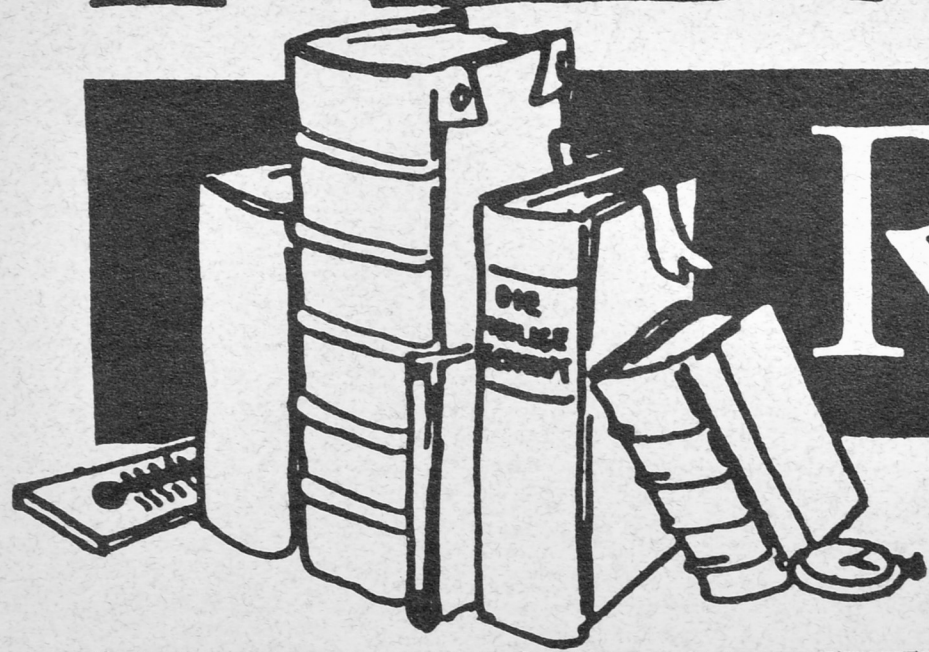


HERITAGE

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The Heritage Review is an annual publication of the Ohio Amish Library, 4292 SR 39 Millersburg, Ohio 44654. It is intended to provide information, past and present, about the Amish and Mennonites, especially in Ohio. We invite articles and information. Memberships to the Ohio Amish Library are \$20 annually. Single copies of The Heritage Review are available.

"LAWYER" YOST MILLER

Gleanings From his Collection of Documents
-by Edward Kline

Yost Miller (1776-1846) served the Amish community in Somerset Co., Pa. in many legal matters from ca. 1800-1816. After his move to the fledgling Amish community near Walnut Creek, Ohio in 1816, he continued to do extensive work as executor, administrator, guardian, and money collector. For this reason he became known as "Lawyer Yost." His son Benjamin (1813-1877) assisted in this work and continued it after Yost's death in 1846.

Throughout their lifetimes Yost and Benjamin collected a vast amount of documents: estate settlements, wills, maps, surveys, letters, and receipts for money and taxes. In the summer of 2005 several boxes of these documents were donated to Ohio Amish Library by Betty Miller Jeschke. One does not know how many documents perished, but 179 catalogued documents and one box of uncatalogued court records survived and are included in this collection.

These documents were found in a wooden, dove-tailed box, where Yost or Benjamin had placed them. In the late 1960s Oscar R. and Betty Miller acquired this box and its contents. Oscar was a great-great-great grandson of Yost Miller. After Oscar's passing, the papers went to Goshen, Indiana where Betty, now remarried,

now lives. There the collection of papers was listed and organized by the Mennonite Church Archives staff, after which they were brought to Ohio Amish Library.

