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APPENDIX  
THE GHOSTS OF LONGMARSH RUN  
The Three Wives of Christopher Beeler

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"There were two young married persons in the Community of Ephrata who were anxious about their eternal welfare; but because, according to the usage of these times, the wife entered upon the practice of continence without consent of her husband, he fell into grate temptation, and at last sinned with a neighboring widow whom he had served in many ways. Because on this account he lost his fellowship with the Community, he took his children and the said widow with him to Virginia, and left his first wife in the Community. After he had three children by that widow, she died, and he married a person of noble birth, who had just arrived in the country, and who called herself Henrietta Wilhelmina von Höning, but who did not bring the best character with her into the country."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the *Chronicon* introduces Christopher Beeler (Böhler) and his three wives. Nothing is known about Beeler's origins other than that he was probably of Reformed background before he embraced the Sabbatarian faith. As the *Chronicon* infers, Christopher Beeler moved south with his three children, Catherine, Joseph and Frederick and with the widow of Hans Michael Schüle. The Schüles had lived near Germantown before coming to Ephrata. Beeler's wife, Catherina, remained behind in the convent as Sister Esther.

In June 1740 Beeler acquired 139 acres of land between Opequon and Shenandoah from Neill Thompson and built his home on Longmarsh Run, about half-way between the Bullskin and the present site of Berryville.<sup>2</sup> Three years later he bought five hundred acres on the west side of the Shenandoah from Abraham Pennington. This transaction is the first entry in newly-formed Frederick County's first deed book.<sup>3</sup> The death of his first wife in Ephrata in 1741 removed, if it had mattered to Beeler, the obstacle to a legal marriage with widow Schüle.<sup>4</sup> Catherine, daughter of Catherina and Christopher, chose to return to Ephrata where she joined the sisterhood. Widow Schüle bore Beeler three children while there were living on Longmarsh, Mary, Benjamin and Samuel.

Like other German sectarians of his day, Beeler emerges from available records as a man of remarkable enterprise. He amassed considerable acreage in Frederick, Jefferson and Mineral counties and owned a town house in Alexandria. With farming and trading he accumulated a fortune that was to benefit his children and, in a small measure, also the Ephrata treasury.

Throughout the years, the Beeler family seems to have kept up their contacts with Ephrata. Late in 1750, Samuel, Israel and Gabriel Eckerlin visited them before heading for the Ohio region.<sup>5</sup> At that time Beeler himself was scouting for land in the western parts. In March 1752 he obtained a patent for 387½ acres within Fairfax' Patterson Creek Manor where he built a house on the present site of Kayser, West Virginia.<sup>6</sup> He appears to have lived there until some time in 1756 or 57 when he was forced back by the Indian incursions. In August 1756 Ezekiel Sangmeister, Anthony Hellenthal and Martin Kroll, the three solitaries of the Sandy Hook, tried in vain to find him on the Longmarsh while on a return trip from Ephrata.<sup>7</sup>

Christopher Beeler himself went to Ephrata in 1757 to take his second wife to the cloister for medical treatment. She died there in March 1758.<sup>8</sup> On July 24, 1758 Beeler was in Winchester to cast his vote for George Washington as burgess.<sup>9</sup> In 1760 he married Henrietta Wilhelmina von Höning, also known at various times as Eliseba. One of her first concerns seems to have been what would happen to her husband's estate in view of his previous marriages. Widow Schüle also had left behind a considerable number of children from her first husband. It was only after Beeler wrote a will that the spiritual manifestations began in January 1761 which led to the midnightly session in Ephrata presided over by Conrad Beissel himself.

After the disquieting events which brought the Beeler family considerable notoriety, at least among fellow Germans, Christopher Beeler did not appear at the polls in Winchester on May 18, 1761. Only his two oldest sons cast their votes, Joseph for George Mercer and Adam Stephen, and Frederick for George Washington and Mercer.<sup>10</sup> As soon as the threat of Indian attacks was over, Christopher Beeler moved his family back to New Creek where he made his permanent home. His land holdings were mostly acquired to provide for his children. In 1758, Joseph, the oldest, had already received the land his father had bought in 1740. In 1762 and 1768 he took over the remaining parts of the large plantation. He also received a smaller farm near his father's house in the west.

Joseph Beeler's activities included extensive business in Alexandria, Annapolis and Baltimore. In 1767 he was associated with Daniel Bush and had the sole use of Bush' "Long Ordinary" in Alexandria. Bush, a distant relative of Christopher Beeler, was a merchant and one of the first trustees of the German Reformed church in Winchester. Joseph Beeler also became a prominent citizen of Winchester where he was one of the early members of the masonic lodge. He died about 1806.<sup>11</sup>

Frederick, the other son of Beeler's first marriage, died quite young in the spring of 1764. The oldest daughter,

Catherine, had died at Ephrata on March 1, 1763 at the age of 29 years and 7 months after a long illness.<sup>12</sup> The children of the second marriage all received land in the west in their father's lifetime. His daughter Mary married George Kyger in 1764 and lived near her father on New Creek.<sup>13</sup> His son Benjamin was settled in Jefferson county.

