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# Household structure in 1850 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

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**Household**

**Structure in 1850**

**Bethlehem,**

**Pennsylvania**

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**Household Structure in 1850  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania**

by

**Meredith R. Gee**

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## Abstract

By 1850, Bethlehem was no longer a closed society of the Moravian church. For the first time in its history, non-Moravians were allowed to move into the town proper. Scholars have argued that the loss of the religious focus of the community ended the uniqueness of Bethlehem. Yet some of the institutions from the closed period of Bethlehem continued to provide support for Moravian women. Also, historians of the community and family argued that household structure changed as the heads and household members aged according to the "life course paradigm." This study argues that after the dissolution of the closed society the Moravian community continued to offer aid to single and widowed women. As well, the male-headed households in Bethlehem did not fit into the "life course paradigm" that scholars found in other nineteenth-century communities.

This statistical analysis of the borough of Bethlehem integrated data from the 1850 federal census, tax records, and local histories. This thesis concluded that contrary to the "life course paradigm" offered by scholars of other nineteenth-century United States communities, extended households in Bethlehem were located across all the age cohorts of male household heads due to its status as a "pre-industrial" community. The presence of small workshops created households in which laborers lived with their employers.

Furthermore, because non-Moravians could not purchase land or property in Bethlehem proper until 1844, Bethlehem continued to be a predominantly Moravian community. As well, the continued operation of the Widows' House and the Sisters' House provided Moravian women with options that may not have been available in larger communities. This suggests that the Moravians continued to influence Bethlehem after the community was opened to outsiders. The "life course paradigm" and the focus of historians on boarders overlook communities that were not industrialized and had histories distinct from the "New England" model. This indicates that the "life course paradigm" needs to be re-examined to expand beyond a concentration on age-based stages and industrial economic considerations.

## I. Introduction:

Nestled in the Lehigh Valley on the banks of the Lehigh River, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in the mid-nineteenth century was a small community. In 1850 there were no steel mills, in fact the site of the future mills was mainly farmland. The heart of Bethlehem was on the north side of the Lehigh River near the Moravian church. Mid-nineteenth century Bethlehem had no large industries, only small craft shops intermixed with stores and houses. Five years had passed since non-Moravians were first allowed to move into Bethlehem, yet the people remained predominately Moravian. By 1850, there were voluntary associations, non-Moravian congregations, and a few non-Moravian businesses operated in Bethlehem, such as the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. In the mid-nineteenth century Bethlehem was a curious mix of growth and tradition; however, most of the scholarship has focused on the time of the communal economy of the Moravians or on the rise and decline of Bethlehem Steel with little discussion of the time between those eras.

Studies of eighteenth and early nineteenth century Bethlehem such as the works of Beverly Prior Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, and Gillian Lindt Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds*, focus on changes in social values, implying that the systems of support that existed



among the Moravians disappeared when the society was opened.<sup>1</sup> In 1850, the household structures in Bethlehem had distinctive characteristics that differed from the life-cycle models developed by scholars of the family.<sup>2</sup> As well, unlike the household structures examined by urban historians, households in Bethlehem appear to have been based on social values that extended beyond economic necessity. This study argues that the systems of support and religious ties developed during Bethlehem's communal phase were still present after the town was opened to non-Moravians.

The scholarship on nineteenth century United States communities has focused heavily on cities, areas of rapid industrialization, and more recently on frontier regions. Small, homogeneous communities such as Bethlehem are understudied. Scholars who discussed small towns in the northeast, such

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<sup>1</sup> There is only a small amount of scholarly work on Bethlehem prior to 1850: Beverly Prior Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem: From Communal Mission to Family Economy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), which is based on her dissertation, "From Communal Pilgrims to Family Householders: The Moravians in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1742 – 1844" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1986); and Gillian Lindt Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds: A Study of Changing Communities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967). The work of Smaby and Gollin are the best scholarly books specifically on Bethlehem as a Moravian community. There are also several books and dissertations that focus on women or religion in Moravian Bethlehem, such as Katherine Faull's translation of the personal histories of Moravian women, *Moravian Women's Memoirs: Their Related Lives, 1750-1820* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1997); Vivien Evelyn Witcraft, "Moravian Settlement at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1740-1800" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1927); Barbara Dowd Wright Pilgrim in "Bethlehem: A Study of the Influence of American Moravian Pietism on the Identity Formation of a Nineteenth-Century Adolescent Woman" (Ph.D. diss., Drew University, 1989); Edward Gene Murray, "Fruit that Should Remain: An Analysis of Christian Spiritual Formation as Experienced in the Renewed Moravian Brethren Colony at Bethlehem Pennsylvania from 1742 until 1762" (Ph.D. diss., Kansas State University, 1995); Craig Atwood, "Blood, Sex, and Death: Life and Liturgy in Zinzendorf's Bethlehem" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> The household structures analyzed in this study were derived from the 1850 federal census. The households were categorized into three basic structures – unrelated, simple, and extended households – based on the demographic information in the census. A full discussion of the household structures is in Appendix Two.

as Edmund Morgan, John Demos, and Philip Greven, concentrated on town structure in colonial America.<sup>3</sup> The works on urban areas often traced the changes in population, neighborhoods, and industries that occurred with the growth of cities in the transition from the colonies to the early republic, for example the works on Philadelphia by Sam Bass Warner, Jr. and Susan Klepp.<sup>4</sup> Small towns in the South served as the basis for investigations of race and gender, such as Suzanne Lebsock's study of the women of Petersburg, Virginia.<sup>5</sup> On the American frontier, historians Merle Curti and John Mack Faragher have examined the process of town and county

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<sup>3</sup> The most prominent of the early New England studies were Edmund Morgan's examination of Puritan family life, *The Puritan Family: Religion and Domestic Relations in Seventeenth-Century New England* (New York: Harper & Row, 1944); John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York: Oxford University, 1970); Philip Greven, Massachusetts, *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1970); Michael Zuckerman, *Peaceable Kingdoms: New England Towns in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Knopf, 1970).

<sup>4</sup> Sam Bass Warner Jr.'s study of nineteenth century Boston, *Streetcar Suburbs* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962); Stephan Thernstrom and Richard Sennett, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Cities: Essays in the New Urban History* (New Haven: Yale University Conference on the Nineteenth-Century, 1968); Stephan Thernstrom's examination of Boston, *The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); Stuart M. Blumin, *Growth and Change in a Nineteenth-Century American Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976). Other studies that traced urban growth are Theodore Hershberg, Alan Burstein, Eugene Ericksen, Stephanie Greenberg, and William Yancey's article, "A Tale of Three Cities: Blacks and Immigrants in Philadelphia: 1850-1880, 1930 and 1970," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 441 (January 1979), 55-81; Sam Bass Warner, Jr., *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of its Growth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1980); Susan E. Klepp, *The Swift Progress of Population: A Documentary and Bibliographic Study of Philadelphia's Growth, 1642-1859* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1991); Peter R. Knights, *Yankee Destinies: The Lives of Ordinary Nineteenth-Century Bostonians* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

<sup>5</sup> Suzanne Lebsock, *The Free Women of Petersburg: Status and Culture in a Southern Town, 1784-1860* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984). Other works that focus on community structure in the South include Jane Turner Censer, *North Carolina Planters and Their Children; 1800-1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1984); Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University, 1995).

formation.<sup>6</sup> The scholarship on communities in the nineteenth century has contributed greatly to understanding the effects of gender and racial ideologies, urbanization, and industrialization on family and household structures.

