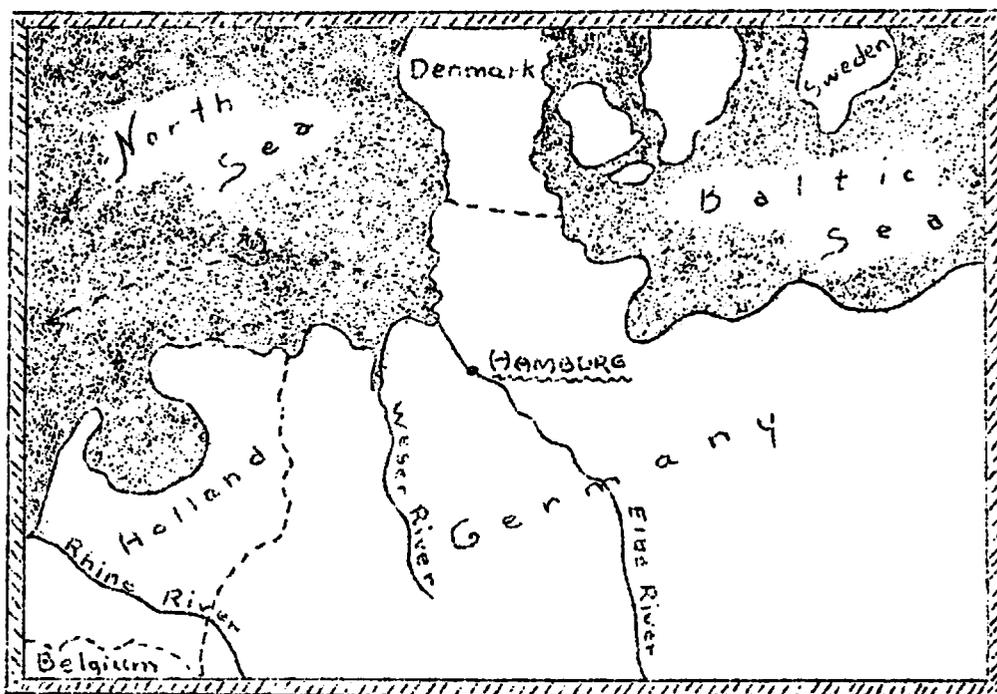


Emigration of the Schlenkers to America

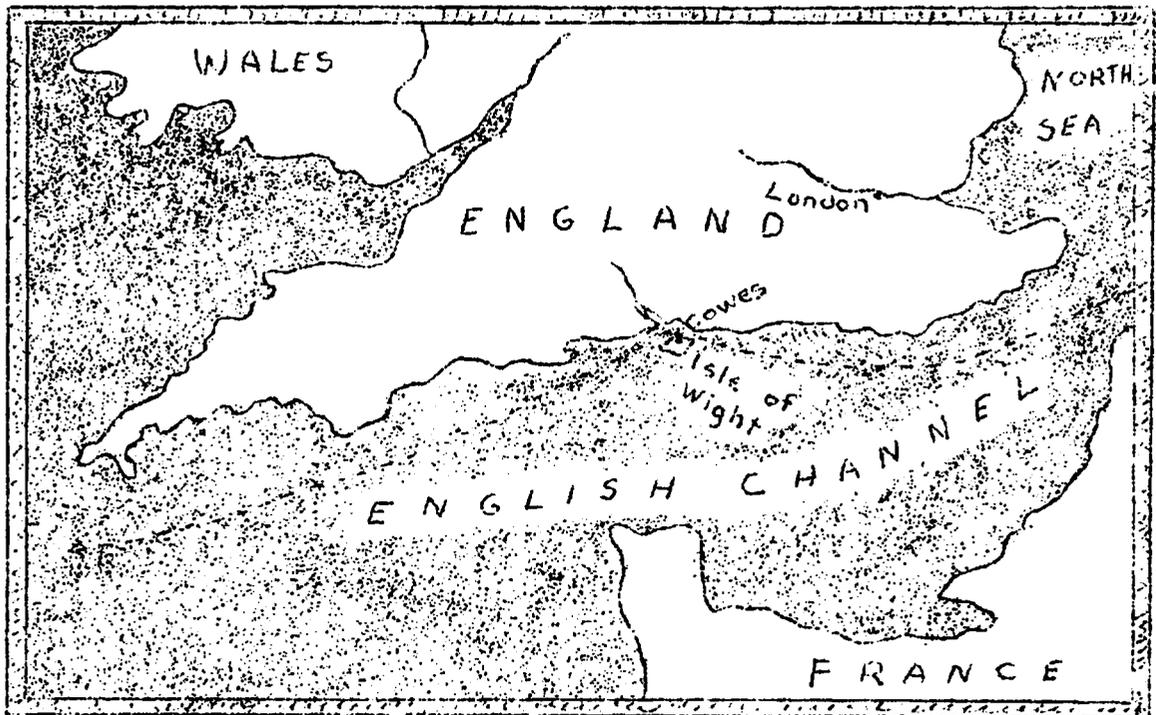
In the spring of 1753 a party of Schlenkers embarked on a ship at Hamburg, the largest port in Germany, near the mouth of the Elbe River. Their destination along with the approximately 150 other passengers on the ship was Pennsylvania in the New World.



