PRINCIPAL 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 Wurttemburg in 1817.

(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, dargestellet in giestreichen und erbaulichen versammlungsreden und betrachtungen.
(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).


(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


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


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


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


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

BOOKS THAT MENTION ZOAR
Has a chapter on Zoar which is fairly accurately presented.
A journalist’s view of communalism. His chapter on Zoar is rather unflattering, but fairly accurate.

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

ARTICLES
An early description of Zoar by a Briton, including depictions of their industries.
A thorough history of the Separatists’ time in Philadelphia, using the minutes book kept by the Quaker committee that assisted them.
Uses original documents in Wurttemburg to detail the Separatists’ beginnings, particularly in the village of Rottenacker. By a German historian.
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,
A delightfully-written description of the village of Zoar.
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

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

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

**DISSERTATIONS AND THESES**


Studies community reactions to Zoar.


Perhaps the best all around source about Zoar.

**UNPUBLISHED PAPERS**


Traces the relationship of these three communal groups through their letters.

**NEWSPAPERS**


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.

*Nugima* [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 Broadscale Collections. The text is in E. O. Randall, *History of the Zoar Society*.

**DIARIES, MEMOIRS**

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.
An early visit to Zoar, gives very detailed descriptions.