

THE CHURCH SQUARE JOURNAL

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A New Stone in St. James Graveyard

In June 1731 Valentine Westhafer (*modern spelling*), with his wife Anna Margaretha and their daughter, joined more than one hundred other German immigrants, setting sail from the port of Falmouth, England, on the *Love and Unity* and bound for a promised better life in Pennsylvania. Also on shipboard was Anna Christina Sandritter with her parents. At the end of the long, badly mismanaged, and ultimately deadly voyage fewer than one quarter of the passengers were alive. Valentine and Anna Christina, but none others of their families, were among the survivors who at last reached Philadelphia. By the mid-1730s they had married and settled at Muddy Creek, near present-day Adamstown, Lancaster County. There they established a homestead and began to raise a family.



New Valentine Westhoefer Stone
~ photo by William Oehme

The primary worshipping community in the Muddy Creek area was Lutheran and Dutch Reformed, but there were also a number of itinerant ministers of various faiths. In 1742, at the request of the group of Brothers and Sisters in Warwick who had been deeply moved by his preaching, Count Zinzendorf sent Jacob Lischy, a Swiss minister, to labor in their midst. Lischy soon established a mission station at Muddy Creek, where the Westhafers learned of Moravian beliefs. Though records of the time are incomplete, it is clear that by 1746 the Westhafer family had joined the Moravians. They remained in their homestead, becoming “Society” members of the congregation.

The history written by Bishop Matthaeus Hehl mentions Westhafer family members on a number of occasions. In October 1763 Hehl recorded that “On the 27th old Brother and Sister Westhoefer (*sic*) moved here from Muddy Creek, into the back house at Blickendoerfers as guests, to live here from now on.” And there they remained until their respective passings. Though by that time God’s Acre had been opened behind the church, they were both laid to rest in the old St. James Graveyard,

where burials continued into the second decade of the 19th century.

Then for much of the next two centuries the cemetery suffered neglect. Stones were damaged, moved, or lost. Grassy sections became playgrounds and ball fields. Finally in 2013 a team of volunteers undertook a massive clean-up and restoration project. (*See the Fall 2013 issue of **The Church Square Journal** for details.*) Thus it was that, when three sisters who are direct Westhafer descendants contacted the Archives committee for help in their family history project, we could tell them that Christina’s grave was clearly marked with the original stone, but that Valentine’s stone had not been recovered during the restoration project.

That set in motion a process that has recently come to completion. With the assistance of Archives Committee members Bill Oehme and Tom Wentzel, and the stone-cutting skills of Miller Monuments, Brother Valentine’s gravestone is now placed beside Sister Christina’s, a memorial to one of the very earliest members of what became Lititz Moravian Congregation.



Westhoefer Stones
in St. James Graveyard
~ photo by Thomas Wentzel

~ Marian L. Shatto

The Church Square Journal

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Editor: Marian L. Shatto
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museumarchivistours/church-square-journal

From the Archives Secretary

Historic Church Square tours continue to be a big draw to visitors who gain insights to “Who are the Moravians?” Our knowledgeable guides have been busy this spring and summer with several bus tours and a good number of ‘call-in’ tours as well. One unique tour moment for this writer was the request from a bus tour group from Arkansas to sing *Stille Nacht* to the group on the front steps of the sanctuary! The request was sheepishly fulfilled. To schedule a tour call the church office: 717-626-8515

Once again, our group will partner with the Lititz Historical Foundation to present our annual Departed Spirits Tour on Saturday, October 25th, with the first tour group departing at 5:00. This year’s highlights will include a visit from Mary Dixon (played by a Linden Hall student), David Tannenberg and his organs, and the ever popular if not bewitching Mamie Schroeder at the privy! This tour sells out, so be sure to get a ticket by visiting <www.lititzhistoricalfoundation.com> and search for “*Departed Spirits Tour*.”

Words of thanks go to a number of dedicated volunteers:

- Charlie Best has been trimming the grass from around the gravestones over the past several years, keeping God’s Acre in tip-top shape. He’ll be stepping away from this project. Thanks, Charlie, for all your labor!
- Charlene Van Brookhoven announced that she will be leaving our group. Charlene has been a tireless worker and contributor with our committee for many years. She’s a well-known authority on all-things Lititz, and her knowledge and input will be missed. Thanks, Charlene!

Currently, the placard in front of the Brothers House has been removed for reconstruction. The old placard housed a hand-painted map of historic Church Square, but the framework is severely rotted from over fifty years of weather exposure. So far a new, digitized map has been printed on weather-resistant material, and the new framework is out to a contractor for bids. Stay tuned for more!

