

Middle Octorara Presbyterian Church and the Revolution

by J. Barry Girvin

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the memory of Emma Shimp Groff (1897-1964), my grandmother, who I loved very dearly. Her love and unselfish giving of herself made her an important influence in my life and in the lives of many young people who affectionately referred to her as "Mom Mom."

INTRODUCTION

As Mr. Madison McElwain pointed out in *Faith and Works* there is very little source material on our church during the Revolutionary Period available to the historian. We did not have a regular minister and no records were kept of the activities of the congregation. Therefore, what I write here is based on earlier church records (mostly concerning

Alexander Craighead), on materials found concerning individuals who were connected with the Church, on records concerning political and civil matters, and on sources dealing with other churches in our area during the Revolution. The latter allows the author to use his imagination in assuming in some cases that what was true of another church was probably true of Middle Octorara. Hopefully, the validity of these assumptions will someday be tested by the discovery of an old diary or some other significant primary source.

My purpose is to give the reader a minds-eye view of the life-style of our forebearers of the Revolutionary Period who were building a community on the frontier. Their spiritual dedication and passion for freedom certainly serve as examples for us to follow in dealing with the problems of our time.

CHAPTER I

CITIZENS RATHER THAN SUBJECTS

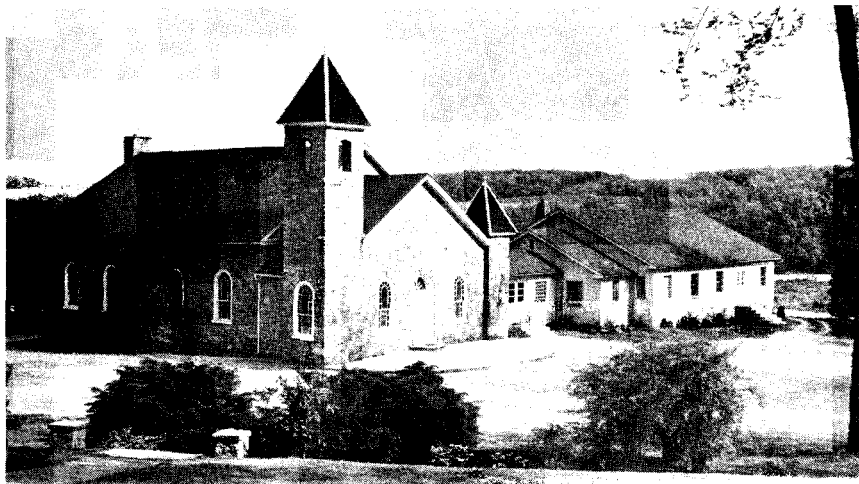
Why were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians some of the first to advocate the overthrow of British rule in America? To answer this question one can look to Middle Octorara during the pastorate of Alexander Craighead (1735-1741) as a case in point.

Reverend Alexander Craighead was the son and grandson of Presbyterian ministers who had suffered under English laws. He was either born in the New World or came here at a very early age. He had little cause to love the Royal Government since his ancestors had moved first from Scotland to Ireland and then to America to escape religious persecution. A dissenter by birth and training, he did not hesitate to express his views, enforce them on his contemporaries and take the consequences.¹ *

He was a strong supporter of the Great Awakening (late 1730s and 1740s) and a preacher of such emotional fervor that his audience would sometimes "... burst out with an audible noise into bitter crying."² The Great Awakening or Great Revival got its start in America among the Congregationalists of New England. The goal of these "New Light" descendents of the Puritans was to return to the zeal of the Reformation by creating a new reform movement. In brief, it was a movement against centralization, formalism, and secularization. Presbyterians of Craighead's persuasion (New Side) saw synods and presbyteries as simply advisory bodies whose rulings were not binding. They stressed revivals saying that true converts were sure of their "gracious state" and were able to tell of the time and manner of their salvation experience or conversion. They scoffed at the idea that ministers had to be educated in colleges approved by the Synod and had to pass an examination approved by the Synod. Craighead and the New Side



Middle Octorara Presbyterian Church. This building was erected about 1795 during the pastorate of Reverend Nathaniel W. Sample. The picture below (about 1965) shows that the old building still stands. A bell tower, vestibule, and educational building have been added.



asserted that the call of God to the ministry “. . . does not consist in their being regularly ordained and set apart to that work” but through the workings of the spirit known alone to the individual himself.⁸

Believing that the preaching of the gospel by unconverted⁴ ordained ministers could not save souls Craighead rode uninvited into areas served by other ministers and accused these servants of God of not preaching the whole gospel. Several protests were lodged against

him with the Presbytery including one by Reverend John Thomson and three members of the session of Chestnut Level Congregation.⁵

Craighead was also a strict Covenanter which meant that he supported the struggle to make Presbyterianism the state religion of Britain. His beliefs were the result of both Catholic and Anglican (Episcopal) persecution of his ancestors in Europe. He called on the Congregation to pledge support to the Solemn League of Covenant in the Communion services and when having children baptized.⁶ The congregation protested Craighead's changes in the ritual but he stubbornly defended the terms of worship as used in Scotland claiming that the sea did not separate God's people from their obligation to make Christ head of the Nation. The culmination of Craighead's argument was that since George II did not follow Christ (was not a Presbyterian) therefore the people owed no allegiance to the King.⁷ Treasonous talk indeed for a time when few colonists saw themselves as anything except loyal British Subjects.

Reverend Craighead paid the price for his defiance. What follows is a quote from McElwain's *Faith and Works* concerning the action of the Presbytery of Donegal in 1740.

The Presbytery came to Octorara Meeting House in 1740 to adjudicate the case between the pastor and the people. Craighead was preaching on the text, "They be blind leaders of the blind." It was a continual invective against pharisaical preachers and the Presbytery as given over to judicial blindness and hardness of heart. The people were invited at the close to repair to the tent, (evidently pitched in the grove for evangelistic service,) and hear his defense which was read by David Alexander and Samuel Finley. The Presbytery, though summoned to hear the defense, remained in the church and were proceeding to business when the people arose in a tumult and with railings compelled them to withdraw. When they met the next day Craighead, with his coadjutors, appeared, and having read the defense declined their jurisdiction because they were all his accusers. Presbytery suspended him but resolved that if he should signify his repentance to any of the members a meeting should be called at once to consider his acknowledgement and take off the suspension. He sat in the next Synod, and they having spent the first week in considering his case without coming to any decision the protest was withdrawn and the conflicting parties separated.⁸

