

Old Fort News

Vol. XXX, No. 2

THE ORIGINS OF LUTHERANISM IN THE FORT WAYNE AREA (1829-1847)

By

The Rev. Rudolph F. Rehmer



PASTOR FRIEDRICH WYNEKEN

Spring 1967

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Revised by

Rex M. Potterf, Librarian Emeritus

Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society
Fort Wayne, Indiana
1967

PREFACE

The transplanting of conservative Lutheranism from Germany to the Middle West was first accomplished in Fort Wayne; it radiated therefrom in many directions. The Reverend Rudolph Rehmer has explored this movement in detail and has evaluated the work and ministry of numerous early Lutheran pastors. His study involves scholarship and depth of effort. He has examined many obscure sources and has delineated a species of religious evolution. Reverend Rehmer has brought into focus, pioneer life in Indiana in the 1840's--its crudities, its privations, its primitive facilities for travel and even the frailties of men who encounter great difficulties. An impressive feature of this movement is the considerable amount of travel necessitated for these pioneer missionaries who came together in meetings from widely different areas.

In the interest of brevity and the needs of a wider readership we have reduced the original study to smaller compass and have rewritten much of it. The revision has only altered rhetorical structure. In no case have the facts been changed.

Rex M. Potterf, Editor

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INTRODUCTION

At the 45th Convention of the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod, June 20-30, 1962, at Cleveland, Ohio, a resolution was passed dividing the Central District of the Synod, constituted as a District in 1854, into two Districts. One comprised chiefly the state of Ohio and the other mainly the 193 Lutheran congregations of the Synod in Indiana. A few congregations in West Virginia and Kentucky were incorporated into the new Districts.

Although Indiana did not become a separate District of the Missouri Synod until 1962, it has since played a very important role in the Synod's formation in 1847. St. Paul Lutheran Church, now at Barr and East Lewis, was founded in 1837, under its early pastors, the Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken and Dr. Wm. Sihler. It was an influential charter member of the Synod and the mother of many Lutheran congregations. Under the Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken as pioneer missionary in the years 1838-1844, other congregations were formed in Allen, Adams and surrounding counties. Thus at the time of the establishment of the German Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states, in Chicago in 1847, Indiana was not mentioned in the Synod's name.

Indiana did supply a generous share of the founding fathers of the Synod as well as charter member congregations. In addition to St. Paul Lutheran Church and its pastors, Dr. Wm. Sihler, there were also the Rev. F.W. Husmann and the Soest and Bingen congregations, (Marion Township, Allen County); the Rev. G.H. Jaebker and the congregation in Adams

County (postoffice--Poughkeepsie, Indiana); and the Rev. G.K. Schuster and the Lutheran congregations of Kosciusko and Marshall counties. Advisory members of the new Synod listed from Indiana were the Rev. C.L.A. Wolter and the Rev. Carl Frincke. The Rev. Mr. Frincke was missionary at large in Wisconsin, but he is mentioned as being from Fort Wayne.

The constitution of the Synod signed on Monday, April 26, 1847, at First St. Paul Lutheran Church in Chicago stated that every member congregation was to have two votes, one by its pastor and one by its lay delegate, and that pastors who joined the body but whose congregations did not, had no right of suffrage. It readily appears that one-third of the votes were cast by Indiana pastors and lay delegates.¹ The Rev. Dr. Sihler of Fort Wayne was elected as Vice-President of the new Synod and the Rev. F.W. Husmann of the Bingen and Soest churches as secretary. Dr. Sihler was also named as one of the Examiners and Collectors to give doctrinal approval by the Synod to ministers and congregations who wished to join.

Paralleling the early dedicated efforts of the Saxon fathers of Perry County, Missouri, in the training of a well educated and truly Lutheran ministry were again those of Dr. William Sihler under whose leadership the Lutheran "Practical Seminary" was founded in Fort Wayne in 1846 and was deeded to the Synod in 1848. Though the "Practical Seminary" of the Synod was later moved to Springfield, Illinois, a Lutheran ministerial training school of either full theological or pre-theological academic dimensions has existed in Fort Wayne almost continuously since 1846. The Concordia Senior College at Fort Wayne is a unique institution in the ministerial training program of the Synod. Here graduates of its 10 pre-theological schools enter to complete this phase of their education before pursuing concentrated theological studies

at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

Fort Wayne and Indiana have a prominent place in the affairs of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, even as they have in other Synods of the Lutheran Church.² Allen County with a population of 232,196 in the 1960 census had 30,452 Missouri Synod Lutherans (1965 statistical yearbook). The total Lutheran population in Allen County amounts to more than 40,000. Adams County, with a total population of 24,643 in 1960,³ has a sizeable percentage with 3,243 Lutherans in Missouri Synod congregations. The District headquarters of the three-year-old Indiana District are in Fort Wayne just across the street from historic St. Paul's church. Dr. Walter C. Birkner served as secretary of the Synod for nine years until 1965. For 37 years he also performed as executive secretary of stewardship, missions, and church extension in the former Central and the present Indiana Districts of the Synod. Dr. Edwin A. Nerger, pastor of St. Paul's Church, is chairman of the Synod's Board of World Relief. Several Lutheran laymen of the Fort Wayne area are prominent in the affairs of the church-at-large.

The beginnings of Lutheranism in the Fort Wayne area constitute the subject of this paper. The Fort Wayne area was one of the earliest centers of conservative Lutheranism in contrast to the Lutheranism in America up to 1840. Historical data clearly shows that Fort Wayne and the surrounding area have made a significant contribution to the development of Lutheranism in Indiana and beyond.

There are other Lutheran congregations in Indiana which are older than those of the Missouri Synod in Fort Wayne. Zion Lutheran Church at Pershing, Indiana on U.S. Highway 40 east toward Richmond, formerly known as Germantown, has been in existence since 1822. A Lutheran church near Crawfordsville

known as Phaneel Lutheran Church originated in 1832. There are Lutheran churches in southern Indiana now affiliated with the Missouri Synod at Seymour, Jonesville, Evansville, Farmers' Retreat, and Indianapolis which were founded before that Synod was organized in 1847. The Rev. Paul Henkel, pioneer Lutheran missionary from the Tennessee Synod, had reached into Indiana before Indiana statehood; Rev. C. F. ("Father") Heyer of the Pennsylvania Ministerium also traversed parts of southern and central Indiana. At Corydon, Indiana, the state's first capital, C. F. Defendorfer states, "no less than seventeen Lutheran churches existed in the area at one time or another in Indiana history."⁴ It is claimed the Rev. George Forster of Fairfield County, Ohio, was the first Lutheran pastor to preach on Indiana soil. He considered the whole territory his field of operations; he visited Harrison County and ministered to scattered Lutherans there in 1805. Whether he organized Lutheran congregations is not known, but the church record book of Mt. Solomon Lutheran Church in Harrison County, bears this inscription written in its fly leaf: "Organized in 1810."⁵

Settlers of Lutheran faith also entered Indiana via the Whitewater, the Ohio, and along the Wabash where it forms the western boundary. They too helped to "crisscross the triangle between Clarksville, Vincennes, and the mouth of the Wabash with trails."⁶ Probably there were Lutherans among them for that wave of immigration into Indiana included chiefly former residents of Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York,⁷ and from the southern states. Lutheranism was already established in Pennsylvania and New York before the War of the Revolution by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg and others. When the first Lutherans came to the Fort Wayne area, which was still largely Indian territory, there were already two Lutheran

synods in Indiana. The one was the Synod of the West including parts of Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Illinois, organized in 1835 in Louisville, Kentucky. The other was the Synod of Indiana, also organized in 1835 in Johnson County, Indiana, under the leadership of the Henkels and others of the Tennessee Synod.

