

Many of us remember the fraternal organizations. Membership in lodges was held on a level of importance next to church membership. As one walks about the cemetery it can be easily seen that the Oddfellows, the Patriotic Sons of America, and other such fraternal bodies satisfied the needs of social, civic, and patriotic comradeship. In addition, the lodges afforded the members welfare benefits. Contributions, "dues" to the "benefits fund" built up a tidy treasury which paid generous dividends in case of a member's illness or to his family upon his death.

Lodges existed in Summit Station, and Friedensburg and while such groups were for men only, women, too, had their counterparts and both groups had their meetings in the same "lodge hall."

The lodges as such began to fade out of existence in the past two decades. Few remain. Most have merged with groups in Pine Grove, or Schuylkill Haven. In this manner the yesteryear fraternity is linked to today for those who retain membership.

It is generally conceded that the Workmen's Compensation Laws, personal insurance programs, welfare organizations, and more recently Social Security programs have provided the "death knell" to the fraternal organizations which served as beneficial associations.

"LOVE," IS WHAT THE CHURCH IS ALL ABOUT. "IT IS SAD BUT TRUE THAT AS THE FAMILY FARM DISAPPEARS FROM OUR BELOVED LAND, THE RURAL CHURCH IS DISAPPEARING WITH IT."

CHURCHES



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. John's Lutheran church is one of the oldest heritages of our community. Its presence reminds us of the many sacrifices entailed in the development of the area in which we live.

The early history of Wayne Township is a story of courageous people who came here seeking homes in a new world. Much of the history of this period is written in blood for massacres were not uncommon to the early settlers. Our forebearers encountered Indians who regarded them as trespassers on their land.

The early settlers who came here brought the Bible and the Catechism with them. Originally worship on Sundays and on holy days was held in a home where neighbors would gather. This is the religious heritage of our community born out of devotion and a need for God's guidance. Needless to say we have come a far way in 200

years of history. If our religious life had progressed as our community life has, our present church would be far too small to accommodate all our people. In the year 1976 when we are reviewing our past history we should be reminded of this great religious heritage that we so proudly call ours with a deep sense of humility and an awareness of our dependency upon the same God who inspired our early settlers.

Early in our national life George Washington was inaugurated as the first president of our country in the year 1789. At this same time the settlers of our community began planning for a church to serve their spiritual needs. St. John's Union Congregation was organized in 1791 but it was not until the fifth Sunday after Easter in 1797 that the first church was dedicated by Rev. Henry Hertzel of the Reformed Church and Rev. Andrew Schultz of the Lutheran Church.

The first church was a long structure. It probably was not located at the same place where our present church stands.

On Oct. 5, 1803, the Lutheran Congregation united with four other congregations—Zion's Red Church, St. Paul's Summer Hill, Salem and St. James, forming a Lutheran Parish.

Rules and regulations were drawn up to govern the new parish formed. The incorporation petition was signed by Jacob Schaeffer, Trustee; George Nagle and Peter Laubenstein, elders; John Kemmerling and Micheal Schaeffer, deacons; in June 1813. A congregational meeting was held and it was decided to repair and beautify the church. The total cost of the renovation was \$611.00 and the amount collected was \$633.95. The incorporation of the two congregations (Lutheran and Reformed) for the purpose of public worship was finalized by the State Department at Harrisburg on July 3, 1835. The present church building was erected in 1868 at a cost of \$5,481.28.

The Sunday School was organized on May 13, 1852. The first enrollment was 50 members. John Mullins was the first superintendent.

Since many of our early members were of German descent, either German or Pennsylvania Dutch was generally spoken in church and Sunday School. The Sunday School had a class of elderly members who heard the lesson in German each Sunday for many years. The last teacher who taught in German was Mr. Daniel Ney. After his untimely death in 1919 German teaching was discontinued.

Church services were held in the morning for two successive Sundays and then in the afternoon for two successive Sundays. The morning services were conducted in German with the liturgy, hymns, and sermon all in the German language. This practice was discontinued during World War I.

