

HISTORY OF THE MUDDY CREEK REFORMED CONGREGATION

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FOR many years I have taken an interest in the history of the Reformed churches in this region. As early as 1900, I published a series of articles, in the *Reformed Church Messenger*, on the "Early History of the Reformed Church in the Conestoga Valley." Later, I spoke at several anniversaries in this charge.

For that reason, I gladly accepted the invitation of your pastor, the Rev. Dr. Schweitzer, to deliver the anniversary address on this, the 200th, anniversary of the founding of the Muddy Creek congregation. To be able to celebrate such an anniversary this year is quite a distinction, for it makes this congregation one of the ten oldest congregations of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania.

The earliest German settlers came to this region for two main reasons: The first was an economic one; they came to better their living conditions. For years the valleys of the Rhine river (from which most of the settlers came) had been exposed to the inroads of the French armies, which had ruthlessly burned their cities and towns, destroyed their homes, ravaged their vineyards, and had driven the luckless inhabitants to seek temporary shelter in forests and fields. Then, when foreign invasions ceased, the Catholic princes of the Palatinate and neighboring regions, persecuted their Protestant subjects and made the observance of their religion as difficult as possible. Hence to the economic motive a religious one was added. They wanted to seek freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. They longed for religious as well as civil liberty; and, as a result, they thronged in large numbers to Pennsylvania, where both civil and religious liberty were promised to them.

The first to come to Pennsylvania were the so-called sect people, — persons who did not belong to any of the three religions

which were tolerated in the German Empire, the Catholic, the Lutheran and the Reformed.

Penn himself had asked King Charles II of England to give him land in North America in exchange for the debt of £16,000, which the British government owed to his father, in order that he might secure a haven of refuge for the persecuted Quakers. In 1682, he sent three shiploads of Quakers to Pennsylvania, in order that they might enjoy religious liberty, which was denied them at home. This example was soon followed by others. In 1683, came Francis Daniel Pastorius, with thirteen families of German Mennonites, who settled in Germantown. In 1694, came John Kelpius, with a band of German mystics, who settled on the Wissahickon. They were followed, in 1710, by a group of ten Swiss Mennonite families, who made their home on the north bank of the Pequea creek, in Lancaster county. This was the first German settlement within this county. In 1718, when Conestoga township was erected, there were seventy German settlers on the assessment list. The Dunkers followed in 1723 and 1729. All of which shows that the sect people were the first to seek shelter in Pennsylvania, because most of the oppression in the old world was directed against them.

But, no sooner had reports of their successful settlement in Pennsylvania reached their former homes, when others, and especially church people, followed in their footsteps. The second wave of immigration, consisting largely of Lutheran and Reformed people, began in considerable numbers about 1720. That was the year when John Philip Boehm, the founder of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, reached these shores. This second wave of immigrants reached large proportions about 1730. When in 1727 the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania ordered that all foreigners entering the province through the port of Philadelphia should sign an oath of allegiance to the King of England, the first shipload to obey this order consisted of a colony of Reformed people, headed by their pastor, the Rev. George Michael Weiss.

But even before Weiss reached Philadelphia, the first religious services among the Reformed people of the Conestoga valley had been held. A contemporaneous document informs us that they began in the year 1725, with small gatherings in private houses here and there, with the reading of sermons, with songs and prayer, led by laymen, in the absence of regular pastors.

On October 15, 1727, John Philip Boehm, who had founded the first Reformed churches in the Perkiomen valley, came also to the Conestoga valley and held the first communion service there, near what is now Heller's church in Upper Leacock township. Soon afterwards, Mr. Weiss visited the Conestoga valley and held services there. He was followed in 1731 by a third Reformed preacher, John Peter Mueller. A letter, dated February 13, 1733, is still in existence, in which it is stated that at that time there were six preaching places of the Reformed people in Conestoga township. Three of these were served by John Conrad Tempelman, and three by John Peter Mueller. Among the latter three was Muddy Creek and thus we are introduced to the founder of the Muddy Creek congregation, the Rev. John Peter Mueller.

I. PASTORATE OF JOHN PETER MUELLER, 1731-1734.

The first pastor of the Muddy Creek Reformed congregation had studied in the University of Heidelberg. Many years ago, I was delighted to find the signature of Mueller in the matriculation book of that university. On December 29, 1725, "Johannes Petrus Mullerus, Altbornensis," is entered on the university register. I followed this clue and discovered that his father was the Rev. Johannes Mueller, who from 1707-1714, was pastor of the Reformed churches of Zweikirchen and Wolfenstein, near Kaiserslautern, and from 1714-1726, was pastor at Alsenborn. His son, John Peter Mueller, was born December 25, 1709, at Zweikirchen, while his father was pastor there. When his father was pastor at Alsenborn, young Mueller entered the University of Heidelberg in 1725. After finishing his studies at the university he was licensed to preach. But before he could be ordained, he suddenly left for America. That it was a sudden resolution which he carried out can be inferred from the remark of one of his friends, which he made many years later, that he left his father, with only thirty guilders in his pocket. What induced him to take this far-reaching step that changed his whole life, we do not know. He landed at Philadelphia, August 29, 1730. The Reformed congregations at Philadelphia, Germantown and Skippack, which had become vacant through the return of Weiss to Holland, at once

accepted Mueller as their pastor; but, as he was not ordained, he applied to the Presbytery of Philadelphia for ordination. He surprised his examiners by his remarkable knowledge of Latin, which he spoke, as one of the examiners remarked, "as readily as we do our vernacular." Mr. Andrews, the pastor of the First Presbyterian church at Philadelphia, gave him an excellent testimonial: "He is an extraordinary person for sense and learning. We gave him a question to discuss about Justification, and he answered it, on a whole sheet of paper, in a very notable manner."¹ At the end of the year 1730, Mueller was ordained in the old Buttonwood Presbyterian church in Philadelphia by three eminent Presbyterian ministers, Andrews, Tennent and Boyd.

