

## INTRODUCTION

This study is the result of research done when I lived in Rome, NY, from 1985-1997. This research suggested that much of the uncertainty in the churches at the end of the twentieth century might, in fact, be expected and predictable, based on a proper understanding of human needs and how God is attempting to fill them. Much of what is unfolding in the churches and the world today is a direct result of the dynamics of the Great American Experiment in religious based freedom.

## FREEDOM AND SALVATION

Compare Genesis 2:16-17 with Genesis 3:2-3:

Gen. 2:16-17 You may eat of every tree in the Garden, but of the tree

Gen. 3:2-3 We may eat the fruit of the trees of the Garden, but of the tree

of knowledge of good and evil you should not eat, for in the day you eat it,  
in the middle of the garden, God has said you should not eat of it,  
nor even touch it,

you die of death.  
lest you die.

The first is what God said, the second is what the woman said God said. Note the differences. God offers whole trees; the woman accepts only fruit, putting a burden on herself. In God's plan, eating of the tree satisfies spiritual hunger, and death is spiritual also ("eat of eating" and "die of death"). The woman doesn't even appreciate the distinction; for her, all is physical. She even places the choice as central to the garden, increasing its importance, rather than giving it its proper name.

God makes a statement of man's freedom, and gives a reason for avoiding one tree. He gives the tree a name, and gives a warning. The woman drops the word "every", implying less freedom than God had given. Then she credits God not with making the warning, with a reasonable explanation, but instead she perceives it as a command with a curse. To her, it's almost like God is testing her, making it His fault if she is too weak to comply. Then, she increases the command on herself to even touching the tree, to make it seem even more burdensome. Then, she changes the second spiritual death into the first death of the body to make the penalty less severe.

Even allowing for the fact that woman is, according to early Christian traditions, the physical side of Adam, where man is the spiritual side, one must wonder who is setting her up to sin worse, the serpent, or herself.

Then, it's Adam's turn. God spoke to one Adam ("you"), when the woman and man had not yet been separated, but Eve heard for both ("we"). Adam does not accept his role in discerning what kind of fruit he has eaten, but merely blames the woman, implying she had not discerned correctly, thus blaming her for failing to do for him what he was supposed to do for himself. It is well said that he wanted her will more than God's. And then, he renames her "life" (Eve), appreciating her more for her childbearing ability than for her companionship, which is why God created her for Adam. This restricts their freedom to enjoy each other.

It's about freedom. We were created free. God related to us as free, for only as free could we make the choices necessary to till the garden and have dominion over the earth. Once upon a time we heard God totally and perfectly. Later, in Gen. 3:8, we hear fearful noises before we hear God's speech. But it still was about freedom, Isa. 61:1, John 8:36, Gal. 4:5, etc., because it is always about God's will, and God's will is for us to be free. So what else is salvation but a setting aside of the payment due for sin, including the first sin which started it all, and gave away our freedom?

But what is the history of Christianity? Adam gives away freedom (Luke 4:6), and the demons take over rulership (Genesis 5), and gradually the people who had known God forget Him more

and more, preferring their own idols instead. Before Noah, the nephalim ruled, replacing God with demons in government, taking away everyone's freedom but theirs. After Noah the Egyptians looked for anointed kings and deified the men so chosen, giving up the place God might occupy to restore their freedom.

For two millennia, wars were fought to prove which local god was better (for that is why God commanded Israel to conquer all who stood in their way), and by Greek times Plato spends several hundred pages in the Republic trying to decide how best to breed and train an unending supply of anointed leaders. Aristotle is clear that while men are created free, slavery is desirable because it allows inhabitants of conquered nations to be mainstreamed into the culture of the conquerors while they are socially protected. The Romans conquer the world in the name of divinely revealed laws (the twelve tablets), and even after Jesus comes, the first church to rule the world does it through one man who, they teach, hears God so perfectly that he cannot make a mistake. And more and more freedom is given up, as the price for God's will on earth becomes more and more slavery to individuals less and less in touch with God. It is only when this church in its pride seeks to conquer the Holy Land so they may prove their anointing like the Israel of old, that the war fails and the ancient books of the early Christians that they burned return from Arabian libraries.

The Inquisition fails to stop the spread of the "heresy" that freedom is freedom for each person, and once again, it becomes about freedom. For three centuries, reformers are put to death, or discredited, although here and there, there is a breakthrough, and a new church is organized around an imperfect vision of freedom. Again a group of people submit to new headship, ostensibly to gain, but in reality to sacrifice freedom, so that the church may survive long enough to allow God to clarify the vision.

Finally, history gets rewritten enough to cover the real motive for staging the great experiment: Can people really, in this life, before we are in heaven, live in the individual freedom of the Children of God? Europe, with its history of religious wars, and its established (prophetically revealed?) king-based social order, is no place to try; we need a new continent where we can try the experiment. Of course, there is one on the other side of the

Atlantic recently discovered by Columbus. To go there, however, and try to run from the established, trustworthy, five thousand year old social order is not acceptable to the vast hoards of people that must be moved if the experiment is to be tried.

A new story is dreamed up. America's 3500-year-old copper mines, complete with Egyptian hieroglyphics (their form of writing still being used today by the Indians in Maine) and Hebrew words in common use in the Iroquois languages, are forgotten. The old Latin and Greek writings are ignored, and the story gets around that the world has always been thought to be flat. The Vikings are forgotten, and in search of a new route to India, brave Columbus sets out in three ships that would make the ancient Egyptians sailors scared to board, and America is "discovered".

For three hundred years we sit and wait, while philosophers try to find just the right way to say "it's about freedom" without saying "it's about what God always wanted", for that would also say "all you church leaders who set up the Kings who are paying me to sit and think are wrong". Finally, the daring break is made, and "freedom" is replaced by "freedom under democracy" and the experiment begins.

Thirty-five years later (1826), when America has adults who were born after the Constitution was put in place, the parameters would be defined, the experiment would begin, and no one would even realize that something being driven by subconscious needs was occurring. The experiment would look like a bunch of unrelated events for two centuries, and the Christian churches of the next century would be confused as to whether God is in control, and wondering "what next?"

#### ESTIMATING TIMES

How is Jesus' ministry coming anyway? That sounds like a blasphemous question. Who could question that Jesus' ministry is anything but successful?

I'm sorry, but I just can't believe that Jesus is coming back in the next 50 years. As much as I believe that God can shorten the time, and get more done, if He wants to, I just can't see the Body of Christ being without spot or wrinkle that quickly, especially since other things are moving so slowly.

There are almost 24,000 Christian denominations on earth today. That's one new church a month since the first Pentecost. That doesn't even count the ones the Roman armies, under command of the Roman Catholic bishops, destroyed in the fourth century because they didn't agree with them theologically. And most of the 24,000 think the other ones are in error on some critical point! Is this the fruit of Jesus' last prayer in John 17:21? Of course not! Certainly God can grant the prayer of His Son.

But look at it this way. You are wasting your time teaching Scripture to those who have not made the choice to follow Jesus. To ask someone to follow Jesus, as every street evangelist knows, is to risk the question, "who is Jesus?" The answer, "the Son of God..." implies that the person understands who God is. Like the bumper sticker says, "If Jesus is the answer, what is the question?" Or, to put it another way, if someone has heard the preaching, has he heard the Gospel, and if he has heard the "gospel", has he heard any GOOD news?

The fact that such questions can even be posed suggests that even in America, where everyone has heard preaching, something is not getting through. In the worst pagan times, there was far less atheism than is now officially mandated in government buildings, because at least people talked in public as though they believed in SOMETHING divine, even if they were a uncertain as to what it was. In Europe, church attendance is less than 10%. America is little better, only 30%. So is it so blasphemous to ask in what respect can we say that Jesus' ministry, which was to save everyone, is making progress?

But in reality, Jesus' ministry is overwhelmingly successful - if we lower our expectations as to when He is supposed to get done with it. In 3700 BC, everyone spoke to one God (Gen. 4:26). By early Egypt, as in early Hinduism, everyone knew that there was one God, but considered Him too remote, so instead they decided to worship heavenly powers. By Persian times, the heavenly powers were thought of as people, and only a few educated elite knew God. So, counting the Hebrews, who of course had God's special revelation, and a handful of philosophers, maybe one person in a thousand on earth knew God was One. By 100 AD, thanks to Jesus, and Paul, the number is nearer to one in a

hundred. By 500 AD we're talking one in ten. By 1,000 AD, one in five. By today it's almost half. They're not all Christian, but they believe in one God.

So, assume that's the plan: Step 1: return the world to the knowledge of the true God. Step 2: Show them Jesus. Step 3: Get back the freedom. Step 4: Then, the perfection of the bride, the tribulation, rapture, etc. Under this assumption, most of the world is at step 2. America, the great experiment, is still getting ready for step 3. Then it will be prepared when the time arrives for the "Olde Worlde" is ready for the results.

But Americans have been about it for almost 200 years, and we're not yet free ourselves, if the powerless state of most churches is to be used as a guide. So Jesus' ministry is halfway to completion, resulting in salvations that have constantly grown in numbers. And who else can claim to have changed even 10% of the world from only the efforts of one lifetime, let alone half a lifetime? But this whole line of reasoning predicts that it's going to be a while before Jesus returns. It also tells us, the American Church, that we need to concentrate on trying to understand God's definition of freedom, so that we can be ready to hand the results of the great experiment to the world when they are ready to have it.

## DEFINING THE DREAM

Times have changed. The base of knowledge has changed. If we are going to appreciate the narratives of the religious events of 1826 in Upstate New York, we need to enter into a two hundred year old mindset.

The first thing we need to understand is that the return of the spiritual gifts of I Corinthians 12 was not accomplished generally in the world until barely a decade or two ago. In 1826, what is now routinely called the "Presence of God in worship" was known as an emotional experience, and was perceived as somewhat threatening. Baptism in the Spirit was unknown. Prophecy and tongues were considered magic tricks and part of the occult.

The Egyptian language had not yet been deciphered. The Catholic Church, as part of the world "cleansing" operation of the fourth century, had outlawed the teaching of Egyptian, and with it, had suppressed the memory of the ancient civilizations, except for

those parts transcribed in Latin or Greek, and not burned in the great library raids. It had been just about 1820 that Champollion made the brilliant guess that hieroglyphics were a rebus written in an older form of a still-used language called Coptic, and began to break the code. It was in roughly 1826 that the first translations made by Champollion and his colleagues from the Rosetta Stone were available generally in America. Up until that time, Egyptian writings were usually thought of as ancient mystical writings of a totally pagan nature. After translating their stories, scientific textbooks, inventories, grocery lists, etc., we see that the Egyptians appear to have been people much like ourselves in what they wrote down.

Literature and society depended heavily on Greek and Roman classical models. The same people who decried Egyptian as paganism easily used Greek gods as literary allusions in daily speech. Reading knowledge of Greek and Latin was the college entrance exam, and the total college curriculum consisted mostly of directed reading and recitation of ancient texts in preparation for (does this surprise you?) becoming a pastor.

Upstate New York, although an undesirable place to live today due to its taxes and weather, in those wagon-and-sleigh days before air conditioning, was deemed to have the best moderate and healthful weather and location for production. It was called the "Empire State", after the Great Roman Empire itself, and its cities were named in the 1790's after the great cities of that empire. Rome, NY, was to be the capital. Already the home of the Mohawk River/ Wood Creek basin that was later upgraded to the Erie Canal, it easily united by boat the entire one-third of America east of the Mississippi. With abundant tree cover for fuel, and farmland that had not been stripped by two centuries of white-race destructive farming, it looked like the Promised Land to the people of the new country.

Nor was archeology neglected. Many authors had remarked about the similarities between the Old Testament language, mythology, and customs and those of the Iroquois Indians, the first inhabitants of New York State.

It is not surprising that the state became the "burned-over region", which is the term modern historians give to Upstate New

York a hundred or so miles east or west of Rome. The name signifies the repeated revivals that swept the region - the fire alluding to the fire of the Holy Spirit. Not that there weren't any revivals anywhere else in America - they were frequent and powerful. But percentage wise, either in number or intensity, New York easily took the prize. And historians usually cite that the cause of these revivals was the fact that the state was so popular for the reasons described above.

In fact, there were much broader causes operating. New York had been the foundation state, with Rome the foundation city, so that anything new in America would either start there, or end up coming there very quickly.

The year 1826 had to be a special year. The Revolutionary War debt was all but paid off. Children who had been born after the constitution was signed had become barely old enough to be financially stable and were now getting ready to make their contribution to society.

And these contributions weren't only in religion, either. This was the year at the center of it all: the first great canal opened; the first electric motor experiments were done; the first great American authors appeared. All came within a few years of 1826. This was to be expected. Generation A (for America) had money and the leisure time to spend it.

It was a generation that treasured talking about religion. They either loved it or hated it. In the frontier they whiled away the long winters either at church socials or in the tavern - and drinking was a sin. People were either committed, active Christians or Universalist philosophers. But this is understandable too, given the education of the period.

It was here and for these reasons that the dream had to be defined. Europe had chosen America. America had chosen New York. New York had chosen the Erie Canal centered at Rome. And the time was 1826.

But what was the dream? By their fruits you will know them. In the narratives that follow, I will give brief descriptions of the fruits of this year. It is beyond the scope of this study to give annotated, in-depth historical treatments, so expect to find here only those details not commonly in print, and summaries of the

stories emphasizing the most relevant portions. The details may be had for an afternoon at any decent library, by simply looking up reference books of biographies and histories of American religion.

The thesis proposed here is the following: America had been subconsciously commissioned by the world of human need to determine if freedom was compatible with the Gospel, and if so, how the compatibility was to be achieved. Now, the nation's social fabric, the scientific ideas, the paradigms of history that define our reality, were still all European. America had been able to realize its possession of two, and only two new things: a democratic government and an ancient, newly reclaimed continent.

Therefore, there were only four possibilities to try. In no particular order, they were:

1. That the land itself is holy and will yield the desired revelation.
2. That democracy itself is holy and will yield the revelation.
3. That the freedom to try the experiment is itself the freedom desired, and may simply be claimed from God, by realizing it is our right.
4. That religion as inherited from Europe is not in need of any additional changes, i.e., the experiment is not necessary.

As we shall see, all four of these, and only these four, were tried in the critical place in the critical year. The dynamics that developed there left unanswered questions and doubts, and these are the questions that the churches are still trying to answer in an attempt to complete the experiment.

#### 1. HOLY IS THE LAND

America had been settled by small groups of Egyptians, Phoenicians, Druids, Vikings and Hebrews at different times. This is beyond question, although it shocks many. The Micmac Indians of Maine are still writing in Egyptian hieroglyphics. The writing on stones as far inland as Ohio and Kansas are clearly Phoenician and Druid. Hebrew words occur with identical meaning in American Indian languages. One can actually go further. It is argued in my other books that America was Atlantis, although this deduction is supported only by narrative evidence. The founders of America were very aware of the thrust of these things, if not the

particulars, and spoke of them often. The American Indian Department actually makes these claims in its studies of the Indians, published in the mid-19th century.

If the goal was to convince ourselves that America was the desired new revelation of God because of the holiness of the LAND, the theology to be advanced was obvious. Simply state that proof of ancient Israeli occupation (it's members were later ministered to personally by the resurrected Jesus) had been found in America. Further state that, on the land of the Indians, the true early Jewish-Christian writings had resurfaced and were now available for all who wished to have them. This was precisely the thesis of Joseph Smith of Palmyra, NY, in the 1820's. Make the writings Egyptian in form, add a little slight of hand, a special revelation by an angel, a special ordination of the founder, and a missing Urim and Thummim, and you get voila! Mormonism, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

It is trivial to prove that Joseph Smith was self-deluded. The Egyptian language he supposedly copied from his plates did not mean what he said it did when translated correctly. The plates were "taken back to heaven" so other people couldn't see them. The so-called witnesses who saw the plates all recanted their testimony and admitted they had been fooled by slight of hand. The processes of translation were occult. Lately, new Dead Sea Scroll evidence proves that the Urim and Thummim didn't work the way Smith said they did. The content of the Book of Mormon, except for that which is quoted correctly from the Bible, is stupid, and is based on Joseph Smith's personality. The leaders of the movement killed each other. Etc, etc, etc.

But they do own a state (Utah), and they have nice music in a rather ritzy temple. Their TV evangelistic ads are some of the media's best. And this success stands in spite of the fact that they had been kicked out of three states for their views. So the experiment isn't finished. We are not yet ready to abandon the importance of the hope that the ground has power because it is sanctified. (Ask any Upstate NY Catholic who buries a statue of St. Joseph in his yard in order to sell his house quickly.)

## 2. HOLY IS DEMOCRACY

What makes a conspiracy theory? That question is rapidly generating several new books as authors tackle it, but I suggest that it is a desire to place before the public, all the public, a new idea, and to get their opinion of it without risking personal rejection if they don't like it. For example, if you want to deny the existence of visitors from other planets, but you have had an abduction experience, you might try guessing that someone on earth did it to you. Your friends aren't sure, and kind of like the idea, so you try blaming the government. To get people's attention, you start adding details, like singling out a special branch of government, or special secret projects, etc. The statements, of course, have no proof; if they did, you would be wasting your time to publish them, since your goal is acceptance of your personal theory to fulfill your personal needs, and proof would give you that. In order to need to do this in the first place, the theory must be avant-garde, and risky to your ego to suggest, and not subject to proof. As the public makes up its mind if they like it or not, potential proof may surface, for they will search for it with you. The non-agreeing public must then find contrary proof - otherwise they cannot stall for time to make up their minds.

With that preface, allow me to present what is probably the first American conspiracy theory.

About 50 miles west of Palmyra is Batavia, New York. In the spring of 1826, Col. David A. Miller and Capt. William A. Morgan made a deal. That much is certain. The following is the story believed by most American Christians of the period:

The Masonic Order was formed in the middle Ages supposedly to give men a place to hang out with friends and do good deeds for the local area. But in reality, it was an occult teaching organization having sorcerers and even Devil worshippers at its head, and possessing the secret knowledge of paganism. Through demonic attachments and clandestine manipulation of civilization, it and its brother organizations, such as the Knights Templar and Rosicrucians, were engaged in the selective release of information to the public for the purpose of establishing a new world order based on paganism. Mr. Morgan had been the first non-Mason to

infiltrate the order to its highest levels. He, with Mr. Miller, was getting ready to publish his memoirs, relating how to infiltrate the Masons, betraying all their secrets, and thus showing its "effects on the government and the Christian religion." Mr. Miller began advertising the upcoming publication through the local newspaper he published. The Masons then infiltrated his business, attacked and burned his shop, and, when the manuscript survived, kidnapped and killed Morgan. So the story goes.

Now, here's the Masons' version:

The Freemasons are a direct descendant of the Catholic Church's approved guild of stonemasons who built the cathedrals in the middle Ages. While they have in their possession certain ancient Christian writings, everything they teach is Scripturally based and represents a spiritual theory of building the earth. But most Masons don't even care about that; they just make good lifelong friendships, have innocent fun together, and do charitable work. Morgan did not write the book; he was too unlettered. Miller, who had had a falling out with the Masons, wrote the book to get even with them and make a profit for himself. He set Morgan up as the fall guy, in case the project failed (some give other reasons). The Masons did not infiltrate Miller's business; he was paranoid because of his guilt. They did not burn his building (no one was ever caught) since Masons don't do things like that. Morgan's disappearance happened as follows:

Morgan, although he had counterfeited his Masonic credentials, had realized what Miller was trying to do to him, and petitioned the Masons to help him. They, in turn, arranged for him to disappear and be admitted to Canada, where they gave him his choice of a farm or a substantial sum of money. They left him safely in Canada, but he later ran from their guardianship and boarded a ship bound for international waters. He was never seen again.

Further, the book they published does not say anything new about the Masons; and certainly does not give away secrets of any value. Even if it did, the publication of these secrets would mean nothing, since Freemasonry isn't about secrets, but about charitable deeds and friendships.

Now, you have both stories. Here is some of the truth:

The Catholic Church officially condemns Freemasonry, as do most Full Gospel churches. Mainline churches are divided on the subject. Morgan's book was published late in 1826, and was later republished internationally by a New York Publisher. Morgan left behind a wife and infant child, and a recently developed reputation of having many debts (although the truth is that he had only a couple, which are due to researching his book on a shoestring budget). The governor of New York, a Mason himself, hoping to discover what had happened to Morgan, offered a substantial reward "for information leading to..." and this is how Morgan was traced to the ship. Public trials of the "kidnapper" Masons were held, and nothing was ever proved either way, although a couple admitted "rescuers" served minor sentences in prison. The body found in the fall of 1826 was not Morgan (or was, if you assume the people who claimed it as a missing relative were paid to lie by the Masons). In 1882, a cemetery monument was erected to immortalize the "heroic deeds" of Mr. Morgan. Several books and newspapers were written about the escapade from all points of view.

If the reader wants more data, the complete file of everything still extant is in the State Library of Wisconsin.

Here is some more truth: By 1829, a political party had been formed composed of ex-Masons who had quit the organization and had banded together to destroy the Lodges. Throughout the United States, many lodges were closed (including the one in Rome, NY) and the Freemason organization suffered untold damage. The party had managed to affect a national election or two, but eventually quietly disappeared into other parties of the day. But the dissidents had undertaken a publishing program. Miller, for many years, continued to publish an anti-Masonic newspaper. So they said whatever Morgan didn't say, and soon all the secrets had been revealed. So, today when you go to your Christian bookstore and buy a book on the Masons, you have Morgan (or is it Miller or the dissidents?) to thank for the availability of whatever is in it, if any of it is, in fact, true.

Now, what does this have to do with religion in New York? The REASONS why Masonry was hated is the key to understanding its relationship to religion. Masonry, according to

Morgan's book and the later publications of dissidents, claims to be based on the Bible and speaks of Jehovah. That makes it a church, in their view. And then, on top of it all, the Masons operate in secret. The books in the Morgan tradition argue that this makes it undemocratic, since in their view of democracy, there can be no secrecy. So the secrecy inherent in a conspiracy theory creates a paranoia that shuts down a maybe-church on the basis that nothing that is done in secret should exist in a democracy, since secrecy is ungodly. Secrecy equals undemocratic equals un-Christian. In other words, in their minds, Christianity equals democracy.

There is also another unexpected Masonic connection that we will see in the next chapter.

### 3. THE SHEKINAH RETURNS

A one-and-a-half time as far east of Palmyra as Batavia is to its west, is Rome, NY.

If there was ever an unfulfilled promise, it is this unfortunate village.

Rome was founded as a fort to protect De-o-wain-sta, the carrying place of the Iroquois, which united the great waters of America that may have once flowed around Atlantis. If you start in the salt water of the ocean and sail up the Mohawk River, it gets too shallow for a canoe right at Rome. By accident or providential design, if you walk one mile from this point, you reach Wood Creek. At just this nearest point to the Mohawk, Wood Creek becomes navigable by canoe, and takes you ultimately to Lake Erie. If you sail the inland waterways and come out by Chicago, the Chicago River takes you to the Mississippi. The Oneida Indians, placed highly in the Iroquois Confederacy by Hiawatha, were, in their mythology, the divinely appointed guardians of this connection point of the ancient trade route. The fort protected the one-mile walk for the white man's commercial exploitation of the interior of America.