The earliest beginnings of Lutheranism in southern Indiana, although an interesting story, must be told elsewhere.

As soon as German Lutherans arrived in Fort Wayne, many coming at the behest of the Raskells, some coming on their own, they felt the need to organize their accustomed ways of worship and religious training. When the ministers of Fort Wayne numbered about 300 people in 1836, Henry Rudolph petitioned the Immigration Commission and the Mission Committee of the Lutheran Synod in the East for a Lutheran pastor. Through these agencies he appealed

CHAPTER I

From the coming of Henry Rudisill to Fort Wayne until the founding of St. Paul Lutheran Church in 1837 with the Rev. Jesse Hoover as pastor

In 1829 when Henry Rudisill settled in Fort Wayne, a village of 150 inhabitants, he brought Lutheranism with him from Pennsylvania. Most of the residents were French and Indian. Rudisill and his wife, a relative of the famous Pastor Henkel of the North Carolina Synod, did much to alter the village. They sought to accomplish this through inviting letters to other German Lutherans back in Pennsylvania and the East. They had to undergo severe privations and hardships. Pastor H.G. Sauer, an early pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, in writing about Rudisill's early days says "that the Rudisills had lived in Fort Wayne nine months already before they could buy their first pound of butter. Fodder for the animals was entirely lacking; there were no eggs. A cow was worth seven dollars when available but none were to be purchased. Mrs. Rudisill's father brought the first cow from Ohio."¹

As more German Lutherans arrived in Fort Wayne, some coming at the behest of the Rudisills, some coming on their own, they felt the need to continue their accustomed ways of worship and religious training. When the inhabitants of Fort Wayne numbered about 500 people in 1836, Henry Rudisill petitioned the Immigration Commissions and the Mission Committees of the Lutheran Synods in the East for a Lutheran pastor. Through these agencies he appealed

to settlers to come to Fort Wayne. These overtures were successful.

In the years prior to 1836, religious meetings were held in Fort Wayne. The Rudisills might well have joined one of the American "sect churches" already in existence there as they were repeatedly asked to do so. Henry Rudisill however was a Lutheran and determined to remain a Lutheran. He continued to practice his religious faith. He was concerned for the spiritual welfare of the new settlers who came to Fort Wayne and also for their physical well-being. He employed the new settlers, thus supplying them with the means for livelihood, and also stood by them in word and deed. Rev. Sauer says, "if one of them no longer knew where to turn for counsel he went to Mr. Rudisill. Everyone found him to have an open heart and an open hand."²

The petition which Henry Rudisill sent to the Synods of the East for a Lutheran pastor was printed in a German language church paper published there and was read by the Rev. Jesse Hoover, then a Lutheran pastor in Woodstock, Virginia. The latter replied to Rudisill; thereafter, he came to Fort Wayne in July, 1836, and preached to a sizeable gathering of interested people. The Rev. Mr. Hoover remained for only ten days, but mission prospects appeared so bright to him that he promised to return to Fort Wayne as soon as possible.

Rev. Hoover returned in the fall of 1836. The Rudisill family and other German settlers then residing at Fort Wayne welcomed him and gave him lodging. His first ministerial acts as recorded in the earliest church book of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, shows that on January 15, 1837, he administered Holy Communion to 63 persons. The organization of St. Paul Lutheran Church did not occur until October 14, 1837. Meanwhile, Rev. Jesse Hoover

journeyed throughout the northern part of Indiana visiting the widely scattered German settlers and preaching to them. He travelled to a place called Friedheim in Adams County where dwelt a small colony of Germans. They requested him to carry on a ministry.

Rev. Hoover now divided his time between the settlers in Fort Wayne and at Friedheim. Travel was difficult because there were no suitable roads. Often this Lutheran pastor cut his way through the heavy underbrush. His source of livelihood was chiefly what his people brought him. He received only a little cash. A man who experienced the privations of those early days recalls that Rev. Hoover's only food was corn meal which he hammered out on a block of wood. For a long time he had no oven and the corn meal bread was baked on a board on the open fireplace. The price of uncleared land was a dollar and a half an acre. For heavy work a man received only \$15 a month in paper money, which was frequently worthless. These impoverished parishioners could hardly provide a very high living standard of living for Rev. Hoover. The pastor's wife took boarders to maintain their modest house. Nonetheless Rev. Hoover carried on his ministry with zeal. When he made his missionary journeys as far north as the Michigan border, his brother David Hoover conducted the religious instruction and confirmation classes.³

Rev. Hoover, who could speak both English and German fluently, preached almost entirely in German during his first year. During the second year he began to preach English on occasion. The worship services were very simple. The congregation knew nothing of the already established Lutheran liturgy, and since there was an inadequate supply of song books, the pastor repeated the lines of the hymns as the congregation followed in singing them. In the celebration of Holy Communion, lights were absent.

Rev. Hoover's preaching was forceful and very edifying, but he succumbed to a heart ailment on May 23, 1833. This was only two years after he had first arrived in Fort Wayne. His illness may have been aggravated by strenuous missionary journeys and the difficulties of travel between Fort Wayne and the Friedheim settlement.

In spite of the pastor's untimely death the mission was accomplished. Of the two churches founded, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, seemed to be the better organized by the time of Hoover's death. Henry Rudisill, a miller by trade, had contributed much through his pleas for settlers and for a Lutheran pastor. He himself had received the new pastor and wife into his own home. He had assisted the pastor when the congregation utilized the old Court house for worship services. The appointments were crude. The worshippers sat on blocks of wood with rough boards over them. The altar, too, was of similar rough material. These were secondary considerations to the preaching of Christ's Word and the baptism and confirmation of children. The church's work had begun. Two names stand out in this earliest period--those of Henry Rudisill and the Rev. Jesse Hoover.

CHAPTER II

The missionary activities of the Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken in the years 1833-1841

Friedrich Konrad Dietrich Wyneken succeeded Rev. Hoover. In his theological studies at Goettingen and Halle, Wyneken acquired little of the conviction which would be necessary to be a frontier missionary in America. "When he left the university, he really knew precious little of the Bible, which in those days was principally used as a stamping-ground for philosophical unbelief."¹ After he completed his formal theological studies, he served as private tutor in various families. In this way he came to the parsonage of a Pastor von Hanfstengel, who directed his attention to the worth of the Bible and to Christ as the Savior from sin. Henceforth Wyneken spent a great deal of time in the study of the Scripture as the revelation of God. He also read the missionary journals which were in Pastor von Hanfstengel's study. One of these gave a vivid account of the dire spiritual needs of German Lutherans in America. Wyneken felt an urge to respond to those needs. It seemed to him there was work to be done in the New World. He came to believe that he was wasting his time in dallying and in useless peregrinations. While the Rev. Jesse Hoover was concluding his missionary labors in Fort Wayne, F.C.D. Wyneken was on his way to America.

At the age of twenty-eight Wyneken possessed resolute convictions and knew how to make his own way. His father, a Lutheran pastor, had died when Friedrich was a small boy. Friedrich had to assist in earning a living for the family of six boys and three girls since his mother received only a small government pension for support. Inured to sacrifice and

accustomed to making his way in the world, Wyneken had no fear of going to a strange land.

