

WELS Historical Institute

Journal

Volume 34, Number 1

Spring 2016



WELS Historical Institute Journal

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Cover picture
Rev. Arthur and Gloria Guenther

Christmas at the Mission

Gloria Guenther: Pastor's Wife, Mother, Teacher¹

by Jo Baeza

FORT APACHE RESERVATION — When Gloria O'Brien was a girl she never dreamed she would marry a missionary and go out West to live on an Indian reservation in a place she'd never heard of.

In the years that followed, she endured hardships and adjustments but found love and joy among people of a vastly different culture. At the side of her husband, Rev. Arthur Alchesay Guenther, she did whatever needed to be done to spread the Gospel and minister to the needs of the White Mountain Apache people.

Gloria was born Dec. 30, 1927, "third from the end" in a family of nine children.

"Mother had 12, but only 9 lived," she said. "We grew up in the small coal mining town of Thayer, Ill. By the time I came along, the mines had closed and my father went to work in a factory in Springfield. Those years were very slim."

Like many families in the Depression years, they had a large vegetable garden. "There was a vacant lot next to us that my dad planted in potatoes. We ate a lot of potatoes," she said. "As my brothers got older, they would hunt in the forest. My mother cooked a lot of small game. I don't think there's any way I haven't eaten wild rabbit."

There was no money for Christmas gifts for the children, but they all got toys, thanks to her two older sisters.

"My sisters both worked in the city as nannies for wealthy people who owned department stores. They were given beautiful toys that their children no longer played with," she said.

Her favorite gift was a little suitcase that contained a beautiful doll and a wardrobe to go with it. She didn't spend much time playing with dolls, though. "We played outside most of the time, except in winter," she said.

When Gloria graduated from high school, she worked as a secretary for purchasing agents with Allis-Chalmers Co. and took business classes in night school. In January 1947 she and a friend went to a chili supper at their church and she met a handsome young Lutheran seminarian named Arthur Guenther who was studying at Concordia College in Springfield. He asked her for a date and she accepted.

"We were married Oct. 19, 1947, in a beautiful little Lutheran church in Athens, Illinois. Arthur was preaching in that church as a visiting preacher."

When he was called to Arizona by his church, Gloria's friends and family were concerned about her going so far away, living in a wild, remote part of the country they had only read about in western novels.

"I never gave a thought about it. I was just married!"

The young couple traveled to Whiteriver to see Arthur's father, who had been ill. Rev. Edgar Guenther and his wife, Minnie, were prominent Arizona pioneers. He

had started holding services in East Fork and Whiteriver in the early 1900s, and in 1922 established the Open Bible Church, a Lutheran Apache Mission, in Whiteriver with the help of his friend, Chief Alchesay.

Arthur's mother, Minnie, raised nine children of her own and helped raise many Apache children. They also started an orphanage and school in East Fork, with Rev. Guenther making the desks and chairs himself.

Minnie played the organ, taught Sunday School and raised her children. Minnie Guenther was honored as an American Mother of the Year and is in the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame.

It was quite a legacy for two young people, but they were up to it.

Arthur's first call as pastor was to the mining towns of Safford and Morenci, where they lived for two years. In 1950 he was called to the Lutheran Apache Mission in Whiteriver. He was going home at last.

Raised with Apache children, Arthur spoke Apache and loved the Apache people. He had been gone for years, attending Dr. Martin Luther College in Minnesota, and then to seminary. The church had grown since he was at home, with a large Sunday School but no teachers. Arthur taught senior Sunday School. In true Apache fashion, he took the senior boys to the woods in the fall on Sunday afternoons to cut wood for tribal elders. Gloria taught the younger children. It was the beginning of a long career in preschool teaching.

Christmas was coming and there was no money for gifts or candy for the Sunday School children, a tradition Rev. Edgar Guenther and Minnie had started. Somehow it had to happen. The Guenthers were determined that their first Christmas at the mission would be one the children would remember.

First, they had to find a 22-foot high Christmas tree. Church members cut and brought in a perfect tree and put it up near the altar.

"We decorated it with blue and silver glass balls and blue lights. It was a gorgeous tree," Gloria recalled.

In 1950 most Apache people still lived in wickiups without running water or electricity. Just to see the electric lights on the tree was a treat. No one exchanged gifts back then because no one had money to spend.

"There was no stigma attached to being poor. Everyone was poor. There was so little work on the reservation until the sawmill got started," she said.

Then the Christmas gifts began to pour in. "People from all over the U.S. donated toys, coloring books and crayons for kids. We tried to involve everyone in the Christmas celebration. The older kids wrapped every gift and tagged each one with the name of a child."

They decided a Christmas pageant was in order, so parents helped out with the production. She remembers, "Adeline Webster made 40 angel's gowns from old sheets she gathered from all over the reservation. We had some old bathrobes for the shepherds. Someone donated satin robes for the Kings. Artist Max Hillyard, Arthur's brother-in-law, made beautiful crowns. They were the best-dressed majis anywhere."

Before long the community was infused with the Christmas spirit. Gloria said,



Apache child at Christmas

“Men of the congregation helped Arthur put up a Nativity scene in front of the church and lighted it at night. There was a steady stream of people walking by with their families just to look at it. It was never vandalized in all the years we lived in Whiteriver.”

Gloria added, “So many kids showed up, more than 200, and their families came, too. We had kids stashed everywhere. They all sang Christmas songs. On Christmas Eve every child had one gift and candy. Many years later people who were children in 1950 remember that Christmas. People still remember the songs they sang.”