It was a symbol that no Mason could have missed, and was obvious even to some Christians. As the Garden of Eden was placed in the opening between the waters above heaven and the waters below (Gen. 1:6 according to the interpretation of the period), and so was called Mesopotamia (Greek for "between the

waters"), so was Rome the separator of the ocean salt water from the inland fresh. In the symbols of this mythology, Rome, NY, was the new Garden of Eden.

And it had been named and mapped as the new capital. But the deal fell through; Albany became the capital instead.

And a resident of Rome had designed the Erie Canal, the first great transportation and commercial success of the new country. And the canal was to go through Rome. This deal also fell through. (During the dedication of the canal in October 1825, a group of Masons carried a barrel of water from Wood Creek across the one-mile walk route, and dumped it into the Mohawk in protest. The first Masonic Lodge, by the way, occupied the precise center of the walk route, and later became a Jewish synagogue. It is now a drugstore. The current Lodge appears to occupy the site originally planned for the state capital building.) The canal that was ultimately built missed being located in downtown Rome by a couple miles. It looked like Rome would never achieve its promise of being a special place.

But God had other ideas. In 1793, a group of five mostly related individuals had banded together as the First Religious Society of Rome. The purpose was to share their lives in committed, accountable Christian community, praying together weekly, and working to build a church in the new town. Every six years or so brought some great fruit: the first girls' school in the county; the first boys school; the first permanent downtown church (the new building was still being used for worship today); the first Christian publishing society; the work of 1826; and ultimately the founding of Oberlin Christian College. But it is the work of 1826 that is the greatest triumph of God in the world in almost 1800 years.

Charles G. Finney was not the first American Evangelist. There had been revivals in America on a regular basis. The work of 1826 was summarized in a fairly routine manner by the churches that brought him to Rome and the surrounding towns, with just a few clues buried in between the lines.

Certainly God specially chose Finney: he was the first person EVER recorded as being saved in a sukkah (or "booth" - see the study on the Celebration of a Christian Feast of Tabernacles). He

had been taught by the direct command of God how to build and use this Biblically mandated (Lev. 23:42, et al) booth, which no Christian had seen for over 1700 years. Unquestionably, he was a powerful speaker. As the standard histories would have it, Finney's greatness was due to his talents and God's grace. But there is much more to the cause of his success.

Why was the shekinah glory witnessed by the secular sheriff of Oneida County (just as he crossed the canal a couple miles south of Rome on his way into town)? Why was 12% of the city saved (not even in Acts 2 was it such a high percentage)? Why does the pastor of the sponsoring church remark that some of his members were convinced the second coming had occurred already? Why were people falling over under the power of the Spirit in doorways (no one had heard of slaying in the Spirit then)? Why, after 3 days, was no building big enough to hold the people who came to hear Finney's preaching? Why were drunks who mocked the revival struck dead on the spot? Why was there no opposition to the revival for over 6 months? **WHERE WERE THE DEMONS THAT COME OUT TO FIGHT EVERY REVIVAL?**

This was not just Finney. Never again was he even remotely so successful. His reputation was made in three short weeks in a little bypassed village of Rome, where it had taken the members of the First Religious Society weeks to convince him to come. The evangelist who for two years no one would allow to preach, went from Rome to cosmopolitan Utica, 17 miles away, and from there to the world. Yes, people got saved. But, from Utica on, the demons were interested. The opposition was organized, ready, and effective. And no, the Shekinah glory wasn't around in any of his other crusades. Finney never did get the word from God to cross over into Herkimer County, where the Mohawk Indians lived. (Curiously, at almost the same time, the great Iroquois evangelist, Handsome Lake, and his son ministered to them. His teachings are recited at festivals to this day. The Indians say that he was taken to visit heaven and met Jesus, and that Handsome Lake was later killed by demons.)

Finney had made one statement that had started it all. In preparation for his first service in Rome on Christmas Day, 1825 (which wasn't as big a holiday then as it is now), he met with the



regular Saturday night prayer meeting in a farmhouse. (Currently this site is buried by the Air Force high tech runway at the now closed Griffiss Air Base, recently home of the infamous Woodstock '99.) Maybe because all the most influential people of Rome were there (the prayer meeting was still a citywide fixture well into the 1870's), he said very little during the meeting. The elders of the church asked him if he had anything to share, especially in response to their earnest and persistent prayers for revival. He meekly responded, "God is always ready; if you don't have revival, it is your sin that is blocking it."

That's all he said - and the world caught fire. For the first time, the right person and the right place had met. A group of people had dared to consider that in this new land INDIVIDUALS had the right, anointing, and therefore, duty, to follow God as He lead them in their own hearts. For people who had never heard anything except the dogma that salvation came through faith in an institution, it was a daring statement. That these people had created their own church which had been blessed by God, and that they believed Rome was destined for greatness, helped. But Finney was used to the concept of salvation apart from human intervention (as he had himself been saved alone with God). He had learned to hear God without having any headship, and was used to being rejected by men for his calling. The grace that Europe had prayed for so long had found its opportunity.

#### 4. NOTHING NEEDS TO CHANGE

In 1826, the week before Christmas, a box ad with the following caption appeared in the Rome weekly newspaper: "Come spend a quiet Christmas at Zion Episcopal Church". Simple enough on the surface, but it hides the fourth part of the great experiment.

Zion Episcopal Church had been formed in fall of 1825. A couple of its members had been saved during the Finney revival, which, although sponsored by the First Religious Society's Congregational-recently-turned-Presbyterian Church, was interdenominational and left no congregation untouched. The first opposition most likely came from Zion. In May of 1826, the first confirmations of the new Episcopalian converts were done by

district Bishop Hobart Yates, who, after spending the rest of the summer touring his diocese, wrote that pastors should do everything in their power to stop revivals, so that people may be returned to the "sober institutions" of the church. Zion Episcopal Church had decided to devote itself to the principle that Christianity, as it had been handed down from Europe, did not need to change.

It is surely true that the old worship, where people stand and sit on cue, looks much more sober than miracles and shekinah glory. It is not possible to prove, but it seems likely that Bishop Yates created a pastoral order that caused the members of Zion to threaten to pull their part of the funding of the Masonic Lodge. The Lodge was then being built and Zion had contracted to pay half in return for a floor of their own. Certainly, the revival could not have continued for 6 months without at least Masonic permission (for many of the influential people in any town in this era were Masons). It is tempting to wonder if the lack of demonic interference in the revival had anything to do with Masonic sorcery (if indeed there is such a thing). But it is quite clear that the Masons were angry about losing the canal, and were probably angry about losing the state capital status. Surely, having Rome become the seat of the new move of God would have been an acceptable substitute for this status, and would have served their stated purpose of charitable works. It might even have helped to prove false Morgan's assertions that Masons were anti-Christian and anti-democratic, thus saving their entire organization.

In the end, the revival split the sponsoring church for over 10 years, and the only other great fruit that the First Religious Society was able to accomplish was the founding of Oberlin College, in Ohio (not Rome), where Finney retired in his later years as a professor. Nothing else ever came out of Rome, and although Finney became a worldwide evangelist, he has nowhere near the recognition he should have as the originator of 21st Century Christianity.

The crisis of which of these four paths the world should take remained unsolved; and freedom to follow God based on what an individual hears in his heart is not always recognized in every Christian denomination to this day.

## THE UNDERGROUND GRACE

The experiment had been tried. It had been stopped before it could be evaluated. The Mormons are still with us, and growing rapidly around the world as they change their doctrine to something people would rather hear. The Masons are back, although who knows how much they have changed. Most traditional churches still oppose the "non-sober" revivals, although no one wants to sound as antagonistic as Bishop Yates. And their spin-offs are numerous. The list certainly includes several communities who, convinced the churches cannot be saved, go off to live their own way, hoping for an immanent second coming, occasionally committing mass suicide, or adopting an extreme position on marriage that results in their swift end due to lack of children.

Then there's the occult, which in America started with the spirit rappings of 1848 in Hydesville, NEW YORK (just as far southeast of Rome as Palmyra was to its west). And then there are the secret organizations, like the Order of the Golden Dawn, that loosely connects with the Masons, and, of course, the British White Eagle Lodge, which claims to be a non-denominational Christian Church, but is in reality an occult teaching center supposedly inspired by an ancient Egyptian priest reincarnated as an Iroquois chief, who spoke in a vision to its founder in about 1900. Such combinations certainly prove that God had given the grace for what happened in New York to go around the world, but that it got stopped as it was born (Rev. 12).

What of Finney? The one God had appointed for the work. God is never beaten. Just before 1900, a Methodist minister (the Methodist church in Rome was across the street from the church that sponsored Finney) named Charles F. Parham opened Bethel Bible College in Kansas, and a second branch campus quickly followed at Houston, Texas. The purpose of the college was to study Finney's teachings in the light of Methodism, but all denominations were welcome. A minister from Los Angeles, W. J. Seymour, attended the college. On New Year's Eve 1900 (remember, 1900 is the last year of the nineteenth century, not the first of the twentieth) the gift of tongues was restored, just before

midnight. Pentecostalism was born. Rev. Seymour opened a storefront church on Azusa Street in Los Angeles. His doctrine was rejected by all mainline churches, so he formed his own denomination, the Assembly of God. Other smaller Spirit-filled denominations followed. It was from such a church that four Catholic college students sought the Baptism in the Spirit after discovering it during a Bible Study in 1967. The Catholic Church, which was everywhere in the world, rejected the whole thing 20 years later, but in the meantime, Finney's realization that the power of God was available to set free any INDIVIDUAL who would just ask for it went all around the world, and today is available behind the scenes, welcomed by no traditional church, but there for any who want it.

But other problems remain. The crisis is still with us. We do not know how to get the freedom to operate within traditional, more sober, church structure. This is why mainline members quit their parents' church and try to start a church of their own - they are trying to solve this question. This is why in some churches uncontrollable outbreaks of laughter and roaring like animals are encouraged even during the sermon - we need a model to test whether personal freedom is ready to replace the traditional headship. This is why young people look for religious experience in mysticism, cults, and drugs - they want to be personally free, and we have no structure for them except rebellion. This is why we trust science, even though the sales of the scandal sheet newspapers with their news of impossible prophecies and miracles proves we know that faith is stronger; we are afraid to have no headship, so we assign that role to science, and then let UFO's baffle us. This is why we hide from each other in our air-conditioned houses and cars, and build new impersonal universes in cyberspace - we are afraid that we cannot handle the freedom we know we can have.

In 1826, one more neat thing happened. A book was published on the use of the gifts of I Cor. 12. It was correct in all respects, and was as good as any manual out there today - and this was 70 years before tongues was restored. It was called "Magic and the Christian Faith". The true freedom of the children of God is that

we are to till the Garden and form the earth. In a culture where only a few people realized this, the power to do it seemed magical.

But now, that 30% of Christians claim this experience (Baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues), but only 10% (in Europe) or 30% (in America) are in church; this must say something about the institutions. Thanks to archeology, we know more about the Scriptures than ever before. Thanks to technology, we can share our thoughts faster than ever before. Thanks to our refusal to accept what God tried to give us in answer to our ancestors' prayers in Europe, we are still in slavery, like Israel (building cities like stone Masons) after 400 years. (There will be no Moses except the Son of Man inside us. Sinai is in the shekinah glory.) We are doing more for religion faster than any generation since the apostles, yet we are the most defeated church in history. Because we settle for the same from God that our ancestors did when we have been called to accept much more.

The history can tell us the promise, and the unresolved conflict. But will we dare to finish the job, and get ready for the next step?



# THE HISTORY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN HAMBURG

Compiled and analyzed by

Ken Behrens

## PREFACE

No place is an island. Hamburg, as everywhere, is subject to a multitude of forces. The people who settled here had expectations, which God could override only with difficulty. The people who visited here had expectations which made them open to God in specific ways. The present is an edifice built on a foundation of the past. Events of today seem to make no sense until they are placed in their proper historical context. There is a very simple truth, almost a definition of the operation of faith in a community: No matter what God shows an individual in his prayer closet, people can accept only what they can perceive, and a group of people can perceive only what their language and background can allow them to say and to hear. Movements of God that seem illogical as they unfold are often rendered sensible by just such analysis. God, who can do so much more than we can ask or imagine, does therefore precisely what we will allow Him to do. And the Spirit broods, as over unformed waters of creation yet to be, waiting for the human mind to dare to entertain the Word that wishes to come forth.

Dec. 3, 2004 updated October 27, 2006

## THE UNDERGROUND GRACE

In my book “1826 – Year of the Spirit”(in “The Coming Body of Christ...”), I demonstrate that the salvation history of the church has a plan, and that plan can be understood by God’s operation in the United States. The model is here summarized as five “words” – stages of realizations of God’s plan that developed movements within the church.

The purpose of Jesus’ death was to restore us to righteousness before God. Righteousness allows us once again to act as God’s emissaries in the world. We are to be a Kingdom of Priests, ministering to a hurting, waiting world.

No one would disagree with this. But, confronted with 24,000 denominations, a mostly dysfunctional worldwide Body of Christ, and three consecutive generations of people who won’t go to church, what are we to say has happened to what Jesus earned?

Once it is recognized that the call to minister implies the freedom to minister as God assigns, America’s role becomes clear: before God can fix anything, He has to get us free first, and this is why people came to a fresh continent looking for freedom to worship. The events of 1826 are pivotal, since they define America’s role:

In the apostolic church, anyone called was free to enter any ministry. In 365 AD, the Church at Rome became eager to join the greatest revelation of God with the greatest governmental scheme ever developed by man, and that was the Roman empire. For the sake of “doctrinal authenticity”, individual freedom was sacrificed for a “system” that could fill the world with preaching (I hesitate to call what was preached “good” news). The original word of “You are sons of God, and brothers of Jesus Christ” had become “proper ordination is necessary for truth which is needed to please God.” (word #1)

The pride of a worldwide organization came before a fall, and, with the attempted extension to the Holy Land, copies of the books which needed to be destroyed to keep the appearance of apostolic authority for the “program” to remain intact came back from Asia in Crusaders’ saddlebags. The Inquisition held back the power of the Scriptures rightly understood for 300 years, but in the end a German monk found enough friends to deny the established order, and stay hidden long enough to live to tell about it, and Protestantism was born. We now heard a new word from God: “You are allowed to run your own church. In fact, it is your joyous DUTY to so.” (#2)

But this created another problem. One of the primary forces in the establishment of Hamburg is the Thirty Years’ War. During the late 1600’s, a portion of Germany was situated midway between three countries ruled by three churches. In turn, each country ravaged the land, and famine, disease, and disorder followed. The hardy, industrious Germans, as hard as they worked, couldn’t keep rebuilding fast enough. It would forever be

a subconscious rule among these people that NEVER, under ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, would any church be allowed to grow so powerful that it could do this again. These people would become the Pennsylvania Dutch.

Meanwhile, in more peaceful surroundings, God was on the move. Handfuls of people began to sense some of word #3, although they couldn't quite explain it. Mennonites had gotten inklings that the Holy Spirit could inspire people personally, and Quakers had begun to realize that if you pray to God, and wait long enough, He will talk back. Baptists, Congregationalists, Amish, and a thousand others formed churches, many of which survive to this day, and many more which did not. America had just become a nation, and the "Second Great Awakening" came through the country, defining the camp meeting, prayer meeting, outdoor religion, and emotional response to God.

William Penn's father had been a British Navy Captain, and the King owed him some major back pay. The son accepted Pennsylvania. Penn was a Quaker, and God had spoken to him, although he lacked the words to say it. After paying the Indians for permission to live on the land (for our purposes up to the Blue Mountains), he talked to the Pennsylvania Dutch about his great experiment, and they came to, among other places, Hamburg, for religious freedom. And they brought their subconscious fear of the churches ever uniting with them.

As America was defined, the question loomed large in people's subconscious minds, what was God up to? In 1826, in Rome, NY, the Shekinah Glory returned to earth for the first time in 3000 years. In less than 3 days, 12% of the little village got saved, surpassing even the first Pentecost in Jerusalem. Revilers of the work fell over dead in public, and the published reports say that members of the little Presbyterian Church that had done nothing unusual, except daring to live like the Bible said to, had thought the second coming was happening in their midst. The cause was an unknown preacher named Charles Finney, recognized in the neighboring town by the children of 5 people who had prayed for 33 years. The word he gave proved to be word #3: Church membership won't save you; you need a personal relationship with Christ.

Finney may have articulated and published it, but God had been revealing it for some time. Revivals in the Second Great Awakening at the end of the 1700's had started the Evangelicals and the Methodists, who talked about personal experience of God, and being on fire for the Gospel. All these movements had things in them that didn't match the somber established "duty" of the early Protestants, and were suspect, and condemned. Persecution drove the grace that defined 20<sup>th</sup> Century Worldwide Christianity underground.

Just before 1900, a Methodist minister named Charles F. Parham opened Bethel Bible College in Kansas, and a second branch campus quickly followed at Houston, Texas. The purpose of the college was to study Finney's teachings in the light of Methodism, but all denominations were welcome. A minister from Los Angeles, W. J. Seymour, attended the college. On New Year's Eve 1900 (remember, 1900 is the last year of the nineteenth century, not the first of the twentieth) the gift of tongues was restored, just before midnight. Pentecostalism was born. Rev. Seymour opened a storefront church on Azusa Street in Los Angeles. Word #4 had been uttered, and the birth pangs were getting closer in time: The gifts of the Holy Spirit are still here for today. From now on the Gospel would be preached in power.

His doctrine was rejected by all mainline churches, so he formed his own denomination, the Assembly of God. Other smaller Spirit-filled denominations followed. It was from such a church that four Catholic college students sought the Baptism in the Spirit after discovering it during a Bible Study in 1967. The Catholic Church, which was everywhere in the world, rejected the whole thing 20 years later, but in the meantime, Finney's realization that the power of God was available to set free any INDIVIDUAL who would just ask for it went all around the world, and today is available behind the scenes, welcomed by no traditional church, but there for any who want it. With the Catholic Charismatic renewal leading, the Lutherans and UCC followed suit and renewed their music and worship styles.

The gap was getting wider, as God moved on with His plan, but traditions held their ground. Forced out of mainline churches, those renewed formed non-denominational, Charismatic churches. They had guitar music, and gifted preachers to tell them God's word. People still were not free. They still needed music leaders and preachers to tell them how to praise and what to do.

And all the movements centered around either the Catholics, maintaining what they believe is the true ancient tradition, of the Reformers, like Lutherans and Reformed/UCC maintaining that they have correctly restored what the Catholic Church should have been, or the Methodists, emphasizing the awakening of religious fervor within a body of believers, and the successful compromise between the independent churches of the

congregationalists and the formal structured churches. Three approaches; just like the three approaches that caused the Thirty Years' War.

Word #5: "You are a new creation, with a ministry of your own. Assemble with others, and follow Jesus together. NO ONE BUT JESUS IS TO LEAD." Do you dare hear it? Your children hear it every day. If the churches won't preach it, TV and Internet will. And if you don't learn to hear it pretty soon, the last chapter of this book will be that the churches are all closed. Two weeks ago, in Hamburg, and old Lutheran gentleman was discussing with me the inevitability of churches all closing in 20 years unless the youth come back. He knew God had a plan, but he couldn't hear even Word #3. God has moved so far from him, as he moves closer toward traditions he barely understands.

Where is Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, when you need him?

## THE STORY OF HAMBURG

Everybody in Hamburg knows this story. Jacob Kaercher got a land grant from the King and sold it to his son, who partitioned it into lots in 1789. That land is Hamburg. Then the Pennsylvania Dutch came, and worked very hard as Germans do, and, voila, prosperity. But that doesn't explain the spirit that governs the place.

The key is go look at some tunnels. A local landlord got me into the stories of slave rescue just before the Civil War. It seems he had bought a building (on South Fourth) that he thought was used as a station in the Underground Railroad. In researching, he ran across an old woman who would tell him only that certain flags were flown in Hamburg to let people know when "slaves were on the move".

Now, the context of the times on that story is that Quaker (congregationally ruled, independent churches) Pennsylvania had been one of the first free states. When a slave reached here, he was essentially free, since no Pennsylvanian would help his former owner recapture him.

But the Supreme Court changed all that in 1843, by ruling that every peace officer, in a free state, must help bounty hunters recapture slaves. There followed 20 years when Pennsylvanians had a serious problem. There had never been a slave in Hamburg, although Reading, and even Oley, had them. The Borough Council minutes are all mysteriously missing until the end of the Civil War, and the 1866 minutes have as one of their first acts, outfitting a police force (in 1855, Hamburg had a "constable"). And an Underground Railroad slave station on Fourth Street is just too far from a river to move slaves without massive cooperation. It is just possible that there was a conspiracy to have no police force, precisely so the town could work together to free the slaves. The laws decreeing the lack of a police force would need to "disappear", lest some bounty hunter subpoena them and have them overturned.

This exciting possibility cannot be proved pro or con. If it were true, it would make Hamburg unique in this respect, and alone could provide enough funding to save the town. I started researching, with no results, at least not about slaves.

In asking people, many mentioned the mysterious "tunnels" under downtown, discovered when the sewers were installed. Some felt that the tunnels were built to transport the slaves, most didn't know. As I continued my research, I located a person who was willing to show me his tunnels. I was looking at a complete 150 year old home and storefront, plus gangway, and front yard for horses, all in a basement, with a retaining wall to Fourth Street. This wasn't tunnels at all. Hamburg is built on top of an older city that was built before the stores on Fourth Street.

It all fit. The old maps show Hamburg laid out east to west. The new maps show turns in the streets that were always there, but no one ever saw before the 1840's. And as time went on, mapmakers made errors that betrayed that Hamburg was changing its perceived purpose.

What if we try throwing out Pennsylvania Dutch as the dominating force in Hamburg? We already know that Hamburg existed first as a public house at a crossroads of the Blue Mountain Road, and the East Schuylkill River Road for horses in pre-revolutionary times. We all know that Hamburg improved greatly when the Centre Stage Company built the toll road from Philadelphia to Sunbury and chose Hamburg as the overnight stop, and again when the canal came through, and again at the coming of the railroad. What if, instead of saying that the Pennsylvania Dutch population worked hard for each new group of people, we emphasize the people coming in. Instead of looking at the Pennsylvania Dutch workers' abilities, let's look at the ideas that

motivated the work. Let's model Hamburg as people coming in. Either model is valid, but the second has never been discussed.

All of a sudden the pieces fit. The Centre Stage route was a toll road until the 1860's. Could it be that Fourth Street was a toll road until the coming of the state highway around 1820? That's why the street was renamed from Schuylkill to State. Let's suppose that Hamburg was originally a town defined by the crossroads of the two horse trails. The high hill that the Catholic church stands on, and the fact that the most northerly usable Schuylkill River fording place is near Pine Street, would have forced the trails around the hill to either side, just like they are on the early maps. The public house went on top of the hill midway between the crossroads, which explains why it is so far north (the Getty Mart), but the road use by the travelers, and that hill determined that Hamburg was built along Island, Schuylkill and Pine Streets with short crossroads at White Oak (3<sup>rd</sup>) and Main (4<sup>th</sup>). The early maps don't show the roads turning, because the reason they turn is because 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> don't go straight north and south today, as the the original plan would have had them doing.

