

MORAVIAN ARCHIVES

Inventory
of the records
of the

Papers of David Nitschmann (Bishop)
1728 - 1756

PP ND (Ep)

Paul Peucker
2005

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Papers of David Nitschmann (Bishop), 1728-1756. 1 box.

PP ND (Ep)

Biography

David Nitschmann was born in Zauchtental (Suchdol, Moravia) on Dec. 27, 1696. He emigrated to Herrnhut together with David Nitschmann (Confessor), David Nitschmann (Syndikus), Melchior Zeisberger, and Johann Töltzschig. They arrived in Herrnhut on May 12, 1724, during a ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone of the Gemeinhaus. In Herrnhut he learned the carpenter trade from Christian David. He married Rosina Schindler on Nov. 12, 1726. He undertook several visits to Bohemia and Moravia, to Bayreuth, England, Jena, and Livonia. In 1731 he accompanied Zinzendorf on his trip to Denmark to attend the coronation of Christian VI of Denmark. When Nitschmann returned to Herrnhut, he brought Anton, the slave from St. Thomas, with him. Anton's tales about St. Thomas encouraged the Herrnhuters to send out missionaries in 1732. David Nitschmann and Leonhard Dober were the first two Moravian missionaries. They left for St. Thomas on Aug. 21, 1732. Nitschmann returned after staying on the island for sixteen weeks. In 1734 Nitschmann was involved with starting a Moravian community in Holstein. He was ordained as the first bishop of the Renewed Unitas Fratrum by D.E. Jablonski in Berlin on March 13, 1735. He traveled to Savannah, Georgia, in 1735, from where he went to Charleston, SC, Pennsylvania and New York and back to Germany in the following year. He assisted Jablonski at the bishop ordination of Zinzendorf in 1737. In 1737/8 he was involved with the negotiations and construction of Herrnhag. In Dec. 1740 he arrived in Philadelphia. In 1741 he bought the land for Bethlehem and he helped with the construction of the first houses. From Bethlehem he visited St. Thomas for a second time in 1742. He returned to Europe in 1744. During the voyage the ship was taken captive by the Spaniards and Nitschmann was taken to St. Sebastian. In the years 1745-1747 he was in Denmark, Norway and Silesia. In 1748 he visited Pennsylvania. Nitschmann stayed in Herrnhag from 1749-1754. During these years the residents of Herrnhag had to leave the community. Nitschmann's wife, Rosina, died there on Aug. 10, 1753. Nitschmann went to Pennsylvania in 1754. Here he married for the second time with Maria Barbara, née Leinbach (1722-1810), who had been previously married to the missionary Friedrich Martin. From 1756 they lived in Lititz, until they retired to Bethlehem in 1761. David Nitschmann died there on Oct. 8, 1772.

Archival history (History of fonds):

On one of the old folders a note in Ettwein's handwriting was found, so the papers must have been given to the archives not long after Nitschmann's death. The papers were originally arranged by S.H. Gapp and rearranged by Kenneth Hamilton. In 2005 were rearranged again by Paul Peucker.

Scope and content:

Apparently Nitschmann collected papers during his life. Some of them were connected to his activities, some of them were letters that he had sent to various people and some papers he must have considered interesting enough to preserve. There are some letters that were written to Nitschmann, papers relating to his activities (the emigration from Moravia, the 1728 trip to England, his work in America, St. Thomas, his office as a bishop, the negotiations he undertook with Danish officials and the dissolution of Herrnhag). Some of the papers do not seem to have any direct connection to Nitschmann's work. They are listed under Miscellaneous.

System of Arrangement:

The papers are arranged according to the following categories: letters addressed to Nitschmann, papers relating to his activities and miscellaneous (not directly connected to Nitschmann's work).

Conditions governing access: the papers are open to the public. *Language:* German. *Physical characteristics:* good.

Finding Aids: inventory (also online), searchable database.

Related Units of Description:

Some of Nitschmann's personal papers are possibly in the Unity Archives in Herrnhut, Germany.

Literature: Lebenslauf/memoir in: *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine* (1833) I 394-415. *Dienerblatt* (copy in reading room).

