

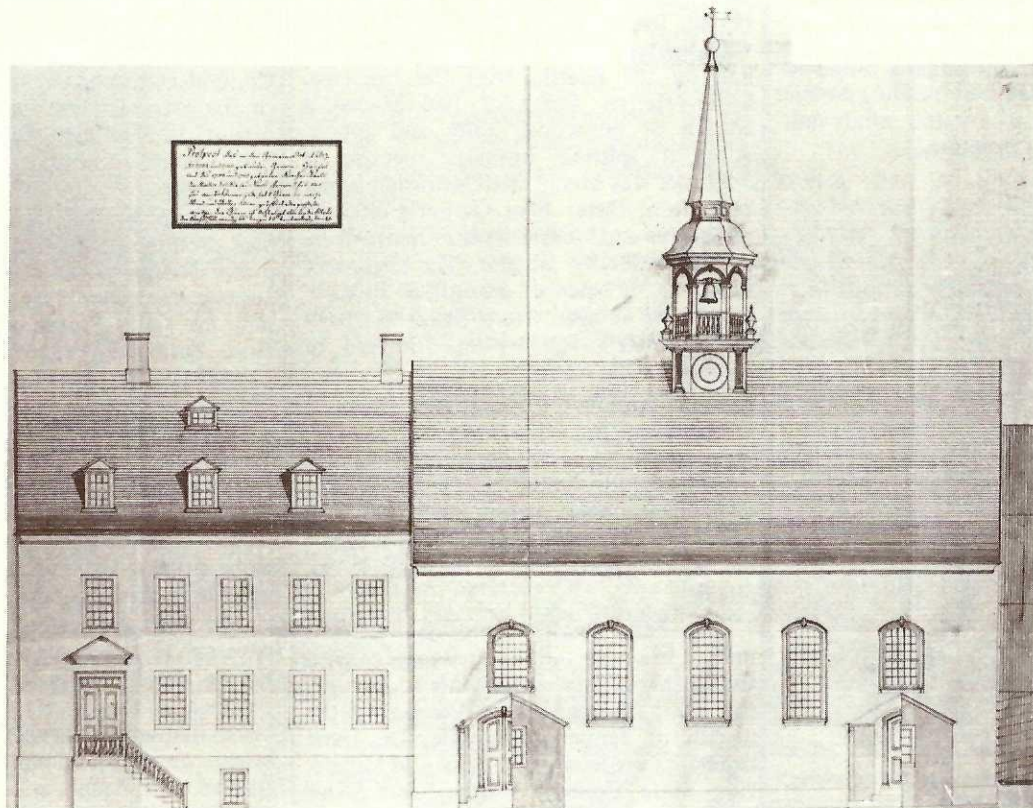
# THE CHURCH SQUARE JOURNAL

PUBLISHED BY THE ARCHIVES COMMITTEE OF THE LITITZ MORAVIAN CONGREGATION

VOLUME 2

CHURCH SQUARE, LITITZ, PENNSYLVANIA

SPRING, 1977



*The Lititz Moravian Church and Gemeinhaus, as they appeared before the changes of 1857.  
From a drawing in the archives at Herrnhut, East Germany.*

## A GIFT FROM HERRNHUT

During the past twelve years, the writer of this *Journal* has been conducting a search for positive evidence describing the original 1787 interior of the Lititz church before the alterations of 1857. The quest finally led to the archives of the Brüdergemeine Unität (Brethren's or Moravian Congregation Unity) in Herrnhut, East Germany. Sister Ingeborg Baldauf, the Herrnhut archivist, responded with information concerning a small collection of Lititz materials in the Herrnhut Archives. These materials, on 35mm film, were offered to Lititz on loan so that prints might be acquired for the congregation's collection. Shortly after the films arrived, a second communique from Sister Baldauf suggested that Lititz accept the films as a gift from the Herrnhut Archives. This generous gift was gratefully acknowledged; the films will be filed in the manuscript room of the congregation's museum.

