

**The German Church Records
of
Western Pennsylvania**

1772 - 1791

Volume 1

Paul Miller Ruff

495	Joh. Peter	19 Jun 21 Aug	1791	Peter Hill Catharina	Johannes Gunckel Margaretha
496	Tobias	6 Apr 18 Sep	1791 1791	Tobias Bender (illeg) Elisabetha Scholl	Peter Bröding Catharina
497	Wilhelm	16 Oct 18 Sep	1791 (!)	Conrad Knappenberger Eva Barbara	Johannes Moser Catherina
498	Catharina Elisabetha	19 Oct 16 May	1791 1792	Moses Decart Maria	Parents
499	Susanna	30 May 4 June	1792	Johannes Rudolph Christina	Parents

BALTHASER MEYER - THE MAN AND HIS WORK

Little is known of Balthaser Meyer today. Historians tell us that he was the schoolmaster at Harrolds, baptized children, led worship for the Lutheran and Reformed settlers, and "ordained" the later Lutheran pastor, Anton Ulrich Luetge. One says he led a colony of settlers to Westmoreland when the area was opened to settlement in the spring of 1769. Another says he came with a group of Germans in 1769 or 1770.

A Balser Meyer of Chase, Maryland, was witness for the Germans who were naturalized on September 7, 1768. It is possible that this Balser Meyer was the one who led settlers from Maryland to western Pennsylvania. Annette Kunselman Burgert has definitely placed Balthaser Meyer in Northampton County in the mid 1760's by a baptism in a church there. It is possible that Balthaser Meyer came west with a group of Northampton settlers. Or it is possible that, like Karl Scheibeler his successor as schoolmaster at Harrolds in 1785, he came from eastern Pennsylvania by way of Frederick County, Maryland.

At any rate, when the people of the Harrold's settlement gathered into a congregation for worship, it was Balthaser Meyer who led the services. This could have been as early as 1770. In 1772, on the second day of August, there were three children baptized by Meyer, and he began a baptismal register. This community was unusual for the frontier in having its own regular schoolmaster. Most of the other frontier communities were dependent on such transients as came along. Later, Harrolds would share such services with Brush Creek, Greensburg, and possibly other communities. People from areas later included in the Huntington, Mt. Pleasant, Franklin, Unity, Penn, Salem, Ligonier Townships, and adjacent areas, had their children baptized by Balthaser Meyer.

Balthaser Meyer was married. His wife's name was Christina. He had at least three children: John Balthaser, who signed the Hannastown Petition as Baltzer Meyer Jr. There was Anna Barbara who with her mother was sponsor of a child baptized by her father. And there was another child baptized in Northampton County. The name Meyer has been changed in later usage to Myers.

Meyer was, without doubt, Lutheran. He ordained the Lutheran pastor after the arrival of John William Weber, the first Reformed pastor. This ordination was rejected by the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Also Reformed church practice did not include lay baptism at that time.

(continued at end of the list of baptisms)

Wentzel, Philip - 156
Williard - Wilgerd - Willjard
Williard, Magdalene (Frederick's wife)

481
Williams - William - Willems - Wilhelm
Williams, Daniel and Christine - 65
Williams, Daniel - 16

Yahn - see Jann - John
Yockey - see Jacke

Zehner - Zehnder - Seanor - Sanor
Zehner, George and Anna Mary
179 - 180 - 336
Zehner, Jacob and Catherine -
60 - 183 - 194 - 379
Zehner, Magdalene - 71

Additional Modern forms of names in the sponsor lists that may prove helpful.

Armel - see Ernel
Camp - see Kemp
Carnes - see Kern
Carver - see Garber
Cherry - see Tscherrri
Colmer - see Kolmer
Cook - see Koch
Croushore - see Kraushaar
Cribbs - see Krebe
Coons - see Kuntz
Derringer - see Thuringer
George - see Jorg - Jerg
Jones - see Schantz
Keltz - see Koltz
Sanor - see Zehner
Seanor - see Zehner

BALTHASER MEYER - THE MAN AND HIS WORK (Continued from Page 28)

There are 499 baptisms in Meyer's list which began in 1772 and continued into 1792. In 1785 when Luetge was established at Harrolds, and Carl Scheibeler assumed the position of schoolmaster at Harrolds and Greensburg, Meyer and his family moved to Franklin Township. His baptisms from that time are limited to a few families in the Brush Creek parish area.

It was the custom in German parishes in Pennsylvania for the schoolmaster to keep the church records. For a long time it was believed that Meyer kept the records for Luetge's pastorate and entered the baptisms in Weber's book from September 4, 1785 through January 26, 1794. Indeed, the first and second editions of this volume credit Meyer with the keeping of these records.

