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Leaving the Fatherland

—by Paul Kline

Have you ever wondered how it would feel to be driven away from your homeland, not having a sure place to go? You would suddenly have to leave behind all that was dear to you knowing that you would never see them again.

There are records¹ telling of a group of approximately 700 people who were driven out of the Canton of Bern in Switzerland in 1681. Among the group were families who had from 10 to 12 children. In this group there were three brothers, Michael, Peter and Yost Kreybill (Grayerbühl). As they traveled through the Canton of Bern the people mocked them, but as they came into the Jura region the people became more friendly. They gave them food and drink. Already here some families stayed and made this their home. The rest moved further north to Basel and there parted ways. Some went through France to go to America, others went to Alsace and the Palatinate. Still others floated up the Rhine to the Netherlands where there were fellow-believers who took them in. In Basel the three brothers also parted ways. Michael headed for the coast to go to America, following his bride and her parents. Peter never heard from him again. Peter and Yost headed for the Palatinate as they had heard that Prince Karl Ludwig welcomed Swiss farmers into his region. The further they got into Alsace the more they despaired. They were used to seeing neat villages with the people going about their work heartily in Switzerland. But here the villages were in ruins and the fields were growing up with weeds and brambles on account of the "30 Years War" which had gone through this region

¹ "Ellenberger's Bilder aus dem Pilgerleben, Vol. 3 1883"

(cont., Leaving the Fatherland) earlier. Wolves also were plentiful. They clubbed 3 or 4 of them to death with clubs. The Spanish and Swedish armies had laid waste to the whole region. About one half of the people were killed or died of hunger. The famine was so great that the people ate roots, grass and leaves to keep alive. It was reported of one instance where people, dogs and ravens together feasted on a horse that had died. Through this country the two brothers traveled and came into the Palatinate. There Peter rented the WEIERHOF in 1682. This became a Mennonite Hof which unto this day is one of the few all-Mennonite villages in Europe, with its old buildings dating back to the seventeen hundreds. A grandson of Peter Kreybill wrote a beautiful poem in German expressing his feelings on leaving the homeland.

Following is a literal English translation of the poem.

Lebt wohl ihr Alpen, ihr geliebten Gauen,
Du heimathliches Dorf in stillem Thal!
Euch traute Fluren wird ein anderer bauen;
O Vaterhaus, dich werd ich nie mehr schauen,
Behut' dich Gott! Lebt wohl zum letzten mal!

Sieh' wie so freundlich dort herüber grüßen,
Erglühend in der Sonne erstem Strahl,
Die schneebedeckten, ernsten, erusten Felsenriesen;
Die hehre Jungfrau, Eiger, Mönch und Niesen:
Sie grüßen mich zum letzten, letzten mal.

Lebt wohl ihr Thäler, mit den Felsenwänden,
Die auf zum Himmel streben, ernst und kahl,
Die ihre Bäche hoch von oben denden,
Dasz sie zerstäubend in der Tiefe enden:
Auch euch sah ich zum letzten, letzten mal.

Euch gelten heut nich minder meine Thränen,
Ihr waldumkränzten Seen, so blank wie Stahl;
Wo wir gesangesfroh in leichten Kähnen,
Die Fläche kräuseland furchten gleich den Schwänen:
Ich fuhr auf euch zum letzten, letzten mal.

Dort auf den Matten sah ich munter springen
Der wohlgenährten Rinder grosze zahl.
Hörst du das Alpenhorn her, ber klingen?
Hörst du die Sennen lustig Jodler singen?
Ich hör' sie ach! zum letzten, letzten mal.

O Vaterhaus, ihr heisz geliebten Räume,
Wo ich empfand des Lebens Lust und Qual,
Leb wohl, leb wohl im Schatten deiner Bäume!
Es bricht das Herz mir, wenn ich länger säume,
O lebe wohl zum letzten, letzten mal.

Noch einen Blick nach meiner Eltern Grabe,
Dort unter'm frisch bekränzten Todtenpfahl,
Wo ich verfolgt so oft gebetet habe!
Jetzt greif ich schmerzzerfüllt zum Wanderstabe
Und grüß dich noch zum letzten, letzten mal.

Und ihr, die mir verfolgt mit Wuth und Schnauben,
In desz ich euch der Gnad' des Herrn empfal,
Meint ihr, ich liesz mir meinen theuren Glauben
An meinen Herrn und Heiland jemals rauben?
Lebt ihr auch alle wohl zum letzten mal.

Nehmt alles hin! nur laszt mir meinen Heiland!
Die Erdengüter sind ja öd und schal.
Im Elend bin ich glücklicher als weiland,
Braust rings die Fluth, ich bin auf sichrem Eiland.
So selig fühl ich es zum ersten mal.

So lebt denn all wohl! ich musz jetzt scheiden,
Lebt wohl! Es bleibt mir keine andre Wahl.
Der Herr ist ja mein Hirt, Er wird mich weiden
Auf grüner Au. Er bringt, wenn auch durch Leiden,
Mich doch dereinst zu seinem Abendmahl.

Farewell you Alps, you beloved regions,
You native village in the quiet valley!
You beloved fields, another will till you;
Oh house of my youth, you will I no more see,
God keep you! farewell for the last time!

Behold, how friendly the snowcovered austere rocky giants
Send their greetings over them,
Bathed in the sun's first light;
The lofty Jungfrau, Eiger, Moench and Niesen:
They greet me for the last, last time.

Farewell you valleys, with your walls of stone,
Who reach for the heavens, severe and bleak,
Who send their streams from on high,
That they land in the depth with spray:
Also you I have seen for the last, last time.

Not few are my tears for you today,
You forest enwreathed lakes, as shiny as steel;
Where we with songs of joy, send ripples over its surface
In light canoes, like the swans:
I rode on you for the last, last time.

Away on the meadows I saw springing,
A great herd of well fed cattle.
Do you hear the Alphorn ringing?
Do you hear the cowherds yodeling lustily?
I hear them too! for the last, last time.

Oh house of my youth, you dearly beloved rooms,
Where I experienced life's joys and sorrows,
Farewell, farewell in the shadow of your trees!
My heart breaks, if I tarry longer,
Oh farewell for the last, last time.

One more glimpse of my parents' graves,
There underneath the freshly bedecked death marker,
Wher I, being persecuted, so often came to pray!
No I sorrowfully grasp the pilgrim staff
And greet you for the last, last time.

And you, who persecuted me with fury and rage,
In that I commend you unto the grace of God,
Do you think, I would permit to be robbed
Of my precious faith in my Lord and Saviour.
Also you all, farewell, for the last time.

Take all away! only leave me my Saviour!
The earthly things are all empty and vain.
In destitution I am more blessed then formerly,
If the floods roar, I am on a secure island.
So blessed am I for the first time.

So farewell you all! I must now depart,
Farewell! I have no other choice.
The Lord is my shepherd, He will feed me
In green pastures. He brings me, (though through suffering)
In, at last, to his feast.

1711 Swiss Brethren Deportees

— by Leroy Beachy

In 1711 the government of the Swiss Canton Berne made an all-out effort to expel the remaining Anabaptists from their area. Because of the earlier dispute between the Oberländer (Amish) and the Emmenthaler (Reist's followers) concerning several articles of the Mennonite Confession of Faith (Dortrecht, 1632), the Bernese Swiss Brethren had for several years been rather permanently divided into two factions. Of the approximately 500 persons who had responded to the government's plea for all Anabaptists within the territory to make themselves known, only about two-thirds of that number showed up on the days on which they were scheduled to board the boats that had been prepared to float them down the Rhine River, the first leg of the journey of the scheme to resettle them in the Carolinas.

As a result of the lesser number of persons, only four of the five boats prepared for the trip were actually used. These were named Neuenberger, Oberländer, Emmenthaler and Thuner, each name supposedly indicating the *heimat* of most of those aboard. A serious problem for those in charge of the shipping arose when the Reist followers resisted being put on the same boats as the Amish. As a result of this and other experiences with the Emmenthaler faction, the Bernese authorities referred to them as "the most contrary people known." Apparently the Oberländer had been exposed to teaching which made them more receptive to the government's demands as to the forsaking of their homes and to accepting whatever fate might offer them for a future home.

As can be seen from the following record, most of those who escaped along the way or disembarked at Breisach or Mannheim were of the Reist followers aboard the Emmenthaler boat. Perhaps the primary reason for this was that they had many relatives in the Palatinate as a result of the great exodus of 1670. The passengers of the other boats, consisting mostly of Oberländer, mostly stayed aboard as far as Amsterdam, where the Dutch Mennonites helped them to find new homes. Many of the Oberländer were resettled in northern Holland where an Amish settlement existed for nearly a full century.

Since the Oberländer were mostly new converts from the state church, it was not uncommon for either a husband or wife to officially remain with the Reformed faith while the partner openly professed to be an Anabaptist. Although some cases existed where couples were truly divided in faith, there were also instances where one or the other, although convinced of the Anabaptist faith, remained with the state church for a time to avoid confiscation of property. These "half-Anabaptists" generally openly adopted the faith when they arrived in the Palatinate or America. One such case of split church allegiance is that of the Christian Stutzmans in the deportee list.

Although the following list has appeared in several published works, this alphabetically arranged version may be of some additional value to serious researchers. (Lists are on following pages.)

The Bible

When I am tired the Bible is my bed;
Or in the dark, the Bible is my light;
When I am hungry, it is vital bread;
Or fearful, it is armor for the fight.
When I am sick, 'tis healing medicine;
or lonely, thronging friends I find therein.
Should I be lost, the Bible is my guide;
or naked, it is raiment, rich and warm;
Am I imprisoned, it is ranges wide;
Or tempest-tossed, a shelter from the storm.
Would I adventure, it is a gallant sea;
Or would I rest, it is a flowery lea.

—Author unknown

LIST OF PERSONS EXILED FROM SWITZERLAND IN 1711

Source: Swiss and German Pioneers, Eshelman, pp.183 to 188.

Compiled by Leroy Beachy

Column A: Surname
 Column B: Marital (sgl, wid, wdr) or religious (Ref) status.
 Column C: First name
 Column D: w/= Accompanied by; w= wife, c= children; etc.
 Column E: Age
 Column F: Name of boat: N= Neunberger; O= Oberländer; E= Emmenthaler; T= Thuner
 Column G: Place of origin
 Column H: Place of departure
 Column I: Additional information

