from the Pennsylvania Land Office to survey 400-acre tracts in the unappropriated land of the then huge, frontier Northumberland County. By late 1787 they had selected and obtained surveys for their tracts, at least two of which appear to have been located near Catawissa, in present-day Columbia County. These were true ground-surveys with irregular boundaries, keyed to local geographic features. By mid-1794 they had sold their warranted tracts to interested buyers, who immediately obtained initial deeds—known as patents—from the Land Office, which established their ownership of the surveyed tracts. It was a requirement at that time that these new, far-flung "plantations" be given distinctive names so that they could be more readily tracked in future land transactions. The tracts surveyed for the three Razers were, respectively, given the names *St. Kitts*, *Unexpected* and *Convention*. (46)

The next year, on 22 February 1785, the three each purchased survey warrants for additional 400-acre tracts in Northumberland County. Within seven months they had obtained "surveys" for their tracts, which consisted of large rectangular areas within a grid laid out over a huge area, much like the Rectangular Survey System adopted by the federal government the *same year* for the sale of western lands. Their tracts were within the then Stokes Township, "on waters of Tunkhannock Creek" (47). No record was found for the eventual disposition of these tracts, which may have been in remote mountainous areas for which their warrants were left to lapse. It is intriguing to note that, on the *same two dates* in 1784 and 1785, Catharine's brother William Colliday, sister Susannah, and nephew William Colliday, Jr., also each obtained warrants to survey 400-acre tracts in Northumberland County (48).

In May 1786 Catharine Reser purchased a frame house about three city blocks north of her inn, in a section of Philadelphia known as Northern Liberties. The property was located on the north side of Duke Street, more commonly known as Artillery Lane, about 77 feet west of Delaware Front Street. She does not appear there until the 1796 directory, when she is listed as Catherine Raser, widow and shopkeeper. Possibly she used this as rental property from 1786 to the mid-1790s, continuing to live at and operate her inn until it was sold in mid-1794. Catharine, shopkeeper, is listed on Artillery Lane in directories 1796–1799. In the 1800 census

widow Razer appears in eastern Northern Liberties with one female 16-26 (daughter Catharine) and two females 45 and above—probably Catharine and her spinster sister, Susannah Colladay (49).

From 1801 through 1809 Catherine Raser is listed in directories as a widow—but no longer as shopkeeper—at 5 Artillery Lane. She died intestate prior to 24 August 1809, when Joseph Miller, farmer of Germantown, was appointed administrator of her estate (50). Her personal estate, valued at less than \$1,000, was left to be distributed in three shares to her daughters Susanna and Catharine, and the five minor children of deceased son Bernard. John Heyl, guardian of Bernard's children, wishing to provide "for the better maintenance & education" of his wards, petitioned the court to have her Artillery Lane house sold (51). The two daughters soon agreed, and the house was sold in May 1810 at public sale for \$1,250. The exact date of Catherine's death, and her place of burial, have yet to be discovered.

Children (RASER) by Mary Luckens, all born in Germantown, Pa.:

- + 1. Matthias (M-1), b. abt. 1744, d. abt. 1803, m. bef. 25 Nov. 1771 Abigail —.
- 2. John, b. abt. 1745-47, bur. 18th, 6 mo. (Aug.) 1747, Friends B.G., Gtn., Pa. (52).
- 3. Baltes, b. abt. 1747-52, d. 1773. In July 1761, Yellias Dohr of Germantown, having bequeathed most of his household effects to Baltes's parents, bequeathed all of his financial estate to Baltes Raser, Jr. The funds were to be managed by Dohr's executors until Baltes arrived at the age of 21 years, at which time they were to pay to him all of the principal and interest. Dohr died in late 1762 (25).

The Pennsylvania Gazette, 3 Feb. 1773 (AA), reported that "Last Friday Evening [29 January], as Mr. Baltus Raser, Son of Mr. Baltus Raser, of Germantown, was driving his Waggon Home, loaded with Wood, it is supposed being fatigued he attempted to get on the Shafts to ride, but missing his Hold, fell down, when the Wheels went over him, and killed him on the Spot." He was bur. 31 Jan. 1773 in the Friends B.G., Gtn. The disposition of Dohr's bequest remains undiscovered.

- + 4. Daniel Raser (A-7), b. abt. 1750-60, d. early-June 1792, m. 1780 Catherine(?) —.
- + 5. Elizabeth (A-8), b. abt. 1750-60, d. —, m. by 1791 Thomas(?) Mahorter.

Children (RASER) by Catharine Colladay, all born in Germantown, Pa.:

- + 6. Bernard (A-9), b. 10 Aug. 1764, d. 25 Mar. 1804, m. abt. June 1790 Mary Heyl.
- + 7. Susannah (A-10), b. 12 Jan. 1767, d. 22 Sep. 1853, m. 27 Nov. 1790 Joseph Miller.
- 8. Sarah ("Sally"), b. abt. 1771; as Sarah Razor, d. 17 Oct. 1793, aged about 20 yrs. (53). She appears, "AEt. 22," in Mathew Carey's list of victims of Philadelphia's devastating yellow fever epidemic (54).
- 9. Catharine ("Caty"), b. abt. 1772. In Feb. 1810 she wit. the will of her brother's widow; in May 1810 she was called a single woman of Gtn. No further record.

A-4. **SOPHIE MARGARETE CHRISTINE** ("Sophia") **RESER** was born in Schwarzenau, County Wittgenstein, Germany, the daughter of John Bernhard Reser (A-2) and Anna Elizabeth —. She was baptized on 23 October 1724 in the Evangelical Reformed Church in the nearby village of Elsoff (1). Her sponsors were August Pfeiffer; Sophie Elisabeth Wiedersprecher, single, chamber maid at Schwarzenau; and a Margarethe Elisabeth of illegible surname. She was probably named in honor of the two women, but for reasons yet to be discovered. Sophia celebrated her second birthday while enroute to America with her parents and a group of Wittgenstein emigrants.

Sophia grew up in Germantown, Pa., probably residing most of her early years in the family house on Germantown Avenue. She was married in the First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, on 26 January 1745 (Old Style—6 February by modern reckoning) to **JOHN KRAFT RICHSTEIN** (2). His parentage is not positively known, but he was likely the son of John Kraft Richstein and Anna Katharina Gelbach. If so, he was baptized in the Elsoff Evangelical Reformed Church on 16 June 1720 (3). His brother, John Christian, who was baptized there in 1723, had emigrated to Pennsylvania in 1743, arriving in Philadelphia aboard the ship

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Lydia (4). John Kraft does not appear in the published passenger lists of Philadelphia arrivals—possibly his ship arrived in New York.

The earliest appearance of our John Riestein so far noted was on 4 February 1744/5, when as Jno. Kraft Riestein he was one of the witnesses signing the draft resurvey of the Germantown Lower Burial Ground (5). His marriage two days later suggests he may only recently have come to America, possibly with Bernhard Reser's assurance of a place to find work.

During 1745–46 several Reser deeds involving the family's Germantown lands were witnessed by John Rustine. He actually may have spelled his name Riestine—a form that appears in newspapers and other documents; perhaps the clerks misread his handwriting as Rustine. Eventually the name became Anglicized to RISTINE or a close variation. During this period John Ristine resided in Germantown, and is soon identified as a tanner. Possibly he had learned the trade previously, but it seems more likely he learned it in the employ of Baltes Reser, his brother-in-law.

To help him in his trade, in mid-August 1746 Ristine paid one Nathaniel Ambler £16 for six years of indentured service of Michael Ark, who had just been imported into Philadelphia from Ireland by Ambler on the ship *George*. John Ristine's obligation was to teach Michael the trade of a tanner and give him the customary dues at the end of his service (6).

On 1 December 1747, for £150, Bernhard Reser and his wife sold to John Kraft Riestine and his wife a tract of somewhat over twenty acres on the east side of Old York Road (plots 44, 46, 51), in the Milestown area of north Philadelphia (7). The tract included buildings, other improvements and a stream of water; here John Ristine conducted a tannery business until 1754. His tanyard was located on the east side of Old York Road about 250 feet south of present-day Chelton Avenue.

Early in 1754 Bernhard Reser, for an undiscovered reason, found it necessary to bring a suit in Common Pleas Court against John Kraft Riestine. The judgement was in Bernhard's favor, and Riestine's property was ordered to be sold by the Philadelphia County sheriff. A newspaper notice in mid-June announced that the plantation, "late the estate of John Krafft Reistine," shortly would be offered for sale (8). On 4 September 1754 Bernhard paid £388 at a sheriff's sale for the same tract he had sold to Ristine seven years earlier for £150 (9). Two weeks after Bernhard Reser bought back the Ristine tract, he placed a notice in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* offering the plantation and tanyard "where Krafft Riestein lately liv[ed]" for sale or lease (10). The property was described as containing "a good stone house and barn, with cellars under both, and a stone bark mill house, the tanfats [*sic*] all in good order, and bark, so that a tanner may begin directly, [all on] 20 acres of land, with a good orchard and garden." Two months later the property remained in his possession, and Bernhard announced that he was conducting the tannery business formerly operated by his son-in-law (11).

On 26 September 1754 court-appointed auditors placed a notice in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* asking the creditors of John Kraft Reistine, late of Bristol township, tanner, to bring them their accounts for inspection (12). Those that were indebted to Reistine's estate were asked to make prompt payment to the auditors. While it seems likely that Reistine had died, leaving his debt to Bernhard unpaid, it is possible he had just gone personally bankrupt—or even had absconded to some remote area.

Bernhard Reser, in his will of October 1760, gave his residual estate in equal shares to his wife and five children, "except my Daughter Sophia ... is to have in the said Distribution Two Hundred & fifty Pounds less in her share than each or any of the others as I have suffered so much as that sum amounted to as a Loss to my Estate by becoming Security for her Husband John Riestine ... " He also empowered his executors to "Retain my Daughter Sophia's part of my Estate in their hands if they see it necessary and for her good, and pay her [such of the proceeds] as they may think will conduce to her and her Family's advantage ... "

At the time of Bernhard's death in mid-June 1761, his daughter Sophia was raising six children, ages one to 15 years. Possibly in consideration of her uncertain future, and using some of the proceeds from the sale of Bernhard's lands, in September 1764 his executors sold Sophia Restine, widow of Bristol Township, in behalf of her minor son Bernard, a small house on an acre lot (plot 41) on the east side of Old York Road for £24 (13). The lot was located at a point roughly 1000 feet northeast of the widow Reser's house—about where present-day 65th Avenue crosses North Broad Street.

Sophia probably resided in her small house for some years, but by 1779 she had leased the property to Jacob Kinsley, cordwainer, and possibly had moved to Lancaster County, Pa. (14). The lot was back in family hands by 1783. Sophia may have been living there when she died in 1785; on 21 April "Widow Ristine" was buried in the Germantown Lower Burial Ground (15). The next year her surviving children—son Bernard had died in 1776—decided to dispose of her house/lot. In February 1786 they sold it to Henry Young (16), who two years earlier had bought a neighboring acre lot which he had been leasing from the Resers since 1746 (plot 43).

Sophia Ristine left a number of descendants (17). Through her interest in the residuals of Bernhard Reser's estate, her heirs were entitled to a share in any proceeds which arose from the subsequent disposition of his properties. Between 1801–08 two of Bernhard's lots in Germantown were finally sold; the deeds outline in great detail the surviving heirs of Bernhard and provide helpful insight into the then-current whereabouts of Sophia's children (18).