1. Letters addressed to David Nitschmann

- 1 Letters, written by David Sigmund Kriegelstein to David Nitschmann, (1733, 1738).
Contents:
1. [Halle] to [David Nitschmann], [Febr. 27/28, 1733]
2. Berlin, April 8, 1738.
Kriegelstein (or Krügelstein, 1698-1760) lived with Spangenberg in Halle until Spangenberg was suspended. He and Nitschmann were instrumental in buying the land for Herrnhag. After that, Kriegelstein went to Berlin with the Pilgergemeine.
2 items
Annotation: Language: German

- 2 Letter, sent by David Nitschmann ([Syndic]) from Herrnhut to [David Nitschmann (Ep.)?], (1734).
Dated: Herrnhut, Oct. 28, 1734.
1 item
professionally restored
Annotation: Language: German

- 3 Letter, written by Christian David 'am Meer', to David Nitschmann in Herrnhut, (1734).
1 item
Language: German

- 4 Letters, written by N.L. von Zinzendorf to David Nitschmann, (1734 - 1741).
Contents: 1. Herrnhut, Oct. 1734; 2. Herrnhut, Aug. 15, 1735; 3. Herrnhut, Oct. 27, 1735, written on a letter by Zinzendorf to all the brothers in Savannah, Georgia; 4. New York, Nov. 29, 1741; 5. n.d.
1 folder
Language: German

- 5 Letter, written by Joannes Deknatel in Amsterdam to David Nitschmann, (1738).
Deknatel was a mennonite minister, who was a close friend of the Moravians.
1 item
Language: German

- 6 Letters, received by David Nitschmann, from Jonas Paulus Weiss, (1738 - 1739).
Contents: 1. Nuremberg Febr. 7, 1738; 2. Nuremberg Febr. 28, 1738; 3. Nuremberg Febr. 24, 1739; 4. Nuremberg July 7, 1739.
1 folder
Language: German

- Letter, written by Friedrich von Watteville from Heerendijk to David Nitschmann in Herrnhag, (1739).
The letter, dated Aug. 15, 1739, was removed from the collection and pasted into the Bishop's book by Edmund de Schweinitz (p. 124).
1 letter
Language: German

2. Papers Relating to David Nitschmann's Activities

During his life, Nitschmann was active in many parts of the Moravian Church. He remained interested in Moravian work in these countries and he kept collecting documents relating to these subjects.

2.1. Moravian Emigration

Nitschmann left his native Zauchtental in 1724 to live in Herrnhut. In 1725 and 1727 he returned to Moravia to visit relatives, friends and other protestants.

- 7 Papers relating to the emigration from Moravia, (1747 - 1756).
Contents:
1. List of families and individuals that emigrated from Moravia 1722-Dec. 1747, compiled by [D. Nitschmann], n.d.
 2. (Another) list of families and individuals that emigrated from Moravia 1722 - Dec. 1747, compiled by [D. Nitschmann], n.d. (note: the list is not identical with nr. 1).
 3. List of families and individuals that emigrated from Moravia 1722-1754, compiled by D. Nitschmann, Bethlehem, Sept. 1756.
 4. Chronological list of arrivals of Moravian immigrants in Herrnhut and other arrivals and events (extracted from the Herrnhut diary?) 1731-1744, compiled by [D. Nitschmann], n.d.
 5. History of the "Hidden Seed", Zauchtel (Zauchtental, Suchdol) and the Schneider family, 24 p.
- 1 folder
Language: German

2.2. England

In 1728 Nitschmann, together with Johann Töltschig and Wenzel Neisser, was sent to Holland and England to establish contacts for the Moravians.

- 8 Letter, sent by the congregation in Herrnhut ('die sämtliche mährische und böhmische Brüder auf der Herrnhuth') to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in London, ([1728]).
The letter was delivered by Nitschmann, Johann Töltschig and Wenzel Neisser. Podmore quotes from another copy of this letter in the Unity Archives (R.13.A.1.2).
1 item
copy
professionally restored
Annotation: Language: German
Further References: See: C.J. Podmore, *The Moravian Church in England* (Oxford 1998) 9.
- 9 Letter, written by the overseers and elders of the Herrnhut congregation to the Queen of England, ([1728]).
The letter was to be delivered by Nitschmann, Johann Töltschig and Wenzel Neisser, but the meeting with the Queen never took place.
1 item
copy
professionally restored
Language: German
Further References: See: C.J. Podmore, *The Moravian Church in England* (Oxford 1998) 8-9.

2.3. America

In 1735 Nitschmann accompanies a group of Herrnhuters to Savannah, Georgia. From there he traveled to Charleston, SC, Pennsylvania and New York in the next year, from where he returned to Europe. His second trip to America took place from 1740-1744, when he traveled with Father David

Nitschmann and his daughter Anna to Pennsylvania. They arrived in Philadelphia on Dec. 5, 1740. He undertook a trip to Georgia, bought the land for Bethlehem and was involved with the construction of the first houses there. In 1748 he was in Pennsylvania again and returned in the same year. In April 1754 he arrived in Bethlehem again and he remained in America until his death in 1772.