COLUMNS A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
Aeschbacher		Mathys	w/w	75	N	Diesbach	Amsterdam	husbandman, w.70
Aeschbacher		Hans		23	N	Lauperswyl	Amsterdam	husbandman
Aeschbacher (wdr)		Peter	w/3c	39	N	Lauperswyl	Amsterdam	farmer
Aeschbacher (wid)		Anna	w/4c	30	T	Schwarzenburg	Amsterdam	2s & 2d, 5-14y
Aeschbacher, Jr		Mathys	w/w, 1d	26	N		Amsterdam	wine grower, w.40
Aeschlimann		Verena			E	Langnau	Breisach	
Althouse	(wid)	Elsbeth	w/d	56	E	Sumiswald	Amsterdam	d, 23, not member
Anken		Hans	w/w, 3c	37	N	Spiez	Amsterdam	Elder, teacher, w.30, 1s, 2d
Barben	(Ref)	Verena		30	O	Spiez	Amsterdam	seamstress
Bauer	(Ref)	Hans	w/w, 4c	41	N	Oberhofen	Amsterdam	wine grower, w. Anna Willener, 34, 2s & 2d
Baumgartner		Niklaus			E	Trub	Mannheim	
Becker		Daniel			E			
Beer		Ulrich			E	Trub	Breisach	
Bieri		Kath			E	Trub	(escaped)	
Binggeli	(Ref)	Elsbeth		38	N	Schwarzenburg	Amsterdam	
Bohlen	(sgl)	Ester			E	Rueggisberg	Amsterdam	weaver
Bögli	(sgl)	Maria		25	O	Herzogenbuchs'	Amsterdam	
Brand	(orf)	Christ		11	E	Sumiswald'	Amsterdam	
Bryner		Ulrich	w/w, 2c	42	T		Amsterdam	w. Maria Ruff, 1s & 1d, 2-4y
Bucher	(sgl)	Anna		30	N	Reichenbach	Amsterdam	
Buhler		Hans		39	T		Amsterdam	tailor
Burki		Hans			E	Langnau	Breisach	1 of 3 overseers
Eicher		Elsbeth		26	T	Schwarzenburg	Amsterdam	country servant
Flückinger		Hans			E	Lützelflüh	Mannheim	
Frei	(sgl)	Barbara		39	N	Hilterfingen	Amsterdam	country servant
Frutiger		Hans	w/w, 4c	44	T	Sigriswyl	Amsterdam	farmer, w. Maria Konig, 47, 3s & 1d, 6-13y
Frutiger	(Ref)	Ulrich	w/w, 1d	68	T	Sigriswyl	Amsterdam	husbandman, w & d(Ana), d.36
Furer		Hans	w/w, 5c	45	N	Oberhofen	Amsterdam	w. Magdalena Kämpf, 1s & 4d
Galbi		Katrina			E	Hochstetten	Amsterdam	
Gasser		Hans	w/w, s		E	Lauperswyl	Breisach	teacher, w. Katherina Stauffer, s. young
Gasser		Hans	w/w, 3c	75	N	Schwarzenburg	Amsterdam	husbandman, w.50
Gaumann, Jr.		Christen	w/w, 4c		E	Hochstetten	Amsterdam	w. Katherina Streit, s.5 & 11, d.3 & 6
Gaumann, Sr.		Christen	w/w		E	Hochstetten	Amsterdam	1 of 3 overseers, w. Anna Brenzikoffer
Gautschi		Adam	w/w	72	T		Amsterdam	shoemaker, w.60
Gautschi		Hans	w/w, 2c	32	T		Amsterdam	w. Barbara Hafele
Gerber		Peter	w/w		E	Langnau	Breisach	
Gerber		Daniel	w/w	46	E		Amsterdam	husbandman, w. Magdalena Richen
Gerber		Barbara			O	Thun	Mannheim	
Gerber		Niklaus	w/w, 2s	34	N	Thun	Amsterdam	w. Magdalena Yeager, 24
Gerber	(sgl)	Barbara		25	T		Amsterdam	lame
German		Hans			E			farmer, w. Magdalena Shallenberger & 2c died
Gisler	(wid)	Magdalena	w/2c	46	E	Sumiswald	Amsterdam	seamstress, c.6 & 10
Habegger		Anna			E	Trub	(escaped)	
Haberli		Niklaus			E	Lüchsee	Mannheim	
Haldimann		Katharina			E	Hochstetten	Amsterdam	
Hartig		Peter			E	Lauperswyl	Breisach	
Hauri		Hans	w/w, 2s		E	Lenzberg	Amsterdam	weaver
Heininger		Katherine		32	E	Durrenroth	Amsterdam	
Heininger		Magdalena		28	E	Durrenroth	Amsterdam	
Heininger		Elsbeth		34	E	Durrenroth	Amsterdam	
Heininger	(sgl)	Anna		35	E	Durrenroth	Amsterdam	
Hoffman	(Ref)	Niklaus		30	N	Affoltern	Amsterdam	cooper
Huber	(wid)	Elsbeth	w/1s	40	T	Frutigen	Amsterdam	s.6y

Hugo		Ulrich		E		student
Jakob	(Ref)	Peter	w/w,3c	40	T	Amsterdam carpenter, w.Maria Stadler
Jeggli		Andreas			E	tanner
Jenni	(wid)	Anna	w/d	30	T	Hilterfingen Amsterdam d.1y
Joost		Barbara	w/d		E	Sumiswald Amsterdam d.20,(Ref)
Kallen		Margaret	w/d	70	O	Frutigen Amsterdam d.20,(Ref), husband stayed behind
Kallen	(sgl)	Verena		29	N	Frutigen Amsterdam country servant
Kallen	(sgl)	Christina		32	N	Frutigen Amsterdam country servant
Kaner	(sgl)	Elsbeth		22	E	Durrenroth Amsterdam straw hat maker
Kling		Mary			E	Trub (escaped)
Kohler		Verena	w/d		E	Rothenbach Mannheim
Kohler		Hans	w/w		E	Wimmingen Amsterdam stonecutter, w.(Ref)
Krahenbuhl		Hans			T	Diesbach Amsterdam hired man, had been in prison
Krahenbuhl	(Ref)	Peter	w/w,3s	37	T	Diesbach Amsterdam w.Anna Wenger,38,(Ana), 3s,3-6y
Kratzen	(Ref)	Melchoir	w/w,7c	40	O	Aeschi Amsterdam w.Elsbeth Graf,(Ana),had been in prison, 4s & 3d,6m-14y
Krebs		Hans	w/w	32	N	Reutigen Amsterdam husbandman, w.22
Krebs,Jr.		Peter		24	N	Reutigen Amsterdam husbandman
Krebs,Sr.		Peter	w/w,1d	32	N	Reutigen Amsterdam glazier, w.24
Kroff		Christen	w/w,3s		E	Amsterdam shoemaker
Kropfli		Kungold	w/2c		O	Spiez Amsterdam s.12,d.10
Kuenzi	(sgl)	Anna		22	T	Diesbach Amsterdam (called Seiler)
Kupferschmidt		Elsbeth			E	Sumiswald Amsterdam
Lang		Hans	w/w,1c	35	E	Amsterdam weaver, w.Barbara Gerber
Lauffer		Abraham	w/w,3c	24	N	Zofingen Amsterdam tailor, w.Katharina Richen, 1s & 2d
Lauffer		David		17	N	Zofingen Amsterdam tailor
Lehner		Peter	w/w	34	N	Oberhofen Amsterdam
Lortschner		Emanuel	w/w,4c		O	Erlenbach Amsterdam 1 of 2 overseers, husbandman, w.Anna Andres, 4c,6m-6y
Lortschner	(unm)	Hans		30	N	Hilterfingen Amsterdam wine grower
Maier	(Ref)	Peter		38	N	Siebethal Amsterdam shoemaker
Meier		Hans	w/w,4c	41	T	Sigriswyl Amsterdam 1 of 2 overseers, tailor, w.Dorothy Frutiger,34, 2s,2d,6-7y
Müller	(sgl)	Katherine		44	E	Melchnau Amsterdam
Müller	(wid)	Anna		66	E	Amsterdam lame
Neuhauser		Christen	w/w,1c	30	O	Amsterdam w.Margaret Plank
Neukomm		Daniel			E	Eggiwyl Mannheim
Oberli		Margaret			E	Ruderswyl (escaped)
Ogi		Hans	w/w,d	34	E	Amsterdam farmer, d.5
Propst		Joseph			E	Lauperswyl
Reber		Samuel			E	Trub Mannheim
Reusser		Michael		27	T	Hilterfingen Amsterdam teacher, s.of Stephen Reusser, had been in prison
Reusser	(Ref)	Stephen	w/w,1s	76	T	Hilterfingen Amsterdam w.Anna Buhler, s,12y
Richen		Daniel	w/w,4c	30	O	Frutigen Amsterdam 1 of 2 overseers(Inspector General), teacher & husbandman, w.Anna Blank, 3s & 1d
Richener	(Ref)	Jakob	w/w,5c		E	Rupperswyl Mannheim 1 of 3 overseers, c.5-11y
Richer		Martin	w/w,1s	34	N	Frutigen Amsterdam husbandman, w.Barbara Turner,25
Ritschard	(sgl)	Verena		30	T	Hilterfingen Amsterdam
Rohrer		Barbara	w/h	40	E	Bolligon Amsterdam
Roth		Ulrich	w/w,4c	55	E	Amsterdam miller, w.Elsbeth Steiner, s.15, 3d
Roth		Ulrich	w/w,3c		N	Diesbach Amsterdam 2d & 1s
Rothenbuhler		Daniel			E	Lauperswyl Mannheim
Rubeli		Anna			T	Diesbach Mannheim
Rubi		Barbara		18	N	Amsterdam
Rubi		Katharina	w/d	67	N	Frutigen Amsterdam d.Magdalena,26
Ruegsegger		Barbara			T	Diesbach Breisach had been in prison
Ruegsegger		Katharina			T	Diesbach Breisach had been in prison
Ruff		Hans	w/w,7c	45	T	Sigriswyl Amsterdam winegrower, w.Elsbeth Thommen,39(Ref), 3s & 4d,3-16y

Ruff		Christen	w/w,1c	39	T	Sigriswyl	Amsterdam	farmer, w.Magdalena Konig,39, c.4y
Sagiman	(Ref)	Veit	w/s		E	Bolligon	Amsterdam	died shortly after arrival, s.20,not member
Schallenberg		Hans	w/w,4d		N	Erlenbach	Amsterdam	
Schlapbach	(Ref)	Christen	w/w,4c		O	Frutigen	Amsterdam	w.Kath.Boner,
Schlappach		Hans	w/w,8c	50	T	Eriz/Thun	Amsterdam	farmer, w.Verena Duchtli,42, 4s & 4d,2-18y
Schmied		Magdalena	w/8c	54	O	Latterbach	Amsterdam	c;Jobam,Abraham,Jakob,Isaac,David,Hans Rudolf,Susanna,Salome; all named Lortscher
Schmied	(Ref)	Hans	w/w,2c		O	Frutigen	Amsterdam	w,(Ana), 1s & 1d, 7-9y
Schmied	(sgl)	Magdalena			O	Frutigen		joined the party enroute
Schönauer		Hans	w/w		E	Hochstetten	Mannheim	w.Elsbeth Aebesold
Schurch		Ulrich	w/w,4c		E	Sumiswald	Amsterdam	w.Barbara Grunacher, 3s, 1d
Schurch	(wid)	Margaret	w/d		E	Lützelfluh	Amsterdam	d.20,not member
Schwarzentrub		Hans			E	Trub	Mannheim	
Shallenberg		Hans	w/w,4d		E	Neunberg	Amsterdam	w.Margaret Richen
Shar	(wid)	Barbara	w/2c		E	Sumiswald	Amsterdam	c.8 & 11
Shellenberger		Hans	w/w		E	Trub		(escaped) w.Elsbeth Neueschwander
Simon		Steffan	w/w,1d	39	N	Reutigen	Amsterdam	husbandman, w.Ursel Fahrni
Snyder		Hans			E	Trub	Mannheim	
Somner	(sgl)	Elsbeth		30	E	Sumiswald	Amsterdam	
Sorg		Blassius	w/w,2c		T	Schaffhausen	Amsterdam	w. Magdalena Meier of Hitlterfinge, 1s & 1d,6m-3y
Stähli		Jakob	w/w,1d	35	N	Hilterfingen	Amsterdam	husbandman, w.35
Steiner		Christen	w/w	60	T	Diesbach	Amsterdam	deacon, w.50
Stettler		Rudolf	w/w,2s		E	Stettlen	Amsterdam	weaver, w.Elsbeth Widmer, 2s,13 & 15
Stöckli		Bevd.	w/w,2c	42	N	Schwarzenburg	Amsterdam	w.Anna Glaus,44, 1s & 1d
Stöckli	(sgl)	Christen		50	T		Amsterdam	husbandman
Strahm		Martin			E	Hochstetten	Breisach	
Streit		Peter		34	T		Amsterdam	ropemaker
Stutzman	(Ref)	Christen	w/w	34	O	Spiez	Mannheim	w. Magdalena Stucki,37,(Ana)
Teuscher		Anna		40	O		Amsterdam	weaver
Teuscher		Duchtly		40	O		Amsterdam	weaver
Thonen		Peter		25	N	Reutigen	Amsterdam	shoemaker
Thonen	(Ref)	Hans	w/w,9c	50	O	Frutigen	Amsterdam	husbandman, w.Kath.Reichen, 3s & 6d,3-20y
Trachsel		Anna		34	N	Frutigen	Amsterdam	(forsaken)
Trüssel		Ulrich	w/d		E	Sumiswald	Mannheim	d.Katherina
Tschageler?	(Ref)	Peter		25	N	Barometer?	Amsterdam	husbandman
Tsihbald	(wid)	Elsbeth	w/2c	50	T	Steffisburg	Amsterdam	s.16y, d.20y
von Gunton		Hans	w/w,3c	55	N	Sigriswyl	Amsterdam	w.Katharina Isler,30, 2s & 1d
Weinmann		Lucia		40	E	Hochstetten	Amsterdam	weaver
Wenger		Peter	w/w	79	N	Blumenstein	Amsterdam	w.Katharina Wyler,70
Wenger	(sgl)	Elsbeth			O	Thierachern	Amsterdam	
Wisler		Hans			E	Langnau	Breisach	
Zahler		Melchoir	w/w	41	N	Frutigen	Amsterdam	deacon,husbandman, w.Anna Richen,30
Zann		Hans			E		Mannheim	
Zurcher		Hans	w/m	40	N	Frutigen	Amsterdam	(crippled), m.Barbara Germann,knitter,70,(wid)

