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THE  
RECORD BOOK

*of*

**DANIEL SCHUMACHER,**

**1754-1773,**

Containing registers of  
baptisms and confirmations  
in Berks, Lehigh, Northampton  
and Schuylhill counties, Pennsylvania

Translated with an introduction

*by*

Frederick S. Weiser



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## INTRODUCTION

The chronic shortage of clergymen and the almost overwhelming, continued immigration of German settlers should have combined to tempt the leaders of the colonial German churches in Pennsylvania, the Lutherans and the Reformed, to yield to the expediency of accepting anyone who came and claimed to be a pastor. That is not what happened, however. Perhaps because of a professional dignity and self-respect, and of the tradition of an educated clergy, but more likely because the field was already littered with ruin and problems caused by inadequately trained ministers, the leaders of the first synods upheld their demands for an educated, properly-ordained and, to some extent, at least, disciplined clergy. A man who was sent out with the approval of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg to a Lutheran congregation had come to Muhlenberg with respectable credentials from a credible European ecclesiastical agency; and a man who passed the further test of being admitted into Muhlenberg's "College of Pastors" (the embryonic synod) had demonstrated his capability for the pastoral office and could rest assured of continued fellowship among other clergy in the synod and likely of a good appointment so long as he could serve.

One such immigrant, Daniel Schumacher, turned up at Muhlenberg's door early in 1754 with credentials from the Lutheran pastor of New York city and from the ministerium of Lutheran pastors in Hamburg, Germany. These papers identified him as a candidate for the ministry, which means that he had studied theology in a German university and was now ready for ordination. Muhlenberg had no trouble finding a place for the man to serve. He sent him "ad interim" to the new congregation of Lutherans in Reading and to two related congregations in the neighborhood, Alsace and Schwarzwald.<sup>1</sup>

Upon his arrival in Reading, Daniel Schumacher discovered that the parish had no permanent record book; and he saw that one was acquired and that records of pastoral acts that had already taken place were entered into it. At the same time he entered some paragraphs which tell us something about his origin:

I praise and glorify Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth, whose grace, favor, kindness and good-will towards man is unspeakable, that He has pointed out a way for me, through many difficulties and dangers, to go from one place to another for the purpose of establishing the glorious kingdom of God, founded by the blood of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

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<sup>1</sup>*Halleische Nachrichten* (Halle, 1787), p. 654.

I arrived here from my native country of Hamburg (Germany), and came into the so-called province of Nova Scotia, and in the city of Halifax and at Lunenburg I preached the gospel to the brethren professing the Lutheran religion. In the former and latter city at that time Evangelical [Lutheran] ministers and school teachers were opposed. There was nothing remaining there for my support, inasmuch as the people were poor and the rulers had no concern about advancing evangelical truth. I left in a miserable condition, both as regards myself and the care of their souls. Thence I went to New York and afterwards to Philadelphia, until the providence of God pointed out my way to this town of Reading. Here there was a wretched state of ecclesiastical affairs, because shortly before a man by the name of Wordman had been suspended from his office. The officers of the congregation offered me the office of the gospel in the new church, after a sermon delivered on Sunday, *Quinti*, March 17, 1754, on the subject of keeping the divine word in the heart. May the thrice great and blessed God, whose benefits are very great, be my support in this new field of labor, that many may be converted and established in the faith of Jesus Christ, that the kingdom of God may be enlarged and extended from one sea even to the other, be covered with many souls, and be propagated to distant prosperity. So writes Daniel Schumacher. Romans 1:22<sup>2</sup>

The pastor in New York who had given Schumacher a letter of recommendation to Muhlenberg, Johann Albert Weygand, was in constant touch with the Lutheran authorities in Hamburg, from whom the New York congregations derived both financial support and most of their clergymen. It was only natural, therefore, that Weygand should report Schumacher's arrival, since he had come from Hamburg and brought recommendations from the authorities there. The correspondence with Hamburg reveals more about the candidate of theology than he had entered in the Reading records, or probably cared to, not to mention what he had told Weygand or Muhlenberg.