However, there are now items of evidence that Meyer was not the scribe of any of the present documents. The discovery of the original signatures of the Fort Allen and Hannastown petitions gives us two samples of the signature and handwriting of Balthaser Meyer. The man who signed the petitions as Baltzer Meyer was not the man who set down the extant copies of the early church records. The third, most positive evidence is the minutes of the first recorded council meeting of the Zion Lutheran Church at Harrolds on February 15, 1793. There can be no doubt that the man who wrote these minutes in the parish register was Carl Scheibeler. He signs his name twice. This script and that of the baptismal records are identical without doubt. There can be but one conclusion, that the records we have of the baptisms of Balthaser Meyer and of Anton Ulrich Luetge, and the earlier records of John Michael Steck, together with the baptisms in the Weber book from September 4, 1785 until January 26, 1794, were written, not by Balthaser Meyer, but by Carl Scheibeler.

Nonetheless, we know that Balthaser Meyer provided educational and spiritual leadership for the German pioneers in the western part of Pennsylvania for over twenty years. He deserves our thanks for his service to our ancestors and therefore to us. Without his faithful register our knowledge of that time and those people would be much less.

36	Catharina	19 Aug 19 Dec	1773	Conrad Haag Sara	Joh. Georg Haag Catharina	
<u>1774</u>						
37	Johannes	29 Dec 23 Jan	1773 1774	Peter Cassner Magdalena	Johannes Gunckel Margaretha	
38	Margaretha	16 Jan 3 Apr	1774	Georg Saltzer Catharina		
39	Susanna	15 Aug 4 Apr	1773 1774	Philip Schrötter Eva	Joh. Balthaser Dürr Catharina	
40	Maria Barbara	27 Jan 1 May	1774	Jacob Stroh Maria Catharina	Wilhelm Altmann Maria Barbara	
41	Maria	31 Mar 12 May	1774	Johannes Gulden Margaretha	Christoph Uhrig Maria Ruch	S
42	Jacob	30 Nov 22 May	1773 1774	Adam Mayer Catharina	Peter Hill Catharina Gunckel	S
43	Anna Magdalena	27 Mar 22 May	1774	Gerhard Thomas Magdalena	<u>Adam Fritschmann</u> <u>Catharina</u>	
44	Christina	13 Jan 22 May	1774	Joh. Peter Altmann Christina	Christoph Uhrig Christina Ruch	S
45	Scharlotta	24 Dec 23 May	1773 1774	Conrad Jung Elizabetha	Michael Stockberger Scharlotta	
46	Elisabetha	17 Jun 19 Jun	1774	Friedrich Werner Margaretha	Christian Ehret, Elisabetha Michleisen Ottilia, Jacob Michleisen, Wife	S
47	Maria Margaretha	17 Apr 13 Jul	1774	Joh. Adam Brucker Margaretha	Nicolaus Scheurer, Anna Maria, his wife, and Margaretha, Jacob Kummel, Wife	
48	Maria Magdalena	14 Dec 3 Jul	1773 1774	Johannes Kraushaar Maria Apolonia	Georg Bender Maria Susanna	
49	Margaretha	14 Jun 3 Jul	1774	Jacob Kimmel Margaretha	Joh. Adam Brucker Margaretha	
50	Joh. Friederich	30 Dec 7 May	1773 1774	Johannes Laidy Maria	Christoph Renner Eva Catharina	
51	Christoph Johann	25 Jul 14 Aug	1774	Nicolaus Scheurer Maria	Christoph Truby Sibilla	
52	Joh. Christoph	7 Oct 21 Dec	1771 1774	Martin Oberle Eva	Christoph Lawengayer Elisabetha	
53	Philip Heinrich	6 Sep 21 Aug	1769 1774	Philip Hermann Barbara	Heinrich Schantz Barbara Dumbald	S

