

# Abraham Reincke Beck: Portrait of a Schoolmaster

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As is true of most work of this nature, there are numerous debts which can in no way be repaid. In at least one instance, however, good faith demands that the debt be assumed. The study of Abraham Reincke Beck and the edition of selected letters would never have materialized had it not been for the kindness of George Swan of Lititz, Pennsylvania, who brought Beck's Letter Book to the author's attention and granted permission to publish a portion of it.

## Part I.

### A Portrait of a Schoolmaster

On June 25, 1895, Abraham Reincke Beck, the highly respected schoolmaster of Lititz, Pennsylvania, wrote a letter to his nephew James Montgomery Beck announcing his intention of closing the Beck Family School for boys. "The final closing of my school," wrote Beck.

had been in consideration by us ever since Xmas, and with the end of the term we came to the conclusion that forty years' work was about enough, especially as Paul did not wish to succeed me. Had he done so, it would have given me much pleasure to teach for him because, so far, I have lost little, if any power in that direction, the heavy responsibility of taking entire charge of other people's children being the only thing we were beginning to tire of.

Beck's retirement from the teaching profession and the closing of the school marked the passing of an institution which had been the pride of the community for thirty years. In a larger sense the closing was a part of the general decline of the small private school — an institution which served a very important purpose in the educational system of the nineteenth century but which had, by the end of the century, begun to show signs of having outgrown its usefulness.

In contrast to the mid-twentieth century with its massive, impersonal, highly centralized system of public school education, the preceding century offered a system vastly different in every respect. The nineteenth century counterpart of the enormous complexes which have been given the innocuous title of "jointures" was the one-room common school which offered rudimentary training in the three R's. Numerous colleges both large and small were to be found in many towns and cities throughout the country, but the majority of the taxpayers felt no obligation to provide any further education than the elementary training offered by the one-room school.

It was the educational vacuum which existed between the one-room school and the college during the greater part of the nineteenth century that the small private school attempted to fill. However, one should not assume that the private school of the nineteenth century was confined exclusively to the secondary education usually associated with the junior and senior high schools of today. Many private schools including the Beck Family School for boys specialized in an intensive and closely supervised elementary education. With the increased emphasis on secondary education after the Civil War, such schools as the one operated by Abraham Reincke Beck played an important role in preparing boys to enter high schools in the large towns and cities.

In attempting to visualize the nineteenth century private school which, in one form or another, day or boarding school, was to be found in the cities, towns and villages throughout the country, one should avoid comparing them with the large private schools of today such as Deerfield, Groton, Choate, Philips Andover, Philips Exeter, Lawrenceville and other similar institutions. Whether day schools or boarding schools, most of the private institutions were quite small, many of them, especially family schools, enrolling no more than 15 or 20 boys at the most.

Although the tremendous influence of the small private school and the schoolmaster is all too frequently played down by the people who still find solace in the self-made-man-myth in American political, economic and social life, one important fact cannot be ignored. The small private school of the nineteenth century was the great training ground for American leadership — religious, professional, political and industrial. The fact that a small private school such as Franklin Academy at Harford in Susquehanna County could produce, within the confines of a group of contemporary classmates, three or four United States representatives, a like number of United States district judges, a speaker of the House of Representatives, a United States Senator and a governor of Iowa was not as unusual as it might seem at first glance. Of the students who attended the private schools in America during the nineteenth century probably the greatest number eventually found their way into the offices of various prominent

attorneys where they read law in preparation for admission to the bar. For a young lawyer with any facility in public speaking the step from law to politics was almost inevitable. A cursory examination of available lists of students who attended various private schools will undoubtedly show that the example of Franklin Academy was repeated over and over again, possibly to a lesser degree, in numerous communities throughout the country.

The private family and day schools of the nineteenth century had one great feature in common, a feature which the large jointure school of today has all but pushed into oblivion. These private institutions were generally operated by a single dedicated individual who served as both teacher and principal. Thus it was almost inevitable that such a person, by imposing his strong personality upon the school, would succeed in giving the school a distinct direction and character. It was also inevitable that he would exert a profound influence upon the students who came under his supervision. Abraham Reincke Beck, speaking from the vantage point of forty years' experience in the operation of private schools, pointed up rather vividly this feature of private school education. Shortly after he had made known his intention of closing his school, several people wrote to him to inquire about the possibility of taking over and continuing the operation of the Beck Family School for Boys. "I must say frankly," wrote Beck in answer to one such inquiry,

that I do not think that your prospects for re-opening with my boys of last year, or any of them, would be good. To several of my recent patrons, who asked my advice, I have recommended Nazareth Hall, for I was both a boy and a teacher there; but the majority of those who have ever kindly patronized us are such who—if I must appear to boast—would not have sent their boys from home except to Mrs. Beck and myself.<sup>2</sup>

Rather than giving the appearance of boasting Beck was simply stating a fact. Such influence was something which the patron of a private school expected as a part of the course of study. However, as the case of Abraham Reincke Beck seemed to demonstrate, it was this feature that contributed to the high mortality rate of such schools. The school usually passed out of existence with the death or retirement of the teacher.

Our knowledge of the character and personality of the nineteenth century schoolmaster is, unfortunately, rather limited. Although historical accounts of private schools usually contain the important dates associated with the history of the institutions, statements about the courses of study and certain statistical information concerning the more illustrious alumni, very little is said about the schoolmaster beyond the mere mention of his name. In cases where information about the schoolmaster is included it is usually confined to the presentation of the cold, vital statistics. The reader may learn that the person in question was born on such and such a day; that he was educated at various institutions; that he founded a family school or a select day school where he taught for a specified number of years after which he retired; or that he passed away on such and such a day. The advertisements in the local newspapers and the printed statements of terms which the schoolmaster mailed to his patrons for the most part added little or nothing. The "Circular of Terms" for the Beck Family School for Boys is a case in point.

Moravian Family School  
for a  
Limited number of Boys,  
Abraham R. Beck, Principal.  
Lititz [sic], Lancaster County, Pa.

Terms.

“For tuition and all domestic expenses, \$300 a year, to be paid half-yearly in advance, in September and February.

Music Piano and Violin, \$40; drawing, \$20.

No extra charge for vocal music and light gymnastics.

Boys will be received between the ages of eight and eleven years.

The annual vacation takes place during the months of July and August.

No deduction will be made for absence, except in cases of protracted illness or dismissal.”<sup>3</sup>

In the case of Abraham R. Beck, however, the recent discovery of a record book containing numerous letters written by him between 1883 and 1921 now affords the opportunity of taking a more intimate look at one of the great schoolmasters of the nineteenth century.

The vital statistics in Beck's case can be summed up briefly. He was born on December 16, 1833, the seventh of eight children born to John and Johanna Augusta (Reincke) Beck. He was educated at Nazareth Hall, one of the great Moravian academies, where he taught for a number of years following his graduation. Shortly after his father retired from the teaching profession in 1865, Abraham Beck opened the Beck Family School for Boys in Lititz. After he closed the school in 1895 he devoted much of his time to the study of Moravian history in his capacity as archivist of the Moravian Church in that village. As archivist Beck made a major contribution to geneology in an article entitled “The Moravian Graveyards of Lititz, Pa., 1744-1905.”

If to these statistics and the letters in the Letter Book one adds a certain amount of historical imagination, he may experience much the same effect which Beck experienced under similar circumstances. In December, 1892, Beck's friend Martha Hammer seems to have suggested to Beck that he have portraits of several members of his family painted by some reputable artist. Beck's answer shows rather clearly the value which he placed upon old letters as a means of recalling past events and occasions.

I have seen some beautifully executed portraits in my time, by Sargent, Bonnat, of Paris, and others equally celebrated: but I need none such of my departed parents, brothers or sister, if I have but some of their old letters. So it is my habit, every New Year's Eve, to meet them, to see them, hear them, and laugh and cry with them — at least, almost cry; — and, as I read, my room changes to the old homestead, or Cressona, losing me to everything but sweet remembrance.<sup>4</sup>

If family background contributes measurably to one's effectiveness as a teacher A. R. Beck was generously endowed. He was the proud heir to a great Moravian tradition in the field of education dating back to his

great-grandfather, the noted teacher and missionary Bernhard Adam Grube. Grube was born on June 1, 1715, in the village of Walschleben near Erfurth in Thuringia. Following a thorough education in the parish schools and at the University of Jena, he entered the ministry of the Moravian Church in 1740. At the age of thirty-three he was dispatched to Pennsylvania. He spent the next sixty years in the service of the Moravian Church, first as a missionary to the Indians and later as a minister to various Moravian congregations. On May 4, 1757, he married Margaretha Elizabeth (Krieger) Busse, widow of Joachim Busse. The couple had at least one child, a daughter Anna Johanna, born in Gnadenthal on June 12, 1758.

In 1790 Anna Johanna Grube married John Martin Beck, a Moravian minister and teacher. John M. Beck was born in Schafhausen, Switzerland, on September 29, 1746. Sometime during youth or adolescence he was "spiritually awakened by the preaching of Moravian itinerants in his native city."<sup>5</sup> He later joined the Brethren in Neuwied and became a very successful teacher in the school for boys. He migrated to America in 1786 and for four years was engaged in teaching boys in Bethlehem. Immediately following his marriage to Anna Johanna Grube in 1790 he went to his first pastorate in Emmaus. This was followed by other pastorates in Graceham, Maryland and Donegal, Bethel, Lancaster and York, Pennsylvania. Three children, John, Benigna Louise and Johanna Elizabeth, were born to the couple.

John Beck, the father of Abraham Reinke Beck, was born on June 16, 1791, at Graceham, Maryland. In 1797, when he was six years of age, his parents moved to Mt. Joy where they remained for two years before moving to Lebanon County. Following a number of years of formal education at Nazareth Hall he was sent to Lititz in 1805 where he was apprenticed to the village shoemaker Gottfried Traeger. His career in education began in 1813 when he undertook the instruction of five over-aged apprentices whose masters were obligated to send them to school. The success of this venture prompted the village fathers to ask Beck to take charge of the local school. Beck assumed his new duties on January 2, 1815. Sometime about 1819 the school was converted into a boarding institution. The Lititz Academy, the name by which the institution came to be known, remained in operation from 1819 until John Beck's retirement in 1865.<sup>6</sup> "For his calling he was especially gifted"; wrote A. R. Beck in 1906,

excelling as a teacher, it was a pleasure as well as an advantage to be taught by him, and to experience his influence for good was to many a boy a blessing. Of a cheerful disposition and a winning personality, simple-hearted and guileless, he had yet a remarkable sense of character, so that he could measure a boy almost as soon as he first saw him. Impartially faithful to his pupils, whether they were of high or low estate, bright or dull; scorning the use of sarcastic speech to a defenceless lad; readily giving his kind word of commendation when it was deserved, and bringing to the settlement of difficulties of discipline a superb degree of tact, he won the absolute confidence of his patrons and the lasting love of his boys.<sup>7</sup>

All the evidence available would tend to indicate that the above quotation would be an accurate appraisal of A. R. Beck's own ability as a teacher. This, however, would not be unusual for he was a student in his father's academy and inherited the extensive collection of "philosophical appa-

tus" which his father used in teaching the various subjects.

Beck's distinguished Moravian educational heritage was not confined to his father's side of the family. His maternal great-grandfather and grandfather, Abraham Reincke (1712-1760) and Abraham Reincke, Jr. (1752-1833) were both well-known Moravian ministers. The elder Reincke is also remembered for his important contribution to Moravian history entitled *A Register of Members of the Moravian Church, and of Persons Attached to Said Church in This Country and Abroad, Between 1727 and 1754*. Beck's Moravian ancestry also included Schneiders, Nitschmanns, Huebners and Tshudys who, like the Becks, Grubes and Reinckes, played prominent roles in the early history of Bethlehem, Nazareth, Lititz and surrounding communities. Various members of these families worked closely with such prominent figures as David Zeisberger, Nicholas Zinzendorf, Augustus Spangenberg and Amos Comenius in the establishment and expansion of the Moravian Church in America.

A. R. Beck was always enormously proud of the tremendous cultural and intellectual heritage to which he had fallen heir and was quick to recognize the impact of this heritage on his own life and character. His father's ability to "measure a boy almost as soon as he first saw him," was an attribute which Beck also claimed for himself. However, in his own case he credited this ability to family background. In answer to a query about evaluating the character of individual boys, Beck confessed that he had "no special method" for dealing with the problem. "My diagnosis of a boy's character was generally correctly made almost as soon as I saw him — thanks to 4 generations of schoolmasters before me — and then going to work upon him as my nature dictated, I usually won him . . ."<sup>8</sup> The infallibility of instinctive judgment of this nature may have little basis in scientific fact but the statement clearly points up Beck's belief in the importance of family background.

Although family background was important the one characteristic above all others which contributed to Beck's enormous success as a teacher was the one mentioned by him in a letter to I. G. Samson of Bay City, Michigan. Samson, wishing to establish a school similar to the Beck Family School, had written to Beck for advice. After commenting extensively on the numerous academic and social problems entailed in the operation of the school, Beck turned to the subject of amusement — hikes, shooting matches, magic tricks, etc. "It was my custom to be untiring in affording my boys amusement . . . not, however, as a bribe for their good behavior, but because I liked to do it for them, and was a kind of a boy myself."<sup>9</sup> The other characteristics of a good teacher which Beck possessed in great abundance — genuine sympathy, infinite patience, attention to detail, a vivid imagination, a keen sense of humor — all stemmed from his being "a kind of a boy" himself.