Of perhaps the most interest to our people is an undated drawing of the 1787 church and the 1763 Gemeinhaus as they appeared before the changes of 1857. An accompanying legend in German describes the belfry as eight-sided, dispelling

the notion that the original belfry displayed only six bays. The bell seen on the drawing is probably the original bell which hung alone until 1850 when it was joined by a second bell purchased through the legacy of the late Samuel Grosch who built and resided in the present red brick Pfautz House on the northwest corner of Church Square. The first bell was then arranged to ring the quarter hours while the newer, larger one struck the hours. These two bells crashed to the floor of the church during the 1957 fire.

The decorative wooden urns, seen at the base of the belfry, were later removed, possibly because of water seepage from rain and snow. It was this belfry, designed by the famous Lititz Moravian organ builder, David Tannenberg, which the 18th century church building committee at first thought much too elegant for a church in this outlying area! Thankfully, their decision was reversed.

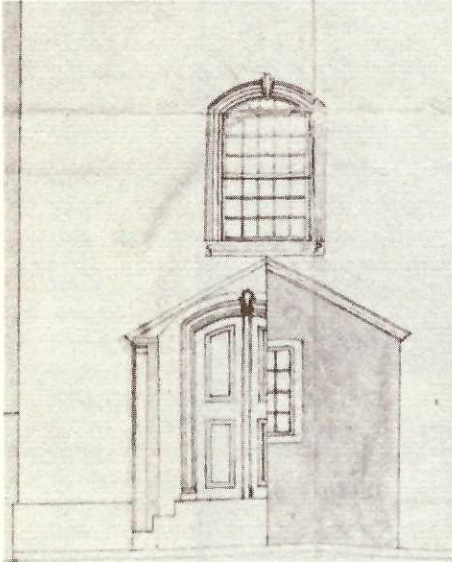
Note the two tiers of dormer windows on the Gemeinhaus roof, indicating the presence of a double attic, as yet found in the Single Brothers and Single Sisters Houses. Attractive architectural detail may be found in the hooded doorway and the elegantly turned balusters of the stair and stoop, matching those seen on the belfry.

Visible, too, is the cove cornice springing from a simple molding at the eaves-line of both church and Gemeinhaus. That of the Gemeinhaus remains today. Similar cornice detail may yet be seen on the Brothers and Sisters choir houses.

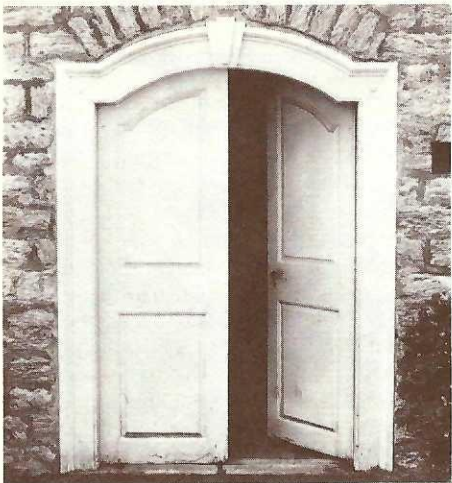
Of particular note is the pair of covered entries leading into the church. The only other 18th-century Moravian church building utilizing these unique appendages is the church in Herrnhut. In Lititz, that entry to the left was the Sisters' entrance while men and boys used the entry nearer the Brothers House. Although the church is of stone, these entries were of brick, each with two doors: one to the east, the other to the west. In inclement weather, that doorway facing the prevailing wind or storm was kept locked and the opposite entrance opened to church-goers. These doorways gave access to a light stair within the entry, leading to the main doors opening into the large church room or Saal. The cut-away on the drawing shows the simple but handsome architectural design of these inner panelled entrances, each with a segmental arched opening having a keystone. The enlargement of the cut-away provides close-up detail of this feature while the accompanying photograph of



the 1786 Corpse House allows one to note the interesting comparison between the church doors and those of the smaller structure. As the church and the Corpse House were constructed simultaneously, it is obvious that the builders used the same design for the doorways of both buildings. Those of the church were destroyed during the Samuel Lichtenthaeler alterations and additions of 1857 while the Corpse House, with its original doorway intact, remains today that building on the Square least affected by the winds and whims of so-called "progress."