Children (RISTINE), probably all born in Bristol Township, Philadelphia County, Pa. (18):

1. John, b. abt. 1746, "eldest brother of Bernhard." In 1786 he was a tanner of Redstone, Fayette Co., Pa.; tax lists place him in Menallen Twp. (19). In 1801 he had "long been absent and supposed to be dead," but in 1808 Richard Ristine, tanner of Phila., identified himself as a son and the attorney for John, who was now of Gallatin Co., Ky.
2. Bernhard, d. "a minor without issue"; bur. 7 July 1776 as Bernhard Riestein in the Gtn. Lower Burial Ground (20). Bernhard Restine appears in the Gtn. tax list of 1774 (21).
3. Catharine. In 1786 she was the wife of Leonard Hoe, yeoman, residing in the Northern Liberties of Phila.; in 1801 she was the widow Hoe of Gtn. She signed by mark.
4. Joseph, a wheelwright in 1779 when employed in the government armory in Phila. to work on artillery equipment (22). Not mentioned in 1786. In 1801 he was described as "went beyond Sea ..." and no mention was made of any heirs.
5. Baltes. In 1777 and 1779 he was fined for failure to muster in his assigned Phila. Co. militia company. He served in the 2nd Battalion in 1778, and in the 4th Co., 7th Battalion, Phila. Co. militia with Daniel Razor and the Ents in 1780 (23). In 1786 he was a mattress (artillery private), along with his brother Charles, in the 3rd Co., Artillery Battalion, Phila. City militia (24). In 1786 he was a coachmaker of Phila.; in 1801 he "is said to have died at Salem leaving lawful issue" (25). He is prob. the Baltus Ristein who m. 30 Jan. 1784 Christiana Rush in Phila. (26). He signed by mark.
6. Charles, b. abt. 1760. A 1782 notice stated: "Ten Pounds Reward. Made his escape from the subscriber [Daniel Rees], one of the Constables of the township of Germantown ... A certain Charles Rustine, about 22 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, slender made, pale faced, has long black hair which he wears tied, is country born, speaks good English and German, by trade a cooper, but follows harness-making." "He was arrested for Fornication and Bastardy." (27). Charles m. 23 May 1783 Hannah Gottschalck; their child Elizabeth, b. 1 Apr. 1783, was bp. the day of their mrg. (28). In 1786–87 he was a mattress in the 3rd Co., Artillery Battalion, Phila. City militia (29). In 1786 he was a harness-maker of Phila.; in 1790 he was residing in Manor of Moreland, Montgomery Co., Pa.; in 1801 he was a cooper of Gtn., with wife Hannah.

A-5. **MAGDALENE RESER**, daughter of John Bernhard Reser (A-2) and Anna Elizabeth—, was born about 1730–40, probably in her parents' house on Germantown Avenue. Little has been found of her in

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records. Magdalene Reser was married sometime during 1760–69 in Germantown, Pa., to **MATTHIAS ADAMS HOGERMOED**. He was born about 1730, the son of Matthias Adams Hogermoed, the elder, of Germantown and his wife Catherine —, and the grandson of George Adam Hogermoed.

George Adam Hogermoed appears in Germantown as early as 1710, when he bought fifty acres there from Hans Peter Umstett (1). In his will of October 1723 he gave all of his land to his eldest son Matthias Adams Hogermoed; he also mentioned his daughter Barbara and youngest son Samuel (2). He signed his name Hochemuth in various documents; the origin of the name is not currently known. Before 1750 the name sometimes appears as Hogermaid and Hogermoedt in newspaper articles.

Mathias Adams Hogermoed, the elder, was naturalized on 6 February 1730/1 by the same Act of Assembly which included Johannes Dewalt End and Blasius Daniel Mackinet; his name immediately follows Mackinet's (3). This proceeding indicates that Mathias was born in Europe, which suggests that he had come to America with his father George some time before 1710—probably as a child. In 1729/30 Hogermoed, along with Mackinett and two others, was named an executor in the will of John Charles Greiss, shoemaker of Germantown (4). In his will Greiss mentions his brother Daniel as being a resident of Elsoff, Germany, pointing to the possibility that many of the above men had origins in Sayn–Wittgenstein. In 1735/6 Mathias Adam Hogermoed, yeoman of Germantown, with the other executors, sold three of Greiss's lots in Germantown to John Bernhard Reser. Three days later Reser sold back one of these lots to Hogermoed (5).

By the 1730s a pattern was emerging to drop the Hogermoed surname and use only **ADAMS**, somewhat in the style of a patronymic. In 1734 Mathias Adams (the elder) is listed as owning seventy acres in Germantown (6). In May 1741 Mathias Adams witnessed a deed in which Christian Kinzing, miller, sold a small gore of land to Bernhard Reser (7). Mathias Adam Hogermoed, yeoman, wrote a will in July 1760 in which he names his wife Catherine and children John, Mathias, Jacob, Anne, Catherine and Barbara (8).

Mathias Adams Hogermoed, the younger, who was born about 1730, was a wheelwright of Germantown. In 1762 he bought from Anthony Gilbert a 4 1/2 acre lot with a stone house on the southwesterly side of Germantown Avenue (9). In June 1773 he and his wife Magdalen (as she signed the deed) sold the house and about 2/3 of this lot to Elizabeth Razor, Magdalen's widowed mother (10).

In October 1773 Elizabeth Reser wrote her will, in which she gave Catherine Adams Hogermoed, widow of Germantown (and Magdalen's mother-in-law), an annuity of £3.6.8 and one cord of firewood "in lieu ... of the Annuity payable to her from her Son Mathias Adams Hogermoed as his part of her Dower" (11). Catherine is likely the widow Adams who was buried in the Germantown Lower Burial Ground on 14 March 1782 (12).

Also by her will, Elizabeth Reser gave her house and lot to her "trusty Friends" and executors, Jacob Engle and Jacob Knorr and their survivors, to be held in trust and used, along with her personal estate, for the support and maintenance of her daughter Magdalen Adams and her children during Magdalen's lifetime. After Magdalen's death the real estate was to pass to her children as tenants in common; they also were to receive all the remainder of Elizabeth's personal estate. Elizabeth Reser died in February 1776, but the Adams house/lot trust she had established survived for more than half a century (13).

Magdalen's husband likely was the Mathias Adams who was buried in the Lower Burial Ground on 12 November 1789 (14), as in the 1790 census her son Charles Adams is shown occupying his grandmother Reser's house along with a woman—possibly his mother, Magdalen (15). Magdalen was still living in Germantown in June 1801, as a widow, when she was involved with other family members in the sale of some residual properties of her long-deceased father (16).

By 1808 Elizabeth Reser's executor's had died, and Conrad Carpenter, house carpenter of Germantown, was appointed administrator of the Adams house lot trust. He continued to collect rents up until his death about 1823. His administration account appears to indicate that Magdalen was still alive as late as 1817 (17), but exactly when she passed away has not been discovered.

By late-1832 Charles Adams had married, raised a large family and died, leaving nine children and a grand-child entitled to his share of Elizabeth Reser's trust. Magdalen's daughter Elizabeth had by then married a John Smith. She and her husband decided it was time to terminate the trust, and so they appealed to the Philadelphia District Court to have the property divided. Since it was agreed that a division would harm the value of the tract, appraisers were selected who subsequently valued the property at \$1900. The other trust holders agreed to sell their interests to Elizabeth and John Smith, after which the sheriff in November 1833 issued them a deed (18). Soon afterwards the Smiths sold most of the tract to Benjamin Lehman, Jr., a Germantown lumber dealer, but retained for their own use a quarter-acre street-front lot at the northwest corner of the tract which contained Elizabeth Reser's stone house (19).

Children (ADAMS), probably all born in Germantown, Pa. (18, 19):

1. Charles. In 1833 his heirs were his widow Mary, and children Joel, Susan (wife of Charles Flew), Ann (wife of Charles Kerbaugh), Daniel, John, Mary (wife of William Mooney), Amos, Sarah (wife of John Idle/Ider), Hannah (wife of William Muhre/Muire), and grandchild Edward Miller, a minor.
2. Elizabeth, m. John Smith.
3. Ann, m. Conrad Carpenter, who died by 1823.
4. Infant child, bur. 20 May 1770 Gtn. L.B.G. (20).
5. Infant child, bur. 10 Sept. 1770 Gtn. L.B.G. (20).
6. Infant child, bur. 22 June 1779 Gtn. L.B.G. (20).

A-6. **ELIZABETH RESER** is the youngest known child of John Bernhard Reser (A-2) and Anna Elizabeth ——. She was born about 1730–40, probably in her parents' house on Germantown Avenue. Elizabeth Reser married on 13 May 1762 **THEOBALD ENT**. He was born in Germantown, Pa., on 30 August 1737, the youngest of three sons of John Theobald Endt/Ent and Sibilla Katherine — (1*). The marriage was short lived; Elizabeth died sometime in 1765–66, leaving her husband with two infant sons, who were raised by his second wife.

Theobald's father, as Johannes Dewalt End (2), had been naturalized on 6 February 1730/1, along with Blasius Daniel Mackinet and Mathias Adams Hogermoed (3)—all were destined to become closely associated with the Reser family through marriage. John Theobald Ent appears with five acres in a 1734 list of landholders in Germantown (4); he subsequently bought other land, including in 1739 a tract of 11 3/4 acres bordering the lower southeast corner of John Bernhard Reser's Germantown land (5). In August 1753 he advertised "a house for sale at the lower end of Germantown, the former residence of Bernhart Roser, baker" (6)—he had bought the house in a resale in 1749. John Theobald was active in community affairs up until his death in 1767, during which time his name frequently appears in newspapers and on legal documents. The 1765 will of Johan Theobald Endt, saddler, names his wife Sibilla and children Daniel, John, Theobald and Mary (7). Since his son Theobald also was a saddler in Germantown, in the 1755–67 time period it is easy to confuse the two men. During this time only one instance of "Junior" appended to "Theobald" has been noted, which suggests that most early references to Theobald refer to John Theobald, the father.

Theobald's oldest brother, Daniel, also was a tanner of Germantown; he lived next to Baltes Reser and John Zachary. Zachary had bought part of John Theobald Endt's 11 3/4 acres in 1745, and here "in 1747 [he] built the present house and stone buildings still standing [in 1881] in the meadow, and established [his] tanyard" (8*). In his will of March 1754 Zachary appointed his wife Catherine, brother-in-law Jacob Rupp,

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and “trusty Friend and Neighbour Baltus Reser” to be his executors (9). A July 1754 newspaper article announced the death of Johannes Zacharias, tanner, and indicated that his widow Catharina was continuing the business (10). Probably Daniel Ent was handling the business for her, as on 8 August 1754 he married the widow Zachary (11). In 1768 Daniel Ent died intestate; administration of his estate was granted to his brother Theobald Endt and to John Frey (12).

Theobald’s brother John was a clock and watch maker, working early in New York City, but active in the Philadelphia area during the 1755–90 time period (13, 14, 15). He served with his brother Theobald in the Philadelphia County militia during the Revolutionary War (16). Their sister Mary married George Miller, a clockmaker residing in Germantown into the 1790s and later of Lancaster, Pa. Miller is said to have been a pupil of Dr. Christopher Witt, famous Germantown clockmaker who also taught “the art and mystery of clockmaking” to Christopher Sower, the multi-talented German-language publisher (13).

Theobald the younger likely had learned the trade of saddler from his father—he early resided on a part of his parents’ property. After the death of his wife, Elizabeth (Reser) Ent, in 1765–66, Theobald, Jr., married Maria Barbara Haas on 18 December 1766 in the Germantown Reformed Church (17). She was born in 1753, the daughter of Adam Haas, who later operated the *White Horse Inn* in Germantown. Her youthful age at marriage has long been recognized by descendants (1). It was not until 7 January 1774, seven years after their marriage, that the Ents decided to have their children baptized—the eldest two were Elizabeth Reser’s sons (18). Later children also were baptized in the Germantown Reformed Church (19).

In 1768 Theobald Endt and James Haslet were overseers of the fire engine of the Germantown Lower Ward fire company (20). In 1770 Theobald resided next door to the *King George the Third* tavern; he appears in the tax lists of Germantown 1774–83 (21). Early in the Revolutionary War, during 1777–78, he was fined for absences on muster days in Capt. James Haslet’s company of the 2nd Battalion (22). But in 1780 Theobald Ent, with his brother John, and his nephews Daniel Raser and Baltus Ristine, appears to have actively served in the 4th Company, 7th Battalion of Philadelphia County militia, under Capt. Noah Townsend (23).

