

The Brethren in the Carolinas

SAPPINGTON

Div.Sch.
BX
7816
.S277
1971

DUKE
UNIVERSITY



LIBRARY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from

Institute of Museum and Library Services, under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the State Library of North Carolina. Grant issued to Duke University for the Palgion in North Carolina project.

The Brethren in the Carolinas

THE BRETHREN IN THE CAROLINAS:
//

THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
IN THE DISTRICT OF NORTH AND SOUTH CAROLINA

ROGER E. SAPPINGTON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Div. Sch
286
1509756
S241
B844
1971
Page

Preface	viii
Introduction	xii
I The Eighteenth Century Beginnings	1
The Beginning of the Church in Germany	1
The Beginning of the Church in America	3
The Beginning of the Church in the Carolinas	4
Catawba, North Carolina	6
Ewarry, North Carolina	8
Yadkin, North Carolina	19
Beaver Creek, South Carolina	26
Clouds Creek, South Carolina	30
Edisto, South Carolina	31
Broad River, South Carolina	36
Tuchosokin, Georgia	39
Dutchman's Creek, North Carolina	42
Fraternity, North Carolina	48
Universalism in the Carolinas	54
Building Meeting Houses in the Carolinas	76
Fraternity Again	79
Ashe County, North Carolina	88
In Summary	93
II The Nineteenth Century Growth	95
Fraternity	95
Ashe-Alleghany Counties	101
Peak Creek	103
Pleasant Valley	104
Mt. Carmel	104
Three Top	105

Long Hope	105
Flat Rock	106
Mitchell County	108
Pleasant Grove	110
Bailey	111
Brummetts Creek	111
Polk County	113
Mill Creek	115
Green River Cove	116
Brooklyn	116
Eastern North Carolina	118
Oak Grove	118
In Summary	119
III The Twentieth Century Maturity	121
Ashe-Alleghany Counties	122
Flat Rock	122
Peak Creek	126
Pleasant Valley	131
Mt. Carmel	133
Long Hope	137
Blue Ridge	138
White Rock	140
New Bethel	141
Little Pine	142
Mountain View	147
Rowland Creek	148
New Haven	149
Lowmans Valley	153
Mt. Olive	155
Riverside	155
Friendship--North Wilkesboro	156
Mt. Airy	159

Mitchell County	160
Brummetts Creek	160
Hollow Poplar	166
Petersons Chapel	168
Pleasant Grove	168
Bethel	176
Bailey	177
Pigeon River	179
Upper Brummetts Creek	180
Berea	181
Polk County	182
Mill Creek	182
Green River Cove	188
Brooklyn	188
Melvin Hill	190
Downs Chapel	200
Golden	201
Laurens	202
Mountain Creek (Spindale)	203
Spindale	204
Travelers Rest	206
Statesville	207
Spartanburg	208
Eastern North Carolina	210
Oak Grove	210
District-Wide Activities	211
District Organization	211
District Boards	214
District Secretary	215
District Camp	217
In Summary	225
Conclusion	226
Index	

PREFACE

About ten years ago, I first became interested in the history of the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas. I was engaged in research on the history of the Brethren in Virginia in the eighteenth century, and I discovered first of all that the account written by Morgan Edwards, a Baptist historian, regarding the Brethren in the South in 1772 was still available and had not been destroyed; second, I was surprised by his claim that there were more Brethren in North and South Carolina at that time than there were in Virginia. That was particularly surprising since Brethren historians had traditionally thought that the beginning of the Brethren in the Carolinas had taken place after 1800.

My opportunity to expand my research on this evidence that the Brethren had been in the Carolinas in the 18th century did not come until 1966, when I received one of the Humanities Fellowships established by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Duke University with a Ford Foundation grant. I was able to take a leave of absence during the year 1966-1967 from my teaching at Bridgewater College in order to pursue research on "The German Sectarians in North Carolina in the Eighteenth Century." As a result of that research I found much additional evidence about the Brethren who had arrived in the Carolinas in the 18th century. I wrote several articles about these Brethren, two of which have been published in the *North Carolina Historical Review* in 1969 and 1970. Another article about the Mennonites, who were included in my research as German sectarians, has been published in the *Mennonite Quarterly Review*.

Another result of my research was that I became interested in the history of the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas in the years since the 18th century. In consultation with Bert G. Richardson, who was the executive secretary of the District of North and South Carolina of the Church of the

Brethren, I learned that the Brethren had a long-standing interest in having the history of the church in that area written but had been unable to find someone to undertake the task. Inasmuch as I had had some previous experience in working with such districts in the preparation of a history, I agreed to write the history of the Brethren in the Carolinas, and the District Board of Administration agreed to provide some funds to cover the expenses and eventually to publish the results in the form of a book.

After returning to Bridgewater, I spent the summer of 1968 busily studying and writing about the Brethren in the Carolinas. I was significantly assisted in my research by one of the most capable students that I have had in my classes in Brethren history, Robert E. Alley, who carefully read all of the *Gospel Messengers* in the Bridgewater College Library, looking for material on the Carolina congregations. His notes were invaluable in my writing; a quick examination of my footnotes in Chapters II and III will indicate that this material from the *Gospel Messenger* proved to be my major source in writing the history of the church in the Carolinas in the 20th century. Incidentally, I compensated Mr. Alley for his many hours of work with some of the expense funds provided by the District Board. By the end of the summer, I had completed the story of the Brethren in the 19th and 20th centuries and had brought the story down to the present-day.

It has been a genuine pleasure for me to have become involved in this project, for I thoroughly enjoy studying and writing about the history of the Church of the Brethren. Another part of the pleasure is that I have become acquainted with some mighty fine people, to whom I have accumulated a large measure of indebtedness for the assistance that they have provided. I must attempt to name some of these people, although I realize that any such attempt runs a great risk of omitting others who also played a part. My greatest indebtedness, I am sure, is to Bert G. Richardson, now a pastor of a Church of the Brethren in Tennessee, without whose

assistance and encouragement this book would never have been written or published; he has read the second and third chapters and has provided many helpful suggestions which have made the text more accurate. He has also led out in the negotiations for the publication of the book. Another person who has read much of the manuscript and offered many valuable suggestions was Clayton B. Miller, who has been active as a minister in different North Carolina congregations for much of the 20th century; he has also written extensively about the history of the Brethren in the Ashe-Alleghany county area, and thus has provided valuable material for my study. Finally, among those in North Carolina who have been very helpful has been Miss Betty Griffith, who has read the manuscript and has offered suggestions dealing especially with the Mitchell County congregations; she also has played a major role in collecting the pictures used in this book and in working with the publisher.

I am also indebted to the editorial staff, especially Mrs. Memory F. Mitchell, of the *North Carolina Historical Review* for helpful suggestions and for permission to use in Chapter I material which has already appeared in that journal. One of the results of the publication of my material in the *Review* was that I was brought into contact with Dr. John Scott Davenport, the director of research of Scripps-Howard with offices in Cincinnati. He was personally interested in the Germans in North Carolina who intermarried with his ancestors, and he has become very much interested in the early Brethren in the South Atlantic area and in their emigration to the Ohio River Valley. He is furthermore a remarkably skilled researcher in working with legal documents, and he has been able to supplement my work with the 18th century Carolina Brethren with much additional information. As a result there is some significant material in this book which did not appear in the *Review* articles.

To all of these individuals, I am deeply grateful for the

contribution that they have made toward making this book possible. They deserve a great deal of the credit that may result from its publication. Whatever errors of fact or of interpretation may be discovered are of course my responsibility.

I firmly believe that this book will make a contribution to our historical understanding not only of the Brethren who have lived in relative isolation in small numbers in the South Atlantic states, but also in broader outline it will contribute to our understanding of the difficulties involved in the transitions from a sect group that is emerging as a more churchly religious type and from a completely rural religious group that is trying to adjust to the urbanized culture of the United States in the 20th century. For the members of the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas, these transitions have provided many difficult and challenging moments in their lives.

Bridgewater, Virginia

June 1, 1971

Roger E. Sappington

INTRODUCTION

History is a continuous stream, flowing from the past to the present, and into the future. We are so involved in paddling our canoes upstream that it is a very difficult task for us to take time out in our present day routine to write about the past. This has been true with the Brethren in the Carolinas. It has been a long hard task to get a History of the North & South Carolina District, Church of the Brethren. Some have labored at this task for 17 years.

At the Melvin Hill District Conference in August 1954, a committee consisting of Virgie (Mrs. Bryson) McIntyre, Rt. 1, Campobello, S. C., Miss Juanita Harrell, Bakersville, N. C. and myself, was formed. Our task was to collect historical material, compile facts and to see that a history of the District was written. For a short while the three of us worked very diligently at the task. We soon found out that the Brethren in the Carolinas were doers rather than recorders, and that authentic historical material was very difficult to collect, especially in the local congregations.

Over the years the members of the committee changed from time to time. This is understandable because of the length of time involved. Many people which I will not attempt to mention served on the committee and made their contribution. Also, many others in the local congregations helped in collecting material. Since I served as District Executive Secretary for several years, I had the opportunity to be in all the congregations and this gave us a chance to be alert for material that would be of value to the historical committee.

It became evident that if the History was ever completed, the District Board should supervise the work. This happened in 1965 and was turned over to the Commission on Nurture. In the Fall of 1966, Dr. Roger Sappington, Professor of History, and a Church Historian, visited me in Johnson City. At that time he was doing research on the Early Brethren in the Carolinas. We talked about the History of the N&S Carolina

District. I invited him to attend a meeting of the N&S Carolina District Board which would be held at the New Haven Church in November. At this meeting, Dr. Sappington was asked by the Board to write the History of the District. He accepted.

By the Spring of 1969, Dr. Sappington sent to the District 15 copies of a rough-draft of the history. These were to be distributed across the District for correction, additional information, editing, etc. The people of the District responded very slowly to this and very little was done.

At this point the District Board appointed Betty Griffith, Relief, N. C. to work as a liaison between Dr. Sappington and the local churches. Her task was to collect additional information, pictures, secure a publisher and to do what was possible to get the history completed by District Conference, 1971. Watson's Lithographing Company of Kingsport, Tennessee, was selected as the publisher, and once again I found myself involved working as a go-between the Publisher, Betty Griffith and Roger Sappington, the Author. It now appears that the 1971 deadline-District Conference, Aug. 15, will be met.

We are deeply indebted to Professor Sappington for his dedication to this task. Without his services, we probably would still be struggling with what seemed to us as a job beyond our capabilities.

The author, Roger Sappington, was born and reared in Florida. He graduated from Manchester College with the B. A. degree, from Bethany Biblical Seminary with the B. D. and from Duke University with the M. A. and the Ph. D. He is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren and served the Pleasant View church near Lima, Ohio for three years. Currently he is Professor of History, Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, Va. He has written several histories regarding the Church of the Brethren and is regarded as one of the best historians in the Church. Most of all, he is a fine Christian person.

Jonesboro, Tennessee
July 10, 1971

Bert G. Richardson

Chapter I

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BEGINNINGS

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH IN GERMANY

During the years since its founding in 1708 the Church of the Brethren has been known by a number of names. Prior to 1908 the church was known as the German Baptist Brethren, a name adopted in 1871. Frequently, the Brethren, as they preferred to be known, have been called Dunkers. This term evidently originated from the practice of these people of baptizing by immersion. In Germany where they originated as a sect, the word describing such a baptism is **tunken**, and occasionally, the term, the Tunkers, is used in describing them. Apparently, the English in America tended to confuse the German "T" with the English "D" sound, and the result was the term Dunker or sometimes, Dunkard, both of which are corruptions of the German, Tunker. In this volume, the term, Brethren, will be most commonly used to refer to the Christians who are today known as the members of the Church of the Brethren.

Ideologically, the Brethren were an outgrowth of the Pietistic Movement. Even though the most important leader of the Pietists, Philip Jacob Spener, did not favor separating from the state church to form a new church, some eighteenth century Christians found it difficult to follow his pietistic ideas and remain within the state church. Consequently, a considerable body of separatists lived in those states and provinces within Germany where at least a limited degree of toleration had been granted by the ruler. It was in such an area, in the county of Wittgenstein in the village of Schwarzenau that a group of eight separatists under the leadership of Alexander Mack, a miller from Schriesheim,

went down into the River Eder on an unknown day in the summer of 1708 to be rebaptized as Brethren.¹

What were the tenets which differentiated this new sect from the numerous Christian groups already in existence? One of their most basic convictions was that Christians in the eighteenth century ought to try to imitate the Christians of the first century in every way possible. For this reason the Brethren adopted the form of baptism by trine immersion, which involved three separate immersions under the water “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19); based on the very recent writings of Gottfried Arnold, they believed that this was the form of baptism used by the first century Christians. The Brethren also changed the practice of the Eucharist by adopting the form of the Lord’s Supper as Jesus and his disciples performed it on the last evening before his crucifixion; in addition to the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the cup, the Brethren washed one another’s feet and ate a meal together, and all of this they did on an evening about once or twice a year. Finally, the Brethren actively practiced the anointing for healing based on James 5:14-16. In other words, they believed in some definite modifications in the performance of the ordinances, as they called them, or the sacraments, as the more liturgical churches called them.

These early Brethren may be classified as sectarians because of their rejection of many of the traditional patterns of society. In accepting such a sectarian pattern, the Brethren were influenced in many ways by the Mennonites who were an outgrowth of the Swiss Anabaptist movement of the 1520’s. Both groups believed in non-resistance or pacifism, refused to take an oath, rejected the courts as a method of settling disputes, and followed great plainness in language and dress. These patterns of life have sometimes been called by Brethren

1. The background and beginning of the Brethren in Europe has been most recently described in a fine set of documents collected and edited by Donald F. Durnbaugh, *European Origins of the Brethren* (Elgin, Illinois: The Brethren Press, 1958).

leaders the simple life or the good life. Morgan Edwards, a Baptist writer, described these people in 1770: "In a word, they are meek and pious Christians; and have justly acquired the character of the **Harmless Tunkers.**"²

With the zeal and exuberance of a new religious sect, the Brethren began to spread across Germany and soon had established congregations at Marienborn, Epstein, and Krefeld. However, political persecution and economic hardships made life difficult for the Brethren wherever they went. In addition to these pressures tending to push them out of Europe, America was also exerting a pulling force on them. The Brethren in Krefeld had come into particularly close contact with the Mennonites there as fellow sectarians, and from them they learned of the Mennonite success economically in the Quaker colony of Pennsylvania. As a result, most of the Brethren in Krefeld departed for America in 1719 under the leadership of Peter Becker. There they expected to find complete religious freedom, full political acceptance, and unbounded economic opportunity.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

In these high expectations, the Brethren were not disappointed, for Pennsylvania offered them all that they had expected. Within five years after their arrival they had organized three congregations--Germantown near Philadelphia, and Coventry and Conestoga in the interior of the colony. Their prosperity in America together with further difficulties in Europe which had caused the Schwarzenau group under Mack to flee to Holland in 1719 now caused Mack and his followers to depart from Holland and sail for Pennsylvania, where they were joyfully reunited with their

2. Morgan Edwards, *Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Crukshank and Collins, 1770), I., 67. Hereinafter cited as Edwards, *Pennsylvania*.

brethren. After their arrival in America in 1729, only a small remnant remained in Europe; over a period of years it gradually disappeared from the scene.

In America the overwhelming majority of the Brethren became farmers, which is not really very surprising since that was what the overwhelming majority of all Americans were doing. Along with the Scotch-Irish who arrived in America somewhat later than the early Germans, the Brethren were constantly seeking new and better land on the frontier. This search eventually carried them across the continent to the Pacific coast, but this story is limited to what was happening along the South Atlantic seaboard.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH IN THE CAROLINAS

No one has ever attempted to write and to publish the story of the Brethren in the Carolinas, even though there have been Brethren in this area for more than two hundred years. Such a study has only become possible in the last ten years with the discovery for the first time by Brethren historians of extensive material dealing with the Brethren in the Carolinas. The most important of these discoveries was the realization that Professor Floyd E. Mallott, for many years the leading Brethren historian as the instructor of church history in the church's only seminary, had been incorrect in his assumption that the very valuable account of the Baptists (including the "Tunker Baptists") south of the Mason-Dixion line by the Baptist minister, Morgan Edwards in the early 1770's, had been irretrievably destroyed. In 1954 Mallott wrote: "It is a sad misfortune that his manuscript on 'Tunker Baptists' in Maryland (and presumably south of Maryland) was never published and was destroyed by fire as it lay in the files of the Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia."³ Actually,

3. Floyd E. Mallott, *Studies in Brethren History* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1954), page 89.

copies of this manuscript are available today in the libraries of Furman University and of Crozer Seminary.

Another important development was the discovery that the very fine published **Moravian Records** of the Moravian settlement in North Carolina included a number of valuable insights into the life of the Brethren who were living as next door neighbors of the Moravians. Finally, the land records of North and South Carolina contain extensive material on the movements of the Brethren. Without these three sources, which are utilized extensively in this study for the first time, any attempt to discuss the history of the Brethren in the Carolinas in the eighteenth century would be impossible. In fact, it has been generally assumed by Brethren historians that Brethren life in the Carolinas did not begin before 1800.⁴

Since Morgan Edwards' account of the Brethren in the Carolinas in 1772 provides the only available general survey of all of the Brethren in the two colonies, and hence, is of great importance to the historian, his account needs to be evaluated carefully. According to his information, the Brethren had arrived in North Carolina in 1742 and in South Carolina in 1748. Although Edwards did not provide any evidence to support the North Carolina date, in his South Carolina account he listed the names of three families who arrived in 1748 and each of these families was soon listed in the land records. This difference is typical of the two accounts. He named only four Brethren in North Carolina, all of whom were ministers, while in South Carolina he named twenty-eight Brethren, including ministers and laymen. In his account of the Brethren in Pennsylvania, which is by far his finest, he named each one of the seven hundred sixty-three baptized members. Also his geographical descriptions of the location of the societies, as he called them, was much more precise in South Carolina than in North Carolina.

4. *Ibid.*, page 116. Mallott understood that "the beginning in North Carolina is associated with the name of Jacob Faw. He heard of the Brethren in Franklin County and came to hear them preach. He was baptized and his home became an outpost." Actually, this event took place in the 1840's and is described in detail in the discussion of the Fraternity congregation in Chapter II of this book.

Finally, the superiority of Edwards' account of the Brethren in South Carolina is indicated by his information regarding the leading Brethren minister in the colony, David Martin, about whom he knew more than about any other Brethren minister south of Pennsylvania. He listed his date and place of birth, the date of his ordination and by whom, the names of his wife and children, and also a brief description of his personality and character. Almost certainly, Edwards had interviewed Martin, which indicates that Martin had learned English, since Edwards did not speak German. In contrast, in North Carolina Edwards had not had the benefit of such an interview with the Brethren and his account suffered accordingly.

CATAWBA CONGREGATION

Although Morgan Edwards' account of the Brethren in North Carolina is not as helpful as his South Carolina account, it is nonetheless an essential starting point for this story. He began his account of the three societies in North Carolina: "Catawba, the north branch of Peedee, _____ miles WbS from Newburn and _____ SW from Philadelphia. The families about forty whereof thirty persons are baptized. The minister Samuel Saunder."⁵ Although the Catawba River of North Carolina is the north branch of the Wateree River, not the Peedee River, as Edwards understood it, the evidence indicates that a large Brethren settlement developed in the general area south and west of the Catawba River in the period beginning in the late 1740's. This settlement may well have been the earliest and the largest of the Brethren settlements in North Carolina, for Edwards listed it first among

5. Morgan Edwards, "Materials towards a history of the Baptists in the provinces of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia," 1772. Microfilm of manuscript belonging to Alester G. Furman of Greenville, South Carolina, made by the Duke University Library, 1952. Hereinafter cited as Edwards, "Materials."

the North Carolina congregations and indicated that it had the largest number of families.

By 1772 when Edwards wrote, the land records indicate the presence in this area of families of Millers, Saylor, Zimmermans, Hoovers, Sniders, Dicks, Reinharts, Rhodes, Moyers, Ulrichs, Yoders, Clines, Hendrickses, Kellers, and Frys. All of these families (in a wide variety of spellings) were identified as Brethren in the northern colonies during this period of time. In addition to these families, there were numerous other German families which quite probably were friends of the Brethren, if not actually Brethren, including Forneys, Crowders, Ramsowers, Weitners, Isenharts, Jacobs, Bakers, Nesingers, Rudisails, Costners, Leepers, Kuykendols, Earharts, Akers, Seitzes, Baumgartners, and Eberharts.⁶

The earliest minister of this Brethren settlement was very likely Christopher Guss (Guis), who received a King's Patent for one hundred fifty acres of land on the west side of the Catawba River on both sides of Middle Creek on October 30, 1756. Quite possibly, he had been in the area for at least several years before the completion of the transaction. Guss sold his land in March, 1768 to Peter Krits, and several years later he was identified by Morgan Edwards as one of the Brethren ministers in Virginia.⁷

By the time of Guss' departure for Virginia, his successor Samuel Saunders, who was identified as the minister by Edwards in 1772 had very likely arrived on the scene; in July, 1767 Samuel Saunders witnessed two land transactions. Mysteriously enough, however, the name Samuel now dropped out of sight, for these are the only documents before 1800 which bear the name, or might be assumed to bear the name, Samuel Saunders. There are, however, many documents, including the Census of 1790, which include the name Lemuel Saunders, and quite possibly, the name was changed in the five years bet-

6. Land records of Anson, Lincoln, and Mecklenburg counties in North Carolina. Deed search by Dr. John Scott Davenport, 1100 Central Trust Tower, Cincinnati, Ohio, to whom I am deeply indebted for his valuable assistance in this research.

7. *Ibid.* See also, Edwards, "Materials."

ween 1767 and 1772, when Lemuel first appears in the land records.⁸ That Lemuel was a minister was indicated in 1794 when he was listed as the elder of the Long Creek Baptist church at the time of its re-organization. This congregation which is thought to have been in existence at least as early as the 1770's may well have been the successor of the Catawba Brethren congregation. At the time of Lemuel Saunders' death on October 26, 1795, he had at least six children: Thomas, Lemuel, Jr., Edward, Samuel, Jesse, and Martha.⁹

What happened to the Brethren in the Catawba River area is not at all clear from the available evidence. As has been suggested, those who remained in this area very likely merged into the Baptist congregations of that day and made an impact in that way. Probably, the Brethren witness continued in some places in the general area for quite a number of years, because it is clear that the Brethren settled in a number of different places; they may well have had as many as half a dozen different settlements in the area immediately west of the Catawba River. And finally, many of the Brethren in this area followed the general practice of migrating westward to Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana.

EWARRY CONGREGATION

According to Edwards' account, a second Brethren congregation in North Carolina was called the Ewarry: "Ewarry, one of the waters of the north branch of the Peedee, _____ miles from Newburn, and _____ SW from Philadelphia. The minister Jacob Studeman. The families about nineteen whereof thirty persons are baptized. These all came to the province about thirty years ago having Rev. Dan Leatherman at their head."¹⁰ The geographical description of

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Edwards, "Materials."

the location of this congregation is the most precise of the three North Carolina groups recorded by Edwards, simply because the Uwharrie River (as it is spelled today) is a rather short river, most of which is in present-day Randolph County. Also, if the numerous ways in which German names were spelled during this period is understood, this minister had quite a history. Most probably, the basic German name was Stutzman, but all kinds of variations seemed possible.

Many of the Stutzmans who landed in Philadelphia became Mennonites, but according to C. Henry Smith, one of the outstanding Mennonite historians of the twentieth century, "The Johan Jacob Stutzman who immigrated October 2, 1727, became a Dunkard."¹¹ Like many Swiss and Germans, he probably settled for a time in Lancaster County and then moved with the frontier into York County on the west side of Susquehanna River. At any rate, Morgan Edwards identified a "Studsman" as one of those who "united into a church" in 1738 to organize the Little Conewago congregation in the township of Hanover and the county of York.¹² In all likelihood, this man was the same one previously identified by Smith as becoming a Dunker. In fact, it may be that this was Jacob Stutzman's initial contact with the Dunkers. Also, it ought to be noted that in Edwards' list of the members of this congregation in 1770, no Stutzman was included, thus indicating either that they had all died (unlikely) or that they had moved on with the advancing frontier (more likely).

Another item of importance to the North Carolina Brethren in Edwards' account of the history of the Little Conewago congregation is the fact that its first minister was Daniel Leatherman. Like so many others, he followed the call of the frontier and moved to the Monocacy River area of Maryland in 1756. According to J. M. Henry, writing in his doctoral dissertation on the history of the Church of the

11. C. Henry Smith, "The Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania in the Eighteenth Century," *The Pennsylvania-German Society Proceedings*, XXXV (1929), page 238.

12. Edwards, *Pennsylvania*, pages 86-87.

Brethren in Maryland, Leatherman was probably the same man as the Hans Devalt Letterman, who came to Philadelphia on the ship, James Goodwell, on September 27, 1727. This boat was loaded with Germans who became prominent Brethren, such as Michael Tanner, Ulrich Stauffer, Peter Zug, Christian Miller, Hans Longenecker, and Henrich Wolff. If Letterman was at least twenty-one when he signed the ship's roll in 1727, he was a very old man when he died in January, 1798; however, Henry's thesis may well be correct, for there is no contradictory evidence. That Leatherman was old enough to be the founding minister of the Little Conewago congregation in 1738 and to be the presiding elder of the Conewago congregation in 1741 would seem to point to his maturity and churchmanship.¹³

In his description of the North Carolina Brethren, Edwards indicated on two different occasions that Daniel Leatherman was the "minister" or "head" of these "Tunker-baptists" in North Carolina. From these statements, it has sometimes been inferred that Leatherman actually lived in North Carolina, but the evidence clearly indicates that he spent the remainder of his long life in Maryland. He may well have visited the Carolinas, for in 1770 he and another Maryland minister, Nicholas Martin, ordained David Martin, a South Carolina Brethren minister.

The evidence seems to indicate that Daniel Leatherman and the minister of the Ewarry congregation in North Carolina, Jacob Stutzman, had been co-workers in the church for many years. They had landed in America within a week of each other in the fall of 1727, and they had worked together in the Little Conewago congregation in the 1730's. In the only known list of the elders of the church who composed the Standing Committee at the Annual Meeting, both Stutzman and Leatherman were present in 1763 at the Conestogo

13. J. Maurice Henry, *History of the Church of the Brethren in Maryland* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1936), pages 57-66. Hereinafter cited as Henry, *Brethren in Maryland*.

congregation in Pennsylvania.¹⁴ Unfortunately, no indication is given about the addresses of these leaders of the church; by this time Stutzman might well have been living in Maryland, for Leatherman had moved to Maryland, or possibly even in North Carolina.

On September 1, 1764, Jacob Stutzman of Rowan County, North Carolina completed the purchase of two hundred thirty acres on the headwaters of the Uwharrie River from Henry Eustace McCullouch. At about the same time, numerous other German families that very likely were Brethren were buying land from McCullouch in the same general area including David, Jacob, John, and Michael Fouts (Pfautz), Andrew Hoover, John Mast (possibly Mennonite), Adam Varner, and Jacob Schwartz.¹⁵ Although the evidence is not clear-cut, it seems possible that the Michael Fouts may have been the very prominent Brethren minister in Pennsylvania, Hans Michael Pfautz; if so, he was very likely the earliest leader of this Brethren settlement on the Uwharrie River in North Carolina. Since he was in North Carolina at least a year and a half earlier than Stutzman according to the land records, Stutzman might have replaced Pfautz after the latter returned to Pennsylvania. At any rate, it is quite clear from the land records that a considerable group of Brethren were moving from Pennsylvania into the Uwharrie River section of North Carolina at least as early as the early 1760's.

It is also quite certain that these Brethren remained in this area for a number of years with Jacob Stutzman as their leader. At about the same time that Morgan Edwards identified Stutzman as the leader of the Ewarry congregation, a Moravian missionary, George Soelle, was visiting Stutzman and recording: "The Baptist preacher and teacher in this

14. Donald F. Durnbaugh, editor, *The Brethren in Colonial America* (Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1967), page 266. Hereinafter cited as Durnbaugh, *Brethren in Colonial America*.

15. Rowan County Deed Books, Microfilm, Dr. John Scott Davenport, VIII, 387, for Stutzman deed. See also Deed Book V, 332-333, 334, 335, 336, 338, 342, 343, 415 and 484 for deeds of Foutses, Mast, Hoover, Varner and Schwartz.

Abbott's Creek neighborhood was Stotsmann, 'an earnest, serious loyal man.' ”¹⁶ That he was identified as a Baptist is not particularly surprising, since even Baptist historians like Edwards accepted the Brethren as a type of Baptists. The location in the Abbott's Creek territory is also quite reasonable, because the Uwharrie River and Abbott's Creek run roughly parallel and rather close together on the east side of the Yadkin River.

Reporting in greater detail on his visit, Soelle wrote in his diary: "I planned to visit with the teacher of the Taufgesinnten (Anabaptist) and others, but Mr. Stotsmann--that was the teacher's name--anticipated me, as he came to me in good time and stayed until afternoon. There was much to talk about, and to answer. He is an earnest and a serious young man, who means well, as far as he knows." As a Moravian, Soelle would naturally have been somewhat suspicious of the religious ideas of such groups as the Brethren and the Baptists. However, Soelle must have seen at least some hope in this man, for he continued: "You might say he is a young John who as yet lacks simplicity of faith in the heart of God, and is therefore ensnared in the works of the law which causes much darkness in his mind. In leaving he invited me to visit him in his house, that he might tell me more about his condition, and I promised to do so." ¹⁷

Soelle did visit Stutzman two days later and reported: "Visited Mr. Stutzman, who received me in friendly fashion. I conversed with the man and his wife, who laid much stress on self-denial. I answered that self-denial is the fruit of faith as an apple of the tree, and cannot be produced until a man believes." Soelle believed that one of the "great mistakes" of his own day and age was that "men moved too rapidly with an

16. Adelaide L. Fries and Others, editors, **Records of the Moravians in North Carolina** (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission [State Department of Archives and History] , 11 volumes, 1922-1969), 11, 798. Hereinafter cited as Fries and others, **Records of the Moravians**.

17. G. W. Paschal, **History of North Carolina Baptists** (Raleigh: The General Board, North Carolina Baptist Convention, 1955), 11, 186-187.

awakened soul, and while it still hangs in the balance, it is treated as believing, and this is the reason that many are counted living who are dead, and that they sink back into their former sleep." Emphasizing the importance of a proper amount of education for the new Christian, Soelle concluded: "Let the tree be good, and the fruit would be good also."¹⁸ Evidently, the visit was a cordial one, for Stutzman asked Soelle to return for another visit.

Five months later in July, 1772, Soelle did call again, but unfortunately neither Stutzman nor his wife was at home. Soelle talked "with his grown children, and felt sorry for the young people, who were as hard as stones because they have not been led to Jesus."¹⁹ Unfortunately, the terms "grown children" and "young people" are not very helpful in indicating how old the parents were. The Moravians, whom Soelle represented, baptized infants, so any unbaptized person beyond infancy would have been as "hard as stones" Although the Brethren and the Moravians had the common heritage of a German ancestry, their religious views were quite far apart in many ways.

In addition to Stutzman, Soelle identified Jacob Roth as a Brethren who lived "toward the Juvare." Roth was so impressed with Soelle's preaching and the Moravians in general that he considered selling his land "in order to move nearer the settlement" of the Moravians, but Soelle advised against such a step.²⁰

At one home where Soelle spent the night in this neighborhood, many people gathered to discuss their religious ideas. Soelle recorded: "These people are of a definite species, and remind me of the crow in Esop's Fable, which made itself great with the feathers of other birds. They have Moravian, Dunkard, Separatist, Baptist principles, know everything and know nothing, despise others, hold to no one,

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. Fries and others, *Records of the Moravians*, II, 794-795.

and reject all others. With only one soul was there an opportunity to really speak; and she was the only one to ask me to come again to this neighborhood.”²¹ Evidently, much religious uncertainty prevailed in this particular area, where the sectarian groups were numerous.

On another trip into this general area in August, 1772, Soelle had another experience with the dogmatism of these eighteenth century Brethren:

Scarcely had Soelle reached the church next day when an old Dunkard came up and began to discuss Infant Baptism, warning Soelle against it. While they were talking a man came to ask for the baptism of his child, as he did not wish to have it baptized by a minister of the Reformed Church, --and the Dunkard went away in disgust, and after some conversation with the father Soelle promised to baptize the child, which he did after making an address on the sacrament of Baptism. The old Dunkard looked and listened, and exclaimed: “O what a pity! The last has spoiled the former!” But the people thanked him repeatedly for what they had heard and begged him to come again.²²

If there was any tenet about which the Brethren had strong convictions during the first two hundred years of their existence, it was their form of baptism, and this matter did more to separate them from other Christians than any other topic.

In the same places where Soelle discovered extensive religious agitation, he very likely also found much political agitation, for this was the period of the Regulator Movement in North Carolina history. The climax of the movement had come with the Battle of Alamance in May, 1771, a few months before Soelle's journey to the Abbott's Creek settlement. Although

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, page 798.

the Germans generally did not participate actively in the Battle of Alamance, they undoubtedly were disturbed by the same causes which led many of the settlers to take up arms. In a list of eight hundred eighty-three identified Regulators compiled by Elmer D. Johnson, very few German names and no known Brethren names appeared.²³ That no Brethren were active participants in the Battle of Alamance is of course not surprising, since the Brethren were all pacifists.

The pacifism of the Brethren was severely tested by the coming of the American War of Independence in 1775. In spite of their religious differences, the Brethren and the Moravians had one big similarity as they faced the coming of the war: Neither group would allow its members to participate actively as soldiers on either side of the conflict. Although some individuals with some kind of a relationship to the Moravians evidently served in the militia, they were not members in the fullest sense. With the Brethren, one was either a member or not and one did not stay a member if he accepted militia duty. The Brethren had followed this policy consistently from the day of their establishment in Germany in 1708, while the Moravians on the other hand had been quite inconsistent, as evinced by the establishment of their own private militia (or its equivalent) as recently as the French and Indian War.²⁴

On another matter relating to the coming of the war and its ensuing problems, the two groups agreed that they would insist on taking an affirmation rather than an oath, but they disagreed on the form of the affirmation for very basic reasons. The Moravians insisted that they could not accept the

23. Elmer D. Johnson, "The War of the Regulation: Its Place in History," Unpublished master's thesis, the University of North Carolina, 1942, appendix III, pages [155] - 173; see also, F. Wilbur Helmbold, "Religious Aspects of the Regulator Movement in North Carolina (1765-1771)," unpublished paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the course in American Colonial History and the Revolution in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Duke University, June, 1953, in the Carolina Collection of the University of North Carolina Library.

24. Fries and others, *Records of the Moravians*, III, 1100; I, 182; on the Brethren, see Rufus D. Bowman, *The Church of the Brethren and War* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1944), pages 64-100.

original affirmation drafted for their use by the North Carolina government because of its clause abjuring the King of England, which in their eyes meant that they could never again serve as missionaries in a territory controlled by Great Britain such as the West Indies. When this clause was finally eliminated by the government after much pressure from the Moravians, they happily accepted the revised affirmation.²⁵ Like the Quakers and the Mennonites, to which groups their ideas were much more closely related, the Brethren refused to accept the affirmation because they did not believe in political revolution. The Annual Meeting, which was the governing body of all of the Brethren, stated this position in 1779:

On account of taking the attest, it has been concluded in unison as follows: Inasmuch as it is the Lord our God who establishes kings and removes kings, and ordains rulers according to his own good pleasure, and we cannot know whether God has rejected the king and chosen the state, while the king had the government; therefore, we could not, with a good conscience, repudiate the king and give allegiance to the state.²⁶

As a result of this policy, in Randolph County, North Carolina, Jacob Stutzman I and Jacob Stutzman II refused to take the Oath of Allegiance or to return a list of their taxable property in 1779.²⁷

Generally, the North Carolina authorities took a rather tolerant attitude toward the non-conformist ideas of the Moravians, the Brethren, the Quakers and the Mennonites,

25. *Ibid.*, III, 1100, 1384, 1289-1290.

26. *Minutes of the Annual Meetings of the Church of the Brethren, 1778-1909* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1909), pages 5-6. Hereinafter cited as *Minutes of the Annual Meetings*.

27. List of those refusing to take and give inventory, Tax List, 1779, Randolph County, North Carolina. From Dr. John Scott Davenport.

who were almost always grouped together in the laws of the state. With regard to military service, the state was willing to accept the idea that these individualists would not make very good soldiers any way, so it agreed to exempt them from military service provided they paid a fine of twenty-five pounds. This provision was later modified by substituting for the fine, the requirement of finding a substitute for each sectarian who refused military service. If they refused to secure a substitute, as was certainly true of the Quakers and probably true of the Brethren, the local officials were empowered to hire substitutes and “levy the Sum given for such Man or Men on the Goods and Chattels, Lands and Tenements, of any Person belonging to such Sect, as shall refuse or fail to find a Man or Men agreeable to this Act.”²⁸

In addition to the penalties for refusing to accept military service, special taxes were levied on these non-resistant sectarians. The Moravians protested to the state authorities that they would prefer to pay a tax rather than a fine for their refusal to accept militia duty. The state legislators accepted this idea and levied a three-fold tax on all Quakers, Moravians, Brethren, and Mennonites, and any others who refused to take the oath of allegiance. Furthermore, “if any person coming within either of the aforesaid denominations, or refusing to take the oath as aforesaid, shall fail to return an inventory of his taxable property according to law, the person so failing shall pay four times the tax which shall be assessed on persons in this State who comply in every respect with the laws thereof.” Although the intentions of the legislators were not clear, some tax collectors tried to collect a twelve-fold tax on these individuals over a period of five years until the legislature finally decided that it had intended for a four-fold tax to be the maximum. For example, in Rowan County the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions in February, 1780, ordered “that Nicholas Leatherman, John Seares, and Xtian

28. Walter Clark, editor, *The State Records of North Carolina* (Winston and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 16 volumes, numbered XI-XXVI, 1895-1914), XXIV, 117, 156. Hereinafter cited as Clark, *State Records*.

[Christian] Leatherman Dunkers in the same District [Hopewell] be released from a 12 fold tax to a 3 fold tax.”²⁹ These Dunkers were members of the Ewarry congregation, for the Leathermans were neighbors of Jacob Stutzman.

In general the treatment of these non-resistant groups seems to have been more lenient in North Carolina than it was in the other states with considerable numbers of these groups, such as Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. At any rate, the official policy of the government of North Carolina was admirably stated in the resolutions which were included with the revisions of the affirmation sought by the Moravians: “That as the end of all government is to make every member of the Community equally happy, and as in a State settled by people of different Religions this equality of political Happiness is inseparable from an Indulgence to those whose religious Opinions make them object to the usual form of promising fidelity to the State.”³⁰ With the laws and actions of the North Carolina government based on such an attitude of tolerance, it is not surprising that various Brethren families emigrated from Pennsylvania and Maryland to North Carolina.

The Ewarry congregation led by Jacob Stutzman evidently prospered in the years immediately following the end of the War of Independence. Stutzman himself secured considerable additional land in the 1790's both by state land grants and by purchase from others, including Valentine Beard and Christian Leatherman. However, by the end of 1801, he had sold most of his property in North Carolina and had emigrated to Clark County, Indiana along the Ohio River.³¹ Most of the Brethren in the Ewarry congregation were also moving westward at about the same time, including numerous

29. Fries and others, *Records of the Moravians*, III, 1206-1208; Clark, *State Records*, XXIV, 204, 434; Rowan County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, February term, 1780, from Dr. John Scott Davenport.

30. Clark, *State Records*, XIII, 550-551.

31. Rowan County Deed Books, XIII, 641, 776, 778, 967-968; XVII, 318-319; XXI, 651-652; XIV, 464-465; Stutzman's emigration to Indiana has been documented from the Clark County, Indiana land records by Dr. John Scott Davenport.

families of Hoovers and Foutsers. The reasons for the migration included the desire for better land since the land along the Uwharrie River was evidently not very productive, the need to escape from the legal harrassment which the courts in Randolph County were beginning about 1795, and the unsettled religious conditions among the Brethren which will be discussed in more detail later in this story.

YADKIN CONGREGATION

Edwards' third society of Tunker-baptists in North Carolina was known as the Yadkin or the Atkin; it was located on the north branch of the Peedee River "further from the fork" and SbW from New Bern. The big question about this description is which fork of the river, since numerous locations would seem to fit this general description. "The ministers Hans and Conrad Kern. The families about 29 whereof 40 persons are baptized."³² Like Stutzman, these two ministers can be specifically located in the colony of North Carolina, but their background is completely obscure. Robert Ramsey in his doctoral dissertation on the northwest Carolina frontier suggested that the Kerns might have come from a German settlement in Loudoun County, Virginia, but no Brethren are known to have lived in that area during this period.³³ According to the tremendous Strassburger-Hinke compilation, two Conrad Kerns arrived in America: one on October 25, 1738 and a second on October 1, 1754.³⁴ Which of these (or whether either) was the Dunker elder of Rowan County cannot be determined from the available evidence.

32. Edwards, "Materials."

33. Robert W. Ramsey, *Carolina Cradle: Settlement of the Northwest Carolina Frontier, 1747-1762* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), page 92. See also, "The Pennsylvania Germans in Loudoun County, Virginia," *Pennsylvania German Magazine*, IX (1908), 3:125-133.

34. Ralph Beaver Strassburger and William J. Hinke, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers* (Norristown, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Society, 3 volumes, 1934), I, 234, 628.

The earliest record indicating Conrad Kern's presence in North Carolina was a Rowan County deed from his uncle, Conrod Michel, conveying three hundred eight acres of land on both sides of Crane Creek on August 2-3, 1762. Eventually, over a period of some thirty years, Kern secured several other pieces of land in the general area.³⁵ That he and John (Hans) were brothers was confirmed in a complicated document involving their uncle, Conrod Michel, who made a trip back to Germany and had died somewhere along the way, leaving these two brothers as his heirs.³⁶ A number of transactions involved the members of the Kern family, who bought and sold land located in the Crane Creek area of Rowan County on the west side of the Yadkin River.³⁷ This area which is south of the "Forks of the Yadkin" in which the North Yadkin divides from the South Yadkin and north of the forks in which the Yadkin divides from the Rocky River is the specific location of Morgan Edwards' Yadin or Atkin congregation of the Brethren in North Carolina.

Both Conrad and John Kern prepared wills to provide for the distribution of their extensive estates, although the indication is that they had already taken care of some of their sons. Conrad's will was drawn on December 20, 1807, when he was "in perfect health and sound mind," and probated in November, 1812. An interesting aspect of the will is its concern for two grandchildren, Joel and Marymagdalane, who were the children of a deceased daughter, Elizabeth, and Daniel Stotsmann. This marriage to a man who was quite probably the son of Jacob Stutzman, the minister of the Ewarry congregation, is an excellent illustration of the movement of Brethren families back and forth among congregations and the requirement that children had to marry within the fellowship.³⁸ John Kern's will was signed, also in legible

35. Rowan County Deed Books, IV, 924-925; VII, 80-81; VIII, 347-348; IX, 488-489; X, 357-358; XI, 636-637.

36. *Ibid.*, VIII, 550-554.

37. *Ibid.*, VIII, 138-139; XIII, 217-218; XVIII, 45, 984-986.

38. Rowan County Will Books, G, 238-241.

English, on June 25, 1818, and probated in November, 1823.³⁹ Nothing in any of these legal documents indicates any relation to any religious group, and no other evidence concerning the religious activities of these Yadkin Brethren has come to light.

However, much additional evidence has been discovered concerning another Brethren clan which lived for a time as neighbors of the Kerns. On February 7, 1775, James Hendricks, a wheelwright of Rowan County, purchased three hundred forty-nine acres on the Middle Fork of Crane Creek from George Smith and Richard Walton. This tract had been granted by the Earl of Granville to Peter Smith on August 23, 1759; Hendricks had paid three hundred pounds to Peter Smith, and his executors Walton and George Smith were now settling accounts with Hendricks.⁴⁰ Although there is no positive evidence that this James Hendricks was a Brethren in North Carolina, the evidence regarding the family in Pennsylvania before they came to North Carolina and in Kentucky after they left North Carolina clearly indicates the family ties with the Brethren.

The Hendricks family had extensive ties with the Quakers, the Mennonites, and the Brethren in Pennsylvania and to some extent in Europe. A Laurens Hendriks is identified as the preacher of the Mennonite community at Nijmegen in the Netherlands, and in 1685 Gerhard Hendricks with his wife, Mary, and his daughter, Sarah, arrived in America from his home in Krisheim.⁴¹ This Gerhard Hendricks three years later signed a statement protesting the evils of the slave trade, which was evidently drawn up by a group of Mennonites at Germantown and sent to the Philadelphia Friends. Samuel W. Pennypacker, the eminent Pennsylvania historian, described this statement as "the first public protest ever made on this

39. *Ibid.*, H, 248-250.

40. Rowan County Deed Books, VIII, 259-261.

41. J. G. De Hoop Scheffer, "Mennonite Emigration to Pennsylvania," translation from the *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, 1869, in Samuel W. Pennypacker, *Historical and Biographical Sketches* (Philadelphia: Robert A. Tripplé, 1883), page 183; see also information supplied by Pennypacker, pages 35-36, in the same volume.

continent against the holding of slaves. A little rill there started which further on became an immense torrent, and whenever hereafter men trace analytically the causes which led to Shiloh, Gettysburg, and Appomattox they will begin with the tender consciences of the linen weavers and husbandmen of Germantown.’’⁴²

The Philadelphia records of the Friends reveal the presence of a number of members of the Hendricks family in the early years of the eighteenth century. Of most interest to this study, however, are those who moved into the interior of Lancaster and York counties. In a careful study, Abdel Ross Wentz of Gettysburg College described in great detail the first “authorized” settlement in present-day York County which was made when John Hendricks moved across the Susquehanna River in 1728. Other pioneers had settled in this area as early as 1721, but they had been removed by the authorities. In 1731 he was joined by his brother, James, who was accidentally shot and killed by their father, James, in 1732 while they were hunting turkeys. Wentz also examined carefully the traditional claim that the first settlement in York County was made by Englishmen--the Hendricks. He concluded:

It is highly probable, but remains without positive proof, that these Hendrickses were of German descent, that their ancestors one or two generations previous were Mennonites in Switzerland or in the Rhine Valley and had fled before persecution and found refuge in England; that there they quickly associated themselves with their English brethren in the faith, the Quakers, and with them came to America. In this case they might be called Englishmen of German descent, and this would account for their German spirit of enterprise in pushing across the Susquehanna and locating where they did,

42. *Ibid.*, pages 42-44.

while at the same time it would account for their English associations and the English form of their Christian names. Certain it is that soon after their location in York County the Hendrickses were close associates of the Germans who followed them into the county. They sympathized with them in times of adversity and cooperated with them in matters of religion. But while there were these strong bonds of sympathy and cooperation, perhaps even ties of blood between these pioneer Hendrickses and the early Germans in the county, nevertheless the places from which they came, their associates before their migration, together with the other evidence in the case, seem to leave little room for doubt that John and James Hendricks were regarded as Englishmen when they crossed the Susquehanna.⁴³

Wentz's conclusion has been quoted at length in order to explain how the members of the Hendricks family came to play such an important role as Brethren in the century from 1750 to 1850.

The manner in which the Hendrickses first became Brethren is not certain, but certain evidence needs to be considered. Morgan Edwards in his previously cited history of the Little Conewago congregation in York County stated that "Their beginning was in 1738 when one Eldrick, Dierdorff, Bigler, Gripe, Studsman and others united into a church." The name Eldrick is a puzzling one, for there is no similar name in any of the Brethren records of the eighteenth century. The suspicion is that the name ought to be Hendricks, since members of the family were living in this area in close proximity to the Brethren during the 1730's. Michael Tanner, in particular, was a Brethren who had come to America in

43. Abdel Ross Wentz, *The Beginnings of the German Element in York County, Pennsylvania* (Lancaster, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Society, 1916), pages 24-36. Hereinafter cited as Wentz, *York County*.

September, 1727, with Daniel Leatherman. First, he “took out a patent for two hundred acres of land near the farm of John Hendricks in west Lancaster County,” according to J. M. Henry, who was especially interested in Tanner’s career. Then, he was one of “the first Dutch [!] settlers west of the Susquehanna River,” and became involved in the extensive legal turmoil between the Penns and the Carrolls regarding the boundary between Pennsylvania and Maryland. At this time, Tanner was living six miles southwest of the John Hendricks residence.⁴⁴ At any rate, it is certain that the Tanner family and the Hendricks family were acquainted and probably associated in the frontier settlements in York County.

According to Morgan Edwards, one of the ministers of the Little Conewago congregation in 1770 was James Hendrick. No indication is given by Edwards of the background of this man, but the suspicion is that he was the same individual described by Wentz as a Quaker and a carpenter, who lived in the western part of Lancaster County in 1732-1733 and who was employed by James Patterson in 1733 to make trips across the Susquehanna River to take care of Patterson’s horses. Furthermore, in two depositions which he made regarding the border difficulties west of the river, he made his mark for a signature.⁴⁵ Henry understood that the James Hendrick, who was the minister of the Little Conewago congregation, of which Michael Tanner was a member in 1770, was “formerly a Quaker and the close neighbor of Michael Tanner.”⁴⁶ This description also fits the James Hendricks who turned up in Rowan County, North Carolina in 1775. He was a wheelwright, which was a specialized kind of carpentry; furthermore, in the marriage of John Hendricks to Sarah Lewis on December 27, 1780, the bondsman was James Hendricks who made his

44. Henry, *Brethren in Maryland*, pages 34-36.

45. Wentz, *York County*, page 31.

46. Henry, *Brethren in Maryland*, page 39.

signature with a mark.⁴⁷ This John Hendricks was identified as the son of James Hendricks in a transaction of June 2, 1798 in which John sold four lots in the town of Salisbury to William Hendrix; these lots had become the property of John Hendricks as part of his legatee from his father, James Hendricks, deceased.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, no will of James Hendricks nor any land sales by him have been discovered in order to check the method by which he made his signature.

How long James Hendricks lived in North Carolina is uncertain. Two sales of land to James Hendricks in 1780 and in 1787 were for land adjacent to his initial purchase on Crane Creek in 1775.⁴⁹ A James Hendrick is listed in the Census of 1790, although the Hendricks clan by that time was living in a different area of Rowan County on Dutchman's Creek in the Forks of the Yadkin. Of course, one major problem which is almost impossible for the historian to solve with the available information is the fact that the Hendricks family used the names James and John in every generation so that after several generations there were probably several individuals with these names in each generation; it is therefore possible that several different individuals with the name James may be involved in these events in Pennsylvania and in North Carolina.