In 1731, Mueller left Philadelphia and Germantown (when a new minister, the Rev. John Bartholomew Rieger, had arrived for them), and took charge of a number of congregations in the interior of the province. At Goshenhoppen, Mueller began the oldest Reformed church record which is in existence. His baptisms there extend from June, 1731, to July, 1734. He also preached at Tulpehocken and in the Conestoga valley. In the latter region, he had three congregations. One of these was Muddy Creek. This is proved by the Lutheran Muddy Creek record, in which three baptisms are entered which were performed by Mueller. The first, was on January 20, 1731, the second, on November 21, 1732, and the third, on February 3, 1733. The reason why Mueller baptized these Lutheran children evidently was because there was no regular Lutheran pastor at Muddy Creek at that time. The pastorate of John Caspar Stoeber did not begin until the fall of 1733. (See Schmauk, *History of the Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania*, p. 255).

Mueller soon came under the influence of that remarkable man, Conrad Beissel, the founder of the Seventh Day Dunkers at Ephrata. The Ephrata Chronicle states definitely that Beissel thought, in view of his own inability and the important work before him, that work "would be better carried out, if God would provide one of the young preachers for him."² Beissel visited Mueller at Tulpehocken, where, as the Chronicle states, "he was received with the consideration due him as an ambassador of God." The result was that, as Mueller himself states in a letter, "he quitted the ministry and returned to private life." His associates built him a cabin at a limpid spring in Tulpehocken and there he

lived as a hermit for about half a year, when he moved to Ephrata. To make his exit from the Reformed church as dramatic as possible, Mueller one day gathered his adherents in the house of one of them, Gotfried Fidler, and there they burnt the Reformed and Lutheran catechisms and other devotional books, — thirty-six in all.

On the first Sabbath in May, 1735, Mueller, three elders, five families, and some single persons, were baptized in Dunker fashion, by three-fold immersion into a river.³ He entered the Ephrata cloister and there became one of their leading spirits, "the only educated man in the community," who published most of their books, among others the *Ephrata Chronicle*, an important religious document.

John Philip Boehm states, with regard to this remarkable event: "It caused a great alarm among the congregations. Those that were kept by God sent messengers and letters to me and once more asked me for help, which I did not dare to refuse." Boehm rallied the faithful in two communion services, held in May, 1735, at the Hill church, now Heller's, and at Cocalico, near Ephrata. But nothing is said about his coming to Muddy Creek. It is more likely that the Reformed members at Muddy Creek were rallied by one of the neighboring Reformed pastors, most likely by Conrad Tempelman, who had settled in the Conestoga valley, where he had taken up 200 acres of land on January 17, 1734. It may also be that John Bartholomew Rieger, who from 1739 to 1743, was pastor of the Reformed congregation at Lancaster, helped to supply Muddy Creek. So much is certain, that when the congregation reappeared in 1743, it was still worshipping with the Lutherans in a little log church which had been erected by them soon after Mr. Stoever appeared upon the field, about six miles north-east of Ephrata, on a little eminence not far from Adamstown, in what is now East Cocalico township.

II. PASTORATE OF JACOB LISCHY, 1743-1745.

We come again into the full light of history when Jacob Lischy appeared in 1743, as the next Reformed pastor. He was born May 28, 1719, at Muhlhausen, then in Switzerland, now in Alsace, France. In Europe he had become acquainted with the Moravians

and had joined them at Marienborn and Herrnhut. He came to Pennsylvania with the so-called "First Sea Congregation" of Moravians, landing in Philadelphia on the "Snow Catharine," May 28, 1742.⁴ In November of the preceding year, there had come to Pennsylvania a strong and striking personality, Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, the founder of the Renewed Church of the Moravian Brethren. When he discovered that in Pennsylvania there were dozens of shepherdless Lutheran and Reformed congregations, as well as many similar congregations of German Mennonites, Dunkers, Schwenkfelders and New Born, he conceived the plan of uniting all these churches into one union, in which all, without giving up their own peculiarities, might live and labor together in a higher unity of the Spirit. Hence he called the new movement "The Congregation of God in the Spirit." In the interest of this movement, a series of seven union synods were held in Germantown and neighboring places in 1742, by which Zinzendorf attempted to get the leaders of the various churches together and make the movement attractive to them; but, although the response was not encouraging, he determined to continue the movement by sending Lutheran and Reformed preachers, under Moravian auspices, to the several churches. One of the most active of these missionaries was Jacob Lischy. Fortunately, there are numerous reports and diaries of Lischy and his colaborers in the Moravian archives at Bethlehem, which shed light upon the movement.⁵

According to these reports, Lischy was ordained by Bishop David Nitschmann, in January, 1743, at Philadelphia and then became an indefatigable itinerant preacher, who had no less than eighteen preaching places in his circuit, of which six at least, were in Lancaster county, namely Cocalico, Warwick, Muddy Creek, Donegal, Earltown and Kissel Hill. The first sermon which Lischy preached in the church at Muddy Creek, in March, 1743, was from the text: "His sweat was as drops of blood." It made such a deep impression that he at once received a call, signed by sixty-two men, which was duly entered into the church record, secured by Lischy for the congregation. The call is dated May 19, 1743. The signatures, which give us the first list of members at Muddy Creek, are well worth giving in full:

Eberhard Riem, elder & helper; Hans Jacob Brunner, elder;

Christian Krebs, elder; Baltzer Hissing, elder; Christoph Schaub, elder.

