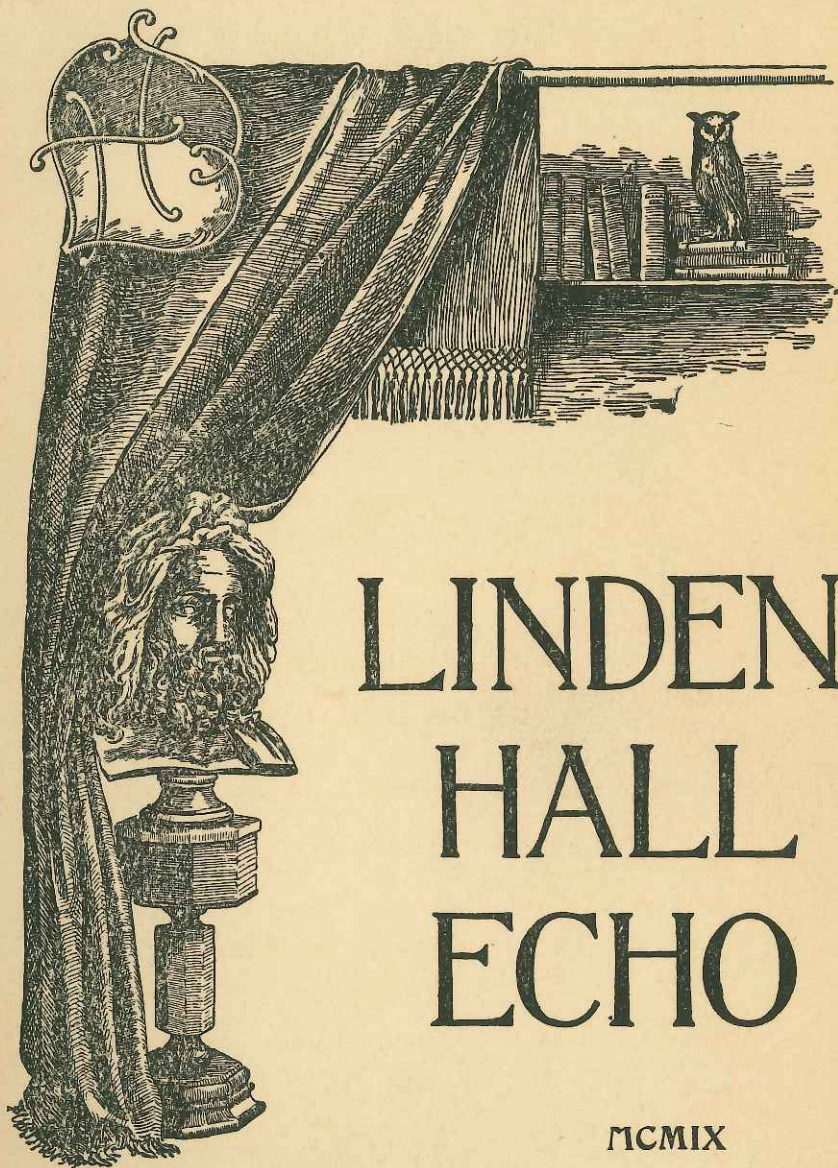


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INTERESTING HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT LINDEN HALL SEMINARY.

From the Bethlehem Times, August 23, 1909.

The chance discovery of an old ledger from way back in Washington's first administration has marked the beginning of a series of very interesting discoveries, all of which point to the conclusion that Linden Hall—the Moravian Seminary for girls at Lititz, Pa., is the oldest school for girls in the United States.

This ancient ledger, still in excellent condition, came to light some time ago and upon examination accounts "for schooling" were found as far back as 1790, when the book was begun. The entries were made in German and the money used up to 1810 is the old English system of pounds, shillings and pence. A little search disclosed the account of the supposed first pupil, Margaret Marvel, of Baltimore, in its proper place under the year 1794 which at once showed that this date, accepted for over half a century as the correct one for the founding of Linden Hall, is wrong.