The third of Morgan Edwards' congregations in North Carolina in the Crane Creek area west of the Yadkin River evidently came to an end as did the Catawba and Ewarry congregations as the result of a combination of factors including the death of the Kerns and the emigration of other leaders including the Hendrickses. The pressure of neighboring religious groups such as the Baptists and the Methodists also must have entered into the picture.

47. Rowan County Marriage Bonds, I, 192.

48. Rowan County Deed Books, XVII, 70-71.

49. *Ibid.*, IX, 121-123; XI, 218.

BEAVER CREEK CONGREGATION

At the same time that the Brethren were establishing settlements in North Carolina during the second half of the eighteenth century, they were also establishing several settlements in neighboring South Carolina. In his introduction to the history of the Baptists in South Carolina, Morgan Edwards stated that "In 1748 a few Tunker baptists from Connecocheague came into the northwest parts about the waters of Santee." He amplified this statement in Part IV, which "Treats of the Tunker-baptists in South Carolina": "About the year 1748 Michael Millers, Jacob Canomore, Lawrence Free, with their wives arrived hither from Connecocheague."⁵⁰ This point of origin was a Brethren settlement in Maryland which had been established in 1743. Of these three families the Miller family bore the most distinctively Brethren name; for example, Edwards listed Millers as members of seven of the fifteen Brethren congregations in Pennsylvania. The name, Canomore, however, is not found in any possible form in Edwards' list of the Pennsylvania Brethren. Free is probably a form of Frey or Fray; Christian Fray was a member of the Conewago congregation in Pennsylvania in 1770. Of course, the fact that Edwards did not provide the names of the members of the Connecocheague congregation from which these South Carolina Brethren had emigrated is a handicap in providing a more definite identification of their background.

These Brethren families probably departed from their friends and relatives in Frederick County, Maryland because of their desire to secure inexpensive, virgin soil on the frontier of South Carolina. At any rate, it did not take them long to stake out claims in their new location. According to Townsend, who studied the Tunkers in her doctoral dissertation on the Baptists in South Carolina, "Jacob Canamore (Gannamer) and Lawrence Free . . . had surveys respectively of 350 and 400

50. Edwards, "Materials."

acres on Wilkingses Branch and Wilkinsons Creek in 1752; ... Michael Miller 200 acres on the north side of Broad River on Beaverdam Creek in 1755 and 100 acres on small branches of Sandy Run in 1766.”⁵¹ In the various documents which Meriwether cited, Free is identified as a Pennsylvanian, and Canomore is identified as Free’s “former acquaintance.”⁵² These statements seem to place more emphasis on the Pennsylvania background of these South Carolina Brethren than on the Maryland background proposed by Edwards. Really, this uncertainty is not very important anyway, since these Brethren usually stopped for a time to visit relatives in the various settlements on their way south and west.

What these Brethren found in South Carolina must have pleased them, for they were joined by other Brethren during the 1750’s. Edwards reported that “after them came Rev. George Martin and wife, and Hans Waggoner and wife.” A bit later in his discussion, Edwards noted that David Martin, who was quite probably the son of George Adam Martin, arrived in South Carolina in 1754. With a minister present, the Brethren “united in communion in the month of July 1759,” according to Edwards, who added that they “increased fast.”⁵³ Townsend indicated that in 1757 Hans Wagoner had a survey of one hundred fifty acres on a branch of Little Creek in the fork of Broad and Saluda Rivers, but for George Martin she was unable to locate any land survey.⁵⁴

George Adam Martin, as he is usually known, was a very important and in many ways unusual itinerant preacher among the Brethren in America during the eighteenth century. The most recent student of Martin’s life, H. Austin Cooper, who has written an unpublished biography, noted that

51. Leah Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists: 1670-1805* (Florence, South Carolina: The Florence Printing Company, 1935), page 167. Hereinafter cited as Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists*.

52. Robert L. Meriwether, *The Expansion of South Carolina, 1729-1765* (Kingsport, Tennessee: Southern Publishers, Inc., 1940), page 148. Hereinafter cited as Meriwether, *South Carolina*.

53. Edwards, “Materials.”

54. Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists*, pages 167-168.

Martin "went on missionary tours to the Colonies as far north as Maine, south to North Carolina, Virginia, present West Virginia and often into Maryland taking the Gospel of evangelism everywhere he went. He did not believe in riding a horse but walked thousands of miles each year on these missionary tours to the back country of our colonies."⁵⁵ Briefly, Martin was born near Lundsthal in Germany in 1715 and came to America in 1729. At that time he was a member of the Reformed Church, but in 1735 he was baptized as a Brethren by Peter Becker. His leadership potential was evidently recognized immediately, for in the same year he was ordained as an elder. His itinerancy is indicated again by the fact that before his South Carolina residence, he had been connected with the Coventry, Conestoga, Little Conewago, and Conewago congregations in Pennsylvania and with the Antietam congregation in Maryland.

For about five years in the 1750's George Adam Martin was the leader of the Beaver Creek congregation in South Carolina, as it was called, but by 1760 he was back in Pennsylvania where he got into difficulty in the Conewago congregation. Consequently, he led some sixty members in the establishment of the new Bermudian congregation. The crux of the matter was the strictness with which certain sectarian practices such as the closed communion and the ban were to be enforced. Added to these issues was Martin's attitude which was characterized by his declaration that "everybody who knew me considered me a great doctor of Holy Writ." His activities and attitude were considered sinful by the older leadership of the sect, and therefore, Martin was disfellowshipped and subjected to the ban.

In reaction to his disfellowshipping Martin took two steps: In the first place he tied himself more closely to the schismatic group of Brethren led by Conrad Beissel, the leader and

55. H. Austin Cooper, "Pastor's Report to the Congregation," *Church Directory, Brothersvalley Church of the Brethren*, Berlin, Pennsylvania, 1953-1954, page 14. At the time he wrote this statement, Cooper did not know of Edwards' account of the Brethren in South Carolina.

founder of the Ephrata community. The most distinctive characteristics of the Ephrata Brethren were their emphasis on celibacy as the highest form of Christian life and their acceptance of the seventh day as the proper time for Christian worship. This Sabbatarianism, as it is known, spread widely among the Brethren settlements and had its impact in South Carolina as will be noted. In the second place, Martin led a group of sympathetic Brethren across the mountains to establish the first Brethren congregation in Somerset County, Pennsylvania in 1762. Here Martin spent the remaining thirty years of his life, although he continued to travel widely. M. G. Brumbaugh, one of the first scholarly historians of the Church of the Brethren, summarized Martin's career in these words: "He was a Taufer [Brethren] at heart and a lover of God's ordinances, but he was a rash, impulsive, impatient man. He possessed an unusual mind, well trained in German and in Latin, was a logical reasoner, a profound speaker, and a ready writer."⁵⁶

Not surprisingly, George Adam Martin's influence on the South Carolina Brethren was very great. The most important leader of these Brethren on the southern frontier was David Martin, who was probably a son of George Adam. David Martin was born on October 8, 1737 at Conestogo, according to Morgan Edwards. For a time at least, George Adam Martin lived at Conestogo, although the exact dates are unknown. When George Adam returned to Pennsylvania, David remained in South Carolina as the shepherd of the flock. He married a local girl named Ann Lessley, who quite possibly was the daughter of James Leslie, a settler on Little River and evidently a friend of John Pearson, whom Edwards considered an assistant of David Martin. By 1772 when Edwards visited

56. This biographical sketch of Martin is based on H. Austin Cooper, *Two Centuries of the Brothersvalley Church of the Brethren, 1762-1962* (Westminister, Maryland: The Times, Inc., 1962), pages 115, 120-122, 124-125, and Martin Grove Brumbaugh, *A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America* (Mount Morris, Illinois: Brethren Publishing House, 1899), pages 330-332. Hereinafter cited as Brumbaugh, *German Baptist Brethren*.

David Martin, the latter had three children, Esther, Catherine, and David. According to his will, he eventually had eight children, including in addition to these three, George, Solomon, Samuel, Deborah, and Ruth.⁵⁷ Edwards was quite favorably impressed with this Brethren minister, for he recorded: "He bears an excellent character; . . . Mr. Martin has the happy cast of mind that he is facecious and devout at the same time."

At the time of Edwards' visit, David Martin was taking steps to provide for the financial support of his growing family. In 1770 he secured a survey of one hundred acres on the road from Ross's Mill to Grant's Ferry on Wrights Branch on the south side of Wateree River, and three years later he secured another survey of one hundred acres on a branch of Beaver Creek of Broad River, bordering on the land of John Godfrey, Thomas Medows, and the estate of William Mobley. Townsend considered this latter location "the center of religious activity of the group," which is reasonable since Edwards described Beaver Creek as "a little brook running into Broad River on the north side."⁵⁸

CLOUDS CREEK CONGREGATION

David Martin was an active leader of the Brethren in South Carolina. By 1772 the Beaver Creek settlement included twenty-five families and fifty baptized members. Very likely, some of these members represented non-German Carolinians who associated with the Brethren because of Martin's preaching. At any rate, Martin did not hesitate to preach to non-Germans and non-Brethren, for as Townsend indicated, "In 1768 Rev. David Martin went into the region about Clouds Creek, where he found some English Dunkers and Seventh Day Baptists, to whom he preached and administered com-

57. Will of David Martin, Newberry County Wills, A, 237, cited in George Leland Summer, *Newberry County South Carolina Historical and Genealogical* (Privately printed, 1950), page 461. Hereinafter cited as Summer, *Newberry County*.

58. Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists*, page 167.

munion. By 1772 there was a congregation of thirty families with forty-two baptized communicants.”⁵⁹ In addition, Edwards noted that these Brethren along Clouds Creek were English rather than German; some of these members, he added, were seventh day baptists from the neighborhood, who will be described in more detail later in this story. One of the prominent charter members was Snowden Kirkland and the local leader of the society in 1772 was James Warren, “who exhorts among them.” Townsend found land surveys for both Snowden Kirkland and James Warren; the latter had surveys of two hundred acres in 1770 on Clouds Creek, bordering the land of John Williams and Captain Benjamin Tutt and of one hundred fifty acres in 1773 in St. Paul’s Parish.⁶⁰

EDISTO CONGREGATION

In addition to the Clouds Creek congregation which David Martin helped to organize in 1768, his work extended further down the Edisto River, where in January, 1770, he baptized about ten people and organized them into the Edisto congregation. Two families were prominent in this settlement, the Elijah Patchet family and the Thomas Taylor family. By the time Edwards visited Martin, the Edisto congregation had sixteen baptized members from eight families, and Patchet was serving as the minister of the group. Like the Clouds Creek Brethren, all of these new Brethren were English, “some keeping the 1st day some the 7th for sabbath.” Townsend discovered surveys for Elijah Padgett of two hundred acres in 1767 on the waters of Edisto and of two hundred acres in 1773 on Clouds Creek of Little Saluda River bordering Michael Watson and Thomas Green and for Thomas Taylor of two hundred acres in 1769 on the northeast side of Edisto near Cattle Creek bordering David Rumph, John

59. *Ibid.*, page 169.

60. *Ibid.*

Milhouse, and Thomas Pinckney and in 1772 on a branch of the northwest fork of Long Cane Creek.⁶¹

Because of his significant work in South Carolina, David Martin was ordained as an elder of the Brethren in September, 1770 by Daniel Leatherman and Nicholas Martin, the elders of the Monocacy and Connecocheague congregations in Maryland. Edwards does not reveal where the ordination took place, and it seems quite possible that the two Maryland elders could have been visiting the congregations in the Carolinas to encourage and strengthen them or that Martin could have gone to Maryland for this event. Edwards made it clear in his discussion of the North Carolina Brethren that Leatherman had a special responsibility for all of the Brethren in the southern colonies. In addition in his discussion of the Brethren in New Jersey, Edwards said of Leatherman:

Their church government was purely republican as I observed in my first volume [on Pennsylvania in which there is an extensive discussion of the Brethren]; but in Maryland (and I suppose in other states) they have a superintendent whose name is Daniel Leatherman; to him is referred the decision of variances among the ministers and the people, and as the Dunkers call all their ordained ministers bishops, it follows that Leatherman holds the rank of archbishop.⁶²

Edwards' interpretation of Leatherman's role indicated clearly his importance among the Brethren, although it seems unlikely that the Brethren themselves used such a title as archbishop. In fact, they rarely ever used the title of bishop, preferring to call their highest ranking ministers, elders.

61. *Ibid.*, page 171.

62. Morgan Edwards, *Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in America* (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1792), page 145.

Regardless of his title, David Martin was certainly the most important Brethren leader in South Carolina during the years from 1760 until his death in 1794.

Another Brethren leader who was particularly prominent in South Carolina life was David Martin's assistant at Beaver Creek, John Pearson. According to Fitz Hugh McMaster, the author of a book on Fairfield County, South Carolina, Pearson was a "native of Berkshire Co., England, early settled in Carolina."⁶³ He was in Amelia Township, South Carolina in 1737, and in 1742 he married Philip Raiford's daughter, Mary, and settled on a three hundred acre tract near his father-in-law on the Congaree River. Here he cleared and cultivated the land, and built a house and barn.

However, Pearson was also a surveyor, and after the death of the surveyor, George Haig, at the hands of the Indians in 1749, "Pearson turned to surveying and became the most active of these enterprising developers of the back country." Since most of the frontier surveying was being done farther west along the Broad and Saluda Rivers, Pearson moved to the Broad River in 1755.⁶⁴ Here he became a justice of the peace and militia captain along with his surveying responsibilities. He had located on a high ridge on the west side of the Broad River above the mouth of Crims Creek, a site which gave him an excellent view of the Broad River valley. As sometimes happened to such land speculators, Pearson became bankrupt in 1766 and was forced to sell his thirteen hundred acre estate on the Broad River; he then moved back to the Congaree River settlement.⁶⁵

Pearson's religious interest was clearly indicated in two letters to his son, Philip, written in 1764 while he was living among the Broad River Brethren. On March 27, he wrote:

63. Fitz Hugh McMaster, *History of Fairfield County, South Carolina* (Columbia: The State Commercial Printing Company, 1946), page 215. Hereinafter cited as McMaster, *Fairfield County*.

64. Meriwether, *South Carolina*, page 60; see also the map on page 52.

65. *Ibid.*, pages 156-157.

in Regard to Your Immortal Soul my dear Son think Seriously of Your later End as you See by Experience every day one or another Launched into Eternity therefore my Dear take care to make your Calling and Ellection sure in pertickular my dear remember your Creator in the days of your Youth and dont Lett this world blind your Eyes but continue in prayers always as the Apostle Says--Pray without Ceaseing that pray always and Lett your thought be ingaged in heavin where you hope to Live in the Enjoyment of God to All Eternity which may God for ever Grant Amen Remember my Love to Your Grand-Mother and All Your Unckles and Aunts and tell them that I begg they will Meditate on the end of there Creation and to work out there Salvation with Fear and Trimbling for what will be the profit if A Man Gains the whole world and Lose his Soul A Dreadfull ease Indeed for A Man to forfeit his Soul for the profits of this Life my Dear therefore watch & pray continually Least you fall into Temptation which is the Ernest desire & prayer of Your Loveing Father till death

The second extant letter of May 5 was somewhat improved in orthography:

I am to Inform you that our Redeemer has preserved us in Health and in the unity of the Spirit, and as God through his sparing mercy Allows us the Opportunity to meat before him morning and Evening to Celebrate his praise, and Offer up prayers and Thanksgiving, to his Dreadfull Majesty Who Measures out the Heavens with A Span and Weighs the Mountains in a Ballance and Contains the Great Waters as in the Hollow of his Hands and Who is of purer Eyes than to behold iniquity in Any of his Creatures here below he being so pure & Holy yt [that] he Charges his Angles with folly and the very

Heavens are not Clean in his Sight, much more such poor polluted Creatures as wee are who were born in sin, and brought forth in iniquity and by our Actual Transgressions against this mighty God have incurd his Displeasure but as JESUS ye [the] Saviour of the World hath delighted himself Amoungst ye [the] Sons of men our Hope is in him . . . as we shall have a great meeting on Friday Saturday and Sunday next I desire youl come up and I hope Your Grand mother will be permitted to come Also Together with some of your Uncles and Aunts Pray Call on Your Uncle Mosses as you come up and press him and your Aunt Patience to come itt may be for there Eternal Wellfare for itt is Good to be where Jesus is passing by as poor blind Bartemus found to his Eternal Happiness for as wee Are Blind by Nature and cannot see the things that belong to our Eternal peace so God may make Use of some of our Ministers as a little Clay to Open there Eyes that they may Desire Spiritual Things for without the Spirit of God wee are none of his⁶⁶

The nature of this “great meeting” is not clear from the context of the letter. The Brethren of the eighteenth century sometimes called their Annual Meetings, great meetings, when they assembled from as many as possible of the local congregations to conduct necessary business and to engage in a great spiritual revival experience. The time of year in the month of May would also fit the usual time for having the Annual Meeting. Since the practice of having such meetings began in the 1740’s as an outgrowth of the threat to the Brethren of the Zinzendorf synods in Pennsylvania and since no record has been preserved of the location or the business of

66. These manuscripts were secured from Mrs. George Tomlin of Blair, South Carolina, the present owner. I am deeply indebted to her for the use of this very valuable material. However, the second portion of the letter of May 5 which I have quoted is missing from Mrs. Tomlin’s collection. I have taken it from Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists*, page 124.

the Annual Meeting of 1764, it is at least possible that this "great meeting" described by Pearson was the Annual Meeting of the Brethren in 1764. On the other hand, it has been assumed by Brethren historians that all of the early Annual Meetings were held in Pennsylvania; however, there is no evidence to support such an assumption.

BROAD RIVER CONGREGATION

The deeply religious John Pearson has been identified with the Seventh Day Baptists who lived among the Brethren on the Broad River. The establishment of the earliest Brethren settlement in South Carolina by George Adam Martin, the friend of Conrad Beissel of the Ephrata Seventh Day Brethren, would make natural the mingling of first and seventh day Brethren in South Carolina. Although these two groups did not get along very well together in Pennsylvania in which state each group had its greatest strength, as these individuals moved toward the frontier, they tended to forget the bitterness of feelings in Pennsylvania and to work together more closely in facing the harshness and loneliness of life in the back country. Julius F. Sachse, who has written the most detailed history of the German sectarians in Pennsylvania, summarized this mingling of the two groups, when he wrote of the Brethren in Maryland: "Here, as well as in the Shenandoah Valley, the First and Seventh-day Baptists lived side by side without any clashing."⁶⁷ If he had had more information on South Carolina, he would certainly have included it in his list.

The two groups evidently came to South Carolina at about the same time. Meriwether in his study of the South Carolina frontier pointed out that "two Pennsylvanians, Thomas Owen and Lawrence Free, and Free's 'former acquaintance' Jacob

67. Julius Friedrich Sachse, *The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania, 1742-1800*, volume II of *A Critical and Legendary History of the Ephrata Cloister and the Dunkers* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Author, 1900), page 457. Hereinafter cited as Sachse, *German Sectarians*.

Canomore, in 1752 petitioned for land on [Wilkinsons] creek.”⁶⁸

Morgan Edwards identified Free and Canomore as Tunkers and Owen as a leader of the Seventh Day Baptists. Of the latter group, he wrote: “The way in which this society had a beginning was by emigrants from Connecocheague immediately, but originally from French-creek in Pennsylvania viz. Thomas Owen and Wife who came here in 1754. Victor Nelly and wife who arrived in 1757. John Gregory (and his sons Richard and John) from Piscatawa in New Jersey, the same year.” In these families were to be found the leaders of this Seventh Day Brethren settlement for Edwards also reported that “these had Rev. Richard Gregory to their minister,” and “No place of worship; the meeting is held alternately at the houses of Thomas Owen and Victor Nelly.”

These individuals lived along the Broad River, according to Townsend’s examination of the land records. In addition to his land on Wilkinsons Creek, Thomas Owen secured two hundred fifty acres on the northeast side of Broad River on Conaway Creek. Victor Nelly (Naley, Nailly) had surveys of one hundred fifty acres on a branch of Rocky Creek in December, 1756, and of one hundred acres on the Little River of Broad River in June, 1759. John Gregory, “an old man,” arrived in South Carolina from East Jersey in May, 1748, at the same time as the earliest of the First Day Brethren and requested that his fifty acres be included with the land of his son, Benjamin, on Crims Creek. Richard Gregory asked for three hundred acres for himself, his wife, and four small children on the Wateree Creek, and actually received two hundred seventy-eight acres at the junction of Wateree Creek and Wateree River.⁶⁹

Actually, the eighteen families from which came the twenty-four members of the Broad River Seventh Day Brethren congregation were spread out quite widely across the frontier of South Carolina. In addition to the Owen, Nelly,

68. Meriwether, *South Carolina*, page 148.

69. Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists*, pages 172-173.

and Gregory families which lived on the northeast side of Broad River, John Dunckley had land on Burkhalters Creek of Broad River and Joseph Smith claimed three hundred acres in 1763 on Cedar Creek on the north side of the Broad River. These families were the most centrally located in terms of the total membership of the congregation. A second group of families lived along the Wateree River farther east than the Broad River. Isaac Aldridge, Sr. and Jr., had four hundred acres in two surveys in 1765 and 1768 on the Crooked Creek of the Wateree River. William Harris claimed two hundred acres on the north side of the Wateree River near Sparrow Spring. Matthias (Messias) Fellows had claims of one hundred acres in 1765 on the Twenty-Five Mile Creek and of one hundred acres on the Taylors Creek in 1771. Richard Kirkland secured three hundred fifty acres on Wateree Creek on the path from the Congarees to the Catawba Nation in 1753, at which time one of his neighbors was Richard Gregory.

Still a third group of families lived on the south side of Broad River. Paul Williams who lived on Second Creek in 1750 requested one hundred fifty acres for his daughter's husband, John Pearson, who came from Philadelphia. This survey on Reedy Branch near Second Creek between the Broad and Saluda Rivers was certified to Pearson in May, 1751. Although this John Pearson was later identified as a Quaker, he was evidently not the assistant of David Martin in the Beaver Creek Brethren settlement. Samuel Cannon, Esq., was an extensive land holder, including one hundred acres on Broad River in 1754, two hundred acres on Cedar Shoal Creek of Enoree in 1765, and two hundred acres in 1771 and one hundred fifty acres in 1772 on Cannons Creek of the Broad River. Another member of this family, Ephraim Cannon, secured two hundred acres on Cannons Creek in 1769. Jeremiah Pearson had one hundred acres in 1772 on Second Creek in the Fork of the Broad and Saluda Rivers, and George Smith had one hundred acres on Cannons Creek in 1756. The only surveys which Townsend found for another member of this

congregation, Joshua Edwards, were located in the Welsh Tract on the Peedee River.⁷⁰

TUCHOSOKIN (GEORGIA) COMMUNITY

One of the interesting episodes in the history of this isolated Seventh Day Brethren settlement in the deep south was an attempt to found a monastic community in Georgia which would be somewhat similar to the Ephrata community in Pennsylvania. Morgan Edwards has preserved some of the details of this venture. About 1759 some eight families crossed the Savannah River and settled in the eastern part of the colony of Georgia near a little river which the Indians called Tuchosokin (now called Tuckaseeking). The settlement was close to the mouth of this river where it empties into the Savannah River and within the bounds of St. Matthew's parish. The leader of this settlement was Richard Gregory, who had been in South Carolina at least as early as 1749. However, he died in Georgia, and the leadership role fell on Robert Kirkland, also a member of a very prominent family among the Brethren in South Carolina. His assistant was John Clayton, who got into difficulty with the English authorities for a comment in one of his sermons. He stated that "he who kept a concubine would be no Christian, though the keeper were a king and the concubine a countess." This statement was interpreted to refer to King George II and his relationship with the Countess of Yarmouth, and for it Clayton was fined a mark.

Clayton's involvement with the English authorities was typical of the troubles which plagued the colony because of the attitude of their neighbors. The factor which caused the dissolution of the colony in addition to sickness was "a malignity which their neighbors had conceived against them on account of their working on Sundays and the judgments (as

70. *Ibid.*, pages 172-174.

they imagined) which beset them while working." Among these judgments were such things as "a hollow tree falling and killing two horses while their owners were taking honey out of it," which incidentally was one of their major sources of support, "a young man being killed with the jirk of a plow while planting indian corn on Sunday," and "on another Sunday one or two being struck dead with thunder as they were hunting," which was the other major source of their income. These events seemed to represent the hand of God to the neighbors of these Sabbatarians. Living on the frontier of Georgia was difficult enough without incurring the antipathy of the neighbors of this communal settlement; consequently, after about four years, the survivors gave up and returned to live among their friends in South Carolina.⁷¹

In addition to such Seventh Day Brethren leaders as Thomas Owen, Victor Nelly, Richard Gregory, Robert Kirkland, and John Clayton, one of the very fascinating leaders of this group in South Carolina was Israel Seymour. After an early life in New Castle County, Pennsylvania, Seymour spent some time as a sailor and captain of a ship and then by some unknown circumstance he became "one of the earliest and most enthusiastic converts of the Sabbatarian movement" in French Creek, Pennsylvania, which was a settlement of English and Welsh Sabbatarians with close connections with the Ephrata settlement. In 1746 he and his sister entered the Ephrata community; however, the discipline was too exacting and they soon returned to French Creek. Before leaving, Seymour was baptized by Beissel and was ordained to serve the English and the Welsh. As the result of his work, a monastery similar but smaller than Ephrata was constructed at French Creek. The community was prospering until Seymour fell in love and married a young sister from Ephrata. To add to the difficulties he became ill with spells of insanity and engaged in a series of financial frauds involving especially his wife's family.

71. Edwards, "Materials."

When his financial difficulties were taken to court, Seymour departed from French Creek in haste and was next seen in South Carolina. For a time he served with the army during the Indian wars of the 1750's. Supposedly, his horse was shot out from under him, which so frightened him that "he earnestly prayed to Almighty God, and made a vow that if God would save him out of this danger he would mend his life." At any rate, he ended up in the Broad River area among his fellow Sabbatarians from French Creek, who selected him as their minister. The records are not clear, but evidently he served the Broad River congregation on a sporadic basis. In 1772 Edwards reported: "They have no minister. Isaac Zeymore did the preaching among them while he behaved well . . . He is a man of wit and some learning; but unstable as water." On the other hand, the Ephrata records reveal that a letter was received at Ephrata from Seymour in 1783 which was also signed by more than forty members of his congregation. It "shows that God afterwards made use of him to build up an English congregation according to the plan he had projected when still living a Solitary in the Settlement."⁷² This Ephrata report would indicate that the Broad River Seventh Day Brethren congregation retained its identity for some years after Edwards' visit and also throughout the period of the American War of Independence.

Clearly, the First Day Brethren and the Seventh Day Brethren lived together, worked together, and worshiped together in the back country of South Carolina. Morgan Edwards confirmed this cooperation between the two groups repeatedly in his discussion of South Carolina. Regarding the Seventh Day group he wrote: "There are others about Edesto and Cloudscreek, but these are incorporated with the Tunkers." And in his report of these two Tunker congregations, he used the expression, "Some keeping the 1st day and some the 7th for sabbath." Even Israel Seymour, the unstable minister, was reported to have left the Seventh Day

72. Sachse, *German Sectarians*, pages 261-265.

group to become a Tunker. Also, John Pearson was considered the assistant to David Martin at Beaver Creek and a member of the Broad River Sabbatarian congregation. Certainly, David Martin did not hesitate to minister to the spiritual needs of those Brethren who worshiped on the seventh day. On the frontier of South Carolina the similarities between the two groups obviously were much greater than the differences.

DUTCHMANS CREEK CONGREGATION

In addition to the Brethren settlements of 1772 which Morgan Edwards described, a number of other areas of Brethren settlement in the eighteenth century Carolinas have been identified. One of these involved the settlement on Dutchman's Creek in the Forks of the Yadkin River which was built around the leadership of the Hendrickses and the Rowlands. The original interest of the Brethren in this area may have been built on the marriage of John Hendricks to Sarah Lewis, who was probably a daughter, or at least a relative, of Daniel Lewis, who was a Quaker living in the Dutchman's Creek settlement at least as early as 1771 when the Moravian minister, George Soelle, visited him.⁷³

Certainly, not long after Hendricks' marriage in 1780, quite a number of Brethren had gathered in the Forks of the Yadkin, as revealed in a remarkable document preserved in **The State Records of North Carolina**:

[Undated letter filed with Letters, etc. 1782]
To his Excellency Thomas Burke, Esqr., Captain General, Governor, Commander in-Chief in and over the State of North Carolina, &c.

The Petition of John Crouse humbly sheweth that your petitioner of the Society of Dunkards, Haven

73. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, II, 795.

bought a piece of Land in Rowan County Lying on the Waters of Bear Creek, and by a man a Near Nabor, Thomas Maxwell, who has Entered the Sd. Land and has forewarned your humble Petitioner and forewarned him from tiling the land, and is Determined to Drive him from the Sd. Land. And your Humble Petitioner being a Poor, Harmless and inoffensive man, having bought sd. land at a very dear rate; whereas, aforesaid Thomas Maxwell pretended no right nor Claim to said land, your humble Petitioner being a poor Dunkard and past Common Slow, both in words and actions, but more especially he was he acknowledges was too slow, for when the land office was first opened the aforesaid Thomas Maxwell being of a cruel and coveting disposition goes immediately and enters aforesd. land, and your humble Petitioner what through Ignorance and what through being too slow he neglected either entering his land or entering a Cavit against the man that had entered it, till the first three months were out that was allowed for every one to Cavit in, that had any Ocation; therefore your humble Petitioner does humbly beg that your Excellency might be pleased to point out some way wherein he might be redrest and come to the right of his land again and he will ever think himself in duty bound to be thankfull to your Excellency for the Same.

We the subscribers hereof, do know assuredly the right of the said land belongs to the above name John Crouse and we have known sd. Crouse a long time and we are satisfied that he is but a simple and very honest man.⁷⁴

This petition which dealt with a problem resulting from the American War of Independence was signed by twenty-seven subscribers, four of whom, James Hendricks, John Hendricks,

74. Walter Clark, *State Records*, XIX, 926-927.

Gaspar Roland, and Joseph Roland, were almost certainly Brethren. Several others, including Michel Beam, Jacob Rethly, Abraham Wellty, Christian Gros, and Jacob Cellare, may have been Brethren. One of the others was the Quaker, Daniel Lewis, and most of the others had various relationships with the Brethren in North Carolina and in Kentucky across the years.

The Rowan County records reveal that the members of the Hendricks family were active in the Dutchman's Creek area following 1780. For example, in 1783 John Hendricks secured a state grant for two hundred acres, in 1787 he purchased one hundred twelve acres on the waters of Dutchman's Creek, and in 1792 he secured another state grant for two hundred eighty-six acres at a place called the Bear Garden on the waters of the South Yadkin River. In 1793 John Hendricks began to sell his North Carolina land, and by the time of the sale of four lots in Salisbury to William Hendrix in June, 1798 he was a citizen of Montgomery County, Kentucky.⁷⁵ Another Hendricks who ended up in Kentucky, according to the Rowan County records was James Hendricks, who is identified elsewhere as the son of the John Hendricks of Montgomery County. In 1813 John Henry Freeling gave to James Hendricks of Warren County, Kentucky one hundred acres in the Forks of the Yadkin for undisclosed reasons. Two years later, Hendricks sold ninety-seven and one half acres in the same area.⁷⁶ Of course, it is possible that the two tracts were not identical, but the significant point is the residence of Hendricks in Warren County, Kentucky.

Another individual who was very active in land transactions in the Dutchman's Creek area was Jacob Crouse, who was quite possibly a relative of John Crouse, identified in the petition to the governor as a Brethren. In contrast to John, Jacob Crouse was evidently neither ignorant nor slow, for he

75. Rowan County Deed Books, IX, 568; XI, 56; XIII, 233; XIV, 641-642; XVIII, 497; XV, 193-194, 71-72; XVII, 70-71.

76. *Ibid.*, XXII, 849-850; XX, 557.

had purchased land in this area as early as July, 1779, and he was involved in numerous transactions as the executor of the estate of Abraham Weltey who died about 1787.⁷⁷ The Weltey estate went particularly to the Hendrickses and the Rolands, which further substantiates the idea that Weltey and Crouse were Brethren, because the Brethren had a tendency to sell land to other members of the sect.

In addition to the Hendricks the other very important Brethren family in the Dutchman's Creek area was the Rowland family, which had been active among the Pennsylvania Brethren almost from the beginning of the sect in that colony. When the Beissel schism took place in the Conestoga valley in 1728, one of those Brethren who refused to go along with Beissel was Hans Rolande.⁷⁸ A few years later, when the Cocalico congregation was organized in 1735 in Lancaster County, Philip Rowland was one of the charter members.⁷⁹ Many years later in 1781, Christopher Sauer, Junior, the prominent Germantown printer and long-time elder of the Germantown congregation, recorded in his diary that during a trip into the interior he had baptized "two sons of the late Philip Roland . . . in the Cocalico Creek in Lancaster County."⁸⁰

When the Rowlands arrived in North Carolina or what their status as Brethren was at the time is not clear. The earliest record of their presence in North Carolina is an entry for four hundred fifty acres on Weaver's Creek in the Forks of the Yadkin on November 5, 1778. For unexplained reasons this land was not granted to Rowland until November 27, 1792. In the meantime he had made another entry on November 30, 1779 for three hundred acres on Dutchman's Creek in the same area; this grant was issued more promptly on October 10, 1783. During the 1780's and the 1790's Gasper Rowland was involved

77. *Ibid.*, IX, 26; XI, 396-397, 490, 491; XIV 364-366; XII, 639.

78. Sachse, *German Sectarians*, I, 138.

79. Edwards, *Pennsylvania*, page 81.

80. Quoted in Brumbaugh, *German Baptist Brethren*, page 403.

in a number of other land transactions in Rowan County. Also, in two sales of land in 1795 he was identified as a resident of Wilkes County, North Carolina, but in none of these transactions was his later Kentucky residence involved.

Joseph Rowland, who was probably the son of Gasper Rowland, purchased two hundred acres of the Abraham Weltey estate from Jacob Crouse in February, 1788; this land was on Bear Creek adjoining Daniel Hendricks and John Rowland whose relation to other members of the Hendricks and Rowland families is not clear. Eight years later in 1796 Joseph Rowland sold this land in one of the very few transactions in which the seller lost money.⁸² The only other action involving Joseph Rowland was a power of attorney granted to him as a resident of Warren County, Kentucky in 1809 by John Dobbin of Maury County, Tennessee and John McCrackin of Williamson County, Tennessee to sell land on Bear Creek. Within twelve months Rowland had sold the land to Mary Hendricks, who is unidentified.⁸³ It seems probable that around 1796 Joseph and Gasper Rowland moved to Kentucky with a stop perhaps in Wilkes County, North Carolina where there was a Brethren settlement.

The Census of 1790 indicates the existence of an extensive Brethren settlement built around the Hendrickses and the Rowlands in the Forks of the Yadkin. Other families with Brethren names included Sheets, Beam, Miller, Keller, Donner (Tanner), Buckner, Mock (Mack), Trout, and Click (Glick).⁸⁴ Some of these individuals were close neighbors, as indicated for example in the tract of land cited in the preceding paragraph sold by Joseph Rowland to Mary Hendricks in which the description included the names of George Tanner, Jacob Keller, and Andrew Mack, and mentioned "Gasper's old

81. Land Grant Records of North Carolina, Office of the Secretary of State, Raleigh, Land Grant Books 80, 125: 51, 118; Rowan County Deed Books, IX, 516-517; XIV, 346-347, 387-388.

82. Rowan County Deed Books, XIV, 364-366, 483-484.

83. *Ibid.*, XXI, 849-850, 836-837.

84. Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 1011-1014.

track" which probably referred to Gasper Rowland. Although people with Brethren names continued to live in this area (e.g., the town of Mocksville), the Brethren identity rapidly died out with the emigration to Kentucky of the Hendrickses and the Rowlands, who were the leaders, and the remaining Brethren probably became Baptists and Methodists.

The only author who has written at any length on the relation of the Hendrickses and the Rowlands to the Church of the Brethren is J. H. Moore, who was more of a journalist than a historian. According to his information Gasper Rowland was ordained in 1775 by David Martin of South Carolina, who according to Morgan Edwards had been ordained in 1770 by Daniel Leatherman and Nicholas Martin, both Maryland elders. If this date is correct, it would indicate that Rowland was in the Carolinas somewhat earlier than the information based upon the land and other records previously cited. Of course, the land records do not usually indicate the earliest arrival date of a pioneer. This ordination also indicated the close relationship between the Brethren in the Carolinas, for which there is not much evidence. Moore asserted that Gasper Rowland ordained John Hendricks and Joseph Rowland on April 1, 1800, "while they still lived in North Carolina." However, this statement does not agree with the documentary evidence in the case of John Hendricks and probably in the case of the two Rowlands. Moore also described something of the work of the Hendrickses and the Rowlands in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri. Each of these leaders who had contributed to the life of the Brethren in North Carolina continued to work actively among the Brethren of the west for many years.

85. J. H. Moore, *Some Brethren Pathfinders* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1929), page 160. Hereinafter cited as Moore, *Some Brethren Pathfinders*.

FRATERNITY CONGREGATION

None of the Brethren settlements surveyed thus far became a permanent congregation of the Church of the Brethren. The oldest of the present-day North Carolina congregations is the Fraternity Church of the Brethren located six miles southwest of Winston-Salem. It had its beginning in the 1770's as the result of the establishment of a Brethren settlement on the southern edge of the Moravian territory called Wachovia. The Salem diarist recorded on February 12, 1772 that "The great needs of Salem received special help today when quite unexpectedly, three Dunkards came and asked to buy 1000 acres of land in Wachovia; which was promised them when they had seen it." Two weeks later, the Bethabara diarist reported that "Br. Reuter left day before yesterday, already, as this week he is to survey 800 acres on the Ens, near Peter Pfaff, for Schutz and Tanner, two Baptists from the Huwaren."⁸⁶

Although the editor of the *Moravian Records* did not attempt to find a correlation between these two events, the evidence already suggested regarding the Brethren on the Uwharrie (Huwaren) and the German names of the Baptists, Schutz and Tanner, would indicate that these were Brethren who were purchasing Moravian land. Furthermore, on April 6 the Bethabara diarist reported that one of the Moravians had purchased for his brother-in-law in Pennsylvania the four hundred acres which had been surveyed for "the Baptist, Schutz, from the Huwaren, who has not come back, and one hears he has settled elsewhere."⁸⁷ This report turned out to be only a rumor, because on March 25, 1773 James Hutton (the agent of the Moravians) sold to Jacob Schott (almost surely a form of Schutz) two hundred acres on both sides of the South Fork of Muddy Creek (also called the Ens by the Moravians).

86. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, II, 670, 729.

87. *Ibid.*, II, 732.

One of the witnesses was Reuter, the surveyor.⁸⁸ Also, George Tanner had a tract adjoining Schott, as verified by the Moravian map of 1780 and by Tanner's deeds of purchase of 1786 (it took him a little longer to pay for his land) and of sale of 1799. In the deed of 1799, his neighbor is John Jacob Sheet, the English form of Schutz.⁸⁹

That George Tanner was very likely a Brethren is also suggested by the fact that many members of the Tanner family were active as Brethren in the eighteenth century beginning with Michael Tanner in 1727 in Pennsylvania. Michael had at least two sons, Henry, who was a member with his father of the Little Conewago congregation in York County in 1770, and Jacob, who moved to Maryland where he became a prominent leader as the minister of the Middlecreek congregation in Frederick County, according to Morgan Edwards.⁹⁰

Another prominent member of the Tanner family was John Tanner, who in the early 1760's led a Brethren settlement from Maryland and Pennsylvania to Madison County Virginia, where the only colonial Brethren congregation east of the Blue Ridge Mountains was established. The additional evidence indicates that John Tanner was a typical pioneer minister, for in the 1770's he traveled and preached in North Carolina where he was filled with buckshot by a man angered by Tanner's baptism of the man's wife. Recovering, he evidently spent several years in the 1780's in the Muddy Creek area, for he purchased three hundred six acres from the Moravians in 1783 and sold the tract in 1787 to Jehu Burkhart, a Brethren elder. Was he attracted to North Carolina by the presence of George Tanner, who might have been a relative, or by Jacob Tanner, who also lived in the Muddy Creek set-

88. Surry County Deed Books, on microfilm in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, A, 40-42.

89. *Ibid.*, D, 386-389; Stokes County Deed Books, on microfilm in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, III, 273; Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, III, 1342-1344.

90. For Pennsylvania, see Edwards, *Pennsylvania*; for Maryland, see Edwards, "Materials."

tlement for a number of years beginning in the early 1770's? After possibly spending a short time in Pennsylvania, John Tanner departed for the Kentucky frontier where he again gathered a Brethren settlement around him, which is considered the first settlement of white men in Boone County. After losing two sons by Indian attacks in Kentucky in the early 1790's, he moved to the Brethren settlement in Spanish territory in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, in 1798 where he died in 1812.⁹¹

The Moravian records make it clear that the Brethren group on Muddy Creek was increasing in size and that it was conducting worship services. In July of 1772, the Friedberg diarist reported that a Moravian told him that he had sold his farm on Reedy Creek, which flowed into the Yadkin River just to the south of Muddy Creek, to a Brethren in order to move into Wachovia. The Salem diarist noted in May, 1773 that four more families had just arrived from Pennsylvania--three Moravian and a Brethren; thus, the Brethren group was growing by addition from the North as well as by Brethren in North Carolina moving around. At Friedberg which was south of Salem and closer to the Brethren community, the diarist reported on May 1, 1774 that not many were present at the Moravian service, since some of the members "out of curiosity were at the Dunkard meeting," thus indicating that Brethren services were probably just beginning. The same diarist noted in August, 1775 that "Last Sunday Christian Frey attended a Dunkard meeting, in which three persons were baptized."⁹² When baptisms took place, it normally indicated both the presence of an ordained minister and the establishment of an organized congregation, so that the

91. Among the many sources which have been utilized to piece together the story of John Tanner, two of the most valuable are: Lewis Peyton Little, *Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia* (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell Co., Inc., 1938), and H. Max Lentz, *A History of the Lutheran Churches in Boone County, Kentucky* (York, Pa.: P. Anstadt & Sons, 1902). The North Carolina land transactions of John Tanner are found in Rowan County Deed Books, IX, 641-642; XI, 266-267.

92. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, II, 744, 758, 837, 914.

Fraternity congregation of today ought to think of itself as beginning in the year 1775.

Although the Moravians did not identify the leader of this Brethren settlement, other evidence indicates that a Brethren elder named Jehu Burkhart moved to the Fraternity area of North Carolina from Frederick County, Maryland in 1775. His father, Jonathan, had emigrated from Switzerland in the 1740's or 1750's and had settled with four children (his wife had died on the Atlantic crossing) in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Here young Jehu had married Magdalene Croll before moving to Frederick County, where he owned a thirty-one acre farm from 1768 to 1775.⁹³ Although the North Carolina land records regarding Burkhart are not clear because his first name was frequently spelled John and his last name was spelled several different ways and it has consequently not been possible to reconcile completely his acquisitions and dispositions of land, the earliest indication of his presence in North Carolina in the land records was his entry for a land grant of two hundred thirty-five acres on Reedy Creek in Rowan County on November 21, 1778.⁹⁴ During the period of the War of Independence, Burkhart must have been busy with his farm work and with his shepherding of the young congregation of Brethren settling between Muddy Creek and Reedy Creek.

One of the major reasons why the Fraternity congregation survived the turbulence of the war period and the division in the ranks that occurred among the Brethren in the years after the war was the coming of the Jacob Pfau (Faw) family from Maryland, for his descendants served as ministers of the congregation for many generations and indeed his descendants have continued to play an active leadership role in the denomination in the twentieth century. The history of the family in America began in 1749 when Jacob Pfau with his wife, Catherine Disslin, and his children, Elizabeth, Anna

93. John M. Burkett, Mrs. Nellie G. Raber, and Rev. Harvey R. Burkett, **Descendants of John Burket** (Burket-Fouts Group, 1940), page 1. Hereinafter cited as Burkett, **John Burket**.

94. Land Grant Records of North Carolina, Land Grant Book 67, 153.

Catherine, Abraham, and Magdelane, secured permission from the authorities of the Canton of Basle to emigrate to America. After losing Magdelane with smallpox in England and after spending nine weeks on the Atlantic, the family arrived in America in November. Because of Catherine's ill health at the termination of the Atlantic crossing, the Pfaus were unable to move inland immediately to be with their friends and were forced to spend the winter in the neighborhood of their port of embarkation at Philadelphia.⁹⁵

In the spring of 1750 with the assistance of Rudy Heier the Pfau family moved to the area of Frederickstown, Virginia (present-day Winchester). In September, 1750 Jacob (so the letter has been identified) wrote to his relatives in Switzerland, urging them to come to this good land, where the Pfaus were "never a day without meat, fresh butter and cheese, and also good wheat bread."⁹⁶ However, all was not paradise in America, for by 1756 Catherine was dead and Jacob had married Anna Magdalena Yount. The family was increased by the addition of Jacob, Isaac, and Adam by this second marriage. During the 1760's Jacob moved his family to Frederick County, Maryland, for in 1768 he paid the quit-rent for one hundred acres to Lord Baltimore for a tract known as Friendship, which was some eight miles northwest of the city of Frederick. Among the many German settlers in this county were numerous Brethren, but whether the Pfaus learned of the Brethren during their stay in Frederick County has not been determined. Also, among the many Germans in this area were large numbers who were leaving because of the unsettled conditions caused by the war and because of the attractiveness of land in North Carolina, and about 1778 Jacob

95. Amy Faw and Linda Faw, *The Faw Family Record* (Chillicothe, Ill.: Privately printed, 1955, revised, 1964), *passim*. Hereinafter cited as Faw, *Faw Family Record*; see also, A. B. Faust and Gaius Marcus Brumbaugh, *Lists of Swiss Emigrants in the Eighteenth Century to the American Colonies* (Washington, D. C.: National Genealogical Society, 2 volumes, 1925), II, 145-146.

96. *Ibid.*

Pfau sold out to his son Abraham and joined the migration to Carolina.⁹⁷

In North Carolina the Pfaus settled among the Brethren in the Muddy Creek area on the southern edge of Wachovia. This choice of a tract of land would seem to indicate some prior knowledge of the Brethren. Regardless of why they chose this exact location, on September 29, 1780, Jacob Pfau signed an Articles of Agreement with Friedrich Marshall, the Moravian business agent, by which Pfau leased two hundred seventy-four acres with an option to purchase the land over a period of years.⁹⁸ Faw's name was included in a tax list of 1780 found in the Moravian records. Also included is a map of farm owners in Wachovia dated 1779 and later on which lots eighty-eight and eighty-nine were held by Isaac Faw and Jacob Faw respectively. By their marking, the lots were identified as "partly rented, and partly bought but not yet paid for." The lots were located southwest of Salem where the Middle Fork of Muddy Creek joins Muddy Creek.⁹⁹

This Moravian map must refer to the relations of the Faws to the Moravians after 1792 when Jacob Faw, Jun., and Marshall drew up a supplementary agreement (included with the agreement of 1780) by which Faw, Jun., took over the agreement of his father on the same terms. The lease was to continue for seven years, during which time Faw was granted the right to lease part of the tract to his brother Isaac with the provision that if the purchase was completed, the Faws would receive separate deeds. This agreement would seem to indicate the death of the patriarch, Jacob Faw, who had come to America from Switzerland more than forty years earlier. His death had probably occurred in the preceding year or two, for he is listed in the Census of 1790; included in the family at that time were three males over sixteen (presumably the father

97. *Ibid.*

98. Moravian Archives, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Hereinafter cited as Moravian Archives.

99. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, IV, 1925; III, 1342-1344.

and his sons, Jacob and Isaac), one son under sixteen (probably Adam), and two women (probably the wives of Jacob, Sen., and Jacob, Jun.).¹⁰⁰

UNIVERSALISM

The very encouraging development of the scattered Brethren settlements in the Carolinas was seriously interrupted in the last fifteen years of the eighteenth century by a division in the ranks. Although the Fraternity congregation in North Carolina managed to survive this storm, the strong Brethren congregations in South Carolina were completely destroyed in the process. In 1826 when Robert Mills compiled his *Statistics of South Carolina*, he was unable to discover any Brethren congregations in the state;¹⁰¹ the available evidence supports his conclusion.

What happened to these congregations was that over a period of years a number of the Brethren under the leadership of David Martin gradually turned to Universalism. Because of the Brethren emphasis on the New Testament with its emphasis on the love of God, the Brethren of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were particularly susceptible to the tenets of Universalism. J. H. Moore summarized this influence:

Early in the history of the Brethren in America the doctrine of Final Restoration became a live issue and not a few of our people were tinctured with it. In fact it became necessary for the Annual Meeting to give the matter some consideration It probably secured its firm foothold mainly through the writings of Elhanan Winchester, a very prolific and fluent Baptist minister

100. Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 1123.

101. Robert Mills, *Statistics of South Carolina* (Charleston: Hurlbut and Lloyd, 1826), page 219 and *passim*. Hereinafter cited as *Mills, Statistics*.

and writer, who was the author of no less than forty volumes, one of them bearing the title of "Universal Restoration." This book, as well as his "Lectures on the Prophecies," appears to have gained a wide circulation among the Brethren. . . . In 1780 he settled in Philadelphia, and in time became acquainted with the Brethren in Germantown, and preached for them quite frequently. In his writings he speaks of being with them the first Sunday in April, 1781.¹⁰²

What Moore evidently did not know was that Elhanan Winchester was the pastor of the Welsh Neck Baptist Church on the Peedee River in South Carolina from 1775 to 1779 just before he moved to Philadelphia. Furthermore, as Townsend pointed out, many of his converts to the Welsh Neck Church were later excommunicated, probably because "his carelessness in inquiring into the religious experiences of his converts was due to his having dropped from his creed the principle of election."¹⁰³ In other words, his theology was turning toward Universalism while he was still preaching in South Carolina. Undoubtedly, he was widely heard during these years in South Carolina, for he was a very successful evangelist and was also one of the early leaders in whipping up sympathy for the American cause in the War of Independence.