& all (Ref)

Joni J. Yoder Death Record Ledger

— by Vernon Miller

Death records are of interest to the family researcher and historian as well as to individuals. Death dates, like birth dates, can help establish a person's identity while doing genealogical research. To the historian, they can be factual bits of information; and to any interested person, especially older people, they can be a precious pastime relating to bygone times. Revealing the final day of life of dearly loved ones may bring a silent tear in their deeply felt friendship. Its pages may tell of sad accidents, sudden deaths, or of one's death finally coming after an extended illness, which is all set within the scriptural standard, "there is a time to live, a time to die," and "thereafter the judgment."

Such a record, written by Joni J. Yoder, was donated to the Ohio Amish Library by his grandson Paul J. Yoder of Berlin. To further introduce its writer: Joni (4R261298) was born in 1863 to Jacob C. and Lydia (Miller) Yoder. He married Elizabeth Schlabach in 1889. Due to health reasons, Joni took the jewelry shop business in Charm, repairing and selling clocks and watches, etc. Most of the time he was located in the house he built on the north side of town, where John Oren Miller now lives. Also included as an occupation was retailing farm gates, Superior grain drills, and Rose Queen salve, which he made. Deeds indicate he first bought land in 1887, of which he owned several tracts. By 1911 he offered for sale in "The Budget" his complete jewelry trade, due to health reasons.

The death recordings are centered around Charm, although they are widespread to other communities and some from out of state as well. The index is set up with surnames only and the page numbers accordingly. The page entries are then recorded by date and not alphabetically. Approximately one-third of the volume's 300 pages are used to record from deaths from 1821 to 1908. Interestingly, a lot of entries have an abbreviated form of information included. Following are some of the records in the ledger:

Sept. 6, 1879 – Rebecca Miller, wife of klaines Dan or Oilmill Dan, aged 80 years. This was my grandmother. Her name was Kauffman.

Dec. 23, 1893 – Benjamin Miller, klaena Mose Ben; 51 y. 7 m. 29d. 4 d widower.

Jan. 30, 1899 – Samuel Miller, Bishop of Doughty, Ohio. Aged 75 y. 5 m. 27 d.

April 3, 1906 – Emanuel Miller, son of minister Jacob E. near Berlin, was killed by a straw stack falling on him. Supposed he was killed instantly. Aged 13 y. 5m. 20 d.

October 12, 1877 – Joseph Miller, Bishop of LaGrange Co., Ind.; aged 68 y. 10 m. 27 d. He was born in Somerset Co., Penn.

June 1882 – Lydia Yoder, wife of Jacob (nee Miller); aged 53 y. 1 m. 2 d. This was my mother.

Feb. 5, 1903 – Anna Yoder, wife of Drahā Mose. Aged 85 y. 10 m. 29 d. Was married 58 y. 10 m. 25 days.

Feb. 28, 1903 – Moses Yoder, Drahā Mose. Aged 82 y. 2 m. 6 d. Was widower 22 d.

Sept. 24, 1907 – Catherine Yoder, north of Walnut Creek, O. Aged 69 y. 5 m. 15 d. She was the only daughter of Michael Yoder. She leaves only one brother Daniel M. Yoder of Charm. She was single all her life;

Jan. 4, 1908 – Mrs. Rudy Yoder of Springs, Somerset Co., Pa. Aged 77 y. 6 m. 24 d. Her husband died about 6 years ago. Had no children;

Sept. 11, 1882 – Levi B. Troyer, killed by a clover huller. Aged 32 y. 9 m. 8 d. Was married 11 y. 7 m. 12 d.;

April 12, 1905 – Joel D.A. Troyer, Deacon of Howard Co., Ind. Aged 47 y. 9 m. 23 d. Was married the 2nd time 4 y. 5 m. 11 d.;

Nov. 1, 1907 – Lizzie Hershberger, 2nd wife of Noah W. of Charm. Aged 49 y. 12 d. Died at Charm, took her to Michigan for burial.

Jan. 7, 1899 – Clary Hochstetler, wife of Jonas H., died at Andrew Millers near Charm. Aged 28 y. 8 m. 24 d. They lived in North Dakota and was here on a visit;

July 13, 1907 – Jonas J. Kauffman. Pre. of Clockmas Co., Oregon. Aged 77 y. 4 m. 26 d. He was born

in Holmes Co., Ohio. In 1872 he was ordained as bishop. In 1867 he was ordained as minister. He lived in Johnson Co., Iowa and also in Douglas Co., Ill.;

April 9, 1887 – Frany Lantz. Aunt to Lizzie's mother (Sarah). Frany Lantz spent her 14th birthday on the way moving from Pa. Arrived the age 14 years. Died at Daniel J. Schlabachs northeast of Berlin. Frany Lantz, aged 89 y. 5 m. 26 d.;

Nov. 1, 1901 – David Coblentz, the oldest son of Jacob of Geauga Co., Ohio, was accidentally shot and instantly killed while out coon hunting near Mespo. There was 5 or 6 in company. Had treed a coon and David climbed the tree unbeknown to the rest. He was up about 25 ft. when the shooter mistook the boy's head for the coon and fired. The unfortunate boy fell to the ground dead. Was shot in the head. Aged 20 y. 11 m. 10 d.;

March 21, 1908 – Samuel J. Nisley, son of John P. and Anna. Died of measles. Aged 23 y. 10 d. (single);

April 3, 1908 – Lydia J. Nisley, daughter of John P. and Anna, died of measles. Aged 22 y. 6 m. 22 d. (single);

May 26, 1888 – Daniel Schlabach, northeast of Berlin, Lizzie's father. Aged 61 y. 2 m.;

Dec. 26, 1899 – Reuben Yutzy. Aged 79 y. 10 m. 15 d. Was widower 9 mo.;

Dec. 4, 1906 – David T. Eash, son of Tobias of LaGrange Co., Ind. was feeding a fodder thresher at Josiah Eash near Schrock Post office. Got caught at his right arm and right arm and the whole head and shoulder was torn off. He balanced back on his feet and was standing there a short time without a head then fell backwards down. He was single. Aged 26 y. 9 m. 3 d.;

Nov. 23, 1891 – Abner Maxwell near Berlin got killed by his brother Robert. Robert claims he done it in self defense. He killed him with an ax. Sons of David Maxwell;

A sad accident. On Jan. 18, 1901 in the morning about 5 o'clock the house owned by Joseph Weirith of Shipshewana, Ind. occupied by Ben E. Miller and family caught fire, awakening the four oldest children who slept upstairs. They called for help as the fire had gained such headway that they could not get down the stairway. Ben and wife jumped up and grabbed their two youngest children (downstairs) and made a narrow escape. The call for help from the children was in vain so they sufficated in the smoke and remained in the house until it had burned down. Parts of their bodies were removed, burned to a crisp. A number of people had gathered to the scene but too late to save anything. The bodies of the four children were laid in one coffin. Sunday before this happened one of their children was buried, little over 6 years. The ages of the children that burned were as follows; Geneva 15 y. 7 m. 9 d., Eli B. 12 y. 9 m. 9 d., Mabel 10 y. 9 m. 17 d., Belva 8 y. 6 m. 5 d.

Some of the unusual weather recorded by Joni on page 268 is as follows;

1901 April 9 it commenced to snow. Blowed and drifted the snow that the east and west roads was blockaded. Were impassable for 6 days. The snow laid till May 1 and some places till May 7;

1845 Wheat froze

1885 Wheat was killed by flies

On the last pages of the volume more specific information was noted about certain individuals, like: Bish. Mose J. Miller; Jonas son of Bish. Mose who had suffered a severe rheumatism most of his life; Bish. David A. Troyer and others. Interestingly, these are almost identical accounts as those found in the Moses P. Miller ledger, owned by Raymond Weaver of Bunker Hill, except that the Miller ledger is written in German script. In the 1980's Eli E. Mast compiled "A Partial Death Record" and used much of the J. J. Yoder records in his work.

From all of Yoder's recordings, probably the most important entry of historical significance is the previously mentioned Frany Lantz death record. With the help of the Gingerich-Kreider "Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies" we find that Frany was the third child of Conrad Keck (KK1) and had married to Samuel Lantz (LZ37). Note 5 and 7 of pages 145-146 of the "Cemetery Directory of the Amish Community in Eastern Holmes and Adjoining Counties in Ohio" – Beachy, states that the Conrad Keck family is listed on the Somerset, Pa. 1810 census and on the 1820 is found living in Ohio. During this time, in 1818, he was deeded the northeast quarter of Sec. 3 Twp. 8 R. 5, although he may have lived here a few years earlier. Presently the farm is owned by Dan G. and Kathleen Schlabach, being located two miles southwest of Walnut Creek.

Interestingly, with the ledger now providing the fact that her fourteenth birthday was spent on the trek

from Penna. to Ohio, new light is shed as to the arrival of this Amish pioneer family to the newly founded Walnut Creek Valley settlement. Calculating from Frany's birthday, Oct. 14, 1797, we may assume that the Keck family came to the small Amish group yet in October of 1811, after which the first settlers had arrived the previous year.

With Joni merely adding this bit of information, what had probably been orally passed along through the family generations, it can be of great interest today.

Frany-Lantz is buried on the Daniel E. Schlabach farm (K-16). The Daniel J. Schlabach mentioned in her death entry had also lived there with Daniel's wife, being a daughter of Abraham Kauffman, whose wife was a sister to Frany. As Joni's wife was a daughter of Daniel J., it establishes the relationship as noted, "aunt to Lizzie's mother (Sarah)."

Concerning J. J. Yoder's own death, Joni died October 11, 1937. Aged 74 y. 7 m. 5 d. He is buried in cemetery (O-4), where his grandfather "Ölich" Daniel C. Miller is also buried, one mile northwest of Charm. From one of the several accounts pertaining to the naming of the small town of Charm, Joni is recognized as having been instrumental in choosing that name. At the time it was a tradition to wear a long watch chain to which an ornament was attached, called a watch charm. As Joni was jeweler in the town at that time, he is referred to as supposedly the originator of the "Charm" name, changing it from Stevensville when the Post Office was established in 1886.

Anabaptist Heritage Tour

— by Atlee D. Miller

When I was in school, two of my favorite subjects were geography and history. As I grew older, I became aware of our Anabaptist heritage, so I had this dream of visiting Europe sometime. I thought it would be interesting to learn more about the struggles of our forefathers, being persecuted, driven out of their homes, and their emigration to America. These people certainly upheld principles and convictions that are laudable.

