

# BRETHREN IN CHRIST HISTORY & LIFE

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# BRETHREN IN CHRIST HISTORY AND LIFE

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## From the Editor

This is a two-article issue. Normally an issue of this journal contains several articles of moderate length. Martin Schrag's article on Christian Leshar warrants considerable space, thus restricting the number of pages available for other articles.

Only a very few documents about the Brethren in Christ exist prior to 1870. Much of our knowledge of the group before that date depends on scattered pieces of evidence and on inferences made about the earlier period from sources available after 1870. Thus a major article on Christian Leshar, whose active years are in the first half of the nineteenth century, is of significant value. That Leshar was a bishop increases the value of the article.

We are greatly indebted to Martin Schrag for his work on Christian Leshar. He has been researching his subject over a long period, in a more concentrated manner in the last few years. This article is only one part of his labor; a second major article by Schrag on Leshar will appear in a subsequent issue of this journal.

Many readers of *Brethren in Christ History and Life* remember Jesse Lady. Some of us remember him best as a teacher; to others he is known as pastor, evangelist, or missionary. All remember him for his warm and intensely spiritual personality.

Lady's life and work is recalled in this issue in an article by one of his nephews, Myron Lady. The author

carefully sets the background to Lady's life; in doing so he reminds us of the importance of early years in the shaping of values and personalities. Lady's career, as described in the remaining part of the article, reflects the dedication and sacrifice that is in the best tradition of the Brethren in Christ Church in his generation.

According to our custom, this April issue publishes the financial report presented at the past annual meeting of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society (the report is updated). It also publishes the list of members of the Historical Society and in the list notes those who made special financial contributions to its work. The officers of the Historical Society express appreciation for all who maintain their membership and for those who in giving more than the annual membership fee help to assure that the various activities of the Society will continue.

Readers are encouraged to note the section in News and Notes that describes, among other activities, the annual meeting of the Historical Society, the election of Dorothy Jean Sollenberger to the Executive Committee of the Historical Society, and the projected tour of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa sponsored by the Historical Society.

Finally, we are pleased to begin the eighteenth year of this journal's publication with a new cover design. We have used the same graphics for the front cover since the beginning of publication in 1978. Among other advantages, the new design makes more possible the use of photographs and art work illustrative of the contents of the various issues. The captions for front-cover illustrations will always be found inside the front cover. The graphics for the new cover were designed by Geoffrey Isley, Art Director of the Communications Department at Messiah College.

E. Morris Sider

## Jesse F. Lady: A Loyal Churchman in a Time of Transition

*By Myron Lady\**

Jesse Lady was among those people who both modeled life and enjoyed it to the full. Joy and optimism characterized his attitudes; not surprisingly, he was a favorite child in a large family. He was a student of the Bible; as a teacher he made it come alive. For ministers he modeled sermon preparation and preaching. He listened well to persons with difficulties. Highly educated, he enjoyed being with both scholars and those with little schooling. He was as comfortable conducting a ring meeting as attending scholarly seminars. His exemplary, quiet Christian life made a lasting impression on many people.

### Family Background

Jesse Lady's father, Samuel Jefferson Lady, was born on March 16, 1860, on a family farm in Adams County, Pennsylvania, two miles from the Gettysburg battle field. He was reared in a strict Lutheran home, read his Bible, and lived a highly moral life, never touching alcohol or tobacco.

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\*Myron Lady, now retired from elementary school teaching, operates the Lady home farm, and is a deacon in the Zion Brethren in Christ Church in Kansas.

At the age of twenty-one, Samuel went to Kansas where he worked for Samuel Zook, who himself had recently migrated from Pennsylvania (Franklin County). Zook, a minister (later bishop) had a strong influence on young Samuel. Under his influence, Samuel experienced a remarkable conversion, and requested baptism by immersion.<sup>1</sup>

In Kansas, Samuel met Mary Olive (Ollie) Frey (1870-1951). Although she was ten years younger than Samuel, the two fell in love at first sight. Mary Olive's parents--Adam and Mary Ann (Hershey) Frey--also came from Adams County. Adam's father Christian, a weaver by trade, had come to the United States from Baden, Germany, in 1833. Following their marriage, Adam and Mary moved to Lee County in Illinois where their first child, Mary Olive, was born, followed by the birth of Emma. Adam worked as a shoemaker for two and a half years, then the couple moved to Decatur County, Iowa. In the five years that they lived in Iowa, three sons were born to them--Harvey, John, and Reuben. Their final move was to Dickinson County, Kansas, in 1877 in a covered wagon. Here they settled on a farm nine miles northeast of Abilene, and here their five youngest children were born--Mabel, Jesse, Edith, Christian, and Lawrence.

Their new location brought them into their first contact with the Brethren in Christ (or River Brethren, as they were frequently still being called in Kansas at that time). Ten years after their move, members of the group constructed the Zion church, with Samuel assisting on the project. In this new location Mary Olive met the young Brethren in Christ Samuel Lady.

Samuel and Mary Olive were married on December 29, 1889. They settled on a farm north of Abilene near the Zion church; at least Mary Olive became a life-long member of the congregation (it is not clear whether Samuel actually

joined as a member). Eleven children were born to this marriage, the oldest and the youngest of whom died in infancy. Those who reached adulthood were, in order of birth, Harvey, Ann (Hoover), Luther, Minnie (Engle), Cornelius, Eunice (Wingert), Samuel, Jesse, and Paul.

In 1902, Samuel and Mary Olive purchased a half section of land (320 acres) two miles east of the Zion church. Nine years later they built a twelve-room house on the land to accommodate their growing family. The farm and house has remained in the Lady family; a fifth generation family presently resides on the place.

The spiritual life of Samuel and Mary Olive was striking; not surprisingly, in time the parents' values would be reflected in their children's lives. Father Samuel was very knowledgeable of the Bible and disciplined in his approach to church and religious matters. Although he never held a church office, he was always supportive of the church's leaders and institutions. He insisted that the family always attend the two Sunday services and the Wednesday evening service. To be in church on time was a virtue; he would say, "If we can't be there to help sing the first song, we just as well not go." He would tolerate from his children no whispering or irreverence in church. Although he had a good appetite, he would fast and pray on Sunday mornings in order to have more time to study the Bible and the Sunday school lesson.

Mother Lady had a similarly serious approach to religious life. She made certain that all her children read their lessons before Sunday school began, that they could pronounce all the words correctly, and that they had memorized the Golden Text and the title of the lesson. She insisted that if they were called on to answer questions in class, or make some other kind of contribution, they should readily do so. Her children all became knowledgeable about the Bible.



**The Samuel and Mary Olive Lady family. Back row, left to right: Anna (Hoover), Harvey, Eunice (Wingert), Minnie (Engle), Luther; front row, left to right: Jesse, Samuel, Samuel Sr., Mary Olive, Cornelius, Paul**

The parents taught Christian living in the home by authority and example. Each morning after the farm chores were finished, the family gathered for family worship before eating breakfast. Father Lady would read a portion of Scripture and follow his reading with prayer; sometimes Mother Lady prayed, as did occasionally the children as they grew older.

His mother's prayers remained one of Jesse's outstanding memories from his youth. She mentioned each child by name, and prayed for the needs of each. She would pray, "Now Lord, you know that Jesse needs to be saved. He is old enough now. I pray thee, send him conviction that he may come to know thee as his own personal Savior." Or she might pray, "Lord, we didn't bring our children into the world to be lawyers or doctors or any other professional men. We want them to be preachers and missionaries." Her prayers for her children were more frequent during the time of revival meetings in the Zion church.<sup>2</sup>

As this suggests, Samuel and Mary Olive dedicated each of their children to God and Christian service. Before the parents married, Samuel promised God that if they had children, he would give the first child to the Lord. Harvey, the first child born to the couple, seemed unusually gifted with great spiritual sensitivity. A young man of much prayer, he had a deep concern for the salvation of his brothers and sisters. He went to Africa to serve in Brethren in Christ missions where he died at the early age of twenty-eight.

Father and Mother Lady were much interested in the salvation of the people beyond their family. At one time Samuel became concerned about the spiritual welfare of a brother who lived in California but from whom he had not heard for some time. Mary Olive agreed with her husband that he should visit his brother. Samuel travelled by train to California, where he discovered that his brother had only

recently been converted. Samuel remained with him for some days, the two brothers rejoicing together and discussing spiritual matters. While he was absent, his wife supervised the work of the farm, and the sons had more than their usual time for play.<sup>3</sup>

Not surprisingly, the Lady's neighbors were objects of Samuel and Mary Olive's concern. Despite her busy schedule in raising nine children, Mary Olive and her sister, Emma Minter, would travel by horse-drawn carriage to visit unsaved neighbors, witnessing to them about Christ and praying for them. Although they may not have become Christians as a result of such activity, the neighbors professed appreciation for the visits, even that they looked forward to the return of the two sisters.

Samuel and Mary Olive were both strong believers in divine healing. Twice their faith was severely tested--when Mary Olive had inflammatory rheumatism, and when son Harvey was near death with appendicitis. They took counsel from James 5:14,<sup>4</sup> and called for Bishop Millard (M. G.) Engle to anoint with oil. Both were restored to health.<sup>5</sup>

Father Lady was a strict disciplinarian. He believed in the saying, "Idleness is the devil's workshop." Thus he had plenty of work planned for his sons to do on the 320-acre farm, including cutting weeds when the other work was finished. His sons later in life liked to tell how their father early in the morning would call, "Come on boys, get out of bed. I was wide awake since 2:30 thinking of all the work that has to be done."

His sons had a way of making hard work seem like fun. Usually two or three worked together; they would make a game out of seeing who could do the most work.

But their father did give them some time to play. He himself frequently joined them in a game of ball. Mother Lady agreed with the saying that "All work and no play makes a dull boy." Thus the work schedule was more



The home place, built in 1911



The Chronister school (1910). Jesse Lady is in the front row, third from the right.

relaxed when her husband was absent and she was in charge of the farm (as her husband's trip to California indicates). Rainy days were not dull days because then the boys had more time in which to play. The barn on these occasions made a good playground.

Other occasions brought a change from the vigorous work routine. Father Lady sometimes gave his sons a half day from their work and each fifty cents to visit an uncle at Enterprise, thirteen miles distance.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes on Saturday the entire family went to town; on those occasions the children were often given money to buy ice cream.

Wrestling was a favorite play activity. The boys often wrestled in the house, moving from the living room to the dining room through the open double doors. Their parents seemed to take such vigorous in-door activity in stride, obviously seeing it as a natural thing for boys to do.

Playing church was another favorite pastime. Since Jesse was one of the younger boys, he did not get to be the preacher; he was one who testified in the "testimony meeting," part of the play service. He would get "happy in the spirit," which included shouting and seeing how high he could jump as he testified. He was not without models in playing such a role. Jesse was fascinated by a man in the Zion congregation who would get "happy" and jump while testifying. Jesse observed how high the man jumped and reasoned that anyone who could jump that high must have the Spirit in him.<sup>7</sup>

Some Brethren in Christ parents in those years prohibited play activity on Sunday. Samuel and Mary Olive were less rigid in this respect. This was in part the mother's influence. She was sometimes her children's intercessor in such matters; because her husband respected her views, he was more flexible than he otherwise would have been.<sup>8</sup>

Singing, too, was a part of leisure time. Guests were frequently in the Lady home, including young people,



Samuel and Jesse (right) Lady in teenage years

missionaries, and evangelists. Often the guests and the Lady family gathered around the piano to sing, a custom practiced elsewhere in Brethren in Christ homes.

For a Brethren in Christ, Mother Lady held relatively advanced views on education. She often thought of what God could do through her children if they received an education. Once while visiting in Pennsylvania she made a special effort to go to Messiah Bible School and Missionary Training Home (now Messiah College) to determine whether this would be a good place to send her children. She must have been suitably impressed because seven of her nine children attended the school. In this view of education, her husband was supportive, despite that their going to school in Pennsylvania meant loss of help as well as considerable financial sacrifice in paying for their schooling.

Messiah College may even have survived because of Mother Lady, if a family story is correct. At a time when the school encountered severe financial difficulties and word reached Kansas that it might possibly close, Mary Olive wrote to the president strongly encouraging him to keep it open. This letter from a concerned parent, according to the story, was one of the decisive factors in the continuance of the school.

All nine of Samuel and Mary Olive's children became active Christians; eight were life-time members of the Brethren in Christ Church. Three of the six boys--Harvey, Samuel, and Jesse--became Brethren in Christ ministers; of her three daughters, Eunice (Mrs. Norman Wingert) married a minister and was for many years with her husband a relief worker with the Mennonite Central Committee in various countries of the world.

Clearly Jesse Lady's future years were strongly shaped by such a family background.

## Education and Marriage

Jesse enjoyed school and was a good student. His favorite subjects were arithmetic, geography, spelling and writing. For his first year of high school he attended the local school at Talmage. His final years of high school were taken at Messiah Bible School for which he left in the fall of 1921 at the age of seventeen and from which he graduated in 1924. The Lady boys took turns in staying out of school to help with the farm work, which accounts for Jesse being twenty years of age when he graduated from high school. After graduation he continued at Messiah Bible College for two more years, graduating in 1926 from the junior college.

While at Messiah, Jesse found part-time employment to help with the expense of his schooling. With other male students he found some work on local farms, including husking corn. Jesse earned the reputation of being one of the fastest huskers.<sup>9</sup>

During his first year at Messiah, he recommitted himself to the Lord and joined the Brethren in Christ Church. He was active on the school's student gospel teams which gave him opportunities to speak, witness, and pray in public. These experiences in gospel team work led him to enter the ministry. To this decision his father gave his full blessing, despite that he would now be certain to lose his son's help on the farm.

Among his memorable experiences at Messiah were those that came from debating. He was a member of a debate team, which did not have an excellent win record, but did provide a good time.<sup>10</sup> He was active in the Miltonian Society which met on Friday evening and whose programs included such activities as debate, poetry-reading, and special singing in student music groups. The programs also included mock trials. In one trial Jesse was on the witness stand. When the accuracy of his testimony was questioned,



Jesse Lady (far right, front row) with men's chorus of Messiah Bible College (now Messiah College), in the mid-1920's. Others in the chorus are, front row, left to right: Glendon Snyder, Benjamin Thuma, Lloyd Hershey, Earl Miller, Alfred Crider, Ezra McCulloh, Jesse Lady; second row, left to right: Leroy Yoder, J. Elwood Hershey, William Engle, Joseph Stoner, Benjamin Lenhert, Paul Stoner; back row, left to right: Ernest Kern, Paul Nissley, Vincent Flowers, Joseph Aiken, Ray Brechbill, Samuel Lady.

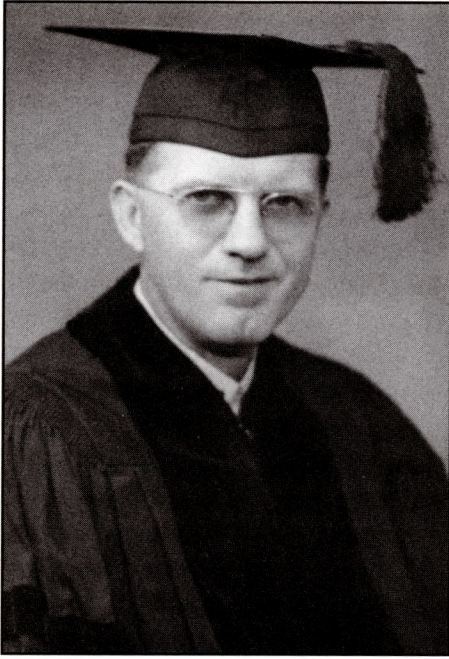
he gave an evasive and typically witty reply: "I'm not sure it was perpendicular to the bisector," a reference to a geometry lesson.<sup>11</sup>

While in junior college he won third prize in an oratorical contest. He also served as class secretary, student pastor, superintendent of the Young People's Christian Association, and president of the Missionary Circle. He was an excellent encourager of spiritual life among the students.<sup>12</sup> The statement chosen by the editors of the school yearbook of 1926 reflected what others saw in Jesse: "What one has, he ought to use; and whatever he does he should do it with all his might."<sup>13</sup>

Lady continued his education first by attending John Fletcher College in Iowa from 1929 to 1930, where he earned his B.A. degree. In the summer of 1929 he studied at the University of Chicago. He took one year (1930-1931) from his schooling to teach at Jabbok Bible School Academy, a Brethren in Christ high school near Thomas, Oklahoma.

From there he went to the Biblical Seminary in New York City where he graduated in 1933 with a B.S.T. (Bachelor of Systematic Theology) degree. His thesis for the degree was on John Wesley's use of the Bible in preaching. Upon graduation from Biblical Seminary, he entered Princeton Seminary, from which he graduated in 1934 with a Master of Theology degree. His thesis for this degree was "The Book of Acts as a Manual for Missions." Following Princeton he took a year of graduate studies at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. During these years, from 1932 to 1935, he pastored a church at Mountainside, New Jersey, and was involved in some evangelistic work. In the summer of 1941 he studied at New York University.

Lady completed his formal education while serving as president of Beulah (now Upland) College (more of his presidency below). He received the Ph.D. from Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary in Los Angeles in 1946, with



**Jesse Lady on graduation with the Ph.D. degree in 1946 from the Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary**



**Lucille and Jesse Lady**

a dissertation on "A Presentation of a Workbook as a Technique for Teaching the Doctrines and Ordinances of the Brethren in Christ Church."

Lady was among the first Brethren in Christ to attend seminary and to obtain a doctorate. Such advanced education was still frowned on by many in his denomination. Yet throughout he maintained his loyalty to the church and did not compromise its standards (the opposite of what many detractors of education thought would happen). And throughout he did not distance himself from less educated persons in the Brethren in Christ Church.<sup>14</sup>

On June 13, 1934, Jesse Lady married Lucille Brechbill, a registered nurse from Garrett, Indiana. They first met while Lady was conducting evangelistic services. The friendship, only formal at first, grew closer as the two corresponded with each other. The correspondence continued for four years while Jesse continued his schooling in the East and Lucille worked at the Englewood Hospital in Chicago.

Finally a wedding day was set. But before the wedding Lady became very ill; his condition required hospitalization and a serious operation. To meet this development, the couple advanced their wedding date by a couple of weeks, and were married on the night before he entered Englewood Hospital as a patient. There his bride, as a nurse, cared for him during six weeks of recuperation. A year later they took a belated honeymoon--a trip to Europe and the Holy Land.<sup>15</sup>

Jesse and Lucille had no children of their own. But they both loved children and young people, and ministered to many of them. In turn they were loved by many as parents. Jesse often commented, "Some people choose not to have children, but that was not our choice. It was God's."

## A Contagious, Friendly Personality

A distinction of Jesse Lady's life was joy and optimism.<sup>16</sup> His friendliness and happy spirit made him popular wherever he went. Later in life when returning by boat from Africa, people who had never seen him before repeatedly sought him out. Over a cup of coffee, or a game of shuffle board, or standing by the ship's rail, he would strike up a conversation, often philosophical in nature, which would sooner or later lead to a discussion on the person's spiritual condition.<sup>17</sup> Part of his attraction to people was that he listened well to what they said, no matter who they were or what level of education they had.<sup>18</sup>

As one of his nephews who grew up on the Lady family farm where Jesse spent his childhood and youth, I remember the pleasant times that resulted in his frequent visits to the home place. He would invariably reminisce about his experiences on the farm, telling stories followed by hearty laughter. He kept alive the memories of the good times he and his siblings had in growing up. Clearly, he retained a love for the place, shown perhaps in that throughout much of his life he enjoyed gardening and, where possible, kept a few chickens in his back yard.

As noted earlier, he enjoyed children, which was reflected in playing with them, making them feel like special people, and calling them pet names. In talking to them he often asked serious questions. Once he asked my sister Mary Olive, then probably about five years of age, if she ever had a spanking. After hesitating a little, she replied, "Once, when I was little." He never let us forget her response.

Uncle Jesse was concerned about the total welfare of his nieces and nephews--about our education, choosing mates, vocations, and spiritual growth. He gave us financial

assistance when I and my three sisters were in college because he knew that not to do so would put a financial strain on my parents. When I attended Upland College, he offered me the use of his car when dating, as well as encouragement and advice in my courtship of my future wife. He and his wife also took an interest in other young people, especially relatives and those who were away from home; in a sense, they took the place of absent parents. Various people have said that only through their help and encouragement were they able to attend Messiah College or Upland College.

Lady spoke much of "contagious Christianity." It was in character that he should provide the following quotation for *Hymns for Praise and Worship*, a hymnal presently in use by the Brethren in Christ Church: "To be sure, Christianity is easier to discuss than to live. Thus we go on hiding behind the discussion of it. But remember that the loveliest and deepest experiences of life are not realized at the end of a discussion but in actually sharing one's life in devotion to Christ and His cause wherever He may lead. Be sure of this: if anyone's religion is to be contagious, it must first of all be enjoyed. It must be his strength."<sup>19</sup>

This joy of life was reflected in his love of the Bible. Many remember him for his preaching--making the Word practical, alive, and enjoyable. He loved to preach and read from it. He is remembered by one as sitting in the lounge during a retreat with the Bible open on his lap and tears streaming down his cheeks.

He frequently gave praise for the common things of life. He had the ability to enjoy a good walk, to hear, see, taste, and smell nature.<sup>20</sup>

And he believed that even the small encounters in life were part of the plans of a gracious God. Henry Ginder tells of a layover at a train station that he and Lady had while travelling together to a board meeting. Ginder went for a

haircut while Lady watched the baggage. When Ginder returned he told Lady of his aggressive witnessing to the African-American barber who gave him his haircut. The barber promised Ginder that he would go to church with his wife the next Sunday. Lady responded to Ginder, "Praise the Lord, I believe you will meet him in Heaven." He then quoted Philippians 1:6: "Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion, until the day of Jesus Christ."<sup>21</sup>

A good summary of Lady's philosophy of life may be found in a paper written by a student in 1963.

Christian Theist. Dr. Lady's philosophy of life is summed up in these words: "I am a personal Christian Theist. I believe God is both transcendent and eminent. He is a personal, eternal (and the only one who is eternal), perfect, immutable, self-revealing, and self-existing God. God is not only the creator of all things, but also the sustainer of his creation. Through his son Jesus Christ, he is the Redeemer of mankind."

"I believe, by nature, man is under the curse of sin, and only by a personal faith in the atoning merits of Christ's death, and through the operation of the Holy Spirit in him is man able to become a spiritual son in God's eternal kingdom!"

Bible belief. "I believe the Bible is spiritual and intellectually relevant for the ideals and standards of society today. There is a Spirit in the Bible teaching, if believed and practiced, that makes man tall of soul, tender in heart, gentle, patient, strong, faithful, and courageous."

Christian love. "I believe Christian love is the supreme motive of life. We should not only love our neighbors as ourselves, but we should love others as Christ has loved us. Then, and only then can we live in a world of peace, and enjoy good-will and fellowship with God and our fellow men."<sup>22</sup>

## The Ministry and Preaching

Jesse Lady was a loyal churchman who served in many roles--pastor, evangelist, teacher, school administrator, missionary, writer, bishop, and member of boards and committees. He held a strongly positive view of the position and opportunities of the ministry. Of all the roles he had in the church he considered ministry the highest. The minister's work, he said, was primarily teaching and teaching was a ministry. He thought that in no other vocation was the work so dignified nor association with the noblest personalities so likely; in no other vocation could one so well mold minds and public opinion or proclaim Christ.<sup>23</sup> As noted earlier, he was ordained as a minister, held several short-term pastorates, and from 1928 through 1947 conducted fifty-three evangelistic campaigns. After his retirement from active church work, he served as interim pastor at Clarence Center, New York, from September 1968 to February 1969.

Additional insights into his views on preaching comes from his *Preaching the Gospel*, written for young pastors in Africa. The call to ministry must be a call from God, he writes. Accepting such a call will help a person preach with greater authority. A preacher must understand human nature and be close to the common people. He must learn to love and sympathize with people, which can be done by the minister putting himself in their place. He must be a student, thereby learning from the everyday experiences of life.<sup>24</sup>

In the same source Lady also offers his views on sermon preparation and delivery. The theme of the sermon should be plain, clear, brief, and easy to remember. In sermon preparation allow sufficient time for reading, gathering, and arranging the materials. Study hard, think hard, plan hard. Trust everything to preparation, nothing to inspiration.

Study as if everything depended on you, and trust as if everything depended on God.<sup>25</sup> Earlier, in an article in the *Evangelical Visitor*, he urged that sermons should aim at simplicity and naturalness.<sup>26</sup>

These instructions correspond to his own style and practice of preaching. Although well educated, his preaching and teaching (he saw them as intertwined) were easily understood and remembered. He used various devices to command attention and give understanding.<sup>27</sup> Sermons and lectures usually consisted of short outlines, usually with three or four main points in parallel form (for example, each point beginning with the same letter of the alphabet). He had the gift of seeing sermon outlines in Scripture; the margins of his Bible have many hand-written, three- or four-point outlines. Often in class he would remark, "Now that would make a good sermon outline." Among his assignments were the developing of three-point sermons. A former student has evaluated his instruction as a model of expository teaching and literary analysis.<sup>28</sup>

Lady radiated a warm spiritual ministry within the Wesleyan tradition. At times during his sermons and classes he became excited and shouted "Hallelujah." At other times he had his class sing "Trust and Obey," his favorite song.

### Teaching on Holiness

The Spirit-filled life was a dominant part of his teaching and preaching. He considered that no aspect of the Christian faith was so tragically neglected and perhaps misunderstood.<sup>29</sup> The doctrine of the Holy Spirit, he maintained, is absolutely vital to the entire plan of salvation: what health is to the body holiness is to the soul—not a luxury but a necessity.<sup>30</sup> One of his arguments for the need of holiness was that "no man can ever hope to

raise the standard of his ethics higher than the state of his character." Christians need holiness for victorious daily living and effective service.<sup>31</sup>

His teaching on how one receives the Holy Spirit was in the historic Brethren in Christ tradition. The experience--sanctification--comes as a crisis, when the Christian realizes a lack of power in her or his life, claims the promise of the Holy Spirit, and makes a full surrender to God. But he was not as rigid in this respect as were some in his day: he recognized that the process and accompanying emotions would vary in those receiving the Holy Spirit.

A study of two articles on the subject printed in the *Evangelical Visitor* shows that his position on the need for and the process and effects of sanctification remained much the same between the fifteen years that separated them. Sanctification is fact, faith, and feeling (the alliteration in his choice of words is typical) and received just as any other aspect of salvation. He cautioned that it is futile to expect the same emotional reactions from the experience from everyone, that there is danger in emphasizing feelings rather than faith, and that people should not be slaves to vocabulary, or judgmental towards people receiving the Holy Spirit in a manner other than they had experienced.<sup>32</sup>

Lady placed emphasis on right ethics and consistent living accompanying sanctification. There can be no holiness without right relationships with both God and man. A sanctified person is still human with normal appetites. Such a person is not depersonalized, is not a saint. In this position he was more flexible than some holiness advocates of his day. But he maintained that such appetites are brought under control by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, thus the difference between the pre-sanctified and the sanctified life.<sup>33</sup>

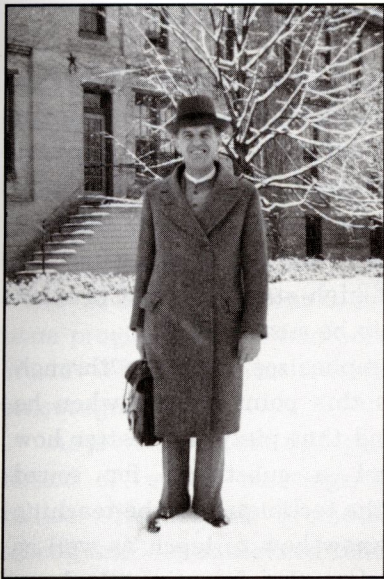
## Educator

In the summer of 1935, Messiah College invited Jesse and Lucille Lady to return to their alma mater as part of the faculty. Both were promising young people; he had only recently completed post-graduate work, and she was a nurse. He remained at Messiah until 1944 as Professor of Biblical Literature and New Testament Greek. Within this time he was visiting pastor and Religious Director at the college.

In 1944 the Ladys moved to Upland, California, where he became president of Beulah College. These were years of transition for the institution-into a four-year arts college and in expanded facilities. During Lady's five-year tenure, government surplus buildings were bought and moved on campus, thus providing such additional structures as a chapel, classrooms, and a gymnasium. A new mens dormitory was also constructed. The staff was upgraded by bringing to the campus additional faculty with advanced degrees.

To fund such advances, Lady travelled from time to time throughout the denomination to raise money. When he stopped at our home on such trips, he would often comment, "I make no apologies for asking for money for Christian education." He would add, "I'd rather have many people give small amounts than fewer give large amounts. Giving makes them part of the college."

As this suggests, he was strongly committed to Christian education. He realized little material existed on church doctrine for the junior and senior high school group, the most critical age. His concern for this situation was the major factor in his choice of a doctoral dissertation on a workbook as a technique for teaching the doctrines and ordinances of the denomination (noted above). "If there is to be a church tomorrow," he writes in the dissertation, "There must be a well instructed people today." "Modern



**Jesse Lady as a teacher at  
Messiah Bible College**



**President Jesse Lady at the dedication of new buildings at Beulah (later Upland) College in February, 1949. Others in the photo are, from left to right: E. J. Swalm, Roy Wenger, Jesse Lady, C. N. Hostetter Jr. (President of Messiah Bible College), and Alvin C. Burkholder**

education," he wrote a few pages later, "too often educates youth for a job, and instructs them in the art of making a living. The true fact is that education ought to train and prepare young people how to make a life. We need purpose more than we need ability." Later he insists that "we must come to realize the place for a definite religious education program within the church if high standards of Christian living and Bible doctrine are to be sustained."<sup>34</sup>

But this education, he emphasizes, must be through quality teaching. He makes this point clearly when he states, "We must keep in mind that piety, no matter how sincere and genuine, is not a substitute for sound scholarship, or for mastery of the techniques of the teaching process." The teacher must know how to teach as well as what to teach, including using the latest methods of teaching.<sup>35</sup> He designed his workbook to help students to distinguish between what is essential and what is non-essential, to think through reasons for certain practices of the church.

Lady was popular as a Bible teacher. Many of his students remember his making the Bible come alive and have practical, relevant meaning. Lessons were both inspirational and well organized. Students at Messiah College recall that he tried to make Greek not seem to be Greek. A line in the tribute contained in the Alumni Appreciation Award which he received later in life notes that he made the courses in biblical literature and in religion become a "vital force in Christian living."

In his classes, as in his sermons, he used simple outlines and some little helps. Typical was one which helped to distinguish the Sadducees from the Pharisees: "The Sadducees did not believe in heaven, so they were 'sad you see.'" Those students who went into the ministry without benefit of a seminary education still had the benefit of knowing how to make outlines of chapters and sermons and

other skills needed in sermon preparation. One of his students at Upland College used Lady's methods to train pastors in Japan.<sup>36</sup>

In chapel addresses and in articles in the *Evangelical Visitor* he repeated the theme that Christian education was to equip young people for service, including for missionary work. It was no accident that at Beulah College the gospel team program, which had been largely inactive because of World War II, was revived in 1945 and strongly encouraged.<sup>37</sup>

As president of the college he maintained the traditional format of revival meetings, prayer groups, and holiness rallies. He actively promoted evangelistic fervor at the school, and was concerned that its religious life be kept free from what he saw as the potential dangers of liberal influences.