Numerous historians and genealogists have in the past looked through these papers and taken information from them. They date from 1796 to 1865, with a heavy concentration of material from 1810- 1820, the early years of the Holmes County settlement. Many are legal documents, but letters, maps, and many tax receipts are included. They provide an insight not only into the lives of Yost and his son Benjamin, but also into the workings of the pioneer era, as well as later, of the Holmes County Amish settlement. This article discusses a number of points of interest gleaned from the papers.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Yost Miller, ML221, was born January 19, 1776 in Berks County, Pa., the oldest child of Hannes and Frany (Yoder) Miller. Hannas was the oldest son of "Indian John" Miller. Soon after Yost was born, probably the same year, Yost's parents moved from Berks County to Brothers Valley, Somerset County. They were in their lower 20s in age at that time. Yost grew up in Somerset County and in 1800 married Gertrude Yoder of the Glades area. In 1802 he bought a 302-acre farm alongside the Casselman River, across the river from his father Hannas' farm. In 1815, when preparing to move to Ohio, Yost sold this farm to his cousin Abraham Miller. (He was the son of Hannas' brother Peter, and a brother to Mose P. "Groß Mose" Miller.) In 1816 Yost moved to Ohio with his six children, where he was a pioneer in Walnut Creek Twp. His uncle Jacob (Yokkel) had been the first pioneer to move to that area, in 1809.

Before moving to Ohio, Yost had acquired the south half of Section 25, Township 9, Range 4 in Walnut Creek Twp., located midway between Walnut Creek and Sugarcreek along SR 39. After coming to Ohio, Yost sold this land to his brother Emanuel and in 1816 bought part of Section 16, Township 9, Range 4 from his cousin John J. Miller (Yokkel's son). On this property, located 1¼ miles east of Walnut Creek (where Roman Coblenz now lives), Yost lived and raised his family. Five more children were born to Yost and Gertrude in Ohio. Sometime before 1830 Gertrude passed away and on Sept. 8, 1836 Yost married Marie Follmer. Yost died

May 12, 1846, and Marie died the same year. Yost and both his wives are buried in the cemetery on his home farm. (Cemetery L-23 in Beachy, Cemetery Directory).

YOST'S FAMILY

Eleven children were born to Yost and Gertrude Miller, of whom only four married. Four died at a young age and three more grew to adulthood, but did not marry.

- 1.) Sarah, b. 1802, and married Peter C. Schrag, minister in the Oak Grove Church in Wayne Co.
- 2.) Jonathan, b. 1804, and died single.
- 3.) Isaac, b. 1806, and died young.
- 4.) Susanna, b. 1808, and died single. She was a dwarf.
- 5.) Elias, b. 1810, and married Barbara Hersberger.
- 6.) Benjamin, b. 1813, and married Mary Mast.
- 7.) Michael, b. 1816, and died young.
- 8.) Yost, b. 1818, and died young.
- 9.) Magdalena, b. 1820, and died single.
- 10.) Solomon, b. 1821, and married Magdalena Kauffman.
- 11.) Elizabeth, who died in infancy.

One Sunday in May, 1846, Sarah's husband Peter C. Schrag, SK3a, was stricken while preaching in the barn of his neighbor Jonas Smucker. He died 30 minutes later at the age of 50. A document in the collection, dated June 4, 1850, shows Christian S. Plank receiving \$17.42 from Benjamin Miller from the estate of Peter C. Schrag. Christian Plank was married to Peter's daughter Elizabeth. So it appears that Benjamin was executor of his brother-in-law's estate.

A puzzling document dated June 5, 1847 appears concerning Elias. It reads: "Rec'd of Benjamin J. Miller, thirty dollars for the use of Elias Miller, an insane man in my care as guardian, being part of the amount due said Elias Miller from the estate of his father Yost Miller." It is signed by the Justice of Peace—"Joel Hall, guardian of Elias Miller." Elias was married at this time and had three children. His father Yost had died the year before. Was the insanity a problem with alcohol?

Benjamin paid a "muster fine" of \$2.50 in the years 1837 and 1839. He would have been 24 and 26 years old at the time. This was probably a fine paid instead of serving in the military. Benjamin worked closely with his father and assisted in the legal work while Yost lived. After

his death he continued the work. An agreement dated April 21, 1841 shows Benjamin bought the home farm (S16, T9, R4) for \$1200. The agreement made provisions for Yost and Marie as long as they lived. Two years later they both died. On this farm Benjamin and Mary raised eleven children.

All nine of Yost's living siblings moved to and lived near Walnut Creek. Of Yost's 36 grandchildren, 21 remained in the area and lived and are buried here. These two factors have made the Miller name the most common surname in Holmes County among the Amish.

