



JOURNAL

OF THE LUTHERAN
HISTORICAL CONFERENCE

Mark Granquist, editor



2016

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to a single "Union" church. Founders of the Missou-
protested this union.

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THE CIVIL WAR LETTERS OF A BORDER-STATE LUTHERAN PASTOR

12

XENOPHON J. RICHARDSON

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY EDWARD W. SPANNAUS

Introduction:

The following letters, written by Rev. Xenophon J. Richardson from Lovettsville, Virginia, were published in The Lutheran Observer in the winter of 1864-1865. When Rev. Richardson, who had been the president of the Virginia Synod for two years, came to New Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Loudoun County in early 1860, he had little idea of the isolation, turmoil and lawlessness that he would face over the coming years. Nonetheless, he managed not only to keep his sizeable congregation together despite its deep divisions during the Civil War, but he actually enlarged it, while other nearby churches were shutting their doors.

Rev. Richardson was born in Page County, Virginia, in 1821, and died in Washington County, Maryland, in 1889. Here, in his own words, is his remarkable account of his travails—and the faith that sustained him—during these awful years. His letters have been transcribed from microfilm of the Lutheran Observer in the United Lutheran Seminary's A. R. Wentz Library at Gettysburg.

Lutheran Observer December 23, 1864, p. 3

MESSRS. EDITORS:

I am ministerially isolated from the world around me. Though nominally connected with the Virginia Synod, that connection amounts to nothing practically as I have not attended any of its meetings nor

forwarded any parochial reports since the commencement of the war. Military movements, together with a total suspension of mail facilities, have been the cause of this. I am, however, laboring in my pastorate with a view to an account of my stewardship during these years of horrible war, that I expect to render to the synod some day, if a merciful providence shall continue my life to meet with my brethren in synodical convention once more. Meanwhile, I have concluded to report to the church generally, through the medium of the *Observer*, what I have been doing the last two or three years, the progress the church has made, and its present condition and prospects. And if the *Observer* reaches any of the members of the Virginia Synod who attend its meetings, or can communicate with it, I shall be much obliged to them if they will preserve these numbers containing my papers and forward them for presentation at the next meeting. I hope all the members of the synod will be gratified to hear from me and know what I am doing.

But I cannot commence my report proper without saying something first in regard to my painful ministerial isolation. From the time I was licensed until the commencement of this war, about twelve years, I was present at every annual convention of synod; I really loved to be there. Every minister, with the soul of a christian brother in him, knows the pleasantness of these annual seasons of fraternal communion and conference. They are the green spots in ministerial life. They are seasons of refreshing. The heart is warmed anew with holy love, faith is strengthened, zeal is animated, all the christian graces are quickened, and we go away prepared to engage with increased vigor in the work we have to do. Need I say, then, that the loss of these annual meetings of synod, and of the conferences during the intervals, is a serious ode to me? Moreover, our synod was indeed a band of brethren. I believe we all truly loved one another. In all our business transactions and discussions, the feelings and opinions of the humblest member were always respected by all the rest. In our debates embittering personalities were scarcely ever heard, and if heard never failed to receive merited rebuke. The result, was, that our partings were always regretful, and with cordial wishes and earnest prayers for each other's welfare. Pardon me, Messrs. Editors, for writing thus, for some of the most pleasant memories of my past life are connected with the Virginia Synod; and one of my chief ministerial sorrows now is that the prospect for a repetition of them is so dim. . . .

X.J.R.

Lutheran Observer, January 13, 1863

MESSRS. EDITORS:

It is a source of devout gratitude to God that, in the midst of this civil war, my church has been wholly free from the ravages and sensations. Other churches, both north and south, far from us, have been rent and torn asunder, the doors of the sanctuaries in which they have been opened now. But it has not been so with us. God has preserved us from this, and I deem it worth while to mean we employed to accomplish an object more desirable to others than ourselves, but worth while.