During these years at Beulah College, Lucille Lady was also closely involved in the life of the institution and students. She taught classes in health and first aid, and served as the school nurse. Both Ladys took a personal interest in the students, among other ways by counselling them and inviting them into their home.

### Bishop

In 1947, while still president of Beulah College, Lady became bishop of the Brethren in Christ Church in California and Oregon. Two years later he asked to be relieved of the presidency of the college in order to devote more time to his responsibilities as bishop. He continued to teach classes at the college in Bible, biblical literature, and philosophy on a part-time basis.<sup>38</sup> Less conservative and with more education than the typical bishops of that time, he was a stabilizing influence on the church as it entered into significant changes, as in modes of dress.



**The administrators of Beulah College in 1945. Left to right: Alma Cassel (academic dean), Dortha Dohner (business manager), Jesse Lady (president), William Hoke (dean of students)**



**Transferring the bishopric from J. Harry Wagaman to Jesse Lady**

One of his main concerns as a bishop was that his people live Spirit-filled lives. He carried a burden for those who did not seem to grow spiritually or attend church services regularly. Instead of giving up on such people, he urged his associates, more attention should be given to helping them to a higher level of spiritual life.<sup>39</sup>

Another of his concerns was for a renewed focus on missions. He admonished the Upland congregation for retaining so many of its talented people. Some of them needed to move out into the smaller congregations and to do more outreach work. Some young couples heeded his advice and found their experiences life-changing. During his bishopric forty or fifty persons from the congregation on a given Sunday participated in small, local Sunday schools.<sup>40</sup>

To the young ministers under his bishopric, Lady gave sound, practical advice. Know your audience, he counselled, and make the message fit it. Some preachers just fire into the air and the audience gets nothing. During the summer, preach light sermons, such as character studies. He emphasized thorough preparation: one of his ministers recalls his saying that if you know of a busy week coming, prepare an easy sermon, or have another person preach for you.<sup>41</sup> He also advised not to make big issues out of unimportant things.

Lady took seriously his responsibility towards his pastors. He critiqued their work, always in a constructive manner. He told one pastor to put more life into his sermon delivery--make it more like a Youth for Christ delivery. On a visit to a service in one of the congregations in his bishopric he observed a child making excessive noise. He asked the pastor later whether he had counselled its parents about the problem.<sup>42</sup> He asked those young pastors who were changing their style of dress, including wearing a necktie, more rapidly than was acceptable to the church to be patient and remain in the church. As a bishop he was

not above sharing with them some of his own thoughts and negative aspects of the denomination.<sup>43</sup>

But he was throughout his career a loyal churchman, despite the disagreements he had with his church. He strongly supported its doctrines and made adjustments where those seemed necessary.

This attitude may be illustrated in the events surrounding the invitation the Ladys received to join the Messiah faculty in 1935. Lady responded to the invitation favorably but informed Messiah's president, C.N. Hostetter Jr., that Lucille was wearing a hat instead of the traditional prayer veiling, having been removed from the Brethren in Christ Church for a number of years. Hostetter responded in a strongly worded letter stating that Lucille would need to comply with the school's standards, that is, to wear a prayer veiling, if they joined the faculty. The Ladys thereupon regretfully withdrew their acceptance of the invitation.

Two weeks later, however, the Ladys sent another letter to Hostetter saying that they had reconsidered the matter. They now thought that they should come to Messiah and were ready to comply with the college's position on the prayer veiling. Through the period when the clerical vest was expected of ministers and the prayer veiling for the women, the Ladys dressed to the denomination's expectations.<sup>44</sup>

Lady both spoke and wrote supportively of the church's position on dress. The Ladys personally adopted the dress changes that eventually came in the church in California, but in a deliberately modest way: thus Lady wore a black tie and his wife did not cut her hair. His teaching came to focus on modesty as the primary concern of the Christian in matters of dress.

Part of Lady's church leadership was service on various denominational boards and committees. He was a member

of the Review and Study Committee from 1947 to 1953. This committee, in effect, initiated the significant changes that occurred in the denomination in the 1950's and 1960's. Committee members remember that an important element of his service was as reconciler between conservative and so-called liberal elements, even though he himself was less rigid than most church leaders. In the committee, his classroom, and bishopric he tried to avoid divisiveness, and would not be drawn into discussing controversial issues or Scriptures with vague interpretations.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to serving on the Review and Study Committee, he sat on the Board for Young People's Work from 1937 to 1952. He was also a member of the Board for Christian Education, Commission on Youth, Committee on Indoctrination, Committee on the Preparation of Doctrinal Literature, and the Ministerial and Examining Board.

Although loyal to the Brethren in Christ Church, Lady enjoyed the fellowship of members of other denominations, despite differences in doctrines. Of his association with them he would say, "When you eat chicken, you don't eat the bones. You eat what's good. Likewise you can fellowship with Christians in areas in which you agree with them."<sup>46</sup>

I remember that in class he frequently quoted G. Campbell Morgan, a British Methodist, one of his favorite preachers and theologians. After quoting Morgan, sometimes he would add with a twinkle in his eye, "And he smoked a big cigar." He would then look at the class in a manner that indicated he did not approve of smoking but he did not discredit Morgan's theology.

Similarly, in a chapel address at Messiah College in the 1960's he suggested that perhaps the Hippies have something to say to us.<sup>47</sup> That he liked to associate with people other than Brethren in Christ is illustrated by his being active in the Southern California Holiness Association

(one year as its vice-president), and serving on the board for the San Bernardino Youth for Christ.

### Missions

Lady had a life-long interest in missions. As the Brethren in Christ began to move through changes in the 1950's, he hoped that one of the results of the changes would be a renewed interest in missions. He was encouraged by church leaders who received more exposure to world needs as they began to travel more extensively, including Sam Wolgemuth who in the early 1950's organized evangelistic crusades in various parts of the world for Youth for Christ.

One of the countries in which Wolgemuth had worked was Japan. Lady encouraged several Brethren in Christ young men to form an evangelistic team to go to that country. The young men were willing but money was needed to send them. Lady encouraged them to pray for financial assistance, but also presented to the newly formed Men's Fellowship of the Upland Church the idea of supporting the young men as a gospel team. Not everyone was enthusiastic about the idea; they thought that already the church had many needs for their money.

But Lady was persistent. "If we get involved in missions," he reasoned, "it will create new enthusiasm in the church at home, and this will generate more money." He arranged for a Men's Fellowship dinner, at which he sponsored the project, with the result that the group agreed to support the young men--Peter Willms, Royce Saltzman, and Gordon Johnson--in their trip to Japan. Two of these young men were associated with Upland College, the other with Messiah College; by thus supporting them, Lady sought to renew a fervor for missions and evangelism in the church schools as well as in the denomination.<sup>48</sup>

One of Lady's special mission interests was Israel. After

his term as bishop ended in 1954, he and Lucille were commissioned by the Brethren in Christ Church to go to Israel to investigate possibilities for mission outreach in that country. In Jerusalem, he worked in a book shop where he gave out many New Testaments and much other Christian literature. He had opportunities to give personal testimony and counsel, and to speak in the services of various religious groups (altogether he spoke at least twenty-five times in public meetings, one of them a radio address). But because of pressure from outside groups and restrictions in most areas of Christian service, all missionaries considered at that time that their accomplishments were meager and progress slow. Most decisive for the Ladys' continued work in Israel was their failure to get their visas renewed after one year in the country, thus their work in that country was terminated.<sup>49</sup>

From Israel the Ladys went to Africa where he served as principal of the Wanezi Bible Institute in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) until 1959 and she taught students first aid and simple bookkeeping. It is clear that he found great satisfaction in his work in Africa. He was greatly challenged by the thought of helping to develop an advanced Bible school to train the future ministers and leaders of the African church. Because he did not know the language, he spoke in English, but this was advantageous in that students from Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) could attend because English was a language understood in both countries.

Davidson Mushala of Zambia was one of those students who could now attend the Brethren in Christ school; he declared that the classes he attended under Lady were far superior to those he took in South Africa.<sup>50</sup> Both Mushala and another student in his classes, Phillip C. Mudenda, speak very positively of Lady's relationships with African students. He identified with their culture, they claim, and

frequently called them "brethren" in class, all the more surprising because he was highly educated. He carried a concern for the personal lives of the students, including for their being separated from their wives while in school. For the single men, he was concerned about whom they would marry. He kept finely tuned to their out-of-class informal discussions. On a morning following such discussions, he would sometimes begin the class with, "Brethren, you know . . .," then would address the issue they had been discussing. The students were puzzled how he knew about their conversation.

To his African students, Lady's instruction on preaching was in the same manner as to his North American students--practical, and an emphasis on outlining and preparing sermons. He showed them how to identify significant words and ideas, and to ask questions such as, "What does this verse mean? At that time? Now in our time?" He admonished them, "Take time to pray! Prepare! Pray!" And he accompanied his students to their villages to hear them preach; he considered that it was important that his students be able to give a personal witness to their people.

He had the ability to identify potential in his African students. He would encourage them to be true to the Word and not fall into sin, thereby lessening their potential service. He asked a student in whom he sensed leadership potential to assist him and suggested that he be included in committees that made decisions for the school. Other missionaries resisted this suggestion as a "thing not done," but Lady insisted that because these men were future leaders of the church they should be included. The Ladys kept in touch with their African students in the following years and showed acts of kindness toward them, such as sending money for wedding presents.<sup>51</sup>

While at the Wanezi Bible Institute, Lady brought

together the little book *Preaching the Gospel* referred to above. The work is a compilation of notes on preaching by former missionaries and notes coming out of his own experiences. He also did some preaching, occasionally conducted prayer meetings, and continued to show his interest in farming by taking care of the chickens and gathering the eggs at the mission.<sup>52</sup>

### Last Years

The Ladys returned to the United States from Africa at the beginning of 1960, in time for him to teach at Messiah College during the second semester. In the following year they travelled in Canada and the United States in the interest of missions. At the beginning of the 1961 school year, he and Lucille returned to Upland College, where he served as Associate Professor of Bible and Religion and as Acting Chairman of the Department of Religion. He remained in these positions until the college closed in 1965.

Upon their return to California, the Ladys began attending the Chino Brethren in Christ Church, even though they lived in Upland. That they did so was perhaps because of their wish to support smaller congregations, perhaps also because this would be less stressful and provide a change. At Chino he regularly taught a Sunday school class.

In California he also became involved in several non-church occupations, including selling *World Book* encyclopedias, burial caskets and cemetery plots, and Swipe, a cleaning fluid. Many people wondered why, given his talents, he should be engaged in such work. But he gave no apologies for what he did, and seemed to enjoy making sales, in which he achieved a degree of success. It may be that he needed the financial return such sales brought, or that he welcomed a change of life that gave him new ways to contact people.

It may also have had something to do with the stressful time he was having owing to his wife's physical and emotional condition. For fifteen years she had been suffering periods of severe depression, the details of which he did not share with even his family and closest associates. Rather he carried the burden alone.<sup>63</sup> Thus when she took her life on May 2, 1968, all who heard were shocked.

Her husband, too, was taken by surprise. In a letter to family and close friends describing what had happened he wrote: "I lived under the shadow of knowing that it could happen, but never really thought it would happen. But...I thank God that he gave me 34 years--wonderful years!--with her. Tears flow unbidden, but I am sure she is far better off, and I can never question the purposes of God." He noted also in the letter the assurance that their medical doctor, James Alderfer, had given him that mental illness is as real as physical illness, and that Lucille was not responsible for taking her life.

A brother-in-law in an obituary notice summarized well the essence of Lucille's life: "Serving God in the healing touches of a registered nurse; giving choice years on the mission fields of Israel and Africa: being the behind-the-scenes support and inspiration for her bishop and college president husband; becoming involved in her own right in the concerns of church and school; extending to a friend and stranger alike the hospitalities of their home; and performing these services with an unusual grace and glow!--This was Lucille Lady!"

In retrospect the family grieved that they had allowed Jesse to carry his burden alone, but depression was not so well understood then as now, and not so openly discussed. Also Jesse may have felt that as a holiness preacher his reputation was more vulnerable in such a situation. He was once asked how he could always be so happy. He replied, "You have to be if you're a holiness preacher."<sup>64</sup>

He remained in California until September 1968 when he went to Clarence Center, New York, to serve as interim pastor of the Brethren in Christ Church at that place. He made his home with Joe and Trena Miller, who have said of his stay with them, "He was a good example of what a Christian could be by the grace of God."

In January 1969 he suffered a stroke. In early spring of the same year he went to live at the Messiah Home in Harrisburg (now Messiah Village). Later, in June, he moved to Abilene, Kansas, to live with one of his sisters, Minnie Engle. And on September 14, he married Grace Stoner of Pennsylvania. The couple lived in her home near Dillsburg. While he was too weak for much exertion, he managed to cut a path through the woods near their house, where he also found much enjoyment in taking walks. They spent the winter in Florida, taking in the meetings at Camp Freedom near St. Petersburg.<sup>55</sup>

The Ladys went to California in the spring of 1970, residing in the house of Eldon and Harriet Bert while the latter were elsewhere. But for much of their time he was hospitalized with a severe heart condition (he had developed heart trouble six or seven years before his stroke). This must have been greatly disappointing to him. He had hoped to regain his health so that he could preach and conduct revival meetings, accompanied by Grace doing the special singing.

Now open-heart surgery was required. He was given only a 50-50 chance of survival and recovery, but he decided to have the operation since his present condition was not a satisfactory alternative. He underwent the operation on October 21 at St. Vincent's Hospital in Los Angeles. Eight days later he died, at the age of sixty-six.<sup>56</sup>

Excerpts from two tributes given following his death serve to help summarize his character and work. "Many there are today," said Arthur M. Climenhaga, then bishop



**Jesse Lady with John Climenhaga at Messiah Home in Harrisburg in 1969**



**Jesse Lady and Grace Stoner at the time of their wedding, September 14, 1969**

of the Pacific and Midwest Conferences, "who could stand and recount the wonder and privilege of having known and been associated with Dr. Jesse F. Lady. His life touched many lives with blessing. His dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ became the foundation of his dedication for others. In him the Spirit of God was the force that moved him in various paths of life."

D. Ray Hostetter, president of Messiah College, wrote, "A distinction of his life was joy. Yes, he had his disappointments but even through the tragic in life he exemplified joy. His quality of life is scarce and his absence from our sad society will be sorely felt . . . . Some leaders are known as thinkers and others as doers. These leaders are superseded only by those who are concerned with being . . . . Dr. Lady was that kind of leader."<sup>67</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Eunice Wingert, *Mother's Whirring-Wheel Rug: A Lady Family Genealogy* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Press, 1978), p. 29, and the writings of Cornelius Lady. Conflicting views exist on whether Samuel joined the Brethren in Christ Church. My father said that he remained a Lutheran but was loyal in attendance and support of the Brethren in Christ, and that many assumed that he was a member. In more recent years, my Uncle Samuel Lady and Aunt Eunice Wingert have said that they think he did join the church.

<sup>2</sup>Jesse Lady, "The Church in Thy House," *Evangelical Visitor* (April 28, 1958), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Eunice Wingert, interview, March 1991.

<sup>4</sup>James 5:14 (NIV): "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord."

<sup>5</sup>Eunice Wingert, *Mother's Whirring-Wheel Rug*, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup>Interviews with Eunice Wingert and the writings of Cornelius Lady.

<sup>8</sup>Wingert, *Mother's Whirring-Wheel Rug*, p. 60.

- <sup>9</sup>E. Morris Sider, *Messiah College: A History* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Press, 1984), p. 84.
- <sup>10</sup>Walter Graif, "Jesse Lady, A Biography," a paper written for a class at Upland College, April 1963, p. 8.
- <sup>11</sup>Correspondence from Clarence Musser, January 21, 1991.
- <sup>12</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup>*Clarion*, 1926, p. 10.
- <sup>14</sup>Interview with Alvin C. Burkholder, March 1991.
- <sup>15</sup>Graif, "Jesse Lady," pp. 13, 14.
- <sup>16</sup>Correspondence with Charlie B. Byers, 1992.
- <sup>17</sup>Correspondence with Ruth Byers, 1992.
- <sup>18</sup>Interview with Alvin Burkholder.
- <sup>19</sup>*Hymns for Praise and Worship* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Press, 1984), p. 453.
- <sup>20</sup>Jesse F. Lady, Editorial, *Evangelical Visitor* (November 18, 1951), p. 3.
- <sup>21</sup>Interview with Henry Ginder, 1992.
- <sup>22</sup>Graif, "Jesse Lady," p. 17.
- <sup>23</sup>Jesse F. Lady, Preachers Page, *Evangelical Visitor* (May 24, 1939), p. 166.
- <sup>24</sup>Jesse F. Lady, *Preaching the Gospel: Introductory Studies on Preaching* (Bulawayo, South Rhodesia: Matopo Book Room, n.d.), p. 14.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 18.
- <sup>26</sup>Jesse F. Lady, Preachers Page, *Evangelical Visitor* (May 24, 1937), p. 166.
- <sup>27</sup>Correspondence with Clarence Musser.
- <sup>28</sup>Interview with Merle Brubaker, March 1994.
- <sup>29</sup>Jesse F. Lady, "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament," in *Insights into Holiness*, compiler Kenneth Geiger (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press, 1962), p. 173.
- <sup>30</sup>Jesse F. Lady, "Climate for Holiness," *Evangelical Visitor* (February 28, 1966), pp. 3-4.
- <sup>31</sup>Jesse F. Lady, "Ethics and Holiness," *Evangelical Visitor* (October 29, 1951), p. 7.
- <sup>32</sup>Jesse F. Lady, *ibid.*, and "Climate for Holiness," pp. 3-4.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 4.
- <sup>34</sup>Jesse F. Lady, "A Presentation of a Workbook as a Technique for Teaching the Doctrines and Ordinances of the Brethren in Christ Church" (Doctoral Dissertation, Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary, 1946), pp. 3, 5, 30.
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 11, 20.
- <sup>36</sup>Interview with Peter Willms, June 1993, and interview with Henry Miller, June 1993.
- <sup>37</sup>E. Morris Sider, *A Vision for Service: A History of Upland College* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Press, 1976), p. 159.
- <sup>38</sup>Beulah/Upland College Trustee Board Minutes, 1944-49.
- <sup>39</sup>Interview with Alvin C. Burkholder.

<sup>40</sup>Interviews with Alvin Burkholder, Peter Willms, and Dorothy Guengerich, March 1991.

<sup>41</sup>Interview with Merle Brubaker.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Interview with Peter Willms.

<sup>44</sup>Sider, *Messiah College*, p. 220.

<sup>45</sup>Interviews with Henry Ginder, Alvin Burkholder, Peter Willms.

<sup>46</sup>Interview with Arthur Heise, March 1992.

<sup>47</sup>Interview with Peter Willms.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Jesse and Lucille Lady, "One Year in Israel," *Evangelical Visitor* (October 24, 1955), p. 9.

<sup>50</sup>Interview with Davidson Mushala, April 1994.

<sup>51</sup>Interview with *ibid.*, and P.C. Mudenda, April 1994.

<sup>52</sup>Interview with Dorothy (Mrs. Elwood) Hershey, 1992.

<sup>53</sup>Interview with Grace Stoner Lady and Lois Tidgwell, March 1991.

<sup>54</sup>Interview with Lois Tidgwell.

<sup>55</sup>Interview with Grace Lady.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>For the two tributes, see *Evangelical Visitor* (December 25, 1970), p. 15.

# The Life and Times of Christian Leshner

*By Martin Schrag\**

Those who have worked with the primary sources from the first century of Brethren in Christ history (to 1880) know that the material is very limited. The writings and letters of Christian Leshner (1775-1856), a bishop in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, constitute a larger volume of documents than all the other surviving documents from his period combined. One of the values in reviewing his relatively voluminous writings is that through them we have an excellent insight into the thought of an early Brethren in Christ leader, as well as into the life of his group and the context in which its members lived.

## European Roots

The great majority of the Germans who came to Pennsylvania (including Swiss who were German in culture) did so in the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Among the estimated 100,000 who had arrived by the American Revolution was a group of fifty-three families with 166 dependents<sup>2</sup> who sailed from Rotterdam in "ye Ship James Goodwill, David Crockatt Master [Captain]," and landed in

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Philadelphia on September 27, 1727.<sup>3</sup>

Three of the dependents were a sixteen-year-old orphan named Heinrich (Henry) Leshner, the grandfather-to-be of Christian Leshner, and two of his sisters. Henry's guardian and probable uncle was Hans Hege.<sup>4</sup> Related to the Heges and Leshners was Hans Lehman, whose sister Marie Hans Hege married; in turn Lehman married Hege's sister Anna. There is some but not conclusive evidence indicating that Henry Leshner's mother was another sister of Hege's--Elizabeth (or Barbara)--and that in 1710 she married Joseph Lichti whose last name in the shifts of spelling that took place in these years could have become Leshner.<sup>5</sup> Hege, being guardian of Henry Leshner, would naturally flow from this uncle-nephew relationship. The Heges, Lehmans, and Leshners were Mennonites, as were seven other families with Mennonite names who made the trip on the same boat.<sup>6</sup>

According to the oldest available source, written in 1859, Hans Hege "emigrated from Switzerland in Europe, in Schauffhausen, near Zweibrucken, at Ebertsen Hoff to the American Colonies."<sup>7</sup> The same source tells of the Lehmans, Leshners, and Heges coming together as three neighboring families. The source, however, is not entirely clear on this point because some of the locations are difficult to identify. There is insufficient information given to follow the route in detail, and it is not known at what point the three families became neighbors. A European genealogist characterized the statement as "enigmatic . . . because it is full of contradictions."<sup>8</sup> That judgment is too severe, but a loss of precision in the statement occurred as the information was passed down from one generation to another from 1727 to 1859.

However, the sequence of place names is true to history in that many Swiss-German Mennonites followed the route of emigration from Switzerland to the Palatinate and other principalities such as Zweibrucken, all located in the

west-southwest part of what today is Germany. After living in these parts for a time they sailed to America.<sup>9</sup> While some Swiss Mennonites moved directly to America (such as the Ulrich Engel family),<sup>10</sup> the attention given to Zweibrucken and Ebersten Hoff in the 1859 statement indicates that the Heges, Lehman, and Leshers settled, it appears, for an unknown number of years in southwestern Germany.

The starting point of the emigration--Switzerland--is not in doubt because the surnames of Hege, Lehman, and Leshner are Swiss in origin. Moreover the three names are found among the Swiss Anabaptists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Heges and Leshers have been traced back to the Aargau Canton and the Lehman name is rooted in the Berne Canton (see map 1).<sup>11</sup> Substantiating data is contained in a study of Anabaptist-Mennonite surnames used in Switzerland in the years 1525 to 1799. The following names are included: Haggi, Haigy, Hagi, Hegi and Haggy; Leeman, Lehmann, Lehner, Lehnerr, and Leman; Lasture, Leuchter, Latscho, Lochman, Lotscher, Luscher, and Luthi. One German genealogist states that two hundred variations of the Leshner name is possible. The listed names not only reinforce the Anabaptist-Mennonite roots of the three families; they also show the great variety in the spelling of names.<sup>12</sup>

With Schaffhausen mentioned immediately after Switzerland in the 1859 migration statement, that canton appears to be on the migration route taken by those persons listed in the statement. However, the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* indicates that the last Anabaptist churches in the canton dissolved soon after the 1590's, the implication being that no Anabaptist-Mennonites lived there during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>13</sup> The present archivist of Schaffhausen, Dr. Hans Lieb, lends support to this implication by stating that no record exists of Heges or

Leshers having lived in the canton in the eighteenth century; furthermore there are no places named Zwiebrucken or Ebersten Hoff in the canton. He considers that Schaffhausen is the town of that name in the Saarland province of Germany, and points out that some thirty miles east of Schaffhausen in Germany is the town of Zwiebrucken (see map 1).<sup>14</sup> The near proximity of the two towns is in keeping with the migration statement wording, "in Schauffhausen near Zweibrucken." At the same time, however, there is no evidence of Mennonites living in Saarland in the time under consideration because the Roman Catholic rulers of the area were not allowing Mennonites to settle on their land.<sup>15 16</sup>

Although this seems to preclude the Swiss canton of Schaffhausen as being a place on the route taken to America, certain information seems to suggest that it cannot be ruled out. It is known that some persons identified as "separatists" emigrated from Schaffhausen Canton to America in the years 1737 to 1752. This information is not conclusive because the term separatist was applied not only to Mennonites but also to persons or groups who separated themselves from the state church, which could include the German Baptist Brethren, the radical Pietists, indeed any individual or group that separated themselves from the state.<sup>17</sup>

The most informed word on the subject undoubtedly comes from Hermann Guth, a German Mennonite historian and genealogist, who states that it was the practice of at least some Swiss Mennonites to proceed from their native canton, stay temporarily in Schaffhausen Canton, then drift down the Rhine River to or beyond Germany. This was a way Anabaptists-Mennonites had of avoiding asking the government officials for permission to leave their home cantons.<sup>18</sup> Supporting such a view is a later statement of Dr. Lieb that there is no doubt that Mennonites did leave

# EUROPEAN ROOTS

## FRANCE

### France

By 1715 much of what became modern day France was unified under the king of France.

### Germany

The Germanic area of Central Europe in the year 1700 was a patchwork of some three hundred sovereign principalities and territories. There were fifty-one free cities and over eighty independent districts... all of these territories were loosely organized in the Holy Roman Empire. The Palatinate and Zweibrücken (both the town and the duchy) were a part of this patchwork.

### Switzerland

The three Swiss cantons mentioned in the article are

- 1) Schaffhausen
- 2) Aargau
- 3) Berne

## MAP 1





from the Schaffhausen Canton for the Palatinate, but official and full documentation is lacking for the view.<sup>19</sup> Thus it appears that the Schaffhausen mentioned in the migration statement is the Swiss canton by that name.

The Mennonites left Switzerland because they were persecuted by both church and state, this being especially true in the cantons of Zurich and Bern. At times persecution became intense, as in 1671-1672 when over 700 Mennonites (Anabaptists) streamed from Bern to the Palatinate, and again in 1716-1717 and 1725-1727.<sup>20</sup> Levi Lukenbach, a well informed nineteenth-century bishop, recalled this persecution in the first Brethren in Christ account of the founding of the church, when he wrote, ". . . the ancestors of the founders of the [Brethren in Christ] Church were residents of Upper Switzerland, in Europe, and members of the Mennonite persuasion, and while living in the country they had to endure great persecution for their faith's sake. . . . Some of them were imprisoned and had their property confiscated. . . ." <sup>21</sup> Lukenbach tied persecution to the group of emigrants that included the Engel family, which arrived in America in 1754. The Heges, Lehmans, and Leshers also left Switzerland because of persecution.

The Mennonites fled to the Palatinate and Zweibrucken because the rulers of those lands knew the Mennonites to be good farmers who could help restore the countryside that had been devastated by the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). To encourage Mennonites to settle in their territories, the rulers granted them limited religious toleration (see map 1).<sup>22</sup> Few of the pre-Thirty Years War Anabaptist-Mennonites remained in the Palatinate after that war, but those who did aided the newcomers.

Zweibrucken was both a duchy (600-750 square miles) and a town located within the small duchy, situated in the western and southern part of the Palatinate.<sup>23</sup> (The duchy,

in existence for four centuries, came to an end in 1799 during the French Revolution.) As early as 1648 Swiss Mennonites were settling around the town, and by 1680 some of them had organized a congregation which later came to be known as the Ernstweiler congregation.

The names of Hege, Lehman, and Leshner have not been found among the Zweibrucken Mennonites. This is not surprising, since they would not be placed on any census list if they stayed only a short time at Zweibrucken on their way to America.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the Palatinate Mennonite census lists do not include Mennonites living in the duchy of Zweibrucken, since the duchy was independent.

No evidence exists of a village named Eberstein Hoff in the duchy of Zweibrucken. Hermann Guth believes the hof (or village) in mind is Offweilerhof, located next to the town of Zweibrucken. It was locally called Oberstenhof because for a time it was owned by a Colonel Phyl. The title colonel translates into the German word *oberst*. Thus the village was named Oberstenhof or Obersthof. If this identification is correct, this was the village in which the Heges, Lehman, and Leshners lived prior to their leaving for Pennsylvania.<sup>25</sup>

Although Mennonites were appreciated in the Palatinate because of their skill as farmers, they remained subject to religious discrimination. The Treaty of Westphalia (1648) recognized as legitimate the Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed faiths but did not give Anabaptists-Mennonites legal status. This left them at the mercy of ruling authorities, who levied special taxes on Mennonites, allowed no evangelism, restricted their rights to land ownership, limited the numbers of Mennonites in the country, and refused to grant full citizenship to them.<sup>26</sup>

In contrast was the news of new possibilities in the "new lands." Even before Pennsylvania had been granted to William Penn, Quaker messengers, including William Penn and George Fox, were encountering the Palatinate

Mennonites and securing the conversion of a number of them. Fox had been to North America and no doubt he and Mennonites of the Palatinate saw the new world as a place for refuge and new beginnings. When Penn was granted Pennsylvania in 1681 he put the vision of a "Holy Experiment" into practice by granting religious, civil and economic freedom to such persecuted groups in Europe as the Quakers, German Baptist Brethren, Mennonites, Schwenkfelders, Amish, and Moravians. The result was that Pennsylvania became a refuge for Christians who in Europe were suffering for their beliefs.<sup>27</sup> (See note for definition of German Baptist Brethren.)

Societal conditions also led Mennonites and many others to come to Pennsylvania. These included the "unhappy mix of waste at the court, mismanagement, serfdom, heavy taxation, bad weather and crop failures."<sup>28</sup> In addition, war continued to ravish parts of the countryside. Thus not only minorities who were discriminated against but also people of the Lutheran and Reformed faiths left the Palatinate for Pennsylvania in large numbers to become important elements in the emerging so-called Pennsylvania Dutch culture.<sup>29</sup>

In summary the data examined establishes that in terms of ethnic origins, surnames, and religious commitment the roots of the Heges, Lehmans, and Leshers were in Switzerland. The relationship of these families to Schaffhausen is not fully determined, but most likely the families stayed in the canton briefly before going on to Germany. In the German Palatinate was the independent duchy of Zweibrucken which was a point of departure of Mennonites for America. Ebersten Hoff, where the three families resided before leaving for the new world, appears to have been the village of Offweilerhof, also known locally as Oberstenhof, located close to the town of Zweibrucken.