Henrietta Wilhelmina Beeler is mentioned in Frederick County records in 1770 and 1772 because questions arose as to her consent to her husband's conveyance of land to his son Joseph. Since she was unable to travel to Winchester, the court ordered dispositions taken in her home in which she affirmed her agreement.<sup>14</sup> She must have died soon afterwards, and her marriage to Beeler seemingly remained without issue, unless she had left him in later years. At least, his will neither mentions her nor any children by her.

Christopher Beeler died in 1774 in his home on New Creek. [DBR-this is wrong. There are records of him in the minutes of court of Yohogania County, Virginia (now Westmoreland County, PA) of 23 Sep 1777 when Joseph and Christopher came into court and enter into bond for the administration of the estate of John Hutchison. There are many references to his sons, Joseph and Samuel, in the "Virginia Court Records in Southwestern Pennsylvania" by Boyd Crumrine.] His last will, written in March 1773, provides for his children and grandchildren. He also bequeathed one hundred pounds to the Sisters in the cloisters at Ephrata from the proceeds of the sale of his house in Alexandria "for Taking Care of my Daughter Catherine when there and in her sickness."<sup>15</sup>

In Ephrata, Christopher Beeler would have remained one of the numerous souls whom the paradisiacal foretaste brought sad consequences, spiritually at least, and whose memory was best forgotten by the virtuous in the cloisters, had it not been for the ghosts who haunted his noble wife on Longmarsh. Conrad Beissel deemed the affair worthy of his personal involvement. When the Beeler couple arrived in Ephrata, Beissel was out of town on business and none of those present were "inclined to meddle with these things." A messenger was sent for the superintendent but at first he refused to hurry back. The *Chronicon* recalls:

"But the night following he received other instructions and travelled home with the Brethren. He considered that these people and their important experiences had been sent to him by God, and as such accepted them"<sup>18</sup>

Beissel's handling of the dramatic denouement session and his eagerness to have a full account of these occurrences committed to print give a rare insight into the workings of his mind when confronted with seemingly supernatural interference in the settlement of a worldly inheritance. The pamphlet of 39 pages was published by the Ephrata Brotherhood. It consists of Eliseba Beeler's detailed account of the spiritual manifestations up to the eve of the convocation in the great hall at the cloister. There Joseph Beeler takes up the reporting because his stepmother's mind was too perturbed to recall the particulars. Next comes Beissel's letter which, according to Joseph Beeler, was handed them the following day. Beissel's private altar, incense and his "mercy-seat" (*Gnadenstuhl*) feature as background to his magisterial interpretation. The pamphlet concludes with a lofty discussion of the world of spirits which, although unsigned, was probably also Father Friedsam's contribution.

The entire ghost interlude was no doubt a costly affair for wealthy Christopher Beeler who probably also underwrote the printing costs. If the reconciliation of the living and the dead in the presence of the Superintendent of the very cloister whence he had been chased as a sinner more than twenty years earlier, put his own troubled conscience at ease, he, after all, must have gained most from this winter journey to Ephrata.

Abgeforderte  
**RELATION**  
der Erscheinung  
eines entleibten Geists

Dem Publico zur Nachricht getreulich  
aus dem Mund derer, die von An-  
fang bis ans Ende mit interessirt,  
aufgeschrieben.

Und da der Geist vor mir über ging  
stunden mir die Haare zu Berg  
an meinem Leibe. Hiob IV-15.

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EPHRATÆ Typis & Consensu Societatis  
Anno Domini MDCCLXI.

"Title page of the 39 page Ephrata pamphlet of 1761 dealing with the spiritual manifestations on the Beeler plantation in Virginia and the dramatic denouement session at Ephrata. Translation by Klaus Wust and publication here with permission of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, owners of the only known copy."

**Translation of the Relation of 1761**

**An Exacted  
RELATION  
on the Appearance  
of a Disembodied Spirit**

Faithfully recorded for the public's  
information from the mouth of those  
concerned from beginning to end.

