David Zeisburger's cabin in reconstructed Schoenbrunn.
"THE TENTS OF GRACE" IN LONGFELLOW'S EVANGELINE: THEIR HISTORY AND FATE

By Rose M. Davis

LONGFELLOW'S Evangeline may be regarded as a bit of American folklore. Most readers familiar with the poem, if asked to recall its historical background, would remember that it begins with the deportation of the Acadians in 1755, includes a visit to their French compatriots in Louisiana, and ends with the yellow fever epidemic of 1793 in Philadelphia. Historical references during the remainder of Evangeline's wanderings would be dimly recollected if at all, although she encounters briefly the War of the Revolution and another significant but forgotten chapter of American history, the Moravian missions among the Indians.

It is well known to students of American literature that Cooper and Longfellow did not portray the Indian from first hand knowledge but made use of earlier writings, including those of the Moravian missionary, John Heckewelder. There is, however, little or no general knowledge about the actual history of the Moravian missions, though it constitutes one of the darkest and most tragic pages in the long story of Indian-white relationships. But few references to these events are to be found in American historical fiction. A forgotten novel, Charles Killbuck, by Francis Huebner, published in 1902, is a fictionalized account of the missions in Ohio, based upon the writings of the missionaries and told from the point of view of an Indian. Zane Grey in The Spirit of the Border (1906) gives a completely distorted account of the massacre of the Christian Indians at Gnadenhütten.\(^1\)

\(^1\)In this fiction the Christian Indians are massacred by their unconverted kinsmen, instigated by the Girtys and other white renegades, while the real
In *The Pioneers* and *The Pathfinder*, Leatherstocking and Chingachgook have had contact with the Moravian missionaries at some place far from the scene and at some indefinite time in the past. In *The Deerslayer*, however, they have recently been in contact with the Moravians "down in the Delaware country," that is, in Pennsylvania. The time of the action, according to the author, is between 1740 and 1745. The earliest Moravian mission in North America, except for the one in Georgia, was established in 1740 in New York State near the Connecticut border, and it was not until 1746 that some of their converts followed the missionaries to Pennsylvania. Count von Zinzendorf, the Moravian leader, preached to the Indians of the Susquehanna valley in 1742 but made no converts.

*Hiawatha* is Indian mythology and could make no use of events of so late a date, but that Longfellow was interested in the history of the missions, as well as in the information about the Indians to be gleaned from the writings of the missionaries, is suggested by a single line in *Evangeline*. After his heroine has found the deserted hunter's lodge in the Michigan forests, she continues her wanderings,

Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian missions
Now in the noisy camps and battlefields of the Army.

So historically accurate is this brief passage that Huebner introduces Evangeline as a character in his fiction and expands these two lines into several chapters.

Gnadenhütten, or "Tents of Grace," was a favorite among those benign place-names with which the missionaries dotted the blood-stained wilderness: Gnadensee in Connecticut; Friedenshütten, perpetrators, the border militia under the leadership of "Captain" Williamson, stand by unwilling, because of fear and indifference, to interfere.

A factual account of the massacre is given in an article entitled "Gnadenhütten" by W. D. Howells in the *Atlantic Monthly*, XXIII (1869), pp. 95-115.

*Ch. II.*

Edmund de Schweinitz, *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger, the Western Pioneer and Apostle of the Indians* (Philadelphia, 1870), pp. 97-99, 117 n. This secondary source is used freely throughout this paper, supplemented by the original accounts. I have not found it in disagreement with them.


Part II, lines 576-577.
Friedenstadt in Pennsylvania; Salem, Schönbrunn, Lichtenau, Pilgerruh, and Goshen in Ohio. Gnadenhütten was the name bestowed upon settlements in three different localities, extending from the vicinity of Bethlehem in Pennsylvania to the banks of the Clinton River in Macomb County, Michigan. The auspiciousness of the name did not save two of these settlements from massacre and destruction.

Longfellow's familiarity with the work of the Moravian missionaries dates from his college years. On November 9, 1823, he wrote to his mother from Bowdoin that he had been reading Heckewelder's Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations of Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States. This is a very interesting volume, and exhibits in a new and more agreeable light the character of this reviled and persecuted race. It appears from this account of them and of their customs (and I see no reason why he should not be relied upon as correct, since he passed the greater part of a long life amongst the Indians) that they are a race possessing magnanimity, generosity, benevolence, and pure religion without hypocrisy. . . . They have been most barbarously maltreated by the whites, both in word and deed. We have heard them branded as a very scandal upon humanity,—cruel, malicious, wicked, and without natural affection. Their outrages!—what ear has not heard of them a thousand times? whilst the white people who rendered their cruelty more cruel, their barbarity more vindictive, publish abroad the crimes and thank heaven in their hypocrisy, that they are not like these persecuted heathen.

Here we have Hiawatha in the germ, and more than thirty years later when the poet was engaged upon that work we find in his diary under date of September 19, 1854, that he was "Working away with Tanner, Heckewelder, and sundry other books about

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7 The first of these was on Mahoning Creek near the present site of Lehigh-ton, Pa. (it was later moved across the Lehigh River to the site of Weissport, Pa.); the second, in Ohio, near the site of the present Gnadenhütten, is the subject of this article; the third, New Gnadenhütten, in Michigan, was abandoned in 1786. See de Schweinitz, 141 n., 214, 381 and n., 571 and n.


9 Lawrance Thompson, Young Longfellow (New York, 1938), pp. 352-353.
the Indians."10 The line in *Evangeline* (1847) indicates that he had remembered the Moravians through the intervening years.