In late August 1778 Theobald Ent attended the public sale of the property of Christopher Sower, which had been confiscated by the State of Pennsylvania for Sower’s failure to declare his allegiance to the patriot cause. His name appears in a list of purchases for a total of £10.01; his larger purchases included a stove, five bushels of flax seed, and “an old chaff Bed” (24). Theobald Ent died on 11 January 1794 and was buried three days later in the Germantown Lower Burial Ground (25, 26). His brother John was buried there on 8 November 1794 (26). Both graves have been marked by the D.A.R. Maria, Theobald’s second wife, died in February 1833 (1).

Anna Elizabeth Reser (A-2), widow of Germantown, in her will of 28 October 1773, left a bequest of £100 to her two grandchildren, William and Bernard Endt, sons of her late daughter Elizabeth Endt, deceased (27). An 1801 deed confirms that Elizabeth had married Theobald Ent and died, leaving no issue as of 1801 (28). As a result, the Reser blood in the Ent family came to an end.

Children (ENT) by Elizabeth Reser, probably both born in Germantown, Pa. (1, 18, 26):

1. William, b. 20 Feb. [15 Jan.] 1763, killed 1 Mar. 1788 in a powder mill explosion (1), bur. 2 Mar. Gtn. L.B.G. See endnote 1 for explanation of date discrepancies.
2. Bernard, b. 16 [15] Dec. 1764, d. 26 Sep. [28 Aug.] 1777, aged 12.8.10 (29), bur. 29 Aug. Gtn. L.B.G.

Children (ENT) by Maria Barbara Haas, probably all born in Germantown, Pa. (1, 18, 19, 26):

3. Charles, b. 14 May 1767, d. 20 June 1847, m. 17 Nov. 1789 Mary Johnson; 13 ch. Charles was a major in the War of 1812; he settled in Butler Co., Ohio, in 1818. (30)
4. Mary, b. 10 Mar. 1769.
5. Sarah, b. 2 May 1771.

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6. Sibilla, b. 2 [5] July 1773. One of the three daus. mrd. a John Salter.
7. Elizabeth, b. 13 Sep. 1775, d. 29 Feb. 1776, bur. 31 Jan. 1777 [*sic*], aged 4 mos. & 4 days, Gtn. L.B.G (31).
8. George Washington, b. 29 Nov. 1777, d. 4 Mar. 1854, m. 30 Sep. 1806 Margaret Woltz. He was a captain in the War of 1812 (32).
9. Theobald, Jr., b. 13 Aug. 1780, d. 15 Sep. 1780.
10. Susanna, b. 29 Nov. 1782, d. — Apr. 1783, bur. 21 Apr. Gtn. L.B.G.
11. James (Jacob), b. 28 July 1785, d. 24 Sep. 1786, bur. 22 [*sic*] Sep., Gtn. L.B.G.
12. John, b. 4 Nov. 1788.

A-7. **DANIEL RASER**, youngest son of Baltes Reser (A-3) and Mary Luckens, was born about 1750–60 in Germantown, Pa. He probably was raised in the family home on the south side of Germantown Avenue, but after his father died and his step-mother moved to downtown Philadelphia in 1775, he may have gone to live with his brother Matthias who recently had bought a home lot with a tanyard in Germantown.

Like his other brothers, Daniel was associated with the Germantown Friends, who came under the jurisdiction of the Abington Monthly Meeting. A December 1780 record in the Abington Meeting minutes states that “Germantown friends Represent that Daniel Razer has gone out in his Marriage with a person not of our Religious Society and accomplished the same by the assistance of an Hireling Priest, has lived a lose life and much in the neglect of attending our Religious Meetings, and being treated with gave no expectation of making any Satisfaction ... ” (1). No record of the marriage has been found.

Only a little is known of Daniel’s adult life. He was married, but no evidence has been found that he had any children. He appears to have lived in Germantown in the early 1780s, after which he resided in Philadelphia, then in the late 1780s he probably lived in Bucks County, Pa. His likely final appearance was in Burlington County, N.J. The records suggest that he was poor, having no real estate and little personal estate; he appears to have moved about the greater Philadelphia area seeking employment. Except for the 1792 inventory of an estate, no mention has been found of his trade.

Daniel served in the Philadelphia County Militia during the Revolutionary War. In July 1777, as Daniel Raser, he served as a private in Capt. John Downey’s 2nd Company, 2nd Battalion; around the same time, as Daniel Razor, he also served in Capt. William Young’s 7th Company, 2nd Battalion. About August 1780, as Daniel Razor, he appears as a private in Capt. Noah Townsend’s 4th Company, Seventh Battalion; in this same Germantown company were his cousin Baltes Ristine and his uncle Theobald Ent. (2)

In August 1778 Daniel Razor appears as the purchaser of “1 large book, £1.13.0” in the list of goods and chattels of Christopher Sower of Germantown, which had been confiscated from Sower for his lack of allegiance to the patriot cause and sold by the State of Pennsylvania at public sale (3).

After the war, in June 1783, Daniel Razor served as a mattross (artillery private), in Capt. Thomas Rice’s 3rd Company of the Pennsylvania Militia Artillery Battalion. In 1784 he appears on a muster roll of Capt. Benjamin Freeman’s 1st Company, First Battalion. Both of these companies were associated with Philadelphia city. In the latter muster roll he appears as “Daniel Raeser (removed),” which suggests he recently had moved from the area (4).

During 1779–80 Daniel Raser appears on the tax lists of Germantown (5). He disappears from tax lists until 1786–87, when it is probably he who is listed among the non-singlemen in Middletown Township, Bucks County, Pa., for a minimum tax of two pence (6). In early 1792 he received £20 in the will of Thomas Nedrow, who in later life had married his grandmother Luckens (7).

The Early Generations

The final mention of Daniel Raser is in 1792, when his burial is recorded on 5 June in the Germantown "Burying Ground in the road called Bowman's Lane" (8). This burial ground had been purchased in 1755 by his father, on behalf of the residents of Germantown, for use as a potter's field. Located on what later became Queen Lane, burials ceased here in 1916 and after 1920 the site was converted to a playground. In 1955 Queen Lane Apartments, a high-rise public housing project, was built on the site. (9)

Daniel's burial date tends to confirm that he was the Daniel Razor/Rasor of the city of Burlington, N.J., who died intestate that same month. An inventory of this Daniel's estate taken on 22 June 1792 amounted to only £13.15.9. The inventory included one "Coachchee Body not finished, £3;" a chest of tools and grindstone, £3; a "Chere Body" not finished, and "Cheremakers patterns," indicating he was then a coach and riding-chair maker. Three days later a Catherine Rasor (who signed by mark) was appointed administrator of his estate (10); she may have been Daniel's widow, whose name is otherwise unknown.

A-8. **ELIZABETH RASER** is the only known daughter of Baltus Reser (A-3) by his first wife, Mary Luckens. She was born about 1750-60 in Germantown, and probably was raised in the family house on the south side of Germantown Avenue. Like her two brothers, she received £10 as her sole bequest in her father's will of December 1773. After her step-mother moved to downtown Philadelphia in 1775, Elizabeth may have gone to live with her brother Matthias, who recently had bought a home lot in Germantown.

Almost nothing is known of Elizabeth's adult life. Her name, along with that of her brother Matthias, appears in a list of contributors to the fund for establishment of the Concord School in Germantown about 1780 (1). She subsequently married, as in 1791 she is called Elizabeth **MAHORTER** in the will of Thomas Nedrow. Nedrow, who had married her grandmother Luckens in later life, gave her £10 in his will (2). The given name of Elizabeth's husband is not known, but the fact that in 1790 her brother Matthias named a son Thomas Mahorter suggests the child may have been named for his uncle.

Intensive searches have indicated that the name Mahorter—or any of its variations—is rare. Elizabeth's husband may have been the Thomas Mahorter/Mehurter who appears in 1784-85 in the Northampton County, Pa., militia (3). In 1790 he appears in the Salisbury Township, Northampton County census with four males 16 and older, one under 16, and with five females (4). From 1802 through 1821, Philadelphia city directories show a Mahorter family living at 143 Cherry Street. In 1802-03 John Mahurter, laborer, is listed at that address, replaced the next year by Thomas Mahurter, laborer. For 1805-13 Thomas Mawhorter, cabinet-maker is listed there, replaced in 1814 by Elizabeth Moherter, huckster. During 1818-21 Elizabeth is listed as a widow, then disappears. As Mrs. Mahorter, she was listed in the 1820 census as over age 44, with two boys between the ages of 10-26 (5). Whether the above are our Elizabeth and Thomas Mahorter remains unproven.

A-9. **BERNARD** ("Barney") **RASER**, only son of Baltus Reser (A-3) and Catharine Colladay, was born 10 August 1764 in Germantown, Pa. He was named after his grandfather Raser, who had died several years earlier. His childhood was spent in the family home on the south side of Germantown Avenue, where his father operated a tannery. He probably assisted his father in this work, but after his father died in mid-December 1773 the property was put up for sale. About a year later the widow Raser, with Bernard and his three young sisters, moved to downtown Philadelphia to a property owned by her stepfather, Blasius Daniel Mackinet.

This property, at the northwest corner of Second and Race (originally called Sassafra) Streets, contained a three-story brick house on the street, which widow Raser soon put to use as a tavern, and a two-story building

Our Raser Family

in back. Commencing about 1775, Catharine Raser operated a tavern and inn here for about twenty years. Presumably it was a family enterprise, with her children assisting their mother, along with help from Colladay family members. Being barely a block from the busy Philadelphia waterfront, the tavern must have attracted a wide variety of seafarers and maritime business men, whose activities quickly exposed her family to the business and social life of the city.

No records have been found to tell us of Bernard's experiences during his teenage and early adult years. We first find him as a sea captain in 1789, sailing a ship into the Caribbean. By then he was twenty-five years old and in a position of significant responsibility. Prior to this he must have spent a number of years learning navigation and the management of seamen and sails. A typical path then followed was to become an apprentice to an experienced captain and "learn the ropes" under his guidance. He later would advance to cabin boy, where he would become familiar with navigation and various aspects of handling the ship's cargo. Possibly Bernard had gone to sea quite young—on his final voyage in 1804, his apprentice was only about fourteen years old, and Jethro Myrick, who sailed his ship back from Java, was only about twenty-three. What may have happened is that, while working in his mother's tavern, Bernard developed and soon displayed a keen interest in shipping activity, which eventually caught the eye of a local sea captain or business man who decided to invest in developing his talents. It has long been suggested that he once sailed for Stephen Girard, but all references to Bernard found in a search of the Girard Papers are dated 1791 or later, and display only an incidental business relationship with Bernard (1).



Capt. Bernard Raser;
oil painting by
John Heyl Raser (P-7)

The first record we have of Bernard Raser's seafaring career is his departure in late-August 1789 for San Domingo, as captain of the brig *Union*. The vessel was owned by Peter Lemaigre (2), a merchant and ship owner who resided on the waterfront less than two blocks from the widow Raser's tavern. Bernard's next eight voyages also were for Peter Lemaigre, which raises the possibility that Lemaigre may have been the person responsible for his following a career at sea. Strengthening this possibility is the fact that Bernard Raser ended his signature with a distinct flourish, identical to that used by Lemaigre—possibly emulating the style of a man he had long grown to admire. For a description of the seven ships eventually commanded by Bernard, with what information I found about their ownership history, see Table 1 at the end of this account.

Bernard was captain of the brig *Union* on three voyages, the first two to San Domingo and the last to Guadaloupe. His principal cargoes returning from San Domingo were 16–20,000 gallons of molasses; from Guadaloupe he brought back rum and seven tons of sugar. On this third voyage we find the first evidence of Capt. Raser importing goods for his own account. Of the 1,261 gallons of rum imported from Guadaloupe, 323 were for his own account. See Table 2 for a list of Bernard Raser's twenty known voyages, with details of some of the cargoes carried in either direction.

It was probably in mid-June 1790, shortly after Bernard returned from Guadaloupe, that he married **MARY HEYL**. She was born in Philadelphia on 22 July 1765, the daughter of Philip Heyl and Maria Jacobina Ziegler (3*). Her father was a baker who long resided at 106 North Second Street, just a short

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distance south of Catharine Raser's inn—quite likely he supplied her inn with baked goods. He served in the Philadelphia City militia during the Revolutionary War; descendants loaned (supposedly) his gold watch to the Sons of the Revolution, who for many years placed it on display in Fraunces Tavern in lower Manhattan.