Investigations were immediately begun by the school officers to determine the exact date of the founding of Linden Hall. These investigations have arrived at such a stage that the results can be made public.

It has always been recognized that with the Moravians the Church and school go hand in hand. In the case of Lititz and Linden Hall the school even preceded the church. It was in 1742 that Count Zinzendorf first visited Lancaster County and made a noble attempt to unite and reconcile the various sects which have ever been plentiful in the "Garden County" of Pennsylvania. One of the men who at first

treated Zinzendorf with disdain and regarded him as an interloper but who soon fell under the spell of his preaching was George Klein. He became a leading spirit among those who soon joined the flock of the Rev. Lawrence Nyberg, a Swedish Lutheran minister, and the church erected by them was built upon land donated by Klein. This church was dedicated in 1744 and shortly afterward, on account of his independent views, Nyberg was suspended from his ministry and joined the Moravians. This was in 1746 and a school was immediately commenced. In the same year steps were taken to build a school and meeting house (as distinguished from the church) and for this purpose George Klein gave almost four acres of land. This building was finished in 1748 and the Rev. Leonard Schnell and his wife took charge of the school. The former instructed the boys, the latter the girls. From these humble beginnings sprang Linden Hall and the famous Beck School for Boys.

As yet a formal organization of the congregation had not been effected and this was not done until Feb. 9, 1749, when the "Warwick County Congregation" was organized as a "Land Gemeine," three years after the school had been commenced. Having obtained this data Abraham Beck, the well known archivist of the Lititz congregation, was interviewed and he at once expressed himself as certain that Linden Hall was a boarding school long before 1794. His reasons are best stated in his own words: "The Warwick, afterward Lititz, congregation, was a 'Land Gemeine,' that is a country congregation, the members of which lived scattered on their farms and not in close settlement as was the case in Bethlehem and Nazareth. The daughters of the members of this Land Gemeine, therefore, on account of the distance from their homes boarded at the school." The date 1794 was merely the year in which the school was reorganized so as to admit non-Moravian boarders, of whom Margaret Marvel was the first.

The question naturally arises, "When did the first boarding pupil enter Linden Hall?" To this query no certain answer can as yet be given. The original documents which will throw light on the question are still to be found. It is, however, quite safe to say that it was not later than 1767

when the old diaries make mention of the children of Sister Hopson, of Lancaster, who were withdrawn from the "Anstalt" or higher school because their mother "could not live without them." One of the children was, however, at her earnest request brought back and re-entered. While at present a conservative estimate advances the date 1767, given above, it is quite within range of probability for reasons already stated that it may be as early as 1747. That matter must remain in doubt for the present but this much is certain, Linden Hall has had a continuous and unbroken history since 1746 and is therefore beyond all doubt the oldest school for the education of girls and young women now existing in this country.

The school while holding to the lofty ideas of the Moravian fathers and existing so that "our daughters may be as cornerstones for the building of the temple," is thoroughly modern in spirit and equipment and is a splendid tribute not only to the strength and virility of its educational ideas but also to the noble men, past and present, who have been at the head of this historic institution. "That which gives woman the greatest power is an intelligent Christian character," and it has ever been and is still the chief aim of Linden Hall to give its daughters that power.

ROBERT FULTON.

As this issue of the Linden Hall ECHO goes to press, there comes to my mind a topic which is of the greatest interest to most people at the present time, namely that of the great Hudson-Fulton celebration in New York. We are particularly interested, in as much as Lancaster county was the birthplace of Robert Fulton, therefore, a brief review of his life and the reception of his invention may not be out of place.

Robert Fulton was born in 1765 in Little Britain, Lancaster Co. His parents emigrated from Ireland, and because they were in poor circumstances the only education which Fulton received was one that enabled him to read and write. This he used quite profitably and we are told that he even spent his recreation hours in study.

When he was old enough he became an apprentice to a