1. Johann A. Weygand to Dr. Friedrich Wagner, Senior of the Lutheran ministerium in Hamburg, dated New York, April 1754: "...candidate Daniel Schumacher. He arrived here from Halifax a few weeks ago, and, because of the deep respect we have for your reverences' testimonial, we permitted him to preach here, and, since he had been quite destitute in Halifax, we furnished him with new clothing, and

then sent him to Pennsylvania, where he may expect a prompt assignment, or perhaps one here in our own province.

Since the above mentioned candidate of theology D. Schumacher had administered the Lord's Supper to the Lutherans in Halifax during the three years there, we ask you reverences to what extent he can be forgiven for doing so without having been ordained? A fatherly chastening by a very reverend consistory would [appear to] be quite necessary.

2. Weygand to Wagner, July 10, 1754.

Candidate Schumacher who was mentioned in my last letter is in the ministry in Pennsylvania and will be ordained shortly. Up to the present time we have nothing but good to say about him.

3. Weygand to Wagner, February 5, 1755.

About Candidate Daniel Schumacher I must write the sad news that he deserted his wife in Halifax, where they had been married. He himself admitted this, and gave as reason for the divorce that he was persuaded to marry her while he was under the influence of liquor and that he could not live with her because of her homely appearance. And it is still sadder that he continues to be...when it comes to drunkenness.

4. Wagner to Weygand, April 10, 1755 (answering letter of February 5).

The news about candidate Schumacher sounded very sad indeed. I cannot at all recollect that he was here in Hamburg during my time or that he received a testimonial from the reverend Ministerium. I therefore humbly request your reverence to find out, if possible, by whom the testimonial was signed and sealed, and the date it bears, so that further investigation can be made here as to whether it is genuine or false. Even if he had received an excellent testimony here, because nothing unfavorable was known about him, yet that can no longer be relied on, because he has since conducted himself in such a bad manner and made himself unworthy of the good testimony itself.

5. Wagner to Weygand, September 16, 1758.

[Magister] Schumacher became a candidate here in 1728, but we do not know where he stayed after that and how it happened that he went to America.<sup>3</sup>

Sometimes more information is known about a situation two hundred years after it occurs than is known at the time. Doubtless Daniel Schumacher was one of the Germans lured to Nova Scotia in the 1750s after the Treaty of

<sup>2</sup>Translated from the Latin original in Jacob Fry, *The History of Trinity Lutheran Church, Reading, Pa., 1751-1894* (Reading, 1894), pp. 29-30.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Simon Hart and Harry J. Kreider, Jr., *Lutheran Church in New York and New Jersey, 1722-1760* (New York, 1962), pp. 372, 373, 375, 387, 388, 397.

Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748 made it a British possession and George II decided to invite his German countrymen to populate the colony. Two vessels arrived early in 1751 with immigrants sent by an agent named Johann Dick. They had come from northern Germany.<sup>4</sup> Among passengers who arrived on the *Speedwell* in 1751 was "T. Schömacher" from Hamburg, aged 22. He is designated as a "Candidate in Theology", which implies that he had studied at a German university. Schumacher apparently lived in both Halifax and Lunenburg in Nova Scotia; a town lot at Lunenburg was assigned to him, but the same lot was sold to someone else very soon.

Even more, however, investigation of available records reveals that Schumacher never matriculated at a German university, much less received the degree of *Magister*; and in spite of Friedrich Wagner's statement, there is no record of Schumacher's admission to the candidacy for the ministry in Hamburg in 1728 or at any time. Just when he was born is even a mystery; if he was 22 in 1751, then he was born about 1729. A careful search of the church records of the congregations in Hamburg and the area has failed to reveal a Daniel Schumacher or Schomaker, the low German form of the surname. Although his mother did live there, they may have been immigrants to the city.<sup>5</sup>

We may be sure that upon his confession of irregular conduct and an abandoned marriage in Nova Scotia, to which must be added his administering the Lord's Supper without ecclesiastical authority, together with the continuing misconduct with the bottle, Schumacher's chances of ordination and admission into the Synod in Pennsylvania were crushed. And this rejection, clearly, embittered Schumacher against the synod.

