Reading “the Writing on the Walls” of Backcountry Rowan County’s Stone Sanctuaries, 1774—1795

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One of backcountry North Carolina’s more impressive achievements was the great effort to erect stone sanctuaries in eastern Rowan County. As the oft-told tale goes, hardy German pioneers celebrated the end of the American Revolution by building two substantial houses of worship. In a time when the region’s churches were literally getting off the ground—even the Presbyterians were still in log huts—these granite edifices lent an unusual air of sophistication to the erstwhile wilderness. Although the founding of Zion and Grace churches appears often in local narratives, their origins have not been fully interpreted nor their context properly understood. Since the Federalist era these churches have been like Biblical lamps hidden under a basket. Even their distinctive stonewalls have begged a re-interpretation that can elucidate the backcountry’s rich cultural complexity, as this essay will suggest.

The German ethnography of these communities has itself enriched backcountry social history. The “Dutch Side” sanctuaries housed sizeable congregations through the agrarian 1800s, then doggedly persisted as anomalies when western North Carolina’s ethnic consciousness faded during industrialization. Congregants have remained cognizant of their heritage into post-modern times. When one church celebrated its 250th birthday in 1997, elderly members held a fodder pull, teaching Sunday Schoolers how corn was cured in “olden days.” During the same period, the other congregation held fall festivals complete with sauerkraut, “schnitz”, and other staples commonly found in their forebears’ larders.¹

Even the church names have portent. Like folks on most rural home places, each has two names, one formal and official, the other familial and attributive. The stronger and larger of the churches over time has been Zion Lutheran, more commonly known as Organ. Outside of the Moravians in Wachovia, it was the first backcountry church with such an instrument. Grace United Church of Christ has been a small but resilient part of the German
Reformed tradition. It, too, has a more widely known and used nickname. The Lower Stone sanctuary was lower down Dutch Second Creek as backcountry travelers made their way along the Great Road from Salem and Salisbury to Charleston, hence its designation.2

There is more to learn about Organ and Lower Stone churches, however. This essay investigates a mystery long forgotten about their origins. These neighbors have kept a secret over time, one that makes them an ethnographic anomaly: Why did Rowan Germans build two churches at the same time in the same place? Why would frugal folk of common tongue and shared custom, who consciously chose insularity to preserve their collective identity, go to the expense and effort to erect fraternal twins just two miles apart? In other words, why hasn’t there been just one stone church in Rowan—the union church of Pennsylvania Dutch tradition—to celebrate and admire as an icon of ethnic persistence?3

By analyzing this anomaly, I hope to offer an innovative case study in backcountry history. This scholarly reconstruction builds upon a culling of many local records—built, archived, and buried—to delve deeper into various connections between frontier conditions and global normings, of the motives that led to particular actions in specific places, at distinctive times. I literally use the “writing on the wall” as well as more standard documentary shards to arrive at a new perspective on the origins of these landmarks. Although the building of the sanctuaries is easily seen in particular terms, understanding the less apparent context gives scholars scaffolding for a broader cultural construct of regional history. This two-part inquiry into the times and the timing presents both aspects of the story.4

Fig. 1: Inscriptions “written” on the 1795 walls of Lower Stone German Reformed Church.

There was not yet a Rowan County when the first Germans pushed their way into the North Carolina backcountry. Their migration was part of a multi-ethnic movement south from the crowded triangle of rolling land west and north of Philadelphia. After Scots-Irish and Germans gradually filled the
upper parts of the Shenandoah Valley during the 1740s, the surplus continued into the Carolinas. Their arrival led to in 1753 to the establishment of Rowan to administer the frontier section of the Granville District. Since the Scots-Irish arrived first in the Yadkin River watershed, they picked the better land that lay mostly to the west of the Great Wagon Road. The “Irish Settlement” west of Salisbury—the county seat set up by 1755—claimed ridges covered in prairie grass that sloped steadily into rich, wide bottomlands. In turn, Germans headed to the east and south of the main artery of backcountry travel, taking up on the “Dutch Side” what one descendent later called “the cooler soils” nearer the Uwharrie Mountains. Although these soils were not as rich as those of the Irish, the bottoms provided for corn and the slopes for pasturage. These “Germans,” North Carolina’s Royal Governor Arthur Dobbs found, were “all an industrious people” who “raise[d] horses cows hogs with a few sheep” as well as “Indian corn, wheat, rye, barley, and oats.” In addition, he reported in 1755, “they have gone into indigo with great success, which they sell at Charles Town, having a wagon road to it.”

