

THE SOUNDS OF EPHRATA: DEVELOPING A RESEARCH METHODOLOGY TO CATALOG AND STUDY EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY PENNSYLVANIAN MUSIC MANUSCRIPTS

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A corpus of at least 135 illuminated music manuscripts¹ from the Ephrata and Snow Hill communities can be definitively classified as American, and specifically Pennsylvanian. These manuscripts have been studied by a mere handful of scholars, only three of whom are musicologists. During this past year, I had the opportunity to study them toward work on my dissertation; one result of the study is a descriptive catalog of these manuscripts, with specific attention paid to their content, form, and function.

Some scholars learn of Ephrata and Snow Hill music manuscripts by way of Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. Mann's narrative makes reference to Conrad Beissel (1691–1768), the founder of Ephrata. Mann quite accurately explains that Beissel developed a system of composition and

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1. Although a strict definition of "illuminated manuscript" requires the presence of gold or silver heightening images or text, this study employs a broader understanding of the term, encompassing any handwritten document that includes decoration supplementing words or music. See *The Praeger Picture Encyclopedia of Art*, s.v. "Illumination."

harmony that divides scale degrees into classes of “masters” and “servants.”² This point of entry led to a unique and under-explored path of scholarship.

This corpus of manuscripts appears to have descended from a much older tradition of European monastic scribes, but was produced between 1739 and the 1850s in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, and Snow Hill, Pennsylvania. The manuscripts contain primarily homophonic four-part settings of hymn texts, all of which are in German. The people who created these manuscripts were celibate members of an isolated religious community (later known as the Ephrata Cloister of the eighteenth century, and its affiliated community, the Snow Hill “Nunnery” of the nineteenth century) who, like many Pennsylvania Germans of the time, viewed their artistic activities as devotional tasks. All of the music in these manuscripts is original to Ephrata and/or Snow Hill; apparently none is contrafacted.³

The settlement at Ephrata was first established in 1732 by Conrad Beissel (1691–1768), a radical Pietist, who immigrated to the Colony of Pennsylvania from the Heidelberg region of the Palatinate in 1720. Located northeast of Lancaster along the Cocalico Creek, Ephrata attracted new members each year and became a close-knit religious community with Beissel at its center. Essential social features of the settlement were Sabbatarianism, celibacy, and asceticism. The solitary brethren and sisters practiced various forms of self-denial, and held regular Saturday services that were attended by the neighboring farmers affiliated with the religious community, known by Ephrata historians as “householders.”

We know a significant amount about the daily life of Ephrata because of the community’s own retrospective accounts. Ephrata’s leader after Beissel was Peter Miller (1709–1796). During the twilight years of the settlement, Miller published the *Chronicon Ephratense*, a history of Ephrata, which was translated into English by Joseph Maximilian Hark in 1889.⁴ Starting in the 1740s, the Ephrata sisterhood gradually produced a handwritten chronicle entitled “Die Rose,” describing their solitary community within the community. This document has not been translated from German. The original manuscript is at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania,⁵ and two other copies are held there as well (a mid-nineteenth-

2. Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus: The Life of the German Composer Adrian Leverkühn as Told by a Friend*, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), 63–69.

3. This assertion has yet to be definitively proven. To date, there is no evidence that Ephrata composers wrote anything other than original music.

4. Brother Lamech and Johann Peter Miller, *Chronicon Ephratense: A History of the Community of Seventh day Baptists at Ephrata, Lancaster County, Penn’a*, trans. Joseph Maximilian Hark (Lancaster, PA: S. H. Zahm, 1889).

5. [Ephrata Community], “Die Rose (Chronicon of the Ephrata Sisterhood), 1745–1813,” Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Cassel Collection, Document 7.

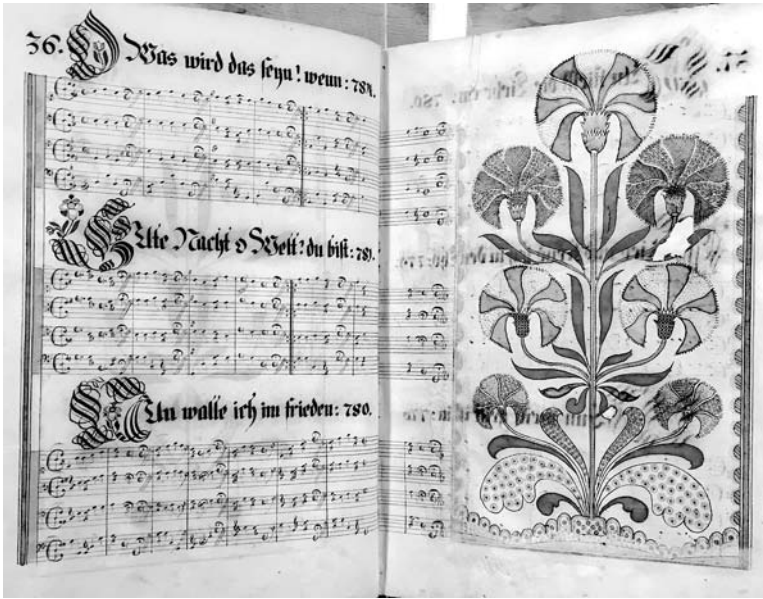


Fig. 1. Music manuscript for 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* Type 1. Ephrata Cloister Collection, EC 85.3.1, p. 36

century copy produced at Snow Hill,⁶ and a late nineteenth-century type-written transcription by Julius Sachse⁷). What we receive from these sources is a plethora of anecdotal evidence about individual community members and their various responsibilities. We also gain information about activities—both religious and economic—that were undertaken by different groups within the settlement.

Based on the *Chronicon*, “Die Rose,” and several contemporaneous accounts of visitors, we know the following regarding music at Ephrata: singing was performed by nearly all members of the settlement as part of religious services; a singing school was established during the 1730s and 1740s, which became the source of compositional and performance practice; and the sisters ran a scriptorium that produced the lion’s share of music manuscripts.⁸

6. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Cassel Collection, Document 6.

7. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Cassel Collection, Document 8. Julius Sachse (1842–1919) was an early scholar of Ephrata, and his work coincided with a late nineteenth-century flourishing of interest in Pennsylvania German studies. His studies of Ephrata history and music are problematic because of his tendency to alter facts. See Jeff Bach, *Voices of the Turtledoves: The Sacred World of Ephrata* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 119–20.

8. Dorothy Hampton Duck, “The Art and Artists of the Ephrata Cloister,” *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 97, no. 4 (1995): 138.

