

# The Religious Development of the Early German Settlers In "Greater Pennsylvania": The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia\*

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## Introduction

Throughout much of the eighteenth century, the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia was the frontier. The first Europeans to settle there came from colonies to the north. They had the opportunity to create new culture in this sparsely inhabited area. Most of the Indians had abandoned it, and Europeans from the Tidewater had not yet spread their plantations that far west. The Valley was an ideal location for innovation. Nevertheless, the early settlers brought with them their religious heritage and developed patterns and institutions for their spiritual nurture that were remarkably similar to those that they had known in their previous homes.

## Historiography

Study of the religious development of the early German settlers has been underway for more than a century and a half. One of the first accounts appeared in Samuel Kercheval's 1833 *History of the Valley of Virginia*.<sup>1</sup> A more detailed description is contained in John W. Way-

1. Samuel Kercheval, *The History of the Valley of Virginia* 4th ed. (Strasburg: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1925), originally published in 1833.

land's *History of The German Element of the Shenandoah Valley*, published in 1907,<sup>2</sup> some of which he included in his *History of Shenandoah County* that appeared twenty years later.<sup>3</sup> Dedicated to Wayland and drawing on his work but going further is *The Pennsylvania Germans of the Shenandoah Valley*, the 1962 volume of the Pennsylvania German Folklore Society, by Elmer Lewis Smith, John G. Stewart, and M. Elsworth Kyger.<sup>4</sup> More broad and inclusive is Klaus Wust's *Virginia Germans* of 1969.<sup>5</sup> Charles H. Glatfelter included both a narrative as well as a congregation by congregation and clergyman by clergyman account in his two-volume *Pastors and People: German Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the Pennsylvania Field, 1717-1793*, a 1980 - 1981 publication of the Pennsylvania German Society.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, denominational historians have treated the subject. J. Silor Garrison's *History of the Reformed Church in Virginia, 1714-1940*, was published in 1948.<sup>7</sup> *The History of the Mennonites in Virginia, 1727-1790*, by Harry A. Brunk, appeared in 1958,<sup>8</sup> followed several years later in 1967, by William Edward Eisenberg's *Lutheran Church in Virginia, 1717-1762*.<sup>9</sup> *The Brethren in Virginia: The History of the Church of the Brethren in Virginia* by Roger E. Sappington appeared in 1973.<sup>10</sup> Klaus Wust published his *Saint-Adventurers of the Virginia Frontier - Southern Outposts of Ephrata* on the Seventh Day Baptists in 1977.<sup>11</sup> Also inform-

2. John W. Wayland, *The History of the German Element of the Shenandoah Valley* (Bridgewater: C. J. Carrier, 1964), originally published in 1907.

3. John W. Wayland, *The History of Shenandoah County, Virginia* (Strasburg: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1927).

4. Elmer Lewis Smith, John G. Stewart, and M. Elsworth Kyger, *The Pennsylvania Germans of the Shenandoah Valley* (Allentown: Pennsylvania Folklore Society, 1964), publications of the Pennsylvania Folklore Society, vol. 26.

5. Klaus Wust, *The Virginia Germans* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1969).

6. Charles H. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People: German Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the Pennsylvania Field, 1717-1793*, 2 vols. (Breinigsville: The Pennsylvania German Society, 1980-1981), Publications of the Pennsylvania German Society, vols. 13 and 15.

7. J. Silor Garrison, *The Reformed Church in Virginia, 1727-1790* (Winston-Salem: Clay Printing Co., 1948).

8. Harry A. Brunk, *The History of the Mennonites in Virginia, 1714-1940* (Staunton: McClure Printing Co., 1959).

9. William Edward Eisenberg, *The Lutheran Church in Virginia, 1717-1962* (Roanoke: Trustees of the Virginia Synod, Lutheran Church in America, 1967).

10. Roger E. Sappington, *The Brethren in Virginia: The History of the Church of the Brethren in Virginia* (Harrisonburg: Committee for Brethren History in Virginia, 1973).

11. Klaus Wust, *The Saint-Adventurers of the Virginia Frontier-Southern Outposts of Ephrata* (Edinburg: Shenandoah History, 1977).

ative are more recent inclusive denominational studies by A.G. Roeber, *Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British America*<sup>12</sup> and Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1705-1995*.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, other types of studies have been helpful. Freeman H. Hart's *Valley of Virginia in the American Revolution, 1763-1789*, published in 1942,<sup>14</sup> contains an informative chapter on religious history. Treatments of the "Back Country" that have emerged during the past few years have shed light on the religious development of the area. They include Robert Mitchell's *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era*, published in 1991,<sup>15</sup> Michael Puglisi's *Diversity and Accommodation: Essays on the Cultural Accommodation of the Virginia Frontier*,<sup>16</sup> Warren Hofstra's *George Washington and Virginia Frontier*<sup>17</sup> and David Hackett Fischer's and James C. Kelly's *Bound Away: Virginia and the Western Movement*.<sup>18</sup>

### Reasons for Further Study

The availability of so many publications that contain information about the religious development of the early German settlers in the Shenandoah Valley raises questions about the need for additional studies. Although there may be no reason for a drastic revision of what past historians have presented, additional evidence has come to light that expands upon earlier works. Furthermore, recent studies of Virginia's interior enable historians to place the Shenandoah Valley's early religious development in a broader context.

### Geography of the Shenandoah Valley

The Shenandoah Valley of Virginia is located in the Piedmont Plateau, west of the 3,000 to 4,000-foot Blue Ridge Mountains and east

12. A. G. Roeber, *Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993).

13. Donald F. Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1708-1995* (Elgin, Illinois: Brethren Press, 1997).

14. Freeman H. Hart, *The Valley of Virginia in the American Revolution, 1763-1789* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942).

15. Robert Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1991).

16. Michael Puglisi, ed., *Diversity and Accommodation: Essays on the Cultural Composition of the Virginia Frontier* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997).

17. Warren Hofstra, ed., *George Washington and the Virginia Back Country* (Madison: Madison House, 1998).

18. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000).

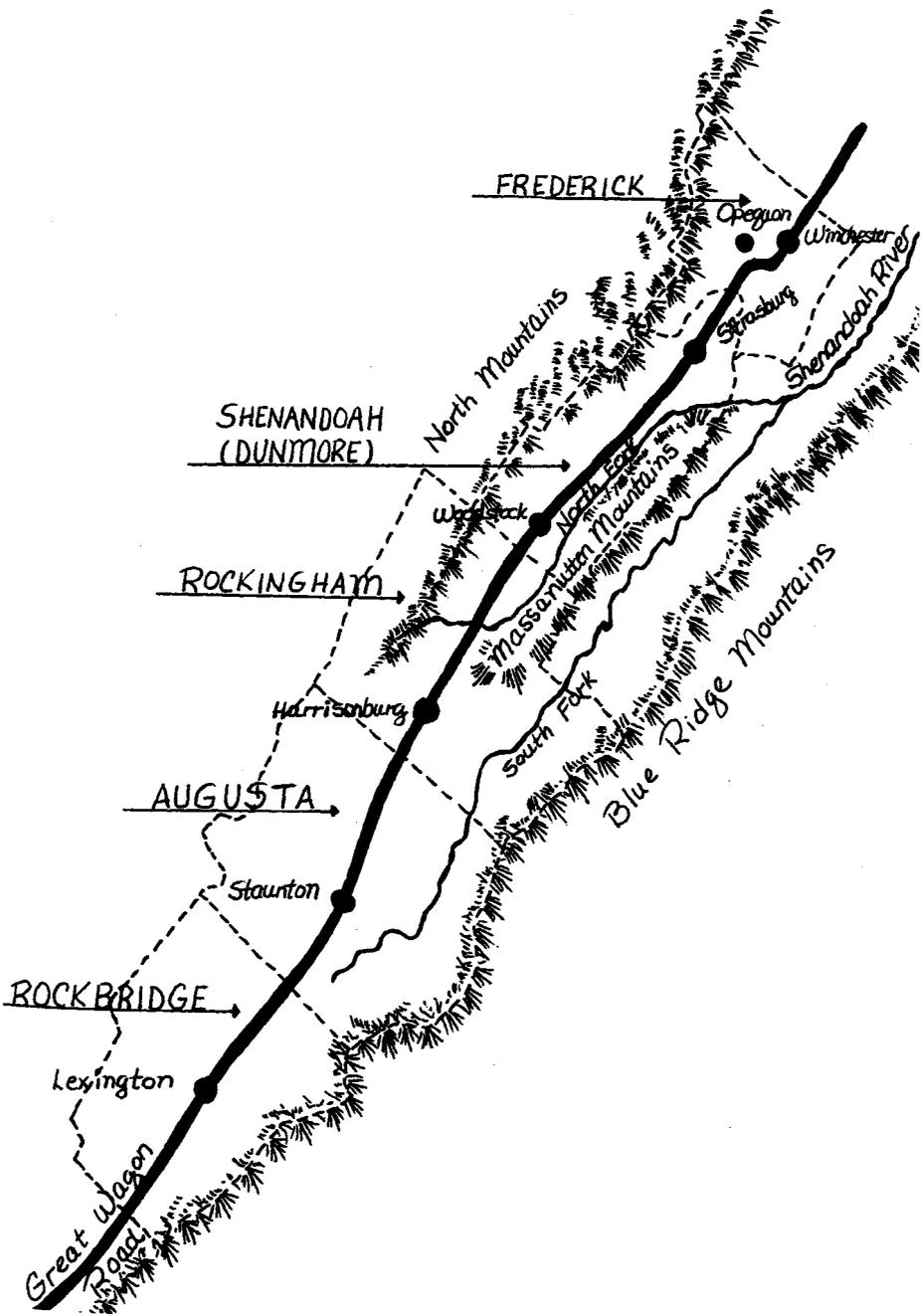


Figure 1. Topographical Map of the Shenandoah Valley, including also the major thoroughfare and principal towns. Many of the Pennsylvania Germans who came to the Valley traveled the Great Wagon Road and settled in the western portion between the Massanutten and North Mountains.