The fierce political excitement, which has been attending the war, so fearfully agitated the country as well as others. Here appeared a fearful trial of my duty, as a minister of the Gospel and of the church, all the care and diligence of which I was capable. Shall this political strife enter the church, those who have so long worshipped in the same communion around the same altar, and who have so long revolved, labored, prayed, and rejoiced together, enemies to each other, to the dishonor of the church, and the curse of the community? I therefore avowed that this should not be. I therefore avoided all political preaching, no political sermons, nor would I have any action taken within our congregation liable to a political construction. I tried to keep the attention of my people more than its political. The leading members of my course, seconded my efforts, and endeavored to serve peace and godliness among us; many of our pastors are gone have lent us their aid and blessing has rested upon us, so that, as a church, we have not only held our own, but have been the means of spiritual prosperity.

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X.J.R.

Lutheran Observer, January 13, 1865, p. 1

MESSRS. EDITORS:

It is a source of devout gratitude to God, that during these years of civil war, my church has been wholly free from internal strifes and dissensions. Other churches, both north and south, and, indeed, some not far from us, have been rent and torn asunder, the pastors are gone, and the doors of the sanctuaries in which they worshipped are scarcely ever opened now. But it has not been so with us. God's grace has mercifully preserved us from this, and I deem it worthwhile to note, in passing, the means we employed to accomplish an object that was certainly no less desirable to others than ourselves, but which they failed to secure.

The fierce political excitement, which, for months immediately preceding the war, so fearfully agitated the country, affected this community as well as others. Here appeared a fearful danger against which I felt it my duty, as a minister of the Gospel and pastor of a church, to guard with all the care and diligence of which I was capable. The question with me was, shall this political strife enter the church and rend it in pieces? Shall those who have so long worshipped in the same temple of God, so often communed around the same altar, and in so many precious seasons of revival, labored, prayed, and rejoiced together—shall they now become enemies to each other, to the dishonor of the Gospel, the ruin of the church, and the curse of the community? With God's help, I determined that this should not be. I therefore avoided all political discussions, and preached no political sermons, nor would I allow any subject to be introduced and action taken within our council or congregational meetings liable to a political construction. I tried to show my people their sins, and held up, to view as well as I could in all their aggravated guilt, the iniquities of the nation on account of which the just judgment of God was about to overtake us, and only the more fearful because so long delayed. Thus, as the storm gathered strength and increased in awful threatening, I tried to keep the attention of my people directed to the moral aspects more than its political. The leading members of my church approved of my course, seconded my efforts, and exerted all their influence to preserve peace and godliness among us; members of other churches whose pastors are gone have lent us their aid in this good work; God's gracious blessing has rested upon us, so that, as will be seen in my future numbers, we have not only held our own, but have enjoyed no small measure of spiritual prosperity.

This is the general course that I have pursued in my ministerial and pastoral work since the commencement of the war. Is any argument necessary to show that I did right? Perhaps so, for the majority of ministers around me, of the leading denominations, acted differently, treating their people Sabbath after Sabbath to fiery political discussions of the war, its causes and results. Let me remark then the *Christ's kingdom is not of this world*. What have we then as *ministers*, as *christian* people, as subjects of a purely *spiritual* kingdom, with a work in the world, of an exclusively *spiritual* character to perform, and having our conversation in heaven, to do with earthly affairs? What may be our duties, rights, and privileges as subjects of earthly governments, or members of the social state, is not the question now; nor is it denied that political subjects as well as others may be legitimately introduced into the pulpit and discussed in their internal [?] aspects and bearings, but further than this, in my humble opinion, ministers and churches should not go. . . .

X.J.R.

Lutheran Observer, January 27, 1865, p. 1.

MESSRS. EDITORS:

I assumed the pastoral care of this church about one year before the commencement of the war. Its condition then was not good. Various causes had operated to produce dissensions, heart burnings, and alienations. I was, however, kindly received by all, and a general disposition was manifested to aid and sustain me in my efforts to do good. My first object, of course, was to improve the spiritual condition of the church, to remove as far as possible the causes of distraction and disaffection, and to bring back again those who had become estranged away. In this I was as successful as could be expected. After some months I had a protracted meeting; the Holy Spirit was poured out upon us in copious measure, christians were revived, sinners were converted, and fifty members were added to the church by confirmation. The influence of this season of grace upon the church was of the most happy character. It united the church as it had not been before for years, increased its moral power in the community, and gave me a hold upon the confidence and affections of my people, that has been of incalculable value to me and my efforts to save the church from evil, and the distractions of succeeding war.