Throughout his entire life there was always a large amount of "the boy" in A. R. Beck. Just a year before he retired he gave some indication of this in a letter to Frederick S. Curtis, the principal of the Curtis School for Boys in Brookfield Center, Connecticut. "I am sixty," Beck confessed to Curtis, "but I don't realize it, — probably because I am spending my life, sympathetically, with boys."<sup>10</sup> It was undoubtedly this "boy" that



**JOHN BECK (1791-1873)**  
**Father of Abraham R. Beck**

accounted for some of the tricks and jokes which Beck played on his boys, especially the one described by his son, Herbert Huebener Beck. According to the account, the boys had just finished a twilight game of "cops and robbers" and were standing in line with lanterns in hand ready to go up to their dormitory. The usual exchange of "Good Nights" between Beck and the boys was interrupted by an important announcement: "Boys, I hear excitement in our chicken house. I wonder if it might not be the wild cat which the **Lititz Record** reports prowling these parts. Let's investigate." The boys accompanied by Beck and his faithful Henry gun made their way quietly through the corridor and into the bowling alley in the rear of Beck's home where they had a clear view of the side-street. When the boys spotted the animal it ran down the street "only to be stopped by the bang! of the brave Henry." The boys cheered but Beck cautioned them that the animal might not be dead yet and that a crippled wild cat was exceedingly dangerous. On closer inspection, however, the wild cat was found to be quite dead. "In fact," wrote Herbert Beck in relating the incident,

it was so dead that the confederate who had pulled the monster down the alley with a clothesline had trouble getting the rope from its wooden legs. While it was not exactly a museum piece, the specimen was notable for its melanism. That wild cat must have had pints of black ink in its bloodline.

Herbert Beck seemed to imply that his father used this wild-cat gag rather frequently in entertaining the boys.<sup>11</sup>

The "boy" in Beck was responsible for the development in him of a vivid imagination and a degree of creative ability rare among members of the teaching profession. It was the utilization of these qualities in the teaching process which made him not only an inspiring teacher but a great one. A fine example of Beck's genius in this field is found in a letter which he wrote to young Rosalind Tausig of Lancaster. Beck, aware of the fact that the girl was at a stage in her intellectual development where she was reading the novels of Charles Dickens, used his letter as a medium for bringing to life certain of Dickens' characters. He set the stage by addressing the letter to "Julia Mills, c/o Rosalind Tausig."

Dear Julia: "I thank you for the Christmas card you sent me, and its good wishes. When it came to our office, my employer, Mr. Ralph Nickleby, said "Such cards are nonsense, and a nuisance"; but I don't agree with him; of course, no one would ever think of sending **him** one. I frequently see Mr. Pickwick walking the London Sts and never had the good fortune to behold him mounted on his chair, as he is pictured on your card. Last Sunday, as I strolled in Hyde Park, whom should I meet but N. N. and his lanky friend Smike. They inquired about you, and the latter asked me were you as handsome as ever. They are no longer with the Crummles troupe because the Infant Phenomenon was getting too "fresh" and too sweet on Smike. Well, now, Julia, I, in return for the Xmas greeting, wish you a very Happy New Year, and I hope that it will bring you much good, and restored health to your dear mamma.

Affectionately yours  
Newman Noggs.

Golden Square,  
London,  
Dec. 31st, 1906.<sup>12</sup>

Although Rosalind's reaction is not known, one might assume that if she



were a sensitive person who enjoyed reading she might now find new pleasure and enjoyment in the novels of Charles Dickens.

Even at the age of seventy-eight Beck had lost little or none of this boyish exuberance and vivid imagination. In December, 1910, a friend had given Beck a copy of Kipling's latest collection of stories entitled **Rewards and Fairies** as a Christmas gift. Beck finished reading the book between the holidays and then wrote a letter to Kipling praising it. After assuring Kipling that he was not too old to "take delight" in the stories, Beck told him how surprised he was to find the well-known Lititz character, Tobias Hirte, playing a prominent role in at least two of the stories. He informed Kipling that as archivist of the Lititz Moravian Church he was quite familiar with the puckish nature of "Toby" Hirte. The use to which Hirte frequently put his enormous energy and musical talent was never fully appreciated by the Moravian Church fathers of Lititz. Hirte seems to have had the bad habit of playing the wrong music in the wrong place at the wrong time. Beck, however, was forced to confess to Kipling that he did not "suppose his [Hirte's] youthful escapades were nearly so dreadful as the stern clergy of his day seemed to find them." "It occurred to me," wrote Beck in appreciation, "that an autograph of Toby's, herewith enclosed, might be at least a passing interest to you, — or, possibly, to 'Dan' and 'Una' (or those they represent), in case they collect such things."<sup>13</sup>

In the introduction to **Rewards and Fairies** Kipling presents Dan and Una and their friend Puck. If, in reading the introduction, one were to substitute Rosalind Tausig's name for that of Una and Beck's for that of Puck, it would almost seem that Kipling had Beck in mind when he began to write the stories:

Once upon a time, Dan and Una, brother and sister, living in the English country, had the good fortune to meet with Puck, alias Robin Goodfellow, alias Nick o'Lincoln, alias Lob-lie-by-the-Fire, the last survivor in England of those whom mortals call Fairies. Their proper name, of course is 'The People of the Hills.' This Puck, by means of the Magic of Oak, Ash, and Thorn, gave the children power—

To see what they should see and hear what they should hear,

Though it should have happened three thousand year.

The result was that from time to time, and in different places on the farm and in the fields and the country about, they saw and talked to some rather interesting people. One of these, for instance, was a Knight of the Norman Conquest, another a young Centurion of a Roman Legion stationed in England, another a builder and decorator of King Henry VII.'s time; and so on and so forth . . . <sup>14</sup>

One might also add, ". . . and Newman Noggs."

Even the numerous animals who were fortunate enough to become house pets at the Beck Family School did not escape the whimsy and imagination of A. R. Beck. According to Herbert H. Beck, "Pinch, Watch, Bruce, Tiger, Punch and Purley were all famous canine characters, in their day and way, at Audubon Villa."<sup>15</sup> To call the cats at Audubon Villa "famous canine characters" was in no way an exaggeration of the facts. A. R. Beck invested each with a distinct personality. In a letter to his brother J. Augustus Beck, the noted artist, he talked about one of these canine characters at some length. The cat in question was a stray to whom Beck had given the rather unusual name of "Whatty." "Whatty's"

origins always remained a mystery to Beck. "Sometimes I think that he never had a home of his own, and was given to wicked ways, and that at a convention, or rally, of cats, held in some Lititz barn, he was reformed and directed to go to the Beck's, where he'd have a good time." At first "Whatty" was somewhat surly and belligerent and Beck decided to get rid of him by taking him out of town to some Moravian farm and throwing him over a high board fence. However, when Beck returned home "Whatty" was perched on the sill of the library window. At that point Beck decided to keep him. By that time, Beck confessed, he and "Whatty" were "pretty good friends all around."<sup>16</sup>

These few examples of the "boy" in Beck and the vivid imagination which it fostered should not lead the reader to the conclusion that Audubon Villa was the scene of one big riotous party throughout the school term. On the contrary, the very nature of the school deterred against this sort of thing. Where fifteen or twenty, healthy, active boys were housed under the same roof, the individual responsible for their education and well-being had to be prepared to face every problem inherent in such a situation. He had to deal with everything from stealing and petty jealousy on the one hand to homesickness and bed wetting on the other; from the common cold and stomach ache to diphtheria and typhoid epidemics. A certain amount of discipline and order had to be maintained else chaos would have resulted. Beck was quite clear as to the degree of discipline which should be imposed. "While I rather invite than deny a free & familiar intercourse with my pupils," he wrote to a patron, "they soon discover that there must be no answering back, & that my word must be full law."<sup>17</sup> His experience in his father's school and at Nazareth Hall made him more than equal to the task of maintaining discipline. He was able to strike a happy medium between extreme rigidity and complete chaos. He operated a well-disciplined school which aimed at the education and training of the whole boy.

One of the first obstacles which many of the boys had to overcome before they could make a complete adjustment to the environment of a private boarding school was homesickness. Realizing that homesickness was rather common especially during the first few weeks of the first year and realizing also that teaching could be effective only after an adjustment had been made, Beck chose to deal with the problem in his own way without outside interference. Long experience had taught him that the process of adjustment on the part of the boy could be made extremely difficult by overly solicitous parents. All too frequently parents were ready to drop everything at a moment's notice and come running to Lititz at the slightest indication of homesickness. Beck's letter of November 12, 1887, to one mother who wanted to see her son shows quite clearly his position in such matters. "... It would probably be better . . .," Beck wrote.

if you defer seeing him until Christmas, when I understand, he is going to go home for the holidays . . . A visit from you, now, might make a change detrimental to him, &, consequently, uncomfortable for us. It would not do for me to ask him, as you request me to do, "whether he would be satisfied to wait until Xmas; [""] for it is not well if little boys come to imagine that the decision of such matters in question is left to them.

This seemed to be one of those frequent cases where the problem rested more with the mother than with the son. At the end of the letter Beck

noted that the woman's husband had slipped a confidential note into her letter requesting that the woman be urged not to come.<sup>18</sup> On another occasion when homesickness prevented a boy from making the necessary adjustment, the boy's guardian decided to send a certain Miss Williams to Lititz for a few days to visit the boy. Beck again took a firm stand against any such visitation. "It would not be advisable in my opinion," he wrote to the boy's guardian,

for Miss Williams to come hither as she proposes, to board for any length of time. A short visit, later, as Bertie expected, on her way to N. Y. would be a better arrangement for his sake. Without explaining why, I think that Bertie should, for the present, be left to our care entirely. I must ask you to believe me sincere in all I advise as best for him.<sup>19</sup>

To make sure that his position in the matter was doubly clear Beck's wife wrote to Miss Williams assuring her that since the boy was getting over his homesickness the less he was disturbed the better.<sup>20</sup>

Once having cured the various cases of homesickness Beck was in a position to begin the work of education. His purpose was to give the boys under his supervision much more than mere training in a number of academic courses. It was not his desire to fill a number of gifted students with a great deal of subject matter and neglect their non-academic needs. He was always concerned with the needs of each individual boy. If he felt he could offer further aid to a boy, despite the fact that the boy was over-age, he did not hesitate to make an exception in the boy's case. In one such instance Beck wrote to the boy's mother stating that the boy would probably learn more by staying on for another year "than he would at a higher school . . . ." Beck felt that the boy needed the advantages of a small school. In concluding his letter he made a brief statement indicating his approach to education. Speaking for his wife and himself Beck confessed that he did not find the boy to be "much of a book student; what he acquires most readily is from personal, oral instruction, — from talk, lecture, explanation &c; &, of course, in a school, small as to numbers, his advantages in that direction are apparent."<sup>21</sup>

In later years when he described his school to people planning to open similar institutions, Beck emphasized the individual attention which this type of school was able to offer the students. Beck's answer to a question concerning the course of study followed in his school is rather enlightening in this respect. According to him,

There was no set preparatory course of study; among so small a number of boys, each could have personal attention according to his needs; and if a boy showed a special talent, as for music, drawing or painting in water colors, he had an opportunity here to develop it.

He concluded his letter by stating that, although instruction was offered in numerous branches of learning, "the chief end of all our teaching and care was the general welfare of our boys."<sup>22</sup>

The extent to which Beck carried this individual approach to education can be seen in his treatment of two brothers who attended the school at the same time. He found the one to be a slow learner and cautioned the parents not to expect too much from him for the moment. As for the brother, Beck found the opposite to be true. "He has rather too much mental capacity for his years, and his nervous temperament is, by spells,

so apparent that I have felt it a necessity not to push his education." Beck told the parents that he could receive the boy for another term "only with this understanding between us that he need not be pushed to the full extent of his mental ability."<sup>23</sup>

Because of his long experience in dealing with boys as individuals Beck, unlike many people, was very reluctant to call a lad a "bad boy." He believed that the great majority of such charges were gross exaggerations. In December 1883, a relative of Beck's, affectionately known as Aunt Cellie, wrote him a letter warning against enrolling a problem child in his school. The boy in question had burned his brother on the cheek with a hot poker. "I know that boy exactly," wrote Beck in answer to Aunt Cellie's warning; "at least, I should have said, I can imagine him, having had similar cases . . . ." Beck then proceeded to match gory story with gory story by telling Aunt Cellie of a boy who had skinned a cat alive, and "when a whipping was imminent jumped through a window carrying sash & all with him." Although Beck had had great success in handling such cases, he told Aunt Cellie that the job was not an easy one. ". . . Even when such boys are under our discipline, & at **their** high-water mark of good conduct, the strain to **keep them** so is sometimes terrific." According to Beck, boys like those just described "are not so sinful, so incorrigibly bad, as they are in some way so sadly unfortunate."<sup>24</sup>

In his preference for the term "sadly unfortunate" and his abhorrence of such terms as "sinful" and "incorrigibly bad" Beck definitely takes a stand in favor of giving the boy the benefit of the doubt. The use of the term "sadly unfortunate" implies the recognition of factors both numerous and complicated which have contributed to the case. The other terms are snap judgments which ignore these contributory factors. A letter to the mother of one of the boys illustrates rather clearly Beck's method of dealing with the special problems of a particular boy. It also points up vividly Beck's refusal to resort to rash judgments. "Your little boy has been getting on well in his studies through the winter"; Beck wrote in April, 1886,

accomplishing all we expected of him. I should not be prepared . . . to call his conduct unsatisfactory, but must say, frankly, as you will wish me to, that he is quite a handful to manage. At the same time, much allowance must be made for his age & highly nervous temperament. Years of experience have made me slow to consider a troublesome boy necessarily a bad one."<sup>25</sup>

Parents who, from a lack of patience or understanding or both, were quick to judge (or more often misjudge) a troublesome or difficult boy received little or no sympathy from A. R. Beck. "Sometimes," he wrote rather caustically, "it is a boy's right to be sent from home — to be rid of an injudicious parent."<sup>26</sup>

Beck's statement that years of experience had made him "slow" in judging a boy reveals that as a schoolmaster he possessed that most necessary of qualifications — patience. A person may have a good knowledge of subject matter, he may have a vivid imagination which permits him to present his material in many interesting forms, but if he lacks patience his knowledge and imagination will avail him little. If a person is to receive a maximum degree of satisfaction from the teaching profession he must possess what may seem to be almost infinite patience — patience to deal

with excessive boyish energy and patience to wait for long periods of time before "the value of one's teaching is manifest."<sup>27</sup>

As with Beck's ability to make an accurate appraisal of a boy upon first meeting so with his capacity for almost infinite patience, he attributed it in large part to family background. When asked by a fellow teacher whether or not he found the work pleasant, Beck answered: "Yes, very pleasant, but at the same time excessively arduous. Fourteen hours a day, Sundays included! I don't see how I ever should have stood it had I not been of the fourth generation of hard workers in the same line."<sup>28</sup> In January, 1884, after he had sent out the usual reports to the boys' parents he paused momentarily to comment on the need for patience. The tone of the comment indicated that he had to do considerable soul-searching before writing some of the reports. "When a boy is careless & disinclined to study," Beck observed,

one must not be too ready to report him to his parents. The disinclination may, as is sometimes the case, be only of temporary duration. It may continue for a fortnight, a month, or several months, & then perhaps, he will do as well as he ever did. To write too soon is to precipitate unpleasant & quite unnecessary correspondence.<sup>29</sup>

If, however, the lad was a hopeless case despite all efforts to help him, Beck considered it his duty to state the case frankly to the boy's parents.