Drawn by Judith L. Shawley

of the 2,000 to 3,500-foot elevations, known in the eighteenth century as the North Mountains. Between these rise the Massanutten Mountains. The Valley extends almost 180 miles southwest from the Potomac River to a point just south of the James River. The floor of the Valley contains rolling hills and fertile limestone soil, with slopes varying from 3% in the northern portion to 12 to 15% in the south. Approximately 26 miles wide at what is now Winchester, the Valley narrows to not more than 8 miles at present-day Lexington. The climate now is moderate, with average temperatures ranging from 70 to 75 in summer and 30 to 34 in winter. Nevertheless, at least one eighteenth-century traveler complained of cold weather with ice and snow. In the early eighteenth century, the Valley probably was covered by forests of oak, chestnut, poplar, hickory, maple, walnut, locust, and pine, with "no single uninterrupted grassland." Meandering through the northern portion of the Valley were the South and North forks of the Shenandoah River, one on either side of the Massanutten range, joining east of the Manassas Gap near present-day Front Royal, and flowing north until emptying into the Potomac at what is now Harper's Ferry. Its numerous bends and low level, except in late winter and early spring, rendered it of little use in transportation.<sup>19</sup>

#### European Exploration of the Shenandoah Valley

Although "fur trappers and Indian traders" had known about the Valley since the mid-seventeenth century, and several Europeans had explored it during that period, serious attempts to examine and settle the Valley began in the early eighteenth century. Several Swiss, led by Lewis Michel, explored the northern portion in 1704 or 1705, hoping to establish there a colony of their compatriots. Simultaneously, one of Michel's associates, Christoph de Graffenreid, proposed a colony on the Shenandoah River. Neither project materialized.<sup>20</sup>

Slightly more than a decade later, in 1716, British explored the Valley. Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood, vigorous promoter of Virginia's expansion into the interior, led an expedition consisting of 62 men, "mostly gentlemen" explorers, 14 men called "rangers," and 4 Indian guides beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Shenandoah

19. Robert D. Mitchell, *Commercialism and Frontier: Perspectives on the Early Shenandoah Valley* (Charlottesville University Press of Virginia, 1977), 19-25.

20. *Ibid.*, 16, 25-26.

River. "They took possession of the country, for Great Britain, by marking it with papers sealed in many wine bottles that they had emptied the night before." When the group returned to the capital, Spotswood gave each of the "gentlemen" who had accompanied him "golden horse-shoes," some of which were "studded with valuable stones." Subsequently, the legend of Spotswood's "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe" helped to stimulate interest in "westward expansion."<sup>21</sup>

### Germans' Settlements in the Shenandoah Valley

The vast majority of the early Europeans who began to settle in the Valley during the mid-1720s did not come from Tidewater Virginia. They were Scots-Irish, Germans, and German-speaking Swiss whose previous homes were in Pennsylvania. Increasing population density east of the Susquehanna River, the rising cost of land, and difficulty in obtaining clear titles persuaded them to move south. Lower prices and available fertile land abandoned by the Indians attracted them to the Valley.<sup>22</sup>

Many of the Germans traveled the "Philadelphia Wagon Road [that] ran west through Lancaster to Harris' Ferry on the Susquehanna River and thence through York to Williams' Ferry across the Potomac, where the road entered the Shenandoah Valley."<sup>23</sup> Then they followed a major Indian trail which in the 1740s became the "Valley Pike," also known as the "Great Wagon Road" (the present Route 11), though some took routes farther east and west.<sup>24</sup> Germans settled primarily in what were or became Frederick, Shenandoah, Rockingham, and Page counties, some spilling over into adjoining counties. Although settlement was slow during the 1730s and 1740s, it increased rapidly between 1750 and

21. Warren R. Hofstra, *Land Policy and Settlement in the Northern Shenandoah Valley*, in Robert D. Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1991), 105; David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away*, 101-102.

22. "Open Letter from Pennsylvania in America," November 25, 1738, in Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren in Colonial America: A Source Book on the Transportation and Development of the Church of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century* (Eigin, Illinois: Brethren Press, 1967), 44; Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South* (New York: Atheneum, 1963, originally published in 1952), 122; Hofstra, "Land Policy and Settlement in the Northern Shenandoah Valley," in Robert D. Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers: Settlement, Society, and Development in the Preindustrial Era* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1991), 114-115; and Mitchell, *Commercialism* 33-34.

23. Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, 129-30.

24. "Extracts from the Dairy of Leonhard Schnell and Robert Hussey of Their Journey to Georgia, November 6, 1743 - April 10, 1744". *Virginia Historical Magazine*, XI,4 (April 1904): 372, n.; and Mitchell, *Commercialism*, 149.

1776 when approximately 20,000 to 25,000 German settlers lived among the Valley's approximately 50,000 residents.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, the Germans' departure from their earlier homes was consistent with a tendency to migrate that some had demonstrated since their arrival in Pennsylvania. Lutheran pastor Henry Melchior Muhlenberg observed that half of the members of his Providence (Trappe) congregation located in what was then Philadelphia County, some thirty miles northwest of the city, had moved during the first five years of his ministry. He met them again as he traveled to the interior to preach and administer the Church's sacraments and rites.<sup>26</sup> Bringing along traditional cultural patterns, the German-speaking settlers' new home in the Valley became known as "Greater Pennsylvania."<sup>27</sup>

In their former lands to the north, the Germans had lived among or near Scots-Irish and English inhabitants. They did so to an even greater degree in the Shenandoah Valley.<sup>28</sup> Germans constituted the vast majority of the inhabitants of Northampton, Berks, Lancaster, and York counties during the mid-eighteenth century,<sup>29</sup> alarming the colony leaders including Benjamin Franklin and William Smith.<sup>30</sup> Initially, they prevailed numerically in the northern portion of the Shenandoah Valley also. The Scots-Irish were more numerous in the southern area. In time, English settlers moved west from the Tidewater and added to the ethnic mix as they had in Pennsylvania. By the 1770s, the population of the northern Valley's Frederick County was one-third German and one-fourth Scots-Irish. Most of the rest was English.<sup>31</sup>

The physical characteristics of the Germans' Virginia settlements

25. Wust, *Virginia Germans*; Hart, *Valley of Virginia*, 34, n. 3; Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, 121.

26. Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstein, eds., *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1942-1958), Vol. 1, 142, 261.

27. Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, 136.

28. Richard K. MacMaster, "Religion, Migration, and Pluralism: A Shenandoah Valley Community, 1740-1790," in Puglisi, ed., *Diversity and Accommodation*, 83; Sally Schwartz, "Religious Pluralism in Colonial Pennsylvania," in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers*, 52.

29. Scott Swank, "The German Fragment," in Scott Swank, ed., *The Arts of the Pennsylvania Germans: A Winterthur Book* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), 16; David J. Cuff, et al., eds., *Atlas of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 88.

30. Leonard W. Labaree, et al., *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961-), Vol. 4, 234; Horace Wemyss Smith, ed., *Life and Correspondence of the Rev. William Smith, D. D...* (Philadelphia: S. A. George, 1879), 29-31.

31. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 37; and Hofstra, "Land Policy," in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontier*, 118.

were similar to those in Pennsylvania. The rolling hills of the Valley's floor resembled those in southeastern Pennsylvania that they had left. In Pennsylvania and later in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley they usually purchased tracts of significant size and lived on comparatively isolated farms. There they constructed dwellings, barns, and out-buildings in a distinctively Pennsylvania German style. Only after a generation or so had lived in the Valley did towns such as Winchester, Harrisonburg, Woodstock, and Strasburg emerge. The founder of Strasburg, Peter Stover, named the town for his native city in Alsace; Woodstock originally was Müllerstadt.<sup>32</sup>

Of course, the Germans spoke their own language. Although the settlers' European homes had been in different parts of what is now Germany and Switzerland, their provincial dialogues and differences blended rapidly. Most understood standard German, the "Hochsprache," which was used in much verbal and all written communication. Nevertheless, the settlers' local dialects blended into "Valley Dutch" which some continued to use even in the twentieth century. Seldom in the eighteenth century and only gradually in the nineteenth did the German settlers add English to their linguistic skills.<sup>33</sup>

### Religious Diversity

Using the German language, the early settlers held religious services during which they expressed a variety of beliefs, as they had in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Lieutenant Governor George Thomas observed in 1748 that the German settlers had not only "imported all the religious whimsies of their home land," but subdivided even further in America.<sup>34</sup> Dissenters from the Anglican establishment enjoyed freedom of worship

32. Mitchell, *Commercialism*, 19; and Cuff, et al., *Atlas of Pennsylvania*, 20; Hofstra, "Land Policy," in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers*, 105; and Hofstra, "Land, Ethnicity, and Community at the Opequon Settlement, Virginia, 1730-1800," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 98 (1990): 440; Donald W. Linebaugh, "Folk Art, Architecture, and Artifact: Toward a Material Understanding of German Culture in the Upper Valley of Virginia," in David C. Crass, et al., eds. *The Southern Colonial Back Country: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Frontier Communities* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1998), 205-06; Fischer, *Bound Away*, 113-14; and Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 64.

33. Smith, et al., eds. *Germans of the Shenandoah Valley*, 243-51; and Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 187-91.

34. Governor George Thomas to the Bishop of Exeter, April 23, 1748, in William S. Perry, *Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church*, 5 vols. (Hartford: Printed for Subscribers, 1870-1878), II, 256; and Sally Schwartz, "Religious Pluralism in Colonial Pennsylvania," in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers*, 53-64.

as a result of the British Parliament's Act of Toleration of 1689 that was written into the "Statute Law of Virginia in 1699." The unenforced law that all had to attend their parish (Anglican) church was changed in 1744 to the equally unenforcible requirement that everyone was to go to Anglican or Dissenter services regularly.<sup>35</sup>

Nevertheless, Dissenting ministers had to register with their county courts, specifying where they intended to preach. Although Virginia's Attorney General Peyton Randolph attempted in the late 1740s to restrain Scots-Irish Presbyterian clergy, such as Samuel Davies, the Germans did not experience similar difficulties.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, Virginia's Lieutenant Governor Sir William Gooch, who served from 1727 to 1749, had assured non-English settlers that they would not be hindered in their particular ways of worship. He made that pronouncement to encourage settlement of the Valley.<sup>37</sup> Even earlier Lieutenant Governor Spotswood had permitted the German ironworkers, whom he had brought to his Germanna Forge on the Rapidan River in 1714, to conduct Reformed services. When German Lutherans accidentally settled in Virginia in 1716, Spotswood granted them similar dispensation.<sup>38</sup>

These "church people" or "gay Dutch" as they came to be called in Pennsylvania because of their worldly, fun-loving ways, were most prominent numerically among the early German settlers in the Shenandoah Valley.<sup>39</sup> Roman Catholics, also theoretically "church people," never became numerous.<sup>40</sup> The Lutherans and Reformed, the latter also known as Calvinists, or "Dutch Presbyterians," lived in almost all of the

35. George M. Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church and the Conditions Under Which It Grew: The Story of the Anglican Church and the Development of Religion in Virginia*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Church Historical Society, 1952), Vol. 2, 43-45.