From the spring of 1861 to the fall of 1863, we did not deem it prudent, in consequence of military excitements and for other reasons, to

open the church at all for night services were, however, but seldom suspended. Meetings as often as the condition of the country permitted, special attention was given to Sabbath school. With God's blessing, we were thus enabled to increase in the congregation. The Sunday School numbered 166 scholars, with a corresponding increase.

But with all this there was one deficiency. To accomplish the good we earnestly desired, more young people were being gathered into the church. True, we never had a communion season, the number was not large. Meanwhile the church was on the increase, and demoralization was stronger. What was to be done? Last year several special prayer meetings in different parts of the town were held, all except one, semi-weekly, some at the houses of members, changing from place to place. Occasionally attend, for the purpose of obtaining the pardoning mercy and compassion of God. Meetings were made of these meetings, and the influence circulated among the members, and among them except those who would go to the Spirit of heavenly grace descended upon them, the covenant with God, and were blessed. Souls began to come upon us as it had been, all the earnestness of longing desire.

Thus we continued in prayer until the fall of 1863, when, without any public announcement, a meeting at the Tankerville school house was held. Sinners were converted, they were in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The house became so crowded that we had to move to another place, confining ourselves to the same meeting progressed, we several times moved at two different places at the same time, and prevent disorder. The result was a large number of souls. From the deep impression made

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open the church at all for night service. Our ordinary Sabbath appoint-
ments were, however, but seldom suspended; we held our sacramental
meetings as often as the condition of things around us would permit, and
special attention was given to Sabbath School and catechetical classes.
With God's blessing, we were thus enabled to keep up a religious interest
in the congregation. The Sunday School in the summer of 1863 num-
bered 166 scholars, with a corresponding force of officers and teachers.

But with all this there was one direction in which we failed to ac-
complish the good we earnestly desired -- but comparatively few of our
young people were being gathered in from the world and added to the
church. True, we never had a communion without confirmations; but
the number was not large. Meanwhile, wickedness of every description
was on the increase, and demoralizing influences were become daily
stronger. What was to be done? Last winter (1863-'64). I appointed sev-
eral special prayer meetings in different parts of the congregation, to be
held, all except one, semi-weekly, sometimes at school houses, and then
at the houses of members, changing from place to place, so that all could
occasionally attend, for the purpose of confessing our sins and imploring
the pardoning mercy and compassion of our God. No public announce-
ments were made of these meetings, the appointments were privately
circulated among the members, and but few attended them or knew of
them except those who would go to pray. It was good to be there. The
Spirit of heavenly grace descended upon us. Christians renewed their
covenant with God, and were blessed. Then the burden of unconverted
souls began to come upon us as it had not before. We prayed for them in
all the earnestness of longing desire for their conversion.

Thus we continued in prayer until the later part of last February,
when, without any public announcement, I commenced a protracted
meeting at the Tankerville school house. The power of God was mani-
fested, sinners were converted, they prayed for mercy, and found peace
in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The whole community seemed to
become aroused, and in the course of two or three nights the school
house became so crowded that we had to move away privately to an-
other place, confining ourselves to the instruction of mourners. As the
meeting progressed, we several times found it necessary to have services
at two different places at the same time, in order to meet the interest
and prevent disorder. The result was the conversion of more than forty
souls. From the deep impression made upon the minds of the people I am

satisfied this result would have been doubled but for lack of house room to accommodate the congregations. . .

X.J.R.

Lutheran Observer, February 3, 1865, p. 3.

MESSRS. EDITORS:

In my last number I gave a brief account of a work of grace with which this church was blessed last winter and spring. We entered upon a series of meetings with fear and trembling. This county for the past two or three years has been neutral ground—neither army holding it, and detachments from both overrunning it. We feared interruptions by soldiers, but, to their credit, and the praise of God's restraining grace, let it be said, they caused us no trouble. We feared collisions between opposing parties, but though we had both occasionally, providentially they never met at any of our meetings. But how unfavorable, in human view, was such a condition of things for a work of this character. To God's grace be all the praise for the success that crowned our humble efforts to promote this glory. His ear is never heavy that he cannot hear, nor his arm shortened that he cannot save. . . .