Enlargement of cut-away on Herrnhut drawing, showing detail of 1787 church doorway.



Elegant doorway of the 1786 Corpse House. Photo by Jack Alvarez.

### NEW FACES REVITALIZE ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

The Eschbach Parlor of the Single Brothers House provided the setting for a gala December gathering of the Archives Committee. The event not only celebrated the approach of Christmas; it also served as an elegant reception for new committee members, as an occasion for the sharing of

citations and commendations awarded the first issue of *The Church Square Journal* and as an "opening night, private showing" of art pieces newly framed and hung in the Parlor.

Arriving on the Square, committee members were greeted by lighted candle-lanterns lining the steps to the Brothers House. Indoors, the room glowed softly with lighted tapers and a brisk fire crackling on the hearth. Over the fireplace, Sister Herma Losensky had placed a wreath of boxwood, holly and apples. After a spirited business meeting, a *Schmaus* was served with Moravian sugarcake from Sister Elva Garber's kitchen, tea, coffee and Moravian water mints made by Sister Phyllis Wagner. The sugarcake took on a special ambrosial quality, served, as it was, from Sister Garber's grandmother's egg basket trimmed in spruce and red ribbon.

The Archives Committee's fledgling publication, *The Church Square Journal*, attracted nine new members to the group's roster: Doctors Peter and Irene Seadle, Colonel and Mrs. Antonio Alvarez, Mrs. Louis Fortier, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wagner, Mr. S. Fred Diffenderfer and Mr. R. M. Shank.

Dr. Peter Seadle is professor of German at Franklin and Marshall College with frequent teaching assignments in Europe, the latest having been in Vienna for the month of January. His wife, Dr. Irene Seadle, is professor of German at Millersville State College. Brother and Sister Seadle came to this area from Washington, D.C. and reside on Glen Moore Circle, Lancaster, with puss Tussifer and their treasured collection of putz figures gathered from throughout the world. The Seadles plan to aid us in the translation of the congregation's diaries and the cataloguing of early books and papers.

After many years in New Orleans, Sister Dorothea Fortier returned to Lititz, moving into the 1762 William Werner House at 66 East Main Street, popularly known as the Huebener House. A connoisseur of the arts, Sister Fortier has filled the little one-and-a-half story log dwelling with her prized collection of art and antiques. When not travelling here and abroad, she is at work in her studio, restoring old art objects and painting antique furniture.

Brother Fred Wagner is the son of the late Victor Wagner, long-time choir director at Lititz Moravian. Brother Wagner is associated with Armstrong; he and his wife sing in the church choir. Come twelfth month, the Wagner kitchen — on Princess Avenue in Lancaster — is redolent with a tantalizing aroma, for Sister Wagner is a confectioner of considerable degree, noted for those daintily hand-decorated Moravian mint patties, so sought after at Christmas time. (Note: in Moraviandom, there is an unwritten de-

cree to the effect that without Moravian mints on the table at Christmas, one simply has no hope of getting off to heaven.)

Reinhold (Rian) Shank retired to South Spruce Street in Lititz after a long career as assistant manager of Union Station, the famous former railroad depot in Washington, D.C. A patron of the arts, Brother Shank is chairman of the Art Committee responsible for the acquisition of the art collection housed at Moravian Manor. In Washington, he was — and in Lititz, he is — a music and art critic of the first water.