The years flew swiftly by and conditions on the reservation improved. The government began building housing projects, and there was work in the woods, the sawmills and on ranches for the men.

Gloria found her place, or it found her. She taught Sunday School for 50 years, and when the Head Start Program started up, she became a preschool teacher. She was also there to help with the Lutheran ladies group.

Strangely, the Christmas everyone who lived at the time remembers came about in the midst of utter poverty. The miracle of Christmas happened when the community came together, and people across America sent gifts and good will.

“As Americans, we have to realize that we don’t have to have so much. We think that we have to have so much, and we have to have it now. We need to think of what we can do for someone else. I didn’t have physical riches, but my life has been so blessed and enriched by everything that’s happened to me.”

When the Guenthers “retired” they moved to Pinetop. Rev. Arthur A. Guenther devoted his life to others until the end, including working as a volunteer fireman in Whiteriver and Pinetop. He died April 30, 2012.

Gloria continues to work in her church and volunteers at Summit Healthcare and Larson Memorial Library. Arthur and Gloria were married 65 years and had two children, Mark and Cynde.

Endnote

1. This article originally appeared in the *White Mountain Independent* and is reprinted with permission.

The Lutheran Who Reached for the Stars: The Life, Legacy, and Lapses of Wernher Von Braun At the Centennial of His Birth 1912–2012¹

by Joel L. Pless, Ph.D.

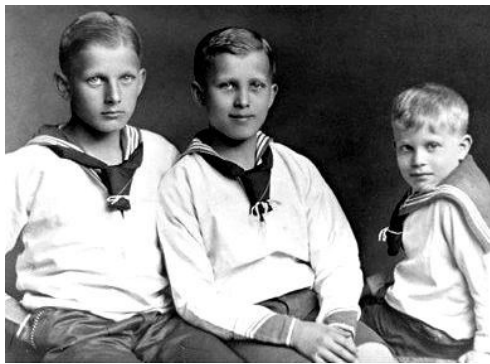
It was Sunday night, July 20, 1969. In Rochester, Michigan, a northern suburb of Detroit, a nine-year-old boy that evening went to the local movie theater with his family to watch a Walt Disney film. After a stop at an ice cream shop, the family headed home to gather around their black and white Zenith television in their family room. The entire nation was abuzz that night. Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin (Buzz) Aldrin had safely landed their spacecraft, the Lunar Module “Eagle,” on the surface of the moon. Very late that night, this nine-year-old, his family and an estimated 600 million other people around the world watched as Armstrong and Aldrin stepped upon the surface of the moon. Arguably not since October 12, 1492, was there ever a more historic day in terms of human exploration.

I was that nine-year-old boy. The race to the moon between the Soviet Union and America’s NASA space program fascinated me. As I grew older and became more interested in history, I learned that there was one individual—more than any other—who had promoted the idea of human spaceflight and mankind traveling to the moon and other planets. That man was Dr. Wernher von Braun. I would like to share with you the life story of Dr. Braun, who was baptized, confirmed, and married Lutheran, and present a brief summary of his legacy in aerospace engineering and space exploration, as well as some of the lapses of his life of sixty-five years. His biography describes an achieving and eventful life in both Germany and the United States, a life full of monumental contributions to the fields of rocket science and space-flight as well as a Christian confession in the face of death.

Early Life and Education

Wernher von Braun was the middle child of Baron Magnus von Braun and his wife, Baroness Emily von Quistorp von Braun. He was born on March 23, 1912, in Wirsitz, Posen, part of Prussian Germany. His father was at the time a provincial councilor.² Wernher had an older brother Sigmund (b. 1911) and a younger brother Magnus (b. 1919).

For his Lutheran confirmation, instead of the customary gold watch, his mother—an educated and cultured woman who spoke six languages—gave Wernher a telescope.³ The future scientist designated this happy event as starting a lifelong interest in astronomy and soon generating dreams of space travel.⁴ Coming from an aristocratic (Junker) Prussian family, young von Braun received a first-rate education. Entering school in the final years of World War I, Wernher and his family



Wernher von Braun with his two brothers, Sigismund (left) and Magnus (right). Sigismund became a diplomat and Magnus became a rocket scientist and later an automotive executive. Photo courtesy of NASA.

were eventually forced to leave the Posen region of Prussia when it was ceded to Poland as part of the Versailles Treaty. The family moved to Berlin in 1920, where Baron von Braun took a position in the Weimar Republic, ultimately becoming Minister of Agriculture.

Young von Braun demonstrated from early on an impressive talent in music, becoming an accomplished musician on both the piano and the cello. At the age of thirteen, he was enrolled in the French Gymnasium in Berlin. Due to surprisingly low grades in mathematics and physics his father transferred him to the boarding school of Ettersburg Castle near

Weimar.⁵ It was at Ettersburg Castle that young Wernher began to show signs of a budding genius. Here he also acquired a copy of Hermann Oberth's *The Rocket into Interplanetary Space (Die Rakete zu den Planetenräumen)* which further sparked his interest in space travel and spurred him to improve his performance in math and physics.⁶