Scholarly works that incorporated household structures into a broader examination of urbanization and industrialization revealed important connections between economic conditions and the composition of households. Scholars such as Stuart Blumin, Robert Robinson, Paul Johnson, and Tamara Hareven examined how individuals and families met economic and housing demands in urban and industrializing areas.<sup>7</sup> Single, young people boarded with families that were often of the same class, race, and ethnicity. Families decided to take in boarders based on the space available in their homes and their financial situations. The composition of the household, whether it contained only the immediate family, extended kin, or unrelated people, changed as the members of the family aged and moved into

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<sup>6</sup> Merle Curti, *The Making of an American Community: A Case Study of Democracy in a Frontier County* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1959); John Mack Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (New Haven: Yale University, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> Stuart Blumin, "Rip Van Winkle's Grandchildren: Family and Household in the Hudson Valley, 1800-1860," *Journal of Urban History*, 1 (May 1975); Paul E. Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); Robert Robinson, "Economic Necessity and the Life Cycle in the Family Economy of Nineteenth Century Indianapolis," *American Journal of Sociology*, 99 (July 1993); Tamara K. Hareven, *Families, History, and Social Change: Life-Course and Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000)

different stages of their lives. Hareven described this process as a “life course paradigm.”<sup>8</sup>

Hareven, Johnson, Blumin, and Robinson based their interpretations of family strategies and household structures on local economic and social conditions. These historians generally concluded that households took in unrelated individuals, boarders, and extended kin when there was available space or financial need. Therefore, additional household members were most often found in the homes of young couples without children, widowed women with children, and older adults whose children had moved out. Families with children, who did not have space in their homes for boarders or extended kin, relied on the labor of all members of the household to support the family.

In 1850, Bethlehem was a pre-industrial town with a very unique communal history. This thesis examines the household structures in Bethlehem, as derived from the 1850 federal census, in comparison with the life-course paradigm studies, the studies of boarders and lodgers, and the scholarly works on Bethlehem. Households were categorized into three structures – unrelated, simple, and extended – based on the relationship between heads of households and household members. Simple households were a couple and their children – a “nuclear” family. Extended households

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<sup>8</sup> Hareven, *Families, History, and Social Change*, 129.

were "nuclear" families who shared their homes with relatives and individuals of no determinable relation. Unrelated households were individuals who lived by themselves or a group of people who were apparently unrelated but who lived in one household.<sup>9</sup> Analysis of household structures in mid-nineteenth century Bethlehem by the gender, age, and occupation of the household heads had two striking results. Household structures varied very little by the age of the male household heads and there was a clustering of single female-headed households in two buildings.

The present scholarship on Bethlehem, primarily the works of Beverly Prior Smaby and Gillian Lindt Gollin, indicated that it had become a secular society by 1850, with an emphasis on family that detracted from the religious community. Yet Bethlehem had unique household patterns that historians have not found in other mid-nineteenth century communities. Gollin and Smaby both explored the collapse of the Moravian communal social and economic system and creation of a secular capitalistic borough. They attributed the dissolution of the age and sex segregated lifestyle in Bethlehem and the advent of the nuclear family households to economic pressures within the church. Gollin argued that the Herrnhut community maintained the religious communal living arrangements longer than Bethlehem due to the stability of their social and economic environment.

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<sup>9</sup> See Appendix Two for a complete explanation of the household structures.

Smaby contended that it was the inefficient financial management of the main church in Europe that led to the economic crisis that forced abandonment of the communal system. She concluded that the dissolution of the communal lifestyle and the adaptation of familial living arrangements shifted the focus of the Moravians away from religious concerns to bonds of kinship that altered the socio-economic attitudes of the Moravians at Bethlehem. Gollin and Smaby contended that by 1850 the sociological attitudes, as well as the living arrangements, of the Moravians in Bethlehem had shifted to a contemporary nineteenth-century American concentration on the nuclear family and private gain. This paper suggests that contrary to what Smaby and Gollin have implied, the Moravian religion continued to influence the structure of households in Bethlehem after the dissolution of the closed society.

## II. Background of Bethlehem

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania was originally settled in 1742 by a group of Moravians under the leadership of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf.<sup>10</sup> The Moravians were members of the Unitas Fratrum established in 1457 in

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<sup>10</sup>The date of the incorporation of Bethlehem was March 6, 1845. W. Ross Yates, *Bethlehem of Pennsylvania: The First One Hundred Years* (Bethlehem: Lehigh Litho, 1968), 214-215. The date of the original settlement of Bethlehem by the Moravians, along with a detailed history of the Moravian church, is provided by Beverly Prior Smaby, "From Communal Pilgrims to Family Householders," 9.

Bohemia.<sup>11</sup> From 1457 to 1722, the Moravians suffered severe persecution from the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>12</sup> This forced the Moravians to move from Bohemia and Moravia to Poland, and then in 1722 to Saxony, where they settled on Zinzendorf's estate known as Herrnhut.<sup>13</sup> At the time of the Brethren's settlement at Herrnhut, Zinzendorf was Lutheran, not Moravian. For a brief period Zinzendorf encouraged the Moravians to worship with the Lutherans; however, the Moravians established their own church at Herrnhut. Doctrinal differences that emerged between the Lutherans and the Moravians led the Brethren to separate from the central settlement of Herrnhut. They did not leave Zinzendorf's estate, rather they moved to the outskirts of the community. As more Brethren settled at Herrnhut, Zinzendorf became an active promoter of the Moravians and protected the Moravians from persecution by the Saxon government. In 1733, some of the Moravians persuaded Zinzendorf to acquire land in Georgia for a Moravian settlement and, in 1735, under the leadership of Bishop Augustus

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<sup>11</sup> Jacob John Sessler, *Communal Pietism Among Early American Moravians* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1933), 4. The dates used in the history of the Moravian Church and the founding of Bethlehem are derived from the work of Sessler and Vivien Witcraft. Additional and more detailed information on the history of the Moravian Church is available in the work of Edward Langton, *History of the Moravian Church: The Story of the First International Protestant Church* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956); Taylor Hamilton and Kenneth G. Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church: The Renewed Unitas Fratrum, 1722-1957* (Bethlehem: Interprovincial Board of Christian Education, Moravian Church in America, 1967); Allen W. Schattschneider, *Through Five Hundred Years: A Popular History of the Moravian Church* (Bethlehem: Comenius Press, 1974).