36. George William Pilcher, *Samuel Davies: Apostle of Dissent in Colonial Virginia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), 120-25; Leonard J. Trinterud, *The Forming of an American Tradition: A Re-examination of Colonial Presbyterianism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1949), 130; Wesley M. Gewehr, *The Great Awakening in Virginia, 1740-1790* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1930), 41-42, 54-58, 74-85.

37. Hofstra, "Land Policy," in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers*, 106-07.

38. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 20-21; and William J. Hinke, *Ministers of the German Reformed Congregations in Pennsylvania and Other Colonies in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. George W. Richards (Lancaster: Historical Commission of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1951), 485.

39. Hart, *Valley of Virginia*, 34, n. 3; and Klaus Wust, "German Mystics and Sabbatarians in Virginia, 1700-1764," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 72, 3 (1964), 331; Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, 1, 485.

40. Moravian missionaries met one Catholic, Stephen Schmidt, on their journey. "Extracts From the Diary of Leonhard Schnell and Robert Hussey of Their Journey to Georgia, November 6, 1743-April 10, 1744," in "Moravian Diaries of travels through Virginia," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* XI (1904), 374. See also Smith, et al., *Pennsylvania Germans in the Shenandoah Valley*, 69.

German settlements.<sup>41</sup> Exactly when they began to hold services is impossible to determine; however, in 1735 the Pennsylvania-based Lutheran John Casper Stoever, Jr., might have been the first German pastor to have performed baptisms among them.<sup>42</sup> "Sect People," so called because they had withdrawn from the legally established churches in order to live apart from what they considered a sinful world, or the "Plain Dutch" who dressed and lived more simply, also came early to the Valley from Pennsylvania, possibly beginning in 1727. Of them, the Mennonites were most numerous.<sup>43</sup> German Baptists, called Dunkards because of their practice of baptism by immersion, arrived later, in the early 1750s.<sup>44</sup> Simultaneously, several Seventh Day Baptists left Conrad Beissel's Cloisters at Ephrata in Pennsylvania and established monastic communities in the Valley. Similar to their Pennsylvania counterparts, they were Pietists who stressed pious living, adult baptism, celibacy, and pacifism.<sup>45</sup> There may be as well a few Inspirationists who believed that they received divine revelations. Although the religious diversity of the Germans in Virginia was not quite as extreme as in Pennsylvania, it was far greater than among Scots-Irish settlers who were with only a few exceptions Presbyterian and the English, most of whom were at least nominally Anglican prior to the Great Awakening.<sup>46</sup>

### Problems

The problems that the German-speaking settlers experienced in developing their religious institutions in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia were similar to those that they had in Pennsylvania. Their difficulties were more extreme in Virginia, however, because of their more rural settlement pattern. Eighteenth-century Virginia Germans had few supportive urban concentrations comparable to Philadelphia, Germantown, Lancaster, Reading, York, or Hanover, or even Frederick or Hagerstown in the colony of Maryland. Nor did they have much contact with

41. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 130.

42. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 25; and Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 485; Stoever's Shenandoah Valley baptismal and marriage record, appears in Eisenberg, *Heritage*, 313-21.

43. J.C. Wenger, *The Mennonite Church in America* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1966), 36,46-51, 84-86.

44. Morgan Edwards, "Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in Virginia," in Durnbaugh, ed., *Brethren in Colonial America*, 189; and Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 85.

45. Klaus Wust, "German Mystics and Sabbatarinans in Virginia, 1700-1764," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, LXXII (1964): 330-47.

46. Kenneth W. Keller, "What is Distinctive About the Scots-Irish?" in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers*, 79-81; and MacMaster, "Religion, Migration, and Pluralism, in Puglisi, ed., *Diversity and Accommodation*, 93.

the Tidewater Virginians, as did the Hebron German Lutherans in Madison County, east of the mountains. The northern portion of the Valley, where most Germans settled initially was occupied by small farms.<sup>47</sup> Because the farms were widely scattered, the settlers were comparatively isolated. Scots-Irish Presbyterians in the Valley experienced a similar problem.<sup>48</sup>

These Shenandoah settlers suffered in their religious development from a scarcity of capable qualified leaders. For the minority of sectarians, the problem was not as intense as for the "church people." The "plain people" did not require formal education or approval of their ministers by European church officials. Mennonites, Dunkards, and other such groups selected their leaders from their own congregations.<sup>49</sup> The Lutherans and Reformed, in contrast, normally required of their clergymen university training and the rite of ordination. Even in Pennsylvania, with its more numerically dense German population, pastors who could meet these specifications were scarce. By the mid-eighteenth century, when there might have been as many as one hundred thousand German-speaking Pennsylvanians, there were not more than a half-dozen qualified clergymen to serve them.<sup>50</sup> Pennsylvania Reformed minister John Philip Boehm complained in 1734, that "the decline of true religion is indeed deplorable in this country, and whence does it come from but a lack of faithful and orthodox ministers?"<sup>51</sup> Among the Virginia Germans, only the Hebron congregation, east of the mountains, had a settled pastor before the 1770s. In the Shenandoah Valley, none remained more than a year or two during the first half century of German settlement. Frequent appeals during the third quarter of the

47. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 5-13; Hofstra, "Land Policy," 105; Hofstra, "Land, Ethnicity, and Community," 440; and Andrew Burnaby, *Travels through the Middle Settlements of North America in the years 1759 and 1760 with observations on the state of the colonies*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), 40, originally published in 1775.

48. Kenneth W. Keller, "What Is Distinctive about the Scotch-Irish?," in Mitchell, ed., *Appalachian Frontiers*, 75.

49. Wenger, *Mennonite Church*, 77; and Stapleton, *Brethren in Virginia*, 28.

50. For estimates of the German-speaking population of Pennsylvania, see Howard F. Barker "National Stocks in the Population of the United States as Indicated by Surnames....," in *Annual Reports of the American Historical Association for the Year of 1931*, I (Washington, D.C., 1932) 294-98; and Everts B. Greene and Virginia Harrington, *American Population before the Federal Census of 1790* (New York: Columbia 1932), 114-18.

51. Boehm and Consistory to Velingius, October 28, 1734, in William J. Hinke, ed., *Life and Letters of John Philip Boehm: Founder of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania, 1683-1749* (Philadelphia: Publication and Sunday School Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1916) 239.

century to Pennsylvania's Lutheran ministerium and Reformed coetus, those denominations' administrative bodies, produced no resident pastors. Again and again the secretary of the Reformed coetus lamented plaintively "we have not the means to help them."<sup>52</sup> Even if German-speaking clergymen could have been enticed to the Valley, it is doubtful that adequate remuneration would have been available. German "church people" in Pennsylvania had difficulty in providing salaries for their pastors. The German Lutheran Halle Missionary Society refused to send a pastor to the Philadelphia, Providence, and New Hanover congregations, the latter two approximately 30 and 45 miles respectively northwest of the city, because members would not specify a salary.<sup>53</sup> Only when threatened by ecclesiastical competitors did Halle officials remove that requirement. The pastor whom they sent in 1742, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, later complained that he had to use funds from his father-in-law, Conrad Weiser, in order to pay his bills. His parishioners, he explained, did not pay in cash but instead provided eggs, chickens, and other types of food.<sup>54</sup> Pioneer German Reformed clergyman John Philip Boehm, who served the Philadelphia, Falkner Swamp, and other congregations in southeastern Pennsylvania, claimed that he could continue his ministry only "by the work of his hands" and through the efforts of his son Anthony William who managed his father's lands.<sup>55</sup> A German Lutheran pastor in New York observed concerning his parishioners' contributions that "one person will not pay; another cannot, the third moves away, and the fourth dies."<sup>56</sup>

52. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 8-16; Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 130-31; "Diarium des Herm, Pastor Helmuths zu Philadelphia, June 17, 1784," in *Nachrichten von den vereinigten Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Gemeinen in Nord-America, absonderlich in Pennsylvanien*. eds. W.J. Mann and W. Germann, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: P.G.C. Eisenhart, 1895), II, 761; and "Minutes of the Coetus of 1771," in *Minutes and Letters of the Coetus of the German Reformed Congregations in Pennsylvania 1747-1792 Together With Three Preliminary Reports of Rev. John Philip Boehm, 1734-1744* (Philadelphia: Reformed Church Publication Board, 1903), 311-12. The Coetus had received previous requests in 1747 and 1766 and received another in 1791. See *Minutes and Letters*, 37, 250, 311-12, 445. The quotation appears on 312.

53. *Reports of the United German Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in North America* J. Mann, et al., eds. C.W. Schaffer, trans., 2 vols. (Reading: Globe Printing House, 1882), I, 177.

54. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 91, 518 and 533.

55. Boehm to the Deputies of the Synod, July 9, 1744; and Boehm to the Classis of Amsterdam, January 29, 1730, in Hinke, ed., *Life and Letters*, 426-27 and 184-85. See also 146.

56. Minutes of the Church Council, October 26, 1741, in *Protocol of the Lutheran Church in New York City, 1702-1750*, trans. Simon Hart and Harry J. Kreider (New York: Published . . . by the Synod, 1958), 316.

To remedy shortfalls, beginning in the 1740s and continuing throughout the colonial period, Reformed Church officials in the Netherlands subsidized their Pennsylvania counterparts with advice and funds. Early German "church people" in Virginia even requested financial assistance from the Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel which was providing a clergyman for the German settlers in the Hudson and Mohawk River valleys of New York. But the SPG members decided that Virginia was not under "the immediate care of the Society" and that they could not "properly send a missionary hither." They assuaged their consciences by sending twenty five German language copies of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer instead.<sup>57</sup>

The early Scots-Irish Presbyterians in the Valley received more prompt and effective assistance. In 1738, the Synod of Philadelphia instructed "a committee of two," to ask Lieutenant Governor Gooch for assurance of toleration, and to permit a Presbyterian ministry in the "back country," requests that he granted immediately. Even before, in 1736, Samuel Gelston had visited Presbyterians in the Opequon Creek settlement. Other ministerial visits followed frequently with expenses paid by the synod. In 1740, the Donegal Presbytery of south-central Pennsylvania authorized John Craig to accept a call from the Triple Forks congregation in the southern portion of the Valley in what became Augusta County. At least two additional Presbyterian ministers settled in the Valley later in the 1740s. Not until decades later did neighboring the German Lutheran and Reformed have settled ministers.<sup>58</sup>

Virginia's Anglican parishes also were better-staffed, at least quantitatively. In 1775, "Virginia and Maryland had 143 churches and 136 ministers," but whether Anglicans were better served than the German church people is debatable. Though over ninety per cent their parishes were filled in 1773, the Virginia Anglican priest Devereux Jarrett observed that "many souls are perishing for lack of knowledge, many are crying for the bread of life, and no man is found to break it to them." He asked rhetorically, "Is not then our situation truly deplorable?"