***Then a spirit passed before my face;  
the hair of my flesh stood up. Job 4:15***

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EPHRATAE Typis & Consensu Societatis  
Anno Domini MDCCLXI  
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This booklet is for sale in  
Philadelphia by Henry Miller, Printer  
Germantown by Christopher Sauer, Printer  
Reading by Christ: Wittman  
Tulpehocken by Peter Spicker  
Lancaster by Lauman  
Yorktown by Krosch, Merchant  
Winchester by Daniel Busch

I, Eliseba Beeler, otherwise known as Hennrietha Wilhelmine von Höning, in the year 1760 married Christopher Beeler, an inhabitant of New Virginia in Frederick County. I am his third helpmeet. The first one died in Ephrata and left him three children. The other one was the widow of a man named Michael Schüle who used to live near Germantown but ended his life near Ephrata. She also died in March 1758 and, besides leaving behind a considerable number of children she had with the said Schüle, there were three fathered by her last husband. Then I followed her and, in order to remove any cause for future dispute, I persuaded my husband to draw up a true will covering his estate and how it was to be distributed among his various heirs. In this connection an incidence occurred of which, since rumors of it have been spread already about the country, I want to render a comprehensive account for the contemplation by posterity. And if there be someone who doubts the truth of the matter and thinks it is an old wives' tale, he ought to go to the trouble of pursuing the matter with the many eyewitnesses. For herein I call upon the testimony of my husband's children, our neighbors, people in Winchester and many inhabitants of Ephrata where the affair was settled at last.

On the 10th of January this 1761<sup>st</sup> year, in the morning while I was still lying in bed but awake, I suddenly was overcome by a slumber. Then I felt as if my husband was beating me hard which saddened me very much, and I implored him to let me be and promised to move out of the house again. When I was about to leave, it seemed to me that the door opened and an old woman came in. I had a good look at her and felt assured within myself that it was my husband's late last wife in which belief others, whom I described her appearance to, supported me afterwards. She stepped in front of my husband's sideboard, opened it, and placed so much gold and silver in it as she could hold in one hand, locked it again, placed the key on the table and came toward me. There was a chair nearby on which she put me down. The bruises on my arm, where she had touched me while setting me down, were visible for several days. Thereupon she said: do not go away/ but stay here with my husband/ I am an old woman I do not like it / and shall go away again/ you are the third and rightful wife/ and because you are good to my children/ I shall reveal everything to you/ for you will not be here much longer. Go into the kitchen in the twelfth hour/ where you shall find money behind the pewter sideboard.

While she was speaking, the horses passed the window on their way to the pond with such noise that I awoke whereupon the spirit made off. I was convinced that, had I not been interrupted, she might have told me everything clearly then and there what she tried to reveal afterward in confused language at different times. My husband arrived and wondered about my sleeping unusually long. I revealed the whole affair to him and at the twelfth hour of the day, after having removed everybody else from the house and locked the same, we both went into the kitchen to the indicated spot. My husband pulled the sideboard from the wall and with a stick I scraped up an old rag that was well held together by means of pins. To our surprise we found a Virginia five pound note in it. When we examined the bill, we discovered that it had not been issued till four weeks after the death of the said woman which made us suspicious of the whole affair. She had died in March and the subsequent month of April was the date printed on the bill. With it was a piece of silver as flat as a button beaten with the hilt of a sword.

We spent the following day in a state of amazement and did not know what to make of this thing. But it was to be only the beginning of a strange comedy played hereafter for four weeks about which I shall now give a true account as it happened. The next night, toward daybreak, I fell again into a slumber. The ghost soon made herself known again and spoke: Go behind the stove to the sideboard in the twelfth hour. There you shall find something for Hanna (this daughter she had with the said Schüle). When we emptied the sideboard the following day, we found some cambric and money hidden in a skein of hemp. Otherwise this incidence affected my human body so severely that I thought I might lose my life. All of a sudden I vomited half a pint of blood, and this still went on for 24 hours.

Since we did not know what might happen the following night, my husband took it upon himself to guard me, and he sat at my feet. Once midnight had passed and the sun began to approach our horizon, the ghost appeared and spoke: Go with me, there are thirty pieces of silver and gold buried at a certain spot. You shall give those to Samuel when he will be eighteen years old. I shall show them to you. I refused to go and I did not want to go. She tore my left shirt sleeve out of the seam at the shoulder as if it had been severed and threw it on the floor in front of my husband's feet. My husband saw it lie in front of him and thought it was the ghost and when he kicked it with his foot, it moved by itself. There he called for his son to bring in a light. Now both of them took up the guard. My stepson at my head, my husband at my feet. But before they realized it, the ghost was there. The air in the room stirred as if moved by a gentle breeze. The light began to quiver as if it would go out. All of a sudden she reached from under my stepson, seized the sleeve of my other arm on which I was lying, tore it out too and threw it into my stepson's lap.