After three years at Ettersburg Castle, young Wernher became one of the first students to attend a boarding school on Spiekeroog, an island off of Germany's North Sea coast. Enrolling in 1928, von Braun enjoyed the school and the area, and continued his interest in observing the heavens. He became such a prodigy in mathematics, that—while still in high school—he filled in for a teacher who had taken ill and was an instant success in the classroom. It was also at Spiekeroog that the young prodigy joined the Society for Rocket Travel (*Verein für Raumschiffahrt*) which had been founded in Breslau in 1927.⁷

Professional Training and University Years

It was through his association with the rocket club that young Wernher decided to pursue a career in engineering. His studies continued in mechanical engineering in Berlin at the Charlottenburg Institute of Technology, during which time he served an apprenticeship at a large machine factory. While in Berlin, he met rocket pioneer Hermann Oberth and worked for him briefly as a pitchman in front of a display on interplanetary space travel at a Berlin department store.⁸ He also became involved with a group of rocket enthusiasts who were using an abandoned ammunition dump on the outskirts of Berlin to test fire small rockets. Von Braun then spent a year studying abroad at the Swiss Institute of Technology in Zurich.

Since this paper seeks to describe the spirituality of von Braun, it is interesting to mention the observation of one of his friends during this year in Switzerland. While his parents were devout, practicing Lutherans—according to one of von Braun’s American friends at the time—young Wernher was a scientific skeptic, “bordering on being an atheist.”⁹ The deep Christian spirituality that he eventually became known for was years in the future, although throughout his formative and young adult years spent in Germany, von Braun always remained at least a nominal Lutheran.

After spending a year studying in Switzerland and traveling around southern Europe, young Wernher returned to Berlin and resumed his engineering studies while still pursuing rocket research and testing at what he and the other rocketeers pretentiously called the Rocket Flight Field—Berlin (*Raketenflugplatz Berlin*).¹⁰ Events would soon permanently give his life a new direction.

Army Employment at Kummersdorf and a Doctorate

The year 1932 proved to be the watershed year of Wernher von Braun’s life. At one of the rocket launches, when Wernher was only twenty years old, a small group of German army officers were in attendance. They tentatively expressed interest in the work of the Berlin-based rocket club. One of the officers, Walter Dornberger, who had served in an artillery unit in World War I, eventually offered von Braun an army contract to research and build rockets, with the stipulation that his work would have to be done secretly and within the secure confines of a military base. Dornberger—who essentially would be von Braun’s boss for the next thirteen years—was impressed with the young man’s enthusiasm, charisma, and theoretical knowledge. The work at the “Rocket Flight Field” soon came to an end as many of the German rocketeers received military funding for rocket research and development performed at the Kummersdorf Proving Ground, a weapons test facility and artillery range, seventeen miles south of Berlin.¹¹

The energetic von Braun, who was still in his early twenties, became the technical director of the German army’s (*Reichswehr*) research and development of rockets. The army soon encouraged him to transfer from the Institute of Technology to the prestigious Frederick William University (now Humboldt University of Berlin). His rocket research served as the basis for his dissertation “Design, Theoretical and Experimental Contributions to the Problem of the Liquid-Fuel Rocket.”¹² Young Wernher thus at the age of twenty-two earned a doctorate in physics and was known the rest of his life as Dr. Wernher von Braun.

Developing the V-2 Ballistic Missile at Peenemünde

The energetic and indefatigable von Braun and his team continued their rocket research for the army. Contract work with the German air force (*die Luftwaffe*) also followed. Since the Kummersdorf site was becoming too small for their research, von Braun was entrusted with selecting a new site which would serve as a joint air

force and army research center for rockets. Acting upon the advice of his mother, Wernher chose the area around the village of Peenemünde, where his maternal grandfather used to hunt ducks. This idyllic site was located on the far northern tip of the island of Usedom on Germany's Baltic coast. An undeveloped, wooded area consisting largely of pine trees and sand dunes, Peenemünde was a site which provided military security and enabled rocket launches to be performed over the relative safety of the Baltic Sea.



*Dr. Wernher von Braun and German army officers
at Pennemünde, March 1941*

While von Braun served as the site's technical director, the Peenemünde complex became one of the premier research and development facilities in the world. Millions of German marks were eventually spent on this massive scientific center, which would eventually employ upwards of 6000 people.¹³ Peenemünde came to have its own test stands, a wind tunnel, research laboratories, and a housing complex for the scientists and their families. While von Braun and many of the key people who worked for him eagerly yearned for the idea of spaceflight and interplanetary travel, the army and the new German government, the Nazi Third Reich, were only interested in the potential of the rocket being a long-range artillery weapon, essentially the world's first ballistic missile.

Von Braun and his rocket team moved to Peenemünde in 1937 and for the next eight years they researched and developed what would become the infamous V-2 missile of World War II. October 3, 1942 is the day that historians point to as the origin of spaceflight, following a successful launch of the rocket then known as the A-4. Due to the destructive Allied bombing raids against German cities, Hitler and the Nazi SS wanted von Braun's missile to be used as a retaliation weapon against London and other British cities. The A-4 became the V-2, the first ballistic missile used in warfare, a Nazi vengeance weapon.