Longfellow may have intended his chronology here as elsewhere in the poem to be vague, and he may have intended the "Tents of Grace" to stand for any Moravian mission in the wilderness, but if he had in mind one of the places actually called Gnadenhütten, then Evangeline's visit followed by one to the camps and battlefields of the army is historically possible. She could not have visited the settlement of that name in Pennsylvania, for it was destroyed by French Indians in October, 1755, shortly after the deportation of the Acadians. Her sojourn only a few lines before the "Tents of Grace" passage in "the depths of the Michigan forests" suggests that Longfellow may have had vaguely in mind the settlement in that state called New Gnadenhütten, but it will be noted that "the long sad years glide on" between the finding of the deserted hunter's lodge and the visit to the "Tents of Grace." New Gnadenhütten was founded in July, 1782, after all military action had ended, and occupied until April, 1786. The United States was at war with the Indians intermittently between 1790 and 1795, but Evangeline lived "many years" in Philadelphia before the outbreak of the plague in 1793. Therefore a visit to the settlement which, from its founding in October, 1772, until its destruction in March, 1782, flourished on the banks of the Muskingum (now the Tuscarawas) River in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, followed by visits to the camps and battlefields of the Revolution would be chronologically possible.

Undoubtedly all this is being much too literal in interpreting a poetic fiction. A point of more interest is that it is characteristic of Longfellow that he should have selected for emphasis only the spiritual grace and the meekness of the Moravian missions and should have spared Evangeline and the reader any hint of how these Tents of Grace were soaked in the blood of the meek. During the period of her wanderings through the Great Northwest, these areas were the scene of some of the worst wartime atrocities in our history, committed by both Indians and whites. Our historical texts tend to hurry over the fact that the white man sometimes went to school to the Indian and learned from him to use the

10 Samuel Longfellow, *Life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow* (Boston, 1891), II, 276. It is well known that Longfellow's principal source for *Hiawatha* was the work of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft.
tomahawk and the scalping knife and to kill without regard to age, sex, or physical condition.

The efforts made by the Moravian missionaries during a period of over seventy years between 1735 and 1808 in Georgia, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, to establish permanent Christian settlements among the Indians may be described as one of the great heroic failures of history, a failure made inevitable by the defeat of the Indian himself. The dream of their leader, David Zeisberger, of "a Christian Indian state in the midst of the aboriginal domain," from which "benign influences would stream forth and enlighten the land" was against the whole trend of American history. In this article space will allow only the briefest summary of the missionary activities before telling in detail the story of the settlement which Evangeline in her wanderings seems most likely to have happened upon. In the fate of this settlement is contained much of the significance of the whole story.

The Moravians shared with the Quakers principles which forbade their engaging in or giving their support to any kind of military action. After being driven from their first American refuge in Georgia because of their refusal during the war between England and Spain (1739) to fight with the English settlers against the Spaniards of Florida, they came to Pennsylvania where they founded Bethlehem. They were pietists, what the Anglicans in the eighteenth century called "enthusiasts"; they had the "other world" point of view. But they did not lack a concern for the uses of this world. Heckewelder expresses his belief that "the introduction of Christianity among the Indians" was "the forerunner towards their civilization." The missionaries considered themselves

\[1^{1}\] De Schweinitz, 413.
\[12\] By an Act of the English Parliament of 1749 the Moravians were exempted from military service and the taking of oaths in the colonies (see John W. Jordan, "Bethlehem during the Revolution. Extracts from the Diaries in the Moravian Archives at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XII (1888), 385). The Moravians no longer adhere to these restrictions. In The Pioneers (ch. XIII) Leatherstocking represents Chingachcook as having been "Christianized by the Moravians," but in other of the Leatherstocking Tales he extenuates the latter's taking of scalps on the grounds that it was one of the Indian's "gifts" (see The Deerslayer, chs. IX, X; The Last of the Mohicans, ch. XIV). Chingachcook was no true Moravian convert, for the exercise of such "gifts" was expressly forbidden by the Moravians to their converts.
\[13\] De Schweinitz, pp. 22-24.
\[14\] Heckewelder, A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians, from its Commencement, in the Year
"as messengers of the God of Peace, who himself had pronounced a blessing on the peacemakers; . . . The Christian Indians under their care," he continues, "obedient to the commandment of God: 'thou shalt not kill'—. . . strove to live in peace with all mankind. . . ."¹⁵

To their sorrow one community of the Moravian converts learned this pacific lesson too well, as the subsequent events of our story will reveal.

The New York-Connecticut mission where Cooper's "Mohicans"¹⁶ must have made their contact with the Moravians was eventually abandoned, and some of these converts followed the missionaries back to Pennsylvania.¹⁷ Continued pressure by white settlers, especially their retaliations during Pontiac's War, caused the Moravians to move their converts first to the Susquehanna valley,¹⁸ then to western Pennsylvania,¹⁹ and finally in 1772 to the banks of the present Tuscarawas River in Ohio, where they built four towns and flourished for nearly ten years.²⁰

Zeisberger's biographer describes the Tuscarawas valley as it appeared when the Moravians, who preceded the first regular white

1740, to the Close of the Year 1808 (Philadelphia, 1820), p. 307. Hugh Henry Brackenridge expresses an opposite opinion: "For until a savage is civilized, and is brought to cultivate the soil, and have a fixed residence, he differs in nothing from the wolf or the bear, as to any possibility of implanting systems of faith, or truths of religion." (Modern Chivalry, ed. Claude M. Newlin [New York, 1937], p. 626.) For further discussion of this question see Edward Rondthaler, Life of John Heckewelder (Philadelphia, 1847).

As this narrative will show, the Moravian missionaries actually carried on the civilizing and the Christianizing processes simultaneously.

¹⁵ Heckewelder, Narrative, vi.
¹⁶ Heckewelder believed that the Mahicans (Mahicanni) of the Hudson River Valley and the Mohegans of Connecticut were the same tribe, designated by him as "Mohicans" (see Account of the History of the Indian Nations, p. 77). According to the Handbook of the American Indians North of Mexico, ed. Frederick Webb Hodge (Washington, 1907), these two related tribes had no political connection within the memory of white men (see under "Mohegans," Part I, p. 926; see also De Cost Smith, Martyrs of the Oblong and the Little Nine [Caldwell, Idaho, 1948], p. 27). In 1740 Christian Rauch began a mission among the Mahicans at Shekomeko, Dutchess County, New York, and in 1742 extended it to the Saticook, a mixed band of Mahican and other tribes, settled just across the line near the present Kent, Connecticut (see Handbook, under "Missions," Part I, p. 880). Cooper, like Heckewelder, identifies these Mahicans with the Mohegans of Connecticut. The young Uncas is represented as the grandson of the historical Mohegan chief, Uncas (see The Last of the Mohicans, ch. XXX).
¹⁷ See note 4 above.
¹⁸ De Schweinitz, pp. 310-316.
¹⁹ Ibid., p. 362.
settlers into Ohio, began erecting their towns as "Although a wilderness, no less a land of plenty."