In his numerous contacts with the Brethren, Winchester formed a very favorable opinion of them and he used them in one of his numerous books to illustrate the idea that the doctrine of universal salvation did not destroy the moral standards of a man in this world:

The Tunkers or German Baptists, in Pennsylvania, and the states adjacent, who take the Scripture as their only guide, in matters both of faith and practice, have always (as far as I know) received and universally, at present, hold these sentiments: But such Christians, I

102. Moore, *Some Brethren Pathfinders*, pages 140-141.

103. Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists*, page 69.

have never seen as they are; so averse are they to all sin, and to many things that other Christians esteem lawful, that they not only refuse to swear, go to war, &c. but are so afraid of doing anything contrary to the commands of Christ, that no temptation would prevail upon them ever to sue any person at law, for either name, character, estate, or any debt, be it ever so just: They are industrious, sober, temperate, kind, charitable people; envying not the great, nor despising the mean: They read much, they sing and pray much, they are constant attendants upon the worship of God; their dwellinghouses are all houses of prayer: They walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless both in public and in private: They bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: No noise of rudeness, shameless mirth, loud vain laughter, is heard within their doors: The law of kindness is in their mouths; no sourness, or moroseness, disgraces their religion; and whatsoever they believe their Savior commands, they practice, without inquiring or regarding what others do.

I remember the Rev. Morgan Edwards, formerly minister of the Baptist Church in Philadelphia, once said to me, "God always will have a visible people on earth; and these are his people at present, above any other in the world." And in his history of the Baptists in Pennsylvania, speaking of these people, he says: "General redemption they certainly held, and, withal, general salvation; which tenets (though wrong) are consistent. In a word, they are meek and pious Christians; and have justly acquired the character of **The Harmless Tunkers.**"¹⁰⁴

104. Elhanan Winchester, *The Universal Restoration, Exhibited in Four Dialogues* (Worcester, Mass.: Isaiah Thomas, 1803), pages 154-155. The book was first published in 1787; a copy of the 1803 edition cited is in the Perkins Library of Duke University. For additional comments on the relation of Winchester to the Brethren, see Roger E. Sappington, "Eighteenth-Century Non-Brethren Sources of Brethren History, II," *Brethren Life and Thought*. (Spring, 1957), pages 69-72.

Winchester certainly had high praise for these eighteenth century Brethren.

Even more effective in converting the South Carolina Brethren to the Universalist position than the preaching and writing of Elhanan Winchester was the writing of William Law, according to one of the earliest of Universalist historians, Thomas Whittemore, writing in 1830:

About the year 1780, Mr. D. Martin, a pastor of a society of Dunkers, in Fairfield District, adjoining Newbury, was led to doubt the validity of the doctrine of endless punishment, by reading the works of William Law. Like an honest man, he desisted from preaching, until he could satisfy himself on that point; and after having given the subject a thorough investigation, he came out openly in the belief of Universal Salvation, and commenced preaching the doctrine.¹⁰⁵

William Law, who influenced David Martin so directly, was an English clergyman, who was well known for his devotional and mystical books. Best known were his **Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life** (1728), **The Spirit of Prayer** (1750), and **The Spirit of Love** (1754). In the latter two can be seen the influence on Law of Jacob Boehme, the Medieval mystic. Law is considered by Universalist historians a precursor of Universalism. In his **Letters**, he wrote: "As for the purification of all human nature, I fully believe it, either in this world or some after ages."¹⁰⁶

At some time between 1780 when David Martin was identified as living in the Fairfield District, which included Beaver Creek, and his death in 1794, he evidently moved some miles further west near the present-day city of Newberry in

105. Thomas Whittemore, **The Modern History of Universalism** (Boston: Published by the Author, 1830), page 421. Hereinafter cited as Whittemore, **Universalism**.

106. Richard Eddy, **Universalism in America, A History** (Boston: Universalist Publishing House, 2 volumes, 1891), I, 11. Hereinafter cited as Eddy, **Universalism in America**.

Newberry District, for his will was probated in Newberry County on July 29, 1794. Also, O'Neill in his recollections of Newberry County stated that David Martin "lived on Saluda, near Hewett's ferry." He placed the Brethren settlement "mainly on Palmetto Branch, north of Bush River."¹⁰⁷ None of the Brethren identified by Morgan Edwards in 1772 was located by Townsend on either the Palmetto Branch or the Bush River which is a tributary of the Saluda River. Consequently, the evidence seems to suggest that an additional Brethren settlement developed after Edwards' visit to South Carolina. O'Neill went on to say that "Among these Dunkers and the Quakers, without any definite participation in either, lived the Elmores, Mills, Hawkins, Brooks, Atkins, McKinseys, Larges, Gillilands, Abernathys, Coates, Downs, Hilburns, Thweatts, Sheppards, Ramages, Nances, Gillams, Coopers, Cates, Myers, Juliens, Rileys, Elsmores, Barretts, Curetons, Harps, Hays." Most of these names are English in background, but then in contrast to the Brethren settlements in the other colonies which were usually pure German in nature, many of the South Carolina Brethren, identified by Edwards, were English and Welsh in background.

Two of the families in the Newberry District which were positively identified with the Brethren were the Summers and Chapman families. Joseph Summers, the patriarch of that family, was a native of Maryland. Among other things he was noted for his long flowing beard and for his introduction into the area of the strain of wheat called the Yellow Lammas. As the story goes, he brought all that he could carry in a stocking leg with him from Maryland. It was pure white in color, but gradually it became more yellow.¹⁰⁸ The patriarch of the Chapman family, Giles Chapman, came to America from Bridlington, England in 1725 with his wife, Sarah Jackson. Their first home in America was in Virginia where they had

107. John Belton O'Neill, *The Annals of Newberry* (Charleston: S. C., S. G. Courtenay and co., 1859), pages 76-77. Hereinafter cited as O'Neill, *Annals of Newberry*.

108. *Ibid.*, page 77.

six children. Some time after 1748, when their son, Giles, was born, the family moved to the Newberry area in South Carolina. Several important things happened to the younger Giles: For one thing, he married Mary Summers, the daughter of Joseph Summers of Maryland. Also, he became a Brethren, probably as the result of the efforts of David Martin. Finally, he followed Martin into the Brethren ministry.¹⁰⁹

O'Neill who knew Giles Chapman well and considered him a "venerable friend," wrote a moving description of Chapman:

He began to preach in 1782. Ofter have I heard his discourses. He was beyond all doubt an eloquent and a gifted preacher; and seemed to me to be inspired with a full portion of that holy and divine spirit, which taught "God is Love." His education and means of information were limited, yet his mighty Master spake by him, as he did by the fishermen "in words that burn, and thoughts which breath." His ministry was much followed, and in recurring to his spotless life and conversation, his continual zeal to do good, his kind and benevolent intercourse with men, and the meek humility with which he bore the railing of the sects of Christians, who differed in opinion with him, I have never entertained a doubt, that whether right or wrong, in abstract matters of faith and theology, he was indeed a disciple of Him who came into the world to save sinners.

I can see him now as plainly in my mind's eye, as I have seen him hundreds of times, as well in all the various pursuits and intercourse of life as in the pulpit; and yet I find it difficult to give of him a life-like description. He was rather above the ordinary size; grey hair and beard, not very long, but worn; his dress very much that of Friends, a face of the most placid and benevolent expression.

109. Summer, Newberry County, page 207.

He married more persons than any other clergyman; he never would have more than \$1 for this service; "that was as much as any woman was worth," was his laughing reply to the question "how much do you charge"? This was his jest. For no man ever appreciated more highly woman, good, virtuous, suffering, feeble woman, than he did, and none had ever more cause to value her; for certainly none better as wife and mother was to be found than his "ain gude wife."

As a husband, father, master, neighbor and friend, none was ever more justly beloved than Uncle Giles, as he was familiarly called by the country all around him.¹¹⁰

This vivid description makes Chapman more of a personality in the eyes of present-day readers than any other Brethren minister in the eighteenth century south of Maryland.

Chapman not only followed David Martin into the Brethren ministry, he followed him into Universalism. Among the writers who have described Chapman's activity as a Universalist, there is some uncertainty about his relationship to the Brethren. On the one hand, O'Neill, who was a personal friend, wrote that "Giles Chapman, the great preacher of what was called Universalism until within the last twenty years, certainly always preached the Dunker faith." On the other hand, Whittemore, the Universalist historian, wrote that "Following [Martin's] example, Mr. Giles Chapman, a member of the same church, searched the scriptures, became convinced of the same doctrine, and although not a preacher before, now commenced the work of the ministry."¹¹¹ Regardless of when Chapman first began to preach and no one claims that he was preaching before 1782 which was after Martin turned to Universalism, the Brethren brand of Universalism was generally somewhat different from that of other Universalists. O'Neill could not have explained the

110. O'Neill, *Annals of Newberry*, pages 78-79.

111. *Ibid.*, page 77; Whittemore, *Universalism*, page 421.

difference, but he knew there was a difference: "Most of the leading Dunkers, in the settlement to which I have alluded, became Universalists, but not to the extent now held by that body of Christians."

The most concise description of this unusual relationship of the Brethren to Universalism was penned by the Universalist historian, Richard Eddy. After explaining that a Brethren minister in North Carolina, John Ham, and his followers were disfellowshipped by the Annual Meeting for accepting Universalist ideas, Eddy commented:

This fact in the history of the Dunkers will explain what otherwise might seem contradictory, that while holding to the doctrine of Universal Restoration, they repel the charge of being Universalists. "If I were to say to my neighbors," said a Dunker preacher, whom the writer once visited, "I have a Universalist preacher stopping at my house, they would say, 'How do you dare to have such a character under your roof?' but if I should say, 'I have a friend with me who preaches Universal Restoration,' they would say, 'Have you? I am glad; I would like to come in and see him!'" ¹¹²

Thus, over the years a very small number of Brethren actually became Universalists, while quite a number evidently accepted many of the ideas of Universalism without making a public change.

John Ham, a Brethren elder in North Carolina, was one of that very small number of Brethren who actually became a Universalist. Little is known about John Ham. The origin of the name and of the family is obscure. The only possible origin among the Pennsylvania Brethren seems to be the family of Adam Hann, which belonged to the Ephrata settlement during the 1740's. In 1744 a controversy developed with Conrad Weiser, and the Han family fled; however, it is recorded that in

112. Eddy, *Universalism in America*, I, 37-38.

March, 1773 George Han died at the Ephrata Cloister.¹¹³ Or the name Ham may be a shortened form of some longer German name. At any rate in November, 1784, Joseph Ham, the father of John, secured a state grant for two hundred acres on Lick Creek which flows into the Town Fork in Surry County.¹¹⁴ In addition he secured another one hundred fifty acres. In March, 1792 he sold one hundred seventy of the three hundred fifty acres to his son John Ham. Joseph Ham made out a will on October 29, 1794, in which he named his wife Seth, his five sons, Ezekiel, Daniel, Thomas, John, and Jacob, and his two daughters, Milly Holbrook and Rachel Watson.¹¹⁵ No probate date is given on the will, but in 1800 Ezekiel Ham described himself as the surviving executor of Joseph Ham when he sold the other one hundred eighty acres to Thomas Ham.¹¹⁶

Quite possibly Joseph Ham died shortly after his will was prepared; at any rate, his son John was living in the Brethren settlement in the Forks of the Yadkin on November 18, 1794, when he bought two hundred sixty acres on Hunting Creek from Joshua Hawkins. Among his neighbors were Peter Beam and Abraham Renshaw. The deed was witnessed by Joseph Ralan (Rowland), the Brethren minister. Probably, Ham's moving was related to the action of the Annual Meeting of 1794, which will be considered later, for he was seeking a more congenial location. That John Ham continued to live in the area even after being put out of the church is indicated by his will of December 12, 1811, probated in February, 1814, which divided his land on Hunting Creek between his sons, William and John.¹¹⁷

A major historical problem is the relation of John Ham to

113. Sachse, *German Sectarians*, II, 285, 501.

114. Surry County Deed Books, C, 19. This tract is apparently close to the line between present-day Stokes and Forsyth counties.

115. Stokes County Deed Books, I, 199-200; Stokes County Wills, in the State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.

116. *Ibid.*, III, 413-414.

117. Rowan County Deed Books, XIII, 971; Rowan County Wills, V, 309-310.

the Fraternity settlement. The distance as the crow flies from Muddy Creek to Lick Creek was perhaps fifteen to twenty miles, which certainly does not seem too difficult in the light of the trips the Brethren made to Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. Possibly, some other Brethren lived in the area around Ham. James Tanner was listed in the Census of 1790 not far from Ham, and also he secured two land grants on the waters of the Town Fork in 1795. However, the Census does not reveal the large number of characteristically Brethren names which is true of most of the other settlements. Consequently, the likelihood is that Ham and such other Brethren as lived on the North side of Wachovia usually worshiped with the Fraternity congregation and considered themselves a part of it.

That John Ham was a Brethren elder was confirmed by the prominent Universalist historian, Richard Eddy, who wrote in 1891:

About 1785, John Ham, an elder in one of their churches in North Carolina, began to preach the doctrine of no future punishment, and, being a man of great talents and of popular address, many converts were made to his views, chiefly in Virginia and the Carolinas. The church at large became alarmed, and at a council held about that time, they decided against preaching or saying anything in public about the doctrine of Restoration. Subsequently, John Ham and his followers were cut off from the fellowship of the church.¹¹⁸

Until very recently, no historian of the Church of the Brethren knew of the existence of John Ham, and certain references in the church records were consequently obscure.¹¹⁹

118. Eddy, *Universalism in America*, I, 37-38.

119. John Ham was identified in the Annual Meeting Minutes only as John H., and it was not until 1967 that he was first identified by his full name by a Brethren historian. See Durnbaugh, *Brethren in Colonial America*, pages 326-334.

J. H. Moore believed that the Universalist, Elhanan Winchester, had a great influence on the Brethren in North Carolina. Winchester "did considerable preaching in North Carolina and other parts of the country and likely met with our people at a number of other points. It is more likely that while with the Brethren in North Carolina, he instilled into them the universal restoration doctrine that later on helped to mislead a number of the southern members."¹²⁰ Whether by the direct influence of Winchester or some other Universalist preacher or writer, the Brethren elder, John Ham, along with David Martin in South Carolina, accepted the tenets of Universalism and began to proclaim these ideas from Brethren pulpits in Virginia and the Carolinas.

As Eddy suggested, the leadership of the Brethren became concerned about this heresy. The elder of the Pipe Creek congregation in Maryland, Michael Pfautz, explained in a letter of December 9, 1794 to Martin Urner of Schuylkill and Alexander Mack of Germantown, Pennsylvania Brethren congregations, that "Brother Stutzman from Carolina sent a letter with two brethren, namely Brother John Gerber and Brother John Burgert from Carolina, to the great meeting, because somewhat strange doctrines were cropping up among the southern brethren, and the brethren in North Carolina felt very uneasy about them, and therefore wanted to hear the opinion and judgment of the older brethren, etc." Pfautz was pleased with the decision of the Annual Meeting which convened on October 10, 1794 in Shenandoah County, Virginia in the Flat Rock congregation and concluded that "God installed you to be heads and bishops and pillars in the congregation so that if such perversion continues to spread, you would be informed about it, etc."¹²¹

As Pfautz indicated, the Annual Meeting of 1794 dealt in full detail with the ideas proposed by the Brethren Universalists such as John Ham:

120. Moore, *Some Brethren Pathfinders*, pages 140-145.

121. Quoted in Durnbaugh, *Brethren in Colonial America*, pages 330-331.

Article 2: We hear that there arises a strange doctrine, or rather opinion, among the brethren in Carolina, and that some brethren are grieved about this matter, because some believe, say, and teach the following, viz.:

1. That there is no other heaven but that in man.
2. That there is no other hell but that in man.
3. That God has no form or shape; and if a person would worship God, and would conceive in his mind God as in the human form; would imagine or believe that God had an appearance like a man, such person would do the same as one who would worship a horse or any other beast.
4. That God has no anger, and would punish no person on account of his sins.
5. That the dead rise not; for out of the grave nothing would come forth.

For this cause some brethren desire to hear the views or minds of the brethren (in general council), and therefore we inform the loving brethren, that

The view or doctrine of the old brethren is, that we are to believe as the Scripture has said. For Christ says, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John 7:38. Further he says, "The Scriptures can not be broken." John 10:35. Again we see that Christ in his whole life has looked upon the Scriptures, and has fulfilled them in all things. For when they came, and Peter struck with the sword, the Lord said, "Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Thinkest thou that I can not now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Matt. 26:50-54.

Now, to come to the before-mentioned points or propositions, our dear brethren will not think hard of us because we believe as it is written, and believe also with David, that the word of the Lord is well refined, and a true doctrine, and that we also believe with Paul, that it is our duty to bring into captivity every thought (all reason, says the German) to the obedience of Christ, etc.

1. Now, to come to the word about heaven. Says Moses (Gen. 1:1), "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; and the earth was without form, and void." Then no man was created yet, and Moses calls something heaven, that is not in man. And (Acts 1:9) if we read, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Here we see that there is a heaven up on high.

2. "That there be no other hell but that in man." We read (Luke 15: 22, ff.) about the rich man, that he died and that he also was buried. Now, it is without contradiction that when he died his soul and spirit had departed from the body, and had found, it seems, according to the word, the hell in which he suffered torments. So we think it would be well for us, if we would on this point or word "hell" apply the doctrine of Paul, not to dispute about words; for we can notice in Holy Writ that the word hell is used for different things. But we believe, as it is written, that there is a lake of fire or place of torment, in many places mentioned, which, according to the word, is outside of man, as we read plainly (Matt. 25:41) where Christ says, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the

devil and his angels.” Here we see clearly that the lake of fire is not in man, because men are sent into the lake of fire, and it says not that the fire should go into the men.

3. “That God has no shape or form; and if a person would worship God, and would conceive in his mind and believe God having a form like a man, such a person would do the same as if he worshiped a horse or any other beast.” This, it seems to us, is speaking very derogatory of God, or against God, though we believe, also, from the heart that God is a Spirit, as Christ himself says, and that the true worshipers worship him in spirit and in truth. But not at all contrary to this says John, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” And further on, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory,” etc. Here God has put on a visible form. Now, to be sure, in his worship man should not imagine a form or likeness of God; but if it should happen that a person or disciple would, in his worship in simplicity and sincerity toward God, look to God in the person or appearance of Christ, we consider it far less culpable than for a man to worship a horse or some other beast, and deem this a very unbecoming expression.

4. “That God has no anger, and punishes no person for his sins.” Now, we believe also with John, “that God is love; and that he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him”; and that God is not angry like an unconverted man, but that penal judgments proceed from love to the human family. Yet notwithstanding the holy Scriptures or the men of God in Holy Writ call God’s judgment God’s wrath, as Psalm 90: 11, “Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.” Again, John the Baptist says (John 3:36), “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and

he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." And that the Lord would punish no man for his sin, we deem to be an error. Christ says himself, "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13: 2, 3.

5. "That the dead rise not, for out of the grave nothing would come forth." We believe as Christ says (John 5:28), "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth," etc. So we read (Matt. 27:51, 52), "The earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves," etc.¹²²

This lengthy discussion of the main doctrines of Universalism by the Annual Meeting of 1794 provides an excellent insight into the Brethren mentality of this period. It demonstrates for one thing the constant reference to the Bible for guidance in meeting the problems of this earth; this practice by the Annual Meeting continued well into the twentieth century. Furthermore, almost all of the Biblical references are found in the New Testament, which is evidence of the Brethren conviction that the New Testament was the only creed which the Christian needed. One of the points on which it was necessary to turn to the Old Testament was in the discussion of God's anger and punishment; in fact, the great Brethren emphasis on the New Testament and its pattern of God's love through Christ had made the Brethren susceptible to the wiles of Universalism in the first place. This fourth proposition was very likely the most difficult for the Brethren elders assembled at the Annual Meeting to refute.

In order to understand the relation of the Annual Meeting to those Brethren who were preaching Universalism in the

122. *Minutes of the Annual Meetings*, pages 16-18.

Carolinas, it is necessary to understand that even though the polity of the sect was (and still is) rather confused, it tended to be more congregational than either episcopal or presbyterian. However, within an individual congregation the elder was normally a very powerful figure probably as an outgrowth of the German patriarchal family pattern. To disagree with an elder on a major congregational decision was a matter of considerable significance, and frequently the Annual Meeting was asked for assistance in resolving the conflict. It was in this light then that "some brethren desire to hear the views or minds of the brethren (in general council)" with regard to Universalism.

On occasion the Annual Meeting was required to take sterner measures than merely offering advice, and such became the case with regard to the problem of Universalism. In 1798 at the Annual Meeting held in the bounds of the Little Conewago congregation in York County, Pennsylvania, the assembled elders reached the following decision:

Article 1. It has been made known to us that last fall, at the great council meeting of the Brethren in Virginia [at Blackwater in Franklin County] there was some discussion on account of the different views of the brethren, especially those in Carolina, where a brother minister, by name John H., has defended himself in the name of his whole church before many brethren in public, and brought to light many of his own sentiments, in so far that the brethren who still hold fast to the word of truth, according to their best knowledge, could not break the bread of communion with said John H.; would, however, in such serious circumstances, not lightly make a full conclusion without hearing first, also, the mind of their beloved old, and by many temptations, established brethren; hence this is to inform our dear brethren in North Carolina that the case has been presented to the brethren by those brethren who have

seen John H. himself, and have heard from him many of his what can scarcely be called doctrines, but rather perverse apprehensions of Holy Writ, and have quite unanimously

Concluded that we can not hold said John H., and all who are of his mind, as brethren as long as they do not acknowledge the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles as a true doctrine sent from God unto salvation, and publicly confess, with David, that the word of the Lord is a true doctrine, and well refined; while they contradict the Holy Scriptures in many points. This we, the undersigned brethren, confess and testify to hold them as other people out of the church as long as they do not seek and keep house according to the Scripture.

Signed by the brethren.

Part of the evidence against John Ham was included as a postscript to the minutes and provides additional perspective on Ham's beliefs:

P. S.--(Copy) This is to certify that I heard John H. say in his preaching that it would be no more sin to him to get upon the top of the barn that he was in, and preaching in, and swear and blaspheme all the new-found oaths and curses, than to pray to God to forgive him his sins, or to bless him in any respect; and he said he had not served such a God that required the prayers of human creatures to forgive them their sins, or to bless them in any manner, these seven years, nor never would. These are the words I heard, as near as I can remember.

Per me, Samuel Van Etten
Johannes Keller¹²³

123. *Ibid.*, pages 20-21.

Now the Annual Meeting had upheld the drastic action of disfellowshipping or excommunicating John Ham and his followers which some of the Brethren in Virginia and North Carolina had already taken at a local level.

In order to complete this episode in Carolina Brethren history, it is necessary to turn to the Annual Meeting minutes once again, for in 1800 the Meeting agreed to explain the basis of its action of 1798:

Article I. (On account of brethren in Carolina.) It has been made known to us that the brethren in Carolina desire to be informed more plainly concerning the conclusion made at the big meeting on Little Conewago, May 26, 1798, where it was concluded in union about Brother John H., and all who are of his mind, that we could have no fellowship with him (and them) as long as they persisted in their erroneous doctrine contrary to Holy Scripture. And since it is requested to inform them why and for what cause it was done, we should specify by name the causes for which we can have no more fellowship with John H. and his sympathizers--this is to further inform them that

The chief causes were already mentioned in a letter from the big meeting held on Shenandoah, Virginia, October 20, 1794, as follows, viz.; that there arises a strange doctrine, or rather opinion, among the brethren in Carolina, and that other brethren are grieved by the same. (The six points are given in Minutes of 1794.) These six chief points have been specified in the above-mentioned letter of the big meeting, with the answer, as the old brethren have given their views and doctrine in refutation, which letter, as we presume, has been sent to the brethren in Carolina, and they are all desired to read the same at pleasure. Then again, at the big meeting which was held on Little Conewago, May 26, 1798, the same case was once more viewed by the old brethren,

and also the Germantown brethren have sent their opinion by letter from Brother Sander Mack [the son of the first leader of the Brethren], wherein it is sorrowfully lamented that among the little flock of Taufs-Gesinute [sic] in America there should arise men who deny the resurrection of the dead, and that among brothers and sisters some had to have the misfortune to have their eyes smeared by that old, moldy, and horribly stinking leaven of the Sadducees. And in addition a written testimony has come to hand about John H., that he should have said in his preaching, which two truthful men have heard him say it, and have testified to it. (see postscript, Minutes of 1798.)

Behold, much beloved brethren, in view of all the unscriptural doctrines and expressions, we have been moved (compelled) to exclude from the fellowship and membership of the Lord Jesus at that big meeting of May 26th, said John H., and all that are in union with him in such views, and we confirm again that conclusion unanimously in our great meeting of the brethren today, renouncing all fellowship with each and all such persons as hold such doctrines and views as are stated above, until they acknowledge their error and repent. Still, we look upon this case with sadness and heartfelt grief, and wish them (grace) of God in Christ Jesus, whose mercy endureth forever, that they may earnestly reflect and consider what may make for their peace and everlasting salvation while yet it is the accepted time and the day of salvation. This we desire from the bottom of our hearts, that the good God, through the tender mercy of Jesus Christ, would give and bestow to them and us for his merciful love's sake. Amen. So much from us, the undersigned brethren, assembled with one accord, and delivered into the hands of our loving brethren, who also, in words, will make it known to you in the name of the whole fraternity.¹²⁴

124. *Ibid.*, pages 22-23.

Nothing further is recorded either in the North Carolina records or in the Annual Meeting minutes regarding John Ham and his followers.

It is interesting that the Annual Meeting never mentioned the case of David Martin in South Carolina, especially since Martin was almost certainly a better known minister among the Brethren than Ham. Of course, it may be that Martin was too well known to touch on this matter. More likely, the difference is to be found in the fact that Ham did not have the support of certain important North Carolina elders, while Martin was the most important South Carolina elder and succeeded in taking virtually all of the South Carolina Brethren along with him. In other words, from the standpoint of the leaders of the Annual Meeting there were no Brethren in South Carolina who could be retained as Brethren, while in North Carolina there were. Whittemore confirmed the general sympathy of the South Carolina Brethren for Universalism: "These men were not disowned by the church to which they belonged. The members had been convinced by the two former ministers [Martin and Chapman] of the truth of Universalism."¹²⁵ He was probably referring to the fact that the local congregation took no action against these ministers, although it is correct that there is no record of any action by the Annual Meeting specifically directed against the South Carolina Brethren.

At any rate, the records indicate that the Brethren in South Carolina gradually made the transition into full-fledged Universalists. Elijah Lynch is said to have been the "last member received with the ceremonies of the Dunkers" in 1797. A few years later in 1805 he began to preach Universalism as the associate of Giles Chapman. Certainly, by the time "he decided to take the name of Universalist, the entire Dunker Church joined him in the change of name." Such an action was quite reasonable on the part of the surviving Brethren, since there was no longer any Brethren minister in South Carolina.

125. Whittemore, *Universalism*, page 422.

Chapman died on April 14, 1819 after having spent more than thirty-five years as a minister. The story is told of Chapman's final illness: "Neither Mr. Chapman, nor any of his brethren knew of the existence of any Universalists in the United States besides themselves; nor did he become acquainted with the fact, until on his death bed, when a friend accidentally procured and read to him Ballou's Treatise on Atonement. The dying man was in extacy; and so strong was the effect upon his feelings it is said to have allayed his bodily pain, though his suffering had been extreme."¹²⁶ This remarkable story which comes from the Universalists is another confirmation of the unusual nature of Brethren Universalism.

If the story of Chapman's first learning of American Universalism on his death bed by hearing Ballou's writings is correct, then the connection between the South Carolina Brethren Universalists and the Universalist Church that was developing in the United States must have been established by Elijah Lynch. Writing while Lynch was still active, Whittemore reported in 1830 that Lynch's "labors, though faithful and approved, have not been as extensive as those of his predecessors. He preaches to a respectable audience once a month, in a Meeting House about three miles from Newbury Court House, and at other places, as occasion requires."¹²⁷

Writing some years later in the 1880's after Lynch's death, Richard Eddy was able to provide a better perspective of Lynch's contribution to Universalism: "For many years he officiated regularly in the meeting-house a few miles north of Newberry, and much of that time was the only Universalist preacher in the State."¹²⁸ Also, Eddy gave a further insight into Lynch's life by including his obituary, following his death on August 10, 1842, which was written for *The Southern Universalist* by L. F. W. Andrews, who conducted the funeral:

126. *Ibid.*, page 421.

127. *Ibid.*, page 422.

128. Richard Eddy, *History of Universalism*, Volume X of *American Church History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), page 86.

During his last illness he dictated to his son what may be considered his dying testimony to the truth, from the passage in 1 Thess. ii. 19. "For what is our Hope," in which he has given evidence how sustaining was the hope which he possessed, on the near approach of death, and effectually rebuked the slanderous report already circulated, that he had renounced his faith and burnt his books! His remains were committed to the tomb on Thursday, the 11th, in the burial ground where stood the church in which he received his first religious impressions of universal love, and where repose the remains of the venerated Chapman, from whose lips those sacred impressions were received.¹²⁹

Quite probably, these Universalists were not highly regarded by their neighbors who had worked diligently to convert them to the more orthodox Methodist and Baptist churches. But to the very end, Lynch had stood his ground in preserving the faith which he had received as a youth.

Lynch's death succeeded in achieving what these neighbors of other churches had not succeeded in doing during his lifetime--bringing an end to the active Universalist witness in Newberry County. At any rate, Richard Eddy's survey of Universalism in the 1880's had no indication of any Universalist activity in this area of South Carolina.¹³⁰ Also, Lynch's death evidently brought an end to the Universalist activity on the other side of the Broad River in the original Brethren territory around Beaver Creek. There the surviving Brethren had apparently become Universalists, for Robert Mills reported in 1826 in his discussion of the Fairfield District that "In the Beaver Creek settlement there are some Universalists, who, however, are not regularly constituted into a society."¹³¹ Beyond this notice and the fact that delegates were present

129. *Ibid.*, pages 86-87.

130. *Ibid.*, pages 398-399.

131. Mills, *Statistics*, page 548.

from both Newberry and Fairfield Districts at the organization of a State Convention of Universalists in November, 1830, nothing is recorded regarding the Beaver Creek group.

BUILDING MEETING HOUSES

The fact that two of the most important Brethren Universalist ministers in South Carolina, Chapman in 1819 and Lynch in 1842, were buried in what is identified by Summer as the "Chapman-Summers graveyard, also known as the old Tunker Church Cemetery--located about 4½ miles South-west of Newberry Court House, near the old Paysinger home" outlines the final major problem that needs to be considered in discussing the Brethren in South Carolina. More precisely, the problem concerns the building of a meeting house, the existence of which was also noted by the Universalist historians, Whittemore and Eddy.

As a general practice, the Brethren were very slow about building meeting houses, as they preferred to call their churches. So far as the records reveal, no church buildings were erected by the Brethren in Europe. Furthermore, they did not build any churches in America until 1770, more than fifty years after their arrival in America.

The reasons for this delay are not clear today. Perhaps, the Brethren simply did not have sufficient funds and energy to devote to such a purpose; obviously, they were carving homes and farms out of a virgin wilderness, which involved endless hours of hard work. According to this explanation, the Brethren by their hard work eventually became prosperous, and then they had the surplus funds to devote to the construction of meeting houses.

Possibly, the Brethren did not immediately build meeting houses because they wanted their religion to be home and family centered, and thus they preferred to worship God in

their own homes, even on a congregational level. Certainly, it is abundantly evident that they were very clannish and that family ties were extremely important to them. According to this explanation, the local Brethren congregations eventually included too many people from outside the immediate family, and thus the more formal houses for worship became necessary.

Still a third reason for their failure to build meeting houses shortly after they arrived in South Carolina, as other religious groups did, may be suggested. The Brethren were honestly attempting to imitate the New Testament Christians of the first century after the life of Christ. And nowhere in the New Testament did they find any evidence of a building erected by the Christians for worship. That this explanation was very likely the one accepted by the Brethren as the basis of their action was confirmed by Morgan Edwards in his account of the Brethren. With regard to Pennsylvania he wrote that among the fifteen congregations were only four "meeting houses." As he understood it, "The reason of their having no more places of worship is, That they choose rather to meet from house to house in imitation of the primitive Christians." In his Maryland account he noted: "It is to be remarked that there is no meeting house in any of these places. They preferring to assemble in each other's private dwelling in imitation of primitive Christians."¹³² Evidently, the Brethren based their case for not building meeting houses on religious grounds. How they justified the eventual change from this policy, which began with the construction in 1770 of a meeting house by the mother church at Germantown, Pennsylvania, is not made clear from the records.

This general attitude of the Brethren toward meeting houses was the accepted policy of the Brethren in the Carolinas for many years. When Morgan Edwards visited these isolated Brethren on the southern frontier, he noted regarding each of the seven congregations that there was no

132. Edwards, *Pennsylvania*, page 90; Edwards, "Materials on Maryland."

meeting house, and added, "They hold their worship from house to house." In contrast to Edwards' statement, which is undoubtedly correct, it is interesting to speculate on the possible relation of the Beaver Creek Brethren to the Mobley Meeting House, which was erected in the north central part of Fairfield County some years before the War of Independence. McMaster, the historian of Fairfield County, considered it "one of the next earliest places of worship in the county," after the Little River church built in 1771 and the Bethesda Auf der Morven church which is not dated. The possible relation of the Brethren to the Mobley Meeting House is based first on the fact that it was called a meeting house rather than a church, second on the fact that it was built near the residences of the Moberleys, the Beams, and the Wagners, and third on the fact that it was "for the use of any denomination." With regard to the families, it ought to be pointed out that the Hans Waggoner family was specifically identified with the Brethren by Edwards and that Beam was a familiar German Brethren name (by whatever spelling) found in Brethren settlements in other colonies. Finally, McMaster concluded that "It never became notable for religious worship, but its name lives because of an affray between the Tories and Whigs during the Revolutionary War, when the Tories were put to rout."¹³³

Even though the Mobley Meeting House in Fairfield County was never specifically identified as a Brethren meeting house, the Tunker meeting house near Newberry clearly was built by the Brethren. When this meeting house was constructed is an unanswered question. O'Neill claimed that his earliest recollection of Giles Chapman went back to 1799 or 1800, and he gave no indication that he had ever seen him preach anywhere else than "in the pulpit." In fact, in 1859 when he was writing, he referred to the church as "the old Dunker meeting house" and implied that the building was no longer standing.¹³⁴ Neither Whittemore nor Eddy gave any

133. McMaster, *Fairfield County*, page 74.

134. O'Neill, *Annals of Newberry*, page 79.

indication when the building was erected although they seem to imply that it was there when Elijah Lynch became a Brethren in 1797. Quite likely, then, the Brethren meeting house near Newberry was built during the 1790's, and its construction may have been related to the death of David Martin in 1794, which may have removed the last conservative Brethren opposition to the building of meeting houses.

FRATERNITY CONGREGATION (Continued)

The major problem of the North Carolina Brethren during the closing decade of the eighteenth century was not building a meeting house, which they did not undertake until 1852, but rather surviving in a time in which most of the Brethren and their leaders either died, or departed for other states, or turned to Universalism. In the perspective of all of this difficulty with Universalism including the lengthy decisions of three Annual Meetings, it is all the more remarkable that the Fraternity congregation survived; this survival is a tribute to the leadership exerted by the members of the Burkhart and Faw families, who succeeded in keeping the settlement of Brethren loyal to the doctrines accepted by the church as a whole.

After the end of the war, the elder of the Fraternity congregation, Jehu Burkhart, increased his holding of land. On October 15, 1787, he purchased three hundred six acres from John Tanner on Sparks Creek. During the 1790's he also secured additional land on Reedy Creek by purchasing two hundred thirty-five acres in 1792 and one hundred twenty-five acres in 1793, and by securing a state grant of eighty-four acres in 1795.¹³⁵ During the years from 1801 to 1809 Burkhart disposed of all of his land in North Carolina, including the property on Sparks Creek, which Jehu Burkhart, Jr., sold in 1808. Incidentally, the son signed with a mark in contrast to the

¹³⁵ Rowan County Deed Books, XI, 266-267; XII, 538-539, 229-300; XVI, 541-542.

father who signed his name in German script.¹³⁶ Obviously, some of the Burkharts were disposing of their property in North Carolina in order to leave the state. In 1809 Jehu Burkhart moved to Montgomery County, Ohio, where he continued to be an active churchman as the first elder of the Lower Stillwater congregation when it was organized in 1811.¹³⁷

Most of Jehu Burkhart's land went to his children.¹³⁸ For example, in 1801 the two hundred thirty-five acres on Reedy Creek which he had purchased in 1792 was sold to his fourth child, Henry, who had been born in 1771.¹³⁹ After remaining in Rowan County some years longer, Henry and his family joined his father in Montgomery County, Ohio, about 1816. In November and December, 1803, in three transactions, the elder Burkhart disposed of much of his remaining property in North Carolina to his son, Abraham, and to his son-in-law, Isaac Hire (Heyer).¹⁴⁰ Abraham had been born in 1778 and had married Catherine Hire, a sister of Isaac and the daughter of Rudy Heyer; shortly after the birth of their tenth child in 1824 they moved to Putnam County, Indiana. Isaac and Barbara Hire, like so many other members of the family eventually moved to Montgomery County, Ohio; it is recorded that they had nine children before his death in 1820, after which she remarried and had two more children. Isaac's twin brother, Leonard, married Barbara's older sister, Elizabeth, and they received assistance from her father, either in the form of land or of financing; in 1799 in a Stokes County document, Jehu Burkhart acknowledged the payment of a mortgage from Leonard Heyer on one hundred forty acres.¹⁴¹ The land was located along the Muddy Creek next to the Faws. Elizabeth died in 1806 during the birth of twins, and her husband with her three

136. *Ibid.*, XVII, 616-617; XVIII, 936; XIX, 11-12, 12-13; XXI, 504-505, 880-881.

137. Jesse O. Garst, editor, *History of the Church of the Brethren of the Southern District of Ohio* (Dayton, Ohio: Otterbein Press, 1920), page 94.

138. Most of the information in the following two paragraphs is found in Burkett, *Jehu Burket*; however, the land records are properly documented from the sources.

139. Rowan County Deed Books, XVII, 616-617.

140. *Ibid.*, XVII, 936; XIX, 11-12, 12-13.

141. Stokes County Deed Books, III, 248.

children and a second wife moved to Montgomery County, Ohio, in 1815.

Another son of Jehu Burkhart who received land from his father, although the exact transaction has not been located in the records, was Jehu, Jr., who had been born about 1770. Probably he left North Carolina in 1808 shortly after disposing of the property on Sparks Creek which his father had purchased from John Tanner in 1787,¹⁴² and settled in Harrison County, Indiana. Other children of Jehu Burkhart included his oldest child, Mary, who was born in 1765 and who married Jacob Huntsinger, a native of Germany. They lived in Ashe County for a number of years after 1789 and eventually moved to Montgomery County, Ohio. The second child was a son, Christian, who moved to Wilkes County at least as early as 1796, when he received a state grant of fifty acres; however, it is identified as adjoining "his old corner," probably an indication that he had already been in Wilkes County for some time.¹⁴³

In 1791 one of the daughters, Magdalene, married Isaac Faw, who succeeded his father-in-law as the leader of the Fraternity congregation. Finally, the youngest child, Nathaniel, who was born in 1784, married Elizabeth Kessler and moved to Ohio in 1812 and then on to Indiana in 1828. They had thirteen children, most of whom lived in Indiana. Quite probably, all of the nine children of the Brethren elder, Jehu Burkhart, married Brethren, since such marriages were a common sectarian practice. The names, such as Huntsinger, Rinker, Kessler, and Heyer, generally are German names which have been associated with the Church of the Brethren. The nine children of Jehu Burkhart averaged nine children apiece, thus demonstrating the way in which the Brethren increased in numbers during those years and providing another piece of evidence to support what Thomas Bailey has called "the delightful fertility of American parents."

142. Rowan County Deed Books, XI, 266-267; XXI, 504-505.

143. Wilkes County Deed Books on microfilm in the State Archives, Y, 53.

The Moravians were well acquainted with Jehu Burkhart and consequently provided more of an insight into his activities than is available for other Brethren leaders. The earliest reference was in May, 1791, when the Salem diarist noted that "The wagon of our neighbor Jehu Burkart, which went to Pennsylvania in March, has returned and brought us letters and Nachrichten, for which we were grateful for we have received none since October." The references became more frequent after 1800. The writer of the Friedberg diary reported that on December 2, 1800, "I attended two meetings held by the Tunkers at the home of Jehu Burkhart. Two or three preachers from Virginia were present, and among other things they spoke much about the sufferings of Jesus. Their guide, George Giersch, a Tunker from Pattitat [Botetourt] County, came to me and referred with pleasure to his childhood, when he spent two years in the school of the Brethren [Moravians] two miles from Quithopehill" in Pennsylvania.

Evidently, the Moravians and many other neighbors were much impressed by an event on Sunday, June 23, 1799, when "the Dunkers held a great gathering, on which occasion various ministers preached, prayed, and sang, alternately in German and English. Then three persons were immersed in the South Fork. Altogether the meeting lasted more than four hours. As this seldom happens, more than three hundred persons gathered, standing on both banks of the creek." How many of these three hundred people were Brethren is an interesting but unanswered question. Also the fact that the preaching was conducted in both German and English is worth special attention, because there is very little evidence on this transition among the Brethren; it has generally been believed that the change from German to English did not make much progress until well into the nineteenth century.

The Moravians treated the medical needs of the Burkhart family along with everyone else for miles around: In April, 1801, the Moravian doctor was "called to the home of our

neighbor Jehu Burkhart, as his son had fallen from a horse and had broken a bone in his leg,” and in May, 1803, Jehu Burkhart’s “little son had broken his right arm.” From the context it is not clear whether these were the sons of Jehu Burkhart, Sr., or Jr. Occasionally, Burkhart visited his Moravian friends or attended their services. In June, 1807, the Friedberg diarist “had a pleasant visit from the Dunkard bishop, Jehu Burkhart. He inquired about a number of Brethren whom he knew, and especially about Br. John Gambold and the mission to the Cherokees.” A year later in July, 1808, “the Dunkard bishop, Jehu Burkardt,” attended a Moravian funeral and after the sermon by the Moravian minister, Burkhart “followed with an address to the company.” Finally, in the last reference to Burkhart, in August, 1810, it was noted that at Friedberg, “the old Tunker bishop, Jehu Burkhart, attended the preaching service.”¹⁴⁴ From the wording of the last three items, it may be that Jehu Burkhart, Sr., had moved to Ohio by 1807 and was merely visiting family and friends on these three occasions.

The man who became the leader of the Fraternity congregation after Jehu Burkhart moved to Ohio was Isaac Faw. On August 10, 1791, Isaac had married Magdalene Burkhart, the daughter of Jehu Burkhart.¹⁴⁵ Both of the young people were eighteen. However, Isaac was an ambitious young man and he made provisions for his family by adding to his holdings of land in the Muddy Creek area. On April 1, 1795, he purchased from the Moravians one hundred four acres “in the Fork of the Middle fork of Muddy Creek and the Northfork, thereof” for which Faw was to make payments over a five year period.¹⁴⁶ Actually, he completed the stipulated payments in three years and received his deed to the property

144. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, V, 2324; VI, 2552, 2685, 2755, 2909, 2920; VII, 3129.

145. The date is based on family records since it cannot be verified by surviving Stokes County marriage bonds.

146. Moravian Archives.

on September 9, 1798.¹⁴⁷ He immediately made arrangements to purchase another one hundred six acres adjoining his land on the north side of the Middle Fork of Muddy Creek, to be paid for in three years.¹⁴⁸ He became the father of eight children, Henry, Daniel, Abraham, Mary, Isaac, Nancy, Elizabeth, and Jacob.¹⁴⁹ One interesting sidelight on Isaac Faw, Sr., is that he achieved his success as a farmer and a leader of the Brethren without ever learning to write, for he signed his name with an "X" in his agreements with the Moravians in the 1790's and in his son, Isaac's, wedding bond in 1834.

From the standpoint of the Brethren in North Carolina, Isaac Faw was significant primarily because of his leadership of the Fraternity congregation. Nothing is known of his ordination or of the exact years of his leadership. He probably took over full responsibility for the Brethren settlement about 1810 after Jehu Burkhart departed for Ohio. Faw must carry much of the responsibility for the fact that the Fraternity congregation is the only present-day congregation of the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas which had its beginning in the colonial period of American history. He was evidently the only Brethren elder in the original area of settlement along the Yadkin River who did not emigrate to the west with the tide of the frontier.

Another important Brethren family in the Fraternity community about which virtually nothing is known is the Miller family. The only definite linking of this family to the Brethren is found in a recent history of the Flat Rock congregation in Ashe County which asserts that a young Brethren named Jonathan Miller moved from the Salem area to the Ashe County Brethren settlement shortly after 1800. Furthermore, his father was reputed to have settled in the Salem area before the War of Independence.¹⁵⁰ In a

147. Stokes County Deed Books, III, 160.

148. Moravian Archives.

149. Faw, **Faw Family Record**.

150. Clayton B. Miller, "The Flat Rock Church of the Brethren," unpublished manuscript. Hereinafter cited as Miller, "Flat Rock."

remarkable document dated November 23, 1801, this Jonathan Miller is identified as one of the eight children of John Miller, Sr. The father had evidently died some years before and the children had had to await the death of the mother before the two hundred fourteen acres on Sparks Creek (just south of Muddy Creek) belonging to the father could be divided. In this document Jonathan sold his twenty-six and three-quarters acres to Horatio Hamilton. John Miller, Sr., had been granted four hundred fifty-three acres on Sparks Creek on May 6, 1762 by the Earl of Granville, of which he sold one hundred forty acres in 1779 to Henry Miller, Sr. He had also secured other land in the immediate area, including one hundred forty-six acres on both sides of Muddy Creek adjoining the northeast side of the Yadkin River from a Moravian, Nathaniel Seidel, and two hundred acres on the southwest side of Abbotts Creek, which was a gift from his father, George Miller.¹⁵¹

By 1783 Henry Miller was acting as the executor of John Miller in land transactions; in the name of John Miller and in his own right, Henry Miller secured at least thirteen hundred acres in state grants from 1783 to 1789.¹⁵² When Jonathan Miller sold his inheritance in 1801, Henry Miller was identified as a neighbor, along with Valentine Miller and Michael Miller. Obviously, the Millers were prominent farmers in the Muddy Creek Brethren settlement; which ones were Brethren cannot be proven, but such evidence as the identification of Millers as members of seven of the fifteen Brethren congregations in Pennsylvania in 1770 by Morgan Edwards, and the identification of Millers as Brethren by the Committee of Observation of Washington County, Maryland, in 1775 would indicate the existence of Millers as Brethren in other sections.¹⁵³ Finally, if John Miller, Sr., was a Brethren when he came to North Carolina, he was living in the general area of

151. Rowan County Deed Books, XVIII, 221; XI, 20-21; VII, 200-202; VIII, 222-223.

152. *Ibid.*, IX, 593; X, 46; XI, 253, 854.

153. Edwards, *Pennsylvania*, pages 72, 75-76, 80, 83, 86, 87, 88; "Journal of the Committee of Observation of the Middle District of Frederick County, Maryland," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, XII (September, 1917), 261-285.

the Fraternity congregation very early indeed--1762.

In addition to the Miller family, several other Brethren families in this general area have been identified. Although it has not seemed likely that Daniel Leatherman ever lived in North Carolina, other members of the family moved to North Carolina, including Nicholas Leatherman whose will was dated September 7, 1782 and probated in May, 1783.¹⁵⁴ His four sons were Jonas, John, Daniel, and Christian, the last of whom had been identified in the Rowan County court records during the war. According to the Census of 1790, all four of the sons were living in Rowan County just south of the Stokes County line in the Reedy Creek area. Christian Leatherman was a neighbor of Jacob Stutzman and in 1795 sold him a piece of land.¹⁵⁵ Daniel Leatherman witnessed this transaction and several others involving Stutzman, which was a frequent characteristic of the Brethren. Another such family was the Heiers, Leonard and Rudy, who were neighbors of the Faws and intermarried with the Burkharths; furthermore, Leonard Heier seems to have purchased his farm from Jehu Burkhart.¹⁵⁶ Also, the Moravians, who were neighbors of the Heiers, observed that in 1799 a Brethren baptizing took place "on the South Fork near the home of Rudy Heuer,"¹⁵⁷ an event which usually took place at the farm of a member.

Although the Moravians and the Brethren lived as neighbors in the Fraternity area, sometimes the relations between the two sectarian groups were not so cordial. For example, in May, 1782, the Salem boards expressed concern that "the so-called Dunkards, and especially the Methodists, seem to be trying hard to take over our people into their persuasion. The latter become constantly more busy in the neighborhood of Hope, but the last speaking with the members of that Society

154. Rowan County Wills in the State Department of Archives and History.

155. Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 1034, 1037; Rowan County Deed Books, XIII, 776.

156. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, III, 1343; Stokes County Deed Books, III, 248.

157. *Ibid.*, VI, 2636.

did not show that any harm had been done.”¹⁵⁸ Actually, the Brethren had secured a reputation for their ability to secure members from other German sectarian groups, especially among the Mennonites in Virginia. On the other hand, the Moravians evidently were doing some proselyting on their own, too, for on October 7, 1802, a former Brethren named George Samuel Brendel, who had been born in North Carolina on December 28, 1775, was baptized a Moravian at Hope, and in 1835, “this month in Hope a member of the Dunkard Church, who was baptized by her uncle Faw, asked to become a member of our congregation.”¹⁵⁹

Also, some intermarrying between the two German groups was taking place, although a sect normally forbids its members to marry outside of the sect. The Salem boards expressed concern in May, 1783 because “Kastner has chosen to marry the daughter of a Dunkard. It will not be wise publicly to turn him out, but the newly elected Friedland committee, . . . can be asked whether they will recognize such a man as a Society Brother, and then they can tell the settlement of their decision.” That was certainly a polite way of handling the matter!

Many years later in 1823, a Moravian minister performed the marriage ceremony of Maria Faw, the daughter of “the Dunkard preacher, Faw, near Hope,” to a Moravian, Thomas Hanes, in the Faw home. According to the Moravians who had rather high standards regarding weddings, “The wedding festivities which followed were conducted in a Christian fashion, accompanied by prayer and the singing of hymns.” Nothing was said about whether the Hanes family would be Brethren or Moravian. Years later, when the four children were growing up, the Moravian minister at Hope visited “Thos. Hanes and had a thorough discussion with him in regard to his merely nominal membership with us. He seems

158. *Ibid.*, IV, 1804.