57. See "Classis of Amsterdam to the German Churches in Pennsylvania, November 28, 1728," in Boehm, *Life and Letters*, 170-71, and "Minutes of the Coetus," 1752, in *Minutes and Letters*, 69, and "Journals of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel," 63 vols., Vol. 4, 98, ms. in Rhodes House Library, Oxford University, Oxford, England.

58. *Records of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* ... (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication ..., 1904), 142, 147, 138, 181-82, 193, 197, 199, 205, 215, 220, 226, 234, 237, 239, 247; and Gewehr, *Great Awakening*, 40-44.

"Some Anglican clergymen were scandalous men who managed to blemish the reputations of all . . ." Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie reported to the Bishop of London in 1757 that the members of Anglican rector John Branshill's Hamilton Parish in Prince William County had charged him with "monstrous immoralities, profane swearing, drunkenness, and very immodest actions." The "charges were proved, and the governor removed him from his parish" and forbade him to officiate as a clergyman in Virginia.<sup>59</sup>

The German "church people" had no resident clergy and were forced to make do with a bunch at least as scandalous as the Anglicans. Some were downright imposters. They had failed in Europe and in Pennsylvania and so wandered to Virginia. Muhlenberg charged the Lutheran Carl Rudolf was "not a regularly ordained pastor but a vagabond . . . who [passes] himself off as a Lutheran preacher and roves about the whole country, whoring, stealing, gluttonizing, and swilling" Impiricus Schmidt, initially a dentist, was another whom Muhlenberg called "a quacksalver by profession." He labeled another "the very paragon of the apostles of Satan . . . who set himself up as a Lutheran preacher, talked like an angel, and lived in the grossest kind of vice."<sup>60</sup> Even as late as 1792, the unordained John Peter Ahl, a physician and druggist with whom the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania would "have nothing to do," intruded into congregations in the Valley.<sup>61</sup>

In light of some German settlers' desire for congregational life in their own traditions, the temptation to join other denominations became too strong to resist. This was especially true as the German settlers adopted the English language.<sup>62</sup> During the 1760s the Baptist preacher James Ireland inspired Mennonites of the Mill Creek congregation, near Luray, to join his denomination. In Rockingham County, he formed out of the Mennonites what he called the "Mennonist Baptist Church." Mennonite leaders were so concerned about Baptist proselytizers that they requested aid from Pennsylvania colleagues. As a result, several Mennonite preachers, including Peter Blosser, went to the

59. Gewehr, *Great Awakening*, 36-39; William W. Sweet, *Virginia Methodism: A History* (Richmond: Whillet and Shepperson, 1955,) 65, 8-9 and John F. Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism in North America* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1984), 23, 34. For a more favorable account of Virginia's Anglican clergy, see Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism*, 23. The quotations appear in Sweet, *Virginia Methodism*, 65, 8, and Woolverton, *Colonial Anglicanism*, 23;

60. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 154, 160. See also Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 30.

61. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 15; and Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 131.

62. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 134-35; and Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 44-45.

Shenandoah Valley to combat this "work of Satan."<sup>63</sup> Some of the German Reformed joined the Presbyterians, especially when they moved farther west. Although the early settler Jost Hite was Lutheran, three of his sons became Anglicans. His son John served on the Frederick Parish vestry in 1752.<sup>64</sup>

To add to the German settlers' religious problems, frontier warfare erupted during the mid-1750s. Indians, allegedly aroused by the French, attacked outlying settlements. By 1755, "Virginia's long frontier was ablaze." "George Washington reported to Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie that the Shenandoah Valley was lost."<sup>65</sup> The traveling Anglican priest Andrew Burnaby noted that the "southern Indians are numerous [and] never make war on the colonists without carrying terror and devastation along with them." He charged that in the vicinity of Winchester they "daily committed the most horrid cruelties." Colonel George Washington tried to protect the growing town by building a fort there.<sup>66</sup> Observing that war was sweeping over British America, German Reformed minister William Stoy prayed "May God keep us from falling into the hands of the barbarians, who are more savage than wild beasts." He later charged that "They scalped the living, and what is more even the dead. I myself have seen them slay them and mutilate their bodies with tomahawks."<sup>67</sup> Lutheran pastor Handschuh called the contest between European settlers and American Indians "merciless."<sup>68</sup>

What is known as the French and Indian War (or "The Great War for the Empire."<sup>69</sup>) disrupted all aspects of the Valley settlers' lives, including the religious. Whether the Indians' attacks caused the Germans to be more diligent in prayer is not a matter of record, but other reactions are. Some left the area. When a Mennonite family and fifty others were killed in an Indian raid in May, 1758, thirty nine Men-

63. Brunk, *Mennonites in Virginia*, 25-28.

64. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 94, 47, 34.

65. John E. Ferling, "School for Command: Young George Washington and the Virginia Regiment," in Warren R. Hofstra ed., *George Washington and the Virginia Frontier* (Madison: Madison House, 1998), 202

66. Burnaby, *Travels*, 40-41 and Warren R. Hofstra, "A parcel of Barbarians . . .," in Hofstra, ed., *Washington*, 88-92.

67. William Stoy, "Letter on the Special Coetus . . .," October 8, 1755; and "Letter to the Classical Deputies," September 30, 1757, in *Minutes and Letters*, 133 and 163.

68. "Auszug eines Schreibens des Herr Pastor Handschuhs [John Frederick Handschuh] an den Herm Hofprediger Ziegenhagen . . .," November 23, 1756, in *Nachrichten*, 214.

69. Lawrence H. Gipson, "The American Revolution As An Aftermath of the Great War for the Empire," *Political Science Quarterly* 65 (1950): 89-104.

nonite families were among the several hundred settlers who went back to eastern Pennsylvania.<sup>70</sup> Such attacks prompted Virginia Mennonites to appeal for aid from their Dutch co-religionists in Amsterdam so that they could "be guided through the valley of grief."<sup>71</sup> When the Indian attacks began, the German Seventh Day Baptist community at Sandy Hook, near Strasburg, became a refuge for others in the area; however, after raids on June 1, 1764, most of the residents retreated to safer quarters in Pennsylvania. Ezekiel Sangmeister, a Seventh Day Baptist, thanked God for making them go.<sup>72</sup>

Following previous Indian attacks in 1753, Seventh Day German Baptists who remained at Monhannaim settlement on the New River in southwestern Virginia went south, instead of north. They settled in the Moravian community at Bethabara in North Carolina.<sup>73</sup> Virginia Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie charged the settlers of Augusta County with "shamefully" deserting "their plantations for Fear of an Enemy . . . leaving everything that they have, and seek[ing] for Settlements in some other County . . ." He promised that Colonel George Washington would provide "the utmost security."<sup>74</sup> Nevertheless, Indian incursions continued. At Powell's Fort, the Mennonite minister John Rhodes, his wife, and several sons were killed, and his daughters captured and held by the Indians for three years.<sup>75</sup> According to tradition, one who remained in the Valley hid in the mountains to avoid war.<sup>76</sup> In all, there were approximately "3,000 casualties along the Appalachian frontier."<sup>77</sup> In the 1760s, however, the defeat of the French, the increasing density of European settlements, and the withdrawal of the Indians to the West allowed some refugees to return to their homes.<sup>78</sup>

For the Lutherans and Reformed, defending themselves from physical attacks was not an ethical problem; but it was for members of the

70. Brunk, *Mennonites in Virginia*, 32-34.

71. Michael Kaufman, et al. to "fellow believers" in the Netherlands, September 7, 1758," Photocopies in Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, filed under "Dutch West India Company," trans. Mrs. Peter Hohendahl. See also MacMaster, *Conscience in Crisis*, 127-29.

72. Wust, *Saint-Adventures*, 52-53.

73. Wust, "German Mystics," 340-41; and Wust, *Saint-Adventurers*, 40.

74. Quoted in Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities*, 125. See also Hofstra, "A Parcel of Barbarians" in Hofstra, ed., *Washington and the Virginia Back Country*, 88-93.

75. Brunk, *Mennonites in Virginia*, 34-35.

76. Richard B. MacMaster, et al., *Conscience in Crisis . . .* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1979), 293.

77. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 38.

78. Stapleton, *Brethren in Virginia*, 22.

German "Peace churches," such as the Dunkards (Brethren) and Mennonites. English Quakers in the colony had similar compunctions. They refused to comply with Virginia's militia law. Strasburg area residents, Christian Crabell and John Funkhauser, Jr., paid fines for their violations in 1761. In 1769 and 1771 they petitioned the provincial legislature for "exemption from the militia system on religious grounds."<sup>79</sup>

Although the Valley settlements were not ravaged during the War for American Independence as they had been during the previous conflict, they were affected. The inhabitants again were called upon to participate. Peter Muhlenberg of Woodstock headed the Dunmore (later Shenandoah) County Committee of Safety in 1774 and in 1775 became an officer in the Continental Army. In early 1776, he recruited his neighbors to form a "German Regiment that marched with him to join General Washington in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Recruiting continued in the Valley during the conflict.<sup>80</sup> Valley Mennonites again declined to join military units, provide substitutes, list tithables in their families, or pay fines. The Virginia Assembly authorized the county sheriffs to seize their property to pay substitutes. The Dunkards' annual meeting expressed opposition to military service by the Brethren in 1778 and again in 1779. The 1780 and 1781 meetings even forbade swearing allegiance to the new American nation. Mennonites continued after the war to petition the legislature for relief from required militia service.<sup>81</sup>

### Attempts to Solve Problems

Lutheran pastor Henry Melchior Muhlenberg recognized that some German-speaking settlers who moved to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia had developed "an antipathy and repugnance to churches . . . and prefer [red] to dwell in darkness where their works will not be exposed to light." Yet, he knew of others who went "to the still uncultivated wilderness" who hungered for "the Word of God." They were, he confided to his journal, as "in a desert where there is not water."<sup>82</sup>

Gradually, religiously inclined German-speaking settlers in the

79. MacMaster, *Conscience in Crisis*, 156.

80. Hart, *Valley of Virginia*, 83-101; and Paul A.W. Wallace, *The Muhlenbergs of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, (1950), 116-117, 134, 168-172, 185-186, 190-196, and 219-234.

81. MacMaster, *Conscience in Crisis*, 297, 373, 271; Sappington, *Brethren in Virginia*, 64.

82. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 141,142.

