

#848 The Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg – The Muhlenbergs from Trappe, part 5, The Trap for the Muhlenbergs

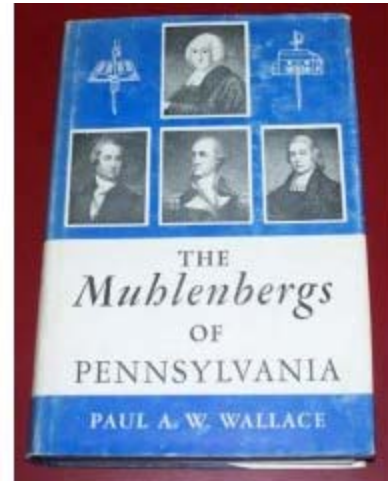
This Unsealing and the next contain excerpts from the book *The Muhlenbergs of Pennsylvania*, by Paul A. W. Wallace, p. 109, 122-3, © 1950, published by the University of Pennsylvania Press:

Nothing could better show the differences in temperament among the four Muhlenberg men – Henry Melchior and his three sons – than the effect of the [American] Revolution upon them. To begin with, there was the natural difference between the generations. Old Calendar and New Calendar. They all had had European training, but differences between father and sons in the matter of early environment caused a marked difference in outlook. Henry Melchior had his roots in Europe. He still looked upon America as a “wilderness,” and feared the high free spirits of her people. The boys, on the other hand, had grown up to take both American high spirits and American freedoms (in politics, manners, and speech) for granted; and while abroad, all three of them had acquired a sharp feeling of separateness from Europe which drew them closer together and made all the broadsides and oratory in America preceding the Revolution seem like an echo of their own feelings.

The story of Pennsylvania German minister Johann Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg throwing off his clerical robe to reveal a uniform underneath became an inspirational symbol of American patriotism. Pennsylvania artist Stanley Massey Arthurs (1877-1950) painted this version of the famous scene in the early 1900's.

By 1777, they were all, the boys and their father together, united in their American loyalty. But, whereas the boys had never been anywhere else, their father had had to think his way to that position. The war, when it came, found the boys serving pastorates in three different colonies: Peter in Virginia, Frederick in New York, and Henry Ernest in Pennsylvania. Its first blasts in each locality interrupted their careers. When the storm had passed, Peter and Frederick had been swept out of their churches and had entered public affairs. Only Henry Ernest remained in the ministry.

Key Understanding: *The trap for the Muhlenbergs.* The foundational doctrines of the United States of America were a trap for the Muhlenbergs, the founding family of the Lutheran Church in America, and, in turn, the Martin Luther/Muhlenberg gospel of a



sword-bearing, Bill of Rights-dominated Protestant Reformation church/state of America “under God” was/is a trap for those who would follow.

Jeremiah 5:26-27 (KJV) FOR AMONG MY PEOPLE ARE FOUND WICKED MEN: THEY LAY WAIT, AS HE THAT SETTETH SNARES: THEY SET A TRAP, THEY CATCH MEN.

27 AS A CAGE IS FULL OF BIRDS, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, AND WAXEN RICH.



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