Now, why are 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> not true north and south? Simple. If you extend 4<sup>th</sup> street, it goes exactly, to within 100 feet, of the easternmost meander of the Schuylkill (just north of the bypass entrance at 61, by Cross Keys). The Centre stage company built that road. They built it as a straight line from Reading to Hamburg, turning only once, to get around that bend in the river. They used compass and transit to put in the shortest possible road from that point to what was then the only public house in Hamburg, and that angle fixed everything east of Peach Alley, and made all the original streets turn to agree with the new grid. And they built up 4<sup>th</sup> Street above the creeks, and shored it up with retaining walls, as they encountered the sudden rise on North 4<sup>th</sup>. Under this concept, that road was a toll road, an off-limits viaduct, with 4<sup>th</sup> Street having its own frontage road on either side. The tunnels were what early Hamburg used to get under the stagecoach road. There were thus two Hamburgs; the one the Pennsylvania Dutch built to farm and serve the trails, and a second one built by the commerce delivered by the Centre Stage.

This is a daring hypothesis, but it explains everything: the map changes, the tunnels, the basements, and most importantly, all the different churches in Hamburg. It is echoed twice more: The land near the Schuylkill was built-up for the canal, and Confer's (Balthaser's) store was built only as the railroad came in on that side of town. First two trails, then a stage line, then a canal, then a train. One brought culture, one brought coal and energy, and one brought the cosmopolitan Victorian age with its factories, minstrel shows and fine balls. All far beyond what Shoey or Leesport ever saw, and much earlier. Hamburg exists to WELCOME new ideas, and to serve them. But it is deathly scared of religious ideas, as we saw above. So we find two separate religious traditions, either or which has valid claim to being that of Hamburg, and an official story that only the Pennsylvania Dutch Reformed one is historical. The Lutheran/Calvinist Word #2 tradition that is "official," and an early evangelical Word #3 tradition, run by people who believe they are hearing the Holy Spirit directly, need individual salvation, and with ties to the Methodist church.

## THE TEXTS

Now here are the primary texts, illustrating how the above spirit established itself in Hamburg. Texts before 1886 are from Montgomery, Morton L., History of Berks County, 1886. From that date until 1937, texts are from the Hamburg Item Centennial Edition, July 29, 1937. From then until 1976 are from the Bicentennial History of Hamburg, Bicentennial Committee, 1976. From then on until 2004 are from members of the churches themselves, or from my own recent experience. The single exception is the letter from Henry Davis, which is taken from the Bethany Methodist Centennial Book, 1961. Later quotes are from personal conversations with older people from Hamburg who lived through the events.

In 1829, the Presbyterians, newly reformed around Finney's message attempted to unite the churches in a network of Sunday Schools. This was a work of the Word #3 traditions, of which Methodism is Hamburg's chief part.

"MEETING OF FREEMEN IN EXETER TOWNSHIP.

"A large and respectable meeting of the Freemen of Exeter township, Berks County, was held on the 27th of June, 1829, pursuant to public notice, at the house of John Mellon,



inn-keeper, at which John Guldin was chosen president; William Reiter and Abraham Brumbach, vice-presidents; and Daniel Esterly and Jacob Brumbach, secretaries.

"The following-named persons were chosen a committee to draft a suitable address and resolutions: William Reiter, Jacob Maurer, Daniel Ritter, C. F. Egelman and Daniel Guldin. The committee having retired for a short time, returned and presented the following address and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

"'FELLOW CITIZENS: In the course of human events various vicissitudes will take place, some for the better, others for the worse. These changes are not unfrequently brought about by a part of our own citizens. Yes, by those who profess to promote the interest and happiness of their fellow-beings among whom they dwell, or over whom they preside as protectors. But how often are these resolutions or changes effected with any other view than that of self-aggrandizement? We are not without precedent on precedent, instance on instance. When was it that America groaned under the oppression of her mother-country? It was when Britain professed an anxious solicitude for our welfare. But our fathers were not even then insensible of the ponderous burthen, and the duration of that oppression; being inspired by a love of country and liberty, they looked forward with a pitying eye; their bowels moved with compassion towards us, and most wistfully desired that we should not inhale the air of bondage; they made every laudable, though mighty effort, to evade the impending thralldom; they sacrificed all, save conscience and honor, to secure and promote our native rights. And, fellow-citizens, why should we not perpetuate the same to our children and children's children? Shall we remain passive on the present occasion? Shall the inheritance bequeathed us by our fathers be neglected? Shall our children be denied the liberties we enjoy? Let us watch with a jealous care, be vigilant "in season and out of season," to shield our rights from encroachments. The present is a crisis unparalleled in the annals of America; such vigorous exertions were never made in the United States to connect church and State. What are some of those doing who assume to themselves the name "Spiritual," claiming the prerogative of dictating to others in religious matters, framing traditions, and to enforce which, powerful attempts are made to gain the sanction of the civil and national power. As soon as the civil power interferes, more or less, so soon will church and state be united. How many are the attempts made, on several occasions, to incorporate Synods, Theological Seminaries, Sunday-school unions, &c.

"'At the close of the second century, no sooner had the number of the faithful increased, than the priests discovered that an advantage would result from forming a closer union of their interests and designs; they adopted provincial Synods; their deliberations were assisted by the advice of a few distinguished presbyters, and moderated by a listening multitude. Their decrees were styled sermons, confession of faith and church discipline, which regulated every important controversy of faith. These institutions were very well suited to the private ambition and public interest of the clergy. That in a very short time they were received in the whole Roman empire. A correspondence was established between these synods or councils, which mutually communicated and approved their respective proceedings, and the church immediately assumed the form, and acquired the strength of a great federative republic,- church and state were united! bloodshed and carnage maculated the hands of the pious priests and priest-ridden!

"'We are fearful, if we let the "monster," "Union of Sabbath-schools," &c., stalk our country, that our government will be placed into the hands of those who have been trained in these "disciplined armies." "In ten years," says one of the Board, "or certainly in twenty, the political power of our country would be in the hands of men whose characters have been formed under the influence of Sabbath-schools" (see second Report of the American Sunday-school Union, page 93). This is a candid confession of one who is an active member of the Board, a correspondent of the Sunday-school Union. These are not surmises, they are facts on record.

"'And did not even Dr. Ezra Styles Ely, the grand representative, as he calls himself, of the Presbyterian church, propose a new union, a Christian party in politics? Therefore,

"'1. Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting, it is highly important that public disapprobation should be freely expressed as to the numerous societies now existing or about being originated under the pleasing pretext of Christian benevolence; but in reality possessing no views other than private gain, personal ambition and the political ascendancy of the priesthood.

"'2. Resolved, That we view education as the first principle of our liberty, and therefore approve of Sunday-schools disconnected with the union, as conducive to the best interests of mankind; but that we view in the Sunday-School Union an alarming evil about to desolate our land, by instilling into the youthful mind bigotry, superstition and fanaticism, and thus controlling the infant, they secure the man, to crouch and cower beneath the mitre and crosier of ecclesiastical tyranny.

"'3. Resolved, That we consider the distribution of the Bible as laudable and beneficial, but that we view the extensive establishment of the Bible Society, controlled as it is by priestcraft, as a dangerous and horrible machine, capable of being perverted to the accomplishment of the vilest purpose, the destruction of civil and religious liberty.

"'4. Resolved, That we admit that those romances called tracts may benefit when they contain gospel precepts and doctrines compatible with reason and common sense. But that the millions disseminated by the American Tract Society are so much fanaticism and bigotry to lead the thoughtless into the snares of priestcraft.

"'5. Resolved, That we view missionary societies as totally useless, connected as they are by auxiliaries and branches throughout the country, and that, whatever may be their avowed object, their real purpose is to collect funds to make sectarians and not Christians. Our Saviour and his disciples, when on earth, taught us to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and that all other things will be added, but these missionaries bow first to mammon, to the obvious neglect of all other more important objects.

"'6. Resolved, That we disapprove of Theological Seminaries as not within the spirit of Republican Institutions, inasmuch as they generate a progeny of idle metaphysicians, trained to the absurdities of their teachers, and ever prepared, by unity of action, to further the most extravagant designs.

"'7. Resolved, That we are determined not to countenance the above-named institutions, but rather aid in their decline; and that we will support no minister in connection with them. That we respect and have due deference for Christian teachers, and that we feel rejoiced to acknowledge that many of this class among us disapprove of the measures we have attempted to expose.

"'8. Resolved, That we condemn the measures of the German Reformed Synod, convened last year at Mifflinburg, Union county, as recorded in the publication of their proceedings, and particularly as to their supererogation in indicating what Almanac should be used, and their views as to enforcing a more strict observance of the Sabbath.

"'9. Resolved, That we approve of the proceedings of the meeting held May 21, 1829, at Gernaut's, in Heidelberg; that we join with them in supporting our religious rights and guarding our Civil Liberty.

"'10. Resolved, That we instruct our representatives in the National as well as in the State Legislature, to suppress, with their most earnest exertion, every measure calculated in the least to curtail the rights of conscience.

"'11. Resolved, That the following-named persons be a committee of correspondence, with power to call meetings whenever, in their opinion, the exigency of the case may require: Oley township, Peter Knabb, Jr., Jacob H. Reiff; Exeter, Isaac Ritter, John Esterly, Col. W. Reiter, Daniel Guldin; Robeson, George Focht, John Westly; Brecknock, Nicholas Leshner, John Ziemer, Esq.

"Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be signed by the officers of the day, and published in such papers as have at heart the rights of conscience and, of course, the liberty of the people.

"JOHN GULDIN, President.  
"ABRAHAM BRUMBACH,) Vice-Presidents.  
"WILLIAM REITER,)

In other words, if churches work together, we will lose our rights to worship as we choose. Someone had not heard word #3, or didn't realize that rulership can't take anyone's rights if the person is hearing from God well enough not to give them up. Since the 1820's were the defining age of 20<sup>th</sup> century Christianity, we have here the denial of what God wishes to do about church unity. Apparently, the conclusion is, unless we make one be for Apollos and one for Paul, and unless we keep Christ divided into parts, the union of the Body might take away our freedom. This is the fear of the survivors of the Thirty Years' War.

Now, here are the histories of the churches of Hamburg:

#### St. John's Lutheran (including for a time, First UCC):

St. John's Church is the oldest in the borough, and the one around which the most historic interest centers. In 1790, on February 12th, the first church at Hamburg was consecrated as a German Lutheran and Reformed United (Gemeinschaftliche) Church.

The land on which it was erected, and which at that time was the old church yard (Gottes-acker) of this congregation, had been given as a gift by Martin Kercher in 1773, for the use of the Lutheran and Reformed inhabitants of Hamburg and vicinity, to bury their dead and to erect on it a United Lutheran and Reformed Church edifice.

At that time Hamburg resembled a desert; the vicinity was a forest, the inhabitants were few and poor, and could not erect a church; they therefore worshipped God in private dwellings, and used the lower part of the land as a burying-ground, reserving the upper part for the church. In time they were enabled to build a church of logs, using the lower story as a school-room and the second story as a place of public worship. On the day mentioned the church was solemnly consecrated as a church of God under the name, style and title of "The United Evangelical Lutheran and Evangelical Reformed St. John's Church in the village of Hamburg."

Pastors, Rev. Daniel Lehman (Lutheran) and Rev. Henry Hertzell (Reformed).

After 1800 the influx of population at Hamburg was rapid, and the church became too small to accommodate the growing congregations. As all the means to erect a new church could not be raised by the ordinary methods of collections and subscriptions, the Legislature was invoked to grant the church privilege to raise funds by lottery- by no means an unpopular method of raising money in those days for various enterprises. An act was passed in 1807 authorizing them to raise by lottery three thousand dollars, with which to build a church at Hamburg for the use of the Lutheran and Calvinist congregations. Robert Scott, George Miller, Philip Klein, Philip Seidel, John Mayer and Abraham Bailey were appointed commissioners to conduct the lottery. Five thousand tickets, at one dollar each, were issued, seventeen hundred and fifty entitling the holders to prizes, and three thousand two hundred and fifty being blanks. The final drawing was published for June 15, 1813, from which it appeared that there were two prizes of twenty-five dollars, two of twenty dollars, two of fifteen dollars, five of ten dollars, seventy of five dollars, and others at smaller amounts. It is not known what amount was actually realized by this lottery. The corner-stone of the new church was laid June 16, 1811, and a very substantial stone building erected,- in dimensions, thirty-five by forty-five feet. It was finished in 1814, and consecrated in March, 1815. This building stood on the site of the present edifice. After the new church came to be occupied the old church was set apart for school purposes. The upper room was used as a public hail. Upon its removal the logs were used in the construction of a one-story school-house on the same lot. When the stone church was consecrated the Lutheran congregation was without a pastor, but the Reformed had Rev. Philip Mayer. The trustees at the time were George Schumacher and Henry Lewers (Lutheran), Jacob Stitzel and Henry

Fister (Reformed). Abraham Wolff was the treasurer, and Robert Scott the secretary. The mason-work was done by William Adam and Jacob Gehret, and the carpenter-work by Philip Altenderfer. In the church thus provided the congregations flourished forty-six years, when it was found too small and "its inner arrangements too inconvenient to accommodate all the members and to be in harmony with the spirit of the times." A proposition to build a new church, as urged upon the members by Pastor A.L. Herman, June 1, 1857, was received with much favor, and measures to build it were at once instituted and diligently prosecuted.

The necessary list of subscription was filled in a few weeks, the trustees chosen and a resolution adopted to erect the building that summer, which was to be known by the same name. The cornerstone was laid August 16, 1857.

Prior to the building of this church the brick school-house was built and the upper room set aside for the use of the congregations until the present edifice would be occupied. The old walls of the stone church were used in building the foundation of the present church, and the other materials removed. The steeple of the old church had a vane in the shape of a fish, and upon which was the date 1811. The pulpit, also, was a novelty, very closely resembling a tulip. The new church is of brick, very commodious, being sixty by eighty feet, and a fine building throughout. The bell, with which the steeple is supplied, is one of the best in the county. The lot upon which the building stands indicates careful attention. In the rear of the church there is a new cemetery, a few acres in area. The trustees in 1885 were George Walters and J.B. Pottinger (Lutheran), Lewis C. Romich and William G. Sheridan (Reformed). The pastor of the Reformed congregation was the Rev. Perry Y. Schelley, and the members numbered three hundred. Among other pastors may be named the Revs. Moses Peters, William F.P. Davis and A.L. Herman. The Lutheran congregation, also, has about three hundred members under the pastoral care of the Rev. Oscar Miller. Among his predecessors were the Revs. Drumheller, Jaeger, Klein and Jaeger. The latter served the congregation many years.

Since the Rev. Herman was connected with the church, the pastors have been superintendents of the Sunday-schools. The first Sunday-school was started in the old log church by Henry Lewers, Robert Scott, John Shenck, Henry Fister, Andrew Smith and John Bailey, kept up for some years. The present school was instituted afterwards.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL.

REV. G.F.I. IAEGER, who was for sixty years a minister of the Lutheran Church in Berks County, was born July 20, 1796, in Illingen, in the kingdom of Württemberg. His parents were Rev. Charles F. Jaeger and Catherine Commerell.

He was baptized in infancy, and in due time confirmed and received by his father as a communicant member of the Lutheran Church. After attending the schools of his native village, and also the Latin school at Maulbrun, six miles from Illingen, he entered the University of Tübingen, where he remained several years.

But at this juncture came a turning-point in his life. The war between France, under Napoleon the First, and Russia had just ended, and of the eighteen thousand soldiers that left Wurtemberg, only three thousand returned. A heavy draft must, of consequence, be made to fill up the ranks of the army, and he having no desire to enter military life, informed his parents that he should make his future home in America. He left his father's house in July, 1817, and coming by way of London, visited his relatives, the Commerells. On the 8th of September he took passage for New York and was forty-nine days crossing the ocean. It was a strange coincidence that thirty-eight years after this, in 1855, on the 8th of September, he again took passage from Liverpool to New York, after a pleasant visit to his old home, and to his brother and sister, this time making the trip, by steamer, in eleven days. After remaining a few days in New York, he came to Philadelphia, and from there went to Northampton County, where he taught school near Bethlehem during that winter and summer. In 1818 he came to Hamburg, Berks County, and joined Rev. John Engel, pastor of a number of Lutheran congregations, who soon found him a diligent student. He offered him a home in his family, instructed him in the doctrines of the Lutheran Church in this country, and procured a school for him near Hamburg, at St. Paul's Church, where he taught during the winter of 1818. He also commenced preaching as

Rev. Mr. Engel's student, and at times officiated in that minister's congregations. He delivered his first sermon at Plunkel's Church October 18, 1818, in Greenwich, six miles from Hamburg, and from that date continued preaching for fifty-one years to this people. In the spring of 1819 he, with three other young men, Dr. Demme, Dr. Krauth and Henry Kurtz, was received as a member of the old Pennsylvania Synod at Baltimore, Md. On his return from Synod to Hamburg, Rev. Mr. Engel gave him two congregations, -White Church in Albany and St. Jacob's in Lynntown. This was the beginning of the pastoral work in which he engaged as a faithful shepherd for fifty-five years.

On March 14, 1820, he was united in marriage to Mary, daughter of Lewis and Anna Audenried, from McKeansburg, Schuylkill County. In April, 1820, he commenced house-keeping in Lynntown, near St. Jacob's Church, where they remained five years. In 1825 they removed near Klinesville, seven miles east of Hamburg, and resided at this point until 1876, when, on account of the infirmities of old age, Mr. Jaeger gave up his congregations and moved to Hamburg, where he continued active in his Master's work, visiting the sick and the aged, and occasionally preaching funeral sermons. He was an able sermonizer, a pleasant speaker and a beloved and faithful pastor. He, with his devoted wife, reared a family of eleven children, seven of whom are still living, -William, in West Virginia; Lewis, in Yuma, Arizona; Rev. Thomas T. and Samuel, in Reading; Mrs. Levan, in Hamburg; Mrs. Berger, in Philadelphia; and Mrs. Salade, in Tamaqua. In the fall of 1879 Mr. Jaeger began to suffer from heart-disease, which often gave him great pain. He, however, endured his sufferings with Christian fortitude and patience, until the Head of the Church called him to his eternal rest. He died November 16, 1879, aged eighty-six years, three months and twenty six days. His widow still resides at Hamburg, and is now in her eighty-ninth year.

Emanuel Church was built in 1854, at a cost of eleven thousand dollars, for the accommodation of Evangelical Lutheran and German Reformed Congregations, most of the members having withdrawn from St. John's Church, on account of a difficulty which arose from the opposition of many members to preaching in the English language. The building committee was composed of Dr. John Seiberling, John Lubarg, Wm. E. Shollenberger, Jacob Geiger, Reuben Lins, George Shollenberger and Daniel Kern. The united congregations occupied the church under favorable auspices for some years, and at one time had a joint membership of two hundred and fifty. Their services were conducted wholly in the English language. The Reformed congregation had as pastors the Revs. Moses Kieffer, Joseph H. Appel, Uriah Heilman, D.B. Albright and William H. Reilly, some of them preaching as supplies. On the part of the Lutherans, the ministers were the Revs. Scheide, Keller, Gable and B.D. Zweitzig. On July 15, 1877, the church was badly wrecked by a tornado. The expense attending the repair of the building proved so burdensome to the congregations that the Rev. B.D. Zweitzig assumed the settlement of it on behalf of the Lutheran congregations, and he now holds the church in trust. No services of any kind have been held in the church during the past year, and most of the members have again connected themselves with St. John's Church. A flourishing Sunday-school was maintained by the congregations, and superintended by H.R. Shollenberger, but it has been discontinued.

This is very strong in word #2. I noted the name of God twice in the whole 3 pages, that of Jesus not at all, but nearly endless lists of the names of men, and their accomplishments. Also, in the last paragraph, a church split over LANGUAGE seems unconscionable to our sensibilities, when countless English - Spanish ministries exist today, but points up the force that the eminent domain of the state highway was exerting, as Hamburg built new store after store in this era. This is also when the German Schnellpost newspaper failed, and an English paper took its place. Traditions could not change with the changing makeup of Hamburg. Later we will study how the Calvinist view of predestination leads to such behaviors; since God chooses who is to be saved, the church has no purpose other than providing Christian training and a clubhouse for the people so chosen. Anyone not of the same company can be dismissed as "unsaved and unsaveable". It should be noted that "membership" to a Lutheran normally is defined as coming to church once a year, OR sending money once a year, once your name is in the book. The physical size of the church makes regular attendance impossible to assume was the case for most members, even knowing the services alternated between denominations every other week.

The first church was a log structure, built in 1790 at what is now the "southeast corner of Pine and Primrose Alley" (Bicentennial Book)." Since they wrote that, the fieldhouse now stands there. School in German was taught on the first floor, worship was on the second floor. The second church was built in 1815 on

the current site, with the same distribution of floors. It was much larger, 45X35 feet. The shape of the "Gottesackre" has changed many times, as the church bought land to extend the burial ground. This church served until 1857.

Here is the Item's update:

The new church was built of brick. It was 60x80 feet and a fine building throughout. This served the two congregations until 1898 when it burned down, having been ignited by a burning ember blown on the church roof from the bicycle works, which burned down at the same time.

Immediately afterwards, the members of the Lutheran congregation purchased the interest of the reformed group, and erected the present church on the old site. The Reformed congregation purchased the lot at Third and Pine Streets and thereon erected the present Reformed church.

St. John's Lutheran.

(By Rev. R.E. Kern):

St. John's Lutheran congregation was reorganized and incorporated under the name and title of "St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hamburg" The new constitution was adopted May 31, 1898. May 10, 1898, it was decided to erect a new church on top of the old Union Church. Officers listed. The cornerstone was laid on Sunday, Sept. 4, 1898 by the pastor, the Rev. Harry C. Kline. Services were conducted in the armory hall until Christmas when the Sunday school was used for worship. Beginning Sunday, May 21, 1899, the completed church was dedicated.

Rev. Kline conducted the service assisted by...The church was erected at a cost of \$40,000, constructed of yellow pressed brick with sand stone trimmings.

St. Johns was part of a large country parish until May 1906, when the congregation had increased to require a full-time pastor. Thus Rev. Kline resigned his country work and accepted the call from St. Johns.

During his pastorate a new pipe organ was installed and a parsonage bought, in addition to building the new church. A number of improvements have since been made to the church and property. During... 3 paragraphs follow of structural details and pastors. Note all the humans, and no mention of God. There has been no change as far as I can tell, to 2006.

First UCC:

First Reformed lists purchase from John Shollenberger in 1898 for \$2000. Cornerstone Aug. 7, 1893. Completed Nov. 1898, first service held was holy communion. Dedication of the completed church took place on Whitsunday, May 21, 1899. The Rev. John R. Stahr, D.D., Ph.D., president of Franklin and Marshall College, preached the sermon. From that day to this the church has had a steady growth. 3 paragraphs of pastors and details of building.

The present membership of the church is 745 (in 1937). At the beginning of the present pastorate it was 560. The Sunday School enrollment is 623, compared with 521 in 1926. Good Friday service in UCC since 1948. Hall built in 1951, merged with UCC 1957. Parking added by 2 homes 64-66 Third. 1964 members 949. New parsonage 69. The church has purchased a home which is used in a social ministry for emergency housing and rehabilitation. The church also maintained a children's orchestra for a few years in the early 1980's.