Brother Fred Diffenderfer is a retired vice president of Pennsylvania Power and Light Company and was chairman of the former Lancaster Transit Authority. He and his wife, Florence, came to Lititz from Bethlehem where they were members of Central Moravian Church. Brother Diffenderfer serves on the Board of Directors of the Moravian Archives, Northern Province, in Bethlehem; he, therefore, provides an excellent liaison between our local church archives and that of the wider parent organization. When at home, the globe-trotting Diffenderfers may be found at Olde Hickory Village, Lancaster.

Of Spanish ancestry, Colonel Antonio Alvarez is descended from a military family dating back to 1492. A retired Colonel of the U. S. Army, he is now associated with the federal government in social security administration. Having studied with leading art schools across the nation and having worked with America's foremost textile designer of the mid-twentieth century, Sister Geraldine Alvarez, in 1946, was engaged by the insular government of Puerto Rico to initiate, in that country, a handwoven-textile industry. Utilizing native fibers, her products were featured by pace-setting Lord and Taylor and Neiman-Marcus and, by invitation, were exhibited in the Museum of Modern Art. She designed and produced the textiles for the draperies of the Starlight Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City. In 1949, along with Julie Harris in theatre and Margot Fonteyn in ballet, Sister Alvarez received the coveted Mademoiselle award for signal achievement, given to the ten most outstanding young women of the year. Brother and Sister Alvarez are at home in the old Barr Nursery Mansion on Marietta Avenue in Lancaster.

*Some people don't know how to be happy. They just crawl into a corner and spit at everybody.*

— Sister Adeline Snyder who, on St. Valentine's Day of this year, received the invitation to dwell with the Author of her salvation. Rest in peace, dear Sister.





*Smoke billows from the historic Lititz Moravian Church, ablaze from a painter's blow torch.*

## TRAGIC FIRE RAVAGES LITITZ MORAVIAN CHURCH

This July, it will be twenty years since the disastrous fire of 1957 which destroyed much of the original fabric of the Lititz church and Gemeinhaus-Parsonage. Dr. Byron K. Horne, Headmaster Emeritus of Linden Hall School for Girls, reconstructs for us here something of the circumstances leading to and surrounding that memorable event.

Tuesday, July 2, 1957, was a warm day. The atmosphere in Lititz was quiet and peaceful. Most of the industries were closed for the annual week of vacation over July 4th. Many families were out of town, some camping in state parks, others on trips. Those who remained at home engaged in the usual vacation-time activities.

Shortly before one o'clock, the quiet and peace of the community were pierced by the fire alarm, and in less time than it takes to tell it, the awesome news had spread across town that the Moravian Church was on fire. The smoke that began to appear over the area on East Main Street confirmed the news and indicated that the fire was extensive.

Painters had been removing century-

old paint from the outside of the church. To make their work easier, they had used blow torches to soften the many coats of paint they encountered. In using the torches, they had been cautioned by the sexton of the church and others as to the risk involved. That fateful Tuesday, the painters went to lunch, and before they returned, a young man employed at Linden Hall, while passing the church, saw smoke and flames rising from under the eaves. In a matter of minutes, fire companies with their equipment from Manheim and Rothsville, joined the Lititz company in an effort to contain the flames. These companies were later joined by a ladder unit from Lancaster.

An unfortunate drop in the water pressure of the community system handicapped the fire companies and allowed the fire to spread through the mud and straw plaster of the ceiling of the historic structure.

In a matter of minutes, the flames had spread to the adjoining parsonage and engulfed the entire third floor of that building. A westerly wind, which later became northerly, saved the Brothers House and Fellowship Hall to the west and the buildings of Linden Hall immediately to the east.

While the fire raged on the floor above

them, many townspeople, later joined by a bus-load of tourists, removed all of the loose furniture from the church, and all of the furniture as well as the belongings of the pastor and his wife (they being in New England on vacation at the time) from the parsonage.

When the flames were finally brought under control hours later, the church was gutted and the upper floors of the parsonage were in ruins. Fortunately, the walls of both structures were not weakened and the windows of the church, as by a miracle, were unharmed.

