

HISTORY
OF THE
German Society of Maryland



JOHN STRICKER

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OF THE

German Society of Maryland

COMPILED BY

LOUIS P. HENNIGHAUSEN

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The history of "The German Society of Maryland" will be more interesting and better understood by some knowledge of the formation and histories of similar societies in other Atlantic ports of North America during the eighteenth century, who still continue their noble work of charity at the present time. They came into existence during the years of 1764 to 1784 in the cities of Philadelphia, Pa.; Charleston, South Carolina; Baltimore, Maryland, and New York, with the object to assist German immigrants in distress and to mitigate and finally to abolish a pernicious system of contract labor of free white persons, which in reality became a system of slavery limited in years. We find that most of the laws governing the conduct of negro slaves, were in the course of time made applicable to the white contract immigrant laborers usually called "Redemptioners."

There is an erroneous impression that these redemptioners were all Germans, when, in fact, persons of all nationalities were kept under that bondage. For many years English, Irish and Scotch had preceded them, and the earliest German immigrants to our country were free settlers who paid for their passage and for their homesteads.

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