

be so extensive that a third volume is contemplated. Other regional volumes planned are: *Niederrhein* by Goeters, *Bayern III* by Wiedemann, which will deal mainly with the bishopric of Passau; editors for *Württemberg* and *Mittelrhein* have not yet been finally arranged. Fellmann and Fast are preparing the text of the *Kunstabuch* for publication. Volumes of a similar nature which have been planned outside TAK are the writings of Karlstadt by Hans Hillerbrand, the writings of Rothmann by Stupperich (completed), and two volumes of Anabaptist documents in the Swiss series, Volume II, *Ostschweiz*, by Fast; Volume III, *Bern*, by Haas.

Volumes in the Täuferakten Series:

- I. G. Bossert, ed., *Herzogtum Württemberg*, 1930 (out of print).
- II. K. Schornbaum, ed., *Markgraftum Brandenburg (Bayern I)*, 1934 (out of print).
- III. L. Mueller, ed., *Glaubenszeugnisse oberdeutscher Taufgesinnter*, 1938 (out of print).
- IV. M. Krebs, ed., *Baden-Pfalz*, 1951.
- V. K. Schornbaum, ed., *Bayern II*, 1951.
- VI. G. Baring and W. Fellmann, eds., *Hans Denck, Schriften*, 1955-1960 (3 parts) (out of print).
- VII. M. Krebs and H. G. Rott, eds., *Elsass I, Stadt Strassburg, 1522-1532*, 1959.
- VIII. M. Krebs and H. G. Rott, eds., *Elsass II, Stadt Strassburg 1533-1535*, 1960.
- IX. G. Westin and T. Bergsten, eds., *Balthasar Hübmaier, Schriften*, 1962.
- X. H. J. Hillerbrand, ed., *Bibliographie des Täuferturns, 1520-1630*, 1962.

Volumes not in the Täuferakten Series:

- Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz, 1525-1535:
- I. L. von Muralt and W. Schmid, eds., Zürich. 1952.
- Urkundliche Quellen zur hessischen Reformationsgeschichte:
- IV. W. Koehler, W. Sohm, T. Sippel, G. Frantz, eds., *Wiedertäuferakten 1527-1626*. 1951.

NOTE ON GEORG SCHWERTFEGER

JEAN SEGUY*

In an article published in *Christ Seul* (January 1960, p. 27-38) titled "Un Poème du XIX^e Siècle sur les Mennonites Français, I had given, together with a reproduction of the German text of Schwertfeger's rhymed ballad (which had already been published by H. S. Bender in the *MQR* for April 1929, pp. 151-54), a French translation of it, and a commentary on its contents and its author. As Dean Bender put it in the review he devoted to this article (*MQR*, October 1960, pp. 313-14), my "most earnest attempts to identify the author" had proved "to be in vain." The difficulty was that no hint was given in the poem as to the place where Schwertfeger lived. In other words, it was impossible to make any investigations in birth and death records, without an extensive search through a vast mass of documents scattered all through the German-speaking parts of Alsace and Lorraine. Only chance could help if the

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origins of the man were to be discovered. Chance did help, but too late for the find to be inserted in my article of January 1960.

The information I am now able to give is taken from the records of baptisms, marriages, and deaths of the Lutheran parish of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines (Haut-Rhin), (German "Markirch") for 1706-92. These are deposited in the Archives du Haut-Rhin, Colmar (France), and to be found under the description G. G. 35. These documents confirm my impression that the name Schwertfeger is alien to Alsace. The first bearer of it in the Sainte Marie Lutheran records is Johann Georg, born at Hoffmarks-Furth, a place near Nürnberg, Germany. I have been unable to identify this place, which must be some hamlet. He is referred to in connection with the marriage of his son also named Johann-Georg with a certain Maria L'huiler. The union took place on May 27, 1738. At that date, Johann Georg I had already died. He is mentioned as *gewester Kriegsbedienter*, or deceased military functionary. We may surmise that he had come to Sainte-Marie after the 'Thirty Years' War, when the place was so hopelessly depopulated and the Prince of Birkenfeld allowed as many as wanted to come to his small possession in the Val de Liepvre. One knows that this was also the occasion when the first Bernese Anabaptists came to Sainte-Marie. Whether this Johann Georg was nicknamed for his professional occupation or not, Schwertfeger meaning maker of swords, his son Johann Georg II was certainly more peacefully minded, as he is known to us as a joiner. From his marriage with Maria L'huillier he had five sons: Johann-Georg III (b. 1739), Christoph-Ulrich (b. 1743), Georg-Christoph (b. 1746), Johann-Paul (b. 1749). Johann-Georg II having died in 1739, at six months of age, his name was given to the fifth son, Johann-Georg IV, born on January 26, 1752, baptized on the 30th of the same month. This latter is most probably our poet and schoolmaster. It is to be supposed that he is the same Georg Schwertfeger whose death is reported as follows in 1819: "Du treize novembre mil-huit-cent-dix-neuf à dix heures du matin, acte de décès de George Schwerdfeger, mort hier à onze heures du soir, âgé de soixante-dix ans, fileur de laine, né et domicilié à Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, département du Haut-Rhin, fils célibataire des defunts Jean-George Schwerdfeger et de Marie L'huillier son épouse" (Archives du Haut-Rhin, Colmar, *Etat-Civil de S-M-A-M.*, 5 E. 444). It is probable that the age of the deceased was given approximately, as was frequently the case in those days. In fact, (Johann)-Georg IV had reached his sixty-eighth birthday in January 1819.

