

HISTORY  
OF THE  
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN  
OF THE  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

BY  
THE COMMITTEE  
APPOINTED BY  
DISTRICT CONFERENCE

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HISTORY  
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CHAPTER III.

PERSECUTION.

*Retrospect.*—Such childlike faith, and unfaltering trust and pious devotion was the seed of a church. What self-forgetfulness, and what self-abnegation! It was early in the morning, in 1708; this is all we know. The month and the day are studiously avoided. They covenanted not to reveal the name of the one who baptized the leader, and they kept their vow; we shall never know on whom the lot fell. They had traveled over Germany to collect the opinion of the awakened upon the subject of baptism; they had diligently searched history for apostolic and primitive Christian practice; they prayerfully studied the New Testament; there was but one conclusion. The crisis came and the camp moved forward. They knew the consequences but they faltered not. Blessing and prosperity followed the new congregation, and converts were added in such numbers as to arouse the spirit of envy in the established churches; opposition and persecution were at once instituted. The twenty-one years of the church's existence in Germany were eventful years. We know the struggle, but history is silent on many things we should like to know. We may know more, sometime we shall. The Schwarzenau congregation flourished and in seven years the society was numerous. There was a congregation established at Marienborn, to which the awakened from the Palatinate attached themselves. These members were all driven out as exiles in 1715, but found a refuge, or asylum at Crefeldt, under the jurisdiction of the King of Prussia, whence also came the congregation from Epstein.

*Persecution.*—Persecution did we say, in the preceding retrospect? Yes, persecution; religious persecution! In

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CHAPTER XII.

THE VERY ANCIENT CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN IN  
LANCASTER CO., PA.

According to manuscript records, kept in said church, and entrusted to the writer for investigation, it consisted on the 29th of September, 1734, as on the day when MICHAEL FRANTZ was baptized, who was afterwards their first teacher, of the following members:

BRETHREN.	SISTERS.
Legan,	Rollin,
John Keppinger,	Koch,
John G. Koch,	Kalkglaser,
Rudolph Bollinger,	Latshaw,
Earnest Stoll,	Luy,
Joseph Latshaw,	Keppinger,
Lewis Kalkglaser,	Hildebrand,
——— Luy,	Krapf.
Samuel Gut,	
John Hildebrand,	
Gottfried Geiger,	
Michael Frantz.	

Altogether of 20 members.

Counting from the above date, September 29, 1734, this church in Lancaster is now (1855) over 120 years old. Truly a venerable mother-church, whose daughters are to be found in the most distant parts of our great country, as we have reason to conclude from the names of the members in that church.

“Afterwards,” continues the record, “hands were laid on MICHAEL FRANTZ by Elders, and he was ordained as Elder and overseer of the church in Conestoga and White Oak; and thus by the grace and blessing of God the church has been multiplied and increased continually.” And how great

the blessing was that rested upon this church the continued lists of those who were baptized by them, and were added unto them from the Seventhday Baptists and from elsewhere, show.

In the list from 1735 to 1739 are 32 names of newly-received members, and among them we find the following: Segrist, Etter, Frantz, Royer, Martin, Landis, Roland, Bollinger, Miller, Longenecker, &c. In the year 1739 were further baptized 21 persons, among whom were MICHAEL PFAUTZ, the successor of the first overseer, and three Brethren by the name of Mohler.

In the year 1740 were received *seven*; in the year 1741, *ten*; in the year 1742, *twenty-eight*, among whom were the names of Stucky, Gehr, Alterffer, Schwartz, Flory, Hag, Funderburg, Weis, Schneider, Lichty; and others occur.

In the year 1743 was the number of newly received members *twenty-four*, among whom was Jacob Sontag of whom particular mention is made afterwards. Anno 1744 only *four* persons were baptized, and brother *Michael Pfautz* chosen for the ministry. In 1745 *four* were baptized, and six brothers and six sisters from Amwell (probably in New Jersey) received. In 1746 thirteen persons, and in 1747 nineteen persons were added unto the church.

In the following year we find the following note. "In the year 1748 is our elder and overseer (MICHAEL FRANTZ) departed this life, and has exchanged time with eternity, after being well tried by affliction." To this are added a few lines of poetry, of which we have endeavored to make a translation.