Just as the V-2 was about to be mass produced at Peenemünde, the rocket center was struck by a massive bombing raid by the Royal Air Force's Bomber Command in August 1943. Nearly 800 people were killed, many of them workers at a nearby concentration camp. Von Braun and virtually his entire rocket team escaped with their lives and the complex remained partially functional. Mass production of the V-2 missile was then moved to a subterranean production facility in the Harz Mountains in central Germany, using concentration camp labor from Buchenwald and its sub-camps. Thousands of inmates worked in appalling conditions to manufacture the V-2 rocket, which would soon be used against targets in England and on the Continent. By one estimate, 20,000 concentration camp inmates died as a result of the inhumane conditions and treatment in manufacturing the V-2, four times the number of people killed by them.¹⁴

After numerous delays, the first V-2s were fired against Allied targets on September 6, 1945. Before Allied armies were able to overrun all of the launch sites, the missiles that Wernher von Braun led in developing had killed over 5000 people in Europe. Most of these deaths were civilians, with over 2700 killed in England alone.¹⁵ While the V-2 proved to be an effective terror weapon, militarily it was a failure, diverting enormous resources from more conventional weapons such as planes and tanks.



Dr. Wernher von Braun and several of his colleagues after their surrender to U.S. Army soldiers, May 3, 1945

Early in 1945, as Soviet armies approached Berlin and Peenemünde, Wernher von Braun and his team members met secretly in a farmhouse and came up with a plan to continue their research and to make their dreams of manned spaceflight to other worlds a reality. Since the Nazi SS had ordered the evacuation of the rocket facility to middle and then southern Germany, von Braun and his inner circle decided that their best hopes depended upon surrendering to the approaching Americans. After a harrowing journey from Peenemünde to the German-Austrian border in the final months of World War II, von Braun and his key people surrendered to the American army on May 3, 1945. The German rocket experts were soon thoroughly interrogated by an American scientific team. It was eventually arranged that von Braun and over one hundred of his team

members would be taken to the United States to conduct their rocket and missile research as part of *Operation Paperclip*. Some in the U.S. military expressed the belief—before the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—that the German scientists and their V-2s might be useful in defeating Japan.¹⁶



Dr. Wernher von Braun and over 100 other German rocket scientists after their arrival at Fort Bliss, Texas, as part of Operation Paperclip, 1946. Dr. von Braun is the seventh man from the right in the first row.

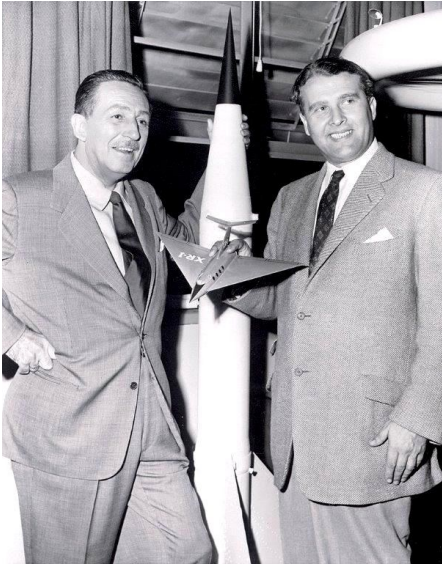
Fort Bliss and Huntsville

Wernher von Braun was thirty-three years old when he arrived with his co-workers at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. Over the next five to six years, the former V-2 rocket team worked to develop various missiles for the U.S. military, while also test firing captured V-2s at a site near White Sands, New Mexico. During this time, von Braun returned to Germany and married his first cousin, Maria von Quistorp, at a Lutheran church in Landshut, on March 1, 1947.¹⁷

The Fort Bliss years were frustrating for the German rocket scientists, who now worked for the American army in a post-war era that saw U.S. defense spending slashed. With meager resources and little interest in space travel, von Braun came to see the Fort Bliss/White Sands era as a time of wandering in the wilderness.¹⁸

Issues involving the Soviet Union and the Cold War brought about a dramatic change for the rocket men. Since the United States did not want the Soviets to get ahead in missile technology, especially after the Soviets tested their first atomic bomb in 1949, the von Braun team was soon relocated. The coming of the Korean War prompted the army to move the German missile men to the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. It was here in Alabama that von Braun would spend the most productive years of his adult life, as the U.S. government employed him to lead efforts to build larger and larger rockets to keep up with the Soviets.

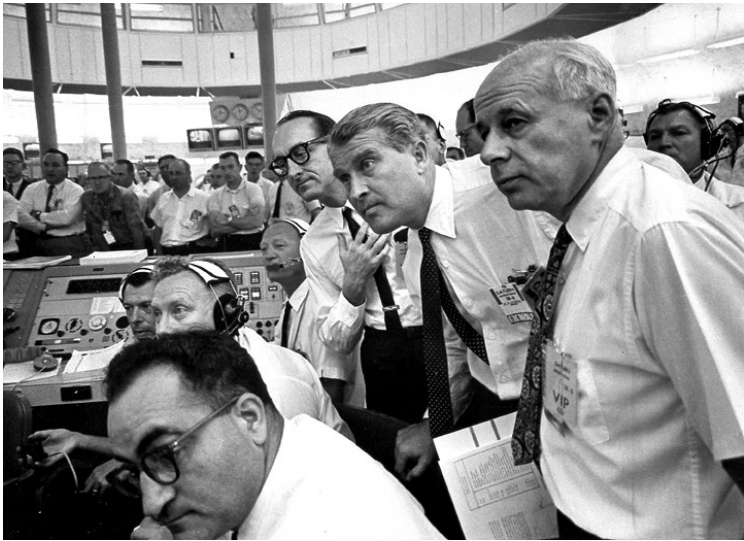
While Huntsville was happy to see a new research and development facility—employing thousands of people—many in the town of 15,000 did not quite know what to make of von Braun and his team. The mayor at the time was quoted as saying that he thought that von Braun and his team were crazy, yet in time he grew to greatly admire them.¹⁹ The former residents of Peenemünde immediately began to make their presence felt. Some served as musicians for the local orchestra and taught night classes at the University of Alabama—Huntsville. Some members of the rocket team founded the first Lutheran church in Huntsville, St. Mark Ev. Lutheran Church, which at the time was affiliated with the United Lutheran Church of America (ULCA). In April 1955, von Braun, his wife Maria and over one hundred