YOST'S LEGAL WORK

Although we do not know how Yost got a start doing legal work, he is a good example of one who developed self-taught skills to meet needs that arise. Yost must have shown interest and ability in such things early in life, for he

was 25 years old when he was named executor of his father's estate. From his work as executor he developed other skills in legal work.

Later, in Holmes County, Yost acquired a small book containing forms for various legal transactions, as well as instructions for self-taught penmanship skills. He signed the flyleaf of the 1822 book called "Pocket Companion or Every Man his Own Lawyer", shown below. This booklet is in the archives of the Holmes County Historical Society. Yost was proficient in both German and English and his legal documents were correct and accepted well both in Somerset and Holmes County.

HANNAS' ESTATE

Yost's father Hannas died an untimely death on June 13, 1802, at fifty years of age. He, with Joseph Speicher, had been executors of his father, "Indian John's" estate. "Indian John" died

THE Pocket Companion;

OR,

Every Man his Own Lawyer:

CONTAINING

A VARIETY OF PRECEDENTS,

Laid down in so plain a Manner, that

The Farmer, Mechanic, Apprentice, or School Boy,

CAN DRAW ANY

INSTRUMENT OF WRITING

Without the assistance of an Attorney.

By a Gentleman of the Bar.

PREFACED WITH

TWELVE PAGES OF SCRIPT,

Intended as a Copy for those Persons who wish to Improve their Hand Writing at leisure hours at home without the Instructions of a Teacher.

THE SEVENTH EDITION.

