

**HISTORY OF THE DESCENDANTS OF  
CHRISTIAN WENGER WHO EMIGRATED  
FROM EUROPE TO LANCASTER COUNTY,  
PA., IN 1727, AND A COMPLETE  
GENEALOGICAL FAMILY REGISTER**

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History of the Descendants of Christian Wenger Who Emigrated from Europe to Lancaster County, Pa., in 1727, and a Complete Genealogical Family Register by Jonas G. Wenger & Martin D. Wenger & Joseph H. Wenger

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**JONAS G. WENGER & MARTIN D. WENGER & JOSEPH H. WENGER**

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No. 260. Martin D. Wenger.

HISTORY OF THE DESCENDANTS  
OF  
Christian Wenger

WHO EMIGRATED FROM EUROPE TO  
LANCASTER COUNTY, PA., IN 1727

AND A COMPLETE  
GENEALOGICAL FAMILY REGISTER

WITH BIOGRAPHIES OF HIS DESCENDANTS FROM  
THE EARLIEST AVAILABLE RECORDS  
TO THE PRESENT TIME

WITH A FEW ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

JONAS G. WENGER, of Rittman, Ohio  
MARTIN D. WENGER, of Elkhart, Ind. (now deceased)  
JOSEPH H. WENGER, of South English, Iowa

(FIRST READ EXPLANATIONS, PAGE 14.)

1903  
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## NOTICE

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The publication of this History was unavoidably delayed on account of the neglect of some of the families to send their records promptly. Then also the Publishing House required more time to complete their work than was expected. However, the subscribers are to be commended for their patience.

On account of the size of this work as compared with the cost, it was thought necessary to abbreviate and produce less pages, although the same information is given.

It is hereby announced that the Wenger History is on sale, until the number is exhausted.

State which binding you want and send your orders direct to the Menmonite Publishing Co., at Elkhart, Ind.

Leather binding, \$1.25.

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## DEDICATION

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1st. This book is dedicated to the memory of our ancestors who braved the dangers of life incident to the early settlements in the wilds of America, and bequeathed to us the blessing of religious liberty and by their consistent lives set us noble examples.

2d. To our parents, for their timely advice and for implanting the seeds of religious thought in our young minds. May we reverence them as a priceless boon from the hand of the Lord.

3d. To our children, in whom we hope to see the perpetuation of these blessings and privileges. May they cherish their inestimable privileges, and may they hold fast to the piety to which the lives of their ancestors direct them.

4th. May our posterity imitate the priceless principles of their ancestors, and may they be found among the good, the true, and the holy, like those who have preceded them, and may none dare to bring reproach upon the honored name of these dear old ancestors.

JOSEPH H. WENGER,

South English, Iowa.

March 10, 1903.



## INTRODUCTION

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Christian Wenger, the progenitor of the Wenger family of our lineage in America, emigrated from Europe to this country in 1727. According to official records, different Wengers came across the ocean to America on different occasions, but that the above mentioned Christian Wenger is the progenitor of our lineage is proved beyond a doubt by the family records copied from his Bible and handed down from one generation to another. This record corresponds with the official records of immigrants arriving at Philadelphia, Pa., during the years from 1700 to 1800.

The traditions of our grandfathers tell us that when the above Christian Wenger from Europe arrived at Philadelphia, then a young man, he made his way up through the country to Lancaster Co., Pa., into the neighborhood of Strasburg, where the Herrs and Brennemans and others settled. Here, it seems, he hired out to a man by the name of Hans (John) Groff. Said Hans Groff's horses strayed away on a certain occasion, and were found at what is now known as Groff's Valley, at the large spring. It seems that Groff became attached to this place and purchased a large tract of land, setting the four corner stones, marking the outlines of the tract he desired. But on surveying he found that he had more land than money, and also found himself involved in debt which he was not able to meet. Therefore, young Wenger, who had some money to invest, in order to help Groff out of his dilemma purchased 300 acres of it along the west side, paying forty dollars for it, in the vicinity now known as Groffenthal, in Earl township, Lancaster Co., Pa., in the church at which place even at present (1900) the aged Joseph Wenger, a descendant of

the fifth generation of the same Wenger family, is the presiding minister. Here then we have the site of the old homestead where our progenitor, Christian Wenger, took upon himself the hardships of a pioneer life, and began to carve out of the dense forest a home for himself and family, contenting himself with but few requisites.

Having no stoves, they built a fireplace in one end of the house, upon which an open fire was kept to protect them from the cold of the winter season. The cooking was done by means of kettles hung over the fire, and the baking was done in ovens that were built outside of the house, and which were simply places arched over with stone and clay.

Our grandfathers tell us that as the land was cleared off, the soil was broken up by means of the hoe and the spade, and after sowing the seeds, a heavy brush was drawn over it by hand. We may feel inclined to think that this was a rude way of starting out in life, but by hard labor and strict economy they prospered, and, I believe, enjoyed life in their humble new home at that time as well as if not better than we do in our modern and more commodious homes.

MARTIN D. WENGER,  
Elkhart, Ind.



## ADDITIONAL INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

By Joseph H. Wenger.

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Christian Wenger, our first American parent, came from the Palatinate, Germany, to America, landing at Philadelphia Sept. 30, 1727, and settled in Lancaster Co., Pa.

In the course of years, some of his children emigrated to Canada, Joseph and Henry to Rockingham Co., Va., but the majority remained in Pennsylvania, and later they scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Thus, our progenitor bade farewell to his country, his home, and his relatives in the Old World to exchange them for the realities of the New World, and to secure peace and religious liberty in the forests of America, to battle with things of which he knew nothing until he approached them.

It is very evident, however, that he and his children and grandchildren had to brave the inconveniences of pioneer life in these years, minus the improvements and advantages which came to their posterity in later years. For instance, the plow with wooden mold-boards, the harness made of hickory withes, the wagon wheels made of cut blocks and without tires, the hoe, and the reap-hook—these few things constituted the farming outfit. The log cabin, perhaps constructed without a single nail, and, if it had any windows, perhaps greased paper or skins did service instead of glass. No cook-stoves, no sewing machines, no pianos, no fine clothing, nor ruffles, etc. These people had no opportunity to get such luxuries, neither did they want them.

The men were engaged in clearing the forest and tilling their few small fields, while the women found employment not only in their household duties, but in operating