The museum and archives committee meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30, usually in the Heritage Dining Room, and we always begin with History Half-hour, where an item from our collection is discussed in some detail. All are welcome!

Respectfully Submitted,
Thomas L. Wentzel

Secretary - Lititz Moravian Museum & Archives Committee

Dreaming of Vacations (and other News): Linden Hall, 1903-1907

Scott Paul Gordon, Lehigh University

The school year is well underway, which means that students are dreaming of Thanksgiving vacation. Dreaming of vacations seems to have been a constant of student life over the years. “I am longing for summer,” Harriet Henry (1890-1976), a student at Linden Hall, wrote in April 1907, “as the lessons are getting much harder and the examinations are beginning to come.” She and her older sister, Helen Henry (1885-1963), also a student at Linden Hall, would count the days until they could head home from the boarding school, just as students had before them and have ever since: “We have but five weeks untill (*sic*) our vacation commences” (February 1904); “there are only thirty-two days until we go home for our Xmas vacation” (November 1906); “we only have seven weeks from Tuesday till we go home for our Easter vacation” (January 1907); “in two months time I will be at home for a nice long vacation” (April 1907). One year the Linden Hall girls even came up with a tune. “Our song, heard all over the school now,” Helen informed her uncle back home, “is ‘Two more weeks untill vacation. Then I leave this Lititz station’ and so on.”

The girls wrote home to family members at Boulton, a collection of homes and industries on the Bushkill Creek a few miles north of Nazareth in Northampton County. Boulton was filled with children, nearly all girls, in the 1890s. The girls’ great-grandfather, J. Joseph Henry, with his brother William Henry III, had built a gun factory there in 1812 (calling it “Boulton”). James Henry, who took over the business from his father Joseph in the 1830s, had many children.

Six Henry siblings—Granville, Sophia, Edward, Clara, Robert (Helen and Harriet's father), and Charles—remained at Boulton for their entire lives, raising their families in homes very close to one another. All these siblings lived into their 70s, most into their 80s, and one into their 90s. There were seven children in the next generation, Helen and Harriet's generation, all girls but one. The Henrys sent four of these girls to Linden Hall. The teenagers dutifully stayed in touch by letter with their close-knit family back home (and, happily for the historian, the Henrys saved the correspondence).

Besides vacations the girls seem to always have had food on their minds. "I am hungry all the time around these parts," complained Harriet in October 1906, "in fact all the girls are. When ever the girls rattle a little paper, all of us look up to see if there is anything good to eat." They seemed not to be fond of the fare at Linden Hall, but they always held out hope that it could improve. "We have a new cook and janitor," Harriet wrote with relief in 1904, "and as a result our meals are very much better than before." The temperature of their rooms and other spaces was another frequent cause for complaint. In October 1907 Harriet told her older cousin Mollie Henry Stites that "our sitting room is so cold that we all have to write letters with our coats on. I do hope they will turn the heat on or my hands will get too stiff to write." Her sister would have sympathized. Back in January 1903 Helen had reported that "There has been a scarcity of coal here, so much so that about half of the building was not heated." "The Chapel has not been heated since I have been here," she added, "and therefore, I have not been in it yet. Some of [the] girls have been forced to move to other parts of the building but to-day they are going back to their old quarters."



Helen, Ruth, and Harriet Henry, 1909

~ photo supplied by the author

The Linden Hall girls were dutiful in writing letters. "This is quiet hour," Helen wrote in 1903, "and all of the girls are writing letters." But life at school kept the girls so busy that it was hard to find time to write. Sometimes bad weather helped. "The weather is very rainy and all the girls are in writing letters," noted Harriet in 1906, "so I think I will do the same." The following year she was still trying to find time to write. "This morning we have service in the chapel as there is German preaching in the big church," she wrote. But, she explained, "this will give us more time to write letters, which we all need very badly."