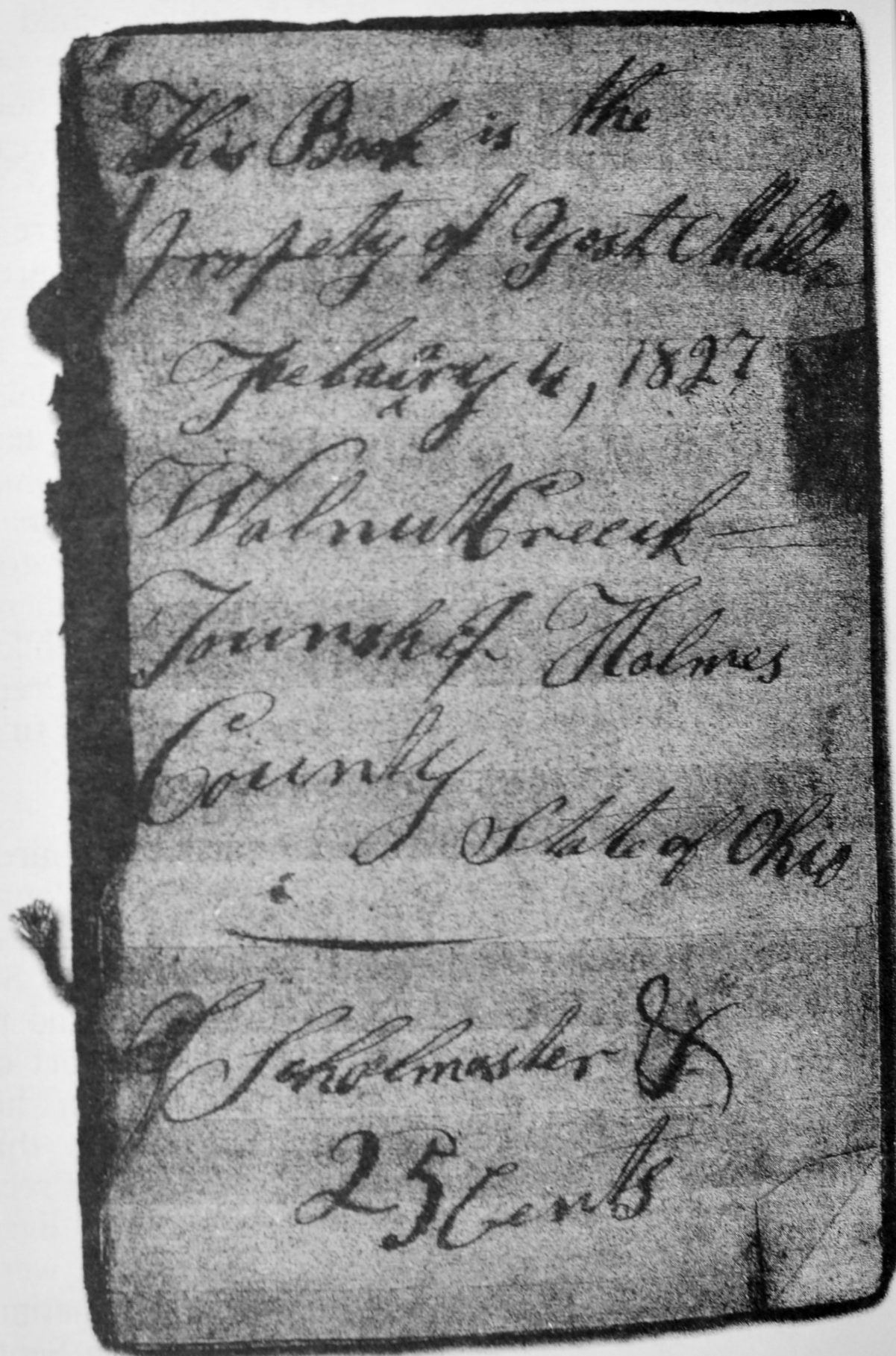
TO WHICH IS ADDED,

THE ART OF PENMANSHIP.

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY S. ROBERTS.

1822.



Yost's Law Book

Yost's Signature On The Flyleaf

in 1798, only four years before his son Hannas.

Yost's papers include a document dated Jan. 20, 1801, in which a probate judge, Morgan Rhees, names "John Miller" executor of the estate of Jacob Miller, deceased. It is believed that Jacob was Hannas' uncle, a brother to "Indian John." Hannas died the next year, so probably Yost got this document in order to fulfill its obligations. When Yost and his younger brother David were named executors of Hannas' estate, they had to complete both of the above duties of their father.

A paper dated May 15, 1808 shows that John Miller, a younger brother to Yost—then 21 years old, "received of Yost and David, 83 pounds and 10 schilling, which is my share of the goods of Joh. Miller's estate." In another paper dated Oct. 25, 1810, he again states that he "received from Yost Miller, executor of the deceased younger Johannes Miller's estate, 2 pounds, 16 schilling, and 2 cents. This is the full sum which comes to me of the elder deceased Joh. Miller's estate."

These papers, as well as others, show that often moneys were not given to heirs until they turned 21 years old. This explains the lapse of 6–8 years since Hannas' death. In 1814, when Isaac, another brother, turned 21, he received \$137 from the estate.

On October 17, 1811, David Miller writes he "received \$7.71 from Yost from his grandfather Johannes Miller's estate. On January 28, 1812 Daniel Miler "received from Yost Miller \$7.81, from Joh. Miller, Senior's estate." Both David and Daniel were younger brothers of Yost. We see here that Yost dispersed money from both his father Hannas' and his grandfather "Indian John's" estates.

OTHER LEGAL WORK

Yost's papers show that he was executor of nine estates in Somerset from 1802–1816. Most, but not all, were estates of fellow church members. It is also known that he helped with the estate of immigrant Michael Troyer, and that of John Hochstetler. Probably he was involved in still more cases. A performance bond for a Christian Moyer of Somerset, dated April 18, 1808, is in Yost's handwriting, showing he prepared such documents..

Several of the more notable estate settlements

Yost was involved in were as follows.

In his will dated June 20, 1812, Christian Mast, of Ellick Twp., Somerset, in a very shaky German script, names "der alte Peter Bitsche und Yost Miller" as his executors.

A paper dated Nov. 19, 1814 shows Benjamin Hochstetler having received \$52.44 of Yost Miller from Solomon Miller's "hinterlassenschaft" (remaining estate). Benjamin was married to Yost's sister Catherine. Solomon was a younger brother to Yost, who was killed earlier in 1814, at 18 years of age and single. He was killed while felling trees at his brother Isaac's. A dead limb hit him, breaking his back. His was the first death in the Ohio pioneer community. He was buried in a coffin made with hand-split boards, as there was no sawmill in operation at that time in the area. Another paper dated the same day, shows another brother, Daniel receiving \$52.44. It is believed that each of Yost's nine siblings received this amount, making Solomon's estate worth \$471.96, which is substantial for an 18-year-old pioneer in 1814. What is not clear is how the estate was settled, since the death took place in Walnut Creek and Yost was living in Somerset County in 1814. Probably Yost came to Ohio and settled the estate in a short time, since both payments were on the same day.