A friend, C. W. Wolff accompanied him to America. They landed in Baltimore in the summer of 1838. Wyneken soon learned that the German missionary journals reported true conditions. When the two young men finally found a Lutheran pastor in the person of the Rev. John Haesbart, they introduced themselves as missionaries who had come to America to minister to the poor, destitute German settlers of whom they had read. Since vagabonds and adventurers often posed as missionaries and ministers the Rev. Mr. Haesbart, however, at first was not impressed. Wyneken's candor and openheartedness soon indicated that he was a resolute and determined young man. Shortly after Wyneken's coming to Baltimore, Rev. Haesbart became ill and young Wyneken conducted the worship services at St. Paul Lutheran there.

When Haesbart recovered from his illness, Wyneken became restive. He had not come to America to stay in Baltimore. Haesbart constrained him to be patient until he had written to the Missions' Committee of the Pennsylvania Ministerium. This Ministerium had already learned of the death of Jesse Hoover at Fort Wayne and of the two settlements of Lutherans there. The Pennsylvania Ministerium called and commissioned Wyneken to go to Indiana and to form the scattered "Protestants" into congregations. Although it seemed an easy task for this energetic young man, actually it proved to be otherwise.

Wyneken left Baltimore in September, 1838. He travelled by rail to Pittsburgh. There he visited a Rev. Friedrich Schmidt,² editor and publisher of the Lutherische Kirchenzeitung. In him Wyneken found a friend. He continued on his way by canal boat as far as Zelienople, where he bought a horse and supplied

himself with provisions for the journey across Ohio. Unaccustomed to riding a horse, ignorant of the roads which were barely more than trails, he struck across country in the general direction of Indiana. In Allen and Putnam counties, Ohio, he came upon the first settlements of Germans. There he encountered spiritual misery. They had lived in the backwoods for years, without Word or Sacrament. Wyneken remained among them for eight days, preaching, baptizing their children, instructing, and encouraging them. The spiritual destitution he found made a great impression on him. Several years later when he returned to Germany to make his famous appeal for "The need of German Lutherans in America" he still referred to his impressions of those days. He now surmised what awaited him in Fort Wayne. Though the Ohio people begged him with tears in their eyes to remain with them, Wyneken nevertheless proceeded to Indiana.

Proceeding to what is now Decatur in Adams County, Indiana, Wyneken decided to make that his headquarters. Though he encountered distrust and suspicion among some German settlers, he received a hearty welcome from a Mr. Buuck who was much interested in religion. The latter had been a sturdy supporter of Rev. Hoover and now became an able helper to Wyneken who temporarily resided in the Buuck home. Father and Mother Buuck extended the utmost hospitality to young Wyneken. The pioneer missionary at first felt constrained to make Decatur and Adams County his headquarters.

Father Buuck explained to the young pastor the dual parish arrangement whereby Hoover had served in Fort Wayne and in Adams County. Wyneken therefore continued on to Fort Wayne, arriving there the last week of September, 1838. On October 1 he wrote to his friend, Rev. Haesbart, in Baltimore:

"Eight days ago I arrived in Fort Wayne. . . . I have already preached five times, baptized children, and read burial services. Now these people want me to stay . . . I advised the vestry of the church here to write to the committee of their church body about this. Tomorrow I intend to continue my journey, and I expect to return in four weeks to receive the answer. . . . I am satisfied with everything."³

Wyneken's first letter indicates that Henry Rudisill and the members of St. Paul Lutheran Church wanted to call Wyneken as their pastor. From the outset he made it clear that the prior commitment that he gather the scattered Lutherans and Germans into congregations and minister to them must be honored.

Without awaiting a reply to his letter, Wyneken set out on his first missionary tour on October 2. Wyneken's biographer, the Rev. J.C.W. Lindemann, sketches this journey as follows: "From Fort Wayne he went at first into the western section of Ohio,⁴ from there in a northwest direction to Michigan City; then he turned back to the vicinity around South Bend, going also to St. Josephs City and Elkhart; from there he made an excursion into Michigan, journeying from Mottville to Niles; he then went southward . . . as far as Crawfordsville and Montgomery County; from there he proceeded through Clinton County and along the Wabash back to Fort Wayne. He returned there on November 16."⁵ On his journeys he met many German Lutherans who had forsaken their church. At some places he aroused them to organize into congregations, at other places he promised to send them help to provide a ministry for them.

Wyneken had covered a considerable territory and had braved many hardships and dangers. Within him burned a missionary zeal as well as a deep concern for the spiritual needs of the dispersed Luther-

ans. Three weeks before Christmas, 1838, he wanted to make a second missionary tour. However both his own horse and that of Mr. Rudisill were lame. For want of a horse the next missionary undertaking was delayed. But on January 2, 1839, he again departed to visit the congregation at South Bend, Elkhart, and Mottville. He had to dismount from his horse, lead the animal, and travel on foot. Winter hazards of travel on icy trails and his strenuous efforts expended in preaching caused him to become ill. He camped some two miles from Elkhart. Pressed for time he failed to reach the congregation at Harris Prairie (near Mottville, Michigan). He had eagerly desired to improve its organization. He had promised his people in Fort Wayne, in Benton, and in another community around Wolf Lake to visit them at a specified time. Returning he still did not feel very well; his illness prevented him from visiting all the people whom he wished to see.

On January 25 he was back in Fort Wayne and wrote to the Rev. Friedrich Schmidt, editor of the Lutherische Kirchenzeitung in Pittsburgh:

"I am convinced that the only orderly way to carry out the work . . . is to establish missionaries for smaller circles (of people). The General Synod should therefore once again send out a call to the Lutheran congregations."⁶ This letter indicates Wyneken's determination to leave no possibility untried to secure additional workers for the congregations of northern Indiana.

Wyneken now realized the impossibility of one man to try to cope alone with this large field. He began to write letters not just to Pastors Schmidt and Haesbart but also to friends back in Germany to lay the distressing situation before them.

Wyneken continued his ministry in Adams County simultaneously with his work in Fort Wayne.

"Father" Buuck now presented him with a small log cabin which became his first parsonage. It measured about sixteen feet in length and was perhaps eight or ten feet wide. The cracks between the logs were stuffed with moss in true backwoods fashion. The floor was of crudely hewn logs. Since it had no window, he always left his door open when he wanted to read or write. But he thought nothing of these hardships, even as he did not seem too disturbed when he lost his way in the thick brush on his missionary tours and had to camp at night. In spite of all the inconveniences and hardships he was jovial in spirit. Stories told about him are still legendary among the older German people in the Fort Wayne area. Perhaps the best known and that most often repeated relates to Wyneken and his yellow leather trousers. One of his deacons, Ernst Voss, wanted to get rid of these trousers because they had been given to Wyneken by a shopkeeper who was a heavy drinker and possessed of a Roman Catholic background. Wyneken however loved those yellow trousers. Therefore Ernst Voss resorted to a good-natured conspiracy with the local tailor to induce Wyneken to accept a new suit of clothes.