There is a notation of a missing lot in the Bicentennial book: On May 26, 1786, Martin Kaercher, Jr., and Elizabeth, his wife, for the sum of five shillings, paid by John Myer and Philip Shatz, sold a lot in the town of Hamburg, beginning at White Oak Street (now Third Street) easterly to Grave Yard Alley, being a half acre of land, for a church or school-house place, and graveyard, for the use of the inhabitants of Hamburg, as a joint congregation of the Reformed religion of Lutherans and Calvinists. The two men mentioned were church trustees. The cost was virtually negligible; the annual rent for a lot was 2 pounds 5 shillings (there are 20 shillings to a pound); this deal was for a large lot, and had a total purchase price of just 5 shillings. But this raises the issue of why would they need to buy property at any price, as they already had the other site free. There are several answers. Number one is that the original citations say that it was sold for "church use," not, as the Bicentennial Book has it, for worship and burial. The lot is never heard from again. But that is not surprising, since Graveyard Alley is missing as well. Presumably the lot was later sold under another address after the stage lines changed the direction of White Oak Street.

The next denomination in order of birth in Hamburg is Salem Evangelical: This is from the Item (since the story is not included in Morton's book).

Jacob Albright, Evangelist

Jacob Albright, who was connected with the Evangelical Association, preached in Hamburg as early as 1801. During this year, as he was passing through, he asked permission of Casper Diehl (He's the tavern owner, according to Morton's book; this detail is conveniently omitted) to preach at his house (his public house, or tavern; this other possible interpretation is thus suppressed), but the latter said that it was hardly a suitable time as there was a frolic in progress at the tavern not far away. (The wording also means not far away in time, i.e. "It will soon be happy hour")

A mill stood in close proximity to the tavern, at the front of which was a worn out mill stone. Albright obtained permission from the proprietor to mount the stone and preach. A multitude soon gathered, to whom he delivered a heart-searching address. As it had the effect of breaking up the frolic, the tavern keeper became incensed at Albright, and attempted to punish him with a whip.

George Miller, who a few years later was converted and became a co-laborer with Albright, was at this time engaged in working at the mill and received impressions which came to an early fruition. Sometime later, Albright and his co-laborers began to preach in a small school house in the town, but because of opposition, the work made but little progress for years.

It was not until 1872....

**Morton's book takes over:**

St. Paul's Church (Evangelical Association) was built in 1872, under the direction of the Rev. Thos. Bowman and the Rev. B. Miller, for the accommodation of fifteen members. Among these were Jonas Mengle, Henry Gessley, Henry Lenhart and Jesse Rubright. The present trustees are R.T. Lenhart, Jesse Rubright and Allen Savage. The membership of the church is still small, but the Sabbath-school, under the superintendence of R.T. Lenhart, has seventy-five scholars. This congregation is included in the Kutztown Circuit, of which Rev. Wm. H. Weidner is pastor. Other ministers serving here have been Revs. J. Stermer, D. Lentz, D.S. Stauffer, B. Miller and I. Hess.

**Now back to the Item:**

Salem Evangelical (by the Rev. C.S. Engle)

October 10, 1894, the former members of the East Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Association organized the East Pennsylvania Conference of the United Evangelical Church, and called a general conference in Naperville, Ill. Nov. 29, 1894. Other conferences joined in the call, the first general conference of the United Evangelical Church.

The church here was one of that group, and at that time adopted the name "Salem United Evangelical Church."

In 1922, at the merger of the Evangelical Association and the United Evangelical Church, this congregation with the other churches in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois remained under their original form of government and discipline and adopted the name Evangelical Congregational Church.

Salem Church is located on Franklin Street. The new parsonage at 421 Franklin Street was purchased in 1935, the second year of the present pastorate. The former parsonage was located at 135 North Fourth Street.

Fire on April 24, 1915 damaged the structure to the extent of several thousands of dollars, partly covered by insurance. Rebuilding began in July, and meanwhile services were held in Confer's hall, Fourth and State Streets.

The congregation is not large but active and making commendable progress. During a little over three years improvements in the parsonage and church property costing over \$1000 have been made. Paragraph of officers.

Salem started a bus and radio ministries 1950 that had failed by 1954 (more will be added on the reasons for this below). Separated from Port Clinton in 1952, that is when they became a separate church. In 1999 they sold the church to Assembly of God, and went nearer to Lenhartsville, where they now consider it their ministry to that area.

The importance of the Salem article for the history of Hamburg cannot be overemphasized. First of all, note that the article of origin in 1801 was omitted from Morton's book of 1886. The resulting narrative makes Salem sound like just another church, with humans and buildings, as the Calvinist point of view would hold. Then, note that even when the article was included in the Item, the little fact that Mr. Diehl was the tavern-keeper is omitted. I restored it from lists of early inhabitants in Morton's book. The point is, that the fact is in plain sight, and was never noted.

Hamburg's history is, as I have said, not stated correctly. It is not the industriousness of the Pennsylvania Dutch that is the key item, but the openness of the people to new ideas. It was 1801 when the evangelical gospel first came to Hamburg. The Lutheran/UCC had barely put up a log church, and it is doubtful that over 60 people could worship in it (the population of Hamburg was 329 in 1800) comfortably. Although they had been the only religious affiliation here for several decades, they were still quite small. The Lutheran narrative states that it was AFTER 1800 that the population increased, which is why they built the new church in 1811.

Read the narrative of Evangelist Albright again, knowing what we now know. We are told Albright is "passing through", implying that he is not there to found a work. As an evangelist of the Methodist tradition (we will get to that later), he applies to the home of the tavern keeper to preach at the tavern. The tavern keeper says there is a "frolic" in progress. Preaching at taverns was common with the Wesleys, the founders of Methodism, in England, but not during "frolics". The Wesleys would get the men out of the taverns and preach outdoors, or maybe, in old mills. Albright is asking for permission from the boss to do what the Wesleys had done successfully for half a century. Now how did Albright find the tavern keepers house? He must have seen the tavern first, and asked someone. He surely would not have wanted to try to break up a "frolic" in progress. The conversation as reported MUST have been altered, as my comments suggest. Albright must have been passing through, seen the tavern, asked the boss, who was at home, for permission to preach. The boss said "it's almost happy hour", but Albright preached nearby anyway. It couldn't have been much of a happy hour, if it could be broken up by preaching a few doors down, but nevertheless, either the tavern-keeper Diehl (the boss) or his employee, had resorted to violence to stop the proceedings. The interference did not stop Albright from converting a local (George Miller the owner of said mill, who was one of the founding citizens of Hamburg. His deed came direct from Kaercher) and the second biggest property owner (his deed included 40 acres), eventually assembling a team, and starting a work at the school house (not likely the one in the Lutheran church). Notice, the persecution continued, but the establishment of the work was successful. The story contains all the elements of the spiritual history of Hamburg I mentioned in the opening pages. We will hear the same story again during the 2004 Hamburger Day.

Now, we will read the Bicentennial's rendition of the Albright/ Diehl/Miller business, and note how history changes things:

There is evidence that traveling preachers visited Hamburg prior to 1800. The founder of the church, Jacob Albright, appears to have visited the Hamburg area prior to 1800. Albright did preach "in Schuylkill County as early as 1797 in the home of Leonard Zimmerman." George Miller, who was the first secretary to the Annual Conference, recorded the conference minutes from 1800 to 1813. He wrote the first Discipline of the church, lived in Albany Township and was converted in 1799 under "Albright's soul-stirring preaching."

Miller, as his name suggests, was a miller by trade and is said to have worked at Diehl's mill in Hamburg.

They can't both be right. Either Miller ran the mill, or he worked for Diehl who ran the mill. Either the year was 1799 or 1801. We can prove who owned the mill. Deeds recorded in 1785-6, give the mill, and 40 acres (most of the south end of downtown) to George Miller, and state it was on Kaercher's run (Walnut St.). It was rebuilt after a fire at the downtown location using Kaercher Creek for power. The records of 1800-1820 quoted by Morton list Miller as an inhabitant of Hamburg in the business of miller, and Diehl as a tavern-keeper. The 1860 map hanging in the Boro hall list the property as "Miller's Mill", proving he was of importance long after his death. The date of the deed, and biographies posted on Internet by the EC denomination lists Miller's birth as 1774, which puts him in his late 30's by the time he stopped writing minutes and church discipline books in 1813. It may seem surprising that an 11 year old boy would be given such a deed, but this was a time of limited education, and in a culture of early apprenticeship. Miller was thus saved in his mid 20's, and had quite a ministry for the new denomination, founding 10 Bible studies in the Susquehanna frontier in 1808. Employees



do not have the time to travel to do such; mill owners, who sell their mills, do. His work in the Susquehanna frontier made him sickly, and so, he most likely retired to Albany township, after which he revised and published the complete minutes up until that date. But note how God's first salvation in the Second Great Awakening in Hamburg, and the troubles that went with it are taken from a Hamburg blue-blood, and given instead to an employee of a tavern-owner. His Hamburg heritage, and even his residence are removed. In the new story, the conflict never happened; it's just another church getting started by random preaching. The Bicentennial Book also has a whole paragraph explaining that the Bishop, in Pottsville, from 1854-1871, although asked by the conference to supply missionaries to Tamaqua and Hamburg ASAP, responded only to Tamaqua. The reason is never stated, but note the intervening years are precisely those of the great German/English language controversy and of the Methodist persecutions (see below). The church was established in 1872, for 12 people, who had asked for it in 1852. So, from 1813 until 1872, who was minding the store? No pastor, no missionary, a bishop whose resources were needed elsewhere, but the "work that made little progress because of opposition" had somehow managed to stay together for 60 years! And it was barely a few years that the Lutherans/Calvinists had "worshipped God in private dwellings," before log cabin churches were built and pastors were hired. (We get elaborate biographies from Zion UCC as early as the 1730's).

What schoolhouse they met in is hard to say. St. John's would surely not have permitted it. An English school existed by the river, near the ford, then bridged by a ferry service. This is the most likely location, if Miller retired in 1813, as I suggest. From 1820, John Shomo taught a school in English in his home on Main Street (listed on the 1861 map as approximately 24 south). These are the only schools until public education came to Pennsylvania in the 1830's.

One more observation. If you read the Lutheran narrative again, you will note that this same George Miller served as a commissioner on the lottery committee to build the Lutheran Church. This one man was a Hamburg founder, the first Great Awakening convert, the head of the first non-denom type ministry, and a person who helped the Lutherans build their church!

We have not yet explained why this story was purged from Morton's history, restored in the Item, and stated as it was in 1975. There are clear reasons for all of this, but we first need to get to the Methodists:

Hamburg Methodist Episcopal Church.- In the spring of 1859 the Rev. H.H. Davis began preaching Methodism in Hamburg and met with so much opposition that a building could not be obtained in which to hold the meetings. Strong in his purpose, however, he continued his labors, and on May 15th preached on the door-steps of a Mr. Epler in the morning, and in the afternoon in Shollenberger's lumber yard. These services won several members, and three months afterward he was encouraged to rent Kern's hall, at a rental of fifty dollars for seven months. He began preaching August 27th, and held semi-monthly meetings. On November 6th an extra meeting was conducted, which produced great excitement and not a little opposition in the town, and on November 25th he organized a class with the following members James, Geiger, Gleasoner, Dewalt and Long and their families. They met stately in the hall, till its further use was refused, May 5, 1860. A lot was then bought for church purposes, and in June a tent was procured and services held in it until a church was erected, in the fall of the same year. On July 15th a Sunday-school of twenty-two scholars was formed, with H.H. Dove as superintendent, this having also been organized in the tent. The church was dedicated on November 29, 1860, and Sunday-school was first held in the building on December 2d following, each pupil having been presented with a card to commemorate the occasion. The building was improved in 1870, and again in 1884, the latter repairs involving an outlay of five hundred dollars. It is centrally located, on White Oak Street, and is a neat and inviting brick edifice. The congregation has about fifty members, and the Sunday-school one hundred and thirty five. S.A. Loose is superintendent of the school. The ministers of the church since its organization have been the following:

1859-61, H.H. Davis.

1872, A.L. Urban.

1863, A. Fisher.

1873-74, L.M. Hobbs.

1864, Joseph Schlichter.

1875, W.A. Macnich.

1865, William Manlove.

1876-77, Geo. W. North.

The Item says:

Methodism (by Rev. J.A. Simons)

The beginnings of Hamburg Methodism may be traced to an article in the Philadelphia Methodist, December 4, 1886, and written by the Rev. Stephen Evans who had just completed a two year pastorate in the town.

In 1848, the Rev. J.Y. Ashton, pastor of Tamaqua Methodist Church, attempted to plant a mission in Hamburg. He had excellent congregations. He was followed by Rev. James Flannery who attempted to hold revival meetings and was driven from the town. Another effort was made by "Brother Quimby" that apparently met with a similar fate.

May 15, 1859 the Rev. Harry H. Davis, missionary of the Berks County mission, preached his first sermon in Hamburg.

...The Hamburg Sunday School reported four officers, 10 teachers and 63 scholars (in 1861), a library of 179 volumes, a full supply of testaments, spelling books and hymn books.

In 1861, Brother Davis was returned as a missionary by the Philadelphia Conference.

In March 1862, the Rev. Alfred A Fisher was appointed the first pastor of the Hamburg-Leesport-Port Clinton circuit. In 1891, Hamburg became an independent charge, Port Clinton being joined to Orwigsburg.

The first Methodist marriage in Hamburg was on Aug 23, 1862, when Rev. Alfred A. Fisher united E. Benjamin Bierman, teacher, and Miss Annie Isett. They were married in the "new church".

This is significant in that local Methodist history for the next 75 years came from her pen...

The first children's religious organization in Hamburg was begun by Miss Mary G. Smith. It was a temperance reform movement among the boys and girls and was called "The Blue Ribbon Army" It made Miss Smith quite unpopular by its prayers and propaganda in favor of temperance. A plaque was raised to her memory by the Bethany Sunday School in 1910.

They bought Emmanuel in 1889. Isett is listed by Brother Davis as the first salvation. The name Bethany was suggested one day over the counter at Confer's Dept. Store by Miss Martha Schollenberger.

Confer's is Hamburg's first big store. Located at 4<sup>th</sup> and State, it had a stage on the top floor, and later built Balthaser's for its expansion. We will see it twice more.

Methodism now began to grow numerically and in prestige. The denomination had commonly been scoffed at and made the butt of much derision. Communicants were known as "Jumpers". One historian mentions that...prominent citizens jeopardized their reputation by being Methodists.

One person did much to dispel this feeling, the Rev J.H. Hackenburg, principal of Hamburg High School, was exceedingly popular in the community. He was recommended for ordination by the conference, and appointed to Bethany.

**Parsonage built in 1906. Details of furnishing follow. The Bicentennial Book adds:**

In 1891, the congregation took over the Emmanuel Church building at Third and Island Streets, and used it for worship until 1913. In that year the cornerstone of the present stone church was laid and the edifice dedicated in 1914.

**Let's hear the purged details from Brother Davis (Main Street is Fourth; White Oak is Third):**

On Saturday, May 14, 1859, I tried to procure a house, orchard or even a doorstep but all was denied. The inhabitants were much opposed to Methodism, some thought them false prophets, others that their churches would be broken up...And on May 15, 1859, I began my Mission on the corner of State and Main Streets by singing "Bow Y the Trumpet Blow"..I continued to preach during that summer at the corner of White Oak and State Street. And the Lord wrought powerfully upon the hearts of the people and Sept, 1, 1859, God melted and won the heart of one of our opposers who rented us a hall..There was a pentecostal shower 26 in a week were saved; names are given. Meetings in Kern's hall were crowded to overflowing. God's power was manifested in a wonderful mannner until about 50 experienced religion, but the prejudice and opposition was so strong that husbands would not permit their wives and wives, husbands, parents, children, threatening to drive them from home if they join us and thus for two years we have fought against the powers of Satan and hoping this may when found, find a society large and devoted to God...

This letter was found sealed in a pilaster when the first church was torn down. This reliance on God is something the current pastor is trying to restore.

Bethany dropped its Methodist - Epsicopal joint affiliation some years ago. I have spoken personally to former members who joined the church as Episcopalians. Methodism was founded as a renewal movement

within the Church of England (equals Anglican equals Episcopalian. In fact, one of Wesley's few mistakes was his statement that when Methodism leaves the Church of England, God will leave Methodism.). After the Revolutionary war, the nearly ubiquitous Methodist home Bible studies in the Colonies (now America) became a church denomination long before their British counterparts. This created an ongoing evolution within the Methodist church gradually pulling away from their highly liturgical past to their more pentacostal-like present, and making them part of the Second Great Awakening. This evolution is very evident at Bethany today, and, as expected, many members don't like it, and many do. These changes are important for understanding the church's place in Hamburg history, as Bethany figures prominently in the evolution of other churches in the area, through its members.

Note the number of non-German names in the records. This is part of the proof that there are two Hamburgs.

This is the standard history of the Evangelical Congregationalists and the Methodists. To understand the connection between the Methodists and Albright, let us next consider these articles from *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1952):

EVANGELICAL ASSOCIATION: An ecclesiastical body which originated as a result of the evangelistic labors of Jacob Albright (q.v.), who began preaching in 1796 among the Germans in Eastern Pennsylvania. The first organizations among his converts were formed in 1800. The first general meeting took place in 1803, which acknowledged Albright as a minister of the Gospel, and solemnly ordained him by the laying on of hands, in accordance with the precedent in Acts xiii. 1-3. Albright was a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with whose doctrine, polity, and spirit he was fully in accord. But he was compelled to organize, much against his own purpose and will, because the leaders of the Methodist Church did not wish to do work at that time among the Germans of this country. In 1807 the first regular conference was held, in Kleinfeltersville, Pa., composed of the ministers and officers of the Church, twenty-eight in number. Albright was elected bishop and authorized to compile a Scriptural creed and a plan of organization, but he died May 18, 1808, leaving this work unfinished. George Miller, an excellent writer, John Walter, an eloquent preacher, and John Dreisbach, a man of uncommon gifts of organization and leadership, carried the work forward. In 1809 a second conference was held, at which the book of discipline begun by Albright and completed by George Miller, was adopted and the name, "The So-called Albright People," was agreed upon. In 1816 the first delegated General Conference was held, at which the name, "The Evangelical Association," was adopted. A publishing house which had been founded by John Dreisbach in New Berlin, Penn., was made an institution of the Church. The work of the denomination was at first exclusively German. But it gradually turned into English, while now it labors in a number of languages and nationalities.

The Evangelical Association is Arminian in doctrine, connectional in organization, and episcopal in government. The governing bodies are: (1) The Quarterly Conference, composed of the ministers and lay officers of a charge and presided over by the presiding elder of the district. It meets four times a year, manages the affairs of the charge and recommends candidates for the ministry. (2) The Annual Conference, which has administrative jurisdiction over a prescribed territory. At its sessions a bishop presides and assigns the preachers to their charges. It licenses and ordains preachers and acts coordinately with the General Conference in the enactment of constitutional law. (3) The General Conference, meeting every four years, and consisting of the bishops, general officers, ministerial delegates chosen by the Annual Conferences upon a basis of one to every fourteen members, and lay delegates to constitute about one-third of the entire body. This is the supreme governing, legislating, and judicial body of the Church. It makes laws in concurrence with the members of the Annual Conferences, elects the bishops and general officers, and is the final court of appeal...

I have removed the history after 1872, as not relevant to Hamburg.

ALBRIGHT, JACOB: Founder of "the Evangelical Association of North America; " b. near Pottstown, Penn., May 1, 1759; d. at Muhlbach, Lebanon County, Penn., May 18, 1808. His parents were Pennsylvania Germans of the Lutheran Church, in which denomination he was himself trained. His education was defective, and his early surroundings were unintellectual. After marriage he moved to Lancaster County and carried on a successful tile and brick business. Grief over the death of several children in one year (1790) and the counsels of Anton Hautz, a German Reformed minister, led to his conversion, and he

became a Methodist lay preacher. At length his concern for his German Lutheran brethren led him to give up business and devote himself entirely to missionary efforts. As the Methodist Church did not desire to enter upon the German field he founded a new denomination. Its members are often called the "Albright Brethren."

Albright was in fact the apostle of Methodism to the Pennsylvania Dutch! Had the Methodists of 1797 been interested, Albright would have established a branch of Methodism rather than start his own denomination.

But start his own denomination he was forced to. When Albright died in 1807, George Miller, one of the oldest residents and largest landowners of Hamburg, became his administrative successor. In modern terminology, Albright was the Methodist apostle to the Pennsylvania Dutch; and Miller, the first born-again in Hamburg, a favored man of Kaercher, was the administrative successor of a new worldwide denomination, and head of one of the first ever home-churches on earth! From various sources involving the "Albright Brethren," we learn:

In 1800, Hamburg had one of five home churches with 40 people. By the late 1880's, Albright's church, having combined with two other works in Pennsylvania in the early 1800's had hundreds of thousands of members worldwide.

We would never have heard this story, except for the following remarkable series of events:

In 1894, a crisis occurred in Albright's denomination. A bishop submitted an article against the church's missions in Japan to the church's newsletter. The editor refused to publish the article, claiming the church authorities would not like it. The bishop took the editor to church court over the issue, and the resulting arguments divided the church. The majority group continued on as Albright's denomination, and reunited with the Methodists in 1968. Salem Evangelical was with the minority that reorganized in 1894. These dates are why Morgan omitted the narrative (it had not happened yet, and so Salem looked like a split from the Methodists), but why the Item mentioned it (in 1937, it proved Salem's right to exist), and why the Bicentennial Book quoted it the way it did (the sudden rejoining of the other part of the original denomination left it unclear what Salem would do). It is only from our perspective now that we can see that Salem is, and apparently will remain, a congregational spinoff of Bishop-run Methodism.

Also notice Albright was a convert from Lutheranism.

The Arminianism connection may be new to the reader. The Catholics, following Augustine, teach that God ordains and makes possible salvation, but the receiving of it requires individual consent. God's purpose in the Reformation was to make clear Word #2, that a person can operate in the Kingdom of God without being under worldwide headship; but its apparent cause in the world was the belief that the Catholic Church had set itself up, against people like Augustine, as the bestower of salvation. Calvin (whose churches are now UCC) came out powerfully against this in public, and his statements are called "predestination". He taught that it is God, and never any person, who decides who will be saved. There is an implication in this that God has created some people who He has destined for hell (and will force them to go there), although, as far as I can tell, Calvin never said this. Nonetheless, his followers did, and Arminius in Holland, came out against this in about 1670. There is a clear problem here: How can God be God UNLESS He can choose who will be saved, but how can man have free will unless he can choose whether to accept it? And then, once a person is "saved", what part do works play? The Catholics seem to teach some form of works play a part in salvation, the Lutherans teach they do not, the Calvinists agree with the Lutherans, but also include predestination, and the Armenians (including the Methodists) are opposed to predestination.

Now, in America, we believe(d) that the free choice of individuals expresses and determines the unfolding of God's plans. But the reason for the divisions and persecutions should be clear: if God has already picked those who will be saved, preaching is irrelevant. The churches' only goals are education and expression of what God has already done. If preaching makes a difference, that creates a whole different type of church. Now, remember, Pennsylvania Dutch people came here solely to get away from wars created by just this type of theology. Separation of church and state (which is a new American idea) has worked nicely to prevent such wars, but in 1799, who could be sure it would work?