But by that time it did not really matter, for Daniel Schumacher had worked his way into the ministry, had been accepted by three and then more congregations, had been acknowledged by Tobias Wagner, a regularly ordained Lutheran clergyman, as a brother-pastor, as Schumacher's baptism of Wagner's daughter in 1754 testified and had begun a career which his conviction, if not his training, compelled him to pursue.<sup>6</sup> He was one of perhaps one third of the pastors without professional credentials among the colonial Pennsylvania German clergymen; but among that group of independents he may have been one of the most talented and intelligent. There is every evidence that he generally exercised the office to which he appointed himself with dignity and skill, as the steps of his career will reveal.

<sup>4</sup> *Collections of Nova Scotia Historical Society*, VI, p. 140. Winthrop Pickard Bell, *The Foreign Protestants and the Settlement of Nova Scotia. The History of a Piece of Arrested British Colonial Policy in the Eighteenth Century* (Toronto, 1961), p. 393.

<sup>5</sup> Data in this paragraph provided in letters from the Archives of the city of Hamburg to the author in 1967 and 1968.

<sup>6</sup> See below, p. 35.

In August 1754 Schumacher began ministering to the Lutherans in Windsor Township, under the shadow of the Blue Mountain north of Reading. (The congregation is today known as Saint Paul's or Smoke Church and is located east of Hamburg, Pennsylvania.) The next spring he crossed the mountains to conduct services in what is today West Brunswick Township of Schuylkill County. (The congregation is now Zion or Red Church.) About the same time he began to serve the Lutherans east and north of Windsor in an area harshly named Allemangel - "lacks everything" - probably because of its remoteness from other civilization. (That congregation became the Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Albany Township, Berks County, near Stony Run.) From Allemangel, with intermediate stations, he seems to have gone to Weisenberg. These two congregations played significant roles in his life. In the former he found a new wife, Maria Elisabeth, the daughter of George and Anna Margaretha Steigerwald, who had probably come to America in 1748. (Yerick Steigerwald, aged 40, was on the *Hampshire*, September 7, 1748.)<sup>7</sup> In the latter congregation he made his home along the Schweitzer Creek. Where he had lived from the time he left Reading in March 1755 until he settled in Weisenberg, by at least 1759, if not before, if indeed any one place had been his home, is one of the forgotten details of his life.

From records of the congregations he served and from the baptismal journal whose translation occasions this essay, it is possible to compose the following list of fields of service. It is not always certain that what Schumacher identifies by an area name was really a congregation; he may merely have gathered some Lutherans together, preached and baptized. Nor is it fair to assume that he was pastor in all of the places in which he baptized; he may have merely supplied occasionally. To indicate this difference, we have assigned numbers only to congregations which he served long enough to be considered as pastor. An asterisk indicates that the church record of the congregation also identifies him as its pastor or contains portions in his writing.

<sup>7</sup> W. J. Hinke and R. B. Strassburger, *Pennsylvania German Pioneers* (Norristown, Pa., 1934), I, p. 372. George Steigerwald, age 44, Anna Margaretha, age 37 and Maria Elisabeth, age 11, Johann Henrick, age 4, and Ann Margaretha, age 1, are listed as emigrants from 63639 Flörsbach (today part of Nordsachal) in the Spessart, east of Frankfurt in Inge Auerbach, *Heesische Auswanderer (Hessens), 1. Auswanderer aus Hanau in 18 Jahrhunderte*, Veröffentlichungen der Archivschule Marburg (Marburg, 1987), 43. Cf. Clifford Neal Smith, *Emigrants from the principality of Hesse - Hanau, Germany, 1741-1767* (McNeal, AZ, 1979). Two other Steigerwald pioneers, Johannes and Johann Peter, were on the *Ranier*, 26 Sept. 1749 (Strassburger - Hinke, I, 412), with other emigrants from Hanau.