While Wyneken was so intensely busy trying to bring order out of chaos among his backwoodsmen, another missionary arrived in Fort Wayne during the summer of 1839 sent by the Pennsylvania Ministerium. This was Johann Joseph Nuelsen. He reached Fort Wayne on August 2, 1839 and visited Wyneken for a short time. Two weeks later Nuelsen wrote to Haesbart in Baltimore:

"A few hours later I greeted Brother Wyneken. He was riding into the village from his home to instruct the children. He lives with a miller, Mr. Rudisill, about a mile east of the village. I accompanied him on his visit to one of his congregations in Adams

County, where he taught school for three days and preached in the forenoon, while I preached in the afternoon . . . The people seem to cling to him and hold him in very affectionate regard . . . His manner in dealing with these people is very plain and simple. He has in mind to introduce some church discipline in order to bring about at least a semblance of order and to change the rough and coarse behavior of the many Germans who want to join his church. He is in favor of sending German schoolteachers here, and I, too, am of the opinion that some could be placed here in several settlements, which are almost exclusively composed of Germans."⁷

On August 26, 1839 Rev. Haesbart wrote to Rev. Schmidt of Pittsburgh highly praising the tremendous efforts of this hero of the faith. Schmidt, in turn, wrote to Wyneken and Wyneken replied in a letter dated September 10, 1839:

"Here in Fort Wayne . . . we have been able to build our own little church, a frame building, in which we now worship, though it is not yet finished. Ground has also been bought for a parsonage."⁸

Wyneken's letters indicate that he believed the only way for him to secure personnel to carry on the work was to return to Germany and make a direct appeal. Through his correspondence he succeeded in getting Rev. J. W. Husmann of Bremen to come to America. Husmann came to Fort Wayne in May, 1840, and helped Wyneken for a while by teaching in the school he had organized in connection with St. Paul's Church.⁹ Wyneken also influenced people in Bremen to organize a mission society which pledged itself to gain more men for the ministry in America. But things moved too slowly for the zealous missionary. Already in spring, 1840, Wyneken wrote to the Mission Committee of the General Synod (of which the Pennsylvania Ministerium was a part) about the ne-

necessity of his going to Germany. The Convention of that body which met in May, 1840 resolved to send him as soon as possible in the interest of his work.

More than a year, however, was to elapse before Wyneken was able to make the voyage to Europe. In that year he sought to consolidate the work he had begun in the surrounding areas as well as in his Fort Wayne parish. On March 4, 1841, Rev. Schmidt of Pittsburgh wrote in his Kirchenzeitung:

"Brother Wyneken plans to go to Germany next spring to approach various organizations and to secure missionaries from various Mission Schools to send missionaries to the West."¹⁰

When Wyneken read this in the Kirchenzeitung, he immediately wrote to Rev. Schmidt declaring that he could not leave Fort Wayne without a vicar supplying for him. He would not leave his faithful people without spiritual ministrations.

Evidently the General Synod and the Synod of the West which Wyneken had joined had been aroused, or Wyneken's letters to the brethren back in Germany, were taking effect. In either case, in June, 1841 three men arrived in Baltimore from Germany, C.F.W. Drude, G. Bartels, and G. Jensen, the last of the three, G. Jensen, coming on to Fort Wayne. Meanwhile in May, 1841, Knape, a young pastor had already reached Fort Wayne and relieved Wyneken of his country parishes. When Jensen arrived, he took over the Fort Wayne parish.

Before Wyneken left for the East, he married Marie Sophie, the second oldest daughter of good "Father" Buuck of Adams County, who had given the young missionary such a cordial welcome almost three years before. Rev. Knape performed the ceremony on August 31, 1841. Shortly afterwards they left the little log cabin in Adams County on their honeymoon. They stopped at Pittsburgh and then contin-

ued to Philadelphia. In October, 1841, Wyneken and his bride of only two months sailed for Europe. He hoped to be able to relate his missionary adventures in person on behalf of missionary work in America generally and in Indiana particularly.

After Wyneken's return to the United States he had in that year he sought to consolidate the work he had begun in the surrounding areas as well as in his Fort Wayne parish. On March 4, 1841, Rev. Schmitt in

the following words in his Kirchenzeitung:
"Der Herr Wyneken ist zu Gott gegangen
nachdem er sich von seinen Organisations und in
seinem Zusammenhang von seinen Missionen abgetrennt
hatte."

When Wyneken read this in the Kirchenzeitung,
he immediately wrote to Rev. Schmitt saying that
he could not leave Fort Wayne without a strict supply
of men. He would not leave the faithful people
without spiritual ministrations.

Obviously the General Synod and the Synod in
the West which Wyneken had joined had done everything
in Wyneken's interest to the best of their ability.
In fact, in June, 1841, Rev. Schmitt, C. F. W.
Trumbull, D. Schmitt, and G. Schmitt, the last of the
three, came to Fort Wayne, Indiana,
while in May, 1841, Rev. Schmitt, a young pastor had al-
ready reached Fort Wayne and relieved Wyneken of
his country parishes. When Schmitt arrived, he took
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Before Wyneken left for the last, he married
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left the little log cabin in Adams County on their hom-
eward journey. They stopped at Pittsburgh and then began

CHAPTER III

Wyneken's activities in Germany and their influence on the Lutheran churches of Allen, Adams and surrounding counties

On Wyneken's arrival in Germany he sought the care of competent physicians to effect a cure for the throat ailment which had curtailed his ministry the last few months in America. As a first step to gain support for the missionary cause, he wrote to influential people in various parts of Germany, describing the spiritual conditions of the Germans in America. He appealed to them for aid in men and money. He then sought engagements to deliver lectures. In this way he had opportunity to speak in many churches. Likewise, he sought personal interviews with influential men to discuss his missionary project.

Among others Wyneken influenced Rev. Wilhelm Loehe, a prominent Lutheran leader in Neuen-dettelsau, Bavaria.¹ Loehe promised to help Wyneken in every way possible. In 1840 Loehe's attention was already directed to the unfavorable condition of Lutheran immigrants to America. A missionary society with headquarters in the town of Staden had issued an Appeal for Aid for The German Protestant Church in North America. In this appeal were quotations from the pioneer missionary, Friedrich Wyneken. Before Loehe actually met Wyneken he had become acquainted with the latter's vivid descriptions of American needs. Loehe had given this appeal wide publicity in the Noerdlingen Sonntagsblatt, edited by a Pastor Wucherer.²

In response to his plea in the Noerdlingen Sonntagsblatt, Loehe accumulated a fund of 600 guil-

ders. "The Society for North America," just organized at Dresden, had also begun to agitate for the relief of emigrated Lutherans. There were now workers offering their services who would be subsidized by the Loehe fund. The first to enlist for the cause was Adam Ernst, a cobbler's apprentice in Bohemia, who had read the Appeal for America. He had been a pupil of Pastor Wucherer. George Burger, a native of Noerdlingen also offered his services. Ernst and Burger decided to become schoolteachers. With this end in view they took lodging in Neuendettelsau, where Loehe himself instructed them for over a year. Loehe called them Sendlinge. They sailed July 11, 1842. Among others who followed was Dr. William Sihler who eventually succeeded Wyneken in Fort Wayne and Adams County. In 1846 he began a Lutheran ministerial training school in Fort Wayne under Loehe's direction.

Wyneken made contact with other influential persons. In Erlangen he gained the interest and active support of Prof. Karl von Raumer. In Dresden Wyneken himself sparked the founding of the missionary society in April, 1842. In Leipzig he started another mission society which cooperated with that in Dresden. With the aid of Loehe and von Raumer he now published his famous pamphlet, The Distress of the German Lutherans in America, which was widely circulated both in Germany and in America.³ The pamphlet contained a most urgent and insistent appeal for aid and received considerable attention.

