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Hamilton College Library “Home Notes”

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Hamilton College Library “Home Notes”

Communal Societies Collection New Acquisitions

[Broadside]. Lecture! [n.s., n.d.]

Isabella Baumfree (Sojourner Truth) was born in 1797 on the Colonel Johannes Hardenbergh estate in Swartekill, Ulster County, a Dutch settlement in upstate New York. She spoke only Dutch until she was sold from her family around the age of nine. In 1829, Baumfree met Elijah Pierson, an enthusiastic religious reformer who led a small group of followers in his household called the “Kingdom.” She became the housekeeper for this group, and was encouraged to preach among them. Robert Matthias, also known as Matthias the Prophet, eventually took control of the group and instituted unorthodox religious and sexual practices. The “Kingdom” ended in public scandal.

On June 1, 1843, Baumfree adopted the sobriquet Sojourner Truth. Unsoured by her experience in the “Kingdom” she joined the Northampton Association of Education and Industry in Massachusetts. This anti-slavery, pro-women’s rights group lived communally and manufactured silk. After the Northampton Association disbanded in 1846 Truth became involved with the Progressive Friends, an offshoot of the Quakers. Truth began her career in public speaking during the 1850s. In 1857 she moved to Harmonia, Michigan, to live with a community of spiritualist Quakers. Truth remained an active public speaker and advocate for abolitionism, freedmen’s rights, and women’s rights throughout the 1860s and 1870s. She died on November 26, 1883, at the age of eighty-six.

The date of our broadside is uncertain, though the statement that Truth was “the oldest public speaker in the world, one hundred years of age” suggests that it likely dates from late in her life, possibly circa 1880. Testimonials from such prominent figures as William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglas, Susan B. Anthony, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, bespeak Truth’s importance in the cultural milieu of the mid-nineteenth century. Intriguingly this item was discovered tucked into a book by Thomas Lake Harris, founder of the communal societies The Brotherhood of the New Life and Fountain Grove.

LECTURE!

The Oldest Public Speaker in the World.



One Hundred Years of Age.

SOJOURNER TRUTH

Eloquent, Pathetic, Witty, Quaint, Original, and Wise as Ever.

WILL LECTURE AT

She has been eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, strength to the weak, help to the erring, and now needs help in her old age. Hear her, help her, and be instructed and interested by the narration of her varied experiences.

TESTIMONIALS.

"I have known a few words from her to electrify an audience."
WENDELL PHILLIPS.

"The renowned Sojourner spoke last night, full of native wit, eloquence and religious passion."
NORHAMPTON (Mass.) GAZETTE.

"She is strong, simple, shrewd, full of power and sweetness."
MRS. HARRIET B. STOWE.

"The free room of the Presbyterian Church will no doubt be full, to hear her to-night."
SYRACUSE JOURNAL, [N. Y.]

"The wisest, wildest woman I know. I have enjoyed her acquaintance many years, and hope to enjoy it many ages." REV. GILBERT HAVEN,
Bishop M. E. Church.

"God bless her and help her."
SUSAN B. ANTHONY.

"Your brother is in the hope of glory."
REV. B. SUNDERLAND,
Presb., Washington, D. C.

"Witty, Shrewd, Sarcastic, Gifted."
ROCHESTER [N. Y.] DEMOCRAT.

"A valued friend and co-laborer."
LUCRETIA MOTT, Phila.

"A true and eloquent friend of her race."
DETROIT POST.

"God bless Sojourner, who spoke so grandly in the M. E. Church last night." L. U. PEARCE,
Grand Rapids, Mich.

"May she live long to cheer, bless and enlighten us."
FREDERICK DOUGLAS.

"I have long known her worth. I know her age and infirmities, and commend her to the good will of all."
WM. LOYD GARRISON.

"A large audience heard her last night."
KANSAS CITY JOURNAL.

"A large, respected and interested audience heard her in the Friends' Meeting House."
PHILA. PRESS.

"We have enjoyed your powers of description, have been instructed by your wisdom, and welcomed your religion."
GERRITT SMITH.