It extended a distance of nearly eighty miles, inclosed on both sides by hills, at the foot of which lay wide plains terminating abruptly in bluffs, or sloping gently to the lower bottoms through which the river flowed.

These plains were well wooded, the soil fruitful, and the river well supplied with fish.\(^2\)

The first of the towns in this area, Schönbunn, was started on May 3, 1772,\(^2\) and when late in August a group of "Mohicans" arrived, they were advised to settle ten miles down the river, where they built Gnadenhütten.\(^2\) Heckewelder has left us no description of the latter town beyond the fact that it "lay on a high bluff,"\(^2\) but we may get some idea of it from his description of Schönbunn, "the largest and handsomest town" the Christian Indians had built, containing upwards of sixty dwelling houses, most of which were of squared timbers. The street, from east to west, was long and of a proper width; from the centre, where the chapel stood, another run [sic] off to the north.\(^2\)

The chapel at Schönbunn was 40 feet by 36, and that at Gnadenhütten somewhat smaller. Both were

built of squared timbers, and shingle roofed, with a cupola and bell. The towns being regularly laid out, the streets wide and kept clean, and the cattle kept out by means of fences, gave the whole a neat appearance, and excited the astonishment of all visitors.\(^2\)

Under the guidance of their teachers the Indian converts were changing from a hunting to an agricultural people, raising grain, cattle, and poultry.\(^2\) Heckewelder describes them as living chiefly on their crops and cattle. Besides this,

\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 372-373.
\(^2\) Heckewelder, Narrative, pp. 117-118.
\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 125-126.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 256.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 157.
\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 128-129.
\(^2\) De Schweinitz, p. 424.
the Christian Indians were well known by their dress, which was plain and decent, no sign of paint to be seen on their skin or clothes, they wore no feathers about their heads, neither did they shave and trim them as every Indian warrior does; but wore their hair as the Christians did.\textsuperscript{28}

The Ohio missions seem to have reached their highest point of prosperity in the year 1775 with 414 Indian converts at the end of that year.\textsuperscript{29} The “peace and rest enjoyed by the Indian congregation” during that year “was favorable to visitors, who came in numbers to hear the gospel preached; so that the chapel at Schönbrunn, although large, was too small to contain them.”\textsuperscript{30}

An English traveler, Nicholas Cresswell, visiting the missions in August of that year, noted at the meeting, contrary to his expectations,

the greatest regularity, order, and decorum, I ever saw in any place, of Worship, in my life. With that solemnity of behavior and modest religious deportment would do honor to the first religious society on earth, and put a bigot or enthusiast out of countenance. The parson was a Dutchman, but preached in English. He had an Indian interpreter, who explained it to the Indians by sentences. They sung in the Indian language.

Crossing the Muskingum River, he went to “Kanantohead [Gnadenhütten], another pretty Moravian town, but not so large as Wale-hak-tap-poke.”\textsuperscript{31}

The War of the Revolution, which was to result in the ruin of the missions, was at its beginning very remote from them. While the embattled farmers of Massachusetts were fighting the Battle of Lexington on April 19, 1775, Zeisberger was examining con-

\textsuperscript{28} *Narrative*, p. 318. Colonel George Morgan, Indian agent for the Western District, was astonished at the progress shown by the Indian converts, praising their industry, cleanliness, and order as giving them “a claim to be ranked among the civilized part of mankind. . . . That to him it was now evident that the Indians, when living by themselves and out of connection with the white people, could easily be brought to a state of civilization . . .” (De Schweinitz, pp. 424-425 n. [quoted from a manuscript of Heckewelder’s in the Bethlehem Archives]).

\textsuperscript{29} Heckewelder, *Narrative*, p. 144.


\textsuperscript{31} *The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell, 1774-1777* (London, 1925), pp. 106-107; see also De Cost Smith, p. 179.
verts for church-membership in the Mission House of Schönbrunn.32

It soon became apparent, however, that the missions were caught between two fires. The American Congress, perhaps knowing too well what they would be unloosing if they encouraged Indian warfare, urged the Indians to remain neutral,33 but it is well known that the British sought the alliance and active aid of the savages. The missions continued to prosper during 1776,34 but their troubles began with the real start of the border warfare in the spring of 1777.35

Evangeline appears in the novel Charles Killbuck during the summer of that year. She is represented as coming first to the Indian village of Coshocton with Basil Lajeunesse and Father Felician during the “green corn month.”36 An Indian appears on the scene with Gabriel’s gun. After satisfying Gabriel’s friends that he had come by the gun honestly, he conducts them to Michigan where they find the abandoned hunting lodge. Huebner omits the intervening “long, sad years” of Longfellow. Evangeline and her party go next to Detroit, where they meet some traders from the Muskingum, one of whom remembers meeting in Gnadenhütten a man who answered Gabriel’s description. Arriving at the “Tents of Grace,” they learn that he had stayed with the cooper, Joshua the Mohican. According to Joshua, Gabriel had remained with him a week during the previous June and had then left for the East to join Washington’s army, thus providing a motive for Evangeline’s visit to the army camps. But for the time being the bad news is too much for her. She becomes ill and remains through the winter of 1777-1778 at the home of Joshua the Mohican. After Easter the party accompanied by some Indians and some white prisoners set out for the East. At Pittsburgh they learn that Washington’s army is at Valley Forge. There armed with passports and a letter they meet Lafayette. The Indian hero, Charles Killbuck, takes leave of Evangeline and her party as they go to present their request to General Washington and we hear no more of her. At the end of

32 De Schweinitz, p. 428.
34 De Schweinitz, p. 432.
36 According to Heckewelder (Indian Nations, p. 305), August was called by the Lenape (Delawares) the “month of roasting ears.”
the story when Killbuck is reunited with his Moravian Indian sweetheart, Benigna Nanticoke, they name their eldest daughter Evangeline Killbuck.\textsuperscript{37}

To return to authenticated history, Zeisberger and the other missionaries, remote as they were from the centers of colonial life, were probably somewhat vague about the points at issue and particularly desired to prevent their converts from violating what they regarded as the express commandments of the God of Peace. In 1778 two new rules were added to the list which had been drawn up at the founding of the mission in 1772.