Tragic as the fire was, it was only the second time in two centuries that a fire of any consequence came to this area of Lititz. On July 18, 1838, four buildings located directly to the north of the Church Square were destroyed by fire and two others were severely damaged.

While, after that fateful July day in 1957, some time passed before the church and parsonage were again available, it was with a feeling of deep gratitude and a greater appreciation of our sanctuary and its appointments, that the congregation returned to its accustomed place of worship, a restored church.

— Byron K. Horne



## A FLOURISH OF PRAISES FOR NEW PUBLICATION

*There are all sorts of laurels, awards, medals and what-not given out for excellence in . . . various kinds of Journals. [The Church Square Journal] just won them all with this first issue . . . It is superb!!! . . . reporting [left] way behind . . . every page an art form . . . it will help strengthen the weaker souls who otherwise may never take a stand on things of consequence . . . Bravos will surround every issue coming off the press.*

— Sister Geraldine Alvarez  
Lititz Congregation

These enthusiastic lines are typical of those which daily reached the editor's desk and ears following November's appearance of the Archives Committee's publication, *The Church Square Journal*. Quietly and without fanfare, the *Journal's* first issue arrived in Moravian homes in Lititz and elsewhere, evoking an immediate response totally unexpected and positively overwhelming. Nine parishioners asked to join the committee, some having been completely unaware of the existence of such a group within our congregation, others having supposed that membership was only by appointment! One church couple pledged a financial contribution toward the removal of stucco from the Single Brothers House, should that project materialize. Another couple, not members

of our congregation, contributed a sum of money to the 1787 Tannenberg Organ Restoration Fund; two months later, this same couple joined our congregation, citing *The Church Square Journal* as having given them the final push. Items of historical value from the Huebener estate, now in a member's private collection, have been promised to the congregation's museum.

A periodical of this type was suggested by Brother Bill York during September's meeting. Brother York is to be highly commended for his vision, the realization of which has stirred responsive hearts far beyond Lititz's horizon, as evidenced below:

*I . . . commend you . . . The articles are well chosen and written, and the off-white paper, brown ink and handsome type face make a very attractive publication. It fills a real need . . . may it have a long and happy life.*

— Brother Jerome Leaman  
First Moravian Congregation  
New York City

*The new publication looks like a good one to meet some of the historical interest needs of the Lititz community. We commend you on the style and good make-up of the first issue. We will be pleased to receive any follow-up issues as they are published.*

— Brother Bernard Michel, Editor,  
*The North American Moravian*

*Thank you so very much for the copy of The Church Square Journal. I have read "the whole thing" with great interest. All the things you are doing sound fascinating. Could you put us on your mailing list? I would like very much to follow your activities.*

— Mary Creech  
Archivist, Moravian Archives  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

*. . . It is a very interesting publication and may it have a long life . . . The account of the Graybill-Jurgen wedding is especially beautiful.*

— Brother Henry Williams, Bethlehem;  
Librarian, Moravian College;  
President, Moravian Historical Society

*Thank you so much for sending The Church Square Journal. If it isn't asking too much, we would like to be on the list to receive it each time. As I can tell by this first issue, it is going to have items of special interest to a number on our staff.*

— Frances Griffin  
Director of Information  
Old Salem, Inc.  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

*What a wonderful surprise . . . Thank you for saying all those things which have needed saying for so long. It is my prayer that all the "new" people of our congregation will read, digest — and then begin to appreciate our wonderful heritage . . . The simplicity of our faith, the soul stirring beauty of our music, the feeling of equality with our fellow Moravians world wide, the simple tho grand architectural design of our beloved old church — how can anyone criticize or want to change any of that? They need to be converted! Let us hope the new Journal will bring about that conversion . . . I feel at long last they [the Archives Committee] have a voice — may it be heard!!!*

— Sister Herma Losensky  
Lititz Congregation



*The once-elegant interior of the church, here open to the sky, is seen as a twisted mass of rubble and ruin.*



