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On Interpreting Immigrant Letters: The Case of Johann Caspar and Wilhelmina Honegger-Hanhart

At a time when social history seems nearly equated with quantification of demographic data, it may appear out of date to deal with personal documents such as letters and private reports. Yet Charles Tilly, a noted practitioner of the art, acknowledges readily: "To distinguish . . . among local, circular, chain, and career migration . . . one needs life histories, detailed accounts of intentions and social relations at the time of moves."[1] Although letters of immigrants grant only sporadic insight into "life histories," they do provide valuable glimpses into motivations and personal circumstances, not only at the time of moves, but also years after; they highlight migration as experience.

But are such personal documents of use in reconstructing the past? The question is not out of place. In 1850, for instance, an anonymous immigrant wrote from Folk, Missouri, to his "dear pastor and friend": "You too may have read the letters that we have written to our mother; you may have found them fairly contradictory; I believe, however, that I could write differently and yet always the truth. It is not easy to write from America."[2] Reverend Johann Ludwig Spyri, a careful student of mid-nineteenth-century Swiss emigration, cautioned similarly about using letters and reports of emigrants. He had examined several hundred of them, but found them wanting. Some were outright forgeries, he thought, written or insinuated by profit-hungry and unscrupulous agents. But even those accounts that were "genuine and truthful from the heart" were not to be taken at face value; too many emigrants, the pastor maintained, "lacked the means to assess the land and its people and even their individual situation. It may appear strange, and yet it is true: Not everybody knows how he is situated . . . We are justified, therefore, to insist that emigrant letters must be used with great caution."[3]

Reverend Spyri's comments are well taken. Letters of immigrants may not be taken literally, and interpreting them is as demanding as assessing

dispatches of diplomats. Both must be understood in the unique context in which they were written, before proper conclusions may be drawn.[4] Some letters of an immigrant couple who arrived in New York City in 1849 may illlustrate this contention.[5]

I

On May 22, 1849, a magnificient spring day, Johann Caspar and his wife, Wilhelmina Honegger-Hanhart, took leave of their relatives in the small village of Felben, situated some thirteen miles southwest of Constance, and embarked on their journey to America. In five long letters they sketched their experiences on the trip and during the first two years in New York City. Their reports, however, differ like day and night.

Despite some difficulties at the French border,[6] Johann Caspar enjoyed the ride from Mülhausen to Paris by coach and from there to Le Havre by train. "The postal carriages are comfortable," he explained, "just like the coaches of Turn [sic] and Taxis[7] with eighteen seats. In the compartment one travels quite well. The wheels are set very low and make getting in and out easy. They load the top unbelievably so that the fully loaded vehicle looks like a baggage wagon." The six heavy horses ran at a very fast pace and offered a majestic view.

The Alsatian grain fields were "the largest and most beautiful" he had ever seen. At Belfort, where the coach stopped for a quarter hour, Johann Caspar admired the fortress and "the beautiful inviting little town with its straight and broad streets and attractive houses."[8] He also saw a detachment of hussars passing by, for him a magnificent spectacle. After Belfort they traveled through poorer country, but towns like Troyes[9] were impressive and some regions they traversed seemed very fertile.

"But the metropolis Paris. Yes, Paris deserves this name, a description is impossible, one has to see for oneself, but one must be careful not to get lost in this veritable labyrinth." On Sunday afternoon Johann Caspar went sightseeing. He admired the large, beautiful stores and the Tuileries with their "vast, magnificent gardens and numerous tree-lined boulevards. The royal palace [is] of ineffable splendor." The following day he visited the zoo. A mighty ostrich and the wild animals devouring their midday meal impressed him greatly. "May heaven spare me," the emigrant commented, "never to end up in such company in America. My pistol would then be of no help despite its eight barrels." After climbing the zoo's main vantage point, he marveled: "What a surprise, Paris stretched out all around me with its towers and statues. The Pantheon stands out most impressively. The column in the suburb St. Antoine whose angel at the top is just now in full sunlight, glitters in full splendor."[10]

Johann Caspar admired most, however, the church St. Madeleine, "a work of monumental magnificence, a testimonial to art and wealth, built only of marble, from the outside steps all the way to the roof." Over forty columns framed the building in majestic beauty. But the inside:

> What magnificence, what a splendid temple, what wealth, what beauty . . . golden candelabras, artistic paintings; no emaciated crippled saints; all in beautiful harmony; no hell with devils; a heaven. The Mother of God with the Savior on her arms stands near the entry, carved from dazzling white

marble. A chain which she holds in her hand is a true work of art. The links are as small as in a larger watch chain, but so sharply and beautifully worked in marble that it calls forth true amazement.[11]