No man inclining to go to war—which is the shedding of blood, can remain among us.

Whosoever purchases goods or articles of warriors, knowing at the time that such have been stolen or plundered, must leave us. We look upon this as giving encouragement to murder and theft.\textsuperscript{38}

More concerned to prevent bloodshed than to aid one side against the other, the missionaries used their influence to keep the Delawares neutral until near the end of the war.\textsuperscript{39} They notified the Americans when the unconverted body of the Delawares went over to the British,\textsuperscript{40} and sometimes sent to Fort Pitt reports of the approach of hostile Indians.\textsuperscript{41} On the other hand the missionaries could not prevent their towns from being used as stopping places for Indian raiders coming and going.\textsuperscript{42} According to Heckewelder, if they refused to provide for these war parties, the warriors would “shoot cattle and destroy the corn in the fields.”\textsuperscript{43,44}

In the spring of 1781 Zeisberger was in Philadelphia, where he received thanks from the President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania for his services in turning back so many

\textsuperscript{37} Charles Killbuck (Washington, 1902), pp. 32-157. The Countess Benigna, founder of the present Moravian Seminary and College for Women in Bethlehem, Pa., the oldest girls’ school in the original thirteen colonies, was the daughter of Count von Zinzendorf. The name Benigna occurs twice in a list of Indians massacred at Gnadenhütten (De Schweinitz, pp. 551-552).

\textsuperscript{38} Heckewelder, \textit{Narrative}, p. 124.

\textsuperscript{39} De Schweinitz, pp. 444 and n., 457-458, 479. Heckewelder implies, however, that the missionaries observed strict neutrality and avoided interfering with the activities of the non-Christian Indians (\textit{Narrative}, pp. 153, 155).

\textsuperscript{40} Butterfield, \textit{Washington-Irvine Correspondence}, p. 51.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid., pp. 58-63; De Schweinitz, p. 488.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., p. 538.

\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Narrative}, p. 162.
war parties, but for reasons of military strategy the authorities at Fort Pitt did not make public the aid they were receiving from the missionaries, and as Indian atrocities increased, the settlers came to hate all Indians indiscriminately and to burn for vengeance on them, refusing or failing to discriminate between pagan and Christian Indians, especially as it was known that the "half way towns" served as convenient stopping-places for the hostile Indians.

At about the time of Zeisberger's visit to Philadelphia one of the Delaware war chiefs made an ominous and prophetic speech to the Christian Indians, warning them not to trust the white men. "I admit," he declared, according to Heckewelder's account, that there are good white men, but they bear no proportion to the bad; the bad must be the strongest, for they rule. They do what they please. They enslave those who are not of their colour, although created by the same Great Spirit who created us. They would make slaves of us if they could but as they cannot do it, they kill us! There is no faith to be placed in their words. They are not like the Indians, who are only enemies, while at war, and are friends in peace. They will say to an Indian, "my friend! my brother!" They will take him by the hand, and at the same time destroy him. And so you... will also be treated by them before long. Remember! that this day I have warned you to beware of such friends as these. I know the long knives; they are not to be trusted.

In the following summer, Colonel Brodhead, the commander at Fort Pitt, advised the missionaries to break up their settlements because of their dangerous position, and accompany him to the fort, but this they declined doing. According to Heckewelder the Colonel stated that nothing would give him greater pain, than to hear that any one of the Moravian Indians had been molested by his troops, as these Indians had conducted themselves,

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44 De Schweinitz, p. 481.
45 Heckewelder, Indian Nations, p. 65.
46 Butterfield, An Historical Account of the Expedition against Sandusky under Colonel William Crawford in 1782 (Cincinnati, 1873), pp. 9-10. Theodore Roosevelt in The Winning of the West (New York, 1889), II, 4, 12, 14, blames the missionaries for their stubbornness. From their point of view abandoning the settlements would be undoing the work of a lifetime.
from the commencement of the war, in a manner that did them honour.\(^4\)

In the meantime American captives had betrayed to the Indians the help which the Moravians were giving the Americans by informing them of projected Indian raids, and the British were informed.\(^4\) On August 10, 1781, the Wyandots, accompanied by the British agents, Elliott, McKee, and Simon Girty,\(^4\) raided the settlements and broke them up. The Christian Indians begged for time to harvest their crops that they might not be exposed to the possibility of starvation. This request was refused and the converts were obliged to leave behind them their unharvested corn and vegetables, besides their cattle, hogs, poultry, furniture, and farming implements.\(^5\) The whole community left on September 11, 1781, only a few weeks before Cornwallis’s surrender on October 19. They were abandoned at a site on the Sandusky River where they constructed a crude settlement. On October 14, the missionaries were summoned by the Half King\(^5\) of the Wyandots to Detroit, where they were questioned by Major De Peyster, the commander. In reply to questioning they maintained that they received their instructions not from Congress but from their own bishops and apparently convinced these authorities, as they were released and allowed to return to their converts on the Sandusky, where they arrived on November 22.\(^5\)

During the winter on the Sandusky the missionaries suffered severely with their converts from cold and hunger, their plight worsening as the winter advanced:

Towards the end of January, the cold during the nights became almost insupportable; the more so, on account of the smallness of our huts, not permitting the convenience of our having large fires made within them, and even wood being scarce where we were. Our houses having no flooring, whenever a thaw came on, the water, forc-