In 1813 another tragic death, that of John Troyer, TY23, involved Yost in the estate settlement. John Troyers were one of the first four families who came to Walnut Creek Twp. in 1810. During the Indian scare of 1812–1813, Johns returned to Somerset, where he was killed in a barn raising accident. A document dated March 30, 1815 shows that Magdalena Troyer (the widow) received \$168.66, as a third of John's estate. The same day Yost also paid Peter and Joseph Miller (probably Magdalena's brothers) \$338.34, as guardians for the heirs of John Troyer. This was twice the amount Magdalena received. John and Magdalena had six children. It must have been difficult to face the rigors of pioneer life as a widow with six small children, the oldest being ten years old. Seven or eight years later Magdalena died in Ohio, when her youngest child was ten years old, leaving six orphan children under nineteen years old.

Yost's papers do not record many estate settlements in Holmes County, although it is known that he did quite a few. For example, he

was executor of the estates of Joseph Hochstetler in 1823, of Christian Gindlesberger in 1824, of John Blank in 1836, and of Peter Brenneman in 1844. A paper dated 1846 shows Benjamin dispersing funds from the estate of Albright Gindlesberger as agent for Yost Miller, deceased. Yost died on May 12 of this year, and apparently he was settling this estate when he died, and Benjamin completed the work. Many of Yost's papers dating from his time in Ohio deal with lending and collecting monies.

Five documents from 1818 and 1819 show Yost and John Schrock, Jr. as executors of David Hochstetler's estate. Included are David's will, in which he names his "trustworthy friends" as executors, and a list of chattel divided by David's three children, Joseph, David, and Elizabeth. Another paper shows that Joseph received the land he lives on (unspecified), valued at 100 pounds, as inheritance. Another lists nine household items, plus two beds and two cows which Elizabeth received as inheritance.

CIVIC INVOLVEMENTS

When Holmes County was organized in 1825, each township held elections for officers. The election for Walnut Creek Township were held at Yost's home on November 10, 1825, showing Yost's interest in the process.

The next year Yost was appointed school examiner for Holmes County. In 1827 Yost must have been teaching school, according to what he wrote on the fly-leaf of the "Pocket Companion". A document dated November 1837 shows Yost Miller involved in hiring William Gerber as school treasurer of Walnut Creek Township. Yost was well educated, probably self-taught, for his time and circumstances. He obviously took interest in the education of others.

Yost's work with estates and as guardian in various situations brought him into a working relationship with the legal offices of the county. Sometime in the 1830s he was prompted to make a plot map of the Walnut Creek area, showing by initials who owned the land. This map is at the Ohio Amish Library. Yost's papers also include land ownership maps dated 1923, of Sugarcreek, Hardy, and Berlin Townships in Holmes County. Also included are many Justice of Peace records, and box of dockets from the Holmes County courts. Most of them are not related to Yost or Amish people, but somehow Yost and Benjamin came to possess them.

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

Yost's papers give evidence that both he and his son Benjamin lent out money and collected notes as a service to the community. The notes collected were often for other people. It appears that Yost and Benjamin acted as sort of a clearing-house for lending and borrowing. It seems that if someone desired to borrow money, they would find someone wanting to lend it, make notes, and then collect the note when due. At times they lent out their own money. Following are examples:

"J. Williamson" signed the following: "Borrowed of Yost Miller \$6.30, Jan. 25, 1841, which I promise to return again 15th Nov. next"

In January, 1842, and again in April, 1845, a Samuel Porter "received of Yost Miller" \$3.52 and \$5.44 on the account of Jacob Holderman.

In 1829 a firm called Brobst and Graeter, probably bankers, "left for collecting into the hands and care of Mr. Yost Miller of Holmes County, Walnut K.T.S. the following notes and accounts." The list of 53 accounts were for amounts of \$1.00 to \$32.00, due within 21 to 90 days. Of these, thirty-four are marked "paid," after Yost collected the monies. After Jacob Mathes paid a \$10.00 account to Brobst and Graeter, he was given a document which said "We do hereby order Yost Miller, in Walnut K. T.S. where said note is for collection at the present time, to deliver it up... and consider this our receipt." There is no further explanation of this arrangement, but Yost was obviously collecting notes for Brobst and Graeter.