In early 1990 an organization in Germany called "Verein für das Deutschtum in Ausland" asked for two Amish brethren to go on a tour of Europe. After a few interviews with Bern Längin (a German citizen living in Canada), it was decided that David Kline and I would go. Bernd is also the editor of "Globus," a magazine printed in Bonn, Germany. This tour consisted of ten meetings in universities and churches of Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and Italy, and interviews with the newspeople.

At these meetings, Bernd would give a slide presentation and a lecture on the Amish. After each presentation, David and I took part in a question and answer period. This was a real test of our German, as there meetings were all conducted in high German.

Marina Graffin zu Donau, a lady employee of the V.D.A., drew up the itinerary and arranged the sponsorship for this tour. The sponsors were Northwest Airlines, the V.W. company, the V.D.A., and other German industrialists. The V.D.A. and these sponsors were interested in knowing what became of the Anabaptists who emigrated to America. They wanted to know about our farming methods, our religion, and our culture. They were quite amazed that we still speak the German language after living in an English-speaking country for two hundred years.

We had to meet with some of our sponsors, one which was the head lady of Northwest Airlines in Frankfurt. She introduced herself as Mrs. Darwin. She then smiled and said, "No, I'm not related to *him*," referring, of course, to the evolutionist Charles Darwin. She told us we were special guests of Northwest Airlines and they flew us first class coming back. In Landau we met with Ulrich Krause, who is the mayor, and with Willie Rhem and Fran Schäfer, who are on the faculty at the university.

In Stuttgart we met with Manfred Rommel, who is the mayor. He is the son of Erwin Rommel, famous general in Hitler's army, known as the "Desert Fox." We met in his meeting room with a lot of his cabinet mem-

bers present. He asked us questions on the Amish and related to us some of the problems involved in the unification of East and West Germany. We also met with the Keitkamp family, which is one of the richest families in Europe.

Another sponsor we met was Dr. Olt, a very interesting and distinguished man. He encouraged us to remain steadfast and keep our religious principles. We received some very nice, colorful books on German from these people we met with.

Our first slide presentation was held in Kaiserslautern, with about 80 people present. In the question and answer period, a lady got up and said, "Yes, I see where you people remained steadfast, but our things are 'kaput.'"

On the first Sunday we stayed in the home of Ruprecht and Monica Müller-Schumann. He is a Reformed minister and had postponed his morning service till in the afternoon so we could attend. They had baptismal services, baptizing two infants which were eight months old. He said he realized we do not agree with him on baptism, but he wanted us to attend their services anyhow.

We visited the Weirhof where the Grabiels and the Eashes came from. The new part is an American army base, and Gary Waltner is the principal of the school there. Gary showed us around the old part of the hof and took us to the cemetery. They do not use vaults when burying a body, then after thirty years they take the headstone out and place it along the outside wall. They then use the grave again for another burial. In earlier years the authorities gave the Anabaptists permission to build a church here, but it could not look like a church, so they built it to look like a granary.

We then went to the Münster-hof where we met Hochstetlers, Gingerichs, and Yoders. Hochstetlers have been living here for 240 years.

Our next meeting was in Landau at 15:00 We had around 300 people with about 50% being students. In this meeting a man stood up and asked, "What can we do to get back on the right way?"

We went to the Wahler-hof where the Remy Stalders live. Remy's grandmother was a Yoder and a sister to Barbara Yoder, who died in 1956 and is buried on the farm. He said the last Amish lived here in 1937, and the last feet washing took place in 1914. Remy took us to the Ringweiler-hof, where Nikolaus Stolfus came from. There is still a Stolfus family living there. He then took us to their church, where we met their minister. His name is David Kläy. This was quite a coincidence, a David Kläy from America visiting with a David Kläy from Germany.

In the meeting at the University of Bonn, there were around 450 people present, 75% of them students. This was a good meeting, with good questions. We had the opportunity to talk with these students one to one. One girl said it really touched her heart to be present at this meeting. We met with three Russian Germans in the V.D.A. office, and they said they would really appreciate it if we could tour Russia and hold meetings in their schools and churches.

We traveled southeast towards Austria and saw beautiful scenery; vineyards on mountainsides that are very steep, and also fields full of rape in full bloom of yellow. When this rape matures they harvest it and crush the seeds to make cooking oil. On our way to Austria we stopped at a gas station to get fuel. When the attendant came out, he asked Bernd who we were. He said, "These are two Amishmen from the U.S.A." The man then said, "Oh yes, they do not fight nor quarrel. I would like to live with them." This is quite a challenge. Is this the way it is with us?

We visited the Stuttgart Bible House, where they gave us a tour and showed us their printing process and how they gild edge the bibles. This is done by a goldsmith. They said there are around 3,000 languages in the world, and the Bible is printed in about 1,800 translations. There are around 149 languages in America, and the Bible is printed in 41 of these translations.

We went to Bern, Switzerland, where we met Ulrich Gerber. We stayed in their home two nights. Ulrich is a Reformed minister, but he said his heart is still with the Anabaptists. He gave us a tour of Bern and showed us where they would bring out the prisoners and execute them. They would also take prisoners down to the river and hold them under water until they were almost drowned. They would then let them come up for air. They would repeatedly do this to try to get them to recant. They called this "schwemme."

After a good night's rest, Ulrich took us up on the Sonnenberg, where we met his father, Samuel Gerber, who is a minister in the Sonnenberg Church. We ate lunch in the church with the ministry and some friends. We then went to the Täufer Brücke way up in the mountains, where the Anabaptists would gather to have services at night.

On Sunday we were invited to attend an old Mennonite church in Langnau. Hans Rufenacht, a 72-year-old minister, preached the sermon. He would normally preach in the Swiss dialect, but for our benefit, he preached in high German. We could understand him really well.

We left right after church for Bozen, Italy, where we had our last meeting. It was requested that we make some comments on our trip. We commented on the friendliness of the people and how we could learn a lot. A man got up and said, "No, you did not come to learn from us, we came to learn from you."

We traveled close to 4,500 miles in a V.W. bus that the V.W. company supplied for us. We were gone 19 days, leaving May 12 and returning May 31, 1990.

The rest of this article is a report of a tour we took in September of 1991. On September 4, a group of 33 people gathered in Cleveland, ready to leave for Europe. In this group there were Beachys, Borntragers, Bylers, Miller, Troyers, and Yoders, mostly Amish. We left Cleveland for New York at 3:20 p.m., and left New York at 5:45, arriving in Brussels at 7:30 a.m. We all got off for a 1 hour wait, while the plane was being serviced. As we entered this not-so-modern airport, I approached a rather stern-looking man at the information desk and asked what time we would be boarding again. In a gruff voice, he said, "You are now in Europe and we say 'Good morning' and 'Please!'" We left Brussels at 8:30, arriving in Zurich at 9:30. After going through customs and exchanging some American dollars for Swiss francs at the rate of 1:49, we met Marvin Mast, who was in Zurich waiting for us. Marvin is with Golden Rule Travel, which organized this tour. Marvin and Leroy Beachy were our tour guides and Danell Oscar, who must be one of the best bus drivers in Europe, was the driver of our modern bus.

I will try to give some of the highlights of the tour, as space does not permit a full report. We left Zurich on a beautiful, sunny day, headed for Basel. We ate a light lunch in an open-air market. We then crossed the Swiss-French border and drove to Riquewihr, France, where we would be staying for the next three nights. Riquewihr is called "the Pearl of the Vineyards." Here some of the best wines are produced. Riquewihr is a quaint old town surrounded on three sides by a wall, having narrow cobblestone streets. We had to park our bus on the outside of town and carry our luggage in to our hotel, The St. Nicolas. We were all ready for a good night's sleep after being on the bus for 36 hours.

After a typical European breakfast, we headed up the mountains to the Struthof concentration camp. This camp was where the Germans imprisoned French government officials, army officers, mayors, etc. They would make them work hard with little food. When these prisoners were at the point of starvation, the German doctors would come in and do research work with these humans. This was done on a special table equipped with a drain so the blood would run outside. After they were done, the remains would be placed in a tray and pushed into a crematory. The heat from this process was used to heat water for the camp, and the ashes were used for fertilizer . . . a very depressing place. This camp is on a farm formerly owned by Amish.

Next we went to the Haut-Koenigsbourg, which is a very famous castle. Marvin asked for an English tour guide for us German-speaking English people. We got a young Frenchman whose English was somewhat limited. He was trying to explain to us that the water became scarce at times, and after struggling for the right word, he came up with, "The water was seldom."

After lunch we went to Sainte-Marie-Aux-Mines, where Ulrich Miller lived. He was the founder of the Amish church here. Jacob Ammon later came and lived in the Sainte-Marie valley. Some of the Amish were asked to leave this valley because their boys would not serve in the army.

We headed east the morning of September 7, crossing the Rhine into the Black Forest and the small town of Titisee. We went to the House of 1000 Clocks. We bought a cuckoo clock and other souvenirs. We took a hike down the Triberg Falls, which was very nice.

We left Riquewihr for the last time and headed south to the town of Altkirch. Outside Altkirch is a small Mennonite church at the Birken-hof. Leroy had arranged with Willie Hege to have joint services with them. They

had the first part of the services and we conducted the last part. We sang two verses of the Lob-lied in the Ausbund, and three verses of "Wir glauben all an einen Gott," also in the Ausbund. Two Amish ministers on the tour preached short sermons.

After services Willie Hege took us to the cemetery while women of the church prepared a delicious lunch for us which was served outside. They seated us at small tables in an orchard under the trees. After lunch we sang a few songs, then Willie took us to the Liebensteiner-hof, owned by Paul and Lena Richard, who are brother and sisters, and are very old. Willie is very concerned about the trend their church is taking. Coming back he wondered if the American women are as inquisitive as the French are. During the services we men had our hats hanging in a row and one of the women asked Willie how we know whose hat is whose. Willis said that we probably have our names in them. This lady said, "No, they don't, because we looked!"

We then went to the Hasselbert Hotel in Kaiserslautern for the night; a very nice hotel.

We took a Rhine cruise from Bingen to Boppard. We saw a lot of castle ruins and very steep mountains with vineyards on them. A bus was waiting for us here to take us on to Cologne, which is a large city along the Rhine. We visited the famous Cologne Cathedral and walked up the 509 steps to the belfry. Not everybody made it up to the top. To us this seemed a waste of the poor people's money, which was used to construct this building. Our hotel was very old, but we had a nice view of the Rhine at night.

We traveled north out of Cologne for Almeer, Holland, to the Almeer Flower Auction. This is something to see. They have 75 acres under one roof. Some of the same flowers sold here in the morning will be sold on street corners and in florist shops of America the next day. Next we went to Amsterdam and took a canal cruise. Here we saw the house where Anne Frank was hidden. Many of our forefathers sailed from Amsterdam when they came to America. Today, it is known to be quite a wicked city.

We went to a small village called Zaanse-Schans, where we toured an old windmill and shoe shop, where they make and sell authentic wooden shoes.

We went to Witmarsum and visited the Menno Simon Memorial Church. Menno didn't really preach here, but the church is named in his honor. Next we went to the Menno Simon monument at the site the church which Menno Simon preached in used to stand. From there we went to Pingjum to the hidden church which was used at the time when it was forbidden to have Anabaptist services. This house has a regular house front with living quarters in the front part and the church in the back. A short ways down the street is the church where Menno preached as a Catholic priest.

Then we went to Haarlem, to visit the Corrie Ten Boom house, where Corrie, her sister Betsy, and their father Casper would hide Jews from the Germans. They had a closet where they would pull out a shelf and hide six people in back of it. An old minister gave us a tour of the house and told us some of the things that happened at that time. They were finally caught and put into prison, where Casper and Betsy died.