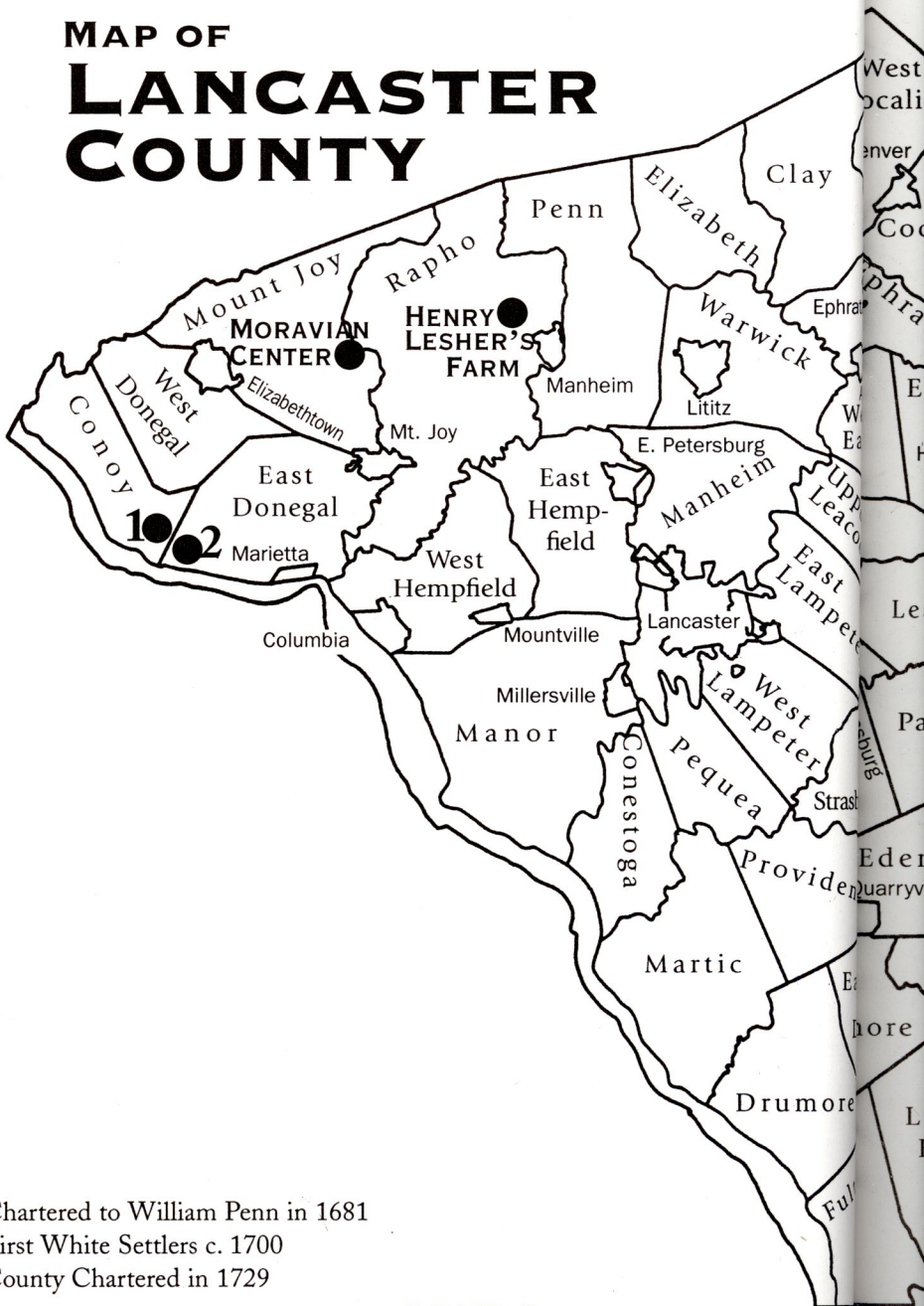
## Christian Leshner's Grandparents

After declaring their loyalty to King George II of England, rejecting the authority of the pope to excommunicate princes, and agreeing that James III of Scotland had no valid claim to the throne,<sup>30</sup> the Heges, Lehman and Leshners traveled to Rapho Township in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and settled northwest of the town of Manheim (see map 2).<sup>31</sup>

In the 1720's and 1730's much of Lancaster County was still wilderness. Panthers and wolves roamed the uncleared land and Indians still lived in the area. Among the first Europeans to settle in what came to be Lancaster County (organized in 1729) were Mennonites who began to arrive in 1710 and who secured acreage along the Pequea Creek east and south of what came to be the city of Lancaster. The wave of Mennonites in the 1730's that brought the Heges, Lehman and Leshners settled on land in the townships of Manheim, Warwick, and Rapho (see map 2).<sup>32</sup> The first Europeans in Rapho Township were Scotch-Irish but they were soon replaced by Swiss-German people; by 1756 more than 110 of the 118 families in the township were of that extraction. Thus Rapho was fertile soil for the fostering of the Pennsylvania-German culture.<sup>33</sup>

The Heges and the Lehman apparently settled on land before the government wanted white people in the area or had fully completed the process needed to legalize possession of land. They were known as squatters (which was true of many immigrants); they staked out their lands, as one historian says, "by marking trees along the boundary lines with a tomahawk."<sup>34</sup> John Hege received a patent for 149 1/2 acres in 1735.<sup>35</sup> In the same year John Lehman (Lemon) acquired the patent for 197 acres on land adjacent to John Hege.<sup>36</sup> Both farms were directly adjacent (northwest) to the town of Manheim.

# MAP OF LANCASTER COUNTY



Chartered to William Penn in 1681  
First White Settlers c. 1700  
County Chartered in 1729

MAP 2



### Henry Lesher's Farm

In 1737 a warrant was issued for the surveying of the land. Henry Sr. (1711-1784) on tax list first in 1756 (tax lists began in 1751, no records for 1752-1755). Land was surveyed again in 1761 and the patent was issued in the name of the son, Henry Lesher, Jr. (1740-1821).

### Brethren in Christ Beginnings

The number (1) designates the homestead of the leader in the founding of the Brethren in Christ, Jacob Engle, around 1778-1780. Number (2) designates his grave.

### Moravian Center

In the years c. 1749-1800 the Moravians had a work in the town of Donegal (today the town of Milton Grove) and carried on evangelistic work in the area. To date, no linkage has been found with the founding of the BIC, but not all sources have been studied. The Moravians kept extensive records and diaries of their work, and these texts need to be translated into English.

### Notes

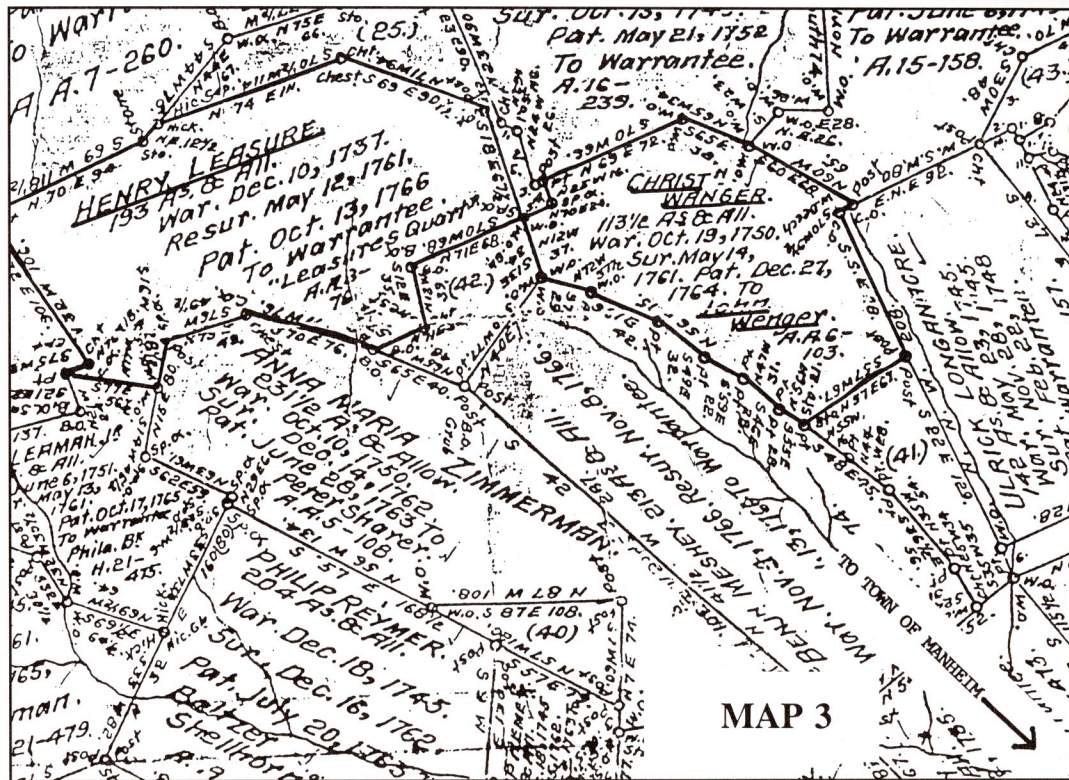
When Donegal township was created in 1729, it covered the present townships of West Donegal, East Donegal, Conoy, Rapho and Mt. Joy.

On December 10, 1737, a warrant was granted "unto Henry Leshar" for surveying a tract of land identified as "Leasure's Quarter" (note the freedom by which the name is spelled). Leshar applied for 150 acres but the land surveyed consisted of "one hundred and ninety-three acres and allowance of six acres [ineligible word] for roads etc." (As detailed below, the patent was not issued until 1766.) The land was located approximately three miles (northwest) measured directly crosscountry to the town of Manheim (see map 3).<sup>37</sup>

In 1756 Henry Leshar is listed for the first time in the Rapho Township tax lists (begun in 1751, the lists have no records for 1752 through 1755). In this year he is cited as having one hundred acres, two horses, one cow, and two sheep. The land was gradually cleared--twelve acres in 1758, fifty by 1770, and seventy by 1775. The listing in 1770 shows one hundred and sixty acres, two horses, three cattle, and five sheep. In addition to being a farmer,<sup>38</sup> Henry Leshar was also a weaver.<sup>39</sup>

From his will, we learn that Henry's wife was called Mary (Maria in German).<sup>40</sup> Henry and Maria had eight children--John, Henry, Jacob, Casper, Christian, Maria, Barbara, and Anna. The inventories (goods owned at death) of Henry and Mary give us some insight into the life they lived. (See Appendix A for the inventories.)

It is doubtful that Henry and Mary were related to the Brethren in Christ Church in their last years (both died in 1784). The issue is complicated by the lack of precise dates for the beginning of the Brethren. Estimated dates range from 1775 to 1787. Undoubtedly the group met informally several years before becoming a separate entity, but the years of such meetings are not known. To the east of the Henry Leshar farm, during the life time of Leshar Sr. and Jr., was the farm of Christian Wanger (father) and John Wenger (son). Worthy of mention is that the son, John



MAP 3

**Henry Leshler's Farm**  
 In 1737 a warrant was issued for the purpose of surveying the land that became Henry Leasure (Leshler) farm. The tract consisted of one hundred and ninety-three acres with allowance of six acres for road, etc. The land was surveyed again in 1761 and the patent issued (1766) in the name of the son, Henry Leshler, Jr.

**John Wenger**  
 To the right of the Leshler farm was the farm of Christian Wanger and his son, John Wenger. There is some evidence that the son, John Wenger, became the first Brethren in Christ bishop in Canada.

**Manheim**  
 The town of Manheim was/is located beyond the lower left corner of the map.

Wenger, was probably the first bishop of the Brethren in Christ in Canada (see map 8b).<sup>41</sup>

Henry chose as executors of his will (dated February 12, 1784) his son Christian and "my beloved friend John Heege." One of the witnesses to the will was John Hagy Jr.<sup>42</sup> Probably John Heege and John Hagy Jr. were the same person since John Heege Sr. is thought to have died around 1765.<sup>43</sup>

#### Christian Leshler's Parents

The Leasure quarter was resurveyed in 1761 and the patent issued in the name of Henry Leshler Jr. on October 31, 1766 (see map 3).<sup>44</sup> That the Rapho Township tax records give no evidence of the lands being turned over from the father to the son is explained by there being no tax records for the years 1759 to 1769. Before, during, and after those years, only one Henry Leshler is on the Rapho Township tax lists.<sup>45</sup>

Henry Leshler Jr. (1740-1821) and Frena Zedy (Cety, Zette, 1744-1804) were married in 1765.<sup>46</sup> They had five children--Henry, Maria, Jacob, Fanny, and Christian. Christian became the Bishop Christian Leshler of this study. The parents of Frena--Jacob and Frena Zedy--had several children, but only Peter and Frena grew to adulthood.

How Frena (Zedy) Leshler received her inheritance is not only a part of the Leshler story, but is also a window through which to view other important aspects of the Brethren in Christ past. Father Jacob Zedy (died 1750) in his will stated that his wife was to sell the farm, pay all debts, keep the house, and live in it with her children. When the youngest child (Frena) became ten years of age, the remaining assets were to be divided equally among mother, son, and daughter.<sup>47</sup> Because Mother Zedy did not sell the land (she died before November 7, 1759), the responsibility of

furthering the inheritance process fell on son Peter.

Because daughter Frena was a minor at the time of her mother's death, the Orphan Court of Lancaster County became involved in the matter, and appointed John Hare, a Mennonite elder, to be her guardian.<sup>48</sup> In a petition to the Orphan Court, dated November 7, 1759, Peter requested the Court to appoint several men to determine if the land could be equally divided, and if not the men were to determine the value of the estate so the money could be divided between Peter and Frena. The appointed men concluded that the land could not be equally divided "without injury and lessening the value of the land." They evaluated the estate at 325 pounds.<sup>49</sup>

Mother Frena Zedy may have died before 1759, for as early as 1755 Ulrich Engel "bargained" (came to an oral agreement) with Peter Zedy for 150 acres of Zedy land located in Donegal Township bordering on the Susquehanna River. Before the purchase was made final, Engel died (1756 or 1757), and because he had not made a will the matter came to Engel's wife Anna and her children--Catherine, Anna, Ulrich, John, Barbara, Christina, and Jacob (Jacob became the leader in the formation of the River Brethren, later Brethren in Christ). The 150 acres legally became the property of the Engels on March 26, 1761; the court determined the price at 325 pounds as already mentioned and gave the Engel estate the deed.<sup>50</sup>

Frena, now the wife of Henry Leshner Jr., received her inheritance on June 12, 1766 in the amount of 120 pounds, 6 shillings, and 1 penny. To this was added 22 pounds and 10 shillings for reasons that are not clear.<sup>51</sup>

One of the aspects of the Zedy land transactions of interest for Brethren in Christ beginnings is the interaction of Henry Leshner Jr. and his wife with the Ulrich Engel family. It is not known what all was involved in the relationship but the contacts may have been the means of

some Leshers becoming Brethren in Christ, as may have been the case with Christian Lesher.

Some interesting data relating to the Henry Lesher Jr. family is found in the records of a one-time United States federal tax levied in anticipation of a war with England (it may not have been collected). According to this source, the Leshers in 1798 lived in a one-story log house twenty by twenty-two feet in size, with three windows having twelve "lights" (the number of panes in the three windows). They also owned a barn forty-five by twenty-five feet. Their nearest neighbor was Christian Martin.<sup>52</sup>

It has been asserted that Henry Lesher, Jr. was a soldier in the American Revolution. The basis of the belief is that Lesher is listed in the multi-volume *Pennsylvania Archives* as a member of the Lancaster County Militia. A study of the data indicates that he took no part in the war and was what today is identified as a conscientious objector.

Evidence exists that Henry Lesher Jr. may have spent his last years in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, probably living with his son Christian (as noted, his wife Frena died in 1804). One source states that he moved with his son Christian when the latter and his family moved to Franklin County in 1807. This statement, however, needs further documentation. Other family members living in Franklin County who may have encouraged him to move to Franklin County were his brother Jacob (1747-1813), his sister Maria (Lesher) Brubaker (1759-1838), and his two daughters, Fanny (Lesher) Wingard, and Maria (Lesher) Stoner. Henry Jr. could have resided at more than one place in his later years. The belief that he died in Franklin County is based on his being buried in the Ringgold, Maryland, cemetery (less than a mile below the Franklin County line), beside Christian and Catherine Lesher. The headstones of the three are identical. Henry Lesher died on November 7, 1821, at eighty-one years of age.<sup>53</sup>

## Christian and Catherine (Strite) Leshner

The future Bishop Christian Leshner, the youngest child of Henry and Frena Leshner, was born on April 26, 1775. We do not know the setting for his conversion, or when and where he became a member of the Brethren in Christ Church, although his birth corresponded to the church's beginning and he was a part of the second generation of Brethren in Christ. His being elected a bishop in 1825 meant that he knew Jacob Engel (died 1833), the first Brethren in Christ leader, and undoubtedly other first-generation leaders.<sup>54</sup>

Christian Leshner recorded in his Sauer Bible that he was married on August 21, 1798, to Catherine Strite (born August 21, 1779), daughter of Christian and Mary (Myers) Strite of Lancaster County (the Strite family came from the Palatinate in Germany). Six children were born to the couple--Magdalena (1801), Christian (1804), John (1810), Catherine (1815), Henry (1817), and Jacob S. (1819).<sup>55</sup>

Evidence indicates that Christian Leshner farmed in Rapho Township until 1806. The township tax list included a Christian Leshner as early as 1772 and a second Christian Leshner for 1800-1806, without making a distinction between the two names. The 1798 United States federal tax list noted above does make a distinction between the two names, one being designated as senior and the other as junior. It is known that the senior-junior distinction sometimes indicated an uncle-nephew relationship. Such appears to have been the case here.<sup>56</sup> The uncle Christian's appearing on the tax lists by 1772 relates well to his birth date; his having no sons eliminates the younger Christian as being his son.

The statistical data suggests that the younger man was the future bishop. He married in 1798 and moved to Franklin County in 1807 (see note 57 for the latter date), and was on the Rapho tax list in the years between those

dates (1800-1806).<sup>57</sup> In short, Christian Leshar Sr. was an uncle to the Christian Leshar of this account.<sup>58</sup>

Although the 1798 United States federal tax lists the two Christian Leshars as senior and junior, it does not indicate which of the two farms belonged to the uncle and which to the nephew. It appears that it was the uncle who lived in a one-story log house, twenty-eight by twenty-five feet, with three windows and eight lights. His log barn was forty-two by twenty-two feet. The name of his closest neighbor was John Isten. His nephew's log house was twenty-seven by twenty-five feet, with two windows and twelve lights; the barn was sixty by twenty-seven feet, his spring house fourteen by sixteen feet. His nearest neighbor was his father Henry.<sup>59</sup>

Given the nature of the sources used in this article, such as tax lists, patents, and deeds, most of the action is by men. Fortunately two items were found in the Christian Leshar collection that relate to his wife Catherine. One is a piece of *fraktur* art featuring flowers. The writing on the left side reads "Gatarina Streitlin, Anno 1785." There can be little doubt that the Gatarina refers to Catherine, although in German the "G" should have been a "K." The date 1785 also suitably fits the picture since Catherine, born in 1779, would have been six years of age. Giving a student (especially young students) a piece of *fraktur* art as a reward for outstanding work was a common practice in those days, a practice commended by the well-known colonial schoolmaster, Christopher Dock.<sup>60</sup>

Catherine Strite's *fraktur* features four skillfully drawn tulips with a fan-shaped flower at the top,<sup>61</sup> possibly representing a carnation. The original colors were red and green.

A second item relating to Catherine Leshar is her song book. On the first page, in translation, are the following words:



Catherine Streit's fraktur

Dieses Heftchen wird geschenkt  
mit

Catharina Lescher

Zu

Februari Jan 7<sup>ten</sup> 1833

Es muß nur Gottes Will sein  
Denn kein Mensch kann noch forschen  
abgang aus der und aus der Zeit  
Hingang in der Feiligkeit

Flyleaf of Catherine Lesher's songbook

This Book of Spiritual Verses belongs to me Katherine  
Leshner

purchased February 7, 1833

Whoever intends to see the kingdom of God

Must follow the Lamb of God in His way

Going out with you and going out with time

is to enter into eternal life<sup>62</sup>

The title of the book is *Das kleine davidische Psalterspiel der kinder Zions* (the *Small Davidic Psalter of the Children of Zion*), first printed in 1744 by the German Baptist Brethren.<sup>63</sup> The song book was repeatedly republished, with minor changes from time to time. Catherine Leshner's owning a copy is evidence that at least some Brethren in Christ related to this popular book. A second piece of Fraktur art, not related to Catherine Leshner or an other designated person, was found in Christian Leshner's Sauer Bible. The five stanzas of poetry carry a pietistic-oriented message that sought to edify and admonish fellow-believers.<sup>64</sup>

### Franklin County Beginnings

Europeans began settling in what became Franklin County in the 1720's. The county was organized in 1784; up to that time it had been a part of Lancaster County from 1729 to 1750 and of Cumberland County from 1750-1784.<sup>65</sup> Settlers "purchased" the land that became the county from the Indians in 1736.<sup>66</sup> The first settlers were Scotch-Irish who were followed shortly in larger numbers by German-speaking pioneers. When the Revolutionary War ended the threat of Indian attack, many more people, especially those with German background, settled in the county.<sup>67</sup>

As early as 1734 Presbyterians sent out clergymen to minister to the scattered settlers. Within a year or two the first Mennonites made their appearance. Itinerant Lutheran

pastors began serving Lutherans during the 1740's. At the same time German Reformed believers made their way to the territory, in time becoming a strong body, probably in part because of such schools as the German Reformed Seminary in Mercersburg, a town located some twenty miles southwest of Chambersburg. German Baptist Brethren lived in the county for some years prior to organizing their first congregation in 1752. A few years later, in the 1790's, the Methodists and the United Brethren appeared in the county.<sup>68</sup>

Little is known about Brethren in Christ beginnings in Franklin County and of Washington County, Maryland. (Since the majority of the members lived in Franklin County, the entire community, including members in Maryland, were frequently defined as the Franklin County Brethren.) Two factors about their beginning in the counties are important to note. First, it is not always known when individuals and families began to identify with the Brethren in Christ Church. Some were members when they arrived; others became Brethren during their time in the two counties.<sup>69</sup> Second, it is not fully possible to determine how solid the research is that lies behind some of the available data.

In Franklin County Christian Leshner became a minister (the date of his ordination is unknown). When he was chosen as the first resident bishop in 1825, he became the chief shepherd of the Brethren community. Given the Brethren understanding of community, the range of his leadership went beyond conventional personal spirituality to cover the scope of Brethren society. This group gradually grew, as suggested by the accounts of the following families who became Brethren in Christ.

Thanks to the detailed work of genealogist Richard Winger, it is known that Abraham Wingert (ca. 1765-1830) moved from Dauphin County (now Lebanon County) to

Franklin County in 1790 where he bought land. He is listed as being a farmer and a minister of the Brethren in Christ.<sup>70</sup> Samuel Betzner Sr., one of the eight men who signed the original (or first) Brethren in Christ statement of belief (ca. 1780), and his wife Mariah (or Mary), moved from Donegal Township in Lancaster County to Franklin County in 1793, buying land in Green Township, later (in 1795) adding land in Montgomery Township. Between March 1795 and April 16, 1796 the Betznors bought land across the Pennsylvania border in Maryland and from there moved to Ontario, Canada, in 1800.<sup>71</sup> Christian and Jacob Heisey are on the Washington Township, Franklin County, tax lists in 1799 and 1802; in 1803 they resettled in Guilford Township and in 1804 one or both men moved to Ontario, Canada.<sup>72</sup>

There is evidence that John Sollenberger and his mother Catherine (his father died in 1792) sold their farm in Chester County in 1794 and moved to Franklin County.<sup>73</sup>

Heinrich Huber (Hoover)(1759-1833) and his wife Maria (Wenger) are reported to have bought 400 acres on land located in Letterkenny Township in 1800. Their son, Christian (1793-1867), became the founder and first leader of the Hooverites, which body very soon became the Franklin County wing of the Old Order River Brethren.<sup>74</sup> At about the same time some Stricklers (of Swiss-German descent) from York County made their way to Franklin County. One source states that the first Strickler to arrive was Henry (1750-1816) who settled near Greencastle in 1807, followed soon by his brother Joseph (1764-1813). A Strickler genealogy mentions a Jacob Strickler moving from York to Franklin County.<sup>75</sup>

John and Barbara Meyer, after living in Lancaster County in the 1780's and 1790's and later in Cumberland County, by the end of the 1800 decade were living on land in Letterkenny Township in Franklin County. During their

time in Lancaster County they may have taken part in the formation of the Brethren in Christ Church, since one of the persons who signed the original statement of beliefs was a John Meyer.<sup>76</sup> Possibly related to John and Barbara was Henry Meyers (1760-1836). Of German Baptist Brethren parentage, he moved with his family from Adams County, Pennsylvania, to Washington Township in Franklin County by 1825. He is known to have been a member and a minister of the Brethren in Christ Church but the date of his joining the church or of his election to the ministry are not known.<sup>77</sup>

In 1827 Christian Oberholser Jr. (1803-1872) (first wife Nancy Hoover, second wife Veronica Heisey) purchased a farm in Green Township, Franklin County.<sup>78</sup> His son was the gifted future bishop Martin H. Oberholser.<sup>79</sup> Also providing leadership for the Brethren group was the Joseph Zook family (first wife Anna Schock, second wife Catherine Whisler). They lived in Lancaster County until 1829 or 1830; in the latter year they bought a farm in Franklin County.<sup>80</sup> Two of their sons were elected to the Brethren in Christ ministry--Samuel, who was bishop in Franklin County and later in Dickinson County (Kansas), and Noah, pioneer Brethren evangelist, holiness preacher, church planter, and minister in the same locations his brother served as bishop.<sup>81</sup>

The Stoner family is known to have bought land in Washington County, Maryland (near Ringgold) by 1744. No information is available, however, concerning the family's early religious commitment, but it is known that some descendants became Brethren in Christ, including Martin (b. 1796), his brother Benjamin (b. 1806), and the latter's son Jacob (b. 1848). Martin apparently became a minister. But the dates of their becoming Brethren in Christ and of Martin's becoming a minister are not known.<sup>82</sup>

Another family that related to the Brethren in Christ

was the Hollinger family who settled in Franklin County in 1797. More data is needed to determine which members of the family joined the Brethren, but it is known that Daniel Hollinger (1827-1895) did so; eventually he served as a deacon, as did his son-in-law D. Frank Kipe (1865-1933) for many years in the Ringgold District.<sup>83</sup>

In 1806 the Dayhoff family settled in Washington County, Maryland. Although members of the United Brethren Church, a son Samuel (1799-1877) joined the Brethren in Christ, as did his son John. Samuel served many years as a deacon. Both men were mechanically talented--the father in working with wood, his son in developing "mechanical devices."<sup>84</sup>

Members of the Deardorff family were living in Franklin County by 1802 as part of the German Baptist Brethren community. The immigrant father, Anthony, had come to Pennsylvania in either 1719 or 1729. Deardorffs have joined the Brethren in Christ in more recent years.<sup>85</sup>

The family of Daniel Jacobs (1787-1838) also associated with the Brethren in Christ. Coming from Adams County, Pennsylvania, to Washington County, Maryland (in the Leitersburg area), they rented a farm that was the property of Daniel Jacob's father-in-law, Henry Meyer. Daniel's hired man, Jacob Hykes (1813-1889), married Daniel's daughter Barbara; the young couple lived on a farm that Daniel and his wife Eve bought from Eve's parents. The Brethren frequently held worship services on this farm when it was owned by the Jacobs and later by the Hykes.<sup>86</sup>

Not readily discernable is the time and place of the arrival of the Byers family (also spelled Boyer or Bayer) in Franklin County. Henry Bayer settled in York County, Pennsylvania, around 1720. One of his descendants, Brethren in Christ minister Benjamin Boyer (b. 1788), lived below Roxbury in Letterkenny Township, Franklin County. Since that time, the Byers family have lived in the county,

including William Boyer (1826-1897), and Alfred Byers (1860-1954), the grandfather and the father, respectively, of Bishop Charlie Byers.<sup>87</sup>

The Hawbakers came to Pennsylvania from Switzerland by way of the Palatinate and Holland. A historical sketch of the Hawbaker lineage indicates that the family belonged to "plain sects," such as the Mennonites and German Baptists. Burial and land records suggest that the family settled in Lancaster County in 1737. Three sons of a Christian Hawbaker moved to Franklin County--John to Welsh Run in 1812, Peter to Greencastle in 1810, and Henry to Upton in 1813. According to available records, the first Hawbaker to become Brethren in Christ was John (1807-1878), son of the John Hawbaker who had settled in Welsh Run. He chose to be part of the Old Order River Brethren at the time of the division of the Brethren; he is reported to have been one of the earliest bishops of the Old Order group in Franklin County.<sup>88</sup>

The Bert family, of Waldensian and Huguenot background and consisting of mother Elizabeth and two sons, Peter and Jacob, arrived in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, from Frankfurt, Germany, in 1830. Peter (1812-1880) was a weaver by trade; he obtained employment with Jacob Wenger, a fellow weaver and a Brethren in Christ. Peter lived with the Wenger family for a time; their deep religious commitment led to Peter's conversion. In time he was ordained as a Brethren in Christ minister, and had a wide reputation for fruitful and effective service. His daughter Sarah gave strong leadership to the founding and, for many years, the operation of the Brethren in Christ mission in Chicago.<sup>89</sup>

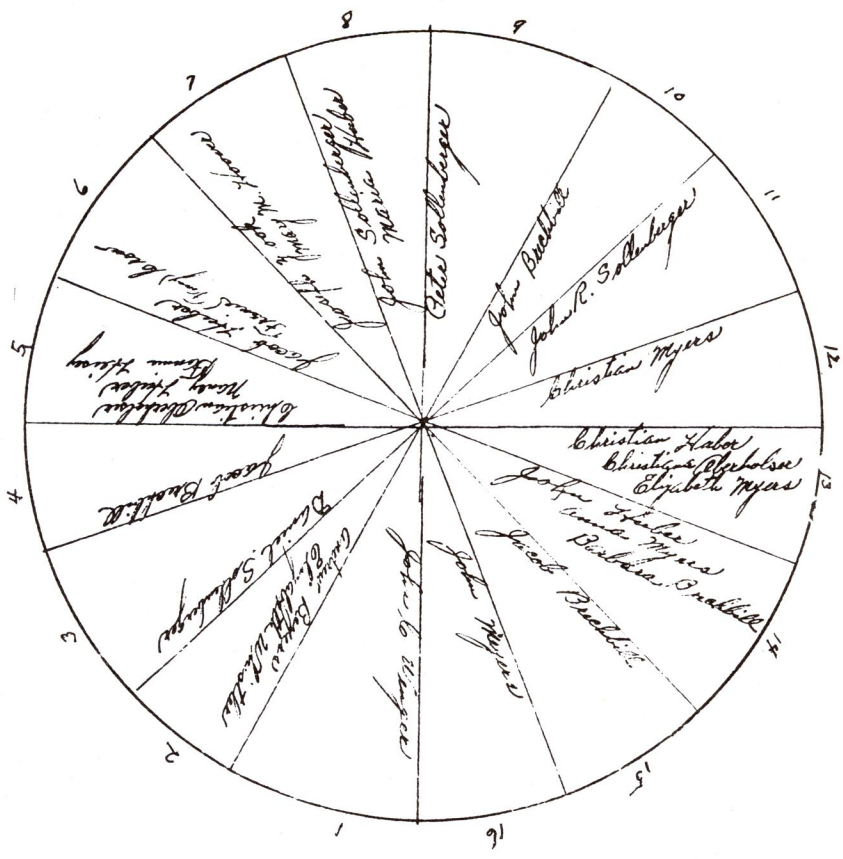
No doubt additional research would reveal other families who made their way to Franklin County and who were either Brethren in Christ before going or became so after their arrival. The data collected indicates that many of

those who related to the Brethren in Christ were of Swiss-German extraction, and had earlier lived in Lancaster or the surrounding counties. There is no record of Brethren in Christ moving to Franklin County in a group; rather the pattern was more by individual families. More important for this article is that those who moved to Franklin County were a part of the group led by Christian Lesher and other church leaders.