The ship, named Leathley, was under the captainship of John Lickley. This was the first and last trip carrying emigrants from the European continent to Pennsylvania that this ship and captain made.

Leaving the continent of Europe behind the ship sailed for England, for ships carrying emigrants to America had to stop at an English port and get clearance papers for American ports. This was necessary because the colonies in America were under English rule.

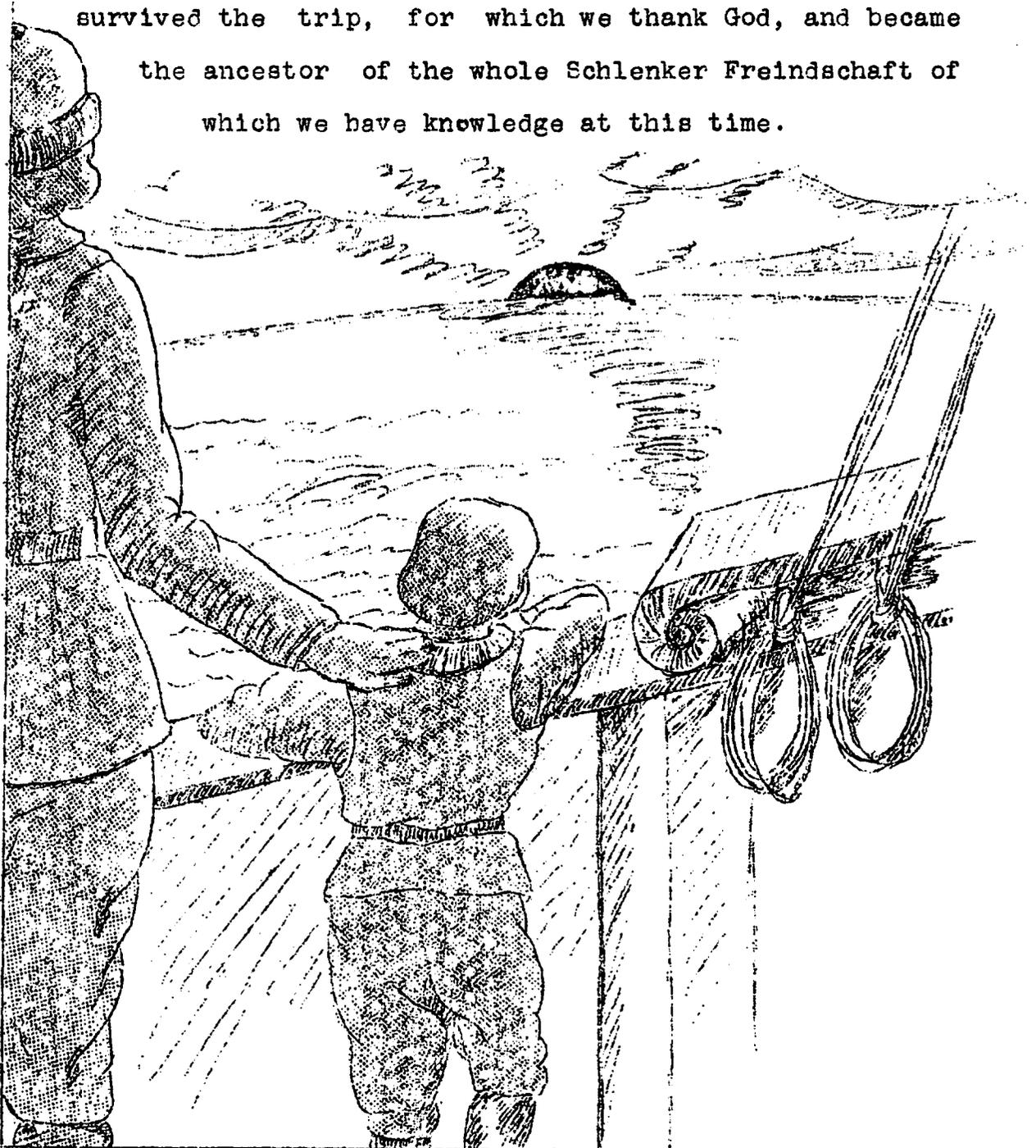
Captain Lickley put in at Cowes, on the Isle of Wight off the south coast of England. Most of the ships carrying migrants to Pennsylvania stopped at this port. The stopover here was probably from one to two weeks waiting to be passed through the customs by officials and until the winds were favorable.