Most of the letters described busy days and nights, filled with classes, exams, sports, and outings. Harriet considered Algebra "my easiest study," while Helen endured "Latin grammar" (including "several lessons in Caesar") and Geometry, in which she "got 100 per cent" on an exam. The specter of exams organized the rhythm of each semester. "We are studying for dear life," Harriet wrote one April. But students at Linden Hall had plenty of time for long walks in the country, whether to look for flowers ("we did not find any Arbutus," Harriet moaned after one walk, which "made me wish for the woods at home to hunt some") or to visit a "festival" with a "chicken and waffle supper." Harriet told her cousin Mollie that the girls had a "walking club here at school" and that they hoped "some day" to "walk to Lancaster." The girls probably traveled by carriage, though, rather than on foot, when they went in groups to Lancaster to hear the lectures and see the plays that the Henry girls mentioned. One of Harriet's favorite outings was a "Chestnut ride to the Elizabeth farms" in 1907, even though the girls "didn't find any chestnuts." But they had "a very nice time," Harriet assured her family, because "I drove two great big farm horses almost all the way home. I tell you what, it was lots of fun!" The Linden Hall girls headed off campus so often for activities that Helen wondered in 1903: "What will become of our lessons, I do not know."

Of course there were lots of events at school, too. Harriet was pleased that the juniors beat the seniors at a "great game in Basket Ball" ("best of all the Juniors won!") and she enjoyed an "informal dance given in the gymnasium in honor of two girls who expect to leave soon." But nothing entertained her more than a 1907 "mock wedding," to which "the Juniors invited the Seniors." "We all dressed up, some as boys and the rest as grown up ladies," Harriet told her uncle and aunt back home. "It seemed like a real wedding, the Bride wore a long white veil and long skirts, the groom was Dorothy Worthington, she did her part fine. After it was all over they had a reception and we danced and sang."

Harriet's description of the event was more relaxed when she wrote on the same day to her cousin Mollie. Dorothy Worthington as the groom "looked too funny for words," she said. "The Bride was almost again as tall. After that they had a reception for us, and we had a gay old time."

Their letters home also captured daily life and milestone events in Lititz. In 1903, during a "long walk in the country," Helen noticed that the "roads are macadamized for some distance on the outskirts of town and there seems to be a lot of driving done." In April 1907 Harriet reported on "the fire up here, in the gymnasium—and the great excitement. We surely thought at one time that Linden Hall would burn to the ground." ("It is still standing," she quickly added.) They also sent more personal news home about Lititz residents whom the Henrys knew well. Helen informed her Uncle Granville Henry, who had recently recovered from a dangerous cataract operation, that their old friend Charles Krieder was also recovering from an eye ailment. He "is still in the hospital and we do not know when he will be able to come back," Helen wrote. "He suffers no pain and is very cheerful through it all. I think his eye will be so treated that he will not have to have a glass eye." Helen reported, too, that one day she spotted the elderly A. R. Beck, a family friend, "sitting at [his] window." Beck had been retired from his school for about a decade and, in these years, was finishing his *Moravian Graveyards of Lititz, Pa.* which was published in 1905. Helen also saw his grandson (Abraham Beck Miller), who lived across the street.



Helen and Students at the Boulton School
~ photo supplied by the author

The students rarely left the campus after dark. "It seemed so funny to be on the streets in Lititz at night," Harriet wrote in 1907, after the chicken and waffle supper. Teachers accompanied the girls for such outings. The rarity of being unaccompanied—and even rarer, unaccompanied at night—made one of Harriet's visits to the home of "Mrs. Huebener," probably the mother of Mary Augusta Huebener, who later wrote *A Brief History of Lititz* (1947), particularly memorable. Harriet "had a very nice time" visiting with her ("it seemed so much like home") and, afterwards, she "came down to the school all by myself and the moon was shining very brightly. I tell you what, it seemed very strange to be without a teacher." The Huebeners lived at 66 East Main Street, so Harriet would only have had one long block to walk. On another occasion Harriet visited Mrs. Huebener and also a "Mrs. Baker" (perhaps Catherine Baker, who also lived on East Main Street until 1908, when she moved to live with her daughter in Reading). Again Harriet roamed the Lititz streets without supervision. "It seemed very funny to walk on the street without a teacher," she confided to her cousin, "having been watched for five long weeks as close as a mouse."

The Linden Hall formula seems to have been to balance close supervision with supportive instruction, to offer challenging classes along with lots of extracurricular activities, and to assemble cohorts of clever girls from all over the globe. This formula certainly prepared Helen and Harriet Henry well for the rest of their long lives. Neither sister married, a choice that Linden Hall may have enabled: since the eighteenth century, Moravian girls' schools had fostered environments that valued unmarried women. Back at Boulton after her Linden Hall years, Harriet worked for many years as an administrative assistant at the Moravian boys' school at Nazareth Hall. Helen kept a school herself, at Boulton, for thirty-five years. "Helen is happy in her school work," her cousin Mollie Stites reported in 1928. Helen must have remembered, and drawn on, her years at Linden Hall frequently during that long career. In 1923, Helen's students put on a play, which their old Aunt Tal at Boulton, nearly eighty years old, described: "The event of the week will be a play given by Cousin Helen's scholars, assisted by Cousin Harriet who takes the principal character in the play, she will be dressed in my old black silk dress [which I had made in 1887] with big puffs on the sleeves and Aunt Sophie's old bonnet with a big white bow of ribbon on it, her hair powdered and glasses on. I am sure you would laugh if you saw her." The spirit of Linden Hall seems to have been alive at Boulton!