Little is known about church life among the Brethren in Christ living in Franklin County during the years Christian Lesher was a minister and bishop. Asa W. Climenhaga, writing in the early 1940's, noted that Christian Lesher was elected bishop in 1825, and that he was assisted in the ministry by Henry Funk and Joseph Wingert (the latter was elected to the ministry in 1845 and to the bishopric in 1857).<sup>90</sup> Laban Brechbill, an Old Order River Brethren historian, has written that Christian (Huber) Hoover was chosen as bishop in 1834 and that Christian Oberholser also became bishop at about the same time.<sup>91</sup>

Precisely when the Brethren in Franklin County and Washington County, Maryland, divided into two districts is not known, but as of 1846 the North Franklin County District was operative. A one-page wheel chart shows the Sunday house meetings in a sixteen-week sequence with the family heads responsible for hosting the services.<sup>92</sup> A similar chart in square format and dated 1852 from the Christian Lesher collection appears to show the meeting places of the South Franklin District.<sup>93</sup> It will be noted that in the square chart the places of meeting are given in both German and English (illustrating the shift from the use of the German language to English), and that five of the twenty-four meeting places were in school houses.

The members in Franklin County in 1880 formed one of the largest sections of the Brethren in Christ Church. According to a tabulation of families made in that year,



**Places of Meeting of the River Brethren of the  
North Franklin District in 1846**

The names listed in the circle chart are:

- |                         |                          |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. John C. Winger       | 9. Peter Sollenberger    |
| 2. Andrew Beyers        | 10. John Brechbill       |
| Elizabeth Whisler       | 11. John R. Sollenberger |
| 3. Daniel Sollenberger  | 12. Christian Myers      |
| 4. Jacob Brechbill      | 13. Christiana Huber     |
| 5. Christian Oberholser | Christian Oberholser     |
| Nancy Huber             | Elizabeth Myers          |
| Fannie Heisey           | 14. John Huber           |
| 6. Jacob Huber          | Anna Myers               |
| F ? (Fanny) Crow        | Barbara Brechbill        |
| 7. Joseph Zook          | 15. Jacob Brechbill      |
| Mary M. Hoover          | 16. John Meyers          |
| 8. John Sollenberger    |                          |
| Maria Huber             |                          |

The circle chart (reduced in size) on the opposite page lists the places (homes) of Sunday house meetings in a sixteen-week sequence with the hosting families or persons for each worship service. It is not known when the River Brethren living in Franklin County (PA) and Washington County (MD) divided into the North and South Franklin Districts. The heading above suggests that as of 1846 the separation had taken place. Although it can not be stated with absolute certainty, the evidence in hand suggests that number five, Christian Oberholser, and number thirteen, Christian Huber (Hoover), were River Brethren bishops, since it is known that men with those names were bishops in Franklin County at the time. The women listed probably were the wives of the host men, but it is difficult to believe eight or nine of the men were not married. Also perplexing is the listing of more than one wife. The solution may be in keeping with the marriages of Christian Oberholser: he married Nancy Huber and after her death married Fannie Heisey.

The chart is provided through the courtesy of Jacob and Ada Sollenberger.

Juniors - Jun 1852.	
1	X Elyriaian Longear. Jefanumb Laminar.
2	Jefangl Mungar Jefanumb Jachter.
3	Uvion Jufflgar. Jefangl. Mogle
4	Jefangl Junt Jufflgar.
5	Jachter Jais Jufflgar.
6	X Elyriaian Junt.
7	Jefanumb Mungar.
8	Jefangl Jufflgar. David Junt.
9	Jefanumb Laminar. J. J. Junt.
10	Jachter Mungar.
11	Jefanumb Mungar.
12	Jefanumb Jufflgar. J. Mungar.
13	Elyriaian Longear.
14	Machtin Jachtergar. David Mungar
15	Uvion Jufflgar. Elyriaian Mungar Jachter.
16	Jefangl Junt Jufflgar. Jefanumb Jachter.
17	Jefanumb Laminar. Jachter Jufflgar.
18	Elyriaian Junt.
19	Machtin Mungar.
20	X Jefanumb Mungar Jachter.
21	X Jefanumb Junt.
22	Jefanumb Jachtergar. Jefanumb Mungar.
23	X Jachter Mungar. Jefanumb Jufflgar.
24	X David Jachtergar. J. Mungar. Jefanumb Jufflgar.

Beginning January. 4 <sup>th</sup> . 1852.	
1 — Christian Leshner. John Bowman	13 — Christian Leshner.
2 — Joseph Wenger. John Haulbecker.	14 — Martin Soleberger. David Myers
3 — Union Schoolhouse. Joseph Seigley	15 — Union Schoolhouse. Christian Highswander.
4 — Henry Funk Schoolhouse.	16 — Henry Funk Schoolhouse. Andrew Thomas
5 — Gabriel Bear Schoolhouse.	17 — John Bowman.
6 — Christian Shank.	18 — Christian Shank.
7 — Benjamin Myers.	19 — Martin Myers.
8 — Joseph Mysey. David Flick.	20 — John Highswander.
9 — John Bowman.	21 — John Shank.
10 — Jacob Wenger. John Busherman.	22 — John Soleberger. John Busherman.
11	23 — Jacob Myers.
12 — Samuel Debus.	24 — Daniel Jenger. Rafel Berger.

Meeting places for Sunday worship services for the South Franklin District, 1852. The first chart is in German, the second gives the English translation. The charts were found in Christian Leshner's Sauer Bible.

Lancaster County had 105 families, Franklin County and Washington County, Maryland, had 102, while Blair County, Pennsylvania, and York County, Ontario, each had forty-seven.<sup>94</sup>

Franklin County also had a good complement of ministers. A history prepared for the centennial celebration of Chambersburg held on July 4, 1876, although perhaps not deeply researched, lists four Brethren in Christ bishops and seventeen preachers. (Identified as "River Brethren," the list does not contain the names of any Old Order River Brethren.) The list reads as follows:

Bishops

Joseph Wenger	Samuel Zook
Henry Leshner	Aaron Wenger

Ministers

John Burkhart	Abraham Leshner
John Bert	Isaac Shank
Noah Zook	L. C. Wenger
Michael Wenger	George Wenger
William Tanner	John Sollenberger
Christian Stoner	Eli Martin
Jacob Leshner	Benjamin Myers <sup>95</sup>

The Franklin County Brethren were known as industrious people, skilled in the art of farming. A Franklin County historian in 1887 saw them as "a quiet and industrious . . . people."<sup>96</sup> Another writer, also having Franklin County in mind, wrote, "The sleekest and strongest horses that pull loads of grain to our elevators are those of the Mennonites, Dunkers, and River Brethren [Brethren in Christ]," and added that they had some of the best cows in the country.<sup>97</sup>

More important, the evidence indicates that the

Brethren in Christ were successful in evangelizing their friends and neighbors, although by what methods is not fully known. Avery Zook credits some of this evangelizing and consequent expansion to Christian Leshar. He also mentions one of the ministers, Joseph M. Hess (1833-1876), as one also much interested in evangelism. Probably one of the reasons for building the Ringgold Meeting House in 1871 was the growth of the Brethren in Christ community in the area.<sup>98</sup>

Although the factual data on Brethren in Christ life in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and Washington County, Maryland, is limited, the information gives the impression that the Brethren in Christ comprised a growing and healthy community through much of the nineteenth century.

#### Christian Leshar as Farmer

When Christian and Catherine Leshar moved to Franklin County in 1807, they had two children--Magdalena (age six) and Christian Jr. (age three). In the following year, the Leshars purchased 151 acres and allowances for the sum of 1,126 pounds and 10 shillings (Pennsylvania money). The farm had been given the name Dunhaven. Located in Washington Township directly north of Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, it was first surveyed in 1786 for Samuel Wilson who took possession on November 15, 1786. He sold the farm to Charles Shull on December 6, 1793, and Shull in turn sold it to the Leshars on October 4, 1808. (For the verbatim description of the initial survey, see note.)<sup>99</sup>

One of the neighbors to the Christian Leshars was a man named John Price. He may have been a German Baptist Brethren minister. Whether true or not, the presence of the Antietam German Baptist Brethren meeting house located one and a half miles north of Waynesboro means that the Leshars lived in an area that had a German Baptist Brethren presence. The Antietam German Baptist

The map is from *Atlas of Franklin County* printed in 1868 by Pomeroy and Beers, Chicago, and reprinted in 1974 by the Bookmark Press, Knightstown, Indiana. Used by permission of the Bookmark.

**Christian Lesher's Farm:**

Christian & Catherine bought the land in 1808 from Charles Shull. The farm at the time of the 1869 printing was owned by their son, John Lesher, the parents having died prior to that date.

**Ringgold Meetinghouse:**

The Ringgold Meetinghouse (Brethren in Christ) was built in 1871, a few years after the death of Christian & Catherine Lesher. The graveyard in which they are buried was in existence before the meetinghouse was built. The meetinghouse is located immediately east of the graveyard, less than a mile from the Maryland border.

**Mt. Alto:**

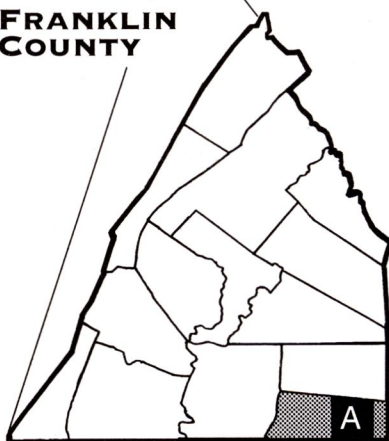
The Christian Lesher farm was identified as being north, not south, of Waynesboro by a reference in a deed stating that the Lesher farm was "bordered by the road leading to Mt. Alto."

**Sister Churches:**

The German Baptist Brethren and the Mennonites were closely related in faith and practice to the Brethren in Christ. The Antietam German Baptist Brethren meetinghouse was built in 1795, and the Reformed Mennonite church in the 1830s.



**FRANKLIN COUNTY**



*Washington Township*

*A. The black inset above indicates the portion of Washington Township represented in the map at right.*

# FRANKLIN COUNTY'S WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP

Dunkard Ch.  
German  
Baptist  
Meetinghouse

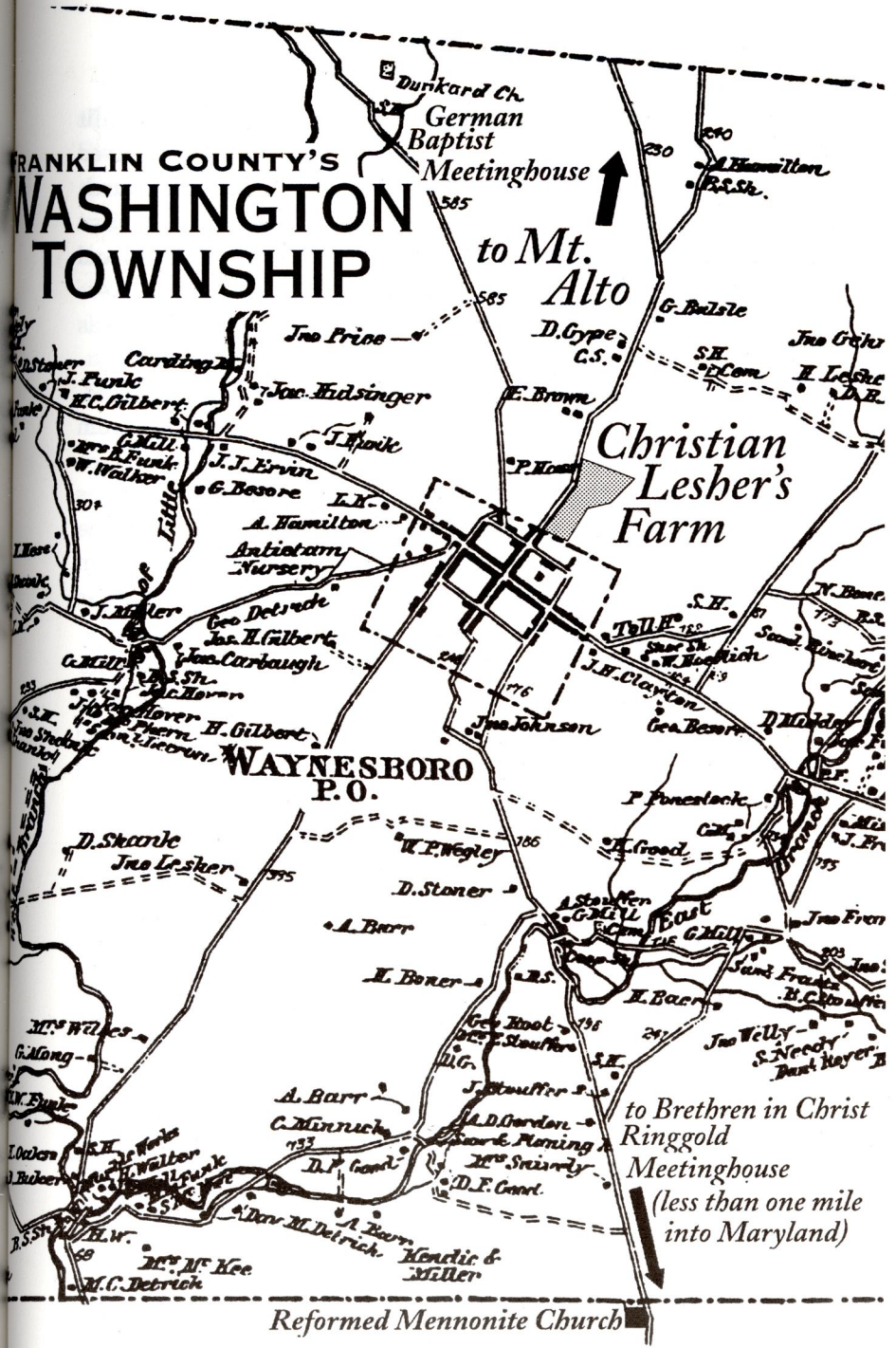
to Mt.  
Alto

Christian  
Lesher's  
Farm

WAYNESBORO  
P.O.

to Brethren in Christ  
Ringgold  
Meetinghouse  
(less than one mile  
into Maryland)

Reformed Mennonite Church



congregation organized themselves in 1752 and in 1795 built their meetinghouse (see map 4).<sup>100</sup> Mennonites also lived in the area as evidenced in the Reformed Mennonite Church building situated a few miles south of Waynesboro within yards of the Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and Washington County, Maryland, border along the road from Waynesboro to Ringgold (see map 4). The building was erected in the 1830's.<sup>101</sup>

The Leshers were involved in buying and selling land. In 1820 they bought four acres and eighty-four perches from James Coughran for the price of \$262.45.<sup>102</sup> These acres lay adjoining the Lesher farm or "plantation," as it was sometimes called. The next year they sold a tract of three acres and seventy-nine perches to John and James Clayton of Waynesboro for \$279.50.<sup>103</sup> Apparently this tract was taken from the southern panhandle of the Lesher farm.

This transaction establishes that the Christian Lesher plantation lay north of Waynesboro, because the location of the acres involved is described as bordering on the road leading from Waynesboro to Mont Alto (Mont Alto is north of Waynesboro--see map 4) and bordering on the "Catholic Church ground."<sup>104</sup> In 1821 the Roman Catholic Church building was located on the northern edge of Waynesboro, but was later relocated on Main Street in Waynesboro.<sup>105</sup> The Lesher farm located south of Waynesboro, sometimes believed to have been the original Christian Lesher farm, was bought by Christian Lesher's son John in 1862 for \$12,000. It adjoined the Turnpike Road and consisted of one hundred and thirty-two acres, fifty-six perches.<sup>106</sup>

In 1822 the Leshers bought sixty-four acres and thirty-six perches in Guilford Township, Franklin County, for \$2,633.22.<sup>107</sup> Four years later they sold one and three-fourths acres and thirty-eight perches to James Coughran for \$147.17.<sup>108</sup> In 1833 they sold one acre and eighty-four and a half perches to Samuel Gipe for

\$76.46.<sup>109</sup> The last two plots were taken from the Leshner homestead. In 1839 the Leshners bought from John Stamey two tracts of land--forty-three acres of cultivated land, and nine acres and one hundred and forty perches of mountainous land--for \$3,436.87. Both tracts were in Washington Township; the latter apparently bordered the Leshner farm.<sup>110</sup> The last purchase of land by the Leshners, made in 1843 and located in Antrim Township, was obtained for \$2,850 and consisted of one hundred and thirty-eight acres and seventy-four perches.<sup>111</sup>

Christian Leshner's Franklin County tax record gives some insight into his farming.<sup>112</sup> He began in 1808 with two horses and two cows, and peaked at six horses and five cows. The number of animals decreased as Christian's sons appear on the tax lists. His son John is first listed in 1833 as having one cow; son Henry appears in 1840 with three horses and two cows.<sup>113</sup>

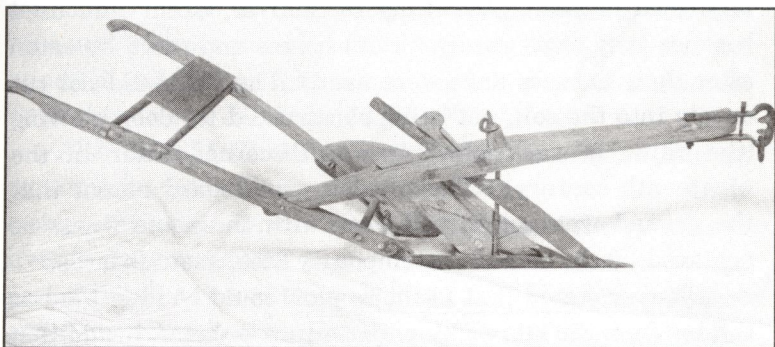
### Franklin County

#### Christian Leshner's Tax Record

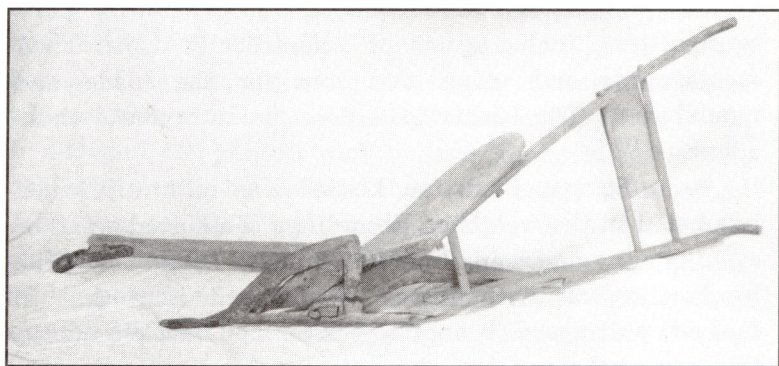
<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Tax</u>
1808	Lesner, Christian	150	2	2	1684	5.56
1809	Leshner, Christian (weaver)	150	2	2	1590	3.82
1810	" "	"	"	"	2190	5.72
1811	" "	"	"	3	2196	7.91
1812	" "	"	3	3	2214	7.31
1813	" "	"	2	2	2144	12.79
1814	" "	"	3	3	9192	13.79
1815	no data					
1816	no data					
1817	Leshner, Christian	"	2	4	7300	10.95
1818	" "	"	3	3	7395	11.09
1819	" "	"	2	3	5605	11.21
1820	" "	"	3	4	5530	8.29
1821	" "	"	"	4	5515	8.37
1822	" "	"	4	4	5410	10.82
1823	" "	"	4	3	5250	10.80

<u>Year</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Tax</u>
1824	" "	"	4	4	5410	10.82
1825	" "	"	3	"	3895	9.73
1826	" "	"	"	"	3914	8.61
1827	" "	"	4	3	3900	8.58
1828	" "	"	"	5	4240	9.33
1829	" "	"	"	3	4056	8.92
1830	" "	"	5	5	4150	6.23
1831	Lecher "	"	"	4	2627	9.20
1832	" "	"	"	5	2840	11.36
1833	" "	"	"	4	2948	13.27
1834	Leasure "	"	"	3	2499	8.75
1835	Leshner "	"	6	3	2586	6.45
1836	" "	"	"	4	2540	8.89
1837	Lashure "	"	?	3	32.54	11.28
1838	Leshner "	"	2	2	32.06	11.21
1839	" "	"	"	3	3240	14.58
1840	" "	200	3	3	4915	19.66
1841	Laesher "	200	1	"	8376	8.37
1842	" "	200	"	2	9160	---
1843	" "	200	"	3	8432	---
1844	Leshner (tenant)	0	1	1	32	---
	(year of retirement)					
1845	" "	0	1	1	---	---
1847	" "	0	1	2	---	---
1854	Leisure "	0	1	2	---	4.68
1855	Leshner "	0	1	2	---	4.68

A unique aspect of Christian Leshner's occupation as a farmer was his plow. An 1887 source suggests that he brought the plow with him when he moved to Franklin County.<sup>114</sup> It has gained some visibility from being on display at the American history building of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. for several decades. Donated to the Smithsonian by Daniel G. H. Leshner, a descendant of Bishop Leshner,<sup>115</sup> it is not identified as Christian Leshner's property but is accompanied by this plaque: "Pennsylvania Plow: This is typical of the 18th century Pennsylvania plows except that it turns the furrow to the left. It is a bar-share plow--so-called because the share and the iron bar on the land side are forged together into one unit."



Two views of Christian Lesher's plow



The plow may have been made by Lesher but more likely by some local blacksmith. According to a Mr. Sharrar of the Smithsonian staff in 1968, oxen were used to pull the plow, but this is unlikely in the case of Christian Lesher because he owned horses. (According to Sharrar, oxen were used because they were stronger than horses and could be eaten after their harness days were over.) The blade did not cut deeply into the soil, not being constructed for deep plowing (the value of such plowing was discerned later in the nineteenth century). The wooden mouldboard meant that the ground was not turned over with the same finesse as achieved by the use of contemporary steel mouldboards.

Sharrar stated that Lesher's plow could be identified as coming from the late eighteenth century because, in addition to oral tradition of the Lesher family, certain construction features place it as belonging to that period. These features include the use of wooden pegs and the type of metal screw. More to the point, around 1800 certain inventors, including Thomas Jefferson, were making advances in plow construction, including more scientifically constructed mouldboards and using cast iron for the blade and mouldboard. The Lesher plow does not incorporate these advances.<sup>116</sup>

As a farmer, Christian Lesher was naturally much interested in the weather. Recordings of unusual weather events are made in his Froschauer Bible.<sup>117</sup> (The handwriting of these entries is different from that in Lesher's writings, thus another person may have chronicled the events.) Among the entries are the following notes: "In 1827 on the 2nd of June there was so much frost that much fruit, rye, and field corn froze and on the 12th, 18th and 23rd there was frost"; "In 1833 on November 13 thousands of stars fell from 12 o'clock till daybreak"; "In 1836 there was no harvest so we didn't harvest more actually than the seeds"; "In 1844, 16th April one has already seen ears of

corn." 118

Christian and Catherine Leshner retired from farming in 1844. In that year they sold the first land they had purchased (one hundred and fifty-one acres less sold plots) to son John for \$6,600, the forty-three-acre tract, and the nine-acre mountain land to son Henry for \$3,320, and one hundred and thirty-eight acres and four perches in Antrim Township to son Jacob for \$3,320.<sup>119</sup>

Also in 1844 Christian and Catherine entered into an agreement with their oldest son John regarding their retirement needs for the remaining years of their "natural lives." It was agreed that for the rest of their days the parents were to have the use of the "brick dwelling house" and "any other buildings they may occupy" located on the "plantation." John was responsible to provide "sufficient stabling for one horse creature and two cows," taking good care of the animals for as long as the parents lived, with the exception that the horse needed to be stabled only to the death of Christian should Catherine live longer than her husband (which she did). John was also to take care of the horses of visitors, including the steeds of church members when church services were held at the brick dwelling house. In addition, the parents were to have "the privilege to keep one hog" yearly bought at "about the age of six months." John was to "feed and water said pig until it is about eighteen months old." They were to pay for the "fatning [sic] expenses of said hog." Further, they were to have one-third of the chickens raised on the farm and one-third of the eggs laid. At the same time they had to provide one-third of the feed for the chickens during the winter season. They were to have access to one-third of the garden, which John was "to supply with manure when necessary." Christian and Catherine had the right to "reserve as much fruit of all kinds" as they deemed necessary. And John was to "deliver to the house a sufficiency of fire wood of a good

quality cut and split suitable for stove or otherwise as may be required."

Provision was also made for the farm. Twelve hundred dollars was to remain in the tract until 1857 or until the death of both parents. The interest of five percent on that amount was to be paid annually (on the first day of April) to Christian and Catherine as long as they lived. On their death, the \$1200 was to be distributed among the children, with John receiving \$200, the remaining \$1,000 being shared equally among the other children. Finally, John was not to sell the farm as long as his parents lived.<sup>120</sup>

#### Christian Leshar as a Church Leader

Our knowledge of Christian Leshar's ministry is limited. He informs us that he was converted in 1803 at the age of twenty-eight and, as already noted, was chosen bishop in 1825.<sup>121</sup> The context of his election to the bishopric, according to one account, is that the York County bishop originally had oversight of the Brethren living west of the Susquehanna River. With an increasing number of members moving to Franklin County, it was thought that additional leadership was needed. Thus Leshar was elected as the first resident Brethren in Christ bishop in Franklin County.<sup>122</sup>

To fully understand Leshar as a church leader, including his thought, it is necessary to have some knowledge of River Brethren beginnings and of the three-way division that took place in the group in the mid-1800's. Following a brief sketch of these events, consideration will be given to the following subjects: first, a statement on church discipline by the Brethren in the United States to their counterparts in Canada; second, the origin of the Old Order River Brethren; third, a controversy dealing with marriage and the interpretation of Leviticus 18. All three items involved

Lesher as a church leader.

Soon after the middle of the eighteenth century, a pietistic-inspired awakening began among the Pennsylvania Germans and continued through much of the last half of the eighteenth century. The awakening emphasized the necessity of a crisis, heart-felt regeneration experience that bore the fruit of assurance, a personal relationship with God, and living a holy life. Many of the converts began meeting in informal groups for edification and mutual support. Such groups in Lancaster County were identified by location--thus the "Conestoga Brethren," the "Pequea Brethren," and the "River Brethren."<sup>123</sup>

In time (around 1800) most of these groups developed into the United Brethren denomination. The River Brethren, however, remained separate because they believed not only that the regeneration experience was followed by holiness but also that the Bible called for a believers church, as set forth in the New Testament. For the River Brethren the church was not something that gradually evolved for functional purposes and individual edification, as believed also by the United Brethren; the church was to be established as a body integral to true Christianity. Both the new heart *and* the new community were a part of God's plan for salvation. Christ lived, died, and arose not only to make provision for personal salvation but also to provide for harmonious group living. Such an approach meant that as a group gathered and covenanted with each other, the church modeled its corporate life after the pattern of the New Testament church. Accordingly the River Brethren became a distinct body earlier (around 1780) than the United Brethren.<sup>124</sup>

The new fellowship was known as the River Brethren because the members lived next to the Susquehanna River and because the newly converted felt a sense of spiritual kinship with others who had the same inner experience. It

was a rather common pietist practice to call those who had the experience brothers and sisters, and the group as brethren. The basis for the familial language--sister, brother, family, household--was the New Testament. Such language was also used in the Anabaptist movement: the word brethren was self-designated in several strands of early Anabaptism.<sup>125</sup>

The Brethren by the river accepted their name, thus becoming known as the River Brethren until the mid-nineteenth century when there occurred a three-fold division of the progressives, moderates and conservatives. (The informal title, River Brethren, continued and continues to be used in some settings, although technically incorrectly.) Few details are available regarding the sequence of events; even the dates involved in the parting of the ways are uncertain. An early twentieth-century history of the Brethren in Christ written for the group states that the conservative schism (Old Order River Brethren) took place around 1843, and the separation of the progressives (United Zion's Children or Brinserites) occurred around 1852.<sup>126</sup> Recent research finds limited support for the 1843 date but has discovered information placing both schisms in the 1850's.

A common reading of the succession of events is that the schisms were interrelated. The crisis began when the parent body, the River Brethren, first warned (in 1853) and then excommunicated (in 1855) an eloquent minister and his followers who had progressive tendencies. The liberal posture of Matthias Brinser (1795-1889) of Dauphin County was shown in his building a meeting house following his refusal to accept the ruling of the Lancaster-York River Brethren leaders not to do so. (Up to this time the River Brethren worshipped in homes and sometimes in schoolhouses.) Brinser and those who followed him gave themselves the name United Zion's Children (now the

United Zion Church). By 1855 they were well under way as a new body of believers.<sup>127</sup>

The conservative response, largely from York County (thus one of their names--Yorkers) was led by Bishop Jacob Strickler Jr. (1788-1859). These Brethren were deeply concerned not only with the meeting house innovation but also with "some gradual changes that were creeping in."<sup>128</sup> Whether they broke away from the moderate group (mostly in Lancaster County) before or after the excommunication of Brinser has not been fully documented, but it appears that they departed shortly after Brinser was expelled.<sup>129</sup>

Given the available data, there is no evidence that Christian Leshar was directly involved in the emergence of the United Zion's Children. He was engaged, however, in the issues giving rise to the Hooverites, so-called because they were followers of River Brethren bishop Christian Hoover. The Hooverites made common cause with the Old Order River Brethren and became that group's Franklin County wing.<sup>130</sup>

The moderates continued using the name River Brethren until the American Civil War when, needing to secure legal recognition as a church committed to nonresistance, they registered with the federal government (possibly in 1863) under the name Brethren in Christ.<sup>131</sup>

### The Brethren and Discipline

Among the Christian Leshar papers is a two-and-a-half page statement entitled and dated "April 8, 1944."<sup>132</sup> The statement came from a Brethren council meeting held in Donegal, Lancaster County, and was addressed to the Canadian Brethren (then known as Tunkers) who had requested counsel on church discipline. (The Brethren in the two countries were not organizationally one until 1879.)<sup>133</sup>

While no names are affixed to the statement, the

penmanship appears to be Leshner's. The choice of words and sentence structure are similar to his, thus at least he was probably involved in crafting the statement that was corporately determined.