<sup>12</sup> Sessler, *Communal Pietism*, 4-6.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

Spangenberg, a group of Moravians settled there.<sup>14</sup> Conflict between England and Spain forced the pacifist Moravians to relocate to Pennsylvania. In 1740, the Moravians arrived in Philadelphia where they were joined by a second group of Moravians led by Bishop David Nitschmann.<sup>15</sup> The Moravians left Philadelphia in September of 1740 and settled on the property of George Whitefield, a Methodist, in Nazareth, north of the future site of Bethlehem.<sup>16</sup> A doctrinal dispute over predestination between Whitefield and the Moravians forced them to find a new settlement. In April 1741 they purchased a tract of land from William Allen that became Bethlehem.

Bethlehem was originally located on five hundred acres of land at the point where the Monocacy Creek flows into the Lehigh River.<sup>17</sup> The Moravian settlements were divided into two groups: *Hausgemeine*, those who lived and worked for the benefit of the community; and the *Pilgergemeine*, the missionaries.<sup>18</sup> Bethlehem's residents conducted missionary work among the local Native Americans, but their primary focus was on contributing to the financial stability of the main church in Europe. The "general economy" of Bethlehem, formalized by Bishop Augustus Spangenberg in 1745, was a communal system of property ownership and

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<sup>14</sup> Witcraft, "Moravian Settlement at Bethlehem," 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-12.

<sup>17</sup> John N. Schlegel, *Two Hundred Years of Life in Northampton County, Pennsylvania*, vol. 2 (Easton: Northampton County Bicentennial Commission, 1976), 50.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.



labor. Modeled after the Moravian settlement of Herrnhut in Saxony, the communal society consisted of sex and age segregated housing on land owned by the main church of the Moravians, the *Unitas Fratrum*.<sup>19</sup>

Bethlehem was established as a communal society whose residents lived in choirs, age and sex segregated housing, designed to enhance religious enlightenment. Choirs were established based on the sex, age, and marital status of the residents.<sup>20</sup> People of the same age, gender, and marital status lived in communal housing and were kept segregated in order to keep their minds focused on spiritual growth. Smaby argued that this was beneficial to women because the management of the choirs allowed women to participate actively in governing the society.<sup>21</sup> She did not suggest, however, that women had an equal share of authority, as men managed the finances of the Single Sisters' Choir and the Widows' Choir.<sup>22</sup> Members of the choirs worked together in craft industries for the benefit of the community and the Moravian church. The main church in Europe owned all of the land and buildings in Bethlehem.<sup>23</sup> Yet the dynamic economic activity in Bethlehem fostered a desire among some of the Moravians to abandon communal living.<sup>24</sup> The economic strains of the main church and the death of

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<sup>19</sup> Wright, "Pilgrim in Bethlehem," 29.

<sup>20</sup> Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 10.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Schlegel, *Two Hundred Years of Life in Northampton County*, 51.

<sup>24</sup> Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds*, 93-100.

Zinzendorf in 1760 led to the alteration of Bethlehem's communal structure.<sup>25</sup>

The first one hundred years of settlement brought drastic change to the daily domestic experience of the small Moravian community. Burton Folsom described those changes as a three-step process of modernization. The first and second steps were the elimination of the "general economy" in 1761 and the elimination of the choirs, opening opportunities for a "wage system and private ownership of land."<sup>26</sup> Folsom's description of the "opening" of Bethlehem is simplified, as private ownership of land was not available until the nineteenth century. The dissolution of the Moravian economy resulted from the death of Zinzendorf in 1760 and the debt of the main church in Europe.<sup>27</sup> The real estate in Bethlehem was signed over to a proprietor, a representative of the congregation in Bethlehem, in a "perpetual lease," but "considered the property of the church."<sup>28</sup> From 1771 until 1844, the church owned most of the land in Bethlehem and individual Moravians rented parcels for their use. Throughout the early to mid-nineteenth century, as the church in Bethlehem faced a series of financial crises, it offered parcels of the land to Moravians for purchase in fee simple. Between 1762 and 1771, the Moravian Church in Bethlehem reorganized the choir

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<sup>25</sup> Smaby, *Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 32-34.

<sup>26</sup> Burton W. Folsom, Jr., *Urban Capitalists: Entrepreneurs and City Growth in Pennsylvania's Lackawanna and Lehigh Regions, 1800-1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1981), 126.

<sup>27</sup> Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 35-36.

buildings for married men, married women, and children into apartments for nuclear families. Widows and single sisters continued to live in the communal buildings throughout the nineteenth century. At the same time, the communal industries slowly evolved into private businesses.<sup>29</sup>

The economic changes of the early to mid-nineteenth century led to the opening of Bethlehem to non-Moravians and the end of the lease-system. The construction of a section of the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Canal in 1831 and the first sale of land in Bethlehem proper to non-Moravians in 1844 ended the limited isolation of Bethlehem.<sup>30</sup> The incorporation of Bethlehem as a borough was the third step in Folsom's process of modernization. The introduction of "political democracy" with the creation of a secular elected council, coupled with the economic and residential changes, encouraged "entrepreneurship," construction of new factories, and "rapid economic growth."<sup>31</sup> Folsom's description of Bethlehem's "modernization" suggests that change was very abrupt. The transitions in land ownership and housing, as well as the acceptance of permanent non-Moravian residents, were slow processes. The evidence from the 1850 census, which will be discussed at length below, indicates that the communal

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 57-59.

<sup>31</sup> Folsom, *Urban Capitalists*, 126.

bonds and industries formed during the closed period were still present after the incorporation of the borough.

In 1850, the town of Bethlehem combined remnants of the Moravian community with “new” social organizations. The community contained a Female Seminary for Moravian girls, a waterworks, three inns, tanneries, foundries, specialized craft shops, and several mercantile stores. Many of these enterprises had been rebuilt after the flood of 1841.<sup>32</sup> The history of Bethlehem as a religious, close-knit, and picturesque community contributed to its reputation as a resort area for people from larger cities.<sup>33</sup> That reputation drew visitors to the small town. Charles H. Schwartz, a visitor to Bethlehem, reminiscently described the community and its residents in 1852:

I grew more interested in the country as we neared the Lehigh Mountain. Its richness was unsurpassed in my knowledge. The famous Saucon Valley was below me at one time, a veritable paradise. The mountain we crossed an hour before twilight and then old Bethlehem burst in view. A few minutes later ‘A Life on the Ocean Wave’ was wafted through the air, and my anticipations of Bethlehem’s musical culture were more than realized. . . . The houses on Main Street were scattered. . . . The fields were mostly commons. The mountain then was very beautiful. It was broken up by walks and was a delightful place in summer and autumn. Calypso Island was in its primitive state. . . . The people were nice, were quiet, were affable and hospitable. . . . A peculiarity those days was that a stranger was at once well known. The residents were as one family.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> I. Daniel Rupp, *History of Northampton, Lehigh, Monroe, Carbon, and Schuylkill Counties* (Harrisburg: Hickok and Cantine, 1845), 84.