ADMISSION,

COLLECTION OF BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS PRINTED BY AND FOR THE EPHRATA CLOISTER

The Communal Societies Collection at Hamilton College has been enriched by the acquisition of eighteen separate imprints from, or relating to, the Ephrata Cloister at Ephrata, Pennsylvania. Among these are works printed by the Cloister for their sister community at Snow Hill as well as for local Mennonites. They also include the Cloister's own history, and two hymnals—one of which was the first book printed with German type in North America. A list with brief descriptions follows:

[Br. Lamech and Br. Agrippa]. *Chronicon Ephratense*. Ephrata, 1786. An abstract of the diary of the Brotherhood, which had been kept by Brother Lamech, and continued and edited by Brother Jaebez (Agrippa) i.e. Johan Peter Miller. Brother Lamech has been identified as Jacob Gass by bibliographer Oswald Seidensticker. This is the main primary source describing life inside the Ephrata Cloister in the eighteenth century, as well as providing a biography of founder Conrad Beissel.

Beissel, Johann Conrad. *Deliciae Ephratenses, oder, Des ehrwürdigen Vatters Friedsam Gottrecht, weyland Stiffers und Führers des christlichen Ordens der Einsamen in Ephrata in Pennsylvania*. Ephrata: Typis Societatis, 1773. Theological writings of Ephrata Cloister founder Conrad Beissel, edited by Johann Peter Miller (Brother Agrippa). Contains Volumes I and II, as well as an engraved seal of the community printed in 1773.

Beissel, Johann Conrad. *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hugel*. Germantown: Gedruckt bey Christoph Sauer, 1739. The fourth major hymnal printed for use at the Cloister. The three preceding hymnals were printed by Benjamin Franklin. This massive work was one of the first large books printed with German type in the United States. This is variant B with "Wach auf, mein Geist" as hymn 91.

Beissel, Johann Conrad. *Das Gesang der Einsamen und Verlassenen Turtel-Taube Nemlich der Christlichen Kirche*. Ephrata, Drucks der Bruderschaft, 1747. The first hymnal printed at the Cloister for the community's own use. This work contains a lengthy preface on the performance of sacred music which is attributed to Conrad Beissel.

Wudrian, Valentin. *Valentin Wudrians Seel. Kreutz-Schule. Ephrata, Penn.: Bruderschaft, 1762.* A devotional writing that was valued by the pietists and radical pietists in Germany and America. Wudrian (1584-1625) was a pastor in Hamburg, Germany.

Lazius, Wolfgang. *Von der Historia des Apostolischen Kampffs. Ephrata: Gedruckt durch die Bruderschaft, auf Kosten der Bruder in Canegotshiken, 1764.* Published for, and paid for by, the Brethren of the Canegotshiken, an early congregation of Seventh Day Baptists in the vicinity of the Snow Hill Cloister.

Roosen, Gerhard. *Christliches Gemuths-Gesprach von dem Geistlichen. Ephrata: Typis Societatis, 1769.* A catechism popular with local Mennonites.



[Mueller, Samuel]. *Kurzgefasstes Arzney-Buchlein, fur Menschen und Vieh. [Ephrata: Solomon Mayer], 1792.* A rare example from a group of popular German-American manuals of “Cures for Man and Beast.” These consist mainly of medicines that could be concocted in the rural home, based on ancient precepts conjured from “Aristotle,” “Alburtus Magnus,” “the Pharaohs,” etc. Like the “Long Lost Friend” and “Pennsylvania Dutch Pow-Wow;” they are genuine survivors of the medieval folk medicine tradition. They were consulted often and literally read to death. The 1791 and this 1792 Ephrata edition both suggest that the printer was following an earlier Vienna edition. The text (originally published anonymously in Dresden in 1687) is sometimes attributed to a certain Samuel Mueller.

Sangmeister, Ezechiel. *Mystische Theologie der Wahrer Wegweisser nach Unsern Ursprung und Vaterland!* Ephrata, Penn.: Gedruckt und zu haben Joseph Bauman, 1819 & 1820.