A number of facts help us identify this Johann-Georg IV as the author of the *Gedicht von der schweitzerischen Gemeinde* with a high degree of probability. He is the only one among his family to fit in with the details we know about the poet. The one with whom a confusion might arise, Georg-Christoph, does not appear in the records after the year 1746 when his birth was reported. He must have left Sainte-Marie. Besides, Johann-Georg IV had never married, as appears from the record of his death. Michiels, in *Les Anabaptistes des Vosges*, tells us (p. 245) that the schoolmasters whom the Mennonites of the Vosges district hired for their children were bachelors. On another hand, the death record quoted above describes Georg Schwertfeger as a wool weaver. This also fits in with what we know of the schoolmasters in that time and place. Prof. Paul Leuilliot, in *L'Alsace au XIX^e Siècle*, Vol. III, Paris. S. E. V. P. E. N., 1960, p. 314, quotes the sous-préfet of Altkirch as complaining, in 1821, of the bad conditions then prevailing in primary

schools. This official tells of those masters who would spend the winter teaching and the rest of the time making ends meet by weaving. In most cases, he adds, the school session takes place in the room where the loom stands! So there is no difficulty in supposing that our Schwertfeger was both a wool weaver and a schoolmaster. This does not solve the problem of his own education. Compared to other teachers of those days he seems to have possessed a rather good foundation. This is particularly important, as Leuilliot (*loc. cit.*) underlines the paucity of bilingual masters. Georg Schwertfeger belonged to a bilingual family, his mother being of French lineage. Yet he had also learned Latin. The fact that he lived in Sainte-Marie explains why he started his review of the Elders of the "Swiss Assemblies," as he says, with Jacob Kupferschmitt, the Elder of Salm, a congregation with which the Mennonites of Sainte-Marie had numerous connections. Then they may have been friends, and the knowledge Schwertfeger allegedly had of the Dutch Mennonites might have come to him through conversations with the old Kupferschmitt. The latter had been to Holland before the French Revolution¹ in order to settle difficulties in the Amish congregations there.

It seems that the Schwertfeger family either left Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines in the course of the nineteenth century or that it died out. The last mention I have been able to find of it is dated "12.2. 1832." It concerns the death of a Caroline Schwertfeger, illegitimate daughter of Madelaine S., who could be a cousin of Johann-Georg IV. The L'huillier family to which the mother of this latter belonged still exists. It is a most ancient Sainte-Marie family. The founder of the noted daily Paris newspaper *Le Temps*, which was replaced by *Le Monde* in 1945, Auguste Neftzer, was the son of a Sarah L'huillier, of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines. F. L'huillier, a well-known historian and professor, belongs to the same family. See Bopp (J-M), *Die evangelischen Geistlichen und Theologen in Elsass und Lothringen* (Neustadt a. d. Aisch, Verlag Degener und Co, 1959-60), article "Neftzer."

I had suggested in the above quoted article that Schwertfeger might well have written his poem on the French Mennonites essentially to advertise his schools. Its last stanza is devoted to Schwertfeger himself and this had led me to this hypothesis. Though it cannot be entirely dismissed, I want to underline here that this poetry is in the form of a popular ballad, and that the genre itself demands that the author should sign his piece in the last stanza. It may be, then, that Schwertfeger just conformed to good usage in the six lines in which he advertises his ability as a schoolmaster. After all, he was already sixty-three when he composed the "Gedicht" and his reputation was certainly established by then.

¹ See Pierre Sommer, "Historique des Assemblées," in *Christ Seul* (March 1932) p. 5.