But as I continue to relate the happening, I must ask the esteemed reader to imagine how it felt being treated so roughly. When my husband saw this he said to me: There is nothing else we can do. You must go along lest the ghost kills you. We shall go with you and risk our lives as well. We had deep snow and since we did not know whither the ghost would lead us, we put enough clothes on. I took a fire shovel and knife for digging in one hand and with the other one held on to my husband's hand and my husband held my son's hand who carried the light. No sooner were we ready than the ghost appeared. She walked ahead of us. I could see her distinctly as a shadow on the snow. She led us into the milk house. We moved some wood out of the way and I began to scratch on the ground and uncovered a board under which stood a small calabash. I picked it up and noticed a little hole on its top that had been stoppered with a chunk of salt. But I was ordered to keep it intact and thus did not open it but put it aside, sealed as it was.

Now I began to get accustomed to this business because it went on all night and at times into a good part of the day. She returned the following night and I was spellbound by her as if I were dead. Then she spoke through me, somewhat indistinctly but in a manner that everybody could hear and understand: "Go to the sideboard behind the stove where you shall find three yards of cambric and thirty shillings of money for my daughter Elisabeth, and three yards of cambric and thirty shillings of money for my daughter Hanna; but of the latter a woman has stolen twenty shillings and two yards of cambric, this you must recover. Of the former thirteen shillings are missing which were also taken by a woman. "When I came to, I wrote it all down for my memory's sake which had been weakened very much by this procedure. The latter we had found already. It amounted, however, to one fourth more than the ghost had indicated. Instead of two yards only seven-fourth were missing. The money was right for there were 6 shillings which, together with the stolen amount, added up to the said 30 shillings. Thereupon we searched once more through the said sideboard and opening up the hemp we found another skein that contained both cloth and money. This one we found in order except that instead of 13 shillings only 12 and sixpence were missing.

After we had discovered this much, curiosity drove us to check also the calabash. Upon opening it, we found nothing of the thirty pieces of money save six copper pence so new as if they had just left the mint. With them lay a brass ring. The children of the deceased woman said that she had owned a golden one just like it during her lifetime. We sealed the calabash again and put it aside.

The affair was getting familiar to me at long last, and the neighbors knew all that happened at our place. Hardly a night passed during which she did not make herself known but she would never appear without first dulling my senses through slumber. My husband, having most reason to hush up the affair had there been fraud involved, since much of it concerned him personally, finally exhausted his patience. He tried by every means to prevent me from slumbering in order to bar the ghost access to me. Yet all his efforts were futile because, before he was aware of it, I passed out as if dead and all persons present heard me speak, not in my usual manner, but imperfectly, crudely, and somewhat indistinctly. Yet everyone could understand it.

At one time the ghost announced herself at night and said: twelve pistoles twenty-one pistrins,<sup>17</sup> fifteen dollars and some small change, a woman has it in her custody but there is some injustice involved. This my husband and the children heard distinctly, but we were at a loss as to where to look for it. It was money which the deceased woman had intended for her children. Maybe one of them had kept it all which must have displeased the ghost. At that hour we knew as yet nothing about this money, where it went and how some person would eventually admit to having retained the fifteen dollars. And this may serve as proof of the matter because the person would hardly have confessed the affair of the fifteen dollars if the ghost had not brought it to light before, and maybe it will yet become known where the remaining money went to.

I still want to tell of another strange happening which will show clearly to everyone that the ghost uncovered unknown things. Once I was besides myself and the ghost wandered into a house with me in which money and sundry household items were lying around such as cloth, linen etc. There were also people busy dividing it all up among themselves. However the ghost flew amidst the things in the shape of a dove and exclaimed: Oh, injustice! injustice! Thereupon, when I came to, I recounted this just while the deceased woman's daughters were with my husband. One of them turned pale and spoke: Now I shall not conceal it any longer. These things did happen in our house at one time because we did distribute secretly many things our late mother had left us unbeknownst to our stepfather.

At last, she was no longer afraid to make herself known during daytime. Once she seized the ribbon with which my husband had tied his hair, pulled it off the hair and threw it on the floor. Knocking sounds and all kinds of things flying to the floor now were nothing new to us anymore. Once she took the tea service and cast it into the

middle of the room Strange was only that everything broke except what the deceased woman had used for serving her husband when she was living. Another time the books, one by one, came flying off the shelves onto the floor.

One day I put on a shirt and other clothing and sat down on a chair. It was not to the ghost's liking. She wanted me to go away. My husband, who was watching over me, noticed it and warned me therefore not to slumber off. But in vain. Before he knew it, and as soon as I had passed out, the ghost tore the sleeve off my right arm. By that time almost all of my clothes were torn on the sleeves. My husband persuaded me to wear one of his shirts. Then, on a Sunday, we went over to a neighbor's house. The shirt I was wearing was not only very strong but also doubled on the shoulder. Nevertheless the shirt sleeve was torn off my shoulder over there. Thereupon we returned home toward evening. We had hardly sat down again when the ghost appeared and spoke: Three pounds currency under the roof on the third rafter from the end; a man has stolen it and will not bring it back. As we did not go soon because we were told that it was lost anyhow, she approached me, tore also my other sleeve, and said: The rag is still there. Thereupon we looked for the rag at the spot indicated and found the rag on which we could see distinctly that dollars had been wrapped in it.