Farewell on the chariot of God!  
We do not envy thee thy rest.  
By angels thou'rt carried the road  
Toward the abode of the blest;  
To join in that heavenly abode  
The host of the angelic choir,  
To sing and rejoice in thy God,  
To praise him forever and e'er.

When we stand still here at the death of the first elder and overseer, MICHAEL FRANTZ, and look back on the first fourteen years of this church, we are compelled to say to

the glory of God, that the time of the ministry of this old Brother, who has died more than a hundred years ago, was richly blessed, inasmuch as the church increased "by the grace and blessing of God," and its numbers were multiplied from year to year in such a manner, that and until it grew in fourteen years from a little flock of 20 members to a company of nearly *Two hundred*. "This is the Lord's doing, and is marvelous in our eyes."

The year when the first teacher and overseer died, was a memorable and singularly blessed year for the church. As we read of *Samson*, Judges 16: 30, "The dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life," so we might say of MICHAEL FRANTZ, as blessed as his former years of ministry were, the year of his death was still more blessed. Of this we find the following recorded in the manuscript already mentioned:

"In the year 1748, the 25th of September, Brother MICHAEL FRANTZ, overseer of the church in Conestoga and White Oak has laid his hand upon Bro. MICHAEL PFAUTZ (who, as we have seen already, had been chosen to the ministry in the year 1744), and has ordained and confirmed him in his place, with the united assistance of the Brethren. Thus the church has been blessed and enlarged by the grace of God through Brother *Michael Pfautz*, who has been ordained by the Elders to be an Elder." Again it says, "In this year brother *Jacob Sontag* was chosen as a minister (or deacon) in the church."

How much the share of each of these *three* ministers was in the great blessed awakening, which came this year upon the church, cannot be made out, and is also of no consequence, whether we know it; but this much we may safely believe, that they must have labored together in unity of spirit, without which unity no blessing can be expected. And whether the one sows, and the other reaps; whether the one planteth, and the other watereth; whether one stands with Moses on the mountain, and raiseth up his hands in prayer, and the other with Joshua is fighting against Amalek, and the third stands by the side of him that prays, or him that fights (the battle of the Lord); still "neither is

he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.”

And how great the increase was of this year 1748 we may gather from the following simple statements as they were recorded at the time:

In the year 1748 were baptized Brothers Ulrich, Shively, Henry Gibbel, &c.

March 6 in all .....	7 persons.
April 24 .....	11 persons.
May 1 .....	2 persons.
June 12 and July 24 .....	15 persons.
August 7 .....	6 persons.
August 14 .....	4 persons.
September 4 .....	2 persons.
October 16 .....	4 persons.
October 23 .....	6 persons.

Altogether in this one year, or rather within less than six months, 57 persons; truly a harvest-blessing not often repeated, and reminding us of Pentecostal times.

To the encouragement of those who might think such blessed times happened of old, but are now-a-days rare among the Brethren, and to the honor of God and his word we cannot refrain from noticing, what we lately have learned, namely that during the past summer and fall (1854) the Lord has revealed himself as of old in different churches, and that for instance in one church not one hundred miles west from here there were baptized more than thirty, and in two other adjoining churches in the southeast over sixty souls. Blessed be the Lord for his grace which is yet to-day proving its efficacy for the salvation of the children of men!

But even in our dear Lancaster church it was not every year alike, for we find, that there were baptized in the year

1749 only .....	8 persons.
1750 .....	14 persons.
1751 .....	6 persons.
1752 .....	18 persons.
1753 .....	12 persons.
1754 .....	10 persons.
1755 .....	11 persons.

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PART VI.  
CONESTOGA GROUP.

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CHAPTER I.  
CONESTOGA CHURCH.

This congregation was organized on November 12, 1724, by Elder Peter Becker of Germantown and was the first organized church of the Brethren in Lancaster County. It was located south of Ephrata.

The original membership consisted of seven members: Conrad Beissel, who was the first minister; Joseph Shaffer, John Moyer and wife, Henry Höhn and wife and Veronica Frederick. The first deacon was John Hildebrand. Peter Becker was their Elder, although non-resident.