| Location  | Congregation               | Designation in Schumacher's record  | Dates of Personal Activity   |
|---|----------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Reading  | Trinity*                   | Reading, Readingtown  | March 1754-<br>March 1755<br>July, October 1758  |
| 2. Alsace Township, Berks County (now Hyde Park, Reading)                               | Alsace                     | *Elsass*  | March 1754-<br>September 1758  |
| 3. Five miles east of Reading in Exeter Township, Berks County                          | Schwarzwald                | Schwarzwald, Exeter   | March 1754-July 1758   |
| 4. Two miles east of Hamburg in Windsor Township, Berks County                          | St. Paul's* (Smoke Church) | Windsor, in 1773 as "Lebanon Church"  | August 1754-June 1757<br>May 1760-1761<br>February 1764-<br>September 1765<br>May 1771-1775* |
| 5. One mile south of Orwigsburg, West Brunswick Township, Schuylkill County             | Zion** (Red Church)        | *Across the Blue Mountains <sup>11</sup> ; after 1770 also Zion; Brunswick Township | April 1755-July 1757;<br>December 1770-<br>July 1781 <sup>12</sup>                           |
| 6. Two miles east of Kempton, one mile east of Stony Run, Albany Township, Berks County | Jerusalem*                 | Allerangel  | May 1755-1770 <sup>13</sup>  |

\*The records of the congregation have three baptisms in Schumacher's handwriting for 1775. He appears to have served alternately here and elsewhere with Peter Mischler.

<sup>12</sup>When the church was dedicated at the beginning of Advent in 1770 Schumacher wrote into the church book: "Whetness we have found it expedient, after the awful experiences which we suffered at the hands of these wild and heathen peoples, the Indians, so-called, in 1756, etc., to build us a new church in this place; having, by the grace of God, again attained to dwell peacefully and unmolested in our former possessions; therefore, have we here resolved, in peace, love and unanimity one with another to erect a new church building, which was done and completed in the year 1770."  
<sup>13</sup>See below, number 19.

7. Seven miles south east of Bernville, Bern Township Berks County Bern Church Bern Church: August 1755-December 1757<sup>14</sup>

[Periodic visits to "Maxawany" in 1756, November and December 1758, November 1766, May 1767, February 1770, have been identified with what became Saint John's Church, now in Kurtzown, in 1789. Likely there was no organized congregation at this time.]  
[Periodic visits to Greenwch Township, perhaps New Jerusalem Church - see below, number 16 - but more likely New Bethel-Zion Church, Grimsville, if indeed any congregation is invoked at all. All the references are to the township, not a church, and many add "at home." In 1761 a group of five were confirmed in Greenwch Township; it is worth mentioning that the cornerstone for the first church of New Bethel-Zion was laid on May 18, 1761. But Schumacher does not mention a congregation there in his list of parishes served in 1761.]

8. Possibly in the area of the junction of Ruscombmanor, Alsace, Richmond, and near to Maidenreck Townships, Uincertain; a century later Salem or Schalter's Church appears here.

9. One mile east of Strasstown, Uipper Tulpehocken, Berks County Zion "Sommerberge" Northkill Church; August 1756-<sup>15</sup> March 1758

[Visits to "Tulpehocken" in November 1757 and March 1758 - either Zion Church or Christ Church, both near Stouffsburg and both identified as Tulpehocken.]

<sup>11</sup>Historians of Lutheranism in Berks County have taken this to be a reference to the Lutheran congregation at Belteman's Church, but since Schumacher clearly identifies it as Bern Church, there is a possibility at least that Lutheran services were held at the Bern Church from time to time. Compare, for instance, the published records of Bern Reformed congregation, *Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*, V, 1 (1912), pp. 38 ff.

<sup>12</sup>J. W. Early, "Short Histories of Congregations" (clippings annotated by Early in the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg), pp. 54-58 strongly identifies these references with St. Joseph's Church, although the evidence is not as clear as it could be and Schumacher's handwriting is not in St. Joseph's records. The late Raymond E. Hollenbach pointed out that "Weydenthal" is the valley north of the Oley Hills drained by the Willow Creek in Richmond and Maiden Creek Townships and that most of the persons involved in these transactions lived in Ruscombmanor Township, with a few in Alsace, Maiden Creek and Richmond. The only confirmation service Schumacher records "in the Oley Hills near to Weydenthal" is at the house of Haan Dieter Bewelmann. For what it is worth, the congregation of Schalter's church, founded 1860, was located at a cemetery laid out in the 1790s by a Dr. Beitelman.

<sup>13</sup>Tradition muddles the identification of this congregation; it may also be Friedens Church in Bernville. Neither of these congregations knows Schumacher as its pastor to judge from their surviving records.