Even in a man like Beck there was always the chance that the limit of his patience might sometime be reached. It was this possibility that led him to insist that his summers be kept free. In October, 1884, a diplomat who had enrolled his son in the Beck family School for Boys wrote to Beck inquiring about the possibility of keeping the boy at the school during the summer. Beck's answer was short and to the point. "We do all in our power through the school year for our boys, but must have the summer holidays free from care."<sup>30</sup> Several months free from worry and care were absolutely necessary if Beck was to give his students the attention to which he felt they were entitled.

Probably the main reason why people sent their children to such a school as that operated by Beck was the attention to detail which a qualified schoolmaster could give to a small group of 15 or 20 students. Here a student could acquire a degree of depth and polish impossible in the public schools. It was for this kind of education that patrons paid a sum of money which even Beck admitted was fairly high for the area.

Although he had to deal with numerous academic problems the ones which seemed to plague most of the students most of the time were in penmanship and arithmetic. Several examples taken at random will serve to show the attention which Beck gave to detail. After mentioning the need to restrain one boy who had a tendency "to prefer his Arabian Nights to his spelling book," Beck made the following analysis of the boy's writing:

I have had some trouble . . . to get him into neat habits of penmanship, in his letters home as well as his written tasks. He has a sort of headlong way of writing with commas for i dots, & sprawling words with a general untidiness of the page. There has been some improvement in these respects, of late, & trust, by extra attention, to have him do well.<sup>31</sup>

During the same report period Beck had another boy with a writing problem. In this case he reported:

Penmanship somewhat behind comps same age. Trust extra attention my part, do better future. Indeed, a little more legible than it was. Trouble has been make him hold pen easily & with proper slant.<sup>32</sup>

In the field of arithmetic Beck's analyses were equally detailed. When discussing one lad's deficiencies in this area he wrote:

In the operation of adding quite formidable columns of figures he is rather better than any boy in the school, & that, of course, is an important merit; but the difficulty with him lies chiefly in solving practical questions, no matter how simple they happen to be.<sup>33</sup>

A letter of May 5, 1885, is especially revealing. It shows two of Beck's characteristics to good advantage — his ability to analyze a boy's problems and his reluctance to make snap judgments. "He can add and subtract simple sums," wrote Beck,

but seems unable, in spite of my endeavor, to remember the carrying operation; never knowing whether to place or carry the units or the tens &c. I don't know that I can, on this account, term him a dullard; I should say rather, that his mental development was in some respects tardy, & that he may, when somewhat older, do well enough. I have known such boys. If allowed to do it, he will shirk his lessons, asking questions, to detain the teacher, &c; for he instinctively dislikes that which is a real difficulty to him.<sup>34</sup>

In the one-room school where the teacher usually had eight grades under one roof such attention as that shown above was almost impossible. If by chance a dedicated teacher in a one-room school did attempt to analyze and correct problems like those mentioned above he would still have a long way to go before he could match Beck in the handling of individual student problems; for Beck probably gave even more attention to problems of social behavior than he did to academic ones. The letters to parents make frequent references to bed wetting, selfishness, receiving and reading undesirable literature, petty stealing, etc. If, as Beck said, the general welfare of his boys was the primary purpose of the educational training offered by the Beck Family School for Boys, then the great attention to detail must apply to all the problems a boy might have to face, social as well as academic.

Upon the completion of training at Beck's school a young lad usually went on to some private secondary school or to a public high school. This was generally followed by college and/or professional training. In practically every case the peculiar stamp of A. R. Beck was evident both in the boy's academic training and in his social behavior.

If historians and philosophers of history can still maintain academic and scholarly respectability while speaking of continuous and inevitable change as a "law of history," then one is certainly permitted to use a similar analogy when discussing private school education in the nineteenth century. If the schoolmasters and principals who operated private schools had any commonality it was their uniqueness as individuals. Today the school teacher is a part of a large bureaucratic system where uniqueness more often calls forth adverse criticism than praise; but in the nineteenth century the situation was somewhat reversed. The schoolmaster of a private school was, in most cases, a distinct personality complete unto himself.

As the preceding material demonstrates Abraham Reincke Beck was just such a personality. He was a dedicated teacher enormously proud of his teaching profession and of the contributions made by his Moravian ancestors to this profession. He was a strong-willed individual who, believing that he was fully qualified for his profession by virtue of his training, family background and experience, would tolerate no interference in his dealing with problems that had to be faced in the education of young boys. He was a firm but wise disciplinarian fully admitting that discipline was necessary in the handling of 15 or 20 boys in somewhat confined quarters. However, discipline should not be construed to mean any kind of regimentation, for Beck's admission that he was "a kind of a boy" himself would not permit such a situation to arise. Beck not only tolerated but encouraged his students to be free and relaxed in their associations with himself and Mrs. Beck.

Many of the qualities which were a part of Beck's uniqueness as a schoolmaster stemmed from the "boy" in him. This characteristic was in large part responsible for the development of his highly creative imagination which he used so effectively in the teaching process. His almost infinite patience in bringing out the best in his students must also be evaluated in light of this boyish quality. It also goes far to explain his desire to maintain a small school where a maximum of individual attention and concern for detail could be given to each student.

With all of this Beck was a modest man as well as a great teacher. He was never boastful of his abilities, although he was always ready to come to the defense of his system when confronted by the parents of students or by fellow teachers. To him the affection and respect of his students and the gratitude of parents more than paid for the time and effort devoted to the education of nearly 220 boys who attended the Beck Family School for Boys between the years 1865 and 1895. Beck's modesty as well as his respect for simplicity and sincerity were never displayed with greater strength and clarity than in a set of instructions which he desired his family to follow in the writing of his obituary and the conduct of his funeral services. "When my obituary comes to be written, in the Moravian, or elsewhere," wrote Beck in October, 1884,

my name is to be given, not A. R. Beck, nor, Abraham R. Beck, but in full, Abraham Reincke Beck. (The grandfather I was named for spelled it thus, with a c.) An initial is a convenient brevity, perhaps, but it is not a name. A few sprigs from my own evergreens will answer instead of flowers. A piece of crape for the front door is to be furnished by my family; not by the undertaker. The use of crape (necessary only as an announcement of death to passers-by) is sufficiently a form without its being made more so by hanging up the rosette, which, like the village sour-croute cutter used common service from house to house. (At least as the sour-croute cutter used to go.) The stone-cutter is to be directed not to place his name upon my gravestone. He may advertize his business in the newspapers; and if his work is well done on my gravestone, people who think so may ask who did it.

I should wish my carriers, & others kindly troubling themselves for me at my funeral, to have, as in old time, a treat of cake & wine, or oysters, &c as is thought best by whoever carries out my wish in this respect.<sup>35</sup>

## PART I FOOTNOTES

1. Abraham R. Beck to James M. Beck, June 25, 1895, Letter Book of Abraham Reincke Beck, hereinafter referred to as the Letter Book.
2. A. R. Beck to H. A. Foering, July 26, 1895, *ibid.*
3. Herbert Huebener Beck, "The Beck Family School," *Moravian Historical Society Transactions*, XIV, 1949, 275.
4. A. R. Beck to Martha V. Hammer, January 1, 1893, Letter Book.
5. Abraham Reincke Beck, "The Moravian Graveyards of Lititz, Pa., 1744-1905," *Moravian Historical Society Transactions*.
6. For a detailed account of the Lititz Academy and an evaluation of John Beck as a teacher see Simon P. Eby, "John Beck: The Eminent Teacher." *Lancaster County Historical Society Papers*, II, 1898, 111-139.
7. A. R. Beck, "The Moravian Graveyards of Lititz, Pa., 1744-1905," *loc. cit.*, 295-296.
8. A. R. Beck to I. G. Samson, June 8, 1896, Letter Book.
9. *Ibid.*
10. A. R. Beck to F. S. Curtis, March 14, 1894, *ibid.*
11. Herbert Huebener Beck, "The Beck Family School," *loc. cit.*, 280-281.
12. A. R. Beck to Rosalind Tausig, December 31, 1906, Letter Book.
13. A. R. Beck to Rudyard Kipling, January 1, 1911, *ibid.*
14. Rudyard Kipling, *Rewards and Fairies*, (Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, 1949), iii-iv.
15. Herbert Huebener Beck, "The Beck Family School," *loc. cit.*, 282. "The property was called Audubon Villa — a euphonious title inspired by the owner's fondness for nature, especially ornithology. John James Audubon (1780-1851) had been an active figure in American ornithology during Mr. Beck's youth." *Ibid.*, 275.
16. A. R. Beck to Augustus Beck, November 22, 1897, Letter Book.
17. A. R. Beck to S. Chapman, October 25, 1887, *ibid.*
18. A. R. Beck to Mrs. G. W. Hall, November 12, 1887, *ibid.*
19. A. R. Beck to Dr. Landon, October 2, 1884, *ibid.*
20. J. S. Beck to Miss Williams, October 2, 1884, *ibid.*
21. A. R. Beck to C. F. Black, July 2, 1887, *ibid.*
22. A. R. Beck to I. G. Samson, June 8, 1896, *ibid.*
23. A. R. Beck to the Oberteuffers, June, 1887, *ibid.*
24. A. R. Beck to Aunt Cellie, December 26, 1883, *ibid.*
25. A. R. Beck to Mrs. M. F. Oberteuffer, April 14, 1886, *ibid.*
26. Note of A. R. Beck, December 19, 1884, *ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. A. R. Beck to Prof. A. E. Gehman, January 6, 1896, *ibid.*
29. Note of A. R. Beck, January 30, 1884, *ibid.*
30. A. R. Beck to W. E. Dando, October 29, 1884, *ibid.*
31. A. R. Beck to W. W. Greenland, February 1, 1884, *ibid.*
32. A. R. Beck, reports for February 1, 1884, *ibid.*
33. A. R. Beck, reports for February 1, 1884, *ibid.*
34. A. R. Beck to W. E. Dando, May 5, 1885, *ibid.*
35. Note of A. R. Beck, October 19, 1884, *ibid.*



## SELECTED LETTERS OF ABRAHAM REINCKE BECK

Dec. 26th 1883

To Aunt Cellie:

(She had written to warn against our receiving a boy from West Phil — one who heated a poker red-hot, & deliberately burned his brother on the cheek with it &c)

I know that boy exactly. At least, I should have said, I can imagine him, having had similar cases; for, as to what such manifestations are, with a multitude of other problems human, we must, even with the completest experience, sit like poor, little, illy-clad beggars far down on the steps that lead up to the locked portals of knowledge. It is true we have had success with several chronic cases of the S -- genus;<sup>1</sup> notably a St. L - - boy (inclined to torture other boys — bending back fingers, &c.), with whose devil, cowering beneath much that was noble & kind in the lad, I was on familiar terms; & we have one now, doing well, too, who at 5 years skinned a live cat, & when a whipping was imminent jumped through a window carrying sash & all with him. (Both of these boys, and others like them turned out all right, and are now (1908) our [unintelligible] friends. See letter about the latter in June, 1887.)

x x x

x x x

At the same time, forewarned is forearmed! We hight easily, perhaps, manage this lad, but in the midst of my year, with a full school, I do not care to attempt it. May I say, too without an appearance of craving sympathy for the hardness of the bed I myself have made & so must lie upon, that even when such boys are under our discipline, & at their highwater mark of good conduct, the strain to **keep them** so is sometimes terrific. Now, I so seldom write to you that it's really too bad if any letter goes astray in sombre metaphysics! I shall only add, & then shoo away this black rooster, that one of the convictions I now live & expect to die in is that the youthful characters we have been talking about are not nearly so sinful, so incorrigibly bad, as they are in some way so sadly **unfortunate**.

A. R. Beck.

Note: When a boy is careless & disinclined to study one must not be too ready to report him to his parents. The disinclination may, as is sometimes the case, be only of temporary duration. It may continue for a fortnight, a month, or several months, & then perhaps, he will do as well as he ever did. To write too soon is to precipitate unpleasant & quite unnecessary correspondence. If, however, the lad is a hopeless case, then I owe it to myself to state his case frankly to his parents.

Jan. 30th 1884.

Lititz June 16th/84.