An exposition of Ephrata theology written by Brother Ezechiel mostly between 1774 and 1778. His interpretations of theology were sometimes at odds with Conrad Beissel's.

Boehme, Jakob. *Ein Systematischer Auszug aus des Gottseligen und Hocherleuchteten Deutschen Theosophi Jacob Bohmens Sammtlichen Schriften.* Ephrata, Lancaster Caunty [sic]: Gedruckt und haben bey Joseph Bauman, 1822. A mystical work popular with the remnants of the Ephrata community.

[Landes, David]. *Das Guldene A B C fur Jederman der gern mit Ehren wolt bestahn.* [Ephrata, Penn.]: Gedruckt [bey Joseph Bauman] fur David Landes, 1825. A scarce mystical Dunker/Church of the Brethren work, which begins with a poetical ABC. The four original fold-in broadsides are present, including the famous spiritual maze. (See pages 106-7 for an illustration of the maze.)

Dell, William. *Das Reine und Lautere Evangelium.* Ephrata, Lancaster Caunty [sic], Penn.: Joseph Bauman, 1825. William Dell (1607-1669) was an English clergyman, Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and a proponent of free grace and continuous revelation. His works were popular with radical religious sects both in Europe and America.

***Die Ernsthafte Christenpflicht.* Ephrata: Johannes Baumann, 1808.** A Mennonite/Amish prayer book.

***Katechismus, Oder, Kurze und Einfaltige Unterweisung aus der Heiligen.* Ephrata: Gedruckt bey Joseph Bauman, 1824.** First published at the German and West Prussian city of Ebling in 1778, this became the standard catechism of Amish and Mennonite congregations in both Europe and America. This first American edition was printed for the Mennonites of Waterloo County, Ontario, Canada.

Romeling, Christian Anton. *Gewesenen Predigers zu Haarburg.* Ephrata, 1792. Five works in one. Romeling was a Lutheran minister at Harburg who was excommunicated and banished for his pietist/mystical theology. He found refuge in Holland and joined the Mennonites.