Walter Disney and Dr. Wernher von Braun collaborating on bringing the idea of space exploration to the American public, 1954.

other rocket team members and their families became naturalized American citizens.²⁰

Regrettably for the Peenemünders, the dreams of manned spaceflight still remained elusive. But beginning in the Huntsville years, Wernher von Braun became an eloquent pitch man for space exploration and manned space travel. His first major breakthrough was writing a series of articles for *Collier* magazine about a proposed space station.²¹ Von Braun's media effort began in 1952 and continued all through the 1950s and beyond. With television gaining in popularity at the time, he soon was featured on Walt Disney programs promoting spaceflight, *Man in Space*, and *Man and the Moon and Mars and Beyond*.²² It was through these media appearances that Wernher von Braun became a household name in America during the 1950s and 60s.



Dr. Wernher von Braun and colleagues watch intently the launch progress of a Saturn 1 rocket, May 28, 1964.

The Race to the Moon

Despite the fact that the Eisenhower Administration planned to launch a satellite as part of the “International Geophysical Year,” the Soviet Union—with the help of their German rocket experts—launched the world’s first satellite, *Sputnik*, in October 1957. Three months later, using a Redstone rocket developed by von Braun and his team at Huntsville, the United States responded by sending *Explorer I* into orbit on January 31, 1958, making von Braun a bona fide national hero, this time for America. NASA was founded in July of that year and the space race was on. The Redstone Arsenal became part of the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center on July 1, 1960 when NASA took over the sprawling complex. Dr. von Braun became the director of the entire facility.²³ In many respects the NASA site at Huntsville had become “Peenemünde South.”²⁴



Dr. Wernher von Braun as Director of the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, Alabama, 1964

After President John F. Kennedy issued a challenge to send an American to the moon before the end of the 1960s, Wernher von Braun, along with others, spearheaded the effort to race the Soviets to the moon. He and his rocket team were instrumental in developing the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo space programs. Working from Huntsville, von Braun and the rest of the world watched as the Apollo program put astronauts on the moon and brought them safely back to earth again in July 1969. For von Braun, it was the fulfillment of his boyhood dreams.

Church Membership

Despite the fact that for most of his German years, von Braun had a reputation of being jolly heathen, numerous sources and testimonies show that he became a professing Christian and active church goer during his years in America. For a while, the von Braun family held membership at St. Mark Ev. Lutheran Church, Huntsville. In 1952—due to differences with their pastor, they left the congregation and joined

the long-established Episcopal church in the city, the Episcopal Church of the Nativity.²⁵ The von Braun family belonged to this congregation as long as they lived in Huntsville.²⁶

It is beyond dispute that Wernher von Braun was raised in a devout Lutheran home. But as he ascended into engineering and scientific research in pre-war Nazi Germany, he became spiritually disconnected from his Lutheran state-church upbringing. At best he was a non-practicing Lutheran when he arrived in America. But his time in the South's Bible Belt brought about a change. Biographer Michael Neufeld describes von Braun arriving in United States as a "nominal Lutheran" and that "his religious conversion experience did not occur until he was in Texas in 1946."²⁷ He accepted an invitation to attend a Church of the Nazarene worship service in El Paso from a neighbor—more from curiosity than for any other reason. From this event, Wernher von Braun had at least a recommitment experience to biblical Christianity.²⁸

Final Years and Death

After several successful moon landings and the Skylab space station missions, NASA cut the Apollo program. The agency—at least for the foreseeable future—became only interested in sending unmanned spacecraft to explore other planets in the solar system, in view of its next manned space program, the Space Shuttle. In 1970, von Braun left Huntsville and his team to become deputy associate administrator at NASA headquarters in Washington, D.C.²⁹ This position he held for two unhappy years. He soon became frustrated that his hopes of seeing men go to Mars would not happen in his lifetime. Seeing himself as little more than a paper shuffler, Wernher von Braun resigned from NASA in June 1972. The following month he accepted a position as vice-president of engineering and development for Fairchild Corporation of Germantown, Maryland.³⁰

Only five years of life remained for Dr. von Braun. Still only sixty years old, a year into his new position at Fairchild, a routine physical exam revealed a malignant tumor on one of his kidneys. Surgery and radiation treatment followed.³¹ The pioneering rocket scientist lived long enough to witness the final launch of a Saturn IB rocket on July 15, 1975, a launch which linked up an Apollo Command/Service Module with a Soviet *Soyuz* spacecraft. That same week von Braun flew to his native Germany to accept a seat on the board of directors of Daimler Benz, the manufacturer of the Mercedes Benz.³² A year earlier, he had become the first president of the newly-founded National Science Institute, "a private sector organization to tap and expand grassroots and high-profile support for the space program and to lobby for it."³³

Wernher von Braun realized in the summer of 1975 that he was again seriously ill with cancer. This time a malignancy was removed from his colon. Frequent hospitalizations and treatments followed, but no cure was produced. By mid-1976, as his adopted country celebrated the bicentennial of its founding, the failing von