Wilhelmina gives a very different view of the journey. "Often we crossed such desolate, infertile regions that I was reminded of America," she wrote, "and we saw such miserable strawthatched huts and groups of irksome beggars." She was amazed at the greedy French hosts who had demanded one full franc for two bowls of watery soup! During the night she could hardly sleep and the next day she felt even more miserable. "I had a bad night," she lamented, "back- and side pains, thus I could hardly sit anymore, [had] head- and bellyaches; that was a long night . . . It went this way for three days and two nights, on and on until Paris."

On arrival at their lodgings Wilhelmina went straight to bed. "I was seized by terrible homesickness," she reported to her sister's family, "wept bitterly; the maid brought me some soup, she said that I should not cry, it was not good . . . The beds were not clean, all untensils dirty, unbelievably bad water. In the morning I took another clyster, that helped. I had no desire to admire the city, but longed so much for fresh air." She was then shown to a large park where she stayed a full hour. "That refreshed me more than all the glories of Paris," she commented. "I could hardly tolerate the foul air anymore . . . What a life in Paris! I would not want to be dead here!"[12]

The train ride to Le Havre also turned out to be most unpleasant. "Our car was overfilled, the seats not cushioned, it shook very much, I disliked it; the French were boisterously loud, they got so excited until some started to vomit, and that precisely besides us in the car." The accommodations in Le Havre were modest, but at least clean, and the emigrants could take some pleasant walks through town. Johann Caspar admired the straight and wide streets and the forest-like view of the harbor with its numerous steamboats and three-masters. "A strange view," he wrote, "such a loaded sailing vessel with two- to three-hundred people of all types, tongues, and manners!"

After careful inquiry the Honeggers took passage "on the boat *Niobé*, Captain Thomas, in the *Ruffel* or so-called second cabin, two places for 250 French francs . . . The cabin had only four single beds. I feel happy to have gotten [two of] them; in the steerage where four and two sleep densely packed in one bed, it is horrible."[13]

On June 7, 1848, the *Niobé* was ready to sail for New York. Wilhelmina experienced the crossing as pure misery. First she had to wait far into the night in heavy rain and sharp wind until the cabin was ready. The day had been quite warm and she had found no opportunity to change into warmer clothes. In addition, her period set in. She lamented:

> Once more all misery had to start at once . . . Violent vomiting and retching and cramps tormented me. I fell ill and remained ill the whole time. I did not have a single happy hour; the horrible noise and the bustle of the passengers and the roaring chant of the sailors distressed me so thoroughly that I often did not know how to put my head down.

Wilhelmina became feverish, suffered from terrible thirst and hunger because she felt unable "to devour bacon and hard zwieback like the

others." To make her misery complete, one of two bottles of raspberry juice she had taken along had cracked and its contents were lost.

> The other one I took into my bed so that I could get something to drink by myself; and lo and behold, even the one thing that refreshed me, perished; the cork blew out, and the mattress absorbed the wonderful juice; I lay in a beautiful state, one could neither wash nor dry, because my cook was too complacent . . . In spirit I was always with you, my beloved, longing for my dear homeland . . . When finally the cry "land" was heard, one thought heaven had been reached.[14]

"It is everywhere bad if one is unable to accept circumstances and if those circumstances refuse to accommodate one's own ideas," Johann Caspar dryly commented on his wife's report. He thought that they had experienced a "very good sea voyage." The only bad thing had been the outbreak of the cholera that "snatched away six strong ruffians; and three small children died." As for himself, "he now had to laugh quite often at the thought what fear the idea of an ocean crossing had caused" him. "One may meet up with disaster on firm land just as at sea," he explained. "For my part, I would not mind at all to go to sea today or tomorrow." He had otherwise nothing to report and viewed the journey from Felben to New York a mere trifle. They had been at sea for only thirty-two days and had encountered stormy weather but once. What really counted were the glories of America.[15]

II

Johann Caspar waited a full eight months to write his first letter home. "The reason was the worry about the immediate future," he explained, "and the firm will to write you the truth and nothing but the truth, and for that some months of experience had been necessary." He had read all too many negative letters from America "that had clearly borne the imprint of prejudice." In contrast he now had only good things to report:

> My beloved! I now have been in the desired land of freedom for eight months, a freedom that in one aspect is miles apart from Swiss freedom, where not a more or less fat purse makes the same creature human, but when the purse has become accidentally empty, be it by one's own fault or without it, one is deemed worth less than some domestic animal which is being fed for pleasure or out of compassion, out of silly, apish humanity, because one is now also an animal, unable to buy anything. No, in this country one deals with humans in a human way.
>
> Poverty is not shameful in America, and purses are not worshipped in political life. Civic virtue is not bought with money and is not lost with the loss of property. Crimes are severely punished, but not being able to pay does not lead to the criminal in prison.