When the Synod of Philadelphia met in May of 1741 the Craighead challenge served as a catalyst in bringing on a schism. The Synod was about evenly divided between the New Side (Craighead's group) and the Old Side who supported the power of the Synod to forbid encroachments by traveling preachers and to set up standards for an educated ministry. The Old Side also felt that revivalist preaching which worked "on the passions and affections of weak minds . . . causing . . . them to cry out in a hideous manner, and fall down in convulsion-like fits" was not in the best interest of the work of God.⁹

The movement against Craighead received strong support from the Presbytery of Donegal including our former minister Adam Boyd. The Synod meeting of 1741 ended with both sides claiming that they were the only ones with a right to seats in the Synod because they rep-

resented a majority view. The meeting was very disorderly and when the revival group (New Side) discovered that they were in the minority they walked out. The result was an unofficial schism in the Church.¹⁰

The irony of the situation is that frontier Presbyteries tended to be New Side but Donegal was an exception. Craighead was out of tune with his own Presbytery so at the Synod meeting he joined with the revivalists of the Presbytery of New Brunswick to do battle against his own Presbytery. After the schism the Synod of New York was established in 1745 consisting of the New Side adherents of the Presbytery of New York, of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, and of the Second Presbytery of New Castle which was made up of the New Side adherents of both Donegal and New Castle Presbyteries.¹¹

According to Madison McElwain in *Faith and Works* for almost forty years after Presbytery suspended Craighead and the Synod split.

Middle Octorara drops out of the records of the Old Side, we are lead to believe that the New Side faction were in the majority and that the rupture was quite severe in this congregation. During the above mentioned forty years only one settled pastor, Reverend Evander Morrison, ministered to this people, and he, as far as we can reason, was a New Side sympathizer. Such was the seriousness of the resulting division in the church that Middle Octorara did not recover sufficiently to call a permanent pastor [Nathaniel W. Sample in 1780] until twenty years after the rupture had been officially healed and the two Synods united in one body [1758].¹²

It was assumed by earlier writers that Craighead left this area soon after the Synod meeting of 1741. However, according to sources found by this writer Craighead remained at Middle Octorara for some time after 1741 but as a Covenanter, not a Presbyterian.¹³ He may have been the one who started the custom of the Covenanters and Presbyterians worshipping in the "log church" on alternate Sundays. We know from several sources that this practice was followed after Reverend John Cuthbertson became the Covenanter minister in 1751 and continued until the Covenanters built their church in 1754.¹⁴

Craighead entered the political arena in 1743 by writing his views on civil liberty. He touched on several issues which were to be raised against British rule some twenty years later when the storm of revolution was brewing. Basic to his argument was the claim that only Episcopalians had access to the King and thus civil magistrates had to be of the Episcopal persuasion. They were therefore enforcing the laws of the established church as well as the civil laws, and this condition would lead to religious tyranny in the Colonies. Perhaps an Episcopal Archbishop would be sent to America to oversee the Church here.

After Benjamin Franklin published the essay in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* there was quite a reaction. Thomas Cookson, one of the King's magistrates in Lancaster County, appeared before the Synod of Philadelphia and asked their views regarding Craighead's paper. The Synod (then composed of many of Craighead's long standing foes) repudiated the pamphlet saying it was "full of treason and sedition." The Synod

also made haste to declare their abhorrence of the paper and of any practice that would tend to encourage dissatisfaction with British rule or disloyalty to the King.¹⁵

Stiff-backed as ever Craighead continued his agitation against royal authority by renewing Scottish Covenants with his Congregation.¹⁶

On November 11, 1743, Mr. Craighead gathered all of the Covenanters together at a meeting at Octorara, Lancaster County, and after various religious services, he and the congregation renewed the Covenants—National and Solemn League. After denouncing George II as an unfit King, they then swore with uplifted swords to "keep their bodies, property and consciences against all attacks; to defend Christ's gospel and the purity of the Church; to submit to no ruler who would not submit to Christ, and to defend their liberty from fears without and within." This declaration immediately disturbed the political as well as the religious waters, for Governor Morris, in his message to the Assembly, denounced these people for their "aspirations and machinations to obtain independency."¹⁷

In 1749, Reverend Craighead moved to Windy Coce on Cow Pasture River, Augusta County, Virginia.

... He followed the trail of his predecessor, Reverend John Thomson, tarrying a while in Virginia and moving on to North Carolina where he spent the remaining days of his life and where he was destined to exert an influence upon the thinking of the citizens of Mecklenburgh County, which bore fruit in the famous Mecklenburgh Declaration of Independence, May 20, 1775. Although he did not live to take part personally in this action, he is given credit for being the apostle of Freedom and Independence to the pioneers of North Carolina.¹⁸

What can we then say to summarize the story of Reverend Alexander Craighead? He was a Covenanter and a revivalist who rode far and wide on the frontier bringing the word of God to hungry souls. He supported the establishment of Covenanter Presbyterianism as the state religion for Britain and her possessions yet he clamored for civil liberty and independence from Britain. In some ways he was a paradox, but he was a consistent example of the spirit of the proud Scotch-Irish people of the frontier.

Having suffered persecution in Europe because of their religious and political views, and having now tasted of the freedom offered by Penn's Holy Experiment and of the independence of life on the fringes of civilization, these people were very leary of any laws or restrictions which could shackle them. They fought for what they thought was their due with a vigor sometimes thought to be an overreaction to authority, but this was the grit one needed to survive on the frontier. As was indicated earlier, even Craighead felt the blunt end of this resistance to authority when he tried to impose his Covenanter views on the Congregation at Middle Octorara. Those who disagreed appealed to the Presbytery and he was suspended.

Alexander Craighead's independent ways, his sermons and his writings cut a path for freedom of thought and dissent against the King from Middle Octorara to Mecklenburgh. His ideas were remembered

and resurrected when Britain's relations with her American Colonies worsened in the 1760s.

Those who worshipped at Middle Octorara during its first three decades were subjects of a foreign sovereign, but . . . "there was a spirit of adventure and an innate desire for a liberty of thought and action which would make them citizens rather than subjects."¹⁹ Indeed, as many historians of the colonial period have pointed out, the Revolution was accomplished in the minds and hearts of the people before anyone ever heard of Lexington or Concord.

CHAPTER II

FREEDOM AND TOLERANCE

To win a war in the name of freedom and to exercise the tolerance of others which is necessary to make freedom endure are two entirely different ventures. So-called democratic revolutions in many countries have only replaced one dictatorship with another because those who came to power gave only lip service to liberty and cared little about defending the rights of those with whom they disagreed.