The statement begins with a greeting, modeled in part on one used by the Apostle Paul: the Brethren "wish much grace, love, and peace" from God the Father working through "Jesus Christ, our Chief Shepherd and Overseer over the church . . . [and] through the power and working together of the Holy and good Spirit." The statement then proceeds to address the proper handling of a person against whom complaints have been made and who has been brought before the church to determine whether he should remain a member. (The United States Brethren strongly stressed the need for a fair and balanced hearing and decision.) The statement emphasizes the Old Testament imperative of righteous judgement without bias against the poor or in favor of the mighty (Jer. 19:15) and the necessity of having two or three witnesses to establish the truth (Deut. 19:15-20). Diligence and care are to be exercised in discerning the facts and in the judgement made.

The statement establishes the continuity between the two testaments and the fulfillment of the Old in the New Testaments by reference to the words of Jesus that he came not to destroy the law and the prophets but to fulfill them (Mt. 5:17). The fulfillment is especially found in Matthew 18:15-17, where Jesus indicates that the first step in a case of a difference between persons is to be a one-on-one interaction. The second step, if this first one does not succeed, is for two or three persons (as stated in both Testaments) to call on the one in question. The second step failing, the third is to bring the person before the church (the church is seen as the equivalent of the fulfillment of the Old Testament priest and judge).

The Matthean procedure, the statement indicates, is to

be applied within the church and used in instances of sins of weakness, or when words are spoken and deeds done that have not been thought through. When the church meets to hear the case, the positions of both the accuser and the accused are to be evaluated because either one of the two could be at fault. If "God's order and plan" is carried out with diligence and caution, the statement insists, both the accuser and the accused will realize, when they hear the decision of the church, that any fault is theirs, not the body of Christ. After the decision has been made, the guilty person is brought before the church and informed of his sin (according to I Tim. 5:20,21). If the offender repents, he is forgiven and brought back into the fellowship, otherwise he is to be seen as a heathen and a publican.

The Brethren believed in two levels of discipline, although the point is not explicitly made in the statement. To be seen as a publican and sinner did not mean excommunication, since Jesus had interaction with the heathen and publicans (a means by which to correct their understanding of the faith). Those found guilty of lesser sins were usually not given the holy kiss, nor allowed to take communion or wash feet and to participate in council meetings.

However, if the person was clearly guilty of a major sin or his sin became public knowledge (I Cor. 5:11), it was not necessary to follow the three steps of Matthew 18. The guilty one is to be dealt with "immediately by common counsel and judged according to God's judgment," which has already condemned the offender. Several Brethren are to inform the sinner of the decision made against him. In other words, in such a clear-cut case, there was no need for congregational consideration. The guilty person is to be put out of the church according to I Corinthians 5:11-13. If, however, the sinner repents and is ready to confess his sin, he is to be brought before the congregation to make his

confession.

The closing paragraph of the statement indicates that the counsel sent to Canada a year earlier not having been adequate for some Canadian Brethren, the Brethren in the United States have reconsidered the matter in the presence of God and through a further study of his Word. This statement is the counsel God would have them give. The document ends with a request that it be read, or heard read, by all in the Canadian church.

The interpretation and application of church discipline was an ongoing concern of the Brethren in Christ. The counsel given the Brethren in Canada was an effort at reaching a common mind on church discipline. The Brethren believed that God reveals his will to the body of believers gathered around the Word and guided by the Holy Spirit. (Leshner's fuller understanding of church discipline will be considered in a subsequent article.)

#### Old Order River Brethren Origins, Marriage, and Leviticus Eighteen

The earliest information in this study on the division that created the Old Order River Brethren and involved Christian Leshner indicates that the issue was the view of Leshner and other Brethren that John Hess of Franklin County should be excommunicated for having married a "close blood relative" or engaged in some sexual act contrary to Leviticus 18.<sup>134</sup> (The key verse was Lev. 18:6. Chapter 20 was also used.) A council meeting held on April 21, 1851, at the home of Bishop Daniel Engle (1788-1881) near Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, considered Hess's expulsion.<sup>135</sup> (For fuller identification of the persons mentioned in this controversy, see notes.) (The understanding of "close blood relatives" in this context, simply stated, was that when a man and woman married, in

some sense they become physically or biologically brother and sister. This meant that a man could not marry his deceased brother's wife or, if he had been married, his deceased wife's sister. This idea can be traced back to the fourth century A.D. Leshner's writing on the subject will be discussed in a subsequent article.)

The decision of the church council was that such marriages should not be allowed, and that the brethren were to testify, warn, and advise against them. John Hess was not to be received back into the church until he "becomes penitent," "expresses sorrow," and "openly confesses" his sin. The confession was to include "a solution of the conflict." If he repented, he would be accepted as a true believer, and the unity of the Spirit would once again be experienced between him and the other members.<sup>136</sup>

Within a few weeks, Bishop Leshner wrote a letter dated June 2, 1851, to Jacob Riefer and his people, and to Bishop Daniel Engle detailing recent developments in the Hess case.<sup>137</sup> With a "heavy, saddened heart" Leshner was compelled to inform his reader of what had happened at a love feast held at Micha Meyer's place.<sup>138</sup> Prior to the Saturday evening service, two brethren came to Leshner, one by the name of Staub doing the talking, stating that they were instructed to inform Leshner that he was not to "stand up front" at the communion (that is, not to preside or to sit with the ministers), although he would be allowed to take part in the meal (communion).<sup>139</sup> That the senior bishop was not to take an active leadership role in the communion was unusual, but Leshner decided that he would be obedient to the request to the extent he could do so with "a good conscience before God." In the ongoing conversation with the two men, Leshner mentioned having a council meeting regarding John Hess, but he thought that such a meeting should not take place at the love feast. The result was that no announcement was made that a council meeting would be

held on the Sunday morning of the love feast.

Much to Lesher's surprise a person came to him in the yard soon after breakfast on Sunday asking him to come to the house, but said nothing about considering the Hess case. When Lesher entered the house he noted only a few brethren present, although later a few entered uninvited. Lesher added that many who remained in the yard would not have agreed with the action subsequently taken. The meeting was led by Micha Meyer, Daniel Sanger, and Christian Huber (almost certainly Bishop Christian Hoover [Huber]).<sup>140</sup> Meyer and Sanger stated that Strickler (undoubtedly Bishop Jacob Strickler Jr. of York County) and John Flory did not agree with the view taken on marriage (apparently a reference to the April 21, 1851, meeting at Daniel Engle's place) that Leviticus 18 prohibited the marrying of "close blood relatives"; rather the passage referred only to fornication and adultery.<sup>141</sup>

At this point, a "Brother Plum" stated that he was surprised that Strickler and Flory could take this position because clearly Leviticus 18 refers to marriage.<sup>142</sup> As Lesher remembered the discussion, no one except the leaders spoke for the leaders' point of view; at the same time all others who voiced their opinion stated that Leviticus prohibited the kind of marriage under discussion. One person pointed out that no council meeting had been held to excommunicate Hess. Lesher defended his action in excommunicating Hess by stating that Strickler had openly stated that there was nothing wrong with Lesher putting Hess out of the church.

Lesher's defense of his action was not heeded; leaders of the meeting proposed that Hess did not need to make a confession but only to admit that he had "caused the Brethren grief." When asked if he agreed with the proposed solution, Lesher replied that he did not because he could not defend it before God; Hess had to make a confession. The

leaders of the meeting were in "great haste" to end the meeting, so Leshar said that if the congregation wanted to let the matter rest, he was ready to do so. (The German text is not complete in giving Leshar's response because some words were missed in photocopying the document.) Leshar's words were taken by the opposition to mean that Leshar had changed his view, but all that Leshar had in mind was that the discussion of the matter in the meeting they were in would end. A vote was taken on the issue; the decision was in favor of the more lenient treatment.

Leshar continued his letter by reporting that at the recent Sunday meeting Hess expressed his "grief." He reported Hess as saying, "It is almost a year ago that I did something, you perhaps all know what it was, something that has grieved the Brotherhood but I did not think it was an offense, and now I am sorry that I have caused offense to the Brethren, but the deed that I have done is one that I have never been convinced was wrong or improper." On the basis of this statement, Hess was reinstated into the church. At this point in his letter, Leshar mentions that at the council meeting held at the love feast (or some later meeting), he had pointed out that Hess had served as a "juryman in the courts," but that in his statement at the Sunday meeting Hess had made no mention of such service.

Having described these events, Leshar asked for evaluation and advice. He apparently wanted to know (the text is not clear) if the council held during the love feast at Micha Meyer's place was truly a council meeting. He saw the opposition at that meeting as not caring for biblical instruction since they did not allow Plum to read Leviticus 18. Leshar added that most members from Chambersburg and in Maryland who voted with the opposition now know they were mistaken in their vote, and are under tension and in distress. Those from the "other side of Chambersburg" were swept to the opposite side, thus

the opposition obtained a majority.

Asking for understanding, Leshar wrote, "And now dear Brethren, consider for yourself how hard it is for us to think of Hess as a dear brother" and have communion with him. The same lack of unity is felt toward those who refuse to listen to God's Word. Leshar ends his letter by asserting that he cannot agree with those who act against the Word of God because what happened to King Saul when he disregarded God's Word (I Sam. 15:23-26) will also come upon them.

Leshar's letter indicates that a serious situation had arisen. The council held at Daniel Engle's place had ruled that John Hess was to be excommunicated if he did not repent and confess. It is not clear from Leshar's letter to Riefer and Engle whether Leshar excommunicated Hess or had spoken about doing so and was planning to call a council meeting to formalize the excommunication. What is obvious from his letter is that there were leaders, apparently including Bishop Christian Hoover, in the Franklin County church who disagreed with the need to excommunicate Hess, that Leviticus dealt with adultery and fornication, not with supposed "close blood relatives." These leaders demoted Leshar, at least temporarily, rejected the rule made at the council in Daniel Engle's residence, and restored John Hess to full church membership upon Hess's expressing his "grief."

A letter dated May 16, 1853, while not dealing with the Leviticus issue and probably not involving Christian Leshar or any of the Franklin County members, has significance for our understanding of the division that occurred with the formation of the Old Order River Brethren. The letter was sent to Bishop Mattias Brinser of Dauphin County by the Lancaster and York County leaders requesting Brinser to stop erecting a meeting house because it will "cause great injury and severe suffering."<sup>143</sup> The importance of the

letter is seen in that the first four of the twenty-six signatures on the letter were those of two men who became the leaders of the Old Order River Brethren--Jacob Strickler Jr. and David Stoner--and two who were leaders in what soon was to be called the Brethren in Christ Church--John Gisch and Jacob Hostetter. Thus as of May 16, 1853, the separation between those who became Old Order River Brethren and those who became Brethren in Christ had not taken place: they were all of the same mind in warning Brinser.<sup>144</sup>

The next known important event took place either before or after May 16, 1853, but before November 17, 1853, as will become apparent. A council meeting was held at the home of Jacob Hykes (or Heicks) across the Pennsylvania-Franklin County line in Washington County, Maryland. Evidence indicates that Bishop Jacob Strickler Jr., if not presiding at least played an important role in the meeting. Bishop Christian Hoover, in a letter written on February 10, 1857, in which he reviews the events of the "last 4 to 5 years" leading to the Old Order schism,<sup>145</sup> stated that at the council at Hykes's place it was decided that Meyers and Plum were to be chastised for not walking "according to the doctrines of Christ." Christian Leshar was to be dealt with in the same manner because he "allowed this fault in the church and did not chasten them" (that is, Meyers and Plum).<sup>146</sup>

The reason for and details of the misdeeds of Meyers, Plum, and Leshar are not entirely clear, but the evidence suggests that they were related to the love feast held at Micha Meyers's place a few weeks before Leshar's letter of June 2, where the basic issue was the handling, or mishandling, of John Hess and the interpretation of Leviticus 18. In his letter Hoover indicated that those in the opposition (including those whom he identified as "official Brethren") opposed the actions taken at the Hykes council,

claiming that the action was contrary to the Bible and encouraged the five excommunicated individuals (see below regarding the five).

In the unfolding events, another council was held on November 17, 1853, in Franklin County at the residence of John Schenck (or Shenk).<sup>147</sup> The records of the meeting state that the "distant brethren" met with the Franklin County Brethren (distant brethren were very likely Brethren from Lancaster and surrounding counties who had some association with the ruling made at the April 21, 1851, meeting at Daniel Engle's place.) This council basically agreed with the decision of the action taken in 1851.

Those who believed that the passage in Leviticus meant that the marriage of close blood relatives was forbidden were allowed to hold their view, while those who held that the passage referred to fornication and adultery could do the same. In the future, however, the marriage of close blood relatives was forbidden and the brethren were to testify and advise against such marriage. Those who did not follow this rule were to be dealt with according to Matthew 18. Past attitudes and actions dealing with the controversy were to be forgotten by both sides and accusations and counter-accusations were to cease. Love and tolerance were to characterize relationships, and housekeeping (discipline) was to be carried on as they were prior to the conflict.<sup>148</sup>

This ruling can be interpreted in more than one way. It may be seen as an effort at reconciliation. Thus it may have conveyed the meaning that past wrong views of Leviticus 18 are history and that a new beginning among the River Brethren is possible. In other words, change your view and remain within the church that you know. It may be that some of the members were undecided on the issue or that some members could be persuaded to change sides. On the other hand, those fully committed to the fornication-adultery position could see that ruling as ambiguous and

contradictory. At the meeting at Daniel Engle's place, that view had been condemned, but now such a view was permissible in the past if in the future the position taken at the April 21, 1851, meeting became normative. It could also be perceived as a move to divide the opposition.

The November 17 council meeting also took action regarding Christian Leshner. "Old Brother Leshner," the document reads, "is to be restored to his place [position] and function in his office and keep house just like he did before, and where there are worship services, Leshner is to be in charge and preside just like he has been doing for many years."

Restoring Leshner to his position attests to the seriousness of the tension among the River Brethren on this issue. It may be that Leshner made a confession of his wrong deed (as determined in the Hykes council) and on that basis was restored, or it may have been that those who restored Leshner thought that no confession was needed.

The next development mentioned in the available sources is reported to have taken place in 1854. According to the tradition recounted in the late 1950's by Simon Myers (a prominent member of the Old Order River Brethren living in St. Thomas, Pennsylvania), Bishop John I. Gisch, acting for the Conoy-Donnegal District, Lancaster County, excommunicated Bishop Christian Hoover and his group for being "too orthodox."<sup>149</sup> In his letter Christian Hoover seems to say (the text is not clear) that five brethren, of whom he was one, were excommunicated. These five men may have been the five leaders of the emerging Hooverite movement. Hoover further indicated that he made an "open confession" on the issues involved. Whether he was reinstated is not known.

If the date 1854 is only oral tradition, it is subject to questioning. As to the charge that Hoover and his group were "too orthodox," Bishop Gisch was probably not

referring to correct theology, as implied in the word orthodox; rather he saw the Hooverites as excessively firm in their commitment to historic faith and practice, especially in relation to separation from the world. Such a view is basically true to historical developments: as noted, the Hooverites became the Old Order River Brethren in Franklin County. Hoover himself wrote that the reason given by those who expelled him was that he and his followers did "not want to keep the council [sic] of the church, but want[ed] to keep to the Gospel."<sup>150</sup>

Hoover's statement needs context. Basic to understanding the context were two methods of making decisions. One method (Hoover's), after a consideration of the issues, was to give the last word to the "elder bishop[s]." As Hoover saw it, this was making decisions "by the Gospel." The second method, ascribed by Hoover to the Lancaster Brethren, was group centered--coming to decisions by group consensus or majority vote.<sup>151</sup> (A question without answer is whether making decisions by majority vote was taken from the American democratic process. Group consensus was inherent in the Brethren view of the church.)

Following the line of history being traced in this paper, the reason for excommunicating the Hooverites could have been their belief that Leviticus 18 refers only to fornication and adultery. Such an interpretation, however, does not readily relate to the two reasons given above for the expulsion of the Hoover group. At the same time the reasons given may have been "correct language" for the Leviticus question.

If 1854 is the accurate date for the expulsion of the Hooverites, it is clear that they were expelled before the Old Order River Brethren came into being. Such a conclusion is reached because the Lancaster-York group that warned Brinser in 1853 not to build a meeting house expelled him

and his followers in the summer of 1855 for doing so. If the two groups, Old Order River Brethren and Brethren in Christ, had separated they would not have cooperated in excommunicating Brinser.<sup>152</sup>

It has also been stated that the Hoover schism took place some ten years after the Brethren in Christ and the Old Order River Brethren divided.<sup>153</sup> Most historians probing the beginnings of the Hoover movement have not come to that conclusion, rather they have explicitly stated or implicitly suggested that the date of origin has not been documented.<sup>154</sup> If the Old Order River Brethren and the Brethren in Christ split some time between 1855 and 1857, the 1854 date for expelling Hoover and his adherents could have been a possibility but not a certainty. The overall impression gained from the Hoover letter is that he was mentally and spiritually involved in the two councils of 1855. The letter unmistakably reflects Hoover's identification with Bishop Jacob Strickler Jr. and his views.

Mention is made of a council held at Jacob Wenger's residence in Hoover's 1857 letter and in a note in the Christian Leshner papers. Leshner gives the date of April 18, 1855, for the meeting; Hoover refers to the meeting as an Easter council.<sup>155</sup> The objective of the gathering was to dispel misunderstandings and to explain actions taken. An issue, if not the key one, at this Wenger meeting was whether the Hykes council was legitimate. The issue, it appears, turned on which of the two methods (discussed above) to use in making decisions.

The approach taken in the April 18 meeting was to have the "York Brethren" explain what they had done at the Hykes council, and the "Lancaster Brethren" evaluate and make righteous judgment on what had been done. (The designations of these names were written by Christian Hoover, and indicate the growing crystallization of two distinct groups.) In the meeting, Strickler (surely Bishop

Jacob Strickler Jr.) explained how they "kept house" (made decisions) at the Hykes council. Hoover relates in his letter that the explanation was well received. To make this point clear, he stated that Bishop Daniel Engle of the Hummelstown area declared openly that "nobody is to say that the Hykes council was not good."

In the time sequence being followed, the next event--in the summer of 1855--was the excommunication of Brinser, at which point the separation of the Old Order River Brethren had not taken place.

After the council at Jacob Wenger's place, the "opposition" (Hoover's designation for those who opposed him) began again, or continued, to see the Hykes council as not legitimate.<sup>166</sup> They expressed their opinion at a council meeting, attended by "many Brethren," on October 31, 1855 (the location is not named but probably it was held in Lancaster County). Here a statement was written, addressed to the "Brethren from [or of] Franklin County," which declared that the consultation held at Jacob Wenger's place was to stand as a "western decision."<sup>167</sup> Nothing more than this is known of the meeting.

Hoover does not mention the meeting, but after stating that he had heard that some brethren were speaking against the Wenger council (and the Hykes council) he reported that he and some others "visit[ed] and examine[d] them ["official brethren"]. They found these officials to be "unfaithful" and not realizing the state of their condition. In response to such unfaithfulness, Hoover and those with him obeyed the word of St. Paul, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 7:17).<sup>168</sup>

A worthy question is whether Bishop Jacob Strickler Jr. was a member of the party accompanying Hoover on this visit; his not being mentioned in the letter suggests that he was not in the group. There is also the question of whether Hoover had been excommunicated by the time he visited the

official brethren, or did his "open confession" restore him to church fellowship?

No information is available to throw light on what was meant by "western decision." The flow of events and the geographical location of the counties point to members in York and Franklin Counties as "western." If so, it was almost certainly an action aimed at those who became members of the Old Order River Brethren.

In summary, the Wenger council did not bring about reconciliation. To rule that this council was to be seen as a "western decision" and for Hoover to excommunicate the "official Brethren" strongly suggests the intensity of the crisis. Hoover may have considered the action of the Wenger council as a western decision to be a fundamentally unbiblical move. Thus after interacting with the officials, he may have thought the only option was to excommunicate them. Other possibilities exist but information is lacking on which to form a firm conclusion.

Confirmation that the division that led to the separation of the Old Order River Brethren was the result of a difference between moderates and conservatives is found in a letter written by David Stoner (1814-1888, later a member of the Old Order River Brethren). In one dated March 27, 1856, written on behalf of the York Brethren and addressed to the Lancaster Brethren, Stoner indicates why the Yorkers broke with the Lancaster group: the latter wanted the "Way" wider than that revealed by Jesus and the apostles. In the councils, Stoner wrote, the York Brethren were criticized for being "too strong" and were not ready "to bear and die" for their brothers and sisters. At the same time, the Yorkers thought that the opposition was "too fleshy." Such being the case, Stoner declared that the York Brethren had no other option than to withdraw from the church. Stoner next summarized the "works of darkness" engaged in by the opposition. They "take part in worldly

election[s] . . . go to law before the world, . . . send their children to Sabbath School, . . . take them to places of worldly amusement and pleasure . . . [take] money for solemnizing marriages, . . . teach unscriptural doctrine." In closing his letter, Stoner asked his readers (the Lancaster Brethren) to visit them (the York Brethren) and made a call for such values as humility, self-denial, and meekness.

In addressing his readers as Brethren in a non-polemical and considerate manner, Stoner implies (consciously or unconsciously) that reconciliation is still a possibility. In contrast the reply from Lancaster County was distancing and blunt. Its point was to inform the York Brethren, certainly Jacob Strickler and John Flory but also all who agreed with them, that they are to stay where they have placed themselves in withdrawing from the church: they had not accepted the rulings of the church, therefore they are no longer Brethren.<sup>159</sup> In a tentative study, Avery Zook suggests that as many as twenty-seven families became part of the Old Order River Brethren in Franklin County and in Washington County, Maryland, although he indicates that data on the subject is very limited.<sup>160</sup>

The data available locates the separation of the Old Order River Brethren from the moderate River Brethren between the summer of 1855 (the excommunication of Brinser) and David Stoner's letter of March 27, 1856. The Hooverite break cannot be so sharply dated. The year 1854, when Bishop Gisch expelled Christian Hoover, is not as solidly based in the sources as the separation of the Old Order River Brethren. Hoover does not give dates in his letter, but the movement of the letter implies that he and those with him separated from the official brethren after the Wenger council in April 18, 1855, if not after the October 31, 1855, meeting. Further it appears that the two separations were distinct from each other, but close in time of occurrence. No information has been found to determine

when the Yorker Old Order River Brethren and the Hooverites came together.

Key sources remain the problem. Strong effort needs to be made to find the German originals of Christian Hoover's letter of February 10, 1857, David Stoner's letter of March 27, 1856, and the Lancaster County response to Stoner's correspondence. The original documents would give added integrity to or alter the conclusions drawn from the copies.

This article was not written to determine the factors that brought about the divisions among the River Brethren. However, having explored, in the process of delineating the life and times of Christian Leshar, the sources dealing with the divisions, it is appropriate to list the elements brought into focus by this study that were basic to the divisions.

First, the evidence indicates controversy regarding the procedure in making decisions. The Old Order River Brethren followed the pattern of the elder bishop, making the final decision after a discussion of the issues; the Brethren in Christ advocated making decisions by consensus or voting. Yet the difference may not have been as clean cut as just stated. In his letter of June 2, 1851, Leshar implies that he excommunicated John Hess apart from a council meeting. The manner of making decisions appears to have been an issue in determining the legitimacy of a council. The problem may have been that the Brethren had not given adequate attention to the process of decision making. It may also have been that there was not much difference between having the oldest bishop, or bishops, sum up the discussion and a group coming to consensus under some leader other than the oldest bishop.

Second, an issue was how to remain true to the historic biblical faith in the context of a changing and upward-bound society. The Brethren believed that God, in a one-time supernatural revelation found in the Bible, revealed the divine way of living. It was God, in Christ's headship and

through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who led his people through the dangers of the evil world. In contrast, American civilization was based on the idea that properly oriented people will find new and better ways of living. This confident attitude influenced American religious life. Brinser in his building a meeting house felt its impact; according to David Stoner, the moderate River Brethren experienced the attraction of the Sunday school movement and felt the lure of political elections. The Old Order River Brethren were deeply concerned about a gradual acculturation that came to God's people in a hypnotic-like fashion.

Third, the difference of belief on the issue of Leviticus 18 is difficult to identify with the Brethren in Christ, since there is not a shred of evidence of the controversy among the members anywhere except in the papers of Christian Leshar. It is possible to discount the belief as only Leshar's that in some sense when people marry they become of one blood or biologically brother and sister, except for the action of the council in 1851 affirming Leshar's position.

#### The Last Years

The controversies and divisions of the River Brethren may have clouded the last years of Christian and Catherine Leshar. It is not known what storms they encountered in the first years of his ministry and there is no evidence to explain how they reacted to and reflected on the crisis of their later lives. Leshar did most of his writing when he retired from farming in 1844 at the age of sixty-nine; the content of his writing must be read within that context.

Unfortunately, there is almost no information on the day-to-day leadership and pastoral work of Bishop Leshar. Given his biblical knowledge, theological insight, leadership talents, spiritual gifts, and pastoral heart, there is reason to

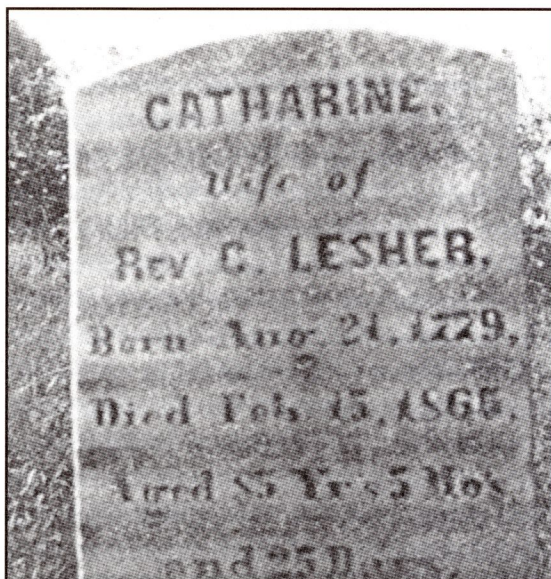
believe that he was helpful to a great number of people.

A reference in a Bible indicates that Leshar traveled from his home in Washington Township to near Pleasant Hill in Letterkenny Township to perform the marriage ceremony for Christian Brechbill and Nancy Hoover on December 19, 1844 (the bride was the daughter of Bishop Christian Hoover; the wedding was held in her home).<sup>161</sup>

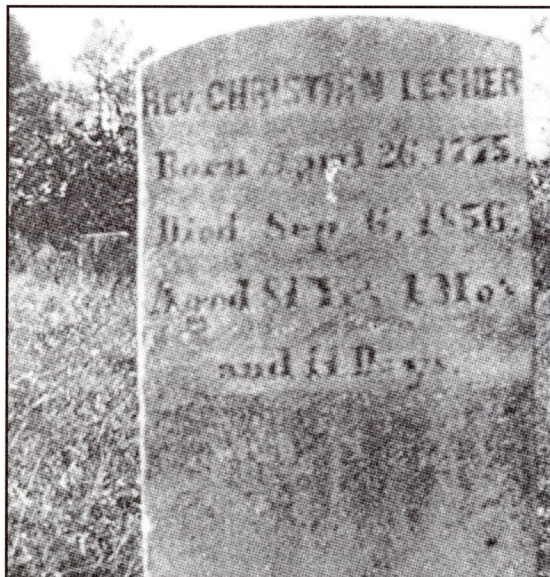
Leshar may also have been the guardian of an orphan girl named Elizabeth Leshar. According to the record Elizabeth repaid Christian Leshar \$237.73 for the costs involved in taking care of her from April 8, 1840, to April 12, 1844.<sup>162</sup> But even here there cannot be certainty since there were two Christian Leshars--the one of this account and another in Antrim Township--who could have been the guardian.

Christian Leshar died in September 6, 1856, having lived eighty-one years, four months, and eleven days.<sup>163</sup> Catherine passed away on February 15, 1865, at age eighty-five years, five months, and twenty-five days.<sup>164</sup> Both were buried in the cemetery located next to the Ringgold Brethren in Christ Meeting House.

After Catherine's death, the heirs took legal action acknowledging that John had fulfilled all the responsibilities agreed to between him and his parents. The resulting statement was signed by Henry C. Leshar, Magalena Shank, Christian Leshar, Catherine Miller, Jacob Miller, and Jacob S. Leshar.<sup>166</sup> The women here, as in most legal documents, signed with an X. The usual explanation is that women, being uneducated, could not write. Yet Catherine in her song book wrote that the book was hers (someone could have written for her but no evidence supports that this



The tombstones of Catherine and Christian Lesher. The markers are located in the cemetery next to the Ringgold Meeting House in Ringgold, Maryland. The photographs are taken from *The History and Genealogical Records of the Strite and Allied Families*, compiled by Carl E. Robinson and Amos W. Strite, 1963.



happened), and she was a student at least long enough to receive a piece of *fraktur*. It is hardly logical to assume that Catherine could write but not her daughters.

This article has dealt with the life and times of Bishop Christian Leshner. Some consideration was given to aspects of Brethren in Christ life that were not directly related to Christian Leshner. The study of the Old Order River Brethren-Brethren in Christ division was germane as the Christian Leshner papers throw light on the subject and Bishop Leshner was directly involved. Another article will focus on Leshner's world view and one on his writings.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>C. Henry Smith, *The Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania* (Norristown, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Society, 1929), pp. 75-221.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Proud, *The History of Pennsylvania in North America from Original Institution and Settlement of that Province, Under the First Proprietor and Governor William Penn, in 1681 till after the Year 1742* (Philadelphia: Zachariah Poulson, Jr., 1789), pp. 341-345.

<sup>3</sup>Ralph B. Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, William J. Hinke, ed., Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2nd printing, 1966), pp. 10, 11. Original passenger list, James Good, Philadelphia, September 27, 1727, Pennsylvania State Archives, Record Group 26, Harrisburg, Pa. (hereafter referred to as PSA and RG).

<sup>4</sup>Smith, *Mennonite Immigration*, pp. 183, 184. *Genealogical Register of the Male and Female Descendants of Hans Hege and also the Male and Female Descendants of Henry Leshner and the Relationship Existing Between the Said Two Families* (Chambersburg, Pa.: M. Kieffer and Co., 1859), pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup>Daniel R. Lehman, "Bishop Hans Lehman, Immigrant of 1727," *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* (October 1980), p. 16 (hereafter referred to as *PMH*). Will of John Lehman, Lancaster County Will Book Y, Vol. 2, p. 421 (hereafter referred to as *LCWB*). Letters of David McCormick to author January 15, 1991, and February 1, 1991. Letter of Alex Schmidt to author, one undated but received January 1990. Letter of Mrs. Alex Schmidt to author undated but received in February 1991, and one received August 11, 1994.

<sup>6</sup>Smith, *Mennonite Immigration*, pp. 183, 184. *Genealogical Record, Hege, Leshner*, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>*Genealogical Record, Hege, Leshner*, p. 5.

<sup>8</sup>Letter of Walter Petto to author, September 3, 1988.

<sup>9</sup>*Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, s.v., "Palatinate," by Gerhard Hein (hereafter referred to as *ME*). When using *ME*, it is necessary to keep in mind that the first four volumes were printed (1955-1959) as a unit, the material covering the alphabet from a to z. The fifth volume, printed in 1990, also covers the range of the alphabet. Thus the citing of the *ME* will always include the volume used). *Ibid.*, s.v., "Pfalz-Zweibrucken," by Maria Klugel and N.van der Zijpp. John L. Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1984), pp. 25-133.