We also know that Ephrata, although monastic, was not hermetically sealed from the world. There were many contacts with groups including the Moravians and Mennonites, both inside and outside Pennsylvania. Interaction with the householders was also indispensable for the economic survival of the settlement. In the long term, the householders were ultimately responsible for the preservation of many Ephrata manuscripts. While some manuscripts found their way to the affiliate Snow Hill commune near Antietam in Franklin County, many remained. When the last of the celibate members of Ephrata died in 1813, the householder families reorganized as German Seventh Day Baptists the following year,⁹ and kept many of the Ephrata music manuscripts and other documents. Some of these documents were later dispersed as collector's items or acquired by various libraries and archives throughout the United States.

The research on Ephrata music discussed herein accomplished the following: (1) the creation of a comprehensive descriptive catalog of all extant Ephrata and Snow Hill music manuscripts; (2) a translation, interpretation, and historical contextualization of Beissel's music theory treatise; (3) a study of Ephrata hymnody and motets with an exploration of the application of the music theory system; and perhaps most noteworthy, (4) the discovery of music authorship inscriptions in a 1746 manuscript referring to three of the solitary sisters of the Ephrata Cloister, establishing them quite possibly as America's first known female composers.

The methodology underlying this research is the focus of this article. By developing a strategy to capture and classify the data of the primary sources, it was then possible to organize it into a scheme that makes logical sense. Before explaining this strategy, a distinction must be made about the relationship between two types of sources: (1) music manuscripts and (2) printed hymnals.

A few of the basic facts known about this collection follow. Ephrata music manuscripts were created to correspond with printed hymnals that contained the text for the music. Ephrata's first hymnals were printed by Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) in Philadelphia (*Göttliche Liebes und Lobes gethöne* (1730)), *Vorspiel der Neuen Welt* (1732), and *Jacobs Kampf und Ritter Platz* (1736); and Christoph Sauer (1695–1758) in Germantown (*Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* (1739)). Ephrata then purchased its own printing press sometime between 1742 and 1745,¹⁰ which enabled it to produce a series of hymnals over two decades, starting with the 1747 *Das*

9. Michael S. Showalter, " 'And We, the Fathers of Families. . . ' A Study of the Householders of the Ephrata Cloister," *Journal of the Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley* 13 (1988): 10.

10. Cynda L. Benson, *Early American Illuminated Manuscripts from the Ephrata Cloister* (Northampton, MA: Smith College Museum of Art, 1994), 10.

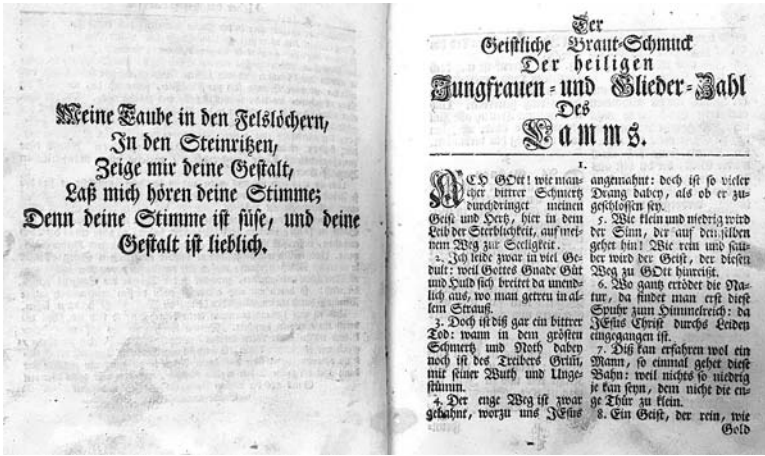


Fig. 2. 1747 *Turtel=Taube*, p. 1. Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society, 245.2865 E. Courtesy, Seventh Day Baptist Historical Library and Archives

*Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube*¹¹ (see fig. 2), and then the 1749 edition of the *Turtel=Taube*, followed by the 1755 *Nachklang zum Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube*, the 1762 *Neuvermehrtes Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube*, and finally the 1766 *Paradisisches Wunderspiel*.

The music manuscripts were created to be used alongside the printed hymnals. In addition to illuminations, the manuscripts contain textless musical settings of hymns with first-line incipits and numbers that reference the corresponding page in one of the printed hymnals. Thus, a printed hymnal may serve a function on its own as a textual source, but a music manuscript requires a corresponding hymnal to meet its intended purpose of musical performance. Starting in 1754, Ephrata attempted a print-manuscript hybrid known as the *Paradisisches Wunderspiel* (see fig. 3), not to be confused with the 1766 text-only hymnal mentioned above. One of the apparent purposes of the 1754 *Paradisisches Wunderspiel* was to combine text and musical notation, thereby eliminating the need for a print-manuscript concordance, as discussed below.

The combination of hymnal printing and music manuscript creation necessitated an organized labor force. The production was mainly done at Ephrata, including the making of paper and ink, and the tanning of leather. In order to create the music manuscripts, a scriptorium was set up in association with the singing school.¹²

11. Hereinafter cited as *Turtel=Taube*.

12. Lamech and Miller, 168–69.



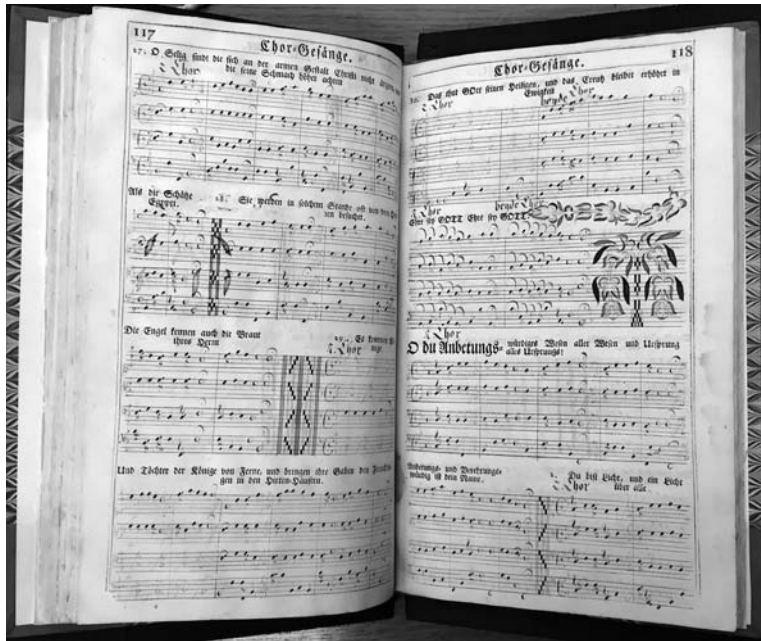


Fig. 3. 1754 *Paradisisches Wunderspiel*. United States Library of Congress, M2116. E6 1754, pp. 117–18. Courtesy, the Music Division at the Library of Congress