<sup>33</sup> E. Gordon Alderfer, *Northampton Heritage: The Story of an American County* (Easton: Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society, 1953), 219.

Some people did not share Schwartz's positive memory of Bethlehem as an open town and a musical community. James Henry, a contemporary historian of Bethlehem, felt that the "modernized" Bethlehem had lost the charm and sense of community that had previously existed. Henry described Bethlehem in the 1850's as having lost

... nearly all the quaintness of life and character ... and though many of the self-same structures remain that made their hold upon the imagination, new designs of architecture have ... supplanted the old, and destroyed the past ... the woody slopes of the mountain have, to a great extent, been cleared, and the din of the railway and busy traffic mark the progress of civilization.<sup>35</sup>

Henry described Bethlehem as a "mixed society" that had lost some of its distinctively Moravian characteristics.<sup>36</sup> Yet the older buildings, such as the Widows' House and the Sisters' House, continued to shelter Moravians and the community itself remained predominately Moravian. There were only two other organized denominations in the town, the Lutheran and Methodist congregations.<sup>37</sup> Besides these religious groups there were a number of secular associations, such as the Masons and the Odd Fellows.<sup>38</sup> Schwartz and Henry held differing perspectives on Bethlehem during its

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<sup>34</sup> W. Ross Yates, *Bethlehem of Pennsylvania: The Golden Years* (Bethlehem: Lehigh Litho, 1976), 4-5.

<sup>35</sup> James Henry, *Sketches of Moravian Life and Character* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1859), 247.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 261.

<sup>37</sup> William J. Heller, *History of Northampton County and the Grand Valley of the Lehigh* (New York: American Historical Society, 1920), 459.

<sup>38</sup> Alderfer, *Northampton Heritage*, 217.

period of transition and redefinition, but both recognized glimpses of the “old” Moravian community intermixed with new construction in the town.

The physical remnants of the Moravian community were not the only aspects of the Moravian society that remained in the mid-nineteenth century. In some ways the small community of 1,405 resembled other American towns. Many people lived with their families – 48 percent of the households were simple, “nuclear” families (tables one, two, and three).<sup>39</sup> Women often lived by themselves or shared their homes with unrelated individuals (tables one, two, and four). A brief glance at the households and population of Bethlehem reveals no distinctive characteristics; however, a more detailed examination of the households suggests a continued influence of Bethlehem’s past. The few scholarly studies of Bethlehem focused heavily on the changes that occurred as Bethlehem converted from a religiously oriented society to a family centered community. Their focus on the alteration of the Moravians’ value systems obscured the continuation of religious bonds in a secular community.

### III. Household Structure in Bethlehem

Bethlehem’s long history as a closed Moravian society influenced the demographic characteristics of the population. Beverly Prior

Smaby divided the demographic history of Bethlehem into three periods that demarcated major changes in its social and economic conditions. The first period, from the 1740s to the early 1760s, was a period of growth that reflected the settlement and establishment of the communal society. From the 1760s to 1818, there was a period of decline in the rates of marriage, childbirth, and in-migration. In 1818, Bethlehem entered a second period of growth in which marriage and childbirth rates increased, people married at a younger age, and more men began to move into Bethlehem.<sup>40</sup> In 1844, Smaby estimated that the population was approximately 1,000.<sup>41</sup> These periods coincided with major changes in the economic and social structures of Bethlehem.

As Bethlehem evolved from a communal based society to a more individualist capitalist community, the control of industries and land slowly shifted from the church to individual Moravians. Even after Bethlehem's period as a closed society officially ended, land was not immediately available for purchase by non-Moravians. From 1771 until 1845 most of the land was owned by the church and leased to the Moravian residents of Bethlehem. Individual Moravians owned the buildings located on the land; however, they could not rent or sell the buildings to others without the

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<sup>39</sup> See tables in Appendix One. The population count does not include the female students and employees who resided at the Female Seminary.

<sup>40</sup> Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 51-52.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

permission of the church.<sup>42</sup> Due to the insular nature of the community non-Moravians could not purchase land or rent the buildings in Bethlehem until after 1845. Historian Joseph Levering argued that when the lease system was abolished in 1844, the Moravian officials in Bethlehem did not begin to sell the land indiscriminately.<sup>43</sup> In 1844, Moravians were entitled to purchase the land that they had leased from the church, but the purchase of land and the establishment of businesses by non-Moravians was controlled by the church until the period of reconstruction ended in 1851.<sup>44</sup> The unique history of controlled access to land and migration into Bethlehem allowed for the continuation of Moravian institutions and kept the craft-based industries and the land predominately in the hands of Moravians. These conditions were reflected in the household structures of Bethlehem.

Aspects of Bethlehem's household structures were quite different than the economic and life-cycle patterns scholars found in other American towns. In urban areas such as Boston or Rochester, the presence of extended and unrelated households indicated a reliance on boarders and lodgers to supplement the household income. Extended and unrelated households were located among certain segments of the population based on the age, sex, and occupation of the household heads. Household structures changed as the

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<sup>42</sup> Joseph Mortimer Levering, *A History of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1741-1892* (Bethlehem: Times Publishing Company, 1903), 684-685.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 683.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 683-684.



household head and household members aged and entered new phases of their life cycles. Tamara Hareven argued that change in the structure of families must be measured not only according to socio-economic changes of society – such as the dissolution of the Moravian community in the case of Bethlehem – but also as the family grew. That is, as the members and heads of the household aged the household structure changed. In her study of nineteenth-century Boston, Hareven found that

Men and women grew up in predominantly nuclear households, left their parental household in their twenties and attached themselves as boarders and lodgers in strange households until they married and set up their own nuclear households. Middle-aged parents, whose children had left home, took in boarders. The same held true for men and women in their fifties and sixties . . . .<sup>45</sup>

Hareven's theory of the household as a cyclic process that changed outside of external pressures and her description of the alteration in household structure in Boston did not match with household structure in Bethlehem.

In Bethlehem, household structures did not vary according to the life cycle model described by Hareven. The percentages of men who headed either simple or extended households changed very little across the age cohorts (table five). Scholars such as Barbara Laslett and Smaby concluded that extended households developed from access to kin and land resources. Laslett, in her study of households in Los Angeles, stated that “one way in

which migration is important to household and family structure is the availability of kin with whom households based on kinship ties may be formed.”<sup>46</sup> Laslett concluded that it was the long-term residency of Spanish-surnamed heads that accounted for the higher occurrence of extended households among that group. That is, people with Anglo surnames started to move into the Los Angeles area in 1841, and consequently, by 1850, the Anglo-surnamed heads did not have access to the land resources or the communal ties that were necessary to form extended households. In Bethlehem, 42 percent of the male-headed households were extended, and 56 percent were simple. Like the Spanish-surnamed heads in Laslett’s study, the Moravians, through their long residency in Bethlehem, had access to the kinds of communal bonds and land resources that resulted in extended households.

