

INTRODUCTION

SCHWARTZWALD CHURCH REGISTER

This church record book, a small folio bound in half calf, with 200 pages of written records, on old hand made paper with the water mark "I.C." (John Copeland), was purchased from a dealer in second hand books in the summer of 1939 and is at the time of writing (November 1939) in the hands of C.W. Unger Pottsville, Pa. The corners of the binding are either broken or missing, but the contents are still in fairly good condition.

The title page reads:

"Tauf und Kirchen Buch vor die Reformirte Hochdeutsche Kirche und Gemeinde in den so genannten Schwarzwald in Berks County in die provintz Pensylvanien, Reading d. 19ten Martz 1781.

J.W.Boos,
V.D.M.

The contents are as follows:

Title, 1 leaf.

Baptisms, 162 pp., ca. 3500, (May 13, 1781 - 1809)

Burials, 56 pp., ca. 1300, (Mar. 9, 1782- Oct. 1, 1807)

Marriages, 62 pp., ca. 2100 (June 5, 1781- Mar. 10, 1782)
(May 13, 1783 - 1810)

All of the material, covering a period of thirty years, is in the hand writing of the Rev. Johann Wilhelm Boos, of Reading. His German is fairly consistent and for the most part legible enough excepting entries made during the years 1809 and 1810. He is said to have failed mentally during the last years of his life and these last entries are very confused and in many cases entirely uncertain. We have arranged them as well as possible, but warn readers of their uncertainty. Luckily there are not many of this kind.

Apparently a few of the people recorded (and this is particularly so among the marriages) are English. The names seem to be Welsh, English, Quaker and Scotch-Irish from the extreme southern part of the county. Rev. Boos has written most of these names in English and some are understandable, but quite a few (although they are written plainly enough) are far from certain in pronunciation and their phonetics are not at all clear.

The marriages seem to cover quite a wide territory and it is apparent that not only does this list include those in Mr. Boos' congregation, but that many other couples all the way from the Cocalico Region of Lancaster County to the Oley of Berks, combined a trip to Reading with their marriage ceremony.

In using the translation it must be remembered:

- a. That the dates in the burial list are burial dates and not death dates.
- b. Among the baptisms wherever there is no name attached to the child, it is the UNDERScoreD name of the parent or of the sponsor that was given to the child.

The translation was made by C.W. Unger, with the assistance of Mr. William H. Dietrich in the Fall of 1939