We then went to Asperan, where the Dirk Willem story (recorded in the Martyr's Mirror) took place. Dirk was being chased across thin ice. Because he was kept on a meager diet, he was light enough that the ice held him up. His captor, being heavier, broke through. Dirk turned back and rescued him. He demonstrated beautifully the scripture: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you."

We then went to the Kirchsbacher-hof. This is where immigrant Martin Borntrager came from. There are seven families living in this hof.

Our next stop was at the Willensteiner-hof. Here we met Mr. & Mrs. Bender. She was formerly a Gingerich, and was greatly elated to meet Gingerichs from America.

The morning of September 15, we went to the Branchweiler-hof in Neustadt, where we sang three songs for Emma Lichty, a 91-year-old lady. She was baptized in the Amish church in 1915 by a Nofsinger who was her uncle. It was a touching scene; she had tears, and was so glad we had come. She has a sister who is 101 years old. She was also baptized in the Amish church.

Our next stop was in Essingen, where we met Wilfried Schweigert. He took us to the Hans Nofsinger church and some old Nofsinger homes. We then went up the street to Robart Nicolay's courtyard, where they

had a nice lunch laid out for us. One of his ancestors was the personal secretary of President Lincoln. From there we went to a Mennonite Bible School for the night. It is at the top of a steep, winding hill called Bienen Berg. It was a real challenge for our driver to navigate these hairpin curves on this narrow mountain road.

The morning of Sept. 14 Jacob and Erma Beachy and my wife and I were dispatched to ask an elder of a certain church for permission to attend their services on Sunday. After ringing the doorbell, we were ushered into their sitting room and had a nice visit with the elder and his wife. But he said the answer to our question was no. His reason was: "Wir haben keine verbindung mit andere gemeinde."

We then drove to Reutigen near Lake Thun, where the old Peter Beachy home is located. We visited the cemetery here and found the headstones of Carl and Arnold Beachy, who died within the last 6 years. From here we went to Erlenbach to the church where Jacob Ammon was baptized. We went up on top of the Stockhorn mountain on a ski lift. We saw beautiful scenery on the way up and down, but it was cloudy on top. We went to the Wald Hotel for our evening meal and overnight. Mr. & Mrs. Martin Beachy, who are the present owners of the Peter Beachy homestead, came to eat supper with us. Martin is a quiet and friendly person. He is a ninth cousin of the Beachys who were on the tour. We hade a really nice evening with them.

September 15 was Sunday, so Leroy said he knows of an old church that is not being used anymore. We traveled some very scenic back roads, but when we got there some people were having services. Leroy went in and talked with one of the members and they said as soon as they were done we could have it. While waiting, we walked around in the cemetery and found some common names. Under a little side shed we saw what looked like a big piece of netting. Upon inquiring, we were told that in earlier years, people walked to church and at times encountered wolves. They would then throw this netting over them and let them entangle themselves so that they could kill them. They had a special Swiss choir in the services and as they came out, Leroy asked if they would sing for us. They sang and yodeled two songs for us. We then sang, "Gott ist die Liebe" for them, with most of them helping us.

We then had our Amish services in this church. Leroy said this was probably the first time a Reformed minister would have consented to Amish Anabaptists using his church for services. After services we went to Trub and on up the valley to the Fankhauser home, where the "Täuferversteck," or Anabaptist hiding place, is located. The house and barn are built together as one big unit. In between the barn and the pantry was a secret space about 3x6x6 feet. The authorities would hunt these Anabaptists with dogs like we hunt rabbits. Occasionally the dogs would lose the trail. The authorities were puzzled as to what was happening so they placed a watchman on top of the hill where the dogs were losing the trail. The next Anabaptist that was chased ran on top of this hill and jumped on a stone wall that ran down close to this barn. From this wall he jumped into a tree and from there into the upper part of this barn. There was a trap door on the barn floor that would drop you down into this secret hiding place and after you were inside, there was a prop that you set up against the door so nobody could get in. After discovering that the Anabaptists ran into this barn, they placed a watchman inside the barn. Of course, they finally found this hiding place. Are we not fortunate to be living in a free country!

September 16 was a nice, clear day, so we went to Stechelbert and got a cable car that took us partway up the mountain. We then boarded a train to Murren, which is a town up in the mountains. From there another cable car took us to the top of the Schilthorn. This mountain is about 9500 feet high and from here we had a nice view of the Jungfrau.

On September 17 we went to the Hans Haslibacher hof where the eleventh generation of Haslibachers live and are very prosperous farmers. This Hans Haslibacher was an old minister who had gone into hiding for some time. He had a longing to go back to Summiswald to see his loved ones and was captured. He was beheaded and because of the unusual circumstances at his execution (which are recorded on page 806 of the Ausbund), this was the last time anybody was beheaded here.

From here we went up to the Trachselwald prison. Various Anabaptists were held prisoner here, including Hans Haslibacher. From here we went to Bern to do some shopping in a large shopping center while Leroy and a few of the men went to the archives. We then drove to Rüschlikon, a suburb of Zurich, where we stayed at a Baptist seminary. This was right along Lake Zurich. In the shopping center we met people from West

Liberty, Ohio, who were on a tour with Delbert Gratz.

We headed for the Täuferhöhle, which is a cave where Anabaptists had services. The book *Not Regina*, by Christmas Carol Kauffman, was written about this place. Peter and Regina were baptized and also married in this cave. We had short services here and headed back down to the farm buildings where our bus was parked.

As we approached the bus, the farmer was waiting with a greeting that I was to deliver to relatives of his in Wilmot, Ohio. There were different Reber families living here and the women requested that we sing for them. We sang three songs for them and as we left, one of the women said, "We won't meet you again here, but we hope to meet you in heaven." From here we went to Grüningen to the bell factory. Quite a few bells were purchased by our group.

We went on to Zurich to the Zwingli statue along the river, then to Grossmünster church, where Zwingli preached, and to the site where Felix Manz was drowned. Manz was the first Anabaptist martyr, and was drowned in 1526 in the river Limmat in Zurich. We went back to the Baptist seminary for supper and the night. After having a good breakfast, we went to the airport in Zurich for our return trip to Cleveland via Brussels and New York.

We had a very enjoyable trip and met a lot of friendly people who were interested in the Amish and Mennonite way of life, and encouraged us in this.

A personal challenge from a trip like this is to remain steadfast and to teach our children and children's children to do likewise. May God be honored and praised for everything.

Hans Betz: Poet of the *Ausbund*²

— by William I. Schreiber

Throughout their history of persecution, migration and relocation the Old Order Amish have preserved for active use in their religious services one singular and distinctive achievement, namely the hymnbook of their earliest progenitors, the Swiss Brethren. The title reads *Ausbund, das ist: Etliche schöne, Christliche Lieder, Wie sie in dem Gefängnis zu Passau in dem Schloss von den Schweitzer-Brüdern und von anderen rechtgläubigen Christen hin und her gedichtet worden*. Or in English, *Selection [Anthology], that is: Some beautiful Christian Songs as they were now and then Composed in the Prison in Passau in the Castle by the Swiss Brethren and by other right-believing Christians*.

In 1742 the immigrant Dunker printer, Christopher Sauer of Germantown, Pennsylvania, printed this work as the first American Mennonite book in the German language. He standardized its content of 140 hymns³ and of two apprentices which contained the "Confession" of Thomas Imbroich, written in 1558, and a collection of forty martyr stories. The fourth American edition of the Germantown press of 1785, with an addition of six ballads and two registers of first lines and of melodies to which the hymns can be sung, completed the work which we know today and which has gone practically unchanged through many American editions. There are also fourteen known European editions.⁴ In 1922 the Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, purchased the plates of the book and have continued to print from these ever since.

The earliest completed and dated edition of the *Ausbund*, however, seems to be that of 1583. It is arranged in two parts. The first part contains eighty hymns which, after four songs of an introductory nature, lead into the confessional expressions of the earliest Anabaptist martyrs such as No. 5 by Jörg Blaurock (burned 1527), No. 6 by Felix Mantz (drowned 1527), No. 7 by Michael Sattler (tortured and burned 1527), and No. 8 by Hans Hut (tortured, suffocated and burned 1527).

Song No. 9 about the martyrdom of an early Christian virgin, Pura, begins the long list of ballads or met-

2 Reprinted from Mennonite Quarterly Review, April, 1979, Volume LIII, No. 2. Used by permission.

3 Ada Kadelbach, *Die Hymnodie der Mennoniten in Nordamerika, 1742-1860* (Mainz, 1971), 45.

4 Martin E. Ressler, *A Bibliography of Mennonite Hymnals and Songbooks* (mimeo edit.; Quarryvill, Pa., 1972); Paul Yoder, et al., *Four Hundred Years with the Ausbund* (Scottsdale, Pa.; Herald Press, 1964), 65.

ric descriptions of persecution, imprisonment, trial, privation, torture and finally death of the steadfast Anabaptist believers. These historic songs give us a model of the perseverance of the witness against the inhumanity of man consequent to religious nonconformity. This miscellany lists martyrs in Switzerland, South and North Germany, the Netherlands and extends to the Moravian Brethren up to about 1570.

A change occurs with hymn No. 81, the beginning of the second part of the *Ausbund*. An introductory note states: "Here follow several very beautiful Christian hymns as they were, by the grace of God, composed and sung by the Swiss Brethren in the Castle Prison at Passau." The fifty songs of this part date from 1535 to 1540, the period of incarceration of the South German and Moravian Brethren in the dungeon of the castle of Passau. These songs were printed as a unit in 1564 and are therefore regarded as the older part of the *Ausbund*. These are the hymns which form the substantial body of songs the Old Order Amish use today and from which they derive their strength and inspiration.⁵

Outside of the Old Order Amish communities the songs of the *Ausbund* have received only a mixed acceptance. They are not found in the large Protestant and Catholic collections; and the first American publication of Mennonite hymns in High German, *Die Kleine Geistliche Harfe* (Germantown, 1803) has a carry-over of only two *Ausbund* hymns among its forty Psalms and 474 hymns. On the other hand, *Ein Unpartheyisches Gesangbuch* of Lancaster County Mennonites of 1804 borrowed more heavily. The sixty-four hymns that it took from the *Ausbund* equal 45 percent of the *Ausbund* collection and constitute 17 percent of the 390 hymns in the *Gesangbuch*. In contrast with this latter collection, *The Mennonite Hymnal* of 1969, the joint effort of the two largest Mennonite bodies, the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church, adopted only three hymns from the *Ausbund*, a minor fraction of its 646 songs.⁶ One observes with great appreciation that John J. Overholt in his new *Christian Hymnary* of 1972 lists about ten *Ausbund* hymns and gives four musical settings, three English versions and the original German version of hymn No. 131 as sung by various "Amish brethren" near Millersburg, Ohio. This hymn, the so-called "Loblied," is sung in every Amish Sunday meeting.⁷

Two names—those of Michael Schneider and Hans Betz—are foremost in the older Passau collection. Hans Betz rises to even greater eminence when one considers that eleven of his songs are the regular fare in the Old Order Amish Sunday services, and that No. 106 with the opening lines, "Ihr Christen g'mein, die ihr seyd rein, Thut euch von Herzen freuen," is sung, from stanza 22 onward, at every Amish wedding.⁸ In his twenty-four poems, Betz reaches a total of 4620 lines with an average of 193.63 lines and 18.33 stanzas per song.

It must be noted that the *Ausbund* ascribes only eleven hymns to Hans Betz; the other hymns by him bear no initials. The detailed researches of Adolf Mais of Vienna into the newly-found Hutterian *Ehrenpreis* manuscript of 1657 ascribe some uninitialed *Ausbund* hymns to "Hannsz Betz."⁹ Mais supersedes the earlier studies of Rudolf Wolkan and Philip Wackernagel.¹⁰ Not counted among Hans Betz's efforts is *Ausbund* No. 100, a round of fourteen stanzas which has a first strophe initialed "H.B." but which is a joint effort of fourteen Passau prisoners. It seems strange that *Ehrenpreis* hymn No. 49 is unassigned but precedes hymn No. 50, the last one by Hans Betz. Likewise *Ehrenpreis* hymns No. 51 to 55 are unassigned and precede the following thirteen hymns of Michael Schneider.