Shenandoah Valley solved many of their problems as they had in Pennsylvania. Some provided for their own spiritual nurture. The presence of religious literature in their homes suggests that they conducted some type of family worship. Some German and Swiss had brought with them from Europe family Bibles. In addition, they had various devotional tracts, hymnals, and catechisms. Mennonite Martin Kaufman even possessed a copy in 1749 of the "1,498-page Martyr Spiegel" [Martyr's Mirror] that described the sufferings of his predecessors in the faith. Probably practices were as informal, and perhaps irregular, as the worship of the Scots-Irish to the south in Hanover County.<sup>83</sup> As time passed, lay leaders emerged in various areas who brought and held together people of particular persuasions who had been accustomed in Europe to belonging to communities, villages, and churches.<sup>84</sup> Sectarians had habitually to chosen preachers from among themselves,<sup>85</sup> but this was foreign to the "Church People." Nevertheless, they adapted to their circumstances. At the pastorless Reformed congregation in Frederick, Maryland, members would read from the Bible, or from a book of sermons, or entertain each other with religious conversation. They sometimes sang a psalm or hymn, and prayed.<sup>86</sup> Numerous congregations followed the pattern developed in Pennsylvania's Tulpehocken region, where Indian negotiator Weiser assembled "the congregation on Sundays and other holy days, read them a good sermon and catechized their children."<sup>87</sup>

When schoolmasters entered the Valley, they were pressed into religious service, as the Reformed John Philip Boehm had been by the Falkner Swamp congregation in Pennsylvania.<sup>88</sup> Beginning in the 1770s and continuing possibly into the 1790s, Simon Harr served as lay reader for the Lutheran congregation in Strasburg. Recognizing his deficiencies, he wrote to Muhlenburg for advice and received from him devo-

83. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 56, and George W. Pilcher, *Samuel Davies: Apostle of Dissent in Colonial Virginia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1971), 28.

84. Wust *Virginia Germans*, 130; and Timothy L. Smith, "Congregation, State, and Denomination: The Forming of the American Religious Structure," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series 25 (1968): 159-60.

85. Wenger, *Mennonite Church*, 77.

86. "Minutes of the Coetus," 1767, in *Minutes and Letters*, 254.

87. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 130; and Paul A. W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696-1760: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1945), 53.

88. "Report of Mr. Boehm To The Synods of North and South Holland," July 8, 1744, in Hinke, ed., *Life and Letters*, 408. See also John B. Frantz, "John Philip Boehm: Pioneer Pennsylvania Pastor," *Pennsylvania Folklife* 31 (1982): 128-134.

tional and sermon literature. Harr catechized the young, conducted worship services, and after the Revolution even performed marriage ceremonies. Carl Frederick Wildbahn was another schoolmaster-pastor. He came to America in 1755 with the British army but was discharged, worked as a printer, and then taught.<sup>89</sup>

Visiting pastors also helped to serve the German "Church People." Lutherans occasionally received the services of George Samuel Klug, pastor of the Hebron congregation on the eastern side of the mountains in Madison County. His flock consisted mostly of German immigrants who had worked on Lieutenant Governor Spotswood's iron plantation at Germanna, on the Rapidan River, in 1717. By 1725, they had moved farther inland.<sup>90</sup> The Hebron congregation's first resident pastor was John Casper Stoever, Sr., who arrived in 1733. The next year, he went to Europe to obtain assistance for his congregation, where he secured monetary contributions and Klug's services as his assistant. Klug succeeded him when Stoever died at sea on the return trip in 1739. Now supplied with funds, the Hebron congregation constructed a church, parsonage, and schoolhouse; bought a farm and slaves to work it, which enabled Klug to live "according to refined and sensuous taste," similar to some of his Anglican colleagues with whom he associated.<sup>91</sup> Despite Klug's high living, until his death in 1764, he made frequent journeys across the mountains to serve Valley Lutherans along the Massanutten range, including those in the vicinity of McGaheysville, Mt. Crawford, and Strasburg.<sup>92</sup>

Even before Klug, Lutheran John Casper Stoever, Jr., the younger son of Hebron's first pastor, had been the first of the Pennsylvania pastors to visit the Valley. Ordained in 1733, he began tours of the Valley in 1734 and continued at least through the remaining years of that decade, marrying and baptizing their children, not necessarily in that order, at settlements known as Massanutten, Shenandoah, and Opequon. Although Stoever began church record books for Pennsylvania congregations, Valley Lutherans seem not to have been sufficiently organized in their early years of settlement. Muhlenberg questioned the

89. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 41-42, 39-41; and Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 51-52.

90. Spotswood established the settlement of Germans on what was then the frontier as a defense "to resist Indian attack." Dodson, *Spotswood*, 280-81.

91. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 18-25, 44; Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 5-16; and Roeber, *Palatines, Liberty, and Property*, 135-41. The quotation appears in Roeber, *Palatines...*, 139.

92. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 22; Eisenberg, *Lutherans in Virginia*, 24-25; Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 223.

validity of his ordination, characterized his behavior as "disreputable", and accused him of public drunkenness. Not until 1763 was Stoever admitted to the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.<sup>93</sup>

The German Halle Missionary Society sent Muhlenberg to America in 1742, and in 1746, the Reformed synods of North and South Holland dispatched the German-speaking Swiss minister Michael Schlatter to Pennsylvania.<sup>94</sup> Muhlenberg never traveled farther inland than the Monocacy region of western Maryland (in the vicinity of what is now Frederick). On the other hand, Schlatter went on an extensive missionary tour in 1748 that included also the Shenandoah Valley. He preached and baptized children near present-day Winchester, Strasburg, Woodstock, New Market, and Harrisonburg.<sup>95</sup> He never returned to Virginia and nearly a decade passed before Reformed clergymen arrived. Beginning in the mid-1750s, however, visits by itinerants increased. While serving the Frederick, Maryland, congregation in 1757, John Conrad Steiner made several visits to the Valley and preached at Winchester, Lovettsville, and elsewhere. Beginning in the 1760s, visits by ordained Reformed ministers who served congregations in Frederick, Hagerstown, York, and Lancaster became more frequent. In the early 1780s the Lutheran Ministerium sent Daniel Kurtz and Jacob Goering to visit Lutherans in Winchester, Stevens City, Strasburg, Woodstock, and the Staunton area.<sup>96</sup>

Sectarian missionaries also arrived on an irregular basis. Moravian Bishop Nicholas von Zinzendorf wanted to establish a "Congregation of God in the Spirit" in which German settlers in America were to de-emphasize their doctrinal differences and stress instead their experience of God through Christ.<sup>97</sup> His emissaries spread this message especially in the Middle Colonies of Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jer-

93. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 139-43; Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 22-24; Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 68 and 154.

94. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 7 and 65; Henry Harbaugh, *The Life of Rev. Michael Schlatter with a full account of his Travels and Labors among the Germans...* (Philadelphia: S.R. Fisher, 1857), 32-33, and 45-48

95. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 158-59; and Schlatter's "Journal," in Harbaugh, *Schlatter*, 173-75.

96. "Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Coetus," 1757, *Minutes and Letters*, 158-159; Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 46-47; Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 136 and 491.

97. See John R. Weinlich, *Count Zinzendorf* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1956), 16, 163-66; and Arthur J. Freeman, *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart* (Bethlehem: Moravian Church, 1998), 90-92, 98, William J. Hinke and Charles E. Kemper, eds., "Moravian Diaries of Travels Through Virginia: Extracts from the Diary of Leonard Schnell and Robert Hussey of their Journal to Georgia, November 6, 1743-April 10, 1744," *Virginia Historical Magazine* XI (1904), 373-381. The quotation appears on 378.

sey during the 1740s. Between 1743 and 1753, Moravians Leonard Schnell, Robert Hussey, Matthias Gottlieb Gottschalk, and John Brandmueller traveled through the Valley, preaching to the German settlers on the "death of the Lamb," one of their favorite themes, and baptizing their children.<sup>98</sup> If they attempted to make converts, they were not successful. Klug denied them the use of the Hebron Church and warned the Valley's Germans against them. In 1747, Virginia's Lieutenant Governor Gooch required "all magistrates and officers to discourage and prohibit...all itinerant Preachers whether New Lights, Moravians, or Methodists."<sup>99</sup> In light of such intense opposition, Moravians after 1749 discontinued their large-scale evangelism and concentrated on their own people.<sup>100</sup>

Methodistic evangelists who came later were more effective. Philip William Otterbein, pietistic German Reformed minister, had come to the Valley periodically while serving Pennsylvania and Maryland congregations. Minister of a Baltimore church after 1774, he began to hold "big meetings" in the Pipe Creek region northwest of the city. He had "the gift of awakening people" spiritually<sup>101</sup> and was attracting Mennonites and Lutherans as well as Reformed worshippers to his services. In 1789, he formed a group of ministers who called themselves the Society of the United Brethren in Christ, including "New Reformed" preachers, such as George Adam Getting and Mennonites Martin Boehm and Christian Newcomer. They came frequently to the Valley during the 1780s, 1790s, and thereafter, holding prayer meetings and sacramental services, preaching to large crowds, convicting "hoary-headed sinners," and in general having "glorious time[s]." Adapting a German pietistic and English Methodist practice, the United Brethren organized the "class system" groups led by lay people, for prayer, testi-

98. See also John Phillip Boehm, *Getreuer Warnungs Brief....* (Philadelphia: A. Bradford, 1742); and Muhlenberg, *Journal*, I, 63, 159, and 164; and Leonard R. Riforgiato, *Missionary of Moderation: Henry Melchior Muhlenberg and the Lutheran Church in English America* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1980), 108-30.

99. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 27.

100. Jacob John Sessler, *Communal Pietism Among Early American Moravians* (New York: Henry Holt: 1933), 60-71; J. Taylor Hamilton and Kenneth G. Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church . . . 1722-1957* (Bethlehem: Interprovincial Board of Christian Education, 1967), 132-39.

101. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, II, 394-95; and Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 101-03. The quotation appears in Muhlenberg, *Journal*, II, 394.