\(^{47}\) Narrative, p. 214.
\(^{48}\) Butterfield, Washington-Irvine Correspondence, pp. 58-60.
\(^{49}\) For this colorful and vicious character see Butterfield, History of the Girtys (Cincinnati, 1890); and Thomas Boyd, Simon Girty, the White Savage (New York, 1928).
\(^{50}\) De Schweinitz, pp. 490-512.
\(^{51}\) Viceroy. According to Brackenridge (Modern Chivalry, p. 409 n.), “A half-king, means double king, or king of two nations, who have him split between them.”
\(^{52}\) De Schweinitz, pp. 517-529.
ing passages through the earth, entered in such quantities that we scarcely could keep our feet dry. The cattle finding no pasture in these dreary regions, and we not being able to procure any for them, now began to perish by hunger, and, as provision for so many people could not be had even for money, famine took place, and the calamity became general; many had no alternative but to live on the carcasses of the starved cattle, and in a few instances suckling babes perished for want of nourishment from the mothers' impoverished breasts.

Finally, some time before the first of March, 1782, one hundred and fifty of the Indians obtained the permission of the Half King to return once more to the Muskingum to gather the still unharvested corn.

The Indian raids on the settlements started early that year—before the coming of spring—and the settlers laid the blame on the Moravian “half way towns,” at which the warriors could stop coming and going. Intense feeling was aroused by the capture of a Mrs. Wallace and her children and of a certain John Carpenter.

Early in March a company of militia led by Colonel David Williamson assembled at the Mingo River Bottom and marched to the vicinity of Gnadenhütten. The accounts of the massacre which followed, differing in details, were derived indirectly from the testimony of two sixteen-year old Indian boys, the only ones to escape; from that of Samuel of Nanticoke, an Indian assistant of New Schönbrunn; and from what was picked up in Pennsylvania from the returning militiamen.

The following account is taken chiefly from the first printed history of the Moravian Indian missions, that by Bishop Loskiel.

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53 Heckewelder, Narrative, pp. 299-300.
54 De Schweinitz, pp. 532-533.
55 Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Publications, III (1890), pp. 288-289; Butterfield, Washington-Irvine Correspondence, p. 100 n.; De Schweinitz, p. 539.
56 Ohio State Arch. & Hist. Pubs., III (1890), pp. 285-287. Mrs. Wallace and her infant child were killed because they could not keep up with the escaping Indians, but this was not known until long afterwards.
57 There is some uncertainty as to whether they were regularly ordered out by the authorities or not. See Butterfield, History of the Girtys, p. 155 n.; Washington-Irvine Correspondence, pp. 239-240.
58 De Schweinitz, p. 550 n. Samuel of Nanticoke did not witness the actual massacre.
59 George Henry Loskiel, A History of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians in North America. Translated from the German by Chris-
On reaching the banks of the Muskingum, the men divided into groups, one of which crossed the river while the other approached the town from a different direction. The former group killed the first Indian they met, Schebosch, the son of a white father and an Indian mother. They then gradually surrounded the rest of the Indians, who were working in the fields, unconscious of what had occurred,

but feigning a friendly behavior, told them to go home, promising to do them no injury. The poor, believing Indians, . . . believed every word they said, went home with them and treated them in the most hospitable manner. They likewise spoke freely concerning their sentiments as Christian Indians, who had never taken the least share in the war.

They were told at first that they were to be taken to Fort Pitt for protection, and in this decision they readily acquiesced.

Prepossessed with this idea, they cheerfully delivered their guns, hatchets and other weapons to the murderers. . . . Our Indians even showed them all those things, which they had secreted in the woods, assisted in packing them up, and emptied all their bee-hives for these pretended friends.

In the meantime one of the Indian assistants carried the news to Salem of the arrival of the white men and of their promises, which the converts were glad to believe. The assistant returned to Gnadenhütten with two of the Salem brethren, and Indians and whites lay down to sleep, the former still entirely unsuspicious of the real objective of their visitors. The next morning a division of the whites went to Salem where the Indians gave up their arms

Christian Ignatius La Trobe (London, 1794), Part III, pp. 177-182. (The original German version, Geschichte der Mission der evangelischen Brüder unter den Indianern in Nordamerika, was published at Barby in 1789.) See also Heckewelder, Narrative, pp. 313-324; and Diary of David Zeisberger, ed. Eugene F. Bliss (Cincinnati, 1885), pp. 78-82, 85. De Schweinitz (p. 549 n.) believes that Loskiel's account is more correct than that in a journal written by Zeisberger soon after the events. De Schweinitz reached this conclusion "after a careful comparison of all the sources extant, including those not of Moravian origin." Loskiel had never been in America at the time the book was written, but probably received the material from Zeisberger at a time later than the writing of the journal referred to above.
and acquiesced in the firing of their town “to prevent warriors from harboring there,” as they were told. Just before reaching Gnadenhütten, they were seized and bound, the same fate which had already befallen their brethren in Gnadenhütten.

There seems to have been some sort of consultation and some disagreement on the part of the militiamen, but the Indians were given one night after the sentence of death had been announced to them.

Shut up in their two prisons, the converts began to sing and pray, to exhort and comfort one another, to mutually unburden their consciences and acknowledge their sins.

... As the hours wore away, and the night deepened, and the end drew near, triumphant anticipation of heaven mingled with their hymns and prayers.

On the following day, March 8, ninety-six of them were killed in two “slaughter houses,” to which they were dragged by twos or threes bound together with ropes. Ninety of these were Moravian converts, about equally divided between men, women, and children, of whom about a dozen were unbaptized infants.

Further indirect testimony of the method used in killing the Indians is found in a story related many years later by a man who at the age of sixteen had been present on the occasion of raising volunteers to march to Detroit to repel the British Indians in August, 1812. Among the sights of the day was an old drunken man who was entertaining the crowd with maudlin songs until someone said,

"Now, Uncle Sol, show us how they killed the Indians."
That at once the old fellow’s whole manner changed. . . , and he began crying and cursing the cowards who killed woman and children. Presently he ran forward, making motions as if throwing a rope over the heads of those in front of him and then running backwards as if dragging an object after him, seized the large stick held in his hands, and began beating an imaginary object, all the time howling and cursing like a demon, when somebody pulled him away, saying it was a shame.

