

## **Slump, John Martin** <sup>[1]</sup>

## **Slump, John Martin**

by Frank P. Cauble, 1994

### **d. May 1803**

John Martin Slump, schoolmaster, printer, and newspaper publisher, was of German descent but of uncertain family background. His surname may originally have been spelled Schlump or Schlumpf, but it does not appear in either form in the 1790 census returns for North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, or Pennsylvania. His first known residence was in [Cabarrus County](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, N.C., where he taught a German school in 1792. In the late 1790s he worked in Salisbury at an English and German print shop owned by [Michael Braun](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, who purchased his printing equipment for £60 from Benjamin Shue of Shenandoah County, Va., in 1794. Because an entry in the *Records of the [Moravians](#)* <sup>[4]</sup> in North Carolina for 23 Jan. 1797 notes that a "book printery" was being operated in Salisbury, the Braun print shop evidently had opened as early as 1796. Slump, Benjamin Shue, and [Francis Coupee](#) <sup>[5]</sup> all worked in this establishment, and the weekly *North Carolina Mercury and Salisbury Advertiser*, the first newspaper published in Piedmont North Carolina, was established there in Spring 1798.

Slump was familiar with German, English, and Latin and helped publish a number of eighteenth-century imprints. In 1797 he and Coupee printed a thirty-page collection of the words of German hymns, *Sammlung von erbaulichen Gesängen, zum Gebrauch bey dem öffentlichen Gottesdienste, für die Deutschen Gemeinen in Nord-Carolina*. This hymnal, the first publication printed in German in North Carolina, sold for one shilling and was widely used in the German Reformed and Lutheran churches. As a German schoolmaster, Slump fully appreciated the need for a German hymnal among these people. The Salisbury print shop produced a number of German items, including some German hymns for the [Moravians](#) <sup>[4]</sup> at [Salem](#) <sup>[6]</sup> in March and at Christmas 1798. [Francis Coupee](#) <sup>[5]</sup> printed a German ode for the Salem Moravians as late as 1809.

In 1797 and 1798 Slump published several sermons for [Samuel Eusebius McCorkle](#) <sup>[7]</sup>, a noted [Presbyterian](#) <sup>[8]</sup> minister and teacher in [Rowan County](#) <sup>[9]</sup>, and even after Slump moved to Lincolnton, around 1800, McCorkle again made use of his services. Slump printed his own English translation of a German address on [George Washington](#) <sup>[10]</sup>, delivered at a church in Lincolnton on 22 Feb. 1800, by [Andrew Loretz](#) <sup>[11]</sup>, a [German Reformed](#) <sup>[12]</sup> minister. He apparently printed this address in English because of the limited market for German publications in the Lincolnton area, but it seems likely that he published a North Carolina almanac for 1801 in German.

It has been conjectured that it was Slump who published the newspaper that [François A. Michaux](#) <sup>[13]</sup>, a French botanist, said was being printed in Lincolnton in October 1802. Slump was then living in Camden, S.C., however, where in May 1802 he established the *Carolina Journal* or the *Camden Advertiser*, the first newspaper published in Camden. This was his most successful printing venture, and it enabled him to demonstrate his ability as a printer and publisher. A copy dated 19 Oct. 1802 (vol. 1, no. 21), the only issue known to have survived, contains a statement in Latin in which Slump promised to print all the news, mingling the amusing and useful for the entertainment and instruction of the reader. An item about a Camden wedding revealed his sense of humor, and an eagle displayed on the front page was an expression of his patriotism. He continued to publish this paper until his death, which occurred before 25 May 1803, when Catharina Theresa Slump asked to be appointed administratrix of the estate of John Martin Slump, deceased. After his death, the *Carolina Journal* was almost immediately succeeded by the *Camden Intelligencer*, which appeared on 5 June 1803, with John B. Hood as editor.

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