Heinrich Haller, Hans Gorg Hegi, Joh. Niclaus Fischer, Joh. Michel Amweg, Hans Bucher, Simon Wishan, Gorg Heft, Michael Bueckel, Philip Stephan, Peter Huntziger, Gorg Bibighaus, Johan Jacob Hanschy, Johan Jacob Bachman, Sebastian Schab, Niclaus Walter, Jacob Gorgenhauser, Gorg Brunner, Fritz Rech, Heinrich Surben, Baltzer Rathschmid, Abraham Huntziger, Johan Peter Wisenandt, Johannes Bucher, Niclaus Weinhold, Adam Wisenand, Oursinus Frantz, Jacob Rimm, Abraham Rimm, Heinrich Haller, Wendel Fisser, Marx Klein, Ulrich Gilgen, Peter Ecker, Jacob Hochstetler, Peter Wisenandt, Heinrich Koenig, Hans Waller, Niclaus Zoeller, David Boller, Abraham Kern, Leonhardt Muhman, Heinrich Aurwasser, Heinrich Schlabbach, Jeremias Zaemer, Gorg Adam Ebrecht, Hans Gorg Wolfersperger, Jacob Bollinger, Justus Kaufmann, Michael Schumacher, Gorg Schuessler, Gorg Trautman, Jacob Staehelin, Wilhelm Anspach, Antoni Buehler, Jacob Many, Hannes Binckely, Heinrich Froelich.

But, in spite of the apparently whole-hearted reception given to Lischy, he seems to have had a hard time preaching at Muddy Creek, for, if we can believe his words, "the people had the reputation of being the most wicked and godless people in the country." However, he kept on preaching with such success, that the wickedness soon disappeared. Within two years he had a society of fourteen men who were active in the work of the Lord. "The number of convicted and partly awakened souls is still larger," he writes. When opposition arose to his preaching in the church, because some suspected him of not being "echt reformirt," eighteen of his men built him a house in six days, in which he installed the first parochial schoolmaster, John Adam Luckenbach, with a school of twenty children. "They stay here the whole winter. For them we provide meals and lodging. Besides there are those who attend the school during the day." It was during the ministry of Lischy that on June 8, 1744, a warrant for nine acres and 60 perches was taken out by Henry Haller for the Reformed, and Peter Frey for the Lutherans; but the inference made from the reports of John Philip Boehm (Life, p. 399) that a new church was erected at Muddy Creek in 1744, must be given up. The reference is not to Muddy Creek but to Maiden Creek, in Berks county.⁶ In the year

1745, Lischy received an assistant in his itinerant work, Christian Henry Rauch, who left a number of interesting diaries about their joint labors. Lischy made Muddy Creek his headquarters till October, 1745, when he left with his wife and child, crossed the Schuylkill river and transferred the center of his missionary activity to Creutz Creek, in York county.

III. PASTORATE OF JOHN CONRAD TEMPELMAN, 1745-1748.

In December, 1745, the name of a new pastor appears in the church record. It is that of John Conrad Tempelman. He had settled, originally, within the bounds of Hill or Heller's church, whose faithful reader and teacher he was for many years. There he began his pastoral activity at an early date. This is evident from a baptismal entry in a family Bible, of which I have a photograph. On September 8, 1732, he baptized Susanna Baumann, daughter of Henry and Catharine Baumann of Earl township. In 1744, Boehm reported: "The congregations in and around Conestoga have a long time ago set up as their minister Conrad Tempelman, from Heidelberg, a tailor by trade." With the help of this clue I traced Tempelman to his home in Germany. He was born at Weinheim, in the Palatinate, and was baptized there on March 22, 1692, the son of Henry Tempelman and Anne Maria, nee Linck. In course of time young Tempelman became a tailor, and moved to Heidelberg, where he lived at the foot of the Castle Hill and married, September 22, 1717, Anna Maria Barth. They had two daughters, with whom they came to Pennsylvania sometime between 1721 and 1725. He settled in the Conestoga valley and there rallied the Reformed people around him as early as 1725. In 1737 he moved to Lebanon township, where he took up 200 acres of land, and from which as a center he supplied not only the congregations in the Conestoga valley but also those nearer his home, Swatara and Quittopahilla, the latter now Hill church, near Annville, Lebanon county.

When the Rev. Michael Schlatter, the organizer of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, visited Lancaster county in June, 1747, he found Tempelman ministering to Muddy Creek, Cocalico

and White Oaks. Muddy Creek promised eleven pounds, Cocalico six and White Oaks, with seventy members, twenty-three pounds, towards the salary of a minister. These three congregations, together with Seltenreich, Schlatter proposed to organize into the ninth charge. As Tempelman was getting old, and himself offered to vacate these congregations, if another minister could be secured for them, Schlatter advised him to confine himself to the churches nearer his home, Quittopahilla, Swatara and Donegal, the last near Elizabethtown.

Due to this suggestion of Schlatter, Tempelman soon afterwards gave up the four eastern congregations of his large charge and confined himself to the three nearer his home. The last baptism by Tempelman, entered by him into the Muddy Creek record, was on March 12, 1748, although there are several other baptisms during that year, the last on November 29, 1748, which were, perhaps, performed by him, but entered into the record by another hand.

One other event of interest took place in 1748 under Tempelman's leadership. The Reformed people took possession of the schoolhouse, which had been built during the period of Moravian activity, but the title of which was in the name of Lischy. With his assistance they took over the schoolhouse. The presence of Lischy at Muddy Creek in 1748 is vouched for by several baptisms, which he himself entered into the church record.

IV. SUPPLY OF

JOHN DOMINICUS BARTHOLOMAEUS, 1749.