The narrator of the incident upon inquiry learned

that Uncle Sol had been at the Moravian Massacre, and when in his cups, as he had seen him, would show how he
killed the Indians, but when sober could not be induced to open his mouth upon the subject.60

Of the two boys who escaped, one found his way into the cellar of that house in which the Sisters were executed. Their blood soon penetrated through the flooring, and according to his account, ran in streams into the cellar, by which it appears probable, that most, if not all of them, were not merely scalped, but killed with hatchets or swords.61

After nightfall he climbed through a window and escaped into the woods. The other youth, whose name was Thomas, was struck on the head and scalped.

But after some time he recovered his senses and saw himself surrounded by bleeding corpses. Among these he observed one Brother, called Abel, moving and endeavoring to raise himself up. But he remained lying as still as though he had been dead, and this caution proved the means of his deliverance: for soon after, one of the murderers coming in, and observing Abel's motions, killed him outright with two or three blows. Thomas lay quiet till dusk, though suffering the most exquisite torment.

He also finally escaped out of the house into the woods where he met the other survivor, and both of them eventually reached Sandusky.62 Before leaving the vicinity they observed the murderers setting fire to the two "slaughter-houses" filled with corpses. A messenger from Schönbrunn, who had discovered the body of Schebosch and seen the white people about, returned to that town in time to warn the inhabitants. They fled into the woods and were hidden when the militia arrived and burned the town.63

Other accounts of the massacre differ in details, but all of them, including the report sent by General Irvine, the commander at Fort Pitt, to General Washington,64 agree that the Indians made

60 Ohio State Arch. & Hist. Pubs., III (1890), p. 293.
61 According to Heckewelder (p. 320) and Zeisberger (p. 85) all the killing was done by two men with a cooper's mallet.
62 Thomas, "the scalped boy," was drowned on June 30, 1786, on the Cuyohoga in a creek where he had been fishing. He had been subject to dizzy spells as a result of the blows received on the head before scalping and during such a spell fell out of a canoe and was drowned (Heckewelder, Narrative, p. 388).
63 Loskiel, Part III, p. 182; De Schweinitz, pp. 553-554.
64 Butterfield, Washington-Irvine Correspondence, p. 99.
no resistance and that they prepared for death by singing hymns.

The Reverend Joseph Doddridge, a non-Moravian and a later contemporary of some of the persons involved, believed that the Indians, if they had resisted, could have saved themselves. He notes that the first group who crossed the river numbered only sixteen men against about thirty Indian men besides young boys, who might have captured the invaders and held them as hostages until their own safety was insured. The remainder of the group could not have crossed the river without permission of the Indians as there was only one canoe and the river was too high to be forded.

One can hardly help reflecting with regret, that these Moravians, did not for the moment, lay aside their pacific principles, and do themselves justice... But alas! these truly christian people suffered themselves to be betrayed by hypocritical professions of friendship, until "They were led as sheep to the slaughter."  

Attempts to extenuate, if not justify, the massacre, and accusations against the Moravian Indians have not been lacking. Space will not permit a detailed comparing and weighing of all the evidence pro and con in the matter, and only a brief summary can be given.

The fact that the Moravian towns did actually serve as "half way houses" for marauding Indians has already been discussed. Of the ninety-six Indians killed, only ninety are listed as Christians by the Moravian writers. The remaining six may have been warriors and may have invaded the settlements. The statement found in one historical work that the tracks of forty warriors were

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66 Rev. Joseph Doddridge, Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars, of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania from the Year 1763 to the Year 1783 Inclusive... (Wellsburgh, Va., 1824), pp. 255-256.
67 Heckewelder's Narrative was written for the purpose of defending the Indians of the Ohio missions from the charges made against them (see Introduction, pp. iii-xii).
68 See p. 278 above.
69 Butterfield, History of the Girtys, pp. 154-155 n. Butterfield is the author of three works on the border warfare during the Revolutionary War; An Historical Account of the Expedition against Sandusky under Colonel William Crawford in 1782 (Cincinnati, 1873); The Washington-Irvine Correspondence (Madison, Wis., 1882); and The History of the Girtys (Cincinnati, 1890). These books are poorly organized and repetitious to a remarkable degree but make available much valuable source material. In his eagerness to correct what he considered unfair accounts by historians reflecting on the border settlers, the author speaks disparagingly of the
noted after the Wallace raid and that thirty of these must have been Moravians, since it was known that only ten warriors had reached the Tuscarawas up to that time, seems to rest only upon the evidence of a notice in the Pennsylvania Packet of March 30, 1782. The same author also relates that John Carpenter said that two of his captors called themselves Moravians and "spoke good Dutch" (i.e., German). It is possible that some of the Moravian Indians had lapsed back into heathen ways after the departure of the missionaries.

The articles taken from white settlers said to have been found at the mission may have been brought by some of the six warriors who apparently were found among the Moravians. The story that the decision to kill the Indians was brought about by the finding in one of the houses of Mrs. Wallace's blood-stained dress is weakened by a letter written by her husband, said to have been a member of the invading party, on the following October 21, showing that he believed her to be still alive and intended to apply to General Washington to get his family exchanged.

One circumstance that emerges is the fear which the frenzied settlers seem to have inspired in the military authorities. Doddridge, abhorring the massacre, attempts to extenuate the guilt of Williamson whom he knew personally, on the ground that he did not possess the authority of an officer in a regular army and that his only fault was "too easy a compliance with popular opinion and popular prejudice." And General Irvine, who had been absent Moravians and their converts and tries to cast as much discredit as possible upon them. He seems to condone at least the killing of the Moravian Indian men on the grounds that the tracks found after the Wallace raid and the articles found at Gnadenhütten constituted certain evidence that these Indians had participated in the raids on the settlements. Some of his accusations are answered in an article, "The Moravian Massacre," in the Ohio State Arch. & Hist. Pubs., III (1890), pp. 271-297.