What was there about the people of Middle Octorara which made them harken early to the Patriot cause and which helped them on an everyday basis to respect the views of neighbors with whom they disagreed? To answer these questions we need to look at the people who settled in and around our valley seeking to enjoy the freedom offered in William Penn's Colony.

To the north of our Octorara Valley and beyond what is known as the Mine Ridge came the Dutch and German people allied in language and religion, who brought with them the seed of the word, which in after years developed into such church organizations as the German Reformed, Dutch Reformed, the different Lutheran Churches, Mennonites and others peculiar to Pennsylvania Dutch.

To the east and south, occupying the valleys of Brandywine, Big and Little Elk Creeks, come Friends or Quakers, followers of the elder Penn.

Between these two communities and occupying our little valley and the other lands lying south of the Mine Ridge and westward toward and beyond the Susquehanna River, there came another class of emigrants, drawn here by the same influences that have directed the coming of so many of America's best and bravest — the love of liberty, civic and religious.

By birth they were mostly Scotch and Scotch-Irish with a sprinkling of other nationalities. In religion they were Scotch Covenanters, Calvinists, Huguenots, Presbyterians — men who kept the Sabbath with the utmost rigidity, men who believed in the inspiration of the Bible, the divinity of Christ, an educated and paid ministry, a representative form of government and in education as the handmaid of religion. And because of their similarity of their belief they became adherents of the Presbyterian Church. Such was the character of the men and women who first established a church organization at Middle Octorara. . .

About the year 1894 when workmen were cleaning up the old graveyard the foundation of [what may have been] the first church was found. It stood

between the Keylor monument and the slab which marks the last resting place of Rev. John Cuthbertson, the first Covenanter minister in America.¹

Just who built the first house of worship is not quite clear. It seems to have been a community church, built by the labors and gifts of the religious people of the surrounding neighborhood. . .²

And so it was that dissenters from Europe as different as pacifist Mennonites and fiery Scotch-Irish lived in neighboring townships at peace with each other. Each came to realize that defending the freedom of the other assured their own freedom. The people of Middle Octorara knew the horrors of religious intolerance in Europe and thus they would fight to keep the King from taking away the basic freedoms to which they had become accustomed in Pennsylvania.

The experience of depending on each other for survival in the newly settled land helped groups to see how small their differences were and how love and understanding between neighbors was really the will of God. The Covenanters and Presbyterians worshipping in the same building is a good example of the mutual respect which was fostered. This tolerance was put to some severe trials during the 1760s and 1770s as pacifists were fined for not supporting the war and Tories were abused. However, with God's help the people of Middle Octorara and people throughout the infant United States learned to make freedom endure. May God give us the strength to continue.

During the 1760s and 1770s Middle Octorara was served by ministers supplied by Presbytery (often referred to as supplies).³ The Presbytery records show that supplies were more regular during the 1760s than during the 1770s and that the church called Reverend Nathaniel W. Sample in 1780. It was during his long service (1780-1821) that the present church was erected - with the exception of the vestibule and bell tower. With the Presbyterian supplies being irregular and the Covenanter Cuthbertson traveling far and wide as a missionary preacher, it is the opinion of this writer that the groups may have worshipped together at times during the war when a preacher from either church was available.

The Synod of New York and Philadelphia (united in 1858 after years of controversy) took a Whig point of view when Parliament started to tax the American Colonies in the 1760s. The argument went that great offenses were being done to us by England and that action must be taken to insure that no tax be laid on us without the consent of our own legislatures. When the Stamp Act was repealed in 1766 the Synod thanked God that "our gracious Sovereign" and the British lawmakers had followed a wise policy. They also expressed apprehension about the violence which accompanied agitation against Stamps in some quarters and urged Presbyterians to enjoy civil and religious liberty, but not to confuse it with license. The Synod also praised God that war was avoided saying that "we cannot look down the precipice on the brink of which we stood, without horror."⁴

It seems that life on the frontier, memories of British persecution, and perhaps the influence of Covenanter ideas made the church members at Middle Octorara less afraid to "look down the precipice" than their leaders. Alexander Craighead's charges against the crown had certainly not been forgotten, and Reverend John Cuthbertson of our neighboring Covenanter Congregation was a radical influence. He wrote to his sister and brother in 1770 . . .

[Britain and the] . . . whole Empire may justify alarm . . . [because they] . . . are threatened with slavery by the wretched Rabble about the Throne . . .⁵

As the kettle boiled (Townshend Acts of 1767, Boston Massacre of 1770, Boston Tea Party of 1773, Indian attacks on settlers prompted by British troops) the people of Middle Octorara probably had little confidence that cool heads would prevail. Indeed, the Scotch-Irish particularly had little desire for compromise wishing to end the British and Indian threat once and for all.

If the writings of prominent Pennsylvania Presbyterians is any indication the supply ministers were also taking a more radical stand by 1770. Expressing a fear that the . . . "British Parliament is determined to twist the yoke around our necks" by establishing an "American Bishop," Francis Alison of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia called for religious unity in America to oppose the common enemy.⁶ Presbyterian writers also criticized British occupation forces in America, praised the Sons of Liberty, condemned the Quebec Act for giving Catholics in Canada rights which were not granted to dissenters in the Thirteen Colonies, and used the term "my country" quite often in describing "The Rising Glory of America." The Princeton graduation exercises of 1771 had a very nationalistic theme which may also indicate that the supplies - probably young men - were becoming more radical.⁷

At the time hostilities broke out at Lexington and Concord in 1775 the Synod advised caution, looking on war as a last resort and still hoping that Parliament would see the light and repeal laws which oppressed us.⁸

However, the groundwork for support of the Patriot Cause had already been put in place in the Octorara Valley. As the "White Swan" and "The Grape" taverns were the center of radical activity in Lancaster City, so it was with Robert Thompson's Green Tree Inn in Bart Township. According to Jim Kinter in *A Way of Life*:

The tavern of colonial times was far from being the corner bar of today. It was, more often than not, a center of community life. Many towns grew up around taverns and their futures were often decided there. The first court in Lancaster County was conducted at Postlethwaite's Tavern, near Rock Hill.

These oases cared for the needs of the traveler, even to putting up his horse. In addition to the potables dispensed therein, he could secure ample food and a bed, not always clean or comfortable and in which he sometimes had the companionship of little, creepy, crawly things.

Regaled with food and drink and guaranteed a night's lodging, travelers became expansive on what they had seen and heard in Philadelphia and other

cities and points in between. They brought the only news from distant places, except that transmitted in official correspondence.

Newspapers of those days carried little intelligence generated locally. The journals published brief dispatches copied from city papers, which by the time they were copied and printed were stale news.⁹

Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans in their *History of Lancaster County* give us a brief history of the Green Tree Inn.