I have almost forgotten to report what occurred at another time. We had a building which we called the liquor house because much strong drink was stored in it. The ghost kept on telling me: in the Liquor House/ Mateglen/ ten pounds/ two for the children.<sup>18</sup> I asked my husband what that could mean and he confessed that at the deceased woman's departure there was some mateglen left to which she had been particularly entitled. But he thought it could not have amounted to ten pounds. Figuring the gallon at four shilling six pence, he came to a total of nine pounds and some shillings which sum, upon my insistence, was distributed according to the ghost's command. She must have been satisfied because no more was heard about it.

As rumors of this strange happening reached Winchester, the inhabitants sent an express out to our house to find out more about it. This was my husband's kinsman by the name of Busch. He remained overnight with us. Since my husband was not at home that same night, he had ordered my stepson to look after me. He and the stranger spent the night on the floor while I lay on the bed. What happened? When everyone was asleep, the ghost grabbed one of my husband's shirts and threw it on the floor. Next came the bed cover consisting of two heavy coverlets which the ghost rolled tidily together like a sausage only to throw them vehemently on the floor afterwards. Thereupon my stepson persuaded me to lie between both of them on the floor. No sooner was I down there than the ghost tried to drag us all three away and the bed as well. The stranger resisted very much and began to curse. That angered the ghost who seized his arm and tried to twist it. He was so frightened that he cried out: Lord Jesus! What is that! whereupon the ghost fell to her knees before him, pushed him back with both hands and vanished.

Soon afterward my husband took me to a neighbor's house to recover a little. In the presence of the man of the house and several whites and blacks, the ghost said distinctly: Two shillings and nine pence liquor money in the Harfenspiel,<sup>19</sup> and as I was not about to move soon enough, my coat was torn along the shoulder. A woman standing nearby claimed to have seen the finger. The man suggested to us to go home and search through our books which we did. On the homeward journey, as I was sitting on the horse behind my husband, the ghost pulled off my shoe and stocking behind him. The horse jumped to the side and I almost tumbled down. At home we searched through all the books and to our amazement found in the spine of the said Harfenspiel a half crown bill and a silver piece, amounting together to two shillings and nine pence.

Now, the ghost had repeatedly spoken of five dollars in connection with uttering the name Conestoga. That was the country where the deceased woman had lived. We wondered if something there troubled the ghost and if she might not want for me to go there because always grabbed my arm and tried to make me move. My assumption was not mistaken, for two ghosts appeared finally. I said to my husband: What shall become of us; they are going to kill me as there are two of them now. The second one stood behind the first, looking devout, tall and lean. She seemed to me clad in a shift which turned out to be a habit as the sisters in Ephrata are accustomed to wear. Such description made my husband think it was his first wife. Whenever the first ghost said to me "Come!" the second one, behaving very devoutly, would stand behind her and beckon me with her hand to come.

[Here is picture with the caption: View of the Saal where Conrad Beissel presided over the Beeler reconciliation session on February 3, 1761.]

While we were considering the journey to Conestoga but hesitated on account of the inclement weather, the

ghost knew, it seems, that I devined her wish. She plainly told me now the whole affair, namely that I should go to Ephrata in Conestoga and into the great Saal above the church in the twelfth hour of the night. There I should convoke two brethren, one named Conrad, the other one Negele, my husband, and a sister who had died long ago (most likely Anna Eicher whom the deceased was well acquainted with during her life). The ghost and Catharina (that was the said Beeler's first wife) would also appear for they had died unreconciled with each other. Then the following two hymns were to be sung: "Oh God and Lord," and "Dearest Father, I Thy child." Hereafter they should clasp each other's hands, but I should place my hand upon them and speak the following words: "Christ is the reconciliation for us all/ May He help you/ and forgive you your sins/ and cleanse you with His blood. I have forgotten to mention that, when I was given the command to search the first amount of money, namely the five pounds, the ghost had said to go into the house where Catharina dwelled, by which she meant the sisters convent in Ephrata. And the children of the deceased woman told me afterwards that their mother kept on saying on her deathbed they should take the five pounds behind the sideboard and give them to the sisters. This she had repeated often and added that they should look behind it, but they thought she was delirious.

