

50 YEARS AT

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

1852- QUIHI, TEXAS *---1902

TRANSLATED FROM

GERMAN TO ENGLISH

AND
TRANSPosed INTO FAMILY CHARTS

BY: RICHARD & MARTHA BALZEN

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

125th, ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNding.....

INTRODUCTION

During 1970, when I began to prepare a history of the Balzen Family in Texas, Martha and I had the privilege of seeing the old church records with Pastor Durkep. This visit lasted a little over an hour, and resulted in obtaining much interesting and valuable information about the original Balzen settlers. In 1975 we saw these records again to verify the information we had obtained earlier. At that time it was noted that here there existed much valuable information about all of the families who settled Quihi, and who were members of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Quihi, Texas.

The worn and deteriorated condition of the books containing the records caused me to be concerned about preserving them for future use. Since the paper in 125 years has mellowed and softened to a considerable extent, it was thought to be necessary to copy them photostatically. This I did on a Xerox copier in August of 1976. But it also became apparent that to get information about one family it would be necessary to read all of the books, and that in 1976 few people in this country could read the German Language as it was written by the Pastors. The thought then came to me to translate the records to English, and at the same time to rearrange the information. Since one of the record books was started in the form of 2 pages to each family, it was thought best to use this format. This has been done using one page for each family, and it was thought, that if the church had a copy it might be used by the membership much more than the original were used.

In order to further facilitate the use of the translation, a partial index has been prepared. This is of the names of the mothers and grandparents, and others who do not appear as heads of household. Heads of Household appear in alphabetical order and are not further indexed; neither are the names of the children indexed. This index, with instructions about how to find the names of persons appears at the end, page 219-224.

The Baptism records are prefaced by the following note written by PASTOR G. SCHALL, A liberal translation by Martha Balzen, follows:

" In the meeting of deacons which took place September 2, 1859, it was decided that account of members of the congregation be made, and that the same month the Baptisms book. The count was made in the same month and entered into the book by the Pastor of the congregation.
signed "G. SCHALL, PASTOR"

There then follow 25 pages of names birthdates, ~~xxxxxxx~~ localities of birth, and in some instances the names of father and mothers, a few names of Grandparents, and a few dates of baptisms with the names of the Pastor. Indeed are the baptisms that occurred from the time of the organization of the church in 1852 until the time that Pastor Schall began baptizing in the congregation in 1859. Obviously none of these records default baptism are original, but were obtained from other sources. Possibly the records of babies baptized 1852-1859 were obtained from the records of the Castreville congregation, where the first pastor of the Quihi church, Rev. Christian Gefinger, was stationed. It is believed that the records of the adult members must have come from the members themselves, as a result of questioning by Pastor Schall. These, then, are the people who constituted the congregation in September of 1859. It is supposed that there were no exceptions or omissions at that time. But at a later unknown date someone unknown added names of persons on pages 166 through 171. These are names of adults who became members at a later time than 1859, and certainly included those who immigrated to Quihi after 1859. There is also some repetition of names that appeared on pages 2 to 25. These entries are in fine handwriting of latin letters, and contain about the same type of information as is given on the 1st 25 pages. It is obvious that Rev. G. Schall, and some

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other person at a later date, realized that such information as is given would become valuable in the future to establish the ancestry of the congregation. They are congratulated posthumously for their foresight and diligence.

It is believed that certain comments concerning these records will be of use and in order. They follow:

1. The records are for the years 1852-1902 with a few exceptions where the records are extended a few years. If people who used this book find that they know more about the persons shown in the records than it is because the book is limited essentially to these years and to what is given in the original records. Some additional information is added, but is shown in parenthesis.

2. An explanation of spelling is in order. In many instances there are different spellings given for the same name when it appears on different pages. Actually this is not surprising when one considers certain factors which contribute to this condition: (1) The spelling was dependent on the various Pastors, who though they were schooled, made mistakes; (2) the people gave names in various German dialects and pronunciations which were strange to the Pastors. Some of these dialects were Low German, Schwabish, Alsace with German accent, showing a French influence, Hessish Hanoverish, Bavarian, etc. plus some English mixed with German, or vice-versa. Different Pastors wrote their interpretations of what they heard. Finally, added to all of this there is the interpretation given to various handwritings which are not clear.