When and by whom Green Tree Inn was built is not certainly known. The first patentee of the land at that time was George Leonard, who on the 6th of November, 1739, took up one hundred and four acres. This he sold to James McConnell Nov. 12, 1742. It afterward became the property of John McCarter, who sold a part of it, with other parcels of land, to James Parry. In 1763 Mr. Parry sold to Thomas and William Smith. These gentlemen, who had been the owners of Martic Furnace, laid out a town here called, after them, Smithsburg. The town included nineteen acres, and was shaped like a boot, with the toe pointing up along the east side of the run at that place. James Fulton, a son-in-law of Mr. Smith, and afterward the father of the famous Robert Fulton, became a purchaser from Mr. Smith, and in 1764 he sold to Robert Thompson, of Bart, a shopkeeper, after whom it was for a time called Thompsonstown. No vestige of the town is to be seen, but the old inn remains with but little change, a veritable relic of the long ago.¹⁰

Robert Thompson was a Scotch-Irish extraction, a Covenanter, and a patriotic firebrand in the Revolutionary cause.¹¹ He was a person of influence and prominence in the community as people came to the Inn seeking news which had been gleaned from travelers and meeting with friends to discuss religion, business, or politics. He, as did many tavernkeepers, probably acted as the community banker: keeping deposits and making loans. The Inn also served as the polling place.

In our minds-eye we can see a heavily wooded area with a sprinkling of primitive log farmhouses surrounded by cleared fields where the trees had surrendered to the will of the early frontiersmen. We can sense an excitement in the air: whispered conversations before, during the lunch break, and after church services,¹² a spring of anticipation in the gate of those who rushed to Green Tree Inn for the latest news, an anxious waiting to take part in bringing down the tyrant George III, and the cautious reasoning of those who still hoped for compromise with the Crown.

In October of 1774, the First Continental Congress meeting in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, formed a Continental Association to support unity in the colonies. Every community was to elect people to represent it on a Committee of Observation which would observe the conduct of all persons to make sure they did not buy or sell goods imported from England and that they did not oppose in any way the efforts of patriotic colonists to free themselves from the oppression by Parliament. The names of violators were to be made public and they were to be universally condemned as the . . . "enemies of American Liberty" . . . and everyone else was to break off dealings with them.¹³

Robert Bailey (see biographical sketch in Chapter III), an elder of Middle Octorara who was already active in the Patriot Cause as a member of the Committee of Correspondence, was elected to the Committee of Observation from Salsbury Township, and Jacob Bare and Hieronymus Hickman were elected from Bart. These men took their duties seriously and they became very important to our County because in many ways the Committee of Observation became the revolutionary government. There were seventy-six men on the Committee in Lancaster County and they were forced to "run things" because the national and state governments were very weak.¹⁴

So, when the "shot heard around the world" was fired the people here were ready. We can only imagine their excitement as they waited for local members to return from the meeting of the Committee of Observation in Lancaster City. How they must have cheered when the news was read that we would support our sister colony, Massachusetts, in this dark hour.

The Committee of Observation had much to do.

First, a census was ordered to find out how many able-bodied men lived in Lancaster County. Next came a collection of gunpowder and lead. Shopkeepers were directed by the committee to halt all sales of powder and lead until they had a license signed by at least two members of the committee. Merchants also were ordered to turn over their powder and lead to the committee.¹⁵

Volunteer rifle companies were formed to fight in Massachusetts and then a Military Association of volunteer companies was formed in response to an order of the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety headed by George Ross of Lancaster. The plan called for a system similar to that used . . .

during the French and Indian War. Organization was territorial so that a company consisted usually of men from a single township and a battalion came from several neighboring townships. Associators ranged in age from 16 to 60.

Although service in the Associators presumably was voluntary, men who refused to enroll were termed Non-Associators and were penalized, usually with a fine.¹⁶

Local members of the Committee of Observation did not have many of the problems which occurred in other parts of the County when pacifists refused to pay fines, but Ellis and Evans does list the names of twenty-two Non-Associators in Bart Township who were fined three pounds ten shillings each in 1777.¹⁷

On July 4, independence was declared and the scripture for Covenanter John Cuthbertson's sermon on July 7 seems to point directly to the King.

Let favour he shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD. Isaiah 26: 10.¹⁸

On July 8, 1776, large numbers of countians went to Lancaster to hear the Declaration of Independence receive a public reading by Sheriff William Kelley.

Then, as the throng cheered and soldiers fired their muskets into the air, nine Associators removed from the courtroom a large wooden coat-of-arms of the King. They threw this hand-carved, elaborate symbol of royal authority on a giant bonfire and watched it burn. One by one, the public officials tossed into the flames the commissions of authority they had received from the royal government.¹⁹

Scores of men then swore allegiance to the Second Continental Congress and the United States.

The pledge or oath of loyalty became a requirement for voting and one was suspect if he did not take it. In fact, in June of 1777, when it was feared that Loyalists might raise an army in Central Pennsylvania to help the British, it became common practice for the Committee of Observation to demand a loyalty oath. Hundreds appeared before justices of the peace to swear their fidelity.²⁰ Covenanter Preacher John Cuthbertson "with many others" took the oath at a service at the home of a Captain Paxton of Bart Township on July 2, 1777.

... This was done after he had preached a sermon suitable to the occasion, taking for his text Jer. 4: 2, "And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory." ²¹

With what we know of the oath taken at Donegal and throughout the County one must wonder if perhaps it may also have happened at Middle Octorara whose congregation was certainly influenced by men like elder Robert Bailey and by its men serving on the battlefield. (See Chapter III — "Men of Character")

Late in 1777, the people of Middle Octorara certainly felt the fear and depression which gripped Lancaster County. New York City and Philadelphia had fallen to the British and thousands of scared patriots from these areas came to Lancaster County. The Pennsylvania government moved to Lancaster from Philadelphia but it proved so weak that it could do nothing to raise money for the war or keep order. Congress came to Lancaster for one day and then moved on to York. Fear spread that Hessian prisoners in the City would revolt, and rumors that General Howe's forces were moving on Lancaster spread panic on several occasions. It was during this crisis that the Committee of Observation was the only hope.