E. P. Holman, Esq.

Dr Sir:

Enclosed find your son's bill of incidental expenses & his report. The latter is good, & faithfully rendered. As Andy has informed us that he would scarcely return, we have given him all his things with him. I think that a change will be well for him; especially as you appear not to be well satisfied with his progress while with us. We regard Andy as a pretty fair scholar for his yrs; not especially bright in arithmetic — in which branch you examined him, — but not so tardy that he will not — as his mind develops still more — gain all that he will need in that way for business. It often happens — other teachers will tell you the same — that boys while ciphering farther in advance, yet find themselves stumbling in long division when examined in it, even though they had previously been well grounded in that

one of the fundamental rules. To offset that one branch wherein he is weak, I beg to say for your consideration that he is a good speller, a good reader, good in Geography, reasonably so in Grammar, good in History, & Philosophy tolerable, Elocution very good; with a fine talent for drawing which may some day be of service to him; and, to sum up, his conduct, while here, has been first class. He has learned much besides for which he has not to thank books; much that will undoubtedly tell in his future career. Mr. Clements, & 3 or 4 other principals of schools, are always well satisfied with our boys; — they find the ground well broken for their planting, & have to acknowledge the receptivity of mind apparent in our pupils. Precisely as I did not write last yr to coax patronage, — we always have enough of that, — so now I do not write the above that you may be induced to return him to us in Sept. As before said it will be well for him to have a change. My only object has been to take my own part, & I trust that I have not done so with even the slightest show of disrespect. On the contrary I am obliged o you for your past patronage

With regards to Mrs H & yr father & love to Andy

I am yours truly

A. R. Beck.

Sept 24th/84

Mrs. S. E. Ramsey:

Guy has informed me that you have a Physical Geography which he may use instead of buying one here. If it is the one by Prof. Houston of the Phila High School, you might send it to him. Any books purchased of me, that may have been well cared for, may, at a slight deduction, be returned to me when they are no longer used In reply to your note of 15th inst I have to say that Guy certainly ought, by the end of this school-year, to be sufficiently advanced in Geog. & Arith. to pass an examination for the first class in your Grammar School. Younger boys than he have accomplished that much with us. But for the Grammar, I must own that I do not — as far as books are considered, — make much of it. A close watch over our boys' language in conversation & in composition, — the latter, especially in their letters, — is, in my opinion, about the best in the way of Grammar that we can do for them. I give them but one lesson a week in this branch, & that comes from plain, old-fashioned Kirkham, which treatise I have found, after experience with many other books & methods, gives me, at least, some slight results. At best, it is very little that a boy can acquire of such an abstract study, &, indeed, how can we expect much of them as grammarians, when learned professors of Philology, in council assembled, fight among themselves about it. And then, as for our manner of teaching drawing. We shall begin lessons on Oct. 1st. No special course is made use of, a large supply of copies being at our disposal. Only the boys who after trial are found to have ability in that direction, form the class. For those without such talent, to attempt it would be a waste of time; & so it must be with many lads in the Public Schools. To a certain extent it is with us but a desultory course, on which account I make no charge, as was formerly my custom, for it. For all that, though, we have had some really fine landscape & human figure drawers & a few neat painters in watercolors. Now, as Guy will not at the close of the year have any glib, parrotlike smattering of analysis at his command, nor have come to a certain number in a certain prescribed course of drawing, necessary to his admission in the Pottsville Grammar School, I can well understand that you might regard it as a mistake that he was sent here again this term; & I can frankly assure you that if you think it for his welfare even now to remove him, so that he may have a better preparation for a particular grade in your own schools, I shall cheerfully acquiesce in your decision; making no charge for the time since Sept. 15th. I should wish another teacher to do so by me. It must not be forgotten, however, that a boy may be unable to stand a special examination for which he has not been trained, & yet be the equal & maybe the superior, in his acquirements of those who win where it is his misfortune to lose. Guy's cold seems to be leaving him. With kind regards to Mr. Nice.

Respectfully

A. R. Beck.

When my obituary comes to be written, in the Moravian, or elsewhere, my name is to be given, not A. R. Beck, nor, Abraham R. Beck, but, in full, Abraham Reincke Beck. (The grandfather I was named for spelled it thus, with a c.) An initial is a convenient brevity, perhaps, but it is not a **name**. A few sprigs from my own evergreens will answer instead of flowers.<sup>2</sup> A piece of crape for the front door is to be furnished by my family; **not** by the undertaker. The use of crape (necessary only as an announcement of death to passers-by) is sufficiently a **form** without its being made more so by hanging up the rosette, which, like the village sour-crout cutter, goes in common service from house to house. ( At least as the sour-crout cutter used to go.) The stone-cutter is to be directed not to place his name upon my gravestone. He may advertize his business in the newspapers; and if his work is very well done on my gravestone, people who think so may ask who did it.

I should wish my carriers, & others kindly troubling themselves for me at my funeral, to have, as in old time, a treat of cake & wine, or oysters, &c as it is thought best by whoever carries out my wish in this respect.  
October 19th. 1884.

A. R. Beck.

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It is well to report inveterate stoopers to parents, for they will, if possible, put the blame on the school.

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It takes much courage to wait years before the value of one's teaching is manifest.

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"Why, Mr. Lovepough, you might let these animals, here in winter quarters, run about in the arena sometimes; I should think it would be nice!" At times, with 15 or 20 boys, such as we often have, a strict discipline is quite as necessary with us.

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Sometimes it is a boy's right to be sent from home — to be rid of an injudicious parent.<sup>3</sup>

May 1st, 1886.

Lafayette Hotel / Phila.

Dr. Sir:

On Thursd. Ap. 29th, at about 4 P.M., I applied to one of your clerks for a room for that night, & offered to pay for it in advance. He said it was all right & I need not pay for it beforehand. When I returned from the opera & had smoked a cigar (in the hotel) I asked to be shown to my room & was informed by another clerk — an urbane young gentleman — that no room had been assigned to me, & there really was no room-number opposite my name. So at 1 o'clock in the morning I had to leave your house to seek (with difficulty) other lodging. Now my object in writing is not to scold (for you would scarcely care for that,) but to say that if I accidentally resembled any wellknown **hotel-sharp**, & therefore was refused admittance, the clerk acted as he should; but the truth is, that I am well known in your city, as a gentleman. In the second place I write thus to ease my mind so that if non-assignment was an oversight, I may, with respect to myself, again apply at the counter of my hitherto favorite house, the Lafayette Hotel. Regretting thus to have troubled you to listen to me, I am respectfully,

A R Beck

Principal Boys Sch. Lititz Pa.

No answer required.

May 9th Rec'd answer from proprietor of L. Hotel, Mr. L. U. Maltby — said when I came to Phila, should call on him, desired to investigate &c. It was, at least, taking notice of me.

Mr. Simon P. Eby,<sup>4</sup>

Dear Friend

If I longer delay your extremely kind letter of Feb. 24th, I shall feel that I am neglecting you; but I had hoped to send you, had time allowed me, a long & herzlich letter in return, instead of a bare answering of your questions.

There would be no objection to your honoring the departed schoolmaster by placing upon his grave, on his birthday, some floral tribute of affection; it would, indeed, be a beautiful mark of respect for his worth. Secondly, & as you wish me to say it, frankly, I do not think it would be quite practicable to make such an occasion a reunion of ten or twelve devoted hearts, as you suggest, for the reason that a public demonstration could scarcely be prevented, & 500 people, crowding there, would surely spoil the idea. To me — even though it would scarcely be fitting for me to join such a circle — your suggestion is nothing short of touching; yet I cannot well see how it could be consummated free from objectionable — perhaps that's too harsh a word — features. Now, you may know better than I do about it, & what I have written must not too hastily influence your affectionate intentions in regard to my father.

With great respect I am yours truly

Abraham R. Beck.

In letter of Ap. 27th, alluding to above, Mr. E.<sup>5</sup> says, "My Dear Friend: The modest son of his Father speaks unmistakably in your reply of Mch. 19th."

Ap. 28th 1887

My dear Mr Eby:

Replying to yours of yesterday, I must at once correct one impression that my letter of March, 19th, seems to have given you. When I wrote that "I could scarcely see how the ceremony could be consummated free from objectionable features," my mistake, I think, lay in the use of the last word, *features*, for that perhaps implied that some of your associates might act, here, in an unbecoming way; but my meaning really was that a gathering of villagers & others in large number would be objectionable to yourself & friends, because not in keeping with your original idea as I understood it.

I know that my father entertained at least some little dread of several proposed reunions of old boys of his; for, among many different characters, he feared there might be some to cause him sorrow. But such a thought never entered my head when I wrote you, for, indeed, the strongest spectroscopic analysis of my brain — if that were possible — would not discover lines ever so faintly suggesting the idea of Mr. Ellmaker & yourself coming out here to "paint the town red!" Choice of hotels, better private room probably at L[.] S. House; S. House, room limited & parlor usually occupied with mixed guests. Its table, however, recommends it, & many people on that account give it the preference.

If I can be of any service further in this matter please command me, & believe me yours truly

A. R. Beck.

May 31st 1887.

Mr. dear Mr. Eby:

The printed invitation to the memorial services in honor of my father came duly to hand. Please accept my thanks therefor. I have already assured you that I deeply appreciate the kindness that you & the other gentlemen will show to the memory of your old friend & teacher; at the same time, I must say that my idea that I could scarcely be in place in your party still remains with me. Possibly I may not even have the pleasure of meeting you 16th. Sch. closes 15. If all my boys — or nearly all of them defer going home until that morning, then I shall, as always heretofore, accompany them to Phila; for when so many mixed characters travel together I do my patrons a favor by going with them; but if they leave in parties of 2 or 3 in the course of the last week, then I am free to remain at home. If I must go, I shall, of course, embrace the opportunity to run to the sea shore, or other resort, for a few days; for I need change badly after my year's confinement & hard work. Please accept the assurance of my high regard & esteem.

Yours truly

A. R. Beck.

(I went with Joanna to the ceremonies at the grave, but not to the meeting at the hotel, A.R.B.)<sup>6</sup>

June 16th, 1887.

To Mr. Simon P. Eby:

We, the surviving sons of John Beck, desire hereby to assure you & your associates that we much appreciate & highly value your kindness in beautifully honoring, on this day, the memory of our father.

If it is given to the departed to see what passes here on earth, then we know that he whom you now thus tenderly remember must recognize this tribute of affection from his old boys as the dearest that could have come to him. Accept the assurance of our devoted regard, & believe us your friends.

J. Augustus Beck<sup>7</sup>

Abraham R. Beck.

(Read at the meeting at the hotel.)

Nov. 9th, 1887

Simon P. Eby - -

My dear Mr. Eby:

Your letter of yesterday, and the design for the proposed Memorial were handed me by Mr. Brubaker. The design impressed me most favorably, and I don't see that it could be improved by any one. The globe and books are not only properly suggestive, but they yield a series of curves which add a grace that is usually wanting in modern memorial statues, where flowing robes are inappropriate, and a mantle, even, is an affectation. Should this design be accepted it would, in my opinion, be right to represent my father as a slightly heavier man than this drawing, (which I take to be only a suggestion,) represents him to have been.

Sincerely Yours,

A. R. Beck.

Shall send sketch before Saturday

On bit of paper showed what I meant about the curves from right shoulder downwards. Said too, he should not forget me if circulars for contributions were ever sent out. (Design by J. Aug. Beck)

Dec. 18th, 1889.

To Nathl. Ellmaker, Lanc. Pa.

"As regards that kind project for a monument to my father's memory, I must confess that I for one, while deeply appreciating the originator's sincere and noble intention, from the first rather doubted its success."

ARB<sup>8</sup>

Dear Br Schweinitz:—(Edmund de S.)<sup>9</sup>

Your kind letter of 22nd. inst. greatly delighted me. My impression had been that a praise-worthy precaution existed against lending away any papers from the B. Archives; and now, if any concession has been made by yourself in my favor I have reason to be very thankful to you. On page 280 of your Zeisberger (a book I have read over several times, & used in class) I have noticed an allusion to Grube's Diary B. A. & supposed it to be regular instead of occasional; yet I shall be glad to receive from you anything that relates to Father Grube. Of the "Lebenslauf" I have a copy. At one time I half entertained an idea of asking you to except in my favor in regard to these papers, promising in return to make some church donation: [sic] now I feel so gratified because of your offer that I shall carry out the idea and, instead of a dollar or two for the plate Theological next Sunday, shall send my check for a little more than that to the same cause.

Mrs. Beck & I very sincerely hope that you are feeling somewhat, or, better, quite like yourself again. We learned with regret that you had not been well.

Very truly yours

Abraham Reincke Beck.

Aug. 21st, 1888.

Mr. Geo. C. Stebbins,  
19 Verona Place,  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

Replying to yours of yesterday, I give you permission to publish my quartette, "Just as I am,"<sup>10</sup> in your forthcoming book, on condition that you produce it according to my original composition (herewith sent you,) and not in the somewhat altered form, by another, which may have come to your notice.

I should not, however, wish to relinquish all right to the piece, and therefore request you to place **All rights reserved**, if that is sufficient, where the phrase belongs. If you can suggest a better course as necessary to its protection, please write me about it.

If it is not your rule to date any compositions, then drop my 1861.

Since that year the piece has been used in several Moravian congregations during Confirmation services. The Copy as **tampered with** gives in the latter part a lugubrious, funeral chord of F# minor, quite out of keeping with the character of the words, and, for the sake of a fuller harmony, unpardonably alters my melody, as I conceived it, in the 8th bar; besides it is harmonized throughout, whereas the original has always been deemed effective with its bit of 1st tenor solo, in relief, on the words O Lamb of God!

Now I must add that if you in the end accept the quartette, I should like, if it is your custom so to remember your contributors, to receive a copy of the book, or at least a few sheets as sample thereof.

Respectfully yours,

A. R. Beck.

Aug. 29th, '88

Mr. Geo. C. Stebbins;

Dear Sir:

Yours of yesterday received. I thank you for your proposal to have "Just as I am" copyrighted for me.

As regards the alterations you suggest in measures 7, 8, & at the close of the piece, I would cheerfully make them, if I thought the changes an improvement. It seems to me that to run the melody to destroy what originality the piece may have, hackneyed turn of tune, as found (at we have missed you" and scores of other ward melodic progression, as I have it, ing with the text. With respect for your opinion, I must, therefore, beg you to print the quartette as I wrote it. It is on account of that very 8th measure, that I am glad to publish, & thus assert my original conception; for at that point the alteration had been made that I mentioned in my last letter. I should not like to sacrifice my idea of the melody for a slight gain in the harmony. Now as to your suggestion for the closing bars, I would say that the singing of the words God and I, at the same time has not hitherto seemed out of place, especially if the 1st tenor sang **mf**, and the other voices **p**, softly, as directed. The word God is in relief, and the whole phrase is effective in a solemn service. I should prefer to have you overcome the difficulty, if such it be, of the two words at the same time, by substituting for the close, (as you have it from me, the following arrangement which I have usually offered as a preference, but forgot to do so in your case.



in the 8th measure, is to de- and put in place of it a the same place) in "Willie similar songs; while the down-

I feel to be in tender keep-

(second ending.)

For general use, I think the above will be the better way to sing it, and so please print it that way.

Fully appreciating the kind tone of your letter, I am sincerely yours,

Abraham R. Beck

P.S. Perhaps it would be in better form to give my full name for the music, and strike out "For male voices" on the copy. You will know best on these points.

Ap. 18th, 1887.

Harvey R. Gaylord.  
Haywards, California.

. . . I thank you for the piece of altar cloth, but at the same time must express the hope that the person who gave it to you came honestly by it. Catholics do not readily part with anything so interesting to them in a historical & religious light, & this scrap looks as though it had been cut ruthlessly from the relic.