In spite of his productiveness, Hans Betz has not yet been given space in studies of either German lyrics or church hymnody. Robert Friedmann stated in 1958, "One of these men deserves special attention for his

5 John Umble, "Old Order Amish, Their Hymns and Hymn Tunes," *Journal of American Folklore*, II (January-March 1939), 92.

6 Kadelbach, 66ff.; see also *ME*, II, 880, and III, 196; conversations with Lester Hostetler, co-editor of *The Mennonite Hymnary* (Newton, Kans.; Mennonite Publication Office, 1940).

7 John J. Overholt, compiler, *The Christian Hymnary* (Uniontown, Ohio: Christian Hymnary Publishers, 1972), Nos. 408, 409, 410, 411.

8 Joseph W. Yoder, *Amische Lieder* (Huntington, Pa.: Yoder Publishing Co., 1942), 36; Ben J. Raber, ed., *The New American Almanac* (Baltic, Ohio, 1973) lists 11 hymns of Hans Betz for 28 Sunday services.

9 Adolf Mais, "Die Liederhandschrift des Andreas Enrenpreis (Mit 4 Abb. auf den Tafeln I und II)," *Jahrbuch des Oesterreichischen Volksliedwerkes*, II (1962), 58-105; see also William I. Schreiber, "The *Ausbund* Hymns in the newly-discovered *Ehrenpreis* MS," *MQR*, XLIII (1969), 330-32.

10 Rudolf Wolkan, *Die Lieder der Wiedertäufer* (Berlin: Behr, 1903); Philip Wackernagel, *Das Deutsche Kirchenlied* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1870).

hymns, which not only fill pages of the *Ausbund* but also the Hutterite *Liederbuch*: Hans Betz or Petz. . . . His relationship to the Hutterites is not clear, nor how it happened that some of his hymns found their way into several Hutterite hymnals."¹¹ Of his life we have but scant information and he himself gives no hint of his past. We do know that he plied his trade as master weaver in the Sudeten German city of Eger in Bohemia.¹² This city and neighborhood had early been settled by German peasants from the Upper Palatinate and it had come under the rule of the Bishop of Bamberg in northeastern Bavaria. Josef Nadler believes that all literary ventures of adjoining Bohemia centered around Eger.¹³ In fact, everything that could be identified with German literature, art, culture and language of northwestern Bohemia was concentrated here. The first German humanist, scholar and schoolman, Paul Schneevogel, also known as Paulus Navius, came from Eger.¹⁴ The city boasted of being the only permanent home of German Shrove Tuesday plays since 1442, of Corpus Christi plays since 1443, of Christmas plays since 1476, and the Eger Passion play since 1500. Eger had received and, in return, had spread its influence east and south as far as Vienna.

It is not recorded that Eger had a school for Meistersingers, although it lies close to Nürnberg, famed stronghold of this art. The spread of these artists' endeavors extended from the Rhine to the Moldau. Meistersong was preeminently an art form elected by the sedentary craftsmen such as cobblers, weavers, tailors, etc. It seems certain that Hans Betz could have acquired his poetic skill and versatility only in Eger and from the association with like-minded master craftsmen singers of the Eger vicinity.¹⁵

The Meistersingers became carriers of the Reformation message, and Luther's biblical German became the canon of their own language. Some literary historians, in fact, consider this the greatest legacy which these singers bequeathed to their contemporaries and to posterity, so that the linguistic accomplishments far exceeded their artistic and lyrical achievements.¹⁶ Archer Taylor, the American scholar of the Meistersingers, states, "Perhaps the most important influence which the Meistersingers exerted upon their age lies in their interest in the doctrines of the Reformation and their devotion to that cause."¹⁷ He further asserts that their two most important cultural developments were the creation and acceptance of a standard German language and the writing of hymns.¹⁸ The laws of their singing schools required conformity to the language of Luther's Bible as well as to his doctrines.

The hymns of Hans Betz bear testimony to a Protestant faith, with the addition of his own Anabaptist persuasion as the tangible outworking of his convictions. His first listed hymn, *Ausbund* No. 81 (Ehrenpreis No. 25) begins, "Lord God Father, to Thee I cry. I pray grant me wisdom that I may sing about the nature of your unity;" and in the last of his hymns, *Ausbund* No. 128 (Ehrenpreis No. 50), written perhaps after three years of imprisonment, he still raises his voice in artful praise of his God and Savior.

The language of Hans Betz, the weaver from Bohemia, follows Luther's German Bible, the text-book for all Meistersingers after 1522. It is amazing what clear and concise German this craftsman poet commands. Of course, one can find examples for what Goedeke calls *Flickwörter* (expletives) or unbecoming reflections, suppression of inflections, undue abbreviations, or lengthening.¹⁹ Among Betz's 4620 lines they are, however, scarce. Regrettably, no scholar, linguist nor grammarian has worked on the text of the *Ausbund*. We have it today as Christopher Sauer last printed it in 1767. Hans Betz's vocabulary is rich and High German, apart from a few older idiomatic or dialectal remnants. In as many rhymes as he has made there are of course many repetitions, but most of them are in vocabulary, not in phrasings. It is remarkable how Betz's thought and ethic seem to cul-

11 Robert Friedmann, "The Philippite Brethren: A Chapter in Anabaptist History," *MQR*, XXXII (1958), 277.

12 See article by Chr. Hege, "Hans Betz," *ME*, I, 319.

13 Josef Nadler, *Literaturgeschichte der Deutschen Stämme und Landschaften* (Regensburg, 1923), 250.

14 William I. Schreiber, "The Social Elements of the Humanistic School Dialogues of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," (doctoral dissertation, The University of Illinois, 1933).

15 Frances H. Ellis, *Hans Sachs Studies*, I (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Publications, Humanities Series No. 4, 1943); Rudolph Genée, *Hans Sachs und seine Zeit* (Leipzig, 1894).

16 Johannes Klein, *Geschichte der Deutschen Lyrik* (Wiesbaden, 1960), 36.

17 Archer Taylor, *The Literary History of Meistergesang* (New York, 1937), 28f.

18 *Ibid.*, 125, 126; see also Wolfgang Stammler, *Von der Mystik zum Barock* (Stuttgart, 1927), 234, "Die Reformation hat neue poetische Kräfte entbunden auf dem Gebiete der geistlichen Lyrik."

19 Karl Goedeke, *Grundriss zur Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung*, II (2nd ed.; Dresden, 1886), 130.

minate in ever-recurring twists of "Zu dieser Frist . . . Herr Jesu Christ . . . ; ohn Fleiss . . . kein Preiss."

When we look at Hans Bentz's hymns from the point of view of poetry, the Meistersinger tradition becomes even more convincing. I cannot agree with Wolkan when he states of Betz, "His art of writing poetry, like that of all the Anabaptists, was acquired from the popular folksongs; for he came from their ranks."²⁰ It is my contention that Betz came from the Meistersingers, for he is expert with most diverse rhyme schemes and his rhythms are pure iambic with frequent interspersals of weak end rhymes. His versification is such that his twenty-four songs show a large variety of meters and an even great multiplication of stanzas:

4 lines	No. 122,	23 stanzas
5 lines	No. 104,	9 stanzas
	No. 121,	25 stanzas
6 lines	No. 88,	11 stanzas
	No. 118,	35 stanzas
7 lines	No. 112,	30 stanzas
	No. 117,	34 stanzas
8 lines	No. 92,	27 stanzas
	No. 105,	33 stanzas
	No. 106,	46 stanzas
	No. 108,	30 stanzas
	No. 110,	28 stanzas
	No. 123,	33 stanzas
9 lines	No. 89,	17 stanzas
	No. 90,	13 stanzas
	No. 100,	1 stanza
	No. 107,	38 stanzas
	No. 109,	24 stanzas
	No. 126,	17 stanzas
10 lines	No. 91,	15 stanzas
12 lines	No. 101,	6 stanzas
	No. 111,	18 stanzas
13 lines	No. 128,	7 stanzas
	No. 81,	20 stanzas

If the folksong of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was predominantly in the four- and eight-line tradition,²¹ Hans Betz seems to show little influence. He has only one hymn with four lines (No. 122), and hymn No. 106 is a mere doubling of the four to eight lines. However, in the ninety-four eight-line stanzas of hymns Nos. 105, 110 and 123, he has the unvarying sequence of 3a 3b 3a 3b 3c 3d 3c 3d.²² The two five-line hymns, No. 104 and 121, are identical in their meter with 4a 4a 3b 4c 3b. This design had many counterparts in its day. The two six-line poems, No. 88 and No. 118, with a total of forty-six strophes, are all in the same 4a 4a 3b 4c 4c 3b design. The hymnodist often gives us a fine mixture of dialectal verb forms and High German nouns, which reaches a poetic climax for instance in the last stanza of No. 118:

Die dieses Lied gesungen han,
 Die seynd in diesem Weinberg schon,
 Den Last hands auf sich g'nommen.
 Gnad, Fried, Freud und Barmherzigkeit,

²⁰ Rudolf Wolkan, as quoted in *ME*, I, 319.

²¹ Stammler, 238; see also Wolfgang Kayser, *Geschichte der Deutschen Ballade* (Berlin, 1936), 62. For a study of the model of the fourteenth-century antecedents of many of the songs of the *Ausbund*, see my study "The Hymns of the Amish *Ausbund*," *MQR*, XXXVI (1962), 39ff., with references to Karl Goedeke and Julius Tittmann, *Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1867); Ludwig Uhland, *Alte Hoch- und Niederdeutsche Volkslieder* (Stuttgart, 1881); L. Erk, and F. M. Boehme, *Deutscher Liederhort* (Leipzig, 1893).

²² Goedeke and Tittmann, IV, 231. The underlined letters indicate weak or feminine end rhymes.

Sieg, Ueberwindung, alle zeit
Wünschen sie allen Frommen. Amen²³

In three hymns, No. 92, 106, 108, he proves his linguistic versatility when he creates 103 stanzas of eight lines with an internal rhyme in every other masculine line. The pattern shows: 2a2a 3b 2c2c 3b 2d2d 3e 2f2f 3e. The final stanza of No. 108 reads:

Der war und ist, zu aller Frist,
Und künfftiglich soll kommen,
Den soll bereit, in Ewigkeit
Loben all G'schlecht und Zungen.
Die Ehr ihm gebt, was lebt und schwebt
Im Himmel und auf Erden,
Dan alle Knie spat unde früh,
Sollen ihm g'bogen werden. Amen

This strophe became a great favorite in the baroque religious lyric through Friedrich von Spee's famous passion hymn:

Bei stiller Nacht, zur ersten wacht
Ein stimm sich gund zu klagen . . .²⁴

Hans Betz pursues this form further but with four additional lines in one of his twelve-line poems, No. 101. Only an accomplished Meistersinger could create the eleven stanzas of this long version: 2a2a 3b 2c2c 3b 2d2d 3e 3e 2f2f 2g2g 3h 2i2i 3h.

Stanza 4 of hymn No. 101 reads thus:

O Herr! gib Kraft, dein's Geistes Saft,
Damit du uns thu laben
Zur Zeit der Noth, o Herre Gott,
Send uns her deine Gaben.
Dann ohn dich ist, zu dieser Frist,
Der Streit mit uns verlohren,
Du hast uns auserkohren,
Zu deiner Ehr, darum, o Herr,
Ist unser Bitt, verlass uns nit,
Sondern thu uns behalten
In deiner Ehr, darum, o Herr,
Ist unser Bitt, verlass uns nit,
Sondern thu uns behalten
In deiner Huld, gib uns Gedult,
Lass die Lieb nicht erkalten.