- 10 Letters, sent by August Gottlieb Spangenberg from Savannah to [Zinzendorf ? in Herrnhut], (1735).
Contents: 1. Savannah, April 29, 1735; 2. July 11, 1735.
Very small writing. Nr. 2 has some pieces missing. These are the originals of letters that are preserved as copies in the collection of the Unity Archives in Herrnhut (R.14.A.6.a).
2 items
professionally restored
Language: German
Edition: Translation of the Herrnhut copies of these letters by George F. Jones and Paul M. Peucker, 'We Have Come to Georgia with Pure Intentions': Moravian Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg's Letters from Savannah, 1735' in: The Georgia Historical Quarterly 52 (1998): 84-120 (also has a letter dated June 16, 1735).
- 11 Letter, written by David Nitschmann in Amsterdam upon his return from America, (1736).
The letter is dated May 25, 1736 and Aug. 3, 1736.
1 item
Language: German
- 12 Letter from A.G. Spangenberg in 'Tommenson', Pennsylvania, to Jonas Paulus Weiss in Nuremberg, (1737).
The letter (dated Nov. 8, 1737) starts in a different handwriting, but switches to Spangenberg's handwriting on the second page.
The letter was sent to David Nitschmann to be forwarded to Weiss.
1 item
Language: German
- 13 Letter, sent by David Nitschmann from New York to Jonas Paulus Weiss in Herrnhut, (1741).
The reason why the letter was returned to Nitschmann is not clear. Nitschmann possibly considered this early letter important to document the beginnings of the work in Pennsylvania. The letter is dated January 19, 1741.
1 item
Language: German
- 14 Diary, written by Nitschmann of his journey from America to Europe, during which the Moravian ship was captured by Spanish privateers and taken to St. Sebastian, (1744).
The handwriting is not David Nitschmann's, but there are additions in his hand.
1 item
copy
Language: German

2.3. St. Thomas

Nitschmann went to St. Thomas in 1732, as one of the first two missionaries sent out from Herrnhut. He returned to Herrnhut the next year, but in 1742 he visited the mission in St. Thomas again.

- 15 Diary, kept by Friedrich Martin, missionary on St. Thomas, (1737 - 1738).
The diary covers May 26, 1737 - Jan. 30, 1738.
1 item
copy
Language: German

2.4. Episcopate

David Nitschmann was ordained a bishop of the Unitas Fratrum by Daniel Ernst Jablonski in Berlin on March 13, 1735. He was the first bishop of the Renewed Moravian Church. In 1737 he assisted at the bishop ordination of Zinzendorf.

- 16 Papers relating to Nitschmann's ordination as a bishop and the episcopate in the Moravian Church, ().
1. Certificate of ordination for David Nitschmann issued by Daniel Ernst Jablonski, June 14, 1737. [the ordination took place on March 13, 1735] (copy?).
 2. Certificate of ordination for David Nitschmann issued by Daniel Ernst Jablonski, June 14, 1737 (copy?).
 3. List of bishops of the Unitas Fratrum (nrs. 1-30), [ca. 1747].
- Although the certificates of ordination are not marked as such, they are probably copies. The original is in Herrnhut.
- 1 folder
Language: German

2.5. Denmark & Holstein

Nitschmann accompanied Zinzendorf to the coronation ceremony of the Christian VI of Denmark in 1731. In 1734 he was involved with the founding of a Moravian settlement in Holstein. He visited Pilgerruh again in 1740. In 1745-47 he was traveling in Denmark, Norway and Silesia.