In Smaby’s study of Bethlehem, access to land and kin reflected the town’s changing social values. Smaby found that by 1850 “less than 5 percent of the households controlled 50 percent of the private property.”<sup>47</sup> This represented the purchase of large amounts of real estate by a few established Moravian families at the termination of the lease system. Smaby

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<sup>45</sup>Tamara K. Hareven, “The Family as Process: The Historical Study of the Family Cycle,” *Journal of Social History* 7 (Spring 1974):324.

<sup>46</sup>Barbara Laslett “Household Structure on an American Frontier: Los Angeles, California, in 1850,” *American Journal of Sociology*, 81(July 1975), 117.

argued that the lease system that prevented non-Moravians from entering the community before 1844 created an unequal distribution of real estate because the wealthy, established Moravian families were able to purchase land as the church liquidated its holdings.<sup>48</sup> This resulted in a concentration of wealth and the continued predominance of Moravians in Bethlehem after the abolition of the lease system. Not all of the buildings became private property after 1844. The Widows' House and the Sisters' House remained the property of the church.

The continued operation of the Sisters' and the Widows' House provided women with a religious "boarding house" in which they did have their own households. Approximately 66 percent of the women who lived individually resided in either the Widows' House or the Sisters' House.<sup>49</sup> Four women in the Widows' House headed households that contained children or other unrelated adults. Female household heads who lived in private dwellings more often headed households that contained either children or unrelated adults than women who lived in the Moravian institutions; most did not live on their own (table four). A slightly higher percentage, 27 percent, of women who lived in the Moravian institutions were assessed for taxation than the other female household heads, 22 percent

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>48</sup> Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 119-120.

(table six). The women who lived in the Moravian institutions were not significantly different from the rest of the female household heads in terms of age or wealth. The Widows' House and Sisters' House provided women with an opportunity to live outside of a family unit. This conclusion was supported by the comparison of the age of female household heads with household structure.

Women, unlike male heads, experienced greater changes in household structure with age, perhaps in connection with changes in their marital status.<sup>50</sup> Women who headed households located in private residences were slightly younger, with a median age of 50, than the female household heads in the Widow's House and the Sister's House, median age of 56. Across the age cohorts, more women headed simple households between the ages of 23 to 45 than unrelated households (tables seven and eight). Women in private residences between the ages of 46 to 55 and 66 to 78 more frequently headed unrelated households than simple or extended households. In the Widow's House and the Sister's House, women in all of the age cohorts headed more unrelated households than simple households (table eight). Almost all of the households in the Widow's House and the Sister's House were unrelated households, while the households in private residences

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<sup>49</sup> There were no addresses listed on the 1850 census. I inferred that dwelling numbers 133, 134, and 189 included the Sisters' House and the Widows' House based on the number of unmarried women who were listed as residing in those dwellings.

were more evenly distributed among all three of the household structures. There was approximately a five-year difference in the median age of the women who headed unrelated households in the Moravian buildings, 57, than those in private residences, 52. In the private residences, the median age of women who headed unrelated and extended households, 53, was approximately seven years older than that of women who headed simple households, 45. In the Moravian buildings, the median age of women who headed unrelated households was fourteen years older than that of the women who headed simple households, 43. The continued use of the Widows' House and the Sisters' House by Moravian women suggests that they were part of a system of communal support for single women that may have encompassed more than financial necessity.

Between the 1820's and 1840's, the nature and function of the single and widowed choir systems changed. Established in the mid-eighteenth century, the sisters' and widows' choirs were part of Bethlehem's communal economy. The women who lived in these choirs never married, delayed marriage, or once widowed, never remarried and dedicated their lives to religious service. As Bethlehem changed from a religious communal society to a secular, family-oriented community, the number of women who were members of the choirs and the religious focus of the choirs declined.

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<sup>50</sup> It was not possible to determine how many female heads were widows because only six women

According to Joseph Mortimer Levering, the management of the Sisters' House and the Widows' House by the church ended in 1848.<sup>51</sup> Levering stated that after 1848 women continued to live in both the Sisters' and the Widows' Houses, but they were "simply dwellings in which each occupant had her own private house-keeping."<sup>52</sup> Smaby made a similar argument that, by the 1840s, the choirs were a method used by the Moravians to keep track of unmarried adults.<sup>53</sup> The significant change for Levering and Smaby was the loss of a religious focus, which occurred slowly throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

Yet the choir houses continued to shelter Moravian women and there is evidence that they were still partially subsidized by members of the Moravian Church. In the absence of financial records it is unclear if the church profited from the continued use of the houses or if the houses were a system of support that served religious purposes and social welfare. One of the local historians, Elizabeth Myers, indicated that, before the decline of the choirs, the single sisters paid "five cents a month for water, fire, and for candles," as well as "five cents a month" for cleaning the rooms of the Sisters' House.<sup>54</sup> There was no indication when or if the sisters paid rent;

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were listed as widows on the census.

<sup>51</sup> Levering, *A History of Bethlehem*, 688.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 688.

<sup>53</sup> Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 59.

<sup>54</sup> Elizabeth Lehman Myers, *A Century of Moravian Sisters: A Record of Christian Community Life* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1918), 44.

however it appears that the widows did not pay rent to live in the Widows' House.<sup>55</sup> There were also no restrictions against widows from other Moravian communities migrating to Bethlehem to live out their years. Smaby found that from the 1740s to the 1840s single and widowed women consistently migrated to Bethlehem because of its "social and economic support."<sup>56</sup> In the absence of financial documentation – wills, rent, employment – the evidence from the census, scholarly works, and local histories suggests that while the Widows' House and the Sisters' House may no longer have fulfilled the original religious function, a communal life dedicated to religious service, there was still a religious connection that extended beyond familial interests.

