



Rudolph Strehle

Bethlehem Digital History Project

8. 9. 10. Lives
of some Brethren, who departed in Beth-
lehem in the Months of September & October
1785.

1. Life of our late Br. Rudolph Strehle.
He writes himself: I was born June 29th 1712
at Emdingen a Market Town in the Duchy of
Württemberg. In my tenderest Infancy I had al-
ready a Feeling of our Saviour. & liked to learn
Hymns of my Mother which trusted of him. From
my 4th Year I went to School, & learned with Plea-
sure. In my 11th Year my Mother fell dead by sick-
& my Father being also sickly, it came very impress-
ively into my Mind, that I soon might be a poor orphan
& come among strange People, I went into the field
& prayed God with Tears on my Knees, to save my
Soul, & other ^{things} he might do with me as he pleased,
Some Days after my Mother departed. Being 16
Years of Age, my Father brought me to Tübingen
to learn the Mason Trade, & 6 Weeks after he
also departed this Time. I still retained a Concern
about my Salvation, however by Seduction I fell

Lives of some Brethren, who departed in Bethlehem in the months of September and October 1785.

1. Life our late Br. Rudolph [Christian Rudolph] Strehle, He writes himself: I was born June 29th 1712 at Emdingen a Market Town in the Duchy of Württemberg. In my tenderest infancy I had already a feeling of our Saviour. And liked to learn hymns of my mother which trusted of him. From my 7th year I went to school, and learned with pleasure. In my 11th year my mother fell deadly sick, and my father being also sickly, it came very impressively into my mind, that I soon might be a poor orphan and come among strange people. I went into the field and prayed God with tears on my knees, to save my soul in other things he might do with me as he pleased., some days after my mother departed. Being 16 years of age, my father brought me to Tübingen to learn the mason trade, and 6 weeks after he also departed this time. I still retained a concern about my salvation, however by seduction I fell

into sin, & became more senseless & lightminded,
yet not without Uneasiness. In 1733 a great change
taking place in the Duchy of Wurtemberg & the War
commencing, I was measured with a view to become
a Soldier. I came into great concern & a serious
consideration whether I should run away or what
what turn it would take, & I prayed to God to put
it into my mind & thoughts, what steps to take.
It became clear in my heart, to be still, & to let
it go as it would, & I got the Assurance that it would
take a glorious Event, if I even should come among
the Soldiers. I thought: God is allmighty, omnipre-
sent & all knowing, I will rely on him! In 1734
I went sometimes into the preachings of the Revd. Mr.
Preibitz at Breitenholz, in which my heart often was
powerfully laid hold of, so that I would not refrain from
shedding tears, tho' I was much ashamed to be seen weep-
ing. 1735 in March I was obliged to become a Soldier,
& came into the Imperial Service at Freyburg in Brin-
gau. I many times went into the field, because we
were quartered at first in the Villages, wept & prayed
to God not to withdraw his gracious hand from me, other-
wise I should be lost. I was much influenced by the
Spirit

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to God to put it into my mind and thoughts, what steps to take. It became
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Brigau. I many time went into the field, because we were quartered at
first in the villages, wept and prayed to God not to withdraw his gracious
hand from me, otherwise I should be lost. I was much influenced by the

Spirit of War, & learned also to play Cards. In January 1736 standing Centinel in the Night from 1 till 3 o'clock on the Fortifications I kept a Band with God; for our Savr. I did not know; my last Situation prevented itself before my Eyes. I promised him, that if I should come again into the Duchy of Wirtemberg, so that I would hear again the Word of God & go again to the H. Communion: for we were in a Roman Catholic Place, & had no Preacher in the Army: I would begin anew from that Communion to be obedient, as it is expressed in a Lutheran Prayer Book, & be converted. This our Savr. took Notice of & kept it in Mind, tho' I forgot it again. I came still the same Year among several other Regiments, & on other Places. I grew also so confused in my Mind, that I fair would have become an Atheist, if I could have effected it. But it was always clear in my Heart, that the Word of God is and abideth Truth, & thou art an unfortunate Man, if thou continuest so. Once I intended to desert to France, but divine Providence directed it so, that I came again into the Wirtemberg Country to Ludwigsburg. There I went into

spirit of war, and learned also to play cards. In January 1736 standing centinel in the night from 1 till 3 o'clock on the fortifications I kept a band with God; for our Savr. I did not know; my lost situation, presented itself before my eyes. I promised him, that if I should come again into the Duchy of Wirtemberg, so that I would hear the Word of God and go again to the H. Communion: for we were in a Roman Catholic place, and had no preacher in the army: I would begin a new from that Communion to be obedient, as it is expressed in a Lutheran Prayer Book, and be converted. This our Savr. took notice of and kept it in mind, tho' I forgot it again. I came still the same year among several of the regiments, and on other places. I grew also so confused in my mind, that I fair would have become an atheist, if I could have effected it. But it was now always clear in my heart, that the Word of God is and abideth truth, and thou art an unfortunate man, if thou continuest so. Once I intended to desert to France, but divine providence directed it so, that I came again into the Wirtemberg country to Ludwigsburg. There I went