*The Lititz Moravian belfry, a charred skeleton, about to tumble into the church.*





### BISHOP CARL J. HELMICH: A REMEMBRANCE

August marks the fifteenth year since the retirement of The Right Reverend Doctor Carl J. Helmich as pastor of the Lititz Congregation. At that time, the writer of this *Journal* set down on paper his impression of the day. A parishioner's urging prompts him now to share that account with the congregation, many of whom never knew Brother Helmich. For those of us who did, Bishop Helmich's presence, his influence and inspiration, his saintliness, remain warmly and strongly felt, even though he, some years ago, went home to his Father's House.

#### AUGUST 12, 1962

The thirteenth of August is a day of particular joy and thanksgiving for Moravians everywhere, for the thirteenth of August celebrates the anniversary of the renewed *Unitas Fratrum* (Unity of the Brethren) or Moravian Church, this event having occurred in 1727 in the little village church at Berthelsdorf in Saxony.

For the Lititz Congregation, the date bears additional significance. August thirteenth marks the anniversaries of the congregation's founding in 1749 and of the consecration of the church building which has sheltered the congregation since 1787.

And so, on this Sunday morning, August 12th, 1962, as the worshipers streamed through the tree-shaded Church Square to their ancient Saal, their grateful hearts were touched with a note of sadness; for this day, their beloved Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Carl J. Helmich, was to bid them farewell. Twelve-and-a-half years ago he had come to them and, since, has lived with them, counseled and taught them, rejoiced with them and wept with them and held them fast in seasons of disaster and despair.

How well we remember that Sunday morning in May when, following the benediction, Bishop Helmich quietly announced his forthcoming retirement, leaving his congregation standing in stunned silence.

And now, the day had come; bright and sunny and comfortable it was, neither hot nor humid. As the notes of the ancient Moravian chorales from the trombone choir echoed across the Square, the little jewelbox of a church filled with men and women and children until even the galleries were overflowing and there remained scarcely a vacant pew. The choir sang the "Hallelujah" from Beethoven's "Mount of Olives." There was the Rite of Confirmation and that of baptism, the reception of new members, a sermon and a separate, personal farewell message from the Bishop.

Many were the moist eyes and tightened throats as, during the communion, the Bishop arrived at our pew to serve each of us the elements, looking again into our faces with that warm, assuring smile of his as, for the last time, he placed in our hands first the bread and, later, the cup.

As the communion drew to a close and the Bishop and Pastor Snyder retired to the Preparation Room, Brother Richardson, our financial secretary, stepped forward and asked the congregation to be seated. A moment later, the Bishop reappeared, escorted to the liturgist's table by Pastor Snyder and the Head Sacristan; there he was presented with a purse of two-and-a-half thousand dollars along with a bound leather volume containing an exquisitely hand-lettered message of appreciation and the personal signatures of 855 members of his congregation and their families. Overwhelmed, he looked away and shook his head. Men and women wept openly as the Bishop, with tears in eyes and voice, vowed that he was wholly undeserving of the recognition being paid him, that it was only through all of us working together as one family in Christ that so many of God's blessings have been ours. With full organ and mixed emotions, we sang from our hearts the stirring hymn, "Now Thank We All, Our God."

Again in midafternoon, the trombone choir summoned the worshipers to the church for the anniversary lovefeast. The main body of the sanctuary was thronged not only with parishioners but with townspeople of many denominations who had come to pay tribute to the Bishop. The Lititz Ministerial Association arrived in a body. Members of Moravian congregations in Philadelphia, York, Lancaster, Bethlehem, Nazareth and Staten Island, New York, journeyed here for this service so that, by their presence, they, too, might honor Bishop Helmich. Dr. Edwin A. Sawyer flew in from Newfoundland to present to the Bishop a commemorative plaque from the Provincial Elders Conference of which Dr. Sawyer is president.