During the year 1749, and perhaps also 1750, Muddy Creek was supplied by John Dominicus Bartholomaeus, pastor of the Tulpehocken church. On May 1, 1749, when Schlatter visited Bartholomaeus, at Tulpehocken, he asked him "at his convenience to go over and preach in White Oaks, Muddy Creek, Cocalico and Zeltenreich, which he promised to do." (Schlatter's Diary, p, 189). As a result, we find a baptismal entry in the handwriting of Bartholomaeus in the Muddy Creek record, dated August 9, 1749.

As the name of this minister has been referred to by Schlatter, as well as by all later historians, as Bartholomaeus, it may be

well to retain it in order to avoid confusion. But there can be no question that the original German form of his name was Bartholmay.⁷ It appears in that form upon the church record of his native city, Heidelberg. John Dominicus Carolus Bartholmay (to give him his full baptismal name) was born of Catholic parents, — John Adam Bartholmae and his wife, Maria Susanna, — at Heidelberg, and was baptized there on December 13, 1723. He matriculated in the University of Heidelberg January 15, 1743. Later, he also studied at Franeker in Holland. It was, perhaps, in Holland that he was converted to the Protestant faith. He appeared before the Deputies of the Holland Synods November 15, 1747, together with John Jacob Hochreutiner. Both were examined and commissioned for service in Pennsylvania. He arrived in Philadelphia, with his companion, on August 13, 1748, and was at once sent to Tulpehocken, where he was installed as pastor by the Rev. John Philip Boehm, on October 16, 1748. His ministry at Tulpehocken was, however, of short duration. His baptisms came to an end in April, 1751. His health was undermined and soon he was compelled to retire from the active ministry. The truth was his mind was giving way, and shortly afterwards he had to be confined in a hospital in Philadelphia, where he lingered till his death, July 28, 1768. How long he preached at Muddy Creek is not certain, probably only during the year 1749. Schlatter also asked the Rev. Philip Leydich, then pastor of the Falkner Swamp congregation, "in the beginning of the month of August (1749) to visit Lancaster, Modecreek and other places, to edify the congregations." (Diary of Schlatter, p. 190). We do not know whether Leydich was able to comply with this request. So much is certain that when Schlatter was unable to supply the congregation with regular preaching it fell into the hands of an independent preacher.

V. PASTORATE OF

FREDERICK CASIMIR MUELLER, 1751-1752.

Beginning with May 29, 1751, there appears on the Muddy Creek record the well known scribble (for that is all that it can be called) of Frederick Casimir Mueller, an independent Reformed preacher. According to Schlatter's report Mueller had been a

schoolmaster in a village near Mayence, in Germany. He came to Pennsylvania, landing in Philadelphia on October 20, 1744. Almost immediately he began preaching at Goshenhoppen and in the neighboring congregations. In 1746, Schlatter found him serving ten or twelve small congregations in and about Oley. Schlatter was at first willing to recommend Mueller to the Fathers in Holland on condition that he refrain from administering the sacraments. When Mueller was unwilling to do that, Schlatter lost all interest in him and so Mueller continued as an independent preacher. From 1748-1752, he was at Bern and Longswamp, Berks county. During this period he preached also at Muddy Creek and neighboring places. From May, 1751, to August, 1752, he entered 25 baptisms into the church record, which approximates most likely the extent of his stay at Muddy Creek. From here he moved to Coventry, Chester county, where he preached from 1751 to 1761. Finally, he served Lebanon, Quittopahilla and Swatara in Lebanon county, from 1762 to 1766. He died at Lebanon in 1768. As Mueller was on intimate terms with the Moravian pastor at Lebanon, the bad rumors which circulated about him, earlier in his career, are probably unfounded and ill-natured gossip. Many a preacher has suffered from such treatment.

VI. PASTORATE OF JOHN WALDSCHMIDT, 1752-1754.

At last, in October, 1752, Michael Schlatter, the indefatigable organizer of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, was able to keep his promise to the people of Muddy Creek, Cocalico and neighboring places. In the summer of 1752, Schlatter had returned from Holland, with six young ministers for the vacant Reformed congregations. Two of them were sent to Lancaster county, Philip William Otterbein to the city of Lancaster, and John Waldschmidt to the Cocalico charge, comprising Cocalico, now Bethany at Ephrata, Muddy Creek, White Oaks or Reyer's at Brickerville and Seltenreich, near New Holland. The four congregations constituted the charge as marked by Schlatter. Waldschmidt was installed by Schlatter on Sunday, October 22, 1752, and on October 25th, two large record books were presented by Schlatter to Waldschmidt to record in them his pastoral activities. They are still

in existence and form an important source for the religious history of the churches in this neighborhood.

Young Waldschmidt, who was twenty-six years of age when he entered upon his ministry in this community, was born at Dillenbourg, in Nassau, Germany, on August 6, 1724, the son of a minister's daughter. He studied for the ministry in the University of Herborn, where six young men, then studying in that university, heard the call of Schlatter for missionaries in Pennsylvania and responded to it. They went with Schlatter to The Hague, Holland, where they were ordained by the Dutch Reformed Church for work in Pennsylvania, which was then one of the numerous mission fields of the Reformed Church of Holland.

Unfortunately, the pastorate of Waldschmidt at Muddy Creek was of short duration. On October 28, 1754, Waldschmidt held his last communion service at Muddy Creek. What happened to interrupt his work we cannot tell at this distance. It is, however, of interest to observe, that, in his record, Waldschmidt notes the next communion service as having been held at Michael Amweg's, "in the new church," on May 18, 1755. Having accepted the invitation to preach in this new church, he gave up his preaching at Muddy Creek.