3. There are variations in the originals of the date of birth and death. After completing the translations, the entire records were checked again with the originals to eliminate errors of transcription, as much as is possible.

4. In order to facilitate the checking of the transcriptions found in this volume with the originals, there are given two numbers separated by a hyphen. These numbers appear mostly in the column of birth dates, but elsewhere also. These notations represent first the page ~~wherexthx~~ in the book of Baptisms and secondly, the line on that page where the original information is to be found. Wedding dates and death dates are not so referenced because they are in chronological order in the original and can therefore be referenced easily. The only place the page numbers of this volume are used for reference is in the Partial Index.

5. It will be noted that the baptism ~~ixthx~~ of illegitimate children is herein recorded as it is in the originals. However, notes have been added to show who the mother later married, when there was a reasonable reason found for so doing. In this connection it should be remembered that transportation was very limited during these years, so that young couples could not so easily go to the church to be married. Common law man and wife were more common in those days, and consideration should be given to these conditions, before judging these people harshly.

6. Upon reading these pages of family history it will be noted that there are numerous corrections to be seen, in each and every case. These changes, or corrections are necessary because:

a. There are errors in the originals, more than one date being given when the same person appears twice.

b. The handwriting is sometimes not clear.

c. errors were made in the transcriptions and translations, which were corrected upon checking for second reading.

III.

d. Human errors were made by the people who wrote the original entries as well as by those who made the translations and transcriptions.

e. There are too many Maria's, rsulas, Heinrichs, Jehanns, Kathrinas, Cefingers, "ausers, Gerdes, Behle, etc., which coupled with differences in spelling by the original writer, so that errors easily appear throughout the writings. No offense is intended by any error, and apology is made for all errors.

7. Many spaces are vacant where the marriage of the children should be indicated. This is because the information was not found in the originals, probably because the children were married elsewhere than in the Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Quihi.

8. Some of the children were born at "SOLDIERS CAMP" or "CAMP VERDE". These entries indicate that the fathers served in the military, the location of the camps being unknown to the writer. These camps may have been Fort Duncan, near Eagle Pass; Fort Inge, near Uvalde; Fort Martin Scott, near Friederichsburg, or other more distant. Some children are shown to be born in "Chatfield", now known as Knippa; others at "Avakna", near Hondo; others at "Vandenberg" which was located along the Verde Creek north of the present Farm-to-Market Road 2676; a few at "Thousand Aekers", location not known to me, and at "Strumhill", which is about the same location as Upper Quihi, and other location.

9. The localities in Germany where the immigrants came from can still be found on large scale detailed maps of Germany.

10. The St. John's Lutheran Church of New Fountain, organized in early 1850's and consolidated with the Quihi Church in 1949. This congregation worked in harmony with Quihi Church, and all Lutheran Pastors of the area served both congregations, hence the records of St. John's are included with those of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church, and are a part of this translation.

11. It is hoped that this translation and transposition will be of some use to the members and former members, and their descendants, of the congregation. It is given gratuitously, without responsibility for any part of it.

signed RICHARD W. BALZEN
August- September, 1976

N.B.

Death Records show that at least 3 men of the congregation lost their lives in Louisiana during the CIVIL WAR. They are

EVERT FRIEDRICHS OLD. NEUMANN- born -12, Aug. 1840- died - 13, Sept. 1864

EHME HARM GERDES born- 6, Mar. 1838 - died Aug. 1864

DAVID DETLET SCHLUNZ born 27, Apr. 1829- died about 1864

THE BASIS FOR THE FOLLOWING
FAMILY CHARTS IS FOUND

IN THE ORIGINAL CHURCH
RECORDS SHOWN BELOW

REGISTER OF BAPTISMS

which includes the 1859 census

REGISTER OF MARRIAGES

REGISTER OF FUNERALS

PARTIAL RECORD OF FAMILIES

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

OF QUIHI, TEXAS