159. “Catalogue of the members of the Congregation and Society in Hope in the Year 1806,” *Moravian Archives; Fries and others, Records of Moravians*, VIII, 4210.

to hold with the principles of the Baptists and that is the reason none of his children are baptized.” The minister was impressed by his lack of understanding of the reasons for adult baptism, and therefore “dared to offer some points against the principles and advised him to read the holy scriptures with a request for enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and before all things to ask for the baptism of the Spirit, without which no water baptism can avail for bliss.”¹⁶⁰ Apparently, the Brethren had come out on top in this marriage.

ASHE COUNTY CONGREGATION

Although the Fraternity congregation under the leadership of the members of the Faw family managed to come out on top often enough to survive and continue as a Brethren congregation, one of the major reasons why none of the other early Brethren settlements in North Carolina survived was the emigration of so many Brethren from North Carolina to what seemed like more desirable locations in the west. The land agents and speculators had a hand in persuading these industrious Germans to give up their well-developed farms on the eastern side of the mountains in order to follow the long and dangerous trail westward. J. H. Moore described the activities of Major George F. Bollinger, “a man of wonderful power and influence,” who “talked to our people when he visited them in North Carolina about the productive lands in Missouri [which] naturally stirred their enthusiasm for the west, where land was cheap, climate mild and opportunities unbounded for men of enterprise.” As a result some of the first settlers in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri were Brethren from North Carolina who reached Missouri in 1795.

However, not all of the Brethren who emigrated from Fraternity and other Brethren settlements along the Yadkin

160. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, IV, 1851; VIII, 3628; IX, 4508.

River or its tributaries went to Kentucky and Missouri. Some of them stopped along the New River in Wilkes County in western North Carolina. The Wilkes County land records clearly indicate that Brethren were arriving as settlers along the New River in the 1780's, and by the time of the Census of 1790 a considerable settlement had developed, including such families as Burket (Burkhart), Kessler, Weaver, Keller, Grove (Groff), Fouts, Carver (Garver), Bowers (Bauer), Miller, Landes, and Moch (Mack).¹⁶¹

Of particular interest are the land transactions of several individuals who have been previously identified in connection with other North Carolina Brethren settlements. On May 18, 1789, Jacob Faw received a state grant of fifty acres located on the north fork of Buffalo Creek, a tributary of the New River, near Baker's old camp. Unfortunately, the records do not indicate whether this was father or son, nor do they reveal the purpose for Faw's securing this grant. It seems quite possible that the Faw family was seriously considering the desirability of leaving the Fraternity community in the 1780's because of the turmoil arising from the Universalist controversy. Another interesting transaction was the sale of three hundred twenty acres located in the fork of Buffalo Creek on the west side of Phenix Mountain by Jiles Parmely to John Carver in June, 1788; Carver in turn sold this land in September, 1796, to Gasper Rowland, the Brethren elder from Rowan County.¹⁶² As previously indicated, the Rowan County records indicated that Rowland lived for a time in Wilkes County.

The records do not indicate that the Faws lived in Wilkes County during these years, and Gasper Rowland must have moved to Kentucky not long after buying land in Wilkes County; however, two individuals, John Bowers and Jonathan Miller, have been identified as leaders of the Brethren in Wilkes County over a period of many years. Bowers was there at least as early as 1790, for he is listed in the Census of that

161. Moore, *Some Brethren Pathfinders*, pages 41-47; Wilkes County Deed Books, C-1, 1, 92, 67, 99; B-1, 64; Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 1246-1247.

162. Wilkes County Deed Books, C-1, 279; X-1, 92; Y, 108.

year. His brother, Adam Bowers, had purchased land in Wilkes County in July, 1788, but is listed in 1790 as a resident of Rowan County; quite possibly, John was farming the three hundred twenty acres on the upper fork of Naked Creek near the Phenix Mountain.¹⁶³

The earliest contemporary evidence that these Germans were Brethren besides the presence of Gasper Rowland in the 1790's was the report of a Moravian minister, Abraham Steiner, who visited the mountains of Ashe County (established from Wilkes County in 1799) in May, 1804, and reported: "Going further into the country I crossed New River with difficulty and toward evening reached a settlement of Dunkards, and spent the night with a Mr. Bauer, of that persuasion, a mile from the Courthouse." Not only was Bauer a Brethren, but Steiner discovered that he was "an exhorter among his people, and during the evening spoke much about religious matters, but in such a way and in such a strain that I must admit I did not understand him."¹⁶⁴ Although these German sectarians usually got along cordially, their vigorous defense of their own beliefs and practices could easily have created a barrier to understanding.

Jonathan Miller had evidently been reared in the Fraternity community where his father, John Miller, had secured a grant from the Earl of Granville in 1762. There is no evidence to indicate whether the Millers were Brethren when they arrived in North Carolina or whether they became Brethren as the result of the establishment of a congregation in their neighborhood. The evidence does indicate that Jonathan Miller intended to remain in the Fraternity area of Stokes County, for in November, 1799 he completed the purchase of one-hundred eighty-nine and three-quarters acres close to the Faws on the South Fork of Muddy Creek from George Danner (Tanner), who had been one of the early settlers in the area in the 1770's. In the 1780's Danner had moved

163. *Ibid.*, C-1, 67; Clark, *State Records*, XXVI, 1048.

164. Fries and others, *Records of Moravians*, VI, 2967.

to the Dutchman's Creek area of Rowan County, where he purchased two hundred acres which was part of a tract which had earlier been granted by the Earl of Granville to Squire Boone, Daniel's father.¹⁶⁵ For whatever unexplained reason, Jonathan Miller decided to leave Stokes County shortly after he had secured his deed from Danner, for in November, 1801, when he and his brothers, Joseph and Henry, sold the land on Sparks Creek in Rowan County which they had inherited from their father, they were all identified in the deeds as residents of Ashe County. At the same time, in November, 1801, Joseph Miller was buying one hundred thirty-five acres in Wilkes County, and several months earlier in July, Jonathan had recorded a state land grant for fifty acres on the North Fork of New River in Ashe County. During the next five years, Jonathan purchased an additional one hundred fifty acres adjoining the grant.¹⁶⁶ Evidently, Jonathan Miller like most of these hardworking Brethren farmers was doing very well.

This Ashe County Brethren settlement survived the difficulties of infancy and is today the Flat Rock congregation of the Church of the Brethren. The local congregational historian, Clayton B. Miller, who served many years as the pastor of the congregation, granted the credit for the permanency of the Flat Rock congregation to the work of Jonathan Miller. Much of the early history is based on family tradition, for the descendants of John Bowers and of Jonathan Miller still live in the area, but it is worth repeating for the human interest it adds:

Jonathan Miller's wagon was the first to come down Buffalo Creek. He came through what is now Warrentonville. A Carpenter [Zimmerman] family lived there, which must have been that of Matthias Carpenter. A pig followed Jonathan Miller's wagon. Margaret, a

165. Stokes County Deed Books, III, 273; Rowan County Deed Books, IX, 643-644; XVIII, 220, 221, 222.

166. Wilkes County Deed Books, C-1, 258; Ashe County Deed Books, on microfilm in the State Archives, B, 197, 162, 488.

daughter of Carpenter, said she is going to have that pig for her wedding. She did. Presently, Jonathan Miller and she were married. Jonathan Miller was born in 1776 and died in 1854. Margaret Carpenter Miller was a good woman but never joined the church. She lived to be 83 years of age. According to Fred Welch, she owned slaves, but her husband, Jonathan, did not. In those days, slave-owners were not permitted to join the Church of the Brethren.

In the Census of 1790 or 1791, Matthias Carpenter is listed as being in Surry County, of which Stokes and Forsyth were then a part. It may be that Jonathan Miller had earlier acquaintance with the Carpenter family and was influenced by them to come to Ashe County. Matthias Carpenter came from Pennsylvania and at that time settled on or near New River in Ashe County.

Jonathan Miller settled on the place now owned by Fred Welch in the Flat Rock community. Sally Shoemaker thinks he belonged to the Church of the Brethren when he came to Ashe County and to the present area of Flat Rock Church. This Jonathan Miller is the ancestor of the first set of Floyd Welch's, Sr., children on their mother's side. D. P. Welch was one of those children. Hence we may say he was the ancestor of Flat Rock.¹⁶⁷

In spite of the significant contribution of Jonathan Miller, the evidence is clear-cut that a Brethren congregation had been established in the Ashe County area before Jonathan Miller arrived. Quite possibly, Gasper Rowland had organized the congregation when he lived in the area in the middle 1790's. As an elder, he could have ordained John Bowers as a minister and provided for the continuation of the services of worship and the administration of the ordinances

167. Miller, "Flat Rock," page 2.

after his departure. This pattern was similar to that which the evidence indicates that he followed in organizing Brethren congregations in Tennessee and in Kentucky.

IN SUMMARY

Quite obviously, the Brethren were very active in the Carolinas in the eighteenth century. Altogether some eleven different settlements have been described in this chapter, and very probably some of these involved a number of different sub-divisions which may have been separate groups. Of these eleven only two, Fraternity and Ashe County, became permanent congregations, thus indicating the very transient nature of these frontier settlements. In many of these areas the Brethren were quite clearly among the earliest settlers in the area; in other words, they were pioneering on the unbroken frontier. In at least one area along the Catawba River, a number of Brethren became victims of Indian attacks in the 1750's. The Brethren were one group of Germans who were very active along the frontier, for they did not wait for others to move to the frontier and endure all of the hard work and suffering. The point-of-view has prevailed for too long in the study of American history that the Scotch-Irish and the English were doing the pioneering, and the Germans came along after them and reaped all of the benefits of some one else's hard work. Let the evidence put that myth to rest!

CHAPTER II

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY GROWTH

By the end of the nineteenth century the Church of the Brethren had moved into new areas of North and South Carolina and had established a number of new congregations. However, much of this growth came near the end of the century in a wave of enthusiasm which spread across the entire country. The early years of the century had been years of difficulty and of a struggle for survival involving the problems that had developed in the late eighteenth century. The Fraternity congregation provides an excellent illustration of the course of Brethren history during the nineteenth century.

FRATERNITY CONGREGATION

With the departure of Jehu Burkhart, the elder of the Fraternity congregation, for Ohio sometime in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the responsibility for the leadership of the congregation fell on the shoulders of Isaac Faw, who celebrated his thirty-seventh birthday in 1810. For the remaining quarter of a century of his life, "laboring through prayers and tears in adverse circumstances he held his little band together, meeting in private homes or wherever convenient to worship the God they loved according to the dictates of their own conscience, and meeting for their annual Love Feast service," as the congregational historians described him in 1940.¹

The Moravians, who were neighbors of the Brethren, continued to be reminded occasionally of the presence of their

1. H. J. Woodie, J. P. Robertson, W. M. Robertson, and Dorothy Robertson, "History of the Fraternity Church," about 1940, unpublished typescript, page 1. Hereinafter cited as Woodie and others, "Fraternity Church."

fellow sectarians. The diarist at Salem recorded in October, 1819 that in the Moravian community of Hope “few attended the meetings because a Tunker preacher was baptizing in Muddy Creek, two miles from there.” Although there is no indication whether the preacher was Isaac Faw or someone visiting the Brethren, the Fraternity Brethren were obviously continuing to make an impact on the community. Some nine years later, it was reported that “a Free Dunker (or Bearded Man) preached on Salem Square,” which was certainly a bold step indeed. The Moravian record indicated that he “did not win much approbation.” In a typically sectarian gesture, the Moravian “church had been refused him, although some members seemed to want him to use it.” Finally, in May, 1835 one of the Moravian ministers indicated that he had recently preached in a nearby schoolhouse “following a Tunker preacher.”

This preacher, Friedr. Hauser, (Houser), declared in the beginning that he was not in the habit of taking a text for his sermon because, as he said, from a single passage of scripture almost anything could be proved, and his congregation could be misled; but he would choose today Hebrews 1:1, a text that gave him opportunity to pass from book to book through the Bible, displaying his truly wonderful knowledge of the passages of scripture, so that an adult member of the congregation said: “He told us everything he knew by heart out of the Bible.”²

This fascinating commentary provides an insight into the patterns of Brethren preaching in the early nineteenth century.

Unfortunately, this Brethren minister, Friedr. Hauser, is completely unknown in Brethren history. No evidence connects him with the Carolina Brethren and he likely was just visiting in the area at this time. There may have been some relation between his presence and the death of Isaac Faw in

2. Fries and others, *Records of the Moravians*, VII, 3405; VIII, 3861; VIII, 4194-4195.

1835, an event which according to the traditional accounts left the congregational without a leader. "In 1835 Elder Isaac Faw was called to lay down the mantle and go to his eternal reward, leaving the church . . . without a leader."³

This very difficult period of survival without a leader came to an end after a decade when Isaac's youngest son, Jacob, "heard the call of God to take up the work of his father." There was one major stumbling block: Not only was he unordained, he was unbaptized. Although the story seems like the figment of some imagination, the writer of Jacob Faw's obituary, Dr. F. P. Tucker, reported without hesitation that "he rode on horseback more than a hundred miles into Virginia to be baptized."⁴ The most detailed account of Jacob Faw's early life as a Brethren was written by Daniel Peters in a history of the Church of the Brethren in Franklin County, Virginia: "At one time a man from North Carolina, by the name of Jacob Faw, not knowing Bro. [John] Bowman's given name or address, but wishing to learn something from him of the Brethren church, wrote a letter, addressed to Preacher Bowman, Rocky Mountain, Va., the countyseat of Franklin County." Bowman of course responded, whereupon Faw "came to his home on Friday evening, talked with him on Saturday, making known all of his wishes. On Sunday morning he accompanied Bro. Bowman to his preaching point. After the services he was baptized into Christ, I being one of the witnesses of this impressive scene." The fellowship that was established on this trip continued, for "soon afterward the Brethren of this county began preaching down there, going two or three times a year, on horseback. In a short time Bro. Faw was called to the ministry, and soon to the eldership."⁵

Jacob Faw's dedication to the leadership of the small flock

3. Woodie and others, "Fraternity Church," page 1.

4. F. P. Tucker, "Elder Jacob Faw--Biographical Sketch of an Exemplary Man--His Faith--The Dunkard Church," *The Union Republican*, Winston, North Carolina, June 16, 1887, page 1. Hereinafter cited as Tucker, "Elder Jacob Faw."

5. Daniel Peters, "The Brethren Church in Franklin County, Virginia," *Brethren Family Almanac*, 1909, pages 32-33.

of Brethren did not miraculously solve all of the problems. In a letter in 1853 to members of the Hyer (Heier) family who had moved to Ohio, he noted: "Our church here is not increasing but we still indevor to be faithful over a few things." That life in North Carolina had its discouragements was indicated by the fact that he had been thinking about "going to a free state where the brethren is more prosperous but it don't seem like I can ever leave this country as long as there is any church here, and as long as I am here." In addition to the problems created for the Brethren by their refusal to have anything to do with the institution of slavery, Faw noted that "our prospects in church matters here is not good on account of the numerous sects that is more popular and pleasing to carnal minds and the pride of life and fashions of the day." Over and above all of the problems of this world, he was seeking "a country that is a Heavenly country." ⁶

Evidently, Jacob Faw was able to provide the strong leadership necessary to enable the Fraternity Church of the Brethren to survive through the many problems of the mid-nineteenth century. According to Tucker's obituary: "I am told that the church had declined in numbers during the interval between his father's death and his ordination to the ministry, and that by his personal efforts new life was infused into it, so that it was soon brought up to its former prosperous condition having built several years ago [a] neat house of worship." ⁷

The building of the congregation's first house of worship was certainly an evidence of the prosperous condition of the group. It was constructed in 1860 "on the brow of the hill overlooking the vallies of Muddy Creek and Salem Creek on the border lines of Edwin Hanes and Jacob Faw." According to the congregational historians:

6. Jacob and Sarah Faw to Wesley and Susannah Hyer, Forsyth Co., N. C., April 25, 1853, quoted in Faw, "Faw Family."

7. Tucker, "Elder Jacob Faw," page 1.

In building the church house they selected from the virgin forests around them the stoutest and best of the trees. With its hand-hewn log framing plugged firmly together with small oak pegs in the place of nails, and an inner wall of crude, but enduring brick, it is good for generations to come. Back of the auditorium is a tiny bare kitchen with an open fireplace where the ladies prepared the Lord's supper. The only furnishings in the auditorium are the hard narrow slab benches "pegged" together and worn to a finely polished smoothness by generations of devout worshipers, and the hand made table on which rests a huge Bible. ⁸

Surely the construction of such a meeting house was a major undertaking by the small group of Fraternity Brethren.

Jacob Faw's appearance and personality have been described in the following terms:

Jacob Faw was a man with long, curly black hair and dark eyes. He wore a full beard, although he trimmed his upper lip some. He had a very dominant personality and was strict both with himself and with others. He was against the use of all by-words even down to the word "ouch," and it is said that he would not let anyone work for him who would swear. He refused to own slaves, although his friends and neighbors, the Sides, with whom the family intermarried, owned slaves. As a preacher, he did not have a very strong voice. He was known as a good Bible student and as one who preached long sermons. He had the mannerism of rocking on his feet as he spoke and keeping his hands perfectly quiet.

The following is a true incident from his life: One day Jacob caught two men in the act of stealing meat from his smokehouse. One man was inside handing the meat to the other one outside. The man on the outside saw Jacob and ran, Jacob quietly took his place receiving the meat. Finally, the man inside said, "Shall we leave the old man one piece?" "Yes," replied Jacob. He told the men he would let them go if they would never steal again. He gave them a gift of meat and sent them on their way.⁹

8. Woodie and others, "Fraternity Church," page 1.

9. Quoted in Faw, "Faw Family."

Further testimony to Faw's honesty and integrity comes from Tucker, who remembered that Faw "disposed of the products of his farm in Salem, where his easily recognized form will be missed." It was the general practice for his customers to accept "whatever he had to sell at his own weight or measure, an exception to a rule very probably not made in behalf of any other man who trades in Winston-Salem, thus paying tribute by their confidence to his sterling honesty and truthfulness." Tucker concluded: "It is true that honesty and truthfulness were conspicuous traits of his character, but no more honest, truthful and moral man ever commanded the public confidence to the extent that he did, and therefore we must look for the explanation of the general esteem in which he was held in his faithful and unwavering discharge of duty, as he saw it, to God and man." Such a character led Tucker to comment: "It is then as a model man of God, especially, that he is known and revered. For half a century he has been a prominent figure in the community, towering far above all other men as a model for Christian living."¹⁰

This exemplary man was married about 1835 to Sarah Martin and over a period of more than twenty years from 1836 to 1857 they had eight children: Rebecca, Amos, Jonah, Rhoda, Maria, Mary, Nancy, and Eliza. Although Jacob Faw had indicated in a letter of 1853 when he was forty-two years old that he had a "weakly constitution and I cannot already hold out to labor as I used to do," he nevertheless lived for an additional thirty-four years until his death on June 4, 1887. By that time he had five living children, thirty-six grandchildren, and several great-grandchildren. He died within a quarter-mile of his birthplace and the funeral was held in his home with services conducted by James Hall, a Moravian minister, "after which an unusually large concourse of relatives and friends in profound sorrow, but not without hope, followed his honored remains to their last resting place in the family burial ground." Thus came to an end the life of a man whose death

10. Tucker, "Elder Jacob Faw," page 1.

caused the community to suffer “the loss of an old and familiar landmark, a good neighbor and useful citizen; his church a faithful minister, wise counselor and devout servant of God; and his relatives a kind, tender and loving father and grandfather.”¹¹

By the time of the death of Jacob Faw in 1887, a very important development had taken place which made a major impact on the Fraternity congregation. In 1866 this North Carolina congregation became a part of the newly organized District of First Virginia, which included the northern and eastern part of North Carolina. In the organization of church districts in the Church of the Brethren which took place immediately after the Civil War, the North Carolina congregations were divided between the District of First Virginia and the District of Tennessee, with Fraternity and Flat Rock in Ashe County becoming part of First Virginia and Brummets Creek in Mitchell County going to Tennessee.¹² Granted the geographical locations of these congregations and the transportation system of that period, this division was the natural and logical way to divide the territory, but in the long run, establishing the North Carolina congregations as a separate district might very well have tended to strengthen the church in that state. At any rate, since the Fraternity congregation now became a part of the Virginia story, its further history will not be given in this Carolina story.

ASHE-ALLEGHANY COUNTIES

Virtually nothing is known about the development of the Church of the Brethren in this two county area (Alleghany County was organized out of Ashe County territory in 1859) in the first half of the nineteenth century. In a letter which Jonathan Miller, a Brethren leader in this area, wrote to his

11. *Ibid.*

12. D. H. Zigler, *History of the Brethren in Virginia* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1908), page 151.

brother, Henry, on November 28, 1840, there is a reference to the prosperity of Zion, which has been implied to be a reference to the church. When Henry replied from Newton County, Missouri on July 3, 1842, he rejoiced in the prosperity of Zion taking place in North Carolina.¹³

Although Brethren leadership including Gasper Roland, John Bowers, or Jonathan Miller had lived in the Ashe County area continuously since the 1790's and must indicate the presence of an organized congregation at least that early, tradition indicates that the Flat Rock congregation was organized under Miller's leadership in his barn. On this basis one later record set the date of organization in 1853, since Miller died in 1854.¹⁴ If the more meaningful criteria of the presence of leadership in the area and the maintenance of an active program are accepted, then this date is more than fifty years too late in time, and the date should be 1795.

Over the years of the nineteenth century, the Brethren in Ashe County continued to be blessed by visits by ministers from other areas. Among these ministers and leaders from outside the area were John B. Weddle, C. Bowman, Isaac Reed, Jesse Crosswhite, Jacob Faw, D. B. Bowman, Solomon G. Arnold, Joseph B. Bowman, Alfred D. Reed, Jeremiah H. Slusher, John C. Bashor, Abraham Naff, Peter Crumpacker, and Isaac Naff. Most of these were from Virginia, although some were from Tennessee and from other parts of North Carolina. Typical of the work of such ministers was the visit by C. D. Hylton and H. P. Hylton of Virginia in the fall of 1884, when they held a worship service on Sunday morning, ordained Henry Sheets to the eldership, and J. Gideon Lewis, Martin Prather, and Andrew Sheets to the ministry in the afternoon, and conducted a Love Feast for thirty Brethren in the evening.¹⁵

13. Miller, "Flat Rock," pages 2-3.

14. *Ibid.*, page 3; see also Howard Miller, *The Record of the Faithful* (Lewisburgh, Pennsylvania: J. R. Cornelius, Printer, 1882), page 27. Hereinafter cited as Howard Miller, *The Record of the Faithful*.

15. *Gospel Messenger*, October 21, 1884, pages 676-677.

This event in 1884 also typified the development of an indigenous ministry in the Ashe-Alleghany area. In fact, the earliest extant record of the Flat Rock congregation described a service in 1863 in which Wilson Wiatt (Wyatt) was licensed to the ministry in the presence of elders John Lewis, Hardin Hylton, and Henry Garst and ministers William E. Reed and Henry Garber.¹⁶ Other ministers in the Ashe-Alleghany area in addition to those already mentioned included by 1900 Matthias Miller, Adam Sheets, H. M. Prather, D. C. Davis, Emmanuel M. Sheets, Andrew Reed, Martin Owens, J. Henderson Miller, Jonathan Miller, and George W. Miller.

PEAK CREEK CONGREGATION

With the development of such an extensive corps of local leadership the Brethren began to expand into the area surrounding the Flat Rock community. Some of these ministers including Andrew Reed, Martin Owens, H. M. Prather, and Martin Prather did not live in the immediate Flat Rock area. One of the oldest of these children of Flat Rock developed in the Peak Creek section of Ashe County, to which Andrew Sheets moved from Rowan County in 1795. This man was very likely a member of the Schutz family which had been active in the Brethren communities along the Uwharrie River and had later been one of the earliest settlers in the Fraternity community. Numerous descendants of Andrew Sheets were leaders in the Brethren congregations in Ashe County. These Brethren began, as was always the case, by conducting worship services in the homes of the members; eventually, they moved into the Peak Creek school house, and finally, they built a church. Some of the significant 19th century leaders of the Peak Creek Brethren, in addition to members of the Sheets' family were Martin Owens and John C. Woodie.¹⁷

16. Miller, "Flat Rock," page 5.

17. Clara S. Bowlin, "Local Church Historical Data--Peak Creek," April 4, 1968; Bert G. Richardson, "Peak Creek Church Notes."

PLEASANT VALLEY CONGREGATION

Another present-day congregation which was established during these years was Pleasant Valley, which was called Pleasant Ridge until 1904. The worship services were conducted in the May Apple Knob school house after its construction in 1870. Evidently, the most important leader of this group of Brethren was Andrew Reed, although most of the Ashe County ministers contributed to the development of the congregation.¹⁸

MT. CARMEL CONGREGATION

Still a third child of the Flat Rock Brethren was organized at Mt. Carmel under the leadership of Henry Sheets and others. The earliest Brethren families included the Nat Moxleys, the John Blevans, the Norman Jones, and the Allen Richardsons. This group of Brethren erected a wooden meeting house about forty by sixty feet about 1890.¹⁹

The evidence seems to indicate that the relationship of these four groups of Brethren was modified about 1888. Although the Flat Rock records are not completely clear at this point, probably a number of members were transferred to other congregations in that year. At any rate, after 1888 the Flat Rock records no longer refer to the Church of Ashe County but begin to refer to the Flat Rock Church.²⁰ Thus, it would seem that some of the children were reaching sufficient maturity to become more independent of the mother congregation.

18. No author, "Historical Data--Pleasant Valley," July 20, 1957.

19. Pauline Jones, "Historical Data--Mt. Carmel," no date.

20. Miller, "Flat Rock," page 3.

THREE TOP CONGREGATION

One group of Brethren which was organized during these years but did not achieve permanence was located on Ben Bowlin Creek in the Three Top area. The leader of this group of Brethren before his death in the early 1880's was Hendrick Prather, who was also serving in 1881 as the elder of the entire Ashe County Brethren congregation. He was followed by Henry Sheets who came from Flat Rock to preach regularly. Also, Hendrick's son, Marian Prather, was a minister in the church in the Three Top area. Later his son, Tom, who was also a minister, went to Schoolfield (Danville), Virginia. Evidently, the death of some of the members together with the emigration of others brought about a discouraging situation to which the best solution seemed to be the disorganization of the group.²¹

LONG HOPE CONGREGATION

Still another group of Brethren who organized a congregation which has not survived established the Long Hope congregation in 1890 with about twelve members. Under the prodding of various Ashe County ministers such as J. H. Miller, Henry Sheets, A. J. Reed, J. C. Woody, and Marian Prather, the congregation grew; in 1893 it was reported that there were now twenty members and in 1894 after additional baptisms the membership reached thirty-five. A Sunday School had been organized and the evidence seems to indicate that the regular meetings were being held in a meeting house, although there is no specific information about its construction. For various reasons probably directly related to the poverty of the area the congregation did not survive the vicissitudes of the twentieth century.²²

21. *Ibid.*, page 4.

22. *Gospel Messenger*, July 11, 1893, page 429; January 23, 1894, page 60.

FLAT ROCK CONGREGATION

In contrast, the mother congregation at Flat Rock had been developing steadily during the years following the Civil War. In 1874 the Brethren at Flat Rock built their first meeting house. Previously, they had met in the homes of the members; the records reveal that in 1863 the Brethren met at David Millers, in 1865 at Mary Millers, and in 1866 at Adam Sheetses. The meeting house was re-located and rebuilt in 1887, and has continued to serve the congregational needs in the twentieth century. One of the very up-to-date developments among Brethren during these years was a Sunday School, and the Brethren at Flat Rock organized their first Sunday School while they were worshipping in their first meeting house. George Miller, who conducted the Sunday School in the second meeting house, was the first recorded superintendent. According to Clayton B. Miller in a history of the Flat Rock congregation, "The Sunday School was a great means of maintaining the life and influence of the church through the following years."²³

The Flat Rock congregation not only attempted to guide the lives of its members by educating them properly, it also was willing to follow the Brethren pattern of disciplining its members. It is recorded that in the early 1870's Jesse Sheets, a minister, got into some difficulty which merited the attention of the congregational council. An investigating committee was appointed, and its recommendations were accepted by the council: "We the committee with the church do think according to evidence and the gospel Bro. Jesse should be silenced and deposed from his office until he should reform and become a better light and if he will make acknowledgements of his faults in the presence of Bro. Matthias Miller, Joseph Garber, and David Miller to satisfy the church he may be retained as a private member and, if not, he is put in the first degree of excommunication, that is from

23. Miller, "Flat Rock," page 4.

church council, the kiss, and the communion.”²⁴ This type of action was certainly not distinctive among the North Carolina Brethren but rather was typical of the rather rigid, authoritarian pattern which prevailed in the sect-group of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Much of the prosperity of the Ashe-Alleghany congregations in the closing decades of the nineteenth century must be credited to the dedicated and sacrificial work of Henry Sheets, who became the elder of the Flat Rock congregation in 1884 and who was closely connected with some of the other groups of Brethren. As a nineteen year old when the Civil War began in 1861, Sheets had spent two years in the Confederate Army; according to tradition, he always shot high in order to miss his target. After surviving that experience, he married Emily Wyatt, quite possibly a relative of Wilson Wyatt who was licensed to the ministry at Flat Rock in 1863. At any rate, Henry Sheets decided to become a Brethren and was baptized by Washington Dove from Tennessee. The Brethren recognized talent, and in 1880 Sheets was called to the ministry and in 1884 he was ordained as an elder and placed in charge of the Flat Rock congregation. In 1893 it was reported that in contrast to about forty-five members scattered over a large territory in 1879, there were now about one hundred fifty members in four organized congregations. It was noted in this report that Henry Sheets was the head of the church in this area and would serve on the Standing Committee at the forthcoming Annual Conference. Unfortunately, his health began to fail, and in February, 1897, he was able to be back at church after an illness lasting three months. Finally, in October, 1898 he resigned as elder after fourteen years and was replaced by Emmanuel Sheets.²⁵

One of the reasons for the growth of membership during these years was the addition of evangelistic meetings to the

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Gospel Messenger*, May 11, 1918, page 303; February 7, 1893, page 93; May 13, 1897, page 173; November 5, 1898, page 701.

program of the church. The wave of revivalism brought about by D. L. Moody hit the Brethren hard, even though they had not been very much effected by previous revival movements. In the Flat Rock congregation, for example, it was reported in 1898 that J. C. Woodie, Eli Reed, and W. H. Handy had conducted meetings with the result that five had been added to the church membership; again in 1900 A. J. Reed, W. A. Reed, and W. H. Handy held special meetings which led to the baptizing of twelve.²⁶

By the end of the century, the Brethren in Ashe and Alleghany Counties had become much more permanently established and organized than they had been one hundred years--or even fifty years--earlier. There were now at least four organized congregations and some additional places at which worship services were being conducted. There was a strong staff of indigenous leadership to guide the program, which in itself had been expanded by the addition of Sunday Schools and of evangelistic meetings. The Brethren indeed appeared to have come to this area to stay!

MITCHELL COUNTY

The earliest record of Brethren in this area indicates that about 1797 a Bowman family moved from Tennessee across the state line into what was then Burke County, North Carolina. These Brethren are considered the first members of the church in the mountainous wilderness of what later became Yancey County in 1833. Evidently, the Brethren found something in this area which pleased them, for additional members began to move into the area. How early there was a resident minister and regular services of worship is not known, but in 1844 a congregation was organized in Yancey County under the leadership of Henry Masters with Peter

26. *Ibid.*, December 24, 1898, page 813; March 11, 1900, page 157.

Peterson as a minister.²⁷ Henry Masters is also identified in another connection as officiating along with John Nead at the ordination of Daniel Brubaker in the Limestone church in Tennessee in 1847.

Very little is known about the years immediately after the organization of a Brethren congregation in Yancey County. In a biographical sketch of Joseph Wine, an elder from Washington County, Tennessee, he is reported to have served with Henry Garst on a committee appointed by the Annual Meeting of 1879 to visit the Brummetts Creek congregation "to settle a church trouble." The committee was quite successful in its mission, and "after the difficulty was amicably and pleasantly adjusted a series of meetings was held by the two elders jointly, and the power of God came upon them. Forty accepted Christ and were received into church fellowship."²⁸ Certainly, that committee was successful in more ways than one.

This emphasis on evangelism became an important part of the survival of the Church of the Brethren in the mountains of western North Carolina and was reflected in Yancey and Mitchell²⁹ Counties. By 1882 the membership had increased from the original twelve members in 1844 to one hundred two. The mother congregation known as Brummetts Creek had constructed a meeting house in 1852 in order to meet the spiritual needs of the Brethren. In addition, a second meeting house had been built for the neighboring Brethren at Yellow Poplar. To provide leadership there were seven resident ministers including Hiram Peterson, who was the presiding elder, J. W. Bradshaw, H. M. Griffith, S. M. Laughrun, Samuel Tipton, Moses Miller, and Elhanan Peterson. In addition to Brummetts Creek and Yellow Poplar, a third center of activity

27. M. Nead, "Historical Sketch of the Brethren in Tennessee," *Brethren's Family Almanac*, 1890, [page 15]. Hereinafter cited as Nead, "Brethren in Tennessee."

28. D. L. Miller and Galen B. Royer, *Some Who Led* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1912), page 135.

29. Mitchell County was organized in 1861 with territory from five adjacent counties including Yancey County.

had developed known as Elk Shoals.³⁰ The activity at Elk Shoals provides an enigma, for there is no further mention in the records of such a place.

PLEASANT GROVE CONGREGATION

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Brethren in Mitchell County had organized another congregation and were also holding services in a location which would eventually become a congregation. In the Pleasant Grove area north of Red Hill the Masters and the Harrell families led out in the development of a Brethren settlement. The first Love Feast was held in the barn of Jake Masters, and during the summer services were held under the trees on his farm. Henry Masters was conducting services here at least as early as 1850. Meetings were also held in some of the homes including that of Wiley Harrell. After 1891 the Brethren met in the school house which was located near the site where the Brethren eventually built a church. Finally, in 1894 a new congregation was organized known as Pleasant Grove. Elders J. W. Bradshaw and H. M. Griffith from Brummetts Creek moderated the organizational meeting. Elbert Harrell was elected as minister of the congregation, and Wiley Harrell and Don Masters became the first deacons. Others who served as ministers were Hoke Masters, H. M. Griffith, Robert Willis, and Joseph Griffith.³¹ The pattern followed in the development and organization of this Brethren congregation seemed to be similar to what was taking place in dozens of locations across the country.

30. Howard Miller, *The Record of the Faithful*, pages 29-30.

31. Mrs. Etta W. Bryant, "Local Church Historical Data--Pleasant Grove," August 24, 1967.

BAILEY CONGREGATION

At about the same time that the Pleasant Grove congregation was being organized, the Brummetts Creek ministers were holding meetings at the F. Benjamin Bailey school house in Mitchell County. In May of 1893 it was reported that Elhanan Peterson and Marion Laughrun had conducted meetings which resulted in the baptism of seven people. Such public baptisms in a nearby stream were frequently deeply moving spiritual experiences, for in this case it was noted that some two hundred people had witnessed the baptisms. Again the following year, Peterson and Laughrun were back at the Bailey school for two sermons a day from Wednesday until Sunday of the last week of April, and four persons were baptized and two were reclaimed for the church.³² Although it was reported that the church was progressing, the evidence seems to indicate that the formal organization of a congregation did not take place until after the turn of the century.

BRUMMETTS CREEK

The mother congregation at Brummetts Creek was also feeling the impact of the emphasis on evangelism. At a series of meetings from August 12 to 20, 1893 the local ministers including J. W. Bradshaw, H. M. Griffith, S. M. Laughrun, and A. M. Laughrun had a very successful experience (as measured by numbers) in which thirty-four people were baptized and nine were reclaimed for the church. One wonders how many of those thirty-four people were children from Brethren families and how many of them were being brought into the church from non-Brethren backgrounds. Again in November, 1898 it was reported that a total of eighteen had been baptized and one reclaimed as the result of a series of meetings at Brum-

32. *Gospel Messenger*, June 13, 1893, page 365; May 22, 1894, page 332.

metts Creek.³³ Of course, these meetings should be considered typical of the general practice of the times and not as including everything that was happening, since the record is quite incomplete.

Some of the evangelistic meetings were being conducted by visiting ministers. For example, P. D. Reed, a minister from the Limestone congregation in Tennessee, reported that he traveled in Mitchell and Yancey Counties in January of 1894. He preached in at least two homes including Jef. Bailey's in Yancey County and Elhanan Griffith's; in addition, he held a service in the "old Hollow Poplar Church near where E. Peterson lived," and he conducted six meetings in the mother church at Brummetts Creek. Contrary to the usual practice, he did not indicate statistically the results of his visit in North Carolina.³⁴

The life and work of these Brethren ministers of the nineteenth century was admirably summarized by Mathias Nead, who knew many of them personally, in a history of the Tennessee Brethren which he wrote in 1890:

Of the ministers who served the church in the earlier years of its history, and who have long since passed away, we will give a passing word. With what earnestness and zeal, they contended for the faith and doctrines of the church, some will still remember. Their number for years was quite small and the scattered membership, giving them numerous calls for preaching, necessarily made their labor heavy, and self-sacrificing. For this, their chief earthly reward was the joyous greeting with which they were met by those whom they visited, and for whom they preached, and the consciousness of a faithful discharge of their duty.

He continued by describing in some detail their varied ability, and then concluded that "they all had a fond place in the hearts of their brethren. And the anxiety with which they were expected at the love feast, or district meeting, and the love and

33. *Ibid.*, September 19, 1893, page 590; December 3, 1898, page 765.

34. *Ibid.*, February 13, 1894, page 110.

joy with which their appearance was greeted on such occasions is remembered only by the older members of the church here.”³⁵

It was this kind of dedication and sacrificial love which enabled the church in Mitchell and Yancey Counties to survive. The economic hardships of the mountainous area were very great and posed a very great handicap. Also, the isolated character of the settlement made it difficult for the group of Brethren to maintain contact and to keep abreast of outside trends and developments, which was to prove to be another handicap. All in all, it was a very difficult area in which to build the Church of the Brethren.

POLK COUNTY

The final area of permanent Brethren settlements in the Carolinas has centered in the Polk County, North Carolina area, although the Brethren have expanded from this home base into several neighboring counties, as they usually do. This general section along the state line between North and South Carolina would hardly fit into the type of territory in which the Brethren would be expected to develop a series of congregations. It depends economically primarily on cotton and lumber, which have never been Brethren strengths. As a result, the introduction of the Brethren ideas into this section was entirely the work of one dedicated man.

George A. Branscom was born on April 9, 1855 in Washington County, Tennessee. As a young man he became associated with the Knob Creek Church of the Brethren. Because of the death of his parents when he was a child, he had never been able to secure even a rudimentary education. It was not surprising, therefore, that when an itinerant teacher from South Carolina named Jim Taylor came into the Knob Creek area, George Branscom became an industrious and

35. Nead, "Brethren in Tennessee," [page 15]

ambitious twenty-one year old pupil. Because George was such a good pupil and because a corn-cutting accident had caused him to lose part of the index finger on his left hand, Taylor agreed to take young George along with him to help solicit pupils for his school.

One of their first stops was in Henderson County, North Carolina. Two of the pupils were Hattie and Ellie Sanders who were visiting relatives and signed up for the school. They then invited Taylor and Branscom to come to their home in Polk County to teach a school. It seems that Branscom agreed to go to Polk County to make arrangements for a school, while Taylor visited friends in a neighboring county. Evidently, Taylor never did get to Polk County, but Branscom found other employment and remained there.

Because George Branscom was a deeply religious man who did not hesitate to discuss his Brethren ideas with others, he was soon discussing religion with his new neighbors. J. E. Miller in telling this story has very well described Branscom's approach: "He ever carried with him a New Testament, and as opportunity afforded he read his New Testament to others and explained its meaning. He was well versed in the teachings and practices of the Church of the Brethren." Even though the people in that area had never heard of the Brethren, "George had a way of telling his story so that folks listened and before they knew it they were interested in what he had to say." In the evenings after work, "George would get out his little Testament and explain the practices of his church, always reading from the Book the passages on which the practice was based. Naturally things began to take definite shape."

However, George Branscom was not an ordained minister in the church, and the people wanted to discuss this religion in more detail with a minister. He wrote to his friends in Tennessee urging them to send a minister to visit him in Polk County. However, the Tennessee Brethren refused since it was more than a hundred miles, the mountains were too difficult to

cross, and “the moonshiners of Polk County were numerous and hostile.” Such a reluctance did not daunt the young man’s spirit, and he continued to discuss his Brethren ideas persuasively with his friends. Finally, he had the kind of message that the ministers in Tennessee could not reject! Seven heads of families were ready to be baptized!

MILL CREEK CONGREGATION

Two Tennessee elders, Frederick Washington Dove and Andy Vines, saddled their horses and began the long journey into North Carolina. Arriving in Polk County on April 20, 1878, they remained until April 29. During these days they held a number of meetings and baptized eight people: Mrs. Rebecca Horne, Mrs. Jane Hinsdale, Mrs. Betty Branscom (George’s wife), Mrs. Martha Sanders, Henry and Amanda Cantrell, and Jake and Ellie Sanders Putnam. The baptism was performed by Andy Vines in the nearby Mill Creek, from which the congregation took its name, at Branscom’s suggestion. In the presence of the Brethren and of a number of Baptists from Green’s Creek, Vines said: “Today this creek has been christened by triune immersion.” The first Love Feast was conducted in Cager Horne’s new house, which was not yet completed. The two visiting elders completed their work by organizing a new congregation with George Branscom as the minister, and Henry Cantrell and Jake Putnam as deacons. Thus began the Mill Creek congregation in 1878.

Branscom was an enthusiastic and zealous worker in the Lord’s harvest fields and the church grew. Typical of the way things developed is the story told by Ethel H. Masters in 1960:

My grandmother, Mary Henderson, was a loyal member of the Green’s Creek Baptist Church. She had no intention of “taking off” after this strange “Dunkard” doctrine. But the Kinchen Gilberts, bosom friends of my grandparents began

talking to her urging her to join with them. She said, "Kinchen, I don't believe in being a turn coat." He replied, "Now, see dar' Mary, when you got your coat on wrong side out you gotta' turn it right side out." So grandmother joined the Dunkards.

Evidently, Branscom was able to inspire dedicated laymen to witness to their beliefs as in the case of Kinchen Gilbert. Even though Branscom made his living by teaching school and by farming, he found much time to do church work, especially preaching which he did very well. As Miller expressed his impressions: "He will always be best known because of his preaching."³⁶

GREEN RIVER COVE

By 1882 when Howard Miller published his invaluable statistical and historical material on the Brethren, the Mill Creek congregation had grown to a membership of thirty-eight. In addition, a second congregation had been organized in 1880 by George Branscom a few miles farther west in Polk County near Saluda, known as Green River Cove. It also had grown from eight charter members to a membership of twenty-one. Indigenous leadership including E. J. Bradley and Samuel Jones had been assigned the task of shepherding this young flock of Brethren. Neither of these young congregations had yet had the time and energy to erect a meeting house.³⁷

BROOKLYN CONGREGATION

Evidently, the mother congregation at Mill Creek got around to building a meeting house within the next decade, for the reports at least as early as 1893 speak of meetings in the

36. All of the material on George Branscom has been taken from two sources: Ethel H. Masters, "Brethren in the Polk Area," 1960, pages 1-2; J. E. Miller, *Stories from Brethren Life* (Elgin: Brethren Publishing House, 1942), pages 81-84.

37. Howard Miller, *The Record of the Faithful*, pages 29-30.

Mill Creek church. From this center of operations the Brethren were spreading out across several nearby counties. For example, in April of 1893 four persons were baptized in the Pacolet River in Spartanburg County, South Carolina. This event was probably one of the early developments that came to a climax about 1906 in the organization of the Brooklyn Church of the Brethren. Although the evidence is not available, it seems quite likely that the Brethren were also witnessing in the Melvin Hill community by 1900, for a congregation was organized there in 1906.

In the home congregation at Mill Creek the program of evangelism continued to make a considerable impact on the community. If 1893 may be considered a typical year (and one for which statistics are available), meetings were held from August 4 to 13 by William Lawter of Dimsdale, North Carolina, who had just arrived from "the West" the previous year. As a result twenty-seven people were baptized; it was further reported that in the five months from April 1 to September 1, forty new members had been taken into the church. In November three more were baptized. To provide continued leadership, three men were called to the ministry by casting lots (the usual procedure at that time) at a congregational council in September: J. F. Branscom, J. G. Lawton, and Thomas Greenway. Of the three only one was past forty years of age.³⁸

George Branscom continued to live in the Polk County area for the remainder of his long life, and under his general supervision the two congregations at Mill Creek and Melvin Hill developed into permanent congregations. The foundations had been securely established in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and on these foundations a permanent edifice had been erected, which was certainly a remarkable testimony to the faith and dedication of the one man who had gotten the whole thing started.

38. *Gospel Messenger*, May 23, 1893, page 334; September 12, 1893, page 572; September 26, 1893, page 605; November 28, 1893, page 748.

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

OAK GROVE CONGREGATION

One excellent example of the far-flung influence of the millions of pieces of tract literature which the Brethren were publishing in the years from 1880 to 1914 was the organization of the Oak Grove congregation in eastern North Carolina some seventy miles southeast of Raleigh in Lenoir County in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. The very limited evidence on this development indicates that a minister named Louis Foss had gathered together a group of people who organized a Church of God and held meetings in an old log house. As early as 1896 Foss had become dissatisfied with his religious beliefs, and after reading Brethren tracts (where did he get them, the historian wonders?), his ideas changed and the group seemed to consider themselves Brethren; in that year it was reported that there was a small Brethren church in La Grange, North Carolina.

As the tracts suggested, Foss evidently wrote to the General Mission Board and Tract Committee of the German Baptist Church, which had been reorganized with that title in 1895. In response to his earnest inquiry, two Brethren, H. C. Early and J. M. Cline, came to North Carolina from Virginia to visit this group of interested seekers. After extensive discussions, Foss and his followers held a congregational council on September 17, 1900 and decided to re-organize as a Brethren congregation. H. C. Early was elected elder of the new congregation and Louis Foss was ordained as a minister; of course, the charter members were baptized as Brethren. The Mission Board indicated its continuing interest in this area by sending N. N. Garst as a home mission worker.³⁹ In spite of the effectiveness of the Brethren tracts and in spite of the investment in time and money expended by Early, Garst,

39. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1896, page 795; October 4, 1902, page 640.

Foss, and others, it has proven to be a very difficult task to build a Brethren congregation when there is no nucleus of Brethren around which to build. The Oak Grove congregation did not have this nucleus and it did not survive in the twentieth century.

IN SUMMARY

From the very shakey situation in 1800 when the Brethren in the Carolinas were struggling to survive the difficulties of the Universalist schism and the death or emigration of most of the leadership of the group, the Brethren had developed steadily and remarkably during the course of the years down to 1900. Both of the two settlements in 1800 had survived and indeed the Ashe County Brethren had proliferated into some half a dozen different groups. In addition the Brethren had moved into Mitchell County and into Polk County and in both areas several congregations were on the road to achieving permanence.

A great deal of this development can be attributed to the sacrifice and dedication of a group of ministers who received no worldly compensation for their work. Typical of this group was Jacob Faw of the Fraternity congregation. In his obituary, Tucker related that he had heard "that many years ago there was a couple in Salisbury who desired to be united in marriage by a minister who did not preach for money, and the selection fell upon Uncle Jacob, who arrayed in the simple garb of a minister of his church, officiated at a fashionable wedding in that town."⁴⁰ Certainly, the same thing could have been said about the other Brethren ministers of these years of the nineteenth century. It was the ability to make their own living as a farmer usually, and yet spend many hours in the work of the church that marked their devotion and that contributed significantly to the growth and development of the church in the Carolinas.

40. Tucker, "Elder Jacob Faw," page 1.

Chapter III

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY MATURITY

The first two-thirds of the twentieth century has witnessed many changes in the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas. For one thing, the general milieu in which the church has been located has changed drastically and dramatically, and the church has been forced to react in different ways to its surroundings. Some of these changes have been bewildering and many of them have been frustrating--and expensive. For another thing the Church of the Brethren has changed its basic practices more in the years of the twentieth century than in any other similar period in its history. Some Brethren have found it very difficult to accept all of these changes, and one of the results in the Carolinas was a division in the ranks. Such agonizing experiences frequently have the beneficial effect, however, of forcing a worthwhile evaluation of the church's program.

During the twentieth century quite a number of new congregations have been organized in the Carolinas. Some of these have grown to become strong and healthy; others have barely survived; and still others have failed to survive in the eternal struggle. Various factors have been involved which need to be examined. One of the most vital problems faced by the Carolina Brethren has been the need for well-trained leadership; although many local leaders have been developed, the transition from the traditional free ministry to the professional ministry has been very difficult, and indeed for most of the Carolina congregations it has been impossible. This factor has certainly inhibited the further growth and development of the district.

ASHE-ALLEGHANY COUNTIES

FLAT ROCK CONGREGATION

The oldest congregation in the district at Flat Rock was located in a mountain valley which was prosperous farming land in the 18th and 19th centuries, when this congregation flourished. However, the technological changes in agricultural production in the twentieth century have seriously effected such small-scale farming in the Appalachian mountain valleys, and the Flat Rock congregation has been one of the losers.

The new century seemed to get started on the wrong foot for the Flat Rock Brethren. The exact nature of the difficulty has not been recorded, but in 1908 "quite a number of members left the church with George Miller and went to the Union Baptist Church."¹ The precise extent of this division cannot be determined because of the scarcity of congregational statistics. It was reported to the first District Meeting of the new North Carolina District in 1902 that the Flat Rock congregation had seventy-four members, two elders, three ministers, and five deacons, which made it third in membership in the district and about as strong as any congregation in number of leaders.² It was not until 1928 that the Flat Rock membership was again reported to the District Meeting, when it was thirty-six, a drop of about fifty per cent.³ Obviously, other factors had also become involved in the twenty years from 1908 to 1928.

In addition to the local leadership of D. P. Welch, a great-grandson of the Jonathan Miller who had come to Flat Rock about 1800, a number of ministers from the Lewis family rendered significant service in helping to put the pieces back together after 1908. For example, Gideon Lewis from Taylors

1. Miller, "Flat Rock," page 5.

2. District Meeting Minutes, 1902.

3. *Ibid.*, 1928.