. . . How about Snyder's dam, & the fish, & Bertie's delight over the big sun-fish he caught with his hands! In those happy days I used to tell you that your now fast-approaching manhood must be like your father's — noble, true & good; & that we still expect of you . . .

A. R. Beck.<sup>11</sup>

(Address: To a Roman Catholic Prelate, Tucson, Arizona.)

Lititz, Oct. 22nd '88.

Reverend Sir:

I have in my possession a piece of ancient altar cloth (about 2 x 4 inches) from the mission church of San Xavier del Bac. It was given me by a man who had visited the church. I believe it to have been stolen. If its return is desired, please give my address to whomsoever it may concern; otherwise, no notice of this letter is required.

Respectfully,

A. R. Beck.

Answer date Tucson, Oct. 28th, came to me Nov. 2nd. It was from Rev. Aug. Morin, of St. Augustine's Cathedral, Tucson. This letter is preserved in my office-desk. Returned the piece of altar cloth, Nov. 5th.

Nov. 5th '88

Rev. Aug. Morin, Tucson, Arizona.

Dear Sir.

Yours of the 28th ult. came duly to hand. It affords me great pleasure to return the piece of Altar-cloth. I hope its condition is not such as to render a neat restoration impossible. It was sent to me March, 1887, and I then desired to return it to you, but, owing to a re-arrangement of my museum of curiosities, it was mislaid, and only found again last month.

Very respectfully yours,

A. R. Beck

Jan. 1st 93.

To Martha V. Hammer:

. . . I have seen some beautifully executed portraits, in my time, by Sargent, Bonnat, of Paris, and others equally celebrated; but I need not such of my departed parents, brothers or sister, if I have but some of their old letters. So it is my habit, every New Year's Eve, to meet them, to see them, hear them, and laugh and cry with them — at least, almost cry; — and, as I read, my room changes to the old homestead, or Cressona, losing me to everything but sweet remembrance.

A. R. B.

Ap. 16th '93.

F. S. Curtis.

(Brookfield Center, Conn.)

A Phila lady of my acq. recently sent me your brochure "The C. S. for Boys." She rightly supposed that it wd. int. me, and, without doubt, it seemed to her that you & I must have much in common as prin's of appantly [sic] similar scho. Grt interest it was read; next best thg to talking with you. Not to propose continued corresp., but I do promise myself the pleasure, in this single instance, of a few lines in return from you. Mention his letter of Aug. 1886. Successful operation, 1865 — taught 5 yrs in L. Acad — founded by my father, John Beck, — a noble gentleman and most admirable teacher — and conducted by him 51 yrs. Resigned my succession to two of my fellow teachers & started family plan, according to my preconceived, but then somewhat vague, ideals. Like yours, my school is undenominational and entirely independent; and you don't seem to be any more able to boast of a bishop than I am.

Attd. services Mor. Ch. — to wh. we belong. Name of Lititz, which must strike you as uncom'on — was — barony Lititz in Bohemia — whence some of the founders had come. Pleased to find in book pict of school, with boys in foregrd. Should like to send mine — unsatisfactory, tree &c. If succeed better before foliage out send you one. In the mean time a group of my boys, may interest you (I sent the fine Spring (babeshade [?] photo, & the 11 laughing boys.) Excepting such grps, occasionally, no time for photoghy, but in mids. vaca'n delightful recreation for me.

Now I trust it has been agreeable to you that I should write you & I hope you will favor me in return.

With Mrs. Beck's & my own best regards to Mrs. Curtis & yourself.

I am, very truly yours,  
Abraham R. Beck.

March 7th '94.

Frederick S. Curtis,  
Brookfield Centre [sic], Conn.

Dear Sir:

Nearly a year ago I wrote a letter and rec'd in return a postal card from you kindly stating that you would make early opportunity to reply. If you have forgotten to do so, I have nothing to say, and I do not by this writing express displeasure; but it is most likely that you wrote me and your letter miscarried; and because it may have contained a question or two, it has all along seemed to be my duty by you to say that I never rec'd it. Hoping that you are well.

I am yours truly,  
A. R. Beck.

Rec'd a prompt reply to the above, — a longer letter than my first to him had been. (F. S. Curtis, princ'l of a famous School in Conn.)

Mch. 14th, [1894]

F. S. Curtis. Wrote him short letter of appreciation, his letter, his book (reread) & pictures enjoyed by us all; the latter, on my part, even to the smallest detail—such as learning, from your note, which horse is Don & which Belle. As in first letter said Corresp. out of question — "for if, with evidently similar experiences, we should begin it, where in the world would we stop!" At same time, might be agreeable to both occasionally to receive something like a programme, a new circ. a blue print likely to interest, &c, without necessity of acknowledgement except, possibly, by p. cd.

You have given me your age; I am sixty, but I don't realize it, — probably because I am spending my life, sympathetically, with boys. Glad to learn that you have had a full school; ours, ditto. Regards from Mrs. B. & self to Mrs. C., and I don't forget Master Lawrence, whose acquaintance I made on a few of the photographs.

June 25th, 95.

to James Beck:

"The final closing of my school had been in consideration by us ever since Xmas, and with the end of the term we came to the conclusion that forty years' work was about enough, especially as Paul did not wish to succeed me. Had he done so, it would have given me much pleasure to teach for him, because, so far, I have lost little, if any, power in that direction, the heavy responsibility of taking entire charge of other people's children being the only thing we were beginning to tire of." [""] Would have had good prospects — patrons pressed me hard not to give up."

A. R. Beck.

July 23rd '95.

Mr. H. S. Feoring, Bethm, Pa—

Dear Sir:

Yours of yesterday rec'd. You have been rightly informed as to the discontinuance of my school.

No disposition has been made of it, and, as far as any efforts of mine are concerned, there will be none, it being our intention to occupy the house, in retirement; yet, if a highly remunerative offer to purchase or rent were to be made to us, we might be induced to change our present plan.

Resptfully,

A. R. Beck.



H. A. Foering:  
Dr Sir:

Replying to your second letter, I have to say, first, that I do not do so in a spirit of negotiation, for, as I have told you, I do not desire to rent or sell my place just now; and would add, here, that as none of my family stands ready to succeed me, I am not interested in the school's continuance by another. Should I ever be induced to rent away my property for school purposes, my successor would have to guarantee the payment of the stipulated sum without "its being consistent with the number of scholars and income of the school." I must frankly say that I do not think that your prospects for re-opening with my boys, of last year, or any of them, would be good. To several of my recent patrons, who asked my advice, I have recommended Nazareth Hall, for I was both boy and teacher there; but the majority of those who have ever kindly patronized us are such who—if I must appear to boast—would not have sent their boys from home except to Mrs. Beck and myself.

Very truly yours,

A. R. Beck.

Jan. 6th '96.

Prof. A. E. Gehman,  
Catawissa, Pa.

Yours of Dec. 30th rec'd. My answers to your questions must relate to such a school as mine was; with other conditions I am not familiar. "Is it difficult to secure patronage?" I have never, from the beginning, found it necessary to seek it; my patrons always sought me. When I opened my school, in 1865, I had two boys who were "left over" from my father's school, and I got one more from an adv. in a Phila. paper. Having given satisfaction to these first patrons, they advised others to send their boys to me, and so it went on for 30 years. (Mentional C. E. K.'s case—chief, trusted accountant, a position that I could never, never fill — to emphasize fact that not every one is fitted to keep Fam. Sch.)

"Is it pleasant work?" Yes, very pleasant, but at the same time excessively arduous. Fourteen hours a day, Sundays included! I don't see how I ever should have stood it had I not been of the fourth generation of hard workers in the same line.

It has paid me well enough financially, and infinitely better in the results of my teaching, and the affection my old boys show to Mrs. Beck and myself. A good, motherly wife, is, of course, indispensable in the Fam. Sch. Enclosed Circ. Terms. No set course of study—among so few boys—each could have personal att'n accord'g to his needs.

To answer your final question, and not presuming to advise, I should say, that, success being doubtful, it would be better, in your case, to hold on to the bird in the hand.

A. R. Beck.

P. S. In my present leisure time I have much pleasure in giving Miss Bricker's girls & boys an occasion'l "talk" on Nat. History; so you see I'm not quite unhitched yet.

(Being some account of my school and its ways I have copied this in full).

June 8th, 96.

To Mr. I. G. Samson,  
204 S. Park, Ave. West  
Bay City, Mich.

(Wishes to establish a school "on lines" similar to my own. Introduced by letter from Mr. N. B. Bradley; on that account I answer a stranger so fully, Mrs. B. having given him so glowing a description of our school.)

Encd. Circ. of Terms. It will give you my charges, directions for outfit, & answer some of your questions.

Questn. In some years I exceeded my limit of 15, taking as many as 20, & in one year, 22. Occasionally, too, I exceeded my limit of age, and kept a boy until he was 15, or even 16; doing thus in some cases of slow learners, but excellent character, for whose best advantage it was to stay with us.

Questn. There was no set preparatory course of study; among so small a number of boys, each could have personal attention according to his needs; and if a boy show-

ed a special talent, as for music, drawing or painting in water colors, he had an opportunity here to develop it.

With the exception of the last few years when my son helped me, I have done all the teaching and care taking alone. (In answer, this, to his question.) It is true that I engaged a retired clergyman, one year, (1880) to assist me, for one hour a day, so that I might take, I had hoped, a slight breathing spell for myself; but as he had no power over the boys, I might as well have done without him for all the rest it gave me.

But I had assistance other than that of teaching; for my wife was an excellent mother (pro-tem) to the boys, and my support through trouble; while my two daughters and my son helped to make the boys' stay with us pleasant.

(Answer to question.) I never took into consideration what was the probable expense of each pupil per year; for, although I was exceedingly particular about my advance payment regulation, I was, in truth so much engaged with the boys, day & night, and Sundays as much as week-days, that I never bothered myself further about money matters, my wife, again, coming in good stead in that direction.

(Answer.) I do not know that we ever received any of the actually "tougher element," most of our patronage being from good families: but there were frequently boys here of peculiar, or unfortunate temperaments, who, though not bad boys, gave us considerable trouble. With such cases, I had no special method of proceeding; my diagnosis of a boy's character was generally correctly made almost as soon as I saw him — thanks to 4 generations of schoolmasters before me — and then, going to work upon him as my nature dictated, I usually won him; not to boast, however; no doubt I made many a mistake, and I fully realize that our best endeavor was only weakness.

My charges were high for this section of the country, but low compared with those of many schools elsewhere; at the same time I find that my school was better equipped with philosophical apparatus, magic lanterns, telescope, &c., than some others of greater pretensions.

It was my custom to be untiring in affording my boys amusement—pleasant excursions, "happy evenings," rifle shooting, my own exhibition of legerdemain, &c, &c; not, however, as a bribe for their good behavior, but because I liked to do it for them, and was a kind of boy myself. Yet all this was a great help to my discipline—which ever was nothing less than must—for if a boy, or boys, did not deserve these pleasures, he couldn't have them as a natural consequence, which was a lesson to him for his future as well as his present.

I must add that Mrs. Beck's devoted reading aloud to the boys, on certain evenings, was much appreciated by myself and them as a means of both amusement and instruction.

The usual elementary branches (with some beginning in Latin and German, when desired) were taught; music, drawing & painting were specialties with us; but the chief end of all our teaching and care was the general welfare of our boys. The work was certainly arduous, but in many respects delightful; and we were amply repaid by the kind approval of such admirable patrons like Mr. & Mrs. Bradley, and the affection for us of our boys. Your association with the Bradleys has drawn me out to write as much as I have about ourselves. To them, when next you meet, our best regards, please! Wishing you success,

I am respectfully yours,

A. R. Beck

P. S. I take the liberty to send you a few programmes, &c, which may help to indicate "our lines.") Sent Bird-list (note attached.) Quickslickization [sic] invitation (note about under plates at breakfast table.) Whit & his Cat,<sup>12</sup> prog., School supper prog. Two nights at sea, & concert prog. of best orchestra. (Supplementary to above I may add here what I wrote to Mr. Brown, 1893, when, on applying for Elmer, he asked about the Sabbath: The Sabbath is observed as well as may be by young & lively boys, & I am successful in having the day respected as much as is possible with them. Bible reading first — useful occupation of time — church — afternoon S. School, (Mrs. B.) walk — evening reading aloud by one of us, or a service of song.)

Aug. 21st, 1896.

To Miss Adelaide Fries,  
Salem, N.C.

Dear Miss Fries:

Reading with pleasure your "Outline of the Hist. of Forsythe Co." now appearing in "The Moravian," I have thought that you might care to have a photograph of my portrait of Bernhard Adam Grube, the leader of "the pioneers"; either for yourself, or for some Salem historical collection.

Although I am a stranger to you, my wife, who was Joanna Huebener, is an old Salem girl who knew your family well; and that should excuse the liberty I am taking.

I have ever been much interested in Father Grube's life and beautiful character, and am particularly so because my father was his well-beloved grandson, and it was always said that the two were like each other in many respects.

Photograph from copy, carefully made by my bro. J. A. B. of the original ptg, which was prob'ly by Haidt, the Mor. Artist, and which is now in somewhat decayed condition.

Very truly yours,

Abraham R. Beck

Feb. 23rd, 1897.

To Mr. John W. Jordan,  
1300 Locust St. Phila.

. . . The Military Company to which you refer was organized in 1831, — the date you gave. John Levering was elected Captain, but he seldom took an active part in it, his name standing more for the prestige it gave the company, for he was at that time a very popular man here. (Later he absconded — a defaulter.) Henry Blickensderfer, 1st lieutenant, usually acted as captain, & later was promoted to that position. He & Jacob Tshudy bought the equipments at Horstman's. This company was in existence about 8 years. I remember it well, and though I was but 5 years, or 6, old when it disbanded I can perfectly recollect the sense of calamity that oppressed my young mind when, as they marched past my father's house for the last time, I realized that all this splendor would now be over. The only official use I know to have been made of these volunteers was their presence, with others, as guards at the last Lancaster County public execution — the hanging of one Shaefer, in 1832. On that day thousands upon thousands of people flocked to town, and the eight miles of highway from here was lined with carriages and pedestrians — many coming from as far away as Lebanon. Our company went on foot. At Neffsville (4 miles) — then "Fiddler's Green" — Wm. Rauch, of Lititz, had erected a huckster-table. The company, true to its Moravian instinct, surrounded this table and so heartily enjoyed their cups of coffee that they were usually spoken of, thereafter, as "The Coffee Guards." (This from Geo. L. Grider.) At the vendue of Ferdinand Lennert's stock — old Gemein-store — a few dozen of the bell-crowned "soldier-hats" came to light, and were sold for 10 and 15 cts a piece. I don't know when I ever so much wished for money as then; and my boy companions felt just so.<sup>13</sup>

A. R. Beck

Letter written to all patrons, Febr 24th, 1895,<sup>14</sup> At the time of Paul's attack of diphtheria. (Mabel made the copies sent.)

