

ZOAR

By Kathleen Fernandez, Site Manager

Zoar Village State Memorial

** Item for sale at Zoar Village State Memorial. Inquire for prices at www.zca.org

PRIMARY SOURCES

MANUSCRIPTS

Zoar, Society of Separatists of. Records, 1816-1942. 23 linear feet.

(MSS 110, OHS Library)

This collection includes correspondence and personal, official, legal, business and religious documents. Some of the records relate to various economic enterprises of the Society, including the brewery, tannery and hotel. Also, included are papers of the Society's leaders: Joseph M. Bimeler, Jacob Sylvan, Christian Wiebel, Jacob Ackerman, Simon Beuter and Lewis Zimmerman.

Zoar, Society of Separatists. Records. 1.9 linear feet.

(MSS 1663. Western Reserve Museum Library, Cleveland, OH.) Also on microfilm at OHS Library. (MIC 185)

Contains miscellaneous records of the Society, including many early documents pertaining to their emigration from Wurttemberg in 1817.

Jack and Pat Adamson Collection. Papers and Audiovisuals, 1709-1975, 20 cu. ft.

(MSS 1276 OHS Library)

Includes letters to buy property in Brandenburg, Germany, before their arrival in America, powers of attorney to redeem members' inheritances, contracts, records of trades, funeral discourses, personal letters including some from Civil War soldiers, children's papers, song books and many other records.

BOOKS

Bimeler, Joseph Michael. Die wahre separation, oder die wiedergeburt, dargestellt in giestreichen und erbaulichen versammulngsreden und betrachtungen.

Besonders auf das gegenwartige zeitalter anwendbar. Gehalten in der gemeinde in Zoar, im jahr 1830, 1831, 1832, 1834. Gedruckt in Zoar, O., 1856-60.

(Translation: The True Separation, or Rebirth, represented in spiritual and edifying congregational sermons and meditations. Especially applicable to our present age. Delivered in the Congregation in Zoar in the years 1830, 1831, 1832, 1834. Printed in Zoar, O., 1856-60).

_____, **Etwas fürs herz! oder Geistliche brosameln von des Herrn tisch gefallen. Gesammelt von einer hellbegierigen seele und in der absicht zu einem esegneten gebrauch mitgetheilt. Bestehend in einer sammlung von auszügen vieler kraftiger reden und betrachtungen, vorzüglich auf das innere leben gerichtet. Oeffentlich gehalten und vorgentragen von einem freunde Gottes und der wahrheit in Zoar. Hauptsächlich geeignet auf die gegenwärtige zeit. . . Gedruet in Zoar, Oh., 1860-61.**

(Translation: Something for the Heart! or Spiritual Breadcrumbs that have fallen from the Lord's table. Collected by a Soul desirous of Salvation, and published for the purpose of a blessed use. Consisting of a collection of excerpts from many powerful sermons and meditations, aimed particularly at the inner Life. Publicly given and delivered in Zoar by a Friend of God and Truth. Especially suited for the present day. . . Printed in Zoar, O., 1860-61).

Both of these volumes contain sermons delivered by Joseph Bimeler during his lifetime and printed after his death in 1853. A copy was given to each family in Zoar, and these sermons were later re-read during church services in Zoar during its later years. Both available at Ohio Historical Society Library, Columbus.

SECONDARY SOURCES

BOOKS ABOUT ZOAR

** Fernandez, Kathleen. *A Singular People: Images of Zoar*. Kent: Kent State University Press, 2003.

A photographic history of Zoar, with quotations from 19th century visitors.

** Gunn, Alexander. *The Hermitage Note-Book and Journal of Travel*. 2 vols. New York: privately printed, 1902.

The diary of a wealthy Cleveland industrialist who spent much time in Zoar during its last decade. Very good descriptive passages.

** Hickman, Janet. *Zoar Blue*. New York: The Macmillan Publishing Co., 1978. Reprinted 1998.

A juvenile novel about Zoar and the Civil War. Well-researched with believable characters.

** Morhart, Hilda D. *The Zoar Story*. Dover, Ohio: Seibert Printing Co., 1967 (last reprint, 1999).

An anecdotal history of Zoar seen through the eyes of a descendant.

** Randall, E.O. *History of the Zoar Society from its Commencement to its*

Conclusion. A Sociological Study in Communism. Columbus: Press of Fred J. Heer, 1899. (Originally printed in Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Quarterly, 8[1900]: 1-105.) Includes interviews both before and after the dissolution of the Society. A contemporary view.

BOOKS THAT MENTION ZOAR

Hinds, William A. *American Communities*. Revised edition. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Co., 1902. (Original: Oneida, NY: American Socialist, 1878)

Has a chapter on Zoar which is fairly accurately presented.