As we sang the joyous chorales and professed our love for our fellow-brethren by sharing with them the common meal of sugared buns and coffee, it was difficult

to realize that we were observing our Bishop presiding over his last service as our pastor. At its close, we sang the birthday hymn, number 927 in the hymnal, for Bishop Helmich who would be 65 the next day, August 13th. Following the chorale, "Now Thank We All, Our God," the service ended in quiet reverence as the choir sang, for Bishop and Mrs. Helmich, the Peter Lutkin choral benediction, "The Lord Bless You and Keep You."

The congregation pressed toward the central door at which Bishop Helmich stood to receive those who came from far and near. He must have felt very close to his people that afternoon, the people of both his church and his community, as they, realizing that this was to be their last farewell, bade him goodbye with tenderness and affection. One silver-haired woman moved close and rested her head lightly upon his shoulder for a brief moment; another pressed a kiss to his cheek. A third, in Mennonite garb, wished him well with tears coursing down her face. Others warmly clasped his hand as they wished him a blessing, their faces mirroring the sadness that welled in their hearts.

One was again reminded of the eternal verity: that true greatness in a man will shine forth by its own merit, that one so possessed will be recognized and honored in due season, without the least encouragement on his part. Indeed, recognition of this quality within himself is farthest from the thoughts of a genuinely great person; undoubtedly, such a one would be startled to learn that he was so considered.

Bishop Helmich is just this type of man; a man of brilliant, learned, scholarly stature; one who endeared himself to his people by his modest, unassuming nature, his warmth and understanding, his concern for each one, both great and small, and his constant endeavor to brighten the hearts of us all with so much of hope and peace and light and joy. Always reluctant to accept credit for an accomplishment, he remained ever eager to confer it upon others. He never isolated himself upon a pedestal but sought to remain as one with his people.

The memory of Bishop Helmich will illuminate our hearts with a warm glow, for he was a true shepherd of his flock.

— W.B.L. 1962

*It is to be feared that in time our church may sicken due to its largeness rather than its smallness.*

— Count Zinzendorf; November 11, 1742 entry in the Bethlehem diary.



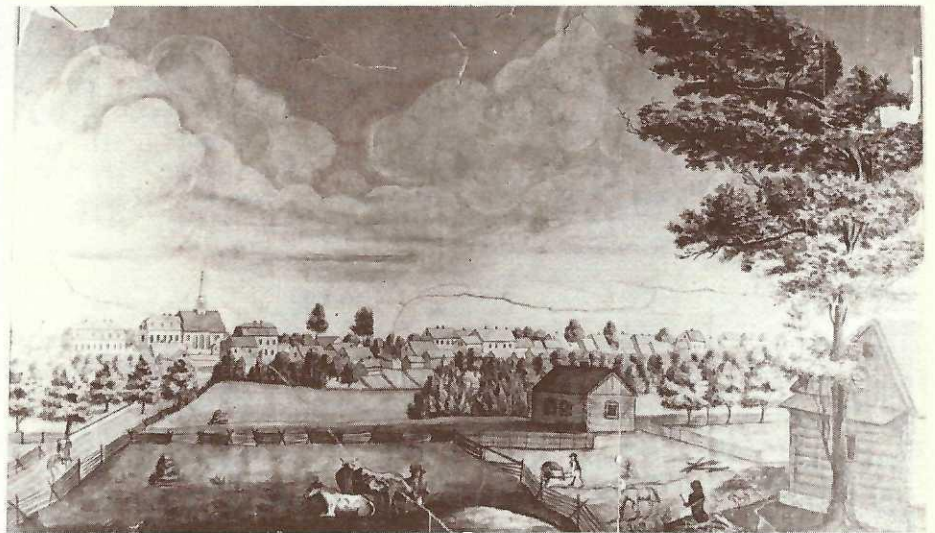
MORAVIANS AGAIN CITED!

But Do We Qualify?

