

**HISTORY OF THE EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CONGREGATION IN  
GERMANTOWN, OHIO, AND  
BIOGRAPHIES OF ITS PASTORS  
AND FOUNDERS**

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History of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Germantown, Ohio, and Biographies of Its Pastors and Founders by J. P. Hentz

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BY THE REV. J. P. <sup>of</sup>HENTZ, A. M.

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## PREFACE.

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This little volume has been prepared for the special use and benefit of the members of the congregation whose history it records. To preserve and perpetuate among them and their descendants and successors the knowledge of the first planting and early history of their congregation, has been the main aim and end of the writer.

But he has also had another object in view. He has long cherished the hope that the time might speedily come when some one, competent for the task, would undertake the work of writing the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in this western world. Fully aware that this can not be done unless the material for the history be first collected, and be furnished ready to the hand of the historian, he has written this account as a small contribution toward a general history.

The Lutheran Church in the United States has attained to dimensions, is exerting an influence, and gives promise of a future, that seem to the writer to demand that her history be speedily written, both for the information of her own children, and the Christian public at large. In point of numbers she holds the fourth place, probably the third, among the Protestant churches of our land, embracing

within her fold nearly one million of communicants. Her growth is more rapid than that of any other denomination. Her accessions, which she receives mainly by immigration from European countries, are truly colossal and are without a precedent or parallel in the history of any other church. It is estimated that in the year 1881, two hundred thousand souls, holding her faith, landed on the shores of our country; and the year 1882, it is supposed, will bring over of the same people three hundred thousand more. From these figures it is easy to foresee that, ere many more years shall have passed by, the Lutheran Church will be the largest Protestant body in this country, as she now is in the world; and that as such she is destined to become an important factor in the ecclesiastical and civil affairs of our country and nation.

In view of these facts it is unquestionably a matter of the utmost importance, and of most urgent necessity, that steps be taken, and means and measures be devised, for the recording and preserving of her past and present history. The work of gathering the material for it ought to be entered on at once. Facts and data can be obtained yet, which will not much longer be available. They are stored away in the memory of the aged people of the church, in congregational records, and in other equally perishable receptacles. With the decease of the former and the decay and the destruction of the latter, these sources of information will be closed up, and much that may be of great value will be lost beyond

recovery. A great deal, indeed, of most precious material has already perished in consequence of not earlier steps having been taken for its preservation.

If every Lutheran pastor in the land were to take this matter in hand, collect all material to be found in his charge, and write out the history of his parish—which he would find to be neither a painful nor a very laborious task—and furnish the same to some person or party, previously appointed as custodian, within a few years at the longest all needed material would be gathered in, and a history could be written full, complete, and satisfactory, such as would prove an honor and a blessing, not only to Lutherans but to all Christian people in our land. Synods should take steps looking toward the accomplishment of this end.

In the preparation of this account the writer has labored under some disadvantages. But few written or printed documents have been at his disposal for information. For the most of his material he has had to depend on the recollections of the aged members of his congregation as they were drawn out piecemeal in mutual conversation around their family firesides. This is a method slow in progress, and often unsatisfactory in result. On his own memory the writer could not draw for much, his pastorate among these people extending over too short a space of time, the period of nine years. With his predecessors in office, whose biographies he has attempted to give, he had no personal acquaintance. Much of the



material embodied in this account he has had to glean from the inscriptions on tombstones, from old and faded baptismal certificates, from obituary notices culled from newspapers, from records of family Bibles, and the like sources—here a little, and there a little, an item one day and another the next. That under such circumstances the work produced be but fragmentary and imperfect, is to be expected.

Accompanied by the earnest hope that it may accomplish the object in view for which its preparation was undertaken, this little volume is hereby given to the public by its writer.

J. P. H.

Germantown, Ohio, August, 1882.

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OF THE  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION  
OF  
Germantown, Ohio.

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*Germantown*

Is a pleasant and attractive village, beautifully situated on Twin Creek, a branch of the Miami River, in the south-western part of Montgomery County, Ohio, and has a population of about eighteen hundred. The first settlement in its vicinity was effected about the year 1798, by a people who came here from the State of Kentucky. But they were squatters, and did but little toward the improvement of the country. In the year 1804 arrived here the first immigrants from Pennsylvania—about a dozen families—all from the counties of Berks and Center. These bought out the Kentuckians, and in a few years' time the Pennsylvanians alone were left as the owners and occupants of the soil. After this emigration set in at such a rapid rate that by the year 1810 the country was already thickly settled, and