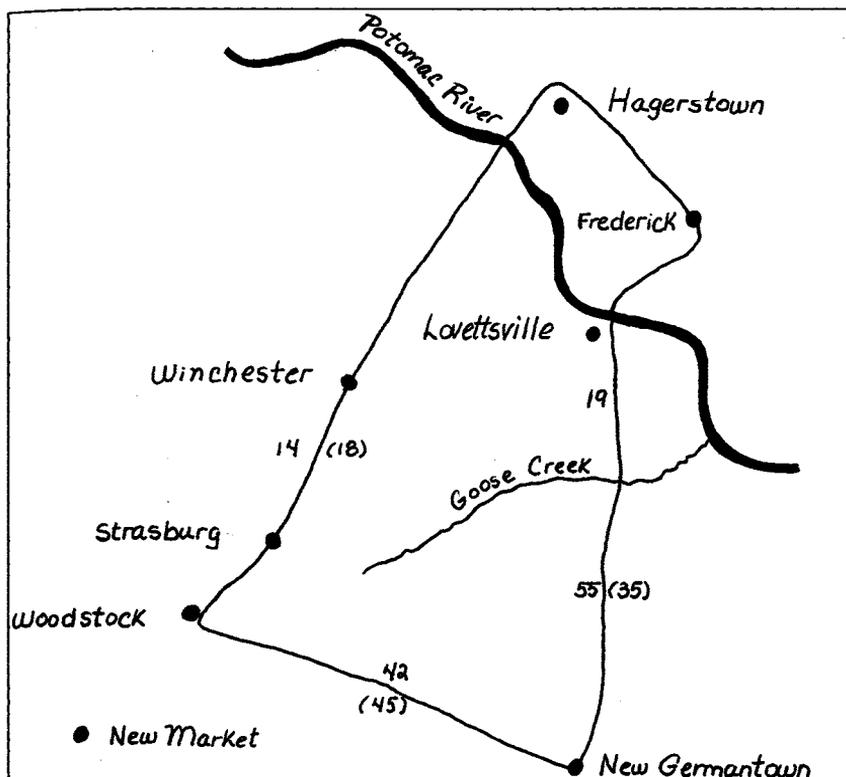


Figure 2. Map of Reformed missionary Michael Schlatter's visit to the German settlers in the Shenandoah Valley in 1748. Drawn by Judith L. Shawley

monies, and fellowship. With the followers of the former German Lutheran Jacob Albright, who became by 1815 the Evangelical Association, they were called "German Methodists."<sup>102</sup>

One of Otterbein's close friends and admirers was Francis Asbury, superintendent of the English-speaking Methodists in America who came to America from England in 1771. Although slow to develop a ministry to German settlers, in the 1780s Asbury began to recruit a corps of German-speaking evangelists. He assumed in 1781 that "could we get a Dutch [German] preacher or two to travel with us, . . . we should have a good work among the Dutch [Germans]." Asbury himself

102. Hinke, *Ministers*, 75-79; Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 134-35; and Samuel S. Hough, ed., *Christian Newcomer: His Life, Journal, and Achievements* (Dayton: Board of Administration, Church of the United Brethren in Christ, 1941, originally published in 1833), 3-6, 19-20, 23-24, 30, and 35. See also Paul H. Eller and J. Bruce Behney, *The History of the Evangelical United Brethren Church*, ed. Kenneth W. Krueger (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979). The quotations appear in *Newcomer, Journal*, 23.

went to the Shenandoah Valley, preaching in English with a German assistant during the spring of 1784 at Stephens City.<sup>103</sup> In 1790 he returned to preach at Rockingham (Harrisonburg), Woodstock, and again at Stephens City<sup>104</sup> because the people “are Germans and have no preaching in their own language.”<sup>105</sup> Asbury and other Methodists returned frequently to German communities in the Shenandoah Valley where they held “quarterly meetings” and even sessions of their annual conference in 1794 and 1806.<sup>106</sup> The coming of Methodist and United Brethren evangelists to the Shenandoah Valley increased the religious pluralism that had characterized it and other back country areas from the beginning of European settlement.

Despite the lack of legitimate ordained ministers, conflicts with Indians, and competition from other religious groups, Shenandoah Valley German church people organized congregations of their own, as they had in Pennsylvania. This was especially true of Mennonites whose congregations may have emerged as early as 1727 while the Dunkards’ (Brethren) formed in the 1770s.<sup>107</sup> Possibly because of their traditional reluctance to list members, evidence of their early activity is scarce. Some records of eighteenth-century German Lutheran and Reformed congregations have survived, however, probably provided by visiting ministers who recorded marriages, baptisms, confirmations, and communicants.<sup>108</sup> One of the earliest congregations was the Peaked Mountain Church in what became Rockingham County near what is now McGaheysville. Its list of baptisms begins in 1745 and continues irregularly thereafter.<sup>109</sup> Many surviving records, however, began only in the 1770s and became more full toward the end of the eighteenth century.

103. Elmer T. Clarke, ed., *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*, 3 vols. (Nashville: Abington Press, 1958), I, 460-61, 105, 333, 114. The quotation appears on 406.

104. *Ibid.*, I, 406, 648.

105. *Ibid.*, 648.

106. *Ibid.*, II, 15, 304-05, 360, 593; J.B. Wakely, *The Patriarch of One Hundred Years: Being the Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical of Rev. Henry Boehm* (New York: Nelson and Phillips, 1875, reprint edition, 1982), 118; and *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences Annually Held in America, 1773-1813, Inclusive* (New York: Daniel Hitt and Thomas Ward, 1813), 1794, 132, and 1809, 435; Newcomer, *Journal*, 109-10. See also John B. Frantz, “Early German Methodism in America,” *Yearbook of German-American Studies* 26 (1991), 171-84.

107. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 130; Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 485; Brunk, *Mennonites in Virginia*, 111-112, and Sappington, *Brethren in Virginia*, 36.

108. The Virginia State Library in Richmond contains photocopies and transcripts of Shenandoah Valley German Lutheran and Reformed Church records.

109. See Register, Peaked Mountain Lutheran and Reformed Church, photocopy in Virginia State Library, Richmond.

Initially, some congregations were "union churches," consisting of both Lutheran and Reformed congregations, such as the Upper Peaked Mountain Church in Dunmore (Shenandoah) County. As the Germans became able to construct buildings they often built one church for both groups, a customary practice in rural Pennsylvania. Zion's Lutheran and Reformed congregations "on the Liberty Creek, not far from Stony Creek," near Edinburg, was consecrated in 1788 with sermons by pastors of both denominations.<sup>110</sup>

Not all Lutherans and Reformed worshipped in the same building, however. In the developing towns, they constructed separate churches. Winchester's Reformed congregation received land from "Thomas Lord Fairfax, . . . Proprietor of the Northern Neck of Virginia" in 1753 and built in 1758 a wooden structure on it. Although Lutherans also probably worshipped there initially, they began to construct their own building in the early 1760s but did not complete it until the late 1780s.<sup>111</sup> In Strasburg, Lutherans must have constructed their own church and school by the late 1770s, for in 1778 they recorded payments for a chair railing and shutter hinges for the schoolhouse and boards to cover the church. In 1799, they paid Jacob Funk "for one gallon of brandy wine used at the raising of the church house roof."<sup>112</sup>

Although some Valley Lutherans and Reformed remained apart, few were as obvious about it as the Lutherans of St. Peter's Church in Augusta County. They affirmed in their records of 1777 that they would build a church "dedicated to the Apostolic Christian faith of the [Lutheran] Augsburg Confession."<sup>113</sup> Pennsylvania's Lutheran patriarch Henry Melchior Muhlenberg would have been proud, for he opposed union churches.<sup>114</sup> At least two Lutheran churches even had obtained

110. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 130; and Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 25, 55, 529, 542. For the agreement between the Lutheran and Reformed congregation at Peaked Mountain see Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 25-26; and C.W. Cassel, W.J. Finck, and Elon O. Henkel, eds., *History of the Lutheran Church in Virginia and East Tennessee* (Strasburg: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1930), 40-41.

111. See photocopy of deed from Thomas Lord Fairfax in Records of the Winchester Reformed Church, . . . 1789-1908, photo-copy in Virginia State Library, Richmond, 1-2; and Eisenberg, *This Heritage*, 19, 25, 32, 46. For the development of Winchester, see Warren R. Hofstra and Robert D. Mitchell, "Town and Country in Back Country Virginia: Winchester and the Shenandoah Valley, 1730-1800," *Journal of Southern History*, 59 (November 1993), 619-46.

112. Register, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, microfilm of transcript and translation in Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia, 236, 251.

113. Register, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, June 10, 1777, photocopy of transcript and translation in Virginia State Library, Richmond, Virginia.

114. *Halle Reports*. . . W.J. Mann, et al., eds., C.W. Schaeffer, trans., (Philadelphia: Globe Printing House, 1882), 168.

pipe organs — St. Paul's in Strasburg in 1794, Grace in Winchester in 1795 — to support the “vigorous German Protestant tradition of chorale singing” a heritage that they brought with them from Europe and Pennsylvania where several congregations had such instruments.<sup>115</sup>

Most early German Lutheran and Reformed church buildings lacked such refinements and were little more than log cabins. Toward the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, congregations constructed more substantial houses of worship. They were not nearly so large and beautiful as the Anglican churches in Tidewater, Virginia, but they were similar to those that their co-religionists built in rural Pennsylvania, often plain in style, rectangular in form and of wood, brick, or stone. Some congregations financed the construction of their buildings by conducting lotteries.

Mennonite and Brethren places of worship also were plain. Initially, believers met in the members' houses, some of which had large rooms with moveable partitions. Although Mennonites might have participated in the construction of the Old Mill Creek Church in Page County, near present-day Luray, even before 1750, they and the Brethren built few others in the eighteenth century. Indeed, by 1770, the Brethren had constructed only four in all of British America, and all in Pennsylvania. Probably they and the Mennonites built no more until the 1800s, as Mennonites and Brethren believed that house meetings were more consistent with the practices of the early Christians.<sup>116</sup>

Having formed congregations and built churches on their own, the German “church people” were eager for consistent pastoral leadership. Lutherans in the northern area of the Valley developed a distinctive approach to their difficulties in obtaining and supporting resident ministers. Because Anglicanism was the established church in Virginia, all property-holders had to contribute to its support, regardless of their denominational affiliation. In 1768, Lutherans asked Henry Melchior Muhlenberg for advice on avoiding the parish tax. He implied that a Lutheran pastor should obtain Anglican ordination, believing that there were no forbidding doctrinal differences.<sup>117</sup> In 1771, Lutherans in and around Müllerstadt (Woodstock) called the senior Muhlenberg's son

115. Eisenberg, *Heritage*, 72; and Kenneth W. Keller, “The Outlook of Rhinelanders on the Virginia Frontier,” in Puglisi, *Diversity and Accommodation*, 111. The quotation appears in Keller, “Rhinelanders,” 111.

116. Wayland, *German Element*, 112-14; Wust, *Germans in Virginia*, 129; Brunk, *Mennonites in Virginia*, 18, 20, 64-65; and Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 104-08.