Soon trouble arose, caused by Beissel deviating from the customs of the Brethren, especially by observing Saturday for the Lord's Day or Sunday. Much admonition did not help. Alexander Mack came to America in 1729 and the congregation agreed to let this trouble be decided by a vote of the majority of the membership. The vote resulted as follows: six brethren and five sisters voted with Beissel for Saturday, and twenty-four brethren and three sisters favored Sunday with Peter Becker.

J. G. Francis contributes the following account of this division:

"A quotation from Bro. M. G. Brumbaugh's 'History of the Brethren,' pp. 299 and 300 reads:

"On the authority of Abraham H. Cassel, the following somewhat remarkable method was used September 29, 1734, to determine the loyalty of the members. A great meeting or council of the congregation was held and Michael Frantz placed a rail on the floor of the barn in which the meeting was held.

He then requested all who wished to join the new congregation to step to the right side, he leading the way. He requested all those who desired to follow Conrad Beissel to step to the left side of the rail. In this way a peaceful separation occurred.'

"I also had personally from Abraham Cassel an account of this separation, and it is in my mind that our great antiquarian stated that the rail was placed on the bridgeway leading to the barn floor. But I do not wish to be dogmatic. Following my impression, however, in having a picture of the old barn taken for this history, I placed a fence rail, as will be seen in the picture, in the middle of the bridgeway, where if my impression is correct, Michael Frantz must have placed the original rail. This old barn is within the present bounds of the Akron congregation, near Millway station, and is owned by the Oil Company. Some frame additions have been built to the original barn.

"According to my understanding of the matter the council was held in the barn, while the dividing was consummated in the open."

After the reorganization of this congregation, Elder Becker had the oversight of it until 1734. Conrad Beissel on his own account founded the convent at Ephrata, leaving the Church of the Brethren in 1728.

After Alexander Mack's death at Germantown in 1735, Michael Frantz was elected as minister in the Conestoga Congregation and Johannis Landis as deacon in 1735. From 1729 to 1734, thirty-seven persons were baptized by Elder Peter Becker. Their names appear in a record now in possession of Elder Hershey Groff, of Bareville, Pa. Many of the additions to this congregation by baptism and otherwise, together with elections of deacons, ministers and elders, are also found in said record and generally agree with the list given in Brumbaugh's "History of the Brethren," pp. 299-315. In Brumbaugh's work, p. 313, the statement occurs that from 1755 to 1763 no record was made. From the record above referred to, the following is taken to supplement the record of Brumbaugh:

In 1753 George Miller, John Bengelbach and wife, Rudy Yound, Katie Hartman, Margaret Geib were added and Jacob Stoll elected to the ministry.



In 1754, Christian Stauffer and wife, George Ester and wife, Anna Frick, Elizabeth Frick were added.

In 1755 Peter Wampler and wife, Henry Aller and wife, Christian Lanecker, Jr. (Longenecker), John Lehman, Jacob Hernley, Hanickel Ackerman, Barbara Flory, John Groff were added.

In 1756 were added Henry Ester, Sister Wampler, Elias Ackerman, Lenhard Sebold and wife, Peter Pebel, John Frick, Christian Frick.

In 1757 Sister Margreth, Elizabeth Boser, Maria Nusbaum, Michael Gäll, Margred Byer, John Bock, Susan Bauman, Sister Mosser were added.

In 1758 Brother Keim and Wendel Mynig were added.

In 1759 Balsler Specht and wife were added.

In 1760 no baptisms on account of temptation.

In 1761 were added John Bather and wife, Jacob Zug, Abraham Frantz and wife.

In 1762 Maria Zug and Sister Hamacker were added.

In 1763 were added Ann Lanecker and Philip Snell.

#### DIVISIONS AND SUBDIVISIONS OF CONESTOGA CHURCH.

##### ELDERS AND MINISTERS IN CONESTOGA CONGREGATION.

- \*1. Peter Becker,<sup>1</sup> 1724-35.
2. Conrad Beissel. Baptized 1724; left church in 1728.
- \*3. Michael Frantz, 1735-48. Baptized in 1734; elected 1734; ordained 1735; died September 25, 1748.
- \*4. Michael Pfautz, 1748-69 (21 yrs.). Baptized in 1739, September 29; elected in 1744; ordained September 25, 1748; died 1769, aged 59 yrs. Buried at Middle Creek Church, near Cocalico Creek. 179 persons were baptized under his eldership.
5. Jacob Stoll. Baptized in 1748; elected in 1753; died in 1822, aged 91 yrs. Buried at Middle Creek graveyard. In ministry 69 yrs.
6. Jacob Sontag (Sunday). Baptized in 1743; elected in 1748; ordained 1763.