NOTE ON SOURCES: The vast Henry family correspondence, including the letters from which this article quotes, remains in the archives of the Jacobsburg Historical Society. A detailed Finding Guide can be found at

<https://www.jacobsburghistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/JHS-Finding-Guide-REVISION.pdf>

From the Collection: Continued from Spring 2025 Issue of the Church Square Journal

“Extracts from the Brethren’s House and Congregational Diaries of the Moravian Church at Lititz, Pa., relating to the Revolutionary War” Translation by A.R. Beck

December 3rd, 1777

Bro. Kreuter, sen., and John Muller were sent in the name of the brethren to Weinland’s Mill, six miles from here, where a Day of Appeal was to be held by Mr. Galbraith. They were to see whether he could agree to come and hold an Appeal Day here, in our house, for us; but he refused, fearing that he might be suspected of partiality towards us.

December 4th, 1777

All the brethren went to the above mentioned Weinland’s Mill, where Mr Galbraith and some other officers were met. They were questioned as to profession and other circumstances and their answers recorded. The brethren declared it was against their conscience to go to war; and some of them urged their inability, being very poor, to pay the threatened fine.

December 6th, 1777

The brethren who lately appealed were informed to-day how much each one would be fined for refusal to go to war. However, the Commissioners mercifully agreed that most of the brethren should pay but one half the fine.

December 14th, 1777

A doctor, by the name of Canada (Kennedy), brought us the disagreeable news that by order of General Washington, 250 sick and wounded soldiers must be quartered here. Our objections and representations were of no avail! He inspected our house which suited his purpose exactly, and ordered that it be immediately vacated, for we might expect the first of the sick in four days. We could, however, retain kitchen and cellar for our own use.

December 16th, 1777

We moved out of the Brethren’s House. Bros. Dreyspring and Keller took up their abode in the two lower rooms of the school house, while some of the brethren and youths occupied the upper schoolroom. The tailors and shoemakers went to the store. Bro Stark, with one of his stocking-weaving looms, to the linen-weaving shop; some of the brethren and youths sleep in the weaver’s shop, and in the building next to the blacksmith’s. We all have dinner in our kitchen.

December 18th, 1777

National Thanksgiving and Prayer Day; which we, also, observed, with blessing to our hearts.

December 19th, 1777

John Muller, Weinland and several more brethren (married) went to Lancaster to pay the County Lieutenant the tax they had been assessed by the Court of appeal. It came in most cases to £24. 8s, 6d., some must pay £30. After dinner arrived the first of the invalid soldiers.

Same Date:

About 80 sick soldiers, from the Jerseys, arrived here to-day. It certainly is not easy to reconcile ourselves to this enforced surrender of our houses for such use; but, like our dear Bethlehem, we must accept the situation, for these are troubled times.

December 20th, 1777

There came 15 wagons full of sick soldiers; so that now all our rooms and halls are filled with them. The doctor of the lazaretto took Bro. Renatus Keller's room, middle-front room, second story, and the Commissary that of Bro. Dreyspring. (Elders' Conference - Bishop Hehl. Diarist.) The question arose, where the dead shall be buried, if any, in the Lazaret. Later, after consultation with several Brethren of the Aufseher Collegium, we determined to set apart a corner of our lower-most field.

December 21st, 1777

Also, quite late, 100 more sick and wounded, but as the hospital was quite full they were taken elsewhere.

December 28th, 1777

Yesterday Bro. Schmick preached to the soldiers in the Bros. House much to their satisfaction. The misery in the Lazaretto can not be described; neither can it, without being seen, be imagined. The doctors themselves are sick, and have the attention of Bro. Adolph Meyer. Therefore the soldiers are without medicine. Such as are nearly recovered, fearing a relapse of the malady, prefer to remain out of doors as much as possible; but to-day, because of the continuous snow storm, they were forced, much to their displeasure, to stay in the house.

December 31st, 1777

Another wagon with sick soldiers came from Reading.