All the backcountry ethnic groups brought with them their culture as well as their cultivators, and all were quick to try to establish institutional roots. The Scots-Irish erected Presbyterian churches in every neighborhood they established. Within two decades of settlement more than a dozen Presbyterian churches were scattered across the two principal backcountry counties of Rowan and Mecklenburg. The Germans were just as eager to have meetinghouses. Usually within five years of real settlement, they, too, had erected a church in the center of their communities. For example, in 1750

Fig. 2: The W.D. Kizziah map, drawn by a local genealogist, showing the cluster of early settlers in the Dutch Side settlement, at lower right.
a group departed the Oley Valley in Pennsylvania with their household goods for the upper South Fork of the Catawba River. About 1758 enough Germans were in the neighborhood to call for a meetinghouse. Each family arrived on a specified Saturday with a quota of logs needed to raise the walls. The congregation founded that day eventually took the name St. Paul’s. Although its organization was delayed because of the 1759 Cherokee war, St. Paul’s evolved into a successful union church, used jointly by the German Reformed Faith and the Lutherans, the first of more than a dozen such structures in the Dutch sections of the backcountry.6

Germans on the Yadkin watershed southeast of Salisbury built a union church as well. They first arrived about 1747, according to Dobbs. At some point soon after—local lore varies from the implausible 1745 to the more likely 1755—worship services were being held in what an early Rowan historian called “the center of the German population.” The Hickory Church, named for the logs used in its construction, was a day’s walk east of the county seat. Very little is known about it. As the “Rev. George H. Cox, D.D., of Salisbury” noted “on the occasion of the one hundred and seventy eighth anniversary” of Organ Lutheran Church, there are “few records exist[ant] from the early days.” There was, however, according to Cox, “a sort of joint tenancy then quite common.” The Reverend Rumpel, who relied upon oral tradition for much of his narrative, agreed that “according to custom . . . the settlers united in building a joint or union church.”7

It is unclear who controlled the Hickory Church. Reformed Church tradition suggests that their denomination supplied the balance of the early itinerants. One story claims that the Reverend Christian Theus of South Carolina held the first services. The Reverend Samuel Suther, who came to the backcountry in 1768, seems to have been a regular visitor.8

There are no documented records for Lutheran pastoral visits until the eve of the Revolution. In 1771 two Rowan laymen, Christopher Lyerly and Christopher Rendleman, were dispatched back across the Atlantic to visit the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London. They sought

Fig. 3: Monument to Reverend Adolph Nussmann at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Mt. Pleasant.
help in finding a resident pastor and schoolmaster. Once “the Lutheran Court Chapel of St. James took up the plan with enthusiasm,” they gained a connection to the Consistory of Hanover. Soon, the two Carolinians had secured books, hymnals, catechisms, and a communion set, as well as the services of the newly ordained Adolph Nussmann and the certified teacher Johannes Gottfried Arends. These young men had been formally trained for their professions in German universities. Nussmann had been a novice in the Franciscan Order, then converted to Lutheranism. Arends had received catechetical training. Nussmann and Arends first went in London in 1772, where, tradition says, they drank a toast with King George III. (Organ Lutheran Church still has the wine bottle they supposedly shared.) They then accompanied Lyerly and Rendleman to Charles Town, the four eventually taking the overland route up to Salisbury.9