<sup>1</sup>The asterisk (\*) means bishop or elder in charge of congregation for time indicated following the name.

where Henry defends himself, saying that he had no such persons in his territory. He did have, but two hundred persons,—forty families,—had just left, and now no one was there except Lutherans, Calvinists and Catholics. In a previous defense Henry says he does not harbor godless and wicked people, but the people whom he had were the 'best people he ever saw' and 'they had more religion than any of the members of the state church.' 'Their religion is genuine, but the religion of many others is sham.'"

Little is known of the church during the stay of nine years in this place of refuge. It is well known, however, that "some Hollanders were won to the church," which is evidence that the activity and growth of the church was maintained. "It was at this place that they received the news of the promising mission fields among the Germans in Pennsylvania. They decided to cast their lot with their friends and Brethren in the New World, the land of religious liberty. They sailed from Rotterdam, in July, on the good ship *Allen*, James Craigie, master, and qualified at Philadelphia, September 15, 1729."<sup>2</sup>

Upon his arrival, Alexander Mack again became the leading spirit of the church, as he had been in the beginning, in the capacity of the "leader and first minister" at the time of organization in 1708. As some so-called historians speak of him as the "founder" of the church of the Brethren, there should be a clear and definite understanding that the Brethren do not regard Mack as either the "founder," or the "foundation." He was only one of eight to organize the work, but because of his previous experience and activity as a minister and evangelist, he naturally became the leader and the leading spirit.

As to foundation, we accept the words of the Apostle Paul, I Corinthians 3:11—"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." It may be well to recall Alexander Mack's recital of the covenant of

<sup>2</sup>"German Baptist Brethren," by the author, p. 52, and footnote.

the eight: "Under these circumstances some felt themselves drawn powerfully to seek the footsteps of the primitive Christians, and desired earnestly to receive in faith the ordained testimonies of Jesus Christ according to their true value. At the same time they were internally and strongly impressed with the necessity of the obedience of faith to a soul that desires to be saved.

"Finally, in the year 1708, eight persons consented together, to enter into a covenant of a good conscience with God, to take up all the commandments of Jesus Christ as an easy yoke, and thus to follow the Lord Jesus, their good and faithful shepherd, in joy and sorrow, as his true sheep, even unto a blessed end."—German Baptist Brethren, page 62 and 63.

This is a clear statement of those who, having come from different beliefs, accepted Christ and His Gospel as fundamental principles. True to the leadership of Alexander Mack and his associates, there is no other creed or confession to-day, but the Church of the Brethren still accepts only the New Testament as the rule of faith and practice.

We have already set forth the difference in doctrine on which the line of separation was made by Beissel. It is necessary to have some understanding now as to the policy of antagonism and destruction that was inaugurated by Beissel, and his faithful dupes, in order to show what Alexander Mack and Peter Becker had to grapple with at this time. In the Conestoga, the confusion and dissension had become a veritable Babel. Many resented the teaching and acts of Beissel, and withdrew, and so was formed later the Conestoga Church of Brethren. The general condition of the congregation, and the conduct of the leaders is thus set forth in the "Chronicon," p. 42: "About this time, namely, in the year 1728, the power of God manifested itself palpably in the meetings, witnessing against the old Adam and his many false sanctuaries; whereat many were offended and separated themselves from the congregation.

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## CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

WHITE OAK CHURCH.

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allowance, for "£60 and one ear of Indian corn for every 100 acres to be delivered in Lancaster on November 1 for said Bachman yearly to the proprietors forever."

Ulrich Zug had eight children,—six sons and two daughters. According to the best information we have, they came to this country Mennonites but his wife was baptized to the Brethren Church in 1741 and he in 1742, their son Peter in 1747, John in 1749, Magdalena in 1748, Michael in 1752, Jacob in 1761 and Christian in 1769.