Lancaster City and County became the storehouse of the Revolution. Locally, Robert Bailey worked diligently to get men for Washington's Army: a tough job by the winter of 1777 after our capital city had fallen to the enemy. He was entrusted with money to help needy Associators, and he also helped acquire supplies for the army from his neighbors who were not overjoyed when payed in Continental money which was earning its reputation for worthlessness. John McClure, who is buried in the old cemetery at Middle Octorara, worked as a sup-

ply contractor for Washington's army. The Covenanter Innkeeper Robert Thompson, by then a Colonel, was one of thirteen persons chosen by the War Office in May of 1777 to supply the Patriot army with blankets, shoes and other clothing.²² Another Covenanter, John McCarter, and John Caughey, probably a member of Middle Octorara, held the rank of Ensign which meant that they also purchased supplies for the army. Alexander Morrison, an elder of Middle Octorara, hauled supplies for the army. (See Chapter III for biographical sketches of McClure, Caughey and Morrison.) With these contributions as well as those of our fighting men it is clear that the Presbyterians of Middle Octorara as well as the Covenanters served the cause of liberty with vigor.

Twelve Presbyterians signed the Declaration of Independence and thirty-seven served as chaplains to the Patriot armies. Strong support of the war cause by Presbyterians is well-documented in "Presbyterians and the American Revolution," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. III, Number 4, Winter, 1974.

Throughout the Conflict the Presbyterian Church supported the cause of liberty and advised tolerance in our dealings with friend or foe.

CHAPTER III

MEN OF CHARACTER

In Colonial America there were many opportunities for men of ability and ambition and thus many self-made men. There was also a deference for "betters" or as we would say today - a respect for those who have become financially successful. These were not men who held their positions because of the class rank of their family as in England but rather because they had earned their status. It was thought that God had smiled on them because of their virtues and that they could be trusted as leaders of church or state. They in turn took seriously their duty to serve as a moral example in business and to give freely of time and substance to God and Country.

The virgin woodlands of our valley were invaded by farmers in the early 1700s and by the time of the Revolution they were also feeling the effects of men going into business to serve their community: millers, merchants, miners, printers and many types of craftsmen. It is interesting to note that many of the men who served Middle Octorara and the patriot cause so well were also successful in business. They were men worthy of the deference shown them. Some examples follow.

There are six gravestones bearing Revolutionary War markers in the old cemetery. The names on those stones are Robert Bailey, James Thompson, John McClure, John Caughey, Joseph Tweed and Alexander Morrison.

Robert Bailey was born in 1706 and died in 1799 in his ninety-third year. He was an elder of Middle Octorara for many years probably beginning service as such before the Revolution. According to Madison McElwain:

. . . We are of the opinion that he and his wife, Margaret McDill, were both natives of Ireland. In 1776 they obtained from the Penns a patent for 230 acres of land in Sadsbury Township. The inscription on the slab that



Author J. Barry Girvin presents a copy of his paper to Mr. Robert Bailey and his daughter Sharon Bailey Girvin, descendants of Robert Bailey.

marks their graves states "They lived more than 58 years together on the same spot; nor changed, nor wished to change their place." A little calculation reveals that they must have lived on this tract of land for about twenty-six years before obtaining a Patent, which was quite common in the early days of the settlement of Pennsylvania. They raised a family of six children, and since the birth of Francis, their most famous son, is given as 1735, we are inclined to think they were married before coming to America and that at least this one child and perhaps another were born in Ireland.

The Bailey family is best known for the famous children of that household. We know the names of two daughters: Elizabeth, who married William Steele, brother of General John Steele; and Abigail, the wife of the General. However the best known of all the children of Robert and Margaret Bailey is the printer, Francis Bailey . . . who among other things is credited with giving George Washington the title "the Father of his Country."¹

Another daughter, Lydia, married Colonel James Thompson. McElwain also states that:

. . . Bailey's grave has always been marked with a flag, indicating service in the Armed Forces of his country. We are not in possession of records showing the extent of his service; but since he must have been a man of three score and ten at the time of the American Revolution, we are inclined to think that if he saw armed service, it was in the French and Indian War.²

This writer is inclined to believe that Elder Bailey deserves the flag marker for all the services he rendered to the Patriot cause as earlier related in this paper.

It was mentioned earlier that Bailey's daughter Abigail married General John Steele. Abigail waited for seven long years of war and finally on March 4, 1784, they were married. Steele later became an elder of Middle Octorara, a paper manufacturer, a farmer, a member of the State Legislature, an Indian Commissioner, and a Collector of Revenue at the port of Philadelphia.³

Colonel James Thompson

Colonel Thompson was a Covenanter and it is not known whether he ever joined our church after marrying Elder Bailey's daughter Lydia. This writer is indebted to Waltanna Scott Shenk of the Octorara Chapter, DAR, for allowing the following biographical and genealogical information compiled by her mother, Mrs. Walter A. Scott, and herself to be reprinted here.

Colonel James Thompson, was born February 17, 1745, died October 3, 1807. Married December 5, 1772. Shortly afterwards moved to Hopewell Township, York County, Pennsylvania.

He joined the army when living in the southeastern part of York County. Took the oath of allegiance, 9th of August, 1777, before his brother, Andrew Thompson, who at that time was a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas — as directed by the General Assembly — passed July 13, 1777.

On the 15th day of September, 1777, the Supreme Executive Council commissioned James Thompson, Colonel, of the First Battalion of York County Militia. It was signed by President Wharton and Timothy Matlock, Secretary. He had been in the service prior to this date as a line officer and his rapid promotion to a Colonelcy was for gallant service. He was permanently wounded and maimed for life at White Horse, (for which he afterwards drew a pension), when Washington was advancing with his army from the Brandywine to Germantown.

The following certificate throws light upon his military career: "These are to certify that on the 16th day of September, 1777, Colonel James Thomp-

son, then in the service under my command, received a bad wound in an action with the enemy near White Horse; that I had him carried from the field on my own horse, but, thinking delay dangerous, gave orders to impress horses to carry him to some place of safety."

Philadelphia
March 10, 1786

James Potter
Brigadier General of Militia

To refer to the civil life of Colonel Thompson: After his disability at White Horse, he returned to his home in York County, where he rendered valuable aid to the civil service in various committees, and in purchasing supplies for the army, which he collected at Peach Bottom, York County, and delivered to Philadelphia, Pa. He was a Councilor from York County of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, beginning February 1779.

After the expiration of his term, he returned to Sadsbury Township, Lancaster County, Pa., and in connection with his brother-in-law, Colonel John Steele, purchased a large tract of land on both sides of the Octorara Creek in Sadsbury Township, and West Fallowfield Township, Chester County, where the village of Steeleville is located, named for General Steele. They built a grist mill and a paper mill.

In 1796, Colonel Thompson bought 246 acres of land in Sadsbury Township from David Longhead. Although, always suffering from his wound he was an active, progressive business man and interested in agricultural pursuits. The old James Rea and Maxwell farms are part of the Longhead tract.