In 1902 the matter of installing a pipe organ was discussed and after a very controversial discussion the issue rested until 1903 when a final vote was taken with the vote favoring a pipe organ rather than the more common reed organ. The Andrew Carnegie fund helped to pay for the organ by donating \$200 which was one half of the total cost. This pipe organ was used until 1960 when it was replaced by an electronic organ.

In 1925 the present church was renovated. Until this time there had been no center aisle in the church auditorium. There were two entrances to the auditorium, one on either side, which led to small aisles toward the front of the church. A panelled divider through the center of the auditorium divided the church into two sections. The right side was generally considered to be the proper seating place for the men and boys of the congregation while the women and girls sat on the left side. This divider was removed during the renovation program and a center aisle was provided. The existing pews were reused in a new arrangement and new pulpit furniture was installed. The Rev. Charles Brown who was the Reformed pastor at this time made some of the furniture. The interior wooden shutters that were used to shade the windows were removed and stained glass windows were installed. The remodeled church was dedicated in November, 1925.

In 1960 the church was again remodeled with new pews, pulpit furniture, ceiling, lights, floor covering being installed and the entire interior repainted. The main entrance and vestibule were rearranged, flagstone was laid at the entrance and new doors were installed. These improvements were dedicated the same year.

The progress of the church over this long period of time reflects the devotion of the dedicated members who have worshipped here over a period of 195 years and have called this their church.

The union of St. John's Lutheran Congregation and the Reformed Congregation which was later known as the United Church of Christ was dissolved by mutual agreement in 1969. The church is presently owned by the Lutheran Congregation. For the first time in the long history of the church its entire membership is being served by one pastor. The present pastor is Rev. Richard A. Olson II.

Ministers who served at St. John's Lutheran Church are: Andrew Schultz, Daniel Schaeffer, John Knoske, George Minnig, William Minnig, Fred Conrad, August Joekel, Nathan Jaeger, T. Bristonbach, Elias Henry, A. Roeller, Joel Grimm, Hoppe, G. F. Woerner, P. Jacoby, W. H. Kuntz, Edwin H. Smoll, Howard H. Krauss, Clarence A. Steigerwalt and James Seifert.

In former years St. John's Church was a member of the Friedensburg Parish, comprised of Zions' Red Church and St. Paul's Summer Hill, with the parsonage in Schuylkill Haven which was centrally located for the three churches. Since the former parish was dissolved St. John's was without a parsonage.

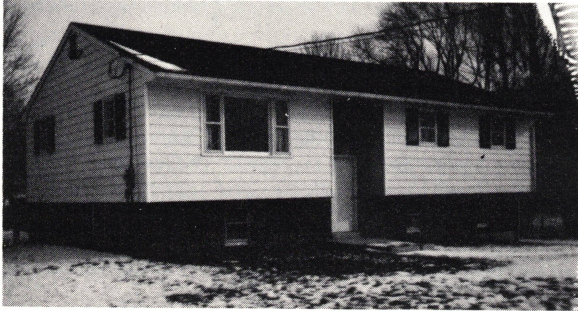
In April, 1974 the members of St. John's Lutheran Church purchased a home, to be used as a parsonage from, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Moyer. This lovely home situated in a beautiful setting in the Long Run Valley, located only a short distance from the church has added greatly to the convenience of the pastorate.

The cemetery adjoining the church remains a union cemetery and is maintained by a Cemetery Board of three members from each denomination. It has been incorporated as St. John's Union Cemetery of Wayne Township.

St. John's Cemetery has had many changes during the years. Records of early burials are not available but church records do record that the first death and burial was Peter Schaeffer who died May 2, 1804 at age 17 yrs., 5 mos., 13 days. Other deaths and burials for the years following are not available. In 1896 a cemetery committee was appointed to have a draft made of the cemetery but no further records are available until 1923 when perpetual

care for burial lots was begun. At this time burial certificates were cataloged and all burial records have been recorded from that date. A new section for burial lots was laid out in 1965 and new drafts were made.