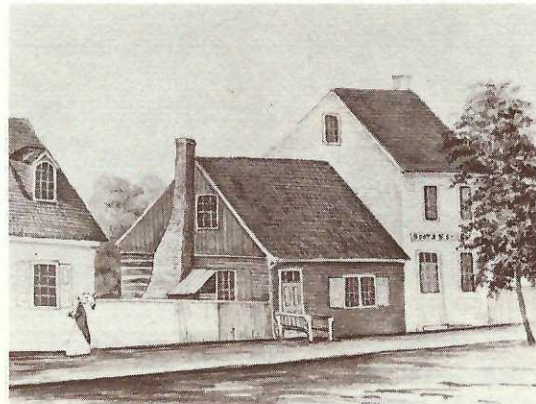
The following item, which describes Moravians as others see us, was submitted by Brother Norman Bursler who learned of the Moravians and became one of us after retiring from the law faculty of the University of Chicago. Brother Bursler lives in Wilmington, Delaware, from whence he, rising each Sunday morning at five, travels fifty miles to Lititz for service, while others of us find it difficult to make it across town!

Christians motivated by the desire to please God may be willing to die for what they conceive to be liberty, but they are never willing to kill for it. The 16th century Moravian Church of the Brotherhood beautifully exemplified this spirit. In 1500, they numbered 100,000. In the Thirty Years War a century later, they were nearly wiped out. They exist today, writes historian Will Durant, "astonishing a violent and skeptical world with *their religious toleration, their unassuming piety, and their peaceful fidelity to the principles they profess.*" (italics the editor's). Ulster [in Ireland] has plenty of Moravian-like Christians on both sides of the struggle. But they are a powerless minority, and, like it or not, they cannot escape their respective cultural identities. They must be [either] Catholic or Protestant.

— C. Donald Cole, pastor, Moody Radio Network, writing on the Irish religious wars in the October, 1976 issue of *Moody Monthly* magazine: "Those less than holy 'Christian' wars."



Lititz and Church Square as seen from Water Street in the vicinity of the Haller Barn. Watercolor, painted in 1809 by Samuel Reinke at age 18. From the congregation's collection.



"My Boyhood Home" at Lititz, Pa. (one door east of Sturgis House on East Main Street. Building now demolished). An 1854 watercolor by Rufus Grider, copying an 1844 sketch by Edwin Fetter. Artist Grider later moved to Bethlehem where, today, his 19th century paintings and drawings of that Moravian community are highly prized and extensively drawn upon for historical reference. From the congregation's collection.

ART IN ESCHBACH SPANS TWO CENTURIES

During the splendid refurbishing of the Eschbach Parlor, the Furnishings Committee of the Recon-Forty project found that funds were exhausted before paintings could be procured for the room's walls. Last fall, the Archives Committee sprang into action, selecting two watercolors, a pencil drawing and a needlework sampler from the congregation's collection of 18th and 19th century art, while, from his private collection, Brother Wayne LeFevre donated three watercolors illustrating areas of Church Square. These seven pieces were framed and hung along with the unexpected and very generous gift of a watercolor by Lititz artist, William (Bill) Young. The room came vibrantly alive with the arrival of these treasured art pieces, three of which are pictured here. Those not pictured include a 1902 pencil drawing by Abraham Beck, an 1801 sampler by Johanna Christ (?) and three contemporary watercolors: two painted in 1970 by Bethlehem artist Fred Bees and a 1968 work by John Wenger of Lititz.



"Retreat from Brandywine." An artist's interpretation of Church Square in 1777 with the arrival of George Washington's sick and wounded troops to be hospitalized in the Brothers House, at upper right of painting. Note the absence of the church which was not built until 1787. Seen are the Sisters House, the Gemeinhaus and the Brothers House. A 1976 watercolor donated by the artist, William Young. This work received honorable mention in the bicentennial art show, "Portrait of Lititz," mounted at Linden Hall during the summer of 1976.