came from Crefeld and settled themselves in Pennsylvania, north of Philadelphia, and called the settlement Germantown. The first article of this charter provided for a full enjoyment of the liberty of conscience by all persons who should acknowledge "One Almighty God, the Creator, Upholder, and Ruler of the World." It is also declared to be capable of holding any office or place under the government all persons professing faith in "Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World," and who should, when required, attest their allegiance, etc.

As stated above, the first settlers of Germantown were thirteen families, mostly Mennonites, and by trade linen weavers. They came in the year 1683; five years later, 1688, Willem Rittenhouse came and settled at Germantown.

S. W. Pennypacker (Judge) says: "There was a rustic murmur in the little burgh (Germantown) that year, which time has shown to have been the echo of the great wave that rolls around the world. The event probably at that time produced no commotion and attracted little attention. It may well be that the consciousness of having won immortality never dawned upon any of the participants, and yet a mighty nation will ever recognize it in time to come as one of the brightest pages in the early history of Pennsylvania. On the 18th of April, 1688, Gerhard Hendricks, Dirk Op den Graeff, Francis Daniel Pastorius, and Abraham Op den Graeff (all Mennonites except Pastorius) sent to the Friends' Meeting the first public protest ever made on this continent against the holding of slaves. A little rill there started which further on became an immense torrent, and whenever thereafter men trace analytically the causes which led to Shiloh, Gettysburg, and Appomattox they will begin with the tender consciences of linen weavers and husbandmen of Germantown. For a copy of the protest see the following:—