The situation of churches and communities along the border is to say the least a very unenviable one. We have no civil law; at least this is the case here, and I presume it is the same elsewhere. There is not a single *human* instrumentality in operation to protect the good and punish the wicked. Society is dissolved into its original elements, and every man, according to his own moral instincts and feelings, has become his own protector and avenger. Sometimes armies pass through, leaving destruction and desolation to mark their course; while scarcely a week elapses that we do not have scouting parties and detachments from both armies going in almost every direction. This state of things causes continued excitement and alarm, and its fearfully demoralizing tendency can only be known and appreciated by those whose lot is cast within its range. The worst passions of human nature are aroused, and every man, except where the most thoroughly tested confidence exists, is disposed to look upon his neighbor with suspicious distrust. No wonder, therefore, that we hear of neighborhoods filled with contention and strife, where mobs will, in all their fiendish violence, and murders are the order of the day. But in our church, and in this community generally, we have had peace. The Gospel has taught us to love one another, and under the

influence of that love we respect each other's burdens, and meet our mutual circumstances, as those that have sur and value of the christian religion, as social morality and order, are peculiar wherever it is cordially embraced. Le deep roots in the hearts of the people, we have comparatively little use for hu right from religious principle, and not legislation. . . .

It may be supposed that, under th pastor and people, very closely togeth them, and I believe not less sorrowful wish to do so. They give me a comfor not withstanding their heavy losses, th want. Sore calamities have befallen u er, may be in store for us. But hithert will trust his mercy and grace for the

Background:

Lovettsville, the northernmost t settled by Germans coming from Penn 1731—part of the wave of internal m of Germans and Scotch-Irish into the West across the Blue Ridge Mountain County comprising what was known with the adjoining Quaker area aroun secession, while the rest of Loudoun Union. During the War, north Loudo buzzard,” or “between Reb and Yank occupation and raids by both armies, the necessities of life from merchants its founding in 1765, New Jerusalem in Lovettsville, Virginia, had always the Maryland Synod and the Genera Ministerium before that — and hac Synod. This is not surprising, since L

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other's burdens, and meet our mutual responsibilities. It is under such
circumstances, as those that have surrounded us here, that the power
and value of the christian religion, as the only effectual conservator of
social morality and order, are peculiarly manifest. And this is effectual
wherever it is cordially embraced. Let the Gospel of Jesus Christ take
deep roots in the hearts of the people, and its spirit pervade society, and
we have comparatively little use for human courts and laws; men then do
right from religious principle, and not from any compulsion of political
legislation. . . .

It may be supposed that, under the circumstances, we are bound, as
pastor and people, very closely together. It would be hard for me to leave
them, and I believe not less sorrowful to them to see me go. I have no
wish to do so. They give me a comfortable support, and still assure me,
not withstanding their heavy losses, that as long as they have, I shall not
want. Sore calamities have befallen us recently, and others still, howev-
er, may be in store for us. But hitherto the Lord hath helped us, and we
will trust his mercy and grace for the future.

X.J.R.

Background:

Lovettsville, the northernmost town in present-day Virginia, was
settled by Germans coming from Pennsylvania and Maryland starting in
1731—part of the wave of internal migration which brought thousands
of Germans and Scotch-Irish into the Great Valley of Virginia just to the
West across the Blue Ridge Mountains. The area of northern Loudoun
County comprising what was known as "the German Settlement," along
with the adjoining Quaker area around Waterford, voted heavily against
secession, while the rest of Loudoun County voted to separate from the
Union. During the War, north Loudoun was caught "between hawk and
buzzard," or "between Reb and Yank," as writers have put it, subject to
occupation and raids by both armies, while often being unable to obtain
the necessities of life from merchants and traders from either side. From
its founding in 1765, New Jerusalem Lutheran Church (New Jerusalem)
in Lovettsville, Virginia, had always been a member congregation of
the Maryland Synod and the General Synod—and of the Pennsylvania
Ministerium before that — and had never been part of the Virginia
Synod. This is not surprising, since Lovettsville is situated just two miles

from the Potomac River and the Virginia-Maryland border, and most of the settlers there had originally come from southeast Pennsylvania.

In 1858, when the Rev. J. B. Anthony began his ministry here, he took New Jerusalem into the Melancthon Synod, which had been formed a year earlier. The Melancthon Synod, centered in western Maryland, was an expression of the "American Lutheranism" championed by S. S. Schmucker and Benjamin Kurtz.