January 1st, 1778

As both doctors are too ill to attend to their duties, a third, a German, from Saxony, came to take charge in their place. Two of the soldiers, seven of whom have died already, were buried to-day.



View of Bro. Renatus Keller's room, taken over by Dr. Samuel Kennedy, a Continental Army doctor, in December of 1777

~ photo by Thomas Wentzel

January 3rd, 1778

In the event of our lower-officer's death we would expect to give him a more honorable burial place than that is where all are huddled indiscriminately underground (*wo ales hinein gescharrt wird*). Therefore, we resolved in such a case to do as they really have done in Bethlehem; to set apart, in our graveyard, a row for strangers, separated from that of the brethren by a passage.

Bro. Sam Krouse is down with the fever.

January 4th, 1778

Greenbury Pettycourt, but soon recovered; ditto.

January 7th, 1778

Andrew and John Kreuter and Chr. Leinbach; ditto. Jacob Born

January 9th, 1778

Some 20 well soldiers left the hospital to rejoin the army.

January 10th, 1778

Tobias Hirte and John Weinland. Hirte, Weinland and Krause lie together in the sadler's shop.

Same Date:

(E.C. Hehl.) Some of our little boys have been trading things with the soldiers receiving in exchange cartridges and powder, which they set off in the barns. Bro Schmick gave them a sharp talking on their improper and highly dangerous play and with good results, - but the parents must be more watchful over their children! No one should buy from the soldiers what are at any rate commonly stolen goods. There is no reason why Tobias Hirte should have bought a gun, indeed, on the contrary it is an unseemliness! What use has he, as a schoolmaster, for a gun? He must be ordered to dispose of it.

January 15th, 1778

Daniel Gloz; went to his parent's home.

January 16th, 1778

Martin Hirte, Ditto.

January 17th, 1778

Bro. Henry Oerter died, 31 ult., after 14 days' sickness.

January 18th, 1778

Dr. Brown, the general superintendent of all the hospitals in this section, came from Bethlehem, bringing with him a fine letter of recommendation for us from Bro. Ettwein. He intends to bring his family hither and make Lititz his temporary home. (Dr. Brown was quartered at Tannenberger's; Dr. Allison was at Blickensderfer's, and officers were at Geitner's, Clause Coelns, in the former Tshudy house, and Jasper Taynes. A Colonel at the latter place was especially objectionable to our people, because of the wild uproar made there by his many visitors from Lancaster. "Because of Bro. Jasper Taynes' age and weakness, it would be well, when the Colonel leaves, for the prevention of future similar occurrences (*sic*), to ask Dr. Allison and family to lodge there.")

February 1st, 1778

Bro. Christoph Pohl died.

February 7th, 1778

In the evening, the brethren who have waited upon the sick had a love feast, with wine and biscuits (zweiback).

February 12th, 1778

We had a disagreeable visit from some officers, who came here from Lancaster, in sleighs, and made a disturbance at the tavern. They had been carrying on high revelry, in Lancaster, for several days previous and had liked to continue their wantonness here.

February 25th, 1778

Bro. Simon Dang is in bed with the fever.

March 1st, 1778

Bro Schank was ditto, but soon recovered.

Same date:

About 60 well soldiers, from the three hospitals, are rendezvousing here. Their behavior is pretty wild and ill-mannered. Dr. Allison, who had hitherto maintained good order here, has gone to Bristol to fetch his family to Lititz.

Celebrating the Sanctuary

During the August Lovefeasts this year, Pastor Mark Breland's comments about a custom that appears to be unique to Lititz Moravian piqued my curiosity. Why, indeed, does our congregation annually celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of our church building? Is it a custom of long standing, or a more recent innovation? How and why did it evolve? With those questions in mind, I set out to search what historic records might be available. The information contained in the following article comes from two primary sources – on-line archives of newspaper articles from the *Intelligencer Journal*, the *Lancaster New Era*, the *Lititz Record Express*, and the *Ephrata Review*; and the Pastors' Record Book covering the years 1935 through 1981 – plus Elders' Minutes from 1971 through 1974 and church bulletins from the late 1980s and early '90s.