This express commission made us fully willing to undertake our journey for which we finally set out regardless of the cold season. I was rather calm during the travel but tarrying even a little brought back the former anxiety. In the inn, at one instance, the ghost threw my shoes towards the door as she had done many a times at home. It is no less remarkable that, when my husband had finally resolved to travel, the ghost threw his spurs, which had been hanging on the wall, before the bed in front of him. At long last we reached Lancaster where my husband's oldest son caught up with us. He is well aware of the whole affair. While we were traveling, the ghost disturbed him much at home. At night she pulled the pillow from under his head and threw it into the middle of the room. Thereupon he resolved to follow us and, as mentioned above, he caught up with us in Lancaster. We stopped at the Buck and could well have reached Ephrata that very day had not good friends retained us and persuaded us to stay overnight there. This sufficed to make the ghost uneasy for she tore the coat off my shoulders in front of all the people. We were so ashamed that the innkeeper provided us with a room where we could be alone.

We arrived at Ephrata the next day and explained the affair to those in charge. Everyone could see that it was no fiction for the torn clothes that I wore or had with me were testimony enough. And, furthermore, as soon as I passed out, these words were heard coming from me: "Come into the Saal above the church," which, according to those who had known the deceased woman, sounded like her voice. They told me of my weeping bitterly and how I was a vivid picture of a penitent but I was unaware of it all. I became quite a burden to the good people there. Hardly had I settled down when the ghost pressured me about 5 dollars and tore my clothes. The poor sisters now had enough work mending the many torn clothes for me. My stepdaughter, of the first wife, who lived in this convent, gave me one of her long habits to wear. But this had no other effect than that it was torn under her hands as she was holding me in an awkward manner. The following night we lodged with the deceased woman's real daughter who was then living outside said convent. There I had a hard night. The five dollars were to appear though nobody knew where they could be. We prevailed upon the daughter to tell us if she knew but she professed her innocence. However she gave the amount from her own money out of love for her dead mother. Nevertheless I was plagued incredibly during the same night toward daybreak. Everyone was holding on to me and trying to protect me against such forces when the mattress burst open. This relieved my mind a little. We searched the bed thoroughly. There was something movable in it that would not let itself be caught. But finally we brought it out. It turned out to be a rag in which the above mentioned five dollars were wrapped. The bed had belonged to the deceased woman. She died in it, and her daughter had inherited it after her death. There was only one more night ahead of us because the following one was designated for the meeting about this affair. I slept rather well throughout the night but toward daybreak my trouble came. I fell into a slumber and a voice spoke through me about 20 shillings. Everyone heard the sound coming from me and they were well aware that it was not my voice. Thereupon the ghost handled me more roughly than ever. Witnesses can speak about it with amazement. She turned me three times around in a circle and then pressed me together in such a manner that everybody held on to me, thinking my last hour had come. They hurried off to look through the clothes of the deceased woman for the money but it was in vain. They questioned the daughter if she had stolen it. Despite her innocence she offered to provide the amount. Yet my ordeal did not lessen. At last I was relieved when the bed burst at another spot. When they searched it, they found a well preserved 20 shilling note in a rag.

So far goes the said Eliseba Beeler's account. Since, in the course of most of the ensuing events during the stated meeting, she was too much perturbed to be aware of it all, I, Joseph Beeler, having known the affair from its beginning and, as an eyewitness, to its end, shall continue the description.



At the beginning of the eleventh hour of the night, besides the three of us from Virginia, eighteen persons from Ephrata were thus gathered in the designated hall, among them also those whom the ghost had especially named. My stepmother refused to attend although she had undertaken the long journey for this purpose but we persuaded her finally to come along. The meeting was commenced with the reading of the last chapter of James and after the one hymn, Oh God and Lord, was sung, the entire gathering knelt down. When the ghost was mentioned, strange emotions took possession of her, and she was filled with fear. My father and I had to hold her because she was trying to get away. It was noticed at this moment that her neckerchief became suddenly stained with blood. There were thirty drops. Someone pointed the blood out to her as it was still fresh. Then she wiped off several drops. Despite all efforts nobody could discover where the blood had come from. My father opened the front of her shirt to see if it had come from within but he could not perceive anything except a few drops that had penetrated to the undershirt. We are keeping the neckerchief, and each and every drop can be seen on it. Most amazing is the fact that the sprinkling blood had spared both apron and shirt. No person could have sprinkled it with such precision. It must be noted, however, that the ghost, as promised, did not appear until she was at a designated place in the hall and then commanded her to sing also the other hymn. After this was sung, the principal matter was to be taken up but she refused and wanted for others to carry on. As an excuse she said that she had prayed on her knees before the ghost and had already spoken the required words. But she was told it was her duty, and that no one else could do it in her

stead. At last it was thought advisable that the two daughters, the one by the first wife, the other by the second wife, should perform the reconciliation instead of their mothers. They clasped their hands, and the said Eliseba Beeler, acting as priestess, spoke the words over them which the ghost had placed in her mouth. Thereupon all knelt down again, and after the prayer was said, the ghosts made off. Nobody had seen anything but we all heard how the window opened and closed again. My stepmother kept on looking to one side. She expressed surprise that we had not seen them as they had just flown away in the shape of two doves.