Dear Sir:

Mrs. Beck & I hope that.....has arrived home safe and well. We thought it our duty, under the circumstances, to send him to you at once, without previous correspondence. As regards re-opening the school, we have this to say: Since Xmas we had about made up our minds to discontinue our school after June 15th; — not, however, that we felt incapacitated for its continuance, but because we agreed that forty years' (that is, 30 Family Sch. — 10 elsewhere.) service was enough of it and our son Paul feels no inclination to succeed us. Now the present enforced condition finds us willing to precipitate our intention of closing finally, but we have thought that some of our patrons might wish to have the boys return for the remainder of the term, and so we ask you to inform us, as soon as possible, of your intention concerning..... If all the boys, or nearly all of them, are to come back again, we shall continue, otherwise, give up. Mr. Paul was taken sick on Thursday, but we did not know the nature of his attack until Friday (22nd). It is not of a malignant type, he is now (Sunday) very much better, and in a few days he will, probably, be well. We propose to re-open in about two weeks, if our patrons wish it. (Then instruction about the Saginaw boys' clothing in trunk exp'd to Frank Lawrence, 1109 Genessee Ave.)

Aug. 31st, 1897.

To John W. Jordan:

I believe I made some allusion to a spook in the Brn's House (He reminded me, in letter, 26th inst. to send it along) when last I wrote you. It cannot be chg'd against me that I am superstitious — quite the contrary am I; but a very strange thing, Horatio, did happen before my brother (J. A.) and myself as we sat, one day, last June in the Archives Room of the Brn's House, while I read to him from one of the old Lititz diaries. Suddenly both of us jumped; for a French horn, that had been lying securely for many a day on the top of a book-case, was violently dashed to the floor with a mighty bang and clatter! The house was at absolute rest, no jarring or hammering going on; except the janitress, in the basement, we were alone then. While there may be a scientific explanation of the circumstance — sympathetic vibration between my voice & the instrument, perhaps—the supernatural one, which I am at this moment influenced by the spirit of Bro. Matthaeus to give you, is this: Just following what I was reading at the time came an entry (in the hand-writing of Brother Matthaeus Hehl.) stating that Bro. Matthaeus had bought with his own money zwei waldhorner, and that after his death his widow ought to have something for them: and this the manifestation was to emphasize (?)

[Note of a later date: "The horn did not fall straight over the edge of the closet; it seemed to be forcibly thrown down."]

Nov. 22nd, 1897.

To Augustus:

This week, one year ago, our vagabond cat, "Whatty," came to us; but whence he came passed our knowledge. Sometimes I think that he never had a home of his own, and was given to wicked ways, and that at a convention, or rally, of cats, held in some Lititz barn, he was reformed and directed to go to Beck's, where he'd have a good time. This is especially likely, because at first he was quite surly, expecting every attention as a matter of course — as the reformed usually do — so that, as he could not make up his mind to return our kindness, I carried him, closely ticked under my overcoat, far away, at night; and although I walked some distance back and forth, and round and round, thinking to confuse him, and finally cast him over a high board fence on the old Moravian farm, in half an hour he was back again, mewing on the sill of my library window. Then we concluded to keep him, and by this time we are pretty good friends all around. (Died Dec. 30th, 1901. "Whatty")

Rev. J. T. Hamilton,<sup>15</sup>

Dear Friend:

In your editorial notice of Mr. Mercer's pamphlet you say "to the best of our knowledge it (German Text) was not systematically taught by the Moravians," at the same time inviting "more accurate information" on the subject. To my father's credit let me state that he taught it regularly and systematically up to the close of his school in 1865. An expert and highly successful teacher of penmanship, when his classes so to speak "graduated" in the simpler forms of writing, he finished them off with **Fraktur**. So many of our earlier ministers having been adepts in the art, I am inclined to think that it was taught at Naz. Hall also. Bishop Samuel Reinke was a notably fine German Text writer. I don't send this for publication — only for yourself; but if you make any use of the fact, let it be as coming from one of John Beck's old boys. Please don't take any of your valuable time to acknowledge my letter.

Sincerely yours,

A. R. Beck.

From a letter to John W. Jordan,<sup>16</sup> March 7th 1899. (He asked for information about Father Grube.)

"To illustrate their hardships in the Indian mission, I can tell you this: My grandmother, Anna Johanna Grube, was born in Gnadenthal, 1758; she was but a few months old when her parents were removed to Patgatgoch (New England); there the cold in their wigwam was so intense, and the means of warmth so imperfect, that, to save the child's life, they had to place it nightly between and close to the bodies of two large Indian dogs.[""]

June 26th, 1899

To Geo. Oberteuffer,

"On the very last day before the close, we went to that lovely place ((Millway). The boys had finished their swim and were engaged in fishing. I stood alone on the old bridge, enjoying the gentle flow of the stream, the musical waterfall and the perfectly calm evening and glorious sunset, all, as I powerfully felt it, a sweet finale to my long period of school-keeping and good companionship of boys."<sup>17</sup>

To Sup't M. J. Brecht, Lancaster, Pa., June, 25, 1900, in relation to the meagre circular I sent him, with answers to other questions: . . . Our patronage was composed of people related or intimately known to each other, so that little information from us regarding our school was necessary.

A. R. B.

June 15th 1901

To Martha Hammer: . . .

. . . I fear, however, that I shall not be able to send you another letter such as you say you found my last one to be; first, because I don't feel that I can get myself into just the same humor, and, secondly, because of the possibility of its being sent on the rounds, which likelihood somewhat mars the naturalness I should like my correspondence to have. . . .

A. R. B.

Oct. 25, 1901.

To Charles Hutchinson:

As I walked past the Girard House, and saw them pulling it down, I thought of the Sunday morning, long ago — about 1850 — when you and I passed there, and you told me that your father supplied the hotel with coffee; and as that establishment in brown stone was considered a wonderful enterprise in those days. I remember that I experienced a faint, homeopathic dose of elation over companionship. Well, time has supplied a stronger bond between us than that of coffee, and I expect it to continue until one of us leaves the other to kindly memories only.

A. R. B.

July 12th, 1902.

To Charlie Hutchinson:

My having recently written a letter of inquiry to Prof. Wm. (Billy) MacLean, of Philada, might have led you to suppose, had you known of it, that I wished to take lessons from him in the "manly art," with design to become a "heavyweight"; but I wanted to ascertain whether he was the man (as I believed) whom I had seen, about 25 years ago, take the part of Charles, the Duke's Wrestler, in *As You Like It*, at the Chestnut St. Theatre my object being to fill out in my copy of Shakespeare the casts of characters with the names of actors I had seen in each part. An answer came, too, but probably Billy's muscles could no longer respond to the gentle movements of penmanship, for it was written evidently by a little girl. He was the wrestler, for the occasion, and, of course, as his namesake the *divine* William would have it, got thrown, too, although he might easily have pitched Orlando over the footlights.

A. R. B.

June 10th, 1902.

To Martha Hammer [.]

. . . You say "I think you must have known the Frueauff family" some of whose members Ella met in Denver? Well, I should say I did! The poor lad's father was one of my best boyhood's and later, friends — Frederick Frueauff, whose father was for many years the worthy and well-beloved principal of Linden Hall Seminary. How well I remember the delightful times when Fred and I sat together, in his room, reading aloud, alternately, *David Copperfield*; then there was no need for us to be reminded of "The Return of Spring" by a lonely school-girl who, at the same time, was practising [sic], over and over again, a mazourka of that name in the adjoining empty prayer-hall, for surely spring was in our hearts as we read the delightful novel. His parents were life-long friends of our family. . . . Since your last writing you have received from Mabel a photograph of her little boy; she wishes me to say that it does not do half-justice to his good friendly looks, and gives you no idea of his high, healthy color; and I, the proud grandpa, indorse all she says, for he is just to be placed among the sweetest of babies that ever were. Victor Hugo wrote "The Art of being a Grandfather"; but I have no use for it, for this little fellow's affection flows out to meet mine for him just naturally, and if I'm about, he will not rest until he can come to my arms. So you can imagine what a joy he is to me in — I won't say my declining years, for, so far, I don't feel much declining — but in the evening of my life.

A. R. B.

To Miss "Julia Mills," c/o Rosalind Tausig, 52 S. Franklin St., Lancaster, Pa.

Dear Julia:

I thank you for the Christmas card you sent me, and its good wishes. When it came to our office, my employer, Mr. Ralph Nickleby, said "Such cards are nonsense, and a nuisance"; but I don't agree with him: of course, no one would ever think of sending *him* one. I frequently see Mr. Pickwick walking the London Sts and beaming good-naturedly on every one he passes; but I've never had the good fortune to behold him mounted on his chair, as he is pictured on your card. Last Sunday, as I strolled in Hyde Park, whom should I meet but N. N. and his lanky friend Smike. They inquired about you, and the latter asked me were you as handsome as ever. They are no longer with the Crummles troupe, because the Infant Phenomenon was getting to be too "fresh" and too sweet on Smike. Well, now, Julia, I, in return for your Xmas greeting, wish you a very Happy New Year, and I hope that it will bring you much good, and restored health to your dear mamma.

Affectionately yours

Newman Noggs.

Golden Square,  
London,  
Dec. 31st, 1906.

Lititz, Pa., Nov. 4th 1907

Martin W. Littleton,  
60 Wall St.  
New York;

Dear Sir:

Replying to your letter to me of 1st inst. requesting "my opinion of the mental condition of Harry Thaw<sup>18</sup> during the time I knew him," I have this to say: Harry Kendall Thaw was a pupil in the Beck Family School for Boys, in Lititz, Pa., of which I was the Principal, from September, 1881, to April, 1882, his age being then eleven years. His conduct during the great part of his stay in my school was of such an extreme of contumaciousness, in regard to his violent opposition to the insistence of his parents that he remain with me, that, as I had known nothing like it in my previous experience with boys, I was led to suspect in him an unstable mental organization, and, finally, to believe him possessed at least of an insane temperament. I am disinclined to give the individual facts that brought me to such a conclusion; one must have lived through them to appreciate their force.

Respectfully,

Abraham R. Beck.

Nov. 7, 1907

Martin W. Littleton,

Dear Sir:

On no consideration would I be willing to appear at Harry Thaw's trial, if requested to do so, to give testimony as to his mental state when he was my pupil; but, if you wish, you can return my first letter and I will add my deposition before a notary as to its truth.

Respectfully,

Abraham R. Beck.

(After another letter from Littleton (Jan. 1908), and much troubled consideration on my part, I came to think it my duty to go and give my evidence . . .)

[At this point in the Letter Book two loose pages were inserted containing a prepared statement which Beck hoped to have read to the jury.]

(Written to read to the jury, but that could not be).

Harry Kendall Thaw was a pupil in The Beck Family School for Boys, in Lititz, Pa., of which I was the Principal, from September, 1881, to April, 1882, his age being then eleven years.

His conduct during his stay in my school was, frequently, of such an extreme degree of contumaciousness in regard to his violent opposition to his parents' insistence that he **must** continue in my care; and its manifestation in sudden, passionate outbursts of animal-like howling — usually breaking into the quiet of a study-hour, or a class-period — the while his facial expression was wild, with a peculiar downward rolling of his eyes — was so unusual that, never having seen anything like it in my previous extended experience with boys, I was led to suspect in him an unsound mind, and, finally, by comparison with normal standards, to believe him possessed of an insane temperament.

It would not be possible for me to give all of the individual facts that brought me to such a conclusion; one must have lived through them to appreciate their force.

When the boy, Thaw, was not affected by his natural spells, he was not unwilling to follow the orderly regulations of the school; although his demeanor towards his companions, and towards my family and myself was almost continuously sullen and supercilious.

Abraham R. Beck.

Lititz, Pa.  
Jan. 14th, 1908.

Jan. 20th, 1908 (copied Mch 4)

Dear Brother:

As you will doubtless be interested to receive a full account of my late, unusual experience, I shall begin at the beginning by saying that for a few days the anticipation of going to the trial, and the nervous strain of spending all of a Sunday in examining about 40 letters of correspondence between the Thaws and myself, &c., &c., had greatly enervated me mentally, and physically I was about ready to drop over. However, when Bert and I got away, Wednesday morning (Jan. 15th), I began to get up courage, and that went steadily on until it was greatly increased, as you shall see, presently, in the evening. Arrived in New York we took the ferry for 23rd St, and then a P. R. R. hansom took us to the Holland House, 5th Ave. & 35th St. Fine Hotel — and here we lived sumptuously, had connecting rooms, bath, telephone &c., and the best the bills of fare could give us. After our late dinner, the telephone was often in use; first came James M.; then Wm Hammer; then Walter Addicks, an old pupil of mine; and, finally, Martin W. Littleton and his assistant, Herndon. We seemed to take each other's measure at once; and as L. is a man of winning personality — in manner something like Frank Gowen,<sup>19</sup> in appearance much like W. U. Hensel<sup>20</sup> — I was soon at my ease and much encouraged for the ordeal. L. said it would be Jerome's duty to ask me a few questions, but he (L.) would keep his promise that I should not be unkindly used. He said he would send his automobile for us at 9:30 A.M. next day, and that it should be at our disposal to use as we wished, and it did, finally, take us to the ferry. I must say that during the whole time I was treated, even by Jerome, with deference and the highest respect. When we got to the Court-house, we were taken to the witness room to await my turn. I forgot to tell you that part of my Sunday strain had been the preparation of a most carefully worded statement which I had hoped to read to the jury,<sup>21</sup> saving me embarrassment and consequent incoherence; but I was frightened when Mr. L., Wednesday night, told me that while the statement was admirable and covered all I could say, it was nevertheless, not what the law demanded, which must be question and answer; but he told me pretty much what he would ask me, so I could prepare myself to some extent.