Nussmann, remembered to Rumple as “a devoted and self sacrificing Christian,” was soon at work preaching at the Hickory Church. Then, surprisingly and—mysteriously, for purposes of this study—Nussmann left after a year, sometime about 1774, it seems, and located himself as the pastor of the Dutch Buffalo congregation in Mecklenburg County, near today’s town of Mt. Pleasant. (This group of Germans had been too far away from the Hickory Church to have participated in its early services.) Nussmann lived on Dutch Buffalo Creek the rest of his life.10 Meanwhile back in Rowan, “as ministers were much needed”—a phrase oft repeated by Lutheran denominational historians—Arends the schoolmaster was ordained to take Nussmann’s place. He did not, however, preside at the Hickory Church, for a new Lutheran congregation had been established on Dutch Second Creek, located south of Salisbury and about seven miles from the Hickory sanctuary. The organization of the Second Creek Lutheran church was effected in a particular and new manner in 1774. Where the Hickory church had been erected on private land and used without title to the property, George Siffert and the other founders of the new congregation made sure that a deed for the site was recorded and verified. Arends proceeded to preach there and at other sites in the backcountry, including “Saut Fork,” as he called St. Paul’s church west of the Catawba River.11

Fig. 4: Log barn built about 1760 by John Lippard, original trustee of Lower Stone Church in 1774.
At the same time, the Reformed adherents in the area took up land just two miles down the Great Road. They, too, officially registered the act. In February 1774, Lorenz Lingle deeded to John Lippard and Andrew Holshouser, trustees of “the Calvin congregation,” a lot on land that had been granted to Reformed adherent Lorance Lingle by Lord Granville in 1761.  

Local traditions assert that the Revolution disrupted regular worship in the new congregations. Rev. Samuel Suther, the Reformed minister, who had moved from Mecklenburg to Orange County to escape the disorder caused by the Regulation, seems not to have been around. However, Rev. Arends held catechism classes on “Saken Cruk” in 1776, 1778, and on Pentecost Sunday in 1780. Arends did miss having a class during 1781, when the backcountry was embroiled in civil war in the wake of the Cornwallis invasion. During the same time, the Reverend Nussmann “was persecuted by the tories, and forced to seek safety by hiding himself in a secure retreat.”

When the Revolutionary military conflict was over, the Germans on Dutch Second Creek resumed their efforts to gain stability and regularity. Rev. Suther returned to begin the more formal organization of the Calvin congregation with the “Protocol . . . der Second Creek in Rowan County in North Carolina” in July 1782. The same month he recorded a payment from the congregation, and got other payments each of the next several years, an indication of periodic visitations for baptisms and weddings.

The post-war process seems to have taken longer for the Lutherans. In 1785 Rev. Arends moved to the Catawba to serve the South Fork congregations. Rev. Nussmann was called back to supply the Second Creek pulpit. His tenure in Rowan County this time, however, was no longer than it had been in the 1770s. By 1788 the newly-arrived Reverend C.A.G. Storch took over the pastorate, along with a renewed congregation in Salisbury and the remnants of the old Hickory Church worshipping at the Pine Church in northern Rowan. “Everybody who sees and hears him loves and honors him,” Nussmann reported, an interesting contrast to what the congregation thought of him.

Postwar stability rested, in part, upon the restored ability of local German farmers to provide the means for an expansion of their church plants. (As the German patrons learned, “Flour, corn, hams, sausages, dried fruits, chickens and turkeys, geese, etc., were abundantly furnished from all quarters.”) In 1789, it was reported, Rev. Storch’s charge “on Second Creek, counts 87 families among its members” and Storch was running “a small special German school.” Given Suther’s records of payments, burials, and baptisms, the Reformed families in the same neighborhood south of Salisbury must have had similar experiences. The idea that the Germans were generally doing well was the completion of the first known sanctuary of the Lutheran congregation in Salisbury, “the first house made of brick.” In 1791, Storch reported, the “pastors live in brotherly harmony and are at peace with our
congregations.” As he informed the German patrons, “the congregation of the Organ Church will erect a new building next summer, and, to be specific, it will be a stone church.”16

