



The Bauman/Bowman Family

Between the 1770s and 1830, members of the Bauman family worked in Ephrata as papermakers and printers, developing their own significant legacy in the printing trade within the history of the community.¹

The family's elder, John (Johann) Bauman, was born in 1703, but it is not clear from where he came or exactly when he became a follower of Conrad Beissel. In 1738, he purchased a 212-acre tract of land adjacent to the community, most of it lying both across the main road and on the other side of the Cocalico Creek. Tax records list his occupation as both farmer and miller. His mill stood along the Cocalico Creek, likely about two blocks from the historic site. There he ground millet (a cereal grain) and barley. He also crushed hemp making the fibers suitable for creating rope. Bauman sold his water rights to the celibate community in 1753. This allowed the Brothers to construct a dam on the Cocalico Creek, creating a mill pond on a portion of Bauman's land, thus providing the ability to harness water power for a new paper mill.



The c. 1804 printing press used by members of the Bauman family.

Contemporary records suggest John Bauman was a very vocal supporter of Conrad Beissel and Peter Miller. He and his wife Margareth had five children: Benjamin, Christian, Daniel, Esther, and Samuel, but not all of them followed their parents' spiritual devotion. After John's death, each son received a parcel of his land. Esther Bauman (1740-1792) married Dr. Dietrich Fahnestock, son of Ephrata married members Dietrich and Margaretha Fahnestock. Dr. Dietrich and Esther (Bauman) Fahnestock continued their membership in the Ephrata congregation. Daniel Bauman (1737-1816) remained living in Ephrata during his adult life but did not affiliate with the congregation at the Cloister. Sons Christian (1734-1814) and Samuel (1743-1807) both left Ephrata by the 1790s, settling in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.

Benjamin (1732-1809) was the only son of John and Margareth Bauman who stayed active in the Cloister congregation. He played a role in the creation of the German Seventh Day Baptist Church in 1814 after the death of the last celibate member. Benjamin and his wife Christina Bauman had five sons, the oldest of whom, Christian (1755-1815), was a papermaker. As early as 1770, Christian's father had joined another Householder in leasing the paper mill built by the Brothers. In 1783, Christian appears in the tax records for the first time with the occupation of papermaker. In 1790, Christian renewed the lease on the mill and continued working there until his death. He was married twice, first to Sarah Fahnestock, and after her death in 1792, he married Maria Royer. A total of ten children were born to these two marriages, one of whom enters the story shortly.

Benjamin and Christiana Bauman's youngest son, John (1765-1809), was a printer. Between 1800 and 1809, he printed a variety of religious tracts, medical books for both people and animals, and broadsides (single sheets of paper printed on only one side). His wife, Margaret Fahenstock, was also his cousin, a daughter of Dr. Jacob and Esther Fahnestock mentioned above. Together, Benjamin and Margaret had five children. Their eldest son, Samuel, continued his father's occupation of printer, creating *Haus Segen* (house blessings) and *Taufschein* (baptismal certificates) along with a few booklets. He may have given up the printing trade about 1816, for the next year, his cousin, Joseph Bauman appears in the tax records with that occupation.

Joseph Bauman (1789-1862) was the son of papermaker Christian Bauman and his first wife Sarah Fahnestock. Joseph Bauman and his wife Maria had no affiliation with the congregation at the Cloister. Like his uncle, Joseph produced a wide range of booklets and broadsides. In 1830, Joseph Bauman moved to Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, taking with him a printing press made in possibly as early as 1787 in Philadelphia.² He left behind the circa 1804 press currently on exhibit in the Printing Office at the Historic Ephrata Cloister.

Other members of the Bauman family served the Ephrata area as farmers, millers, tavern keepers, and one as a doctor. It remains their role in Ephrata's story as an early publishing center that remains the most significant, demonstrating one Householder family's impact on history.

¹ Clarence Spohn, "The Bauman/Bowman family of the Cocalico valley: Printers, Papermakers and Tavernkeepers," *The Journal of The Historical Society of the Cocalico Valley*, vol. 19, (1994): 1-76.

² D. W. Thompson, "Oldest American Printing Press," *The Dutchman*, vol. 6, no. 3 (winter 1955-56), pps. 28-33.