<sup>10</sup>O.H.S. Bender, "A Swiss Mennonite Document of 1754 Bearing on the Backgrounds of the Origin of the Brethren in Christ," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (October 1960), 308-309 (hereafter referred to as the *MQR*).

<sup>11</sup>*ME*, Vol. II, s.v., "Hege," by Christian Hege. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, s.v., "Aargau," by Christian Neff. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, s.v., "Lehman," by Delbert L. Gratz. Letter of Hermann Guth to author, August 20, 1988. Letter of Richard R. Lehman to author, April 22, 1993.

<sup>12</sup>Isaac Zurcher, "Anabaptist-Mennonite Names," *MQR* (October 1988), 482-485. The names Lesher, Hagy, and Lehman, each with several spellings, are also found in the Palatine Census Lists, for which see Hermann and Gertrud Guth and J. Lemar and Lois Ann Mast, *Palatine Mennonite Census Lists, 1664-1793* (Elverson, Pa.: Mennonite Family History, 1987), pp. 10-114. *Genealogical Register, Hege, Lesher*, pp. 5,6. Mrs. Alex Schmidt to author, February, 1991. Letter of David McCormick to author, January 15, 1991.

<sup>13</sup>*ME*, Vol. IV, s.v., "Schaffhausen," by Samuel Geiser.

<sup>14</sup>Letter of Hans Lieb to author, January 14, 1988.

<sup>15</sup>For information on French unity, see T. Walter Wallbank et al., *Civilization, Past and Present* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1969), pp. 421-426. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 22-31. The quotation regarding the Germanic area of Central Europe is from Donald F. Durnbaugh, comp. and trans., *European Origins of the Brethren* (Elgin, Ill.: Brethren Press, 1958), p. 19. The map of Switzerland is from Ernest Thode, ed., *Atlas for Germanic Genealogy*, 2nd rev. ed., used by permission of Ernest Thode, Heritage House, Ye Olde Genealogie Shoppe, Indianapolis, Indiana.

<sup>16</sup>Letter of Hermann Guth to author, December 12, 1989; letter of Karge to author, February 4, 1988; letter of Walter Bohrer to author, December 7, 1988.

<sup>17</sup>Letter of Hermann Guth to author, January 20, 1990; letter of Lieb to author, August 6, 1991; letter of Noah Good to author, February 1, 1993; Don Yoder, ed., *Pennsylvania German Immigrants, 1709-1786* (Baltimore: Genealogy Publishing Co., 1980), pp. 329-338.

<sup>18</sup>Letter of Hermann Guth to author, July 17, 1991. Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, p. 34.

<sup>19</sup>Letter of Hans Lieb to author, August 6, 1991.

<sup>20</sup>*ME*, Vol I, s.v., "Bern," by Christian Neff and J. C. Wenger; Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, pp. 25-74.

<sup>21</sup>Levi Lukenbach, "Brethren in Christ," *Origin, Confession of Faith and Church Government...of the Brethren in Christ...1871-1881* (Wooster, Ohio: Democrat Print, 1881), p. 4.

<sup>22</sup>*ME*, Vol. III, s.v., "Ixheim," by Pierre Sommer and John A. Hostetler; Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, pp. 25-51; Richard McMaster, *Land, Piety, Peoplehood: The Establishment of Mennonite Communities in America, 1683-1790* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1985), pp. 26-27, 33-35.

<sup>23</sup>Hermann Guth, "Zweibrucken, A City and A Duchy," *Mennonite Family History* (January 1990), 12; *ME*, Vol. IV, s.v. "Zweibruckers," by Harold S. Bender; letter of Hermann Guth to author, December 12, 1989. For an excellent introduction to Mennonite contributions to agriculture in the Palatinate, see Ernst H. Correll, "The Mennonite Agricultural Model in the Palatinate," trans. Marion Lois Luffines, *PMH* (October 1991), 2-13.

<sup>24</sup>*ME*, Vol. II, s.v., "Ernstweiler," by Christian Neff. Letter of Gertrud Guth to author, December 19, 1988.

<sup>25</sup>Letter of Hermann Guth to author, August 20, 1988; Hermann Guth, "The Roggys of Offweilerhof," *Mennonite Family History* (January 1990), 12.

<sup>26</sup>Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, pp. 28, 38-41; MacMaster, *Land, Piety, Peoplehood*, pp. 33,34; *ME*, Vol. IV, s.v., "Pennsylvania," by C. Henry Smith.

<sup>27</sup>*Dictionary of Christianity in America* (1990), s.v., "Friends, The Religious Society of (Quakers)," by R.E. Selleck (hereafter referred to as *DCA*); *Brethren Encyclopedia* (1983), s.v., "Society of Friends," T. Canby Jones (*Brethren Encyclopedia* hereafter referred to as *BE*). A bit of history is needed to understand the designation German Baptist Brethren. When the new fellowship or community came into being in Schwarzenau, Germany (1708), the group intentionally did not give itself a distinctive non-biblical name. They simply called themselves Brethren or Baptist-minded (*Taufgesinnten*). Outsiders denominated them by names like Anabaptists, Baptists, New Baptists, Dunkers, etc. Most of the members emigrated to Pennsylvania in the years 1719 and 1729. In 1836 they incorporated, giving themselves the name of Fraternity of German Baptists. That name was altered in 1871 to German Baptist Brethren. The years 1880-1883 was a crisis time for in those years the body divided into three groups. The conservatives became the Old German Baptist Brethren, the progressives the Progressive Brethren, and the moderates, in 1908, the Church of the Brethren. A further division took place among the Progressive Brethren in the years 1939-1940, one wing becoming the Fellowship of Grace Brethren and the other the Brethren Church (Ashland, OH). Mention should also be made of the Dunkard Brethren who left the Church of the Brethren in 1926. Given such developments, my choice of the name, German Baptist Brethren, is somewhat arbitrary. *BE*, s.v., "Names; Brethren," by Donald F. Durnbaugh and Dennis D. Martin.

<sup>28</sup>*BE*, s.v., "Palatinate," by Donald F. Durnbaugh.

<sup>29</sup>Pennsylvania German culture expert, Frederick S. Weiser, has written that the Lutheran and Reformed church people "probably constituted 90%" of the Pennsylvania German church people. This means that the emigration of Brethren and Mennonites was part of a much larger movement. *The Gift is Small, the Love is Great: Pennsylvania German Small Presentation Frakturs* (York, Pa.: York Graphic Services, Inc., 1994), p. 9. Martin H. Schrag, "The Brethren in Christ Attitude Toward the 'World'" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, Temple University, 1967), pp. 9-10.

<sup>30</sup>The oath was required in part because too many undesirable people (in poor health and of questionable morals) were entering the colony, and in part because a large number were from foreign countries, especially Germany and Switzerland. The oath was instituted in 1727 meaning that immigrants on the boat bringing the Leshers, Lehmanns, and Hege were among the first to take the oath. Since Anabaptists refused to swear an oath, they were allowed to affirm. See H. Egle, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives*, 2nd Series, Vol. XVII (Harrisburg, Pa.: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1890), pp. 3-4.

<sup>31</sup>*Genealogical Register, Hege, Leshers*, p. 5. When they arrived the area was still a part of Donegal Township, Rapho Township being carved out of Donegal Township in 1741. Manheim was named after the town of the same name in Germany, and Rapho after the parish of Rapho in Donegal Township, Ireland. Franklin Ellis and Samuel Evans, *The History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, With Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: Everts and Peck, 1883), p. 1125.

<sup>32</sup>John L. Ruth, "The Earth is the Lord's": A Narrative History of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference (Unpublished manuscript in the possession of the Mennonite Historical Society, 1991), p. 258.

<sup>33</sup>*ME*, Vol. III, s.v., "Manheim," by Ira D. Landis. A study was made by John W. W. Loose, president and editor of the Lancaster County Historical Society, of the 1790 United States Census along the line of national and ethnic surnames. He found that in Rapho Township as of 1790, 213 household heads (in effect families) were German, 17 were English, 25 Scottish, 1 Welsh, 3 Huguenots, no Irish, no Jews, and 11 slaves. Apart from the slaves, the above numbers mean that 82.5% of the settlers in Rapho were German. Undated sheet attached to letter of John W. W. Loose to the author, March 5, 1991. John Loose interview with Dorothy A. Schrag, June 2, 1994.

<sup>34</sup>David J. Cuff et al., eds., *The Atlas of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), p. 82.

<sup>35</sup>PSA, RG-17, Survey Book A46-239, Patent Book A15-473. (Hereafter Survey Book is referred to as SB and Patent Book as PB).

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, SB C105-232, PB A12-81. Also Martin G. Weaver, *Mennonites of Lancaster County Conference* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Mennonite Publishing House, 1931), p. 181.

<sup>37</sup>PSA, RG-17, SB C112-167, PB AA8-76.

<sup>38</sup>Lancaster County Historical Society Library, Lancaster County Tax Records, 1750-1855, Rapho Township, 1751-1825. (Hereafter Lancaster County Historical Society Library is cited as LCHSL, Lancaster County Tax Records as LCTR, and Rapho Township Tax Lists as RTTL.)

<sup>39</sup>Lancaster County Archives, LCWB Y, Vol. 2, p. 405. "The Last Will of Henry Leshner, Translated" (1784), trans. Peter Miller (Lancaster County Archives hereafter cited as LCA.)

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>*Genealogical Register, Hege, Leshner*, p. 9. Ronald E. Leshner, Sr., "Henrich and Maria Leshner: Notes on a First Generation Family" (Unpublished paper, Quakertown, Pa.: Reproduced by the author, 1985), pp. 1-4. Carlton O. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience: The Story of the Brethren in Christ* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Press, 1978), pp. 17-25. See also Owen H. Alderfer, "The Mind of the Brethren in Christ: A Synthesis of Revivalism and the Church Conceived as Total Community" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Claremont Graduate School, 1964), pp. 30-49. E. Morris Sider, *The Brethren in Christ in Canada, Two Hundred Years of Tradition and Change* (Nappanee, Ind.: The Canadian Conference, Brethren in Christ Church, 1988), pp. 7-8. Samuel S. Wenger, et. al., eds., *A Foundation Book of the American Wengers* (Lancaster, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Heritage History, 1978), pp. 101-116.

<sup>42</sup>Last Will of Henry Leshner. The will was probated on March 31, 1784.

<sup>43</sup>Letter of David A. McCormick to the author, July 25, 1990.

<sup>44</sup>PSA, RG-17, SB C112-159, PB 8-76.

<sup>45</sup>PSA, RG-47; LCTR 1750-1855, RTT12, 1751-1825.

<sup>46</sup>On the inner side of the back cover of Christian Leshner's Sauer Bible is a listing of the death and life span of sixteen persons, all related to the Christian Leshner family. The item contains the information that Henry Leshner, Jr. "died November 7, 1821, age 81 years three months and seven days." Next on the list is Frena (Zedy) Leshner who "died on July 6, 1804, age sixty years." For the total listing, see Appendix B, pp. 00-00.

<sup>47</sup>*Genealogical Register, Hege, Leshner*, p. 39. Letter of Robert J. Zetty to the author, January 29, 1990. Peter Zetty and family moved from Lancaster County to the Hagerstown, Maryland area (immediately south of Franklin County, Pennsylvania), and later to the Harrisonburg, Virginia area. Will of Jacob Zedy in German original, LCA, LCWB J, Vol. 1, p. 385. English translation in LCA, LCWB X, Vol. 2, p. 112. In the three-volume work, Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, mention is made of only one Zedy in the thousands of Germans emigrating to Pennsylvania (vol. 2, p. 484). This was Abraham Zety who arrived in Philadelphia on September 23, 1752. Since the name had variant spellings, all listings beginning with Ze, Zi, Ce, and Ci were examined. Even so, other spellings may have been used.

<sup>48</sup>Letter of Robert J. Zetty to author, January 29, 1990. See also Petitions of Peter Zedy, one dated November 7, 1759, the other the "first Tuesday of March 1760," in LCHSL, "Orphan Court Minutes", Misc. Files 2, 1760. Wilmer J. Eshleman, "The River Brethren Denominations," *Papers*

of the Lancaster County Historical Society, Vol. LII, No. 7 (1948), p. 180.  
LCA, LCWB, B, Vol. 1, p. 219.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., Report of Jacob Cauffman, John Hare, Samuel Hare, Mathias Blasser [one name not legible], March 4, 1760.

<sup>60</sup>LCA, Lancaster County Deed Book L, Vol. I, pp. 231-234 (Lancaster County Deed Book hereafter cited as LCDB). John E. Engle and Eugene K. Engle, "A Letter from Immigrant Ulrich Engel to Switzerland in 1755," *PMH* (July 1993), 16-18.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>*United States Direct Tax of 1798—Tax Lists for the State of Pennsylvania*, Rapho Twp., pp. 260-161, LCHSL. A Welsh Quaker, upon seeing handworking and industrious German farmers operating in Pennsylvania, wrote, "It is pretty to behold our back settlements, where the barns are as large as palaces, while the owners live in log huts; a sign, though, of thriving farms," quoted in John L. Ruth, *Twas Seeding Time: A Mennonite View of the American Revolution* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1976), p. 21. Another item of interest regarding the inception of the Brethren in Christ is whether the Peter Witmer who married Ulrich Engel's oldest child, Catherine, was also the Peter Witmer who was appointed, July 2, 1764, to be the guardian of Ulrich Engel's youngest child, Jacob, and the Peter Witmer who agreed with Jacob Engle (probably in the 1770's) that believers immersion baptism was the biblical mode of baptism. Dr. Phillip E. Bedient, Witmer genealogy specialist, believes that only one Peter Witmer was involved. It is known there was more than one Peter Witmer living in the area; the limited research engaged in this study supports the view of Dr. Bedient. Letter of Bedient to author, April 13, 1994. From the letter we also learn that Peter Witmer arrived in Philadelphia December 22, 1744. Eshleman, "River Brethren Denominations," pp. 178-182; Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, pp. 22-23. John K. Miller, "The River Brethren," *The Pennsylvania-German* (January, 1906), p. 17. Personal interview, with Phillip Bedient, July 19, 1994. Pennsylvania State Archives, Record Group 4, Military Accounts, Militia 1777-94, Lancaster County rolls, 169-175. (Hereafter Pennsylvania State Archives, Record Group will be referred to as PSA, RG.)

<sup>63</sup>Martin H. Schrag, "Henry Leshner Jr. and the American Revolution" (Unpublished article, 1994). *Genealogical Register, Hege, Leshner*, pp. 40-41. Thomas Montgomery, ed., *Pennsylvania Archives* 5th series, vol. VII (Harrisburg, Pa.: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1906) pp. 213, 695, 717, 744, 762, 788, 793. Daniel R. Lehman, *Mennonites of the Washington County, Maryland and Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Lititz, Pa.: Publication Board of the Eastern Pennsylvania Church and Related Areas, 1990), pp. 11-12. Letters of Daniel R. Lehman to author, February 2, 1991, and June 22, 1991, Daniel R. Lehman, comp., "Descendants of Orphan Henry Leshner" (Unpublished genealogy, 1994), pp. 1-5. Interview with James Leshner, May 26, 1994.

<sup>64</sup>A. W. Climenhaga, *History of the Brethren in Christ Church* (Nappanee, Ind.: E.V. Publishing House, 1942), p. 71.

<sup>66</sup>Note of Christian Leshner recorded on the inside of the last sheet of his Sauer Bible. His Sauer Bible was located in the Kittochtinny Historical Library, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. For information regarding the Sauer Bible see page 82. Carl E. Robinson and Amos W. Strite, comp., *The History and Genealogical Records of the Strite and Allied Families* (Hagerstown, Md.: Amos Strite, 1963), pp. 1, 657. According to George A. Seilhamer the Strite family was Mennonite at the time of emigration. See Seilhamer, ed., *Biography Annals of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: The Genealogical Publishing Co., 1905), pp. 556-557. The parents of Catherine lived in Lancaster County on a farm located partly in Lancaster County and partly in Dauphin County. Catherine's older brother moved to Franklin County at some point in his life.

<sup>67</sup>LCTR 1750-1855, RTTL 1751-1829. *United States Tax of 1798*, pp. 128, 169.

<sup>68</sup>In the material researched no primary or fully convincing secondary source was found regarding the year Christian and Catherine Leshner moved to Franklin County. It is known, as documented in this article, that Christian was on the Rapho Township tax lists until 1806, and that he bought land in Franklin County in 1808. The date of 1807 is given in *History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: Warner, Beers, and Co., 1887), p. 949.

<sup>69</sup>LCA, LCWB P., Vol. 1, pp. 208, 209. Ronald Leshner, p. 2. Ronald Leshner also stated that his uncle, Christian Leshner, lived on the old homestead in Rapho Township, where he died in 1828.

<sup>70</sup>*United States Tax List of 1798*, pp. 128, 169.

<sup>71</sup>Fraktur piece in Leshner's Sauer Bible, Kittochtinny Historical Society Library. Letter of Noah Good to author, August 12, 1991, p. 20. Letter of Frederick S. Weiser to author, November 12, 1991. Gerald C. Studer, *Christopher Dock: Colonial Schoolmaster* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1967), pp. 189, 190.

<sup>72</sup>The tulip was one of the most frequently used motifs in Pennsylvania Dutch folk and fraktur art. Fraktur writing was an ornate style of broken or fractured writing featuring decorative motifs, expanded with intricate flourishes, and often illuminated in brilliant colors, most often in red, green and black. The beginnings of the style reach back into early medieval times as monks in monasteries hand-copied manuscripts to further learning and spirituality. The introduction of printing in the fifteenth century resulted in a gradual decline of the art of hand-illumination, but it continued in folk art throughout much of Western Europe. The German settlers who came to Pennsylvania from southern Germany and Switzerland (upper Rhine area) brought with them the medieval manuscript writing in its folk art form, and creatively invigorated and modified it given their Pennsylvania experience. Fraktur art was used to embellish and decorate religious poems, baptismal certificates, songs and other writings. It became a means of fostering heart-centered religion and upright, pious living.

Frederick S. Weiser states that the kind of fraktur given to Catherine Leshner was an example of Small Presentation frakturs. He describes the category as "usually about one-eighth of a sheet of colonial . . .

paper about four inches by six," usually featuring birds and/or flowers, and their use in part due to the Christopher Dock recommending the practice of rewarding excellent school work with the gift of a small fraktur piece. *The Gift is Small, the Love is Great*, pp. 13-14.

Finally, it was not very common for "plain people," such as Mennonites and Amish, to put signs and designs on such objects as barns, chairs, chests, and tombstones, but many were receptive, especially school teachers, to fraktur writings and art. Mennonite historian John Ruth has written regarding fraktur art: "What is interesting is that this is one of the few folk-arts that was affectionately espoused by the Mennonites and found useful for religious purposes." Ruth, *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*, p. 167. Studer, pp. 179-196. Henry Kauffman, *Pennsylvania Dutch American Folk Art*, C.G. Holme, ed. (New York: American Studio Books, 1946), pp. 9-22, 30-32. Frances Lichten, *Folk Art Motifs of Pennsylvania* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1954), pp. 1-32. *Encyclopedia of World Art*, s.v., "Folk Art," by John L. Stoudt, *Pennsylvania Folk Art* (Allentown, Pa.: Schlechter's, 1948), pp. 3-128. *ME*, Vol. IV, s.v., "Pennsylvania-German Cultures," by Arthur D. Graeff.

<sup>62</sup>Translated by Noah Good in letter to author, August 21, 1991.

<sup>63</sup>(Germania, 1829). Added to the work, as was common to the *Kleine Davidsche Kalterspiel*, was a forty-eight-page supplement entitled *Die Kleine Harfe*.

<sup>64</sup>*BE*, s.v., "Das Kleine Davidische Psalterspiel der Kinder Zions," by Hedda Rasckka Durnbaugh. Photocopy of Fraktur piece in Brethren in Christ Archives.

<sup>65</sup>I. Daniel Rupp, *The History and Topography of Dauphin, Cumberland, Franklin, Bedford and Perry Counties* (Lancaster, Pa.: Gilbert Hills, Proprietor and Publishers, 1846), pp. 449-450, 484-485.

<sup>66</sup>Philip S. Klein and Ari Hoogenboom, *A History of Pennsylvania*, ed. and enlarged (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), pp. 57-59.

<sup>67</sup>*History of Franklin County*, p. 315.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 310-316. M.S. Foltz, "The German Influence in Pennsylvania, with Special Reference to Franklin County," *The First Year of the Kittochtinny Historical Society* (1900), pp. 62-83. J. Lenwood Eisenberg, ed., *A History of the Church of the Brethren in the Southern District of Pennsylvania* (Quincy, Pa.: Quincy Orphanage Press, 1941, reprinted 1961), pp. 3-10. *ME*, Vol. II, s.v., "Franklin County, Pa.," by J. Irvin Lehman.

<sup>69</sup>An example of change was some Mennonite families becoming Brethren in Christ. Mennonite historian Daniel R. Lehman has mentioned that this was true for such names as Burkholder, Lehman, Rife, Wenger, and Hoover, and that "the River Brethren Church in Franklin county drew its numeric strength from the Mennonites." *Mennonites in Washington County, Franklin County*, p. 70.

<sup>70</sup>Letters of Richard Winger to author, July 8, July 29, and September 6, 1989. Winger bases his conclusions on land deeds and the last will of Abraham Winger. Seilhamer, *Biographical Annals of Franklin County*, pp. 654-655.

<sup>71</sup>The last year Samuel Betzner was on the Donegal Township (Lancaster County) tax list was 1793. In that year, Samuel Betzner purchased 180 acres and ninety-nine perches ("and allowance of six P"--for roads, etc.) from Phillip Sprecher for the price of 1,300 pounds. The land was located in Greene Township, Franklin County. In 1795 Betzner sold his farm to Peter Miller for 2400 pounds and bought 115 acres and 53 peaches from John Scott (land in Montgomery Township) for 862 pounds and 10 shillings. He sold this farm to Jacob Zook, 100 acres in 1798 and 25 in 1799. As of April 16, 1796 he was living in Maryland where he purchased seventy-two acres in Washington County for 578 pounds. Franklin County Court House, Register and Recorder Office, Franklin County Deed book, No. 3, pp. 25, 293. (Franklin County Court House hereafter cited as FCCH, Register and Record Office as RRO, and Franklin County Deed Book as FCDB.) Ibid., No. 5, p. 26; No. 9, pp. 389, 459, Washington County, Maryland, Deed book, No. 1.9, pp. 611, 612. Author's interview with J. Harold Sherk, December 11, 1987. Sider, *Brethren in Christ in Canada*, p. 13. Schrag, "Attitude Toward the 'World,'" p. 308.

<sup>72</sup>Record of Valuations, No. 3, Franklin County, 1796-1800, MG-4 County Records Collection, Franklin County, Washington Township, 1794, 1796, 1799, 1801-1804.

<sup>73</sup>Samuel G. Sollenberger, *Abram W. Sollenberger Family* (n.p.: 1908), p. 1. Interview with Jacob L. Sollenberger, January 21, 1988.

<sup>74</sup>D. Ray Heisey, "The Force of Narrative: Portrait of Bishop B.F. Hoover," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* (December 1988), 231-232 (*Brethren in Christ History and Life* hereafter cited as *BICHL*). Laban T. Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, ed. Myron Dietz (n.p.: Brechbill and Strickler, 1972), pp. 156-157.

<sup>75</sup>Brechbill, *History Old Order River Brethren*, pp. 156-157. Seilhamer, *Biographical Annals of Franklin County*, pp. 304-305. Abigail H. Strickler et al., *Stricklers of Pennsylvania* (n.p.: The Strickler Reunion Association of Pennsylvania, 1942), p. 4. The Seilhamer and Strickler sources are difficult to integrate.

<sup>76</sup>Letter of Roy Wenger to author, July 8, 1989. Schrag, "Attitude Toward the 'World,'" p. 308. Material regarding John Meyer is written in a family Bible now in the possession of Ernest E. Meyers, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

<sup>77</sup>Avery Zook, "What Mean These Bricks? The Story of the Ringgold Meeting House," *BICHL* (April 1992), 21-22.

<sup>78</sup>Letter of Avery Zook to author, June 24, 1992.

<sup>79</sup>Avery Zook, "Martin H. Oberholser: Franklin County Bishop," *BICHL* (December 1985), 2-5.

<sup>80</sup>Harry D. Zook, *Zug/Zuck/Zouck/Zook Genealogy* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1983), pp. 51-55, 195-196, 263-274.

<sup>81</sup>Harry D. Zook states that a third son—John—was a Brethren in Christ minister in Franklin County, but Brethren in Christ historian, Avery Zook, indicates that there is no documentation supporting the view that John was a minister. Letter of Avery Zook to author, June 24, 1992.

<sup>82</sup>Zook, "What Mean These Bricks?" p. 22.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., pp. 22, 24.

<sup>85</sup>Letter of Avery Zook to author, June 13, 1994.

<sup>86</sup>Zook, "What Mean These Bricks?" p. 24.

<sup>87</sup>Charles C. Boyer, *American Boyers* (Kutztown, Pa.: Kutztown Publishing House, 1915), pp. 341-351. Letter of Charlie B. Byers to author, October 23, 1992.

<sup>88</sup>Goldia Hawbaker Clark and Eliphalet H. Hawbaker, *One Line of Descendants of the Hawbaker Family in America* (n.p.: The Seventh Generation in America Hawbakers, 1958), pp. 6-14. *Hawbaker Descendants from 1737 to 1978*, 2nd ed. (n.p.: n.d.), pp. 12-16. Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, pp. 188-190. On the passenger list were the following four Hawbaker men—Christian, Joseph, Hans, and Jacob—and four Hawbaker women—Anna, Catarina, Magdalene, and Maria.

<sup>89</sup>The Waldensians was a movement of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries begun by Peter Waldo of Lyons, France. A rich merchant, he came to believe that he was to sell all that he possessed and give the money to the poor, obey the teachings of Christ, especially as given in the Sermon on the Mount, and become a traveling evangelist. The context of his conversion was the wealth, corruption, and political power of the Roman Catholic Church. Waldensians believed in the authority of the Bible, pacifism, non-swearing of oaths, the need to pattern life according to the New Testament Church, and the unworthiness of immoral priests. They also rejected the Constantinian linking of church, state, and society, and rejected the Roman Catholic practices that they saw to be contrary to Scripture, such as the teaching of purgatory. At the same time, they did not formally reject infant baptism and attendance at mass; they saw themselves as the yeast in the church, despite that the Roman Catholic Church condemned the movement. Some scholars believe that Anabaptism was indebted to the Waldensians.

During the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, the Waldensians were strongly influenced by the Reformed (Calvinistic) movement and became a part of the French Protestant development known popularly as the Huguenots. As a result, they moved from loosely gathered groups led by itinerant ministers to an institutionalized organization led by designated leaders. They constructed their own church buildings and no longer had anything to do with the Roman Catholics. They accepted Reformed theology and identified themselves with Reformed political practices and fortunes, including military service.

Before and after the Protestant Reformation, the Waldensians were persecuted, in part because their geographic base was in the Alps bordering between Italy and France. Wars often caused the boundary line to move so they were variously under the rule of Italy and of France. The



East sixty two perches and a half to a Post South fifty three degrees East sixty two perches an a half to a Pine thence by land of John McClenaghan North nineteen degrees West fifty four perches to a Black Oak North fourteen degrees East fifty six perches to a White Oak thence by land of William Bleakley North seventy eight degrees West forty four perches to a Pine South seventy three degrees West sixteen perches to a Pine North seventy two degrees and a half West sixty eight perches to a Hickory North eight degrees West twenty six perches and a quarter to a Pine and thence by land of John Price South thirty seven degrees West two hundred and forty one perches." A perche is a measure of length, five and a half yards, and a measure of size, three and one-fourth square yards. For the survey, see PSA, RG-17, PB P-63, Roll 39, p. 354, and FCCH, RRO, FCDB, No. 8, pp. 205-206.

<sup>100</sup>BE, s.v., "Preiss (Price) Family," by Dorothy B. Lapp. BE, s.v., "Antietam (Price) Church of the Brethren," by Mary Landis Rice. J. Lindwood Eisenberg, ed., *Church of the Brethren in the Southern District*, pp. 7-9.

<sup>101</sup>*History of Franklin County*, p. 316. Daniel Lehman, *Mennonites in Washington County, Franklin County*, pp. 161, 162.

<sup>102</sup>FCCH, RRO, FCDB, No. 12, pp. 445-446.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., No. 13, p. 271.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., D.G. Beers, ed., *Atlas of Franklin County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Pomeroy and Beers, 1868), p. 53. During the nineteenth century (from 1807 to 1892), the Mont Alto Iron Ore Company was a thriving business. The company owned 22,000 acres of land, worked 17 mines, and employed up to 500 men. *1978 Engagement and Note Calendar* (Waynesboro, PA: J. and M. Printing, 1978).

<sup>105</sup>Personal interview with Todd A. Dorsett, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, February 2, 1988. "History of the Church of St. Andrew, Waynesboro, PA." (Unpublished paper, October 1956), St. Andrew Church, pp. 1-3. *Atlas of Franklin County*, p. 53.

<sup>106</sup>FCCH, RRO, FCDB, No. 36, p. 355. The farm was bought from Jacob Carbaugh.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., No. 13, pp. 247-248.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., No. 14, p. 31.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., No. 16, p. 202.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., No. 17, p. 572.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., No. 19, pp. 148-149.

<sup>112</sup>PSA, RG-47, Franklin County Tax Records, 1808-1845. Assess Books, 1847, 1854, 1859. The Assess Books at the time of my using them were located in a basement room of the Franklin County Court House. They were unorganized. I found three for the years following 1845.

<sup>113</sup>PSA, RG-47. Franklin County Tax Records, 1833, 1840.

<sup>114</sup>*History of Franklin County, Pennsylvania*, p. 949.

<sup>115</sup>Personal interview with Pete Daniel, Febuary 10, 1988 and with Francis Gadsen, February 19, 1992.

<sup>116</sup>[Martin H. Schrag], "The River Brethren and His Plow," *Evangelical Visitor*, September 8, 1968, p. 14.

<sup>117</sup>*Die Bibel*, Christoffel Froschauer Version, 1538, two unnumbered pages between the Old and New Testaments. The Froschauer Version was favored by believers in the Anabaptist, Mennonite, and Brethren traditions. *ME*, Vol. II., s.v., "Froschauer's Bible and Testaments," by Adolf Fluri.

<sup>118</sup>Letter of Noah Good to author, February 1, 1993, trans. Noah Good, pp. 5-6. Kittochinny Historical Society Newsletter (October 1988), p. 2.

<sup>119</sup>FCCH, RRO, FCDB, No. 19, p. 372. *Ibid.*, No. 21, p. 19. *Ibid.*, No. 19, pp. 313, 314.

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 19, pp. 294-295.

<sup>121</sup>Christian Lescher, *Das Kleine Geistliche Magazin als ein Zeugnis der Wahrheit; bestehend in unterschiedlichen Stücken des Christlichen Erkenntnisses* (Chambersburg, Pa.: M. Kieffer und Comp., 1849), p. 3. Climenhaga, *History of the Brethren in Christ Church*, p. 71.