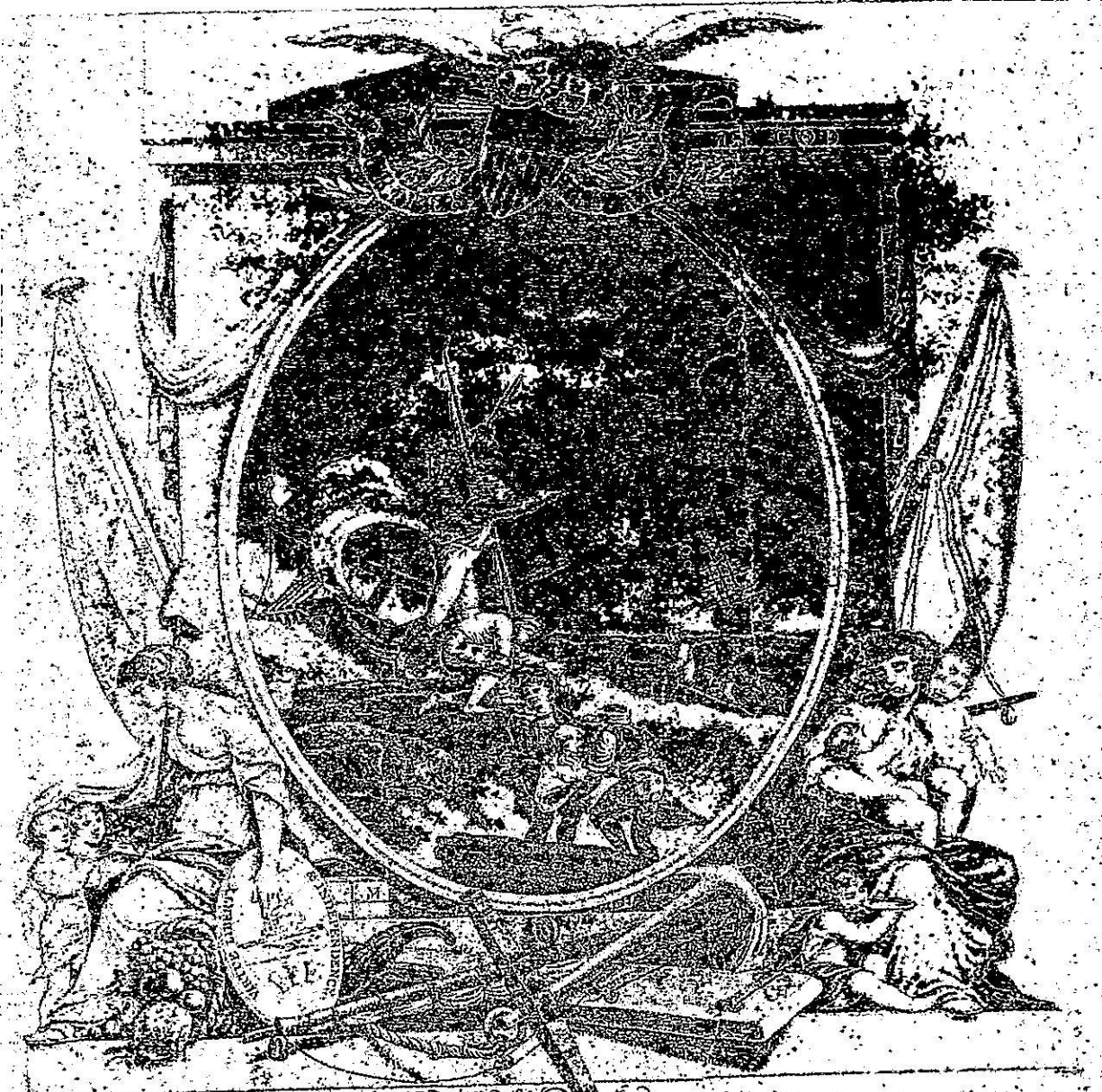
It seems likely that Bernard and Mary initially resided in her father's house. Although not named, they would fit nicely within the headcounts of persons listed in Philip Hehl's [*sic*] house in the 1790 census (4). Additionally, Barnet Razor, sea captain, is listed at Heyl's address in the 1793 city directory. However, in the 1797 directory, Bernard Razor, shipmaster, is listed at his mother's Duke Street (i.e., Artillery Lane) address, suggesting he subsequently had moved his family there. Oddly enough, that directory also lists Bernard Raser, sea captain, at 20 Vine Street. The previous year, and since 1791, William Lake, sea captain, had resided at that address. Tax records indicate that both men only rented the house, it being owned by the widow Joanna Austin, shopkeeper, who resided next door at 18 Vine Street (5). Possibly Bernard only used this place as a temporary storehouse for the accumulated goods he intended to export, or to sell after importing them.

Bernard did not return to sea—at least as commander of a ship—until shortly after his first child, son William, was born on 23 March 1791. It was probably as a result of starting a family that, on 4 April 1791, Bernard applied to become, and was “legally admitted a Member of the Society for the Relief of poor and distressed Masters of Ships, their Widows & Children, at a Quarterly Meeting thereof, held at Philadelphia” on that date. This was in effect a form of insurance policy, for which an elaborate certificate—still in family hands—was belatedly issued to Capt'n. Bernard Raser on 11 July 1800 (6).

On 27 April 1791, Bernard assumed command of Peter Lemaigre's 118-ton brigantine *Molly*. This was a recently completed ship, built in Philadelphia, and the five-month round trip to Le Havre, France, was undoubtedly her maiden voyage. This also was Bernard's first trans-Atlantic voyage as a captain—but possibly he had recently returned from Europe while traveling in a lesser capacity on another vessel. His outbound cargo was principally tobacco and 4,500 barrel staves; on his return it was cloth, clothing accessories and glass. In November he made a second voyage to Le Havre, bringing back a diverse cargo which included 577 gallons of claret wine. In June 1792 Bernard sailed the *Molly* to Amsterdam with a large cargo of coffee and lesser amounts of sugar, logwood and furs. By now he had extended his own business activity to exporting; he shipped 25 small barrels of rice for his own account.

The remaining three voyages for Lemaigre and the ship *Molly* took place between December 1792 and January 1794, and were all to San Domingo (Haiti) and Caribbean way-points. Lemaigre had become greatly concerned for the welfare of the rapidly-increasing number of French refugees streaming into Philadelphia to escape the escalating black uprisings in San Domingo, which had been precipitated by the French Revolution. In addition to supporting his commercial interests there, Lemaigre was using his ships to embark refugees. The first round trip of the *Molly* seemingly was not noteworthy. The outbound cargo consisted mostly of foodstuffs and some furniture, while the return cargo consisted of 38 tons of sugar, 27 tons of coffee and 816 gallons of molasses. No report of returning passengers was found.

The second trip to San Domingo, beginning on 17 May 1793, turned out to be much different. Lemaigre, in a letter to Thomas Jefferson—then Secretary of State—dated Philadelphia, 25 July, tells the story (7*). “[Y]our petitioner, being sole owner of the Brig or vessel called the Molly, whereof Bernard Razer is or was commander, fitted her out and [loaded] her at this Port of Philadelphia in the month of May with a cargo of Flour, and other articles for his own account, for Port au Prince in the Island of St. Domingo. And that the said vessel, having arrived at Port au Prince, there delivered her cargo here loaden, and received on board a full cargo of the produce of said Island and four thousand eight hundred Dollars in Specie, wholly for account of your petitioner, and set sail therewith bound for this port of Philadelphia. That your Petitioner hath received a letter from Captain Bernard Razer, the commander of his said Brig Molly, dated at New providence the 9th day of this present month, informing him that his said vessel and cargo were captured and sent into said Island of



THESE certify that *Capt. Bernard Raser* was legally admitted a Member of the Society for the Relief of poor and distressed Masters of Ships, their Widows & Children in a Quarterly Meeting thereof held at PHILADELPHIA the Fourth Day of April in the Year of our Lord 1791

Given under my Hand and Seal of the Society the Seventh Day of July 1800.

J. M. *John M. Dennistoun* Secy. *George Ord* Pres^{nt}

Masters of Ships "Insurance" Certificate, 1800 (P-8)

new providence with a full cargo, and that they had taken from him 4,800 Dollars in cash, the property of [this] Petitioner. That they had unbent her sails for a Trial of his vessel and cargo, and that he could not inform what would be the consequence, as they bribe the sailors, get them drunk, and ship them on board their privateers, leaving some vessels [with] but one or two Hands and sending them into Port. That the said Capt. Razer's letter, of which Copy is herewith handed you (8), also informs your petitioner that a great number of other vessels belonging to other ports in these States, several of which have property on board for your petitioner, have also been captured by the British and carried into the said Island of New providence." Lemaigre petitioned Jefferson for aid from the government to recover his possessions, lest he be ruined by the violent and unjust measures made use of by the said British privateers. The direct result of the petition is unknown, but apparently Bernard and the *Molly* were soon released. On 6 September the ship returned to Philadelphia with a small cargo—the largest item being 4 ½ tons of coffee—but with 37 refugees from San Domingo (9). How much of Lemaigre's cargo and money had been retained by the privateers has yet to be discovered.

While Bernard was still on this ill-fated Caribbean voyage, the wife of Peter Lemaigre contracted a serious fever. On 19 August 1793 Dr. Benjamin Rush, Philadelphia's best-known physician, consulted with two other doctors at Lemaigre's house at 77 Water Street, where Catherine Lemaigre "was dying horribly, gasping for breath and vomiting black bile." Similar cases had begun to appear, and after one of the doctors called his attention to the pungent odor in the waterfront air, Dr. Rush concluded that "the disease that had [also killed the daughter of one of the doctors] and was killing Mrs. LeMaigre [was] bilious remitting yellow fever" (10). Panic soon arose as word of his conclusion rapidly spread throughout the city. By the time the plague ran its course more than two months later, over 5,000 of Philadelphia's 55,000 inhabitants had died of the disease and a sizable part of the population had fled the city (11). On 22 September, slightly over two weeks after Bernard's safe return from New Providence, his 22-year-old sister, Sarah Raser, also succumbed to yellow fever. Between 1794–1853 Philadelphia had nine less-severe yellow fever epidemics; in November 1797 Capt. B. Raser appears in a list of Germantown subscribers (had he fled there?) as giving a charitable donation of \$15 for victims of that year's yellow fever outbreak (12).

In November 1793 Bernard made his last trip on the *Molly*. His initial destination this time was Nassau, New Providence, with foodstuffs and a large load of lumber—scantling and shingles. Possibly this was for use in building houses for the San Domingo refugees who were developing a large French community in Nassau. He returned from Port au Prince in mid-January 1794 with a small cargo, having stopped again on his way back at New Providence, where he presumably disembarked another load of refugees.

No record has been found to indicate that Bernard returned to sea for almost the next year and a half. This initially may have been caused by the death of Peter Lemaigre, his employer, in early 1794. He certainly was home when his daughter Catherine was conceived late in the year. When he did return to sea on 30 June 1795, his employer was Ferdinand Gourdon. Gourdon's vessel was the brig *Betsy*, a 117-ton ship almost identical to the *Molly*. The destination of this voyage was again San Domingo, with the cargo consisting of substantial amounts of foodstuffs, lumber, 150 hogsheads of unassembled barrel parts, and 3,000 barrel hoops. No record of his return cargo was found.

The day before Christmas 1795, Bernard left for LeHavre, France, commanding Gourdon's 188½-ton ship *Thomas Chalkley*. The full shipload of barrels of flour and corn meal were consigned by Gourdon for sale on the open market. After this point, what happened to Bernard Raser during much of the next four years remains a mystery. What we do know is that 16 1/2 months later, on 12 May 1797, he returned from Bordeaux, France, with the *Thomas Chalkley*. No record of a return cargo, or of a possible intervening second voyage to Bordeaux, was found. Within six weeks after he returned, the ship was sold twice, then sailed by another captain on two voyages to Surinam. In early March 1798, almost ten months after Bernard's return from Bordeaux, he sailed the 225-1/3 ton ship *Peggy*, of uncertain ownership, to Charleston, South Carolina. No cargo manifest was found for this trip, and Bernard may have returned independently to Philadelphia. In mid-



Pastel of Capt. Bernard Raser (P-9)

November 1798 the *Peggy* was reported as lost, presumably by Capt. John Elliott, who usually had been commander of this ship. Seemingly, Bernard did not return to sea again until December 1799, when he resumed a normal sailing pattern with two to four weeks at home between voyages.