LOCATING DOCUMENTS

The modern researcher's first obstacle in working with Ephrata and Snow Hill documents is finding them. Initially, it was extremely difficult to gain a sense of the number or location of the sources. Only a few of the music manuscripts were digitized and accessible to the public, e.g., in the Free Library of Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Others were mentioned in secondary sources written by scholars during the past few decades, most notably Jeff Bach in his *Voices of the Turtledoves: The Sacred World of Ephrata*, which contains a bibliographical essay detailing several music manuscript sources.¹³ An additional resource proved quite valuable: Allen Viehmeyer's *An Index to Hymns and Hymn Tunes of the Ephrata Cloister 1730–1766*.¹⁴ Viehmeyer produced his *Index* over a period of almost two decades, and did so by writing to vari-

13. Bach, 197–218.

14. L. Allen Viehmeyer, *An Index to Hymns and Hymn Tunes of the Ephrata Cloister 1730–1766: Including All Printed and Manuscript Hymnals and Hymnal Fragments and Representative Music Manuscripts* (Ephrata, PA: Ephrata Cloister Associates, 1995). A second edition of Viehmeyer's *Index* is forthcoming.

ous libraries to ascertain whether they held any Ephrata or Snow Hill manuscripts or publications. If he could visit a library, he would do so; if not, he would request microfilm or photocopies. Viehmeyer meticulously collected information from the sources he examined, and was able to create a large database that included information about hymn text incipits, text authors, printed hymnals and music manuscripts in which hymns are found, evidence of various musical settings of hymns as indicated by musical incipits of the soprano part, and confirmation of music marginalia or other notations.

Viehmeyer's primary aim was to provide a complete index of the hymns, to be used by future researchers. Thus, his *Index* is organized primarily by hymn title, with information about known authorship, multiple musical settings, and incipits included as secondary data. Viehmeyer also provided indexes of authors and musical incipits, and each ultimately relates back to a primary entry organized by hymn title. At the end of the *Index* there a list of sources represented by two- and three-letter codes. For example, the first of three music manuscripts that Viehmeyer examined at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, is listed as MJA. The second and third manuscripts are logically titled MJB and MJC.¹⁵ By contrast, the 1747 printing of the *Turtel=Taube* is listed consistently as GTS, and the 1749 printing is GTL, regardless of location. There is no alternate three-letter label for these hymnals that indicates their location, even when they contain unique marginalia or inserted pages that distinguish them from the rest. These classifications allowed Viehmeyer to control his data for *content*, but not always for *sources*.

Because the research discussed here was concerned with *sources*, it was more comprehensive in nature than studies preceding it. And because the primary concern was to examine all of the music manuscripts in order to understand their content, Viehmeyer's list of sources was used as a starting point. Viehmeyer's data list was converted into a spreadsheet that could be organized as required, based on headings with titles like "Viehmeyer classification," "Collection," or "City." After the entry of all of Viehmeyer's data into this spreadsheet, additional data from Bach's bibliographical essay was included. It was then possible to augment the collection by carefully scouring WorldCat, which, although not ideal for searching for manuscripts, did prove useful. With WorldCat, two previously "unknown"¹⁶ manuscripts at Millersville University were located. Given the comprehensive nature of WorldCat, which cataloged its first

15. MJA is a music manuscript for the 1755 *Nachklang zum Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube*, MJB is a music manuscript for the 1762 *Neuermehrtes Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube*, and MJC is a music manuscript for the 1747 *Turtel=Taube* Type 3.

16. Previously unknown to Ephrata researchers.

musical score in 1974,¹⁷ one can gain a great deal of appreciation for current technology by noting that Viehmeyer's search was conducted by postal mail, telephone, and fax machine.

After constructing the list, visits were made to each library or collection found. In most cases, the expected items were located, but in others, a manuscript surfaced unexpectedly. A particularly astounding surprise took place in March 2017 during a visit to Juniata College. In the intervening two decades between the publication of Viehmeyer's *Index* and this research, the Beeghly Library at Juniata had received a substantial transfer of manuscripts from the now-vacated site of Snow Hill.¹⁸ This collection contains a number of printed hymnals alongside forty music manuscripts, none of which appeared in WorldCat or other library databases. It appears that thirty of these manuscripts are Ephrata originals, and ten are Snow Hill copies.

In contrast to the discovery at Juniata College, there were also disappointments. For example, the Moravian Music Foundation in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, apparently experienced a theft of its Ephrata music manuscript. Bach visited the collection in 2016 and spoke with the archivist there. The archivist reviewed past correspondence but had no records or knowledge of the music manuscript.¹⁹ This manuscript certainly had been housed there; it was cataloged by Viehmeyer, and it was also seen and photocopied in 1975 by Guy Oldham, a collector of Ephrata music manuscripts. When the author visited Oldham at his home in the United Kingdom in June 2017, he viewed Oldham's notes and a photocopy of a page of the Moravian Music Foundation manuscript.²⁰

Overall, 127 music manuscripts were viewed and cataloged as part of this study. What remains lacking is comprehensive information about Ephrata and Snow Hill sources existing in public collections which have not been cataloged. Indeed, "new" manuscripts appear unexpectedly. For example, during July 2017, Bach viewed an Ephrata music manuscript in LancasterHistory.org's collection.²¹ This source had been cataloged simply as "music manuscript" within an archival grouping affiliated with a family collection that had not been noted by previous Ephrata researchers.

17. Andy Havens at OCLC, e-mail to Christopher Herbert, 17 February 2017.

18. For details about this manuscript transfer, see Denise Seachrist, *Snow Hill: In the Shadows of the Ephrata Cloister* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2010), 99–100, and Hedwig Durnbaugh, *Snow Hill Nunnery: A Special Collection*, pamphlet created by Annemarie Joedden of the Juniata College Library, Huntingdon, PA, ca. 1998.

19. Jeff Bach, e-mail to Christopher Herbert, 20 July 2016.

20. The author gives special thanks to Mr. Oldham for allowing photos of the two Ephrata music manuscripts in his private collection.