<sup>122</sup>Jacob L. Sollenberger, "Division of the River Brethren in the Mid-1800's" (Chambersburg, Pa.: reproduced by the author, ca. 1960), single sheet. See also Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, pp. 156-158. A. Zook, "What Mean These Bricks?" p. 20.

<sup>123</sup>A Familiar Friend, "History of the River Brethren," *History of all Religious Denominations in the United States* (Harrisburg, Pa.: John Winebrenner, 1848), pp. 553-556. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, pp. 15-30. Alderfer, "Mind of the Brethren in Christ," pp. 18-49. Schrag, "Attitudes Toward the 'World'," pp. 11-23.

<sup>124</sup>Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, pp. 35-37. Alderfer, "Mind of the Brethren," pp. 50-85. Schrag, "Attitude Toward the 'World'," pp. 24-54, 130-152.

<sup>125</sup>*BE*, s.v., "Pietism," by F.E. Stoeffler. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, pp. 26-28. *ME*, Vol. I, s.v., "Brethren," by Christian Neff and Harold S. Bender.

<sup>126</sup>"Brief History of Brethren in Christ (River Brethren)," *Minutes of General Conference of Brethren in Christ (River Brethren) from 1871-1904* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Brethren in Christ Church, 1904), pp. 313-314. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, p. 134.

<sup>127</sup>S. H. Brinser, H. G. Light, and P. Singer, *Brief History of the United Zion's Children Church* (n.p.: 1917), pp. 1-8. Paul Hollinger, Luke G. Showalter et al., *UZ: A History of the United Zion Church, 1853-1980* (United Zion Church, 1981), pp. 9-14. John Miller, "The River Brethren," pp. 20-22. Myron Dietz, "The Old Order River Brethren," *BICHL* (June 1983), pp. 4-5. *ME*, Vol. V s.v., "Old Order River Brethren," by Stephen E. Scott. *Ibid.*, "United Zion Church," by J. Paul Martin.

<sup>128</sup>Brechbill, *History Old Order River Brethren*, p. 38.

<sup>129</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 34-38. Personal interview with Myron Dietz, April 21, 1993. Stephen E. Scott, "Old Order River Brethren," *PMH* (July 1978), 13-15. John Miller, "The River Brethren," pp. 17-22. Eshleman, "River Brethren Denominations," pp. 179, 190.

<sup>130</sup>Scott, "Old Order River Brethren," *PMH*, 13-15. Personal interview with Myron Dietz, January 17, 1989.

<sup>181</sup>"Brief History of the Brethren in Christ," *Minutes of General Conference 1871-1904*, (Harrisburg, Pa.: Brethren in Christ Church, 1904), p. 314. Alderfer, "Mind of the Brethren," p. 96. Peter Brock, *Pacifism in the United States* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 780-783. Brock indicates that in 1862 conscription was administered by the states. The federal draft act passed March 3, 1863. It is very likely that the Brethren in Christ sought federal recognition as a nonresistant body as a result of this act.

<sup>182</sup>[Christian Leshar], "April 8, 1844," trans. Noah G. Good, p. 1 (German photocopy of the original and an English translation in the Brethren in Christ Archives, Messiah College). I discovered the Christian Leshar papers at the Kittochtinny Historical Society Museum in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, in March 1965 while engaged in research for my doctoral dissertation. I photocopied those papers that appeared relevant for my dissertation, thus I did not include all the papers. The March 16, 1965 issue of the Chambersburg daily newspaper, *Public Opinion*, reported the photocopying. Upon returning to the museum in 1987 for work on Christian Leshar, I was informed that the papers had been misplaced. See page 000 for copy of the public opinion article.

<sup>183</sup>Sider, *The Brethren in Christ in Canada*, pp. 50-55. Sider indicates that the name Tunker came from the German verb "tunken," meaning to dip, and very likely applied to the Brethren because the Brethren baptized by immersion. Variations of the name as found in records are River Brethren, Brethren, Dunkers, Dunkarts, and Tunkerts. The name Tunker was used into the 1930's.

<sup>184</sup>The 1850 federal census record indicates that there were two John Hesses living in Franklin County Washington Township, Pennsylvania, the township in which Christian Leshar lived. There is no way to verify which of the two, if either, is the John Hess mentioned, but it probably was one of the two mentioned. Letter of Roger B. Meyers to the author, May 17, 1992.

<sup>185</sup>"April 21, 1851," trans. Noah Good single sheet. German photocopy of the original and English translation in Brethren in Christ Archives, Messiah College. Daniel Engle was a bishop in the Dauphin-Lebanon District, a son of Jacob Engel, the first Brethren in Christ leader. Daniel was an influential leader among the Brethren in Christ at the mid-nineteenth century. It has been reported (oral tradition) that he would "saddle a horse and make tours to Ohio encouraging the saints and warning sinners to repent." Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, p.23. Morris M. Engle, *History of the Engle family in America* (Mt. Joy, Pa.: The Bulletin Press, n.d.), pp. 102-103. Climenhaga, *History of the Brethren in Christ Church*, p. 75. *The Biographical Annals of Lebanon County* (Chicago: J.H. Beers, 1904), p. 513. The *Annals* characterized Engel as "one of the fine men of his time, upright and righteous..." and was "long one of the leading bishops" of the Brethren in Christ Church.

<sup>186</sup>"April 21, 1851."

<sup>187</sup>Letter of Christian Leshner to Jacob Riefer, June 2, 1851. Photocopy of the German original and English translation by Noah Good in the Brethren in Christ Archives. The 1850 United States Census lists five Riefers, one of which was a Jacob Riefer who lived either in the town of Lebanon or in Lebanon Township, Lancaster County. This Jacob Riefer could have been the person to whom the letter was sent. Brethren in Christ were living in Lebanon County at the time. More research is needed to determine if this Jacob Riefer was the Jacob Riefer of the letter. Letter of R. Meyers to the author, May 17, 1992.

<sup>188</sup>Micha Myer (1796-1866), son of Henry Meyer, is buried in the New Guilford Cemetery, Franklin County. Personal interview with Roger B. Meyer, January 21, 1992. Seilhammer, *Biographical Annals of Franklin County*, p. 377.

<sup>189</sup>No information has been found regarding Staub.

<sup>140</sup>The United States 1850 Census lists a Daniel Singer living in Washington Township, Franklin County. More research needs to be done to fully verify that the person in the census was the Daniel Senger of the Leshner letter. Letter of R. Meyers to the author, May 17, 1992. Christian Hoover (1793-1867), son of Henrich and Marie (Wenger) Hoover, spent most of his days living near Pleasant Hill in Franklin County. He was chosen as bishop about 1834 and was the leader of the Hooverites (named after him). He is buried in the Burkholder Cemetery located within the Letterkenny Army Depot. *ME*, Vol. V, s.v., "Christian Hoover," by Stephen E. Scott. Barbara H. Burkholder and Anna Mary Burkholder, *The Genealogy of Henrich Huber* (Pleasant Hill, Pa.: 1965), p. 60.

<sup>141</sup>Jacob Strickler Jr. (1788-1859) was the bishop in York County who was the leader of the movement that withdrew from the main body and became the Old Order River Brethren. The date of his conversion and the time of his being chosen as bishop are not known. No information beyond the information available from River Brethren history was found regarding Flory. A John Flory is mentioned in a letter sent from the Lancaster County Brethren to those in York County. The letter implies that Flory was a leader among the Old Order River Brethren. Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, pp. 36, 79. *ME*, Vol V, s.v., "Jacob Strickler Jr.," by Stephen E. Scott. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, p. 134.

<sup>142</sup>Plum may have been Michael Plum (1802-1881) of Franklin County. He is mentioned in the 1880 Directory of the Brethren in Christ Church. One source lists him as a bishop. He is buried in the Montgomery Brethren in Christ cemetery. Letter of R. Meyers to author, March 15, 1992. Letter of Avery Zook to author, June 24, 1992.

<sup>143</sup>The letter in English translation is in John Miller, "The River Brethren," 21-22. A copy of the German original is in Scott, "Old Order River Brethren," *PMH*, 15.

<sup>144</sup>*Ibid.* Hollinger, *UZ*, pp. 9-14. Willinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, p. 134. David Stoner (1814-1881) became an Old Order River Brethren bishop. Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, pp. 82-84. Scott, "Old Order River Brethren," pp. 13-14.

<sup>146</sup>Letter of Christian Huber (Hoover) to friend dated February 10, 1857, trans. Samuel M. Bricker (spelling of the name is not clear). Copy of the letter from the Lancaster County Historical Society Library. I have seen two additional copies of the letter with smoother flowing English translation. Laban Brechbill indicated that the letter was sent to Franklin County Bishop Christian Oberholser who, according to Brechbill, was a brother-in-law to Christian Hoover. The two men were on opposite sides of the controversy. The letter is considered authentic because of the names mentioned, locations given, the piety manifested, and the mood of the letter. An effort should be made to find the original letter. Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, pp. 157-158.

<sup>146</sup>Chastised refers to what has been called the lesser ban or partial avoidance. Not all religious groups defined the punishment in the same way. Here apparently members in good standing were not to greet the guilty with the holy kiss, and the guilty were not to take part in communion and feetwashing. Personal interview with Myron Dietz, February 22, 1993. How this punishment was applied to a bishop is not known.

<sup>147</sup>No information was found regarding John Schenck.

<sup>148</sup>"November 17, 1853," trans. Noah Good, single sheet, Christian Leshner Papers. Photocopy of the German original and the English translation in the Brethren in Christ Archives.

<sup>149</sup>Ira D. Landis, "The Origin of the Brethren in Christ and Its Later Divisions," *MQR* (October 1960), 304. Letter of Jacob and Ada Sollenberger to the author, July 14, 1989.

<sup>150</sup>Hoover letter. Brechbill, *History of the Old Order River Brethren*, pp. 35-123.

<sup>151</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup>John Miller, "River Brethren," 20-22. Scott, "Old Order River Brethren," *PMH*, 13-16.

<sup>153</sup>Letter of Jacob and Ada Sollenberger to the author, July 14, 1989.

<sup>154</sup>John Miller, "River Brethren," 22. Scott, "Old Order River Brethren," *PMH*, 13-14. Wittlinger, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, p. 134. Personal interview with Myron Dietz, April 21, 1993.

<sup>155</sup>Hoover letter. Short note, no title, trans. Noah Good, Christian Leshner papers, Brethren in Christ Archives. Jacob L. Sollenberger, "Division of the River Brethren in Mid-1880's," single sheet, copy received from the author. Sollenberger gained his information from J. Lester Myers (1892-1961) of the Montgomery Brethren in Christ Church, Myers, in turn, the data from his grandfather, Jacob G. Leshner, a great-grandson of Bishop Christian Leshner.

<sup>156</sup>Hoover letter.

<sup>157</sup>Short note, no title, trans. Noah Good. In Christian Leshner papers, Brethren in Christ Archives.

<sup>158</sup>Hoover letter.

<sup>160</sup>David Stoner, letter dated March 27, 1856 from Hellam Township, York County. Two copies of the letter are located in the Brethren in Christ Archives. One of the copies indicates that it was translated by Charles Baker, Stayner, Ontario, Canada (January 20, 1926). The second copy is in a typed format and indicates that David Stoner wrote the letter. This second copy also contains the "Reply from Lancaster County to York Brethren."

<sup>160</sup>Letter of Avery Zook to author, June 13, 1994.

<sup>161</sup>Letter of L.T. Brechbill to author, September 2, 1970. Photocopy of the Bible page was sent to the author by Jacob and Ada Sollenberger.

<sup>162</sup>FCCH, RRO, FCDB, No. 19, p. 395.

<sup>163</sup>"News Notes," *The Village Record* (Waynesboro), September 11, 1856.

<sup>164</sup>Robinson and Strite, p. 657.

<sup>166</sup>RCCH, RRO, FCDB, No. 40, pp. 380-381.

## APPENDIX A

Appendix A consists of the inventories of Henry Sr. and Mary Lesher. They give some insight into the lives of the couple. Someone with expertize in Pennsylvania rural life in colonial times could throw light on the life of the Leshers by using these inventories. Unfortunately, no inventories were found for Henry Jr. and Frena Lesher or for Christian and Catherine Lesher.

INVENTORY OF HENRY LESHER OF  
 RAPHO TOWNSHIP, DECEASED

March 31, 1784

A true Inventory of all the Goods, Rights, Chattles and Credits which were of Henry Lesher late of Rapho Township, deceased.

	L	s	d
to his Cloaths	3	10	6
to a Shirt and Box		2	6
to a peper Mill		4	6
to 4 sickles 2 wetstones		1	6
to a Quart Bottle and a Tin vessel	2	3	
to 2 bottles		2	
to a great Augar		2	6
to a Glass Mug		2	6
to a Pewter Bottle & wooden Mug	2		
to 2 drawing Knives		2	6
to 3 Augars		1	6
to 4 chissels		5	
to 1 Augars		2	
to tool to Sharpen the schythe		3	
to 2 Saws		5	
to a steel-yard		10	
to a Tonge and Chain		1	
to a Steel-yard and Rasp		7	6
to two Saws		5	

to some Pails and Buckets		5	
to some Joiner Tools		6	
to two Rings of a Beetle & an Ax	6		
to two Axes and two Wedges		8	6
to Sandhorns & a Pair of Cissars for Wool		4	
to Sole and upper Leather		1	6
to 2 Tonges & a Fire Shovel		2	6
to 5 Hows & 2 Shovels		8	6
to a Hetchel		7	6
to a ditto		<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	<u>9</u>	7	9
to an Oil-pot and Wood Card		1	6
to a Fire Tonge		1	6
to 3 Iron Spoons and Fork		3	6
to two Tin Mugs and a Knife		1	6
to 7 Pewter Spoons & a Funnel		2	9
to 2 Kithin Panns		5	
to 4 dishes and some Plates		5	
to a small Pan and Hatchet		1	6
to a Pan and a Bleathing Tool		7	6
to a Pewter Plate		1	6
to 5 buckets		3	
to a Pewter Plate		2	6
to two Iron Potts		3	
to a copper Kettle		7	6
to a Meal (?) Box		10	
to a Skin and two sieves, Seven Baggs	12		
to a Hay Fork		1	6
to Books		6	9
to a Spectule		5	
to a Bleeding Instrument			9
to two Iron Wedges		2	6
to a House Clock with the Box	1	5	
to a Stove with 5 plates		15	
to a black cow	3		
to 2 Tubs & Dung Forks		7	
to a Table		12	6

to a Weaving Loom with its Tools	2	10	
to two Sheep		18	
to a Straw Bench		4	6
to a Hand Bible		2	6
to an Iron			6
to Pennsylvania Paper Money	8	2	6
to Maryland Paper Money	16	2	6
to Passable Money Bond	140		
to Graint Stone		8	6

We the Subscribers testify, that in the above Praisement, we have acted Sincerely and to the best of our knowledge

his  
Steven Wenger  
mark  
Henry Hackman

#### INVENTORY OF MARY LESHER, DECEASED

October the 20th, 1784

Inventory of the Goods and Chattels of Mary Lesher late Deceased taken and appraised by us the Subscribers the same being as follows viz:

	L	s	d
To 2 Jackets 2 Lineey Petecoats		7	6
to 9 Shifts		16	
to a Small Baskt with Caps and hankerchefs		2	
to 9 yards of Tow Linnin		9	
to 18 1/2 yards of Linsey full'd	2	6	
to 4 yards Two Linnin		4	
to a beed Tick		5	
to 3 yards of blu Linsey		6	
to 2 yards of Brown Linsey		4	

to 4 yards of flax Linnin		8	
to 1 1/2 yards of flax Linnin		3	
to 2 yards of tow Linnin		3	
to 3 1/2 yards half tow Linnin		5	
to 1 1/2 yards of Cloth		2	6
to 2 pillow Cases		5	
to 1 tow Sheet		3	
to 3 tow Sheets		7	6
to 4 pillow Cases		6	
to 1 Beed Tick		5	
to 2 Sheets		2	6
to 2 Beed Ticks		5	
to 2 Flax Tabel Clothes		6	
to 6 Towels		4	
to 2 pair of Stockings		2	
to Some flax		1	6
to 9 yards of flax tow Linnin		12	
to Stocking yarn		1	6
to 23 ? of Linnin yarn	1	5	
to 2 Boxes with Sundrys		1	6
to 1 Box			6
to 2 ? of wax		2	
to 1 1/2 yard tow Linnin		2	
to 9 Spones		2	
to a Bag with Sundrys		1	
to 1 Bag Chaff		1	
to a Bag with Hatz		4	
to a Bag with Musterd			6
to a pair Skales		5	
to 1 Peper Mill		2	
to kives and forks		1	6
to 1 old Coat		1	
to 1 old blanket			6
to 1 Bag with yarn		1	
to 2 ash Cloths		2	
to 1 Small Bag with Wollen yarn and a pair Shears		1	6
to 3 Jackcoats		5	
to 3 pair of Trousers		1	

to 6 Shirts		12	
to Baskets		2	
to a Clock		10	
to a Beed	1	10	
to 2 Hackels		15	
to a paire of pinchers and old Iron	1		
to 7 Baskets		1	
to 2 Lamps			9
to 3 Baskets		1	
to 1 vinegar Cask			6
to 1 Cask		1	6
to 1 Drawing Knife & Butcher knife	1		
to Sundry Glasses		2	
to 10 Bottels			6
to 2 horse Shoes and Shakel			6
to Sundrys old Truk			6
to 2 Bags		2	
to 1 Bag with Bran		2	
to Rye and Indian corn		2	
to 2 Bags with Dry apels		6	
to 1 Butter Tub		9	
to 2 Shaws and Leder		3	
to a Basket and Reel			6
to 4 Pans		5	
to 2 Sinning weels		5	
to 1 watering pot a bag with flax seed	4		
to 1 Dung fork 2 Shebels a Dunk Hock	3		
to 2 axes and a foot ax		6	
to 1 Coper Kettel		4	
to 1 Iron pot and Kettel		2	
to 1 flax Brake		2	
to a Small Saw & Hammer		1	
to flax		7	6
to 2 Hows 2 Beehives		1	6
to a Basket a paire of Shears		1	6
to Sundry wooden vesels		4	
to Sundry Ceder vesels		2	
to 2 Butter Dishes 4 plates & a platter	8		
to 1 Iron Ladel and flesh fork		2	

to Pin Hare		1	
to an Iron Stove		15	
to 1 Paire of Trousers			2
to a paire of Coopers Tongs			6
to 1 Cow with a Bell	2	10	
to 2 Booking Tubs & Pickel Tub		5	
to first and Second Crops of Hay	1	5	
to Indian Corn and Some Bakon		1	
to 1 Stool			9
to Cash in hard Money		9	
to 6 aprons		5	
to 20 Books	1	5	
to Weaver Spool		1	
to a Paire of Women pockets		2	
to 6 Tabel Cloths		<u>15</u>	
	<u>28</u>	4	<u>2</u>
to one Beed	1		
to 3 Sheep	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>	
	30	12	2

This inventory was Taken and the Good therein Mentioned  
 apraised by us the  
 Subscribers this 20th of Oct. 1784

his  
 Steven Wenger  
 mark

John Hagey

Exhibited into the Register's Office at Lancaster the 1st.  
 Day of November Anno Domiri 1784.

his  
 John Lesher Adm.  
 mark

## APPENDIX B

On the inner side of the back cover of Christian Lesher's Sauer Bible there is a listing of the death and life span of sixteen persons all related to the Christian Lesher family. The text indicates that Christian Lesher was the recorder until his own death was inscribed. Below is a photocopy of the German original, an English translation of the same, and a limited identification of some members. Noah Good was the translator and Lesher genealogist James Lesher provided the identification information. For the name Sauer and the Sauer Bible, see below.

Jacob Lesher of Goshen Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> Augst. 1796. Delt. 30 Jafs und 6. Monat  
 Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> July 1804. Delt. 60 Jafs  
 Die Mutter of Goshen Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> November 1821. Delt. 81 Jafs und 2. Monat in 7. Tag  
 Maria Lesher Gyniel of Goshen Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> December 1828. Delt. 56 Jafs und 8. Monat  
 Maria of Goshen Jan. 28<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1838. Delt. 69 Jafs und 5. Monat  
 Maria of Goshen Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1841. Delt. 70 Jafs und 11. Monat  
 Jacob Binger of Goshen Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1842. Delt. 70 Jafs und 4. Monat  
 Jacob Finer of Goshen Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1844. Delt. 73 Jafs und 2. Monat  
 Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of Goshen Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1845. Delt. 79 Jafs und 9. Monat  
 Elizabeth Lesher of Goshen Jan. 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1856. Delt. 81 Jafs und 4. Monat  
 Catharina Lesher of Goshen Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1865. Delt. 85 Jafs und 5. Monat  
 Maria Lesher of Goshen Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec. 1864. Delt. 85 Jafs und 9. Monat, 11. Tag  
 Magdalena Bunt of Goshen Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1864. Delt. 83 Jafs und 1. Monat, 16. Tag  
 Polly Lesher of Goshen Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1864. Delt. 58 Jafs und 14. Tag  
 Maria Lesher of Goshen Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1866. Delt. 88 Jafs und 11. Monat  
 Noah Good Miller of Goshen Jan. 28<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1877. Delt. 83 Jafs und 4. Monat 13. Tag

## English Translation

## Identification

Jacob Lesher died on  
August 29, 1796, age 30  
years and 6 months

Brother of Christian  
Lesher, did not marry

Mother died on July 6,  
1804, age, 60 years

Christian Lesher's mother,  
maiden name, Frena Zette

English Translation	Identification
Father died November 7, 1821, age 81 years, 3 months, 7 days	Christian Lesher's father, Henry Lesher, Jr.
My brother Heinrich died December 18, 1828, age 56 years, 8 months	Christian's brother, married Maria Longenecker
My sister Maria died January 24, 1838, age 69 years, 5 days	Christian's sister, married Jacob Stoner
My sister Fronica died April 7, 1841, age 70 years, 11 months	"Fanny," Christian's sister married Jacob Wengard
Jacob Wenger died February 12, 1842, age 70 years, 4 months	no data
Jacob Steiner died December 11, 1844, age 73 years, 2 months	no data
Heinrich Lescher's wife died Dec. 7, 1845, age 79 years, 9 months	Her husband's death (Heinrich Lescher) noted above. Her maiden name, Maria Longenecker
Christian Lescher died September 6, 1856, age 81 years, 4 months & 11 days	The Christian Lesher of the article
Catharine Lescher died February 15, 1865, age 85 years, 5 months, 25 days	The Catherine (Streit) Lesher of this article
Maria Sarwer died February 22, 1864, age 85 years, 9 months, 11 days	Sister of Catherine (Streit) married John Sarver

English Translation	Identification
Magdalena, Streit died April 18, 1864, age 83 years, 1 month, 14 days	Second sister of Catharine Lescher, did not marry
Polly Lescher died April 7, 1864, age 58 years, 14 days	no data
Maria Leshler died November 16, 1866, age 58 years, 11 months, 7 days	no data
Jacob Miller died February 28, 1877, age 63 years, 4 months, 13 days	Cousin of Christian Lescher

The designation of "Sauer Bible" stems from Christoph I (1695-1758) and Christopher II (1721-84) Sauer, a father and son combination, being printers operating in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Christoph I was sympathetic to many of the beliefs of the German Baptist Brethren but remained a separatist, that is to say, he rejected all church structures whether they were state established churches or free church sectarian fellowships. His son, Christopher II, became a member of the German Baptist Brethren and was one of their important leaders during his adult life. Many clergy who came out of or had roots in the European state churches rejected the Sauer Bible (Lutheran, Reformed, etc.). In contrast, many ministers of sectarian groups (German Baptist Brethren, Mennonites, etc.) favored the Sauer Bible. At issue was the text. The Sauers used Luther's translation (34th edition) edited by Pietist and Radical Pietist scholars. In addition, they added the Berleburg Bible translation (Radical Pietist translation) of two books of the Old Testament Apocrypha. Christian Leshler's Sauer Bible, *Die Ganze Gottliche Heilige Schrift* (Germantown Pa.: Christoph Saur, 1776, 3rd ed.) was located in the Kittochtinny

Historical Society Library. *BE*, s. v. "Sauer (Sower, Saur), Johan Christoph I," by Donald F. Durnbaugh. *Idem.*, s. v. "Sauer (Saur, Sower), Christopher II," by Donald F. Durnbaugh. *Idem.*, s. v. "Sauer Press," by Donald F. Durnbaugh. *Idem.*, s. v. "Separatism," by Dennis D. Martin. *ME*, vol. IV., s. v. "Saur," by Harold S. Bender.

## Book Reviews

PALMER BECKER. *Called to Equip: A Training and Resource Manual for Pastors*. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1993. Pp. 108. \$6.95.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Called to Care: A Training Manual for Small Group Leaders*. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1993. Pp. 138. \$6.95.

*Reviewed by George P. Kimber\**

Palmer Becker has written two significant books that answer a crying need of pastors--the need to equip people for ministry. Most pastors have the motivation to equip the saints but become frustrated when trying to establish a meaningful program to accomplish the task. Becker believes that the foundation for accomplishing this task is a renewed focus on small group ministries in the church. There certainly is no lack of material related to small group ministries, but much of it falls short by focusing on what others have done and failing to give adequate information as to how one might structure such a program. Becker has chosen to put his material together in the form of two training manuals because he is convinced that "God is calling pastors to equip a new generation of lay pastors of

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small groups" (*Called to Equip*, p. 11). Becker reminds the reader that church history testifies that most renewal movements of any significance began in small group settings, e.g. the Anabaptist, Wesleyan, and Pentecostal movements.

The first manual, *Called to Equip*, is designated as a training and resource manual for pastors to use in setting up and maintaining a care group ministry in the church. The second manual, *Called to Care*, is designated for the training of small group leaders to begin and lead care groups in the church. Becker has drawn from a number of prominent sources in evangelism, cell groups, and leadership, but much of his material is a product of his own ministry within the General Conference Mennonite Church. He has promoted small groups and congregational outreach ministries throughout North America. During the 1980's he was involved in church planting and university ministry work in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

In *Called to Equip* Becker creates a logical and meaningful progression of content, making the volume a "user friendly" tool for the pastor/ teacher. The manual consists of seven chapters. In the chapter on "Planting a Vision," the focus is on church planting and establishing a proper vision for the particular setting. Becker emphasizes: "The church is to be a friendly, caring community. We are to be an accepting, forgiving family of people who care for each other. We want to show compassion for each other and the people in our wider world. What vision do you have for helping your congregation become a caring congregation where needs are met?" (pp. 17, 18).

This, then, becomes the basis for forming small groups. Becker proceeds to offer three basic patterns or visions for offering such ministry: (1) *The Staff Model*, in which the staff ministers and recruits others to help them in special needs; (2) *The Shepherd Model*, in which families of the

congregation are divided geographically or in some other manner among deacons or shepherds of the church who seek to meet individually with each family once a year or as needed; and (3) *The Care Group Model*, the one favored by the author, made up of small groups seeking to meet the personal and spiritual needs of each other. Becker critiques the first two models, positively and negatively, but fails to critique the Care Model in the same way, although he suggests that in some situations a combination of the three visions may be needed (p. 20).

The subsequent chapters proceed logically under the titles, "Recruiting Leaders," "Training Leaders," "Commissioning Leaders," "Beginning Groups," "Supervising Leaders," and "Affirming Leaders." In the section on the training of leaders, Becker suggests that the pastor, or overall coordinator, would begin training potential leaders by modeling a Care Group. This is based upon four steps: Step 1: "I do you watch," Step 2: "I do you assist," Step 3: "You do I assist," Step 4: "You do I watch" (p. 48).

One of the outstanding features of this manual is that Becker supplies various resources at the end of each chapter: promotional and recruiting materials, job descriptions, response sheets, etc. This material in itself is worth the purchase of the book.

In the companion volume, *Called to Care*, Becker builds upon the other volume and proceeds, in part two, to discuss the types of caring groups that are possible within the church, namely, "The Nurture Group," "The Support Group," "The Evangelistic Group," and "The Mission Group," with an explanation of the function of each group. In part three of the book, four chapters discuss the basic elements that should be present in each group--acceptance, Bible study, prayer and mission. The final section of the book, part four, discusses some very practical leadership issues. Becker has included appendixes which provide

record-keeping reports for group members as well as for leaders, along with assessment forms and other helpful material.

I found very little to criticize in these manuals because I think they live up to their intended purpose. It would be helpful to include a sample of an actual small group session to show the dynamics that might take place. This would enable the reader to understand that, even following all the suggestions in the manuals, there will always be certain dynamics that occur that have not been covered and will require the discernment of the leader to determine the course of action that should be taken.

I would be surprised if any pastor or lay person would say they could not develop a small group program using this material exclusively or at least in conjunction with other sources.

PAUL R. FETTERS, gen. ed. *Theological Perspectives: Arminian-Wesleyan Reflections on Theology*. Huntington, Ind.: The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, 1992. Pp. 740. \$29.95.

*Reviewed by Arthur M. Climenhaga\**

This volume represents the theological reflections of a wide range of United Brethren in Christ scholars, ministers, and students. It does not represent the total range of systematic theology, but deals in six parts with specific theological areas. The first section represents the general

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editor's rationale for the study of theology *per se*. Then follow five more sections which could be summarized as dealing with revelation, including inspiration and hermeneutics, creation, salvation and sanctification, and matters eschatological.

This reviewer does not propose to present even in succinct form a synopsis of the contents of each of the twenty-three chapters. Rather, I wish to be analytical of authorship, the general scholastic aura involved, and especially what this volume says to the Brethren in Christ community of scholars.

First of all, one is struck by the wide range of writers in the United Brethren in Christ denomination. It is evident that we have here a picture of a mentally as well as spiritually alert community of theological reflection. Only a few writers wrote more than one chapter. Thus there is a wide range in the number of authors. The larger proportion of the authors were possessors of Masters degrees either in divinity or Christian ministry (M. Div. and M.C.M.). Of those holding doctorates, only two had the Ph.D. degree; the rest were Doctor of Ministry degree holders. While the usual attitude is that the D. Min. program and degree is a praxis rather than an academic research doctorate, in these chapters this reader was impressed with the strong academic base seen in the research involved. The United Brethren in Christ holders of the D. Min. degrees are to be complimented on their theological study and research.

My next comment has to do with what I have termed the scholastic aura involved. The sub-title of the book speaks of Wesleyan-Arminian reflections. However, the first part of the book shows a fairly heavy aura of research in reformed theological areas with only a modicum of reference to Wesleyan-Arminian scholarship. Only in the latter part of the volume does one become aware of names such as H. Orton Wiley and subsequent Wesleyan-Arminian

scholars. To this reviewer this was an element of weakness in what otherwise is an excellent compilation of theological treatises. It raises the question as to whether the wording Wesleyan-Arminian could have been more adequately stated plainly as "Arminian Reflections, etc."