The resources available to single and widowed women in Bethlehem offered Moravian women choices and economic support that was different from the options available to women elsewhere. Unlike single women in other areas, the single and widowed women of Bethlehem may not have been completely dependent on inheritance, property laws, and boarders. Laslett found that in Los Angeles, women were more likely to head extended households than men. Laslett attributed this to the laws of California that

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<sup>55</sup> John W. Jordan, "A Historical Sketch of the Widows' House at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1768-1892," *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*, vol. 2 (Nazareth: Moravian Historical Society, 1895): 122-123. Jordan listed the charter rules that accompanied the refinancing of the Widows' House in 1873. The charter stated that members of the church who were widows or the daughters of ministers or missionaries could live in the Widows' House rent free. There was no indication that this was a change from previous practices.

granted married women control over property; this in turn encouraged adult children to remain in the household.<sup>57</sup> Pennsylvania had more restrictive property laws; however, as Lisa Wilson Waciega argued, the extent to which the law affected the land ownership of women was dependent on the social values of husbands. Waciega contended that the shift from an agriculturally based economy to craft-dominated industries in the mid-nineteenth century altered the amount and types of resources that widows inherited.<sup>58</sup> This indicates that they most likely did not have access to land ownership as did the women in Laslett's study of Los Angeles, because like the women in Waciega's study, Bethlehem was more of a craft-based economy than an agricultural community. As well, the social values of the Moravian men may have offered single women means of support different than land inheritance. The continued operation of the Sisters' House and the Widows' House provided housing for single women, and while it is unclear how most widows were supported, some did receive annual payments from the Widows' Society.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Smaby, *The Transformation of Moravian Bethlehem*, 69.

<sup>57</sup> Laslett, "Household Structure on an American Frontier," 124.

<sup>58</sup> Lisa Wilson Waciega, "A 'Man of Business': The Widow of Means in Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1750-1850," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 44(January 1987), 49.

<sup>59</sup> Augustus Schultze, "A Brief History of the Widows' Society of Bethlehem," in *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*, vol. 2 (Nazareth: Moravian Historical Society, 1886), 51-124. The Widows' Society was an organization of Moravian men who paid annual dues and in return when they died their widows received a yearly stipend from the society until the widows died. It is unclear precisely how much money the members received in 1850. Schultze gave the value that the widows received, per year, in 1848 as \$24.50 and in 1851 as \$23.00 (87).



Traditional artisan and craft trades dominated Bethlehem, not the industries that encouraged the development of boarding or lodging houses. Taking in boarders was a method of economic necessity in areas of industrialization. Robert Robinson argued that "the dominant hypothesis in the social historical literature on the nineteenth-century family economy is that income-generating strategies were adopted out of necessity by working class families to supplement low family incomes or by families whose main source of income had been suspended through the unemployment, death, or desertion of the male head of household."<sup>60</sup> Households in areas dominated by pre-industrial trades had different structures than those in areas that underwent industrialization. In his study of Rochester, New York, from 1815 to 1837, Paul Johnson found that, "in 1820 merchants and master workmen lived above, behind, or very near their places of businesses and employees boarded in their homes."<sup>61</sup> As businesses expanded and employed larger numbers of men, employees moved out of the homes of their employers. Johnson argued that in 1827 Rochester was in a transitory stage between households that incorporated employees and the emergence of boarding houses. Employees moved into the homes of their peers or lived in boarding houses and by 1834 only 22 percent of employees lived in the households of

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<sup>60</sup> Robinson, "Economic Necessity and the Life Cycle," 50.

<sup>61</sup> Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium*, 43.

their employers.<sup>62</sup> Johnson argued that this shift resulted from the increased size of businesses caused by Rochester's place in New York's transportation system.

In 1850, Bethlehem was a craft-shop based community in which workers continued to reside with their employers. Nearly one-half of the male household heads were skilled manual workers and their households were fairly evenly divided between simple and extended households (table nine). Most of the simple, 87 percent, and extended households, 68 percent, were in the lowest four tax brackets (table ten). The higher status positions – proprietary, professional, and skilled non-manual – were more likely to have extended households than simple households.<sup>63</sup> The unskilled manual workers were most likely to have a simple household. The majority of male household heads employed in both the skilled manual and unskilled manual occupations were in the lowest tax brackets - one hundred to five hundred dollars.

Extended households were predominately those of the skilled manual laborer, that is, men who worked in the crafts or trades, such as blacksmiths, cabinetmakers, shoemakers, and coachmakers. Those men shared their households with their wives and children, as well as with men and women with whom they had no apparent relation. Not counting minor children,

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 46.

unrelated adult males were 30 percent of the members of all the extended households. Approximately 85 percent of unrelated male adults had listed occupations and 82.3 percent of these men lived in households with men who shared their occupational categories. That is, skilled manual workers resided with other skilled manual workers. The information provided by the census did not state whether or not the household heads employed the unrelated men who resided in their homes. The residency of young, unrelated men with older men who shared their occupation in the context of Bethlehem's craft-based industry and size strongly suggests that they were "co-resident employees" and not boarders.

The small size of Bethlehem, combined with the domination of pre-industrial trades, strongly suggests that the unrelated men worked in the businesses of the household heads with whom they lived. Johnson found that Rochester's households, "in the traditional usage of the word family, with all that it implied, stretched to include co-resident employees."<sup>64</sup> The inclusion of "co-resident employees" in the households explains why the extended households were present in all the age cohorts. In his study of the Hudson Valley, Stuart Blumin argued that rural boarders were more likely to lodge with the family of employment and live longer in one household, than

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<sup>63</sup> An explanation of occupation classifications is in Appendix Three.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

in urban areas where the boarders moved on a yearly basis.<sup>65</sup> Blumin found that in the three towns of Kingston, Troy, and Marlborough, the “augmentation of households with boarders was a much more common phenomenon than family extension.”<sup>66</sup> Blumin concluded that the apparent lack of stem-family extension accounted for the insignificant change in the “nuclearity” of the households across the age cohorts.<sup>67</sup> Blumin argued that the significant difference in household structure between urban and rural areas was the higher prevalence of boardinghouses in urban areas. Bethlehem did have three inns, the Sun, the Crown, and the Eagle, but it is apparent from the census lists that the only permanent residents were the innkeepers, their families, and hotel employees. Bethlehem did not have the boardinghouses or lodging houses of the larger cities of that time, such as Boston, or even in the smaller cities, such as Rochester and Kingston.

Robert Robinson defined boarders as part of families’ “income-generating” strategies; however, he did not consider “co-resident” employees as a sign of a family’s financial need. Robinson argued that “families faced the greatest financial strain when they were growing, that is, as the number of children present in the home [increased,] families would try to meet the pressures of growing size by adopting income-generating strategies.”

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<sup>65</sup>Blumin, “Rip Van Winkle’s Grandchildren,” 305.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 307-308.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 308.

Robinson argued that the economic strategies families used depended on their life cycle stage.<sup>68</sup> The taking in of boarders, as well as the employment of wives and children, were “income-generating strategies.” Robinson concluded that, for Indianapolis between 1860 and 1880, taking in boarders was an economic strategy of middle-class and working-class homes that occurred early in the family life cycle.<sup>69</sup> Robinson argued that the “dominant hypothesis” that taking in boarders was an economic necessity of only the working class, does not consider the practice and acceptance among the middle class of taking in boarders to fulfill economic needs.