** Nordhoff, Charles. *The Communistic Societies of the United States*. New York: Dover Publications, 1966 (originally printed by Harper Brothers in 1874).

A journalist's view of communalism. His chapter on Zoar is rather unflattering, but fairly accurate.

LOCAL HISTORIES

Howe, Henry. *Historical Collections of Ohio*. Vol. II. Cincinnati: C.J. Krehbiel And Co., 1908.

Contains a brief sketch of Zoar with a woodcut of Main St.

ARTICLES

"The Colony of Zoar." *Penny Magazine*, (London), VI (Oct. 26, 1837), 411-412.

An early description of Zoar by a Briton, including depictions of their industries.

** Durnbaugh, Donald F. "Strangers and Exiles: Assistance Given by the Religious Society of Friends to the Separatist Society of Zoar." *Ohio History*, Vol. 109 (Winter Spring 2000).

A thorough history of the Separatists' time in Philadelphia, using the minutes book kept by the Quaker committee that assisted them.

Fritz, Eberhard. "Zoar (Ohio) Separatist Roots." *Communal Societies*, Part I in Vol. 22 (2002), Part II in Vol. 23 (2003).

Uses original documents in Wurttemberg to detail the Separatists' beginnings, particularly in the village of Rottenacker. By a German historian.

Landis, George B. "The Separatists of Zoar." *Annual Report of the American Historical Association*, (1899): 165-220.

A comprehensive history of the Society at its end, but contains some errors.

Potts, Pipsey [Rosella Rice]. "A Queer, Quaint People." *Arthur's Home Magazine*, Vol. L, pp. 312-4 (part I, June), 371-4 (part II, July), 428-31 (part III, August), 1882.

A delightfully-written description of the village of Zoar.

[Sophia Dana Ripley]. "A Western Community." *The New Yorker*, 11 (July 17, 1841), n.p. (Originally printed in *The Dial*, 2 (July 1841): n.p.

This article, originally published in the Transcendentalist journal, *The Dial*, is said to document the journey Ripley and her husband made to inspect the Zoar community before establishing their own communal society at Brook Farm. Contains vivid descriptions.

Webber, Philip E. "Jacob Sylvan's Preface to the Zoarite Anthology, *Die Wahre*

Separation, Oder die Wiedergeburt, as an Introduction to Un(der)studied Separatist Principles.” *Communal Studies*, Volume XIX, (1999), 101.

This translation and commentary describes the Separatists’ religious doctrine and their early history.

Woolson, Constance F. “The Happy Valley.” *Harper’s Monthly Magazine*, 41 (July, 1870): 282-5.

The first published work of a noted author who spent childhood summers at the Zoar Hotel.

DISSERTATIONS AND THESES

Colpetzer, Susan E. “The Society of Separatists of Zoar: A Study of a Communal Society Within a Regional Social Context, Focusing on the Years 1870-1898.” Unpublished Masters Thesis, The Ohio State University, 1985.
Studies community reactions to Zoar.

Nixon, Edgar B. “The Society of Separatists of Zoar.” Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, The Ohio State University, 1933.
Perhaps the best all around source about Zoar.

UNPUBLISHED PAPERS

Fernandez, Kathleen M. “Communal Communications: Zoar’s Letters to Harmony and Amana.” Presented at the 11th Annual Communal Studies Association Conference, Amana, IA, October, 1984.
Traces the relationship of these three communal groups through their letters.

NEWSPAPERS

J.B.L., “The Zoar-ites’ or Separatists.” *Sunday Beacon* [Akron, Ohio] July 31, 1862.

Several good descriptions of people and their dress.

“Zoar,” *The Ohio Statesman* [Columbus], September 18, 1859.

A rather windy, but detailed look at Zoar just before the Civil War.

Nugitna [Zoar], December 30, 1895; January 27, 1896; February 24, 1896; March 24, 1896.

The only newspaper ever published in Zoar, it lobbied for dissolution of the Society as well as provided news for the community. The March 24, 1896 issue was never published. These are located in the Ohio Historical Society Broadside Collections. The text is in E. O. Randall, *History of the Zoar Society*.

DIARIES, MEMOIRS

P.F.D., “Harmony Builds the House...,” Unpublished MSS in Peter Kaufmann Papers, Coll. 136, Ohio Historical Society Library. Translated by Wolfgang Fleishhauer.

An early, detailed account of Zoar by a non-member very familiar with the Society. May have been written to be published in one of Kaufmann's German newspapers.

Quinby, Moses, "Diary," October 12-13, 1831, MSS 217, Kroch Library, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

An early visit to Zoar, gives very detailed descriptions.