Today the cemetery association has a contract for the opening of new graves. This work can now be done in less than two hours by the use of equipment especially designed for opening graves. For many years this work was done by hand using a shovel and a bar. Winter weather was no deterrent and funerals were never delayed because of inclement weather. At one time pall bearers were responsible for the opening of the grave. The old custom was to line the graves with brick, then a rough box was set in to receive the casket, and finally a long flag stone was used to cover this "vault".



ST. JOHNS LUTHERAN PARSONAGE

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



ST. JOHN'S U.C.C.



To record the history of St. John's United Church of Christ is an intricate task; several factors which enter into this authentic narrative are unique.

The St. John's United Church of Christ "Reformed" Congregation was organized in 1791 and existed as a union church with St. John's Lutheran from 1796-1967. During this period a new church had been erected and extensive renovations made. This union was dissolved and is today known as St. John's Lutheran Church.

A second factor in this narrative is that of the English Protestant Union Church, which had its beginning on March 5, 1859, when a group of interested citizens met in the home of Mrs. George Witman in Friedensburg to formulate plans for the erection of a new church. Soon after ground was purchased the former church was built and dedicated on October 30, 1859.

Three denominations worshipped together in harmony, namely; The Evangelical Association, The United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Lutheran. In 1885 the Lutherans ceased it's function as a group and in 1919 the United Brethren discontinued services. The Evangelical Congregation continued services until the early 1960's, when due to decreased membership the congregation was then dissolved.

The English Protestant Union Church in Friedensburg was vacant at that time and was offered as a gift to the St. John's U. C. C. Congregation and was accepted by a unanimous vote at a meeting held on November 26, 1967 with Dr. Slinghoff presiding.

Also there was now the dissolution of St. John's Lutheran and St. John's U. C. C. congregations. A meeting was held by both congregations on June 22, 1969 for this purpose, a vote being taken at this time, and counted on June 29, 1969 in favor of dissolution.

On November 9, 1969 A. U. C. C. congregational meeting was held to present to the congregation the building program. The vote was taken in favor of accepting the program outlined by the Building Committee.

The contract papers and agreements were signed on April 16, 1970 and ground-breaking ceremonies were held April 19, 1970. Construction for the rebuilding of the church was begun and continued into the fall of the year. Special services for the laying of the cornerstone were held on September 27, 1970, and the first services were held in the new church on Thanksgiving November 25, 1970.

These are the roots of St. John's U. C. C. and it is with much pride that the members of its congregation and residents of Friedensburg behold its graceful lofty spired and high towered church overlooking the village.

It is very difficult for us in this modern world to comprehend fully the reverence and devotion which the founders of our early church had. Central of course was not a building, but a place set aside for the worship of Jesus Christ, who revealed the Living God.

To worship through music was an expression of faith. From the earliest time to the present, there has always been a need to praise and to worship the Lord through song and music and the two have added joy to our worship.

Through the faithful endeavors of our organist, and choir director, Connie Lindenmuth, the Senior, the Junior, and the Cherub Choirs' splendid music is rendered at all church services.

A dedicated and devoted auxiliary to the church is the "Willing Workers". It's creed is one of service and devotion. Hardly any activity or improvement has been engaged in, which has not found its Ladies in the forefront to bring the task to fruition.

Other organizations are the Altar Guild, Youth Fellowship, and the Sunday School Department.

Present members of the Consistory are; Elders, Larry Breneman, Arthur Snyder and Sarah Ferrebee. Deacons; Ronald Rhen, Robert Morgan and Richard Nagle, Trustees; Robert Roeder, Earl Yeich and Ray Brown, Sunday School Superintendents; Harvey Warner, Jr. for Adult Department and Sarah Ferrebee for the Children's Department.

St. John's present pastor (since 1967) is the Reverend Howard R. Souder, a man of dynamic personality, devoted to his church and his community. He is an inspiration to all who work with him.