According to Heckewelder (Narrative, p. 317) all these articles had been lawfully purchased.

Ohio State Arch. & Hist. Pubs., III (1890), p. 287.

Notes, pp. 262-263. Williamson and Colonel Gibson had aroused the anger of the settlers the fall before by releasing some Indian prisoners whom the former had brought to Fort Pitt from the Moravian missions after these missions had been broken up by the British (Loskiel, Part III, pp. 175-176; Doddridge, loc. cit.; De Schweinitz, pp. 519-531). Some years after the massacre Heckewelder met Williamson by accident. In the 1788 journal of a trip to the Muskingum he tells of meeting on the road near Harrisburg a man named Williamson. Suspecting that this man might be the leader of the Gnadenhütten massacre, Heckewelder asked him if he knew the Ohio
from Fort Pitt at the time of the massacre, wrote to his wife on April 12 that he had returned just after "a number of the country people" had come back from the Moravian towns

where tis said they did not spare either age, or sex—what was more extraordinary they did it in cold blood, having deliberated three days during which time they were industrious in collecting all hands into their Churches (They had embraced Christianity) where they fell on while they singing [sic] Hymns & killed the whole—many Children were killed in their wretched Mother arms [sic]—Whether this was right or wrong, I do not pretend to determine—

"People," he continues

who have had—Fathers Mothers Brothers or Children, Butchered tortured Scalped, by the savages—reason very differently on the subject of killing the Moravians, to what people who live in the interior part of the Country in perfect safety do. . . . Whatever your private opinion of these matters may be, I conjure you by all the ties of affection—and as you value my reputation—that you will keep your mind to yourself, and that you will not express any sentiment for or against these deeds—As it may be alleged, the sentiments you express may come from me—or be mine also.

No Man knows whether I approve or disapprove of killing the Moravians.74

There was some agitation for a Congressional investigation, and General Irvine transmitted to President Moore of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania reports from Colonel Marshal, Lieutenant of Washington County, supposed to be responsible for having called out the militia for the expedition75 and from William-

country at all. Williamson replied that he knew it from end to end and rode on. Afterwards on inquiring, Heckewelder learned that his suspicions as to the man's identity were correct. (I am indebted to Dr. P. A. W. Wallace for this passage from a manuscript journal in the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem.) Williamson at a later period was elected sheriff of Washington County, Pa., although the Moravian massacre was brought up against him during the campaign (see Ohio State Arch. & Hist. Pubs., III [1890], p. 283).

73 This account is probably less reliable than those cited from other sources.
74 Irvine Papers, V, 76 (H. S. P.); Butterfield, Washington-Irvine Correspondence, pp. 343-345 n.
75 Ibid., pp. 239-241.
son himself. The matter never got beyond the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, and the reports have disappeared.\textsuperscript{76}

Doddridge says that the white settlers believed that the pagan Indians would not take up arms to avenge their Christian brethren, who had taken no part in the war,\textsuperscript{77} but when in the following July General Irvine sent to General Washington a report of the frightful death of the latter’s friend, Colonel Crawford, at the hands of the Delaware Indians, he added that Dr. Knight, who had been a witness of Crawford’s death and had escaped to carry the news to Fort Pitt, and another escaped prisoner say they were assured by sundry Indians they formerly knew, that not a single soul should in future escape torture; and gave, as a reason for this conduct, the Moravian affair.\textsuperscript{78}

Washington in his reply of August 6 stated that

no other than the extremest Tortures which could be inflicted by the savages could, I think, have been expected by those who were unhappy eno to fall into their Hands, especially under the present Exasperation of their Minds, for the treatment given their Moravian friends.—For this reason, no person should at this Time, submit themselves to fall alive into the hands of the Indians.\textsuperscript{79}

Crawford was the leader of an expedition of volunteers, which set out late in May with Williamson second in command, to attack the villages on the Sandusky, whether to murder the remainder of the Moravian Indians or merely to wipe out the Indian warriors,

\textsuperscript{76} Washington-Irvine Correspondence, p. 245 n.
\textsuperscript{77} Notes, p. 279.
\textsuperscript{78} Butterfield, Washington-Irvine Correspondence, pp. 126-127.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., pp. 131-132; Irvine Papers, VI, 82. Further information about the impression made upon the Indians themselves by the Gnadenhütten massacre is revealed in Irvine’s report to President Moore on Crawford’s death: “The reason they assign for this uncommon barbarity is retaliation for the Moravian affair. The doctor adds, that he understood these people had laid aside their religious principles, and have gone to war; that he saw two of them bring in scalps whom he formerly knew” (Washington-Irvine Correspondence, pp. 249-250; see also pp. 372 n., 373-374 n.). For an account of the convert, Anthony, who, after losing his wife and children in the massacre, had abandoned Christianity and gone to war against the whites, see De Schweinitz, pp. 593-594, and Paul A. W. Wallace, “They Knew the Indian: the Men who Wrote the Moravian Records,” Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, XCV, No. 3 (June, 1951), p. 294.
the authorities do not agree. After an unsuccessful combat with the savages between June 4 and 6 the expedition was forced to retreat, not without leaving several captives in the hands of the Indians, including their leader, Colonel Crawford, and Dr. Knight, who has left us an eye-witness account of the Colonel's death. After stripping and beating him with sticks, the Indians tied him to a post by a rope long enough to permit him to walk around the post once or twice. They then shot quantities of powder from their guns into his body and, crowding about him, apparently cut off his ears, as Knight saw blood running from both sides of his head. Whichever way he turned, they met him and applied burning sticks to his body; some of the squaws threw burning coals on him from boards so that he was soon walking on coals and hot ashes. The Colonel called upon Simon Girty, who was an amused spectator, to shoot him, but Girty replied that he had no gun and laughed.