Xenophon Richardson, who had served various congregations in western Virginia since 1848, was elected Virginia Synod president in 1857 and again in 1858, while serving at Mt. Tabor in Augusta County. On February 27, 1860, Richardson accepted a call to New Jerusalem, and at the October 1860 convention of the Virginia Synod, the Lovettsville charge (comprised of New Jerusalem and St. Paul's in Neersville) applied for admission to the Virginia Synod, which was approved. One suspects that entering the Virginia Synod may have been a condition of Rev. Richardson's accepting a call to New Jerusalem.

At the same time, there was much turmoil, including boundary disputes, within both the Maryland and Virginia Synods, over the breakaway Melancthon Synod. But at the 1860 convention, proposals were received recommending a merger of all three synods. The Maryland Synod was urging a merger, and it scheduled a meeting with the Virginia Synod to discuss this. The Virginia Synod appointed a committee, including Richardson, to present a plan to a joint meeting of the Virginia and Maryland Synods to be held in Winchester on May 29, 1861; the decision of the Winchester meeting was then to be reported to the next annual convention of the Virginia Synod, which, interestingly, was set to convene in Lovettsville on October 17, 1861.

In April 1861 the war broke out, and in May, Virginia seceded. Because of the war, it was considered "inexpedient" to meet in a border area such as Lovettsville. Unable to attend the convention, Richardson sent a letter asking to be excused, and again inviting the Virginia Synod to hold its 1862 convention in Lovettsville. However, the convention decided, in view of the disturbed condition of affairs in the border counties, that it would still be inexpedient to meet in Lovettsville the next year. Richardson was still associated with the Virginia Synod's Education Society, and he was also designated to supply the Smithfield congregation in Clarke County (although it is unlikely that he was able to do this). Lovettsville did submit a parochial report to the Virginia convention, listing 450 communicants—making it by far the largest charge in the Virginia Synod.

And at the same time, because of the war, the Virginia Synod drew from the General Synod, and sent a letter to the General Synod, founding of the General Synod of the Confederate States. The convention was not resolved until 1918. The convention of the *Southern Lutheran* as an alternative to the *Lutheran Observer*. A committee report, adopted at the convention, the war of the rebellion was "a defensive war against a common foe," and was "just and righteous."

In 1862, 1863, and 1864, Richardson attended Virginia conventions, and no parochial conventions. It is this state of affairs that Richardson reported in a letter to the *Lutheran Observer*.

In the second letter, he relates how the war affected politics and the war. Now, Richardson mentions the necessity, since the congregation was deeply divided by secessionists. Pastor Michael Kretsinger's charge history counted 28 members who joined the Loudoun Rangers, a local cavalry and scouting unit. Richardson, the Loudoun Rangers, 1st Lt. Luther W. Richardson, a captain, but he had attended the Lutheran convention at Gettysburg, apparently on a path to the war. There were at least two other New Jerusalem members who joined other Union Army regiments. John F. Downey. A number of other New Jerusalem members, the Coopers, John F. Downey, Gideon H. Downey, were scouts and clandestine intelligence agents in the command at Harper's Ferry.

We know of fewer New Jerusalem members, but there was Peter Kabrich, William S. Kabrich. Richardson likely performed a marriage in 1864. Oct. 24, 1864, and he preached the funeral service for a man mortally wounded in the fight against the Confederates at the Baptist Church on Aug. 27, 1862. To mention a shot (while trying to steal a horse belonging to Charles Webster, who a few months later was killed in a family, who were New Jerusalem communicants. The case of New Jerusalem's Snoots family, who were killed against brother, when the Confederate War was over, from killing his Unionist brother Charles.

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And at the same time, because of the war, the Virginia Synod with-
drew from the General Synod, and sent a delegate to participate in the
founding of the General Synod of the Confederate States -- a split which
was not resolved until 1918. The convention urged members to patronize
the *Southern Lutheran* as an alternative to the Maryland-based *Lutheran
Observer*. A committee report, adopted unanimously, declared that the
war of the rebellion was "a defensive war," waged against "an invading
foe," and was "just and righteous."

In 1862, 1863, and 1864, Richardson was unable to attend the annual
Virginia conventions, and no parochial reports were submitted to those
conventions. It is this state of affairs that Richardson laments in his first
letter to the *Lutheran Observer*.