117. Muhlenberg, *Journal*, II, 371-75.

Peter, provided that he were ordained in the established church, which would enable him to receive the civil fee for his support. Peter Muhlenberg was sufficiently adventurous to make the still hazardous journey to England to receive ordination from the Bishop of London in order to serve the frontier post. (The elder Muhlenberg had earlier complained of Peter's adventurousness in wanting to fish and hunt, which he blamed on his wife's father, Conrad Weiser.) When the younger Muhlenberg returned, he took up his duties as the rector of Beckford Parish, in September, 1772. His charge included the Anglican South River Chapel, probably located near Overall in Warren County on the south fork of the Shenandoah, and the North River Chapel, possibly between Edinburg and Mt. Jackson on the river's north fork, as well as German Lutherans in Woodstock, Strasburg, Luray, Forestville, Timberville, Powell's Fort, and Winchester. The area was approximately 50 miles wide and 50 miles long. While in Virginia, he officiated at 463 baptisms and 58 marriages. Peter remained at Beckford Parish until January, 1776, when he accepted a commission as Colonel, recruited a "German Regiment," and marched off with several hundred men from his and other congregations to join General George Washington in New England.<sup>118</sup>

Another solution to the shortage of ministers was to ordain capable schoolmasters, as had the Pennsylvanians when they legitimized Boehm's ministry, at Falkner Swamp, by obtaining ordination for him from the Dutch in New York.<sup>119</sup> In about 1778, the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania ordained Carl Frederick Wildbahn "who had come to America as a soldier in the British service during the French and Indian War." He became a schoolmaster in Winchester who preached and baptized in emergencies, ministering to numerous congregations in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, including those in the Valley at Winchester and Strasburg. Another schoolmaster, the Reformed James Hoffman, who taught in Woodstock, was approved for ordination by the Synod in 1796.<sup>120</sup>

118. Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 58-67, Wallace, *Muhlenbergs*, 80-82, 116-119, and 56-59; and Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 98.

119. "Ordination of Mr. John Philip Boehm in New York on Sunday, November 23, 1729," in William J. Hinke, ed., *Life and Letter of the Rev. John Philip Boehm ...* (Philadelphia; Publication and Sunday School Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1916), 177-79.

120. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 164-65; *Acts and Proceedings of the Coetus and Synod of the German Reformed Church in the United States from 1791 to 1816 Inclusive*. Translated from the German (Allentown; Eastern Synod..., 1930, originally printed in 1854), 18-19; Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 62.



*Note the resemblance between the Shenandoah Valley structures and the earlier southeastern Pennsylvania buildings.*

Figure 3. *St. John's (Hain's) Reformed Church, near Wernersville, Pennsylvania, built in 1763.*

*Drawn by Judith L. Shawley*



Figure 4. *Lutheran Church in Winchester, Virginia, cornerstone laid in 1764.*

*Drawn by Judith L. Shawley.*

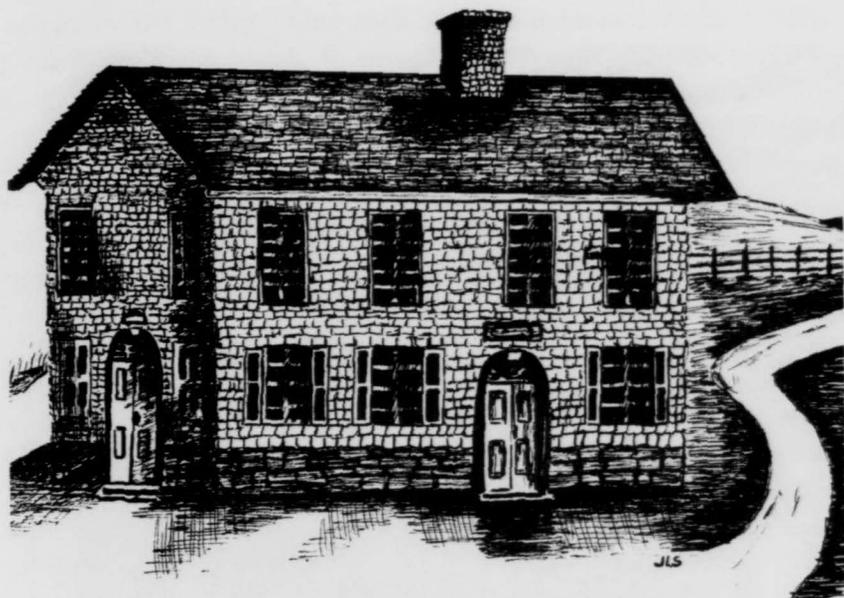


Figure 5. *New Goshenhoppen Reformed Church, near East Greenville, Pennsylvania, built in 1769.*  
*Drawn by Judith L. Shawley*



Figure 6. *Lutheran Church in Woodstock (Müllerstadt), Virginia, cornerstone laid in 1802, dedicated in 1829.*  
*Drawn by Judith L. Shawley*

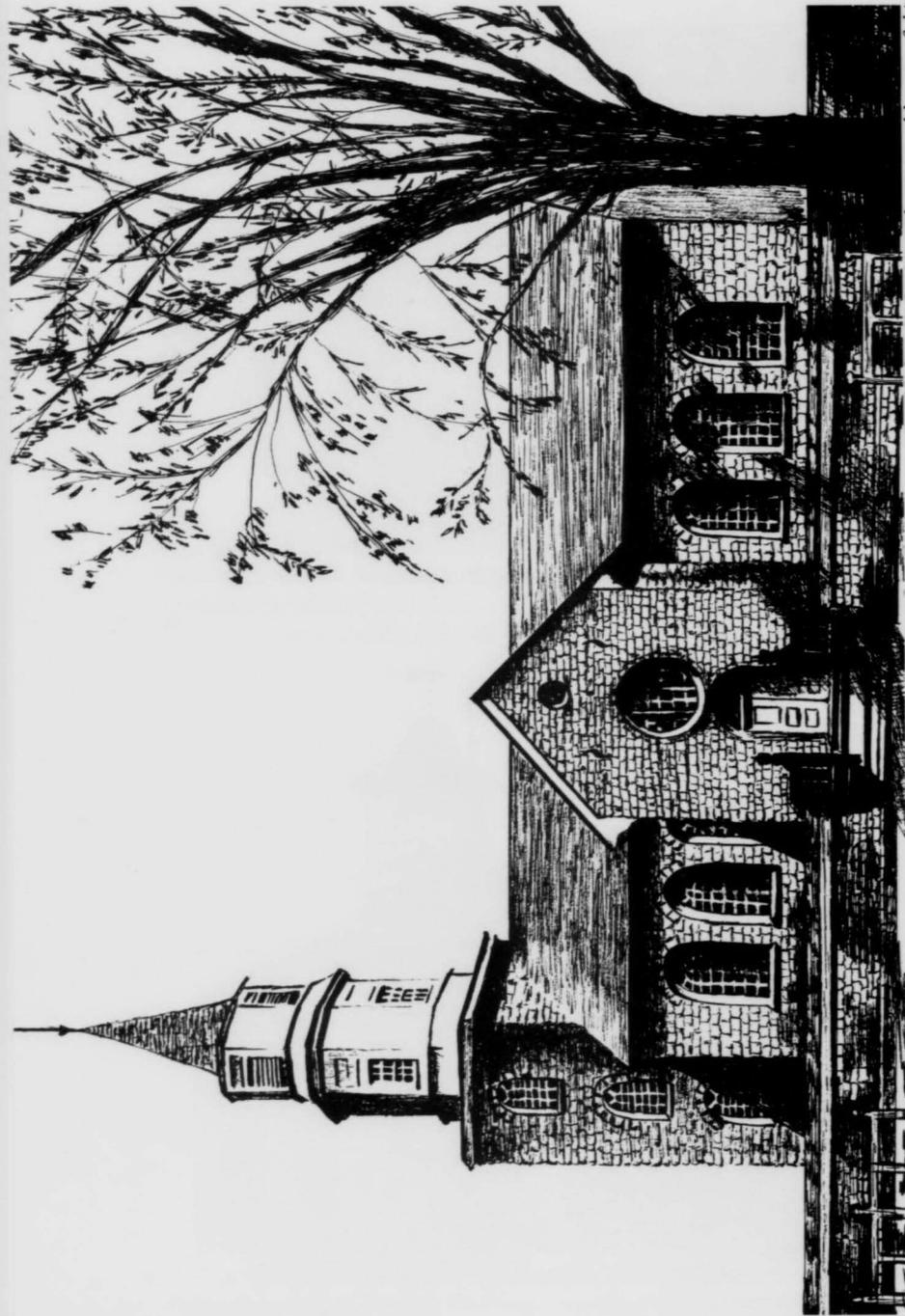


Figure 7 Burton Parish Church, Williamsburg, Virginia, built in 1711, enlarged in 1751-1755, steeple added in 1769. Note the size and beauty of this building in the colony's capital compared to the comparatively small and plain churches in the Shenandoah Valley.

Drawn by Judith L. Shawley

Even clergymen rejected by Pennsylvania Germans became effective pastors in the Valley. One such was the Reformed Bernhard Willy. Ordained in Switzerland, he emigrated to America in 1784 and was assigned to congregations in and around Reading. Two years later, he married a young Lancaster County woman, but could not "live happily ever." Before he returned to Reading, a letter arrived from his other wife in Switzerland, whom he had reported as dead." After Willy confessed his bigamy, the Reading congregations dismissed him; the coetus deposed him; and he went to the Shenandoah Valley. There, he became one of the early resident pastors, serving faithfully for almost a quarter of a century congregations in Page, Pendleton, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Frederick counties. In addition, he prepared manuscript volumes on the scriptures, the Heidelberg Catechism (the Reformed Church's doctrinal standard), and liturgies for baptism, confirmation, preparatory service, the Lord's Supper, and corporate worship on Sundays and weekdays. Furthermore, he trained several students for the ministry.<sup>121</sup> For a few years in the late 1780s and early 1790s, Willy seems to have been pastor to Woodstock Lutherans as well.<sup>122</sup>

Other Reformed ministers joined Willy in the Valley. In 1796, the Reformed Synod ordained Daniel Hoffman for service in Virginia. Hoffman served in and around Woodstock for about twelve years. More important was the request to the Synod in 1800 by congregations in Rockingham Country that John Brown (Braun) be placed over them. Brown was examined in 1800, licensed in 1801, and ordained in 1803. He served the Valley's Reformed people for forty years, ranging from Frederick County in the north to Augusta in the south.<sup>123</sup>

Valley Lutherans were more successful in obtaining ordained pastors.<sup>124</sup> Although Peter Muhlenberg did not long remain in the Valley after the War for American Independence, Wildbahn and Christian Streit replaced him. Streit was chaplain to the Eighth Virginia Regiment commanded by Muhlenberg during the Revolution after which he served briefly in eastern Pennsylvania at the New Hanover, Amity, and Hill churches. Having declined a call to Winchester in 1782, he

121. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 165-66; Hinke, *Ministers*, 216-18; Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 47-48, 62, 397-98; Henry Harbaugh, *Fathers of the Reformed Church ... II* (Lancaster: Sprenger and Westhaeffer, 1857), 337-50.