VII. PASTORATE OF JOHN HENRY DECKER, 1755-1761.

Waldschmidt's work at Muddy Creek was taken up almost immediately by another independent preacher, John Henry Decker, who signs the financial statement in 1755, as "Henrich Decker," and thus enables us to identify his handwriting and determine the length of his stay. His baptismal entries begin on December 10, 1754, and extend to October 4, 1761.

We know very little about this preacher. He took the oath of allegiance at Philadelphia on September 21, 1751, having landed in the ship "Two Brothers." As his entries in the church record show the handwriting of an educated man, I have examined a number of matriculation books of German schools, and find that a John Henry Decker matriculated in the Latin school at Hanau, Germany, on March 27, 1750. He entered as coming from Mar-

koebel, Nassau. There this John Henry Decker was born August

17, 1730. These facts fit very well and make it probable that the two persons are identical.

Of his work in this country we know only a few items. He preached at Cacusi or Hain's church, near Reading, in Berks county, from 1752-1756, at Muddy Creek from 1754-1761, and at Cocalico in 1762. His name appears in the list of pastors in the Cocalico record, made about 1766, by the Rev. John George Wittner. We also know that he married at Reading, Johanna Magdalena Eckert, daughter of John Eckert and his wife, Angelina, nee Hicks, on May 10, 1755. The marriage is recorded in the Host church record.

One important event took place at Muddy Creek during the pastorate of Decker. On May 30, 1761, four Reformed and four Lutheran elders signed an agreement, according to which both congregations were to have equal rights in the church and the church land.⁸ A survey was made of the church land and it was found to contain nine acres and sixty perches. This survey was made on November 5, 1761, and was returned to the secretary's office on January 14, 1762. Shortly afterwards, on March 25, 1762, a patent was issued by Thomas and Richard Penn to Henry Haller, Reformed, and Jacob Frey, Lutheran trustee of the church land, on the payment of one pound, eight shillings and eleven pence, and the yearly payment of one-half penny sterling as quit rent for every acre of the land.⁹

Decker disappeared as suddenly as he had come. What became of him we do not know. He may have died at Reading about this time, although no grave of Decker has been found thus far.

VIII. PASTORATE OF

FREDERICK JULIUS BERGER, 1765-1766.

What happened at Muddy Creek during the next few years is uncertain. From January, 1762, to November, 1766, there are thirty-five baptisms entered into the record, most of them in a fairly well trained hand. But we cannot make out whose it is. The probability seems to be that it is the schoolmaster, Henry Hetzel, whose name appears in one of the baptisms.

Being without the guidance of the baptismal entries, we are

left to inference. In the Cocalico record it is plainly stated that the Rev. Mr. Berger, pastor of the Reading congregation, supplied Cocalico for two years. He also supplied Seltenreich in 1766, where his name appears plainly on the record. From that evidence we may infer, with some degree of probability, that Berger also officiated at Muddy Creek.

Frederick Julius Berger was born at Sargenroth, near Simmern, in April, 1740. He matriculated at Basle University, October 22, 1760; was commissioned for Pennsylvania March 27, 1765, and on his arrival in Pennsylvania was sent to Reading, where he was pastor from 1765 to 1768, when drink was his undoing. The Coetus of Pennsylvania, as the Synod was called at that time, removed him from the ministry in September, 1768. After that he preached as an independent minister. He appears at the dedication of Friedens, or White church, at Wessnerville, Albany township, Berks county, May 20, 1771.

IX. PASTORATE OF JOHN GEORGE WITTNER, 1766-1770.

New life and activity were brought into the congregation by the next pastor, the Rev. John George Wittner. He was born on August 13, 1735, at Bellheim, in the Palatinate, the son of the Rev. Abraham Wittner. The younger Wittner studied in the University of Heidelberg, matriculating there December 12, 1755. What pastorates he filled in Germany we do not know. In May, 1766, he appeared before the Deputies of the Dutch Synods, and, on May 27, 1766, was commissioned for service in Pennsylvania. When he arrived in this country in the fall of that year, he was assigned to the Cocalico charge. He arrived in his new field of labor on October 10, 1766. The arrival of a new minister soon showed itself in greater activity in the life of the church. In the following year the four united congregations began building a parsonage, which when completed cost £335, Pennsylvania currency, or about \$870. It was built on the Philadelphia pike, near the farm of John George Werns. Wittner took possession of it on November 17, 1767. In the same year, on June 2, 1767, Wittner was married by the Rev. Waldschmidt to Salome, daughter of Andrew Behr. The marriage was somewhat remarkable. The bride had neither been baptized

nor confirmed. To remedy this defect, the young pastor first received her into his catechetical class, where he instructed her in the Heidelberg catechism. Then he baptized and confirmed her, changing her name from Salome to Johanna Christina, and after all these preparations he finally married her.¹⁰

But, although happily married, Wittner was not happy in his work. In 1768, Muddy Creek complained that through hail they were unable to meet all their obligations. The other congregations seem to have been in a similar plight. Without a sufficient salary, the pastor was unable to support his family and he became melancholy. In May, 1770, he appealed to the president of the Coetus to help him. A committee of the Coetus appeared in the charge and, as they found conditions unbearable, they advised him to resign, which he did. His brethren in the ministry came to his rescue and helped him as much as possible with the Holland donations. They also assisted him in getting a call to Upper Milford, Kestenberg and Salisbury in Lehigh county. There, under new conditions, his health soon returned and there he labored to the end of his life. He died December 25, 1779, still a comparatively young man of forty-four years of age.