Now began the difficult and most arduous part of the voyage. With the most favorable winds a sailing ship could cross the Atlantic in seven weeks. More often it was

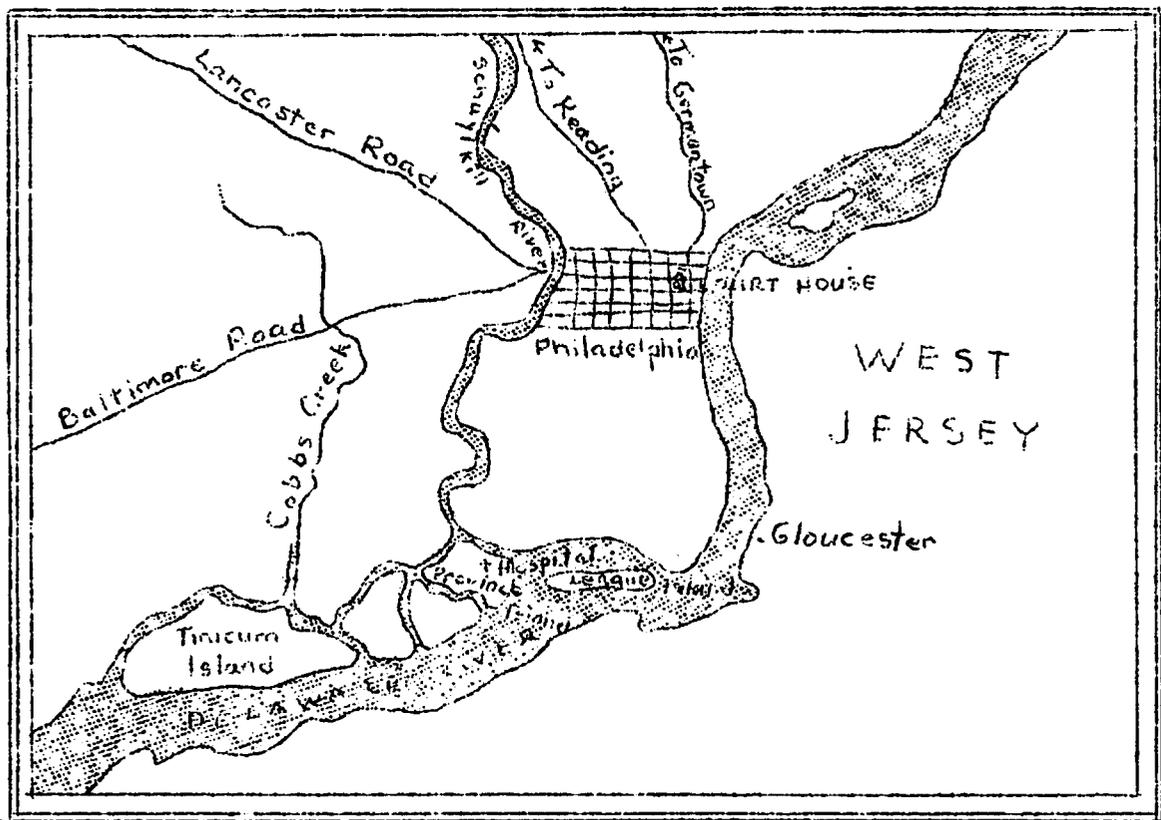
eight, nine, or even twelve weeks. Passengers were closely packed. Food and water were not of the best. Conditions were anything but healthful. All sorts of diseases, especially contagious ones, flourished under such circumstances. Children died in large numbers.