Valley, Virginia and Reuel Pritchett from Tennessee re-organized the Sunday School under the leadership of D. P. Welch. From an average attendance of twelve in 1908, the Sunday School grew to an attendance of twenty in 1921.⁴ Also, during the year 1916, G. L. Lewis, J. G. Lewis, and S. E. Lewis all engaged in evangelistic meetings at Flat Rock which led to three baptisms. Again in 1917 one of the Lewises combined with Reuel Pritchett to preach nineteen sermons which led to three baptisms. In 1920 Frank Lewis of Kannarock, Virginia preached three sermons at Flat Rock, and in 1921 J. G. Lewis and G. L. Lewis of Taylors Valley, Virginia and James Lewis of Louisiana held services for the Flat Rock Brethren. From 1928 to 1930, J. Frank Lewis of Damascus, Virginia served as the elder of the congregation.⁵

Probably the individual who has done more than any other single person to keep the Flat Rock congregation alive in the twentieth century has been Clayton B. Miller, who made his presence felt in the district at least as early as 1916 when he preached the missionary sermon at the District Meeting at the Pleasant Grove church. The district mission board subsidized his work among the Carolina congregations from 1918 to 1922. In 1920 he conducted a two week Bible School at Flat Rock, as the result of which there were three baptisms. Again in 1922 he was back for a two week Bible School, including preaching each evening, and eleven were baptized. Seven years later he spent the Thanksgiving week in the Flat Rock community during which time he preached five sermons. That same year he placed his membership in this congregation, although he did not become a permanent resident of the area until 1931. In the meantime, in 1930, at the age of forty-five, he had been ordained as an elder by elders, George A. Branscom and J. R. Jackson, and had become the pastor of the congregation, a

4. *Ibid.*, 1908, 1921; see also, Miller, "Flat Rock," page 4.

5. *Gospel Messenger*, October 7, 1916, page 653; December 16, 1916, page 813; December 22, 1917, page 821; May 15, 1920, page 301; June 25, 1921, page 391. *Yearbooks*, 1928-1929.

position which he has continued to hold. ⁶ His spirit of dedication and of sacrifice through more than fifty years of service among the Carolina congregations had contributed immeasurably to the spiritual lives of these Brethren on the southern frontier.

Over the years of the twentieth century, the Brethren at Flat Rock have continued to be blessed by the visits of many Brethren leaders from other areas. Among these were D. M. Glick, who taught singing classes during the Christmas holidays in 1924. Raymond R. Peters from Virginia held a revival at Flat Rock in the summer of 1927, which was closed with the baptism of two young boys and a Love Feast attended by thirty-seven including some visitors. Earlier in that summer there had been a Daily Vacation Bible School, which included four classes taught by Mr. and Mrs. F. C. Rohrer, and Dr. Ethel Gwin and her father. Flat Rock had held its first such school in 1926 under the Rohrer's leadership, which was one of the earliest in the district. Also, during that busy summer of 1927, M. R. Zigler had visited the Flat Rock congregation for the first time and had preached five sermons. An impressive service was held on August 27 when Carl Welch and F. C. Rohrer were ordained as ministers, and Fred Welch and R. F. Lewis as deacons. Two years later, in 1929, Emmet Eiler was ordained as a minister. J. R. Jackson from Jonesboro, Tennessee was present in 1932 to hold two weeks of meetings at Flat Rock. The following year S. Loren Bowman of New Windsor, Maryland, who was the summer pastor at neighboring Peak Creek, directed a Daily Vacation Bible School. The enrollment was thirty-two with an average attendance of twenty-two. Each evening Bowman spoke on the ideals of Christ. ⁷ Certainly, these isolated North Carolina Brethren were fortunate to have had such outside assistance

6. *Ibid.*, October 16, 1920, page 629; September 9, 1922, page 573; December 14, 1929, page 805; December 13, 1930, page 805; Clayton B. Miller, "Historical Data," October 22, 1957.

7. *Ibid.*, June 27, 1925, page 413; August 13, 1927, page 525; October 1, 1927, page 636; September 21, 1929, page 605; April 30, 1932, page 25; August 19, 1933, page 33.

in their program.

In addition to the special summer Bible schools for the children, the Sunday School was reported in 1932 to be going well. The total enrollment was forty-three and the average attendance was 23. The young people of the congregation had organized a BYPD (Brethren Young People's Department) for the first time in 1927. The organization went by ups and downs, for in 1935 S. Loren Bowman helped to re-organize the group. Also, the women of the congregation organized an Aid Society during 1935 which began by having meetings every three weeks in the homes of the members. They engaged in studying together and in making quilts.⁸ These women had entertained the District Meeting of 1934 at Flat Rock, which incidentally was the last time the congregation served as host for the meeting.

The fact that the congregation has not been the host for a district meeting since 1934 symbolizes the decline of the Flat Rock congregation. By 1940 the membership was falling off and had reached twenty-three. During the 1940's the membership increased slightly and reached twenty-six by 1950. The 1950's witnessed further decline, however, and the membership by 1960 was nineteen. The most recent statistics in 1970 show a membership of sixteen.⁹ Deaths and migration to other localities to find employment have taken a heavy toll, and the potential is no longer present for building a congregation.

The Flat Rock congregation served its community for more than one hundred fifty years, and many generations of Brethren worshiped as members of the church in this area. One of the ways in which this congregation and its leaders served was by the establishment of other congregations in a number of locations in Ashe and Alleghany counties. It is to these children that this story of the Brethren in the Carolinas now turns.

8. *Ibid.*, August 13, 1927, page 525; June 15, 1935, page 30.

9. *Yearbooks*, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1971.

PEAK CREEK CONGREGATION

The neighboring Peak Creek congregation had roots going back into the early nineteenth century, which made it almost as old as the Flat Rock congregation. The Brethren in this area had developed steadily during the second half of the nineteenth century under the leadership of Adam and Andrew Sheets, M. G. Owens, and John C. Woodie. By 1902 at the first District Meeting of the new North Carolina district, the Peak Creek congregation reported a membership of forty-five with one elder, two ministers, and three deacons.¹⁰

That Peak Creek was prospering was demonstrated in a report that the "church had been built up spiritually" by two weeks of meetings in February, 1902 under the leadership of John C. Woodie, A. J. Reed, and W. A. Reed, which had resulted in seven baptisms. At a council meeting several months later in May, a Sunday morning Sunday School using Brethren literature was organized with H. J. Woodie the superintendent and J. P. Osborne the assistant. Worship services with preaching were conducted on a once a month basis (which was true of every congregation in the district) on the first Sunday of each month. H. J. Woodie proved to be a capable and dedicated leader and was ordained as a minister in 1902. However, not too long afterward, in 1906 he transferred his membership to the Fraternity congregation near Winston-Salem. Occasionally, as in 1914 and in 1916 Woodie returned for visits in his home community and conducted meetings. Since there was no church, the meetings were conducted in M. G. Owens' home. In 1916 Woodie and Owens also preached at the Blue Ridge congregation, and it was reported that many people were thinking seriously about their relation to the church. Four years later in 1920, Clayton B. Miller preached for three weeks at Peak Creek, two were reclaimed and three

10. District Meeting Minutes, 1902.

were baptized as the result of the meetings.¹¹

However, during the early 1920's, the Peak Creek congregation evidently underwent the crisis of loss of local leadership, for by 1925 it was reported that the congregation had been reduced "almost to nothing" because of the lack of leadership for the past ten years. Fortunately, however, early in 1924, George A. Branscom of Melvin Hill began visiting Peak Creek on a regular once a month basis and the congregation revived. Then about the beginning of 1925 D. M. Glick began to work with the members at Peak Creek by teaching music, directing the Sunday School, and leading the worship services. Under all of this stimulation, the Sunday School enrollment increased from forty to one hundred four, and the congregation began to build its first church. The members and their friends in the community donated trees which were cut and hauled to the sawmill where the lumber was prepared with which to build a church. Most of the work on the building was donated, and by the end of 1925 the church was completed.¹²

Another family which contributed significantly to the life and program at Peak Creek during these years of the second half of the 1920's was the F. C. Rohrer's, who arrived in North Carolina in the summer of 1925 in response to an "S. O. S. call" from D. M. Glick. The Rohrer's moved into a small house owned by a Sheets' family in the Peak Creek community, and he taught in the Peak Creek School. The first big job was the completion of the church started by Branscom and Glick. Then in the early spring of 1926 the Rohrers directed a Daily Vacation Bible School with sixty-five children enrolled in five classes, which was certainly one of the earliest such programs in the district. The Rohrers reported that this idea was "new here but the people were willing to try it." During the summer of 1926 a BYPD was organized at Peak Creek; the mid-week

11. *Gospel Messenger*, March 1, 1902, page 148; May 17, 1902, page 316; April 18, 1914, page 253; March 4, 1916, page 157; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1903; letter from Clayton B. Miller.

12. *Ibid.*, September 5, 1925, page 573; November 5, 1927, page 715.

social gathering which met under a huge chestnut tree on the top of the mountain overlooking the community was well attended by the young people.

Before the Rohrs moved on to the Mt. Carmel congregation in 1927, many interesting things had happened at Peak Creek. For one thing, the District Meeting of 1927 was hosted by the Peak Creek Brethren with a large number of Brethren from across the district present. In addition, C. D. Bonsack from the Elgin offices of the church, and W. M. Kahle and D. H. Zigler from Virginia were present as guest speakers. For another thing, in the spring of 1927 Rohrer had loaned a quarter acre to a number of children in the community to be used to buy eggs to set and raise chickens; the older boys and girls were challenged to give one day's wage instead. Altogether forty-one children and forty older youth from six congregations participated. When the project ended at the District Meeting, about one hundred twenty-five dollars had been raised, one-half of which was to go to the General Mission Board and the other half to the District Mission Board.¹³

The encouraging work done at Peak Creek by such leaders as George A. Branscom, D. M. Glick, and F. C. Rohrer in the 1920's was continued by other ministers in the 1930's. About 1930 Fred Dancy became the pastor at Peak Creek and continued for several years in that position; in addition to doing "fine work" at Peak Creek he was also helping to organize a congregation at Marion, Virginia, just across the state line, and was conducting a Sunday School in the Harmon School during the summer for those Brethren who lived in that area. Also, the work that Fred Dancy was doing was supplemented by visiting ministers. For example, J. R. Jackson, who was currently living in Tennessee, was frequently in the community. In July of 1930 he preached seventeen sermons which led to ten baptisms. While he was in the community he reactivated the young people's organization which met each Sunday evening with John Osborne, president. In June of 1931

13. *Ibid.*, October 1, 1927, page 636; November 5, 1927, page 715.

he held meetings at Harmon where six were baptized and two were reclaimed. In September of 1935 he again held meetings at Peak Creek. The story is told that during one of these revivals when the church was crowded to capacity, the preacher noticed one young man who seemed to be sitting too close to his girl. In an aside, Jackson remarked: "For God's sake young man please sit up you are pushing that young lady through the wall." Hardly pausing, he continued his sermon.¹⁴

Another minister who rendered significant service in the 1930's was Gilbert Osborne of North Wilkesboro, who was preaching at Peak Creek at least as early as 1930. He eventually succeeded Fred Dancy as the regular pastor of the congregation. In the summer of 1931 E. C. Woodie of the Fraternity congregation at Winston-Salem held a series of meetings which resulted in three baptisms; he had grown up at Peak Creek but had moved out of the community some twenty-five years earlier. N. C. Reed was another evangelist who held a number of meetings in the Peak Creek area in 1932, in 1934, in 1937, in 1938 at Harmon, in 1938 at the Transom Methodist Church, three miles from Peak Creek, and in 1941. The one in 1941 was considered "one of the best revivals" the congregation had ever had.¹⁵ It ought to be pointed out that this list of evangelists is illustrative and not necessarily all-inclusive.

For several summers beginning in 1934 Weldon I. Flory served as a summer pastor at Peak Creek. One of the long-remembered events of this period was an all-day Children's Day program involving a picnic lunch, and talks and special music in the afternoon. This program was eventually transformed into an annual homecoming service on the first Sunday in July. Another of the forerunners of the homecoming service was an all-day preaching service in September, 1934,

14. *Ibid.*, August 9, 1930, page 509; November 1, 1930, page 701; July 25, 1931, page 25; November 9, 1935, page 29.

15. *Ibid.*, August 9, 1930, page 509; July 25, 1931, page 25; November 5, 1932, page 25; October 20, 1934, pages 28-29; February 5, 1938, page 26; April 30, 1938, page 28; August 13, 1938, page 29; June 14, 1941, page 30.

during which the summer pastor and also Kermit Farrington, another young minister, spoke.¹⁶

During the decade of the 1940's the Peak Creek congregation continued to prosper and grow under the leadership of Gilbert Osborne down to 1944. Kermit Farrington served as pastor for one year, followed by David Cleary, who was pastor from 1945 to 1950. The membership reached an all-time peak in 1950 of one hundred fifty, compared with forty-five in 1902, eighty-four in 1930, and one hundred thirty-three in 1940. After 1950 the membership of the congregation began a steady decline reaching one hundred twelve in 1960. One of the most obvious factors in this decline was the loss of the long-term leadership of such men as Osborne and Cleary. Six different individuals served as pastor at Peak Creek during the nine years from 1950 to 1959: Bristoe Osborne, 1950-1951; Paul Hopkins, 1951-1952; Coy Anders, 1952-1954; Mrs. Mary Girtman, 1954-1955; Kermit Farrington, 1955-1957; and Ivan Gascho, 1957-1958.

In 1960, Rex Sheets began an attempt to consolidate and stabilize the remaining membership in the congregation. One of the steps taken was the closing of the Harmon church which had been listed in the *Yearbook* as a part of the congregation for more than a quarter of a century. Then in 1962 a careful evaluation of the membership roll resulted in a net loss of forty-seven members, which brought the membership of the congregation down to fifty-five. During the 1960's the membership held steady and stood at fifty-one in 1970. One of the encouraging developments was the interest taken by the members in remodeling the church in order to make it more attractive and more usable. In November, 1969 and in April, 1970 the congregation purchased new pulpit furniture and new pews. In October, 1970 the church was moved farther back from the highway, a complete basement was excavated, and

16. *Ibid.*, October 20, 1934, pages 28-29; August 3, 1935, page 29; Clara S. Bowlin, "Local Church Historical Data," April 4, 1968.

the building was covered with a brick veneer.¹⁷

In spite of such encouraging developments the Peak Creek congregation was clearly having difficulty surviving. One of the very important factors in its decline was the changing economic and technological picture in the United States in the quarter century following the end of World War II in 1945. These factors which have caused millions of rural people to move to the cities of America in order to find employment have made life difficult--almost impossible--for many small rural Brethren congregations like Peak Creek.

PLEASANT VALLEY CONGREGATION

The third of the Ashe County Brethren congregations, which has had a history similar in many ways to that of Peak Creek and Flat Rock has been known since 1904 as Pleasant Valley. In the statistical summary of the district compiled in 1902, Pleasant Ridge, as it was then known, had forty members and four deacons. Since it had no elders or ministers, it was entirely dependent on neighboring congregations for its leadership. Two illustrations of the seriousness of this problem may be cited: In November, 1904 it was reported that a local layman, J. McClane, presided at a congregational council meeting since there was no elder present. Nearly twenty years later, in 1922 the congregation held a council meeting to hear the report of the annual visit in preparation for a Love Feast, but the elder did not come and so they could not have the Love Feast. "Disappointed" was the term used to describe their feelings.¹⁸

On the other hand there were of course many occasions when the visiting ministers did show up. As illustrations, Clayton B. Miller was present earlier in 1922 to organize a

17. *Yearbooks*, 1930-1971; letter from Clara S. Bowlin.

18. *District Meeting Minutes*, 1902; *Gospel Messenger*, December 3, 1904, page 781; October 28, 1922, page 685.

Sunday School, to conduct a Bible school and evangelistic meetings, and to officiate at a Love Feast. In 1925 W. H. Handy preached nineteen sermons and one funeral, before illness forced him to return home. It was reported that the Baptists and the Methodists in the community also liked his revival. And in 1928, J. R. Jackson preached a series of twelve sermons which resulted in five baptisms.¹⁹

Most of the North Carolina ministers of the early twentieth century took a turn preaching at Pleasant Valley, including especially members of the Woodie, Reed, and Sheets families. George A. Branscom was related to the congregation as pastor or elder on different occasions. Clayton B. Miller also served as pastor and-or elder for some twenty years stretching from the 1930's to the 1950's. Spencer Wingler was pastor for two years in the 1930's. Archie Wyatt and David Cleary have alternated as pastor of the congregation over a thirty year span beginning in the 1930's. Also, Kermit Farrington has served as moderator for a number of years beginning about 1951.

For many years the membership of the Pleasant Valley congregation held fairly steady in the thirties. From a low of thirty in 1925, the number increased to thirty-eight by 1929. After dipping slightly in the 1930's, it was back to thirty-eight in 1940. The decade of the 1940's with the dislocations of World War II witnessed a decline to thirty by 1950. Contrary to the general trend, the number of members increased in the 1950's and reached a high of thirty-nine in 1960. One factor which contributed to this growth was the relocation of the church from a very inaccessible place to a more convenient location. However, in 1961 a net loss of seventeen reduced the membership to twenty-two; a number of these seventeen were transferring their membership to the new Statesville fellowship. From this low a slow decline set in, and in 1970 the congregation reported only nineteen members.²⁰ Here was a

19. *Gospel Messenger*, May 6, 1922, page 285; December 12, 1925, page 797; August 11, 1928, page 513.

20. *Yearbooks*, 1925-1971; material from Bert G. Richardson.

third congregation which seemed to be having great difficulty surviving during the second half of the twentieth century.

MT. CARMEL CONGREGATION

The fourth of the many congregations which the Brethren established in the Ashe-Alleghany county area was Mt. Carmel, located sixteen miles east of West Jefferson. Henry Sheets had been instrumental in getting this group of Brethren organized about 1890, but it was the members of the Reed family that contributed most significantly to maintaining the program there over the years. As an illustration, a report in 1905 indicated that A. J. Reed as the presiding elder was in charge of the congregational council meeting, and he was "assisted by three of his sons." These three sons conducted evangelistic meetings and worship services at Mt. Carmel on many occasions in the ensuing years. For example, in 1915 N. C. and J. A. Reed held meetings for a week following the fall Love Feast, at which N. C. Reed had officiated. In 1932 Mt. Carmel had a two weeks revival led by W. A. Reed of Schoolfield, Virginia and N. C. Reed of Mt. Airy, North Carolina, which resulted in sixteen baptisms. In 1934 N. C. Reed was present for two weeks, and the following year W. A. Reed conducted another revival meeting.²¹

Another individual who served the Mt. Carmel congregation sacrificially for more than a quarter of a century beginning about 1925 was W. H. Handy, who was the presiding elder during most of the years down to 1951 and who also did some of the preaching during these years. In 1925, for example, the monthly appointment was changed from the second to the fourth Sunday in order to make it possible for Handy to preach at Mt. Carmel. Then in the summer of 1927 F. C. Rohrer transferred his work from Peak Creek to Mt. Carmel in order

21. *Gospel Messenger*, May 27, 1905, page 336; October 2, 1915, page 637; October 29, 1932, page 24; November 24, 1934, page 28; January 11, 1936, page 30.

to try to build up this congregation. According to his report, the doors of the church had been locked for six months. During that summer a Daily Vacation Bible School was held in the community for two weeks, and this program was followed by the organization of a Sunday School. To provide more adequate facilities one hundred twenty-five dollars was contributed to re-roof and to paint the church.²²

Rohrer continued to serve as pastor of the Mt. Carmel congregation until 1933, when he moved to North Manchester, Indiana. During the summer of 1933 Robert L. Sherfy, a Bridgewater College student, served in the community as a summer pastor. Then in the fall a young native of the area, Fred Dancy, became the pastor. Like W. H. Handy, Dancy served the congregation for most of the next quarter of a century either as pastor or as elder. Under Dancy's leadership, the members at Mt. Carmel took an interest in their old church which had been built around 1890. In 1938 they wired the church for electricity and beautified the church grounds by planting flowers and shrubs. In 1942 the congregation entertained the District Conference, during which Dancy was the reader and Dan West of the general brotherhood staff was present to speak on peace and international problems.²³

In the fall of 1943 the Eli Gascho family from Wabash, Indiana moved into the Mt. Carmel congregation and accepted various leadership responsibilities. He was elected the pastor of the congregation and she helped with the music. At about the same time a widowed sister-in-law, Mrs. Mary Gascho and her two sons, Nelson and Ivan, also moved to the Mt. Carmel area from their home in Michigan. The Gaschos brought with them a Mennonite background which strengthened the pacifist emphasis in the congregation. This emphasis was noted in the interest of the congregation in the men in the Civilian Public Service camps. The ladies canned considerable quantities of

22. *Ibid.*, October 31, 1925, page 701; November 5, 1927, page 715.

23. *Yearbooks*, 1933-1960; *Gospel Messenger*, May 28, 1938, page 27; October 3, 1942, pages 28-29.

fruit and vegetables for the camps. Also, the Brethren collected used clothing to be used either in the camps or in overseas relief. The relief program also included the sewing of new garments from material sent from the service center at New Windsor, Maryland; by the spring of 1946 the ladies had completed work on twenty-four new skirts. When the camp at Magnolia, Arkansas was severely damaged by a tornado, the Mt. Carmel Brethren sent an offering of thirty-two dollars and fifty cents. Another illustration of this witness was Ivan Gascho's trip to Greece as a sea-going cowboy with a load of horses in 1945.²⁴ By and large, these were busy and worthwhile years for a congregation with less than one hundred members.

The Mt. Carmel congregation also had the energy and finances to engage in two major building programs during the 1940's. In the fall of 1944 the house in which the Eli Gaschos were living was struck by lightning and completely destroyed. Working in conjunction with the New Haven congregation, the Brethren at Mt. Carmel built a modern six-room parsonage following blueprints supplied by the church's building counselor, C. H. Deardorff. Then about the end of 1945 the Gaschos moved to Florida, and the Fred Dancys moved into the new parsonage as pastor of the congregation. Under his leadership the Brethren at Mt. Carmel built a new concrete block church in 1949-1950. It had a full basement with three Sunday School classrooms, a kitchen, and a furnace room. In addition to the sanctuary, there were three classrooms on the main floor.²⁵

From time to time the Mt. Carmel Brethren were blessed by the visits of different Brethren leaders. In the spring of 1944, James Renz, the pastor of the Wabash, Indiana Church of the Brethren, conducted a two week revival which resulted in a number of accessions to the congregation. Later in that year, A. Stauffer Curry, the Southeastern Region executive

24. *Gospel Messenger*, January 1, 1944, pages 28-29; June 24, 1944, page 16; December 23, 1944, page 16; March 16, 1946, page 30. See also, biographical sketch of Ivan D. Gascho.

25. *Ibid.*, December 16, 1944, page 26; March 16, 1946, page 30; December 17, 1949, page 27. See also, Mrs. Pauline Jones, "Historical Data," no date.

secretary, stopped for a visit on his way to a district conference in Florida. Also, E. L. Ikenberry, a missionary to China, described his war-time experiences in that country. During September of 1946 Coy Anders of Haynes, North Carolina conducted a week of revival meetings at Mt. Carmel. Two years later in August, 1948 F. C. Rohrer, who was now living in Kentucky, returned for a revival meeting in the congregation which he had served as pastor some twenty years earlier. Interestingly enough, his son, Glenn Rohrer, spent the summer of 1953 as a summer pastor at Mt. Carmel, while he was a student at Bethany Seminary. Walter Longenecker also served as a summer pastor in the early 1950's. In addition, several BVS'ers, including Arwilda Giesel, Beverly Barr, and Harold Kenepf provided short-term pastoral leadership for the congregation.²⁶

In addition to all of the valuable assistance which has been received from various outside Brethren leaders, many North Carolina Brethren have attempted to provide the month to month leadership necessary to sustain a small rural congregation. During the 1950's D. B. Osborne, Mrs. Mary Girtman, and K. Dean Huntley all served for a year or two as Mt. Carmel's pastor. The longest pastorate of the decade was the three years from 1955 to 1958 during which Ivan Gascho, the son of Mrs. Mary Girtman and the nephew of Eli J. Gascho, was the pastor. He and his wife had been baptized at New Haven in 1953, and in 1955 he had been licensed to the ministry by Phil Zinn, Fred Dancy, and Holt E. Griffith. He did an excellent job as the pastor at Mt. Carmel, and after indicating a desire for continued service, he was ordained in 1956. In 1958 he left North Carolina to continue his education at Bethany Training School. Further leadership was provided in the 1960's by Mrs. Mary Girtman, Clarence Mabe, S. LaVerne Hinson,

26. *Ibid.*, June 24, 1944, page 16; December 16, 1944, page 26; November 30, 1946, page 26; September 18, 1948, page 29; October 17, 1953, page 32; material from Bert G. Richardson. See also, Pauline Jones, "Historical Data," no date.

and Robert L. Hill. In 1970 Hill was serving as the pastor.²⁷

The membership of the Mt. Carmel congregation has reflected to some extent at least the type of leadership it has been able to secure. Beginning the century with a membership of fifty in 1902, the number increased to fifty-six in 1925, to sixty-eight in 1930, and to ninety-two in 1940. In spite of the very active program of the 1940's the membership dropped slightly to eighty-six in 1950. Mrs. E. J. Gascho described the problem admirably when she wrote in 1944: "We feel the loss of many of our members who have moved to the industrial centers." The 1950's witnessed a more rapid decline and by 1960 the membership was down to fifty-nine. It leveled off somewhat in the 1960's and stood at fifty-two in 1970.²⁸ The future for this congregation like so many of the North Carolina congregations will depend largely on the leadership available and on the economic factors of the community in which it is located.

LONG HOPE CONGREGATION

The Long Hope congregation which had been organized in 1890 had developed rather rapidly in the decade of the 1890's reaching a membership of thirty-five. By 1902 this membership had declined somewhat to twenty-five although the congregation had two elders, two ministers, and two deacons at that time, which certainly should have provided an adequate corps of leaders. In the "regular monthly preaching appointments of each church of the district" published with the District Meeting Minutes of 1903, the Long Hope service was scheduled for the third Sunday, which was the only preaching appointment in the Ashe-Alleghany county area on

27. Yearbooks, 1950-1971; also, biographical sketch of Ivan D. Gascho; material from Bert G. Richardson.

28. District Meeting Minutes, 1902; Yearbooks, 1925-1971; Gospel Messenger, December 16, 1944, page 26.

that Sunday. In spite of all of the encouraging beginnings, the area in which the Long Hope church was located did not prove to be a permanently desirable area for the Brethren, and in 1906 "the members of said church having scattered and moved away," the District Meeting granted permission to the Flat Rock congregation to sell the Long Hope church. This action was completed and the 1908 Conference heard a report that the church had been sold for twenty-five dollars.²⁹ Thus, in the process of establishing Brethren congregations and building churches, which was pretty much of a topsy-turvy process, there were always losses as well as gains.

BLUE RIDGE CONGREGATION

The history of the Blue Ridge congregation in Wilkes County is very difficult to trace because of the off-again, on-again nature of the congregation. The evidence seems to indicate that there have been three different Blue Ridge congregations at different periods of time. The earliest of these dates from 1897, when the Peak Creek congregation granted letters to ten of its members to place their memberships in the Blue Ridge congregation. Seven of the ten were members of the Sheets family, which provides an insight into the leadership of the congregation. Another important family has been the Winglers, which was also represented in the ten charter members. This Blue Ridge congregation was included in the roll of congregations read at the last District Meeting in 1901 of the combined district of Tennessee, North Carolina, and Florida, but was not included in the roll of congregations of the first District Meeting in 1902 of the district of North Carolina.³⁰

The first year in which the Blue Ridge congregation was included in the roll of congregations at the North Carolina

29. District Meeting Minutes, 1902, 1903, 1906, 1908.

30. Bert G. Richardson, compiler, "Peak Creek Church Register;" District Meeting Minutes, 1901, 1902.

District Meeting was 1911, when it was represented by Thomas Sheets as a delegate. The only minister whose name is associated with the congregation during these years was Martin Owens who was elder down to about 1922. The name of the congregation was dropped from the District Meeting roll and from the Yearbook of the denomination about 1925.³¹ Thus ended the second stage in the history of Blue Ridge.

The third stage began in August of 1931 when a new Blue Ridge congregation was organized by George A. Branscom with seventeen charter members. Clayton B. Miller was elected pastor and elder, and Green Wingler was licensed to the ministry. Bronard Wayne and Asbury Lyalls were ordained as deacons, and Bronard Wayne was a delegate to the district Meeting of 1931. On October 8, the Blue Ridge Brethren celebrated their first Love Feast with Miller officiating and a good attendance. In the spring of 1933 N. C. Reed held a revival at Blue Ridge which resulted in five people being baptized and two being reclaimed.³²

The leadership of the Blue Ridge congregation since 1931 has been almost entirely in the hands of two dedicated men, Clayton B. Miller and Kermit Farrington. Miller served as pastor and elder for the first two years and then as elder down to 1953. After a one year pastorate by Spencer Wingler, Kermit Farrington became pastor in 1934 and continued to be related to the congregation either as pastor or as elder for nearly a third of a century until 1966, truly a remarkable record. Others who have had leadership responsibilities have included Rex Sheets, David Cleary, Bert G. Richardson, Claude Hall, Gilbert Shelton, and J. R. Jackson.³³ Hall came to the Church of the Brethren from the Presbyterian Church and became an outstanding laymen.

In terms of its meeting place, the Blue Ridge congregation has been called "a church on the move." It evidently held its

31. District Meeting Minutes, 1911-1925; Yearbooks, 1920, 1925.

32. Gospel Messenger, June 10, 1933, page 28; District Meeting Minutes, 1931.

33. Yearbooks, 1932-1971.

services for some years in what had been the Vannoy school house pretty far up on the side of a mountain in a very difficult location. Then, the congregation met for awhile in the Millers Presbyterian Church about a mile and a half farther down the mountain road. In the early 1960's, leaders of the congregation met with district officials at the Friendship church to discuss relocation; a decision was made and implemented to purchase land in McGrady, across the road from the Kermit Farrington residence. However, the congregation has been unable to raise the funds with which to build a church.

Although the membership of the Blue Ridge congregation has shown a tendency to go up and down, it has generally risen in contrast to the prevailing Brethren pattern in the mountains of northwestern North Carolina. From a beginning of seventeen members in 1931, the membership had almost doubled to thirty-three by 1940. It dropped slightly during the 1940's to twenty-eight, and then took a real nosedive reaching a low of fourteen in 1955. However, instead of the membership's staying down there as might be expected the congregation refused to roll over and die, and by 1960 the membership was up to twenty-five. The 1960's have witnessed continued growth, and in 1970 the membership reached an all-time high of thirty-eight.³⁴ Thus, on the basis of these statistics the future seemed somewhat more hopeful for the Blue Ridge congregation than for some of its smaller neighbors; however, a congregation with less than fifty members was still in a rather precarious position.

WHITE ROCK CONGREGATION

Very little indeed is known about the White Rock congregation which lived for only a few years in the first decade of the twentieth century. The District Meeting of the Tennessee, North Carolina, and Florida district in 1901 ac-

34. *Ibid.*, material from Bert G. Richardson.

cepted the White Rock congregation in North Carolina as “a newly organized church.” The same District Meeting also dispatched a special committee composed of elders, Joseph Bowman, George A. Branscom, and Henry Sheets, “to Whiterock and other churches in Ashe and Alleghany Counties, N. C.” Whether this committee was simply to aid these congregations in getting established, or as more likely, to attempt to work out difficulties that had arisen was not made clear in the Minutes. At any rate, in the statistical summary of the new district of North Carolina, the White Rock congregation in 1902 had thirty-five members with one elder, one minister, and two deacons, which would seem to be a fairly substantial congregation for that day and age. In the schedule of preaching appointments in 1903 White Rock was assigned the second weekend of each month to have preaching on both Saturday and Sunday. In 1908 the White Rock congregation was assigned to the District Mission Board for one year “as a mission point,” indicating that the congregation was probably having great difficulty providing for its leadership requirements. There is no available record of what happened in the ensuing years, but by 1911 the White Rock congregation had been dropped from the District Meeting roll of congregations and had evidently ceased to exist.³⁵

NEW BETHEL CONGREGATION

Another casualty in the give and take of Brethren congregations in the Carolinas was the New Bethel congregation in Alleghany County, which was organized in time to be represented at the District Meeting of 1903. The individual who did far more than anyone else to enable this congregation to survive for some forty years was W. H. Handy. In the earliest report of this congregation, W. H. Handy and W. A. Reed had held twenty-two meetings in the area in

35. District Meeting Minutes, 1901-1911.

which this congregation was located by October, 1903. As a result of their efforts five had been baptized. In the final report of this congregation in the *Yearbook*, W. H. Handy was still serving as the elder. Others who provided leadership included John A. Reed, and F. C. Rohrer. The records indicate that the New Bethel congregation never had more than a handful of members. The earliest available statistics in 1925 indicate a membership of twenty-five, which was the peak. By 1930 the membership had declined to eighteen, and the last recorded membership figure in 1940 was nineteen. Some of the remaining Brethren transferred their membership to the New Haven congregation, and this congregation was dropped from the District Meeting roll in 1942 without any formal action--neither a whimper nor a bang.³⁶

LITTLE PINE CONGREGATION

One of the most active congregations in the Ashe-Alleghany county area has been the Little Pine congregation located ten miles east of Sparta in Alleghany County. The work began in this area in 1905 when W. A. Reed conducted a revival in the Little Pine school house. As the result of the impact of that revival a Brethren congregation was organized in the area during the following year with Reed as the pastor and elder. Two of the charter members were Jim Vaughn and Elizabeth Greene. A church was needed, but there was little money available in the community. Carter Wilson, who was not Brethren, donated the land on which a church should be built. The lumber was donated by the people of the community as was the labor. Some of the ladies sold butter in order to get money to buy nails. By the end of the year 1906 the congregation had a church, which lasted for thirty-five years or so.³⁷

36. *Gospel Messenger*, October 3, 1903, page 636; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1903, 1942; *Yearbooks*, 1920-1944.

37. Mrs. Harvie Greene, "Local Church Historical Data," no date.

In addition to W. A. Reed, another North Carolina elder who gave generously of his time to the Little Pine congregation over a period of many years was W. H. Handy. At least as early as 1912 he preached twenty revival sermons in the church which led to twenty-three conversions. In addition to preaching in the church perhaps hundreds of times, he also served as presiding elder for a number of years, finally retiring about 1951. Many other North Carolina ministers and leaders have been connected with the program at Little Pine during its first sixty years including E. T. Lowe, Alex. Frost, George W. Tucker, N. C. Reed, John A. Reed, Fred Dancy, Clayton B. Miller, David Cleary, Connie Cleary, Otte Utt, Bert G. Richardson, Kermit Farrington, Leo Tompkins, and Coy Anders. Anders in particular deserves special mention; he accepted the pastoral responsibility in 1945 and has continued in that position through the decades of the 1950's and the 1960's.³⁸

The Little Pine Brethren have generally been quite evangelistic over the years, for there have been many revivals in the community. In 1916 W. H. Handy and N. C. Reed combined in a meeting that lasted sixteen days and nights and ended with twelve people being baptized and two being reclaimed for the church. Six years later the two ministers again joined in holding a revival which led to nine baptisms. Again in 1927 Handy and Reed held a revival involving sixteen sermons and three baptisms. George Tucker and E. T. Lowe held meetings in 1930 which were well attended; as a result six were baptized and three were reclaimed. In a period of two weeks in 1938 Holt E. Griffith preached twenty-five sermons which led to two baptisms. The minister who had gotten the congregation established in 1906, W. A. Reed, was back in August of 1940 for ten days of meetings, as a result of which several people were anointed, nine were baptized, two were reclaimed, and two were licensed to preach. W. H. Handy worked with Coy Anders in 1945 during a two week revival which led to twenty-one conversions. Again in 1948 these two

38. *Gospel Messenger*, November 9, 1912, page 720; *Yearbooks*, 1920-1971.

ministers cooperated in a revival which was followed by the baptism of five people.³⁹ Certainly, the Brethren in this area of North Carolina had established a fine record for their interest in evangelism.

In addition to evangelism in the community in which the church was located, the Brethren were also interested in witnessing in neighboring communities, one of which was called Coal Creek. It seems that some years earlier, perhaps before the end of the nineteenth century, elders Harden Hylton and Jerry Slusher from Virginia had preached in this area and had been long remembered. At any rate, on January 25, 1914 N. C. Reed and E. T. Lowe from Little Pine began eight days and nights of preaching in the Coal Creek community by the request of the local residents. As a result of their preaching on the Brethren doctrines, four people were baptized, and interest in building a church and in establishing a congregation was aroused. Although there continued to be cordial relations between the Brethren at Little Pine and at Coal Creek, the record does not indicate either that a church was built or that a congregation was organized at Coal Creek. What is indicated was the existence of a widespread Brethren witness on this Southern frontier. Still another evidence of this witness was demonstrated in October of 1914 when W. H. Handy, J. A. Richardson, and C. C. Tompkins traveled thirteen miles from Little Pine to Glenwood where Handy preached.⁴⁰

The evangelistic program of the Little Pine Brethren was reflected in the growth of the congregation's membership. The earliest available figures on membership date from 1916, ten years after the organization, when there were fifty-two members. By 1925 the number had increased to sixty, and then after jumping up to seventy-five in 1927, fell back to forty-two in 1930. The membership doubled in three years to ninety in

39. *Ibid.*, September 16, 1916, page 605; October 7, 1922, page 637; January 21, 1928, page 45; December 27, 1930, page 837; November 5, 1938, page 30; September 21, 1940, page 29; December 15, 1945, page 29; September 4, 1948, page 32.

40. *Ibid.*, January 31, 1914, page 76; March 7, 1914, page 157; July 25, 1914, page 477; October 24, 1914, page 684; August 28, 1915, page 556; January 28, 1921, page 61.

1933 and ended the decade in 1940 at one hundred four. Continuing to increase in the 1940's, the membership reached a high of one hundred twenty-two in 1948. In the next two years the figure tumbled dizzily to eighty in 1949 perhaps as the result of a re-evaluation of the membership roll, and then jumped back to ninety-eight at the end of the decade in 1950. The number held steady in the 1950's and ended the decade at one hundred one. The erratic tendency of the 1940's came out again in the 1960's, when the membership dropped to a low of eighty-five in 1965, jumped to one hundred twelve in 1966, fell back to eighty-five in 1968, and reached an all-time high of one hundred thirty-two in 1970.⁴¹ At any rate the Little Pine congregation has demonstrated an ability to snap back from declining membership, and it is to be hoped that this evangelistic ability will continue.

In order to provide adequate facilities for all of these members, the Little Pine Brethren became involved in a variety of maintenance and building programs. The frame church built in 1906 lasted for many years with periodic repairs. In 1923 it was reported to the congregational council meeting that the work of repairing the church had been completed. Four years later an offering of twenty-seven dollars and thirty cents was taken to purchase paint to be used on the church. Ten years later in 1937 with the District Meeting coming to Little Pine, the Brethren raised one hundred seventy-three dollars, including three fifty dollar gifts, to be used to repair and to paint the church. Then in 1941-1942 the congregation decided that it had outgrown its church and therefore it built a new brick church with two Sunday School classrooms. The new church was dedicated in the fall of 1942 by W. A. Reed, who very likely had dedicated the first church thirty-six years earlier. These new facilities soon proved to be inadequate to provide for the growth in membership which took place in the 1940's, and in 1948-1949 a basement was dug to provide more classrooms and a new heating system. Other

41. *Ibid.*, October 21, 1916, page 685; *Yearbooks*, 1925-1971.

improvements at this time included new pulpit furniture, the rewiring of the church and installation of an improved lighting system, and the landscaping of the church grounds. Ten years later in 1959 another building program was necessary to provide additional classrooms and an enlarged sanctuary.⁴² Certainly, these Brethren in the Little Pine community had done remarkably well in providing the physical facilities needed to maintain an active church program.

The program at Little Pine was an active one, which included the once a month preaching service allotted to all of the congregations in the district, the many revival services, some of which have already been described, the annual Love Feast, which was generally well attended, and the regular sessions of the congregational council at which the elder presided. In addition, in 1926 the congregation had one of the earliest Daily Vacation Bible Schools in the district under the leadership of Annie Vest and Effie Pratt, both from Virginia. Another program that was also held that summer and periodically thereafter was a Decoration Day service, which was well attended and included messages by W. H. Handy and N. C. Reed. When the Sunday School was first organized is not recorded, but across the years it became an active one. Especially toward the end of the decade of the 1940's the program was doing well, for the year 1949 set an all-time record for Sunday School attendance. Another event which had become a part of the church program by the 1940's was the annual homecoming, which involved as speakers in 1947, for example, Otte Utt, Coy Anders, and W. H. Handy.⁴³ Altogether, many meaningful things have happened to the Brethren in the Little Pine congregation during the first sixty years of their life together.

42. *Ibid.*, February 17, 1923, page 112; October 1, 1927, page 636; August 7, 1937, page 29; October 24, 1942, page 27; January 1, 1948, page 30; September 4, 1948, page 32; January 29, 1949, page 30; April 23, 1949, page 28; December 17, 1949, page 27; December 3, 1960, page 31; also, Mrs. Harvie Greene, "Local Church Historical Data," no date.

43. *Ibid.*, July 10, 1926, page 445; September 4, 1926, page 573; April 1, 1950, page 29; October 11, 1947, page 30.

MOUNTAIN VIEW CONGREGATION

Another of the numerous areas in which the Brethren ministers based in Ashe and Alleghany counties preached was across the state line in Grayson County, Virginia. In 1904 W. A. Reed held a series of meetings involving seventeen sermons at the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, before having to return home for a funeral. He noted in his report that the Brethren had never preached in this community before, but he believed that there were good prospects for the establishment of a Brethren congregation. Within six months he had baptized ten people with a number of others about ready for baptism. The prospects continued to be encouraging and about 1906 the Mountain View congregation located two miles from Volney, Virginia and three miles north of Grassy Creek, North Carolina was organized and admitted to the North Carolina district.⁴⁴

There is virtually no record of the life of this congregation. A survey of the congregations in Ashe-Allethany area in 1919 pointed out that at Mountain View the work was "run down." The earliest available membership figures indicate a membership in 1925 of seventeen. The peak membership of twenty-one was reached in the late 1920's and held steady for several years. The last recorded figure was ten in the early 1940's. Those individuals who served as pastors and-or elders of the congregation included N. C. Reed, R. F. Richardson, and W. H. Handy, which makes Mountain View sound like an extension of Little Pine. The congregation expired in the early 1940's and was no longer included in the roster of congregations at the 1943 District Conference. Evidently, this was one settlement of Brethren in which neither the local elements nor the outside assistance was strong enough to enable the congregation to gain a permanent status in its community.

44. *Ibid.*, February 27, 1904, page 140; July 9, 1904, page 445; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1906.

ROWLAND CREEK CONGREGATION

In one sense the Brethren witness at Mountain View has been perpetuated in the Rowland Creek Brethren congregation in neighboring Smyth County, Virginia, for on July 15, 1911 some of the members of the Mountain View congregation held a congregational council meeting at Rowland Creek and organized a new Brethren congregation. W. H. Handy was the first pastor and elder and R. L. Suit was a local minister. Installed as deacons were R. F. Richardson, Ed Osborne, and R. B. Suit. Richardson was eventually ordained as a minister in February, 1924. The earliest worship services in this community were held in the school house, but land was donated by Carl Parsons on which a small white weather-board church was constructed. Many years later, in 1956, two Sunday School classrooms were added to the church.⁴⁵

According to the published records, many different ministers have shared the responsibilities as pastor or elder of the Rowland Creek congregation, including N. C. Reed, Martin Owens, R. F. Richardson, Fred Dancy, W. H. Handy, F. C. Rohrer, J. A. Reed, F. Blake Million, Clayton B. Miller, J. W. Lowman, Paul Hopkins, J. R. Jackson, David Cleary, Connie Cleary, Holt Griffith, Gilbert Shelton, and Kermit Farrington. Perhaps Clayton B. Miller and David Cleary should be singled out for the length of their service as elder. Very likely, this congregation would have had to close its doors had it not been for the faithful and dedicated service of David Cleary. Also, the ministry of the Raymond Kesslers in 1967-1968 made a significant contribution to the life of this congregation, which was very much appreciated by the local people.⁴⁶

The membership roll of this congregation has tended to be erratic with considerable variation within relatively short periods of time. The earliest statistics in 1925 reveal a membership of fifty-seven, which had increased to seventy-

45. Mary Ann Pennington, "Local Church Historical Data," no date.

46. Yearbooks, 1920-1971; material from Bert G. Richardson.

eight by 1930. The next year it dropped to sixty-two and then rose steadily to ninety-four by 1940, which is the all-time high for Rowand Creek. During the decade of the 1940's the membership declined to a low of thirty-six in 1949, probably as the result of factors related to World War II. In 1950 the figure went back up to forty-seven, only to fall to thirty in 1953. By 1957 it had again reached a high of seventy-eight, by the end of the decade in 1960 it stood at thirty-four, a loss of more than fifty per cent in three years. The erratic tendency continued in the 1960's with a high of forty-five in 1963 followed by a low of thirteen in 1966. By 1970 the membership figure had increased to forty-seven. Part of the reason for these wide variations in the membership was the presence of a schismatic group called the Independent Brethren Church, which was organized in the 1950's.⁴⁷

The regular program at Rowland Creek has included an annual Love Feast on the third Saturday of September of each year and preaching services in the morning and the evening of the third and fourth Sundays of each month. Services twice a month are more frequent than the once a month services universally practiced in the Carolina congregations early in the century, but still not the once a week level of most Brethren congregations in the 1960's. The Rowland Creek Brethren have reached a stage typical of many smaller Brethren congregations: They are too numerous to give up and not numerous enough to have a very adequate program for the people of the community.

NEW HAVEN CONGREGATION

In the early years of the twentieth century, the Brethren in the Carolinas organized quite a number of new congregations, but from the time the Rowland Creek congregation was organized in 1911 by the Ashe-Alleghany Brethren it took

47. *Ibid.*; material from Bert G. Richardson.

fifteen years to get another congregation organized. In August of 1926 a group of Brethren split off from the New Bethel congregation to organize the New Haven Church of the Brethren, located four miles east of the New Bethel church. In what must be one of the most remarkable stories in Brethren annals, all of the thirty charter members of the New Haven congregation were members of the Sexton family--descendants of A. J. and Disa Sexton--including ten of the eleven children with six in-laws along with one or more of the grandchildren of each family. However, the presiding elder, W. H. Handy, came from outside of the family. All of the other officers, including two deacons, were members of the Sexton family.⁴⁸

During the first forty years of the history of the New Haven congregation, three ministers have carried most of the load as pastor and-or elder. John A. Reed, who was a member of the Sexton family by marriage, served as pastor and-or elder from 1928 to 1949. Clayton B. Miller, who served many of the North Carolina congregations during more than fifty years of his life, was elder from 1949 to 1952 and again beginning in 1963. Fred Dancy first become pastor of the congregation in 1931 and continued until 1940. In 1946 he returned as pastor and continued for twenty-years until 1966; for eleven years of that time he was also the presiding elder of the congregation. Others who have served as pastor included Gilbert Osborne and Eli J. Gascho in the 1940's, and Vernon Wilkins from 1966 to 1968. In 1968 Fred Dancy returned once again as pastor after serving for two years in a Florida pastorate.⁴⁹

The membership of the New Haven congregation has tended to increase rather steadily with relatively few drastic changes under the leadership of these dedicated ministers. The greatest increase came during Fred Dancy's first pastorate in the 1930's, when the membership increased from twenty-nine in 1930 to seventy-two in 1940. The rate of growth

48. "The New Haven Congregation," author not identified; also *Gospel Messenger*, November 27, 1926, page 773.

49. *Yearbooks*, 1927-1969.

was much slower during the next two decades reaching eighty-one in 1950 and ninety-three in 1960, which was the all-time high. After a sharp drop to seventy in 1961, the membership had increased to eighty-seven by 1970.⁵⁰

The growth of the New Haven congregation can be attributed largely to an evangelistic fervor. One aspect of this evangelism has been the holding of periodic revival meetings from time to time. Among these meetings, the following might be cited as illustrative. In 1929 Clayton B. Miller held a series of meetings which resulted in six people being baptized and one person reclaimed. The Reed brothers, W. A. and N. C., conducted meetings in 1932 which included seventeen sermons and led to six baptisms. Newton L. Poling, a student at Bethany Seminary, conducted a two week revival and Bible School during the summer of 1941, after which three were baptized. Three years later James Renz from Wabash, Indiana held a revival which was followed by six baptisms. In 1950, the pastor, Fred Dancy, collaborated with Glenn Rohrer in holding a week of revival meetings. In 1952, Coy Anders was present for a revival; in 1953, Earl Dietz, the pastor at Melvin Hill, held a revival in May, followed by one in September of that year by Bristoe Osborne. Paul White, pastor of the Fraternity congregation, was the evangelist in 1956, and Charles Rinehart, pastor of the Mill Creek and Melvin Hill congregations, held a revival in 1963.⁵¹ In general, the pattern had been followed of using pastors from other North Carolina congregations as the evangelists in these meetings, but this type of person frequently proved to be the most effective leader in evangelism.

The growth of the New Haven congregation can also be attributed to the development of a strong Sunday School and age-group program for the members of the congregation and

50. *Ibid.*, 1930-1971.