We should also mention something about congregationalism. The New Testament church was hodgepodge of home groups held together by wandering apostles, the Jewish Feasts, and direction from Jesus' original associates. By 400 AD, a system of organization modelled on the Roman Empire had turned most of the church into a single entity ruled by a pope. The Protestant Reformers had no knowledge of the wandering apostles (the

Didache, the early writing which covered them had been lost until rediscovered in the mid 1800's), and so had great difficulty in replacing the organized structure with independent churches; without the wandering apostles to hold things together, the danger of error in churches was too great. So, the Reformers took varying positions on how much autonomy a local church should have. As we discussed, God's plan has been to restore autonomy to the individual Christian. We can see in retrospect that church direction needs to follow from individual giftings, but that option simply was not open for consideration before the education of Christians could be achieved at the level that we now have. Consequently, until 1980 or so, church authority structure was limited to a couple options and variations: Papal, Episcopal (bishops), Presbyterian (elders), and Congregational. (Readers interested in the Didache's Apostolic principles should read my book on "The 21-st Century Coming Body of Christ".) The argument that gave us Salem EC as a separate church was over Episcopal versus Congregational authority. We should note historically that in Hamburg, Salem was originally (until 1872), a Congregationally run church in an Episcopal denomination, because the bishop had sent no one to act for him until that year.

In the Pennsylvania Dutch mentality, prior to the railroad age, there were only two churches, German (Lutheran/Calvinist) and American (Methodist and related), and they both were in Hamburg from 1800 on. In fact, Hamburg is arguably the birthplace of a unique Methodist spinoff denomination.

Catholics are next:

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was built in 1853. It is a plain brick building; in dimensions, forty by seventy feet. The congregation has never been large, and without a resident priest, its interests have not received proper encouragement. Lately monthly meetings have been held by a priest from Schuylkill Haven, with preaching in the English language. The membership does not exceed a dozen persons.

(By father Burke)

About 1913, St. Mary's was made an independent parish and the church entirely renovated. The Rev. Scott A. Fasig, one of the assistant priests of St. Paul's Reading, was appointed the first rector. Fr. Feising went to Quakertown in Oct. 1918 and the Rev. C.J. O'Neill served until March 1919 when the Rev. Cornelius F. Burke was appointed. A rectory was purchased on Island St. in 1923. Father Burke was rector for 13 years. In June 1932, the Rev. Joseph G. Martin succeeded him. Rev. Burke returned to Hamburg just recently, Father Martin, having been transferred to Lenni Mills, Delaware County. Just before his departure, the church was completely redecorated.

The parish hall was built in 1962. Due to a large donation, the church is now in the west suburbs, but the parish hall is still at 5<sup>th</sup> and State. The Catholics maintained a "branch church" in a basement in Shartlesville for a number of years.

There is no mention of the charismatic renewal in Hamburg's history that I can find. St. Mary's now supports a prayer group of four or five people. I am relatively sure that there was no charismatic activity at the church except for a year or two, which was organized by a nun, and which eventually became a non-charismatic prayer meeting.

Note that a handful of Catholics held on for the 25 years that the church was closed, although this is not as remarkable as the case of the Evangelicals, since travel was far easier by this time. There is no evidence of a significant number of Catholics in Hamburg before 1852. In fact, even today, the parish exists only because of its large geographical area; it was established in large part to serve the Catholic population of the State Hospital. This fact is critical to our study. The Catholics are not part of the two established threads of churches in Hamburg; they exist only as an import. They would have failed if the state had not put the hospital here.

What is not mentioned in this narrative, is that the church was established and dedicated by Philadelphia bishop John Neumann, who is now a canonized saint.

Catholics tend to keep to themselves, because of their conviction that all other churches are counterfeits of theirs, but the new Word #4 and #5 revelations are changing that for at least some of their members. It is significant, that although St. Mary's had been established in Hamburg since 1852, the Item of 1949 still lists the church's mass times as "service times." Catholics are particular about the use of the term, and the mis-use proves the Hamburg parish had almost no interest in engaging in dialog with other churches before Vatican II made it mandatory.

## Now Assembly of God:

Full Gospel Tabernacle (By Rev Coley Jacobs)

FGT was started in February 1933 in a frame building on North Peach Alley, by Rev. Harry Sparks, who had been doing work in Hamburg two years before organization...congregation is growing steadily. Church attendance about 150, Sunday school about 125. Officers are...

In 1932, Henry Sparks, Jr., and John Tubbs began street meetings in Hamburg that resulted in the formation of the First Assembly of God. These meetings, conducted throughout the town, were moved to a second floor room in a building at the corner of Fourth and State Streets. The room, however, was small and inadequate, and the group moved to a garage located on Peach Alley. In the 12 or so years they were located there, they were served by... In 1945, the congregation purchased the land on North Fourth Street and began construction of the present building, now valued at \$153,000. The erection of this building was in itself a miracle. Materials unobtainable because of the war were always obtained, and the community helped members with the finances. I am told these "holy rollers" met in the basement of what is now the shoe store, and also that they had tomatoes thrown at them, although I believe that this comment more likely pertains to the Youth for Christ Church of the 1950's (see below). The new building mentioned was paid for partially by donations from non-members, including businesses, solicited by the pastor at the time, whom I am told, left the Catholic faith to become an Assembly of God pastor.

The Assembly of God announced Oct. 2004 the establishment of a bible study in Blandon, for the eventual purpose of planting a congregation there, and they now have rented property for that purpose. If the plant is successful, they will be the second church in Hamburg to have planted a daughter church. And then two of the churches will have planted, and both will have been charismatic.

In 1999, they bought the old Salem Church, and turned it into a daycare center. In 2003, they went to East Hamburg on the highway, and sold both properties to Praise and Glory Worship Center. They currently have an attendance of around 350.

Praise and Glory was founded by Apostle James Akers in 2003 in the old Assembly of God Church. The day care center failed in summer of 2005. There was a scandal, with many accusations leveled against Pastor Akers, which I cannot substantiate. As a result, the church, with the same board, changed its name in June 2006 and asked Alex and Jenny Alvarez to pastor the church. Pastor Alex, formerly convicted on drug charges, accepted Christ through a storefront ministry, and is a full time counsellor with the State of Pennsylvania as well as being fully trained as a pastor. He and his wife have run a small church of their own in Lebanon county. The current attendance is around 40; they host a weekly prayer meeting for the city and for the church.

In 1939, the Centennial of Hamburg was celebrated with an evening outdoor church service, with the churches working "together" (July 29, 1937 Item):

7:30 Sunday evening. Hamburg Ministerial Association makes arrangements. Sr. John's cemetery terrace, along Church Avenue east of the church. Special amplification facilities. Rain plans, inside church.

"The Rev. Charles R. Zweizig, pastor of Bethany Reformed Church, York, and a former resident of the borough, will deliver the sermon and pronounce the benediction. The Rev. Mark Heller, graduate of Hamburg High School, class of 1911, and formerly pastor of a Lutheran church in California, will present the scripture reading. The Rev. LeRoy Bond, graduate of Hamburg High School, class of 1926, and pastor of the New Tripoli Lutheran parish since 1935, will offer the prayer.

Special music by the Centennial Chorus for 80 voices, conducted by the Rev. Rufus E. Kern, will include "Onward Our America" by George Fichthorn, local musician and composer, and "Our Centennial" words by the Rev. James A. Simons, pastor of Bethany Methodist Episcopal Church, to the tune of Finlandia. Miss Lucretia Raubenhold will serve as pianist for the chorus.

"Nun Danket Alle Gott" is the hymn at the close of the service. The rest of the article is about the antique organ from Zion Church of Perry township. Three Paragraphs follows on organ size and details.

Call to worship: Rev. Dallas R. Krebs, pres HMA. He is the only Hamburg pastor who is speaking! Note what the Item considers important about the whole event:

Church a Great Factor

The church life of Hamburg started in 1790. If a town can be judged by its churches, this borough must stand high, for they have held a great influence on the moral tone of the community.

They had supplied the first school...

In what would today be considered a great insult, no Hamburg pastors were speaking, except the head of the ministerial association who gave only a welcome. Apparently, the committee preferred Lutheran and reformed history, as personified by those who were born in Hamburg, and now pastoring these types of churches, more important than the prophetic message that could come from Hamburg's pastors, who knew the people, and whose churches had suffered so much opposition to get established.

Nonetheless, one managed to be heard. Rev. James A. Simons, pastor of Bethany (Methodist, of course), managed to get his hymn included in the program. It remains today as the only part of the prayers or sermons of that day that have survived. To the tune of Finlandia, the people of Hamburg celebrated 100 years of grace by singing:

O fellowtownsmen, come, Oh, come and raise  
To Him who hath so graciously thus given  
Strength of the soil, the shop, the forges' blaze  
Like gifts that make for those of earth a heaven.  
His blessings He pours out upon us still.  
Shall we not serve Him with a common will?

Our fathers knew Him as the Changeless One,  
Their cloud by day and constant fire by night,  
Leading them on to tasks that could be done  
Only by those who labored in the Light.  
Shall we who live and rest upon the gain  
Forget so soon the One who spared us pain?

He calls us still across the span of years  
Asking that we, too, labor in His name.  
Why is the heart so fraught with pain and tears?  
Did He not calm the troubled sea the same----?  
If we would prosper, then, through coming days,  
We, too, must join as one in prayer and praise.

Following is a summary of the standard history from the Bicentennial Book of the next three churches:

Faith Bible Baptist began as a Bible class in 1960 taught by Rev. Bernard Didden of Exeter Bible Church. They went from homes to the "Pottery Shop" at State and Franklin St., by the Regal Hotel (by the State Hospital; now an apartment building). Construction of the West Hamburg site was 1969-72. They were bussing 175 to school in 1975. There are records that suggest that this was a real K-8 private school, but I can find no evidence that it was anything more than a Sunday school.

They now have about 70 attendees, a quarter of whom are in the choir. I have found them persistent in evangelization, but they have no interest in associating with other churches.

Hamburg Bible Church began with 22 people Aug 30, 1970 at the boro hall, 35-40 by 1975, under Rev. Leroy Kantner. They now meet in their own facility on Port Clinton Road. Church listings in the Item indicate that they moved into the facility about the early 1990's. For the length of their time in the Borough hall, there were bi-monthly hymn sings in the Borough hall, presumably led by the church. In 1983, they were called "Singspiration", and in 1987 "Hamburg Gospel Sings". They met 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays at 7:30.

So ends the narrative from the standard records.

## THE BALTHASER REVIVAL:

The truth of the story of these two churches, as well as a church near Deer Lake, called Grace Independent Baptist, comes from interviews with older people who lived through the events.

William and Helen Balthaser (no relation to the owners of Balthaser's store), were members of Bethany Methodist. Sometime in the late 1950's, they became dissatisfied with what they sensed as "deadness" at Bethany, and began worshipping in their home with their family, at 235 Port Clinton Ave., half a block from Assembly of God and Salem EC. Within a couple years, friends and neighbors had joined the sessions to the point where the group grew too large for the home, about 1960, and moved to the pottery shop (a ceramics store) next to the Regal Hotel, at the corner of Franklin and State, at the east end of Hamburg, renting it there for the purpose. They engaged preachers who they had met in their travels, including Rev. Didden, Rev. Kantner, and a Rev. Pierce. Ernest Arndt, the director of the hymn sings, was a son-in-law of the Balthasers.

The Balthasers lived within half a block of both Salem EC and Assembly of God.

In 1948, the youth ministry of Salem EC was called the "Young People's Fellowship." By 1949, they had changed and became a local chapter of a vibrant new ministry called "Youth for Christ." The movement started just after WWII, in response to the postwar baby boom, the sudden awareness of other cultures brought on by the war, etc., and has given us a half dozen or more worldwide ministries including Billy Graham.

In 1952, the youth group, now regularly called "Youth for Christ," was under the direction of Paul A. Balthaser, a member of Salem EC (no relation to William and Helen).

In 1954, the youth group, under Paul A. Balthaser had left Salem EC and become an independent, non-denominational church.

Beginning in 1955, the new church met weekly for a youth rally at 44 S. 4<sup>th</sup>, which is the basement of the shoestore, where I have been told the Assembly of God once met. This provable fact may be the source of what I heard about the Assembly of God; the person who told me was confused by what church it was. But if this is the case, that would mean that the rallies were as loud as "holy-roller" meetings.

For at least seven years, Mr. Balthaser and those who took over the work after him, brought in weekly speakers, always from a different denomination, sang praise choruses with the youth, and had a "quiz" and fellowship. This is no small feat: seven years in one location with a high quality program founded by one person, not ordained, in the 1950's.

Ultimately, in 1962, the Youth for Christ interdenominational meetings were moved to William and Helen Balthaser's church at State and Franklin, who by now had hired a pastor, and adopted the name Calvary Bible Church.

Possibly through these meetings and the guest speaker they brought in, or just in the course of normal events, a musician named Yoder, and pastors Didden, Kantner, and Pierce entered the church at different times. Pierce took people and started his own church, Grace Independent Baptist in Molino near Deer Lake, by 1965. By 1969 the Saturday hymn sings were commonplace, and New Year's 1970, the church showed a film about the rapture.

At its peak, this church had well over a hundred members, some of the most alive music in Hamburg, the biggest youth ministry, and some of the most far-sighted ideas of any church in the city.

In 1970, Yoder and Kantner threatened to have the Balthasers physically removed from the church (they didn't like how they were dressed – remember who was paying the bills!), and in 1970, Yoder split, and took people, got more people through his traveling to sing, and physically built what he called Calvary Bible Church in West Hamburg. I am told that one of these pastors wrote the words "Anathema Maranatha" (I Cor. 16:22) over the doors of the church, presumably an insult to the ethics of the Balthaser founders.

Reverend Kantner took what was left of the people, and rebuilt the church as Hamburg Bible Church in the Boro Hall, complete with the youth ministry and the hymn sings.

Yoder hired Pastor David Morris, and promptly copied all Rev. Kantner's programs. Eventually there was a scandal of some sort one story I heard was of an affair between the pastor and a young woman), but by now Yoder had advanced through elder and deacon to ordination, and pastored the church himself from 1975 until 1986. (This information from a long-time member.) The next pastor suggested adding the word Baptist to the



name, and the congregation voted to accept it. I do not know why the name was changed to Faith Bible Baptist, perhaps to downplay the original connection to the Balthasers.

The Balthasers subsequently rejoined pastor Kantner and helped physically to build the facility that Hamburg Bible church is now in.

Three churches and a vibrant youth ministry from one home prayer meeting, due to dissatisfaction with a Methodist church that had ceased to act like Wesley, its founder, would have acted.

By the way, by 1970, Bethany Methodist shows evidence of an intercessory prayer group and experimental worship services – much had been corrected.

This creates an interesting parallel. In the very years when the episcopal branch of Jacob Albright's church was recombining with the Methodists (1968), in Hamburg, an independent spinoff of Jacob Albright's Hamburg church was recombining with an independent spinoff of the Hamburg Methodist church.

This is not the only instance of a Hamburg specialized parallel. The hymn sings of Calvary Bible church paralleled the Charismatic Renewal music, which was never permitted by the Hamburg Catholics. Also Jacob Albright's work in Hamburg was a specialized Pennsylvania Dutch version of the Second Great Awakening. Finally, see the specialized ways that Hamburg's two early non-denominational Spirit churches behaved in the 1990's below. In all of these cases, the work of the Holy Spirit is parallel to that of most places, but takes a unique form in Hamburg.

We cannot leave the Balthaser revival period without quoting the following eye-witness testimony, from a woman saved in 1937, at age 17, in the garage under Brother Sparks, whose testimony explains many of the details as to the causes of the revival.

Once the Assembly of God church building had been built, the new pastor went along with the surprising theological position of the church against regular divine healing. (I am also in possession of a book by a woman preacher, Dr. Elvina E. Miller, D.D., describing her ministry in the demon-possessed village of Prampram, Ghana, in 1954. She walked in a tremendous ministry of healing and miracles, and was saved in Hamburg, at roughly the same time, possibly in the same place.) My witness herself had quite a ministry of healing locally, and describes the foment of a revival that began in about 1949.

She had felt forced to leave Assembly of God over the healing issue, and confronted the pastor of Salem EC, whom God was able to convert to acceptance of it. At this time, healing was evidently not as accepted as it is today, even in the pentacostal churches. She states emphatically that the editors of the Pentacostal Evangel would not publish related articles.

In a chance conversation with another witness, I also learned that Hamburg, due to its farming base, did not lose a large segment of its young men in WWII, as did most of the US. Consequently, the demographics did not produce a postwar baby-boom. Instead, there was a continuing supply of young people in the 1950's. These are the young people who populated the youth ministry of Salem EC in 1950, causing the bus ministry, and ultimately, the formation of the Youth for Christ Church. Apparently, they were getting saved hearing Billy Graham on the new TV sets, and looking for dynamism. This was the same time that the Lutheran church created its enlarged youth ministry "Lutheran League." According to her, Catholic youth mostly chose the Lutheran ministry (which was more like the Catholic worship style), other youth chose the Youth for Christ church (which was more like the evangelical and pentacostal style).

Our first witness states that around 1950, evangelists (by then made popular by radio and TV) were teaching healing in Reading and the factories were all abuzz with the news.

Piecing this together, we see that the causes of the Balthaser revival were interest in religion spawned by news of salvation and healing coming from the new mass media. Hamburg had a large number of intact families, whose mothers worked in the factories, and whose children were in the schools. Since the traditional churches would have nothing to do with these ideas, new churches were formed. But note again, the impetus came from the outside.

## REMAINING CHURCHES

The Old Order Amish started in the 1750's in Tilden Township, but moved away due to repeated Indian attacks. Recall, the Blue Mountains were the north purchase border, and that made them the first "target".

This completes the history to the 1950's. Since Assembly of God started from Azusa Street, which started from a college founded by a methodist minister, to this date, we see only three strands of religion in Hamburg: Lutheran/Reformed, Catholic, and Methodist related. Compare that again to the three strands of the Thirty Years war. The problem the Pennsylvania Dutch had fled Europe to avoid controls the history of Hamburg to this day.

From 1953 on, we see the automobile and the revival interest, change Hamburg again, and churches from elsewhere move in, with money to build:

In 1953, there were 11 Adventists, who attended church elsewhere. To eliminate the drive, they formed the local Seventh Day Adventist Church, and it grew because of the academy, which is the state Adventist boarding school. They taught 417 in 1975. The church is part of a two point charge, with Pottsville.

#### Agape Christian Center

In about 1983, a church called (Independent) Hamburg Christian Church began operation at 21 S. 4<sup>th</sup>, where Necessities is now. By 1987, they had changed their name to (Non-denominational) Hamburg Christian Church, and by the early 1990's, to Agape Christian Center, and eventually to Agape World Ministries. They operated a charismatic Christian school for up to 125 children K-12 whose administrators started King's Academy (outside Mohrsville) when the church closed. According to a former elder, the church started as coffee house meetings in the basement of the pastors, who got saved in the early 70's, from TV. At its peak, the church was not only home to the school, but a Christian bookstore, and regular Christian drama and interchange with other denominations. They served to introduce Messianic Judaism to Hamburg, and were the first to use the talents of the man who later established Zion UCC's Easterfest production. The teaching was full-gospel, the worship anointed and prophetic. Certain people from the church will tell stories of why the church closed; however, my take is just that the pastors had done all that God has asked them, and it was time for God to move on with His plans. Again, note that the impetus came from outside.

Dove: This is from their recent publication: The Churches and Religions in Hamburg-1790-1992, distributed at Heritage Day 2004. Note they, as other word #4 going on #5 churches, no longer call themselves a church, but a fellowship:

D.O.V.E. Christian Fellowship North Gate - 31 North Third Street, Hamburg: In the fall of 1992, a group of Believers from Dove Christian Fellowship were sent out to plant a church in Berks County, PA. That church became known as DOVE Christian Fellowship North Gate. The roots of DOVE Christian Fellowship North Gate, however, go back to 1971 when a group of young people from south central Pennsylvania began to reach out to unchurched youth in their local community. As many of these young people were saved and then later baptized with the Holy Spirit, there became a need for a church body to lead them to maturity in their Christian lives.

Several years later, a teaching ministry called "Rhema Youth Ministries" was established by the Holy Spirit. About the same time, the first home cell group started, grew, and multiplied. In 1980, God gave a clear vision for DOVE Christian Fellowship to begin.

In the fall of 1980, a group of approximately 25 people met in a living room in northern Lancaster County, PA for a Sunday morning celebration. These two home cell groups were the beginning of what would be called DOVE Christian Fellowship. By 1992, DOVE Christian Fellowship grew to one large fellowship meeting at several locations in Lancaster, Lebanon, and Berks Counties.

When DOVE Christian Fellowship North Gate was commissioned out in the fall of 1992, the Lord spoke Isaiah 62:10 over that group of Believers, "Go through, go through the gates. Prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway! Take out the stones; lift up a banner for the peoples."

In the beginning, the Believers called to fellowship at North Gate met in Bernville, PA for 3 years. In 1995, they moved to their present location at 31 North 3<sup>rd</sup> St. in

Hamburg, PA. Ultimately, in 1997, they purchased the building. Through the years, several words of prophecy have been spoken over the church including: "This would be a safe place."..."Camp Freedom"..."We would be people of simple faith believing in a mighty God."..."people of worship and warfare."

Dove is, in a sense, a result of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. The Renewal transferred to many denominations, and this group had the experience rejected by their church, so they formed their own. A recent development, along Word #5 lines, is the establishment of networks of home-churches under national headship. This is a quasi-denominational system with the key Sunday meeting replaced by the home Bible Study. Dove is a similar blended operation, on a regional scale at first, but today has fellowships on every continent. Its headquarters is in Lititz, PA.

It should also be noted that this is the first church in Hamburg to ever have founded a daughter church. Reading Dove is descended from them. That makes them also the first Hamburg church to ever have a ministry to Reading. Sociologically, this is extremely unlikely, as new movements almost always go from founding town to local city to small town. Dove went from founding town to small town to big city. The cause of this is, as they tell me, simply that Dove had many Reading members, and they simply preferred to worship in Reading. Nevertheless, the precedent is valid, as Dove North Gate has not closed, as may be expected when a church loses members over geographical preference. Their building was recently paid for by another church in town, though I am not at liberty to say which church.

Nor should it be overlooked that the group owns and worships in the old armory, which was used by the Lutherans while their church was constructed, and is a parallel for spiritual warfare. In this light, the fact that they are the first church to ever establish a branch outside Hamburg, must be considered. The theology of "taking the land" as in Joshua's time, is well established in these circles. And note, they talk about their mission in prophecies, not in numbers and buildings. And the North Gate is where Ezechieh's vision of the restored exiles enters Jerusalem.

Read again the Isaiah prophecy, about building up the highway. Until the publication of this work, no one has ever outlined the importance of the building of the Centre Stage road for the layout and purpose of Hamburg. One can see the stones from the built up hill on the Centre Turnpike (Fourth Street) as they line the basements and retaining walls of the earlier downtown over which the present one was built. Verifying who constructed them is easy – the road grading is absolutely identical in Shoemakersville on Main Street. The Centre Turnpike was the location of the Methodist evangelization, the Assembly of God meetings, the Youth for Christ meetings, and the Balthasers' home. This last because it turns down Port Clinton Ave., and goes through the "gates," the space in the Blue Mountains for the Schuylkill River called the "Blue Mountain Gap," whose existence is what created the crossroads that gave rise to Hamburg in the first place.

## Hamburg Chapel and Microtel

In 2002, a church in Fleetwood made certain pastoral decisions that caused a number of people to leave the church. Two small groups (a dozen or two each) formed two small churches under pastors of their own choosing. The first, Hamburg Chapel, met from fall 2003 through summer 2004 at the old Knitting Mill on South Third. It dissolved in September 2004, after making no attempts even to announce its presence. The second meets at Microtel Hotel, and considers itself under the group that came out of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago.

