

**THE LIFE OF (JOHN) CONRAD
WEISER, THE
GERMAN PIONEER, PATRIOT,
AND PATRON OF TWO RACES**

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The life of (John) Conrad Weiser, the German pioneer, patriot, and patron of two races by C. Z. Weiser

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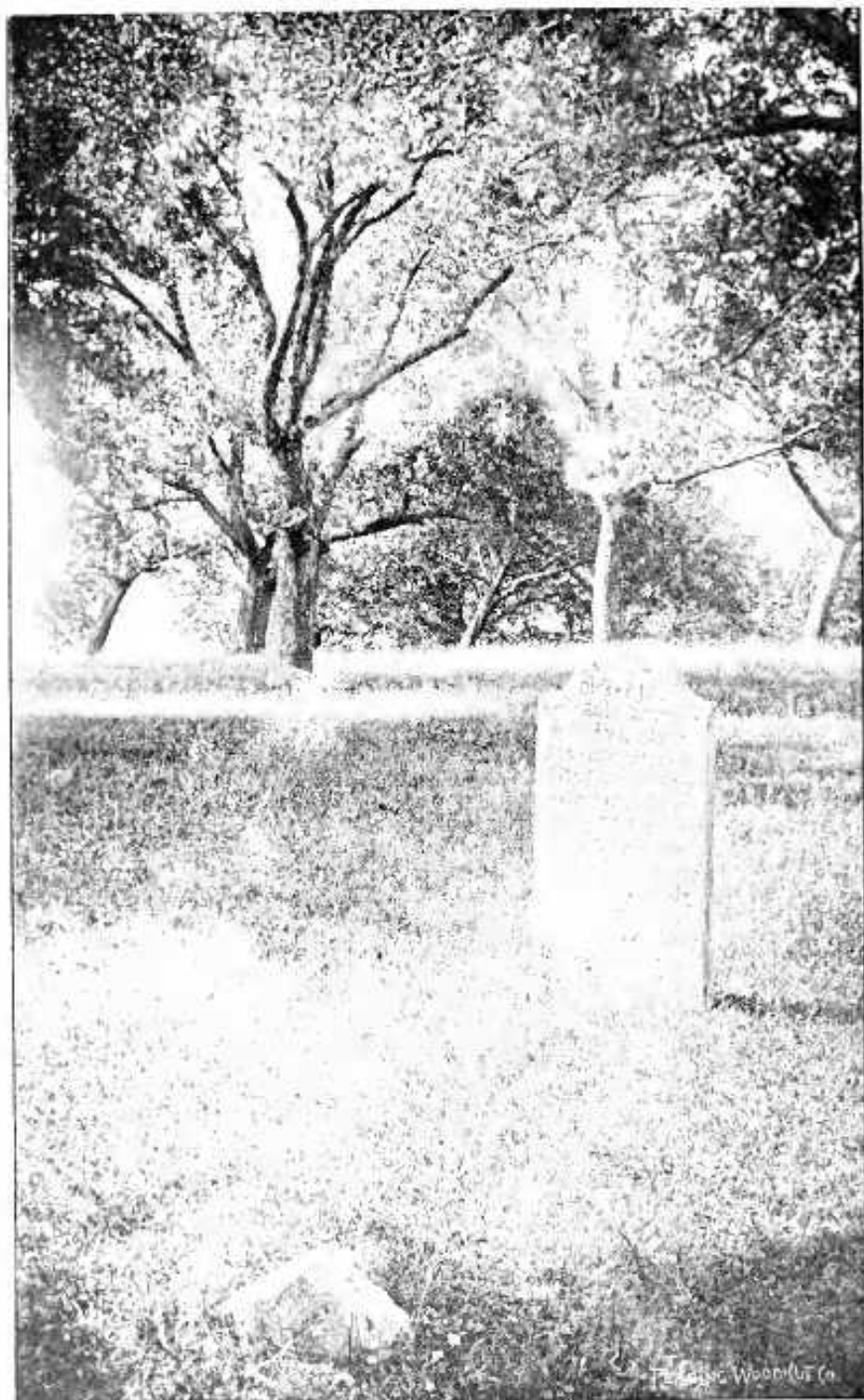
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C. Z. WEISER

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CONRAD WEISER'S GRAVE,
NEAR WOEELSDORF, PA.

THE LIFE
OF
(John) Conrad Weiser,
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GERMAN PIONEER, PATRIOT,
AND
PATRON OF TWO RACES.