I do not know for certain just where Colonel Thompson was born. Some say on the old Thompson farm at Smyra, Lancaster County, in the little log house. This plantation was known as "Stoney Batter." [It is also not known where he died — Steelville or Smyra.]

The James Thompson family was founded in America in 1696, when the first James Thompson came over from England. He was of Scotch-Irish extraction, and had to my knowledge but one son called Nathan. This Nathan was the father of our Colonel James Thompson, subject of this sketch, and also, Colonel Robert Thompson, Captain Andrew Thompson and Nathan, who also fought in the War for Independence, and one daughter Margaret.

Colonel Thompson, together with his wife Lydia Bailey Thompson,⁴ and several of their children, lie buried in the lower cemetery of the [Middle] Octorara Presbyterian Church. . . .

Their children were: Elizabeth, William, Robert, Andrew, Francis, James, James II, William and Jacob. Note there were two Jameses and two Williams.

Quarryville, Penna.
March 1, 1926

Mrs. Walter A. Scott
a lineal descendant and member of
Donegal Chapter, DAR, Lancaster

I would add the following information to my mother's account. . . .

Colonel Robert Thompson, m. Mary Thompson. He owned and lived at the Green Tree Store and Hotel. Seven Children.

Jane, m. William Ramsey

Eleanor, m. Patterson Bell

Nathan, inheritor of the family business at 14 years of age.

There is a 7th generation grandson in the service of his Country at the present time, Midshipman David K. Shimp, 1st Company, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. The tradition of our ancestors military career is still alive. There have been Thompson descendants in all branches of the service, and all the struggles of our Country's Wars for keeping our Independence.

In closing I must state that there have been 11 Penn. Daughters joined the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, through this Ancestor, Colonel James Thompson.

May 23, 1976
149 East Chestnut St.
Lancaster, Pa. 17602

Waltana Scott Shank
Octorara Chapter, DAR
Quarryville, Pa.



Shown above are Mrs. Arthur E. Gaul, Regent of the Octorara Chapter, DAR, and Karen Shank taking part in the dedication of a bronze plaque marking the grave of Colonel James Thompson. Miss Shank is an eighth generation descendant of Thompson.

John McClure

John McClure was born in Ireland about 1758 and came to America before the Revolution. He served in the American army during the Revolution⁵ and as was stated earlier he served Washington as a supply contractor. After the war he purchased land near Green Tree and there made many improvements thus aiding in the development of Bart Township. He and his wife Martha raised a large family. He was a prominent member of the Covenanter Congregation.⁶

John Caughey

John Caughey was an Ensign for Ramsey's Battalion of the Pennsylvania Militia. He was born in 1752 and died in 1833. He married Elizabeth Kerr and their son Francis Caughey became an elder of our church in 1831.⁷

Joseph Tweed

Research on Joseph Tweed was not fruitful. His tombstone says:

In
memory of
Joseph Tweed
a Soldier of 1776
who departed this
life Nov'r. 2, 1839
Aged 89 years

Alexander Morrison

Mr. Morrison was a farmer and miller by occupation. He built a mill on his farm in Colerain Township, which stood for at least a century and a half and was always known as Morrison's mill. He kept a fine team of horses in which he took great pride. During the War for Independence he did hauling for the Continental Army.⁸

John Paxton

Colonel John Paxton was an elder of our church who served in the army during the Revolution.⁹ He is probably buried in an unmarked grave in the old cemetery. His son William Paxton also served fighting in several campaigns including the Battle of Trenton. William was also the first "son" of our church to go into the ministry.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHALLENGE

The Reverend John Rodgers preached a sermon of thanksgiving in New York City in 1783. He chose the text, Psalm 126: 3: "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." After thanking God that we won the war he reminded Americans that they had a great responsibility to use their God-given freedom well by supporting the efforts of our new government.

. . . Be pleased to remember here, that the government to which I recommend your reverence and obedience, is a government of your own framing; and a government for which we have fought and bled; and, blessed by God, have fought and bled with success—And that the Magistrates by whom this government is administered, are the men of your own choice, the Magistrates of your own appointing. Thus it becomes both your duty and your interest, to strengthen the hands of government, and its ministers, as

Our forebearers have done their duty by establishing a democracy. Their energies have kept us free for two hundred years, and now it is time for the heirs of this wonderful gift to be tested. The forces of decadence and sloth in our country today are running a race against those who labor for reverence, decency, honesty, and respect for God, Country, and earning one's own way. Pray God that we never surrender our heritage and let our freedoms slip away. Let us rededicate ourselves to the will of God, the values of our forefathers, and the defense of freedom as we move into our third century as a nation.