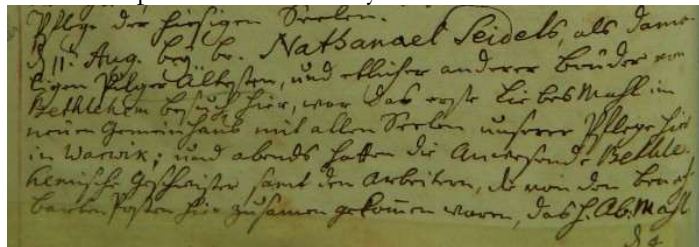
Available records indicate that the Sunday nearest August 13th for many years included both communion services commemorating the anniversary of the 1727 spiritual experience in Berthelsdorf and Herrnhut that is recognized as the beginning of the modern Moravian church and Lovefeasts celebrating various events in the life of the Lititz congregation. The hymnal in use in the mid-twentieth century⁽¹⁾ included a set of communion hymns specifically for August the 13th, and we can assume that these provided the substance of the liturgy being prayed in Lititz' communion worship services. Pastors' notes in the Record Book and published news articles, however, indicate a variety of purposes for the Lovefeasts over the years.

The year 1935 brought completion of construction and a week-long dedication in early Spring of the west wing expansion of the Christian Education building.⁽²⁾ A few months later, nothing special seems to have been added to the August day of celebration that year. There was morning prayer at 9:30 AM and regular worship at 10:30. At 3:00 in the afternoon the congregation enjoyed a Lovefeast, followed by a communion service at 4:15 and another at 7:30 that evening. The next year followed much the same schedule, with the omission of the evening communion service. The Pastor noted that the day was the "Anniversary Festival of the Congregation."

In contrast, the 150th anniversary in 1937 of the consecration of the church building made the August 13th Sunday a festive occasion. At 10:30 AM the "Service for the consecration of a church" was prayed. The 3:00 PM Lovefeast included an English translation of the original 1787 service. Communion services at 4:15 and 7:30 completed the day with focus on the 210th anniversary of the 1727 revival in Herrnhut. This appears to be the last year that an evening communion service was held.

During the following decade the day is referred to as marking the "Congregation Fest and August 13th Memorial." The regular schedule included prayer and worship in the morning, Lovefeast and communion in the afternoon. Then in 1948 the afternoon Lovefeast was specifically designated as the 200th Anniversary of the first Lovefeast held in Lititz. The Matthaues Hehl history, as translated by Pastor Roy Ledbetter, records:

"On the 11th August during the visit of Br. Nathanael Seidel, as Chief Elder for the Travelling Preachers, and several other Brethren from Bethlehem, there was the first Lovefeast in the new Congregation House with all the souls in our care in Warwik and in the evening the visitors present from Bethlehem together with the Laborers who had come together here from their posts held the Holy Communion."



Original text of entry in Bishop Hehl's history

In 1949 the Congregation marked the 200th anniversary of its founding with a week-long celebration in February. That year's August 13th Lovefeast, as reported in the *Lancaster New Era*, "...marks two occasions: the celebration of Holy Communion in Berthelsdorf on Aug. 13, 1727, and the dedication of the local church on the same day in 1787." The next few years returned to simply referencing "Congregation Fest" in August.

Then in 1953 a series of special services were reported as observance of the “Festival of the 13th.” This included commemoration of the 1727 communion at Berthelsdorf, “the consecration of the Lititz Gemeinhaus, or church, school and parsonage, in 1748,” (clearly a reference to the first Lovefeast celebration described above) and consecration of the present church building on August 13, 1787.

The following year’s morning service, along with the usual events, recognized the second meeting of the World Council of Churches, an ecumenical effort that was welcomed by Moravians worldwide. In 1957, despite the disruption caused by the tragic fire just a few weeks before, Lititz Moravian held a full schedule of services, including observance of the Quincentennial of the founding of the Unitas Fratrum. Drawing on resources from the recently-established Moravian Music Foundation, in 1958 Lititz Moravian musicians offered a special Park Vespers service of Early American Moravian Music.

Through the 1960s, with a few exceptions, the schedule of services remained the same: Holy Communion at 8:00 AM, 10:30 AM, and 4:15 PM; Lovefeast at 3:00 PM. Diary entries and newspaper articles specified that the celebrations were for the anniversaries of the 1727 revival in Berthelsdorf and the 1749 founding of the congregation. Dedication of the church building was mentioned only occasionally, such as in 1965, marking the receipt of music scores and first modern performance of Johannes Herbst’s “Lobet den Herrn, Alle Seine Heerscharen,” the anthem he composed for the consecration of the sanctuary.