Pastors who have served ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Rev.	John Rubright	1791- ?
	William Ingold	
	Philip Mayer	1809-1856
	Henry Wagner	1857- ?
	J. P. Stine	5 years - dates not available
	I. E. Graeff	dates not available
	Eli E. Heister	6 years - dates not available
	Brocadus Metzgar	dates not available
	Willoughby Donat	1886-1905
	Samuel E. Moyer	1905-1906
	Dennis Sipple	1907-1920
	Charles H. Brown	1920-1926
	Eneas B. Messner	1926-1934
	Lee D. Loos	1935-1942
	Elmer E. Fahringer	1942-1948
	A. Levan Zechman D.D.	1949-1966
	Howard R. Souder	1967-

Three sons of St. John's were ordained in the Christian Ministry: Wm. Herman Dietrich, former pastor of the Gowen City Charge and now retired; and Reynold Ziegler, now pastor of St. Peter's U. C. C. of Rebersburg, Pa., and Raymond Zechman, now deceased, last a missionary in Africa.

The adjoining cemetery is cared for by the church under the supervision of a cemetery board consisting of Robert Morgan, Lewis Brown, Carl Frantz, Clarence Yeich and Paul Yeich.

ST. MARK'S (BROWN'S) CHURCH

Between the Blue Mountain, so-called because of the hazy bluish appearance and the Second Mountain on a well defined range of several miles known as the "Summer Hill" is located St. Mark's Church outlined in unsurpassing beauty for the lover of natural scenery. From almost any elevated position one has the most sublime view of nature's handiwork.

The church is located on the boundary line of Wayne and Washington Township. Naturally it has retained the attributes with which it was begun - a church whose membership represent "men of the soil".

To understand the roots of St. Mark's more fully we must go back to the early development of the churches that at one time comprised the Friedensburg charges—Salem's (Hetzels) dedicated in 1797; St. John's (Friedensburg) dedicated in 1797; and St. Paul's (Summer Hill) dedicated in 1787. These three churches are the parents of St. Mark's (Brown's) Church which was founded in 1891 by worthy christians in the community who were faced with both distance and means of transportation to one of the other churches.

At a meeting held on June 14, 1891 by George Brown, Israel Ney, Joseph R. Ney, John Kershner, and others it was determined to erect a church within easy communicating distance for persons who resided in the area.

The site was selected whereon the church was to be erected. The plot of ground was purchased from Henry Brown. The "new" officers elected to the consistory of the church were: President George Brown, Vice-President Israel Ney, Secretary Joseph Ney, and Treasurer John M. Kershner.

The cornerstone for this church was placed on Sept. 20, 1891. By-laws were adopted and consistories elected for each congregation. At a meeting on Sept. 16, 1891 it was first recorded that the Rev. Willoughby Donat, Reformed pastor installed the first consistory while the Rev. E. H. Smoll, Lutheran pastor installed the first Lutheran Council. The Rev. Willoughby Donat, the First Reformed pastor, was elected unanimously by the members on Sept. 19, 1891. He lived in Schuylkill Haven and his call was effective on March 6, 1892. While the Rev. E. S. Small was the first Lutheran pastor of the Lutheran congregation, records as to the date of his call were not available.

The men who made up the first Reformed Consistory were: John J. Moyer and John A. Brown, Elders; Monroe Moyer and George W. Kershner, Deacons; and Jacob Moyer and Abraham Kershner, Trustees. Names of the first Lutheran Council are not on any available records.

The early Sunday School was held in the Washington Band Hall, which was located at the foot of the hill to the north of the church, this may have helped to decide the site of St. Mark's "Brown's" Church.

In any event from evidence at hand it can be assumed that the Washington Band Hall served as a Sunday School for many years prior to moving up another hill. On June 15, 1892, when a special consecration service was held and the Rev. J. H. Umbenhen, Lutheran pastor from Pottsville preached in German on the text from Genesis 28:17 for the forenoon service, and the Rev. C. E. Bartholomew, Reformed minister from Cressona preached in English on the text from Genesis 28:17. (Note: Both pastors used the same text.)

The church being completed a special consecration service was held on Oct. 2, 1892 in the forenoon at which time the Rev. J. Gruhler preached on I Peter 2:5 in German language. The Rev. C. E. Bartholomew preached on I Cor. 3:9 in the English language in the afternoon.