Praise and Glory Worship Center is a non-denominational work that bought Assembly of God's Building. The founding pastor/apostle is anointed to act on word #5 and is empowering people for ministry. They have reopened and closed the day care center twice, making it Hamburg's second, the Assembly of God having moved their day care center with the church, to the suburbs. They do not call themselves "church" either.

The Salvation Army has an office on South Fourth where for social work. The office serves as an entry point to a variety of social programs. There is no Salvation Army church activity in Hamburg.

The Journey Café, scheduled to open at least 5 different times, will minister to young people, apparently as a ministry of Zion UCC. Its original vision of space shared by all Christians, apparently has changed.

## PSEUDO-CHRISTIANS, ETC.

Jehovah's Witnesses started in 1943 in the Seidel Bldg. On S 4<sup>th</sup>, I am told, at the NE corner of Fourth and Pine (Miller's Mill). In 1951, they had 50 people. They built a Kingdom Hall and moved to West Hamburg in 1953. The land was donated by Jacob/ Anna Balthaser (no relation to the Balthasers of the revival). Many members moved away, and they had 90 in 1975.

Hamburg had a homoeopathist from 1860 on. The health food store in the 1930's at 4<sup>th</sup> and Grand is not occult. Blue Mountain Herbals on State Street sells certain occult items, such as crystals. Blue Mountain Senior Center hosts intermittent training in tea leaf reading, palm reading, and graphology. There is no evidence I can find of organized witchcraft in Hamburg, although the Item of Oct. 25, 2006 reports that the police had several years ago found "evidence of cult activity at an abandoned building in Tilden Township, including remains of animal sacrifices, satanic symbols, and an altar and candles." (Supplement p. 9, col. 2). The same issue has a disturbing front page report concerning the "Haunted Hamburg Tours" sponsored by local retired journalist, author, and folklorist Charlie Adams. The tours, which had to date been strictly fun excursions to hear unverified ghost stories are now reported by the paper (this is NOT an advertisement) to include "new experiences all the time", and lists repeated photographs of "unexplainable things" and feelings of "mysterious presences". In fact it states "participants of the tour can *expect to experience* (spiritual activity near or at the Hamburg Diner) first hand (italics mine)". Hamburg is presented as a "hotbed of spiritual activity", and it is stated that "the number of people willing to experience such spiritual activity grows exponentially each year." And "spiritual" in this context, means demonic, not Godly. It would be most unfortunate if Hamburg becomes a town which draws its crowds by holding ghost tours with demonically engineered happenings. In fact, Adams himself, showing he no longer wishes to be considered a folklorist, is quoted specifically as saying: "It's not a Halloween gimmick. Halloween is like amateur night for me." The article also features a picture of St. John's cemetery, implying the church's endorsement of this activity, although the church is not mentioned in the article.

The King Frost Parade was started innocently as a fall carnival in 1910. It has grown to a Halloween Parade for nearly 50,000 spectators, with \$30,000 in prizes offered. Even Weis closes, fearing theft, and beer is carried on the streets. It is NOT the biggest parade of its kind on the East Coast, as many residents of Hamburg believe: Greenwich Village, Toms River, NJ, the gay parade in Key West, FL, and the witchcraft festival in Salem MA are all larger. The character, King Frost, is a mean man who kills little children in Russian fairy tales (he first appears in the Yellow Fairy Book published in 1904) unless he is kept happy by parades and such things. Though well known in the 1910's, there are few mentions of the character, until 1999, when a modern novel has Bewitched's daughter Tabitha and Wendy the teenage witch battling demons released during the parade, which has evidently been copied by a town near Salem, MA. The celebration of a day for demons whereon children are taught to go door to door threatening violence to get a treat that hurts their teeth when they eat it is ridiculous, and this is even less conscionable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when God has restored the Feast of Tabernacles. Fortunately, it appears to be on its way out, as one of the leaders of the parade died just after his picture was in the Item. And this year, the Jaycees ran an ad looking for a new place to house the key float for the parade, as they had lost the old. But the churches like it, because they sell food to raise money.

The Item of Oct. 25, 2006, carries a parade supplement section, as the issue nearest the parade date has always done. However, this year, an article appeared on rumors about the parade. In a rare moment of sharing such things in print, Item records and Police Chief Painter reveal that there have been many rumors about the parade over the years, proving that there is a wealth of people in Hamburg who believe in the evil nature underlying the parade. For example, one year rumor stated that a Satanic group was going to stage a kidnapping during the parade (in fact parents of a girl who might fit the rumored target were interviewed for the article, and stated they had become frightened). Another year rumors featured Satanic graffiti on the State Street Bridge, and pentagrams and animal sacrifices at Kernsville Dam. Another year, the man playing King

Frost was supposedly targeted for assassination, and wore a bullet proof vest under his costume. There is clearly an undercurrent in Hamburg of people who believe that the parade is a doorway to demonic activity.

## CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND RENEWAL

In the early 1960's, the Catholic Church began a series of international conventions of its bishops, designed to change many outward appearances of the church, due to the changing nature of culture. Vatican Council II, as this series was called, affected many things, most notably changing the language of the services from Latin to the local language, and allowing the use of indigenous instruments in the music. The American church changed to the English language, and eventually the Catholic mass was conformed to be nearly identical with the Episcopal and Lutheran services, which are, of course, the model for most Protestant denominations. The resulting inter-denominational cooperation made the use of "indigenous American instruments", meaning the guitar, then double bass of the symphony, drums and other percussion, a practically mandatory experiment in almost every Catholic and Protestant church in the country. In several cases, the musical experiment remained. In most cases, including in Hamburg, the experiment was rejected, and thus, this type of music group used at church, went into the non-denominational churches by 1980. The simultaneous development of music recording technology that was nearly free (in 1970 it cost nearly \$100,000 to make an LP recording professionally; today it is routinely done for the cost of the microphones on home computers, using free software from the Internet) made the new music style the definitive Christian music of the home-to-work commute and thus put it on the agenda of every young person. This, together with the new revelations of word #4 and #5, meant that virtually all mainline churches lost virtually anyone who was under 30 in 1970 – the entire postwar baby-boom generation. Arithmetic meant that all these churches must close by 2020 unless the music policies are changed.

Of course, in reality, the problem is much deeper. But in Hamburg, by 2002, virtually all churches have responded to the danger of closing by taking emergency measures to implement this music, now upgraded to amplified rock style. The measures are different in each church, depending on the level of opposition of the "traditional" members. One pastor told me that the Lutherans and UCC are the "old people's churches", and churches such as his are the "young people's churches".

In Hamburg, the Blue Mountain Gospel Express, a professional group of retirees, met through churches, including Hamburg Bible Church and Salem EC, and still play traditional gospel worship music with guitars and related string instruments. They played public venues, and churches if hired. They are now disbanded.

The Catholics still have a small guitar choir, playing (since 1994) the traditional (since 1965) "guitar mass", which has now been renamed in Hamburg a "blended service" (new music with traditional service order). The 8AM mass, which they play, is the best attended mass.

The Methodists have instituted a weekly "contemporary service". Now at the traditional 11:00 time, the presence of the service has caused a lot of dissatisfaction among many long-time members, some of whom have left the church. The remaining congregation of about 80 is divided equally between the traditional service at 9:00 and the contemporary. The format is "contemporary", which means they follow the non-denominational service order of songs, sermon, and prayers, rather than the traditional service order of the "blended service".

The Assembly of God switched to contemporary service years ago, and incorporate the full range of amplified popular "rock" sounds. Salem EC has made its later service contemporary, retaining traditional music in its early service. Both churches have now left central Hamburg and moved to the suburbs, changing the definition of Hamburg, for the purposes of this study.

Dove, Agape, and Praise and Glory were never anything but contemporary service.

Hamburg Bible Church holds a weekly Sunday evening contemporary service.

New Christian rock bands include "A Better Sacrifice", from Zion UCC and other churches, "Torn Perfection" from Assembly of God, and "Krystal Klear," with members from several churches.

Zion UCC added a contemporary service about 2002, doubling the size of the congregation.

Hamburg Chapel had exclusively contemporary services during the year they were open.

First UCC has attempted to introduce contemporary music in a variety of ways, and the attempts have been rejected by the governing bodies. Their pastor occasionally played guitar in public with the Gospel Express.

St. John's Lutheran has attempted a monthly blended service (first Saturday 5:30), but had no music until June 2004, when they began hiring a different group each month. For a year, several people from Zion UCC did their music. Finally, in 2005, several youth sang more modern Lutheran hymns, while the wife of the youth director played the piano. But this is the "traditional" church of Hamburg, that in the 1950's had the Lutheran League.

## INTERCHURCH UNITY

Recall that at the centennial service in 1937, no pastors from Hamburg spoke, except the head of the ministerial association, who only gave a welcome. All speakers were Lutheran or UCC (Reformed). The details of the organ used received three paragraphs, but the only reason any other church was even acknowledged was because its pastor wrote a hymn lyric about Hamburg!

Fortunately, the Northern Berks Ministerium is quite a bit more evenly populated. This organization meets the first Thursday of the month from September through May, and is attended by most pastors from Hamburg (the exceptions are the Baptist pastor and Microtel). They do a devotional, hear a presentation, and discuss whatever they consider important. The spring 2004 Lenten Wednesday night services were split between the churches fairly, and each pastor took a turn presiding. The former president was the pastor of the Adventist Church. The next president was the pastor of Praise and Glory. Beginning in the middle 1970's, the ministerium sponsored a half-page in each weekly edition of the Hamburg Item. They no longer sponsor this, but none of the members I have spoken to know when it stopped. Businesses paid for the insert each week, which included one line ads for each supporting business, an inter-faith picture and article about three paragraphs long, and encouragement to attend church. The Item has always had a half-page of church news anyway, with short contributions from as many local churches as wished to be represented, and a complete schedule of church services and related events.

An attempt of six evangelical pastors to pray together, in the summer of 2005, created an interdenominational concert in the park, and then failed by fall of that year. The Ministerium stopped meeting winter of 2006. In fall of that year, Pastor Fred Diehl attempted to reorganize it out of First UCC.

In August of 2003, a national sporting-goods retailer, Cabelas, of Sidney, Nebraska, opened a superstore a mile outside of Hamburg. To get its twenty year share of tax breaks, Cabelas made many promises to Hamburg, which were (probably mis-) understood by the townspeople as a guarantee of great increases in business. For a year, new businesses were tried experimentally based on these promises.

Kramer's Hard Bean café was an upscale coffee house on State Street. The owners were members of Assembly of God, and the store was frequently a Christian music venue. It closed in the fall of 2005. It has since reopened under new management, and schedules a variety of acts, without regard to their occult or Christian connections.

My wife founded her interdenominational newsletter, "Believers' Bulletin" in April of 2004.

Dove Church began suspending one service per month to travel around the city and pray for it.

Beginning in spring 2006, a new means of reaching Hamburg's ever growing poor and ethnic population was pioneered, first by Dove, then by my wife and I, and then by Victory Chapel; that of holding free dinner get-togethers for selected street people. Dinner is served and a program is provided.

Also in August 2004, a member of First UCC, attempted an outdoor contemporary Christian concert in the church parking lot. His desire to repeat the event in October was overruled by the church governing board.

The Our Town Foundation agreed to coordinate the activities of a street fair in Sept. 2004 called "Hamburger Day". The Pennsylvania Beef Council had offered to provide several thousand dollars to advance its product and Hamburg at the same time. Hamburg has many street fairs, but this event proved important in the spiritual history of Hamburg, because integrated into the day, without formal approval, was an interdenominational contemporary Christian concert called "Praise on the Parsonage Porch", the parsonage being that of the Methodists, half a block from the festival. It was the first time Catholic, Protestant, and non-denominational groups had played in the same concert in Hamburg. It had an important follow-up:

On October 11, 2004, a meeting was held in the Hard Bean Café for all interested members of local contemporary Christian praise groups. They instituted a twice monthly session to share music with a goal to

begin, as soon as feasible, contemporary community wide worship sessions, and Christian concerts, some assisting in community-wide projects.

## THE SPRIT OF HAMBURG

We are told that Hamburg exists because Martin Kaercher sold 250 acres to his son, who divided it into lots. We are told that he gave St. John's property to the use of the church. We were never told that George Miller got saved as a result of the day that the tavern owner whipped Jacob Albright, and that they started a small work in Hamburg, while the Lutherans and Calvinists together could not raise the money to build on their free land without a lottery involving his help. We are told of Pennsylvania Dutch industriousness, but not of the hospitality that brought new ideas here to this crossroads, then overnight stage shop, then canal town, then railroad town, for the Pennsylvania Dutch to work on. We are not told that the street layout of Hamburg was re-envisioned four times, as four modes of transportation brought four new sets of people with four new sets of ideas.

Without the truth of Jacob Albright, the religious history of Hamburg is a jumble of names, dates, and properties owned. But as Albright was whipped, the Methodists were persecuted, and the Assembly of God people had tomatoes thrown at them, the spirit of Hamburg has remained constant. The Christians who threw Praise on the Parsonage Porch were verbally whipped by the "beer contingent" that made Hamburger Day the first summer street festival to have alcohol served in the outdoors. They were told that the public streets anywhere near the festival belong to the festival organizers, not to the people of Hamburg, for the day that supposedly celebrates their heritage and gifts. In fact, they were told that it is necessary to put beer next to loud rock music, because that brings in people. The Christian music must be silenced, else the "frolic" might be interrupted. And one of the businesses that originally wanted to be part of the entertainment for the out-of-town Christians just went on record with this writer that "I don't want my restaurant being turned into a church": the cause of this special phone call was two women sharing Christian songs at their table that morning when the restaurant was empty.

Hamburg wasn't always called Hamburg. Renamed for its founder as Kaerchertown, for a while, it was called in English "Churchtown". That was a mistake. Or was it?

Christians will be invited to bring the new revelations of God to Hamburg. They will be welcomed. And then they will be persecuted. But in the long run, they will hang on through the persecution in small numbers. And the works of God do get established here, and they endure. Often in a different format, decidedly Hamburg-ian in nature. And they can be exported, even to Reading. And if you're Jacob Albright, or Dr. Elvina Miller, even to the whole world.

Cabelas has not helped (in fact, employees talk privately about how it has failed to live up to even the owners' expectations). The factories are closed. If you live in Hamburg and work, you almost certainly commute to another town to do it. Arts are needed to save the town. And Christians have the arts, functioning every Sunday.

Two religious traditions since the beginning. Imports all along the way. Persecution, but openness. This is the foundation. Who will Hamburg welcome next, with what vision from God?

He calls us still across the span of years  
Asking that we, too, labor in His name.  
Why is the heart so fraught with pain and tears?  
Did He not calm the troubled sea the same----?  
If we would prosper, then, through coming days,  
We, too, must join as one in prayer and praise.

# THE SPIRITUAL LEGACY OF PARSON THORNE

by Ken Behrens January 2012

## THE PROBLEM

There are several unique statements that one can make about the city of Milford from a spiritual perspective.

The first, and most obvious, is that it was founded by a pastor, and the pastor did it mostly as an apparent sideline, while he was doing his ministry elsewhere.

The second is the tremendous and unexplained growth of churches in recent years. In the eighteen hundreds, Milford saw about one new church every 20 years. In the nineteen hundreds, that number jumped to one every three years, as the variety of denominations in America caught up. But in the 1990's, that number jumped to almost 2 per year, and from 2008 until now, it is almost one every other month. (These figures do not count the Spanish and Haitian churches formed for the immigrants coming in.) We are currently at a number where there are more churches in town than the average number of attendees at any one of the churches.

The third is a phenomenon caused by Rick Coherd, a resident of Milford. Last July (2011), if you were to run an Internet search for Parson Thorne (ignoring hits on the Apartments), or for Parson Thorne Mansion, you would get various websites telling you the traditional history of the man and the mansion, just as it is stated by the city itself, the histories of Delaware, etc. Today (Jan. 2012), the same search returns hits that are nearly one-tenth filled by statements of Rick Coherd and a team of "ghosthunters", preparing to go into Parson Thorne Mansion to determine if it is haunted by the Parson's ghost, who presumably is "checking up on Milford". Whether the history or science is real, ghosts are considered spiritual by most people, and any such documentable change in the information data base about the Parson must be considered a possible sign of social change. There has always been a "legend" about Parson Thorne, but it is clearly starting to change.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the historical sources as closely as possible, then provide as complete a story as possible. Using the story we will investigate if there is any bearing that the real events that led to the founding of Milford might have on these new events.

## THE CURRENT UNDERSTANDING

The standard theory of the founding of Milford is usually a summary along the following lines, and copies of it are available literally all over the city. This is from the vertical file at the Library:

"To the Reverend Sydenham Thorne is due the credit of the inceptive thought of laying out a town on Mr. Oliver's farm. He evidently saw the possibilities of its becoming an active business center and that the surest way to make the project a success was to build bridges and dams across the stream and open the roads for the accommodation of the agricultural population. With these plans in mind, he approached Mr. Oliver and offered to build a dam across the river at his own expense, with the understanding that Mr. Oliver should have his farm surveyed into building lots. The latter accepted the proposition, and the agreement was faithfully carried out by both parties. The latter (Joseph Oliver), after laying out his farm in town lots, made a gift of sufficient ground for a church site and graveyard."

It seems simple enough: "My dam will bring industry flocking to Milford, and many people will rent



your lots to build homes. You will get profit, and I will get land to move my church from where it is now, to the bustling new economic center.” Even ignoring that most sources are at variance a little bit, and one can find certain evidence that all was not this neat, it's pretty clear from history that it worked. This happened from 1785 through 1789.

## INCOMPLETENESS OF THE CURRENT STORY

The first spiritual problem is, that it did not work for Thorne as a pastor. The town got built and thrives to this day. But the church was not wanted by many of his congregation. Read the following from the history of Christ Episcopal Church, as submitted by Miss Rachel Frame, and printed in the Milford Museum Newsletter (which, except for an unusual division of responsibilities, could be called the “Milford Historical Society”, and I will use the terms interchangeably):

“Several influential men of the congregation opposed the removal of the house of worship to another site and refused and withheld their assistance in the new enterprise. Notwithstanding this, the Parson himself paid the cost of the bricks, which were made of clay dug from Oliver's land and burned in a kiln three hundred yards north of the church, near Fourth Street. The sills, rafters, beams, and girders were constructed out of trees grown on Mr. Thorne's farm, cut down and hewn at his expense, and when necessary, sawed into shape at his own mill.” It is historical fact that Thorne (who died in 1793 with enough a building finished that it could be used, but was not a “proper” church due to his not having finished it) is buried on mansion property, that Oliver (who died in 1807) is buried just behind the new church. But the congregation did not get there for forty years after!

The church records state specifically that they ministered to the community from the “Savannah Church” from 1704 until 1833. There are no church records extant from before 1833, but oral history records that the new church was used only occasionally.

It's a good thing that the Parson could do it himself. It's a good thing he had the vision to see what Milford would become. It's a good thing he had a farm, and a mill, and trees. And money. Well, actually, he didn't have money or the land he bought with it until he married Betty, the widow who inherited from her third husband in 5 years, the richest man in Sussex county, Levin Crapper. So now we have the makings of several legends, already.

Was Thorne (New York City and London educated) a great entrepreneur, or did he learn these ideas from Levin through Betty, or from his parishoner, Oliver? Was any of it even his idea at all, or hers? Maybe Betty even killed husbands to get money and power? If it was his idea, why did he do it? Dam building is hardly a normal part of pastoral care.

Then there's the simple historical fact that even doing everything himself, in opposition to his congregation, and the 39 people who signed petitions opposing the mill, he did not get his congregation to move to Milford. What did happen is that when Oliver partitioned his farm into lots, the Methodists were there, ready to build. Oliver gave them land for 5 shillings (the average lot RENT was \$3-8, which then translated to 10-30 shillings, using the British equivalent, although in post-revolutionary America, money cannot be at all certain), and the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Milford was built while Thorne was busy building his dam, and this church became the head church of Georgetown (Sussex County) Circuit, ministering to over 1000 people while the 24 or so people who had originally requested that Thorne be assigned to the country church in Delaware were listening to him preach against Methodism, and opposing his plans to move to what would become Milford. It's no big secret that the Methodists of Milford today, and always since then, have had more members and been more

active than all the other churches in town put together.

There's also an interesting suspicion. When Thorne moved into the mansion, there was one church in town. It was a Quaker meeting house, and was three blocks from the front door of the mansion. By the time Thorne built his church, they had bought another piece of property (near the bowling alley now, but nowhere in the area then) and had left.

So, Parson Thorne founded Milford as it was known for almost two centuries, before the building of the malls and apartments west of Mullet Run. But maybe, what he did as a pastor was to completely change the face of Milford churches from Quakers (which Anglicans traditionally believed need to be converted) to Methodists (which Anglicans always felt are too emotional), while perhaps wasting years and tons of money in a failed attempt to build his own church from a small country church to big city centrality, as he had learned should be in London.

Another issue surfaces. There are nearly 80 churches in Milford as of Jan. 2012, and no apparent abatement in the pattern of a new one opening every two months. Each church will have a different opinion of what a pastor should be doing. Using the wife's money? Marrying a four time widow as a first wife? Building a church yourself where the congregation doesn't want it? Not liking Quakers and Methodists? And the big issue of, does any of this that happened two centuries ago even matter? Is there really a "spirit" of Parson Thorne in the air in Milford after all this time? We need to get to the facts, and list the possibilities we can and cannot prove, and let each group draw their own conclusions.

#### DETAILS OF CURRENT THEORY

A more detailed version of the history may be obtained from two publications of the Milford Historical Society ("Sydenham Thorne, Clergyman and Founder" by Mary Katherine Downing, 1974, and "Joseph Oliver", available at the Museum), and supplemented with state and early church records of the Episcopal and Methodist churches of Delaware, various Internet sources, and two other books (basically reviews of deeds and other documents) by E. Dallas Hitchens by the historical society in the 1980's, called "Milford before 1776" and "Milford after 1776", and is detailed below.

Prior to 1774, two Episcopal churches existed in the area, both served by part-time clergy from Dover. These were Christchurch, near Houston, on the land currently so marked, and St. Paul's near the Maryland border. An attempt to arrange for a permanent pastor in 1764 was unsuccessful, when the candidate died at sea attempting to return to England for ordination (as was required in those days). Joseph Oliver, born ca. 1727 had settled in Milford, owned much surrounding land, and engaged in a trading business from a home just behind Dolce and the antique shop in that parking lot. A small home, later to become the Thorne mansion had been built on top of Silver Hill, and a predecessor to the Causey mansion already existed, built for one Levin Crapper (the wealthiest man in Sussex county, once State Legislative representative, often Justice of the Peace, and mill builder/owner). Silver Lake did not exist, having been created by the dam built by Thorne. Shipbuilding was already being practiced.

1768 Sydenham Thorne (born 1747) witnesses the will of Ann Powers in Flushing, NY (*Abstract p. 201 of NY Historical Society, v. 31*).

1773 Thorne matriculates at King's College, now Columbia University, and attends approx. one year.

Mar 7, 1774, a letter from Christchurch reflects Thorne's earlier visit and people's positive response.

June 1774, Thorne sails for England to be ordained with reference letters from both congregations, and guarantees of support both for him personally and for his living and maintenance (such land is called a "glebe", and represents the intention to build a parsonage), from the two churches (24 and 21

signatories respectively). Arrived in London in July.

Aug. 21, 1774, Thorne ordained.