Braun realized he was dying. One of the last pieces of writing he produced was an address prepared for the Lutheran Church of America, at its synod gathering, at the University of Pennsylvania in the fall of 1976. The paper was over eighty pages long, entitled “Responsible Scientific Investigation and Application.”³⁴ In this paper, he combined the philosophical and practical, spoke about the future of spaceflight and how he had come to embrace his Christian faith in view of his own impending death. But by this time von Braun was too sick from his cancer to make any more public appearances.³⁵ It was read to this assembly of Lutherans by a surrogate.³⁶ At the end of the year, he retired from Fairchild Industries.³⁷

The end came fairly quickly for the terminally-ill scientist. Less than six months later, on June 16, 1977, shortly after receiving a National Medal of Science from outgoing President Gerald Ford, Wernher von Braun died at his home in Arlington, Virginia. His intensely private family quietly buried him that same day. His death was mourned around the world, accompanied by numerous memorial services and tributes. On his grave marker is a reference to Psalm 19:1: “The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”³⁸ Now the soul of the rocket scientist—who spent most of his life reaching for the stars—rested with the creator of them.

The Legacy and Lapses of Wernher von Braun

Of all of the accolades and honors that came to Wernher von Braun during his lifetime and posthumously, perhaps the most fitting are the succinct words the three Apollo 11 astronauts inscribed on a book they had written: “To Wernher, who postulated, predicted, advertised, conned, pulled and finally pushed us to make us first on the moon.”³⁹ More than any other scientist and rocket engineer, von Braun and his team members originated the discipline of aerospace engineering, which made manned space travel a reality in the twentieth century.

But before fulfilling his dreams, von Braun had been a missile man in the fullest sense. He was the father of the first ballistic missile, the V-2. The technology of the V-2, combined with the concurrent World War II research and development of nuclear weaponry, produced the intercontinental ballistic missiles of today.⁴⁰ Once in the Old World at Peenemünde, and once in the New World at Huntsville, Alabama, Dr. von Braun oversaw the construction and development of a massive military-industrial complex which produced pioneering rockets and missiles. Critical biographer Michael Neufeld describes him as “the most influential rocket engineer and spaceflight advocate of the twentieth century,”⁴¹ with three key contributions: a) making spaceflight a reality to the public; b) leading the team that launched the first American satellite in 1958; and c) managing the development of the gigantic launch vehicles that sent humans to the Moon.⁴² Few would argue these words do not summarize the legacy left to the world by Dr. Wernher von Braun.

Both Neufeld and another critical von Braun biographer, Dennis Piskiewicz, end their biographies with Faustian themes. Neufeld: “He truly was a twentieth-century Faust.”⁴³ Piskiewicz acidly comes to this conclusion: “Because of his tire-

less promotion, he was the man who sold the moon. Sadly, because of his complicity with the Nazi cause, he also sold his soul to reach that goal.”⁴⁴

These conclusions about the lapses of Dr. Wernher von Braun are not completely fair in the opinion of this researcher and writer. Von Braun was indeed a product of his Teutonic environment. His childhood witnessed World War I and the Great War’s debilitating economic and social consequences. As a young man, he experienced the rise of the Nazi Third Reich. It is established empirical history that Wernher von Braun joined the Nazi Party and the dreaded *Schutzstaffel* (the Nazi SS), rising to the rank of major.⁴⁵ But he was not a Nazi in his heart of hearts; one of necessity but not out of conviction—a reluctant party and SS member who joined when pressured to do so from his superiors. His consistent argument was that these memberships were necessary evils on his journey to achieve planetary space exploration. It also must be pointed out that when von Braun *began* his rocket research and development for the German army, it was for the Weimer Republic’s army (*Reichswehr*) and not the *Wehrmacht* of Hitler’s Nazi Germany. A change in government and fortunes brought him and his rocket team into the service of the Third Reich. Von Braun himself was arrested by the Gestapo toward the end of the war, and according to him, this experience is when he began to realize the moral depravity of the Nazi regime.⁴⁶

Besides developing a weapon that killed thousands of Allied civilians in the final years of World War II, the most troubling aspect of von Braun’s storied life was his role in the manufacture of the V-2, performed by concentration camp inmates at the notorious *Mittelwerk* (Central Plant) complex near Nordhausen, Germany. No apologist or critic of von Braun disputes the fact that he visited the underground facility numerous times, where thousands of workers died in the most inhumane of conditions. In defense of von Braun, he attempted at times to have technically-qualified camp inmates transferred out of the *Mittelbau-Dora* concentration camp system to work at other facilities. When he protested once to one of the SS guards concerning the conditions at *Mittelwerk*, he was told to mind his own business or else.⁴⁷ While the V-2 was developed by the von Braun team, the manufacturing of the rocket was controlled by the Nazi SS. Rightly or wrongly, the Peenemünde men came to regard any protestation of the inhuman conditions in the production of the V-2 to be futile and ultimately dangerous to their own lives.

A consistent line of defense was maintained by the Peenemünders who followed Wernher von Braun to America: They were serving their native Germany—albeit a nation with a sinister and murderous government—which was at war with an enemy that was obliterating their cities through strategic bombing.⁴⁸ After the war, the rocketeers sought to come to the United States to continue their research and development of rockets and work to achieve their collective dream of space travel. While many of the German rocket men were reticent to talk about the crimes of Nazi Germany and their own experiences during World War II, they came to appreciate the freedom and democracy they experienced in their new American home. Their goals of sending men into space and to walk on the moon were ultimately fulfilled under the tutelage of Wernher von Braun.