The poet achieves variation and master of versification again in No. 107 with thirty-eight stanzas of nine lines each in the fanciful and artistic scheme: 4a 2a 3b 4c 2c 3b 2d2d 2e2e 3f:

Also will ich beschlossen hon,
Auch warnen thun
Jung, Alt, Gross unde Kleine,
Dass ihr fliehet den Widerchrist,
Zu dieser Frist,
Wolt vermeiden Peine.
Lässt du nicht stohn, sein falschen Wohn,
Wird dir geleich, der feurig Teich,
Da ewig heul'n und weinen. Amen.

For this metric arrangement one finds an antecedent in the then relatively new Meisterlied, "Ein geistlich Lied der Königin von Ungarn," ca. 1530.²⁵

When Hans Betz composed his presumably first and last songs, *Ausbund* Nos. 81 and 128, each of thir-

²³ *Ibid.*, I, 106, 173.

²⁴ Klein, 139ff.

teen-line stanzas, he molded his poems according to well-known works of his own and prior ages. Archer Taylor writes about this type of poem:

The most interesting of the three epic meters which survive in the Meisterlieder is the stanza used in the Middle High German *Eckenlied*. It is composed of thirteen lines arranged according to the rhyme-scheme aabccddedeffg. The origin, history, and use of this relatively complicated metre, which goes by such names as the "Eckenstrophe," "Bernerton," "Herzog-Ernst-Ton," and, in the terminology of the Meistersinger, "Flammenweiser," are very curious and call for even more investigation than they have received.

Then he adds: "The metrical form is as old as some German verses in *Carmina Burana* of the twelfth century, and later medieval German epics use it freely."²⁶ The *Ausbund* interestingly prefaces No. 81, "Diesz schöne Lied mag ins Berners Ton gesungen werden." As mentioned, this hymn also introduces the older part of the *Ausbund*. I like to believe that Hans Betz learned his art of singing with this hymn and paid his respects to the Meistersingers by using it again in his last song.

The relative popularity of this tune can be surmised from the fact that the *Ausbund* has a number of hymns in the identical metric scheme. Hymns No. 4 and No. 51 likewise indicate the melody of "Herzog Ernst." Hymn No. 3 has no markings, but Nos. 53 and 72 suggest the tune "Ewiger Vater in Himmelreich." This latter tune must therefore be added to the other afore-mentioned listings. In the *Ausbund* register of "songs that can be same melody"²⁷ Hans Betz's hymn No. 81 is listed as singable with Nos. 3, 4, 43, 46, 51 and 72. His hymn No. 128 in the tune, "O Herry Gott begnade mich," is given as the only hymn singable in this tune. This poem by Hans Betz shows strong tetrameters with weak trimeters coupled in pairs such as 4a 4a 3b 3b 4c 3d 3d 4e 4f 4f 3g and occasionally ending 3f 3g 3g. This scheme rivals *Ausbund* No. 97, written by his prison-mate, Michael Schneider, the other prolific singer, and containing the pattern 4a 2a 3b 4c 2c 3b 2d 2d 2e 2e 2f 2f 5f (4f) (which incidentally is identical with *Ausbund* No. 32 by Hans Schlaffer, executed in 1527). Hans Betz wrote only the first stanza of the round, *Ausbund* No. 101, in this meter but with one fewer doubly-rhymed verse.

These longer stanzas must definitely be derivative of Hans Betz's Meistersinger tradition, which must also be said of many other poets of the *Ausbund*. Even if we are not told much about their private lives we assume, however, that soem of the *Ausbund* hymn-makers were craftsmen plying some particular trade, as Hans Betz had done. The rhyme and rhythm patterns of many of the *Ausbund* songsters followed the traditional stanza models. The Meistersingers were adamant in their insistence upon the tripartite structure of the stanza with two equal "Stollen" or "Aufgesang" followed by the "Abgesang." Also each "Lied" had to have at least three strophes. The *Ausbund* collection has only one hymn with but three stanzas (No. 130, a versification of Psalm 130). In contrast *Ausbund* No. 3, with 445 lines divided into thirty-five stanzas of thirteen lines each, fits into the best of Meistersinger narratives.

Hans Betz must unquestionably be regarded as the most gifted, prolific and versatile singer of the Anabaptist cause. His many varied metrical schemes follow the best traditions of his fellow craftsmen. While his diverse patterns prevent too great boredom and monotony, we must enlist him among the skilled versifiers and hymnists of all times. His religious conviction is fervid and theologically well founded.²⁸ This sincerity of purpose and the depth of his moral convictions overcome and outrank whatever stylistic imperfections may occur. Filled with the spirit of the new gospel, enthusiastic in the full awareness of being immediately inspired and guided by his God and Savior, he relies not on supernatural powers through sacraments, but, instead sings out of the strict, personal experience of his righteous faith and ethic of daily life. Hans Betz exemplifies best what Wolfgang Stammeler expressed when he maintains that the vitality of the constantly persecuted Anabaptist shows itself particularly in the rich treasury of song, which in originality deviates so far from the widespread Protestant church-song.²⁹ In the few years between his rebaptism in 1530 and his joining the Brotherhood of Auspitz, Moravia (the home of the Hutterian Brethren), his capture in 1535 and his death in prison in 1537,³⁰ Hans Betz devoted his zeal and skill to creating acceptable expressions for a people like the Old Order Amish, who have followed him for more than 430 years and who use his thoughts and words today as he formulated them so long ago.

25 Goedeke and Tittmann, I, 202.

26 Taylor, 72f.; Goedeke and Tittmann, I, 240-45, have this same meter in a Meisterlied of 1507 by Martin Mayer under the name of "Trimunitas in Herzog Ernsts ton," with 455 lines.

27 *Ausbund*, 821.

28 Wolkan, 32, says of Betz: "In his hymns Betz reveals himself in spite of his honest trade, as a theologically well-trained man.

29 Stammeler, 311.

30 *ME*, I, 319.

The Hymns of Hans Betz

—by Edward Kline

The foregoing article provides an excellent view of Hans Betz's zeal and dedication in bringing his abilities and training to promote the Anabaptist thought and practice. The influence of that effort is still felt among us as we sing his songs. Schreiber mentions that the Amish still use 11 of Betz's songs. The song list used in our own congregation lists 15 of his songs which are used throughout the year. Since most of the songs in the Ausbund are known by their page number rather than by the song number among the Amish (they are given out by page number), I will list Hans Betz's songs by page number for those interested in confirming this.

Page numbers									
435	460	464	470	475	481	530			
535	563	565	576	591	604	614	623		
632	641	673	683	706	712	716	750	762	

Following are three of Betz's songs which were translated by the O.A.L. committee. Since it is hard to retain fine shades of meaning while rhyming and metering, we have opted to do the translations as literally as possible without any effort at rhyming. We hope these translations will provide a testimony of Hans Betz's life and thought to those who do not understand the original German. To those who regularly sing the hymns of Hans Betz, we hope they will help us appreciate them more.

Ausbund #122, page 712

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1.
Praised be God in the highest throne,
Who has chosen us,
Has clothed us with a beautiful coat,
That we are born anew. | 6.
The city He has already prepared,
Where you shall live securely,
He also gives you a new garment,
Indeed of pure silk. |
| 2.
This is the true wedding garment,
With which God adorns His people,
The wedding of the Lamb is already prepared,
To lead the righteous thereto. | 7.
The silk is the justification
Of the holy here on earth,
Whoever now clotheth himself with this,
He must be despised. |
| 3.
Rejoice all you beloved Christians,
That God has received you,
And prepared for you a beautiful hall,
Into which we shall come. | 8.
Blessed is he that is watchful,
And always prepares himself,
and keeps the silk well guarded,
Therewith he is clothed. |
| 4.
To keep with Him the Holy Supper,
Which He has prepared
For them that suffer much affliction,
Striving for His sake. | 9.
Whoever does not clothe himself,
With this pure silk,
The same neglects a great joy,
Eternal punishment he must suffer. |
| 5.
Rejoice, Zion, thou holy Church,
Your bridegroom is near to coming,
Who has made you pure from sin,
The kingdom He has already received. | 10.
Thus has our king indeed,
A garment sprinkled with blood,
Who through grace has received us,
Therefore we will sing praise to God. |

(cont.)

11.

When the king shall break forth,
With the sound of the trumpet,
Then shall be led with him,
All the chosen ones.

12.

All they which have washed their garment,
Sprinkled anew with blood,
They shall go unto the wedding,
The bridegroom shall know them.

13.

For as He himself is clothed,
Thus those whom He has invited,
These He has also with diligence prepared,
Hence no one is able to do Him harm.

14.

Blessed are they that are invited
To the Holy Supper,
And thus remain steadfast unto the end,
In all manner of afflictions.

15.

All they which keep this garment,
Violating it in no way,
For them the Lord has prepared a crown,
Which He will set on them.

16.

Whoever does not have on this garment,
When he king shall come,
The same must stand on the left,
The crown will be taken from him.

17.

He shall bind his hands and feet,
Because he is not clothed,
And cast him into darkness.
Away from this great joy.

18.

Therefore Zion thou holy Church,
What you have received,
Keep this and stay pure from sin,
So you will attain the crown.

19.

No one shall be crowned before the time,
Whoever would gain the crown
Shall heed that he only strives honestly,
With Christ unto the end.

20.

All those enduring here in sorrow,
And thus overcoming,
Who will separate them from the crown?
No man may take this from them anymore.

21.

Praise, honor and glory to God be spoken,
Who clotheth us with silk,
And has also made us worthy,
to suffer for His sake.

22.

As Christ himself has suffered,
When He had to hang on the cross,
Thus fare the righteous now,
They endure great constraint.

23.

We entreat you, O Lord God,
Deliver all your captives,
Support them in every difficulty,
That they attain the crown. Amen.

Ausbund #108, page 604

1.

Christ the Lamb came upon earth,
According to the counsel and will of the Father,
All that God had promised,
This He did fulfill,
As Adam's transgression brought us into
Disfavor and God's wrath,
The same through Jesus Christ
Is reconciled again.

2.

Because of this, the sinful burden
Of man can now be lifted,
Is shown to him, a physician is prepared,
Christ who heals the wounds.
The same has acquired grace
For the people of all nations,
He who would have this, must abstain
From all sin so impure.

(cont. p.604)

3.

Heed God's counsel, when from death
Christ was risen,
And that His resurrection now quickly
Be made known in all lands,
And also grace, as He had
Received from the Father,
He sent His Servant unto all generations,
That they might receive it.

4.

Then also has God's counsel
Commanded here on earth,
That man, His Word, in every place
Shall teach onto repentance.
Who believes on Him, and is baptized,
Shall live eternally,
Who believeth not, is deprived of life,
Damnation will be given to him.

5.

Out of the hearing of christian teaching,
Faith does come forth,
Thereupon baptism is to follow,
Now that man has received God's Word.
The baptism that is in Jesus Christ,
Is a covenant out of a good conscience.
Thereafter man is, in this appointed time,
To refuse Satan's craftiness.

6.

That man henceforth, shall live
In the will of God.
Moreover the duty in baptism occurs,
That man this shall fulfill.
Like as one is submissive
Unto her husband here on earth,
Thus one shall be united indeed
To Christ the Lord in baptism.

7.

Peter says, in the Book of Acts:
Repent, and be ye baptized
On Jesus Christ, the same is,
Who remits sin, heed this,
So you receive, His promise,
The Holy Spirit will be given,
Who here believes on Jesus Christ,
Receives the gift unto Life.

8.

Also baptism is here in our time,
To unite with Jesus Christ.
That man bears fruit, that the Word shall become flesh,
And does remain in him.
Who receives this baptism, unto him will come
Cross, sorrow and suffering,
As it now is Lord Jesus Christ
His members here to allot.

9.