21. Jeff Bach intends to write an article about this discovery.

Another significant lacuna is a lack of information about Ephrata music manuscripts in private collections. Fortunately, access to the two known music manuscripts in the United Kingdom was possible by way of a visit to Mr. Oldham. He allowed for photographs of his unique “Mutter Maria” manuscript, an intricately illuminated volume that he intends to bequeath to the British Museum. In addition, in February of 2018, an attendee at a history class on Ephrata’s music at the Ephrata Cloister asked if a book he owned was an Ephrata original. A quick examination of the manuscript identified it as an Ephrata music manuscript for the 1749 *Turtel=Taube* Type 2. It is impossible to know how many more Ephrata and Snow Hill volumes are in private hands and which of these might eventually enter the public record.

TABLE 1²²

CAPTURING DATA

At each library, attempts were made to photograph as many music manuscripts as time would allow. In some cases, photographs of specific manuscripts were not permitted because of the documents’ states of disrepair. At the Library of Congress, a setting of *Liebliche Lieder* was in such poor condition that only the title page was available for reproduction. As a consolation, a microfilm of the document was viewable, and it was possible to take photographs of each page displayed on the screen.

As images were captured, each one was automatically backed up on Google Photos. Photographs were then organized into one album per music manuscript. By using at least two screens (usually a laptop plus an iPad), it was possible to compare and contrast music manuscripts held in various collections. This proved absolutely necessary for the creation of a typology of Ephrata music manuscripts, described below. This data collection process serves as a reminder that such quick and seamless storage of photos would have been impossible only one decade ago.

UNDERSTANDING INTENDED USE AND CONTEXT

Whereas the work of previous scholars provided information about content and function of the various music manuscripts, additional study was required to place these materials in context. That began initially

22. The total number of music manuscripts in this chart is 127, referring to the total viewed over the course of research. At least eight more are in existence, however, which is why the number 135 is used in the introduction to this article. For a complete listing of music manuscripts with their local call numbers, see Christopher Dylan Herbert, “Voices in the Pennsylvania Wilderness: An Examination of the Music Manuscripts, Music Theory, Compositions, and (Female) Composers of the Eighteenth-Century Ephrata Cloister” (DMA diss., The Juilliard School, 2018), 15–100.

Table 1. Locations and numbers of extant Ephrata and Snow Hill music manuscripts

Library/Collection	Institution	City	Number of Music Manuscripts
Beeghly Library	Juniata College	Huntingdon, Pennsylvania	42
Free Library of Philadelphia Rare Book Department	Free Library of Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	10
United States Library of Congress, Music Division	United States Library of Congress	Washington, District of Columbia	10
Ephrata Cloister Research Collection	Ephrata Cloister	Ephrata, Pennsylvania	9
Historical Society of Pennsylvania Collections	Historical Society of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	9
Pennsylvania State Archives	Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	8
Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera	Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library	Winterthur, Delaware	8
Columbia University Rare Book & Manuscript Library	Columbia University	New York, New York	6
State Library of Pennsylvania Rare Collections	State Library of Pennsylvania	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	4
Chicago History Museum Research Center	Chicago History Museum	Chicago, Illinois	2
High Library	Elizabethtown College	Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania	2
Hershey Story Collections	The Hershey Story, the Museum on Chocolate Avenue	Hershey, Pennsylvania	2
McNairy Library	Millersville University	Millersville, Pennsylvania	2
New York Public Library Rare Book Collection	New York Public Library	New York, New York	2

Table 1 continued

Private Collection	Guy F. Oldham	Kingston-on-Thames, United Kingdom	2
Seventh Day Baptist Historical Library & Archives	Seventh Day Baptist Center	Janesville, Wisconsin	2
Special Collections at the Princeton Theological Seminary Library	Princeton Theological Seminary	Princeton, New Jersey	2
American Antiquarian Society Library	American Antiquarian Society	Worcester, Massachusetts	1
Ashland University Library	Ashland University	Ashland, Ohio	1
Lititz Moravian Archives and Museum	Lititz Moravian Congregation	Lititz, Pennsylvania	1
Martin Library of the Sciences: Archives & Special Collections	Franklin & Marshall College	Lancaster, Pennsylvania	1
Research Library at LancasterHistory.org	LancasterHistory.org	Lancaster, Pennsylvania	1

without a clearly defined scope of research, with mere data capture alongside unreflective hypothesizing. As familiarity with the music manuscripts grew, and as various printed hymnals were reviewed, however, it was possible to understand how the materials were created and used by the Ephratensians.

A particularly momentous realization occurred during a visit to Franklin and Marshall University in December 2016. Until this point, the principal research goal was to photograph music manuscripts without giving much attention to their corresponding printed hymnals. Indeed, their correlation was not immediately obvious. Christopher Raab, the librarian in charge of special collections at Franklin and Marshall, suggested investigating a specific printed hymnal together with the music manuscript in the collection. Raab emphasized this particular printed hymnal because of the music marginalia on many of its pages.

The subject of Ephrata music marginalia is complicated, and it alone could account for a dissertation's work. Nevertheless, the visit to Franklin and Marshall brought about a new perspective: viewing a music manuscript and a corresponding hymnal side-by-side (see fig. 4) revealed just how different the musical practice of Ephrata was from our current practice. Today, hymns are typically printed with the words and syllables carefully placed below the music. The result is a very clear layout that allows