Epilogue: A Consequential Life

Despite his later defection to the Episcopal faith, Wernher von Braun, baptized, confirmed, and married as a Lutheran, will be remembered as the Lutheran who reached for the stars, arguably one of the most consequential scientists of the twentieth century. He was an individual who permanently changed the lives of the planet's population by his promotion and implementation of unmanned and then manned spaceflight. And it all began with a Lutheran mother giving her son a unique gift on the occasion of his confirmation—a telescope—causing young Wernher to reach for the stars.

Endnotes

1. This paper was first presented at 2012 Biennial Lutheran Historical Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on October 11, 2012, and published in the *Journal of the Lutheran Historical Conference*. It is reprinted with permission. It was subsequently presented at the annual meeting of the WELS Historical Institute on October 20, 2013.
2. Erik Bergaust, *Wernher von Braun* (Washington, D.C.: National Space Institute, 1976), 34.
3. Bob Ward, *Dr. Space: The Life of Wernher von Braun*, Foreword by John Glenn (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2005), 10.
4. Dennis Piskiewicz, *Wernher von Braun: The Man Who Sold the Moon* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1988), 23.
5. Bergaust, 36.
6. Michael J. Neufeld, *Von Braun: Dreamer of Space, Engineer of War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), 24.
7. *Ibid.*, 30–35.
8. Ward, 14–15.
9. Neufeld, 45.
10. Ward, 16.
11. Ward, 17–18.
12. Neufeld, 55–68.
13. Michael J. Neufeld, *The Rocket and the Reich: Peenemünde and the Coming of the Ballistic Missile Era* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), 243.
14. Ward, 45.
15. *Ibid.*, 51.
16. Ward, 56–59.
17. *Ibid.*, 69.
18. *Ibid.*, 72.
19. Ward, 78.
20. *Ibid.*, 79, 86.
21. Piskiewicz, 72–81.

22. Ward, 90–91.
23. Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 346.
24. Bergaust, 70.
25. Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 277.
26. Piskiewicz, 66; Ward, 222.
27. Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 152.
28. *Ibid.*, 229–230.
29. *Ibid.*, 443.
30. *Ibid.*, 455–461.
31. Ward, 212.
32. Piskiewicz, 195.
33. Ward, 210–211.
34. Ward, 217.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*; Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 469–470.
37. Piskiewicz, 196.
38. Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 218–220.
39. Bergaust, 516.
40. Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 476.
41. *Ibid.*, 477.
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. Piskiewicz, 203.
45. Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 96–97; 121–122.
46. *Ibid.*, 174.
47. Ward, 47–48; Neufeld, *Von Braun*, 162–163
48. Bergaust, 95.

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Ceremony Honors Chief Alchesay¹

by Jo Baeza

NORTH FORK - William Alchesay, the last hereditary chief of the White Mountain Apache people, died in 1928. He was buried in a family cemetery beside an old pinyon tree above the cornfields he used to tend.

His name is familiar to people of the White Mountains. Young people attend Alchesay High School in Whiteriver; the main route through town is called Chief Highway; A-1 Lake is named for the "tag" number given to him by the military. Alchesay Flats is a settlement north of Whiteriver.

His granddaughter, Yvonna Redsteer, and her husband, Guy, live on the site of Chief Alchesay's former home. She said, "All of us in Alchesay Flats are from him. I plant corn all the time because that land meant a lot to them. In the old days, the men cleared the land of junipers by hand to make the cornfields." She is the daughter of Nathan Alchesay, the chief's youngest son.

Her sister, Ruth Alchesay Goklish, 81, was present for the ceremony. Two great granddaughters were also there - Amber Cromwell and Genevieve Ethelbah. Alchesay was never a rich man, as Apache people did not judge a man by how much wealth he had accumulated. They judged him by his character, generosity, and ability to lead. Alchesay's legacy was his many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The grave is now marked with an official granite stone engraved with gold. This belated honor came as the result of a cooperative effort by members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion to get Alchesay what was rightly his as one of Arizona's first recipients of the Medal of Honor. He received the medal for his actions in Gen. George Crook's winter campaign against the Tonto Apache in 1871-73.

Congress authorized Medals of Honor in 1862, during the Civil War, for army personnel who had shown gallantry and bravery in combat above and beyond the call of duty. President Abraham Lincoln signed the legislation in 1863. Today, the Medal of Honor can be awarded to members of the army, navy, marines, air force and coast guard.

Post Cmdr. Roger Stevens said, "Those who wear it and those who received it posthumously belong to a very special group, united forever in a common bond of valor and gallantry known only to those who have performed above and beyond the call of duty. Who are these men and what did they do to earn the Medal of Honor? Each story is a chapter in the larger story of human devotion, dedication, and sacrifice. No one account stands out above the others, for these men did not compete with one another in their gallantry - they shared in gallantry. Therefore, any one account speaks for the others as well.

"Sgt. William Alchesay is a member of that select group awarded the Medal of Honor. And like each who have served this nation, past and present, deserves our unending gratitude and respect."