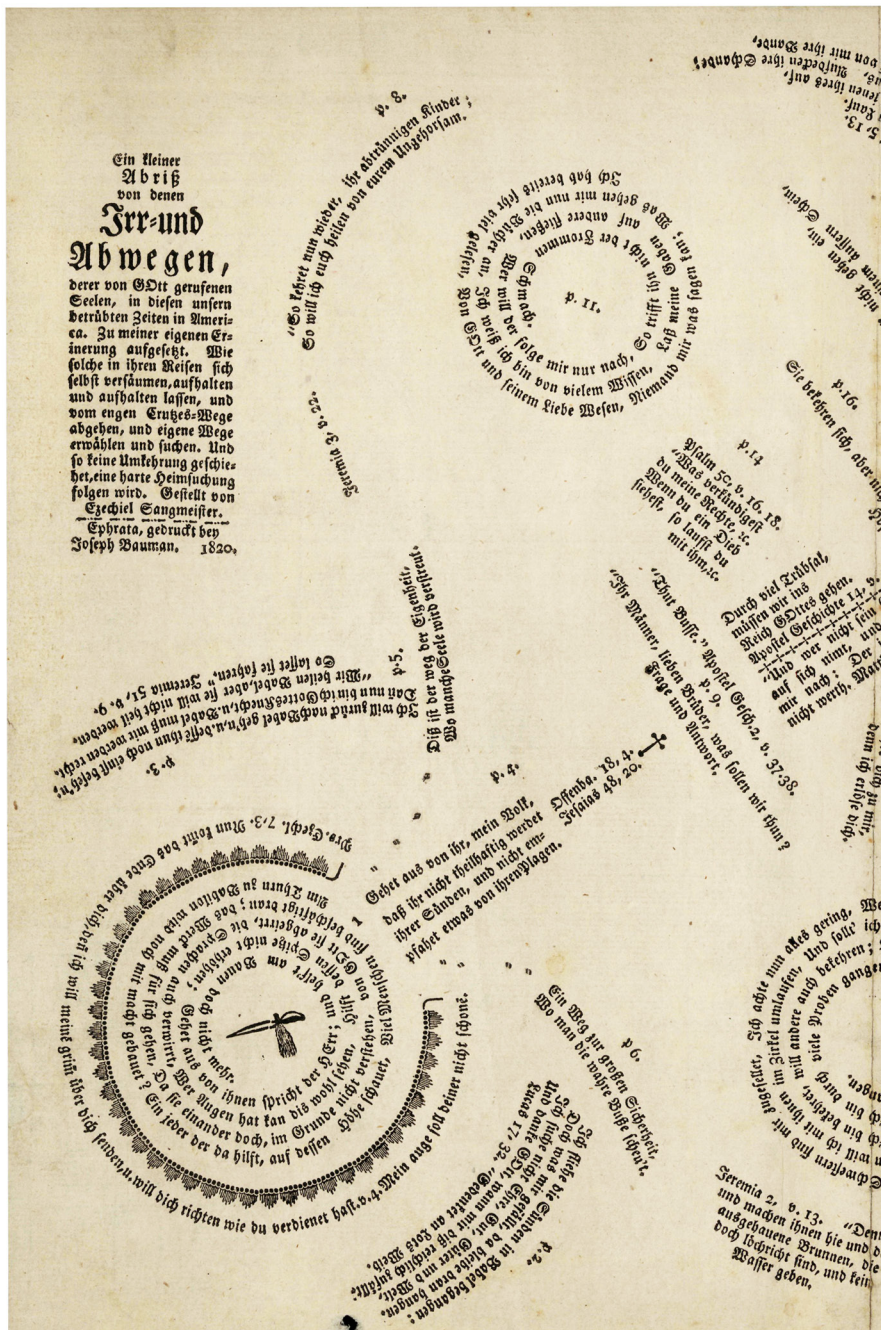
Christliche Bibliothek. Ephrata, Gedruckt [bey der Klosterpresse], 1792. Attributed to George Adam Martin by Evans, who notes that the initial letters of the last three words of the extended title are Martin's initials. Martin was a spiritual successor to Conrad Beissel and oversaw the burgeoning Snow Hill Cloister. Ascribed to the press of the Ephrata Community by Evans.