Then in 1972 the Lovefeast was moved from the afternoon to 9:15 AM, between the two morning communion services, and afternoon communion time was changed to 3:00 PM. This would prove to be the final year that an afternoon communion was offered, as attendance had dropped off considerably in recent years. The remaining three services were compressed into a single Sunday morning, with communion at 8:00 and 10:30, and Lovefeast at 9:15. Typical was this announcement printed in the Lancaster “Intelligencer Journal” on August 13, 1983:

The Lititz Moravian Church will mark the 234th year of its founding and the 256th anniversary of the “Spiritual Birthday of the Renewed Moravian Church” during three worship services on Sunday, Aug. 14.

Major changes began in 1987, when a week of celebration of the dedication of the sanctuary began with communion services on August 9, was filled with special events, including a congregational dinner at the Middle School, and concluded on Sunday the 16th with Lovefeast at 10:00 AM. The following year saw the celebration of three anniversaries – the 261st of the renewal in Berthelsdorf, the 239th of the beginning of the congregation, and the 201st of the dedication of the sanctuary. The first was marked by communion services on the 7th, and the latter two by a Lovefeast on the 14th. By 1989 the congregation anniversary was dropped from the August calendar, and in 1992 the current schedule was adopted: two services of Holy Communion celebrating the August 13th renewal on the first or second Sunday in August and two Lovefeasts celebrating the dedication of the church building on the following Sunday.

Over the years various special occasions were celebrated in early February, including on occasion the actual founding date of the Lititz Congregation. Others included the anniversary of the Men’s Missionary Society, Boy Scout Sunday, and the Strawberry Festival. In 1996, with the lead-up to the congregation’s 250th anniversary, Lovefeasts in early February became an annual event. These have continued to the present day.

The exact “why” of our celebration of the church sanctuary dedication anniversary, then, is left to supposition. Elders’ minutes and church announcements tell us “what” and “when” but don’t record the rationale behind the decisions. It appears that, having first eliminated afternoon services, then separated communion and Lovefeast into two different Sundays, and finally recognizing that the congregation’s founding occurred in February rather than August, the one remaining reason for an August Lovefeast was the sanctuary dedication. And who in their right mind would want to give up a traditional Lovefeast, even if the reason is a bit unusual? So here we are with good sweet buns, good community, good music ~ just come to Lititz Moravian in August and enjoy the beauty of the sanctuary that surrounds our feasting.

~ Marian L. Shatto

Notes:

⁽¹⁾Hymnal and Liturgies of the Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum), Published by Authority of the Provincial Synod, Bethlehem, PA, 1920; pp.128-131. ©1923 by The Board of Elders of the Northern Diocese of the Church of the United Brethren in the United States of America

⁽²⁾See the Fall 2019 issue of the Church Square Journal, article beginning on page 6, for a detailed description of dedication events.

John Valentine Haidt and the Adoration of the Magi

By Paul H. D. Kaplan, Professor of Art History
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The paintings of John Valentine Haidt (1700-1780) have long been known as a notable and appreciated aspect of the history of the Moravian church during its first great expansion in the eighteenth century. Starting in the 1950s American art historians began to pay significant attention to his work, and it did not take long to notice that Haidt's work was distinguished by the inclusion of many diverse peoples from around the globe. That aspect of his work was, of course, connected to the Moravian missions on many continents, and the several versions of Haidt's *First Fruits*, with what we would now call a multicultural crowd of Moravian converts at the feet of Jesus, are especially famous examples of this. There has, however, been less attention paid to the presence of people of color in Haidt's more conventional pictures of biblical episodes.



John Valentine Haidt, *Adoration of the Magi*, Moravian Museum and Archives, Lititz, PA

Haidt painted dozens of pictures with stories from the Bible, including at least two of the worship of the infant Jesus by the three Wise Men. The imagery in Haidt's two paintings of the story of the Adoration of the Magi, now in Nazareth and Lititz, is in most respects very traditional, and though both pictures were made after Haidt's arrival in Pennsylvania in 1754, they would not have seemed out of place in Germany or elsewhere in Europe. (We do not know where these works were originally displayed, though like Haidt's other scriptural pictures, they were most likely made for a Moravian communal space, such as a "Saal.") Though the compositions are different, each has a Black African Magus as the youngest of the three that come to visit the infant Christ, and this had been standard practice in German art for over three centuries. Though Haidt was probably not aware of this, the character of the specifically Black Magus first arose in Germany and perhaps Bohemia (that is, in lands that overlapped with the cradle of the Moravian faith) just before and just after 1400; starting around 1450, the idea spread to the rest of West and Central Europe, and of course today it is still a familiar feature of Christmastime creche scenes.