The importance of Robinson’s study is his contention that household structure changed as the family moved through the stages of the life cycle. As the family faced financial need, and had fewer options to generate income, they took in boarders; however, as children reached ages of employment, and there was less available space in the home, boarders were no longer necessary. Boarders were connected to the family life cycle, but co-resident employees did not reflect changes in life cycle and family structure. Johnson found in Rochester that “on most jobs, employment was conditional on co-residence. Even workmen whose fathers and brothers headed households in Rochester lived with employers.”<sup>70</sup> Johnson

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<sup>68</sup> Robinson, “Economic Necessity and the Life Cycle,” 69.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 69-70.

<sup>70</sup> Johnson, *A Shopkeeper’s Millennium*, 43.

demonstrated that this system of co-residence changed as Rochester's businesses grew in size. In 1850, Bethlehem, like Rochester in the 1820's, remained a craft-based community with employees residing with their employers. As demonstrated by Johnson and this study of Bethlehem, extended households that contain employees did not change according to the life cycle model.

#### V. Conclusion

After the dissolution of the closed society, Bethlehem had distinctive household structures that reflected its unique history and its contemporary status as a small pre-industrial town. In the absence of detailed biographical information, the evidence from the 1850 census strongly suggests that the communal ties formed by the Moravians continued to provide a support system for single and widowed women. The local histories of Bethlehem indicated that some aspects of the Moravian communal support systems remained after the community was opened to non-Moravians.

The demographic characteristics of household heads in conjunction with the pre-industrial structure of Bethlehem and its Moravian history influenced household structure independently from family life cycles. The history of Bethlehem as a closed communal society provided Moravians with access to land and resources that permitted extended household structures to be present in male-headed households. This is supported by the presence of

extended households among all the age cohorts of the male heads in Bethlehem. Furthermore, the economy dominated by the small craft workshops and trades supported household structures that contained unrelated inmates across the male-headed age cohorts that did not change in accordance with the family life cycle mode. The statistical analysis of household structure in Bethlehem indicates that the "life course paradigm" needs to be re-examined to address the household structure of pre-industrial towns.

The "life course paradigm" and the focus of historians on boarders overlook the areas that were not industrialized and had histories distinct from the "New England" model. The study of 1850 Bethlehem suggests that household structure was not solely a reflection of financial need. Bethlehem was not an area of rapid change or population growth; it experienced change slowly over a long period of time. Thus, its household structures reflected extension according to social structures outside of financial necessities. The nature and function of the Moravian religion in Bethlehem society did change over the nineteenth century, but a transition in religious practices and the opening of the town did not mean that the community lost all of its religious focus. The scholarship on Bethlehem should be expanded to examine the influence of the Moravian religion after non-Moravians moved into the town.

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## Appendix One: Tables

**Table One: All Households in Bethlehem by Household Head and Household Structure**

Type	All Household Heads	Percent	Male Household Heads	Percent	Female Household Heads	Percent
Unrelated Households	55	16.8	5	2.0	50	59.5
Simple Households	159	48.6	136	56.0	23	27.4
Extended Households	113	34.6	102	42.0	11	13.1
Total	327	100.0	243	100.0	84	100.0

**Table Two: All Residents in Bethlehem by Household Heads and Household Structure**

Resident	Unrelated Household	Percent	Simple Household	Percent	Extended Household	Percent	Total
Male Head	5	7.5	136	22.9	102	13.7	243
Female Head	20	29.9	20	3.4	11	1.5	51
Female Head Moravian Institutions*	30	44.8	3	0.5	0	0	33
Member of Male Headed Household	0	0	396	66.7	613	82.3	1009
Member of Female Headed Household	11	16.4	32	5.5	19	2.5	62
Member of Female Headed Household Moravian Institutions*	1	1.5	6	1.0	0	0	7
Total	67	100.0	593	100.0	745	100.0	1405

\* Moravian Institutions are the Widows' House and the Sisters' House.

**Table Three: Members of Male-Headed Households by Relationship and Household Structure**

Member	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Total
Spouses	0	0	266	50.3	204	28.4	470
Adult Children	0	0	45	8.5	53	7.4	98
Minor Children	0	0	218	41.2	176	24.5	394
Unrelated Adults	0	0	0	0	235	32.7	235
Unrelated Minors	0	0	0	0	42	5.9	42
Related Adults	0	0	0	0	5	0.7	5
Single Household Heads	5	100.0	0	0	0	0	5
Related Adult Heads	0	0	0	0	3	0.4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1252</b>

**Table Four: Members of Female-Headed Households by Relationship and Household Structure**

Member	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Moravian Institution	Percent	Total
Single Household Heads	15	46.9	0	0	0	0	29	72.5	44
Adult Household Heads	5	15.6	19	37.3	12	40.0	4	10.0	40
Adult Children	0	0	12	23.5	8	26.7	4	10.0	24
Minor Children	0	0	20	39.2	1	3.2	2	5.0	23
Unrelated Adults	10	31.3	0	0	7	23.5	1	2.5	18
Unrelated Minors	2	6.2	0	0	2	6.6	0	0	4
Related Adults	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>153</b>

**Table Five: Male Household Heads by Age and Household Structure**

Age	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Total
19-25	0	0	15	57.7	11	42.3	26
26-35	1	1.3	43	54.4	35	44.3	79
36-45	0	0	34	57.6	25	42.4	59
46-55	1	2.1	27	57.5	19	40.4	47
56-65	2	9.0	10	45.5	10	45.5	22
66-78	1	10.0	7	70.0	2	20.0	10

**Table Six: Female Household Heads by Tax and Household Structure**

Tax in Dollars	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Moravian Institution	Percent	Total
Not Listed	14	70.0	16	80.0	10	90.9	24	72.7	64
200-500	1	5.0	1	5.0	0	0	2	6.1	4
501-1000	0	0	1	5.0	0	0	2	6.1	4
1001-2000	3	15.0	1	5.0	0	0	3	9.1	6
2001-2500	2	10.0	1	5.0	0	0	1	3.0	4
6500	0	0	0	0	1	9.1	1	3.0	2
Total	20	100.0	20	100.0	11	100.0	33	100.0	84

**Table Seven: Female Household Heads by Age and Household Structure**

Age	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Total
23-35	2	40.0	3	60.0	0	0	5
36-45	2	14.3	8	57.1	4	28.6	14
46-55	8	57.1	4	28.6	2	14.3	14
56-65	3	37.5	3	37.5	2	25.0	8
66-78	5	50.0	2	20.0	3	30.0	10

**Table Eight: Female Household Heads in Moravian Institutions by Age and Household Structure**

Age	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Total
23-35	1	100.0	0	0	1
36-45	6	75.0	2	25.0	8
46-55	5	83.3	1	16.7	6
56-65	12	100.0	0	0	12
66-78	6	100.0	0	0	6