Among the children was little Johannes Schlencker, who was only six years old at the time of the voyage. He survived the trip, for which we thank God, and became the ancestor of the whole Schlenker Freindschaft of which we have knowledge at this time.



After reaching the American coast, our ship, the Leathley, sailed into the Delaware Bay and up the river toward Philadelphia. It was one of nineteen ships that came in the year 1753 bearing immigrants from Continental Europe.

Arriving at Philadelphia a physician appointed as health officer visited the ship to make sure that no people with infectious diseases were landed.



Those with infectious diseases were removed to Province Island at the mouth of the Schuylkill some distance below the city. Here a hospital had been erected for this purpose in 1750. The immigrants were kept there until they died or recovered.

According to the law the ship captains were required to present to the authorities a list of all their passengers. These lists they gave varied in nature and contents. Most of them listed the male passengers sixteen years and older. The lists were written on large sheets of paper and were made not by the captains but by some ship's officer designated by the captain. These clerks usually could not read or write German. They would ask the adult male passengers for their names and write them down according to the way they sounded to them. This resulted in some strange and wonderful spellings not at all like the real name.

Of the 324 ships known to have brought German immigrants to Philadelphia between 1727 and 1775 only 138 ship's lists survive. The list of the ship Leathley is among these. Below is a copy of this listing showing only, however, the names of the four Schlenckers appearing therein as published in Strassburger and Hinke, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, Norristown, Pa., Pennsylvania German Society, 1934. Volume I, page 536. (List 202 A)

A List of Male Names on Board of Ship Leathley.
19th Septr 1753.

- (6) Christr Slinker
- (9) John Wm Slinker
- (10) Fred Wilhelm Slinker
- (13) Frans. Hen. Slinker

(Endorsed)

List of Foreigners imported from Hamburg in the Ship Leathley, Captn Lickley & cleared from Cowes.

Qualified 19th Septr 1753

No 51

Note the spelling for Schlenker as written by the English sailor who made the list. He wrote it the way it sounded to him. You will observe there are four Schlenckers listed. The numbers before the names indicate their order in the list of 52 names.

In addition to these captain's lists there are two other lists of German immigrants. The story of their origin is as follows:

Although Pennsylvania was an English colony, Penn's agents and the provincial authorities were glad to receive these German migrants in a sense; not so much because of the policy established by Penn of offering a haven of refuge to the oppressed of Europe, but because these hard-working Germans did not shun the dangers of the wilderness but were willing to go into the backwoods of the colony, clear the land, and establish farms. Their industry was a large factor in making Pennsylvania the prosperous colony it was. At the same time the officials were concerned that so large a group of non-English might retain their own language and customs and perhaps therefore not become properly integrated into the life of the colony.

Accordingly, to insure their political integration the Provincial Council in 1727 passed a law requiring all continentals who arrived at Philadelphia to take oaths of allegiance to the British crown and fidelity to the Proprietor of the province together with a promise to obey the laws of the province.

Two years later in 1729 another oath was also added called a declaration of fidelity and abjuration.

Both oaths were to be administered by and subscribed to before public officials.

On September 19, 1753, those male passengers sixteen years and older passed by the health officer, left the ship on the Delaware and were led up Market Street (then called High Street) of Philadelphia in a procession to the Court House betwene 2nd and 3rd streets to sign the oaths.



The signing of the two oaths was cared for by two clerks seated at two different desks. For those who were unable to write the clerks wrote their names for them and the immigrants placed their marks in a space the clerk left for them between their first and last names.

Fifty-three men from the ship Leathley signed the first oath. Below is a copy thereof showing only the three Schlenkers out of the list of fifty-three as found in Strassburger and Hinke, Pennsylvania German Pioneers, Vol, I, page 537 and Vol. II, page 639. (List 202 B)

List Foreigners imported from Hamburg, in the Ship Leathley, Captain John Lickley, were qualified at the Court House, Wednesday, 19th Sepr 1753.