51. *Gospel Messenger*, November 30, 1929, page 773; September 17, 1932, page 25; August 2, 1941, page 29; August 12, 1944, page 30; December 9, 1950, page 30; November 22, 1952, page 30; June 20, 1953, page 31; January 2, 1954, page 31; March 30, 1957, page 32; November 23, 1963, page 31.

the people of the community. In the earliest annual report of the Sunday School to the District Meeting of 1930, New Haven had five officers and teachers, a total enrollment of fifty-nine, and an average attendance of forty-four. The average attendance made it one of the three largest Sunday Schools in the entire district. There is no record of the earliest summer Daily Vacation Bible School, other than an indication that there must have been one in 1927. Some of the later ones are recorded: for example, in 1934, Fred Dancy, Ruth Sheets, and Delia Sexton were the leaders. The young people of the congregation organized a BYPD (Brethren Young People's Department) at least as early as 1933 with Willie Lee Poole the president. They engaged in a variety of activities. It was reported that on Mother's Day in 1941 the young people gave their mothers a surprise dinner and a small gift, followed by a program in the evening for all of the parents by the children and the young people. Later that year the Mt. Carmel and New Haven youth sponsored a week end conference for all of the district young people, which was the first such meeting in the district. In 1948 the young people were raising money by such means as a barbecue supper in order to redecorate the interior of the church. There was also the spiritual side of their life, for in 1953 they were meeting each Sunday evening for singing and Bible study, and in 1963 they had a special week of youth revival meetings by Robert L. Rowe, a Tennessee pastor, which led to three baptisms and a number of reconsecrations.⁵²

The ladies of the congregation also maintained a very active program, beginning about 1938 when they organized a Sisters' Aid Society with Cora Sexton as president. One of the first projects was to raise money to build a larger church. The women were especially active during World War II in gathering clothing for the CPS (Civilian Public Service) camps and for world-wide relief; for example, during the

52. District Meeting Minutes, 1930; Gospel Messenger, July 21, 1934, page 30; September 23, 1933, page 28; August 2, 1941, page 29; November 27, 1948, page 30; January 2, 1954, page 31; November 23, 1963, page 31.

winter of 1944-1945 they sent two large boxes of clothing to the processing center at New Windsor, Maryland, and they also sent twelve Christmas boxes to boys in the service of their country and of their church. At the New Year service that winter a thirty dollar offering was taken for the support of CPS. During the next year, the women made quilts for CPS, and they sent three boxes of clothing and twenty dozen cans of food to New Windsor for relief; a related relief project was the gathering of soap. The Women's Work, as it was now known, was meeting every Thursday for worship, work, and fellowship. The gathering of clothing continued to be a regular part of the women's activities, for there continued to be a need in many places around the world. In addition, the women were concerned about those in need at home; for example, during the Christmas season of 1956 they visited and gave gifts to the ill and the aged in the community, which was a further manifestation of the spirit of Christian service.⁵³

LOWMANS VALLEY CONGREGATION

Shortly after the New Haven congregation was organized, Fred Dancy did some preaching which ended up in a revival meeting under some apple trees in the Lowmans Valley area of Virginia about three and a half miles south of Marion, Virginia. As a result of his efforts the Lowmans Valley congregation was organized in 1929 with a charter membership of about twenty-three. Dancy served as the first pastor, and since he was not yet an elder, W. H. Handy became the presiding elder. Over the years since, many of the Carolina ministers have spent time serving this small congregation including Kermit Farrington, R.F. Richardson, J. W. Lowman, Clayton B. Miller, Paul Hopkins, W. A. Reed, David Cleary, Archie Wyatt, and Gilbert L. Shelton. Perhaps two of these

⁵³ *Gospel Messenger*, November 12, 1938, page 27; February 24, 1945, page 29; January 19, 1946, page 30; March 30, 1957, page 32.

ought to receive special mention: Kermit Farrington was first connected with the congregation as pastor in 1931, and after serving at least four other periods of time as pastor, was serving as moderator in 1970. Paul Hopkins first became pastor in 1938, spent part of the 1940's and of the 1950's as pastor, and then served continuously from 1958 through 1969. Gilbert L. Shelton became the pastor in 1969. In fact, one of the striking characteristics of this congregation has been the frequent changes of pastor as different ministers took a turn in the non-salaried leadership.

Another striking characteristic has been the stability of membership, which until the middle of the decade of the 1960's had never varied by more than ten from the charter membership of twenty-three. After reaching a high for the decade of twenty-nine in 1936, the figure was down to twenty-five by 1940. During the 1940's the number rose to thirty-three in 1947, but had fallen back to twenty-five by 1950. Again the membership grew to thirty in 1955 but dropped to twenty-seven in 1960 and twenty-five in 1963.

For the first time, the Lowmans Valley Brethren seemed to catch fire in the 1960's. In 1963 Bert G. Richardson conducted a revival in the community, as a result of which seven young people were baptized. More important, the members of the congregation were challenged to remodel and improve the church. Additional Sunday School rooms were built, and steps were taken to provide a church that would meet the current needs of these Brethren. As a result, after reaching thirty-five, an all-time high, in 1967, the membership shot up to fifty-three in 1968 and reached fifty-seven in 1970.⁵⁴ Certainly, this congregation had not followed what seemed to be a widespread tendency among the Ashe-Alleghany congregations. In the first place, its membership total had never fallen below its charter membership, and second, it had more than doubled its charter membership by 1970. Evidently, there was some real possibility for growth in this community.

54. Yearbooks, 1931-1971; material from Bert G. Richardson.

MT. OLIVE CONGREGATION

Another area in which there seemed for a time to be a real possibility for growth and development was the Reddies River community in Wilkes County about fifteen miles north of North Wilkesboro. Evidently, a predecessor of this Brethren group was the Burke congregation which must have been in existence very early in the twentieth century. Martin Owens was the organizer and first elder of this group, which was never listed in the roster of congregations represented at the District Meetings. The Sheets family was active in this settlement, and one of the early ministers was Tom Sheets. In addition, G. W. Tucker and Robert Childers also preached in this community. Probably about 1912 the center of activity was moved to the Reddies River community, where the congregation was reorganized and named Mill Creek; after discovering that there was already a congregation in the district with that name, the Brethren selected the name, Mt. Olive. Martin Owens reported in 1913 that this was a new mission point where the Brethren had begun to preach on the fourth Sunday of April of 1912; within a year the group had increased to sixteen members and a church was being built. However, the Mt. Olive congregation like its predecessor was never recognized by the District Meeting, nor was it listed in the Yearbook of the denomination.⁵⁵

RIVERSIDE CONGREGATION

In 1929 it seems that George A. Branscom of the district mission board assisted this group of Brethren in formally organizing the Riverside congregation, which was recognized by the 1930 District Conference. G. W. Tucker and Gilbert Osborne, both of whom were members of this congregation,

55. David Cleary, "Historical Data," August 1, 1957; *Gospel Messenger*, March 1, 1913, page 140; *Yearbooks*, 1919-1929.

served as the pastors with Branscom as elder. The charter membership was about twenty-two. In addition to these ministers, most of the ministers who worked with the congregations in this section of North Carolina also contributed their services to the Riverside congregation, including Kermit Farrington, David Cleary, Fred Dancy, Spencer Wingler, Clayton B. Miller, Archie Wyatt, Connie Cleary, and William P. Leftwich.

The congregation grew rather steadily in membership for a number of years. By 1933, there were thirty-three members, and by 1940, forty-nine. This growth continued through the decade of the 1940's reaching seventy-three in 1950 and the all-time high of seventy-five in 1952. Then the membership began to drop very rapidly as the Brethren moved out of the community, and in five years the figure had reached twenty-five, causing David Cleary to comment: "At present the membership and Sunday School are both down very low compared with what it one time was." The decline could not be arrested, and in 1966 the congregation was disorganized. Before the property could be sold, the church burned. The land was sold and the money went to the District. Thus ended the Brethren witness in a declining rural community.⁵⁶

FRIENDSHIP--NORTH WILKESBORO CONGREGATION

However, the closing of the Riverside congregation was not a complete loss as far as the Brethren were concerned because some of the members were incorporated into a new congregation located in the city of North Wilkesboro. When David Cleary noted the decline of the Riverside congregation in 1957, he added: "A number have moved their letters to the Friendship Church at North Wilkesboro which we hope to be a strong church in the future." Indeed David Cleary had been the leader in getting the Brethren witness established in this

56. *Ibid.*; material from Bert G. Richardson.

city, for as early as September, 1943 a Sunday School had been organized in Charlie Brown's home with John Osborne as superintendent. In the ensuing years meetings had been held in a number of places including Beldon Osborne's planter shed, James Osborne's store building, John Osborne's basement, and the Warren Miller Funeral Home. Obviously, in addition to Cleary, the members of the Osborne family were very influential in establishing the work in North Wilkesboro.

On September 14, 1954 the Friendship Church of the Brethren was organized at a meeting at the Warren Miller Funeral Home with Bert G. Richardson presiding as a representative of the District. The twenty-five people present selected David Cleary as pastor and elder. In addition, Rex Sheets, L. B. Wayne, and Beldon Osborne were deacons in the new congregation. Plans were discussed for securing permanent church facilities for the group, and in the spring of 1957 these plans came to a climax with the purchase of a storage building, which could be remodeled, from the Greene Brothers. Many improvements were made both in the inside and the outside of the building to make it more attractive and useful as the home of the congregation.

In 1969 when the congregation was considering seriously the need for an addition to the church, which would include rest rooms, the Brethren decided to invest the money instead in a new church. Plans were developed, a loan was secured from the national office of the denomination, and in July, 1969, construction was started. By the second Sunday of November, the work was sufficiently completed to permit the holding of services in the basement of the new church. The windows which had recently been installed in the old church were now transferred to the sanctuary of the new church, and on the second Sunday of December, 1969, the congregation gathered for worship in its newly completed sanctuary. In addition, new oak furniture including pews, pulpit, communion table, and three pulpit chairs, was installed. In the basement there were four Sunday School rooms, in addition to a small kitchen and

dining area, two rest rooms, and a furnace room. The church, which was 32 feet by 54 feet in dimensions, was built of brick and concrete blocks, and was designed to serve the needs of the Friendship congregation for years to come.

The Brethren in North Wilkesboro developed an active program under the leadership of a number of dedicated men and women. The pastors and elders have including Phil Zinn, pastor in 1957, Merle Rummel, summer pastor in 1957 and 1958, Rex Sheets, pastor since 1957, Kermit Farrington, elder in 1959, and David Cleary, who has been the elder and moderator for all but the one year since the organization. The leadership of Rex Sheets has been particularly outstanding. The activities of the congregation have included an annual Love Feast held on the Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in September, an annual picnic each summer, an annual Easter sunrise service, a Christmas program each year, and revival meetings each spring and fall. In terms of stewardship, the congregation provides regular support for the District Board and Camp Carmel, the Brotherhood Fund, Bridgewater College, Bethany Theological Seminary, and such special projects as UNICEF, the Heifer Project, and the One Great Hour of Sharing.⁵⁷

All of the dedicated leadership and of the active parish program has been reflected in a growth of membership from the charter membership of ten in 1954. The early years were difficult years and by 1960 the membership had reached nineteen. However, in the 1960's the growth was more rapid. In September of 1960, Bert G. Richardson held a revival, as a result of which sixteen people were added to the membership. The total continued to grow and more than doubled to thirty-nine in 1962. By 1970 the young congregation had sixty-three members. Evidently, there was the potential present for continued steady growth as the Brethren began to sink deeper roots into the surrounding community. Indeed the Brethren in

57. *Ibid.*; David Cleary, Brenda Osborne, and Sylvia Adams, "Local Church Historical Data," June 9, 1967; material from Rex Sheets.

the Carolinas had proven that in the difficult years following World War II, they could establish new congregations.

MT. AIRY CONGREGATION

In addition to the new Friendship congregation which the Brethren established in the community of North Wilkesboro, the Brethren in North Carolina also organized a new congregation in the 1960's in the Mt. Airy community. Traditionally, this territory had been a part of the district of Southern Virginia, which had congregations at Shelton, four miles east of Mt. Airy, and at St. Paul, eight miles north of Mt. Airy. However, the North Carolina District Conference of 1962 heard and granted a request "that the Mt. Airy Fellowship be received in the North and South Carolina District and their delegates be seated in Conference." This new congregation was the result of a split in the Shelton congregation, which helps to explain why the new fellowship wanted to become a part of the District of North and South Carolina.⁵⁸

Evidently, what happened was that in January, 1962, W. H. Hawks rented a store building on Durham and South Streets in the town of Mt. Airy. He proposed "to try and get the persons who had stopped going to Shelton Church of the Brethren, started to going to church somewhere." At the first meeting the 26 people present decided to start a new Brethren fellowship in Mt. Airy, and they asked D. B. Osborne to serve as pastor. The group also decided to take steps leading to the building of an attractive church on Welch Road, which was completed in December, 1963, and dedicated in 1964.

The first inclusion of this fellowship in the Yearbook in 1963 revealed a membership of forty-one, and a leadership including D. B. Osborne as pastor and J. R. Jackson as moderator. In addition, David Cleary, Coy Anders, and

58. Yearbooks, 1954-1971; material from Bert G. Richardson.

Clarence Mabe have served as leaders in the intervening years. Mabe was serving as pastor in 1970. The new work in this community seemed to prosper, for the membership increased steadily. In 1965 the membership reached fifty-one, thus fulfilling the requirement that a fellowship have at least fifty members in order to be organized as a congregation. By 1970 the membership had increased further to seventy-three, thus reflecting a continued steady growth.⁵⁹ Thus, the Brethren were again getting some work started that looked encouraging for the future.

The Brethren have been very active in the general Ashe-Alleghany area in the 20th century. Altogether seventeen of the congregations in the North and South Carolina District have been located in this area. Eleven of these were still in existence in 1970, although some were not very active. Most of them have a very limited membership; only one had more than one hundred members in 1970. None of them has a full-time pastor who receives all of his income from one congregation. But there are many loyal Brethren in those mountain valleys, and they do what they can to keep the church alive.

MITCHELL COUNTY

BRUMMETTS CREEK CONGREGATION

The mother congregation in the mountains of western North Carolina was organized in 1845 and became known as Brummetts Creek. By 1902 this congregation was one of the strongest in the district with eighty-five members, which made it the second largest in the district. However, the changes of the twentieth century which affected the Brethren along with everybody else have wrought havoc with these

59. Yearbooks, 1963-1971; District Conference Minutes, 1962, 1965; material from Loretta Mabe.

mountain people of Appalachia, and the Brethren congregations in this area have generally declined.

In 1919, J. H. Moore, for many years the editor of the *Gospel Messenger*, attended the district conference at Brummetts Creek and reported to his readers some of his impressions of the area:

The District Meeting, to which we refer, was held in the Brummett Creek church, near Relief, N. C., about thirty-four miles south of Johnson City, Tenn. It, too, is in the very midst of the extensive mountain section of North Carolina. Here the country is practically all mountains, with numerous narrow valleys extending in nearly every direction. The house in which the meeting was held is located at a point where the valley is probably not more than 400 feet wide, and nearly one-half of this is taken up with the house, the dashing mountain stream and the public road.

Passing up this valley one finds a farm-house, and other necessary farm buildings, about every quarter of a mile, and some of the houses are well built and neatly finished. So far as we could see, each family had its spring, and some of the springs are a delight, making spring-houses both common and exceedingly convenient. The narrow valleys and the steep mountain sides are well farmed and it is surprising what crops are often produced. The people live, and they live well.

At some of the services there were probably 300 or more people, and nearly all of them walked, some of them coming from quite a distance. When we, for the first time, viewed the location of the churchhouse, at the foot of a mountain, we wondered where people enough could be found to fill it. But they were on hand all the same, and wore out a hundred per cent more sole leather than automobile tires to get there. We found the people, members and others, intelligent, industrious and the very embodiment of hospitality.

As for the churches, they may not have as many active working agencies as can be found in many other parts of the Brotherhood, but in their way, composed solely of mountain people, they display an activity and a zeal that is to be commended. Possibly, in a way, a more intimate association with

the members of some of our active congregations would help them, and in other ways it might prove a detriment. Some of them may need more system in their church work, and their church activities, but the worldly influences that are creeping into some of our congregations would prove a decided detriment in their work among the mountain people. They have a widely-known reputation for the simplicity in life, and to deprive them of this reputation would be greatly to cripple them in their soul-saving and church-training work. Some new blood, as well as some new brains, of the right type ought to prove a blessing to this whole mountain territory.

.....

The congregations composing the part of the District lying in North Carolina and South Carolina, seem to be in three groups, with nearly 100 miles between them. The meeting was held in the center group. In filling appointments, and keeping up the church work, some of the ministers must ride, generally on horseback, many miles each Sunday. A few evangelists are kept in the field much of the time, and where there is an opening they do not hesitate to tackle new points. In fact, nearly all of the congregations have been built up of native material, emigration cutting only a small figure in establishing churches. The members, considering their circumstances, are fairly liberal in their gifts for missions and other purposes. For the year, closing with the meeting, the donations for the three groups of churches did not miss the \$1200 mark very far. Were the churches as persistent and systematic in reporting their contributions as are some of the State Districts, their showing in the published reports would indicate a far higher grade in the scale of giving.

And now, to sum it all up, we know of no section of the Brotherhood where the outlook for evangelistic work and the building up of churches is more promising. We do not mean that class of preaching that simply sweeps people into the church by a magnetic influence, but a type of teaching that leads to a thorough conversion after the New Testament order. There are openings in the District for more than a dozen efficient and energetic, Gospel-preaching evangelists. Really, this whole mountain section is an open field for the Brethren, for their preachers, their literature and their wisely-directed educational influences.⁶⁰

60. Gospel Messenger, October 4, 1919, page 627.

This fine description provides an insight, that would otherwise be quite difficult to convey, into the problems of developing Brethren congregations in this section of North Carolina.

Many dedicated ministers have provided the leadership for the Brummetts Creek congregation in the twentieth century including M. E. Bradshaw, J. R. Jackson, J. H. Griffith, R. V. Tipton, A. M. Laughrun, Fred Dancy, Fred Harrell, Grady Masters, Holt Griffith, and John W. Bradshaw. Were it not for the four members of the Griffith and Bradshaw families in this list, the congregation certainly would not have survived. M. E. Bradshaw had served as pastor and-or elder on different occasions in the 1920's and the 1930's and had been Sunday School superintendent for thirty-five years before his death in 1942. J. H. Griffith also had been pastor and-or elder for a time in the 1920's and again in the 1940's. Holt E. Griffith became the pastor of the congregation in the early 1950's and was continuing to serve faithfully in that position in 1970. Finally, John W. Bradshaw became moderator in 1956 and also was serving in that position in 1970.⁶¹

In addition to these pastors and elders, a number of visiting ministers have come into the congregation to conduct evangelistic meetings. Among the many such occasions might be mentioned the meetings by S. H. Garber in conjunction with A. M. Laughrun in February, 1908, followed by meetings by John Garst and Laughrun in November of that year. In 1911 W. A. Reed from Polk County preached eighteen sermons which resulted in fourteen baptisms and generally strengthened the congregation. Robert Edwards held meetings at Brummetts Creek in 1914. Since the meetings were held in January when there was not very much activity in the rural community, he preached both in the morning and in the evening and had a good attendance. Of course, the local ministers sometimes conducted series of meetings. In 1917 A. M. Laughrun preached for twelve days and thirty-one persons were baptized, and in 1921 meetings by J. R. Jackson were followed by

61. Yearbooks, 1920-1971; Gospel Messenger, July 11, 1942, page 28.

eighteen baptisms. J. H. Peterson from Fountain City, Tennessee was at Brummetts Creek to preach eighteen sermons in 1926. More than a decade later in 1937, E. S. Coffman, one of the better-known evangelists in the church, conducted two weeks of meetings. Another of the well-known figures in the church who visited Brummetts Creek for two weeks of meetings in 1942 was I. N. H. Beahm.⁶² Certainly, this program of evangelism had contributed immensely to the survival of the Brethren witness in this mountainous North Carolina community.

Besides those leaders who visited Brummetts Creek to conduct evangelistic meetings, occasionally someone came to provide other types of inspiration and leadership. For example, in October of 1911, the great Brethren leader and traveler, D. L. Miller, was present to preach and to deliver his Bible land talk to an appreciative audience of four hundred. Clearly, this was an enriching and broadening experience for these mountain people. At the end of the decade, in 1919, Virgil C. Finnell of the brotherhood staff was present for four days to deliver seven lessons and lectures on the Sunday School program. As a result the congregational Sunday School was enlarged to include a cradle roll for the infants, a teacher training class, a home department, a missionary department, and a temperance department. Another illustration of denominational interest in the local congregation was the visit in 1942 of Dan West of the church's general staff in the interest of the peace program and activities of the church. One result was a decision in congregational council to support the CPS (Civilian Public Service) program of alternative service by encouraging the purchase of the special Brethren savings stamps. The congregation had been prepared for Dan West's coming by such activities as the organization of a youth group in the summer of 1940 which studied peace and war under the

62. *Gospel Messenger*, February 29, 1908, page 140; December 5, 1908, page 796; March 4, 1911, page 141; January 31, 1914, page 76; August 18, 1917, page 525; September 24, 1921, page 589; March 13, 1926, page 173; December 11, 1937, page 29; July 11, 1942, page 29.

leadership of Fred Herrell.⁶³ All of these activities were manifestations of the interest in and support of the general program of the Church of the Brethren.

The Brummetts Creek Brethren made an effort across the years to maintain the attractiveness of their church. In the summer of 1938 in preparation for the hosting of the District Conference in August, the Brethren painted the church and purchased new carpet and pews. During the next year, they bought a piano for their church, which may possibly have been the first introduction of a musical instrument, since the Brethren had historically opposed the use of instruments in their worship. During the decade of the 1950's new flooring, new lights, and a baptistry were installed in the church in a continuing effort to make the church as attractive as possible.⁶⁴

That these mountain Brethren had an interest in their history was demonstrated by the holding of a celebration on August 13, 1939 to commemorate "Mr. and Mrs. I. B. Bailey, Sr.'s, 50th year of service to the church." The big event included an all-day service with a dinner at the church, attended by a crowd estimated at from four to five hundred. After a roll call by the pastor, J. H. Griffith described the history of the organization of the congregation, M. E. Bradshaw discussed the history of the ministry, and A. M. Laughrun gave the memorial address. In addition several former pastors gave short talks, and Fred Herrell summarized the future potential of the congregation. Finally, Mrs. Hazel Roberts gave a talk on the activities of the women in the total church program.⁶⁵ It must have been quite a day!

The membership record of the Brummetts Creek congregation has taken many jumps, both up and down. During the first quarter of the century the figure seems to

63. *Ibid.*, November 11, 1911, page 721; February 8, 1919, page 93; October 24, 1942, page 27; Brummetts Creek congregational council minutes, July 14, 1940; July 21, 1940; July 28, 1940.

64. *Ibid.*, February 18, 1939, page 28; September 16, 1939, page 31; July 12, 1952, pages 31-32; October 5, 1957, page 31.

65. *Ibid.*, September 16, 1939, page 31; material from Betty Griffith.

have held fairly steady declining only slightly from eighty-five in 1902 to eighty in 1925. Then the number jumped to one hundred in 1927, held steady for several years and then plummeted to sixty in 1931. No explanation for this big drop is available. Instead of acting as the beginning of a steady decline, however, this drop proved to be the bottom of the decline and a steady growth began which reached an all-time high of one hundred six in 1945. After declining slowly to eighty-eight in 1948, a careful review of the membership roll necessitated by the changes during and after World War II resulted in a net membership of thirty in 1949. Again, however, after reaching an all-time low of twenty-eight in 1950, the membership began to increase and had climbed to sixty-two by 1954, at least partly as the result of a movement of Brethren from the Upper Brummetts Creek congregation to the Brummetts Creek congregation, which was sometimes called Lower Brummetts Creek. This movement was brought about by changes taking place at Upper Brummetts Creek, which will be explained in connection with the discussion of that congregation. By the 1960's the economic problems associated with this mountainous area seemed to be taking their toll in the life of this Brethren congregation, and the membership by 1970 had declined to thirty-nine.⁶⁶ Whether the Brummetts Creek congregation could once again recover as it had done on two previous occasions was a question which only time could answer.

HOLLOW POPLAR CONGREGATION

The Yellow Poplar congregation listed in Howard Miller's summary of the Church of the Brethren in 1882 had become the Hollow Poplar congregation by the time of the first District Meeting of the new North Carolina district in 1902. At that time it had one minister, three deacons, and forty members ac-

66. Yearbooks, 1925-1971; material from Betty Griffith.

ording to the statistical information included with the District Meeting Minutes.⁶⁷ These members were widely scattered in the same type of mountain valleys of Mitchell County described by J. H. Moore in connection with the Brummetts Creek congregation. And this congregation located a short distance outside of the village of Poplar faced most of the same problems which confronted the Brummetts Creek Brethren. Consequently, the history of this congregation runs along lines similar to those already told.

As is true of most of the Carolina Brethren congregations, many dedicated ministers sacrificed generously of their time and talent to provide the leadership which has sustained the Brethren congregation in the Poplar community. Among those ministers who ought to be mentioned are E. Peterson, Robert Willis, J. W. Honeycutt, J. R. Jackson, J. D. Peterson, R. Vance Tipton, S. S. Bryant, A. M. Laughrun, Joseph W. Barnett, Samuel Arrowood, Martin Edwards, Grady Masters, Fred Dancy, G. W. Slagle, Calvin Barnett, Andy Johnson, Henry H. Peterson, and Charles Laws. Along with such visiting evangelists as J. H. Peterson, S. M. Laughrun, H. M. Griffith, R. N. Miller, and Reuel B. Pritchett, the ministers who served as pastors and elders conducted countless evangelistic meetings in the local church and along the highways and byways of western North Carolina. Among the places mentioned in the one year of 1904 were the Byrd Chapel in Yancey County where several of these ministers preached for a week to a crowded house, the Baptist Zion church in Yancey County where S. M. Laughrun and J. H. Peterson preached eight sermons under the direction of the district mission board, and the Ritchie Mountain settlement of fourteen families where E. Peterson preached in the homes. In another year, 1919, it is recorded that E. Peterson and W. M. Honeycutt preached to large crowds at the Bliss school house near the Poplar church, that J. H. Griffith and Vance Tipton conducted a ten

67. Howard Miller, *The Record of the Faithful*, page 30; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1902.

day evangelistic meeting in the Poplar church, and that Peterson and Honeycutt traveled eighteen miles to Fordville, Tennessee for a week of meetings where the Brethren had never held services before.⁶⁸

PETERSONS CHAPEL CONGREGATION

In the early 1920's changes took place in the organizational framework of the Hollow Poplar congregation. J. R. Jackson led out in the establishment of the Petersons Chapel congregation, which was officially organized in 1923. Billy Peterson donated the land on which a new church was erected in 1922; for a number of years down into the middle 1930's the congregation maintained services in the old church north of Poplar as well as in the new church nearer the town.⁶⁹

The new Petersons Chapel congregation began with forty-six members, only a slight increase over the membership of forty in 1902. After 1923 the membership of the Petersons Chapel congregation held a relatively stable pattern in the fifties and sixties for some thirty years; it reached an all-time high of seventy in 1935. Then about 1957 the membership roll took a precipitate drop to thirty-nine. It recovered slightly to forty-three in 1962, but by 1970 it had fallen back to thirty-nine.⁷⁰ That is not enough members on whom to base a very active church program, and the future of one more Carolina congregation hangs in the balance.

PLEASANT GROVE CONGREGATION

Another of the Mitchell County congregations which dates back to the nineteenth century and which was having difficulty

68. *Yearbooks*, 1920-1971; *Gospel Messenger*, September 3, 1904, page 572; April 2, 1904, page 220; November 12, 1904, page 736; February 25, 1919, page 125; March 22, 1919, page 189; September 27, 1919, page 620.

69. *District Meeting Minutes*, 1924; Bert G. Richardson, "Notes on Petersons Chapel." 1958.

70. *Yearbooks*, 1925-1971.

surviving in the last one-third of the twentieth century was Pleasant Grove, located several miles north of Red Hill. The Masters and Herrell families which were largely responsible for the beginning of this Brethren settlement continued to provide much of the leadership in the twentieth century. If the Griffith family from Brummetts Creek is added to the leadership corps, there are indeed relatively few additional ministers who contributed significantly to the Pleasant Grove program. H. M. Griffith was the elder of the congregation for most of the first thirty-five years of the century, and Holt Griffith was the pastor for two years in the 1960's. Hoke H. Masters was the elder for one year in the 1930's, Grady Masters was the elder from 1938 to 1950, Norris Masters was the moderator (a term introduced in the 1950's) from 1956 to 1961, and C. B. Masters became the moderator in 1968 and was serving in that capacity in 1970. Fred Herrell was the pastor from 1941 to 1944 and again from 1948 to 1950, and Bruce Herrell became the moderator in 1961 and continued to serve until 1968. Aside from these three families then, J. R. Jackson, who has been related in some way to most of the Carolina congregations, served as elder for a time in the 1920's and again as a part-time pastor in the 1960's. R. Vance Tipton served terms as elder in the 1920's, the 1930's, and the 1950's. From 1938 to 1940 Fred Dancy was the part-time pastor. In 1952 Philip Zinn became the first full-time pastor, whom the congregation had attempted to support. After his departure for another pastorate in 1956, it was impossible to secure another full-time pastor and Bert G. Richardson served on a part-time basis for two years. Richard A. Smith was a summer pastor on two different occasions in the late 1950's. After an interim, Robert Winkler began a full-time pastorate in 1960 which lasted only five months, however. After two-year pastorates by Holt Griffith and J. R. Jackson, Claud Leslie became the pastor in 1964 and continued to serve until 1970. Holt Griffith accepted the responsibility again in 1970.⁷¹ Thus,

71. *Ibid.*, 1920-1971; Mrs. Etta W. Bryant, "Local Church Historical Data," August 24, 1967.

the Brethren at Pleasant Grove had attempted to provide for their leadership needs across the years both by using local ministers and by bringing in outside ministers.

These various ministers provided some notable evangelistic meetings in this area of Mitchell County. A. M. Laughrun from Tennessee visited in this community frequently. In 1909 he teamed with H. M. Griffith to deliver sixteen sermons which were well attended. He was back periodically in 1921, in 1923, in 1930, and in 1942, according to the available records. J. R. Jackson was also a frequent evangelist at Pleasant Grove beginning in 1919. After holding a number of revival meetings, he was still preaching to the Brethren in this area more than forty years later. Another evangelist who was widely known across the district, W. A. Reed, remained at Pleasant Grove after the District Meeting of 1910 in order to conduct a revival which led to twenty-five baptisms and which strengthened the congregation significantly. Another long-remembered experience from these early years of the century was a revival by Robert G. Edwards of Jonesboro, Tennessee, in which he preached twenty-three sermons that led to eleven baptisms.⁷²

Other individuals who have visited Pleasant Grove in various capacities included S. A. Honberger, who held a series of meetings in 1917 in which many Brethren were deeply stirred, T. S. Moherman, who represented the interests of Daleville College, and Virgil C. Finnell, who was seeking to strengthen the program of Christian education. At about the same time as Finnell's visit in 1919, Clayton B. Miller taught a Bible school in which he met with the children each morning for lessons from the Gospel of Mark and in the evening he discussed the book of Revelation with the adults; it was an "uplifting and inspiring" experience for the congregation. Miller returned in 1920 for another six week Bible school,

72. *Gospel Messenger*, March 13, 1909, page 172; August 27, 1921, page 525; January 13, 1923, page 29; October 25, 1930, page 684; June 13, 1942, page 28; September 20, 1919, page 605; September 17, 1910, page 605; August 17, 1918, page 525.

which also emphasized teacher training. More recent evangelists included I. N. H. Beahm in 1942, Floyd Biddix in 1953, and Russell G. West in 1960.⁷³

In order to have a place for all of these leaders to preach and teach, it was necessary for the Pleasant Grove Brethren to erect a church. In 1901 they opened the new century by beginning work on a church. The members did about all of the work on the structure. It was a wooden building, and the ceiling boards were purchased in Johnson City, Tennessee, shipped to Relief by train, and hauled by wagon to the church site by K. B. Bryant, Don Masters, and Jason Webb. It took some time to get all of this work done and the funds raised, and the church was not completed until 1907. This church served a generation of worshippers for some thirty years, but by the 1930's the congregation had increased in size by fifty per cent and needed more room. Under the leadership of pastor Fred Dancy, the members razed the old church on October 19, 1939 and began work on a new brick church on December 14 of that year. The work was completed by March 16, 1940, and on the following day the congregation met for the first time in its new church for a council meeting under the leadership of elders Grady Masters and R. Vance Tipton. The building committee which had supervised the building of the new church included, in addition to the pastor, Myra Hughes, Andrew Byrd, and Grady Masters. In order to provide more adequately for the fellowship and recreational needs of the community, a small community building was built in 1942 under the leadership of pastor Fred Herrell. A much more adequate building for this purpose was constructed of cement blocks in 1954 which contained a large dining hall and a well-equipped kitchen.⁷⁴ Through these building programs stretching over fifteen years, the Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren had attempted to meet the spiritual needs of its members.

73. *Ibid.*, December 8, 1917, page 789; October 5, 1918, page 636; February 25, 1919, page 125; March 1, 1919, page 141; March 15, 1919, page 173; April 17, 1920, page 253; June 13, 1942, page 28; December 12, 1953, page 32.

74. Mrs. Etta W. Bryant, "Local Church Historical Data," August 24, 1967.

According to the available records, the Pleasant Grove Brethren organized their first Sunday School in March of 1910 with Joe Griffith, one of the ministers of the congregation, as superintendent. This new program developed by ups and downs. In 1919, it received a valuable boost by the previously mentioned visit of Virgil C. Finnell who gave five lectures and suggested ways in which the program might be strengthened. As a result, a teacher training class, a cradle roll, and a home department were added. About a year later, the congregation organized a Christian Workers' meeting, which was a new program just being developed by the Brethren for the young people; J. H. Griffith was selected as the superintendent. Later in that year, George A. Branscom came from Melvin Hill to discuss the educational work of the church; it was reported at this time that the Sunday School was "doing fine and increasing in number." In 1926 it was noted that the Sunday School attendance was seventy, which incidentally was also the total membership of the congregation at that time. The young people continued to be active, for the record shows that in 1930 and again in 1942 (when the group was known as the BYPD--Brethren Young People's Department) they were meeting regularly each Sunday evening. In 1952-1953 the young people sent a representative to the peace essay contest at Camp Carolina and presented a Christmas drama for the congregation.⁷⁵ Certainly, the Sunday School and the youth activities were playing a significant role in the total program of this congregation.

A final insight into the life of the Pleasant Grove congregation is provided by a relatively complete set of congregational council meeting minutes covering the years from 1913 to 1933. Since this is the only congregation for which such minutes are available, they have been examined quite thoroughly. However, it should be understood that the actions

75. *Gospel Messenger*, April 2, 1919, page 221; February 25, 1919, page 125; April 17, 1920, page 253; June 16, 1920, page 381; September 25, 1926, page 621; October 25, 1930, page 684; June 13, 1942, page 28; May 23, 1953, page 32; December 12, 1953, page 32.

at Pleasant Grove were typical of what was taking place in most Brethren congregations during these years and were not distinctive. During these years, the congregational council exerted a rather strict control over the life of the Brethren and membership was withdrawn from offenders. Such action was taken in 1913 and in 1916 for drinking, in 1916 for the wearing of a lady's hat, and in 1919 for some unidentified "trouble." The year 1919 marked the last recorded case of excommunication.⁷⁶

The transition in the church in patterns of dress needs to be examined in greater detail. During the nineteenth century the Annual Meeting discussed the sectarian garb worn by the Brethren on many occasions, so that in 1898 it was reported to the Meeting that there were "seventy-four decisions covering various phases of non-conformity to the world in dress and in adorning the body." The pressure to change the pattern increased steadily in the early years of the twentieth century and a committee was appointed by the Annual Meeting to bring recommendations. The report to the Meeting in 1910 was rejected and a new committee was appointed. This report to the Meeting in 1911 which refused to make the adherence to the pattern of dress a test of membership was accepted by the Meeting. In effect it put affairs into the hands of the local congregation.⁷⁷

At Pleasant Grove and probably in most of the Carolina congregations a rather conservative policy was followed which was reflected in the decisions of the District Meeting during these years. As late as 1919 the District Meeting urged the congregations not to baptize a man who wore a necktie or a woman who wore a hat (rather than a bonnet). Those who were members and who were wearing these forbidden items were to give them up or have their membership taken away: According to a Pleasant Grove decision of November 18, 1919,

76. Pleasant Grove congregational council minutes, March 15, 1913; September 1916; July 14, 1916; November 18, 1919.

77. For a more detailed discussion, see Roger E. Sappington, *Brethren Social Policy, 1908-1958* (Elgin: The Brethren Press, 1961), pages 21-22, 30-31.

“Our Elder submits a proposition. That the ones that are wearing these things be visited and ask them if they would rather have their membership and come to the rules, or continue to wear these and go out. The Church accepts the proposition.” This rather blunt proposition seems to have been accepted by the erring members who generally took the position that “if she is wearing any thing the church objects to she will lay it off.” The records do not indicate that any of the Pleasant Grove Brethren were put out of the congregation as the result of this 1919 decision. The congregational historian, Mrs. Etta W. Bryant, summarized the whole matter very well when she wrote: “From the time the church was organized all members were supposed to live according to the rules of the Church of the Brethren, until in 1922 they dropped the dress question; now no one is dealt with for any wrong deed they do.”⁷⁸

The congregational council meeting also took a positive role of trying to settle difficulties between Brethren, since the Brethren believed that they ought to keep their difficulties within the group rather than taking them to court. In 1913 the congregation appointed a committee which settled a case of trespassing. In 1919 a very difficult situation involving two ministers in the congregation developed out of a dispute over a line fence and the movement of some logs through another person's property. The procedure followed was according to Matthew 18: First, the two people involved should try to work it out; then, if that failed, a third person should be called in; and finally, the congregation should settle it. After the first two steps had failed to reach an agreement in this case, a four-man committee appointed by the council worked out a compromise. Even then it took most of another year to get everyone's feelings calmed down, so that the two men could go

78. District Meeting Minutes, 1919-1920; Pleasant Grove congregational council minutes, November 18, 1919; April, 1920; Mrs. Etta W. Bryant, "Local Church Historical Data," August 24, 1967.

to the Love Feast together.⁷⁹ After all, the Brethren were human beings with feelings and emotions like everyone else.

The annual Love Feast was a great experience for the Brethren, involving the washing of each other's feet, the eating of a meal together, and the partaking of the bread and the cup, as Jesus Christ had done with his disciples in the upper room on the last evening before his crucifixion. For many years stretching back into the nineteenth century, the Brethren had gathered on Saturday for this special service. To illustrate, in 1933 at 2:00 on Saturday afternoon, October 14, "the Bro. and Sisters of the Pleasant Grove church met for their annual 'Love Feast.' Devotional by Bro. H. H. Masters. Br. Fred Harrell and Elder J. H. Griffith conducted the examination service. There were 33 Sisters & Brethren surrounded the tables and carried out the meeting in the usual way."⁸⁰ The examination service was a significant aspect of the total experience, which the Brethren did not take lightly. In 1919, in the midst of all of the difficulty of that year, the Brethren had two special called council meetings to get things "in shape" for the annual fall Love Feast.

Like most of the Carolina Brethren congregations, the number of members in the Pleasant Grove congregation has fluctuated considerably during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century. From the sixty members recorded in 1902 the number had increased very slowly to seventy by 1925. From that date the membership increased more rapidly in the next few years reaching an all-time high of one hundred twelve in 1932. During the following year the congregation lost thirty-five members, dropping the total membership to seventy-seven. That was the low, however, for at least another quarter of a century, and by 1951 the membership had again gone over a hundred to one hundred three. That figure was evidently too high to hold permanently, and by 1960 the

79. Pleasant Grove congregational council minutes, March 15, 1919; April 19, 1919; June 21, 1919; October 1, 1919.

80. *Ibid.*, October 14, 1933.

number had fallen to thirty-five. After dropping by fifty-three in three years, the number shot up by twenty-four in one year to fifty-nine. After reaching sixty-seven in 1964, the membership had again fallen off to thirty by 1970. Mrs. Bryant summarized the outlook rather pessimistically in 1967: "We are decreasing in membership with no prospect of gaining members, because as our young people finish high school they go to college and then to some other place or town to find jobs."⁸¹ After maintaining a significant witness in its community during much of the twentieth century, the Pleasant Grove Church of the Brethren was finding it increasingly difficult to survive in the last one-third of the century.

BETHEL CONGREGATION

As far as the records go, the Bethel congregation in neighboring Yancey County is virtually unknown today. According to the statistical record in the 1902 District Meeting Minutes, this congregation had fifty members led by three ministers and two deacons. E. Peterson and R. N. Willis from Mitchell County visited the Bethel Brethren in October, 1908, and Peterson preached on Saturday evening and on Sunday. During the visit they conducted a communion at the home of an ill sister. One of the local ministers of this congregation was Joel Hensley, who visited a Brummetts Creek council meeting in 1911. Another minister was John Willis who was the presiding elder in 1920 and continued until the disorganization of the congregation. The exact date is not clear, but the congregation was not listed in the roster at the 1924 District Meeting or in the Yearbook of 1925. The district mission board reported receiving fifty dollars for the sale of the Bethel

81. Yearbooks, 1929-1971; Mrs. Etta Bryant, Local Church Historical Data," August 24, 1967.

church in 1926.⁸² Thus ended the quarter of a century or so of life of this congregation in mountainous western North Carolina.

BAILEY CONGREGATION

During the 1890's the Brummetts Creek ministers had begun to preach regularly at the Bailey school house some three miles west of Relief in Mitchell County. This activity continued in the twentieth century under the leadership of the Hollow Poplar congregation. For example, in August, 1906 H. M. Griffith and A. M. Laughrun held a week of meetings as a result of which thirteen were added to the fellowship in the Bailey school house community. Evidently, by 1911-1912 the group of Brethren had grown sufficiently to merit the organization of a new congregation, which took its place at the District Meeting of 1912 for the first time. At that time it had about thirty-five members. In December of 1912 Joseph H. Griffith and H. H. Masters conducted nine days of meetings which resulted in seven baptisms. A Sunday School had been organized with H. H. Peterson as superintendent and an enrollment of fifty-eight. Also, the congregation was building a new church to replace the school house which had been used for more than fifteen years.⁸³ Apparently, the young congregation was off to an encouraging start.

J. R. Jackson contributed significantly to the life of the Bailey congregation during the 1920's. He conducted at least three series of evangelistic meetings in 1921 and in 1926 which resulted in at least twenty baptisms and a number reclaimed for the church, and he also served as elder of the congregation from 1922 to 1930. Among the many ministers who have served the Bailey Church of the Brethren since 1930 were Joseph H.

82. *Ibid.*, 1919-1925; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1902, 1924, 1926; *Gospel Messenger*, December 12, 1908, page 809; September 23, 1911, page 605.

83. *Gospel Messenger*, August 25, 1906, page 540; January 11, 1913, page 29; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1912-1913.

Griffith, S. S. Bryant, Jonas D. Peterson, R. Vance Tipton, J. W. Honeycutt, Carl Welch, Grady Masters, Holt E. Griffith, Theodore R. Arrowood, Calvin Barnett, and Lynell Peterson.⁸⁴

Under the combined leadership of the first eight of these ministers, the Bailey congregation grew rather steadily to forty-five in 1925, to fifty-five in 1930, to sixty-six in 1935, and to seventy-seven in 1940. Then in 1945 the membership dropped by almost fifty per cent to forty. This re-evaluation of the membership roll seemed to serve as a stimulant to the congregation and the membership again began to increase, reaching sixty in 1950, and an all-time high of seventy-eight in 1956. In 1957 the membership dropped again to fifty-two, in spite of the fact that fourteen people were baptized into the congregation that year; thus, the gross loss was forty people or fifty per cent. As is true of the Brethren congregations in Mitchell County in general, the membership at Bailey continued to drop and reached forty-four in 1962.⁸⁵

In 1962 the Bailey congregation joined three of its neighbors in withdrawing from the Church of the Brethren to form a new denomination known as the Fundamental Brethren. This situation had been developing in the district for a number of years. As early as 1956 the resolutions committee brought to the District Meeting a strongly worded statement on "Unity in the Church," which began: "We recognize that there are many influences in our world that tend to divide or disunite people. There are many philosophies of life and religion. To believe in all of these is to invite confusion and division." The statement concluded with this resolution: "Therefore, in order to promote and maintain unity among our churches, we shall strive for the faith of our fathers as interpreted by the Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren."⁸⁶

The District Meeting of 1957 attempted to clarify matters

84. *Ibid.*, July 23, 1921, page 445; March 13, 1926, page 173; October 9, 1926, page 652; *Yearbooks*, 1920-1963.

85. *Yearbooks*, 1920-1963.

86. *District Meeting Minutes*, 1956.

by approving a lengthy statement on what it meant to be a congregation in the Church of the Brethren. Included was a fine statement on the peace position of the church, which recognized the importance of one's conscience as the final authority. This action evidently did not settle the matter, and in 1959 the District Meeting approved a recommendation from the elders body of the district that a committee of five elders be appointed to "visit the churches that are not sending delegates to the District Conf.," and "visit the ministers and elders who are not attending District Conf." The dissatisfaction of several of the congregations in Mitchell County simmered for several years and finally boiled over in 1962 when four congregations with one hundred forty-one members "pulled out of the district and chartered a new denomination called the Fundamental Brethren." The leader of this movement was Calvin Barnett, who was serving as the pastor of all four of the congregations. In addition, a recently licensed minister, Joe Brown, went with him. The elders body which had carried on the negotiations with these congregations concluded "that everything possible was done to keep the churches in the district, but our efforts failed."⁸⁷ Perhaps, with this much dissatisfaction among these four congregations, it was just as well that their influence was removed from the district, although such a small district could ill afford to lose four congregations and one hundred forty-one members.

PIGEON RIVER CONGREGATION

The largest of these four congregations that had fallen under the influence of militant Fundamentalism by 1963 was Pigeon River, located some two and one-half miles north of Relief. Matison Griffith organized this congregation in April of 1912 with Charlie Barnett, Solomon Barnett, and Paul Barnett

87. *Ibid.*, 1957, 1959, 1962.

as deacons. In 1914 the Pigeon River Brethren built a church on land given by Levi Edwards. Built of wood with a metal roof, the church was a comfortable twenty-six by thirty-six feet. Seven windows provided ventilation and the single door was entered by five wooden steps. The church was heated in the winter by a stove located in the center of the church. The Sunday School which met in this church was directed by Charlie Barnett.⁸⁸

Other ministers of this congregation in addition to Matison Griffith included John Willis, J. R. Jackson, R. Vance Tipton, J. D. Peterson, S. S. Bryant, Grady Masters, Joseph W. Barnett, Samuel Griffith, Holt E. Griffith, Lynell Peterson, Calvin Barnett, and Joe Brown. Under their leadership, the Pigeon River congregation grew rather steadily until 1955 when it had an all-time high of eighty-five members. During the following year thirty-seven members were removed from the membership roll. From forty-eight the number increased to seventy-seven in three years, but then dropped back to fifty-five in 1962, when the congregation led out in withdrawing from the Church of the Brethren.⁸⁹

UPPER BRUMMETTS CREEK CONGREGATION

The third of these dissident congregations was organized in 1930 and called Upper Brummetts Creek. It was located about one-half mile north of Relief. The congregation began with a membership of forty-five under the leadership of R. Vance Tipton. Others who contributed to the leadership of these Brethren were J. H. Griffith, M. E. Bradshaw, Holt E. Griffith, Fred Herrell, Grady Masters, Andrew L. Yelton, Calvin Barnett, and Andy Johnson. The membership increased under their leadership quite steadily for the first fifteen years and reached seventy-six in 1945. From that point,

88. Mrs. George Barnett, "Local Church Historical Data," no date.

89. Yearbooks, 1920-1963.

it began to decrease, reaching thirty-eight by 1954. Instead of continuing to decrease, the number jumped back to fifty-nine by 1958. Then a drastic cut caused by the movement of many of the members who wanted to remain loyal to the Church of the Brethren to the Lower Brummetts Creek congregation reduced the membership to twenty-eight in one year, and that is where it stood in 1963.⁹⁰

BEREA CONGREGATION

The fourth and last of these congregations was known as Berea, and was the work almost entirely of H. H. Masters. Some time around 1930 he began to preach in the Cub Creek school house one mile north of Bakersville. In December of 1930 he held a series of meetings in this school which resulted in twelve baptisms. The report added that the Brethren were hardly known in this community. After there had been additional baptisms a congregation was organized in 1932 with twenty-one charter members, and H. H. Masters as the pastor and elder. When the Mitchell County authorities wanted to sell the school house in 1937, Masters bought it for the use of the Brethren. He continued as the leader of the congregation until 1950 when he was succeeded by Holt E. Griffith. Calvin Barnett became the pastor in 1952 and was still serving in that position in 1962. The congregation never had more than its original twenty-one members, and in 1962 it had fourteen, making it the smallest of the four congregations of Fundamental Brethren. It was not able to survive the changed status and by 1970 it had closed its doors.⁹¹

Altogether, the Brethren established eight congregations in Mitchell and Yancey counties. By 1968 only three of them continued to be related to the Church of the Brethren:

90. *Ibid.*; material from Betty Griffith.

91. *Gospel Messenger*, January 31, 1931, page 24; *Yearbooks*, 1933-1963; Virgie M. McKinney, "Local Church Historical Data," no date; material from Betty Griffith.

Brummetts Creek, Petersons Chapel, and Pleasant Grove. One had been disorganized in the 1920's and four had withdrawn from the Church of the Brethren in 1962. These four took more Brethren with them in 1962 than the three remaining congregations had in 1970. These three have been declining in membership, for in 1962 when the split occurred, they had more than the departing four. The future for the Church of the Brethren in the Mitchell County area does not seem very hopeful in 1970. The economic problems are overwhelming, and most of the ambitious youth are leaving the area. Without their leadership, it is very difficult to maintain an attractive church program, which also encourages them to leave the area. Without people, there can be no church.

POLK COUNTY

MILL CREEK CONGREGATION

The Mill Creek congregation under the leadership of George A. Branscom entered the new century with one hundred forty members in 1902, which was more than twice as many as the other congregations in the district except Flat Rock with seventy-four and Brummetts Creek with eighty-five. To guide the activities of this many Brethren, there were two elders, two ministers, and eight deacons, which was also a larger number than any other congregation in the district.⁹² Indeed, the future looked promising for the Brethren in the Polk County area along the North Carolina-South Carolina line, and in fact, this area has become the only area in the state to fulfill to a marked degree that promising future.

The reports for the year 1902 at Mill Creek indicated that the congregation had had a year round Sunday School for the past several years. At this time, many Brethren congregations across the country were attempting to make the transition

92. District Meeting Minutes, 1902.

from a Sunday School that met only during the winter months to a year-round program. Also, the Mill Creek Brethren were using Brethren literature in their Sunday School, which was not true of all Brethren congregations. Also, according to this report, worship services with preaching were being conducted every Sunday morning at the Mill Creek church and every Sunday evening at the school house in Melvin Hill, several miles south of Mill Creek. As far as the records reveal, these were the only places in the district with preaching services every Sunday. It may well be that such a program could not be maintained with the free ministerial staff in Polk County, for the schedule of preaching appointments in the district published by the District Meeting of 1903 indicated that Mill Creek was having monthly services on the first Sunday of each month.⁹³

In August of 1902, James M. Neff of Morristown, Tennessee, held a ten day evangelistic meeting, during which he preached in the morning at Mill Creek and in the evening at Melvin Hill with good attendance at both places. During the spring of 1903 Neff returned to Polk County to work for several weeks as a home missionary in the various neighboring communities. His itinerary began with the Huntley settlement in Rutherford County, where he held fourteen meetings. Evidently, his work must have borne some fruit, for a history of Mill Creek written in 1960 by Ethel H. Masters mentioned the "Huntley Church (now deceased)" as a descendant of Mill Creek. However, no further records of this group of Brethren have been preserved. From the Huntley settlement, Neff went to Forest City, where he sought a home in which to hold meetings; after being rebuffed in the first three homes that he visited, he was successful in the fourth and ended up successfully reporting a good attendance at his meeting. He then traveled to Caroleen, still in Rutherford County, where he was permitted to hold services in the Methodist church. Among his efforts in this community was the distribution of Brethren

93. *Gospel Messenger*, March 8, 1902, page 155; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1903.

literature at the gate of the cotton mill as the people were departing from work. Finally, he held two services in the Baptist church in Henrietta, a couple of miles down the road from Caroleen. Neff noted in concluding his report that all of the members in these scattered communities were members of the Mill Creek congregation.⁹⁴ Certainly, that congregation was maintaining an active Brethren evangelistic program in this area of the Carolinas.