Wyneken raised funds and contributed to the interest in the missionary work in America. A notable development of his trip thus was the contact with Wilhelm Loehe and the publication of the pamphlet. Loehe continued to train men to come to America. Gifted young men who read Wyneken's appeal were incited to join in the crusade to prevent their fellow

Lutherans from returning to barbarism. They were mindful of the quality of men who should come. They looked for men who had a strong professional conviction to help purify an American Lutheranism strongly diluted with radical sectarian influences. Carl Mauelshagen, in a doctor of philosophy thesis presented to the University of Minnesota in 1936 on the topic, "American Lutheranism surrenders to the forces of conservatism," has described the spiritual status of Lutherans in the West. He terms the Lutherans of colonial background as "American Lutherans" while he refers to the confessional Lutheran immigrants as "old Lutherans," because of their decided reversion to sixteenth century Lutheranism and more rigid adherence to the confessions of the church. Mauelshagen declares:

"From its very beginning on American soil the Lutheran church was an incoherent body. Only the untiring efforts of Muehlenberg saved it from a complete collapse and gave it a feeling of solidarity. But no sooner had Muehlenberg passed from the stage than the forces of disintegration again threatened. The rapid diffusion of population into the West, the loss of membership to more highly organized and aggressive Protestant denominations led to the founding of the General Synod of the Lutheran Church in the United States in 1820. At best it was but a loose synodical federation, wholly unprepared to minister to the spiritual needs of a rapidly increasing Lutheran population."⁴

"The German immigrants," continues Mauelshagen, "more than any others were in constant danger of losing their spiritual heritage. A lack of Lutheran pastors made them prey for religious imposters and vagabonds. For in the absence of faithful ministers, those Germans, always accustomed in their native land to Gospel ministrations and unwilling

to be deprived of them now, are liable to be imposed upon by every expelled student or banished demagogue who flies to this country to escape disgrace or legal penalties of the law he has violated in Germany. In this way German churches of America have been brought into disrepute and become the by-word of reproach among their observant neighbors."⁵

Wyneken, his wife, and their daughter, Louise, who was born while they were in Germany, returned to America. They landed in New York in the summer of 1843. He brought with him a co-worker, A. Biewend. Wilhelm Loehe published and sent with Wyneken a memorial entitled, "Greetings from the homeland to the German Lutheran Church of North America, which was signed by 950 people from all ranks of life. Not only did it testify to their concern but it likewise evidenced the deep impression Wyneken had made on the people in Germany.

Wyneken visited his friend Haesbart in Baltimore before he returned to Indiana. Their friendship remained a close one; and Wyneken was destined to become Haesbart's successor in Baltimore in less than two years. Meanwhile he was eager to return to Fort Wayne. During his two year absence the Fort Wayne congregation had split into two factions. One element wanted to extend a call to Rev. Jensen, but this move had been opposed very energetically by Mr. Rudisill and the faithful Rev. Husmann. In the end Jensen accepted a call to Pittsburgh and departed. Rev. Husmann presided over the charge until Wyneken's return.

Wyneken immediately set about introducing greater doctrinal discipline into the congregations. Previous to his departure for Germany he had allowed preachers of Reformed persuasion to preach in his pulpit and people of their congregations to commune at the altars of his churches. Now he emphasized the

difference between the Reformed and the Lutheran confessions. He now publicly testified against the errors of the Reformed and devoted his energies to the establishment of a thoroughly Lutheran congregation. The Reformed element in his church left and founded a new church. Wyneken went about his task energetically. Even some who professed Lutheranism, and among them his friend Rudisill, were disturbed by his sudden change and began to question his Lutheranism.⁶

Wyneken engaged in a public dispute with a representative of the Reformed church. He contended that the Lutheran faith was grounded upon the Word of God. Yet the former confidence which many had placed in him did not fully return. Wyneken therefore decided to invite the Synod of the West to hold its convention in Fort Wayne in 1844. This synod was composed of pastors of Indiana (chiefly southern Indiana), Illinois, and Tennessee which Wyneken had joined in 1838. He was now dissatisfied with conditions within that Synod. His purpose, though, in inviting the Synod to meet in Fort Wayne was to afford some of his disgruntled members an opportunity to air their grievances before this body. He encouraged them to do this that he, in turn, might present his testimony.

The Synod of the West met in Fort Wayne in October, 1844. Members of St. Paul's Church presented themselves with their complaints. Wyneken countered with a two hour speech first in German and then in English in which he vigorously contended for the Lutheran Confessions. He hoped, too, by this move to persuade his colleagues to buy the Book of Concord and to read the Lutheran Confessions for the majority of the Lutheran preachers of that period knew little or nothing of them.

Wyneken succeeded, though it may appear that he failed. Eighty members of St. Paul Lutheran

Church left the church and formed another congregation. Wyneken himself resigned from the Synod of the West, but his remaining congregational members as well as those in Adams and surrounding counties now knew where he stood. To make Wyneken's problems still more vexing a copy of the pamphlet he had published in Germany against the Methodists had come into their hands. They then published a pamphlet against him under the title, Why have you become an Apostate? Wyneken remained undaunted. He continued his tireless efforts. Although he felt sure that his friends in Germany would send pastors and teachers and support him, and although several men did arrive shortly, he decided to train men already in this country. Two young men, J.H. Jaebker and C.H.F. Frincke, impressed him with their promises. He began their training but was unable to complete it. In February, 1845, Wyneken received a call from St. Paul Lutheran Church, Baltimore, to be its pastor. Rev. Haesbart had suddenly resigned in December, 1844, and had left for parts unknown. When Wyneken finally decided to go to Baltimore, the members of his congregation in Fort Wayne reluctantly released him. He promised to remain until they could secure another pastor. On his way to Baltimore Wyneken visited Dr. William Sihler, of Pomeroy, Ohio, who was to become his successor. Sihler had taken up the ministry there as a Loehle missionary only two years previously.

For Wyneken the years 1843 and 1844 were filled with doctrinal controversy. Nevertheless, he continued his missionary interest. In the brief history of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Avilla, Indiana (Noble County) the Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken came to the home of Samuel Weimer and helped to organize that church in 1844. "According to the records of our congregation," the pamphlet states, "Wyneken came at intervals of four weeks. He held services in the Samuel

Weimer's home, a log cabin located at the north of town."⁷ Similarly, Wyneken's picture appeared in the anniversary booklets of the Huntington and Mishawaka congregations. A number of Lutheran congregations in Allen County and other counties stretching from Adams County to St. Joseph County owe their early beginnings to this energetic Lutheran missionary who had based his work on Fort Wayne as his center.

His name, the Rev. C. F. W. Walther of St. Louis, had become the leader of a German immigration to St. Louis and to Forty County, Missouri, after the city and harbor, the Rev. Martin Stephan, was forced to relinquish the territory. Martin Walther was born in the German and vicinity of the Lutheran Church. His thought is given that this church is one in the category of Christian churches and is not new, but rather the new church of Jesus Christ on earth. His thought is also that a true Lutheran can rightly believe and live as a Christian. He thought reveal current false, deceitful doctrines as he sees them and so write against them. Walther chooses the motto for the Lutheran: "God's Word and Luther's doctrine have shall live and continue forever."