Christoffel Schlenker

(10) Christoffel Schlencker

Friederich Wilhelm Schlenker

(11) Friederich Wilhelm (Schlen)cker

Hendrick + Slinke

(12) Hendrick (X) Slinke

(Endorsed:)

Foreigners imported in the Ship Leathley, Captn Lickley.
Qual. 19th Sepr 1753
No. 51

Kepplee

Note: Numbers in front of names indicate their order in the list. John Wm. who appears on the captain's list did not come to the court house to sign the oaths. Perhaps he was sick. Christoffel and Friederich Wilhelm signed their names in German script, but Hendrick Slinke is written in English letters. Franz Henry could not write so the clerk wrote his name for him in this form. Franz Henry then made his mark of the "x" between the names. Out of the 53 names on the list of Leathley passengers 33 could not sign their own names.

Having signed the Oath of Allegiance the men went to the second desk to sign the Declaration of Fidelity and Abjuration. This was a two-fold oath. In it the signers: 1. Promised loyalty to George II and denied that the Pope had the right or power to depose him. 2. Acknowledged King George II as the lawful ruler and renounced obedience to the Roman Catholic pretender to the throne who had assumed the title of James III.

Fifty-two men from the Leathley signed this second oath. Herewith is a copy of this record with the names of the three Schlenkers given in their original form as found in Strassburger and Hinke, Vol. I, pages 537-538 and Vol. II, page 640. (List 202 C)

At the Court House at Philadelphia, Wednesday, the 19th September, 1753.

Present: William Plumsted, Esquire.

The Foreigners whose Names are underwritten, Imported in the Ship Leathley, Captain John Lickley, from Hamburg and last from Cowes in England, did this day take the usual Qualifications. (No.) 53.

Christoffel Schlencker

(9) Christoffel Schlencker

Friederich Wilhm Schlencker

(10) Friederich Wilhm Schlencker

Frantz Henry Schlencker

(11) Frantz Henry (XX) Shlencker

Notice that the three Schlenker men were again next to each other in line for the signing of this oath as they were for the first. Frantz Henry again makes a mark, this time a double "XX", to his name which is written by the clerk. Note how differently this clerk spells the name from the former one. Of the 52 names on this list 32 could not write their names and made marks instead.

After signing they were led back to the ship. Those who had money paid their bills to the captain for their passage across the ocean and were free to go. Some who had rich relatives in the Province sought a loan from them to straighten out their accounts. As for the rest, according to the agreement they entered into, announcements were printed in the newspapers stating how many of the immigrants were to be sold. Buyers came and bargained with the immigrants promising to pay their debts of passage in return for a certain number of years and days of service. When the agreement was reached the buyer took them to the merchant who paid all the immigrant's bills and the immigrant became the property of the merchant for the definite period agreed upon.

We do not know the financial circumstances of this group of Schlenckers so we do not know whether or not they were sold to pay their passage.

Of the 38,307 names recorded in the shiplists from 1727 to 1808 there are besides the four Schlenckers mentioned above only two other immigrants by the name Schlenker.

Although at present we have no direct interest in these latter two since they are not our ancestors, yet for the sake of general interest and in case something in connection with them should come to light we print their names, and dates of arrival as listed in Strassburger and Hinke.

Vol. I, page 410 and Vol. II, page 461

(List 135 C)

At the Court House at Philadelphia, Monday,
Sept 25th, 1749

Present: Joshua Maddox, Esquire.

The Foreigners whose Names are underwritten, imported in the Ship Speedwell, Captn James Creagh, from Rotterdam, but last from Cowes in England, did this Day take the usual Qualifications to the Government. By the List 85. 215 Freights, 240 souls, from Wirtembergh, Alsace & Hanau.

Johann Schlenker

(63rd on list) Hans Schlenker

Vol. I, page 475 and Vol. II, page 562

(List 176 C)

At the Court House at Philadelphia, Wednesday, the
16th 8ber, 1751.

Present: The Worshipful Robert Strettell, Esquire,
Mayor of Philadelphia.

The Foreigners whose Names are underwritten, imported in the Ship Duke of Wirtemberg, Captn Montpelier, Commander, from Rotterdam & Cowes in England, did this day take and subscribe the usual Qualifications. List 169. Whole Freights 406. Messrs Stedman.

Andreas Schlenker

(14th on list) Andreas Schlencker

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

OF

JOHANNES SCHLENCKER

born in Germany, February 26, 1747
died in Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pa. May 3, 1808

recorded in German script in
Will Book, Volume A, page 552
Berks County Courthouse, Reading, Pa.