- 17 Letter, written by A.R. Reuss in Kopenhagen to [David Nitschmann?], (1734).
1 item
Language: German
- 18 Letter, written by the Count of Danneskiold Laurwig to Zinzendorf, (1735).
Dated: Kopenhagen, March 15, 1735.
1 item
Language: German
- 19 Papers relating to the activities of the Moravians in Denmark and Holstein, especially to the settlement Pilgerruh and missionary work in Danish colonies, (1737 - 1751).
Contents:
1. Concession of Christian VI, King of Denmark, to tolerate the Brethren in Holstein and to let them settle outside of Oldesloe, Friedensburg, 29 July 1737 (copy). (printed with the date July 19, in: Wittern, 397-399.
 2. Letter written by Johann Georg Waibinger to Superintendent-General Conradi, Febr. 28, 1741, and Conradi's petition to the King of Denmark, proposing a new wording of the oath of allegiance to be taken by the Moravians, March 4, 1741 (copies).
 3. Letter written by N.L. von Zinzendorf to president of the Danish West India and Guinea Company, regarding a memorandum presented by D. Nitschmann to the Company, Gnadeck Aug. 1, 1743 (copy).
 4. (Extract from) a letter stating a bid by the King of Denmark for the houses in Pilgerruh, owned by the Moravians, [1744].
 5. Petition of a group of "lutherans", addressed to the King of Denmark, to settle in the empty houses in Pilgerruh, with an accompanying letter by Zinzendorf, Marienborn, Oct. 18, 1744 (copy). (note: the lutherans were probably Brethren who came from the lutheran church).
 6. Letter of complaint, written by [David Nitschmann?] to the Danish Mission Board regarding a refusal by Mr. Severin to take Moravian missionaries to Greenland, Kopenhagen, March 1745 (copy).
 7. Letter, written by David Nitschmann to the president of the Danish West India and Guinea Company regarding the implementation of a Royal rescript allowing the Moravians to do missionary work in the Danish West-Indies, Kopenhagen, Apr. 17, 1745, with a copy of an earlier petition submitted by Lorenz Praetorius, Kopenhagen, Febr. 6, 1745.

8. Registration of an outstanding debt on the houses in Pilgerruh, to be redeemed to Johann Andreas Dober, former Oeconomicus (overseer) of the Moravian property in Pilgerruh, signed by C.E. Kirchhoff, mayor of Oldesloe, Oldesloe Aug. 27, 1745.
 9. Report, written by Rev. Johann Georg Messarosch, about his citation before the consistory in Glückstadt on Nov. 21, 1745. (note: Messarosch supported the Moravians and was interrogated about the Moravian teachings).
 10. Memorandum, submitted by David Nitschmann and Friedrich Martin to the [King of Denmark] concerning the Moravian missions in the Danish West-Indies, Kopenhagen, Apr. 1747 (draft by J.P. Weiss, with corrections made by Zinzendorf).
 11. Ordinance, issued by Frederik V, King of Denmark, addressed to the Danish West India and Guinea Company concerning nr. 10, Christiansburg, Aug. 18, 1747 (copied by J.P. Weiss).
 12. Petition, submitted by David Nitschmann to the King of Denmark, to allow a group of Lutherans to settle in the empty houses in Pilgerruh, Kopenhagen, Apr. 29, 1748 (copy).
 13. Letter, written by David Nitschmann, to court marshal Adam Gottlob von Moltke, asking him to arrange an audience with the King of Denmark, Altona, June 13, 1748.
 14. Petition (same as 12), Altona, June 14, 1748 (note: Nitschmann had not had the opportunity to present the earlier petition).
 15. Petition, submitted by Hermann Reinhard Schick, overseer of the houses in Pilgerruh, to the King of Denmark, to return an orphan girl into his care, Altona, June 15, 1748.
 16. Rescript, issued by Frederik V, King of Denmark, to the magistratel of Oldesloe stating that the Moravian brother Ludwig Frank (Francke) should not be admitted to Oldesloe in case he should ever return, Kopenhagen, Nov. 11, 1748 (copy).
 17. Letter, written by Herrmann Reinhard Schick to David Nitschmann, regarding the permission given by the King of Denmark for Francke to return to Oldesloe to sell his house, Pilgerruh, March 11, 1749. (with the text of the relevant rescript).
 18. Rescript, issued by Frederik V, King of Denmark, to the Danish Mission Board (Collegium de Cursu Evangelii Promovendo) to prevent the Moravian missionaries in Greenland from travelling in and out of Greenland so frequently, from transporting any goods other than necessary for their personal use and to take indigenous Greenlanders out of the country, Christiansburg, Febr. 13, 1750 (copy).
 19. Letter, written by Br. Stemann to David Nitschmann, regarding the sale of the houses in Pilgerruh and the arrival of missionary Matthias Stach and his family from Greenland, Hamburg, Nov. 30, 1751.
- 1 folder
 Language: German
 Further References: M. Wittern, Geschichte der Brüdergemeine in Schleswig-Holstein (Kiel 1908).

2.6. Herrnhag's Dissolution

Nitschmann was in Herrnhag when the Count of Büdingen ordered the Moravians to break away from Zinzendorf in 1750. He was involved in organizing the dissolution of the Herrnhag congregation.