Dec. 24, 1774 Thorne disembarks ship and returns to Delaware.

Aug. 31, 1775, letter affirms Thorne doing well, pledges more money for the glebe. (70 pounds additional per year is pledged, which is quite a large sum for this date. (*this whole section from Downing*))

April 23, 1774 Thorne made guardian of Clement Polk, replacing Levin Crapper.

1776-77 Thorne brought up on charges of violating "Treason Act" 4 times. The Act, passed by the State of Delaware, stated that any public statement that the King or British Parliament should have any right in America is a capital offense. Parson Thorne had an Episcopal priest's oath, which he felt required him to pray for the success of Britain in the Revolutionary War. A letter by him to the SPGFP ("The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts", the British headship of the church) Oct. 1778, states: "He has been very happy in residing among a people distinguished for their loyalty and affection to the British constitutions, and he cannot recall a single member belonging to either of his congregations who hath taken an active part against the government" (*"The Delaware Loyalists" by Harold bell Hancock, 1940, p. 47*). In reaction to the threats of punishment, Thorne appointed a lay reader to preach and lead the prayers, since the lay reader had no such oath. Thorne continued to supervise the church and do the sacraments, and resumed full ministry in 1782 (one source says he claimed 1780) at the cessation of the Revolutionary War.

Married Betty Polk-Manlove-Crapper sometime between 1775 and 1777. Details will follow in the next section.

1778 Daniel Rogers, guardian for Zadock, transfers Betty's estate to Thorne and Betty.

1778 Thorne entertains Bishop Asbuty, reformer and regional head of the Methodist church. (*see "Methodists and Revolutionary America, Dee E. Andrews 2002*)

1780 or 1782 Thorne resumes full ministry. Until the conversion and beginning of priesthood of Charles Wharton, Thorne is the only Anglican priest in Delaware, being the only one who survived the treason act.

1784 Methodists formally note: "...the growing estrangement of Sydenham Thorne" He had been the only remaining episcopal leader of Delaware "that had worked hard to preserve Anglican-Methodist unity". See also below under 1786. (*p. 60 "The Garden of American Methodism", William Henry Williams, 1904*). The reason is given in the book. First, where Anglicans sought to maintain the appearance of continuity with the defeated British government, the Methodists completely reorganized as Americans. Thorne was a diehard loyalist. Second, Methodists became more and more "revivalist". Anglicans repeatedly attempted to stop this behavior as not appropriate religious experience. For example, the massive revival under Charles Finney in 1825-6 in Rome, NY, that defined the "personal relationship with Jesus" concept was ordered stopped by Rome's Episcopal Bishop Hobart Yates stating the Episcopal churches should do all in their power to stop revivals so people may be returned to the "sober institutes of the church." When Methodism was simply a renewal movement within the Church of England, Thorne backed it; when it became American and a separate denomination, he opposed it.

Jan. 26, 1785 Thorne addresses Legislature to ask for clergy tax exemption (no formal U.S. Laws yet).

Feb. 9, 1785 Begins negotiations for the Mansion and the grounds around it (basically everything west of the creek and north of the river to the highway, then north of the highway to the Williamsville Road turn, making about a 1/3 mile rectangle north of the river), using Betty's money (a big deal is made of this fact in the Downing's book, but remember, it is a home for the married couple). Thorne had bought land during the time until he closed on this property, this on Haven Lake, the added piece giving him complete control of the north side of the river for 1/3 of a mile or more wide strip running from Mullet Run to the Williamsville Road turnoff, about a mile long. (*Hitchens: Before 1776, p.9, deeds researched by Dave Kenton of the Historical Society*)

Jun. 9, 14, 15 Thorne address state legislature with petition to build a mill, as follows, on Oct. 28.

1786 Thorne preaches against Methodism on several occasions. (*Garden of American Methodism, see reference under 1784*)

June 26, 1786 Thorne attends convention to reorganize Episcopal diocese, registering as rector of Savannah church and of St. Paul's. I found a several references to the meetings preparatory to and other sessions of this meeting. Thorne was elected president of the Delaware part of the conference, yet Wm. Stevens Perry (in "*The History of the American Episcopal Church, 1587-1883*" published 1885, on p.29) proves that not everyone liked Thorne, when he reports: "Delaware, in its weakness, sent the Reverend Sydenham Thorne, and Charles Henry Wharton, a man of singular elegance and accomplishments, a scion of an old Maryland family of the Romish faith, whose life was checkered with varying fortunes, and who found in the church of his adoption an honored name, deserved by learning, purity, and simple piety." And he goes on for a few more lines. For comparison, here is the quote from "Delaware: A Guide to the First State"(1938): Thorne was "one of the most popular and influential men in Kent county despite his political and religious principles of unconcealed loyalty to the King and Church of England." The cover on his grave lists the "elegance of the affability of his manner, the diffuse benevolence of his heart" and "zeal in preaching the gospel" that "impressed everyone who came into his sphere". It does not mention his being a founder of Milford (the name was used for many years before this), and uses the 1700's script (with the characteristic vertically elongated "s"), so it likely is Milford's opinion of him in about 1798. (While mentioning the tombstones, let us also note that the tradition that he is from the Eastern shore of Virginia is based completely on a companion grave for a "Thomas Parker, son of Thomas and Elizabeth of Accomac County, VA, born 12-19-1797 died 10-2-1813." The assumption was made early on that Thomas must be a relative of Thorne, and hence Thorne is from Virginia. This is complete nonsense, since Thorne and all relations had sold the property at least two years earlier. A genealogical search for Thomas easily turns up the record of the parents, and shows no relationship to Thorne. It seems pretty clear that he was visiting Milford at age 16 and died unexpectedly around the mansion, and this was the most convenient burial option. If we assume Thorne was not recognized as a "founder" at this point, there is no problem with using the mansion graveyard for general burials.)

Aug.-Sept. 1786, baptizes Mary Clarke, daughter of Alette Cloves, who died in 1810. (*This from Sussex County records, from the Cloves family Bible*)

Oct. 10,1786 accepts committee work at Episcopal convention. Becomes known in episcopal circles for championing the reinsertion of the Creed into the Episcopal liturgy and the phrase "descended into hell" into the creed.

Oct. 28, 1786 Thorne presented a formal request and the minutes of the House records:

"Whereupon resolved that the said Sydenham Thorne have leave to bring in a bill, to enable him to erect a Mill-dam at the place where a certain Joseph Booth formerly made a Dam, bounded with the fast land on the Sussex side of Mispillion Creek, and crossing the said Creek to a point of high land on the Kent side; and also for the condemnation of half a acre of fast land, on the Sussex side of said Creek; adjoining the Dam aforesaid; and that provision be made in the said bill, to prevent any *obstacles to the navigation of said Creek*, or for removing them, if any such should happen, as well as to make due compensation to the *owners of such land to be condemned* as aforesaid." I provided italics. I believe the first italicized phrase was misunderstood by Downing to imply that he blocked the river. The second is necessary since he has not closed on the property.

Dec. 18, 1786 Oliver sells first lot.

Jan. 16, 1787 Thorne addresses the Legislature to allow building the dam and power and grist mill on his land. Note: land still not his yet; this was due to death of the seller; he had to wait for probate.

Jan. 16, 1787 Petition filed by Daniel Rogers, guardian of orphan minor Zadoc Crapper (nephew of Levin – see Levin below), and owner of land other side of river, to deny Thorne's petition, on the basis that it "would prove destructive to the navigation of Mispillion Creek and *to the wharves and stores of*

*the said village,*” that there are already “four mills in the area” and “would cause overflowing” of the main highway. (See Levin's history below for a hint at Zadoc's motivation. He owned the mill on Haven Lake, and the italicized claim is certainly true of what would happen to HIS mill, although certainly moving the mill closer to the current town should theoretically help Oliver's business.)

Jan. 17, 1787 Petition filed by 38 residents of area, including Joseph Oliver), to deny Thorne's petition. (Oliver signing this petition, closes the possibility that Thorne constructed the mill as an inducement to Oliver to partition his land into town lots, on the theory that the mill would make the town profitable quicker. Perhaps Oliver agreed originally and changed his mind later. Another option is that Thorne was building the mill anyway, and offered Oliver a chance to “cash in” on Milford's growth by making lots available before anyone else, but see at the end of this entry.) Part of the text of their objection, quoted by Downing in her watershed article “Documents vs. Tradition” in the Historical Society Newsletter, Fall,1992 follows. It is the product of a growing recognition begun in her 1974 book that something is very wrong with the story of the founding of Milford. The first mention of the fact that Oliver signed the petition seems to be in the April 1987 Newsletter. The very presence of 38 owners of businesses – and thus homes- in the “Village of Milford” in itself proved that Thorne did not found the village. Downing's version of Oliver's original plot, shown with the article, has exactly 38 lots marked on it. Coincidence? Here is a part of her quote of the petition: “For their property and possessions which they have purchased and improved at great expense and trouble, and which are rendered valuable principally on account of their situation near and on the Mispillion Creek, and the landings thereof are in consequence deeply interested in the preservation of the navigation of the said creek...would render a village now flourishing...of little value by depriving it of those advantages..” and they went on to repeat some of Zadoc's other arguments. At best, Thorne/Oliver reshaped Milford; he certainly did not found or name it. The 38 lots as shown could, in fact have been intended for exactly these 38 people, in OPPOSITION (not support) of Thorne's project, even though some owned land; he gave them the opportunity for new homes, once their business opportunities were ruined. In reality, 114 lots were laid out, so is Downing, by showing only 38, suggesting something? If so, she is the first to note that the story is changing, as she herself just changed it by changing the number of lots shown.

Feb. 3, 1787 law passed to allow building of Mill on Thorne's land, the original bill above “with sundry amendments.”

Aug. 16,1787 Closes on mansion property.

1787 Joseph Oliver partitions his property into lots and the village of Milford is given shape. He donates land for the Episcopal Church (where it now stands) and for the Methodist Church (the cemetery across from the current St. Paul's). Conrad's History of the State of Delaware, p. 679 states Oliver was a parishoner of Thorne's and they were “friends and companions in any good movement” for the area. It is difficult to imagine his opposition to the mill if this is true, and his equal donation (or cheap sale, depending on the source) to both Thorne's church and the Methodists to whom Thorne had become estranged. A volunteer at the Historical Society told me “they were not friends”; we will suggest the nephew situation that could have caused the problem later.

1789 Thorne listed as subscriber of a historical journal (this demonstrates his interest in the subject).

1789 Methodist Church consecrated by Bishop Asbury and made central church for southern Delaware, total number of members in the area “879 whites, 236 coloreds”.

1791 Episcopal church building started.

1791 Joseph Oliver builds a new bridge across the river on King's Highway (adjacent to Rte. 113) first planning to charge toll, but not being allowed to after petitions. I have also heard this bridge was at Walnut St.

1792 Attends Episcopal convention, registering as rector of Christchurch, Milford. Compare to 1786 registration. St. Paul's does not occur in Episcopal history, proving it was closed before founding of the diocese. This comparison gives us an approximate year when it closed.

Feb. 13, 1793 Parson Thorne dies, and is greatly hailed as the founder of Milford, a great leader in the

Episcopal Church. He is buried behind the Mansion, and he deeds the mansion to his nephew, Peter Caverly, with Betty allowed to live in it. Conrad states, among other things he suggested Oliver donate land for the church and that there was a formal compact between the two making the division of lots and the construction of the mill codependent (not consistent with the signature on the petition). This is the probable source of the original legend we started with. But he also says the Mill was built at Oliver's landing (it was ½ mile west, but maybe means “built to increase the profit of Oliver's landing”).

1807 Caverly sells Mansion to take job in Dover. Joseph Oliver dies.

1813 License to practice medicine issued in Dorchester County, MD to one Sydenham Thorne Russum. The records say he had a fairly good career until his death in 1852. I offer this as proof that someone thought Thorne worthy of being a name for their infant, probably prior to his death. The name Russum appears in the Dorcheser, MD country records. (See also under Betty, 1770 below); presumably this is his son? A Sydenham Thorne Caverly is also listed as buried in Thorne's grave plot, who was born and died in 1797, undoubtedly the son of his nephew.

Now let's tabulate the information about the wife.

She was born Betty Polk, daughter of Joseph Polk. No date found, probably born ca. 1742-50, as her first was likely an arranged marriage among the large Polk family. If she was underage, and married, in 1769, that narrows her birth year to 1743-1747.

Her first husband was Robert Polk. He was the son of Robert Polk and Alice Covington. These records are very confusing, as there were many Polk's (sometimes called Pollock), and many Roberts; these records assume I have the right one. He was born in 1742, and died in Dorchester County in 1769 after Mar. 25 (*this is from familytreemaker.com and from the Account Records of Dorchester County. The complete record is quoted below, as it also establishes that his father was an attorney – in fact, a justice of the peace, the connection with Russum of 1793 above, and the likelihood that Betty was underage at the time, since she is administrator with surety rather than executrix. It also proves Clement was at least named by 1769*). A tax record proves he owned a 100acre parcel of land in MD called Horseys Mill in 1749. His will makes no mention of Clement; this implies he made the will prior to Clement's birth. I have seen that his will also quotes in the first line that he is sick when making it, but was unable to verify this.

Text of “Account Records of Dorchester County, Liber 62, Folio 69”, dated 1769: “Polk, Robert (dec); Adm – Betty Polk (widow); Sureties – Robert Polk (Esq.) & Winlock Russam; Only Child – Clement Polk”

1770 son Clement born (date set by record in Sussex Co. “orphan court”). Clement inherits 100 acre Horseys Mill and 250acre plot Little Goshen, in Maryland, under guardian Manual Manlove Sept. 7, 1772. The tax records prove Robert owned at least Horseys Mill in 1749. Died 1784 (orphan account by Thorne at this date; Clement's will probated 1784; settled 1794).

1771 Betty marries Manuel Manlove. Birthdate 1733. He inherited from father 11-22-70. Lived in Dorchester County (the connection to Polk), but owned land in Cedar Neck, DE (presumably the connection to Crapper which is that King's Highway, as traced by Hitchens, crossed the back of the mansion property; the map published by Kenton used to divide Crapper's land after his death show it was diverted around the front of the property by 1789, and kenton has deed proof that it was moved several times during the 18-th century). (Half-?) brother Boaz was Sussex County High Sheriff early in the 70's. Will probated 11-25-73. (A reason must be sought for Justice of the Peace Crapper permitting

the long wait -see Crapper marriage date below.)

1773 Betty married Levin Crapper Jan. 1, 1773 (according to state records) and moved into the Causey mansion (this is the current name of the Crapper mansion). Note that before Joseph Oliver's lots, there were three prominent houses in town: Causey, Oliver, and the mansion, and all three were equally visible from each other's porches and windows. I have a birthdate on Crapper as "after 1731", but nothing further. Hitchens states (*Before 1776, p. 130*) that between 1768 and 1772, Crapper had made four purchases of land north of the river which gave him controlling interest in all the local mills, including the potential of building a mill at Thorne's eventual site. These include 1788, 141 acres just west of Sawmill Range; 1771, 115 acres up to Mullet Run from Jos. Oliver; 1772 Mill Road.

1775 Levin Crapper dies, will written 4-10, probated 4-23. Separate data on Crapper will follow. Also on April 23, Thorne becomes the guardian of Clement, succeeding Crapper. Note this timing: Thorne had been the pastor less than four months, yet it is to him that Betty came for her 5 year old son. She married him between this date and 1777. Thorne is the first husband who does not own property, but does he ever have status!

1784 Clement dies.

1785 Betty gives her money to Thorne to buy the mansion and eventual Mill property. (Historical society states specifically: "How did he get the money? He married it, of course!" This is an echo of the original theory that Thorne was the brains behind the decision to build the mill and develop the town of Milford, which I believe needs to be questioned.) Thorne begins negotiations for mansion and mill property with Cullen. Note the closing date two year later.

1793 Thorne dies at age 45, before the church is completed. Just like her other husbands – just a couple years after she got what she wanted, and this is the cause for suspicion of her being a "black widow". But at least one and maybe two of her husbands (Levin below, also probably Polk) specifically state in their wills that they are making a will in contemplation of death due to illness, and were sick. She received half of Thorne's estate and permission to live in the mansion.

1794 Settles Clement's will.

1795 Remarries. Her next husband, Peter Lowbar was her last. They lived in rural Frederica. Her will was probated 11-9-1801, his 1-26-1807.

Additional material on Levin Crapper:

Levin Crapper is called a "founder of Milford" Jan. 1, 2010 by Reagan-Watson auction house in NYC, when piece of coffin is auctioned. (It brought \$75)

The Pennsylvania Chronicle, Sept. 27, 1767 and related issues has Crapper offering a reward of 10 pounds plus expenses for the return of Harry, an escaped slave. The item is quite precise and states that Crapper purchased him in 1762 from East New Jersey, and he is competent as a millwright, mill administrator and mill worker, and carpenter, and has worked for sometime at "Three Runs Mill."

Following is the complete text of Crapper's will:

"Will of Levin Crapper 10 April 1775w. 23 April 1775p.

I Levin Crapper of Sussex County on Delaware being sick and weak in body but of sound and

disposing mind, memory and understanding do make this my last Will and Testament in manner and form following that is to say: I give and bequeath unto my Son Molton Crapper and the heirs of his body lawfully begotten all my lands in Sussex County aforesaid on Delaware containing by estimation Fifteen Hundred and Seventy acres of land be the same more or less together with all and every of the houses, buildings and other improvements and appurtenances thereunto belonging. And in default of such heirs of the body of my said son then I give and bequeath all my aforesaid lands in Sussex County aforesaid unto my daughter Amelia Crapper and her heirs and assigns forever.

I give and bequeath unto my said son Molton Crapper and the heirs of his body lawfully begotten Fifteen acres of land in Kent County on Delaware to be laid off at the \_\_\_\_\_ and discretion of my said son Molton out of those lands that I purchased of Elias Mason and Edward Evans and his wife, and in default of such issue of the body of my said son Molton, then I give and bequeath the aforesaid fifteen acres of land unto my daughter Leah Parker, the wife of John Parker of Sussex County aforesaid and the heirs of her body lawfully begotten, and for default of heirs of the body of my said Daughter Leah, then I give and bequeath the aforesaid fifteen acres of land unto my daughter Amelia Crapper and her heirs and assigns forever.

I give and bequeath unto my said Daughter Leah Parker, the wife of John Parker of Sussex aforesaid and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten all those lands that I purchased of Elias Mason and Edward Evans and his wife lying in Kent County aforesaid on Delaware except the aforesaid fifteen acres thereof which I have given to my son Molton Crapper in manner and form above mentioned. And, I also give and bequeath unto my said daughter Leah Parker and the heirs of her body lawfully begotten all those lands in Kent County aforesaid which I purchased of William Beacham and his wife and of Purnall Wattson and his wife and their and every of their improvements and appurtenances. And in default of the heirs of the body of my said daughter Leah Parker lawfully begotten as aforesaid then I give and bequeath all and every of the aforesaid lands which I purchased of Elias Mason and Edward Evans and his wife and of William Beachman and his wife and Purnall Wattson and his wife as aforesaid land which I have given to my Daughter Leah Parker in manner above mentioned unto my Daughter Amelia Crapper and to her heirs and assigns forever.

I give and bequeath unto my Daughter Sarah Ranch, the wife of James Ranch the sum of Five hundred Pounds Current money of Pennsylvania to be paid in four yearly payments after my death.

My will and desire is that my son Molton Crapper and his do support and maintain my son Levin Crapper during his natural life agreeable to his rank and station in life and in such manner as a son of mine ought to be maintained and supported. But in case my said son Molton and his heirs should refuse or neglect to support and maintain my said son Levin in manner aforesaid then I do hereby request, authorize and empower the Court of Quarter Sessions of Sussex County on Delaware aforesaid to make sale of such part of the lands herein devised to my said son Molton Crapper as will be necessary for the support and maintenance of my son Levin.

I give and bequeath all the rest and residue to my wife, my son Molton Crapper and my daughter Amelia Crapper to be equally divided among them and share and share alike.

My will and desire is that in case my wife shall cause or suffer to be done any waste on the lands which she will be entitled to in virtue of her Right of Dower, then she shall forfeit to my heir at law or to such persons who shall be entitled to the lands whereon the waste shall be made, damages equal to such waste out of the part of my Personal estate allowed to her.

And lastly I do hereby constitute and appoint my dear wife Betty Crapper Executrix, and my son Molton Crapper Executor of this my Last Will and Testament hereby revoking and annulling all former wills by me heretofore made, and hereby ratifying and confirming this and none other to be my Last Will and Testament. Signed Levin Crapper. Sussex County, Delaware.

Note:

*Some entries show dates specifically and separately. Some have the dates within the Information notes:*



*c = Chancery Court Date*  
*f = Family Court Date*  
*o = Orphan Court Date*  
*w = Will Date*  
*p = Probate Date*

Comment: Betty is his “dear” wife, but she can forfeit anything she “wastes”. There is also a serious problem in that her dower right is 1/3 of the property, while the bequests above seem to leave her next to nothing. This may have a bearing on why a map needed to be drawn to divide up property when the will sounds so precise, and may have a bearing on why Zadoc opposed the mill Thorne was building with Betty's money. It may also have a bearing on why everything waited until 1785, but note that the end of probate was later, in 1789, under both Betty and Thorne. Hitchens notes that until Thorne and Betty purchased the mansion, they probably lived in the Crapper mansion.

New Theories on the role of Parson Thorne due to the spread of Internet:

2005 Historical Gazeteer of the US credits the founding of Milford to Oliver's division of land and to the mill, but does not mention Thorne. It also mentions the Episcopal church only (although the Methodist church is earlier and comes from Oliver's gift of land as well).

Approx. 2008, a member of a discussion board at yahoo posts that the mansion is honeycombed with underground passages, as it was a station in the underground railway. (If that were true, there would be a lot of money in it for Milford?)

Sept. 2011 Rick Coherd of Milford, a historian for Delaware State parks, announced his intention to conduct paranormal investigations of the mansion in the hope of finding a ghost, most likely that of Parson Thorne, and posts a youtube video of a preparatory investigation by his core-team. In interviews to the papers, he quotes from unnamed sources that Thorne's ghost may likely have been seen wandering the grounds and may be “checking up” on Milford. The source is the book “Haunted Delaware: Ghosts and Strange Phenomena in the First State” by Patricia A. Martinelli, 2006. p.21-22. The pages are available on Google books, as follows:

“The Parson Thorne Mansion in Milford, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was inhabited in 1730 by the town's founder, Parson Thorne.... some visitors have reported on occasion the sight of a white-haired man in Colonial-style clothing wandering the grounds. It really should not come as a surprise, since Parson Thorne is buried in the family plot behind the house. Though no one has been brazen enough to confront the silent figure, some believe it may in fact be the mansion's former occupant, keeping an eye on the town that he establish so long ago.” The missing -ed on “establish” is in the original, as well as the ridiculous excuse for research, wrong on so many counts.

On the subject of ghost stories, Historical Society Newsletter of Oct., 1981 quotes the following from a “reliable” but anonymous source (and it comes “in answer to query” in a previous issue): “Sometimes at midnight on the dark of the moon a shadowy figure of a man dressed in late 18<sup>th</sup> century garb appears outside the east window of the dining room. After peering through the window briefly, he comes through the wall and wanders about the room, calling softly 'Betty'. After a few turns about the room, he sighs, shakes his head in dejection, and vanishes. This must be the ghost of Parson Thorne coming to look for his widow Betty.' And this, the writer points out, is in the correct part of mansion, and the ghost is offered as a reason the paint is peeling off at that spot of the wall.