The original copy written in German script on three sheets of paper as well as an English translation is also on file. The copy in the will book and the original differ in spelling and grammar, the copyist having made corrections. The text below follows the original copy.

In dem Namen Gottes, Amen. Ich Johannes Schlencker Wohnhaft in Greenwich tawnship Berks County und Staedt von Pennsylvania bin bei gesundem Verstand and Überlegung, Gott sey gedankt dafür, der mir zu gemüth führet die Sterblichkeit neines belens, und weissend dass er vor alle Menschen bestimt ist, einmal zu Sterben, thus mache und ordere diesen meinen letzten Willen und Testament hauptsächliches und vor dass allenersten gebe und recommendirn ich meine Seele in die Hände des Allmächtigen Gottes der sie gegeben hat und meinen leib recommendirn ich zur erden begraben zu werden in ein gudbefinden geziemendes und Christliches begräbnis nach gudbefinden meinen hiernach gemelten Executors nicht zweiflent ich werde denselben an der allgemeinen auferstehung wieder empfangen. Und solches weltliches Vermögen wohmit es Gott gefallen hat mich zu Seegnan in diesem zeitlichen leben hingebe und Vermache ich auf folgende art und weisse. Vor das erste beordere ich dass nach meinem Tote alle meine rechtmässige Schulden und anforderungen meine Executors richtig und so bald als möglich ist bezahlen. Beordere ich meine executors, dass sobald als es möglich und ohne Schaden alles meines loses und bewegliches Vermögen und Güder auf öffendlicher Vendu Verkaufen und zu Geld machen, wie auch sobald also möglich und ohne Schaden meine Plantasche wo ich gegenwärtig wohne in Greenwich Tawnship, Berks County, und enthält zwei hundert aker Land es sei dem mehr oder weniger an dem Meist bindenden Verkaufen und welche ich gleicher weise hiermit befolmachtigen dass sie dem or denen Käufer

von mein zuvor gemelte Plantasche und land hinlängliche und Lau Vollen Deed oder Kaufbriefe unterschreiben Siegeln und überliefern sollen welche gänzlich unstreidig und von solcher Kraft und wirkung sein sollen als wenn ich sie selbst Persöhnlich Vollzogen hätte und sollen sowohl meine Executors als auch Vormünder rechnung in gehörigen Rüstigkeit bringen und in ein deutlich Inventionarium aufsetzen oder aufsetzen lassen und dass selbigen gehörig einbringen nach Landes Gesetzen. Mein Wille ist und ich thue hiermit ordenen dass meine hiermit gemelte Kinder als Söhne Johannes Schlencker, Jacob Schlencker, Henrich Schlencker, und Daniel Schlencker, und meine Töchter Susana Fischer, Elisabeth Heldenbrand, Rosina Braucher, Rebeca Glück, und Maria Schlencker, alle und ein jeder von ihnen ein hundert Pfundt Lawfull Geld von Pennsylvania sogleich nach meinem Tode haben sollen ausgenommen diejenigen die es schon empfangen haben in meiner Lebenszeit und welches meine Executors in gleiche theil machen sollen dem einem wie dem andern nach der wahren meinung hier von. Mein Willen ist und ich ordere hiermit dass nachdem meine Executors alles mein Vermögen und Estate in Geld gebracht haben dass sie es an meine hiervor gemelde Söhne und Töchter in gleiche theil theilen sollen dem einem so viel als dem andern ausgenommen meinem Sohn Jacob Schlencker der soll für und zwanzig Geld vorgemeld weniger haben als die andern Kinder und meine Tochter Maria Schlencker die soll zwanzig Pfundt Gelt wie vorgemeld mehr haben als einiges von dem andern Kindern zum Voraus nach der wahren meinung hiervon mein Willen ist dass alles Geld wo gegenwärtig ist und habe wie auch Bonden, Noten, und Buchschulden, und in Summa alles Geld von der Vendu, und Land wann es Vorkauft ist soll und muss allezeit wie es einkommt alle mahl in gleiche theil getheilt werden so dass ein jegliches von den Erben sein theil haben kan und soll wie vorgemeld ist worden und Keines von den Erben vor dem andern, ein Vorzug haben soll. mein Willen ist und ich ordne hiermit meine Executors wann ich nicht so lange leben soll dass ich selber geben kann dass meine Tochter Maria Schlencker soll haben ein neuen seitwadl 1 groszen Bauchzuber 1 zapfen zuber 1 schopkübel. 1 stampel Butterfasz 1 blechner Eimer 1 Erdor (?) Eimer 2 Stühl 1 grossen und 1 kleiner Essorner. Besen 1 Grosse 3 flüszige Pfann 1 Schmelzpfan Bett und Betled 1 Bureau 2 tragente Kühle oder 12 Pfund in gelt welches sie die Wahl haben soll 1 Schauf 2 begel Eisen 1 welwerter Mantel und ein feiner hut. und die übrigen Artickel was nicht hierin gemelt sind und meine andern Töchter in meiner Lebenszeit als ihr aussteuer von ihrem Vater bekomen haben soll und muss die Maria auch haben zum voraus und soll ihr nicht argerechnet werden als part von ihrem Erbtheil mit ihrem Geschwistern. Letzend mache und Ordne ich meinen Sohn Johannes Schlencker und meinen Tochtorman Michael Heldenbrand zu meinen und wahren Executors zu sein, von diesen meinem Willen und Testament um alles richtig und aus führlich in richtigkeit zu bringen so bald möglich und ohne schaden sein gethan werden und ich der gemelte Johannes Schlencker wieder rufe, vernichte, und thue vor Noll und nichtig erklären alle durch mich zuvergemachte Willen und Testament und Vermächtnisse mache und ordinire diesen und sein werden zu sein mein letzter Willen und Testament zum Zeugniß alles diesem so habe ich meine Eigene Hand und Siegel und Siegel hierbey gesetzt diesen 21sten Tag April im Jahr unsers Herrn 1807. Unterschreiben und Gesiegelt bey zeugen