After castigating the Swiss custom of handing over the poor for work to the lowest bidder, Johann Caspar described the American system of welfare in these glowing, if spurious, terms:

> If a father has been blessed by too many children, the state will, if so requested, take over their care and education. Daughters remain [in the care of the state] until their eighteenth year and the boys until their twenty-first

and are taught a trade or agriculture and receive at the end a saddled horse and one hundred dollars in their pockets. The daughters, too, receive a dowry.

This is a different maxim about the rude Americans, is it not, than the one usually proffered by educated Europeans.[16]

In some tortured prose that seems to conceal some uneasiness about his own future which after two and a half years had turned out to remain precarious, Johann Caspar then summed up his view about the promise of America:

I believe anyway that I may state that, whoever comes here with the firm resolve to accept work whatever it may be, whoever has sufficient courage to keep cool even if he sees many things done differently from what his Euro-

pean imagination has led him to assume, whoever forgoes every privilege as to his person and gladly forgets his aristocratic pride and respects himself in others, that whoever arrives here with such resignation, will feel happy and be soon at home. For my part I can say honestly and truthfully that I have not felt any desire to be back home, not even for an hour.[17]

Johann Caspar kept busy trying to build up a liqueur and brandy business. He made various kinds in his cellar, then drove with his horse and wagon through town to sell it to various taverns and inns. In two years he just about broke even and lamented the absence of a trustworthy collaborator and of sufficient investment funds. In a letter dated February 4, 1851, he urgently appealed to the family of his brother-in-law to join him and Wilhelmina in New York, apparently to no avail. He even included an interesting list of goods he hoped his relatives would take along for his brandy-making business. "I sell here very much bitter liqueur," he explained, "and make good profit. I tell people that it was made of Swiss herbs."[18]

In sum, Johann Caspar was sure that anyone worth his salt could find the good life in America. "America is May, Europe November," he had firmly concluded.[19]

Wilhelmina offered her sister's family a very different view of life in New York. First they had been struck by the cholera, then by dysentery, she reported. Then they had rented a small apartment opposite the cellar Johann Caspar was using for brandy-making. She describes her experience in these words:

Alas, the first night we were terribly bitten by miserably small animals; they drove us back and forth in our bed for a full hour. Finally we could not take it any longer; we had thought that they were the mosquitoes everybody had complained about and had bitten our hands, arms, and faces. But behold this American spectacle, we made light, and the devil take it, millions of bedbugs, small and large, like sand at the beach! *That was a night,* the more we killed, the more we saw; thus it went for three full nights, whether we put the bed on the floor or on boxes did not matter. You will understand that I cried bitterly . . .

We told acquaintances of our misery, but were expected to be consoled by the answer that most houses had bedbugs, but that perhaps we had also hit upon one of the worst nests.

Because there was no improvement, the Honeggers decided to move to the cellar where Johann Caspar made his brandy:

There we found only black bugs and many rats which ate away at my light dress, only a small nuisance compared to the cursed bedbugs although I stared at the tall rats with astonished eyes. When I was so alone, and that was most of the time, sitting in the half-dark cellar hole, the bed on the floor, no table, no chair—, in brief, my beloved, if you had seen me sitting there, so sad and so miserable, you would have at last cried out: "Oh God! Are you in a prison, sister? We are coming to set you free."[20]

So far as health was concerned—always a matter of importance to Wilhelmina—everything had gone well after their bout with cholera until January 1850 when both were bedridden for weeks. Otherwise she assisted

her husband in brandy-making and then looked after the small tavern he had rented. City life did not appeal to her. "What do I care for balls, concerts, plays, etc.," she exclaimed.

