

**EARLY HISTORY OF THE  
REFORMED CHURCH  
IN PENNSYLVANIA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649001347

Early history of the Reformed church in Pennsylvania by Daniel Miller

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**DANIEL MILLER**

**EARLY HISTORY OF THE  
REFORMED CHURCH  
IN PENNSYLVANIA**



100-72-  
10613

100-72-  
10613

---

COPYRIGHT, 1906,  
BY DANIEL MILLER.

---

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
REGISTERED IN THE  
OFFICE OF THE  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

## P R E F A C E.

---

To the author of this volume the early history of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania has been the subject of pleasant study for a long time. There are many facts connected with this history which are not only intensely interesting, but also calculated to prompt us to more fully appreciate our religious heritage. The history is presented in plain language and in a form which may be readily understood. It is often said that many writers assume too much intelligence on the part of the average reader, and fail to give all the facts connected with a subject. We have sought to present all the salient facts related to a subject, even at the risk of repeating some statements, so as to make matters easily understood.

We hope the reader will find as much pleasure in reading this book as the author enjoyed in preparing it, although it involved a vast deal of time and research. In the preparation of this volume the author derived much aid from the recently published proceedings of the Coetus, and many unpublished reports and letters bearing on the early history of our Church. For access to the latter he is indebted to Dr. James I. Good. He is also under obligations to Prof. W. J. Hinke for valuable information upon certain points.

## INTRODUCTION.

---

The history of the Reformed Church in the United States has long been a subject of study. As early as the year 1817 a committee was appointed by Synod to prepare a historical sketch of the origin and growth of the Synod. This committee, consisting of Rev. William Hendel, Rev. John Henry Hoffmeier and Rev. Caspar Wack, Sr., examined the archives of Synod, located in the First Reformed Church at Lancaster, but found nothing that threw light upon the subject of their search. Finally one of the committee, no doubt Rev. Dr. Hendel, remembered that he had in his possession a booklet in the Dutch language, which turned out to be the diary of Rev. Michael Schlatter, printed at Amsterdam in 1751. On the basis of this report of Mr. Schlatter a short sketch of six and a half pages was prepared, of which 3000 copies were printed.

After this first attempt of writing the history of our Church, it is interesting to note that the first larger book, dealing with the history of our Church, was published in Germany in 1846, being written by the first professor of theology elected by the Ohio Synod in 1838, Rev. I. G. Buettner, D. D., who returned to Germany in 1841. It is a volume of 154 pages, entitled "The High German Reformed Church in the United States of North America from its First Founding to the Present Time." Schleiz, 1846.

A more extensive history of the early period, written about the same time by Rev. Dr. Lewis Mayer, was unfortunately never published.

Renewed impetus was given to historical studies by the works of Dr. Harbaugh, especially his "Life of Rev. Michael Schlatter" and "The Fathers of the Reformed Church." But it was not till 1885 that our Church had the first connected account of its history. In that year Rev. Dr. Joseph H. Dubbs published his excellent "Historical Manual of the Reformed Church in the United States," in which he summarized all that was then known of the history of our Church.

Twelve years later another advance was made by the important discovery of the documents, relating to our Church, in Holland, which modified to a large extent our knowledge of the earliest period of our history and compelled us to reconstruct certain parts altogether. This reconstruction was largely carried out by Rev. Dr. J. I. Good, through whose energy and zeal the Holland documents had been made accessible. In 1897 Dr. Good published "Early Fathers of the Reformed Church" and

"Historical Handbook of the Reformed Church," which were followed two years later by his still more important work "History of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1725-1792."

Other historians have since followed in the new avenues opened by the recent discoveries, and have completed and elaborated our history through numerous monographs or comprehensive representations, like Rev. Dr. Dubbs' attractive and delightful book "The Reformed Church in Pennsylvania," Lancaster, 1902.

But the new documents have by no means been exhausted, nor is the knowledge of our local history complete. The present volume proves the former and adds considerably to the latter. The author is peculiarly fitted to engage in historical work. For twenty-five years his press has been sending out books dealing with Reformed Church history, among which we may mention the following: D. Y. Heister, "Fathers of the German Reformed Church," Vol. V., Reading, 1881; C. Z. Weiser, "A Monograph of the New Goschenhoppen and Great Swamp Reformed Charge, 1731-1881," Reading, 1882; Theodore Appel, "Recollections of College Life at Marshall College," Reading 1886; J. I. Good, "The Origin of the Reformed Church in Germany," Reading, 1887; D. Y. Heister, "The Fathers of the Reformed Church," Vol. VI., Reading, 1888; Thomas M. Yundt, "A History of Bethany Orphans' Home," Reading, 1888; J. I. Good, "Rambles Round Reformed Lands," Reading, 1889; A. R. Kremer, "A Biographical Sketch of John Williamson Nevin, D. D., LL. D.," Reading, 1890; J. I. Good, "History of the Reformed Church of Germany, 1620-1890," Reading, 1894; J. I. Good, "History of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1725-1792," Reading, 1899; C. Z. Weiser, "The Life of Conrad Weiser," second edition, Reading, 1899; Daniel Miller, "History of the Reformed Church in Reading, Pa.," Reading, 1905. Besides these the author has published a number of sermon books, written by Reformed ministers, as well as other books calculated to instruct and edify our people.