In 1852 Benjamin paid a Christian Steiner \$157.35 for an account owed by John Leichty. In 1853 Nicholas Mollet, administrator for the estate of Anna Leichty, obtained a judgment of \$105 against the same John Leichty in the Common Pleas Court in Millersburg. Benjamin paid this money to the court. Then the next year John Liechty, living in Clay County, Indiana sent a letter Benjamin. Addressing him as "Dear Friend Benjamin," he makes reference to the debts he had with Benjamin and had paid. He further asks if Benjamin would lend him several hundred dollars again. Here we see Benjamin lending and collecting money much like his father had done.

LAND OWNED BY YOST

Yost's papers contain many receipts of real estate taxes paid on various properties. He owned

numerous tracts in Holmes County and several in Wayne County during his lifetime. Yost must have been fairly secure financially and probably invested his money in properties. Most of Yost's properties are now owned, and have been owned by Amish people, so it appears he bought them and made them available to people in the Amish community. Following is a list of those properties, listed in his papers:

- 1.) The first land owned by Yost in Holmes County was the south half of Section 25, Township 9, Range 4. These 320 acres are located between Walnut Creek and Sugarcreek along SR 39. He bought this land while still in Somerset and sold it to his brother Emanuel soon after coming to Holmes County. This land is not listed in his papers, but it is known from other sources that he owned it.
- 2.) In 1814 Yost paid taxes on the following three tracts: On 160 acres of the SE Quarter of Section 16, Township 9, Range 4, which is the farm he lived on, east of Walnut Creek on TR 419, where Roman Coblentz now lives.
- 3.) On 104 acres of part of the NW Quarter of Section 16, Township 9, Range 4. This is the farm to the northwest of the home farm.
- 4.) On 172 acres of the NW Quarter of Section 6, Township 9, Range 4. This was land in the next bottom, north of CR 172, where Noah E. Miller and David A. Miller now live.
- 5.) In 1817 he owned 169 acres in the SE Quarter of Section 5, Township 9, Range 5. This land is north of Bunker Hill to the west of CR 77. It was then listed as in "Coshocton County." After Holmes County was organized in 1815, he paid the tax in Millersburg.
- 6.) In 1826 Yost paid tax on 136 acres in Wayne County- Section 18, Township 21, Range 14, located just north of the Wayne County line.
- 7.) In 1828, he paid taxes on additional 134 acres in Wayne County- Section 30, Township 21, Range 14.
- 8.) In 1843 Yost paid taxes on 160 acres in the SE Quarter of Section 3, Township 9, Range 5, in Walnut Creek Township. This land is located north of CR 168 and east of TR 401.

These tracts of land total 1355 acres, which Yost owned at one time or other. He probably sold some of the tracts before buying others, and probably did not own all of them at one time.

In 1869 Benjamin paid taxes on 81 acres east of Charm, on Section 7, Township 8, Range 5.

MISCELLANEOUS INTERESTING PAPERS

Papers from 1847 to 1854 show Benjamin Miller and John Schrock as guardians of the heirs of Michael Troyer. They were probably also administrators of his estate. According to the names of the children mentioned here, this was Michael Troyer (TY71), the son of Jacob, who was the son of immigrant Michael. (Yost had been appraiser of immigrant Michael Troyer's chattel in Somerset County, ca. 1807.) Michael (TY71) died in 1842 and left six children who were minors.

One paper shows Elizabeth (Troyer) and her husband Daniel J. Mast receiving \$13.11 soon after they married. She was 23 years old then.

A paper dated 1849 records that daughter "Magdalena Miller" received \$86.90 as "her share of rent for the farm" from the guardians of Michael Troyer's heirs. AAMG shows Magdalena as born in 1842 and later married to Abraham Miller. However here in 1849 she writes her name "Magdalena Miller," so she must have been married then. She probably was born around 1825 to 1827.