the Church on New years day 1737, & intended to partake again the first Time of the H. Comm. At the Entrance into the Church, it came all at once into my Mind: What hast thou promised to God in Freyburg on the Fortification Wall? What, if thou now gavest him thy Heart? My Heart melted, I begun to weep & said Yes. Mean while they begun to sing: With Jesus I begin, with Jesus I'll be speaking & this made a deep Impression upon me; I was very attentive in the Preaching, but at the H. Communion I felt so heavy, that I could not help thinking I had partook of it for my Condemnation. After divine Service my Companions persuaded me to go with them to the Orphan House Church, where a good Minister was at that Time. I did it, & heard the loving Heart of Jesus to Sinners described in so sweet a Manner, that I got a Confidence to Him, & resolved to keep & give myself entirely up to him. I then frequented diligently the Preachings & Meetings of this Minister, whose Name was Beckhen, till in 1738 when in his House I learned to know the first Brn. from the Congr. & among the rest our
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late Br. Samuel Krause. Nov 5th this year
standing sentinel over our Saver, manifested himself to
my Heart in his meritorious life, suffering & death,
& how he still intercedes for all poor sinners, on ac-
count of which my Heart grew at once clear & easy,
& was delivered from all its fetters. In 1739 I got
in Tübingen a printed pamphlet, entitled: The right
& straight Way to Life ^{into my hands} & which proved a great Bless-
ing to my Heart. In 1740 working in Studtgard
among many wild natural People, & being ignorant
of the Sinner point, having also no body to whom
I could discover my Heart, I became dry & came into
new perplexities; which excited in me a Desire to
come into Fellowship with the Brns. Congrn. I resol-
ved thereto & prayed our Saver to prepare himself the
Way for it. What I asked for was granted. I got leave
to go on a Visit to Herrnhaag. I was received heartily
by the Brn. & it being just Communion Day I was ad-
mitted to the Love feast, & had Leave to be a Spectator
at the Lords Supper. I had a thorough conversation with
the late Polyearpus Müller, & came again into the right
Track. I was all the Month of July 1742 in Herrnhaag
& in August I returned to Studtgard. I made the

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Covenant with some awakened, to remain by
the Doctrine of the Merit of ~~Jesus~~^{the} Blood & Death of
Jesus, & this was the Beginning of the united Flock
in Stuttgart, where in December came still 7
Brn. After a repeated Visit in the Congrn. I obtai-
ned my Dismission from military Service in Apr.
1744 & arrived with the Congrn in Hernhaag with
the W. Word: What is accounted foolish by the World
God has chosen & Jan. 7th 45 I was received into
the Congrn. at which the Verse: Happy Congregation
whose Robes the Lamb's Blood keeps from all de-
filements & was so impressed on my Mind, that
I always rejoiced as often as it was sung in the con-
gregation. In 1746 Nov. 13th 1746 I was admitted to
the H. Commⁿ which proved a particular Strengthening
to my Heart. 1749 I got a Call to go to Pensilvania
set out in February with a Company of Brn. by
Way of Holland & England & May 12th we arrived safe
& well in New York & on the 21st in Bethlehem. My
Course here is known to the Brn. & Srs. therefore
I will conclude. Thus far be himself.

He served in Bethlehem by his Mason Trade
and in

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He served in Bethlehem by his mason trade

and in various Services of the Oeconomy here faithful & usefully. He was particularly a faithful & edifying Watchman in the Night for many Years, & in his advanced Age he often testified how blessed this Service had been for his Heart, what happy Hour he had often had in Conversation with our Savr. & what Proofs of his gracious Protection & Preservation he has experienced in the Night particularly in the Indian War. He has a good Deal of verisimil Knowledge, & loved to read edifying Books, but had at the same time a faithful Heart towards our Savr. & his Congrn. & was always full of Faith & Courage & of a Witness Spirit. 1749 he was married with his late Wife Sophia Dorothea Sophia late Nurnberger, with whom he lived 34 Years in the married State, & in which he had 3 Sons of whom one Son Frederic is here & 2 are in Wachovia Sept. 5th 1783 he became Widower & his increasing Age Weakness & Sickliness obliged him to live in Quietness & Rest. On his last Choir Festival this Year he was obliged to stay in his Room, but believed, that our Savr. would also bless him there. His

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Share of the Choir Communion being brought to him, he testified to have had an extraordinary blessed Day, & was sure, that this would be his last Festival & Communion here below. The Visit of several Brn. & Srs. & particularly of our Dr. Br. Johannes proved a special Day to him! He looked with Patience & Faith to meet his Departure, & received ^{for it} the Blessing of the Lord & the Congrn. whereupon he departed softly & happily on the 11th of Sept. in the 74th Year of his Age.

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