Colonel Crawford at this period of his sufferings, besought the Almighty to have mercy on his soul, spoke very low, and bore his torment with the most manly fortitude. He continued in all the extremities of pain for an hour and three-quarters or two hours longer, as near as I can judge, when at last being almost spent, he lay down on his belly; they then scalped him and repeatedly threw the scalp in my face, telling me "that was my great captain."

When an old squaw laid hot coals and ashes on his back and scalped head, he

raised himself up on his feet and began to walk round the post: they next put a burning stick to him as usual, but he seemed more insensible of pain than before.

Knight was then taken away before the end had come. Setting out next morning with his Indian captor, from whom he eventually escaped, they passed the site of the Colonel's death and

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80 See Loskiel, Part III, p. 188; Heckewelder, Indian Nations, pp. 279-280; Narrative, p. 337; Dodridge, Notes, pp. 270, 278, 279; De Schweinitz, pp. 564, 576; Butterfield, Hist. Account of the Expedition against Sandusky, pp. 70-71 n., 155-156 n., 158-159 n.; Washington-Irvine Correspondence, pp. 118-119 n.

81 See note 49 above.
saw his bones laying amongst the remains of the fire, almost burnt to ashes. I suppose after he was dead they laid his body on the fire.\textsuperscript{82}

On no other point has the veracity of Heckewelder's writings been more attacked than on a conversation which he reports as having taken place between the doomed Crawford and a chief of the Delawares, Wingenund. Even defenders of Heckewelder will go no further than to maintain that he did not make up the story but merely reported what Wingenund had told him.\textsuperscript{83} And yet it contains in Crawford's own supposed words the best defense that has been offered anywhere against the charge of having associated himself with Williamson, notorious as the murderer of Moravian Indians, for the purpose of murdering some more of them. According to this account Crawford appealed to Wingenund to save him, reminding him of their former friendship. The Indian replied that Crawford had put himself into a situation that made it impossible to aid him by joining himself to that execrable man, Williamson and his party; the man, who, but the other day murdered such a number of the Moravian Indians, knowing them to be friends; knowing that he ran no risk in murdering a people who would not fight, and whose only business was praying.

To this Crawford is represented as replying

Wingenund, I assure you, that had I been with him at the time, this would not have happened; not I alone but all your friends and all good men, wherever they are, reprobate acts of this kind. Wigen. That may be; yet these friends, these good men did not prevent him from going out again, to kill the remainder of those inoffensive, yet \textit{foolish} Moravian Indians! I say \textit{foolish}, because they believed the whites in preference to us. We had often told them that they would


be one day so treated by those people who called themselves their friends! . . .
Crawf. I am sorry to hear you speak thus; as to Williamson's going out again when it was known that he was determined on it, I went out with him to prevent him from committing fresh murders.
Wingen. This, Colonel, the Indians would not believe, were even I to tell them so.
Crawf. And why would they not believe it?
Wingen. Because it would have been out of your power to prevent his doing what he pleased.
Crawf. Out of my power! Have any Moravian Indians been hurt or killed since we came out?84

Some confirmation of this apocryphal defense is found in Dr. Knight's account of his and Crawford's capture by a group of Delaware Indians. As the Indians approached them, Knight made ready to fire,

when the Colonel called to me twice not to fire. Upon that one of the Indians ran up to the Colonel and took him by the hand. The Colonel then told me to put down my gun, which I did.85

Ironical parallel to the taking of Gnadenhütten!

It is a measure of the bitterness which the Moravian missionaries felt over the massacre that the benevolent Heckewelder, writing his book more than thirty years later, believed in Crawford's guilt and implied that his fate was deserved. The story of the conversation with Wingenund is told in a chapter entitled "Friendship," and Wingenund's show of grief in later years over the fate of one whom Heckewelder calls "his guilty friend" is used to illustrate Heckewelder's thesis that an Indian is capable of friendship!

Though nothing had come of the proposed Congressional investigation of the massacre at Gnadenhütten, Congress apparently felt that some recompense was due, for in May, 1785, they made a grant of land to the Moravian Indians,86 and confirmed it in July, 1787, after the adoption of the Constitution, enacting that

84 Heckewelder, Indian Nations, pp. 280-286.
85 "Narrative of Dr. Knight," p. 39.
86 De Schweinitz, p. 587 and n.
the property of ten thousand acres, adjoining to the former settlements of the Christian Indians, should be vested in the Moravian Brethren of Pennsylvania, or a society of said Brethren for civilizing the Indians and promoting Christianity, in trust and for the uses expressed in the ordinance of May 20, 1785.87

In May, 1797, fifteen years after the massacre, Heckewelder was one of a group who went to the Tuscarawas to survey the tract of land granted. They found that the site of Gnadenhütten could be easily traced from the ruined chimneys which were still visible. Everything, however, is overgrown with heavy grass, & as this becomes matted down during the winter, we soon perceived that this would serve as a good shelter for numberless snakes. Besides this, the ground was so thickly overgrown with plum trees, hazel-bushes, and blackberries, that there was no getting through them except by means of the paths made by the bears, deer & wolves. This wild mass we set on fire, & obtained thereby considerable more air. Then only did we obtain a correct view of the ruins of the village. Everywhere bones could be seen, & in the cellars of the houses, where some of the Brethren had been massacred & burnt, they were also to be found.88

Returning in 1799, Heckewelder and his companion reinterred these bones in one of the cellars of the old town. The site of the grave was lost but rediscovered in 1847.89 In 1872 a monument was dedicated with ceremonies by the Moravian Brethren to the memory of the Indian victims with an inscription: "Here triumphed in Death Ninety Christian Indians, March 8, 1782."90

87 *Ibid.*, p. 606. This grant was confirmed again on June 1, 1796 (*Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, X [1886], 126).
89 De Schweinitz, p. 647 n.
90 *Ohio State Arch. and Hist. Pubs.*, III (1890), p. 295. Zeisberger after wanderings in Michigan, Canada, and Northern Ohio, returned to the Tuscarawas in 1798 and founded a settlement called Goshen. Here he remained among the remnant of his Indian converts until his death at the age of eighty-seven in 1808. The town founded on the site of Gnadenhütten and called by the same name soon became a white settlement.