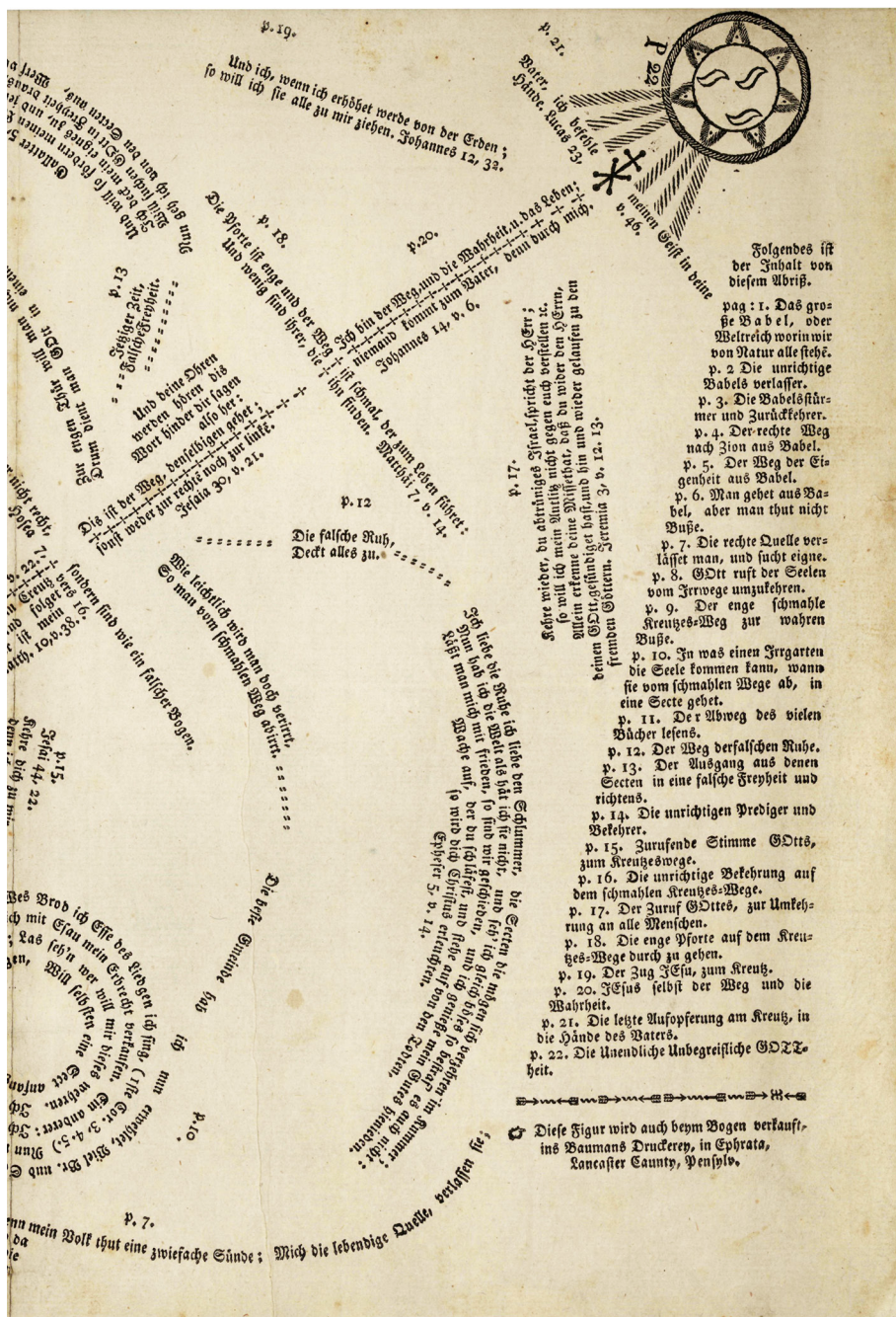
Stoll, Jacob. Geistliches Gewharz-Gartlein. Ephrata: Johannes Bauman, 1806. A book of poetry by a minister of the Church of the Brethren. Stoll was a member of the Conestoga Congregation of the Church of the Brethren that was influenced by Conrad Beissel.

Die Kleine Lieder Sammlung. Ephrata: Gedruckt bey Joseph Baumam [i.e. Bauman], 1827.

The first edition of this Dunker hymn book was issued at Hagerstown in 1826. The demand was so great that barely a year later this second edition was printed.





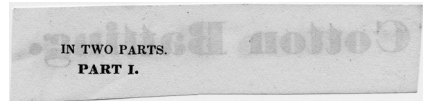


COLLECTION OF SHAKER EPHEMERA

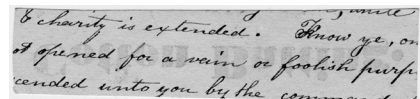
In recent months we have acquired a wonderful variety of Shaker ephemera to add to the Communal Societies Collection. One hundred thirty-two Canterbury, N.H. labels, fifty-one Mount Lebanon, N.Y. labels, tags, and billheads, and thirty-eight Watervliet, N.Y. labels, as well as a lesser number of labels from other Shaker communities, have been cataloged and scanned. These will be available through the online Digital Collections at the following URL:

<http://elib.hamilton.edu> — then click on Shaker Collection and select Artifacts.

Highlights among these ephemera include two very early Mount Lebanon chair industry labels, a product tag for washing machines, brooms, and hoops from Canterbury, and a pair of unusual Canterbury labels (pictured on this page). These “Cotton Batting” labels, likely printed by Elder Henry Blinn for use within the Shaker household, were printed on the reverse of: a) the title page of *A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book* (Canterbury, N.H., 1843), and b) a fragment of a manuscript containing an inspired writing likely dating from the 1840s.



Example a.



Example b.

The mundane reuse of such seemingly important religious texts amply illustrates the Shakers' practical approach to life and material possessions.

See additional illustrations of the ephemera on the inside and outside of the back cover.