However, this volume should be read widely by Brethren in Christ leaders, teachers, and pastors to help stir up our "pure minds by way of remembrance." The basic questions that kept coming to my mind as I read the theological perspectives were (1) where do we stand as to our Brethren in Christ theological perspectives, and (2) why have we not had a comparable production representing the reflections of our own denominational theologians and theological students? This review is therefore a call for someone or someones in the active arena of life to catch the vision for our own denominational theological compilation in an analogous field. In the meantime read this volume for its personal theological benefit and to see what can be done.

AIDA BESANCON and WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER. *Joy Through the Night: Biblical Resources for Suffering People*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1994. Pp. 252. \$11.99.

*Reviewed by Paul W. Nisly\**

Pain, someone has said, is the one constant of human life, or as Aida and William Spencer write, "None of us will

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emerge from life unscathed." The authors write from within their personal and familial experience of pain, both past and present. William Spencer's sister died as a young girl in a swimming accident; his father suffered life-threatening physical injuries as the result of a fall from his painter's ladder--and his father's emotional-spiritual injuries were perhaps even more severe, resulting in long-term family suffering. William Spencer himself lives with the daily, haunting presence of Crohn's Disease.

Thus the authors write not from an abstract, distant view of suffering, but from the midst of the experience of pain. The book, however, is not primarily a *personal* story as the subtitle makes clear. Rather, it is the authors' attempt to provide some answers to the age-old questions which confront all people, specifically, in this case, to issues confronting Christians who suffer and who are driven to ask questions about the nature of God.

The Spencers respond to the puzzling question of the nature of God--who is both omnipotent and good--with equally enigmatic answers: "Why do we suffer? Because God is *just*. Why has God allowed the possibility of suffering? Because God is *love*" (p. 19). The basic structure of *Joy Through the Night* is guided by four reasons which the authors propose for human suffering: (1) we live in a world of pain; (2) suffering can result as a punishment for sin; (3) suffering can be for the advancing of God's reign; and (4) suffering at times remains a mystery.

The development of the book, then, is to flesh out the "reasons" for suffering in these four basic categories. In the third category, for example, the authors address the issue of persecution which comes for the advancement of God's reign. Making clear that they do not believe God desires suffering, they nonetheless suggest, first, that persecution may result from resistance from unbelievers as believers promote God's cause; second, as we become more like Jesus, "we will suffer

as he did;" and, finally, "one way to advance God's reign is to become more cleansed of the evil within us" (p. 79). Throughout the book one finds many listings, a result, one surmises, of the authors' use of blackboards and overhead slides in their classroom lectures and other public presentations on the subject.

Indeed the book can perhaps be most helpfully used as a text or study guide for discussion groups in various settings. The authors suggest that one could use eight or ten sessions for this study, and they provide two appendices, the first offering a number of suggestions and questions for each session, the second listing many biblical passages to support the authors' text. Actually, although the book is divided into ten chapters, one could well use it for the standard thirteen-week Sunday school curriculum. A number of the early chapters could easily provide material for two solid sessions of study, debate, and reflection. And when one would finish the session, the questions would continue to lurk in the recesses of one's mind!

Besides its use as a text on theodicy, *Joy Through the Night* offers practical suggestions about words and actions which can be either helpful or harmful as we support those who suffer. The Spencers speak from the vantage point of personal suffering, and those who suffer learn perhaps most quickly what *not* to say if one desires to minister to those in pain. We can assist others, the authors suggest, through freeing people from shame, trying to stop or lessen others' pain, being "present" with people in pain, allowing others to express their pain, and treating persons in pain as full persons (pp. 36-41).

The Spencers offer both thoughtful theological reflections and practical assistance to all who suffer--and sooner or later almost all of us will. One wonders, though, whether the authors have quite decided who is their audience. On the one hand, the personal experiences and practical advice

seem directed to the "typical person in the pew." But on the other hand, significant portions of the book seem directed to a more academic audience. Particularly intrusive are the numbers of Greek and Hebrew words sprinkled throughout the text. On one page (not a typical example) there are over twenty transliterated Hebrew words.

Yet the book on the whole seems to be directed to a larger than academic audience, and the arguments concerning human suffering are not tightly woven theological discussions. For the most part the theological arguments seem sound--or at least as convincing as they can be. To me the first and fourth reasons for human suffering (that we live in a world of pain and that suffering often remains a mystery) seem far more convincing than the second and third (suffering can result as a punishment for sin; and suffering can be for the advancing of God's reign). The attempt to discover who sinned to cause this suffering can be as counterproductive as were the "comforting" words of Job's friends; and to tell someone in pain that the suffering is for the advancing of God's reign is not much more helpful than reciting Romans 8:28 to a father who has just lost his child. Perhaps other readers will be helped by the second and third arguments; and in fairness, one should add that the authors try hard to avoid the simplistic explanation which "cures" the problem.

*Joy Through the Night* does offer much stimulus for reflection and further study, though the impact of the book could have been sharpened by a tightening of the last two chapters, which become somewhat repetitious of earlier material. These comments may seem more negative than they are intended: to this reviewer the last summarizing sections tend not to strengthen the book (but then I never did like sermons which circled too long before landing!).

On the positive side, listen to some of the provocative, insightful words from the Spencers:

In the same way as God's sovereignty and human freedom are not contradictory possibilities of either/or but happen concurrently and cooperatively, God's external infliction of punishment and a human's internal self-infliction of punishment usually happen concurrently and cooperatively (p. 65).

Properly speaking, then, real joy is the assurance of salvation. It does not depend on our life situation (p. 165).

First, we need to understand that each of us is responsible for--is the cause of--some suffering (p. 114).

A key factor in suffering with those who suffer, which is another way to say bearing one another's burdens, is developing the ability to recognize what is pain for someone else (p. 197).

When you are not sure what to say, shut up! Be silent, empathetic and loving (p. 151).

No book will finally, satisfactorily, comprehensively explain the mysteries and paradoxes of human suffering. Always we are pushed beyond our knowing, always one sees a God who is both comforting and inviting--and inscrutable and silent. And, by faith, we choose to accept a good God--or not. *Joy Through the Night* helps us wrestle, once more, with Jacob's angel.

ALEX SAREYAN. *The Turning Point: How Persons of Conscience Brought about Change in the Care of America's Mentally Ill*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1993. Pp. 314. \$16.95.

*Reviewed by Robert Smith\**

*The Turning Point* is a story of--a monument to--a group of men and women who brought about remarkable change in the quality of care given to our seriously mentally ill neighbors. There are two aspects to this story: (1) the Conscientious Objectors; namely the men and women who were the force of the movement; and (2) the nature of the problem in which they found themselves involved.

The author presents a brief but well researched history of conscientious objection to war, starting in 1775. A busy Ben Franklin, recognizing the concerns of the peace churches in his constituency, added an amendment to Pennsylvania's military budget providing for military exemption to those persons "scrupulous of the lawfulness of bearing arms."

In World War II, many conscientious objectors believed that the work they were doing in the Civilian Public Service camps was out of step with the crisis atmosphere of the times, so they repeatedly requested work of greater social significance. Thus, out of a serendipitous series of events, these conscientious objectors, their wives, and others recruited by the peace churches found themselves in hospitals for the mentally ill. In these situations there was an urgent need for change by people of deep conviction.

They did not set out to be reformers; they were not by

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\*Robert Smith is a psychiatrist in Souderton, Pennsylvania.

nature agitators. Nor was this a movement started or led by any one person or group. Rather, it happened because these men and women, individuals, were accustomed to following where their consciences led.

Considering the profound changes that evolved from the efforts of these people, one could wish for a more detailed account of the men and women whose visions made the programs possible. But the author focuses on the crisis points and changes in the mental health field, rather than a history of the CO's in World War II. The result is a clear picture of the men and women who worked with the patients--what they saw, how they responded, and what drove them to resist the daily abuses they observed.

The abysmal conditions that the CO's discovered in the back wards of the state-operated hospitals are drawn in copious, anecdotal detail. The author describes wards that were not only filthy, but at times in serious disrepair, lacking the most basic sanitary provisions. Worse, the author describes the complete absence of a therapeutic milieu. In fact, many of the attendants ranged from uncaring to downright brutal. That deaths occurred from beatings and maltreatment in such an atmosphere of tolerated neglect may not surprise us. However, it is surprising that such conditions were accepted as the norm by hospital administrators. Thus, we are introduced first to the ethos of the characters in this drama, and then to the situations that compelled them to act.

Mr. Sareyan recounts how the CO's impacted the wards of their units. Starting with the treatment of the patients in their care, they introduced a respect for the dignity of these disenfranchised people, which eventually broadened to include hospital supervisors and administrators and then went beyond the hospital grounds to include newspaper reporters, city officials, and legislators.

The CO's efforts to bring healing, both to these patients

and to the system involved, provides a story both well worth telling and well told. The author brings to this narrative an understanding and a warmth that speaks of a personal involvement in the struggle. He cites professionals within the mental health field, which adds credibility to his story. Then, too, I have known personally some of those men who were involved in the evolving mental health field of those years. Both of these groups recognized and credited at that time the CO's work in this field. The book is not a romance written only for those who already believe, but also a document for the mental health profession. The fact that it is published by the American Psychiatric Press speaks to its credibility and *bona fides*.

One wonders how a handful of men and women, no matter how dedicated, could make a significant difference in such a huge and disorganized system. The author does not outline the history of mental health as he did the history of conscientious objection to war. However, these were not the first men of conscience to grapple with the inhumane treatment of the insane. William Tuke, a Quaker layman (1732-1822), was himself a leader of what was then known as the "humane treatment" of the insane. His influence extended throughout England and beyond to leaders in the psychiatric community. One of these was Benjamin Rush, who is often referred to as the father of American psychiatry. Tuke's story is in many ways similar to the story Mr. Sareyan tells. Mr. Sareyan, in my opinion, would do well to put his story about the CO's in the historical perspective of movements such as the humane treatment. Nor was the issue resolved when the CO's of WW II brought about their turning point in the humane treatment for the mentally ill. The current crises concerning street people, many of whom are mentally ill, continues to call for a conscientious response.

In later years, some of these CO's themselves became

mental health professionals--hospital administrators, psychiatrists, and mental health nurses. Further, many were influential in the movement that brought the church once again into the field of mental health hospital administration. From the late 1940's through the 1960's, the peace churches founded a number of mental hospitals of their own.

Other movements came together with the efforts of these reformers. The author touches on them only briefly. This is, after all, the story of a group of men and women who accomplished a monumentally important task by being willing to be--in the final analysis--conscientious.

HARVIE M. CONN. *The American City and the Evangelical Church: A Historical Overview*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994. Pp. 232. \$15.99.

*Reviewed by Harriet Sider Bicksler\**

Last Christmas, the staff from the office where I work went for lunch at a restaurant adjacent to Reservoir Park in Harrisburg. The park was well-known for many years for its illicit drug and sex activity, but has recently been rehabilitated by the city. It has a band shell that was the site last summer of several free performances of Shakespearean plays. One staff member, a suburban resident, declared as we walked from the car to the restaurant, "I sure wouldn't come in here at night." To

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\*Harriet Sider Bicksler is editor of *Shalom!*, a quarterly Brethren in Christ publication on social issues. She works as a publication specialist for the Pennsylvania Office on children's mental health issues.

which I protested, "But it's well-lit here, and for a play there would be lots of people. You'd be safe." She wasn't convinced, and I was frustrated once again by the stereotypical response to the city as a bad place.

However, I am now a suburban resident too, after seventeen years of living in Harrisburg. When my daughter went to Messiah College's Philadelphia campus this year, I was aware of feeling the same unease toward Philadelphia that my office colleague felt toward Harrisburg. During my tenure as staff person for the denominational Board for Brotherhood Concerns from 1989-1992, urban ministries were a priority. That is, we tried to raise consciousness in the church regarding the needs of the city and to support the relatively few people already involved in urban ministry. Toward that end, we began the "City Talk" newsletter, and sponsored a retreat for urban workers and a pre-General Conference event in 1992 called "Bridge to the City." Yet just six months after that event, our family moved to a suburban development, at least in part because of negative factors we felt were stronger in our city context than in the suburbs.

I give this personal background to illustrate the ambiguity and ambivalence toward the city that is one underlying theme in Harvie Conn's book, *The American City and the Evangelical Church*. Professor of missions at Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia and an authority on urban mission, Conn notes in his introduction the generalizations that are often made about the city and the evangelical church and then says: "The message of this book offers another response: it isn't that easy. The story of evangelical church and American city is more complicated, more ambiguous than these generalizations allow" (p. 11).

The structure of the book is fairly simple. Because not much has been written combining the history of the city in

America with the history of the evangelical church in the city, Conn alternates chapters about the city with chapters about the church in the city. In so doing, he attempts to make connections between the two histories. Most chapters cover a specific time period: beginnings (colonial, pre- and post-revolutionary), 1870-1920, 1920-1970 and 1970-1990. Much of the history is told by tracing trends and providing numerous demographic statistics. Conn details the white evangelical church's origins in the colonial Puritan city to its retreat to suburbia and examines the rise of minority churches in the city.

Rather than repeat either the history or the wealth of interesting statistics, in this review I want to focus on several additional themes that Conn develops throughout the book. These are themes that intersect with what I know about the Brethren in Christ in the city.

*Individualism:* In the first few pages, Conn establishes the American ideology of individualism as "the legacy that the colonial city left to our day" (p. 18). Supplanting the Native American view of the land as community property, the colonists celebrated privatism and individual rights and liberties. This individualism also contributed to the white evangelical church's retreat from social involvement in the city to an emphasis on personal sin, private prayer and personal evangelism. One benefit of individualism that Conn notes was the rise of voluntarism to attack the growing problems of poverty and other social ills in the city.

*Suburbanization and the emerging middle class:* As cities grew, especially with newer immigrant populations from non-European countries, by the mid-nineteenth century, the "image of the 'wicked city' had become a stereotype already deep in the national consciousness" (p. 38), leading to the desire of many to move to safer settings on the outskirts of the city. Conn notes that by 1870, the church had "come to identify itself and its goals with the emerging

middle class" (p. 46) and hence followed the middle class to the suburbs.

*A social conscience and the Social Gospel:* Although Conn makes it clear that evangelicals have always been concerned about the social problems plaguing the city, the way in which they have demonstrated their concern has shifted over the years. Early on, various evangelical volunteer agencies were created to respond to urban needs. Even after the white church retreated to the suburbs, church agencies sponsored rescue missions and shelters for the poor, and crusaded against alcohol and other "sins" of the city.

Evangelicalism's emphasis on personal evangelism and a private Christianity contrasted with the Social Gospel movement of main-line Protestant churches. Conn summarizes the effects of the widening gap between evangelicalism and the social gospel: "The effects of the struggle were to play a heavy role in the social conscience of the evangelical church . . . . Not only was liberalism rejected by the evangelical in the struggle; so was a working Christian social ethic and the city in which to practice it" (p. 93).

*The role of minority churches:* Throughout the book, Conn seems to alternate between indicting the white evangelical church for abandoning the city and acknowledging its significant efforts to minister to urban needs. This is one way he tries to avoid generalizations. Another example is his emphasis on the growth of minority churches. While the black church experienced some of the same middle class flight to the suburbs, many black churches have said, "The city is our mission" (p. 110). Born in the city, the civil rights movement mobilized the black church to act on behalf of cities that were increasingly populated with blacks and other minority and immigrant groups. Many black churches developed holistic models for ministry and provided "intimacy, freedom of expression,

face-to-face contact, and familiar social and physical surroundings" in "a world destructive of the black community" (p. 163). Conn also profiles the rise of Hispanic and Asian churches in the city.

*Concluding observations:* At many points throughout the book, I felt Conn was accurately describing what I know to be true about the Brethren in Christ and the city. We are predominantly white and evangelical, with a past and present history in the city that is similar to what Conn describes for other white evangelical denominations. We too have often found the city an intimidating setting and have had varying success--with ministries opening and closing in places like Buffalo, Philadelphia, and Detroit, and reincarnating themselves in places like San Francisco, Harrisburg, New York City, and Dayton. We too have concentrated most of our efforts in rural and suburban communities.

Most importantly, I think, we have failed to reach out in significant ways to ethnic minorities (one notable exception being the burgeoning Hispanic ministry in Miami). This failure prevents us from being effective in the city. If Conn is right about the major role for minority churches in the future, the Brethren in Christ will need to intentionally work at developing partnerships with people of color (especially the African-American community) if we want to plant churches and do ministry in city settings. To do that, we will have to confront and resolve our fears and prejudices, not only about the city but also about people of color.

Probably the greatest strength of the book, at least for me, is the matter-of-fact way in which Conn tells the story of the church and the city. He doesn't preach but leaves his readers to draw their own conclusions based on the information he presents. I recommend the book for anyone who wants to understand the way that church and city have

interacted in American history, and as a basis from which to challenge the Brethren in Christ not to forget the mission field that exists right on our doorstep.

LEO DRIEDGER and DONALD B. KRAYBILL. *Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism*. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1994. Pp. 344. \$14.95.

*Reviewed by Samuel M. Brubaker\**

The primary purpose of the authors of this volume is to trace and evaluate the transformation of Mennonite peacemaking during the twentieth century. This purpose is expressed in the book's subtitle.

Why did Mennonite peacemaking thought, teaching, and practice shift from being passive (*die Stille im Lande*) toward an activist stance which at times advises government on issues of public policy? How did this general shift occur? What has been the impact of this shift upon the historic commitment of Mennonites to radically follow the teachings of Jesus in being peacemakers? These questions are explored in great detail by the authors.

The first section of the book traces the roots of nonresistance to its European origin. At the inception of the Anabaptist movement, its adherents were regarded as heretics and political insurgents by civil and religious authorities alike, so aggressive was their witness to society and the state. When persecution arose, the early

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Anabaptists adopted a strategy of defenselessness, and came to be known as the defenseless Christians. Persecution forced them increasingly into communities of faith withdrawn from the world. When they migrated to North America, they carried their concept and terminology of defenselessness with them. As they came to adopt English as their language (a process which extended into the twentieth century for some communities) the word nonresistance came to be used to convey the concept.

Another interesting historic insight is that Mennonites came to North America from two European streams. Swiss-South German Mennonites accented the concept of dualism between church and world, separation from public life, humility and simplicity, and the language of nonresistance. They tended to be more sectarian than Mennonites of the Dutch-Russian stream.

Many Dutch Mennonites fled to Prussia as refugees, then later migrated to the Ukraine at the invitation of Catherine the Great. In Russia, they developed their own community life, and gained considerable political experience. They learned to accept public responsibilities, and gained a sense of worldly self-respect. As Russian Mennonites migrated to North America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they were less separatist in their social stance, more comfortable with political involvement, less apt to verbalize simplicity and humility, and less likely to use the explicit language of nonresistance.

Throughout much of their history, the Brethren in Christ have reflected the emphases of the Swiss-South German Mennonite heritage from which the early Brethren came.

A chapter on the effects of modernization follows. The authors explore differentiation, rationalization, and individuation, and conclude that these did not extinguish the impulses of nonresistance, but they modified ("radically

transformed") nonresistance into active peacemaking. This transformation was hastened by the pressures of two world wars, which pressed upon Mennonite consciousness and consciences the questions about the ethics of standing aloof from the fray against strong evil forces. These pressures gave rise, for example, to the Mennonite Central Committee as an expression of an active alternative to remaining uninvolved with the struggles against evil in the world. During the era of wrestling with these issues, the authors found, the Brethren in Christ issued a statement in 1913 which they characterize as "forty years ahead of its time." The statement, addressing economic injustices of industrialization, advocated "the body of Christ should bear a clear and unequivocal testimony on moral issues of public interest."

The authors explore the theological work undertaken to undergird, or in some instances, to delay, the transformation of Mennonite peacemaking. Did God have a lower standard of ethics acceptable for "the world" but unacceptable for the Church? Or was there only one Divine calling, to be modeled by the church and advocated by the church to "the world" as part of the context of evangelism? This theological debate within Mennonitism occurred simultaneously with the wider fundamentalist/modernist controversy. Mennonites, influenced by dispensationalism and premillennialism, preferred to maintain the dualist concepts and retain nonresistance without modification. Other Mennonites wrestled with the content of Christian witness to the world, and sensed the need for a broader expression of peacemaking, including a prophetic witness to governments.

An important milestone in the theological work done by Mennonite peacemakers was the publication in 1944 of Guy Hershberger's *War, Peace, and Nonresistance*. This volume consolidated Mennonite peacemaking around the concept of

biblical nonresistance. Hershberger articulated a two-kingdom concept, but argued also for a single moral law, which he discerned throughout Old and New Testaments. The church, although separate from the world, had a "curative mission" to and in the world. His work reinforced the concept of nonresistance, but also set the stage for the later development of active peacemaking, based upon his concept of God's single moral law.

Subsequent theological work, articulated especially by John H. Yoder, J. Lawrence Burkholder, and Gordon Kauffman, among others, emphasized positive terminology such as "way of love," "the Lordship of Christ," "witness," "testimony," and "justice." They challenged the stance articulated by Hershberger and others, not because of any dispute with the Anabaptist ideals they set forth, but because of their reluctance to challenge Mennonites to radically follow the Anabaptist vision. These younger theologians perceived that the established Mennonite groups were reluctant to understand--let alone practice--the Anabaptist vision.

What would happen as Mennonites become more involved with modernity? What would be the effects of shifting from passive nonresistance toward more activist approaches to confront the realities of war and injustice? Would they lose the fervor for non-violent peacemaking?

The final section of the book contains extensive analysis of late twentieth century Mennonite attitudes toward peacemaking, including the specific issue of service in the military. The Brethren in Christ were one of five Mennonite groups studied. The following is only a sample of the findings. Urbanization tends to transform Mennonite peacemaking from nonresistance toward peace witness and activism. Overall commitment to peacemaking actually is greater among urban Mennonites. Higher education tends to bolster peacemaking commitments. Peacemaking rises

among those whose personal religious life includes expressions of piety. Persons with strong individualist inclinations display reduced peacemaking convictions. Materialism correlates with a decline in commitment to peacemaking. Mennonites with fundamentalist theological orientation display marked reduction in commitment to non-violent peacemaking.

The authors conclude that theological orientation and ethnic solidarity more powerfully shape Mennonite peacemaking than do religiosity or modernization. Mennonites who remain anchored in Anabaptist convictions and are conversant with their ethnic heritage should be resilient peacemakers in urban settings.

This reviewer found the present volume to be highly informative. Persons in academic pursuits will undoubtedly discover a wealth of information. Christian leaders could use this book to good advantage to forge greater understanding of the dilemmas of living Christ's ethic of peacemaking in a complex modern world. Any Christian bent on significant study of peacemaking will find helpful theology and useful information. Those who read casually may find the large amount of detailed information and analysis somewhat tedious. Herein is perhaps the book's weakness: it will not likely appeal to a casual lay readership.

Driedger and Kraybill have produced a useful volume which will be helpful in many ways to the Mennonites of North America.

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Fairview Avenue Brethren in Christ Church  
Fairview Brethren in Christ Church  
Five Forks Brethren in Christ Church  
Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary  
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary  
Grace Theological Seminary  
\*Grantham Brethren in Christ Church  
Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church  
Historical Center, Juniata District of Mennonite  
Churches  
Houghton College  
Lancaster Mennonite Conference, Historical Society  
Lancaster Mennonite High School  
Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society  
Malone College  
Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary  
Mennonite Church Historical Committee  
Mennonite Historical Association of Cumberland Valley  
Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania  
Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College  
Mennonite Information Center, Germantown, Pa.  
Messiah College  
\*Messiah Village  
Mid-American Baptist Theological Seminary  
Millerfields Brethren in Christ Church  
Missionary Church Historical Society  
Moreno Community Church  
Mount Pleasant Brethren in Christ Church  
Nairobi Evangelical Graduate School of Theology  
Nappanee Brethren in Christ Church  
Nazarene Archives

Niagara Christian College  
Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary  
Northeast Brethren in Christ Church  
Northern Baptist Theological Seminary  
Oak Ridges Brethren in Christ Church  
Oakwood Christian Fellowship  
\*Pacific Highway Brethren in Christ Church  
Refton Brethren in Christ Church  
Ridgemount Brethren in Christ Church  
\*Rosebank Brethren in Christ Church (Ontario)  
Selkirk Public Library  
Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church  
Southern Methodist University  
Spring Hope Brethren in Christ Church  
Stayner Brethren in Christ Church  
Sterling College  
Tabor College  
Theological College of Zimbabwe  
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School  
Upland Brethren in Christ Church  
Virginia Theological Seminary  
Walkersville Brethren in Christ Church  
Wainfleet Brethren in Christ Church  
Waukena Brethren in Christ Church  
Western Evangelical Seminary  
Wooster Brethren in Christ Church  
Zion Brethren in Christ Church

## News and Notes

### Annual Meeting of the Historical Society for 1995

The Brethren in Christ Historical Society will hold its annual meeting for 1995 on June 24. The theme of the meeting is life in the Franklin County Brethren in Christ churches.

The program begins at 2 p.m. at the Ringgold Meeting House in Ringgold, Maryland, where Morris Sider will describe various aspects of the meeting house, including how its structure, arrangement, and furniture are symbols of historic Brethren in Christ principles and practices. The program shifts in the latter part of the afternoon to the Air Hill church, where Avery and Eunice Zook will present through slides Brethren in Christ people and places of the past in Franklin County.

This presentation will be followed by a love feast meal, using the menu of Franklin County love feast meals of the past. Story telling, also in the Air Hill church, will follow the meal. Charlie Byers will tell how people and congregations fellowshipped in his earlier years; Ruth Dourte will talk about J. Lester Myers, one of the prominent leaders in the Franklin County churches and in the denomination (she will be assisted by one or more of J. Lester Myers's children); and Frank Kipe will tell about people he remembers who "walked the walk."

All interested persons--members or non-members of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society--are invited to attend.

The meal is without charge. Those wishing to attend only one rather than all the sessions may do so. An offering will be taken during the evening program.

For questions and travel directions, write to the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, Grantham, Pa 17027 (telephone 717-691-6048) or to Avery and Eunice Zook, 6080 Cumberland Highway, Chambersburg, PA 17201 (telephone 717-264-2580).

### Heritage Service for 1995

Each year the Brethren in Christ Historical Society sponsors a Heritage Service at the Ringgold Meeting House. The one-hour service is a modified form of earlier services among the Brethren in Christ.

This year's service is on Sunday, June 4 at 3 p.m. Ronald Long will be the song leader and Curtis Byers the speaker. The response to the sermon will be given by a member of the Old Order River Brethren.

### Hymnsing at Ringgold Meeting House

The annual hymnsing at the Ringgold Meeting House, sponsored by the General Conference Ringgold Meeting House Committee, will be on July 30 at 6:00 p.m. Refreshments are served following the hymnsing.

### Study Conference on the Brethren in Christ Identity

The newly formed Center for Brethren in Christ Studies has planned a study conference for November 3 and 4, 1995, whose theme is the identity of the Brethren in Christ.

The Center for Brethren in Christ Studies is sponsored by Messiah College, the Brethren in Christ Church, and the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, with its home in the college and denominational archives. A substantial grant from a family will add significant resources to the resources already held by the archives, thus strengthening the archives as a study center. Messiah College is represented on the Center's Board of Directors by Dorothy Gish and Rodney Sawatsky, the Brethren in Christ Church by Harvey Sider and Donald Shafer, and the Brethren in Christ Historical Society by Lane Hostetter and Arthur Climenhaga. E. Morris Sider is Director of the Center.

Four sessions are planned for the conference--three on Friday (morning, afternoon, and evening), and one on Saturday morning. Typical of the topics to be read and discussed are how the various streams of the Brethren in Christ (Anabaptism, Pietism, and Holiness) can complement each other and be synthesized (by Luke Keefer, Jr.) and what the Brethren in Christ vision of the church has been in the past and present and what it should be in the future (Harvey Sider).

Attendance at the study conference is both open and by invitation. Limited funds are available to financially assist persons traveling from outside Pennsylvania. Priority consideration will be given those from the greatest distance.

Further details will be forthcoming. Those with questions should contact the Director, Center for Brethren in Christ Studies, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027 (telephone 717-691-6048).

Election of Additional Member to the Executive  
Committee of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society

The election of an additional member to the Executive Committee resulted in the choice of Dorothy Jean Sollenberger.

The voting was very close in terms of numbers of ballots cast for each candidate, which suggests, among other things, that all three candidates were excellent nominees.

Particularly encouraging is that 243 votes were cast, an excellent return, considering voting was by mail.

Alvin C. Burkholder Biography Available

The book-length biography of Alvin C. Burkholder, entitled *For Christ and the Church*, is now available.

Written by Frances Harmon and published by the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, the biography traces Burkholder's life in California from the early 1900's, relates his many ministries both within and outside the Brethren in Christ Church, and describes his active retirement years. In doing so, the book provides an excellent picture of life in the Brethren in Christ Church in the twentieth century.

Copies of the biography may be obtained by writing to the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, the Archives, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 18027. The \$9.00 cost of the book covers handling, tax, and postage.

Checks should be made payable to the Brethren in Christ Historical Society.

At Alvin Burkholder's request, all income from sales of the book is divided equally between the Brethren in Christ Historical Society and the Board for World Missions of the Brethren in Christ Church.

**Tour of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa**

The Brethren in Christ Historical Society is sponsoring a tour of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa in 1997, possibly in June, as part of its activities for that year. The Historical Society will work with the Board for World Missions of the Brethren in Christ Church in planning and conducting the tour.

A committee has been formed to plan the details of the tour, with representation on the committee from the Centennial Committee of the Board for World Missions.

To place your name on a mailing list to receive information on and to keep current with plans for the tour, write to the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, The Archives, Messiah College, Grantham, PA 17027.

**Treasurer's Report**

Brethren in Christ Historical Society  
July 1, 1994 - February 28, 1995

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Institutional Regular	84
Institutional Contributing	4
Regular	301
Contributing	133
Supporting	25
	547
Complimentary to Missions	25
	572

## FINANCIAL:

Balance-on-hand July 1, 1994	\$ 7,317.90
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## Receipts:

Memberships	\$ 7,439.54
Sales/Journals & Tapes	220.53
Sales/Book of Sermons	104.35
Gift-Editorial expenses	1,601.07
Gift-toward EMALA membership	25.00
Gift-toward writing	15.00
Gift-toward copyright	20.00
Offering - Annual Meeting	489.23
Ginder tapes	418.00
JEF - Interest	<u>138.48</u>
Total Receipts:	\$10,471.20

Receipts + Balance:	17,789.10
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## EXPENDITURES:

Evangel Press/3 Journals	\$7,289.22
Editorial Expenses	1601.07
Writing - Dube & Shenk	140.00
Membership - EMALA	50.00
Copyright	20.00
Annual Meeting - refreshments	62.00
Family Calendar announcement	7.00
JEF Service fee	32.07
Ginder - tape royalty	66.00
Archives - tape production	<u>198.00</u>
Total Expenditures:	\$9,474.36

Balance-on-hand February 28, 1995	<u>\$ 8,314.74</u>
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## IN THIS ISSUE

Myron Lady, "Jesse F. Lady: A Loyal  
Churchman in a Time of Transition"

Martin Schrag, "The Life and Times of  
Christian Leshner"

Book Reviews

Membership, Brethren in Christ Historical  
Society, 1994

News and Notes

Treasurer's Report