In the spring of 1759, the children of Ulrich Zug divided the farm into two equal parts, of 175 acres, one to Jacob, and one to Michael, the others all releasing for their shares, all signing their names in German. The last we know of Peter Zug is in 1762, when he, with others, stood in defense of Elder George Adam Martin, and "opposed his excommunication, and were anxious to reinstate him," etc. (Brum. Hist., p. 331). Whether he was married, or when or where he died, is all a blank to us. Jacob took half of his father's farm in 1759, after the death of both parents, but sold it to his brother Hannes in 1772, and moved to Washington Co., Md., where he died in 1794. One of his daughters was married to a Long, and was the grandmother of Elder David Long, late of near Hagerstown. One to a Wolf, on whose grandson's farm the Annual Meeting was held in 1857. One to Elder Nicholas Martin, who was grandmother of the late Elder Nicholas Martin of near Hagerstown. One son John moved to Bedford Co., Pa., and from there to Indiana. And two sons remained in Welsh Run district, from whom came Elder David Zuck, who lived in Fulton Co., Ill., as also Elders John Zuck of Clarence, Iowa, and David, now elder of Welsh Run Church.

Michael married Maria Wolf, and took a half of his father's farm, but later sold it, and moved to Somerset Co., Pa., where he died childless.

Hannes, or John, and his father Ulrich were engaged in clearing a piece of woodland, when, while at work, he said to his father that he has it in his mind to take a wife. The father then asked him: "*Hast du dann was im Zweck?*" John answered: "Yes, sister Anna Heffelfinger." The

father answered, "*Shon recht. Ich will es den Armen diener sagen dasz sie gehen sie fragen ob sie dich auch haben will.*" (All right, I will tell the deacons that they go and ask her whether she will have you.) This was quite a different way for trying to get a wife, from that now generally in use.

About 1760 John Zug and wife went with her father to the Beaver Valley, now Dauphin Co., Pa., near Beaver station where he had taken up a large tract of land, and where he promised to give them a farm to clean of brush and timber; but in 1762 the Tuscarora Indians from the valley up the river became so dangerous by murder, and arson, and robbery that by fall they decided to go back to White Oak until life became safe again. So in that fall one morning they started on foot with their two children, each carrying one. After going a little way they saw a man lying in a buckwheat patch dead. He shouldered the man, who was yet warm, and took him along to the next house, not knowing when he might be the next one shot from behind a tree.

Things in Paxtang and Beaver Valleys grew worse instead of better, and in 1763 a number of young and middle-aged men organized themselves into a company, and assumed the name, "The Paxton Boys," for the purpose of revenge. But the Indians learned of it, and went to an Indian town in Manor Township, about six miles southwest of Lancaster, whence the Paxton Boys trailed them, but when they arrived there, the marauders had gotten wind of their coming, and had left. The Indians misdirected the gang, who essayed to follow, so as to give the fugitives time to escape. When the neighbors learned of the trick the Indians played on the Paxton Boys, they had the Manor Indians placed in the Lancaster Workhouse for their protection, but the Paxton Boys came back, burned the Indian village, broke into the workhouse, and killed every Indian. There was a little boy among them, and one man proposed to spare him, but before he had done speaking another one grabbed him by the legs, flung him around, and dashed his brains out against the wall, the bloody mark of which could

be seen as long as the old prison remained, which was on the northeast corner of West King and Water Streets.

Hannes Zug had four sons and four daughters; viz., Christian, married to a Miss Rupp, and died young, leaving one daughter who was married to a Frick, two of whose daughters were married to two Swarrs, and lived near Landisville. John, married to a Miss Mohler, was given a part of the home farm, where he lived some years; then sold it to David Salm; then he moved to Running Pump tavern, about two miles west of Elizabethtown, where he lived ten years; then he bought a farm near Carlisle where he lived, and died, leaving one son, Jacob, who lived in Carlisle, and died there. Joseph, married to Barbara Eby. He got the home farm, where he lived and died, aged 51 years. He had four sons and one daughter, Andrew, Joseph, John, Benjamin, and Catharine, who was married to Peter Eby. Elders S. R. Zug and B. Z. Eby<sup>1</sup> were grandsons, and S. Z. Witmer and J. C. Zug great-grandsons of his. Abraham was a tanner and lived some years in Rapho Township. His wife was a Miss Royer. Later he carried on his trade at Lexington, and from there he bought a farm in Lebanon Co., near where Richland now is. He was elected a minister in 1815, ordained 1823, died 1841, aged 69 years. Of his family more will be said in another chapter. One daughter was married to Jacob Deardorf, and moved to Franklin Co. Another was married to a Mr. Ream, and moved to Ohio. One was married to Jacob Kinsey and lived near Cornwall, Lebanon Co., and one was married to Abraham Shissler, and the last lived, and died, near Bainbridge, Lancaster Co. Hannes Zug was baptized in 1749, elected a minister 1770, ordained by Christopher Saur, and Martin Urner in 1780, and died 1821, in his 90th year.