The meeting was held on the third of February during the night and it lasted two hours. We remained at Ephrata until the eighth and my mother was no more troubled by the ghost during this time. The next day we were passed a writ wherein we were given the full explanation regarding the money that was found and also regarding the bequest to the sisters' convent. As it belongs to this relation, we will lay it before the esteemed reader. It was as follows:

I cannot help but say a little something about what happened to me last night during my spiritual labor, especially since I expressed myself rather plainly yesterday. In the first place I had a very strange revelation in my spirit before the mercy seat yesterday: (and in my usual manner) in the spirit of prayer. I lay down to sleep at the proper time and woke up again at midnight as, indeed, is usually the case. I looked at once at the mercy seat to see if the fire was still burning on the pure altar. When I noticed that all was well, I went down on my knees before the mercy seat, placed my incense on the altar and it filled the house. After a while I lay down again to rest on my bench but soon afterward I had to get up again to keep the incense going. So I took my golden censer and made the fire burn high; but I remained bent low to the earth in prayer and intercession for the distraught and innocent, and that God might vindicate his great mercy, goodness and compassion towards the innocent, just as He had sought to vindicate his honor on the unrighteous through his righteousness.

This sacrifice offered, and lying down again to rest, I slept for a while and when I awoke I looked around and waited for my spiritual watchword. There I was told that we labored in vain about this ghost, that the best we could do to be rid of her would be to return the stolen goods to their rightful place, not indeed as the ghost had commanded, for then we would become partakers of her sins. For no part of them may be offered on the altar of God. It would not bring honors even to use them as common alms, for it is written: "I hate robbery for burnt offering;" and likewise: "Who restoreth to the debtor his pledge and payeth back what he hath robbed." Otherwise neither sacrifice nor prayer will do. I was also told that if it were right, nobody with a good conscience could take away any of the money from the children for whom it was intended, for it would deprive the father of his honor and parental right. And they, the children, would rob themselves of the father's blessing, for it is written: "The father's blessing builds houses for the children; but the mother's wrath plucketh them down."

Now I will speak: it came to my mind, after deep reflection, that N. N. is the first-born child and therefore most closely related to the mother in this affair. If now this should be so (provided the others agree), then she, instead of the mother, should gather it all up, and should lay the money aside in an unclean place<sup>21</sup> until the passing of seven periods. And she should give up the mother and try to gain the heart of the father, where thus far she had not found entry through the mother's fault, and therefore could not really love the father which brings down the

mother's wrath that plucketh down houses. For by such work the kingdom of heaven is not gained; and so likewise, as I understand it, the ghost had not had a heir to give to the kingdom of heaven as it was the same during the earthly life, and had nothing else to do but torment innocent hearts in order to help fulfill the evil design, etc.

If the dear heart N.N. cannot agree to this as expounded above, and give up the mother with her evil doings and reach instead for the father's heart which, as it is, has been sufficiently wronged by the mother, then it may happen that she will not have good fortune in her further course, for the mother's wrath takes it away. Should it come to pass, however, that the above mentioned money could be disposed of as explained and the ghost should continue her claim to it, then we must do what we can. I also consider whether the ghost had not lost her right if only the money were lifted out of those places where the deceased woman had hidden it.

F. One who Possess  
Nothing on this Earth.

#### NOTES ON THIS STRANGE OCCURRENCE

Someone might rightly ask: who gives such a disembodied spirit such a right to operate in our world? For as we know, in both the natural world and in the church all is subject to rulers. Thus we may conclude that there must also be rulers in those regions whither have wandered so many thousand spirits who rebelled against the will of the eternal God in order to tame such rebels; but in the manner of the world of darkness. And furthermore, we may assume that such rule was instituted with the harshest severity so that the captives are totally robbed of all the freedom they had enjoyed and abused here below. Therefore the great Mediator of the New Covenant could not have achieved such splendid victory had he not learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Hebrews 5:8. For by virtue of this obedience He descended amidst all and thus stripped naked the powers of darkness that had robbed our grandfather Adam of his clothes.