> Nature! Nature, you are my only delight! If I must miss that, I truly miss *everything*. Only then, when you, my beloved [sister], will be with us, will America become home for me, but now my mind dwells daily in your midst and my longing remains unfulfilled.[21]

The same journey, the same lodgings, the same daily world and yet the reports differ radically. One spouse praised what he experienced in near superlatives, the other loathed the journey and wished ardently to return to the world she had left. For the one all unpleasant things seemed to be mere trifles not worth mentioning and the new experiences fulfillment of long-held dreams; for the other, moments of joy had become all too rare and the journey to as well as the life in the New World had turned out to be nearly a nightmare.

To misinterpret either set of reports is all too easy and no mean temptation. Historians who are certain that the host nation is a superior world will find Johann Caspar's letters welcome proof. Those interested in revealing the miseries of the emigrant journey or of immigrant life will discover ample material in Wilhelmina's epistles. But both will be led astray if they fail to answer questions such as these: Why are the views of the spouses so different? Why does the one suppress or bagatellize whatever seemed unpleasant and extol the new surroundings far above those left behind? Why does the other dwell on all that is negative and view the former world of home with such insatiable longing? Exploring the past of these immigrants will set their nearly contradictory reports in proper perspective and allow at least partial answers to those questions.

III

In studying letters of immigrants one must remember that they do not describe what was, but what was experienced. A log cabin far away from any well established settlement, the absence of a school, church, and townhall, a barely cleared piece of land full of tree trunks amidst seemingly endless forests: Some celebrated these conditions as freedom, as opportunity to create, a world close to paradise; others loathed them as abject poverty, as relapse into barbarism, as a world of unmitigated misery.[22] Or the ocean crossing: It was probably neither the trifling affair as Johann Caspar viewed it, nor the total misery as portrayed by Wilhelmina. Yet both accounts seem to reflect a genuine, if contradictory experience whose source must be sought elsewhere.

One may interject that all human records suffer from this relativity of perception. Yet it seems that migration as a change of habitat sharpens this general feature of human reporting. The process of migration includes swift change, not only in the experience of landscapes and climates, but also of human environments as shaped by language, life style, institutions, and values. Reports of immigrants reflect, therefore, different perceptions of changing, either fascinating or repulsive worlds; the often contradictory no-

tions derive mainly from a person's taste, adaptive propensity, and evaluative orientation.

But the circumstances that led people to emigrate shape, perhaps, immigrant reports most decisively. Wilhelmina's letters, for instance, intimate that she never wanted to leave her home village, Felben, for the hustle and bustle of New York City. She valued the rhythm of the seasons; the quiet, orderly village life; the cleanliness of homes and streets; the intimate bonds that tied her to her sister and her family. The more different the world she was moving to became from what she had known and loved, the keener grew her pain. The bad things she encountered moved, therefore, to the center of her experience and dominated her letters. She had just turned forty when she followed her husband to America; thus her age further diminished her perhaps never pronounced ability to adapt.[23]

Johann Caspar, in contrast, was only aged thirty-four when he left Switzerland.[24] Although nothing in his letters hints at his earlier career, separate records show that he had been a teacher in rural villages of the Canton of Zürich. He had changed postitions frequently. In 1838 he had taught in Uerikon, from fall 1839 to 1841 in Hinteregg, then in Glattfelden; on October 2, 1842, he had been chosen by a narrow majority to teach in the secondary school at Bülach where he stayed until 1847. But he seemed very unhappy in his profession. Especially after 1841 he was repeatedly denounced by irate parents, the school board, and pastors of the surrounding villages.[25] A memorandum of March 28, 1843, for instance, signed by nine parents, accused him of having severely mistreated some children; he had failed, furthermore, to teach his pupils the New Testament; in two years they had read in it only three times and only one brief chapter. Johann Caspar had supposedly remarked: "Children, I prefer that you read in your school text or history book instead of the New Testament." "What may, what can we think of, and expect from, such a teacher," the angry parents wrote, "does he not show himself openly as scorning, one might even say, openly suppressing spiritual teaching and religion?"[26] Members of the school board of Bülach further observed that he was often up to half an hour late for school, had closed it for days without cause, and was found sleeping at his desk or writing letters; that he barely explained difficult problems in mathematics and punished those who made mistakes with unreasonable severity.[27]