Copies of the Lutheran came into the hands of both Synods at Fort Wayne and later at Westport, Wis. Their reactions were almost identical. Wyneken had read it and exclaimed, "Thank God, there are more Lutherans in America." Slicher writes in his autobiography: "It was a great joy for me when in 1844 the first edition of the Lutheran appeared from St. Louis. . . I did not hesitate to recommend it to my congregation. . . for such a paper was badly needed for Lutherans (in America) who, for the most part, did not really know what it was to be Lutheran and why they called themselves Lutheran Christians. Naturally I soon entered into extended correspondence with the editor."⁸ The similar reactions of Slicher

CHAPTER IV

The coming of Dr. William Sihler and the establishment of the Practical Seminary

A new Lutheran church bi-weekly paper, the Lutheraner, now began publication September 7, 1844. Its editor, the Rev. C.F.W. Walther of St. Louis, had become the leader of a Saxon immigration to St. Louis and to Perry County, Missouri, after the original leader, the Rev. Martin Stephan, was forced to relinquish the editorship. Herein Walther set forth the doctrines and history of the Lutheran Church. He sought to prove that this church is not in the category of Christian sects and is not new, but rather the true church of Jesus Christ on earth. He sought to show that a true Lutheran can rightly believe and live as a Christian. He sought to reveal current false, deceitful doctrines as he saw them and to warn against them.¹ Walther chose as the motto for the Lutheraner: "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure shall now and evermore endure."

Copies of the Lutheraner came into the hands of both Wyneken at Fort Wayne and Sihler at Pomeroy, Ohio. Their reactions were almost identical. Wyneken read it and exclaimed, "Thank God, there are more Lutherans in America." Sihler writes in his autobiography: "It was a great joy for me when in 1844 the first edition of the Lutheraner appeared from St. Louis . . . I did not hesitate to recommend it to my congregation . . . for such a paper was badly needed for Lutherans (in America) who, for the most part, did not really know what it was to be Lutheran and why they called themselves Lutheran Christians. Naturally I soon entered into extended correspondence with the editor."² The similar reactions of Sihler

and Wyneken to the Lutheraner, more a theological journal than a regular church paper, harbingered a fellowship between them which was to be climaxed in the founding of the Lutheran Synod (of Missouri, Ohio, and other states) in Chicago in April, 1847.

Dr. William Sihler arrived in Fort Wayne July 15, 1845 to replace Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken. That small congregation comprised some 60 communicants. Since Wyneken's departure Rev. Husmann had taught the parish school. The theological students, Jaebker and Frincke, lived with Sihler in the parsonage. The three bachelors seemed to get along famously. Jaebker was assigned to the heavy housework, the splitting of wood, etc. Frincke, who had never had any sisters and so was quite skilled in cooking, made the meals and did the sweeping and dusting. Of the two, Sihler relates, Jaebker became especially dear to him and following Pastor Knappe's call to Ohio, he assumed the pastorate of the Adams County congregation (Friedheim). He also learned to like Frincke quite well. After completion of his theological training Sihler became missionary-at-large in Wisconsin and then ministered to congregations at White Creek, Indianapolis, and later Baltimore.³

Sihler, like Wyneken before him, reached out beyond Fort Wayne. His ministry was not alone at St. Paul's. He related that he traveled to adjacent settlements, to the congregation in Whitley County some 20 miles distant, to the group in Huntington 25 miles away, and the one in Noble County some 21 miles to the north. In addition, he instructed the two theological students.⁴

In 1846 new events occurred to make Fort Wayne even more a center of conservative Lutheranism. In the spring of that year Rev. Ernst and Rev. Lochner had been sent to America by Wilhelm Loehe. He was pastor in Toledo, Ohio. Dr. Sihler met with

the Saxon pastors, Walther, Loeber, Keyl, Gruber, Fuerbringer, and Schieferdecker at St. Louis for the continuation of preliminary talks toward the formation of a conservative Lutheran synod. A meeting of the Loehe missionaries had already taken place in September, 1845, in Cleveland, Ohio. Those who attended had decided to secede from the Ohio Synod and try to form a union with the Saxons. Sihler had severed his own connection with the Ohio Synod while still in Pomeroy. He had previously corresponded with Walther. Walther's letter addressed to Sihler, January 2, 1845, said in part: "We are strongly convinced that without an external union of the true Lutheran ministers and their congregations the unity of the Spirit and therewith the purity of doctrine cannot be maintained, and even less will the talents of the individual be devoted to the common good."⁵

Sihler and his two companions met at Dayton, Ohio, on May 6, and resumed their journey in a packetboat on the Miami Canal to Cincinnati the next day. Thence they embarked on the steamboat Alleghany for St. Louis. By a happy coincidence, the pastors, Loeber, Keyl, and Gruber boarded the Alleghany at Wittenberg, Mo. By the time the six reached Walther's home on May 12, they were aware of their harmony of thought relative to Lutheran doctrine and practice. Sihler left a glowing account of his first meeting with Walther in which he described the favorable impression which he and his travel companions received of Lutheran congregational life in St. Louis.⁶

All who met were concerned to give the new Synod a broad base and to afford others an opportunity to express themselves on the proposed constitution. Another meeting was held in Fort Wayne in July. Invitations to this were sent to various pastors in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Missouri and to Wyneken in Baltimore.

At the Fort Wayne meeting sixteen pastors from various parts of the middle West were present. Walther, Loeber, Keyl, and Brohm came from St. Louis with a lay delegate, Mr. Fr. W. Barthel, traveling via the Ohio River to Cincinnati, and then by canal to Fort Wayne. Craemer and Hattstaedt from Michigan⁸ and several members of their congregations, traveled by lake boat to Toledo, then a place of meeting via the Wabash Canal. Six pastors who could not be present signified their approval to the constitution in writing. After several modifications had been made in the St. Louis draft of the constitution, it was signed by the 16 pastors attending the conference.⁹

Personal and family problems confronted Sihler in hosting sixteen men in a very small parsonage. Likewise his very young bride was unaccustomed to entertaining distinguished guests. Sihler and his wife were soon hosts for other visitors. William Sihler had been one of the first of Loehe's missionaries. Now this dedicated Lutheran pastor back in the homeland continued to send emergency workers whom he himself trained. Wyneken and Sihler in America believed in the planning of Loehe for the establishment of a "practical seminary" in the United States. This project blossomed under Sihler's direction at Fort Wayne. Eleven students were brought by the Rev. C.A.W. Roebbelen to Fort Wayne in August, 1846 and were trained by Wilhelm Loehe. The school opened in October, 1846. Assisting Dr. Sihler with the instruction were C.A.W. Roebbelen and Prof. A. Wolter. In the neighborhood of Sihler's parsonage a house with four rooms was rented in which the students lived. The instructions at first took place in the parsonage.¹⁰ The beginnings of the school were heralded with great enthusiasm. Loehe himself wrote in the Lutheraner: "The number of evangelists from Fort Wayne will in-

crease, and the greater it becomes, the more will the institution be recognized and supported. The school will enlarge the Church and the Church will foster its school."¹¹ In 1847 the first student, J. Seidel, was graduated. In the same year that J.A.F.W. Mueller was the first graduate from the log-cabin seminary of the Saxons in Perry County, Missouri.

Sihler played a leading role in the significant events of 1846 which furthered conservative Lutheranism in the Midwest. On April 24-27, 1847 the formation of the new Synod was completed first at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Chicago after the Fort Wayne meeting and the formulation of the Synodical Constitution there. This draft was published in full by Walther in the Lutheraner of September 5, 1846. Some individuals in the Fort Wayne area other than Sihler had hurdles to clear before they could be a part of the new Synod. Rev. F.W. Husmann, who was now pastor of the Bingen and Fuelling settlements in Adams County and of the congregation in Marion Township, Allen County (Soest) had been present at the Fort Wayne meeting in July. However he was still a member of the Pennsylvania Ministerium at the time. In his diary he relates that he resigned from the Ministerium, and on April 11, 1847, he asked his churches whether they were ready to join the new synod and accept the proposed constitution published in the Lutheraner. The Adams County congregation (St. John's) readily agreed, but the synodical matter had become a matter of controversy to the St. Paul's Church in Marion Township. Therefore the congregation declared it did not wish to join.¹²

Rev. Husmann's diary described the journey of the men of the Fort Wayne area to the Chicago meeting. Husmann, Sihler, Walther, Jaebker, Frincke, Ernst, G. Streckfuss, and Delegate Voss of St. Paul's Church, Fort Wayne, traveled together.