72	Johannes	5	Dec	1774	Jacob Watterson	Johannes Herold	S
		16	Jan	1775	Catharina	Barbara Altmann	
73	Jacob	4	Sep	1774	Peter Geiger	Jacob Gerber	S
		29	Jan	1775	Anna Maria	Maria Dorn	
74	Joh. Lorentz	2	Sep	1774	Michael Gunckel	Lorentz Gunckel	S
		29	Jan	1775	Margaretha	Regina Stroh	
75	Joh. Georg	23	Feb	1775	Christoph Lawongayor	Georg Jan.	
		5	Mar		Elisabetha	Margaretha	
76	Samuel	25	Oct	1774	Christoph Schack	Anthony Walter	
		5	Mar	1775	Anna Maria	Elisabetha	
77	Joh. David	24	Aug	1774	Anthony Walter	Theobald Mechling	
		26	Mar	1775	Elisabeth	Sibilla	
78	Joh. Friedrich	24	Aug	1774	Anthony Walter	Georg Saltzer	
		26	Mar	1775	Elisabetha	Catharina	
79	Anna Elisabetha	1	Jan	1774	Johannes Reitenauer	Anthony Walter	
		26	Mar	1775	Christina	Elisabetha	
80	Elisabetha	14	Feb	1775	Johannes Stutzel	Anthony Walter	
		9	Apr		Catharina	Elisabetha	
81	Joh. Sebastian	2	Jan	1775	Johannes Gunckel	Michael Gunckel	
		16	Apr		Margaretha	Margaretha	
82	Margaretha	5	May	1775	Friedrich Wörmer	Johannes Ehret	
		14	May		Margaretha	Catharina	
83	Jacob	19	Apr	1775	Jacob Zehner	Jacob Schrötter	
		28	May		Catharina	Anna Maria	
84	Daniel	27	Apr	1775	Daniel Mattheis	Georg Mattheis	
		28	May		Catharina	Magdalena	
85	Joh. Philip	3	Jan	1775	Johannes Reut	Philip Klingenschmidt	
		4	Jun		Christina	Christina	
86	Jacob	1	Oct	1774	Johannes Hill	Peter Ruch	
		4	Jun	1775	Magdalena	Margaretha	
87	Joh. Michael	16	Jul	1774	Johannes Wack	Michael Stockborber, Maria	
		5	Jun	1775	Christina	Magdalena, Xstoph Ackerman's Wife	
88	Joh. Philip	14	Apr	1775	Joh. Adam Bricker	Philip Klingenschmidt	
		25	Jun		Margaretha	Christina	
89	Maria Elisabetha	18	Sep	1774	Joh. Friederich Hausser	Elisabetha, Johannes	
		30	Jul	1775	Elisabetha	Reitenauer's wife	
90	Maria Catharina	4	Apr	1775	Ludwig Schack	Peter Dumbal	S
		10	Aug		Anna Elisabetha	Catharina Matheis	

165	Maria Elisabetha	30 Jul 1777 24 Sep	Christian Maurer Anna Margaretha	Peter Klingenschmidt Catharina	
166	Maria	25 May 1777 24 Sep	Wilhelm Bell Barbara	Daniel Klingenschmidt Anna Elisabetha	
167	Margaretha	30 Aug 1777 24 Sep	Peter Klingenschmidt Margaretha	Joh. Georg Spaar Anna Margaretha	
168	Susanna	30 Aug 1777 24 Sep	Joh. Adam Bricker Margaretha	Margaretha, Heinrich Kauffer's wife	
169	Philip	10 Oct 1776 12 Oct 1777	Philip Schwartz Elisabetha	Philip Drum Margaretha	
170	Magdalena	5 Aug 1776 12 Oct 1777	Jacob Zehner Catharina	Georg Matheis Magdalena	
171	Jacob	4 Oct 1777 12 Oct	Conrad Bayer Margaretha	Jacob Mächling Catharina	
172	Catharina	3 Sep 1777 14 Oct	Philip Schmitt Catharina	Anna Maria Ruch	S
X 173	Christina	8 Aug 1777 14 Dec	Friedrich Werner Margaretha	Ludwig Lang Agnes	
174	Joh. Jacob	14 Dec 1777 17 Dec	Ludwig Köster Catharina	Jacob Stroh Maria Catharina	
175	Susanna Margaretha	18 Jun 1777 28 Dec	Wilhelm Altmann Barbara	Adam Meyer Regina Stroh	S
176	Adam	11 Dec 1777 28 Dec	Johannes Gunckel Margaretha	Parents	
<u>1778</u>					
177	Joh. Georg	10 Oct 1777 9 Feb 1778	Daniel Matheis Catharina	Georg Matheis Magdalena	
178	Johannes	17 Feb 1774 9 Feb 1778	Andreas Wolff Eva		
179	Elisabetha	23 Jul 1776 9 Feb 1778	Andreas Wolff Eva	Jacob Zehner Catharina	
180	Anna Maria	23 Jul 1776 9 Feb 1778	Andreas Wolff Eva	George Zehner Anna Maria	
181	Catharina	2 Feb 1777 9 Feb 1778	Jacob Schröter Anna Maria	Jacob Scheck Maria Barbara Schröter	S
182	Magdalena	10 Dec 1776 9 Feb 1778	Georg Mathes Magdalena	Daniel Mathes Catharina	