Note how different the two stories are. In the older story, Thorne looks for Betty. In the new one, he

arise to inspect Milford. In the earlier, he is the innocent, loving husband. In the later, he is the founder of Milford.

Not to be outdone, I offer the following story, made up on well-established, well-publicized lines (such stories were even broadcast on the "One Step Beyond" TV series, all of whose episodes are supposed to be scientifically proven to have occurred. The facts are all verified in the Spring 2001 Historical Society Newsletter:

Joseph Booth, the builder of the rear wing of mansion in 1735 and living above the kitchen (and we note this is where Rick Coherd's youtube video of the pre-inspection has "something happen") until he died a year later. He built several mills in the area, and he is the Joseph Booth who "formerly built a dam" in Thorne's petition. Below, note that he was a founder of the Quaker meetings. Booth was working on the dam when he died, and had gotten as far as extending the land into the river that became the "ford" that is thought gives its name to Milford. Not being a skillful politician, he was unable to get legislature permission (of course, that was from England's colonial government; Thorne got his permission from America), and so died while building the dam. Here's the made-up ghost part: The spirit of his desire to build the dam haunted the house, and thus transferred to Parson Thorne when he bought the house, and that's why Thorne spent three years NOT building his church, and building the dam first. In other words, the parson became possessed by the spirit of a Quaker! We will come back to this when we discuss Episcopal and Quaker relationships.

#### TRACING SYDENHAM'S LIFE

We have heard that he came from the Eastern shore of Virginia, but showed above that this is based on a misinterpretation. He was clearly living in New York City by age 21, as he witnessed a will there. A search for the other witnesses shows only that they were a younger man (John Field) Thorne's age, and an older man (Benjamin Thorne – no traceable relation, but some influential people at King's College are named for him), and they all had witnessed other wills in the same period, mostly for Irish immigrants. The only possible information one can infer from this is that Thorne MAY have worked for an attorney's office, but this is not likely as there were only a few such wills witnessed. It is a wild guess, but he may have left Virginia to train as a law clerk under his older relative Benjamin. His life is also a mystery until he matriculates at King's College (Columbia Univ.) in 1793. The worst possible scenario is that he was a "bum" (but this does not discredit him for the future; many pastors in Milford today are ex-drug dealers). The best case is that he was a lawyer in training, or some sort of law clerk, and this needs to be kept in mind, as Betty's three marriages were to the son of Justice of the Peace (Polk), a brother of a Justice of the Peace (and ex-sheriff) (Manlove) and a current Justice of the Peace and former sheriff and state legislator (Crapp).

It is not generally realized, but almost all colleges in America were set up as divinity schools only, or at least mainly. Law and medicine were apprenticeship positions at the time, and most of the modern majors did not yet exist. Lawyers in training receiving calls to the ministry are quite common at the time, both since law is classically a "learned professions", requiring ongoing study, and depending on preparation of documents and public speaking to persuade groups of people. It is unlikely he would matriculate to King's College with any other intended major. King's College was Anglican, by definition, since that was the official religion of the British Empire. This education would have grounded him in the classics (hence the eventual subscription to the historical journal), but would also have provided him with faculty that knew the situation in Delaware and could easily provide him with an interview at the two-point charge of Savannah-St. Paul's over winter break 1773-74. This accounts for the letters of reference. Waiting to complete the year before leaving in June accounts for the

balance of the year. He was examined, possibly tutored (lacking a D. Div. Degree due to the extreme urgency of the situation in the colonies), and returned to America. He is thus trained in New York and London.

The two parishes for which he was responsible needed to be visited at least twice weekly each (once for the Sunday service and once for pastoral calls – more during Christmas and Easter seasons, and for weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc.). Even assuming that he had his own pastoral reference library at home, this meant at least 2 days of several hours in a horse-and-buggy, and the required maintenance. Once he moved into the Crapper mansion, Savannah Church was half-an-hour away, and the travel responsibility increased accordingly. He had less than four months to get his feet on the ground in a rural colonial environment (after London and New York), learn the job, and impress the people (which he clearly did) before Betty showed up with her 5 year old son in tow.

Betty's marriage record is hardly without potential for criminal accusation. In the worst case, she is a "black widow" who killed 3 husbands, two years apart each, inheriting more and more property as she went. She possibly killed Clement when the son became old enough to realize what had happened to "daddy's" #1,2 and 3. She then killed Thorne when she had the status as the woman-behind-the-man who founded Milford, and only after Crapper's will had cleared probate. Each marriage is within days of the last husband's death (except her last, which waited for Clement's will to clear), each time Clement's guardianship is transferred to the new husband immediately. This is the worst case.

This worst case is probably nowhere near correct. After all, I have accounted for the relationships in each case. All were in or related to the legal profession, which was the profession of Robert Polk's father, and he was a distant relative of hers. Each knew the other in some way (Crapper would have been a parishoner of Thorne's). Land inheritance was normal in those days, as it was plentiful and cheap in the colonies, and farming was the primary means of sustenance. Three of her husbands were relatives of lawyers, sheriffs, and one was a former county legislator. At least one, possible two, made their wills on their deathbeds. One can suggest that a young woman might know some secret poison that would have such undetectable effects, but this is not rural America we are talking about, it's the British colonies. Yes, the King's inattention to the needs here (which is cited so much in the Declaration of Independence) might have made the sheriffs less aware, but when it is their own brothers and then themselves who are victimized, surely they would have caught on. Besides that, Thorne left her half of his estate; the law only required 1/3. For comparison, the Oct. 1986 Historical Society Newsletter reports a case of murder by poison, Sunday May18, 1828. The case was correctly determined by the coroner's jury to be poison (doctor, maid, and neighbor all saw the victim Mary Webb die. The obvious murderer, the husband, was arrested, and brought to trial. The case was proved as thoroughly as would be done today, and the guilty verdict handed down. But the husband went free.

What more likely happened was the woman simply had a lot of bad luck. Illness took out a lot of people in those days. The primary medical treatment for flu was still bleeding with lances and leeches! She was left with an unborn or infant son, then a three year old son, then a five year old son, and the legalities of managing all those estates in a man's world were simply too much for a single mother of say, 18, 20 and then 22 years. The marriages may have happened out of concern for the child, or Betty's own ability to impress people. Another factor in this is that no portrait of either her or her husband was ever done. Surely, a women desiring money and notoriety to this extent would have had one made at the earliest opportunity.

Betty entered Parson Thorne's life when he had been a pastor (with limited training) for just under 4 months. Given what people have said about him, he was probably happy to accept the advisory

position of guardian to Clement, and eventually fell in love with, and married, Betty. There are passages of the Old Testament that one could interpret to the effect that a pastor should have a virgin for a first wife, but also other passages that contradict them. It could also be reasoned that charity is the most important thing, and that Betty had not yet had a real marriage at all, as all three had fallen remarkably short of having the time needed to grow in love.

We can account for the years 1775-6 by saying they were years of courtship and getting used to his ministry and the nature of rural life.

1777-84 must have been some extremely trying years for the young (early 30's) pastor. He was married to Betty, thus living in the Crapper mansion, with its additional transportation demands to his churches. He was helping her supervise the huge Crapper estate, as well as the growing child. He and she were responsible for solidifying the inheritances of her and Clement, and getting Crapper's will through probate. The very existence of the map shown by Kenton proves how trying keeping peace among the heirs must have been. And he was constantly being called up to answer charges against the treason act at the provisional courts in Dover. The above documented instances show the trials he must have had to survive his ministry as a British loyalist, and to maintain ties with the Methodists. He was preaching again by 1782, and was finally able to learn his job completely. At Clement's death in 1784, his life entered a new stage.

We will never know for sure if it was Betty or Thorne who first suggested the plan of the mill. Betty had two years with Levin Crapper, and he was buying up the land to control the mills in the area. If one accepts the black-widow theory, she would have wanted to solidify her own control of the area. Thorne himself, on the other hand, watched the shipbuilding industry establish itself less than two blocks from the Crapper Mansion back window. He could watch the additional business brought to Oliver's trading company by the increased industry. (The business growth would be the reason Oliver might have suggested the whole project, although his motivation is clearly not as strong, especially given his age of nearly 60.) Thorne had been educated in New York and London, and was familiar with the city layout centered around the church, with shops and industry complementing each other at different sides of town, yet all within a few blocks. The same plan can be seen in Lewes (with shipbuilding, downtown, and the church side by side). It can also be seen in Dover (with the Legislative Mall, the shops and the church side by side). Add to this that Milford was precisely the midpoint of King's Highway, which for decades had served as the connecting link between Lewes and Dover. Then add that the terrain of the Mispillion forced the King's Highway to deviate around Milford's south side (Hitchens traces the route from 10<sup>th</sup> and Walnut down upper Church St., across open country to the front of the Parson Thorne Mansion, then across the river on Highway 113, back up the street now called King's Highway, Lakeview Drive, Causey Ave., Front st., Carlisle, 2<sup>nd</sup> St, to Rehoboth Blvd., although, as we have noted, it moved a lot) thus making us certain that every traveler got a half hour to consider what might be done at the shipyards through the carriage windows. What you have is a perfect opportunity to create a great city by starting with the morning brunch stop halfway through the six hour ride. All you have to do is get the mill closer to the shipbuilding yards, and build some houses.

Whatever the reason that caused the couple to have the discussion, Clement was no sooner dead than Thorne began traveling to Legislative Mall in Dover, first to get his tax exemption, then to get his mill. Thorne was just past age 35, and his whole future was tied up with this colonial village, so different from New York and London. The most productive years of a pastor or business executive were just ahead of him, and he had made the decision to raise the level of the area to what he had hoped he would some day be living in. He bought property, and secured the services of Joseph Oliver to help

with the dream.

Joseph Oliver was a parishoner of Thorne's. This is stated by Conrad and easily proved by the location of his grave in the Episcopal church graveyard. Oliver was a man of the world, "mariner turned trader", nearly 60 and getting ready for retirement, and he seized the opportunity. Regardless why Thorne wanted to move the mill location by creating the new one closer to the shipyards, and whether or not he approved, Oliver's best bet for the future lie in going along with the plan.

It was a ten year plan. Since much of his congregation opposed the new church, the mill would have to come first, to prove to them the wisdom of the undertaking. Thorne's whole next 7 years were split between his ministry, Crapper's and Clements will probates, the new expectations placed on him for Episcopal reorganization, and the building project. It seems reasonable that had he lived just two more years, the plan would have been achieved in his lifetime, and he would have reached 50 and thus eventual retirement in just the manner he had envisioned becoming accustomed to, and given his congregation the "proper" position in society that they would have had if the colonies had never broken with England.

But history had other ideas.

#### THE SPIRITUAL LEGACY OF PARSON THORNE

To understand the impact to himself of Parson Thorne's failure to open his church, we must recall that by 1786, he was preaching against the Methodists. We must also recall that Anglicans do not believe in the Quaker religion that motivated William Penn. Numerous references occur in the early annals of Anglicans pleased that they had been able to "convert" Quakers to the sacraments. It is likely that a man driven by a plan with which his wife greatly concurs, possibly even suggested, could become frustrated at the slowness it seemed to be happening. We know for a fact, Thorne liked Methodists before 1782, and preached against them by 1786. It is likely that he also tried to "convert" the Quakers next door to the mansion. Quakers have always run rather than fought, so this could be the reason they left for the new ground at the bowling alley. On the other hand, the deed found by Hitchens proves that one corner of their meeting house land was on the edge of the Mispillion river at the Three Runs Cripple. A small part must have been flooded when the lake was created by the dam. Hitchens (after 1776, p. 32) finds evidence that Thorne bought them out between 1790 and 1793. There is that missing 1-3/4 acres in the exception, also.) Milford would certainly be a different town today had there been equal churches of Quaker, Episcopal and Methodist in its founding, in place of the current Methodist dominance. Let's investigate the details of what happened.

To start at the beginning, when Thorne arrived in Savannah in 1774, there were four and only four churches in the Milford area, and none in the boundaries of Milford as they were before 1800AD. They were the Savannah Church (Episcopal), the Baptists, 3 miles east of Milford, the Presbyterians on the south side of the Mispillion at what is now the 400 block of Kings Highway, and the Quakers who had moved to the location we are discussing in 1760.

Two of the adherents of the Quakers (*according to Conrad*) were Joseph Booth (the dam builder from 1730) and Matthew Manlove (remember Betty's second husband). Nov. 20, 1710, they moved to the home of Raynear Williams (we will see that name again below). Others listed in the book "Historica Etchings of Milford" by George B. Hynson, 1899, include Gallaudet Oliver, John Thomas, and Isaiah James. Of these, only Oliver signed the petition; he was a locksmith, and a nephew of Joseph's, son of Thomas Oliver and Eleanor Mason of NYC, brought here by Joseph when his mother died, in

coincidentally 1774, at age 15. He converted to Quakerism on Pastor Thorne's watch. The Quakers bought the new land (where the highway crosses Mullet Run just south of the bowling alley, Nov. 30, 1790 and built by 1795. They stopped using the meeting house in 1833, and it became a landmark.

Quakers are the prayer meeting people, who wait on God, and aim for non-violence at every opportunity. They are the religion William Penn practiced, and according to his biographers, are part of the reason he made Pennsylvania (and thus Delaware) available for his "holy experiment" of trying to live a life of true Christianity unhampered by the state-owned churches. In war, they were always pacifists in public, whatever their individual personal feelings about England vs. Delaware may have been.

The Presbyterians were already an "enemy" of Anglicans and their pastors. In 1727, the governor of Delaware had given them permission to grant marriage licenses, thus taking away authority and income from the "official" (Anglican) church of Great Britain and her colonies. Their meeting house was famously (according to Sharff's history) a gathering place for the "rebels" so against the loyalists of Parson Thorne's church.

The Baptists need not concern us, as they made no move to enter Milford until 1869, and even then had too few members to start a church in the town. Even today, their building is on the highway just at the southern boundary of the town.

As we have mentioned, the Methodists were a renewal movement within the Anglican church. Wesley was an Anglican priest, who found his faith empty until an awakening at a Moravian meeting at Aldersgate in England. He began preaching a demanding, but simple gospel message in public, and the movement grew quite fast. After the Revolutionary War, America, cut off from the British central church administration, reformed her own denomination, beginning in about 1784 (Asbury first preached locally at Barret's Chapel Nov. 24, 1784). As early as 1777 the circuit rider from Dover, Rev. John Cooper, had (British) Methodist meetings at the home of Raynear Williams (whose family thus helped established two churches in Milford), that had started in Slaughter Neck at the home of one J.K. (*this from Avenue Methodist History pamphlet*). Note that name. Asbury, the leader of the American Methodist church, is said to have refreshed here (probably with Thorne at Crapper Mansion as we have discussed).

We thus have three already-existing churches that were in a position to establish themselves in Milford: The Quakers with their tradition of silence, the Anglicans with their tradition of liturgy and sacraments, the Presbyterians with their tradition of specific rules for administration. In the War, the first was pacifist, the second Loyalist, and the third in favor of the colonialists that became the USA. Each had maybe 20-80 people, and only the Quakers were already in the immediate area. The Methodists were a new denomination, based on an older group that had been known in Delaware since George Whitefield brought the news from Lewes of Wesley's preaching in England up to Boston in 1739, but they were simple homegroups pastored by circuit riders. But, the first three groups were at a standoff, in terms of members, in terms of politics, and in thus in terms of money to build. And it makes no difference if you count the churches that were there in 1784, or the denominations that had established in town by the 1860's Civil War years. The list is the same. (The building boom started with Bethel AME in 1867, the baptist attempt to buy in 1873, Avenue Methodist 1873, the methodist south chapel in 1885, the catholics 1880's in homes, building just after 1900, Calvary Methodist Protestant 1909, Christian Science 1909, the Nazarenes about the same time, Church of Christ 1934, to the Lutherans in 1955. All were part of the "new" Milford, based on the cities of the nineteenth century, common throughout the midwest, that moved the downtown from Purity Row (NW Front St.) to Walnut St. That was followed,

as stated in the introduction by the exponentially increasing opening of small unaffiliated churches still peaking today.) The history of Milford is these 4 churches for the first nearly one hundred years. The Anglicans finally opened in 1833 (the year the Quakers stopped meeting), and the Presbyterians in 1850.

But the Methodists just grew and grew and grew. Why? First, because no one else cared to. Parson Thorne's people just didn't support his vision (except Oliver, of course) of a great city with the Anglican Church in the center, like in England, and he died before he could finish the church by himself and get everyone to change their minds. The Presbyterians were already on the river, and on King's Highway. And the Quakers had gotten out of town, possibly due to Thorne himself.

Second, it was the time and place for Methodism. The older three churches all represented a portion of the gospel. They were founded two hundred years earlier, in Europe, and each stood for a particular statement that one did not have to be Catholic to go to church. The history of protestantism shows the attempt to establish many such denominations, all over one or another differing revelation of a piece of theology. The Methodists, by contrast, stressed simple Christianity and stressed it for the multitudes. Wesley "ignored the finer points of theology and stressed a rigid routine of prayer and good works...a methodist loves God with his whole heart and keeps all the commandments". (*Avenue history*). Wesley became famous for taking this message to crowds in public squares. Also, the Methodists were the only truly "American" group in the list, since the Methodists had just reformed themselves. And too, the group was everywhere, in homes, waiting for a chance to begin to grow.

And then, with the death of Clement (and likely there would be no more, since there were none by Thorne in seven years), came Betty's money, and with it, Oliver's land. While Thorne was busy building the dam that earned the land for his city/church plan, the three other churches stayed in their geographical, theological and political positions, while the Methodists seized the opportunity and built a church just two blocks from Purity Row. It was the first church completed in the Georgetown Circuit, and suddenly grew from a few families to the administrative home-church of more than the 1000 people in the circuit. One could not get better advertising. For a hundred years, revival after revival added people by the hundreds to the Methodist rolls, and the money bought buildings, classes, and projects. By the way, the name "Milford" is established by 1789, because it appears in the Methodist minutes.

If Thorne had lived two more years, and finished the church, the Anglicans might have come here in 1795 or so. If the Quakers had not left, they might have been part of early Milford. The presence of two or three denominations in town 40 years earlier certainly would have made a difference in Milford's history.

The spiritual history of early Milford is that it became not what the Pastor and founder wanted, but what the people were ready to do, and surprisingly, the Pastor was the catalyst of the other plan happening!

A word needs to be said about a particular facet of the three surviving churches that has not yet been mentioned. In each case, there is a particular legend about a woman being at the helm in a behind-the-scenes position. This situation is almost unheard of in Christianity as a whole, where it is usually held to be dangerous. But it's true. Betty in Parson Thorne's case, and the Presbyterian church downtown was founded by Hester McColly, later the wife of the famous Dr. William Marshall, although (not surprisingly) this fact is omitted by Conrad, who makes it sound like the pastor she hired did the job. In the Methodist history, there is the strange remark, that when the second church was built in 1842, the men and women were required to sit on opposite sides of the church. That fact is not too surprising, as

it was done that way in many New Testament churches copying Jewish practice. But, while there are many Scriptures supporting it (for example I Cor. 11 and I Tim. 2), they instead quote the reason as “separating the sheep from the goats”, with the women being the sheep, and the men the goats. The allusion to Matt. 25, 31ff. cannot be missed; they are saying women go to heaven and men go to hell. That this is a continuing Milford subconscious policy is well witnessed by Kenton. Of all the pictures he might have placed on the cover of his book, he chose the picture of women from p. 64, where he explains, these are “the women who directed Milford's stratified society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.” He lists Mary Louise Marshall as the hostess, and “inspiration behind the Milford hospital” and thus the foundress behind the founder of the SW quarter of Milford. p. 104 is yet another telling, picture, showing Sally Wilson of Calvary Church and her Sunday school class composed of nine men, and no women but her.

## THE LEGACY TODAY

Whether Thorne built the mill so Betty could stop Zadock for some reason, or because he wanted a nice, British Episcopal small town with shipbuilding, stores, and his church all in a nice neat square quarter mile, or because the ghost of Joseph Booth made him do it, or because Joseph Oliver wanted to corner the market on having a store, or for any reason at all, one thing is fairly clear: The minute he bought up all of the already existing Village of Milford west of Mullet Run and east of Williamsville Road, he sealed up any chance of Milford expanding westward. The minute he built that dam, he sealed up any water access to the same area. The minute he tried to buy out the Quakers to complete his holdings, he became the person whose project to advance his church would for more than 200 years, limit Milford to believing that it is the city between the shipyards and the mill, instead of the city on the river.

Maybe he was rightfully angry at the Treason Act for making Episcopal priests in Delaware the only people in the colonies founded for religious freedom, the only people who could not pray as they saw fit. Maybe he was a college-dropout survivor who saw a great opportunity. Maybe he wanted to make sure Betty would have an income for the rest of her life. Maybe he was angry at Quakers for taking young men like Gallaudet out his church.

But we don't tell those kinds of stories. Against all the evidence to the contrary, we say Thorne was the co-founder of Milford, and the founder of the idea of having a town. And when we do, we tell ourselves that Milford is that small town that fits between the shipyard and the mill, and we set ourselves up to stay forever restricted, forever limited, like Thorne set us us to be. Women had so much say in the churches, because until recently, women were trained to organize the restricted area of a home, while men were trained to go out and expand the horizons, and in a restricted town that is a definite advantage for the women.

We can trace the history of breaking past those barriers. The mansion was given to the historical society in 1961. By 1974, Downing noticed something was wrong with the history. By 1989, she proved Thorne did not found Milford, he restricted it. All through this time, the shopping malls and apartments that should have been built along the river in 1800 started going up, and today, a new generation sees a new Milford. But the older generation still mourns over the loss of downtown, and never quite figured out what went wrong. And many of them try to restore the old restrictions, with votes, pocketbooks, and administrative policies that restrict growth and experimentation.

But the new expansion wasn't wrong, it was finally right. It's finally right that Milford is whatever God's gifts to its people make it, not what a long dead pastor wanted it to be. The Methodist church he



inadvertently set up taking the place of his Episcopal church (because they were American and he was not) now competes with 80 other churches, one almost every 500 feet throughout the downtown area, as 200 years of experimentation is forced into a single generation.

And the new generation writes new ghost stories, trying to understand a crisis that can only be articulated in spiritual concepts they were not trained to even imagine exist. To limit God is always a sin, there are no exceptions. To do it out of a motive of revenge against a Treason Act, or against Quaker conversions, or to please a wife, or to impose a reality that no one wants, is even worse, if such were his motives, which we will never know for sure. To create a restricting spirit and reinforce it to 10 generations by false historical narrative is even worse. For the realization of what happened to take 50 years is not surprising under such conditions.

Those malls and apartments were built as much for repentance as for financial gain. The old vision must be supplanted, and that means taking action. We see today in 2012, the barest beginning of the conversion of Milford back to what it was in 1784, and should have been since, the vibrant cosmopolitan crossroads of King's Highway growing from a mile and half of riverbank, and not just half a mile. But so much is undone; there still are no Messianic Jews, there still are no white full-gospel churches, there still are no Christian club-worship events. The churches within the city limits, for all their number, are still all traditional, as Dover, Georgetown, and even Milford beyond the precious Williamsville Road cutoff are more than a generation ahead of what is in the town.

We need to change our story to God's plan for the river town. And then we need to start learning to act like we believe it.