A volume might be used to print out the many physical changes which have taken place at St. Mark's. It was in the beginning a simple structure, but to it in these eighty-five years have been added the many conveniences which a modern civilization has created.

The persons who are presently serving on the U.C.C. consistory are Jacob Moyer, Carl Wildermuth, Ray Brown, Carl Herring, Pauline Trumbo, Luther Fessler, Ernest Freeman, Harry Schappell, and Florence M. Webber.

Currently the Lutheran Council consists of the following: Earl Herring, Arlene Moyer, Florence Manbeck, Lester Moyer, Pearl Herring, and Horace Fisher, Ivan Manbeck, Treasurer of Joint Council and Consistory.

MINISTERS WHO HAVE SERVED 1891 - 1976

U.C.C. Pastors

Rev. Willoughby Donat
Rev. Samuel Moyer
Rev. Dennis Sipple
Rev. Chas. H. Brown
Rev. Eneas B. Messner
Rev. Lee D. Loos
Rev. Elmer Fahringer
Rev. A. Levan Zechman

LUTHERAN Pastors

1891-1904	Rev. E.H. Smoll	1892-1895
1905-1906	Rev. H.B. Strodash	1895-1899
1907-1920	Rev. H.M. Schofer	1900-1906
1920-1926	Rev. W.H. Kramlich	1907-1909
1926-1934	Rev. Geo Kirsche	1911-1912
1935-1942	Rev. A. H. Klick	1912-1920
1942-1948	Rev. E. A. Weber	1921-1925
1948-1966	Rev. M.N. Kipps	1926-1940



ST. MARK'S "BROWN'S" CEMETERY

The cemetery adjacent to St. Mark's Church is first mentioned with the purchase of the bell. It's tolling was first for the funeral of the late Joseph Schaeffer who is buried in the well-kept "God's Acre". It is fitting that it be kept a self-perpetuating care that one need not fear that it may become unsightly and that another country church need not be maintained for the sake of perpetuating the cemetery.

Additional ground was purchased from John A. Freeman in 1930, and again in 1960 from Guy W. Brown.

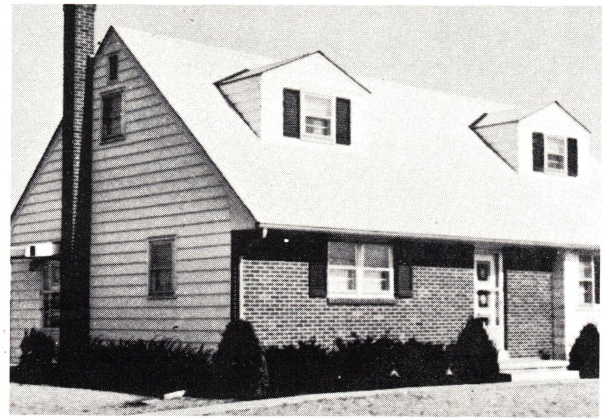
It was noted above that the bell tolled for the death of Joseph Schaeffer, however, the first interment was that of George Fessler, who died on February 11, 1893.

The Perpetual Fund was instituted in 1930. This endeavor is an aid in keeping the cemetery beautiful and shows our concern for caring for the last resting place for departed members. It is obvious that prior to 1930 families cared for their own plots.

Those who served in military units during past wars are honored appropriately by the representative veterans groups. In recent years the Amvets, Post, Summit Station, has provided memorial services for their honored comrades.



REEDSVILLE CHURCH - 1941



THE PARSONAGE



HISTORY OF REEDSVILLE CHURCH

On January 1, 1869, the Evangelical Church of Wayne Township was organized under the direction of an official board consisting of William Fehr, President; Charles W. Reed, Secretary; Elias Reed, Treasurer; Jacob Wommer, and Peter Reed. These men along with others were associating themselves together in order that they might worship God and study his word in accordance with the rules and discipline of the Evangelical Association.

In this early church, only male members in full standing were permitted to vote. The services from the founding of the church until 1875 were held in the old church building which was known as the Meeting House. This building stood on the west end of the cemetery directly north of the present church building.