Jacob Christ
Philip Geehr

Johannes Schlencker

Nachdem ich Johannes Schlencker meinen letzten Willen und Testament gemacht habe den 21ten April 1807 Und habe noch etwas darin vergessen, so thue ich dieses gegenwärtiges Schreibens noch als ein Zusatz zu dem gemelten Willen und Testament befehlen und ordern. Mein Willen ist und ich ordern hiermit dasz meine Executors in meinem Willen gemelte Tochter Maria noch in die Schuln schicken sollen wie auch fleissig besorgt sein sie die Maria wohlunterrichten lassen, dass sie zu dem heiligen Abendmal zugelassen wird wie alle meine Kinder for diesne und alle Unkosten vor Schuln, Pfarrer als auch Kleider sollen alles aus meinem Estate bezahlt werden. Mein Wille ist und ich ordene hiermit dass meine zuvor gemelte Executors sorgfältig und achtung geben sollen vor der Maria ihr Erbthoil aus meinem Estate und Vermögen, und sollen besorgt sein dass alle zeit ihr geld under Leute komt dass es Versiegort ist biss sie es brauchen thut oder kann. Weiter ordene ich hiermit dass meine Tochter Maria der Mütter ihre Kist mit dem Schloss noch zu dem wass ich ihr Vorgemacht haben zu Voraus haben soll. Zum Zeugniß alles obrigo thue Ich dieses als ein Zusatz oder Codical zu meinem letzten Willen und Testament machen und erklären diesen fünften Tag May ein Tausend acht hundert und sieben 1807. Gesiegelt und unterschreiben in gegenwart von und als zeugen die wir auf sein begehren und in der gegenwart eines jeden von uns unsern Namen unterschreiben

Jacob Christ
Philip Gehr

Johannes Schlencker

Register Office Reading in Berks County May 16, 1808 there appeared Jacob Christ and Philip Gehr witnesses to the foregoing will and Codicil, who being duly sworn according to law respectively did depose and say that they were present together and did see and hear John Schlenker the Testator therein named sign, seal, and publish pronounce and declare the same writing as and for his last will and Testament and Codicil and that the names Jacob Christ and Philip Gehr are of the said Deponants own proper handwriting respectively thereto subscribed as witnesses in the presence of each other and in the presence and at the request of said Testator, And that said testator was at the time of signing said will and Codicil of sound mind and understanding to the best of their knowledge and as they verily believe.

Goram me

Chris. Burreansthine D. Register

TRANSLATION

In the name of God, Amen. I, Johannes Schlenker, a resident of Greenwich township, Berks County and the state of Pennsylvania am of a sound mind and understanding for which God be thanked, who brings me to the knowledge of the mortality of my life and being aware that it is appointed to all men once to die, I do make and order this my last will and testament.