It is not easy to assess the validity of these accusations. Was Johann Caspar Honegger a scoundrel, unfit to teach, and generally a quarrelsome and unpleasant man?[28] Had he embraced a liberal, secularist outlook that triumphed in those years, but remained anathema to the pious farm folk of the hinterland? Was he the victim of "intellectually limited parents or heads of households who are in no way capable of understanding academic disciplines or methods of teaching or of judging them correctly and with competence, yet claim to be able to do so,"[29] as his few defenders maintained? It seems clear from the available circumstantial evidence that Johann Caspar had found little enjoyment in his teaching. In his letter of March 17, 1850, the only reference to his past reads: "I think with pain of the time which I have wasted in Europe."[30] Accusations against him had clearly surfaced again and again until he finally quit his post on February 8, 1847.[31] Two

years later he was on his way to New York, perhaps also led to this step by the failure of the 1848 revolutions. Wilhelmina apparently shared none of her husband's religious or political views and went to America merely out of marital fidelity. She therefore missed precisely those things in life she had valued most, whereas her husband treasured the anonymity of life in the big city and the sorely needed elbow room it provided.[32]

In sum, the case of the Honegger-Hanharts reveals that immigrant letters may not be taken at face value, but must be understood within the personal history of immigrants. Only then may historians use them for exploring the bewilderingly complex experience of people on the move.

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Notes

1. Charles Tilly, "Migration in Modern European History," in *Human Migration. Patterns and Policies* , ed. William H. McNeill and Ruth Adams (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1978), p. 56.

2. Leo Schelbert and Hedwig Rappolt, eds., *Alles ist ganz anders hier. Auswandererschicksale aus zwei Jahrhunderten* (Olten, Switzerland: Walter Verlag, 1977), p.20.

3. Johann Ludwig Spyri, *Gutachten über die schweizerische Auswanderung an die schweizerische gemeinnützige Gesellschaft* (Zürich: Schabelitz'sche Buchhandlung, 1865), pp. 12-13.

4. The following are book-length collections of immigrant reports: Theodore C. Blegen, ed., *Land of Their Choice. The Immigrants Write Home* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955) for Norwegians; Alan Conway, *The Welsh in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1961); Charlotte Erickson, ed., *Invisible Immigrants. The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in 19th Century America* (Leicester University Press, 1972); H. Arnold Barton, *Letters from the Promised Land. Swedes in America, 1840-1914* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press for the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, 1975); Everett Emerson, *Letters from New England. The Massachusetts Bay Colony, 1629-1638* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 1976); Schelbert and Rappolt, eds., *Alles ist ganz anders hier* (1977), a collection of 86 letters and reports of Swiss immigrants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.—Joan Morrison and Charlotte Fox Zabusky, *American Mosaic. the Immigrant Experience in the Words of Those Who Lived It* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1980) present 136 interviews. Of these works, only Erickson, Emerson, and Schelbert and Rappolt offer extensive commentaries and give the documents in full.

5. The originals of these letters are in the possession of Mrs. Marinette Egli-Tuchschmid, Zürich, and were lent for transcription and editing by the good services of Professor Max Silberschmidt of the University of Zürich. Copies are available in the Staatsarchiv Zürich. The letters have been published with commentary by Leo Schelbert, "Vom Zürcher Schulmeisteramt Zum New Yorker Liqueurgeschäft," in *Zürcher Taschenbuch auf das Jahr 1978* (Zürich: Staatsarchiv, 1977), pp. 143-192. The first letters by Wilhelmina, dated Havre, May 29, 1848, and Johann Caspar, dated June 1 and 6, 1849, were especially difficult to decipher because the emigrants first wrote horizontally, then vertically across the pages; the paper had yellowed and had been folded into a very small size.—In the following the letters are referred to as published in the *Taschenbuch;* the translations try to keep close to the originals and to convey some of their flavor.

6. The authorities at Mülhausen insisted that as a condition for passage Johann Caspar book for the ship right then and there. He resisted, but bought instead tickets for the journey to Le Havre which was finally accepted as sufficient proof of intent; see Schelbert, "Schulmeisteramt," p. 146.—For Johann Caspar's letter see ibid., pp. 149-153.

7. In 1615 the noble family of Bergamo had received the hereditary imperial postmaster-office general; in the nineteenth century the family gradually lost its privileges.

8. Belfort was strategically located where the roads from Montbéliard, Lyon, Paris and Basel intersected. The fortress was built in 1686 by Vauban and later expanded; for a description see *Grande Encyclopédie* (Paris [1888]), V, 1187-1189.

9. Troyes had in 1880 some 50,000 inhabitants; it was the seat of a bishop and also a commercial center in a long alluvial plain where the Seine divides into various branches; see ibid. (n.d.), XXXI, 432-434.