(Left to right) author J. Barry Girvin, Middle Octorara's pastor Robert W. Tanguy, and John B. Girvin, the author's son, on July 4, 1976. The Girvins dressed in colonial garb to present Mr. Girvin's paper to the congregation.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. Ernest S. Craighead, *Craighead Ministers in Ulster and Colonial America* (Pittsburgh: 1954), p. 62.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. To Craighead, unconverted meant not having had an emotional salvation experience as in the revival meetings.
5. Craighead, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-70.
6. They were promising to give active support to the struggle to destroy Catholicism and the Anglican Church and to make Presbyterianism the state religion of Great Britain and Ireland. According to Session records at Middle Octorara, Craighead even suspended his own wife from the church on one occasion for not conforming to his version of the Communion ritual.
7. Craighead, *op. cit.*, p. 74 and John D. Beyer, "History of Middle Octorara Church," *Quarryville Sun*, Vol. XLIII, No. 74, June 28, 1927.
8. Madison E. McElwain, *Faith and Works at Middle Octorara Since 1727* (Manheim, Pennsylvania: Sentinel Printing House, 1956), p. 4.
9. Craighead, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 65B-66.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
12. McElwain, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
13. To prove this point we must look to the *Donegal Presbytery Records*, Vol. 1C, p. 314. They tell us that Presbytery supplied ministers for Middle Octorara from 1741 to 1753, thus Craighead was not our minister. The following statement from *Craighead*, p. 74A also helps prove the point. From the earliest settlement of Covenanters in America, those families residing in the same community organized themselves into a society of correspondence. All these societies met by representation, annually or semi-annually, for the transaction of business or religious worship, as a Synod or Presbytery, and this was called "The General Meeting." Until the accession of a minister, these meetings were presided over by some prominent elder chosen by the people. From 1743 until 1749, they were presided over by the Reverend Alexander Craighead; and from 1751 until 1774, by the Reverend John Cuthbertson and were usually held at Middle Octorara, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.
14. Reverend Evander Morrison accepted a call to Middle Octorara in 1753 and helped John Cuthbertson to get the land to build the Covenanter Church. (The first United Presbyterian Church in America - often referred to as the Shrine Church - hereafter referred to in this paper as the Covenanter Church.) The "log church" was the Presbyterian house of worship which was located in the area that is now the old cemetery at Middle Octorara.
15. Craighead, *op. cit.*, p. 72.
16. This Congregation of Covenanters is referred to in several sources as "The Craighead Society." (W. M. Glasgow, *History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America*, p. 63.
17. Craighead, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
18. McElwain, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.
19. W. W. Edge, From an address at the 200th Anniversary of Middle Octorara, *Quarryville Sun*, Vol. XLIII, No. 74, June 28, 1927.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. Others including Craighead had Covenanter views, but Cuthbertson was the first missionary sent to America by the Covenanter Church of Scotland.
2. Beyer, *loc. cit.* The first house of worship is often referred to in source material as the "log church."
3. Robert L. Clark, *A History of the Presbytery of Westminster and its Antecedents: 1732-1924* (Westminster Historical Committee, 1924), p. 384.
4. "Presbyterians and the American Revolution," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, Vol. LII, No. 4, Winter - 1974, p. 336. Hereafter referred to as "Presbyterians."
5. MSS, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Document C972.
6. "Presbyterians," pp. 344-346.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 343-372.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 378.
9. Jim Kinter, *A Way of Life* (Lancaster, Lancaster County Bicentennial Committee, 1974), p. 14.
10. Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883), p. 671.
11. It is believed that Robert along with his brothers, Major Andrew Thompson and Nathan Thompson are buried in unmarked graves in the Octorara Covenanter (Shrine) Church Cemetery. Another brother, Colonel James Thompson, is buried in Middle Octorara's old cemetery. (See the biographical sketch of Colonel James Thompson in Chapter III.)
12. Services sometimes lasted as long as five hours.
13. Ellis and Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 36 and Charles H. Kessler, *Lancaster in the Revolution* (Lititz: Sutter House, 1975), p. 18.
14. *The Pennsylvania Archives*, Second Series, Vol. XIII, p. 28 and Kessler, *loc. cit.*
15. Kessler, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
17. Ellis and Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 670.
18. Cuthbertson's first sermon that month was based on Psalms 102: 13-17 and on Isaiah 20. (John Cuthbertson, *Diary*, p. 132 of the typed copy in possession of the Presbyterian Historical Society.)
19. Kessler, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
21. A. S. Aikien and J. M. Adair, *A Biographical Sketch of Reverend John Cuthbertson* (Pittsburgh: Stevenson, Foster and Company, 1878), p. 13.
22. Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. V and VI, p. 143.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. McElwain, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-141.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
3. See McElwain, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-144 for a biographical sketch.
4. Daughter of Robert Bailey.
5. Pennsylvania Archives, Fifth Series, Vol. VII, pp. 572 and 603.
6. *Biographical Annals of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (J. H. Beers and Company, 1903), p. 298.
7. *Pennsylvania Archives*, *op. cit.*, p. 602.
8. McElwain, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151 includes a detailed biographical sketch — Alexander Morrison.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-148, biographical sketch — Colonel John Paxton.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 221-223.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. "Presbyterians," pp. 462-463.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

J. Barry Girvin is the Chairman of the Bicentennial and 250th Anniversary Committee of Middle Octorara United Presbyterian Church. "Middle Octorara and the Revolution" was written as part of his work with that Committee.

Middle Octorara United Presbyterian Church is located on route

372 just west of Green Tree, Bart Township, on the south side of the road. The church was established on August 7, 1727, as part of the New Castle Presbytery. It became a United Presbyterian Church in 1958 when the two branches of the Presbyterian Church in America became one.

On the north side of route 372 stands the Octorara United Presbyterian Church built by Covenanter Presbyterians in 1754. It is the oldest United Presbyterian Church in America and is referred to today as the "Shrine Church."

Mr. Girvin lived in Bart Township from his birth in 1940 until 1968 when he and his family moved to Smoketown. He is a graduate of Solanco High School and Millersville State College. In 1966 he received his M. Ed. from MSC after completing his thesis entitled "The Life of William Uhler Hensel." This work appeared in the LCHS Journal, Vol. 70, No. 4.

Mr. Girvin also holds an M.A. Degree in History from the University of Delaware. He is a teacher and the Social Studies Department Chairman at Conestoga Valley School District. He is married to the former Shirley Welk and the couple has two sons and a daughter: John, Wesley and Tracy.



(Right to Left) J. Barry Girvin, Reverend Robert W. Tanguy, Mrs. Vesta Shea, and Hiram G. Troop, Sr. are pictured reading from *Faith and Works*. Mrs. Shea is the widow of Reverend George H. Shea, D.D.D., pastor of Middle Octorara 1915-1965. Mr. Troop's update of *Faith and Works* follows.

The 250th Anniversary of Middle Octorara United Presbyterian Church

by Hiram G. Troop, Sr.

Mr. Madison E. McElwain's *Faith and Works at Middle Octorara Since 1727* was published in 1956, and there is a copy in the LCHS collection. "The 250th Anniversary of Middle Octorara United Presbyterian Church" is intended to serve as an update of Mr. McElwain's work. It is part of my work as a member of the Bicentennial and 250th Anniversary Committee of Middle Octorara United Presbyterian Church.

A few of you will remember our 200th anniversary in 1927. Many more will wish to know something about it. If so, look on pages 418-426 of *Faith and Works* (Madison McElwain) and you will be thrilled with the response of our congregation.

Many will remember our 225th anniversary in 1952. It can be found in the same book, pages 426-447. Many of you took part in the pageant's twelve parts. You will be interested in finding what part you had. The author of this paper really enjoyed reading about these anniversaries, and you will also enjoy them.

Now we are in the midst of our 250th anniversary (1727-1977). Almost all of those who took part in the 200th anniversary and many who took part in the 225th have passed on to Glory. We miss them for we have not forgotten their works. It is up to us to continue the work for our Lord Jesus.

God has been good to us as individuals and as a church during these last 25 years. Life has gone on as it did in the other 25 year spans. I know we felt sad when loved ones passed on to their reward. But joy also came with the birth of many babies who through the years have grown up with the church and have given their lives to the service of God.

I wish we had space to name and to talk about the great numbers, both men and women, who were pillars of the church and who have gone to their Father in Heaven during the past 25 years. It would not be fair to name some and not others. You can recall many that you have know.