First and foremost I give and recommend my soul into the hands of the Almighty God who has given it and my body I commit to be buried in the earth in a well ordered decent and Christian burial according to the good judgment of my hereinafter named executors not doubting I will receive the same again in the general resurrection.

And such worldly goods with which God has pleased to bless me in this earthly life I give and bequeath in the following manner and way.

First of all I order that after my death my executors shall as soon as possible properly pay all my real debts and obligations.

I order my executors as soon as possible and without damage that they sell at public sale and turn into money all my loose and moveable property, as also as soon as possible and without damage to sell to the highest bidder my plantation where I now live in Greenwich township, Berks County containing two hundred acres of land, more or less, and I in like manner empower them that they shall sign seal and transfer to the buyer or buyers of my aforementioned plantation and land sufficient and lawful deed or letter of sale which shall be entirely incontestible and of such power and effect as though I myself personally had completed them.

And my executors as also guardians shall put in order the accounts and set down or cause to be set down a true inventory and deliver the same properly according to the law of the land.

My will is and I herewith order that my hereafter mentioned children, that is sons Johannes Schlenker, Jacob Schlenker, Henrich Schlenker, and Daniel Schlenker and my daughters Susana Fischer, Elisabeth Holdenbrand, Rosina Braucher, Rebeca Glück, and Maria Schlenker all and every one of them shall have directly after my death one hundred pounds lawful money of Pennsylvania except those who have already received it during my life time and which my executors in equal parts to one as to the other according to the true meaning hereof.

My will is and I order herewith that after my executors have turned all my property and estate into money that they shall divide it in equal parts to my aforementioned sons and daughters to one as much as to the other except my son Jacob Schlenker who shall receive twenty-four aforementioned money less than the other children and my daughter Maria Schlenker who shall have twenty pounds more money as aforementioned than any of the other children in preference.

According to the true meaning hereof my will is that all money which I have as likewise bonds, notes, debts in the book and the sum of money from the sale and land when it is sold shall and must at all times as it comes in be divided into equal parts so that each one of the heirs can and shall have his part as aforementioned and none of the heirs shall have a preference over the others.

My will is and I order herewith to my executors that if I do not live that long so that I can give it myself that my daughter Maria Schlenker shall have a new side saddle, one large bucking tub, one tub with a stopper, one water bucket, one butter churn with plunging dasher, one tin bucket, one earthen bucket, two chairs, one large and one small table(?), broom, one large caldron with three feet, one melting pot, a bed and bedstead, a bureau, two cows with calf or twelve pounds in money of which she shall have her choice, one sheep, two flat irons, one cloak of velvet and a fine hat and the other articles that are not mentioned herein and my other daughters in my lifetime as their dowry have received from their father, so Maria shall and must have in preference and it shall not be reckoned as part of her inheritance with her brothers and sisters.

Lastly I make and order that my son Johannes Schlenker and my son-in-law Michael Heldenbrand be my true executors of this my will and testament and that all things be executed properly and completely in accuracy as soon as it is possible to do it without damage.

And I the aforementioned Johannes Schlenker recall, annul and declare void all wills and testaments and bequests previously made by me and I make and order this to be my last will and testament in testimony of all this I have set my own hand and seal this twenty first day of April in the year of our Lord 1807. Subscribed and sealed by the witnesses.

Jacob Christ
Philip Geehr

Johannes Schlenker

Codicil

Since I Johannes Schlenker made my last will and testament on the twenty-first of April 1807 and have forgotten something therein, I do command and order this present document as an addition to the aforementioned will and testament.

My will is and I order herewith that my executors shall still send to school my daughter Maria mentioned in my will as well as diligently see to it that Maria is well instructed so that she will be admitted to the Lord's Supper as all my children previously and all costs of school, pastor, as well as clothing shall all be paid out of my estate.

My will is and I order herewith that my aforementioned executors diligently take care of Maria's inheritance from my estate and property and shall be careful that at all times her money comes to people where it is secure until she needs or can use it.

Further I order herewith that my daughter Maria shall have her mother's chest with the lock in preference in addition to what has been previously assigned to her.

As witness of all the above I do make and declare this as an addition or codicil to my last will and testament this fifth day of May one thousand eight hundred and seven.

Sealed and subscribed in the presence of and in testimony of which we at his request and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names.

Jacob Christ
Philip Geehr

Johannes Schlenker