Give ear child of man, from lust and sin
Baptism cannot wash you,
But only gives evidence of purity,
Shall you in Christ comprehend.
His righteousness is the garment,
This you shall put on here,
From all lust, sin and deception,
Your Adam must be cleansed.

10.

Understand the course: as the death takes place
When man denies his flesh,
Then man is from Jesus Christ,
Receiving the life-giving baptism,
The same is called fire and spirit,
John does tell us,
Who alone makes holy and pure
To have fellowship with God.

11.

Who has this baptism is planted
Into the death of Christ,
All his desires being crucified,
Through it is born anew.
This birth has, in Jesus Christ,
Taken place through water and spirit.
Therefore it has by the counsel of God
Been provided for in Christ.

12.

Therefore to us has the Lord Jesus Christ,
Three witnesses here given.
Two are called, water and spirit,
The third, blood, that is suffering.
Like as is done in heaven above
Three in one give witness.
The Father, the Word, everywhere
And the Holy Spirit take heed.

13.

Who wants to gain the Kingdom of God,
Must himself be converted,
As a young child, without sin
Shall he be found.
Therefore through baptism, will man be received
Into the fellowship.
In the church, in which are only
The holy and the pious.

14.

What fellowship is, in Jesus Christ,
Learn to know from the body,
Therein are the members together,
Taking common abode,
So also is it in Jesus Christ,
His church in Him is sealed,
His love is hers alone,
Flowing out through His power.

15.

This fellowship, is alone,
The christian Church, take heed,
Her foundation is the Lord Christ,
Who does now give her power,
Through His Spirit, what she binds,
Is bound before God,
This church is, through Jesus Christ
Binding and remitting sin.

16.

The Scriptures give us the account of Christ,
How He did breathe upon
His disciples, through the Spirit so pure,
And endowed them with this authority,
Whomsoever sins you here remit,
Likewise whose you retain,
The same is already, in heaven
Resolved undividedly.

17.

Understand: the church judges solely
In heavenly matters,
Here in this time, peace and unity
Does she produce in Christ.
Her judgment shall be in the Word alone.
Whoever refuses to be directed by this,
The Lord Jesus Christ teaches us,
To keep him as a heathen.

18.

This church does keep alone,
Godly justice and statutes,
Her fellowship is in Jesus Christ,
Truly in His peace.
Like as a bread has many grains
And are combined together
So is a church of God,
Self it does forsake.

19.

A church of God here cannot be,
Where man in covetousness does live,
For the Lord Christ is not with those who covet.
The devil does give it.
He had the same in possession,
When he did exalt himself
Against God, who had
Made all things living.

20.

Therefore God has cast him out
Indeed into the depths of hell,
Because he desired to be in His likeness
In his kingdom at all times.
For God does not tolerate, what pride worketh,
He must quickly part from him,
His creation shall alone to Him,
Give praise, glory and honor.

21.

Of covetousness, the writing of old informs us,
This you should judge well,
Israel had bread in the wilderness,
That God gave them to eat.
He who gathered more than he ate,
For him it became wormy.
By this bread the greedy faction,
Man does teach to observe.

22.

Ananias also was overtaken in greed,
Through which he deceived himself,
When he offered his money to Peter,
He did not only lie to Peter,
But most of all to the Holy Spirit,
Therefore did he receive
His punishment from God, was to die,
And Judas hanged himself.

23.

Thus God punishes the covetous faction,
That which he had created free,
All that is here in this time:
Who makes it his own,
The same has broken the counsel,
The honor of the Highest he does steal,
Therefore his wage with the rich man
He will have in hell.

24.

Therefore alone, holy and pure,
Shall be the church of God,
As she is then from Jesus Christ,
Through His blood made pure,
Whoever wants to be in the church of Christ,
He must be cleansed,
All that he has, he shall in God
Use to His honor.

25.

Also to be helpful to your neighbor,
According as the gift is given to you,
So that he also, as a member,
May be kept unto life.
Oh, how beautiful it is in Jesus Christ,
Where brethern are together,
In unity, here in time,
Having all things in common.

26.

Members of Christ share together,
Spiritual and natural gifts,
Therefore they, like in the kingdom of God
Have fellowship among themselves,
Such a church, she is alone
Chosen to the honor of God,
She is no respecter of persons,
He has regenerated her.

(cont. p.604)

27.

This church is alone,
Given to Christ as a bride,
Who in this time shuns all sins,
And in purity does live,
O church of God, your marriage keep pure,
Let it not be divided,
The evil one with his doings,
Wants to separate you from Christ.

28.

Therefore turn yourself from his teaching,
Let him not deceive you,
As happened to Eve, who looked
On satan's cunning and lies.
Even tho the serpent strives hard and long,
Do not let yourself be moved,
Follow Jesus Christ at all times,
You will live with Him eternally.

29.

So you have already understood,
Of the church of God,
Which in this time does separate itself,
From every sin impure.
If you want to be in the church,
And have part and fellowship with her,
Follow Jesus Christ, He is the way,
So you will live with Him eternally.

30.

Who was and is, in all time,
And in the future shall come
He shall be praised, in all eternity
By all nations and tongues.
What lives and moves gives honor to Him
In heaven and on earth,
Then every knee sooner or later,
Shall be bowed unto Him. Amen.

Ausbund #110, page 623

1.

Christ the Lord went
Onto a mountain quite certainly,
There he began
To speak to the multitude,
Those who are poor in spirit,
These shall live forever,
God's kingdom taking in.

2.

Poor in spirit, bear in mind,
This is to be resigned,
In doing, forsaking and living
In everyday experiences.
He who does not forsake
House, lands, wife and child,
Hating his own life,
He God's kingdom will not find.

3.

These words Christ does speak,
That man becomes resigned,
His self-will does break
Here on this earth.
Then you will be encompassed
With true resignation,
Attaining the poverty of the spirit,
This worketh repentance and sorrow.

4.

Blessed are they that sorrow,
Because of their besetting sins,
They shall have comfort again,
Through God's Spirit alone,
The same does lift up
The cast down spirit
With humble life,
Gives them to taste of his goodness.

5.

Blessed are they who live
In meekness,
The earth will be given to them,
Understand, after this age,
When God will again make
A new heaven and a new earth.
The former will vanish with a great noise,
And with fire be consumed.

6.

Blessed are they who suffer
Hunger, thirst in this time,
Understand, after God's gifts,
The prepared shall also
Be satisfied from God,
With grace and mercy.
These teach us here
Man should not harbor envy.

(cont. p.623)

7.

Blessed are they who show
Mercy also.
God will draw near to them,
Will again return it to them
At the appointed hour,
When the need will arise,
When he through his mouth,
Will judge the living and dead.

8.

Blessed also are the poor
Of the Lord, altogether.
They will in unison behold,
The face of God clearly.
These have put on
The garment of righteousness,
Sin and slander have fled,
Therefore joy will be theirs.

9.

Blessed are the peaceable
They are the children of God.
The Holy Spirit does live,
In their pure hearts.
Who directs and guides them,
In God's Word alone.
He is their power to fight
Against all besetting sins.

10.

Blessed are they who are,
Persecuted for righteousness.
The Truth does teach us,
Theirs is eternal joy.
Because that they do endure
Cross, sorrow and pain,
Living in God's favour,
Blessed shall they be.

11.

Blessed are you, take notice,
If man shall hate you,
Because of godly living,
Teaches the Lord Christ.
When evil is spoken of you,
So men do lie thereby.
Therefore you shall have joy,
With God is your reward.

12.

So also were persecuted,
The Prophets altogether,
Always those whom God had chosen,
Had to be hated,
For His names sake,
Endured shame and mockery.
Therefore have they fulfilled,
What God has commanded.

13.

Likewise man must also become,
Conformed in the present time,
With cross, suffering and dying,
Unto the Lord Jesus Christ.
Then man does also inherit,
With Him the Father's kingdom
Paul, plainly teaches this,
That man shall become like Him.

14.

First in the suffering
And in righteousness,
So that man shuns all sin,
Here in the present time,
And does confess Christ,
Continuing unto the end,
And then man shall obtain,
The joy after the resurrection.

15.

Thus you have understood
The Gospel.
That Christ to the godly
Speaks, They who from sins abstain,
These are truly come,
Into the vineyard of His.
Laboring out of sincerity,
The works of pure Truth.

16.

The light of Truth so pure.
Is Christ the Lord himself.
That in the congregation of the holy,
Shall shine in the present time.
So man does see the works,
That God shall be glorified.
Those that proceed out of faith,
Reach out to His glory.

17.

These works come only
Out of the power of pure faith.
It was expressed by the faithful one,
Abraham it was.
Faith produces the deed,
Which God has pleasure in.
Therefore he also does live,
As it stands written.

18.

The Scriptures also do say,
Where faith is effective,
It has the work of love.
This is the foundation of Jesus Christ.
Where faith does not produce,
The works of righteousness,
It is dead, understand,
James writes this.

19.

Christ gave witness
In the Gospel,
Of the works, take notice,
Which they had done.
I have endured thirst and hunger,
Was naked and in prison,
You have refreshed me,
Visited, clothed and comforted me.

20.

The works of the just, so pure,
They did not claim as their own.
Therefore they speak as one,
Lord, where have we done it?
The Lord said; What you have
Done unto the least of mine,
With such gifts,
Is done unto Me alone.

21.

The Holy Spirit, take notice,
Now unto his honor,
Produces the life of the just.
Therefore it is the teaching of Christ,
That God will reward the works,
So that there will be grace upon grace,
Which all believers have,
Through the merits of Christ's death.

22.

You shall give attention to me,
What I say unto you,
Not out of reward of works,
Does man attain God's rest,
But through grace alone,
Which was earned
By Christ, for his believers,
That they may live through grace.

23.

Unto God the Lord, take notice,
Nobody can give anything,
It be works or life,
That He take pleasure in,
When the same is done
Out of human choosing.
God does not acknowledge this,
Though man appears to be so holy.

24.

On this does God take pleasure,
That man is submissive,
In all his gifts,
The honor gives only to him.
Therefore you shall pray
Lord, your will be done at all times,
Keep me in your peace
And in mercy.

25.

Even so you shall desire,
From God in eternity
Lord, that I only may honor,
Your name in this time,
And live alone unto you,
In true righteousness,
What you would then give me,
It be joy or sorrow.

26.

For this reason live steadfastly,
In God's law and covenant.
To Him always give honor
Out of sincerity of the heart.
He will fulfill in you,
What he has promised,
If you live after His will.
You will obtain His kingdom through grace.

27.

On the other hand, God will cast
Indeed into the torment of hell,
They who here have forsaken,
The law of love so pure,
Likewise have broken,
The peace and His covenant,
God does not leave unpunished,
Casts them into the pit of hell.

28.

Lord God in your kingdom,
Unto you be praise, honor and glory,
Always and forever,
Through the Holy Spirit,
Through whom you do lead us,
Into your goodness and grace,
Now and in eternity.
Blessed be God. Amen.

Ausbund #136, page 791

(author unknown)

1.

Must there now be a parting,
So shall God accompany us,
Each one to his own place,
Let us here diligently give heed,
To have our life approved,
According to God's Word.

2.

That shall we desire,
And not become slack,
The end will come quickly,
We know not about tomorrow,
Therefore live with concern,
The danger is manifold.

3.

Consider well the articles,
That the Lord commands to watch,
To be prepared at all times.
For if we will be found,
Resting and sleeping in sin,
It will be grievous for us.

4.

Therefore prepare yourselves in time,
And avoid all sin,
And live in righteousness.
This is the true watchfulness,
By which man is able to come,
To everlasting Salvation.

5.

Here with commit yourself to God,
He desires us, at all times,
Through his grace alone,
To lift up to eternal joy,
That we after this life,
Come not to eternal sorrow.

6.

In closing it is my desire,
Remember me in the Lord,
As I am also minded,
Now watch all together,
Through Jesus Christ, Amen.
There must be a parting.