10. Five miles north of Fogelsville, in Weisenberg Township, Lehigh County  
Weisenberg\* Weisenburg December 1757<sup>14</sup>-1775
11. Easton Saint John's Easton May 1758-December 1758  
[Visit to Williams Township, Northampton County, July 1758, to Trockenland [Dryland] Lower Nazareth Township, Northampton County, August 1758; to Phillipsburg, New Jersey, December 1758.]
12. Devonshire Jerusalem\* Schmaltzgass December 1758-<sup>15</sup>  
Alton Park  
Western Salisbury Township, Lehigh County  
October 1763;  
February 1766-  
December 1768
13. New Tripoli Ebenezer Linn January 1759-  
Lynn Township, Lehigh County The Organ Church December 1763  
near Schole or  
Scholeier's House
14. Church Road, Jerusalem\* Salzburg or July 1759-<sup>16</sup>  
Allentown, Salisbury November 1763;  
Eastern Salisbury October 1766-  
Township, Lehigh September 1768  
County  
[Visit to Great Swamp, Lower Milford Township, Lehigh County, September 1759.]  
[Visit to "Lehigh Church" (Zion) one mile north of Alburis, Lower Macungie Township, Lehigh County, in the fall of 1759 and fall of 1760, and in 1769.]
15. Egypt, White-hall Township, Lehigh County Egypt Egypt February 1760-1765  
[Visits to Saint Paul's Church, Indianland, Lehigh Township, Lehigh County, during spring and summer of 1760, and in 1770 and 1771, and perhaps on other occasions.]

<sup>14</sup>The records of the congregation bear evidence of Schumacher's writing until 1775.

<sup>15</sup>Schumacher seems to have distinguished these congregations by calling number 12 Schmaltzgass and number 14 Salisbury. The latter name could also have been used at Schmaltzgass, however. Schumacher began the records at both of these churches and they still exist; careful comparison would reveal at which church an entry took place.

16. Six miles west of Kutztown, Greenwich Township, Berks County  
New Jerusalem ("Dunkel's Church") Onelance Church  
Dunkel's Church  
November 1761-<sup>16</sup>  
November 1762;  
January 1764-  
July 1765
17. One mile east of Saegertsville, Heidelberg Township, Lehigh County  
Heidelberg Heidelberg May 1762-1769  
[One visit to "Rosenthal, Allemangel" - that is, the New Bethel Church near Eckville, April 28, 1763.]
18. Three miles west of Fogelsville, Weisenberg Township, Lehigh County  
Ziegel\* Ziegel or Saint John's September 1765-  
March 1770
19. Stony Run or Wesenertsville, Albany Township, Berks County  
Friedens\* ("White Church") Allemangel, 1770-1777<sup>17</sup>  
Friedens or Freiheit new church, Bethel
20. Four miles west of Hamburg, Tilden, Tilden Township, Berks County  
Saint Michael's\* Kaufman's Mill October 1771-<sup>18</sup>  
St. Michael's Church Bern Township  
Across the Schuylkill

It was in his work at Allemangel congregation that Schumacher encountered trouble that brought him back into contact with the synod officials who had neither ordained nor accepted him. To be sure, in 1765, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg noted in his diary that Schumacher had called on him and given him certain papers to send to his widowed mother in Hamburg, who had been begging Muhlenberg for news of her son for two years.<sup>19</sup> Four years later, at

<sup>16</sup>Although Dunkel's Church seems to have been only Reformed until 1790, Schumacher must have ministered to members there periodically.

<sup>17</sup>See immediately below, the original record contains Schumacher's handwriting until 1777.

<sup>18</sup>Schumacher was serving this congregation at the time his own records cease in 1773 and there are no records of the congregation to indicate how much longer he might have served it.