At a trustee meeting on January 1, 1875, it was decided to purchase land for the construction of a second church building and the enlargement of the cemetery. The cost of land and surveying was \$82.50. During the year of 1875 this second building, known now as the "old Church", was completed.

The first remodeling of the church was done during the nineties. In 1890 the church was painted outside and papered in the basement. In 1893 the upstairs was remodeled and a new horse shed was built.

The first great setback was suffered by the church during the nineties with the division of the denomination. In 1897 the congregation separated from the Evangelical Association and Rev. N. A. Barr was instrumental in buying back the property. The name of the new congregation was, "The Bethesda United Evangelical Church."

In 1898 the first insurance on the church was purchased. The valuation of the church was \$225.00. In 1903 an organ was purchased for the Sunday School at a cost of \$3.00. In 1925 the sanctuary of the church was varnished and papered. The stained glass windows also replaced the plain ones. In 1934 it was decided to remove the tall steeple and replace it with a shorter one.

In the spring of 1948 the decision was made to once again improve and remodel. A project, completed in 1949, saw the outside of the church shingled and painted, the installation of a new oil furnace, new carpeting and painting inside. Total cost of these improvements was \$4,597.00.

It was in 1949 that land one half mile north of the church on Rt. 183 was purchased for use as a picnic grove. In the spring of that year, the men of the church built a social hall at the grove.

Renovations to the Sunday School room at the cost of \$800.00 were made in 1955. The next year inlaid linoleum was installed and new pews were purchased. At this time the Sunday School was divided with the children meeting downstairs and the adults upstairs. The Girl's Chorus undertook the project of purchasing an organ for the church in 1958.

The need for expansion became evident and in 1958 three acres of land along Rt. 183 were purchased at a cost of \$3,000.00. In 1963 ground was broken for the construction of a parsonage. By 1966 the \$22,000.00 parsonage was paid for.

In 1967 a final improvement on the "old church" was made. Several men of the church worked together to build a nursery in the front of the Sunday School room.

Due to overcrowding and to structural deficiencies in the "old church" a far-reaching step of faith was taken when the church Planning Committee was appointed on February 9, 1965 to tackle the question of future physical expansion. On April 21, 1968, the congregation approved a master plan for development and building guide lines presented by the Evangelical Church Building Corporation of South Bend, Indiana. In March of 1969, with \$4,000.00 in the building fund, the cornerstone was laid in the present 50x96', \$225,000.00 structure. Great joy and much praise to God was evident on that August 1969 Sunday when the congregation worshipped for the first time in their new church home.

On February 18, 1974 the Church Extension Planning committee was appointed to deal with the need for further Sunday School expansion as predicted by the E.C.B.C. A special congregational meeting on July 14, 1974 approved contacting Church Growth Services International, the new name of the E.C.B.C. for survey and studies preliminary to the construction of a proposed Christian Education building. On March 2, 1975, a 3.8 acre parcel of land north of the church was purchased for \$10,000 to make this expansion possible. At present, the studies continue and expectation mounts for the new facilities which shall increase the church's ability to minister.

Almost one hundred and one years ago the "old Church" was built. God's record lists the faithful who over the past 101 years have labored to keep Reedsville Church a place of worship, prayer, study, and evangelism. Now from the "new church" we look ahead and pray that until our Saviour returns, we shall continue faithfully for His glory.

MINISTERS SERVING THE CHURCH

Rev. Krecker	Rev. Sterner	Rev. H. J. Kline	Rev. C. W. Barner
Rev. Nights	Rev. N. A. Barr	Rev. H. C. Lutz	Rev. J. E. Eckhart
Rev. Rights	Rev. L. J. Guinther	Rev. H. W. Becker	Rev. J. A. Weaver
Rev. Egge	Rev. J. K. Freed	Rev. R. M. Zufall	Rev. R. F. Christman
Rev. Meddler	Rev. J. M. Shoop	Rev. J. L. Ferguson	Rev. R. M. Daneker
Rev. B. H. Miller	Rev. A. S. Mengel	Rev. T. E. Paul	Rev. F. H. Schock
Rev. Yeachel	Rev. Wingert	Rev. V. L. Cappel	Rev. J. O. Williams
Rev. Haman	Rev. S. A. Heisey	Rev. George Chambers	Rev. N. W. Dixon
Rev. J. S. Overholster	Rev. A. S. Mengel	Rev. E. A. Troup	
Rev. E. J. Miller			