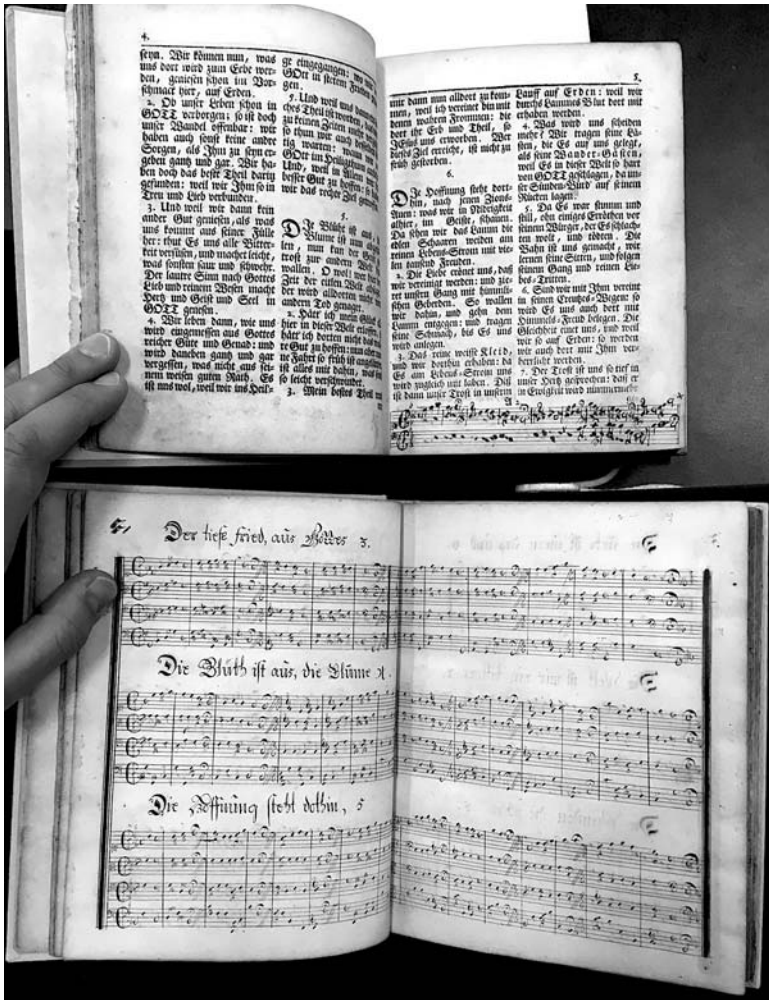


Fig. 4. 1749 *Turtel=Taube* (Franklin and Marshall College, EPHRATA 1747 B889G, p. 2) with music manuscript for 1749 *Turtel=Taube* (Franklin and Marshall College, Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection - MSS 5 Literary Manuscripts, Ephrata Cloister Music Manuscript in Book Form, ca. 1745, pp. 4–5)

the eye to focus on only one textual/musical event at a time. By contrast, the singers of Ephrata performed hymns mostly by reading music from their manuscripts while simultaneously referring to the text in a separate, corresponding printed hymnal. Unless the music or text were memorized, this would require a style of musical multitasking with which most singers are not accustomed today.

A coterminous account affirms this practice: the Swedish missionary Israel Acrelius (1714–1800) visited Ephrata in 1753, and described “the brethren and sisters, who sat in cross-seats in front, having psalm-books [text hymnals] and also note-books [music manuscripts]. . . .”²³ Hymns in Ephrata sources often consist of at least twenty stanzas. Assuming that the practice of singing all stanzas was customary, it would mean that the duration of hymns occupied a significant amount of time.

DEVELOPING AN ORGANIZATIONAL SCHEME AND CHRONOLOGY BASED ON CONTENT

Based on my understanding of these materials, it seems that this project may stand as the first opportunity since the eighteenth century through which one has been able to view such a large range of Ephrata music manuscripts. As a result, it was possible to take the work of earlier scholars and transform their data into a descriptive catalog. To do this it was imperative to identify the content of each manuscript. Unfortunately, none of the music manuscripts has a title page explaining its subject matter. In addition, although the descriptions of previous scholars were helpful, they did not contain enough detail to define specific contents.

Thus, a closer look at the manuscripts was necessary. In the majority of the manuscripts, each pair of verso-recto pages contains three systems of music with one hymn per system. For each of these hymns, a text incipit and a corresponding number indicating a page in a printed hymnal are provided (see fig. 5). These numbers were the initial key; by cross-referencing only one hymn in a music manuscript, one could verify to which printed hymnal it would correspond. Thus, by linking concordance to a printed hymnal (see fig. 4), it was possible to establish if a music manuscript were to be used with the 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel*, the 1747 *Turtel=Taube*, or any of the later printings.

The trouble with cataloging arises when you consider the 1747 *Turtel=Taube*, which was republished in 1749 with significant edits and additions. The index (or “Register”) for each of these imprints is quite different. In examining the Register of each music manuscript that corresponded to the *Turtel=Taube* it was possible to determine which were paired with the 1747 version, and those that complemented the 1749 version.

Dating these manuscripts was another challenge. Because there are few indications of dates in Ephrata manuscripts, context serves as a useful indicator toward establishing a chronology. For example, one could conclude that music manuscripts for the 1747 *Turtel=Taube* were most

23. Israel Acrelius, “Visit by the Provost Magister, Israel Acrelius, to the Ephrata Cloister, Aug. 20, 1753,” in Israel Acrelius, *A History of New Sweden, or the Settlements on the River Delaware*, trans. William M. Reynolds, 373–401 (Philadelphia: Publication Fund of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1876): 388.



Fig. 5. Music manuscript for 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* Type 1. Pennsylvania State Archives, MG 351, item 199, p. 34.

likely created between 1747 and 1749, due to the presence of unnumbered hymns at the end of these manuscripts that appear for the first time in the 1749 imprint.

Using the photo collection of the music manuscripts, it was possible to categorize each one according to a typology that was developed based on each source's Register and contents. It was also possible to use historical data and logical reasoning to establish a proposed chronology for them. These findings are summarized in table 2.²⁴

A study of watermarks found across the range of Ephrata documents would be a potential method for refining this catalog. For example, at least two paper mills were known to have produced paper used in Ephrata work. Apparently, the first Ephrata paper mill closed in 1745, and the other was established by 1750.²⁵ There are several different Ephrata watermarks related to these two mills,²⁶ and they are found

24. For a complete descriptive catalog, including rationales for stated dates of creation, see Herbert, 15–100.

25. John Bidwell, *American Paper Mills 1690–1832: A Directory of the Paper Trade with Notes on Products, Watermarks, Distribution Methods, and Manufacturing Techniques* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2013), 46–47.

26. For an inventory of Ephrata watermarks, see Thomas L. Gravell and George Miller, *American Watermarks 1690–1835* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2002), 174–75.