That the Mill Creek congregation was very much interested in spreading the Gospel as the Brethren understood it was demonstrated not only in the work of James M. Neff but also in various other reports from these early years of the century. For example, at a congregational council in April, 1903 enough money was raised to "inclose a house of worship"; as a result a church was being built at an unidentified mission point in Rutherford County, possibly in the Huntley settlement. In the late summer of 1904 John C. Woodie conducted a series of evangelistic meetings at a mission point located on the state line between North and South Carolina, quite probably in the area that eventually became the Brooklyn congregation. The meetings were well attended and resulted in four baptisms. These meetings were followed by twelve days of meetings in the Mill Creek church which led to five people being baptized and one person being reclaimed. In the winter of 1905-1906 J. D. Clark and N. N. Garst held meetings first at Mill Creek and then moved to the new Brooklyn church, which was nearly enough finished that it could be used for meetings.⁹⁵

All of these evangelistic activities led to both an increase and a proliferation of membership. By 1906 it had become desirable to divide the Mill Creek congregation, and in August two new congregations were organized: The Melvin Hill congregation began at a council meeting on August 8 with

94. *Ibid.*, September 20, 1902, page 606; May 23, 1903, page 333.

95. *Ibid.*, April 25, 1903, page 269; September 24, 1904, page 621; October 22, 1904, page 685; December 2, 1905, page 773.

fifty-five members, one elder, one minister, and seven deacons. The Brooklyn congregation became the only Church of the Brethren in South Carolina at the time of its organization on August 9; it had forty-eight members led by one elder and five deacons. Unfortunately, the record does not reveal the membership and leadership remaining in the Mill Creek congregation after the division.⁹⁶ Quite likely, the remaining Mill Creek membership was in the forties or fifties, and the congregation was being divided into three roughly equal congregations. In the light of the spread-out nature of the congregation and the transportation facilities of the first decade of the twentieth century, such a division was a desirable step to take.

The leadership of the Mill Creek congregation has been provided by a number of capable ministers, beginning with George A. Branscom who served as the elder continuously down to 1922. W. A. Reed was the pastor and elder on three different occasions: from 1922 to 1924, from 1929 to 1932, and from 1937 to 1944. J. K. West provided the leadership from 1924 to 1929, A. M. Laughrun was the pastor and elder from 1932 to 1934, and S. Loren Bowman, who was later to spend a number of years on the brotherhood staff, because the first professionally trained pastor in 1934 and continued for three years at Mill Creek. In the 1940's, Fred Dancy served from 1944 to 1946, followed by Galen Crist from 1946 to 1948 and Calvin C. Kurtz from 1948 to 1952. Philip Zinn was the pastor of both Pleasant Grove in Mitchell County and Mill Creek in Polk County from 1953 to 1955. Bert G. Richardson served for one year, after which Kurtz began another four years as pastor of the Mill Creek Brethren. Charles F. Rinehart came from Tennessee in 1960 to become the Mill Creek pastor, a position in which he continued for six years. From 1966 to 1968 Robert L. Rowe was the pastor of the congregation. In the fall of 1968 Vernon Wilkins transferred from New Haven to Mill Creek to replace Rowe. Down to the time of Kurtz' arrival in 1948, the

96. *Ibid.*, August 18, 1906, page 524.

pastor had also been the elder. In 1948-1949 Grady Masters served for one year as elder, after which Kurtz became the presiding elder. Then in 1951 the congregation elected its first lay moderator, B. E. Hinsdale, Jr., who continued to serve through the pastorates of Zinn, Kurtz, Rinehart, and Rowe. In 1968 Bruce Edwards succeeded Hinsdale as moderator.⁹⁷

In addition to the faithful efforts of these individuals, a number of visiting evangelists have contributed to the program of the congregation. In August of 1925, H. J. Woodie of Winston-Salem was present for a week of meetings. Two years later the popular A. M. Laughrun came from Tennessee to deliver eighteen messages to a large audience; as a result six young people were baptized. In August of 1933 M. Guy West held a revival which was followed by the baptism of twelve young people and was considered the greatest revival in the past twenty-five years at Mill Creek in terms of the number of accessions. Melvin C. Shull was the evangelist in August, 1936; in the mornings he delivered lectures on the home and family life, and in the evening he conducted a revival which led to ten baptisms. In 1942, M. G. Wilson held a series of meetings which featured a chalk talk on a Bible lesson before the sermon each evening.⁹⁸

The Mill Creek Brethren also developed other types of programs to encourage the growth of the spiritual life of the members. In 1928 the congregation held the first Vacation Bible School in this section of the district under the direction of F. C. Rohrer, who had introduced this type of activity into the Ashe County congregations in 1926. Seventy-five children were enrolled in this school in 1928 with an average attendance of forty-six. Also, an active young people's organization was established in cooperation with the young people from Melvin Hill; in September, 1933 under the leadership of Donald Gilbert, president, and Lois Horne, secretary, these youth held

97. *Yearbooks*, 1920-1971; material from Bert G. Richardson.

98. *Gospel Messenger*, September 5, 1925, page 576; September 3, 1927, page 573; September 23, 1933, page 29; September 12, 1936, page 29; October 3, 1942, page 28.

an outing, involving a picnic supper and vespers. In 1935 they sponsored a leadership training class taught by the pastor, S. Loren Bowman. As part of their training, each student was in charge of an evening worship service. In 1940 the Mill Creek young people presented an inspiring Christmas program of carols and scripture.⁹⁹ In many and various ways the children and young people were contributing their share to the total life of the congregation.

One of the important events of the early 1960's at Mill Creek was the building of a new church. C. C. Kurtz had gotten a building fund started while he was the pastor in the 1950's and had provided the initial enthusiasm for the project. Charles F. Rinehart, the pastor after 1960, provided the final push necessary to complete the program in 1962. The church was built by a contractor who was a member of the church; he was able to save the congregation thousands of dollars on the project. The very attractive new church was dedicated in May, 1962 by a former pastor, S. Loren Bowman.

The membership records of the Mill Creek congregation reveal a rather steady growth during the years of the twentieth century. There have been a few sharp drops in membership but the trend has been clearly in the direction of an increase. Although the congregation had one hundred forty members in 1902, the division of 1906 had reduced that number to about one-third. There followed a long period of leveling off, and by 1925 the membership stood at fifty-one. Then the membership began to increase steadily and by 1938 it had reached eighty-five. Ten years later it was eighty-four, although it had reached a high of ninety-seven in 1947. In 1949 the membership jumped up to one hundred, and although it dropped to ninety-five in 1953, it went up to one hundred thirty in 1954. From this new high, it fell to one hundred three in 1955, indicating some strangely erratic behavior. During the pastorate of Charles F. Rinehart from 1960 to 1966 the mem-

99. *Ibid.*, August 25, 1928, page 548; September 23, 1933, page 29; June 8, 1935, page 27; January 18, 1941, page 31.

bership increased steadily from one hundred sixteen to one hundred forty-seven, the all-time high. In 1970 it stood at one hundred forty-three, which represented a very considerable gain in the forty-five years since 1925.¹⁰⁰ Certainly, the Brethren of the Mill Creek congregation had prospered mightily during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, and the future in 1970 seemed brighter for this group of Brethren than for most of the Carolina Churches of the Brethren.

GREEN RIVER COVE CONGREGATION

The Green River Cove congregation which the Brethren organized in the western part of Polk County near Saluda in 1880 did not flourish but withered on the vine and died. From a membership of twenty-one in 1882, the number had fallen almost in half to twelve during the next twenty years. The membership continued to decline and by 1925 it was seven. The original leadership of E. J. Bradley and Samuel Jones continued to serve actively well into the twentieth century. Also, Joel Sherfy served as pastor for a number of years in the 1910's and the 1920's in an effort to revive the congregation. All of these elders' efforts were in vain, however, and in the 1930's the congregation ceased to exist. In 1938 it was dropped from the *Yearbook* with a final membership of five, and in 1942 it was dropped from the roster of congregations in the District Meeting Minutes.¹⁰¹

BROOKLYN CONGREGATION

The available records for the Brooklyn Church of the Brethren across the line in South Carolina are very sketchy and do not explain many of the events in that congregation's history. It has already been pointed out that the Brethren were

100. *Yearbooks*, 1925-1971; material from Bert G. Richardson.

101. *Ibid.*, 1920-1938.

baptizing people in this area during the 1890's and that in 1906 a congregation was organized with forty-eight charter members, which was about the average size of the congregations in the district at that time.¹⁰² Who the elder of the congregation at that time was is not clear, but in 1920 Samuel Jones was serving in this capacity. In 1922 he was succeeded by George A. Branscom, the spiritual father of all of the congregations in this area. Evidently, the congregation had been declining steadily, for it was dropped from the *Yearbook* in 1924 and from the District Meeting roster in 1925. In 1926 the District Meeting heard a report that the Brooklyn church had been sold for two hundred dollars.¹⁰³

From the available evidence, one would assume that another Carolina congregation had declined steadily until there were no members left and then was disorganized as had just happened at Green River Cove. However, quite surprisingly, in 1943, the District Meeting heard another report that the Brooklyn congregation had "decided that we would like to be admitted back into the North and South Carolina district." Without further comment in the *Minutes*, the request was granted. The *Yearbook* for 1944 included the Brooklyn Church of the Brethren with one hundred thirty-nine members and W. A. Reed as elder.¹⁰⁴

After one year Reed was succeeded by J. F. Davis as pastor, although Reed continued as elder until 1952. By 1946 the membership had dropped sharply from one hundred thirty-six to eighty and then two years later it was down to sixty. Although the membership rose again to seventy-three in 1953, it then began to decline and reached a low of fifty-three in 1957. During the 1950's and early 1960's the congregation was served by several student ministers from the Fundamentalist school, Bob Jones University, at Greenville, South Carolina, including Gene Fisher, Roland Rasmussen, and James McCoy. In ad-

102. See above, page 117, pages 184-185.

103. *Yearbooks*, 1920-1924; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1925-1926.

104. *Ibid.*, 1944; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1943.

dition, at least two Brethren ministers from other congregations, Holt E. Griffith and Andrew Yelton, served as pastor or elder of the Brooklyn congregation. Evidently, the Brooklyn Brethren were being strongly influenced by the ideas of Fundamentalism during the 1950's and this congregation should be included with the four dissatisfied congregations in the Mitchell County area; in 1962 when they withdrew from the district to incorporate a new church, the Brooklyn congregation also withdrew to go its own separate way. According to the report of the elders body: "Also, through friendly negotiations, the Brooklyn church was released. To be removed from the district was the desire of the members of the Brooklyn Church as 18 members signed a petition to withdraw from the district and there were no signatures to remain in the district." The 1963 Yearbook which recorded the withdrawal noted a loss of fifty-three members in this transaction, indicating the possibility that a minority of the membership had taken the congregation out of the district. Of course, on the other hand there may not have been more than eighteen active members remaining by 1962.¹⁰⁵ At any rate, this action completed the loss of five congregations with nearly two hundred members in one year, representing one-fifth of the congregations and one-sixth of the membership.

MELVIN HILL CONGREGATION

In contrast to the failures of the Green River Cove and Brooklyn Churches of the Brethren, the Melvin Hill congregation has generally been the strongest Church of the Brethren in the district since its organization in 1906. Under the leadership of George A. Branscom it grew during its first twenty years from fifty-five members to one hundred thirty-five members in 1925, which made it the only congregation in the district with more than one hundred members. This

105. *Ibid.*, 1945-1963; District Meeting Minutes, 1962.

growth was made possible primarily by a concentrated program of evangelistic meetings. Among the evangelists who visited Melvin Hill during these years were J. V. Felthouse from Elkhart, Indiana in 1902, James M. Neff in 1903, J. C. Woodie in 1904, Henry Sheets, S. M. Laughrun, and A. M. Laughrun in 1905, W. A. Reed in 1909, J. V. Felthouse again in 1915, S. A. Honberger in 1917, R. G. Edwards and Clayton B. Miller in 1918, and R. G. Edwards again in 1922.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps the meetings by W. A. Reed in 1909 were especially noteworthy because as a result twenty-nine people were baptized and six were reclaimed. Also, a number of these evangelists held meetings at the Mill Creek church, at the Brooklyn church, and at other outposts of the congregation in the surrounding counties.

Another development which contributed to the growth of the Melvin Hill congregation during these twenty years was the building of a church. The earliest Brethren meetings in the Melvin Hill community were held in a school house which had been built by George A. Branscom, who also hired the teacher. One of the early teachers was Samuel Jones, who also made a significant contribution as a Brethren elder. When the school house was built and when Branscom began to preach in it cannot be determined from the available records, but it must have been around the turn of the century. By the end of the first decade of the new century, the school house was no longer adequate for the needs of the growing congregation and work was begun on a church, which was completed in 1914.¹⁰⁷

One of the interesting problems of this era which demonstrated the transitional nature of the Church of the Brethren in the 1920's was the desire on the part of some Brethren to introduce musical instruments into the churches. In 1921 the question was raised at Melvin Hill. "A heated discussion took place with the vote saying no instruments."

106. *Gospel Messenger*, May 17, 1902, page 316; January 3, 1903, page 12; October 22, 1904, page 685; March 18, 1905, page 176; October 16, 1909, page 669; October 23, 1915, page 688; November 3, 1917, page 700; September 21, 1918, page 605; March 4, 1922, page 141.

107. "History of the Melvin Hill Church of the Brethren," 1965, page 3.

The matter was taken to the floor of the District Meeting: "The Melvin Hill congregation asks the District Meeting of 1921 whether it is right for a congregation to introduce the organ into the church where it disturbs the peace of the congregation." The District Meeting answered that "it is not right, according to the Decision of Annual Conference of 1920, page 12, Art. 3, 'Musical Instruments in Churches.'" Of course, this decision did not put the matter to rest permanently and the agitation continued. Five years later in 1926, the Melvin Hill congregation again asked the District Meeting for a "ruling in regard to the use of musical instruments in church worship." No new Annual Conference decisions had changed the picture, but other pressures were obviously at work. This time the District Meeting spelled out its answer and the supporting reasoning in more detail: "We regard it unscriptural, without precept or example by Christ, the apostles, and the early church, and that it is detrimental to congregational singing and often leads to levity and is often used for entertainment; therefore, we advise our churches not to use them and decide that A. M. Minutes must be observed in regard to musical instruments."

The District Meeting decision on musical instruments should have quieted the issue for quite a time to come, but when there are persistent agitators for change, change is almost inevitable sooner or later. In this case it was sooner, for only two years later in 1928 "an organ was brought in [to the Melvin Hill church] and a vote kept it in." This action must have been one of those which caused the congregational historians to write in 1965: "According to the living charter members, no political campaigns in the Melvin Hill congregation ever got more colorful than some of those early voting campaigns. Issues were heatedly discussed, almost came to blows at times, and members went out to get votes any way they could."

Not only was the action concerning an organ heatedly discussed in the local congregation before a decision was

made, but the elders of the district also were upset enough that they brought a strong recommendation to the floor of the District Meeting of 1930:

Inasmuch as Annual Meeting has advised that churches do not use musical instruments where they disturb the peace of the congregation (Revised Minutes of A. M., p. 160), and our District says it is not right (District Minutes, 1921), and our District Meeting says, "We advise our churches not to use them," and decide that A. M. Minutes must be observed in regard to musical instruments (See District Meeting Minutes, 1926),

Therefore, we, the elders of North and South Carolina District of the Church of the Brethren, in session at New Haven church, Aug. 21-24, 1930, decide that Melvin Hill church had no right to put an organ in their church, and that they must take it out. We refer this decision to the delegates of this conference for confirmation.

In one of those very rare instances in which the delegates at a North and South Carolina District Meeting rejected the recommendation of the elders of the church, "After a lengthy discussion this paper was rejected."¹⁰⁸ As far as the records go, this decision settled the matter in the Melvin Hill congregation and in the district as a whole, although other individual congregations were still permitted to make their own decisions regarding musical instruments.

During the first twenty years of its development as an independent congregation, Melvin Hill carried out quite a variety of programs to encourage the spiritual growth of its members. In addition to the numerous evangelistic meetings, the Brethren held special Thanksgiving services in 1913 at the recommendation of the District Meeting. W. A. Reed gave a message based on the fifth chapter of First Thessalonians a number of hymns were sung (without an organ by the way), and an offering of thirteen dollars was collected for missions; in addition Etta Branscom solicited ten dollars and thirty

108. *Ibid.*, pages 2-3; District Meeting Minutes, 1921, 1926, 1930.

cents for Mary Waters, a blind and ill sister at Golden who had no money with which to pay her doctor. In July of 1916 the Sunday School sponsored an all-day children's day program which included recitations by the children and young people in the morning, a picnic lunch on the grounds, and several talks by the adults in the afternoon. One of the most significant annual events was the Love Feast in the fall of the year, which was preceded by the yearly visit by the deacons to all of the members to discover whether they were still in peace and harmony with the church. Then a congregational council was held to hear the report of the visit and to prepare for the Love Feast. On October 29, 1915 some seventy Brethren, which was considered a large attendance, gathered for the second Love Feast in the new church under the guidance of George A. Branscom, assisted by W. A. Reed and Samuel Jones.¹⁰⁹

In addition to such special events, the Melvin Hill Brethren engaged in various Christian education programs. During the winter of 1917-1918, a group engaged in a mission class using the book *Christian Heroism in Heathen Lands* by Galen B. Royer as a study guide. During the following winter of 1918-1919 the world wide influenza epidemic closed the church's doors for a time in an effort to keep people from gathering together; in fact, five young people in the Melvin Hill community died from the flu. In September of 1919 Laura Gwin Swadley visited Melvin Hill under the direction of the General Sunday School Board to encourage the development of a more comprehensive Sunday School program. As a result a home department, a cradle roll, and a teacher training class were organized. During that winter Clayton B. Miller conducted a Bible School for several weeks which included two sessions each day. Also, I. J. Rosenberger, one of the best-known evangelists in the church, stopped at Melvin Hill to preach three sermons before continuing his journey to Florida.¹¹⁰

109. *Gospel Messenger*, December 13, 1913, page 799; August 12, 1916, page 524; November 13, 1915, pages 733, 736.

110. *Ibid.*, December 22, 1917, page 824; May 3, 1919, page 285; September 27, 1919, page 620; December 27, 1919, page 829; February 14, 1920, page 112.

Another individual who contributed significantly to the leadership of the Melvin Hill congregation in addition to George A. Branscom was W. A. Reed, who served as elder on several different occasions, most recently in 1948-1949. The congregational historians summarized his contribution when they wrote, that he "came and went and worked as fill-in pastor." Indeed, he contributed to the life of most of the Carolina congregations and also worked for a time outside of the district. Other individuals of this type who served as elder of the congregation included J. K. West, A. M. Laughrun, and S. I. Driver from Lima, Ohio, who wintered in this community because of his health.

In 1934 the congregation took a significant step in securing S. Loren Bowman jointly with Mill Creek as the first professionally trained pastor in the congregation's history. After his resignation in 1937 the congregation went back to the system of non-salaried ministers for several years until 1943 when Fred Dancy spent one year in the community. After two more years without a regular pastor, Galen Crist arrived in 1946 and remained for two years. He was succeeded in 1948 by Calvin C. Kurtz, who served as pastor until 1952, when Earl Dietz replaced him. After three years, Bert G. Richardson, who lived in the Ashe County area of the district one hundred fifty miles away served for three years as an interim pastor. Then in 1958 Andrew Yelton who had been the elder since 1952 agreed to fill another interim pastorate for the congregation. In 1960 Charles F. Rinehart was secured as the joint pastor of the Melvin Hill and Mill Creek congregations. He continued as the pastor at Melvin Hill for ten years until 1970. Since 1959 the Melvin Hill congregation has had lay moderators as presiding officers, including Jack Scruggs, Henry Wyant, Buford Johnson, and Wayne Huntley.¹¹¹ Each of these individuals helped to continue the work begun by George A. Branscom in the Polk County area of North Carolina.

111. Yearbooks, 1920-1971; "History of the Melvin Hill Church of the Brethren," pages 2-4.

During the years since 1925 Melvin Hill has profited from the efforts of many evangelists, who contributed significantly to the growth of the congregation. In 1927 Harper Snively from Shamokin, Pennsylvania preached twelve sermons and baptized five, and in 1928 L. A. Bowman from Boones Mill, Virginia preached nineteen sermons to an overflow crowd. Even though the church held four hundred, there were many who could not get in; as a result nineteen were baptized and six were reclaimed, and the congregation was generally strengthened and revived. H. W. Peters from Leaksville, North Carolina, who was the pastor of the Spray congregation in the Southern Virginia district, was the evangelist in 1929, and in 1930 A.M. Laughrun conducted the meetings. In 1931 E. C. Woodie packed the house again through fifteen sermons, which led to twenty-six baptisms; it was considered one of the most successful meetings in Melvin Hill's history. For the first time in its history the membership went over two hundred. The next year J. W. Rogers from Sebring, Florida filled the church again for two weeks and twelve were baptized. In 1933 M. Guy West conducted the annual revival, and in 1934 I. S. Long preached to large crowds for most of two weeks. After a gap in the records, the evangelist in 1941 was M. J. Wilson of Cloverdale, Virginia, and in 1942 M. Guy West returned for another series of meetings. F. C. Rohrer, who had lived in the district in the 1920's, was the evangelist in 1945. More recently, in the 1960's, S. Earl Mitchell, B. J. Wampler, Roland Wine, Donad Rowe, Carl Myers, and Samuel Harley have visited Melvin Hill for evangelistic meetings.¹¹² Even though the record is incomplete, it nonetheless represents a remarkable achievement for this congregation on the Southern frontier.

One of the challenges accepted by the Melvin Hill Brethren was to provide adequate facilities for a growing

112. *Gospel Messenger*, October 29, 1927, page 701; September 29, 1928, page 625; October 26, 1929, page 685; December 6, 1930, page 792; September 19, 1931, page 25; October 29, 1932, page 24; July 1, 1933, page 25; September 15, 1934, page 28; October 11, 1941, page 27; November 7, 1942, page 35; October 13, 1945, page 31; April 1, 1961, page 29; May 16, 1964, page 29; January 6, 1962, page 31; material from Bert G. Richardson.

congregation and an expanding program. For example, in August of 1934 the men of the congregation joined together to paint the church. The possibility of securing a professional pastor was enhanced in the early 1940's by the building of a parsonage on land given by Dr. W. T. Head. This parsonage was replaced with a more up-to-date house in 1960, which was dedicated on September 4 and enjoyed by the Charles F. Rinehart family. In 1945 the men made significant improvements in the church including the installation of a new heating system and of sidewalks in front of the church. During the pastorate of Earl Dietz in the 1950's, the church was completely remodeled, and a kitchen, referred to as the community building, was added. On March 29, 1953 the newly remodeled church was dedicated by Ora DeLauter, the executive secretary of the Southeast Region. Again in 1961 a remodeling of the church provided four additional classrooms, which contributed significantly to the Christian education program. The following year further remodeling improved the community building and also a new heating system was installed. Most recently, in 1964 a major remodeling project at a cost of twenty thousand dollars provided an enlarged sanctuary which will seat two hundred seventy-five, a baptistry, an enlarged foyer, two more classrooms, and adequate toilet facilities.¹¹³ Thus, through these steps the Melvin Hill congregation had provided a relatively modern and comfortable church for its members and a parsonage for its pastor.

In terms of its stewardship of property and possessions the Brethren at Melvin Hill certainly developed a commendable program. The District Meeting Minutes reveal that the Melvin Hill congregation was consistently providing more of the district receipts than any other congregation during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century. As early as 1932 the

113. *Ibid.*, September 15, 1934, page 28; February 27, 1943, page 28; April 1, 1961, page 29; October 13, 1945, page 31; November 29, 1952, page 32; February 28, 1953, page 32; January 6, 1962, page 31; "History of the Melvin Hill Church of the Brethren," pages 6-7.

congregation adopted a budget to arrange better its own financial affairs, and in 1938 the first every member canvass was conducted at Melvin Hill. During the Second World War it was reported that the Brethren were supporting the Civilian Public Service program established by the three historic peace churches; offerings were being taken regularly for this purpose and also at least three boys from this congregation went into CPS. In addition, generous grants have been made to the foreign mission program of the denomination throughout the history of the Brethren at Melvin Hill. For example, according to the most recent statistics in 1970, the congregation was giving \$4,294 for the various outreach programs of the church, including the General Brotherhood Fund, the district, and the college, out of a total giving for the year of \$12,361, which was a per capita giving of \$101.32.¹¹⁴

During the 1960's under the leadership of Charles F. Rinehart, the Melvin Hill congregation continued to develop an enthusiastic church program. The youth of the congregation who were now known as the CBYF (Church of the Brethren Youth Fellowship) were meeting every Sunday evening and had conducted the every member canvass to raise funds for the construction of a camp for the district. At Christmastime in 1963 the youth gave a play, "No room in the Hotel," directed by Vergie McIntyre. An active Boy Scout troop was being sponsored by the congregation for the boys of the community. The Sunday School included seven classes and a nursery, and in fact, a program for pre-school children was being maintained during the morning worship hour. During the summer a vacation Bible school program was maintained, which had an average attendance of forty-two in 1961. Also, during the summer the congregation sent more campers to church summer camp than any other congregation in the district; in 1961 sixteen attended from Melvin Hill. The pastor directed the youth camp at Camp Carolina that summer and par-

114. *Ibid.*, February 27, 1943, page 28; "History of the Melvin Hill Church of the Brethren," page 6; *Yearbook*, 1971.

icipated regularly in the summer camping program of the district.

In January of 1961, the congregation studied the outline, "A Look at Ourselves," and set up a five year plan for their own development as Christians. Bert G. Richardson was present to challenge the Brethren in setting up and achieving goals. During the following winter the congregation entered an experimental program in family education, thus indicating again its willingness to try new ideas. Finally, one of the most significant things the Melvin Hill Brethren were doing during these years was encouraging the beginning of a new Brethren fellowship in Spartanburg, South Carolina; this encouragement included providing some of the members and also sharing the pastoral leadership of Charles F. Rinehart, who was leading out in the development of this new fellowship.¹¹⁵ This story will be told later in this chapter.

The membership record reflects all of the activity of the Brethren in Polk County because for most of the twentieth century the Melvin Hill congregation has been the largest in the district. However, it also reflects the sharp jumps both up and down that have been the pattern in most of the congregations in the district. A big evangelistic push causes the membership to jump ahead and a paring of the inactive membership a few years later causes a sharp drop in the membership. From a membership of one hundred thirty-five in 1925, the congregation climbed to an all-time high of two hundred sixty-one in 1937. The following year forty-seven members were lost, bringing the membership down to two hundred fourteen. It increased again to two hundred forty-four in 1944, but in 1948 it took a catastrophic drop of one hundred twelve members down to one hundred twenty-seven. That decrease in membership dropped it from first rank in membership to third in the district. After reaching a low of one hundred eight in 1950, the membership again increased to one

¹¹⁵ Ibid., April 1, 1961, page 29; January 6, 1962, page 31; May 16, 1964, page 29; "History of the Melvin Hill Church of the Brethren," pages 1, 5.

hundred seventy in 1957. Then in 1962 it took another sharp drop of forty-eight down to one hundred fifteen. Since then it has remained more stable and stood at one hundred twenty-two in 1970, which ranked it third in the district behind Mill Creek and Little Pine.¹¹⁶

Taken altogether, the story of the Melvin Hill Church of the Brethren represents a significant record of accomplishment in ministering to the spiritual needs of the people along the North and South Carolina line. Writing a history of Polk County in 1950, Sadie Smathers Patton concluded that their "religious teachings have contributed a strong element to the citizenry of that section, where the Church of the Brethren, --commonly known as the Dunkers, -- has a large membership."¹¹⁷

DOWNS CHAPEL CONGREGATION

Life is composed of successes and failures, and in the history of the Church of the Brethren the story is filled with successes and failures. In contrast to the remarkable achievements of the Brethren in Polk County, many of the ventures which they tried in surrounding counties have been marked by failure. Three of those need to be described briefly at this point. During the first decade of the twentieth century, a man named Leander Smith, who may have been a medical doctor according to some of the records, was ordained as a Brethren elder. His center of operations was further east from Mill Creek and Melvin Hill in Rutherford, Cleveland, or Gaston County. For a time at least, his address was Gastonia, a large city in Gaston County. By 1908 the Downs Chapel congregation had been organized near Chestnut, North Carolina (which is no longer identified on the road map), for during April and May of that year a congregational council meeting, a Love Feast, and

116. *Yearbooks*, 1925-1971.

117. Sadie Smathers Patton, *Sketches of Polk County History* (Asheville: The Miller Printing Company, 1950), pages 86-88.

a baptizing had been held in that area. Furthermore, in the fall of 1908 E. Lee Smith was chosen and installed as a minister. During the winter of 1909-1910 Leander Smith held a week of meetings during which he preached fourteen sermons, three of which were funerals. Seven people were baptized as the result. Also, during the week he delivered a temperance lecture in the local Methodist church to an estimated audience of six hundred. In spite of all of this activity, the Downs Chapel congregation was never included in the roster of congregations at the District Meeting, and it dropped out of the picture after a very few years. It was evidently the work of one man whose departure brought an end to the project.¹¹⁸

GOLDEN CONGREGATION

The second of those congregations which the Polk County Brethren helped to get started, but in which eventually the flame of life died out, was the Golden congregation located some eighteen miles northeast of Rutherfordton in what was known as the Golden Valley. It all began when several Brethren families including the W. A. Reeds from the Ashe County area camped in the Golden Valley on their way to the District Meeting of 1906 at the Mill Creek church. As Ethel H. Masters described the event: "They talked to the people around there and told who they were and where they were going. So the people invited them to stop with them on their way back and preach for them. From this beginning the Golden Church was organized." These Brethren of sixty years ago certainly witnessed to the Gospel as they understood it wherever they went and to whomever they met.

At any rate considerable interest was aroused in the Golden Valley and on May 20, 1907 a new congregation was organized with some eighteen charter members, about one-

118. *Gospel Messenger*, April 18, 1908, page 253; June 13, 1908, page 380; October 24, 1908, page 685; January 15, 1910, page 45.

third of whom were members of the Smawley family. This family provided the core of the leadership, too, as demonstrated by the fact that the first three deacons were Joe Smawley, Charles Smawley, and Joe Francis Smawley. W. A. Reed was so encouraged by the prospects in the area that in 1908 he moved into the community to become the pastor and elder. In addition, George A. Branscom, J. R. Jackson, J. K. West, Andrew Yelton, L. G. Ware, and Bert G. Richardson have served as pastor and-or elder of the congregation. Members of the Yelton and West families were among the charter members at Golden.

Even though the members erected a church with their own hands shortly after the congregation was organized and even though they established a Sunday School in 1908 under the leadership of Sarah Lee Smawley, the congregation never increased very much in membership. For several decades the membership held steady in the twenties, reaching a peak of twenty-nine in the middle 1930's. Then the economic changes of the post-World War II period began to take their toll, and in 1951 the membership dropped by seven to sixteen. However, Rosa Smawley refused to allow the congregation to die, and it was not until after her death that the congregation was disorganized in 1965 by the district.¹¹⁹ Even though the active witness of the Brethren in this community had ended, who is to say that the more than half a century of effort expended was not worthwhile.

LAURENS CONGREGATION

For a brief period of time about 1910 the Brethren had an organized congregation in the Laurens, South Carolina area. Marion Prather moved to this community about 1905-1906 and began to do some preaching. He was joined by William R. Lewis during 1906. Evidently, no Brethren were living in the

119. Rosa Smawley, "Historical Data," May 8, 1958; Ethel H. Masters, "Brethren in the Polk Area," 1960, page 2; Yearbooks, 1920-1966; material from Bert G. Richardson.

area and these men were trying to get something started in an entirely new field. These efforts apparently were crowned with some success, for in March, 1907 George A. Branscom visited the Brethren and organized a congregation with Marion Prather as elder and William A. Dickens as deacon. Also, a Sunday School was organized and preaching services were scheduled for twice a month. In May of 1909 it was recorded that Marion Prather baptized several people in the Enoree River near his home about twelve miles north of Laurens. Although the Laurens congregation was listed in the roster of congregations in the District Meeting Minutes in 1911, it was dropped in 1912. Probably, the Prathers had moved away from this community and without their leadership, the congregation simply withered on the vine.¹²⁰

MOUNTAIN CREEK (SPINDALE) CONGREGATION

Another Brethren congregation that was organized during the same period of time as Downs Chapel, Golden, and Laurens was Mountain Creek, but this congregation survived the problems of population mobility by moving its center of operation along with the people. During 1909 W. A. Reed began to preach in the home of W. M. Jackson near Hollis, North Carolina in Rutherford County. In June of that year Reed and Samuel Jones spent a week in the community and baptized two women, Lydia E. Jackson and Mary West. Reed returned late in August and continued preaching until he had secured sixteen additional converts; with eighteen charter members he organized them into the Mountain Creek congregation on September 27, 1909. W. M. Jackson and J. K. West were elected to the ministry, F. M. Ledford and W. K. Black became deacons, W. A. Jackson served as the clerk, and E. K. West became the first treasurer. The new congregation was filled

120. *Gospel Messenger*, February 9, 1907, page 92; April 6, 1907, page 221; June 5, 1909, page 365; *District Meeting Minutes*, 1911-1912.

with enthusiasm and began to grow; by February of 1910 there were thirty-nine members including three ministers and three deacons. The Brethren held their Sunday School and worship services in the Tadpole school house. One of the young men who became a member during these early years was J. R. Jackson, the son of W. J. Jackson, who was baptized in November of 1911. Two years later he was called to the ministry, and since 1913 he has contributed more than fifty years to the Church of the Brethren, most of it in North Carolina.¹²¹

SPINDALE CONGREGATION

In the years following World War I many of the people moved out of the rural area around Mountain Creek to the neighboring town of Spindale, about fifteen miles to the southwest. In 1924 the District Meeting heard and granted a request "to change the name of our church to Spindale Church on account of members all having moved into or near the town of Spindale." The membership of the congregation by that time had reached seventy-five. By 1931 it had almost doubled to one-hundred forty-eight, but some of this must have been dead wood, for the next year the membership was cut to one hundred seven. However, the congregation was strong enough to recover, and the membership climbed steadily for the next ten years, reaching an all-time high of one hundred eighty-three in 1940. In 1944 another big cut reduced the number to one hundred twenty-seven. Following the usual up and down pattern in the district, the membership rose again to one hundred fifty-one in 1949, and then fell in two years to one hundred two. After recovering somewhat to one hundred twenty-two in 1956, the membership declined steadily for seven years to the starting

121. *Ibid.*, October 16, 1909, page 669; February 12, 1910, page 109; Lucille Gilbert, "Spindale History," March 7, 1962; J. R. Jackson, "Spindale History," March 2, 1962; Bert G. Richardson, "Spindale Notes," no date.

point of seventy-five in 1963. By 1970 it was climbing again and reached ninety-nine.¹²²

A number of ministers served as pastor and-or elder in the nearly half a century following 1924. Some of them were from the local congregation including W. M. Jackson, J. R. Jackson, J. K. West, L. B. West, L. G. Ware, Willie H. Gilbert, and S. LaVerne Hinson. Others included George A. Branscom, Clayton B. Miller, W. A. Reed, E. A. May, Andrew Yelton, Bristoe Osborne, Roy I. White, Earl Dietz, Charles F. Rinehart, Russell K. Showalter, Bert G. Richardson, and Buford Johnson.¹²³ In 1970 Charles F. Rinehart became the full-time pastor of the Spindale congregation after serving for fifteen months in a yoked parish including Melvin Hill, Spartanburg, and Spindale. Each of these individuals did his share to maintain an active and helpful program for the Brethren in the Spindale area.

When the Brethren first began to hold services in Spindale, they met in the Union church, which was later known as the Methodist church. Then Kenneth Tanner, the superintendent of the stone cutter mills, gave the Brethren the church that had been used by the colored people of the town. This building was used from 1923 to 1948, after which the Brethren purchased a lot in the West Wood section and erected a brick church with Sunday School classrooms in the basement. Early in 1953 J. R. Jackson dedicated the new church and held a week of evangelistic meetings in the new church. By 1956 the debt had been paid on the building, and the Brethren were busily engaged in landscaping the grounds and in laying sidewalks.¹²⁴ The seed which was sown in the first decade of the century had indeed borne much fruit through the Spindale Church of the Brethren.

122. *District Meeting Minutes*, 1924. The *Minutes* incorrectly stated that the Hollow Poplar congregation was changing its name to Spindale. *Yearbooks*, 1925-1971.

123. *Yearbooks*, 1920-1971.

124. Lucille Gilbert, "Spindale History," March 7, 1962; *Gospel Messenger*, March 21, 1953, page 32; August 18, 1956, page 31.

TRAVELERS REST CONGREGATION

In addition to Spindale and others, W. A. Reed was also largely responsible for the organization of the Travelers Rest congregation in that community in South Carolina, which has been the only Brethren congregation in that state since the withdrawal of the Brooklyn congregation. Some time in the late 1930's Reed began to preach in this area, and one of the families which was attracted to his preaching was the Silvers family. In 1938 the congregation was admitted to the district with a charter membership of thirty-six with Reed as pastor and elder.¹²⁵

Reed was able to develop some local leadership for the congregation. J. N. Batson served in different capacities as pastor, elder, and moderator over a period of twenty-five years. Lynell Peterson, who as a young song leader and Sunday School Superintendent was drafted into Civilian Public Service in 1944, came home to serve as pastor and elder on several different occasions in the 1940's and the 1950's. In the 1960's James G. Silvers served as pastor and A. Z. Silvers as moderator. In 1970 James G. Silvers was the pastor and Stanley Gilbert was the moderator. In addition to these capable individuals, some of the ministers from other area congregations also contributed to the leadership of the congregation, including J. K. West, Andrew Yelton, J. R. Jackson, B. F. Long, Calvin Barnett, Holt E. Griffith, and Charles F. Rinehart.¹²⁶

The program of the Travelers Rest congregation was evangelistic and included revival meetings by Reed and E. A. May in 1944, by Earl Hughes of Tennessee in 1946, by B. F. Long in 1951, and by I. D. Leatherman in 1953 to name a few. The visit by Hughes was particularly interesting; he organized a junior choir which grew in number from four to forty, and at the end of the week he baptized seventeen of the boys and girls.

One of the significant recent events in the life of this

125. District Meeting Minutes, 1938; Yearbook, 1939.

126. Yearbooks.; 1938-1971.

congregation was the relocation of the church. It was located on a very small lot in the city with no possibility of securing additional land for expansion or for off street parking. Consequently, the decision was made to move the church some five miles to a larger site on a hill overlooking the city, near the church cemetery and near the home of A. Z. Silvers. In the process the church was remodeled and redecorated.¹²⁷

The membership roster of this congregation took the big jumps which characterized most of the Carolina congregations. Beginning with thirty-six in 1938, the membership grew steadily to sixty-three by 1944, then dropped back to forty-five for several years, and then took a big jump to one hundred in 1949. After reaching an all-time high of one hundred six in 1950, a drastic cut in 1952 reduced the membership to forty-five. Then it held steady in the forties for several years, but by 1962 it had again been cut in half to an all-time low of twenty-three. After hovering at this level for several years with the possibility of going either further down toward disintegration or of increasing with greater hope for the future, the membership began to rise and reached forty-eight in 1970.¹²⁸ Hopefully, this increase indicated that there was a future for this lonely Brethren congregation in South Carolina.

STATESVILLE FELLOWSHIP

At the same time that the district of North and South Carolina was losing five congregations by withdrawal in 1962 it was also gaining several new fellowships. One of these at Mt. Airy has already been discussed. Two others were developing in Statesville, North Carolina and in Spartanburg, South Carolina. The District Meeting of 1962 heard items in the district board report and in the executive secretary's report

127. *Gospel Messenger*, September 23, 1944, page 31; December 7, 1946, page 31; January 12, 1952, page 31; April 12, 1953, pages 31-32; material from Bert G. Richardson.

128. *Yearbooks*, 1939-1971.

that both had been working closely with the new fellowship that was being established in Statesville. Robert L. Hill of Terrell was identified in the 1963 Yearbook as the non-salaried pastor of this fellowship which included a total of twenty-five members of the Church of the Brethren. Bert G. Richardson, the district executive secretary, was serving as moderator.¹²⁹

During 1963 the Statesville fellowship moved its center of operations to a better location in a vacant store building on 7th Street, and the district board agreed to provide ten dollars per month to assist with the rent. Then in 1967 the fellowship decided to purchase a church from the Latter Day Saints located on Fifth Street for ten thousand dollars. Again the district board agreed to assist in making the down payment on the building, although the local group was to be responsible for the monthly payments. This decision was never consummated, however, for during 1968 the Statesville fellowship encountered serious difficulties, which led to the discontinuation of the group.¹³⁰

SPARTANBURG FELLOWSHIP

The Spartanburg fellowship in South Carolina developed out of the presence in that community of some of the members of the Melvin Hill congregation, including the Wyant family. In February of 1963 Charles F. Rinehart, Melvin Hill pastor, and Bert G. Richardson, district executive secretary, held a meeting in the YMCA with twelve local Brethren present from the Wyant, Hannon, and Andrews families. Henry C. Wyant was elected moderator of the group, Kenneth Hannon became treasurer, and Charles F. Rinehart agreed to serve as the pastor. Later that year, John W. Glick, a student at Bridgewater College, spent the summer in the community as a summer pastor. During the school year of 1963-1964 Rinehart

129. *Ibid.*, 1963; District Conference Minutes, 1962.

130. *Ibid.*, 1964-1970; District Conference Minutes, 1963-1968.

conducted services every Sunday afternoon at the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Again in the summer of 1964, Elvin Hess, also a Bridgewater College student, served as a summer pastor. Then in the fall of 1964 Russell K. Showalter came to Spartanburg on a short-term basis and remained until the following May. Rinehart again accepted the responsibility for leading the small group of Brethren. Without his faithful service, the group would almost certainly have given up the attempt to get a fellowship started.

Eventually, the fellowship which was formally recognized on September 1, 1963 moved its center of operations to the Sloan's Grove Baptist Church, but it purchased three acres of land in 1965 in the Pierce Acres community for \$8,250 on which to build a church. A down payment of \$1,250 was made by the district and the remainder was borrowed from the General Brotherhood Board, to be paid back at the rate of one thousand dollars per year. However, the fellowship did not develop as hoped because of changing community attitudes. Even after tentatively securing another building site and after establishing a yoked parish with Melvin Hill and Spindale under the leadership of Charles F. Rinehart, the fellowship did not prosper, and on September 30, 1970 the project was discontinued. "Lack of leadership, low attendance, and withdrawal of Brotherhood support" were cited as factors in the decision.¹³¹ Thus came to an end what had started out as a very promising development in urban church extension.

The work that George A. Branscom had started in the 1870's in Polk County has certainly born abundant fruit during the first nearly one hundred years down to 1970. During the 20th century, eleven different groups of Brethren have existed at some time in the general area of the southern part of North Carolina and the northern part of South Carolina. The casualty rate has been high, for many of these groups never had very much strength in terms of numbers of members, and only four

131. Marion C. Wyant, "Local Church Historical Data," June 19, 1967; *Yearbooks*, 1964-1971; *District Conference Minutes*, 1963-1970.

of these groups existed in 1970 as congregations: Melvin Hill, Mill Creek, Spindale, and Travelers Rest. However, it is certainly true that the impact made by the Brethren lives on in some of the areas where there is no longer an active Brethren voice, and also, it is true that some of the strongest congregations in the District of North and South Carolina have been found in this general area. These congregations have surely played a significant role in the total activities of the district, and the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas would have been much weaker without them.

EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

OAK GROVE CONGREGATION

For several years in the first decade of the twentieth century, the Brethren maintained an active witness in eastern North Carolina. The Oak Grove congregation near La Grange was organized in September of 1900 with H. C. Early from Virginia as the elder and Louis Foss as the local minister. To supplement the work in this area of North Carolina, the General Mission Board and Tract Committee sent N. N. Garst of Virginia as a worker in this field in March, 1901. Garst worked with Foss and also held meetings in neighboring communities. For example, from September 24 to October 4 of 1903 he conducted a revival in the Ground Nut school house near Seven Springs, where the people seemed eager to hear the Gospel. In the summer of 1904 he held some meetings near Richlands in Onslow County. In the report of the annual Love Feast at Oak Grove in 1904 which was led by T. C. Denton from Virginia, the reporter's address was Richlands, indicating the presence of some isolated Brethren in that community.

Still farther east at Darden in Martin County, Denton and Garst held two weeks of meetings in October, 1904 which

resulted in four applications for membership. Garst had been working in this area since the previous July. In his report for the year 1904, Garst indicated that there were "good prospects" for the continuation of the work at Darden. However, there are no further reports from Garst or from others describing his work, and it seems likely that after an additional year or two he was moved out of North Carolina to more promising fields. Louis Foss continued to live in the La Grange area for some years, but there is no further evidence regarding the Oak Grove congregation and it probably just withered away and died.¹³²

DISTRICT-WIDE ACTIVITIES

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

When the congregations of the Church of the Brethren were divided into districts in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the congregations of North Carolina were divided between the Southern Virginia and the Tennessee districts with Fraternity and Flat Rock included in Southern Virginia and Brummetts Creek and Mill Creek included in Tennessee. At some time in the twenty years between 1882 and 1901, the Flat Rock congregation was transferred to the Tennessee District. With the organization of additional congregations in North Carolina, the following congregations from that state were included in the roster of the District Meeting of the Tennessee, North Carolina and Florida district held at the Whitehorn church in Tennessee in August, 1901: Mount Carmel, Flat Rock, Pleasant Ridge, Long Hope, Mill Creek, Blue Ridge, Peak Creek, Greene River Cove, Hollow Poplar, Bethlehem (Bethel?), Brummetts Creek, Laurel Grove, Pleasant Grove, and White Rock. This meeting appointed a

132. *Gospel Messenger*, January 25, 1902, pages 61-64; October 4, 1902, page 640; October 17, 1903, page 669; July 2, 1904, page 432; November 12, 1904, page 733; December 31, 1904, page 844; January 14, 1905, page 30.

committee "to consider the advisability of dividing the district," which made the following report: "We decided to lay the matter before each individual church in North Carolina, to pass upon and report at next District Meeting."¹³³

Unfortunately, the Tennessee, North Carolina and Florida District Meeting Minutes of 1902 are not available, but evidently the individual congregations responded favorably to the question of dividing the district, for in October of 1902 the new North Carolina district held its first District Meeting in the Mill Creek church with Henry Sheets, moderator, George A. Branscom, reading clerk, and H. J. Woodie, writing clerk. At this time the two Florida congregations remained in the Tennessee district, but in 1912 the one remaining Florida congregation was incorporated in what became known as the North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida district. By the 1920's the land boom which hit Florida after the First World War was drawing many Northerners, including Brethren, to Florida, and the Brethren by 1924 had organized five new congregations and had a total membership of about two hundred fifty. Consequently, the District Meeting of 1924 which was held at Sebring, Florida with all of the officers of the meeting from that congregation agreed to a division of the district with Florida and Georgia forming a new district. Thus, in 1925 the North Carolina and South Carolina district held its annual meeting at Melvin Hill with a new title for the district.¹³⁴

During the 1960's as the result of vastly improved methods of transportation which had been developed in the previous fifty years, a movement was taking place in the Church of the Brethren to reduce drastically the number of districts. One of the proposed consolidations involved the Carolina and Tennessee districts. Beginning with studies of their field programs in 1962 the two districts cautiously explored the possibilities of more cooperative action. The first result was an agreement to share the services of the North and South

133. District Meeting Minutes, 1901.

134. *Ibid.*, 1902, 1912, 1924.

Carolina district executive secretary, Bert G. Richardson, beginning in September, 1963. This experimental program was formally accepted during 1964. The district office was relocated in September, 1965, in Johnson City, Tennessee, with Bert G. Richardson continuing as secretary.

At the same time a committee also worked out a plan of organization for merging the two districts into one district. "After a very lengthy session" at the Carolina District Meeting of 1964 the proposal was voted down, since it had received less than the required two-thirds favorable vote. The proposal was reconsidered at a special called District Meeting at the Friendship church in January of 1965, and a decision was postponed until the regular conference of 1966. In 1966 the proposal for merging the districts was again voted down by referring it back to the congregations. However, the idea refused to die, and in 1968 the District Conference again heard a recommendation from its district board that a merger with the Tennessee district be consummated. After another lengthy discussion the proposal was accepted by the congregational delegates gathered at New Haven, and plans were made to merge the two districts, effective September 1, 1969.

On January 18, 1969, delegates from sixteen North and South Carolina congregations and from seventeen Tennessee and Alabama congregations gathered at the Melvin Hill Church to organize the new district. After a "lengthy discussion" which included rejecting two proposed names, the delegates agreed unanimously to call the new district, The Southeastern District. The detailed Plan of Organization proposed by the merger committee, which included Betty Griffith, Paul Zumbrun, and Wayne Huntly from the Carolina district, was also accepted unanimously by the delegates. The Plan established a district board of administration composed of twenty-seven members, seventeen of whom came from seven designated areas and ten of whom were elected at-large. The board was divided into four commissions: nurture, ministry, witness, and stewards. On the basis of this action

taken in January, the 68th and final District Conference of the North and South Carolina District, the 108th and final District Conference of the Tennessee-Alabama District, and the 1st Southeastern District Conference met jointly in August, 1969 in the Blountsville, Tennessee area.¹³⁵ This combined conference symbolized the willingness of the Brethren in the Carolinas to accept the nationwide trend in the direction of larger districts.