Ernst and Streckfuss rode in a buggy. Mr. Voss travelled in a wagon with a small load of books. The others were on horseback. Since detours were necessary because of the many swampy sections the trip to Chicago required five days. Night lodgings were found in the huts of hospitable settlers along the way. "The weather was favorable, and the journey was made in good spirits and in happy anticipation of momentous days in Chicago, then a city of about 16,000 inhabitants and without a railroad."¹³

Jubilate Sunday, the third Sunday after Easter, found all these men safely in Chicago in the modest frame church building situated on the corner of La-Salle and Ohio streets. After attending opening worship on Sunday morning in which the Rev. G.H. Loeber of the Saxon delegation preached, the Dr. William Sihler of Fort Wayne preached in the afternoon service. He stressed the example of the early Christian church which continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, in fellowship and in prayer.

The last of eighteen public sessions of the Synod held in this first convention took place on Thursday, May 6, at 9 p.m. Among the many transactions were these: Elections. Dr. Wm. Sihler was named Vice-President, and with G.H. Loeber, the committee on Examiners and Collocutors; the Rev. F.W. Husmann was elected secretary. Training Schools. Action was taken to have the Fort Wayne "Practical Seminary" deeded to Synod, along with the seminary of Perry County, Missouri. Missions. C. Frincke of Fort Wayne was appointed missionary-at-large to Wisconsin.

The furtherance of conservative Lutheranism in the Midwest and throughout America continued to thrive in Fort Wayne. From 1846 through 1850 some forty able and gifted men, many of them sent by Loehe, were trained at the Fort Wayne "practical seminary."

The seminary became the rallying cause for Sihler, the fifteen pastors, and two theological students who had abandoned the Joint Synod of Ohio in 1845¹⁴ and for the Lutherans of Fort Wayne as well. In 1848 the school was deeded by Loehe to the new German Lutheran synod founded the previous year in Chicago. The St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, then sought to raise the greater share of 4,000 dollars needed to purchase 15 acres for it, "which included a nice apple orchard and a brick house with four rooms."¹⁵ Young men who completed the training offered at the Fort Wayne school thereafter lacked no opportunity for service. "He was sent out by Sihler to hew his own timber, as it were, and gather together the Lutherans of an assigned community into congregations, with the specific instruction to make of the first congregational community a kind of metropolitan center from which missionary efforts were to be extended into all parts of the county. In this way the northwestern Ohio and the Indiana counties adjacent to Fort Wayne were made strongholds from which confessionalism Lutheranism radiated."¹⁶

Lutheran influence from the "Practical Seminary" in Fort Wayne was strongly felt. The emphasis placed by the founding fathers, Wyneken, Sihler, Husmann and others on Lutheran training through elementary parochial schools helped set the pattern for the area around Fort Wayne and for the Synod at large. Loehe in Germany, Wyneken and Sihler in America, were concerned about German schools in which sound Lutheranism could be taught. While ministers who were desperately needed were trained at the "Practical Seminary," there had been the hope that teachers might also be prepared. Between the years 1857 and 1864 Fort Wayne was the center of the new Lutheran parochial school teacher training institution.¹⁷ This emphasis on schools made its impact not just on Lu-

theranism, but on the Fort Wayne community as well. Dr. William Sihler's son, Ernest G., later a renowned scholar at Johns Hopkins and New York Universities, summarized the contribution of conservative German Lutherans to the Fort Wayne community as he quotes from Brice's History of Fort Wayne, published in 1868, as follows:

"Many of the German settlers have now been here between thirty and forty years, some of them poling their way at the period of their coming to this point, up the Maumee in pirogues (flatboats) to the then village of Fort Wayne--all quite poor in means, but able of hand and willing of heart, to work--to till the soil and build themselves homes. . . . Such are the Germans of Fort Wayne; and may their better means of frugality, perseverance, integrity, and general spirit of industry and philanthropic liberality ever serve as worthy examples of emulation and regards for the generations to come."¹⁸

CONCLUSION

Doubtless, great confusion existed in the Lutheran church in America at the beginning of the 19th century. Immigrants of German, Swedish, and other European backgrounds accustomed to a settled church life were confused when suddenly confronted with the new freedoms, the melting pot, and the ruggedness of colonial and frontier America. There was an absence of clear-cut conviction of the meaning of the Lutheran symbols and how they could be upheld in a more democratic form of church government which existed here.

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg in Pennsylvania brought some order to the confusion. Before his arrival in Philadelphia in 1742, as Mauelshagen writes, "the Lutherans of colonial America had given little thought to church symbols. Geographical isolation, a lack of well-trained pastors, German indifference toward religious endeavor in America, all opened the way for proselyters in Lutheran communities. Only the timely appearance of Muhlenberg in response to an urgent appeal to the Halle authorities of Germany saved Lutheranism in America."¹ Yet in spite of Muhlenberg's valiant efforts, he was not able to find the strong leadership required in the difficult days of the frontier.

There is no particular discredit to Muhlenberg and the Pennsylvania Ministerium because they could not anticipate the great problems of religious life and church organization in the frontier states of the Northwest Territory and beyond. The pioneers had much to do. While the Germans were always among the most energetic, still religious life was easily neglected and German settlements could become the prey of itinerant vagabonds like the troublesome imposter

Schlabach who caused Rev. Wyneken and Rev. Kohler much concern. Many of the pioneers came out of a confused Lutheran church scene in colonial America. They were joined by confused immigrants from Germany in which conditions were far from settled. That Lutherans, Reformed, Moravians and others of German background joined hands without too much regard for their distinctive doctrinal heritages is understandable.

Other forces on the frontier contributed to this strange unionism and syncretism. The Schwenkfelders, unable to live within the state church of Germany, came to Pennsylvania in 1734. There was the influence of pietism from Spener and Ludwig von Zinzendorf. There were the echoes of the enlightenment and rationalism movement in Germany which often assumed some distorted forms among the Germans in America.

The conservative reaction in the homeland had to find its place in America. Men like Dr. William Sihler, F.C.D. Wyneken, the Loehe missionaries, the Franconians who settled at Frandenmuth, Frankentrost, Frankenhilf, and Saginaw, Michigan, and the contingents of Saxons who came to Missouri and the Prussians who came to Buffalo were a strong connecting link in this conservative reaction among Lutherans. Wyneken and Sihler did much to arouse the conscience of German Lutherans, in America to go "back to Luther, back to his Reformation church and doctrine."² Those in Germany gave assistance to their dispersed and spiritually neglected brethren. Their ties with a champion of orthodoxy like Wilhelm Loehe, cooperated and added vitality. It is notable that they were chiefly from among the better educated. The greatest vitality, however, came from their own missionary zeal, their emphasis on education and in an informed congregation. No small factor therefore

was their writings--the letters, the pamphlets such as Wyneken's appeal for help, and the new German Lutheran journal, the Lutheraner, which brought them together.