The unexplained sailing to Charleston, S.C.—hub of the American slave trade—raises the question whether sometime during these four years Bernard may have been in some way involved in the slave trade. Could such voyages have used Bordeaux as one of the triangular trade points? And could such usage have later made such vessels unfit for conventional cargoes so that they subsequently were pressed into other use, or conveniently lost? However, it is possible his reason for being in Bordeaux was connected to French refugee problems, not only from San Domingo, but from France itself. Additionally, a Quasi-War existed between the United States and France during 1797–1801, and it is known that many American vessels were captured and impounded by the French in Bordeaux (13*). A family tradition credits Bernard with having “survived three shipwrecks,” but this might have reflected one or more impoundings. A detailed study of shipping news published in Philadelphia newspapers during this period might shed some light on this mystery. In any event, Bernard seems not to have sailed any further for Ferdinand Gourdon.

In February 1799 Bernard became a homeowner when he purchased a townhouse, on a lot of approximately 14 ½ feet by 87 feet, on the north side of George’s Alley—commonly known as Coate’s Alley (14). The alley was located between Vine and Sassafras (now Race) Streets, and Delaware Front and Second Streets, and the house put him only a short block from much shipping activity. It is probably in this house that Barnet Raser and family appear in the 1800 census (15). In city directories from 1800 through 1809, Bernard Raser, sea captain (or ship master), and later Mary Raser, widow, are listed as residents of 45 Coates Alley.

In late 1799 Bernard was employed by John and Thomas Clifford, wealthy Philadelphia merchants and ship owners. His last eight voyages were all for the Clifford family. Shortly after Christmas, Bernard sailed for London, England, as commander of the 262-1/2 ton ship *Roebuck*. His outbound cargo consisted principally of 40-tons of coffee and a great quantity of forest products; he returned with 177 grindstones, a large variety of woven materials and paint ingredients, and other assorted items including ink powder and four small mulberry trees. For his own account, Bernard brought back 30 kegs of white lead and a keg of mustard—he continued in later trips to bring back compact items of this type which had high market value. This voyage was followed by another five-month round trip to London with similar cargoes.

Bernard’s remaining two voyages as commander of the *Roebuck* were both to Bristol, England. His outbound cargoes on these trips consisted largely of barrels of wheat and rye flour, and great quantities of barrel staves. The return cargoes consisted of English manufactured tools and hardware, semi-processed raw materials suited for further processing in the United States, glassware, and a huge variety of household goods for the retail trade.

In mid-November 1801, Bernard assumed command of the 355-ton ship *Philadelphia*, which since its launching in 1796 had been in Clifford family ownership. During the Quasi-Naval War with France (1797–1801), the *Philadelphia*—along with many other US ships—had been commissioned by Congress as an armed merchant vessel, and equipped with a dozen 4- and 6-pounder guns. This was a consequence of an earlier declaration of war between France and Great Britain, in which the French declared any British goods aboard neutral vessels, or goods destined for British ports, were to be considered as contraband and subject to seizure. Our armed merchant vessels “were not privateers in the strict sense since they were permitted to attack only armed ships of the French and were forbidden to prey upon enemy commerce in general” (16). This probably explains the somewhat misleading tradition that Bernard held “Letters of Marque and Reprisal ... which made him a privateer.” The guns had been removed from the *Philadelphia* in early 1801 when hostilities ceased.

Know all Men by these presents, that I, Bernard Raser, Master of the Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, in the City of New York, do hereby certify that the said Bernard Raser, who has signed his name in the Margin in order to present himself as an apprentice and Fellowcraft, and who has been made by us, in accordance with the usual and ancient customs, rites and ceremonies of our said Lodge, is ordered to be appraised hereunto, this 15th day of the Month of December, in the year of our said Lodge, 5800.

Witness my hand and seal, this 15th day of the Month of December, in the year of our said Lodge, 5800.

Bernard Raser
Wm. M. Raper
Wm. M. Raper

Witness my hand and seal, this 15th day of the Month of December, in the year of our said Lodge, 5800.

J. J. Matthey
J. J. Clomest, M. E. C.
Abel J. Becker

Peter Jacob Oliver
Keeper of the Seal

Our Raser Family

Masonic Certificate, 1803 (P-10)

Little has been found of the cargoes on the first three voyages of the *Philadelphia* under Capt. Raser. The first two voyages were to Leghorn, Italy, and the third to Antwerp, Belgium. On the first Leghorn trip John D. Clifford, whose father and uncle were the Messrs. Thomas and John Clifford, ship owners, was aboard as supercargo (the onboard agent for handling business aspects of at least part of the cargo). He was carrying a letter of introduction written by Stephen Girard, dated Philadelphia, 10 November 1801, vouching for the integrity of the Clifford's merchant house should the bearer wish to conduct business at the ship's destination or intermediate way points (1). On the return trip, Constantine Rafinesque, son of a Marseilles merchant, was among the eight passengers boarding at Leghorn. After initially working for the Clifford family in Philadelphia, Rafinesque became engrossed in the study of botany and developed into one of the most well-known—and controversial—botanical classifiers and writers of his day. On Bernard's second five-month round trip to Italy, the return cargo included marble mantles, jambs and slabs for use in building construction; cloth products, flavorings, Parmesan cheese and wine.

During the voyage to Antwerp, Bernard was admitted into the Masonic Order in nearby Flushing in the Netherlands. On "the 15 Day of 1 Month [probably March] of the Masonic year of Light 5803" [1803], he was "made ... an apprentice and Fellow Craft" in the Lodge L' Astrede L' Orient No. 5, which had been established in Flushing in 1793, apparently as a mariners' lodge. He was issued an elaborate diploma—still in family hands—which he was required to sign "in the Margin, in order to prevent Deception" (17). His signature contains the distinctive flourish. According to family tradition, when Bernard later died in Java, the Masons were responsible for seeing that all of his navigational equipment and personal effects were returned to his wife. It also became a tradition for his sons and male descendants to seek membership in the Masonic Order.

On 10 October 1803, still in command of the *Philadelphia*, Bernard set sail for Batavia, Java—now known as Jakarta, Indonesia. An extant crew list describes Cap'n. Bernard Raser as five feet ten inches tall, of fair complexion, with light hair and stout made (18). Second in command was Jethro Myrick, age about 23 years. James Ebbert (Abert), listed as an apprentice about 14 years old, was the grandson of Bernard's aunt Sarah (Colladay) Meng. The remainder of the crew consisted of thirteen white men, ages 17–37 (but mostly in their mid-20s); two free mulattos, ages about 26 and 41; and two "Indented Black Boys," ages about 18 and 20. Unnamed, but also on board, were one or more supercargoes.

No outbound cargo manifest was found, but a book describing the trade at Batavia at that time states: "The Americans [from all US ports] bring kerseymeres, cloths, hats, gold wire, silver, galloon, stationery, wine, beer, Seltzer water, provisions, and piastres, in exchange for spices, sugar, arrack, tea, coffee, rice, rushes, and Chinese silk and porcelain" (19). The destination area being a dangerous one for shipping, the vessel departed armed with five cannon and a sizable complement of muskets, pistols, cutlasses and boarding pikes. Batavia records indicate the *Philadelphia* arrived there safely on 27 February 1804.

A ship captain who had left Batavia on 7 March later reported that the *Philadelphia* was scheduled to depart on 17 March. Another captain, who left there on 22 March, reported that the "ship Philadelphia, Razor, of Philadelphia, [was] to sail in 2 days, the capt. very ill ..." (20). As best we can tell, Bernard had come down with yellow fever—a constant threat in Batavia at that time. Family records state he died there on 25 March, while Batavia records indicate he was buried in the New Churchyard at Batavia-Centrum, with supercargo Leech paying the burying costs (21). The *Philadelphia* finally sailed on 29 March, with Jethro Myrick as captain, and returned home 4 1/2 months later on 10 August 1804. Its return cargo consisted of about 190 tons of coffee, 85 tons of sugar and 65 tons of pepper.

Abert descendants have noted that James, an elder son of John and Margaret (Meng) Abert, "was indulged in his wish for a sea-faring life, [and in 1803] was placed under the care of the well known and highly respected, Capt. Bernard Raser, who was indeed a generous father to him." Following Bernard's death, James was raised in the Raser household as late as 1807, with the widow Mary Raser acting the role of his mother

(22). James continued his sea-faring career for some years until, sometime after 1811, "with ship and crew, [he was] finally lost at sea, somewhere in or near the Straits of Sunda, near Java or Sumatra. They were never heard of after reaching that point, and are supposed to have been victims of Malay pirates, or to have been sunk by a monsoon." (23)

Bernard had failed to make a will. The administration of his estate, believed not to exceed \$6,000, was granted to his widow (24). Mary Raser was left with five small children, ages one to 13 years, but her house was free of any mortgage, and apparently she was left with sufficient cash or income to support her family. In July 1805 she was able to augment her income by financing a \$1,000 mortgage (25). An inventory made after her death showed that she still retained investments made earlier by Bernard, which included shares of stock in both the Bank of Pennsylvania, and the Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Road Company, as well as a 1799 mortgage from her father (26).

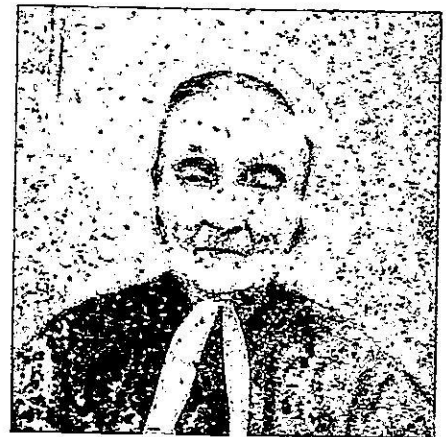
Prior to 24 August 1809, Catharine Raser—grandmother of the Raser children—passed away leaving her five grandchildren with a one-third interest in her estate. Joseph Miller, their uncle, was appointed administrator of her estate, and finding the grandchildren all to be minors, he petitioned the court that guardians be named for them. The court appointed John Heyl, the widow Mary's brother, to be guardian of John, George and Mary, while William and Thomas, minors above 14 years, freely chose him also to be their guardian (27). Within a year Miller had sold their grandmother's Artillery Lane house and completed distribution of her estate.

It probably had become apparent towards the end of 1809 that Mary Raser was seriously ill. She and her children had moved to her father Philip's house at 106 North Second Street, where her brother John Heyl and sister Elizabeth also resided. The Coates Alley townhouse was rented to provide income for the family. Mary Raser, age 44 years, died on 17 February 1810 of "consumption of the lungs." She initially was buried in the churchyard of St. John's Lutheran Church at Fifth and Race Streets, but in 1924 her remains were reinterred in North Laurel Hill Cemetery, during a mass reinterment of the dead not claimed by relatives (28*).

Mary Raser, "being indisposed in Body," left a deathbed will dated 7 February 1810 (29*). Among the personal effects bequeathed to her children, son William received his father's gold repeating watch, son John received his father's writing desk, and daughter Mary received a large Family Bible and a miniature picture of her late father set in gold. She also gave each of her sons a legacy of \$300, to be paid as each reached full age. All effects not specifically bequeathed were to be converted to cash and invested for the benefit of her five children. She named her brother John Heyl as sole executor.

In the 1810 census, which only names the head of each household, but gives headcounts for various age-groups of household members, the Raser children fit nicely within the family of Philip Heyl, their grandfather (30). Later in the year Philip Heyl died, and his son John assumed ownership of the North Second Street house. Tax lists show that Hannah Hollingshead was the initial renter of the Coates Alley townhouse (31). The 1810 census shows Hannah there with twelve other persons, using the place as a boarding house (32).