In the second letter, he relates how he has avoided any discussion of
politics and the war. Now, Richardson may have regarded this as a ne-
cessity, since the congregation was deeply divided between Unionist and
secessionists. Pastor Michael Kretsinger in his 1976 congregational his-
tory counted 28 members who joined the Unionist Independent Loudoun
Rangers, a local cavalry and scouting unit. The number-two leader of
the Loudoun Rangers, 1st Lt. Luther W. Slater, was not only a communi-
cant, but he had attended the Lutheran preparatory schools at Roanoke and
then Gettysburg, apparently on a path to becoming a Lutheran minister.
There were at least two other New Jerusalem members beyond those 28,
who joined other Union Army regiments: William Wiard, and William B.
Downey. A number of other New Jerusalem members, including some of
the Coopers, John F. Downey, Gideon Householder, and Luther Potterfield,
were scouts and clandestine intelligence operatives for the Union Army
command at Harper's Ferry.

We know of fewer New Jerusalem members in the Confederate army,
but there was Peter Kabrich, William Snoots, and James Jacobs. Pastor
Richardson likely performed a marriage ceremony for James Jacobs on
Oct. 24, 1864, and he preached the funeral for Peter Kabrich, who was
mortally wounded in the fight against the Loudoun Rangers at Waterford
Baptist Church on Aug. 27, 1862. To make matters worse, Kabrich was
shot (while trying to steal a horse belonging to the Loudoun Rangers) by
Charles Webster, who a few months later married into the Downey fam-
ily, who were New Jerusalem communicants and Union loyalists. In the
case of New Jerusalem's Snoots family, it was literally a case of brother
against brother, when the Confederate William Snoots had to be restrained
from killing his Unionist brother Charles, after the Loudoun Rangers had

surrendered at the Waterford fight. That gives you an idea of what Pastor Richardson was facing during the war.

Despite his banning of any political discussions in the church, Richardson's loyalties were known. In the public vote on the Ordinance of Secession in May 1861, he voted against secession. In February 1864, he was one of 150 men and women who petitioned Secretary of War Stanton for relief from the Union-imposed blockade which prevented loyalists from obtaining food, clothing, and other necessities of life from across the Potomac in Maryland. The signers declared that that "we have borne the horrors of this ungodly war with all patience and forbearance in our power, while we hope for its speedy close and proud triumph of the Union Arms."

In May 1864, Richardson wrote to the military commander at Harper's Ferry asking for permission to go with his son and "other young men from the neighborhood" to Pennsylvania College in Gettysburg (the feeder school for the Lutheran Seminary). The Commanding General replied that Richardson had permission to send his son and others to school in Pennsylvania, but that he could not go with them; and that he had permission to correspond with his son subject to approval by the military authorities at Harper's Ferry. (This is also interesting, because the Virginia Synod had decisively broken off all connection and support for Gettysburg Seminary early in the war.)

In January and February of 1865, there was a Union Army winter encampment literally right outside the church door. 2500 Union cavalry troops were encamped in a circle around Lovettsville, and there were camps in the fields right across from the church and its cemetery. There is no indication that New Jerusalem was used as a hospital or barracks. The strongly-secessionist Presbyterian church was taken over for use as a hospital during the 1865 encampment, suffering a great deal of damage, and there are some indications that the German Reformed church (also more secessionist than Unionist) was also used by Union troops.

Apparently there was some damage to New Jerusalem, or at least war-time deterioration, because later in the year Pastor Richardson wrote in the church records: "The church having undergone a thorough repairing was re-opened for divine service on Sabbath Dec. 10, 1865, and formally re-dedicated to the service of the Triune Jehovah, the Rev. C. Startzman of Maryland being present and assisting the pastor on the occasion."¹ We wonder how Pastor Richardson would have reacted to the fierce polemics

emanating from his beloved Virginia Synod during the war years. In addition to the resolutions adopted by the 1861 Virginia convention, the Synod's withdrawal from the General Synod of the United States led to the remaining unscrupulous despots.

The 1864 Virginia Synod president, who had fallen by the sword, but stated: "Yes, the families from the assault of a murderous armed our servants, plundered our property, ordered our men, exiled our women and children, a horde of barbarous vandals have our cities and lives. Peace be to their ashes, bliss to their souls."