Christian, fifth son of Ulrich, had a farm near Lititz. He had four sons and several daughters. Jacob lived in Cumberland Co., Pa. He was baptized by Elder Moses Miller at the age of 97 years and his wife at the age of 86. He lived yet about a year. He had several children, among

<sup>1</sup> Elder B. Z. Eby opposed Sunday Schools as long as he could, but after they were introduced into his church, he left, and went to the Old Order.

them a son Christian, living in Pittsburgh, became a multi-millionaire. Christian lived at a place called Papertown, Cumberland Co. Of his descendants we know little. David lived in York Co. Two of his grandsons, Jacob and Peter, lived in Bainbridge some years ago. Abraham had his father's farm, which he gave to his two sons, Christian and Henry. One daughter of Abraham's was married to Joseph Aldinger, one to Joseph Graybill, one to Jacob Stehman, and one died unmarried.

Henry, Ulrich's sixth son, moved to the Potomac River, in Washington Co., Md. From all the information we could gather James Zug, or Zook, who lived near Arcanum, Ohio, was a grandson of Henry. Three of James's daughters are living there now, one a Mrs. Caylor, and two had been married to James and Reuben Gilbert.

Ulrich Zug's oldest daughter Magdalena was baptized 1748. She was afterwards married to Michael Frantz, son of Elder Michael Frantz. He was also baptized in 1748. Shortly after 1770 they moved to Botetourt Co., Va. Elder Isaac Frantz, of Pleasant Hill, Ohio, is a great-great-grandson of theirs, and their descendants are numerous throughout the West.

Christina, the other daughter of Ulrich Zug, married a Musselman, when she was fourteen years old, and they united with the Mennonites. A son of theirs, many years ago, had a fruit tree nursery near Manheim, and two of that nurseryman's children, Jacob, and his sister, about 30 years ago, lived along the state road below Manheim.

Andreas Eby lived about one and one half miles south of Manheim. He and his wife were baptized in 1767. Sometime after 1772 he was elected to the ministry, and the writer heard his grandmother, who was Eby's daughter, relate that when she was eight years old, which must have been 1777, the Revolutionary conscriptors came and took father, and two horses, to the camp in Lancaster, but a man who knew him, one day came to the camp, and was surprised to find him there. He then went to headquarters and obtained his release, because he was a minister, but the horses they kept. When the war was over they brought one horse

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CHAPTER II.

THE LITTLE SWATARA CHURCH.

"In 1745, George Beshler, Michael Frantz, Peter Heckman, John Frantz and others settled in this district. They were baptized by Elder George Kline of the Northkill congregation. Elder Kline was the first elder (in charge, ordained in 1750), assisted by Peter Heckman, who was ordained soon after 1770. On August 12, 1780, the above-named Michael Frantz was ordained elder by Elders Sower and Urner, and George Beasher (Bäszaar) and Jacob Moyer were ordained deacons (ministers). As early as 1770, there were forty-five active communicants. Their names follow: Peter Heckman, minister, and wife, John Heckman and wife, Michael Frantz and wife, Nicholas Gerst and wife, Jacob Moyer and wife, George Beasher, David Marge and wife, Simon Merrich and wife, John Frantz and wife, Christian Frantz and wife, Rose Schnables, Jacob Smith and wife, Eliza Kentzel, Adam Henrich, Mrs. Cryder, Philip Ziegler and wife, Jacob Breneisen and wife, David Kleine and wife, Widow Benedict, Elizabeth Benedict, Sophy Kish, Leonard Sehalt and wife, John Grove, Jacob Baker and wife, Jacob Deal and wife, Hans Stohner and wife, Jacob Beashör and wife."<sup>1</sup>

It is unfortunate that there is no record of this historic church that we know of from 1780 to 1858,—a space of 78 years, excepting statement in account of Big Swatara Church. Nevertheless, by strenuous research, we were enabled to find data to fill up this gap, at least so far as elders are concerned. We do not claim accuracy in every detail, but in the main, facts are obtained from reliable sources.