Table 2. Typology of Ephrata and Snow Hill music manuscripts

Manuscript Type	Number of Copies	Corresponding Printed Hymnal	Number of Voices	Likely Date of Creation
Music Manuscript for 1739 <i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> Type 1	19	<i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> (1739)	4	Definitely post-1739, likely post-1746, and potentially circa 1751.
Music Manuscript for 1739 <i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> Type 2	7	<i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> (1739) and <i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1747)	4	1742–1746. Potentially circa 1744.
Music Manuscript for 1739 <i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> Type 3	2	<i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> (1739) and <i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1747)	4	1746
Music Manuscript for 1739 <i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> Type 4	5	<i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> (1739) and <i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1747)	2 (mostly)	Likely pre-1746
1746 Ephrata Codex	1	<i>Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel</i> (1739) and <i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1747 and 1749)	5 (mostly)	1746 and 1749 or later
Music Manuscript for 1747 <i>Turtel=Taube</i> Type 1	5	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1747)	4 (mostly)	1747–1749
Music Manuscript for 1747 <i>Turtel=Taube</i> Type 2	2	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1747)	2 (mostly)	1747–1749
Music Manuscript for 1747 <i>Turtel=Taube</i> Type 3	2	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen</i>	5	1800–1850 (Snow Hill)

Table 2 continued

Music Manuscript for 1749 <i>Turtel=Taube</i> Type 1	33	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1749)	4	Post-1749, likely circa 1754 (Ephrata); 1800–1850 (Snow Hill)
Music Manuscript for 1749 <i>Turtel=Taube</i> Type 2	9	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1749)	4	1749–1753
1754 <i>Paradisiches Wunderspiel</i> Type 1	2	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1749); Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Psalms, Revelation, and Song of Solomon.	5 (mostly)	1754
1754 <i>Paradisiches Wunderspiel</i> Type 2	13+	<i>Das Gesäng der einsamen und verlassenen Turtel=Taube</i> (1749); Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, Psalms, Revelation, and Song of Solomon.	4 (mostly)	1754
Music Manuscript for 1755 <i>Nachklang zum Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube</i>	2	<i>Nachklang zum Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube</i> (1755)	4	circa 1755
Music Manuscript for 1762 <i>Neuvermehrtes Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube</i>	9	<i>Neuvermehrtes Gesäng der einsamen Turtel=Taube</i> (1762)	4	circa 1762
Music Manuscript for 1763 <i>Liebliche Lieder</i>	4	<i>Liebliche Lieder</i> (1763 manuscript – not print)	4	circa 1763
Additional non-categorized manuscripts	12	Various	Various	1739–1850 (Ephrata and Snow Hill)

throughout Ephrata publications and manuscripts (see fig. 6 for an example). In addition, the Ephrata community purchased paper from other Colonial mills and European vendors. An investigation of the use of these papers in Ephrata documents could potentially yield information about chronology and the manuscript creation process.

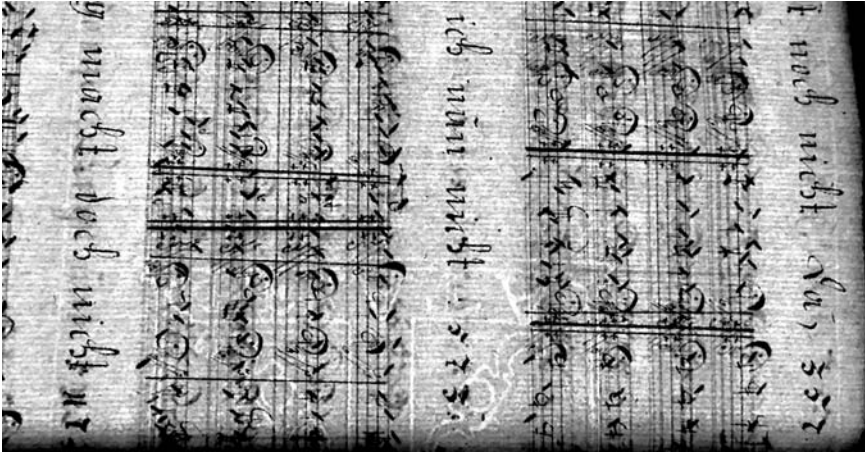


Fig. 6. Ephrata watermark (*EFRATA*) as seen in Winterthur, Col. 318, 65 x 562, section 1, page F. Courtesy, the Winterthur Library: Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera

It deserves to be stated that Ephrata (and Snow Hill) music manuscripts do not necessarily exist in their original form. Many of the known volumes have been rebound at least once, either by eighteenth- or nineteenth-century owners, or by twentieth- or twenty-first-century conservators. It is possible that several of today's extant copies are amalgamations, reorganizations, or physical combinations of earlier books. Thus, any organization of Ephrata music manuscripts will be necessarily imperfect and subject to future revision.

MAKING OBSERVATIONS, INFERENCES, AND HYPOTHESES

The schematic developed for organizing manuscripts led to an additional inference regarding chronology and creation process: it is that a section of one manuscript type is generally used as a "practice run" for the subsequent manuscript type. For example, settings of hymns found in music manuscripts for the 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* Type 2 and Type 3 are also found in music manuscripts for the 1747 *Turtel=Taube*. The difference between them is that these hymns in the manuscripts for the 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* are not given correspondence numbers but *are* numbered in manuscripts for the 1747 *Turtel=Taube*. The reason for this is one of simple chronology: the music manuscripts for the 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* were created before the 1747 *Turtel=Taube* hymnal went to print, and hence before page numbers could be

assigned.²⁷ The fact that there are preexisting musical settings for hymns from the 1747 *Turtel=Taube* reveals that the hymns (both text and music) were in use, and that the music manuscript was the format in which Ephrata writers and composers could test them out. This indicates an ongoing process of creation—a workshop system of continual invention, planning settings for future collections.

And what of this workshop? Would we had been flies on the wall of the Ephrata Cloister scriptorium during the 1740s and 1750s, we could have discovered so much. Of the scant contemporaneous accounts, we learn the following from Acrelius's recollection:

The sisters also live by themselves in their convent, engaged in spinning, sewing, writing, drawing, singing, and other things. The younger sisters are mostly employed in drawing. A part of them are just now constantly engaged in copying musical note-books for themselves and the brethren. I saw some of these upon which a wonderful amount of labor had been expended.²⁸

This is corroborated in the *Chronicon* and other first-hand reports, and essentially confirms that the Ephrata sisterhood led a scriptorium that was responsible for the creation of many of the music manuscripts.