- 20 Papers relating to the dissolution of Herrnhag, (1750 - 1752).
 Contents:
1. Letter by N.L. von Zinzendorf to his "Vetter", London Febr. 4.
 2. Memorandum of the Consilium Unitatis Fratrum regarding the wording of the homage to the new Count of Büdingen, London Febr. 6, 1750 (certified copy).
 3. Protest of the residents of Herrnhag against the requirements of the council of Büdingen, o.D. [Febr. 1750].
 4. Edict of the Count of Ysenburg and Büdingen to the residents of Herrnhag to pay homage to him under certain conditions or to leave the county within three years, Febr. 12, 1750 (printed).
 5. Address by Zinzendorf to the congregation in Herrnhag (draft), [London] March 22, 1750.

6. Letter of the residents of Herrnhag to the count of Büdingen, announcing their departure, [1750].
 7. Farewell address by Johannes von Watteville to the Single Brothers in the Wetterau, Herrnhag Apr. 12, 1750.
 8. Address by Johannes von Watteville to the congregation [Gemeinstunde] in Herrnhag, April 12, 1750.
 9. Farewell address by Johannes von Watteville to the "500 in One Soul" in Herrnhag, April 12, 1750.
 10. List of the married couples in Herrnhag, incl. their age, country of origin, year of arrival in Herrnhag, health, profession, capital and children, May 5, 1750.
 11. Address by N.L. von Zinzendorf to the "500" in Herrnhag, Aug. 9, 1750.
 12. Report of a visit by an unidentified Moravian to Assessor von Schwarzenfels in Wetzlar, regarding the situation in Herrnhag, 1751.
 13. Draft of a proposal by Cossart and Dorie to Brauer, councillor of the Count of Büdingen, Apr. 10, 1752.
 14. Letter by Zinzendorf to [David Nitschmann ?], London Apr. 18, 1752.
 15. Zinzendorf's considerations concerning the Wetterau (as an enclosure with nr. 14), [Apr. 1752].
 16. Zinzendorf's ideas about Herrnhag (as an enclosure with nr. 14), [Apr. 1752].
 17. List of the properties in Herrnhag and their value, n.d.
- 1 folder
Language: German

3. Miscellaneous

Some of the papers do not relate directly to any of Nitschmann's activities.

- 21 Letter, sent by Br. Schneider, Micksch and Grasmann to [the congregation in Herrnhut] about their journey from Reval to Moscow, (1737).
They left Reval on Febr. 17, 1737 and arrived in Moscow on March 15. The letter is dated Moscow, June 5, 1737 (n.s.).
1 item
copy?
Language: German
- 22 Account of the deathbed of 'our King' [Frederick William I of Prussia], ([1740]).
1 item
Annotation: Language: German
- 23 Autobiographical notes by Samuel Lieberkühn, dated Frankfurt June 17, 1745, (1745).
It is not clear on what occasion Lieberkühn wrote this.
1 item
Language: German
- 24 Address, given by Zinzendorf, during the Synod in Zeist, May 17, (1746).
1 item
Language: German
Edition: Printed in: Zeister Reden (1746) 157-170; 2nd ed. (1759) 73-84.
- 25 General concession, given by Frederick II (the Great), King of Prussia, to the Moravians for their establishments in Silesia, (1746).
1 item
copy
Language: German
- 26 Ordinance of George II of Hannover to extend the regulations against separatists from 1734 and to specifically apply them against the Moravians, (1748).
1 item
copy
Language: German

- 27 Text of three Moravian hymns in various languages, ((ca. 1750)).
The hymns are: "Ach mein herzliebes Jesulein" (HG 2279:3), "Geschöpfgen zur Geburt gebracht" (HG 2279:4) and "So singt die seelge Assemblée" (HG 2188:16) in the following languages: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Danish, Swedish, English, Spanish, French, Italian, Bohemian (Czech), Hungarian, "Wallachian" (Rumanian), Latvian, Estonian, Dutch-creole, "Amina", and "Acra".
In the diaries it is noted that at some occasions hymns were sung in various languages at the same time. These translations might have been used at such an occasion.
1 item
Language: German
- 28 Letter, written by A.G. Spangenberg from the ship to America to the Synod convened at Bloomsbury Square in London, (1751).
1 item
copy
Language: German
- 29 Letter, sent by Johannes von Watteville in Westminster to the Indians ('meine lieben braune Herzel') in Pennsylvania, (1753).
1 item
Language: German