Elder Hans Jacob Beashör (Bäszaar) was the son of Hans George Beashör, who immigrated to America prior to

<sup>1</sup> Brumbaugh's History, p. 320.



1738, and settled a few miles northwest of Millersburg, Dauphin Co., Pa.

He was married to Christine Alderfer, and had a family of nine children.

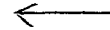
Elder Hans Jacob Beashör is without doubt the Jacob Beashor who signed the Annual Meeting minutes of 1790 and 1814.

Elder Hans George Beashör, son of Elder Hans Jacob Beashör, was born February 8, 1775, and was married to Christine Fackler, of Big Swatara, and no doubt it was this marriage that caused his removal later to Big Swatara.

Elder Joseph Merkey was born November 28, 1782. It will thus be seen he was about 30 years of age when Elder Hans George Baeshör moved to Big Swatara about 1812. It is stated by Dr. Basehore, of Palmyra, that Hans George Baeshör was Elder in charge of Little Swatara at the time he moved away. Joseph Merkey being 30 years of age may at this time already have assumed considerable of the burdens of the ministry. He was a small man and rather weak physically. His talk was good, and to the point, but there was not much of it. He died March 12, 1869; buried at Merkey's Cemetery.

David Merkey was born May 11, 1795. He was the youngest brother of Joseph, and Elder before John Hertzler, but John moderated the council meetings before David died, and before his ordination, being better adapted to the work. David Merkey died December 2, 1873; buried at Merkey's Cemetery.

Elder Jacob Wenger, son of Christian Wenger, was born March 10, 1801. He was elected to the ministry in the Brethren Church about 1835. He was ordained by 1850, his Eldership coming in between that of Joseph and David Merkey. He was a big, strong man, and had a powerful voice. He was a man of high standing, of pleasant approach, and was regarded as a strong preacher. It is thought by his daughter that he was preaching as early as 1835. He was associated with Joseph Merkey, who was about 20 years older. The question arises whether Joe



Merkey was Elder before Wenger? But Wenger was the controlling and leading spirit in the church.

"Watch and pray" was not duly observed on his part. The tempter was on his track, and lo, behold, he made a misstep, which he at first confessed, and afterwards denied, and of course, he was disowned by the church. Because of his denial, it was impossible for him to return to the Brethren. This occurred between the years 1854 and 1856. Afterwards he first held meetings of his own, but during this time baptized but one person—a woman, who said she was deceived, thinking Wenger a minister of the Brethren.

She wished to come to the Brethren later, and would have been admitted, without re-baptism, had it not been for the presence of ———— who, though a young minister, insisted on the order of the Brotherhood being read to the congregation.

She then joined the Brinsers, and afterwards came back to the Brethren by re-baptism. Wenger also joined the Brinser Church, and quite a large number of Brethren went with him, but practically all came back.

Truly this was a trying time for the Little Swatara Church. At times the clouds rose so black and thick that there was apparent danger of the church being disrupted, but the tide turned, the storm was subdued, there was a great calm, and Israel again prevailed.

→ He died January 6, 1881. He was married to Lydia Frantz, who was born February 27, 1801, and died October 14, 1853. It was the year after her death he made the misstep.

He and his wife, his father and grandfather, with their wives, are all at rest in the Wengert graveyard, near Jonestown. His son, Jacob F., was a preacher of the Brethren. He was elected late in life, and never attained to fluency of speech. He was born 1831, and is buried at Jonestown. His son David had also belonged to the Brethren, but while yet young joined the Brinsers, among whom he became a preacher in his old age.

Benjamin Kline was born July 12, 1791, and was elected to the ministry in the Little Swatara Church. Inasmuch as