X. PASTORATE OF JOHN CHRISTOPHER GOBRECHT, 1770-1779.

The next pastor of Muddy Creek had neither been sent by the Fathers in Holland, nor had he been educated in Germany. John Christopher Gobrecht received all the education he had in Pennsylvania. Gobrecht came from very humble surroundings in his home land. His father, Daniel Gobrecht, was a cowherd in his native village of Angerstein, near the city of Goettingen, in Hannover. He was born October 11, 1733, the fifth child of his parents. In his twentieth year, to use his own words, "he was led by divine Providence to turn his thoughts to the new world." On September 11, 1753, John Christopher Gobrecht and his older brother, John Christian, arrived in Philadelphia. Ten years afterwards, he was led, as he notes in his family Bible, "by the Holy Spirit to feel a desire to enter the ministry." Accordingly, he began to study under the supervision of the Rev. John George Alsentz, then pastor

at Germantown. In 1766, he was ordained and called to the Tohickon charge, in Bucks county. When the Cocalico charge became vacant, a call for Gobrecht was sent to the Coetus meeting at Philadelphia. He accepted the call and moved into his charge in December, 1770. On Christmas day, 1770, he preached for the first time at Muddy Creek. In 1771, Gobrecht reported 95 families in his four congregations, 43 baptisms, 48 catechumens, and a salary of £65, or about \$156. In the following year he tells us there were 443 members in his charge, or about 100 members in each of his congregations. During the year 1776, when the independence of the colonies was proclaimed, Gobrecht acted as president of the Coetus of Pennsylvania. Tradition informs us that he was active in behalf of the struggling colonies, frequently addressing passing troops and encouraging them in their fight for liberty. After a successful ministry of nine years, Gobrecht left Muddy Creek, performing his last baptism on December 5, 1779. He moved to Hanover, York county, where he ministered to his people until bodily infirmity compelled him to retire. He died at Hanover November 6, 1815.

XI. PERIOD OF SUPPLIES, 1780-1786.

Some persons have wrongly inferred from the minutes of Coetus (1785, p. 401) that Waldschmidt again became pastor of the Cocalico charge after the resignation of Gobrecht. But, as Waldschmidt's own records show, this Cocalico refers to the Swamp church in West Cocalico township. While, on the other hand, the minutes of Coetus state repeatedly (pp. 383, 388, 396) that the Cocalico charge was vacant during the years 1780-1786. This agrees with the church record at Muddy Creek, which shows that during these years the congregation was visited by neighboring pastors, the most prominent of whom was the Rev. William Hendel, pastor at Tulpehocken. He was suffering from shaking palsy, hence his handwriting can easily be recognized by the wavy lines of the letters. While Hendel was supplying these congregations, a young man, who had learned the trade of a tailor, but felt called to preach the Gospel, was preparing himself under the supervision of Hendel, to become the next pastor of the charge.

XII. PASTORATE OF ANTHONY HAUTZ, 1786-1790.

The next minister of Muddy Creek and associated congregations was Anthony Hautz, a young man who was born in Germany on August 4, 1758. His father, Philip Peter Hautz, arrived in Philadelphia with his family on October 10, 1768. The family settled in what was then Lancaster, but is now Lebanon county, where young Hautz came under the influence of the Rev. William Hendel, his pastor. Having studied under him for about a year, Hendel sent Hautz as a catechist to Muddy Creek and neighboring congregations. He began his work on August 17, 1786, as he states himself in the Cocalico record. On June 6, 1787, his congregations requested Coetus to examine and ordain him. The examination took place in the afternoon of that day, to the satisfaction of the examiners, who also ordained him at the same time. In 1788, Hautz reported 140 families, 74 baptisms, 112 catechumens and a school with 40 scholars. The schoolmaster at that time was Peter Krick.

After a ministry of about four years, Hautz accepted a call to Germantown, but, after preaching there for only a year, went to Harrisburg, where he became the first resident pastor of the First Reformed church of that city. In 1798, Hautz accepted a call to Carlisle. While there his first wife died and he married as his second wife Catherine Keller on February 1, 1803.¹¹ In the year 1804, Hautz removed to the State of New York, where he served a number of Reformed churches in the neighborhood of Ithaca. After a good deal of search I recently discovered his tomb and that of his wife in a cemetery of the village of Etna, five miles north-east of Ithaca. He died in Tompkins county, N. Y., on April 2, 1813.

XIII. PASTORATE OF JOHN CHRISTIAN WILMS, 1790-1802.

After the departure of Hautz, the congregations fell again into the hands of an independent minister, John Christian Wilms. Very little is known about this man. According to his tombstone, he was born April 3, 1738. He landed at Philadelphia, September 30, 1774. His ministry at Muddy Creek and Cocalico began in Novem-

ber, 1791. At the meeting of the Synod at Lancaster, on April 30, 1793, it was resolved in reference to the congregations at Cocalico "that Mr. Wilms be requested to appear at the next Synodical meeting and submit to an examination." When, however, at the next meeting of the Synod it was discovered that Wilms had been administering the sacraments without ordination, "contrary to the established order of the Church," Synod refused to receive him and the congregations were censured for engaging him. Nevertheless, the congregations stuck to him and he remained their pastor to the end of his life. He died March 8, 1802, and was buried in the old Bethany graveyard, by the side of his wife and daughter.

XIV. PASTORATE OF CHARLES HELFFENSTEIN, 1803-1807.

Under the successor of Wilms, Charles Helffenstein, Muddy Creek and affiliated congregations again returned to the care of the Synod of the Reformed Church, under whose supervision they have remained ever since.