It appears, however, that the ghost had to perform a special task here for its absolution. The above mentioned, innocent person was first haunted by the ghost, then subjected by her to perform a troublesome commission that she could have been spared had she not lent herself to it. A knowledgeable person said of such ghosts: They are like the itinerant journeyman in the tavern who, because they are not in as good a condition as others, not only remain without wages but are a burden to others. Otherwise the said woman Schüle was not of the roughest sort during her lifetime and, especially some years before her death, she had tried to return to the paths on which she had walked during her youth. But her appeal to the Church Militant here teaches that we hold much in our hand with respect to the deceased woman and it is simply not [wrong]<sup>22</sup> to pray for her. For although the dissolved church of God has this privilege the cross-bearing one, with the high priest himself going over to its side, one privilege must still be conceded to this one over that one. This privilege means that any suffering still prevailing must be fulfilled on the body of Jesus and that the prayers of this church, mightily penetrate into God for the perfection of the saints. Since this temporal world is the soil into which this splendid plant was set and where it is brought to its maturity by the struggle of the *principia*, nothing but gain will derive from the ordeals of the people of God here below. Even though a cleansing may take place in the other world, there is no more greening because the plant is no longer in the earth and it lacks the added ingredient of the free will. When the last saint has achieved perfection in this soil, this outward *principium* will enter again into the *mysterium* and another world will be set forth.

That the ghost was more incensed by the conduct of the stranger indicates how the *turba* was violently stirred within her. And one should not curse any person, especially no deceased one, who has not yet been redeemed lest one stirs her fire. The ghost's disappearance upon the invocation of the name of JESUS makes us aware of the power of this most precious name. And it is not a fable that this name enabled the first Christians to do so many miracles whenever the magic of their faith led them on, for His name is as ointment poured forth. ( Song of Solomon 1:3). When this eminent sacrifice occurred on the cross, the whole kingdom of darkness suffered such fright that nowadays the mere invocation of the name of JESUS kindles anew the memory of the loss then suffered among the spirits of evil.

That the said Beeler's first wife Catharina, also made an appearance in this strange plot should be no more disadvantageous to her than it was for Samuel to have been brought up by the woman who had the familiar spirit.

(1 Samuel 28:11). The name of the late Catharina has been preserved in the memory of the saints on account of her God-pleasing life of which she has left a living imprint on posterity. But as she went farther in her earnest pursuit of the kingdom of God than might have been required of her, the second wife had occasion to encroach upon her right so that it will be that the first one, after all, had not been quite delivered of this affair when she passed on because such ascent is quite difficult from here below.

That the plot was resolved with blood may well indicate that the ghost achieved her purpose and was reconciled as much as possible for there is no reconciliation without blood. And because she was not heard of anymore from that time on, we may assume that she returned to her assigned task. And this is the essence of this strange occurrence. Should anything further still happen, we shall not be remiss in bringing it, by means of a postscript, to the attention the gentle reader, whom we commend herewith most earnestly to the mercy and forbearance of God.

The End

Footnotes:

1. Chronicon, 263-4.
2. *Frederick Co. Deed Bk. IV*, 327-31; *Kercheval, Valley*, 56.
3. *Frederick Co. Deed Bk. I*, 1-4.
4. "Bro. Kenan's Memorandum Bk.," 55.
5. *Sangmeister I*, 90.
6. *Hampshire Co. Deed Bk. XV*, 295; *William W. Wolfe, History of Keyser, W. Va. 1737-1913 (Keyser, W. Va., 1974)*, 2.
7. *Sangmeister II*, 50.
8. Abgeforderte Relation....(*Ephrata*, 1761), 3.
9. *Quarles*, *Washington in Winchester*, 50.
10. *Ibid.*, 62-66.
11. *Fred. Co. Deed Bk. VII*, 2-6; *IV*, 327-31; *XI*, 416-8; *XII*, 421-4; *Morton, Winchester*, 219.
12. *Fred. Co. Will Bk. III*, 182-4; "Bro. Kenan's Memorandum Bk.," 38.
13. *Mary Harter, "George Geiger," Henckel Genealogical Bulletin II (1971)*, 51-7.
14. *Fred. Co. Deed Bk. XIII*, 286-7.
15. *Fairfax Co. Will Bk. D*, 129-31; *Harter, "Geiger," 53*.
16. *Chronicon*, 266.
17. A pistole was a Spanish gold coin, a pistron or pistareen, a debased small Spanish coin.
18. No meaning for the term Mateglen could be found. It was evidently a liquid.
19. The Harfenspiel, a popular hymnal, also called Neandris Harfenspiel, contained hymns by Joachim Neander (1610-1680), a Reformed hymn writer in Bremen.
20. The Saal was the room in which love feasts and other special worship of the Ephrata community took place.
21. The Chronicon, 268, offers this explanation for "unclean place": "He meant a secretary."
22. The word Fahel remains unidentified. It might be a misprint (Fehl?).