Having been called to the Court-room, I found, what I had ardently hoped for, that I was quite myself, and, with the assurance of truth in my heart, I felt courageous, and that I was, in my own line, as good as any of 'em! James M.,<sup>22</sup> sitting 20 ft from me was also a moral support for me; so, too, Bert and Will Hammer. My answers came out loud and clear without hesitation, and the keenest attention was given to every word I said. While Littleton and the Court stenographer were trying to decipher Mrs. Thaw's letter (I offered assistance, being familiar with her hand, — but they didn't need it). I looked over the court-room to see Thaw, but failed, because, as I afterwards heard from Bert, he was sitting behind James M. — but only about 20 feet away from me — so that I firmly believe he was reluctant to meet my eye. But before I entered the court-room this happened, as James M. afterwards told me: Thaw leaned over to James and said "I ought to know you" — was answered, no he must be mistaken; "why, certainly," said Thaw. "Aren't you Paul Beck?" Explanations followed, and then T. said "Your uncle was the best man of the whole 'push'; he was true to me as steel." When I, in giving my testimony, said that he (T.) was in progress about like a boy of 6 or 7 when he came to me, he, probably, like some of the reporters, understood me to mean that he had made no progress while in my care; so he leaned over again to James, and said, laughingly, as though he had me there, "And yet I still have some of my old composition books in which your uncle wrote below the tasks, 'Excellent.'" The truth is, he did improve some, but he contested every inch of progress, and never would acknowledge that he was learning anything from me. He, Thaw, also said "I wish you to tell your uncle that I have nothing but the kindest feelings for him," and that his conduct at school arose from uncontrollable fits of homesickness. I suppose that, looking back through the vista of a wild and sensual life, he has come to appreciate the fact that his school-boy days were his best. When he was with us he certainly hated me, or pretended to; called me an "old witch," and "a nasty thing," in a letter he wrote me in his Christmas holidays. When they were through with me I turned and bowed like a courtier to Justice Dowling, and received a courtly bow in return; and when Littleton bade me a cordial good-bye — Bert said it was a pretty picture — the old gray head and the virile black one, — I said to him, "I assure you, sir, that my alarm



at coming here was greatly mitigated by my having met you!" That pleased him. You will best understand that I am not conceitedly telling you how prettily I acted, or how nicely I delivered my compliment; I know that you will wish to hear it all.

When James, Bert, Will H., and I got out into the vestibule of the building we were at once beset by three photographers, who most persistently, beyond any power of my description or possible exaggeration, importuned me to "stand still, just a second, just a second," &c, and I as persistently refused, and, at last, on the sidewalk, going to the automobile, pulled down my broad-brimmed hat over my eyes — doing so partly from aversion to figuring in the newspapers, and largely from a sense of the humor of the situation; and I was doubly glad to have foiled them when I learned that they were from the *Journal*, a paper most detestable. The *N. Y. Herald* had a pencil-sketch of me, next morning, which they think, here, was tolerably well hit; at any rate little Abraham recognized it. All next morning's N.Y. papers agreed that my testimony was impressive. One reporter put me down as "a professional elocutionist, retired;" and another wrote "Mr. Beck looked like the Abbe Liszt. He had the same rugged contour of face, the same hawk nose, the same massive repose and air of sincerity" (!!!) Still another, "He exemplified the old saying, "A gentleman and a scholar!" [sic] James M. thought mine the strongest testimony yet presented for the defence, and said it was remarkable that Jerome didn't challenge the admission of Mrs. Thaw's letter. In private conversation, at the hotel, Mr. Littleton said to us, "I cannot get this young man (Thaw) to understand that he is not a popular hero; he insists that he has done the world a service in ridding it of a criminal."

Bert's attendance was invaluable to me, for while it is true that I might have done all he did for me myself, still it was a great help to have him attend to everything. Our bill was \$87.20, and I received a check for the amount to-day. I, of course, charged nothing for doing my duty, but Bert was entitled to professional remuneration, and we had lived high in every respect. We returned home Thursday, 17th, 7:45 P.M. and I was glad to get back to my dear ones, and to my woodpeckers and nuthatches and a new guest (since your visit), — a brown creeper. Must put up more suet in a few days. Yes, I should like to have renewed my acquaintance with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but, you see, once through with Court, nothing could hold me back; James M. wanted me to stay for Thursday night — Will Hammer for another time, — and Walter Addicks for an automobile jaunt through the city and Park for Friday. It was no go! Is it not remarkable that I saved that letter and much other Thaw matter, year after year, from destruction, supposing that I might be called upon some day to testify in behalf of my pupil.

Affectionately,

Abraham.

[In the margin of the book next to the above letter Beck wrote: "My Archives ink used) (Nutmalls—iron &c ink)."]

Dear Miss Lamborn:

On Wednesday morning (10th) I received the little "Ghost Book," for which please accept my heartiest thanks. At once I got to work to try my own autograph: then Mrs. Beck's — amusing her — then that of our domestic (a "Mennonite Maid") to her delight; and then rushing over to my daughter's house, I haled my grandchildren down from their rainy day play in the garret, and raised their and their mother's ghosts much to their surprise and amusement, and all of them very successfully. Even the names of our departed dog and cat, both out of love and experiment, had to go into the book.

Now, while I certainly am pleased with your gift to me, let me tell you that a greater pleasure to Mrs. Beck and myself was your sweet letter with its assurance of your happiness on the lovely occasion of our Golden Anniversary. That was one of the best times in our married life, and we can never sufficiently thank Mr. and Mrs. Beck for so richly rewarding our felicity. Kindly give them our best love; the same to Beatrice and James.

With much esteem,  
I am yours,  
A. R. Beck

Lititz, Aug. 12th 1910

Mr. Rudyard Kipling:

Dear Sir:

Having just read **Rewards and Fairies**, — given to me as a Christmas present — for although I am in my 78th year I am not too old to take delight in your stories — I make free to write, and tell you how great was my surprise to find in two of them, among other well-known characters, that of Tobias Hirte, with whose younger days and doings in this community I, as the Archivist of the Lititz Moravian Church, have been made quite familiar; although I do not suppose that his youthful escapades were nearly so dreadful as the stern clergy of his day seem to find them. It has occurred to me that an autograph of Toby's, herewith inclosed, might be of at least a passing interest to you, — or, possibly, to 'Dan' and 'Una' (or those they represent), in case they collect such things. I have much enjoyed the reading of **Rewards and Fairies**, but to my liking 'The Conversion of St. Wilfrid' is the most beautiful story in the book.

I wish not to trouble you, yet should take it was a high favor if you would have some one send me simply a postal card acknowledging the receipt of my letter.

Very respectfully,  
Abraham R. Beck

Lititz, Penna.

Jan. 1, 1911

(Address was c/o of A. P. Watt & Son, Hastings House, Norfolk St Strand, London. [ ])

Grand Hotel  
Engelberg;  
Jan. 13, 1911

My dear Mr. Beck,

Your very kind letter of the 1st Jan. has been forwarded to me in Switzerland where we are spending the winter and I cannot tell you how surprised and delighted I was with your most generous and valuable gift of Tobias Hirte's Signature — It is a possession that I shall always treasure and be proud of. I am glad you like **The Conversion of St. Wilfrid** [.] With every good wish for the coming year  
believe me sincerely yours  
Rudyard Kipling

(Rec'd Jan. 26th)

July 25, 1911-

To Aunt Cellie Warner,

(She was at Great Barrington, Mass. for the summer).

. . . I wish to tell you of another bit of history which has come to me in the most unexpected way. First, let me remind you that my father, as a Hall boy, was not bright, but of tardy mental development. He acknowledges the same in his valedictory address but adds, "whether from lack of capacity, or whether from proper training to suit my case, I know not, but the testimony I received was not an unfavorable one;" but he does not add what his teacher wrote on the back of the certificate when he left the school; and that, in all its cruel sarcasm, you shall hear, and how, in all these years, since 1805, I got to hear of it. Last Saturday Paul (and his band) played for a large S. S. picnic at Mohnton, near Reading, and there met with an old gentleman, a retired clergyman, a certain Dr. Miller, who told Paul that he had known Father Beck well, and talked with him about that self-same certificate, and how the teacher had endorsed it thus:

"Gott segne dich in deinem Studia,  
Aus dir wird nichts, Hallelujah!"<sup>24</sup>

He had heard this couplet from Bishop Haman (Evangelical) of the old Moravian (Nazareth) family of that name, who must have had it from my father, and, he said, he always remembered it as a case of bitter unkindness and utterly mistaken prophecy. The teacher who did the wrong, was, I doubt not, one Hazelius, of whom I often heard your father and my father talk, and more often than not unfavorably. He left our church and became a professor in Gettysburg College, & in Lexington, Kentucky,

dying there in 1853. It was the custom in that day for some of the teachers, at the Hall, to look down upon and treat with contumely the ministers' sons as charity boys. The principal, however, in my father's time, the Rev. Van Vleck, was a kind and good man.

A. R. B.

Lititz, Nov. 26, 1912

Dear Bro. Moench:

(He wished to know how Gen. Sutter came into touch with Lititz).

Replying to your note of yesterday, I have to say that after Gen. Sutter had heard, I know not how, of the Moravian schools, he sent his two granddaughters to Bethlehem Seminary. Some time later when he went himself to see them, he was not only coldly received by the Principal, but that gentleman didn't know even which **were** the Sutter girls! This made a bad impression on the General's mind, and suggested a want of proper personal attention to his granddaughters; so he took them away from there and placed them in Lititz, at Linden Hall. I do not know the date of this occurrence, nor the name of the Principal at B. at that time. Finally the General came to like Lititz so well that he made it his home, in 1871, and when he died, in 1880, our congregation was proud to give him a resting-place on our graveyard. You would find a short sketch of his life in my graveyards of Lititz.

A. R. B.

P.S. Gen. Sutter's grandson was in my father's care, but whether he came hither before or after his sisters I cannot recollect.

To James Huebener, who had proposed to lend me, on trial, a new contrivance for assisting defective hearing, which he highly praised:

Dear James:

In the crowd, with band blasting away, last night I could not properly express my thanks to you for your kind offer, nor explain why I did not accept it. The fact is I hear about as much as I care to hear, in general; and being practically free from the head-noises usually attendant upon dullness of hearing I would not choose to introduce any artificial ones, however slight they might be, to interfere with what to me in my old days is in truth no less than a comfortable repose.

Yours sincerely,  
Abraham R. Beck.

Sept. 7th, 1919

I have entered the above so that my children, after me, may know how I feel about my partial deafness.

Once our good Marion Beck placed such a machine in my ear, and there was caused such a violent jangling that it seemed as if I had a calithumpian band in my head.

January 13th, 1921

To the Rev. Wm. H. Vogler

(He had sent me some humorous lines of his own composition).

.... It seems to me that formerly the gift of pleasant verse was more common, especially among Moravians, making many a birthday happier, felicitating the married, or giving comfort to the grief-stricken. The Revds. Samuel Reinke and Samuel Huebener corresponded frequently in rhyme; and Bernhard Adam Grube, while minister here, wrote the annual Children's Memorabilia in the same way, and did it so once (in 1777) for the grown-ups.

A. R. B.

(The Rev. S. R. in that correspondence called Graceham "Gnadenshinken. ["]").

Lititz, Jan. 8th, 1921

Dear Cousin Clement:

It was very kind in Cousin Carrie to advise me of your present condition, and I herewith thank her for doing it. I was glad to learn that you are feeling "reasonably well," even if weak and keeping your bed.

The book you in your goodness sent me as a birthday gift I have now finished reading—going through it slowly and carefully as I told you I should. It strikes me as being exceedingly well-written and from the author's point of view very convincing; yet I cannot—perhaps because of my own naturally limited knowledge of theology—quite accept all of his interpretation of the gospel sayings on the subject; and it would ill become me to deny that which in my weakness I may not understand.

I think it a pity that "W. E. B." has not given us his name instead of only his initials. I for one like always to know to whom I am indebted for the contents of a good book.

With much love to you and your dear family, and my hope and prayer for the return of your usual health, I am your early playmate, fellow fisherman, co-octogenarian and

affectionate first cousin,  
Abraham Reincke Beck.

## PART II NOTES

1. The meaning of the term "S - - genus" is not clear. From the nature of the cases described the S might possibly refer to the word 'sadistic.'
2. This sentence was substituted for the following: "With the announcement of my death must go the words 'No Flowers.'"
3. These four brief notations were made by Beck on December 30, 1884.
4. Simon Eby, a former student of John Beck, was a member of the Lancaster County Bar Association and the author of "John Beck: The Eminent Teacher," **Lancaster County Historical Society Papers**, II, No. 5.
5. Probably Nathaneal Ellmaker, classmate of Simon Eby and a fellow member of the Lancaster County Bar Association.
6. Written in pencil following the letter.
7. Well known artist then living in Harrisburg.
8. This letter has been moved out of chronological order because of its direct bearing upon the subject of the memorial mentioned in the above letter to Simon Eby.
9. Edmund de Schweinitz was a noted Moravian historian and author of **The History of the Church Known as the Unitas Fratrum or the Unity of the Brethren**. (Moravian Publication Office, Bethlehem, 1885); and David Zeisberger the **Western Pioneer and Apostle of the Indians**, (Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1870).
10. For a discussion of A. R. Beck's interest in music see Herbert Huebener Beck, "The Beck Family School," **Moravian Historical Society Transactions**, XIV, 1949.
11. This letter has been moved out of chronological order because of its relationship to the two letters which follow it.
12. "Dick Whittington and His Cat" was one of the most popular skits performed by the boys.
13. This statement is rather confusing. If as the previous statements seem to indicate that hats came to light while the military company was marching to Shaefer's hanging in 1832, the event would have taken place a year before A. R. Beck's birth (December 16, 1833).
14. This letter is out of chronological order in the Letter Book.
15. Reverend J. Taylor Hamilton was the distinguished professor of church history in the Moravian Theological Seminary at Bethlehem and the author of **A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church or the Unitas Fratrum or the Unity of the Brethren During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**, **Moravian Historical Society Transactions**, VI, 1900.
16. As archivist of the Moravian Church in Lititz, Beck corresponded rather frequently with John W. Jordan. The information contained in this letter was incorporated in an article entitled "Biographical Sketch of Rev. Bernhard Adam Grube," **Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography**, XXV, 1901.