10. Through a so-called labyrinth, visitors could climb a hill that provided an impressive view of the city; see F.-M. Marchant, *Le Nouveau Conducteur de l'Etranger à Paris* (Paris, 1842), p. 262.—The church St. Geneviève was declared the place where notables were to be buried; ibid., pp. 129-134; the "colonne de Juillet" adorns the Place de la Bastille and was erected between 1831 and 1840 to commemorate the victims of the July Revolution of 1830; it is topped by a gilded bronze statue of the "Genius of Liberty"; ibid., pp. 184-185.

11. The church forms a rectangle of 100 meters in length and 42 meters in width and is framed by 52 tall Corinthian columns; see ibid., pp. 97-100.

12. See Schelbert, "Schulmeisteramt," pp. 147-149.

13. Ibid., p. 155.

14. Ibid., pp. 156-158.

15. Ibid., p. 158.

16. The broader context is described by Robert H. Bremner, *American Philanthropy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 58-75. Documentary evidence for the rather grim situation of the poor and especially their children see Robert H. Bremner et al., eds., *Children and Youth in America: A Documentary History, 1:1600-1865* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), pp. 640-647. The auctioning of paupers to the lowest bidder was a widespread form of solving the problem of poverty. A useful survey on the forms of social welfare presents the *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, Seventeenth Issue (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Social Workers, 1977), II, 1497-1529, with valuable bibliography; for German-speaking immigrants see Agnes Bretting, *Soziale Probleme deutscher Einwanderer in New York City 1800-1860* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1981), pp. 98-101; 185-87; 198-99.

17. Schelbert, "Schulmeisteramt," pp. 172-184.

18. Ibid., pp. 185-190.

19. Ibid., p. 178.

20. Ibid., pp. 164-165.

21. Ibid., p. 170.

22. Schelbert and Rappolt, eds., *Alles ist ganz anders hier*, pp. 65-84, offer an example relating to Purrysburg, South Carolina.

23. Wilhelmina was baptized May 17, 1809, and married Johann Caspar on February 19, 1838, who was then teacher at Uerikon (Dürnten Bürgeretat 1840, Staatsarchiv Zürich, E III 30.14, p. 169, No. 455).

24. Johann Caspar was the son of Hans Caspar Honegger (1774-1826), a farmer in Schlieren, commune of Dürnten; his mother was Regula, born Hess (1780-1829) of Wald; he was born in 1815 and had thirteen brothers and sisters (ibid., p. 40, No. 130; see also Dürnten Pfarrbuch 1803-1867, Staatsarchiv Zürich, E III 30.3, p. 40 and p. 635, No. 2).

25. See Heinrich Müller, *Egg bei Zürich* (Egg, 1975), p. 176; documentary evidence in Mappe Bülach 1811-1875, Staatsarchiv Zürich, U 33 a 1, especially for the following dates: 1842, October 2; 1843, March 20, 28, 31, May 1, July 4 and 20, October 6, November 7; 1845, June 10, August 30, December 5; 1846, February 25; 1847, January 11, February 8.

26. Mappe Bülach, ibid., March 28, 1843; Schelbert, "Schulmeisteramt," pp. 160-161 gives the full text as transcribed from the manuscript.

27. Mappe Bülach, July 4, 1843; also Müller, *Egg*, p. 176.

28. On May 22, 1849, Johann Caspar wrote to his brother- and sister-in-law:

> Let us forget all, if unimportant quarrels, and if you, dear brother-in-law, still have that letter which I have written under those unpleasant conditions and in the pressure of those circumstances, give it over to the flames. All shall be burnt that could remind us of those unfortunate hours. Do it in my name! (Schelbert, "Schulmeisteramt," pp. 143-144.)

29. Müller, *Egg*, pp. 178-179, facsimile of document.

30. "Mit Schmerzen denke ich an die unnütz in Europa verlorene Zeit" (Schelbert, "Schulmeisteramt," p. 182).

31. In January Johann Caspar asked for a replacement due to illness and resigned February 8; Mappe Bülach, ibid., January 11 and February 8, 1847.

32. In New York Johann Caspar joined the newly founded "Helvetia Lodge" which attracted mainly Swiss from the working class; the more well-to-do joined the Swiss Benevolent Society, founded in 1832; see Adelrich Steinach, *Geschichte und Leben der Schweizer Kolonien*

in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nordamerika (New York, 1889), pp. 25-26; also Robert H. Billigmeier, "A Swiss Patrician in New York City's Elite: Henri Casimir de Rham, 1785-1873," *Swiss American Historical Society Newsletter*, 11 (October 1975), 7-17.