The Raser children were raised under the loving care of their uncle John Heyl (and his wife Nancy, after their marriage in 1813) and "Aunt Betsy" Heyl—John's spinster sister who continued to reside with him over the years. A lasting bond developed between the two families, with John Heyl naming two of his children Mary Raser and George Raser. When the administration of Bernard and Mary Raser's



Nancy (Molledore) Heyl,
wife of John Heyl (P-11)

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estate ended in early 1825, the final inventory totaled over \$13,600 (33). One of the later actions taken was to dispose of the Coates Alley townhouse (34). On 29 December 1823 the house was sold to John Abert, he being the high bidder at a public sale (35). In addition to being the father of James Abert, the seaman, John Abert also was the father of Juliet Courtney Abert, who only three months before the house purchase had married Capt. Bernard's son, John Bernard Raser.

Children (RASER), all born in downtown Philadelphia, Pa. (36):

- + 1. William (W-1), b. 23 Mar. 1791, d. 3 Jan. 1833, m. 3 Apr. 1821 Amanda Susan Pfister.
- + 2. Thomas (T-1), b. 26 Aug. 1793, d. 8 Dec. 1857, m. (1) 10 Oct. 1822 Amantilda Mary Pfister, m. (2) 30 Sep. 1841 Elizabeth Knight Brown.
- 3. Catharine, b. 10 Aug. 1795, d. 3 May 1796 (37).
- + 4. John Bernard (A-11), b. 26 July 1798, d. 15 Aug. 1825, m. 25 Sep. 1823 Juliet Courtney Abert.
- + 5. George (A-12), b. 7 Apr. 1801, d. 8 Aug. 1826.
- + 6. Mary (A-13), b. 31 July 1803, d. 16 Feb. 1852, m. 16 Sep. 1821 John Himrod Vincent.

Table 1

Ships Sailed by Capt. Bernard Raser
(Vessel and Ownership Details)

This listing was compiled by the author, primarily from "Proof of Ship Ownership" certificates found in the National Archives, Records Group 36, during a week-long search in August 1967. The certificates are bound in a set of eleven volumes, covering the period 13 March 1790 to 9 October 1801. The certificates are sequentially numbered; in most cases I have provided the certificate number within square brackets following the registry date. Apparently new certificates were required to reflect changes in ship ownership and configuration, but not changes of masters, so that Bernard's name will not appear with every ship.

No records were found of any ships sailed by Bernard Raser prior to 1789. In 1789-90 he made three voyages in the brig *Union*, owned by Peter Lemaigre of Philadelphia. Since no mention was made of the tonnage of this vessel, it is impossible to be certain if the *sloop* of that name, also owned by Lemaigre and described below, is the vessel Capt. Raser sailed. All other vessels listed have been positively identified.

In addition to providing a physical description of the vessels, what was found of their ownership history and configuration changes (in the years close to Bernard's captaincy) also is given. In some cases sailing history from other sources has been added. All of the owners were merchants of Philadelphia. Several were members of the sizable French emigre population that settled in Philadelphia. Capt. Raser's last eight voyages were made for the Clifford family. If he ever sailed for the well-known Stephen Girard, it must have been prior to 1789, and not as a captain.

Registry Date	Owner(s)	Master
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1) Sloop *Union* of Philadelphia

One deck, 47 ft. 8 in. long, 17 ft. 8 in. broad, and 6 ft. 9 in. deep. Square stern, of 46 1/2 tons, with one mast; built in Connecticut in 1789.

23 August 1792 [96]	Peter Lemaigre	David Ross (1)
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Possibly this *sloop* was the same as the brig *Union*, owned by Peter Lemaigre and commanded by Bernard Raser between August 1789 and June 1790.

2) Brigantine *Molly* of Philadelphia

One deck, 65 ft. 9 in. long, 20 ft. 4 in. broad, and 10 ft. deep. Square stern, of 118 tons, with two masts and a woman head; built in Philadelphia in 1791.

27 April 1791 [1:30]	Peter Lemaigre	Bernard Raser
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Capt. Raser made six voyages as master of the *Molly* between April 1791 and January 1794; the first was probably her maiden voyage. After two voyages to Le Havre, France (then called Havre de Grace), he sailed her to Amsterdam. The remaining four trips were made to various locations in the Caribbean.

4 September 1794 [645]	Robert Ralston	John Tremmels
23 March 1795 [857]	Ferdinand Gourdon	John Tremmels

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26 December 1795 [1242]	Gabriel Bouche	Thomas Willson
Certificate surrendered 27 July 1796, with the statement "Vessel Lost at Sea." But she must have been raised, refloated or otherwise recovered (had she only been captured?), for in 1798 the identical ship again appears in the records!		
10 March 1798 [1984]	Joseph L. G. De Lisle	none
Certificate surrendered 29 March 1798; "New owners."		
29 March 1798 [2012]	Felix Imbert	Thomas Chirnside
Certificate surrendered 24 March 1803; "New owner."		

3) Brig *Betsy* of Philadelphia

Two decks, 66 ft. long, 20 ft. 4 in. wide, and 10 ft. 2 in. deep. Square stern, of 117 tons, with two masts and a woman head; built in Philadelphia in 1789.

30 March 1793 [210]	John Shallcross, Jehu Hollingsworth	William Clark
1 October 1793 [402]	John Shallcross, Jehu Hollingsworth	Christopher Clouser
25 July 1794 [609]	James Prince	Samuel Newell
22 December 1794 [794]	Ferdinand Gourdon	James Lake
Certificate surrendered 30 June 1795; "Vessel Altered."		
30 June 1795 [1022]	Ferdinand Gourdon	Bernard Raser
Capt. Raser made one voyage with the <i>Betsy</i> to Hispaniola (San Domingo) between June and October 1795. Certificate surrendered 26 December 1795; "property Changed."		
26 December 1795 [1245]	Gabriel Bouche	Benjamin Thomas

4) Ship *Thomas Chalkley* of Philadelphia

Of 188 47/95 tons; built in Providence, R.I., in 1793.

15 July 1794 [592]	Ferdinand Gourdon	Robert Rice
On one voyage, Capt. Rice sailed her to Rotterdam, returning on 13 October 1795. Certificate surrendered 24 December 1795; "[H]ead put to the vessel."		
24 December 1795 [1241]	Ferdinand Gourdon	Bernard Raser
Capt. Raser sailed the <i>Thomas Chalkley</i> to Le Havre and Bordeaux in a voyage that <i>seemingly</i> lasted more than 1 1/3 years! See the account of Bernard Raser for further details of this voyage, which covered the period from December 1795 to May 1797. Certificate surrendered 13 June 1797; "New owners."		
13 June 1797 [1796]	Abraham Kintzing (2), Henry Pratt	none
Certificate surrendered 23 June 1797; "New owners."		
23 June 1797 [1808]	John Gardiner, Jr.	John Clark
Capt. Clark sailed her on two voyages to Surinam. Certificate surrendered 11 July 1798; "New owners."		
11 July 1798 [2101]	John Gardiner, Jr., James Henderson, David Knox	John Clark
23 August 1799 [2394]	John Inskeep, Gideon Hills Wells	Thomas Kenney
5 April 1800 [2504]	Moore Wharton	Thomas Kenney
Certificate surrendered 21 March 1803; "New Owner."		

Table 2

Voyages of Capt. Bernard Raser
(Destination and Cargo Details)

This listing was compiled by the author, primarily from Outward Registers, Outbound Cargo Manifests, and Import Declarations, found in the National Archives, Records Group 36, during a week-long search in August 1967. Passenger list information was obtained in 1986 from the National Archives microfilm publication M425, "Passenger Arrival Lists, Philadelphia, 1800-1882." Records Group 36 covers records of the Bureau of Customs whose functions, since the creation of the Customs Service in July 1789, have related to such matters as the import and export of merchandise, collection of taxes, entrance and clearance of vessels, protection of seamen and passengers, and the registering and licensing of merchant vessels.

Bernard Raser is known to have been a sea captain during twenty voyages in the period 1789-1804. He undoubtedly sailed as a deck hand and apprentice for a number of years before this, and even may have commanded a few voyages before 1789—although he was only 25 years old at that time. The voyages are listed in chronological order, with the official departure and return arrival dates, as appear in various customs house records. When actual dates were not found, approximations are given in parentheses. The principal destination of each voyage is headlined; at times way points are named in the ensuing text. The round trip time of each voyage, to the nearest half-month, is shown in parentheses after the principal destination name. In ten cases the outbound cargos are enumerated; these lists are believed to be quite accurate. Details of fourteen return cargos are given, but the nature of import declarations makes it highly uncertain whether at any time the entire cargo is herein described. Any cargo noted as carried for Capt. Raser's own account is given in detail.

The reader should be aware that when an entry in this table says "not found," it means the information/record was not found by the author during his searches. Records supplementing this list certainly exist in other National Archives record groups, in ship owner/shipping merchants archives in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and in ship news listings in contemporary Philadelphia newspapers—to name a few sources. Any further searches of such sources could prove to be quite laborious.

Brig *Union* of Philadelphia (46 1/2 tons?)

1) (late-August 1789) Aux Cayes, San Domingo (2 ½ mos.) 5 November 1789

No outbound manifest found. Returned from Aux Cayes with 20,060 gals. of molasses, plus small quantities of coffee, sugar, cocoa and red wine. All imported by Peter Lemaigre.

2) (mid-December 1789) Aux Cayes, San Domingo (3 mos.) 17 March 1790

No outbound manifest found. Returned from Aux Cayes carrying 16,030 gals. of molasses, 49 green hides and a small quantity of sugar.

3) (April 1790) Basseterre, Guadeloupe (2 ½ mos.) 23 June 1790

No outbound manifest found. Returned from Basseterre, Guadeloupe, carrying 1,261 gals. of rum and 14,192 lbs. of sugar. 323 gals. of the rum was for the account of Capt. Raser.

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9) 1 November 1793 Nassau, New Providence (2 ½ mos.) 14 January 1794

Sailed for Nassau, New Providence, with 20 barrels of pork, 38 barrels of harangs (herrings?), 102 barrels of Indian corn, 20,560 cubic ft. of scantling (thin lumber), and a parcel of shingles, all shipped by Peter Lemaigre and consigned to the account of Frederick Boulange.

Returned from Port au Prince, San Domingo, via New Providence, with a small quantity of cotton and linen. It is likely he disembarked refugees from San Domingo at Nassau.

Brig *Betsy* of Philadelphia, 117 tons

10) 30 June 1795 San Domingo (4 mos.) 20 October 1795

Sailed for Hispaniola with substantial amounts of flour, red and white wine, beef, lard and butter, and sundries, with lesser amounts of candles, nails and hams. In addition, carried 668 pine boards, 137 pieces of pine scantling, 150 hogsheads of shooks (sets of staves and headings for complete barrels), and 3,000 hoops. All carried in the name of Ferdinand Gourdon.

Records of return cargo not found.

Ship *Thomas Chalkley* of Philadelphia, 188 47/95 tons

11) 24 December 1795 Le Havre, France (16 ½ mos. ??) 12 May 1797

Left Philadelphia "bound to Havre de Grace & a Market," with a cargo of 707 barrels of flour, 928 barrels of corn meal, and a small amount of coffee, snuff, barley and peas, all in the name of Ferdinand Gourdon.

Returned from Bordeaux, *seemingly* 16 1/2 months later; no record of inward cargo found. See main text for discussion. Within the next six weeks after his return, the ship was sold twice, then was sailed on two trips to Surinam by another captain.

Ship *Peggy* of Philadelphia, 225 32/95 tons

12) 3 March 1798 Charleston, South Carolina (??) (mid-April 1798)

No outward manifest found. John Elliot had usually been the captain since March 1796. After Capt. Raser sailed the ship to Charleston in March 1798, he may have returned as a passenger aboard another vessel. Capt. Elliot was again master when the *Peggy* was reported lost in November of the same year.

Ship *Roebuck* of Philadelphia, 262 48/95 tons

13) 27 December 1799 London, England (6 mos.) 5 July 1800

Sailed with 39,800 lbs. of coffee, 600 barrels of turpentine, 31 1/2 tons of logwood, large quantities of firesticks, staves and oakbark, and lesser amounts of cotton, furs, ginsang, snake root, indigo and "plants."