But there is one who was the friend, counselor and leader of our flock, always there when needed in times of trouble or joy. He served us for 50 years as our pastor and friend. His life and works can be found on pages 110-117 of *Faith and Works*. You know now that I am talking about our beloved pastor, Rev. George H. Shea, D.D. In 1964 and 1965, three special services were held in commemoration of these 50 years.

On November 1, 1914, Rev. Shea came to supply the pulpit which had become vacant upon the retirement of Rev. Cairnes. He chose as his text Micah 6: 8—“He hath shown thee, O Man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” On Nov. 1, 1964, Dr. Shea preached from this same text to open the 50th anniversary of his Ministry.

On Dec. 1, 1914, Rev. Shea was called to be the pastor of our church. On Dec. 1, 1964, in the evening this event was commemorated with visiting ministers and friends participating.

Rev. Shea was installed on Jan. 28, 1915. This event was observed on Jan. 28, 1965, in the evening with the Presbytery of Donegal and the Synod of Pennsylvania bringing greetings.

The Good Lord blessed him in many ways. On Sept. 6, 1965, God decided to take him to his home in Glory, and it was time for another to take his mantle.

Rev. Richard Dunham of Chestnut Level became the Moderator of Middle Octorara. Under his wonderful guidance the following committee took up the task of selecting one who should take up this mantle.

Hiram G. Troop
Mildred Rhoads
Richard Krantz
Ernest Reynolds

Mary Myers
Ruth Rice
Janet Landis
Ray Eby

The committee traveled near and far to visit churches and to hear ministers. After six months of earnestly seeking God's help the committee chose Rev. Robert W. Tanguy, who was the Minister at Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania.

Rev. Tanguy was born at Greenville, Pennsylvania on December 5, 1926, a son of Clair D. and Lillie May Baker Tanguy. He was one of seven children, three boys and four girls.

He attended Penn High School, received his B.A. from Westminster College at New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, in 1951, and his Master of Divinity from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in 1954.

He married Rose E. Rearick, who was born on April 15, 1931, the daughter of J. Harold and Huldah Rearick of Harrisburg. She attended the Reading High School and then went to Westminster, graduating in 1954. Speech and Drama were her special subjects. The Tanguys' have been blessed with four children: Debra Anne (Mrs. William J. Martz), Nanci Christine (Mrs. Richard L. Caskey), Robert Douglas, and Wallace Scott.

Before coming to Middle Octorara Rev. Tanguy served at Harrisville and Uniontown, Ohio, from 1954 to 1956; Glenmoor Church, East Liverpool, Ohio, from 1956 to 1961; and Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania, from 1961 to 1966.

Rev. Tanguy preached his first sermon at Middle Octorara in March of 1966 and became our pastor on June 15, 1966, with installation service on June 26, 1966.

Since then he has served as Counselor for nine years at Camp Donegal, has been chairman of the Ecclesiastical Responsibilities Committee of Donegal Presbytery, chairman of the Pensions Sub-Committee of the Ministerial Relations Committee of Presbytery, and he has been a member of the General Council of Presbytery.

Rev. Tanguy can trace his ancestors back to John Paxton, one of the early members of Middle Octorara, who was his maternal great-great-great-great-uncle. John Paxton's life work for the church can be found on page 146 of *Faith and Works*. It is well worth reading.

In April of 1970 construction started on an addition to the educational building. This project was undertaken after a committee appointed by the Congregation reported a need for more classrooms and for lavatory facilities on the first floor. The total cost of the project was \$34,696.73, and the new addition was dedicated on March 15, 1971.

Since our 225th Anniversary, the Lord has called home two Sons of the Church:

Rev. William McElwain and Rev. Charles Best.

During the past 25 years two members have been called to serve the church in special ways. Elder Hiram G. Troop, with his wife Luetta K. Troop, attended the General Assembly at Boston in 1966. It was at this assembly that the debate on "The Confession of '67" took place. Elder Martha Landis served as a delegate to Synod in 1973.

These were great Christian experiences. If you should be called to this work of God and The Church, never turn this opportunity down.

May the Grace of God be with us as a congregation and bless us in the future as he has in the past and may we be worthy of these blessings.

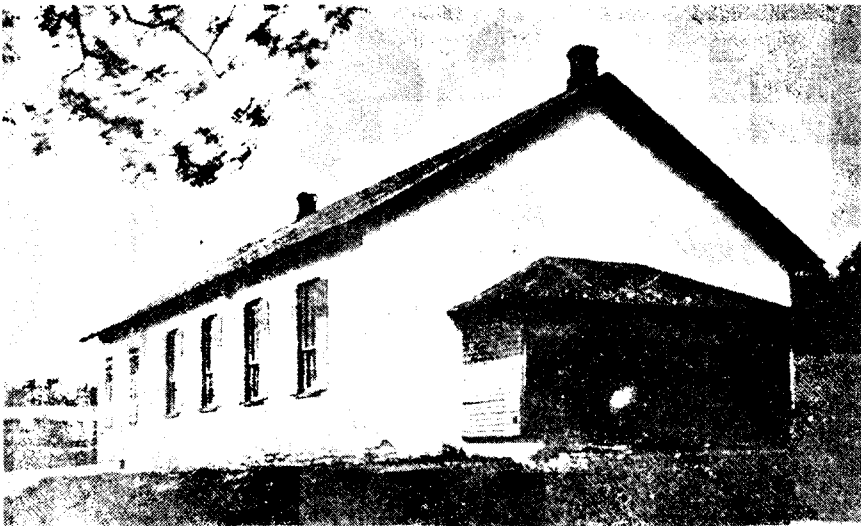
It is up to each one of us to be faithful to our God, our Church, and our Country.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hiram G. Troop, Sr. was born in Gap, Pennsylvania, on December 25, 1897. He graduated from Paradise High School and Millersville Normal School (class of 1918). In 1919 he was elected principal of Bart High School which was then located in the west end of the Shrine (Octorara Covenant) Church across the road from Middle Octorara. This was his first contact with the church he came to love so much.

Mr. Troop has served his church well as a Ruling Elder and in many other capacities. He taught school and farmed for fifty years, and he and his wife still live on the farm near Mount Pleasant where they have lived for the past 47 years.

Mr. Troop has become an institution in his community having taught hundreds of its residents somewhere along the line. Through his selfless giving he has earned the love and respect of the many who have been guided by his hand. He is married to the former Luetta Keene and the couple has six children, twenty grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.



The Octorara United Presbyterian Church (Covenant Church) as it appeared when Mr. Troop taught at Bart High School. The frame addition on the left side of the building is where the high school classes met.