In a document of September, 1854, Christian Troyer, then living in Lagrange County, Indiana, received \$637.06 from John Schrock and Benjamin Miller, as the full amount due him from his father Michael's estate. This was twelve years after Michael's death, at which time Christian was 9 years old, making him 21 now. The paper lists rents from the farm for 9 years (plus interest), money from the estate, and cash. Christian's grandfather Jacob died in 1850, (8 years after his son Michael), and Christian received \$16.05 from Jacob's estate. Expenses deducted from the settlement show \$2.75 for "hauling his cloth[es] to Wooster and paid for a box," in 1853. This may have been when Christian moved to Indiana. The guardians also charged a fee of \$25.00, which reflected work over 12 years. So we see that Yost and Benjamin probably got paid for their "legal work."

In 1843 Yost wrote a contract to sell a "Segmühle und Wasserreif" (sawmill and waterwheel) from Abraham Hershberger to Heinrich Hershberger, for \$400. Written in German, it spells out the terms of payment. One hundred dollars were to be paid for the next two years and the balance when possible. The sawmill was located just north and east of Yost's home farm, along the Walnut Creek.

Empfangen von Marfſſindam
Froschauer das ziefammen
gulegt ist worden für
Samuel Speicher wie
folgt

	\$	Cts
Jonas Stutzman	2	
Isaac Miller	2	
Michael Troyer	1	
Christian Yoder		50
Jacob Stutzman	2	
Emanuel Miller	1	
Moses Miller Klein		62
Johannes Miller bezaht an	75	x
Jacob Mast bezaht an	50	x
Jacob Mast	1	
Abraham Hershberger alt	1	
Christian Hershberger	1	
Johannes Schrag	1	
Daniel Miller	2	

Collection List

An undated document (shown on the left), records a collection taken for Samuel Speicher. An early settler coming from Somerset, Samuel must have had financial needs meriting a collection. Interestingly, most of the contributors were among the first pioneers to the area. Moses J. Miller, ("kleine") is listed, who was born in 1811. So the document is probably from the late 1830s or 1840s.

The top of the document reads, "Received from various persons, that which was collected for Samuel Speicher, as follows." The first name is that of "White" Jonas Stutzman. The rest of the names are (from the top), Isaac Miller, Michael Troyer, Christian Yoder, Jacob Stutzman (Jonas' father), Emanuel Miller, Moses Miller kleine, Johannes Miller, Jacob Weaver, Jacob Mast, Abraham Hershberger-aged, Christian Hershberger, Johannes Schrag, and Daniel Miller. The money made up, \$16.37½, probably had as much buying power as \$800 would have today.

A receipt (shown below) dated March 10, 1859, shows Benjamin subscribed for the paper "Volksfreund und Beobachter" from John Baer's Sons in Lancaster, Pa. The note written across the top says, "We do not have any [New] Testaments in Froschauer's translation." It is interesting to note that in 1859 people were still asking for the old traditional German translation preferred by the Anabaptists- Froschauer's. There is another receipt from the next year when Benjamin renewed his subscription

Wir haben keine Testamente von Froschauer's Uebersetzung

Received, Lancaster, March 10, 1859, of
Mr. Benjamin J. Miller
One Dollar — Cents, for subscription to the
Volksfreund und Beobachter — Janry 27, 1860
John Baer's Sons

Drucker: Hebel,
Von jeder Art, wird in der Deutschen oder Eng-
lischen Sprache, auf kurze Anfrage, schon
und billig angefertigt in der
Campf - Schnellpress - Druckerei des
Hofes in

Der Volksfreund und Beobachter
Wird jeden Dienstag herausgegeben von
Johann Baer und Söhnen,
In der Stadt Lancaster, Pa.
Der Subscriptions-Preis ist 1 Thaler 26 Cents
des Jahres; wenn derselbe in den ersten sechs
Monaten bezahlt wird, kostet der Jahrgang bloß
1 Thaler.

\$ 1 —

Receipt for Subscription

COSTS OF GOODS

Scattered throughout Yost's papers are costs of goods and lands, and taxes in the 1800s. Following is a selection of examples.