Individuality of creation within the workshop is evident throughout the documents. Handwriting varies from manuscript to manuscript, and sometimes from page to page. Illustrations of the same subject are frequently drawn from various points of view and with different colors. In many cases, manuscripts with identical layouts and contents contain entirely different illuminations (see fig. 7 and fig. 8). It has been suggested that certain types of writing and illustrating were assigned to various scribes, perhaps based on their expertise or talent.²⁹ Furthermore, the presence of various brothers' and sisters' names written in throughout the music manuscripts and printed hymnals indicates a degree of affiliation with identity that might have been at odds with communal living. Bach explains this as related to a tension "between a gathered community and an individual quest for God."³⁰ Although the goal of a harmonious community was always implied, individuals or small groups frequently aired their grievances or rearranged their living situations to exhibit

27. Albeit tangential, a valid question emerges at this point: why did the musicians of Ephrata leave the hymn numbers in manuscripts blank once the printed hymnal was created? It would have been simple to fill them in. There are two likely answers: (1) music manuscripts can only correspond with written numbers to one hymnal (the exception to this is the 1746 Ephrata Codex). The addition of numbers from a different hymnal would have been inconceivable, or at least confusing; and (2) once a new printed hymnal was published, all efforts went to creating new music manuscripts for it. At this point, the older manuscripts might have been retired.

28. Acrelius, 375–76.

29. Kari M. Main, "From the Archives: Illuminated Hymnals of the Ephrata Cloister," *Winterthur Portfolio* 32, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 66–67, 74–75.

30. Bach, 62.



Fig. 7. Music manuscript for 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* Type 1. Ephrata Cloister Collection EC 97.1, p. 61



Fig. 8. Music manuscript for 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* Type 1. Pennsylvania State Library RB 783.95 Ep38ma (SHB), p. 61

personal protests against Beissel or other colleagues.³¹ The implication is that although a communal focus was a stated objective, self-regard frequently rose to the surface, placing the demands for recognition of individual acts at the fore.

Authorship at Ephrata included attribution of individuals' names not only to text, but also to music.³² The presence of community members' names in music manuscripts, from the more rudimentary to the extremely presentational, supports this claim. This can be viewed most clearly in the largest extant Ephrata music manuscript, known as the Ephrata Codex, which is housed at the Library of Congress.³³ The provenance of this massive volume is unique; Peter Miller gave it to Benjamin Franklin in 1771. Franklin then purportedly gave it to the English parliamentarian John Wilkes (1727–1797) in 1775.³⁴ After this, its whereabouts were unknown until 1927, when the Hungarian-American antiquarian Gabriel Wells (1861–1946) purchased it for \$475 at a Park Avenue book collectors' auction. Wells then sold it to the United States Library of Congress for the same price.³⁵

The purpose of the Ephrata Codex, as indicated by its title page, is as a dedicatory volume to Beissel with a comprehensive collection of the music written by the community before its stated date of completion (1746). The hymns and extended compositions found therein are mostly in five parts (as opposed to four), and many of the pages are elaborately decorated. While photographing each page of the Ephrata Codex in March 2017, the author noticed a small dedication for the name "Föben" next to the hymn "Formir, mein Töpffer" in section 3, page 157 of the manuscript (see fig. 9 and fig. 10).

It was a few months later while analyzing these photos that an important discovery was made, based on the realization that "Föben" is German for "Phoebe." Authorship of this hymn text is attributed today to Michael Müller (1673–1704),³⁶ and no one in the Ephrata community purported to write it. The presence of Sister Föben's name here indicates that she is not the writer of the text, but rather the composer of the music, whether the melody, harmony, or both.³⁷ In addition to Föben,

31. Bach, 65–67.

32. Herbert, 247–67.

33. The Ephrata Codex was digitized by the Library of Congress in March 2019. It can be accessed at <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017563869/>.

34. There is no proof of Wilkes's possession of the Ephrata Codex other than the Library of Congress listing. None of Franklin's correspondence from 1775 corroborates this detail, and it is unclear how Wilkes's name was originally linked to the manuscript.

35. Betty Jean Martin, "The Ephrata Cloister and Its Music, 1732–1785: The Cultural, Religious, and Bibliographical Background" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1974), 127–31, 353.

36. Lloyd Winfield Farlee, "A History of the Church Music of the Amana Society: The Community of True Inspiration" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1966), 562.

37. Herbert, 256–57.

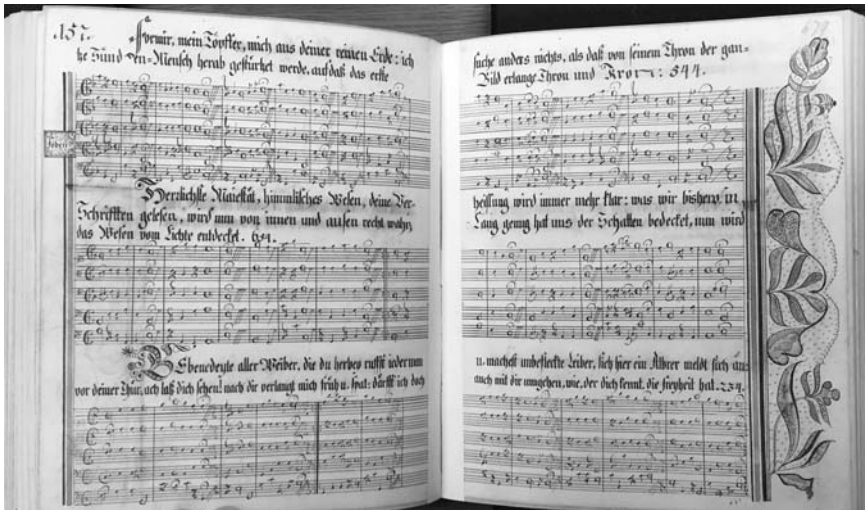


Fig. 9. Name of Föben written next to “Formir, mein Töpffer,” 1746 Ephrata Codex. LC, M 2116.E6 1746, section 3, p. 157. Courtesy, the Music Division at the Library of Congress

the names of two brothers (Jaebez and Theonis) and two sisters (Hanna and Ketura) are also present on neighboring pages. Table 3 shows the composer attributions found in the Ephrata Codex.³⁸

The discussion of these authorship indications is not insignificant. It most probably reveals proof of the first known female composers in America. Had such a straightforward research methodology not been developed, it is likely that this simple, yet substantial discovery would not have been made. Although this finding is not insignificant, it is important to temper it with a qualification: because female cultural contributions in eighteenth-century American society were frequently overlooked, it is impossible to prove that no other women in the Colonies wrote music. For this reason, we can state that Sister Ketura (Catherine Hagamann), Sister Föben (Christanna Lassle), and Sister Hanna (Hannah Lichty) are the first *known* women composers in America.

38. A previous version of this table provides an erroneous authorship attribution to the hymn “Enteigne dich Hertz von der Eigenheit.” See Herbert, 264. Hedwig Durnbaugh at Juniata College recently confirmed that this hymn is found as early as 1712 in the Radical Pietist Philadelphian hymnal *Anmutiger Blumenkranz*, and this indicates that its authorship is most certainly *not* Ephratisian (Hedwig Durnbaugh, e-mail to Christopher Herbert, 19 August 2018).