On the other side, the 1864 convention acknowledged that it is not normally permitted into the sanctuary, but nonetheless stated it was a right but as a bounden duty of our Mission of the national existence against a rebellion of the life, the freedom and honor of our country both by word and deed, as far as is consistent to uphold and defend it."

The General Synod, meeting in Maryland, declared rebellion against the constitutional Government in its inception, unjustified in its cause, in its prosecution, oppressive in its aims, and the highest interests of morality and religion. The mission of the rebellion was "an unavoidable and urged its people to pray for military victory and may be speedily be delivered from their hands."

This is what Richardson, isolated in the north and south. To what degree he was involved in intra-church polemics, we cannot say.

Richardson was finally able to attend the Virginia Synod held in Rockbridge County on October 26, and served on the convention. In preaching, he was granted a leave of absence for the first time since 1861, a parochial report in his charge, showing 492 communicants (400 men, 92 women), 33 teachers, 190 scholars.

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emanating from his beloved Virginia Synod, and other Lutheran synods, during the war years. In addition to the statements reported above that were adopted by the 1861 Virginia convention, the resolution declaring the Synod's withdrawal from the General Synod denounced those "yet adhering to the remaining unscrupulous despotism in Washington."

The 1864 Virginia Synod president's report lamented those who had fallen by the sword, but stated: "Yes, they fell defending their homes and families from the assault of a murderous foe who have invaded our soil, armed our servants, plundered our property, burned our dwellings, murdered our men, exiled our women and starved our children. To repel this horde of barbarous vandals have our citizens, our members sacrificed their lives. Peace be to their ashes, bliss to their souls."

On the other side, the 1864 convention of the Maryland Synod acknowledged that it is not normally permitted to introduce political matters into the sanctuary, but nonetheless stated that "we do regard it, not only as a right but as a bounden duty of our Ministers to pray for the preservation of the national existence against a rebellion destructive in its aims at once of the life, the freedom and honor of our great and good Government, and both by word and deed, as far as is consistent with their spiritual calling, to uphold and defend it."

The General Synod, meeting in May 1862, had declared that "the rebellion against the constitutional Government of this land is most wicked in its inception, unjustified in its cause, unnatural in its character, inhuman in its prosecution, oppressive in its aims, and destructive in its results to the highest interests of morality and religion." It avowed that the suppression of the rebellion was "an unavoidable necessity and a sacred duty," and urged its people to pray for military success, "that our beloved land may be speedily be delivered from treason and anarchy."

This is what Richardson, isolated in Lovettsville, was surrounded by, north and south. To what degree he was fully aware of these bitter intra-church polemics, we cannot say.

Richardson was finally able to attend the October 1865 convention of the Virginia Synod held in Rockbridge County; he preached at the convention on October 26, and served on at least one committee. But after preaching, he was granted a leave of absence due to a son's illness. For the first time since 1861, a parochial report was submitted for the Lovettsville charge, showing 492 communicants (an increase from 450 in 1861), two Sabbath schools, 33 teachers, 190 scholars, and three prayer meetings.

At the October 1866 Virginia Synod Convention, Richardson was present, and he asked, on behalf of himself and New Jerusalem, for permission to withdraw from the Virginia Synod, so that they could unite with the Melanchthon Synod. This was granted. In October 1869 a joint convention of both the Maryland and Melanchthon Synods was held at Williamsport, Md., and all the members of the Melanchthon Synod were welcomed into the Maryland Synod. And Rev. Richardson was immediately elected president of the enlarged Maryland Synod!

Rev. Richardson stayed at New Jerusalem until 1873, when he was called to Trinity in Smithsburg, Maryland, near Hagerstown, where he served until 1887. He died in 1889, and is buried in Smithsburg with his wife Mary.²

Endnotes

- 1 Rev. Christian Startzman had been a founder of the Melanchthon Synod in 1857.
- 2 Two of Xenophon and Mary's children, son H.M.M. and daughter Virginia, are buried at New Jerusalem. Another son Arthur Franklin went on to become a minister, and daughter Susan married the Rev. Dr. John Weidley, long-time pastor and pastor emeritus of the Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, D.C. and a president of the Maryland Synod UCLA.

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