The prodigious labor to build the first stone church in backcountry Rowan took two years to complete, and cost about 1,200 pounds in “Spanish thalers.” Volunteers during winter used frozen ground to sled granite slabs from a nearby hillside. To obtain the mortar they went all the way to Wilmington to order a barge load of oyster shells, which were brought up the Cape Fear River, and then were hauled overland from Fayetteville. The resulting granite edifice was a 50 by 40 foot rectangle, rising 27 feet to include a balcony and a raised goblet pulpit. The gables carried the tip of the roof up another 12 feet. The sanctuary had the traditional doors on the three sides away from the altar. There was no steeple and no adornment on the walls except for the date “1794” neatly etched in a palette of mortar and encircled with stone in the western gable. The members of Organ formally dedicated the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, 1794.17

Within a year of the start of the construction of Organ Church, the German Presbyterian congregation in the same neighborhood began work on a similar structure. In early January 1795 the original trustees, John Lippard and Andrew Holshouser, conveyed to Jacob Fisher and John Casper, “elders of the German Presbyterian congregation on Second Creek in the Dutch Settlement,” title to the site, including a meetinghouse, a spring, and graveyard. The Reverend Andrew Loretz, who had replaced the deceased Samuel Suther as pastor, dedicated the foundations in 1795. Like the Lutherans, the Reformeds were celebrating their postwar prosperity. The Reverend George W. Welker, a later pastor, asserted that the church members believed that since the “first structure was
made of logs”, they had not “been long content with so humble a building, judging rightly that a house erected for the worship of God ought to be superior to their own dwellings.”

Something, however, delayed the completion of Lower Stone. Elders George Henry Barger and Jacob Fisher “were most active in the erection of the new church.” The walls—made of rough stone similar to that used at Organ—may have been completed by 1795, since the words chiseled above the three doors were inscribed with that date. But, according to the story told locally, “many trials and discouragements obstructed the good work, and it was not until November 1811. . . that the building was completed and dedicated. . .” Tradition holds that where the men of the congregation raised the exterior, the women were assigned the task of raising the funds for the decorative features of the interior. Rev. Loretz returned to preach the dedication for the pastor at the time, the Reverend George Boger.

What took the name Grace Church in 1795 looked like a sibling of Zion up the road. The “rough stones, of varying sizes of slate and granite[,] . . . used in the construction” were placed thirty-two inches thick at the foundation then tapered to twenty-one inches at gallery level. Just as at Organ, the sanctuary was 40 by 50 by 27 feet, with a 12-foot rise in the gables. Thus, the dimensions of the walls and the pitch of the roof looked the same at that of the other new church. Three doors led to the interior, and windows just like those at Organ were aligned on both levels. Like Organ, Grace had the goblet pulpit popular in the day. Like Organ, Grace had a stone floor.

The two congregations altered but kept their sanctuaries over time as they weathered the same social and economic stresses common for Southern churches in the nineteenth century. Both encountered membership decline with out-migrations peaking in the 1820s, both found revival with new and young members coming to the folds in the 1830s both lost sons to the Civil War, and both remodeled their facilities during the Gilded Age. Smaller Lower Stone kept its original sanctuary space, modernizing as times changed. Wooden floors and a Victorian pulpit were built in the 1870s, a steeple was added in 1901, and for a while in the

Fig. 7: The 1795 Lower Stone sanctuary photographed in the early part of the 20th century.
twentieth century, the galleries on each side were converted into Sunday School space. On the bicentennial of the congregation, the sanctuary was still being used by the United Church of Christ congregation. The Lutherans kept their organ, built by an original member, John Stirewalt, until it wore out in the 1870s. At some point during the Gilded Age, the congregation had the instrument broken up and the piece distributed as souvenirs. By the early 1900s, the Lutherans had added a steeple tower to one side, and later a Sunday School building out of the same sort of granite. For a century Organ remained within the fold of the North Carolina Synod of what became the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. With the maturation of the Baby Boomers in the 1960s, the congregation built an entirely new granite sanctuary and educational wing adjacent to the old churchyard.

The similar stories of these people of faith lent credence to the common perception that theirs is largely a shared story. Similarities notwithstanding, the contrasts in their particular history immediately cast the two stone sanctuaries more as siblings than as twins. The distinctions of the two sanctuaries call for new questions to be asked about their purposes and characters. Where the Lutherans talks about “some disagreement” but never explain it, Reformed scholars commented that “there is an especially interesting record in connection with the building of the church.” No one, however, has deconstructed these cryptic messages. Nor has anyone really confronted the conundrum of the sites. Here are two structures raised in the backcountry that like any two brothers are so much alike, yet so different. Why were they built as they were, when they were?