<sup>19</sup>Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Dobenstein, Jr., *The Journals of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg* (Philadelphia, 1942-1958), II, 244.

a meeting of the synod in June, Peter Mischler, who had served congregations with Schumacher, was asked to give an account of himself. Among other matters he was asked whether he was ordained and by whom. He reported that Schumacher had ordained him. Mischler was finally rejected by the synod as unfit for the ministry. When Muhlenberg reported the transaction to the authorities of the Lutheran church in Halle, Germany, he added "Shame on such a Brutus, who does not have ordination himself!"<sup>20</sup>

In December 1769 one of the members in Allemangel named Jacob Kortner petitioned the synod through Muhlenberg for preachers for Saint John's Church in Weisenberg Township ("Ziegel Church"), for the Weisenberg congregation, and for the Allemangel church. Muhlenberg noted that the congregations had been ruined by Schumacher and that a theological candidate in fellowship with the synod, Johan George Jung, was already serving in the area.<sup>21</sup>

When Muhlenberg himself visited the communities along the Blue Mountains the following July, he and Schumacher met. His *Journal* records his reactions:

July 9, 1770. Muhlenberg was urged to visit "four little congregations which had hitherto been served and had been ruined by a scandalous vagrant preacher. This preacher had been dismissed, the congregations had applied to the United Ministerium, and they have consequently been visited in turn by our brethren who live nearest, Messers. Fridferel, Buskirk, Jung and Schann. But the dismissed preacher has a small farm of his own in this region, still has a following of like-minded people among those who call themselves Lutherans and Reformed and continues to preach here and there on Sundays in houses and barns. He does all that he can to defame our Ministerium and its members, makes the poor, uninformed people regard us as dangerous, and, in particular, he made them believe that if I came on a visit, they would have to hand over to me their churches, all their privileges and prerogatives, etc... we met our fellow laborer, Diaconus Jung at Ziegel Church and even the dismissed preacher, Daniel Schlumacher]... The dismissed preacher had asked me beforehand for an opportunity to speak with me, but when I looked about for him after the service, he was not there. Accordingly I sent him word to see me early tomorrow morning in the locality I was scheduled to be in at that time....

July 10. The dismissed preacher came to see me early in the morning and conferred with me concerning some letters which his mother in H. had written to me with reference to a small inheritance, if he could prove that he was her real son, etc. After I had discussed with him what was necessary in this connection, I took him aside and remonstrated him in love and mercy concerning his dangerous way of life. I pleaded with him to desist therefrom for God's sake and to seek release and purification from sin and uncleanness at the free and open fountain, etc. Meaning well, he asked if I was not somewhat in conflict with the teaching of Christ, who spoke of beholding the mote... I replied that he was here giving an example of fallacious *exegetis* and poor *application* of God's Word... Now he should reflect, I said, on whether his known vices - such as drunkenness, cursing, swearing, lying, blasphemy, etc., - are to be called motes or beams....<sup>22</sup>

Muhlenberg could not restore peace, as we shall see, but it is also apparent that not everyone in the congregations rejected Schumacher, no matter whether he had all the vices Muhlenberg named or not. His last record at Ziegel Church is dated March 1770. His activity at Weisenberg continued until 1775, but the dissension probably was the real reason that the Lowhill Church was formed within eyescan of Weisenberg.<sup>23</sup> Probably the last of the "four little congregations" was the Rosenthal Church, of which Schumacher seems never to have been pastor.

It was at Allemangel itself that matters reached a climax. The congregation there predated Schumacher's arrival in 1755 by at least a half a dozen years. To understand what happened in 1770 one must know something of the congregation's history. Since some of the early settlers had belonged to Muhlenberg's congregations at Falkner's Swamp and New Hanover, it was only natural that they turned to him for ministry in their new home. This must have been between Muhlenberg's arrival (November 1742) and April 1746, for on April 11, 1746, Conrad Weiser obtained for Muhlenberg a warrant for fifty acres for church and school in Allemangel. Muhlenberg held the land for the time being in his own name and promised to send pastors occasionally, which he seems to have done until Schumacher appeared on the scene. Schumacher's own relationship with the congregation appears to have been in order at least as late as 1768 when he began its record book. But by 1770, as Muhlenberg records, Schumacher had been dismissed, and, as we

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 408.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 431.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 453-454.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Charles R. Roberts, et al., *History of Lehigh County, Pennsylvania* (Allentown, 1914).

I, 988, for instance, which asserts that Schumacher's superior preaching was the reason. The Lowhill records shed no light on the problem.