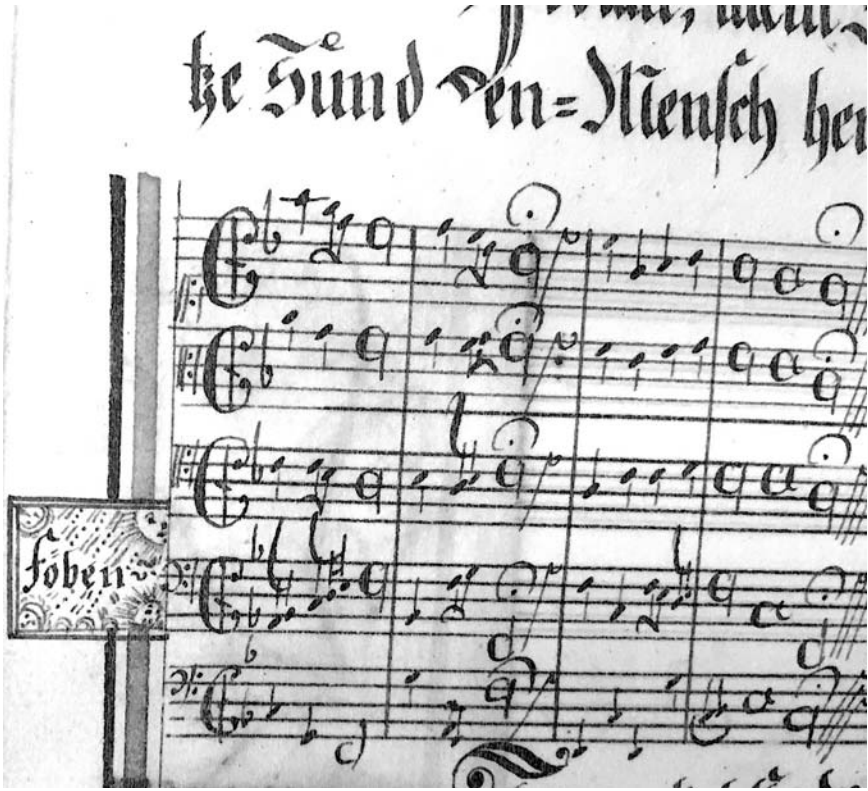


Fig. 10. Detail of inscription for Föben, written next to “Formir, mein Töpffer,”
1746 Ephrata Codex. LC, M 2116.E6 1746, section 3, p. 157. Courtesy,
the Music Division at the Library of Congress

CONCLUSION: FUTURE AVENUES OF EPHRATA MUSIC STUDIES

As is the case with most large research projects, this one answers valuable questions, but also points to significant tasks, obstacles, and lacunae. The future of Ephrata music research will require a concerted effort by scholars to move beyond this bibliographic starting point and take a more detailed and analytical approach.

In May 2018 the author began work on a modern transcription of music for the 1739 *Zionitischer Weyrauchs Hügel* Type 1, intended to serve as a critical edition, the first in the series of a complete works of Ephrata music. Previous attempts at editions did not necessarily address the issue of rhythmic notation, for example, and used only a handful of sources at

Table 3. Complete list of name indications next to hymns in 1746 Ephrata Codex

Section	Page	Hymn title	Text authorship	Composer attribution
3	144	Wann Zion wird entbunden	Beissel	Hanna
3	144	O wie selig sind die Seelen	Christian Friedrich Richter	Ketura
3	146	O süßer Stand! O selig Leben!	Johann Joseph Winckler	Theonis
3	146	Wenn die Seele sich befindet	Unknown European	Theonis
3	147	Enteigne dich Hertz von der Eigenheit	Unknown	Jaebez
3	148	Um Zion willen will ich nimmer	Br. Peter Lessle	Jaebez
3	149	Unfruchtbares Zion sey fröhlich	Unknown European	Jaebez
3	149	Zeuch meinen Geist trifft meine Sinnen	Christian Knorr von Rosenroth	Theonis
3	150	Mien treuer Hirt wie kem ich	Johann Joseph Winckler	Ketura
3	156	Die sanfte bewegung die liebliche Kraft	Christian Friedrich Richter	Föben
3	157	Formir, mein Töpffer mich aus	Michael Müller	Föben

best. Setting this music in accessible modern notation including the resolution of rhythm will increase readers' and musicians' ability to interact with eighteenth-century American history.

In addition to these transcriptions of music, grant funding allowed for the production of a recording of Ephrata music in March 2019, to be released in 2020. This is the first Ephrata musical recording made by professional musicians, and the hymns performed include those from the in-progress critical edition.³⁹

Future work on Ephrata and Snow Hill music will be facilitated by increased access to sources. This will require a greater investment in digital humanities technology, including comprehensive high-resolution digitization of all known manuscripts. Considering the fact that Ephrata music materials are unique American documents that extend from a centuries-old tradition of illuminated manuscript creation, such attention to their digital preservation would be worthwhile and valuable.

³⁹. As of the writing of this article, publication and release details for this recording are not yet confirmed.

ABSTRACT

At least 135 Colonial American music manuscripts from Pennsylvania are located in libraries throughout the United States and beyond. They are affiliated with the Ephrata Cloister, founded in 1732 by Conrad Beissel. Ephrata, and its nineteenth-century affiliated community Snow Hill, were celibate, ascetic, German-speaking, Sabbatarian communes in the wilderness of Pennsylvania. Their residents created a large corpus of hymns and motets in a scriptorium. Because Ephrata and Snow Hill produced no heirs, their documents were scattered and their traditions were mostly forgotten. Although significant strides have been made in recent years to understand Ephrata's theology, substantial lacunae remain in the study of its music.

This article outlines the methodology that the author developed as part of a dissertation in order to capture, organize, understand, and synthesize data of Ephrata and Snow Hill music manuscripts. It discusses the creation of a descriptive catalog of all extant available music manuscripts. This catalog is the first of its kind: it organizes music manuscripts according to their content and proposes a chronology for them. The article also discusses inferences and hypotheses relating to the music manuscripts and their creation. Of particular note is the research-based discovery that the music manuscripts provide tangible evidence of the first possible female composers in America. Finally, the article outlines potential avenues of research in future Ephrata music studies.



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