122. Eisenberg, *Lutherans in Virginia*, 122.

123. Minutes of the Synod 1800-1803, 27-33 in *Acts and Proceedings*, 7; and Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 58-59, 82-83.

124. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 490.

accepted in 1785 and ministered to Lutherans there as well as at "Stevens City, Strasburg, Woodstock, ... Peaked Mountain, Rader's," and elsewhere in the Valley, until he died in 1812. An indication of slight acculturation of Valley Germans was his occasional sermon in English, which was the native language of this third generation German American. For "many years," he conducted a "female academy in Winchester and served as an instructor of young preachers," including Paul Henkel, great-grandson of Anthony Jacob Henkel, one of the first German Lutheran pastors in Pennsylvania and founder of the New Hanover congregation.<sup>125</sup> Paul Henkel served Lutherans in and around New Market for most of the period between 1790 and 1825. He also managed to sire nine children, five of whom became Lutheran pastors in the area. His son Solomon founded a "publication business," for which Paul Henkel wrote and edited religious literature, including "hymn-books, catechisms, and homilies...."<sup>126</sup>

It is impossible to determine what type of religious services the German-American pastors conducted. Available evidence suggests that normally they included scriptures, sermon, and, on special occasions, the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, as well as the rite of confirmation. Streit observed the liturgical church year and preached on the Epistle and Gospel lessons that were specified for particular Sundays, as probably was the practice in neighboring Episcopal churches. It is unlikely, however, that he or any other Valley clergy used their denominations' formal liturgies. The Reformed Palatinate liturgy was scarce even in eastern Pennsylvania, and the liturgy that Muhlenberg prepared in 1748 for his Lutheran colleagues was never printed, which suggests that it did not circulate widely. Both Mennonite and Brethren worship included preaching, hymn singing, and baptism of adults. Brethren services might have been more lively. A critic charged that they sang as if God were hard of hearing. Baptisms were performed usually by immersing candidates three times in streams of running water. They held communion services followed by love feasts

125. *Ibid.*, 146; and Eisenberg, *Heritage*, 58-67, and 79. Streit's diary is included Eisenberg, *Heritage*, 323-64. The quotations appear in Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 146, 325-64.

126. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 60-61; and Eisenberg, *Lutheran Church in Virginia*, 92-94.

frequently and used the "holy kiss" as a symbol of their love for one another.<sup>127</sup>

By the late eighteenth century, there were approximately twenty seven Lutheran and twenty two Reformed churches in the Shenandoah-Valley, served more or less regularly by a few Lutheran and Reformed resident ministers.<sup>128</sup> As time passed, German churchmen became more highly integrated into their denominations' higher administrative bodies. Christian Streit became the first member of the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania to serve regularly in the Valley when he became pastor of the Winchester area congregations in 1785. He attended sessions of the Ministerium in 1787, 1788, and 1792, as did ordained pastors David Jung, serving Valley Lutheran congregations (1793), Wilhelm Carpenter from Culpepper (1794), and Paul Henkel (1798). Licensed candidates Johannes Volz and Adolph Spindler from Rockingham and Augusta County, respectively, were both present in 1798. In 1793, "Johannes Roller" of "Shenendoa" was a voting delegate to the Ministerium's Meeting in Philadelphia and was assigned to evaluate prospective catechists. So highly developed were Valley Lutherans that by 1793 7 pastors and lay delegates from 7 congregations organized a Virginia Conference within the Pennsylvania Ministerium. Its basic objective was "to promote the welfare of the respective congregations."<sup>129</sup>

The German Reformed Coetus of Pennsylvania founded in 1747, have always had expressed concern for the Virginia congregations, first demonstrated by Schlatter's tour through the Valley in 1748, by subsequent encouragement of its member ministers to visit them, and by numerous appeals to European churchmen to send them ministers.

127. See Streit's diary, in Eisenberg, *Heritage*, 326-60; Schlatter's diary, in Harbaugh, *Schlatter*, 173-77; records of Shenandoah Valley German Churches in Virginia State Library; and Mark Oldenberg, "The 1748 Liturgy and the 1786 Hymnal," in John W. Kleiner, ed., Henry Melchior Muhlenberg: *The Roots of 250 Years of Organized Lutheranism in North America...* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998), 61. Muhlenberg's 1748 liturgy appears in Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy: a Study of the Service of the Lutheran Church in America* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1947), 166-67. See also 161-68. On the Palatine Liturgy see Henry Harbaugh, "Creed and Cultus: with special Reference to the Relation of the Heidelberg Catechism to the Palatinate Liturgy," in *Tercentenary Monument in Commemoration of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism* (Chambersburg: M. Keiffer, 1863), 233-267; Durnbaugh, *Fruit of the Vine*, 108-10; Morgan Edwards, *Materials Towards a History of the American Baptists*, 12 vols. (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank and Isaac Collins, 1770) I, 64.

128. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 489.

129. *Documentary History of the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States* (Philadelphia: Board of Publication..., 1898), 213, 219, 243, 261, 268, 276, 197; and Eisenberg, *Lutherans in Virginia*, 79-87.

After the formation of the independent Reformed synod in 1793 members promptly licensed and ordained their own candidates such as James and Daniel Hoffman 1796 and John Brown in 1803. Brown attended synodical meetings in 1800, 1801, 1803, 1806, 1809 and periodically thereafter. When the synod organized administrative sub-divisions in 1819, Valley churches were included in the Maryland-Virginia Classis. Six years later, the Synod formed a separate Virginia Classis.<sup>130</sup>

The numerically fewer Mennonites and Dunkards were less centralized and not as closely involved with the Pennsylvanians. Nevertheless, the early Mennonite settlers in Virginia were under the care of the Lancaster Conference, and continued the relationship into the early nineteenth century. The Brethren had held annual meetings since 1742, and it is likely that Virginians attended. Probably through them, the Pennsylvania Brethren learned of a doctrinal controversy among those in the Shenandoah Valley during the early 1790s, which they dealt with when they held their annual meeting in Virginia in 1794.<sup>131</sup>

## Conclusion

Although the German churches' problems had caused innumerable defections<sup>132</sup> lay leaders and visiting pastors held together their communities of faith. By the outbreak of the American Revolution, or shortly thereafter, all of the Protestant denominations whose adherents had settled in the Valley had organized congregations. Exact founding dates were vague, and exactly what constituted an organized congregation was uncertain. Was the test the laying on of hands by elders, as among the Dunkards; that the Gospel was preached and the sacraments correctly administered, as among Lutherans and Reformed; or that the congregations had elected officers? In any case, by 1800, Shenandoah Valley boasted nearly fifty identifiable German Lutheran or Reformed and a

130. Harbaugh, *Schlatter*, 173-77; *Minutes and Letters*, 37, 158, 176, 231, 238, 241, 250, 253, 276, 277, 311, 331, 339, 351, 394, 445; *Acts and Proceedings*, 7, 15, 18, 21, 26, 27, 29, 32-33, 39, 42, 51; Synod minutes, 1819, in Klein, *History of the Eastern Synod*, 106, 117, 141; "Proceedings of the Virginia Classis," 7, Ms. in Archives of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, Phillip Schaff Library, Lancaster (Pennsylvania) Theological Seminary; and Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 49-51.

131. *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Publishing House, 1955-1959), 4, 832-33; Brunk, *Mennonites in Virginia*, 178; Sappington, *Brethren in Virginia*, 51; and "Minutes of the [Brethren] Annual Meetings," in Durnbaugh, ed., *Brethren in Colonial America*, 327-30.

132. Wayland, *German Element*, 107; Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 129, 135; Glatfelter, *Pastors and People*, I, 489; and Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 39.

smaller but unspecifiable number of Mennonite and Dunkard congregations. Many had meetinghouses and churches. Lutheran and Reformed congregations often shared buildings as "union churches." Indeed, a few congregations of "Church People" even received resident ministers, especially after the Revolution ended.

Although lack of a sufficient number of qualified pastors continued to plague most of the Valley's "Church People" well into the nineteenth century,<sup>133</sup> they and their Mennonite and Brethren neighbors had made great strides in their religious development. "Church People" continued to hold as ideal an educated and ordained resident clergy. Though usually deprived in the early years of their churches' rites and sacraments, and even of its preaching ministry, many Lutherans and Reformed continued to depend upon these practices and partook of them when they were available. Whether the German settlers understood the subtleties of their distinctive theologies is doubtful,<sup>134</sup> but there were those who remained faithful to what they did understand. Observers noticed the Mennonites' "conscientious devotion to their religious principles." They, the Dunkards, and the Sabbatarians refused to defend themselves or to participate in other ways in the French and Indian War and the War for American Independence. It was among the "Church People" who could participate in "just wars" that Peter Muhlenberg recruited for his German Regiment. Despite such differences on important issues, adherents of the various faiths normally lived side by side at peace with one another, worshipping on their Sabbaths in their various ways in their homes, meetinghouses, and churches. After the Revolution, they did so on an equal legal basis with their Anglican neighbors, whose church no longer was established.<sup>135</sup>

Most of the Virginia Germans' problems were similar to those that they had experienced in Pennsylvania before their departure. The solutions that they attempted also were much the same. As they brought with them their secular culture, including settlement patterns, agricultural economy, architectural styles, and language, they carried along

133. Report of the "Committee on Missions" to the Synod of 1820, in Klein, ed., *History of the Eastern Synod*, 112-3; and Garrison, *Reformed Church in Virginia*, 38.

134. According to Muhlenberg, Lutherans and Reformed understood only that one began the Lord's Prayer with "Vater Unser" and the other with "Unser Vater," despite profound differences on baptism, the Lord's Supper, and other points. See Muhlenberg's *Journal*, I, 152.

135. Thomas E. Buckley, *Church and State in Revolutionary Virginia, 1776-1787* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977), 163-64.

their religious customs, eventually integrating their ecclesiastical institutions with those in Pennsylvania. Despite living among people of different beliefs and ethnic backgrounds, Virginia, like Pennsylvania Germans, remained distinctive<sup>136</sup> during the eighteenth century and even beyond. At least in outward manifestations of their religious development the German-speaking residents of the Shenandoah Valley truly lived in "Greater Pennsylvania."<sup>137</sup>

*\*This article is a revision of a paper delivered to the Shenandoah Valley Regional Studies Seminar on November 15, 1996.*

136. Wust, *Virginia Germans*, 142-43.

137. For the later development of the Shenandoah Valley, see Kenneth E. Koons and Warren Hofstra, eds., *After the Back Country: Rural Life in the Great Valley of Virginia, 1800-1900* (Nashville: University of Tennessee Press, 2000).