DISTRICT BOARDS

One of the values of having a district organization is that it makes possible combined action of the congregations within the district in church extension and Christian education, two very important areas in which cooperative action is desirable. One of the first actions of the new North Carolina district in 1902 was to appoint a three man mission board, "It being the duties of this Board to solicit and receive means for missionary purposes and have all the mission work done that can possibly be done." Across the years this board which was led by George A. Branscom worked diligently and wisely in using the funds which the congregations provided. Also, the General Mission Board of the church frequently provided a subsidy for the use of the North Carolina district program. As a specific need developed, other specialized boards were established in the district, so that by the 1940's there were three boards, mission board, ministerial board, and board of Christian education. Finally in 1948, in harmony with the decision of the national boards of the church, these three district boards were combined into one district board of seven members which would handle all of the tasks previously carried by the individual boards.¹³⁶ It took a period of five years or more before this new organization was fully im-

135. *Ibid.*, 1962, 1969.

136. *Ibid.*, 1902, 1948.

plemented in the district in terms of combined treasury, district board reports to District Conference, and related activities. As was frequently the case in church changes, the change was not difficult to begin but it was more difficult to implement and put into practice.

During most of the twentieth century the district of North Carolina has had employed individuals working among the congregations of the state. For example, in 1905 the mission board paid fifteen different ministers a total of four hundred seventy-three dollars. They reported working a total of four hundred fifty-two days, preaching five hundred eighty sermons, and receiving one hundred one additions to the church. Two hundred dollars of the amount disbursed had come from the General Mission Board of the church. In 1919 twelve different ministers received a total of \$626.33 from the district mission board.

DISTRICT SECRETARY

During the 1930's the field program began to take more definite shape with the appointment of Fred Dancy as the District Field Man. He was recommended for this position by W. M. Kahle from Virginia who had learned to know Dancy through his work in the summer camp program. M. R. Zigler, who was the national director of ministry and home missions, approved the appointment, and Dancy was paid \$900 per year by the General Mission Board. He continued to serve in this way until he became the pastor of the Melvin Hill congregation in 1944.

In order to continue this valuable program, the 1944 District Conference accepted a request from the Travelers Rest congregation that a district field-worker be appointed "to visit all our churches, hold meetings, and to take offerings at each meeting, and to make a report at our next district conference of money received, miles traveled, sermons preached

and baptisms performed.' The conference appointed Ethel H. Masters to this position. However, the 1945 District Conference Minutes did not include the report of the fieldworker, nor for that matter did it indicate the disbursement of \$900 for this purpose. Evidently, the program was not continued.¹³⁷

The next step in the establishment of a more adequate field program in the Carolina district came in 1949-1950. The 1949 District Conference accepted a proposal from the New Haven congregation to appoint three field-workers to concentrate their efforts in each of the three areas within the district. By the time of the 1950 District Conference part-time field men had been secured as follows: Holt E. Griffith in Mitchell County, Calvin C. Kurtz in Polk County, and Glenn Rohrer and after 1951 Bert G. Richardson in Ashe and Alleghany Counties. This arrangement continued until 1956, when a two thousand dollar grant from the General Brotherhood Board made it possible for the district to employ one full-time field man for the entire district; one of the district's pastors, Philip Zinn, agreed to accept this responsibility. Two years later, Zinn resigned to accept a pastorate in Virginia, and Bert G. Richardson, who had previously been the field man in the Ashe-Alleghany area, became the new district executive secretary. After 1963 Richardson was also employed as executive secretary by the Tennessee district on a shared-time basis. In 1969, Richardson resigned as district executive secretary and was replaced by Ronald K. Wine, who had been serving as the pastor of the yoked parish including the First Bristol and Liberty congregations in Tennessee.¹³⁸ Thus, Wine became the first executive secretary of the new Southeastern District. By a pattern of growth and development over the years down to 1969, the Carolina District had provided for more effective leadership of its district-wide program by the employing of a district executive secretary.

137. *Ibid.*, 1905, 1919, 1944, 1945; interview with Fred Dancy.

138 *Ibid.*, 1949, 1950, 1956, 1958, 1963, 1969.

DISTRICT CAMP

One of the very challenging activities which this relatively small district has developed by ups and downs since the 1930's has been a summer camp program. As early as 1933 the Melvin Hill congregation asked the District Meeting to consider establishing "a recreation camp for young people and ministers" in the district; the District Meeting appointed a committee to work on the project which included Carl Welch, M. E. Bradshaw, Grady Ridings, and Grady Masters. This committee must have done some good work, because in July of 1934 a week of young people's camp was held on the temporary grounds of the Lee Jones farm near Scottville. S. Loren Bowman, a young pastor in the district, summarized the purpose of the camp: "Camp Carmel was held purposely to develop the religious life of our young people. Our young people are seeking Christ and the right for their life. The church should open the door of life by careful guidance and teaching. This is the challenge of Camp Carmel to the District of North and South Carolina." A fine staff was assembled that year both from inside and outside of the district including John B. White as director, Fred Dancy, Merlin Shull, Clayton B. Miller, Blake Million, Gladys Million, Carl Welch, Mrs. W. T. Head, Carl Coffman, Gladys Welch, Ethel Henderson, Arnold Jones, Robert L. Sherfy, Weldon Flory, A. B. Hurt, and Paul H. Bowman.¹³⁹ Evidently, Camp Carmel was off to an encouraging start.

In 1935 the camp was directed by Loren Bowman. Other leaders included Harold and Leona Row, Frank Williar, Weldon Flory, W. M. Kahle, Fred Dancy, and several other people from the district who had helped the year before. Camp Carmel continued to be held each summer in 1936, 1937, and 1938, but in 1939 there was no summer district-wide activity for the young people. Other leaders during those three years in-

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1933; Juanita Harrell, "The History of Camp in the District of North and South Carolina," 1952, page 1.

cluded Chalmer Shull, Dr. Ethel Gwin, E. S. Coffman, Don Gilbert, Mabel Sheets, Ina Ruth Barlow Addington, Helen Bowman Isenberg, A. S. B. Miller, J. C. Wine, and W. A. Reed. The only year in which the attendance was recorded was 1938, when there were forty-three campers. The fee for the week of camp was four dollars, which was worth a lot more in the 1930's than in the 1960's.¹⁴⁰

During the 1940's the young people held a series of annual week-end conferences instead of a week of summer camp. In 1941 they met at the New Haven church with the leaders drawn from all over the district. After skipping 1942 and 1943, they gathered again at Mill Creek in 1944, at Pleasant Grove in 1945, at New Haven in 1946, at Mill Creek in 1947, at Melvin Hill in 1948, and at New Haven in 1949. These conferences were better than nothing, but less than a full week of summer camp. Therefore, the young people resolved to attempt a summer camp program in 1950. They gathered at the Mt. Carmel church, where the Brethren were building a new church. The girls slept on straw in the old church and the boys put down straw in the new church. The kitchen in the basement of the new church was a very busy place for the adult cooks from Polk and Alleghany Counties, for there were seventy hungry campers to be fed. The leaders of this group included Holt E. Griffith, Fred Dancy, Calvin C. Kurtz, Raymond Boose, Glenn Rohrer, and Helen Bowman from the district, and Warren D. Bowman and Ora DeLauter from Bridgewater, Ira Petre from Africa, and P. G. Bhagat from India. Under the inspiring leadership of the Mill Creek-Melvin Hill pastor, Kurtz, and Juanita Harrell, the CBYF president, the young people in 1950 decided to purchase a centrally located campsite and raised seventy dollars toward its purchase.¹⁴¹

Although a committee of nine members was established to secure a campsite and although it inspected several possible sites, no decision had been made by the time for camp in 1951.

140. Harrell, "History of Camp," pages 1-2.

141. *Ibid.*, pages 2-3.

In order to maintain the enthusiasm a camp was held on the property of Jo. E. Graham of Charlotte, North Carolina, which was located next to Bert Richardson's home at Glade Valley. The cooking for the twenty-five campers was done by the campers themselves under the guidance of Mrs. Calvin C. Kurtz. Juanita Harrell described the experience: "This task was not too hard The fellowship and co-operation of the campers was really wonderful. It really seemed as if we were all members of one big family." The leaders that year included Clayton B. Miller, Holt E. Griffith, Calvin C. Kurtz, Floyd Brady, Evelyn Barkdoll, and Wilmer Crummett. Altogether the campers and leaders raised an additional one hundred nineteen dollars for the purchase of a camp site.

In the spring of 1952 the purchasing committee, which now included six district leaders, located a satisfactory site about two and one-half miles south of Linville on highway 221. Forty-three acres could be secured for fifteen hundred dollars. After borrowing most of the money, the purchase was completed on April 5. About thirty people were present that day for the event, and they held a very meaningful dedication service in the chapel of Camp Linn Haven, a Lutheran camp next door to the new Brethren Camp Carolina. "At the close of that dedication service approximately 30 people went back to their homes, who were alive with fire and determination to see Camp Carolina as a reality." After spending a week in July, 1952 in a work camp during which roads and cabins were built, the young people of the district gathered for their first regular week of camping in August.¹⁴² Truly, Camp Carolina was becoming a reality.

By the end of the second year of operation in 1953, the total investment in property and buildings had reached four thousand five hundred dollars, of which some eleven hundred dollars was indebtedness. In 1953 the camp was used for two weeks by juniors and young people, thus manifesting an increasing value to the Brethren of the district. By the summer

142. *Ibid.*, pages 3-5.

of 1956 the camp was used for four weeks of camping and in addition during the previous year the women's work of the district met there twice, the ministers and elders met there four times, and the youth held a weekend retreat there. The indebtedness had been reduced to about five hundred dollars and continuing investments were being made in buildings and equipment. In 1957 the District Conference took steps to place the ownership and management of Camp Carolina more directly in the hands of the district board, which was a step in the direction of broadening the responsibility for the camp's success in the long run.¹⁴³

Under this new arrangement, the District Conference of 1958 heard a much more detailed report on Camp Carolina including a five year development plan. The estimated investment had now passed eight thousand dollars which did not include the volunteer labor which had provided almost all of the work in building the cabins, the kitchen, the dining hall and auditorium building, and the new shower building. The amount sought for the development program was five thousand dollars, two thousand of which would be used for a new year-round administration cabin.¹⁴⁴

One of the significant firsts for Camp Carolina in 1959 was the hosting of the District Conference in August. Another significant first was the record of one hundred twelve leaders and campers during the three weeks of camping for juniors, junior-highs, and youth. Of that number only two leaders came from outside of the district, indicating the establishment of a reservoir of trained leadership within the district. One discouraging factor was the presence of campers from only thirteen of the twenty-four congregations in the district. This problem was caused both by the lack of interest of some of the congregations and also by the fact that some were too small to have any interested campers. In 1960 the number of campers increased from seventy (in 1959) to eighty-six, but the number

143. District Conference Minutes, 1953, 1956, 1957.

144. *Ibid.*, 1958.

of congregations represented declined to ten. An interesting problem in 1960 was the collapse of the auditorium due to a heavy snow in March, but the loss was completely covered by insurance and the damage was fully repaired in time for summer camp.¹⁴⁵ The year 1960 was considered "one of the best years" in the history of the camp.

By the time of the camping season of 1961, four new cabins and one new administration building, which was named the Ethel H. Masters Memorial Building, had been completed at a total cost of more than three thousand dollars. All of this amount had been raised and in addition the standing debt of fifteen hundred dollars had been reduced to seven hundred dollars by the camp development program under the leadership of Willie Lee Poole. One of the very much appreciated gifts was \$1000 from K. D. Bryant of the Pleasant Grove congregation. His wife, Betty served faithfully for many years as the camp cook.

During the three weeks of camping in 1961, eighty-five campers and thirty-nine leaders participated. In contrast to the usual trend in church camping, the youth camp was the largest and the junior camp was the smallest. One of the significant new developments in 1960 was the leasing of the camp to other groups including the Lutherans and the Methodists. The report to the 1961 District Conference concluded that "Camp Carolina is over the 'hump' and well on its way to become one of the outstanding camps in the Brotherhood."¹⁴⁶

In the year 1962 the number of campers went over one hundred for the first time. Of the one hundred one campers, seventy-seven were from twelve congregations in the Carolina district, seventeen were from other denominations, seven were Brethren campers from other districts. The junior camp increased in size the most and became the largest of the three weeks. In addition the building of a new shower house under

145. *Ibid.*, 1959, 1960.

146. *Ibid.*, 1961; material from Bert G. Richardson.

pressure from the government and other improvements cost more than three thousand dollars, most of which had to be borrowed. This heavy indebtedness coming right after the large investments in 1961 created some serious problems for the camp management. One compensating factor was an increased level of leasing of the camp, which brought in a substantial income. One necessary development in connection with securing a bank loan was the incorporation of the camp. It was discovered that there was already a Camp Carolina, Inc., so the original name of Camp Carmel was used in the incorporation, and the name was appropriately changed.¹⁴⁷

The number of campers in 1963 was three less than in 1962 and two less congregations were represented. Although the indebtedness continued to be a problem, another one thousand three hundred fifty dollars was invested in three new cabins for boys. To pay the indebtedness and to make further improvements including meeting the health department requirements the camp committee requested a three year development program including a district-wide financial canvass. Although many of the necessary improvements in kitchen and sanitation facilities had been made by the beginning of the 1964 season, the camp committee was very disappointed because of a drastic drop in campers to sixty-three. It was believed that "the pastors, church leaders and parents did not cooperate with the camping program as they should have." In spite of this loss in campers the indebtedness was reduced to less than a thousand dollars.¹⁴⁸

The summer program at Camp Carmel snapped back in 1965 with a new record of one hundred three campers, although forty per cent of them were not Brethren. They represented half of the twenty congregations in the district. The development program continued with the construction of another boys' cabin and other improvements, and the indebtedness was reduced to a manageable three hundred dollars, which was scheduled to be paid off by the end of the

147. *Ibid.*, 1962.

148. *Ibid.*, 1963, 1964.

year. However, some of the payments from the financial canvass were not coming in on schedule and threatened to slow down the development program. Betty Griffith directed the junior and youth camps, and Charles F. Rinehart directed the junior high camp in 1965. Like the membership in most of the Carolina congregations, the attendance at Camp Carmel took drastic jumps both up and down, and in 1966 it dropped to eighty-one with only eighteen in junior camp, which was the smallest junior camp in the camp's history. In addition the camp committee had a very difficult time securing adequate leadership and considered canceling the summer camping schedule. Another problem was that no other groups leased the camp during the year causing a financial loss. The result of this loss along with the slowness in getting the development program pledges paid was that the camp committee was able to pay its small indebtedness but no additional projects were undertaken during the year.¹⁴⁹

During the camping season of 1967 the total registration of campers increased very slightly to eighty-three, but the number of campers from the Brethren congregations of the district declined by seven to forty-three, so that almost half of the campers were coming from other districts and from other denominations. This was an odd situation indeed, in which the people of the district had invested thousands of dollars in a camp, which would have had to close its doors were it not for the presence of other people's children: "It would be very difficult to operate our camp without campers from outside our district and from other denominations." In terms of further camp improvements, there were none to report in 1967 because there was no money and no workers. Some twelve hundred dollars in commitments remained unpaid, and "part of the problem is to get someone who is willing to do the work." The camp committee was really disturbed and asked: "Have we only lost our interest in camp, or a real searching question,

149. *Ibid.*, 1965, 1966.

are we losing our interest in the work of the church--are we too busy?"¹⁵⁰

In 1968 the number of campers at Camp Carmel declined by five to seventy-eight; the major reason for this decline was the fact that only fifteen boys and girls attended the junior camp, which was the "greatest concern" of the Camp Committee in its annual report to the District Conference. One significant improvement was that the three age-group camps had sufficient well-trained leadership to maintain a strong program. An important new development was an exchange program called YALE (Youth Adult Leadership Exchange), which involved Brethren young people and adult leaders from Florida and from Alabama. Finally, the Camp Committee was enlarged at the District Conference of 1968 from three to six in order to broaden the base of support in the District.¹⁵¹

The number of campers increased significantly in 1969 to ninety, including thirty-eight in youth camp, thirty-three in junior-high camp, and nineteen in junior camp. Sixteen of the youth were from Florida and Alabama. Enough funds were raised to purchase new equipment, including electric water heaters, gas ranges, and a freezer, as well as to carry out essential maintenance work. One interesting new development was the decision of a corporation called Land Harbors of America to build a million dollar resort on property adjoining Camp Carmel. According to the Camp Committee, "Cooperation with these people has been good and there are many possibilities that this can benefit Camp Carmel."¹⁵²

Although the number of juniors at camp increased in 1970, the youth and junior high camps decreased in size; as a result the total attendance declined to seventy-two, a drop of 20 per cent in one year. The most important new development reported by the Camp Committee was the appointment of a study committee by the two committees responsible for Camp

150. *ibid.*, 1967.

151. *ibid.*, 1968.

152. *ibid.*, 1969.

Carmel and for Camp Placid, the camp sponsored by the Tennessee-Alabama District. Since the two districts had merged in 1969, it seemed necessary now "to study the future role of both camps in the district program." Both camps had serious problems in terms of attendance and financial support, but they also represented extensive investments of time and funds and they each had a loyal group of supporters. Exactly how each would fit into the total program of the new Southeastern District was not clear in 1970.¹⁵³

IN SUMMARY

Perhaps a few statistics are in order at this point in the story of the Churches of the Brethren in the Carolinas. As of the end of 1970, there were eighteen organized congregations, which is exactly one-half of the number that had existed at some time during the twentieth century. In this chapter thirty-six different groups of Brethren have been described, although not all of these were in existence at any one time. Thus, the attrition rate has been relatively high among these scattered Brethren on the southern frontier.

The Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas has never been very strong as measured by the number of its members. These eighteen congregations in 1970 had 1155 members, which is an average of about sixty-four members per congregation. Only three congregations had more than one hundred members, and one more had ninety-nine. Eight of the congregations had less than fifty members and three more had less than sixty members. Altogether twelve of the eighteen congregations had less than the district average of sixty-four members.

One hopeful statistic in 1970 was that eight of the congregations increased their membership sufficiently to

153. *Ibid.*, 1970.

increase the total membership of the eighteen congregations to 1155, which represented a net increase for the year of fifty members, or nearly 5 per cent. Such an increase in a district in which there is only one full-time pastor certainly indicates that some significant evangelistic work is being conducted by deeply dedicated non-salaried or part-time ministers and by equally dedicated laymen.

CONCLUSION

In the Introduction, I suggested that the Brethren in the Carolinas have been involved in two major transitions that have been taking place in the 20th century: (1) The transition that has effected all of the members of the Church of the Brethren as it moved from a sectarian group characterized by its voluntary separation from society to a church group characterized by its acceptance of the society in which it lived and by its acceptance of the patterns of worship and practice followed by the major Protestant denominations such as the Presbyterians, the Methodists, and the Baptists. (2) The transition from a religious group in which virtually all of the members lived in rural areas and made their living as farmers, which was specifically encouraged as a sectarian practice in the 19th century, to a religious group in which large numbers of its members have been forced by the changing American economy to find work in the towns and cities. The Brethren have generally found it very difficult to establish churches in these towns and cities, and thus large numbers of members have been lost to other Protestant churches.

Related to these transitions has been the Brethren emphasis on the free or unsalaried ministry, in which the minister of the congregation was expected to make his living as a farmer, just like all of the other members did. When the minister moved to the town to find work, as some did, he found

his job so demanding in terms of time, that he did not have the leisure time to take care of the spiritual needs of the other members of the congregation. In the Carolinas especially, it rarely happened that enough Brethren moved to a particular town to enable them to provide the financial support to enable a pastor to serve their needs on a full-time or even part-time basis; in other words, the Brethren spread out in looking for jobs and went in small numbers to many different places.

Consequently, the transition from a non-salaried ministry to a professionally trained and paid ministry, which has taken place in many Brethren congregations in other areas, has been thwarted in the Carolinas. The Churches of the Brethren have generally been small enough in membership that they have found it very difficult to support a full-time pastor. Also, by 1970 there was something of a shortage of full-time pastors in the Church of the Brethren as a whole, and consequently most of the pastors were looking for the larger and more attractive pastorates. As a result, at the end of 1970 there was only one full-time pastor serving just one congregation in all of the congregations that had composed the District of North and South Carolina, and that was a special situation in which the man had expected to be engaged in another part-time job which apparently did not develop as anticipated. In a day and age in which many Brethren congregations, as well as those of other denominations, are served by full-time pastors, this shortage in the Carolinas is a crucial problem.

However, most of the eighteen congregations considered in this study could not financially support a full-time pastor, even if they thought it was a good idea and if the pastors were available; consequently, they must turn to other types of leadership. Most of them have been very fortunate across the years in securing dedicated non-salaried or part-time pastoral leadership. The major problem in 1970, however, is that most of these men have reached (or passed) retirement age, and the amount of leadership which they can provide is sharply limited. Very few younger men are available, who are willing to serve as pastors and secure the necessary training to do the

job satisfactorily, while at the same time earning a living in some secular occupation. Once they secure some experience and some other training, they are frequently called to become full-time pastors in some other section of the country.

It would appear to most outside observers who study the Church of the Brethren represented by these eighteen congregations in the Carolinas that the future is not very encouraging. They have many handicaps, including the paucity of members both in the individual congregations and in the area as a whole, the spread-out nature of the congregations, and the lack of professionally-trained leadership. One recent development which may perhaps contribute to a solution of some of these problems has been the reorganization of the district lines to include the congregations in Tennessee and Alabama. The meaning of this development for the future is not at all clear at this time, especially since almost all of the nearly thirty congregations in those two states have the same three problems just outlined.

One hope for the future rests on the availability of outside funds from the church as a whole. Rather generous funds have been available in past years to support the district executive secretary and to support individual congregations, including the Spartanburg fellowship. On the one hand, it is clear that sufficient outside funds are not available to provide full-time pastoral leadership for each congregation, and on the other hand such a step would not solve many of the problems anyway.

The best hope for the future of these Carolina congregations seems to depend on the availability and utilization of dedicated lay leadership, designed to strengthen the congregations that are now in existence. Some of these present-day congregations will almost certainly close their doors in the next quarter of a century, but those that survive will be those that have a present-day combination of potential and willing young people and of attractive economic conditions which can provide a challenge to keep these young

people in the community. Unfortunately, too many of the Brethren congregations are located in declining communities from an economic standpoint, and the Brethren have not been very successful in moving the church along with its moving members, when it meant moving to the towns and cities. But dedicated lay leadership could overcome this reluctance to meet changing conditions, and in fact, it must be willing to make such changes, if the Church of the Brethren in the Carolinas is to survive!



ENTRANCE SIGN
CAMP CARMEL, LINVILLE, N. C.



DINING HALL, KITCHEN & AUDITORIUM
CAMP CARMEL, LINVILLE, N. C.



NEW HAVEN
SPARTA, N. C.



FLAT ROCK CHURCH
OF THE BRETHERN
WARRENSVILLE, N. C.



PLEASANT VALLEY
RT. 2, LAUREL SPRINGS, N. C.



TRAVELERS REST
— TRAVELERS REST, S. C.



MELVIN HILL
RT. 1, CAMPOBELLO, S. C.



SPINDALE
SPINDALE, N. C.

LITTLE PINE
ENNICE, N. C.





FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHERN
MT. AIRY, N. C.



FRIENDSHIP
NORTH WILKESBORO, N. C.



PLEASANT GROVE
RT. 1, BAKERSVILLE, N. C.



ROWLAND CREEK
RT. 3, MARION, VA.



PEAK CREEK
LAUREL SPRINGS, N. C.



MOUNT CARMEL
SCOTTVILLE, N. C.



PETERSON CHAPEL
RELIEF, N. C.



LOWMAN VALLEY
RT. 3, MARION, VA.



BRUMMETTS CREEK
RELIEF, N. C.



MILL CREEK CHURCH
RT. 1, TRYON, N. C.

INDEX

A

Abbotts Creek12
Abernathy family58
Addington, Ina Ruth Barlow218
Aker family7
Alamance, Battle of (1771) 14-15
Aldridge, Isaac38
Anders, Coy130, 136, 143
146, 159
Andrews L.F.W.,74
Annual Meeting
176310
177916
1764 35-36
1794 62, 64-68
1798 69-70
1800 70-72
1879109
1910173
1911173
1920192
Anointing2
Antietam congregation28
Arnold, Solomon G.,102
Arrowood, Samuel167
Arrowood, Theodore R.,178
Ashe County, N.C.,81
Ashe County congregation ... 88-93, 101-108,
122-160
Atkins family58
Atlantic crossing52

B

Bailey, I.B., Sr.,165
Bailey congregation 111, 177-179
Baker family7
Ballou, Hosea74
Baptism
Doctrine2, 13, 14
Practice 50, 82, 97,
..... 111, 115, 123
Baptists 8, 13, 25, 47, 55, 75,
122, 147, 167, 184, 209, 226
Barkdoll, Evelyn219
Barnett, Calvin 167, 178, 179,
180, 181, 206
Barnett, Charlie 179-180
Barnett, Joseph W.,167, 180
Barnett, Paul179
Barnett, Solomon179
Barr, Beverly136
Barrett family58
Bashor, John C.,102
Batson, J.N.,206
Bauer family89
Bauer, John90
Baumgartner family7
Beahm, I.N.H., 164,171
Beam family46
Beam, Michael44
Beam, Peter62
Beard, Valentine18
Beaver Creek congregation 26-30, 75-76,
78
Beaver Creek30
Becker, Peter3
Beissel, Conrad28-29, 36,
40, 45

Berea congregation 181-182
Bermudian congregation28
Bethel congregation 176-177
Bhagat, P.G.218
Biddix, Floyd171
Black, W.K.,203
Blevan, John104
Blue Ridge congregation 126, 138-140
Bob Jones University189
Boehme, Jacob57
Bollinger, George F.88
Bonsack, C.D.,128
Boone County, Ky.,50
Boone, Daniel91
Boone, Squire91
Boose, Raymond218
Botetourt County, Va.,82
Bowers family90
Bowers, Adam90
Bowers, John89-90, 91,
92, 102
Bowman family108
Bowman, C.,102
Bowman, D.B.,102
Bowman, Helen218
Bowman, John97
Bowman, Joseph B.,102
Bowman, Joseph141
Bowman, L.A.,195
Bowman, Paul H.,217
Bowman, S. Loren 124, 125, 185,
187, 195, 217
Bowman, Warren D.,218
Boy Scouts198
Bradley, E.J.,116, 188
Bradshaw, J.W., 109, 110, 111,
163
Bradshaw, M.E., 163, 165, 180,
217
Brady, Floyd219
Branscom, Betty115
Branscom, Etta193
Branscom, George A.,113-116, 123, 127,
128, 132, 139, 141, 155, 172, 182, 185,
189, 190, 191, 194, 195, 202, 203, 205,
209, 212, 214
Branscom, J.F.,117
Brendel, George Samuel87
Brethren Volunteer Service136
Brethren Young People's Department ... 125,
127, 151, 172, 186-187
Bridgewater College134
Broad River27, 30, 33
Broad River congregation 36-39, 41
Brooklyn congregation 116-117, 184
185, 188-190
Brooks family58
Brown, Charlie157
Brown, Joe179, 180
Brubaker, Daniel109
Brumbaugh, M.G.,29
Brummetts Creek congregation ..109, 111-113,
160-166, 181, 182, 211
Bryant, Etta176
Bryant, K.B.,171
Bryant, K.D.,221
Bryant, S.S.,167, 178, 180
Buckner family46

Burkhart family	89
Burkhart, Abraham	80
Burkhart, Christian	81
Burkhart, Henry	80
Burkhart, Jehu	49, 51, 64, 79-83, 84, 86, 95
Burkhart, Magdalene	81, 83
Burkhart, Nathaniel	81
Byrd, Andrew	171

C

Camp Carmel	217-225
Camp Placid	225
Cannon, Ephraim	38
Cannon, Samuel	38
Canomore, Jacob	26-27, 36-37
Cantrell, Amanda	115
Cantrell, Henry	115
Cape Girardeau County, Mo.,	50, 88
Carpenter, Margaret	91-92
Carpenter, Matthias	91-92
Carver family	89
Carver, John	89
Catawba congregation	6-8
Catawba River	6, 7
Cate family	58
Celibacy	29
Cellare, Jacob	44
Chapman, Giles	58-60, 73-74, 76, 78
Cherokee Indians	83
Childers, Robert	155
Church of God	118
Church of the Brethren	
Name	1
Beginning in Germany	1-3
Movement to America	3-4
Church of the Brethren Youth Fellowship (see also Brethren Young People's Department)	198
Civilian Public Service	134-135, 152-153, 164, 198, 206
Civil War	22, 107
Clark County, Ind.,	18
Clark, J.D.,	184
Clayton, John	39
Cleary, Connie	143, 148, 156
Cleary, David	130, 132, 139, 143, 148, 153, 156, 157, 158, 159
Click family	46
Cline family	7
Cline, J.M.,	118
Clouds Creek congregation	30-31
Coal Creek community	144
Coates family	58
Cocolico congregation	45
Coffman, Carl	217
Coffman, E.S.	164, 218
Committee of Observation, Washington County, Md.,	85
Conestogo congregation	10-11, 28, 29
Conewago congregation	10, 28
Connecocheague Creek	26
Connecocheague congregation	32
Cooper family	58
Cooper, H. Austin	27
Costner family	7
Cotton mill	184
Coventry congregation	28
Crist, Galen	185, 195
Croll, Magdalene	51

Crosswhite, Jesse	102
Crouse, Jacob	44-45, 46
Crouse, John	42-43
Crowder family	7
Crummett, Wilmer	219
Crumpacker, Peter	102
Cub Creek school	181
Cureton family	58
Curry, A. Stauffer	135-136

D

Daily Vacation Bible School	124, 127, 134, 146, 151, 186, 198
Daleville College	170
Dancy, Fred	128, 129, 134, 135, 136, 143, 148, 150, 151, 152, 153, 156, 163, 167, 169, 171, 185, 195, 215, 217, 218
Davis, D.C.,	103
Davis, J.F.,	189
Deardorff, C.H.,	135
DeLauter, Ora	197, 218
Denton, T.C.,	210
Dick family	7
Dickens, William A.	203
Dierdorff family	23
Dietz, Earl	151, 195, 197, 205
Disslin, Catherine	51
District boards	214-215
District camp	217-225
District organization	101, 211-214
Doobin, John	46
Donner family	46
Dove, Washington	107, 115
Downs Chapel congregation	200-201
Downs family	58
Driver, S.L.,	195
Dunckley, John	38
Dunkers	1
Dutchmans Creek	25, 91
Dutchmans Creek congregation	42-47

E

Earhart family	7
Earl of Granville	85, 90, 91
Early, H.C.,	118, 210
Eberhart family	7
Edisto congregation	31-36
Eddy, Richard	61, 63, 74, 75, 78
Edwards, Bruce	186
Edwards, Joshua	39
Edwards, Levi	180
Edwards, Martin	167
Edwards, Morgan	3, 4, 5-7, 8-11, 19, 24, 26-27, 29-30, 32, 39-40, 41, 47, 49, 56, 58, 77-78, 85
Edwards, Robert	163, 170, 191
Eiler, Emmet	124
Eik Shoals congregation	109-110
Elsmore family	58
Ephrata community	29, 40-41, 61
Eucharist	2
Evangelistic meetings	107-108, 109, 111, 117, 123, 129, 141-142, 143, 151, 163-164, 167-168, 170, 183-184, 196
Ewarry congregation	8-19, 20
Excommunication	173

F

Fairfield County, S.C.,	57, 75, 78
Farrington, Kermit	129, 132, 139, 140, 143, 148, 153, 154, 156, 158
Faw family	100
Faw, Abraham	52-53
Faw, Isaac	52, 53, 54, 81 83, 95-97
Faw, Isaac, Jr.,	84
Faw, Jacob	5, 51-54
Faw, Jacob, Jr.,	52, 53, 54 89, 97-101, 102, 119
Faw, Maria	87
Fellows, Matthias	38
Felthouse, J.V.,	191
Final Restoration	54
Finnell, Virgil C.,	164, 170, 172
Fisher, Gene	189
Flat Rock congregation (N.C.)	91, 102, 104, 106-108, 122-125, 138, 182, 211
Flat Rock congregation (Va.)	64
Florida, Church of the Brethren in	212
Flory, Weldon I.,	129, 217
Forney family	7
Foss, Louis	118-119, 210-211
Fouts family	11, 19, 89
Franklin County, Va.,	97
Fraternity congregation	48-54, 63, 79-88, 95-101
Frederick County, Md.,	26, 49, 51, 52
Freedom of religion	3
Free, Lawrence	26-27, 36
Freeling, John Henry	44
French and Indian War	15
French Creek community	40
Frey, Christian	50
Friedberg	50
Friendship--North Wilkesboro congregation	156-159
Friends, Society of	16-18, 21-22, 24, 58, 59
Frost, Alex.,	143
Fry family	7
Fundamental Brethren	179-182, 190

G

Gambold, John	83
Garb worn by Brethren	173-174
Garber, John	64, 89
Garber, Joseph	106
Garber, S.H.,	163
Garst, Henry	103, 109
Garst, John	163
Garst, N.N.,	118, 184, 210-211
Garver family	89
Gascho, Eli	134, 135, 136, 150
Gascho, Ivan	130, 134, 135, 136
General Mission Board	214-215
General Mission Board and Tract Committee	118
George II, King of England	39
Georgia	39-40
German Baptist Brethren	1
German language	6, 82
Germany, Brethren in	1-3
Giersch, George	82
Giesel, Arwilda	136
Gilbert, Donald	186, 218

Gilbert, Kinchen	115
Gilbert, Willie H.,	205
Gillam family	58
Gilliland family	58
Girtman, Mary Gascho	130, 134, 136
Glenwood community	144
Glick family	46
Glick D.M.,	124, 127, 128
Glick, John W.,	208
Golden congregation	201-202
Graham, Jo. E.,	219
Grayson County, Va.,	147
Greene, Elizabeth	142
Green River Cove congregation	116, 188
Greenway, Thomas	117
Gregory, John	37
Gregory, Richard	37, 38
Griffith, Betty	213, 223
Griffith, Elhanan	112
Griffith, Holt E.,	136, 143, 148, 163, 169, 178, 180, 181, 190, 206, 216, 218, 219
Griffith, H.M.,	109, 110, 111, 167, 169, 170, 177.
Griffith, Joseph H.,	110, 163, 165, 167, 172, 177-178, 180
Griffith, Matison	179
Gros, Christian	44
Grove family	89
Guss, Christopher	7
Gwin, Ethel	124, 218

H

Hall, Claude	139
Ham, Ezekiel	62
Ham, John	61-64, 69-73
Ham, Joseph	62
Handy, W.H.,	108, 132, 133, 141-142, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 150, 153
Hanes, Edwin	98
Hanes, Thomas	87
Hannon, Kenneth	208
Harley, Samuel	196
Harmon community	128, 129, 130
Harrell, Bruce	169
Harrell, Elbert	110
Harrell, Fred	163, 165, 169, 171, 180
Harrell, Juanita	218, 219
Harrell, Wiley	110
Harris, William	38
Harrison County, Ind.,	81
Hauser, Fredr.,	96
Hawkins family	58
Hawkins, Joshua	62
Hawks, W.H.,	159
Hays family	58
Head, W.T.,	197
Head, Mrs. W.T.,	217
Heier family (see also Heyer)	98
Heier, Rudy	52, 80, 86
Henderson County, N.C.,	114
Henderson, Ethel	217
Henderson, Mary	115
Hendricks family	7, 21-25, 42-45
Hendricks, Daniel	46
Hendricks, Gerhard	21
Hendricks, James	22-25, 43, 44
Hendricks, John	22-25, 42-43, 44, 47

Hendricks, Mary	46
Hendrix, William	44
Henry, J.M.,	9-10, 24
Hensley, Joel	176
Heyer, Isaac	80
Heyer, Leonard	80, 86
Hilburn family	58
Hill, Robert L.,	137, 208
Hinsdale, B.E., Jr.,	186
Hinsdale, Jane	115
Hinson, S. LaVerne	136, 205
Hollow Poplar congregation	166-168
Honberger, S.A.,	170, 191
Honeycutt, J.W.,	167, 178
Honeycutt, W.M.	167
Hoover family	7, 11, 19
Hopkins, Paul	130, 148, 153, 154
Horne, Cager	115
Horne, Lois	186
Horne, Rebecca	115
Hughes, Earl	206
Hughes, Myra	171
Huntley settlement	183
Huntley, K. Dean	136
Huntley, Wayne	195, 213
Huntsinger, Jacob	81
Hurt, A.B.,	217
Hutton, James	48
Hylton, C.D.,	102
Hylton, H.P.,	102, 103, 144

I

Ikenberry, E.L.,	136
Independent Brethren Church	149
Indian attacks	50, 93
Influenza epidemic	194
Isenberg, Helen Bowman	218
Isenhart family	7

J

Jackson, J.R.,	123, 124, 128-129, 132, 139, 148, 159, 163, 167, 168, 169, 170, 177, 180, 202, 204, 205, 206
Jackson, Lydia E.,	203
Jackson, Sarah	58
Jackson, W.A.,	203
Jackson, W.J.	204
Jackson, W.M.,	203, 205
Jacobs family	7
Jesus Christ	65-66, 68, 72
Johnson, Andy	167, 180
Johnson, Buford	195, 205
John the Baptist	67
Jones, Arnold	217
Jones, Lee	217
Jones, Norman	104
Jones, Samuel	116, 188, 189, 191, 194, 203
Julien family	58

K

Kahle, W.M.,	128, 215, 217
Keller family	7, 46, 89
Keller, Jacob	46
Keller, Johannes	70
Kenepp, Harold	136
Kern, Conrad	19-21
Kern, John (Hans)	19-21
Kessler family	89
Kessler, Elizabeth	81

Kessler, Raymond	148
Kirkland, Richard	38, 39
Kirkland, Robert	39
Kirkland, Snowden	31
Klein family	7
Knob Creek congregation	113
Krits, Peter	7
Kurtz, Calvin C.	185, 187, 195, 216, 218, 219
Kurtz, Mrs. Calvin C.,	219
Kuykendol family	7

L

Ladies Aid Society	125, 152-153
Lancaster County, Pa.,	9, 22, 45
Landes family	89
Land Harbors of America	224
Large family	58
Latter Day Saints	208
Laughrun, A. Marion	111, 163, 165, 167, 170, 177, 185, 186, 191, 195, 196
Laughrun, S. M.,	109, 111, 167, 191
Laurens congregation	202
Law, William	57
Laws, Charles	167
Lawter, William	117
Lawton, J. G.,	117
Leatherman, Christian	17-18, 86
Leatherman, Daniel	8, 9-11, 24, 32, 47, 86
Leatherman, I. D.,	206
Leatherman, Nicholas	17, 86
Ledford, F. M.,	203
Leeper family	7
Leftwich, William P.,	156
Lenoir County, N. C.,	118
Leslie, Claud	169
Leslie, James	29
Lewis, Daniel	42, 44
Lewis, Frank	123
Lewis, Gideon L.,	122, 123
Lewis, J. Gideon	102, 123
Lewis, James	123
Lewis, John	103
Lewis, R. F.,	124
Lewis, S. E.,	123
Lewis, William R.,	202
Limestone congregation	109
Little Conewago congregation	9-10, 23-24, 28, 49, 69, 71
Little Pine congregation	142-146
Long, B. F.,	206
Longenecker, Hans	10
Longenecker, Walter	136
Long Hope congregation	105, 137-138
Long, I. S.,	196
Lords Supper	2
Loudoun County, Va.,	19
Love Feast	
Doctrine	2
Practice	175, 194
Lowe, E. T.,	143, 144
Lower Stillwater congregation	80
Lowman, J. W.,	148, 153
Lowmans Valley congregation	153-154
Lutherans	221
Lyalls, Asbury	139
Lynch, Elijah	73-75, 76, 79

M

McClane, J.,	131
McCoy, James	189
McCrakin, John	46
McCullough, Henry Eustace	11
McKinsey family	58
McMaster, FitzHugh	33
Mabe, Clarence	136, 160
Mack family	89
Mack, Alexander	1, 34
Mack, Alexander, Jr.,	64, 72
Mack, Andrew	46
Madison County, Va.,	49
Mallott, Floyd E.,	4
Marriage service	60, 87, 119
Marshall, Friedrich	53
Martin, David	6, 10, 27, 29-33, 42, 47, 54, 57, 59, 60, 64, 73, 79
Martin, George Adam	27-29, 36
Martin, Nicholas	10, 32, 47
Martin, Sarah	100
Mast, John	11
Masters, C. B.,	169
Masters, Don	110, 171
Masters, Ethel H.,	115, 183, 201, 216
Masters, Grady	163, 167, 169, 171, 178, 180, 186, 217
Masters, H. H.,	177, 181
Masters, Henry	108, 109, 110
Masters, Hoke	110
Masters, Jake	110
Masters, Norris	169
Maxwell, Thomas	43
May Apple Knob school	104
May, E. A.,	205, 206
Medical treatment	82-83
Melvin Hill congregation	117, 183, 184-185, 190-200
Mennonites	2, 3, 9, 11, 16-18, 21, 87, 134
Meriwether, Robert	27
Methodists	25, 47, 75, 86, 129, 183, 201, 205, 221, 226
Michel, Conrad	20
Middlecreek congregation	49
Mill Creek congregation	115-116, 182-188, 211
Miller family	7, 46, 89
Miller, A. S. B.,	218
Miller, Clayton B.,	91, 106, 123-124, 126-127, 131-132, 139, 143, 148, 150, 151, 153, 156, 170, 191, 194, 205, 217, 219
Miller, D. L.,	164
Miller, David	106
Miller, George	85
Miller, George W.,	103, 106, 122
Miller, Henry	85
Miller, Howard	116
Miller, J. E.,	114
Miller, J. Henderson	103, 105
Miller, John	85
Miller, Jonathan	84, 89, 90-92, 101-102, 122
Miller, Jonathan	103
Miller, Mary	106
Miller, Matthias	103, 106
Miller, Michael	26-27
Miller, Michael	85

Miller, Moses	109
Miller, R. N.,	167
Miller, Valentine	85
Million, F. Blake	148, 217
Million, Gladys	217
Mills family	58
Mills, Robert	54, 75
Mitchell County congregation	108-113, 160-182
Mitchell, S. Earl	196
Mock family	46
Mocksville, N.C.,	47
Moherman, T. S.,	170
Monocacy congregation	32
Monocacy River	9
Montgomery County, Ky.,	44
Montgomery County, Ohio	80
Moody, D. L.,	108
Moonshiners	115
Moore, J. H.,	47, 54-55, 64, 88, 161-162
Moravians	5, 11-18, 48-51, 82-84, 86-88, 90, 95-96, 100
Mountain Creek (Spindale) congregation	203-204
Mountain View congregation	147
Moxley, Nat	104
Moyer family	7
Mt. Airy congregation	159-160
Mt. Carmel congregation	104, 133-137
Mt. Olive congregation	155
Musical instruments	191-193
Myers family	58

N

Naff, Abraham	102
Naff, Isaac	102
Nance family	58
Nead, John	109
Nead, Matthias	112
Neff, James M.,	183-184, 191
Nelly, Victor	37
Nesinger family	7
Newberry, S. C.,	57-58, 74, 76
New Bethel congregation	141-142, 150
New Haven congregation	135, 142, 149-153
New River	89, 90
New Windsor relief center	135, 153

O

Oak Grove congregation	118-119, 210-211
Oath-taking	2
O'Neill, John Belton	58-61, 78
Onslow County, N. C.	210
Osborne, Beldon	157
Osborne, Bristoe	130, 136, 151, 159, 205
Osborne, Ed	148
Osborne, Gilbert	129, 130, 150, 155
Osborne, James	157
Osborne, John	128, 157
Owen, Thomas	36-37
Owens, Martin	103, 126, 139, 148, 155

P

Pacifism	2, 15, 134, 179
Pacolet River	117
Parsons, Carl	148
Patchet, Elijah	31
Patton, Sadie Smathers	200
Paul, the Apostle	66
Peak Creek congregation	103, 126-131, 138
Pearson, Jeremiah	38
Pearson, John	29, 33-35, 42
Peedee River	6, 19, 55
Pennsylvania	3, 5, 18, 48, 50
Pennypacker, Samuel W.,	21-22
Peters, Daniel	97
Peters, H. W.,	195
Peters, Raymond R.,	124
Petersons Chapel congregation	168
Peterson, Billy	168
Peterson, Elhanan	109, 110, 167, 176
Peterson, Henry H.,	167, 177
Peterson, Hiram	109
Peterson, J.D.,	167, 178, 180
Peterson, J. H.,	164, 167
Peterson, Lynell	178, 180, 206
Peterson, Peter	108-109
Pfaff, Peter	48
Pfautz family (See Fouts)	11
Pfautz, Michael	64
Pietistic Movement	1
Pigeon River congregation	179
Pinckney, Thomas	32
Pleasant Grove congregation	110, 168-176
Pleasant Valley congregation	104, 131-133
Poling, Newton L.,	151
Polk County congregations	113-117, 182-210
Poole, Willie Lee	152, 221
Prather, H. M.,	103
Prather, Hendrick	105
Prather, Marian	105, 202-203
Prather, Martin	102, 103
Prather, Tom	105
Pratt, Effie	146
Preaching	96, 99
Presbyterians	226
Pritchett, Reuel B.,	123, 167
Professional ministry	121, 226-228
Proselyting	87
Putnam, Ellie Sanders	115
Putnam, Jake	115

Q

Quakers	16-18, 21-22, 24
---------	------------------

R

Raiford, Philip	33
Ramage family	58
Ramsey, Robert	19
Ramsower family	7
Randolph County, N. C.,	9
Rasmussen, Roland	189
Reddies River community	155
Reed, Alfred D.,	102

Reed, Andrew J.,	103, 104, 105, 108, 126, 133
Reed, Eli	108
Reed, Isaac	102
Reed, John A.,	133, 142, 143, 148, 150
Reed, N.C.,	129, 133, 139, 143, 144, 146, 147, 148, 151
Reed, P. D.,	112
Reed, W. A.,	108, 126, 133, 141, 142, 143, 145, 147, 151, 153, 163, 170, 185, 189, 191, 193, 194, 195, 201, 202, 203, 205, 206, 218
Reed, William E.,	103
Regulator Movement	14-15
Religious freedom	3
Renshaw, Abraham	62
Renz, James	135, 151
Rethly, Jacob	44
Revolutionary War	15-18
Reynhart family	7
Rhodes family	7
Richardson, Allen	104
Richardson, Bert G.,	139, 143, 154, 157, 158, 169, 185, 195, 199, 202, 205, 208, 213, 216
Richardson, J. A.,	144
Richardson, R. F.,	147, 148, 153
Ridings, Grady	217
Riley family	58
Rinehart, Charles F.,	151, 185, 187, 195, 197, 198, 199, 205, 206, 208, 209, 223
Riverside congregation	155-156
Roberts, Hazel	165
Rogers, J. W.,	195
Rohrer, F. C.,	124, 127, 133-134, 136, 142, 148, 186, 196
Rohrer, Glenn	136, 151, 216, 218
Roland, Gasper	44, 45-47, 89, 90, 92, 102
Rolande, Hans	45
Roland, Joseph	44, 46, 47, 62
Rosenberger, I. J.,	194
Roth, Jacob	13
Row, Leona	217
Row, W. Harold	217
Rowan County, N. C.,	11, 17-18
Rowe, Donald	196
Rowe, Robert L.,	152, 185
Rowland Creek congregation	148-149
Rowland, John	46
Rowland, Philip	45
Royer, Galen B.,	194
Rudisalle family	7
Rummel, Merle	158

S

Sabbatarianism	29
Sachse, Julius F.,	36
Sanders, Ellie	114
Sanders, Hattie	114
Sanders, Martha	115
Sauer, Christopher, Jr.,	45
Saunders family	8
Saunders, Samuel (Lemuel)	6, 7-8
Savannah River	39
Saylor family	7

Waterree River	.6
Waters, Mary	.194
Wayne, Bronard	.139
Wayne, L. B.,	.157
Weaver family	.89
Webb, Jason	.171
Weddle, John B.,	.102
Weiser, Conrad	.61
Weitner family	.7
Welch, Carl	.124, 178, 217
Welch, D. P.,	.122, 123
Welch, Fred	.92, 124
Welch, Gladys	.217
Welsh Neck Baptist Church	.55
Wellty, Abraham	.44, 45, 46
Wentz, Abdel Ross	.22-23, 24
West, Dan	.134, 164
West, E. K.,	.203
West, J. K.,	.185, 195, 202, 203, 205, 206
West, L. B.,	.205
West, M. Guy	.186, 196
West, Mary	.203
West, Russell G.,	.171
Western migration	.8, 18-19, 47, 50, 93
Wheat, Yellow Lammas	.58
White, John B.,	.217
White, Paul	.151
White Rock congregation	.140-141
White, Roy I.,	.205
Whittemore, Thomas	.57, 60, 73, 74, 78
Wilkes County, N. C.,	.46, 81
Williams, Paul	.38
Williar, Frank	.217
Willis, John	.176, 180
Willis, Robert	.110, 167, 176
Wilkins, Vernon	.150, 185
Wilson, Carter	.142
Wilson, M. G.,	.186
Wilson, M. J.,	.196
Winchester, Elhanan	.54-57, 64
Winchester, Va.,	.52
Wine, J. C.,	.218
Wine, Joseph	.109
Wine, Roland	.196
Wine, Ronald K.,	.216
Wingler, Green	.139
Wingler, Spencer	.132, 139, 156
Winkler, Robert	.169
Winston-Salem, N. C.,	.48
Wolff, Henrich	.10
Woodie, E. C.,	.129, 196
Woodie, H. J.,	.126, 186, 212
Woodie, John C.,	.103, 105, 108, 126, 184, 191
Wyant, Henry	.195, 208
Wyatt, Archie	.132, 153, 156
Wyatt, Emily	.107
Wyatt, Wilson	.103, 107

Y

Yadkin congregation	.19-25
Yancey County, N. C.,	.108
Yellow Poplar congregation	.109, 166
Yelton, Andrew L.,	.180, 190, 195, 202, 205, 206
Yoder family	.7
York County, Pa.,	.9, 22
Yount, Anna Magdalena	.52
Youth Adult Leadership Exchange	.224

Z

Zigler, D. H.,	.128
Zigler, M. R.,	.124, 219
Zimmerman family	.7, 9
Zinn, Phil	.136, 158, 169, 185, 216
Zinzendorf, Count	.38
Zug, Peter	.10
Zumbrum, Paul	.213





D00241994T

Div.S. 286.509756 S241 B844
Sappington 1971

The Brethren in the Carolinas

DATE	ISSUED TO
JUL 08 '87	ILL C