BY
REV. C. Z. WEISER, D. D.

SECOND EDITION.

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1819

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P R E F A C E.

There is no apology needed for writing the life of Conrad Weiser, if the opinions and wishes of knowing men carry with themselves any meaning or force. On the 13th day of November, 1793, General George Washington, accompanied by General Joseph Hiester and other distinguished men, stood at the grave of Conrad Weiser, and said: "This departed man rendered many services to his country, in a difficult period, and posterity will not forget him." Richard Peters, Secretary of the Province of Pennsylvania, wrote already in 1761: "Since 1744 he has acted a prominent part between the Indians and the Government, by whom his loss will be severely felt. A faithful sketch of him by some of his descendants would be exceedingly interesting." Samuel Hazard, compiler and editor of "Pennsylvania Archives" and "Colonial Records," is careful to preserve the above remarks in his valuable collections. Thomas H. Burrows says: "On many occasions he was of the greatest service to the Province by his influence with the Indians." Franz Loeher, author of "The History and Fortunes of the Germans in America," speaks of his significance in these words: "One man, whose name figures so largely in the original records and events of his day, deserves special mention." Prof. I. Daniel Rupp, the antiquarian and dweller among the *Manns*, has frequently revived his name in his numerous writings. Geo. F. Baer, Esq., of the Reading Bar, remarks in his address, delivered at the dedication of the new wing of Palatinate College, Myerstown, Pa., December 23, 1875, on the Pennsylvania Germans: "Then, too, the

name and fame of Conrad Weiser, the great Indian Interpreter and peace-maker, will be rescued from comparative obscurity, and he will be given the high rank and place in history which he so faithfully earned and so richly merits."

No student of our Colonial era need be told of the prominence of the man and his works. The wonder is, not that the links which compose his long and eventful history, should now be united in a chain; but that this service had not been done for him long ago.

The "Life of Conrad Weiser" is not a manufactured one. It is not invented, imagined or made up. It is no "baseless fabric of any airy vision"—no Hiawathian structure of poetical art—no arraying of an Enoch-Arden skeleton in fictitious flesh and blood; but the simple record of his life, as we find it enshrined in the facts, events and deeds of a long, steady, unostentatious and efficient course. It is but a reprint of an Autobiographical Journal, of parts of the Pennsylvania Archives, Colonial Records, the *Hallische Nachrichten*, the numerous Monographs of L. D. Rupp, and a gathering up of the floating traditions among his descendants, both in Pennsylvania and Wurtemberg. It is a presentation of the man, so far as this may be done, from his remains. The *manner* of its execution we must leave to the judgment of others. Were it but half as ably done as it was willingly done, then the work would verily be equal to the occasion. As it is, we can only pray the reviewer's kindness to take the hearty will for the imperfect deed. To the disappointed "descendant" of Conrad Weiser we feel like saying, "Go thou and do—better!"

C. Z. WEISER.

New Goshenboppen, Pennsburg, Pa.,
Centennial Year, May.

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND EDITION.

No man has done more, and few as much, for the early settlers of the Colony of Pennsylvania than Conrad Weiser. Had he lived in New England, he would have been remembered long ago in marble, story and song; but, because he lived in Pennsylvania, he is forgotten even by his own people. The very grave in which he is buried is known to very few, and not decently kept. He and his wife lie buried in an old orchard on the farm once owned by him, near Womelsdorf, Berks county.

I started a movement in 1893 to begin to raise funds for the erection of a monument to his memory, as well as to protect the grave. This spot should be the shrine for every Pennsylvania German.

We devoted a period during the Berks County Teachers' Institute of that year to devise means and plans to launch the movement. It was resolved and agreed that the second day of November should be kept as "Conrad Weiser Day." Special exercises were held in every school in the county, suitable programs arranged and a contribution taken.

By these means we collected \$264, which sum is now deposited with the Pennsylvania Trust Company of Reading. It is hoped that ere long sufficient money will be raised to carry out this movement.

In our visitation of schools throughout the county frequent inquiries were made as to where books could be had containing information relative to the life and works of Conrad Weiser. To meet this want, the publisher of this book reluc-

tantly consented to issue another edition of the "Life of Conrad Weiser," and include in the same the most beautiful, yet pathetic Indian story ever written—the story of Regina Hartman, the German captive.

It is hoped that this book will find its way into many homes in Pennsylvania, and there arouse sufficient local pride, and love and respect for ancestry to complete the movement.

W. M. ZECHMAN.

READING, Pa., September, 1899.