17. Directly above the date of this letter Beck wrote "closing day of my school." Since the notation was made some time after the letter was copied the meaning is not clear. Beck himself stated his intention of closing the school at the end of the term in June, 1895. A. R. Beck to James M. Beck, June 25, 1895. In his article on the Beck Family School for Boys, Herbert Huebener Beck lists no students after 1895. The three X's and the use of quotation marks seem to indicate that Beck was merely reminiscing about an event which took place four years earlier.
18. Harry Kendall Thaw, wealthy Pittsburgh socialite, shot and killed Sanford White, the prominent New York architect, in a dispute involving Thaw's wife Evelyn Nesbitt, the noted singer and stage personality. "... At the trial that followed," wrote Walter Lord, "the public hung on the lurid details. There was little sympathy for Thaw, who eventually got off by pleading insanity, but enormous interest in the stories of high jinks in high places." Walter Lord, **The Good Years, From 1900 to the First World War**, (Bantam Books, New York, 1962), 106.
19. Franklin B. Gowen, President of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad and a former student of John Beck.
20. Prominent Lancaster attorney and former student of John Beck.
21. The statement referred to is the one immediately preceding this letter.
22. James Montgomery Beck.
23. Herbert Huebener Beck.
24. Freely translated this couplet might read: "God help him in his studies for he cannot help himself, Halleluiah!"



HERBERT HUEBENER BECK (1871-1960)

Son of Abraham R. Beck

## PART III

### Genealogical Notes in the Beck Letterbook

Macaulay says: "He who is not interested in learning facts pertaining to remote ancestry will not be likely to do anything to bless remote posterity."

[Actual quotation: "Those who have no pride in the deeds of a remote ancestry will hardly be likely to accomplish anything worthy to be remembered by a remote posterity."]

Great-grandmother Grube's memoir  
(copied by Martha)

Genealogy—Translated from German m.s.s in Bethlehem Archives by R. Rau, Esq.

**Margaretha Elizabeth Krieger**, was born at Reval-Livonia, Nov. 12th, 1716. Her mother's maiden name was Boom, and was from Sweden. Her father, Andrew Krieger, died early, and her step-father, whose name was Busse, must have been married to her mother before she (Marg. Eliz.) was six years old. In early years she showed her zeal in reading of the Savior's sufferings, and to her parents' wonder, she spent much of her time in supplication and prayer, in which acts her parents did not sympathize with her. On the 18th. of Feb. 1734 she was married to **Joachim Busse**, a relative of her step-father's. Her anxiety about her salvation abated until she heard a preaching by Junger (Zinzendorf), 1736, delivered in the Dom-Kirche at Reval, and by reading Arndt's "Wahre Christenthum," and coming in contact with several Separatists, she and her husband became "in ein gesetzliches wesen u wurken." In 1738, the brethren Grasmann, Daniel (David?) Schneider, and Michael Miksch (from Gnadenthal) passed through Reval, stopped with the family and proved of great spiritual blessing to her, as did also the visits of Br. Kriegelstein and John Nitachmann [sic] Nitschmann? and family. In 1741 an union was formed by the awakened Souls of Reval, and she and her husband were chosen the first laborers. In 1743 a persecution arose against them, and they resolved to leave Reval, and were granted permission to join the Brethren's church. About this time her mother became converted and died happy. They left Reval with five children July 19, 1743, and arrived at Herrnhut, Sept. 25th, 1743, after a tedious journey by land and water, several of the children being sick on the way. They found the beloved "Junger" at Gnadeck. Marg. Eliz. (Memoir (in German) says "we were appointed") was appointed to lead a "Colonne" of "**Jedige Schwestern**" on foot to Marienborn where also 1744 she was made **Accluth**. Next she and her husband were sent to Berlin to minister to the small congregation there with "geschwister Jaeschkens, ["] (who subsequently died in the East Indies.) In 1747 she was ordained **deaconess by the synod at Herrnhag**. In 1751 they were called to **Hermersdorff** (?). In May 1751 they received a call to St. Thomas, which they willingly obeyed, leaving their children (the youngest only 1½ years old) behind. They went to Holland with geschwister Graff, went to sea with Brn. Nathanaels, Christensen, and others, and arrived at N. Y. Sept. 1751. Remained at Bethlehem three months, visited Gnadenhutten, where M. E. first saw Indians, and became more than ever anxious to preach to the heathen. They left Bethlehem Nov. 1st, arriving at St. Thomas Dec. 10th, 1751, after a severe sea journey. Her husband fell sick soon after their landing;—but she prayed that he might be spared at least one year; and he became better forthwith. Later she fell sick, but recovered in time to minister to her husband in his second illness, which removed him from this life, Feb. 17th 1753, the day before the anniversary of their marriage. Brother Nathanael came on a visit the same year and brought her a request to return to Bethlehem; on which journey she started in a few months, accompanied by the daughters of Legner & Bohner, arriving at Nazareth July 28th where she spent two years in the Nursery. On the 4th of May, 1755, by Brother Petrus of Nazareth, she was married to the single brother, **Bernhard Adam Grube**, and soon after went with him to the Gnadenhutten Indian Mission; but as the savage Indians at the Mahony became turbulent and murderous, they were forced to retreat to Bethlehem with some of the Moravian Indians. In the fourth year of their marriage was born to them **A. Johanna**, (mother of John Beck) who is at Lititz in the care of the congregation (viz—when this account was written). When she was three months old, they were called to take charge of the Indians at Pachgotgoch in New England, which was a hard station. They were relieved by Geschwister Mack, and went to Wechquetank, behind the Blue Mts., whence they

were driven by the Indians to Nazareth. Hence, with the Indians of Nain they were obliged to go to Province Island, where she and her husband fell sick and were kindly ministered to by David Zeisberger. By night journeys, they went to Phila., then to N. Y., to the land of the Mohawks; but got no farther than Amboy, 1764, as the N.Y. Government would not permit them to pass. So they were obliged to return and in this severe winter journey, she suffered exceedingly. Now the Indians were ordered to Susquehanna, and the Grubes' [sic] had a few weeks of rest at Bethlehem. May, 1765, they were called to take charge of the congregation of Lititz and Warwick, where she served 11 years. She had 8 children of Busse; children of Grube, unknown (one, Anna Johanna). The cause of her last illness was a severe drenching while on her return from her visit to Bethlehem, five weeks before her death. She died Nov. 10, 1776. (Buried in Mor. Graveyard, Lititz, 2nd grave at the head of main avenue.)

**Joachim Busse**, the first husband of the above, was born Feb. 27th, 1704 in Brandenburg, Prussia. He was sickly during the great part of his short stay at St. Thomas. Visited St. Croix July 1752. Acquired the language of his colored congregation rapidly. On the 9th of Feb. 1753, he was attacked with a violent fever and died on the 17th, in the presence of his wife and Bro. Bohner. He was buried on the plantation by the express permit of the Governor the following day. He was the first missionary buried on this mission.—

Extracts fr. Bp. de Schiv's "Life of Zeisberger. ["]].

**Bernhard Adam Grube**, second husband of Marg. Eliz. Krieger, and my (A. R. B's.) great grandfather, was born 1715 near Erfurt, Germany; and he died 1808, in the 93rd year of his age, at Bethlehem. He was the first missionary to visit the Seceders from Gnadenhutten. Was at Gnadenhutten on the Mahony, at the time of the great massacre. Was at Wechquetank, and by his great eloquence prevents the massacre of his whole congregation there, by a body of militia, who had come to revenge a murder, supposed to have been committed by the Wechquetank Indians; which imputation was false! He escaped to Nazareth with his whole congregation. Accompanied by the Christian Indians on their way to N. Y. (that is, to the barracks in Phila; from there they started to N. Y. but were ordered back to Phila because the Govr. of N. Y. would not allow them to come to his state. Account of this journey in Life of Zeisberger, by E. de Schweinitz.) On the 4th of July 1780, he married the famous Indian Missionary John Heckewelder to a Miss Ohenberg (ne?) at Gnadenhutten, Ohio. This was the first wedding of a white couple in the present state of Ohio. Their daughter "Polly" was the first white child born there, and, if I am correctly informed, Missionary Grube baptized her. June 4th 1781 he married the still more famous Indian missionary David Zeisberger, to Miss Susan Lecron, at Lititz.

Copied by Mabel,  
Feb. 1886.

Mss. returned to J. A. Beck, March 8th, 1886.

#### Ancestors of John Beck

**Bernhard Adam Grube**: Born June 21st, 1715, in Walschleben, near Erfurt, Germany. Died March 20th, 1808, in Bethlehem, Pa. He married Margaretha Elizabeth (Kreiger) Busse, who was born in Reval, Livonia (a Baltic province) Nov. 12th, 1716, and died, Nov. 10th, 1776, in Lititz. Her grave is the second of the first row in the original section of our graveyard. Her first husband was the Rev. Joachim Busse. Her father was Andrew Kreiger, of Reval, Livonia; his wife's maiden name was Boom.—a Swede.

**Anna Johanna Grube**: Born in Gnadenenthal, near Nazareth, 12th June, 1758; died in Lancaster, where she is buried, 1808.

**John Martin Beck**: Born 29th Sept, 1746, in Schafhausen, Switzerland; died in Lititz, 14th Feb. 1827. He married Anna Johanna Grube, Moravian minister.

**John Beck**: Born June 16th, 1791, in Graceham, Md.; died Feb. 11th, 1873. His sister Eliza, married Jacob Geitner, of Lititz. Another sister, Benigna Louise, died young in Graceham. He married

**Johanna Augusta Reinke.** Their children were John Martin, (17th Oct. 1820/Dec. 9, 1834); Maria Sophia, (July 5th, 1822/Dec. 5, 1824) [;] Samuel Reinke (Ap. 12, 1825/July 11th, 1846); Martha Ann (19th Ap. 1827/Jan. 21, 1861); James Nathan (Sept. 3, 1828/July 19th, 1885); Julius Augustus (born Ap. 2, 1831); Abraham Reinke (Dec. 16, 1833); John Martin (2nd) (Nov. 8, 1838/May 23, 1862).

#### Johanna Augusta (Reinke) Beck's Ancestors

**Peter Reinke**, wine merchant, Stockholm, Sweden. He married Magdalene Petersen.  
**Rev. Abraham Reinke:** born in Stockholm, Ap. 17th, 1712; in Bethlehem, Pa. Ap. 7, 1760. He married Sarah Stockberg, of Norway; (1715-1758).  
**Rev. Abraham Reinke, Jr.:** born in Philadelphia, June 15, 1752, died in Lititz Feb. 16th, 1833. He married Maria Sophia (Rudolph) Reichelt, the widow of Rev. Reichelt.

**Johanna Augusta Reinke:** born Dec. 14th, 1795, in Hope, N. J., died March 28, 1877. She married John Beck. Her maternal ancestors follow:

**Martin Schneider.** Zauchtenthal, Moravia. A contemporary and friend of Amos Comenius.

John (1676-1758) and Catharine Nitschmann. Zauchtenthal, Moravia.

**Daniel Schneider**, Zauchtenthal, Moravia, married Anna Nitschmann, (not the celebrated Deaconess).

**David Schneider** born, Aug. 13, 1693, in Zauchtenthal, Moravia; July 14th, 1775 in Ebersdorf, Germany. Married Catharine Meunster.

**Anna Schneider.** Zauchtenthal, Moravia. Born, Dec. 1714 / 25 March, 1767. She married Rev. John Heinrich Rudolph (26 Feb. 1709 / 30 Jan. 1766).

**Maria Sophia Rudolph.** Born, Ap. 20th 1755, in Eristfer, Livonia, / in Lititz, Ap. 19th, 1816. Her first husband was Rev. Reichelt; her second, **Abraham Reinke, Jr.** She was the mother of Johanna Augusta (Reinke) Beck, of blessed blessed memory.

#### Samuel Renatus Huebener's Ancestors.

**John Ludwig Huebener:** born in Rommelshausen, near Frankfort-on the Main, Dec. 10th, 1717; came to Bethlehem, 1743; married Cornelia Yoselstein, 1756. Itinerant preacher. Died in Bethlehem, Sept. 23rd, 1796.

**Rev. Ludwig Huebener:** born Aug. 8, 1761, in Nazareth; died (Principal of Bethlehem Seminary) Dec. 6th, 1813. He married Maria Christina Eschenbach, daughter of the Rev. Andrew Eschenbach and his second wife, Maria Bossert. (Rev. A. E. was sent by Zinzendorf, at Whitefield's request, to preach to the Germans in Penna., 1740. Stationed at Oley, Berks Co. where he is buried). Maria Christina E. was born Dec. 2, 1760 / in Bethlehem, Sept. 16, 1829).

**Rev. Samuel Renatus Huebener.** Born March, 10th, 1795; died in Salem, N. C. June 7, 1849. Married Salome Tshudy, oldest daughter of Matthias and Catharine (Blickensdorfer) Tshudy.

#### Salome Tshudy's Ancestors

**Henry Tshudy** (lived near Lititz. [;])

**Christian Tshudy;** born near Lititz. He married Eva Barbara Kiesel.

**Matthias Tshudy;** born in Lititz, Aug. 9th, 1771; died Oct. 25, 1852. He married Catharine Blickensdorfer, granddaughter of Christian B. (born Mch. 6, 1724 at the Kohlhof, in the Palatinate; came to America in 1753; settled near Lititz 1761; built a house in Lititz, and settled here; / Ap. 8, 1800.); and daughter of Jacob B., son of above. (Born in Germany. Married Elizabeth Ilgenfritz of York, Pa. Died Jan. 20, 1778, of the prevailing camp-fever.)

**Salome Tshudy.** Born, Mar. 5, 1803; / 25 May, 1867. Married Rev. Samuel R. Huebener. Their children were Matthias Tshudy, Lydia Cecilia, Lewis Renatus, Julia Antoinette, Obadiah Theophilus, Samuel Andrew, Joanna Salome, Mary Catharine.