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Ship *Philadelphia* of Philadelphia, 354 54/95 tons

17) (mid-November 1801) Leghorn, Italy (5 mos.) 19 April 1802

No outbound or return cargo papers found. Returned with eight passengers (1802 list #67).

18) (mid-May 1802) Leghorn, Italy (5 mos.) 18 October 1802

No outbound manifest found. Returned with a small cargo of marble mantles, jambs and slabs; beads and buttons, table cloths, sheets, hats; also liquorice, citron, Parmesan cheese, wine and some books. Also four passengers (1802 list #225).

19) (January 1803) Antwerp, Belgium (5 mos.) 13 June 1803

No outbound or return papers found, including any passenger list.

20) 10 October 1803 Batavia, Java (10 mos.) 10 August 1804

No outward manifest found. Arrived Batavia 27 February 1804; was to leave about 17 March but finally sailed on 29 March, four days after the death of Capt. Raser.

Returned with approx. 3,800 bags of coffee (about 190 tons), 85 tons of sugar, and 2,900 bags of pepper (about 65 tons). Ships arms consisted of five cannon (the Batavia arrival report said six guns), 12 muskets, six blunderbusses, ten pistols, ten cutlasses and eight boarding pikes. No passenger list.



Selected Proofs of Ship Ownership, and Cargo Manifests
(from the National Archives, Records Group 36)

215

Proof of the Ownership of a Ship or Vessel.

I Ferdinand Gourdon merchant of Philadelphia
in the county of Philadelphia and State of Pennsylvania do solemnly
swear according to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the Brig called the
Betsy of Philadelphia of the burthen of One hundred
Twenty tons, and was built at Philadelphia in the State of
Pennsylvania in the year One thousand
Seven hundred and eighty nine

that I am a citizen of the United States; that my present usual place of abode or residence is
Philadelphia in the county of Philadelphia and State of
Pennsylvania; and that I the said Ferdinand
Gourdon am the

the true and lawful owner of the said Brig; that there is no subject or citizen
of any foreign prince or state, directly or indirectly, by way of trust, confidence, or otherwise,
interested therein, or in the profits or issues thereof;

Philadelphia 30 June 1795
Sworn before
John Hughes
Ferd. Gourdon

Bernard Raser
named Brig Betsy
that I am a citizen of the United States, having been born in the State of
Pennsylvania
30 June 1795
Sworn before
John Hughes
Bernard Raser

Proof of Ownership for the brig Betsy, 1795
Bernard Raser was captain of the Betsy on one voyage to San Domingo.

135

Proof of the Ownership of a Ship or Vessel, to be registered.

I John Clifford of Pennsylvania in the county of Pennsylvania and state of Pennsylvania do solemnly affirm according to the best of my knowledge and belief, that the Ship called the Roebuck of Pennsylvania is of the burthen of 148 tons, and was built at Pennsylvania in the state of Pennsylvania

various Voyages 1789

[Faint, mostly illegible text]

that I am a citizen of the United States; that my present usual place of abode or residence is Pennsylvania in the county of Pennsylvania and state of Pennsylvania; and that I, the said John Clifford

together with Thomas Clifford

the true and only owners of the said vessel; that there is no subject nor citizen of any foreign prince or state, directly or indirectly, by way of trust, confidence or otherwise, interested therein, or in the profits or issues thereof.

PHILADELPHIA, the 28 day of July 1800

affirmed before me John Griffith John Clifford
Thomas Clifford

I, Bernard Raser the present master or commander of the above named vessel, do solemnly swear that I am a citizen of the United States, having been born in Pennsylvania

PHILADELPHIA, the 28 day of July 1800
sworn before me John Griffith Bernard Raser

Proof of Ownership for the ship Roebuck, 1800

Bernard Raser was captain of the Roebuck on four voyages to England, 1799-1801.

Proof of the Ownership of a Ship or Vessel, to be registered.

I Thomas Clifford Milard in the
 county of Philadelphia and state of Pennsylvania
 do solemnly affirm according to the best of my knowledge and belief, that
 the Ship called the Philadelphia of Philadelphia
 is of the burthen of Three hundred fifty tons
 and was built at Philadelphia in the state of
Pennsylvania in the year 1796

that I am a citizen of the United States; that my present usual place of abode or re-
 sidence is Philadelphia in the county of Philadelphia and state
 of Pennsylvania; and that I, the said Thomas
Clifford together with John
Clifford of San Mateo do

any foreign prince or state, directly or indirectly, by way of trust, confidence or other-
 wise, interested therein, or in the profits or issues thereof.

PHILADELPHIA, the 15 day Jan 1801
 before me John Gaff Thomas Clifford
John Clifford

I Theodore Bliss the present master or commander of
 the above named Vessel, do solemnly swear that I am a citizen of the United
 States, having been born in Massachusetts

PHILADELPHIA, the 15 day of January 1801
 before me John Gaff Theodore Bliss

Proof of Ownership for the ship Philadelphia, 1801
 Bernard Raser was captain of the Philadelphia on his last four voyages, 1801-1804.

Philad^a 17th May 1793.

Manifest of the Cargoes of the Brig Molly, of Philadelphia, Bernard
Rau, Master bound for St. Domingo.

118

- 500 - Five hundred bbls Flour, whereof
 - 300 - three hundred bbls shipped by Dutels & Wachsmuth
 - 100 - one hund. bbls - do - by Anthony S. Morris & Co
 - 100 - one hund. bbls - do - by Peter Lemaigre
- 30 - Thirty ^{Fines} Rice - do - by - do -
- 1 - one bbl of Goods - do - by - do -
- 2 - two bbls } Goods - do - by - do -
- 3 - three Cases Writing Paper - do - by James ~~Henry~~ Richard Price.

Delany

Bernard Rau

Manifest of the Cargo of the brig Molly, May 1793

Manifest & Report of the Cargo of the Ship Thomas
 Chalkley Bernard Raser Master bound to Havre. Grand a. Martin
 188 47/95 Co. 1795

Shipped by Ferdinand Goudon of Philad^a

marks

SH

Six hundred & Seven Barrels of Flour
 Two hundred half
 Nine hundred & Twenty Eight Barrels corn Meal
 Five hogheads of Coffee
 fourteen Cices Rappin Snuff
 three Cices Barley
 Two d^o Peas

Ship Stores on

Philad^a December 24th 1795

From Refreime

Bernard Raser

[Signature]

Manifest of the Cargo of the ship Thomas Chalkley, December 1795

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A-10. **SUSANNAH** ("Susey", "Susan") **RASER**, daughter of Baltes Reser (A-3) and Catharine Colladay, was born 12 January 1767 in Germantown, Pa. (1, 2). She was raised in Germantown until 1775, when her widowed mother moved to downtown Philadelphia. A Dresden-type drawn-work sampler made by Susannah when she was sixteen years old, and embroidered "SUSannah RaZOr Her WOrk 1783", was pictured and described in *The Magazine Antiques*, February 1974 (3).

Susanna Razor was married in St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, on 27 November 1790, to **JOSEPH MILLER** (4). He was born 6 July 1757. By 1799 the Millers had become associated with the Germantown Reformed Church, in which a number of their children were baptized (5*).

Joseph Miller was a tanner of Germantown. He had a large family from whom come connections with the Thorp and Gowen families (6). Joseph Miller died in the Mount Airy section of Germantown, Pa., on 27 March 1825; his widow died 22 September 1853. Both are buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery, near Mount Airy, with many other family members.

Children (MILLER), all born in Germantown, Pa. (1, 5, 6):

1. Sarah, b. 11 Nov. 1791, d. 12 Nov. 1791, bur. 13 Nov. Gtn. L.B.G. (7).
2. Catharine, b. 18 July 1793, d. 5 July 1880, m. 1815 Issachor Thorp. Their dau. Helen was the second wife of John Heyl Raser (W-2), who was her second cousin.
3. Sarah, b. 30 Jan. 1795, d. 3 Feb. 1869; never mrd.
4. Susannah ("Susan"), b. 13 Nov. 1796, d. 6 Feb. 1875; m. 1838 Daniel L. Billmeyer.
5. Joseph, b. 1 May 1799, d. 13 May 1874; m. Elizabeth —, d. 4 Jan. 1879. With chn. in fam. plot.
6. George, b. 20 Feb. 1801, d. 18 May 1801.
7. John, b. 2 Apr. 1802, d. 31 Aug. 1843 (1).
8. Charles, b. 23 Nov. 1803, d. 25 Oct. 1891, m. Mary —, b. 8 Mar. 1811, d. 7 June 1896.
9. Mary, b. 27 Jan. 1806, d. 12 Feb. 1874, m. 1827 James Gowen. She was the mother of Franklin B. Gowen, storied president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad.
10. George, d. 12 Mar. 1808, d. 10 July 1808(?) (1).
11. William, b. 9 Nov. 1809 (1), d. 16 Feb. 1872; never mrd.

A-11. **JOHN BERNARD RASER**, son of Capt. Bernard Raser (A-9) and Mary Heyl, was born 26 July 1798 in Philadelphia, Pa. He was orphaned at the age of eleven, and raised by his Heyl grandparents. Little is known of his early years, but family tradition says that about 1818 he accompanied his older brother William to Alabama on horseback, where they intended to establish business as commission merchants. William Raser set up headquarters in Mobile, while John subsequently located in Columbus, Mississippi, on the upper reaches of the Tombigbee River. John was well established there by June 1823, when his brother Thomas was inducted into Columbus Masonic Lodge No. 5—at that time John B. Raser was its treasurer and B. C. Barry was Grand Master (1).

During a return trip from Alabama on business, John B. Raser married **JULIET COURTNEY** ("Julia") **ABERT** in Philadelphia, Pa., on 25 September 1823 (2). The daughter of John Abert and Margaretta Meng (pronounced Ming), she was born 7 June 1803 in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. She was a second cousin of John B. Raser through her grandmother, Sarah Colladay, who married Ulrich Meng (3).

According to a son of Eliza Abert (sister of Juliet), the newly-weds sailed for Mobile on 5 October 1823 aboard the brig *Comet*, accompanied by Eliza. On 6 January they left Mobile for Columbus on the steamboat *Cotton Plant* (4), "the first to ply the Tombigby River." Delayed for two or three weeks on a sand bar about sixty miles below Columbus, they finally reached their destination towards the end of January. Columbus was "then a small village of log cabins with mud chimneys." (5)

Our Raser Family

John B. Raser was active as a merchant in Columbus until his death two years later. On "16 August, 1825 [he left Columbus] to see his sister, Mrs. Mary Vincent [A-13], then ill with typhoid fever in Tuscaloosa, and died on the road near Hargrove's, 20 miles from Tuscaloosa. Cause, too free use of cold spring water on a hot day" (5). His body was taken to Tuscaloosa, where it was interred in Greenwood Cemetery. His gravestone gives his birth and death dates (6).

The shock of the unexpected death of her husband, and being left alone with a four-month old child, far from close family members, soon resulted in the widow Raser suffering a nervous breakdown from which she never recovered (7). She remained for some time in Columbus with her sister Eliza (Abert) Barry's family, but by 1828 she had moved to Gloucester County, N.J., where she was being cared for by her sister Matilda Abert (8). Her whereabouts after that time remains undiscovered. Her only child, Mary Eliza, was adopted and raised by her sister Eliza (Abert) Barry, who soon after became the wife of the Rev. David Wright, a Presbyterian minister of Columbus (9).

It is to be recalled that the children of John and Margaretta (Meng) Abert had early become familiar with the Raser family, when their elder brother James served as a seaman apprentice under Capt. Bernard Raser in 1803. Following Capt. Raser's death, James continued to reside in the widow Raser's house on Coate's Alley. In 1823, in the final settlement of the Raser estate, his father purchased the Coate's Alley townhouse. John Abert subsequently died and his son John J. acquired ownership of the townhouse through the purchase of the shared interests of his seven surviving sisters and brother—all of whom by then had become scattered throughout the East and South (8*).

Only child (RASER), born in Columbus, Mississippi:

+ 1. Mary Eliza (A-14), b. 1 Apr. 1825, d. 14 Jan. 1900, m. 5 Jan. 1852 Bartley Barry.