DE BINDER'S CHURCH

In a valley of great beauty, walled on the south by the Blue Mountain, about two miles west of Route I83, on Route 895 was located De Binder's Church of God, German Eldership. It was built entirely of stone by Joseph DeBinder, who was also the founder. Rev. F. W. Berkheiser was the first pastor, and Rev. Walter Schaeffer the last, serving the congregation from 1924-1929, when due to rather small membership, services were discontinued at DeBinder's. On August 8, 1938 the church was struck by lightening and burned. The building was razed in the 1940's and the stones were used to wall the banks of the Schuylkill River in Schuylkill Haven. All that remains at the site is a small cemetery.



ST. PETER'S CHURCH & CEMETERY

The site of the former St. Peter's Church is located along Scheithauer's Road leading off the Sweet Arrow Lake Road three-fourths of a mile west of Cressona.

The church a one room wooden building with a few steps up the front, had a center aisle, with a circle in the center for a pot belly stove. The size of the room was about 27 x 15 feet. Wooden benches were on both sides of the aisle. There was one step up to the pulpit, with a lectern on the right and an organ on the left side, which was later vandalized. The above description was given by Mr. William Allison of Panther Valley whose grandfather was a superintendent of the Sunday School.

No evidence of the former church remains at the site today. The church was a Lutheran and Reformed Congregation. One of our older residents, Mr. Howard Stump, age 89, recalls that services were held regularly in this church during his boyhood days. It is believed that services were discontinued shortly after 1900. The building stood vacant for a number of years and was removed during the past forty years.

From a copy of the original deed to the congregation we have been able to ascertain the following information: The church property was originally part of a land grant dated March 22, 1740. The owner who sold the property to the church was Mr. George Weigner. Mr. Weigner granted a warrant to the trustees of the German United Congregations of Lutheran and Reformed Protestants for a parcel of 22 acres, 152 perches. A deed for this purchase was issued from the Surveyor General's Office of Pennsylvania on May 8, 1852, and was signed by the Governor of Pennsylvania, William Bigler.

The purchase price of the land was Twenty-five dollars and seventy-five cents paid in full by the trustees, Daniel Bartolet, Anthony Yeich and Jacob Rauch.

The properties adjoining this tract were owned by William Hepler, John Zachman, William Phillips and Jacob Eiler.

The deed stipulated that "the Trustees and their successors in trust for the Lutheran and Reformed Congregations are to have and to hold this land forever.

"Free and clear of all restrictions as to mines, royalties, quit unto or otherwise, excepting and reserving only a fifth part of all Gold and Silver ore, for the use of the Commonwealth, to be delivered at the pit's mouth clear of all charges."

Munsells History of Schuylkill County tells of a Reformed Church standing in Wayne Township, slightly west of Cressona, with the above name; that some sort of organization existed in 1847, and that in 1852 or 1853 the congregation bought seventy-two acres of land, and erected a church which was dedicated May 15th. of the latter year. It was abandoned years later.

Mrs. Ella Zerby Elliott seemed to think that St. Peter's early congregation was formed between 1780-1790 and that only a schoolhouse was erected and the meetings were held in it. A house owned by Nicholas Lang stood not far from the site of St. Peter's Cemetery.

We believe that there was some sort of early congregation in the vicinity possibly quite early; such evidence as is at hand points, however, to meetings at Lang's house or in a schoolhouse. Until further evidence is at hand we shall have to consider the building of 1853 the earliest actual church on the property, although burials were made at a far earlier date.

ST. PETER'S CEMETERY

A short time ago, the area now identified as the St. Peter's Church Cemetery in Wayne Twp., was covered with dense overgrowth of bushes and trees. Today, the area is cleared and various old tombstones including that of Captain Conrad Minnich, who served during the Revolutionary War, and his wife, Elizabeth Zerbe Minnich, are clearly visible.