Charles Helffenstein, the second son of the Rev. John Conrad Albert Helffenstein, for many years pastor of the Reformed congregation at Germantown, was born there March 29, 1781. He studied for the ministry under Dr. Becker, while the latter was pastor at Lancaster. He was ordained in October, 1801, and served at first some congregations in and near Allemaengel in Berks county. Shortly afterwards, he accepted a call to Goshenhoppen, but again stayed only for a short time, and then removed to the Cocalico charge, where he remained for five years, from 1803 to 1807. After that, he was pastor at Germantown from 1807 to 1810. Then he labored for eight years in the Hanover charge, in York county, and finally had shorter pastorates in Rockingham county, Virginia, and in Mechanicsburg, Cumberland county, Pa. During the last three years of his life he was unable, on account of bodily infirmity, to exercise the pastoral office. He died December 19, 1842, and was buried in the cemetery of the Reformed church in Reading. Although a sincere and conscientious Christian, he is said, by Dr. Harbaugh, to have been an eccentric man.

XV. PASTORATE OF

JOHN THEOBALD FABER, JR., 1807-1819.

The next pastor at Muddy Creek was the Rev. John Theobald Faber, Jr. He was the eldest son of the Rev. John Theobald Faber, Sr., and was born at Goshenhoppen, where his father was pastor, on September 24, 1771. He studied theology under Dr. Hendel, who from 1782 to 1794 was pastor at Lancaster. At the meeting of the Coetus of Pennsylvania, held May 6 and 7, 1792, at Philadelphia, he was examined and licensed and, shortly afterwards, was ordained at Goshenhoppen, on June 23, 1792. He served Old and New Goshenhoppen and Great Swamp for fifteen years. He then accepted a call from the Cocalico charge, where he remained for twelve years, till 1819. During his first year at Cocalico and neighboring congregations, Faber was elected president of Synod. In 1819 he received and accepted a call from the Goshenhoppen churches and thus returned to the people of his first love. There he labored to the end of his life. His death was quite remarkable. The "Messenger," of March, 1833, reports "On the 10th of February last died, at New Goshenhoppen in Montgomery county, the Rev. John Theobald Faber, pastor of the German Reformed church of that place, in the 60th year of his age. The deceased was preaching a funeral sermon a few days before his death, and near the close of his discourse was stricken with palsy. It is remarkable that forty years before, the Rev. John Theobald Faber, Sr., the father of the deceased, while preaching a funeral sermon, in the same pulpit, was attacked with the same disease, and died in a short time. . . His remains were interred, beside those of his father, under the altar of the church."

XVI. PASTORATE OF

FREDERICK A. HERMAN, 1819-1822.

The successor of Faber was the Rev. Frederick A. Herman, son of the Rev. Dr. Lebrecht Frederick Herman, who himself prepared five of his sons for the ministry. His son Frederick A. Herman was born in the year 1795, at Germantown, where his father was pastor. He was licensed by Synod in the year 1815. In the year 1818 he was ordained. He served at that time three

congregations in Chester and one in Montgomery county. But in 1819 he accepted a call to the New Holland charge, then consisting of New Holland, Reamstown, Royers, Muddy Creek, and what is called "Cloister," which must be Bethany. (Minutes, 1819, p. 26). There were at that time four parochial schools in his five churches. In 1822, Herman, with five other ministers, left the Reformed Synod and formed the "Free Synod," which existed until 1837, when it voted to return to the mother Synod. Herman held various later pastorates and died October 30, 1849, at Turbotville, Northumberland county, Pennsylvania.

XVII. PASTORATE OF DANIEL HERTZ, 1822-1867.

The exact time when Herman left the charge cannot be determined at present, but it was most likely in 1822 or 1823. He was followed by a young man, Daniel Hertz, who was born in Dauphin county, not far from Harrisburg, on April 23, 1796. As a young man, while teaching school in winter, he had come under the notice of the Rev. Isaac Gerhart, then pastor at Lykens Valley, Dauphin county. The latter recognized his ability and persuaded him to prepare himself for the ministry. After having studied under Mr. Gerhart for some time, he appeared for examination before the Synod, held September 30-October 4, 1822, at Harrisburg. Synod directed him to continue his studies for another year under Dr. Samuel Helffenstein. (Minutes, 1822, p. 21). In the following year he received a call from the New Holland charge and Synod licensed him for a year. (Minutes, 1823, p. 23). At the Synod of 1824, "the congregations in and about New Holland gave Hr. Hertz an excellent testimonial of his life and teaching and asked that he be ordained." Hertz was then examined, with several other candidates, and ordained. He reported four congregations, New Holland, Muddy Creek, Bethany, and Zion's, at Brickerville. Mr. Hertz preached his first sermon in the Muddy Creek church, and there, strange to say, he preached also his last sermon. But there was an interval of forty-five years between the two sermons; and all these years, Father Hertz, as he came to be called by his people, spent in the same charge, although the congregations constituting

the charge changed from time to time. In Muddy Creek, however, he remained pastor during the entire time of his ministry.

During the pastorate of Father Hertz the present church building was erected at Muddy Creek in the year 1847. Pastor Hertz was very earnest and faithful in his ministry. The words of Scripture could be applied to him: He was "instant in season and out of season." He enjoyed remarkably good health during his long pastorate. But five weeks before his death he contracted a severe cold, while visiting the sick. Other complications set in, which brought his life to a close on September 22, 1867. His remains were taken to Lancaster and buried there.