A reexamination of the old evidence, combined with a successful search for new sources, suggests that the story is far more complex than usually considered. The history of backcountry settlement clearly shows deep and steady ties to the issues and dilemmas of the eighteenth century world, and the standard presentations of Organ and Lower Stone history drop clues about hidden complexity during each phase of development. These will now be explored.

A contextual interpretation for the breakdown of the union church and the building of the two stone sanctuaries can be developed from clues written into the deeds and on their walls. Two dates stand out for the origination of analysis. The first is 1774. After Nussmann left, each congregation took out a deed for new land. Then, after the two congregations went their separate ways and weathered the Revolution, each built a stone church, the first roughly finished in 1794, the second started but delayed in 1795. The
parameters of 1774 and 1795 can be used as touchstones for interpretation. The context is then apparent, and the hypothesis clear. The “Dutch settlement” in 1774 in some way divided over the political issues of the North Carolina Regulation, and then in 1795 reacted strongly to the cultural challenges brought to America by the French Revolution. In each case, each denomination took similar but different steps to deal with the troubles of the time.

The Regulation of the 1760s and 1770s was actually a sequence of disjointed protest movements aimed at bringing a fairer sense of order and stability to the colonial backcountry. In North Carolina backcountry emigrants of varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds attempted to unite to protest corrupt local government, to make public matters more “regular” as had the case in the more settled areas of the Middle Colonies where they had come from. Although the petitions were specific—protesting excessive fees and bribes demanded by local officials and favoritism and ineffectiveness in the courts—the tone of the movement suggested the coalescing of a new collective attitude. No longer was deference to public authorities to be rotely followed. Rather, the greater group of the public would have a stronger stake in the shaping and implantation of policy and practice. A new social landscape was being seeded.25

The North Carolina Regulation was intricately intertwined with the new terms of evangelicalism, an extension, in many ways, of the Great Awakening that swept up and down the American colonies in the 1730s and 1740s. The evangelical affront to the colony’s weakly established Anglican Church had political parallels in the Regulation. Herman Husband, a North Carolina protest organizer, suggested that British authorities “represented the regulators as a faction of Quakers and Baptists who aimed at oversetting the church of England.”26

Husband’s critique had direct bearing for the events that transpired in backcountry Rowan. Not only were there Regulator protests and threats made in the courts in Salisbury, but there were also imperial efforts to develop a liturgical religious presence in the county, one that would counter the “leveling” aspects of the evangelical challenge. Provincial authorities encouraged the establishment of Wachovia in part to oil the roiling waters of backcountry unrest. The Crown even granted the Moravians parity with the Anglicans. Equally important were the efforts of Governor William Tryon to make Salisbury a liturgical oasis of the Granville District frontier. He made repeated but unsuccessful efforts to seat a rector, the Reverend Theodore Drage, at the new St. Luke’s parish in the late 1760s.27

Tryon’s measures to enlist non-Moravian Germans into his campaign for a religious establishment in Salisbury have bearing on the story of the stone sanctuaries. In 1768, German butcher John Lewis Beard allied the Germans to the cause. He deeded a lot on the edge of town to establish a Lutheran
congregation, with the expressed stipulation that Anglicans and Presbyterians could use the facility “when the Lutheran minister doth not want to perform divine service in said church.” No mention was made of welcoming Baptists or other challengers to traditional hierarchy. \(^{28}\) Beard’s ploy must be seen as more than a simple effort to organize a German congregation in Salisbury. Backcountry towns were more places of revelry than religion, and churches in the early backcountry were generally rural in location. Beard was acting in concert with Tryon’s greater scheme to make the Rowan burg a place of order, more a European village like the soon-to-be-planned Salem than a frontier crossroads.