A-12. **GEORGE RASER**, son of Capt. Bernard Raser (A-9) and Mary Heyl, was born 7 April 1801 in Philadelphia, Pa. (1, 5). He was orphaned at the age of eight, and raised by his Heyl grandparents in downtown Philadelphia. Nothing is known of his early years, but by 1821 he had joined his older brothers in their business ventures in Alabama.

George first appears in Mobile in a November 1821 list of persons liable to perform duty as city watchmen—the origin of law and order in the rapidly-growing City of Mobile (2). He possibly is the Mr. Raser who arrived in Mobile on 2 January 1822 aboard the sloop *Phoenix*, accompanying cargo from Philadelphia consigned to W. Raser & Co., and is probably the G. Raser who arrived in Mobile on 11 November 1822 aboard the sloop *Juliet*, again accompanying cargo from Philadelphia being imported by W. Raser & Co. (3). In 1825 he was among those liable for work on extending Spring Hill Road in Mobile, being apportioned three days of work on two occasions (4).

George Raser died on 8 August 1826, at age 25, in St. Stephens, Alabama; he was buried there in the Mason Cemetery, with a gravestone (5). St. Stephens was the first territorial capital of Alabama (1817–19) and once was a thriving town; it now is an obscure village. A Mobile death notice states that George Raser was "for many years a resident Merchant of this city," while a death notice in New Jersey adds that he died "on his way to Philadelphia" (6, 7). This last reference tends to strengthen the belief that a major role he played in the company was as supercargo, overseeing the shipment of goods to and from Philadelphia—and possibly other places. No indication has been found that he ever was married.

A-13. **MARY RASER**, daughter of Capt. Bernard Raser (A-9) and Mary Heyl, was born 31 July 1803 in Philadelphia, Pa. (1). She was not yet a year old when her father died, and only seven when her mother passed away early in 1810. She was raised along with her brothers in the Philadelphia home of her uncle and guardian, John Heyl. In 1821, while on a visit to her brothers who had settled in Alabama, she met **JOHN HIMROD VINCENT**, who also was a native of Pennsylvania. Immediately attracted to one another, they were married in Demopolis, Ala., on 16 September 1821. (2-4*)

John H. Vincent was the son of Bēthuel Vincent and Martha Himrod, natives of New Jersey who had migrated to the area of Milton, Pa., in 1772. John Vincent was born 20 April 1798 in Milton, where his father kept a hotel, was the postmaster for many years, and raised a large family. His oldest sister, Sarah, was the wife of Major John B. Hogan, who about 1818 was stationed in Mobile, Ala. (5). The Hogans, fascinated by business opportunities at that time in the booming South, during a return trip north in August 1819 convinced John H. Vincent to accompany them back to Mobile. Benjamin Vincent, John's brother, also soon moved to Mobile, where by 1822 he was active as a shipping merchant.

John Himrod Vincent first settled at Mobile, but by August 1821 he had relocated to Tuscaloosa, Ala. It was during a trip between Mobile and Tuscaloosa that he met Mary Raser in Demopolis. After their marriage they settled in Tuscaloosa, where John was a partner in the firm of Vincent & Price, merchants. He was active in various business affairs, being empowered to act as agent for the Bank of the State of Alabama; he later was appointed by Pres. Andrew Jackson as Registrar of the Land Office. He was a pillar of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Tuscaloosa, serving as Steward, Trustee, and member of the Building Committee. In June 1829 the Vincents adopted Ann Eliza Raser (W-3), daughter of Mary's brother William Raser of Mobile. Ann Eliza's mother had died less than a year earlier leaving two infants, and William could no longer care for them.



John Himrod Vincent,
husband of Mary Raser (P-12)

Mary (Raser) Vincent never was happy in Alabama; a son said it was "chiefly on account of slavery," but her letters suggest it was more a longing to be closer to her northern relatives. By 1833 three of her brothers had died in Alabama, and only one of her first five children was still alive. Her great desire to return north was finally realized in 1837. Having dissolved business connections and sold their property, the Vincents—with Ann Eliza—traveled by steamboat and stagecoaches to Philadelphia. There they stayed some weeks in the house of John Heyl before they continued on to a farm near Chillisquaque, Pa.

Between 1839-43 John Vincent operated a flouring mill on Chillisquaque Creek. His niece, Mary Eliza Raser (A-14), recalled many years later how he organized and conducted a Sunday School in the mill house, had a fine voice, and was fond of singing hymns (6). In 1843-44 he returned alone to Alabama, possibly to recover Vincent and Raser assets left behind in the Mobile area by deceased family members. Veiled traditional accounts suggest that substantial funds due the two orphaned children of William Raser were indeed recovered and later were improperly used (7*).

Sometime during the 1840s John Vincent sold the mill place to his brother-in-law, Thomas Raser, and resided in a two-story brick house on adjacent property, before moving across the Susquehanna River to Lewisburg, Pa. (6). There John opened and operated a dry goods and general store for several years, but by

1850 the family had returned to Chillisquaque. In the 1850 census John is listed as a merchant of Chillisquaque Township, with \$2,000 real estate; his four surviving children and Ann E. Raser are listed in the household (8).

In early 1852 Ann Eliza Raser died after a prolonged illness. A few days earlier, her step-mother had unexpectedly become ill; the comforting exchange between the two bed-ridden women is chronicled in the memorial booklet *My Mother* which her son, by then Bishop John H. Vincent, published forty years later (3). While returning from Ann's funeral, the mourners were informed that Mary (Raser) Vincent's condition had worsened, and soon after their return to Chillisquaque, at 3 p.m. on 16 February 1852, she also passed away. Mary and Ann Eliza are buried alongside each other in Lewisburg (Pa.) Cemetery (9*).

Soon after Mary's death, John Himrod Vincent moved to Erie, Pa. There, on 2 June 1853, he married Ann Richards, daughter of John and Ann Richards, who was born 24 February 1823 in Pennsylvania. By 1855 they had removed to Chicago, Ill., where some of his children had settled. John and family appear there in the 1860 census, in which he is called a hardware merchant (10). By 1870 the Vincents had returned to Erie (11), where John died on 13 August 1873. For the last 15 years of his life John was a victim of trembling palsy, which soon rendered him helpless (2, 7). He is buried in the Richards plot in Erie Cemetery. His widow long survived him, and died 15 January 1904 in Plainfield, N.J., where she had gone to live with her oldest son.

Children (VINCENT) by Mary Raser: 1-2, 5-6 born in Tuscaloosa, Ala., 7-9 in Chillisquaque (2, 12):

1. Mary Amanda, b. 20 Jan. 1823, d. 12 Oct. 1823 (13).
2. William Raser Colgin, b. 11 May 1825, d. 6 Nov. 1825 in Columbus, Miss.
3. Martha Ann, b. 13 Mar. 1828 in Mobile, Ala., d. 20 Mar. 1828 in Mobile.
4. George Strother Gaines, b. 26 Sep. 1829 in Demopolis, Ala., d. 15 Oct. 1829 in Demopolis. He was named for the U.S. Choctaw Factor in Alabama, who was also the first "mayor" of Demopolis.
5. John Heyl, b. 23 Feb. 1832, d. 9 May 1920 in Chicago, Ill., m. 10 Nov. 1858 Elizabeth Dusenbury. He was a bishop in the Methodist Church. In 1874, with Lewis Miller of Akron, Ohio, he founded the Chautauqua Movement. The cultural assemblies of this movement spread in popularity throughout the entire country, reaching their peak in traveling Chautauquas in the 1920s. He was very interested in family history, and despite being a busy man, corresponded with various family members on the subject. His son and only child, Dr. George E. Vincent (1864-1941), was president of the Univ. of Minnesota and the Rockefeller Foundation.
6. Bethuel Thomas, b. 9 Aug. 1834, d. 30 July 1920 in Denver, Colo., m. Ella Masters and had two sons: Leon H., the biographer (4); Harry B.
7. Frank Lyon, b. 28 Feb. 1839, d. 12 May 1889 in Clifton Springs, N.Y., m. (1) Maggie Jordan, m. (2) 1868 Anna Curtis. A medical doctor, he had two sons: Robert H., Frank R.
8. Thomas Raser, b. 7 Aug. 1840, d. 18 Sep. 1841.
9. Mary ("Mollie") Elizabeth, b. 9 June 1842, d. 1924, m. James O. Farovid, had chn.

Children (VINCENT) by Ann Richards: 11-14 born in Chicago, Ill. (2, 12):

10. Charles Richards, b. 5 Oct. 1854 in Pa.
11. Henry ("Harry") Collier, b. 26 Dec. 1855.
12. Nellie, b. 4 Aug. 1858, d. 5 Oct. 1863.
13. Anna Dobbins, b. 19 July 1860, m. Chester D. Massey of Toronto, Canada. Raymond Massey, the actor, was one of their children.
14. William, b. 8 Mar. 1862.

A-14. **MARY ELIZA RASER**, daughter of John Bernard Raser (A-11) and Juliet Courtney Abert, was born 1 April 1825 in Columbus, Lowndes County, Mississippi (1). She was only four months old when her father died. Her mother was so shocked by his death and her isolated circumstances, that she suffered a

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nervous breakdown from which she never recovered. Subsequently, her mother Juliet was sent to Gloucester County, N.J., and placed under the care of her sister, Matilda Abert. Mary Eliza remained in Columbus, where after her mother's death she was adopted by her aunt, Eliza (Abert) (Barry) Wright.

Mary Eliza was schooled in the North, mostly at the expense of her uncle Thomas Raser (T-1) of Chillisquaque, Pa. In 1839 she attended the Moravian School at Lititz, Pa., and in 1840 attended a boarding school in Westfield, Mass. It was intended that she enter the seminary (Mt. Holyoke) in South Hadley, Mass., in the fall of 1841 for a four-year course, but she refused. After a year at a private school in Suffield, Conn., she returned to Chillisquaque. She lived with her uncle Thomas Raser for some time, but by 1847 had returned to the South, where she spent the rest of her life. In the 1850 census, Mary Eliza was living in Lowndes County, Miss., with her aunt Louisa P. Abert, wife of William W. Nielson, a farmer (2). Old Wright family correspondence indicates that Mary Eliza was an extravagant and difficult young girl. She apparently was one of the less pretty members of the family, which may account for some of her problems. (3)

On 5 January 1852 Mary Eliza married **BARTLEY BARRY** in Columbus, Miss. (4, 5). Born in South Carolina about 1810, Bartley was somehow related to Dr. Bartley C. Barry. Dr. Barry had married Eliza Abert in 1825, but he soon died, after which his widow in 1833 married Rev. David Wright, the first pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Columbus (6*). Their son, James William Abert Wright (named for his deceased seafaring uncle), eventually became interested in family history and persuaded his mother, in the year or two before her death, to document many of the facts we know of these southern relatives.

According to census records, Bartley Barry was a planter/farmer and owned substantial real estate in the Columbus area (7, 8). Apparently he had a previous wife, by whom he had children Mary, Rebecca and Kate. By Mary Eliza he had at least three children. Little is known of the family after 1880, when they still were living in Lowndes County (9), but Mattie Hitchcock once stated that Bartley "was no manager [and eventually] they lost everything" (10). By the 1890s Mary Eliza was living in Reynolds, Georgia, in the household of her surviving daughter, Elise McAuley. Old family correspondence from the period indicates she had mellowed after a life of adversities, and that she was much respected by neighbors and revered by her family. She died unexpectedly on 14 January 1900 in the McAuley house, and was buried in the Reynolds Cemetery (11).

Known children (BARRY), prob. born in Columbus, Miss. (6, 7):

1. Charles, b. abt. 1853, a (department store?) clerk in 1870; d. young.
2. Juliet, b. abt. 1857, d. young.
3. Elise A., b. Oct. 1866 in Miss., m. abt. 1890 Edward P. McAuley, b. Aug. 1862 in Ala.; a farmer of Reynolds, Ga. Their chn., all b. in Ga., incl. Jennie W., b. Aug. 1892; Sarah F., b. Dec. 1894; Minnie S., b. Sep. 1897 (12).