XVIII. PASTORATE OF STEPHEN SCHWEITZER, 1871-1914.

After the death of Mr. Hertz, the Bethany charge was vacant for several years, until a successor was chosen in 1871. It was the Rev. Stephen Schweitzer. He had been born April 20, 1843, in Wuerttemberg, Germany. At the age of six years he came to America with his parents. His boyhood was spent in New York City and Newark, New Jersey. Later he came to Allentown, Lehigh county, where he joined the Reformed church and was confirmed by the Rev. Joseph S. Dubbs. Then he moved to Longswamp, where he came in contact with the Rev. Dr. William A. Helffrich, to whom he revealed his desire to enter the ministry. With the assistance of Dr. Helffrich, he entered Franklin and Marshall College and after completing his classical studies there, he studied theology in the Reformed Seminary at Mercersburg, where he was graduated in the class of 1866. In the same year he was called to the Schaefferstown charge and was ordained by Lebanon Classis. In 1871 he accepted a call to the Reamstown charge, consisting at that time of Muddy Creek, Lincoln, Swamp, Center and Ephrata. In the same year he was united in marriage to Miss Susan E. Weidman. Ursinus College conferred upon him the degree of A. M. In this charge Mr. Schweitzer spent the larger part of his long ministry. For forty-three years he was an earnest preacher of the Word, and a man greatly beloved by his people as a genial, sympathetic pastor. On April 5, 1914, after preaching in

the Swamp church, he was stricken with paralysis, from which he died April 17, 1914.

No better proof could be given of the deep impress which the ministry of Mr. Stephen Schweitzer had made upon his people than the fact that shortly after the death of the father, the son, Mr. Martin W. Schweitzer, was unanimously elected by the people to continue the work.

XIX. PASTORATE OF

MARTIN W. SCHWEITZER, 1914-DATE

Martin W. Schweitzer was born within the bounds of the Muddy Creek charge, of which his father, Stephen Schweitzer, was then pastor. He began his education by attending the public school in the village of Lincoln, Ephrata township, where his parents resided. He prepared for college at Palatinate (now Albright) College at Myerstown and then entered Franklin and Marshall College, from which he was graduated in 1894. He studied for the ministry one year in Yale Divinity School and then finished his theological studies at the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church at Lancaster, Pa. He was licensed by Lancaster Classis May 20, 1897, and was ordained and installed August 30, 1898, by West Susquehanna Classis as pastor of the Susquehanna charge in Lycoming county. In 1906, he accepted a call to the Union Bridge Charge, in Maryland, which he served till 1914. During his pastorate there he was instrumental in building one new church and in remodeling two others in his parish. On November 22, 1914, he was installed as pastor of the Muddy Creek charge, thus becoming the successor of his father.

Aside from his work as pastor, Mr. Schweitzer has taken an interest in many activities outside of his parish. In 1915 he served as president of the Lancaster Classis. He was also president of the Reformed Ministerial Association of Lancaster county. For some years he was a director of the Lancaster Automobile Club. He is also a member of a number of fraternal organizations, and is a charter member of the Ephrata Grange, in which organization he has served as Chaplain from its very organization. He is a director of the Ephrata Manufacturing Company, a growing

Ephrata industry and is also a member of The Lancaster County Historical Society. In 1929 he was appointed Chaplain of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania. In 1917 the degree of "Doctor of Philosophy" was conferred upon him by Oskaloosa College, Iowa. Dr. Schweitzer has worthily continued the fine tradition of the many noble men who have preceded him.

1. Letter of the Rev. Jedidiah Andrews to the Rev. Thomas Prince, of Boston, dated October 14, 1730. Printed in *Hazard's Register*, Vol. XV, p. 200f.
2. See *Chronicon Ephratense*, English translation by Dr. J. Max Hark, Lancaster, 1889, p. 71.
3. Boehm (Life, p. 275) states that this conversion took place in April, 1735, but Mueller himself states both in the *Ephrata Chronicle*, (Engl. transl. p. 73) as also in a letter of December 5, 1790, (see Boehm's Life, p. 254, note 127) that it was on a Sabbath in May, 1735. Mueller himself ought to know best.
4. About the "First Sea Congregation" see Reincke, *Register of Members of the Moravian Church*, pp. 49-54.
5. Some of these reports and diaries of Lischy were published by the writer in the *Reformed Church Review*, 4th ser. Vol. IX, pp. 517-534; Vol. X, pp. 85-98; Vol. XI, pp. 74-90.
6. The reasons for this statement are (1) Boehm writes Medenkrik not Modenkrik; (2) Medenkrick—Maidencreek is twelve miles from Oley but not Muddy Creek; (3) Lischy was pastor at Muddy Creek in 1744. He was not on friendly terms with Boehm at that time and hence would not have invited him to preach at the dedication of a new church. (4) We know from records at Maidencreek that a new church was built there in 1744.
7. In a letter of Bartholomaeus to the Lancaster Consistory he actually signs his name Dominicus Bartholmay. See Harbaugh Mss. No. 8.
8. The agreement was signed by: Johannes Henricus Deckerus, M. (Minister) Reformatae Religionis, John Samuel Schwerdfeger, Minister of the Lutheran Church, Valentin Schneider, Jacob Frey, Philip Schober, Casper Lutz, on the part of the Lutherans; Henry Haller, Christopher Shaup, George Hefft and Marcus Egly, on the part of the Reformed congregation.
9. The patent gives the following boundaries of the church land: "Beginning at a white oak marked for a corner, standing in the line of Peter Weisenand's land, thence by the same south eight degrees, west 74 perches to

a marked hickory, thence by George Noll's land north 26 degrees, east 47 perches to a marked maple tree, thence by Peter Freezer's land south 25 degrees, east 64 perches to a post set for a corner, thence by Philip Bethey's land north 60 degrees, west 14 perches to a marked black oak, thence south 65 degrees, west 36 perches to the place of beginning."

10. See Waldschmidt's records, published in *Pennsylvania Archives*, 6th series, Vol. VI, p. 262.
11. See the Records of the First Presbyterian Church, Carlisle, published in *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd series, Vol. VIII, p. 575.