Governor Tryon and Anglicans then logically took an active role in the Rendleman and Lyerly junket to find a pastor for Rowan Lutherans. Tryon saw a second opportunity to bring an established clergyman to Salisbury. The timing was propitious. Rendleman and Lyerly came forward just months after the governor had put down the Regulators at the Battle of Alamance, then made a grand march on the “great road” from Hillsborough to Salisbury to exhibit the force of royal authority. Tryon approved of the petition from “from sixty or more” Rowan Germans for “a learned and right-believing preacher of their faith and language,” as he related in a letter of support to the Society for the Spread of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The Reverend Drage, supported the venture because of “the union they desire to live in with the Church of England.” \(^{29}\)

Nussmann and Arends arrived in the winter of 1772-1773, “by royal command” and Nussmann “preached for one year in the Hickory Church to both denominations.” Then, “after which [,] some dissensions arose,” Nussmann departed. The quotation originated with the Reverend G.H. Bernheim, the first chronicler of southern Lutheran history. Doing his research during the 1850s, he relied upon both written documents and oral testimony. \(^{30}\) All the later references to the disagreement between Lower Stone and Organ have been variations on this statement. All of them are cryptic. What had happened? How could such an admirable and substantial effort to civilize the backcountry go so wrong so fast?

Very likely, the matter was rooted in disputes about authority. The arguments about deference and dignity which were implicit in all Regulator protests may have rent both denominations. For example, it was only “the
majority of the Lutherans [who] resolved to build a church for themselves.”
This oral tradition suggests much debate and dispute. Something about Nussmann was clearly the crux of the matter. Bernheim, the story gatherer, was told “there appears to have been some misunderstanding between him and the teacher Arends, which was the cause of Nussmann’s removal from Organ.”31 In starting the records for Organ Church, the Reverend C.A.G. Storch emphasized that “before this church was built” Nussmann had left the area.32 It must be asked: Given the enormity of the trans-Atlantic mission venture, what could the two recent arrivals have gotten on their minds to such an extent that schism resulted so soon? Why would the preacher be fired in a liturgical setting, and the schoolmaster kept?

Perhaps, as later Lutherans imply, Nussmann’s view of the sacraments—particularly over the question of the transubstantiation of the elements—was the heart of the matter. As a former Catholic, Nussmann may well have been too imposing in the insistence of the mystery of the blood and wine, and his power over the conveyance of the elements. One of the Hanover patrons later noted that some of Nussmann’s “disloyal brethren had instilled in his congregation a suspicion that he was secretly still an adherent of the Papacy.” Given how important the need for a new pastor was, it is remarkable that subsequent pastors were silent on the particulars of this issue. Given Lutheran tendencies to minimize conflict and talk obliquely, however, the silence is itself indicative of the seriousness of the dispute. Bernheim does relate that by the time “Arends had removed to the other side of the Catawba” the “difficulty . . . had been amicably settled between them.”33 Maybe so, but Nussmann only survived one year in his second tenure at Organ, another indication that the congregants at Organ simply could not allow him to be their celebrant. Why not? What kind of backcountry congregants were they?

The argument that split the “Dutch settlement” in 1773 may have been as much about context as content. Did being “a secret adherent of the Papacy” in 1773 have more to do with the politics of the time than doctrinal
details? Was Nussman, with his education and airs, seen as a tool of Governor Tryon? After all, the hated Tryon had helped sponsor the Hanover junket. The boundaries of social deference and rightful authority were in dispute across the backcountry at the time, as the province of North Carolina continued to reel in the wake of the battle of Alamance. Tryon himself was off to New York to take the trophy job of royal governor there, a promotion from his strenuous efforts to bring order to the most pitiful of the thirteen colonies. Josiah Martin, Tryon’s successor, tried to make amends with overtures to the former Regulators, but even his conciliatory gestures did not keep the local courts open, encouraging social disorder and endangering the legitimacy of property, and propriety, for that matter. The court controversy, casting its shadow over the legitimacy of title, was going on in 1774, at the same time the two new congregations went to such strenuous efforts to identify who owned, so to speak, their diverging roads to faith. In the midst of such troubles, could transubstantiation alone have created such a dramatic schism?