Indiana, and especially the Fort Wayne area, became an early center of conservative Lutheran activity. It has remained so. While many cleavages from those early days have been repaired, some still remain. The multitudinous synods have joined hands so that there are predominantly three Lutheran bodies in America: the newly formed United Lutheran Church of America which has its heritage through the General Synod, the Pennsylvania Ministerium, and the synods of the eastern section; the American Lutheran Church, made up largely of the old Ohio, the Iowa, and the Buffalo Synods; and the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod still is usually thought of as the most conservative doctrinally of the three, but this has not retarded its progress. In the Fort Wayne area and throughout Indiana it has the largest numbers of communicants. In its rapid advance, the Fort Wayne area continues to provide leadership for the Lutheran Church and the Fort Wayne community. In celebrating its sesquicentennial in 1966, Indiana paid tribute to the Lutheran pioneers in the Fort Wayne area and those elsewhere who have contributed much to its rich religious heritage.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

1. A total of 12 congregations joined the Synod at its founding. For a listing of charter congregations and pastors, cf. Polack, "The Building of a Great Church," p. 73.
2. C.R. Defenderfer, in compiling a history of Lutheranism of the Indiana Synod, United Lutheran Church, for the 100th anniversary of that body in 1948 used the title, "Lutheranism at the Crossroads of America." He presents ample evidence why this title is not an exaggeration.
3. The figures are from the 1961 Statistical Yearbook, Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, p. 180.
4. Defenderfer, C.F. Lutheranism at the Crossroads of America, p. 15.
5. Ibid.
6. Barnhart, John, Valley of Democracy, p. 165.
7. Defenderfer gives this summary of the composition of the new Indiana population from 1816 to 1850. "42.3% were former residents of Ohio, 32.9% of the total was from southern states, 12.6% from Pennsylvania and New York, while New Englanders formed but a plus 2% of the total number. Immigrants from Europe, predominantly Germans, formed only 5.5% of the total increase from 1816 to 1850. Op. cit., p. 14.

Chapter I

1. Sauer, H.G., Geschichte der St. Paul's Gemeinde, p. 8.
2. Sauer, H.G., op. cit., p. 10.
3. Ibid., p. 12.

Chapter II

1. Hageman, G.E., Men and Missions (edited and translated by L. Fuerbringer), p. 9.
2. Rev. Schmidt recalled his first meeting with Wyneken when he learned of Wyneken's death in 1876. He wrote to a friend in Baltimore: "I remember as if it were but yesterday, the first time I saw Wyneken as he came as a missionary to the West. Mighty with deeds, spirited, and with implicit faith in God he put his hand to the plow, and the Lord blessed his labors. Rarely does one find a person as self-sacrificing as he was." Footnote in Krausz, op. cit., p. 738.
3. Hageman, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
4. There were German settlements around Van Wert, Ohio. Very likely Wyneken came to these settlements.
5. This is a rather free translation from Krausz' account in which he intersperses his own German with the exact words of Wyneken himself. Cf. Krausz, op. cit., p. 740.
6. Ibid., p. 741.
7. Hageman, op. cit., p. 31.
8. Ibid., p. 32.
9. Husmann took over a Lutheran charge in Marion Township, Allen County. Husmann also founded the congregations at Bingen and Fuelling in Adams Township in 1845. Cf. One Hundred Years, Centennial Brochure of St. John Lutheran Church (Bingen), Decatur, Indiana.
10. Krausz, op. cit., p. 750.

Chapter III

1. The late Prof. Theo. Graebner of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, writing of the Loehe Founda-

- tions in Ebenezer, a collection of essays commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Missouri Synod in 1922, wrote of Loehe: "At a time when the Lutheran Church of Bavaria had come under the influence of rationalistic teachers, Wilhelm Loehe stood forth as a leader among those who were still preaching the Gospel in an age of doubt and unbelief. Far beyond the confines of his town and country he became famous." W.H.T. Dau, editor, Ebenezer, p. 78.
2. Number Two of the 1841 Volume of the Sonntagsblatt contained Loehe's "Address to the Readers," a part of which is quoted in Ebenezer, p. 80.
 3. The title page of this famous pamphlet is reproduced in Hageman, Men and Missions, p. 38, in the American edition. The American edition was published in Pittsburgh in 1844 through the printing press which produced the Lutherische Kirchenzeitung.
 4. Mauelshagen, American Lutheranism surrenders to the forces of Conservatism, pp. 57-58.
 5. Mauelshagen quotes here from The Lutheran Observer XIII (November 13, 1840). Cf. Mauelshagen, op. cit., pp. 59-60.
 6. Rev. H.G. Sauer in the Geschichte der St. Paul's Gemeinde, gives a striking German description of the "new" Wyneken. Cf. pp. 27-28.
 7. A Brief History of Immanuel Lutheran Church at Avilla, Indiana, p. 1.

Chapter IV

1. Der Lutheraner, September 7, 1844. Bound copies of the Lutheraner in five year volumes are in the Concordia Historical Institute on the campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. A

- reproduction of the first page of the initial issue of Der Lutheraner is contained in Hageman, op. cit., p. 43.
2. Translated from the German of William Sihler, Lebenslauf von Wm. Sihler, II Band, pp. 39, 40, 41.
 3. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
 4. Space does not allow the fuller chronicling of Sihler's first year of ministry which he describes so well and also the estimate of his preaching in contrast to that of Wyneken as it is set forth by Rev. Sauer in his Geschichte der St. Paul's Gemeinde, pp. 31-34.
 5. Polack, W.G., The Building of a Great Church, p. 95. The collection of Walther's Briefs (letters) are found and indexed at the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri.
 6. A portion of this is translated in Ebenezer, p. 85. Sihler's autobiography, however, gives more, pp. 55-56.
 7. It was, however, not all business for these men as they made their return trip. Sihler tells how Rev. Ernst of Neuendettelsau, Union County, Ohio, had corresponded with him and described a fine girl, Suzanne Kern, for him. On the return trip he remained for several weeks in Ohio becoming better acquainted with her, though he had known her previously. Their marriage took place on June 8, 1846, and they arrived together in Fort Wayne on June 12. Sihler was 44; Suzanne was 17 when they were married.
 8. Craemer and Hattstaedt were Loehe missionaries who had come to Michigan in 1845.
 9. The complete list of signers of the preliminary Fort Wayne draft is found in Ebenezer, p. 98.
 10. Cf. Sauer, op. cit., p. 73-74.
 11. Polack, op. cit., p. 57.

12. The Marion Township, Allen County, congregation later also joined the Synod. Extracts from Husmann's diary are contained in Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, Vol. 1, p. 14, and also in One Hundred Years, (1845-1945), the 100th anniversary brochure of St. John Lutheran Church (Bingen), Decatur, Ind.
13. Quoted from the diary in Polack, op. cit., p. 70.
14. Mauelshagen, op. cit., p. 80.
15. Sauer, op. cit., p. 36.
16. Der Lutheraner, III (October 31, 1846). Quoted also by Mauelshagen, op. cit., p. 81.
17. An abortive attempt to found a Lutheran teacher training school in Milwaukee in 1855 through a private venture was made. This, however, failed and Prof. Fleischmann and four seminarians moved to Fort Wayne. In 1864 the teachers' seminary moved into its own quarters, in Addison, Illinois. Cf. the essay, The Development of Higher Education in the Missouri Synod, by Dr. P.E. Kretzmann, in Ebenezer, p. 241.
18. Sihler, Ernest G., From Maumee to Thames and Tiber, p. 15.

Conclusion

1. Mauelshagen, op. cit., p. 38.
2. Der Lutheraner, Volume V (September 12, 1848) number 1, (in the Concordia Historical Institute Archives)
3. The Synod now has 34 Districts in North and South America with 4,576 pastors serving 6,234 congregations and 446 preaching stations.

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