**Table Nine: Male Household Heads by Occupation and Household Structure**

Occupation	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Total
Professional	0	0	3	2.2	10	9.8	13
Proprietary	2	40.0	9	6.6	19	18.6	30
Skilled Non-Manual	0	0	3	2.2	5	4.9	8
Skilled Manual	0	0	64	47.1	53	52.0	117
Unskilled Manual	1	20.0	41	30.2	5	4.9	47
None	2	40.0	14	10.3	10	9.8	26
Unspecified	0	0	2	1.4	0	0	2
Total	5	100.0	136	100.0	102	100.0	243

**Table Ten: Male Household Heads by Tax and Household Structure**

Tax in Dollars	Unrelated Households	Percent	Simple Households	Percent	Extended Households	Percent	Total
Not Listed	4	80.0	39	28.7	16	15.7	59
100-500	1	20.0	55	40.4	25	24.5	81
501-1000	0	0	14	10.3	13	12.7	27
1001-2000	0	0	11	8.1	16	15.7	27
2001-3000	0	0	9	6.6	9	8.8	18
3001-4000	0	0	2	1.5	4	3.9	6
4001-5000	0	0	1	0.7	6	5.9	7
5001-6000	0	0	2	1.5	3	2.9	5
6001-7000	0	0	0	0	5	4.9	5
7001-8000	0	0	1	0.7	2	2.0	3
11000-13000	0	0	1	0.7	2	2.0	3
+30000	0	0	1	0.7	1	1.0	2
Total	5	100.0	136	100.0	102	100.0	243



## Appendix Two: Household Structure

The definition of household used in this study is derived from the seventh census of the United States. The United States census defined a household according to economic dependence. A household consisted of the primary financial provider, the household head, plus all the people who lived in a contained housing unit and who were dependent on the household head for economic support. For example, the census instructed enumerators to count "a widow living alone and separately providing for herself, or two hundred individuals living together and provided for by a common head" as one household.<sup>1</sup> The definition of household used by the census enumerators expanded farther than affinal connections used by scholars to study the family. Steven Ruggles, in his study of extended families in England and America, argued that while family structure and household structure overlap they should be examined separately. Ruggles defined family as "any group of related persons who reside in the same household," meaning that several families may live together; however, "boarders, lodgers, and servants not related by blood or marriage do not belong to the same family as the head of the household."<sup>2</sup> Ruggles contended that an investigation of family structure precludes the study of unrelated inmates as if they were familial members.

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<sup>1</sup>Steven Ruggles, *Prolonged Connections: The Rise of the Extended Family in Nineteenth-Century England and America* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 139-140.

Ruggles suggested that they be included as separate families.<sup>2</sup> Yet there was no clear boundary between the household and the family in the census documents. The federal census only instructed the enumerators to differentiate between kin and non-relatives through order of enumeration. That is, the presumptive head of the household was to be listed first, followed by the spouse, children, and all other residents. The federal census of 1850 did not provide any other information on the relation between household members. In cases in which several families inhabited the same dwelling, the census enumerator distinguished household groups through the structure of the building.<sup>3</sup>

In the absence of records other than the census, the relationships of household members can only be inferred through surnames, age, and occupation. In her study of the households of 1850 Los Angeles, Barbara Laslett distinguished the household units based on affinity. Laslett chose to organize families into "modal categories." People who were listed as residing in the same household without any apparent relation were classified as "no family" households, while parent-child families were "simple family"

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>3</sup> Thus, households in the same building were assigned a different family number with the same dwelling number based on the definition provided by the census schedules. A dwelling was defined as "a separate inhabited tenement, containing one or more families under one roof. Where several tenements are in one block, with walls of brick or wood to divide them, having separate entrances they are each to be numbered as separate houses; but where not so divided they are to be numbered as one house." (DeBow, xxii).

households, and simple families with inmates were classified as "simple family plus others" households. Laslett treated the "family" as a flexible unit within the household. Laslett's treatment of the family and household is more useful to this study than Ruggles's because the 1850 census treated people who resided within the same dwelling and were considered "dependent" on a primary wage-earner as a household regardless of blood relation. The census records for Bethlehem did not provide a clear affinal relation for household members, thus unlike the work of Barbara Laslett and Steven Ruggles, this study cannot examine extended kin households. The extended households discussed in this study included "nuclear" family units whose households contained people who did not have the same surname as the head of the household, possibly extended kin, but whose exact relationship is unknown. Inmates may have been relatives, boarders, servants, or workers.

This study adapts Barbara Laslett's modal categories to the census definition of household to classify household structures in 1850 Bethlehem.<sup>4</sup>

The three categories used in this study are unrelated households, simple households, and extended households. Those single adults and unrelated individuals who resided together are classified as unrelated households.

Married couples, couples with children, and single adults with children are

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<sup>4</sup>Barbara Laslett, "Household Structure on an American Frontier: Los Angeles, California, in 1850," *American Journal of Sociology*, 81(July 1975), 111-114.

simple households and any of these simple households with apparently unrelated inmates are extended households. This study relies on the characteristics of the household head in conjunction with inferred relationships, shared surnames, to classify household structures.

### Appendix Three: Methodology

This statistical analysis of household structure in Bethlehem is derived from the 1850 United States Census and transcriptions of the 1850 tax records for Bethlehem Borough. The information from the census and tax records was entered into an SPSS database. The database contains the names, ages, sex, place of birth, occupation, race, and tax valuations for every individual listed as residing in the borough of Bethlehem. I encoded the database to group individuals by the family and dwelling numbers assigned by the census enumerators. I also encoded the database to group individuals according to the sex and nativity of the household head and their relationship to the household head. The 1850 census did not provide the relationships of household members. Therefore relationships were determined through surnames, ages, and occupations. This method was useful for determining immediate relation, but it did not allow for an examination of extended kin connections. This analysis allowed for cross-tabulations of the household heads and household members based on their age, sex, occupation, and tax valuations. The results of the cross-tabulations were then compared to determine how the age, sex, occupation, and wealth assessments of the heads related to household structure in Bethlehem.

Occupational classifications were derived from the census and the scholarly works of Michael Katz, Theodore Hershberg, and Robert

Dockhorn.<sup>1</sup> The specific occupations listed on the census, such as blacksmith and cordwainer, were given numeric occupational codes that I devised using the work of Katz, Hershberg, and Dockhorn. Each occupation was given a five-digit code that specified the occupation and grouped those professions into larger categories. The categories that I used to group occupations were professional, proprietary, skilled non-manual, skilled manual, unskilled manual, none, blank, and miscellaneous. These classifications do not distinguish between masters, journeymen, and apprentices, as this information was not listed on the census. The group occupational classification was used to cross-tabulate professions with the age, tax assessment, and household structures of the household heads.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael B. Katz, "Occupational Classification in History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 3 (Summer 1972), 63-88; Theodore Hershberg and Robert Dockhorn, "Occupational Classification," *Historical Methods Newsletter*, 9 (1976), 59-99.

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