END NOTES

1 The Salisbury Post, Oct. 13, 1997, publicized the fodder pull. The author attended each of the Lower Stone fall festivals during the 1990s, learning about traditions, including the need to cultivate cabbage for kraut in the full of the moon, according to German tradition. “Otherwise,” said Estelle Miller, “the kraut will turn black as night.” The name “Dutch Side” is first recorded in a same-named sketch in The Charlotte Observer, Aug. 10, 1898. The author was Rufus Barringer, whose family lived on the Cabarrus side of the Granville District line.


4 The original version of this essay was presented September 15, 2004, in Winston- Salem, N.C., at “Bringing the North Carolina Backcountry to the Public,” a conference
sponsored by Old Salem, Inc., and the History Department of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The genesis of the inquiry dates to the North Carolina Teachers Workshop, summer 1997, at the Local Heritage Institute, Catawba College, N.C., during a field exercise looking at the ethnographic origins of the two sanctuaries.


8 George W. Welker et al., eds., *Historic Sketch of the Reformed Church in North Carolina by a Board of Editors under the Classis of North Carolina* (Philadelphia: Publication Board of the Reformed Church, 1908), 194-195.


10 Rumple, *Rowan County*, 383.

11 G.D. Bernheim, *History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina from the Earliest Period of the Colonization of the Dutch, German, and Swiss Settlers to the Close of the First Half of the Present Century* (Philadelphia: The Lutheran Book Store, 1872), 242-243. Bernheim published an earlier and more detailed version in the *Carolina Watchman*, January 17 and 24, 1860. For the typical local repetition of this story see Rev. Everett A. Dasher, “St. Peter’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rowan County, Salisbury, N.C.”, typescript in the church files, McCubbins Collection, Rowan Public Library. The 1774 deed for Organ is analyzed by William Sifford, a descendent, in a private essay placed in the Sifford family papers, McCubbins Collection, RPL. The activities of Arends are gleaned from his diary. See Jo White Linn, ed., *Diary of Johannes Gottfried Arends, 1740—1807* (Salisbury: privately published, 1999). The original diary is in the manuscripts department at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C.

12 Welker, *Reformed Church in North Carolina*, 466-467. The deed is copied in the Lower Stone papers, McCubbins Collection, RPL.

13 The tradition about Suther is in Rumple, *Rowan County*, 468: “During the Revolution he was an outspoken patriot and so obnoxious to the Tories that he was often compelled to hide himself from their vengeance.” Arends’s itinerancy is recorded sporadically

14 The original of “Der Protocol . . .” and several receipts are kept in the archives of Lower Stone United Church of Christ, Rockwell, N.C. A copy is kept in the Lower Stone papers, McCubbins Collection, RPL.


17 Cox, *Organ Church*, 5. Cox claimed, very incorrectly, that the stone sanctuary was the original building and was “twenty years in the making.”


19 *Ibid*.


21 Various manuscripts and pamphlets, Lower Stone Church files, McCubbins Collection, RPL. Each additional newspaper story was based upon the previous tellings. See, for example, “History of Lower Stone Church Goes Back to Early Rowan Days,” *The Salisbury Post*, September 26, 1945, where the seminal line, “then arose some disagreement”, is repeated but not elaborated upon.


23 For an overview see Raymond M. Bost and Jeffrey Norris, *All One Body: The Story of the North Carolina Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1803-1993* (Salisbury: Historical Works Committee, 1994).


28 Martha W. Agner and Martha H. Morehead, *The Heritage and History of St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church, Salisbury, N.C. through 1983* (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company, 1994), 62-66. Also see Boyd, “German Tracts,” 142, for the comments that Nussmann was “no strict papist.”

29 *Colonial Records*, VIII, 630-633.

30 See Bernheim’s essays, January 17 and 24, 1860, *Carolina Watchman*, which are edited and reprinted in the *History of the German Settlements*.


32 Copy of the brief introduction to the baptism, marriage, and confirmation records of Organ Church, 1775-160, originals in LTSS archives, Columbia, and copy in history room, RPL.