In 1843 Yost bought a suit of new clothes from D. Kelsey for 79 cents. From the estate appraisal of Peter Brennehan in 1844: 1 bucket= 25c; 1 oats cradle= 50c; 1 garden hoe= 37c; 2 auger bits= 20c; 1 draw knife= 25c; 1 handsaw= 75c; 1 sickle= 12c; 650 shingles (wooden)= \$1.62; 1 sausage machine= 25c; 1 iron kettle= \$2.75; 1 plough= \$1.00; 3 hogs= \$2.00; 9 sheep= \$3.37; 1 red heifer= \$5.50; 2-year colt= \$32.00; 1 old horse= \$20.00; 1 Dung fork= 50c; 1 windmill= \$5.00; 1 set horse geers (harness)= \$1.25; 1 saddle= \$2.50; 31 bushels wheat (50c each)= \$15.50; 17 bushels rye (30c each)= \$5.10; 1 small keg with whiskey= 45c; 3 pewter plates= 40c; 1 corn meal sifter= 30c.

1819: 1 cant hook= 69c; 5 planes=\$6.00; 1 Iron square= 52c; 1 crosscut saw= \$7.50; 1 chest with shoemakers tools= \$2.60; 1 pair saddlebags \$2.62; 1 cowskin= 7c; 1 flour barrel= 51c; 1 mouse trap= 25c; 1 rifle= \$18.19; 320 lbs salt (2½ bushels)= \$2.87; 1 faucet= 6c; 1 broom= 35c; 1 lb. chocolate= 25c.

1820: 1 bed= \$16.00; 4 new plates= \$2.25; 1 iron pot with lid= \$2.00; 2 cows= \$24.00.

In 1854 John Liechty wrote from Indiana quoting the following costs: wheat= \$1.00 per bushel; corn = 25c per bushel; rye= 40c per bushel; fresh pork= 8c per lb.; butter= 10c per lb.; a good horse= \$100; a good cow= \$15-25; land was \$3-4 per acre.

It is interesting to observe that animals, especially horses were relatively expensive compared to tools and equipment. Grains were also valuable by comparison. A rifle and a crosscut saw were expensive items.

In 1814 Yost sold his 160 acre farm to his son Benjamin for \$1200, which was almost \$8 per acre. In 1843 a sawmill and waterwheel were sold for \$400.

Real estate taxes on 436 acres in 1814 were \$7.63. In 1927 taxes on 432 acres were \$11.13. Taxes on 134 acres in Wayne County in 1828 were \$2.30. (Maybe with no improvements.) By 1847 taxes on 339 acres were \$50.27. In 1854 Benjamin paid \$11.40 IRS tax on \$380 income.

LETTER FROM ALSACE

Among Yost's papers is a letter dated March 10, 1839, addressed to Monsieur Christian Moser, "Walanscrick Taunschip," Holmes Co., State Ohio, Berlin Post Office. It was written by Benedict Moser, from Mülhouse, Alsace, France. Following are excerpts from the letter:

"There is no day nor hour that I do not think of you and this thought increases always more and more about coming to you in America, but one thing remains, that is the property in Schlonitz... Dear brother, I would like very much to know if you can't give me any news of our brother and sister, namely Hans and Bäbi. I beg you to write them or let them know that I would also very much like to come to America, and if they could be so good as to back me up a little. I will of course pay back everything that you and they will do to help me. I can tell you that I don't like it here anymore. I always have to work very hard and yet have hardly enough to live on, for here everything is expensive, and a person can't depend on the factory [for work]

I now have a large household and I would like very much to come to you in America where I hope to earn my bread more easily. But I repeat that I can't come before we have disposed of our property in the Schlonitz.

I have just discovered that one has to have a sponsor to go to America, that is, if they think one doesn't have enough money, but you can give me the best information about this. If it is so, I ask you to be my sponsor and if it is necessary, that you send me a document that shows you are willing to be my sponsor.

You could also let me know what bread and food costs and especially what daily wages are. This is the most important thing that I must know because I have to earn my living by working. Write me too, about how much it cost you until you arrived there, and what I must take with me. And how long we have to travel over the water until we get to America. All these things I would like to know.

I am wondering whether you didn't get the letter which I sent with Christian Kauffman. It has been a year now that they left, and I gave him a letter to take with him. I haven't got any answer to it. Greetings from your relatives and your faithful brother and his wife.

Benedikt Moser

*bey Herrn Kestner Vater u. Sohn
auf der Witswil Fabriken*

Muhlhausen, Oberrheinisches Dep't.