Many of the head stones covered with ground, broken and are scattered on the cemetery. Some of the remaining tombstones are written in German and represent burial dates as early as 1799.

From several sources we have found the following facts in regard to Captain Conrad Minnich. He was born in the Tulpehocken region of Berks County, on Nov. 28, 1740. He was the son of Peter Minnich, and with his father and



brother, George, crossed the Blue Mountain and made a pioneer settlement not far from the present town of Pine Grove. This was before the first Indian war. The warrant for the land was dated March 23, 1750.

During the Indian invasion, the family was again driven to seek refuge south of the mountain. His father, Peter Minnich and brother George, did get back to Pine Grove, however, Conrad came back to the old settlement location. He married Elizabeth Zerby, daughter of Johann Peter Zerby, at this time.

After living here for a few years, he sold the tract to Enoch Weaver in 1772, and bought two tracts, in the area where the Seven Stars Hotel now stands. Here he built a hotel in 1790, which consisted of a humble log cabin for the housing and entertainment of the few hardy woodsmen who journeyed to and fro in search of work and land to settle upon.

As our records reveal, prior to the hotel at Seven Stars, Minnich apparently served as a captain of the Continental Lone Company during the Revolutionary War. His company consisted of men from the northeast section of Pine Grove Township and part of Brunswick Twp., County History books reveal the date of May 17, 1777, as his discharge date from the Army.

Attorney William Mosolino, recent owner of the cemetery plot, has given the deed to the Mahantongo Chapter of the DAR. Since the DAR Chapter lacks sufficient funds to handle the restoration project, the Wayne Twp. Lions Club and the Wayne Twp. Boy's Scouts are giving their support as a Bicentennial goal. The Wayne Twp. Supervisors are sympathetic to the efforts and it is hoped that by late spring of 1976, the cemetery landmark will be completely restored and a dedication ceremony can be held.

Upon completion of the restoration, the DAR Chapter anticipates deeding the property to the Wayne Twp. supervisors to insure its maintenance.

SCHOOLS

The early settlers of our township were not here long before they became concerned with the schooling of their children. The children were usually taught in church buildings. Later log school houses were erected.

Building of the "Pay schools" from logs followed meetings of farmers who had children to educate. Land was donated and a committee appointed to fix the pay rate and hire the teacher. The teacher's salaries varied between ten and twelve dollars a month.

The school term lasted two months with classes held six days a week. Teachers were not required to have much learning. They traveled from school to school and boarded with families.

Tuition for students was 75¢ a month, plus a payment for fuel of \$1 a month. The textbooks were a primer, arithmetic, testament, reader and copy book.

The Germans wanted their children to learn their mother tongue-not English. This later was the chief cause of their protests to the establishment of public schools.

Out settlers were Quaker, Swedish and mostly German. These three groups were interested first in religion and second in seeing that their children learned the language of the parents. The school and the Church were usually together. Very often the Church served as the school and the minister as the teacher.

In 1834, the "Free School Act", creating the public school system, was passed. It may seem strange, in light of the present standing of Pennsylvania's public school system, but the proposal for a school system, open to everyone and supported by the taxes on all, was met by voter opposition.

Farmers came to the voting place armed and threatened those who voted in favor of the free school. They were trying to protect their heritage of language and religion in the only manner they could.

Voting was conducted with ballots consisting simply of a sheet of paper with the words "For Common Schools" and "Against Common School" written on it. The paper was laid upon a table. Each voter put a stroke after the words "For" or "Against" to signify his intention.

The very farmers who at first used threats of violence to defeat the public school system were in later years tricked into voting for the system themselves.

Because of their stubborn adherence to the German language many could not read English. Boosters for the "Free School" made them believe that in marking their ballots "Against" when actually they were voting "For" the common school.

Many years of bitterness followed. In 1893 when a law was passed to provide free books for all students and the public school system became completely free, practically all the opposition had disappeared.