The account of the Magi in the Bible (Matthew 2:1-12) in fact says nothing about where these Wise Men came from, other than from "the East," and indeed Matthew's text does not even specify that they were a group of three, though he does list the three gifts they brought (gold, frankincense and myrrh). Even in Early Christian times theologians began to speculate about the lands of the Magi, and during the Middle Ages an elaborate legend of the Magi was created, which among other things affirmed they were sovereigns of their respective countries, as well as sages. This culminated in the German monk John of Hildesheim's *History of the Three Kings*, completed before 1375, in which the writer asserts that Caspar, the youngest of the trio, was an "Ethiope" (that is to say, in this period, a Black man). Artists soon followed up on this, and the figure of the Black Magus (sometimes instead named as Balthasar) proved useful and attractive in an age when Europe was rapidly enlarging its contacts with sub-Saharan Africa, both in the positive form of diplomatic and ecclesiastical relations with the Christian ruler of Ethiopia, and the deeply destructive form of the initiation of the brutal West African slave trade, which brought enslaved Black people to Europe as well as to American colonies.



MHS0755 "Adoration of the Magi," from the collection of the Moravian Historical Society, Nazareth, Pa. www.moravianhistory.org

The Magi, theologically speaking, were the first Gentiles to whom Christ revealed Himself, and as the Black presence expanded, first in European and then in colonial American culture, the Magi were used to embody a wider notion of the potential Christian community; and Black Africans, whose physical appearance was especially distinctive for white Europeans, were incorporated in the biblical story. A 1504 painting by the German master Albrecht Dürer shows just how compelling this imagery could be, with an elegant Black Magus in European dress – though often, as with the Magus’s lighter-skinned but still identifiably African assistant, costume associated with the Islamic world of the Middle East was depicted. Haidt, like many of his eighteenth-century contemporaries, equipped his Magus with a turban (a type of headgear worn by Dürer’s attendant), but in his Nazareth picture he did echo one aspect of Dürer’s Black Magus: the circular golden earring, a marker, since the late Middle Ages, of Black African male identity in European art. In the Lititz picture, the Black Magus has a different kind of earring, which seems to include a pearl or crystalline gem, and he wears a gold necklace with circular links, from which a gem is suspended.



Albrecht Dürer, *Adoration of the Magi*,
1504, Florence, Uffizi

It is also worth pointing out that Haidt included a Black African figure in another scriptural subject, closely related to that of the Magi: Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. This picture, now in Old Salem in North Carolina, shows the Queen herself as white, but among her entourage is a Black attendant. The biblical narrative relates that the Queen, monarch of a distant kingdom generally placed in southwest Arabia and/or Northeastern Africa, had heard of Solomon’s wisdom and brought him precious gifts. Medieval theologians agreed that this story was an Old Testament prefiguration of that of the Magi. While very occasionally the Queen of Sheba is shown as Black, by the 1700s it was far more common, as in Haidt’s work, to characterize her as a white woman attended by a mixture of Black and white servants. In this case the Black servant, at the far right, is an elaborately costumed child.

Haidt, then, in these biblical narratives, did no more than borrow familiar European imagery, which he had surely seen not only in Germany but also during his extensive travels to Italy. He spent five years (1718-1723) as a young man, staying with relatives and business associates as he learned his original artistic craft, work in precious metals. He was mostly in Rome, but also in Venice (which had hundreds of artworks with African figures) and in the provincial city of Macerata, where the city’s impressive public clock featured a Black African Magus as part of an ingenious kinetic sculpture which performed the Adoration on a daily basis. While it has been asserted that the composition of one of Haidt’s *Adoration of the Magi* paintings was borrowed from a print in an English illustrated edition of the Bible, in fact both of Haidt’s pictures (which are not that similar to each other) are more original, and are based on exposure to various European prototypes. Indeed, Haidt includes one rare detail in his Nazareth picture: the Black Magus holds a censer (the implication is that his gift is frankincense) and a trace of its aromatic smoke is visible.

I first became curious about Haidt’s paintings of the Magi as a result of writing an essay about an American image of the story (by an Episcopalian artist) from the Civil War era, and wanted to understand the prior history of the subject in North America. Haidt’s Black Magi are not quite the earliest in the English colonies: they are predated by three other pictures from c. 1735-1745 that were made in New York’s Hudson valley by an anonymous artist working, it appears, for Dutch settlers.



John Valentine Haidt,
Solomon and the Queen of Sheba
Collection of the Wachovia Historical
Society; photograph courtesy of
Old Salem Museums & Gardens