In the present volume the author has availed himself of the rich storehouse of the Holland documents, as well as of the many historical articles which have appeared from time to time in his paper, REFORMED CHURCH RECORD. He has presented his material in numerous sketches, which are well adapted to bring out the many-sided character of our history.

May this new contribution to our history do its share in keeping green the memory of our fathers, their heroic struggles and arduous labors. May it increase in our people their love for and devotion to their beloved Church, and lead them to a better realization of the blessed heritage which has been handed down to them.

WM. J. HINKE

Philadelphia, August, 1906.



## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
1. The Beginning, . . . . .	9
2. The First Reformed Minister, . . . . .	13
3. A Voyage Nearly 200 Years Ago, . . . . .	17
4. Poverty of the Early Settlers, . . . . .	23
5. How and Where Our Forefathers Worshiped, . . . . .	27
6. Two Early Lay Preachers, . . . . .	35
7. The First Pastoral Charge, . . . . .	39
8. Early Churches, . . . . .	43
9. Early Church Debts, . . . . .	50
10. First Constitution of the Reformed Church, . . . . .	55
11. Scarcity of Ministers, . . . . .	59
12. Confession of Early Reformed Ministers, . . . . .	64
13. Spirit of Early Ministers, . . . . .	66
14. Congregation of God in the Spirit, . . . . .	69
15. Rev. Boehm's Warnings, . . . . .	72
16. Early Church Conventions, . . . . .	76
17. Early Sects, . . . . .	79
18. Care of the Church in Holland, . . . . .	83
19. The Coetus, . . . . .	91
20. Elders at Coetus, . . . . .	96
21. "Censura Morum," . . . . .	100
22. Method of Voting, . . . . .	102
23. Early Church Quarrels, . . . . .	104
24. Charity Schools, . . . . .	111

## CONTENTS.

VII

	PAGE
25. Pastoral Support, . . . . .	115
26. Pastoral Work, . . . . .	120
27. Perquisites, . . . . .	123
28. The Indian War, . . . . .	125
29. Reformed Patriots, . . . . .	132
30. The Coetus and Gen. Washington, . . . . .	151
31. Languages Used by Coetus, . . . . .	154
32. Language Question, . . . . .	157
33. An Early Graveyard, . . . . .	162
34. Money Not Going to the Right Place, . . . . .	164
35. Yellow Fever in Philadelphia, . . . . .	169
36. Early Reformed Sunday Schools, . . . . .	172
37. Services for Children, . . . . .	179
38. Early Church Societies, . . . . .	182
39. Ministerial Relief Society, . . . . .	188
40. Early Educational Movements, . . . . .	192
41. Early Customs, . . . . .	199
42. Names of Congregations, . . . . .	207
43. Churches of Various Periods, . . . . .	217
44. Slavery in Pennsylvania, . . . . .	225
45. Liberty of the People, . . . . .	230
46. Boehm's Church, . . . . .	234
47. Family of Rev. John Philip Boehm, . . . . .	237
48. The Church at Conestoga, . . . . .	240
49. Worthless Preachers, . . . . .	247
50. First Church North of the Blue Mountains, . . . . .	250
51. A Minister's Tragic Death, . . . . .	252
52. Early Defections, . . . . .	254
53. Miscellaneous, . . . . .	256

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
First Church, Philadelphia, . . . . .	30
Conrad Tempelman's Home, . . . . .	37
Falkner Swamp Church, . . . . .	41
First Church, Reading, . . . . .	45
Rev. Michael Schlatter, . . . . .	87
School House, Reading, . . . . .	112
Col. Henry Bouquet, . . . . .	127
Capt. Peter Nagel, . . . . .	139
Col. Nicholas Lotz, . . . . .	140
Gov. Joseph Hiester, . . . . .	142
Franklin College, Lancaster, . . . . .	196
Second Church, Reading, . . . . .	218
Third Church Style, . . . . .	220
Modern Church, . . . . .	223