Cmdr. Slim Quay of American Legion Post 60 spoke to the group present in Apache. Those participating in the military portion of the event were: Hawthorne Harina; Ike Kasey; Slim Quay; Steve Dude; Wilfred Case; Emmerson Kasey; Al Jones; John Beeler; Cmdr. Roger Stevens; Charles Solano; Calvin Newman; and Warren Tyrell. The ceremony ended with the playing of taps by John Beeler.

Lutheran Pastor Arthur Guenther gave some insight into the Apache leader's character by reading a letter to Alchesay from a fellow soldier 40 years after they had fought together during Crook's campaigns. Guenther said, "The Apache Scouts were the frontier equivalent of the Green Berets."

When his father, Rev. Edgar Guenther, first came to the Fort Apache Reservation as a Lutheran missionary, he avoided Alchesay because he didn't want any trouble with him. Then came the terrible influenza epidemic of 1918. Apache people scattered far and wide in an attempt to avoid contamination.

Alchesay, believing he was dying, went out to the mountains alone. Guenther and his helper were doing all they could to help sick people, although their remedies sound almost as bad as the illness. They would ride around until they saw smoke from a campfire, then stop and treat people the only way they knew how.

Guenther saw smoke from a campfire and found Alchesay lying on the ground. He and his friend put tar paper under his pallet to keep him dry. They gave him a dose of Epsom salts and rubbed him down with skunk oil they had rendered themselves, then left him. He was still alive when they returned the next day. Rev. Guenther's wife, Minnie, made soup by the gallon for 'flu victims. Guenther took soup to Alchesay in a tin bowl every day. Alchesay survived. It was the beginning of a close friendship.

At first, Guenther held church services out under the trees, as there was no money for a church. One day Alchesay said, "We've got to have a house." He donated land and Guenther built a church with the help of volunteers. On April 30, 1922, at the dedication, Alchesay rode his horse down to the church, and was handed a key by the agency superintendent. He walked up to the altar and said, "I put my thumbprint on this church." Pointing to the Bible and looking at Rev. Guenther he said, "You listen to him when he speaks from this book."

Alchesay and 100 of his band were baptized in the Church of the Open Bible. When Minnie had a baby boy, Alchesay took him to the church, held him in his arms and said, "Baptize him with my name." The boy was christened Alchesay Arthur Guenther, and Alchesay was his godfather.

Hundreds more of Alchesay's band were baptized in the years to follow. As the old chief lay dying, he asked for a scarf in which he kept the skeleton key that first unlocked the front door of the church. He said, "This is the key that opened God's house for me. This is the key that opened heaven for me. I go."

He was buried with the key in his hand.

Endnote

1. Printed with permission from the *White Mountain Independent*

Letter Pastor Uplegger to Pastor Reuschel

FR: Pastor F. Uplegger, Superintendent
LUTHERAN INDIAN MISSION
San Carlos, Arizona

TO: The Rev. John Reuschel
R. 5
Holland, Michigan

Dear Brother Reuschel!

01 December 1953¹

A few days ago your letter on my desk caught my attention once again and repeatedly awakened precious memories. Today at last I am going about the task of answering. Most heartfelt thanks to you and your wife for giving \$5.00 to our Indian Mission and for your lovely accompanying words.

The Lord will uniquely bless such gifts and the giver of them. Yes, they belong to the application of that pericopé² where the Lord saw her [the widow's] two copper coins placed into the Temple Treasury.³ Money is surely to be used in his service; [but] the act of giving out of which the gift flows is worth more than its material worth. Yes, it becomes a special joy for me that you think in such a friendly way about our situation here and about me and also my family. For me it is an imperceptible visit with us — from a distance, so far away, from old friends in Michigan.

And so, heartfelt thanks to you also for the well-wishes for us here! As to what's happening to me personally? I wouldn't know what more I could desire for one's well-being, also for you, than what the Lord repeatedly distributes in one's joyful service. The trials that attend our spiritual health stretch the threads of patience to the utmost. But we are also continually loaded with experiences that gratify. We observe that the Holy Spirit also does his work among our Indians and has led his people through the fires of tribulation.⁴

Things are also going relatively well with my children. Yes, my son and I are splitting up the work here. And my youngest daughter, Dorothea, who five years ago was in charge of the school here as teacher among the Indians, had to resign for health considerations and went on to [be] at the large school of Faith Lutheran Church, our mission school at Peridot, 3 ½ miles from here, and must see how her physical constitution holds up with [training] 52 beginners in the wisdom of the whites⁵—via divine wisdom and grace.

Now, I wish both of you and all yours a Christian merry Christmastime with all its blessings through our Savior's love and for the coming New Year.

So, greetings to you in constant memories

Your, F. Uplegger

Transliterated & translated with notes
by Arnold J. Koelpin, March 2014
Letter held by Teacher Paul Fritze
New Ulm, MN

Francis J. Uplegger

Francis J. Uplegger (1867-1964) was a *Lutheran minister* who arrived at San Carlos with his family in 1919 to establish a mission to the San Carlos Apache. He learned their language then translated the Lutheran catechism, creed, liturgy and much of the Bible into Apache. Uplegger also wrote a four-volume *Apache-English dictionary* and assisted the Apache in writing their constitution. Photographs in the exhibit of his collection attest to the trust that existed between Uplegger and the Apache. Uplegger was officially *adopted into the San Carlos community* in 1961. Early photographs show Native Americans in traditional clothing sitting in a car, playing and gathering for photographs with the missionaries. Later photographs are of boarding school students in baseball uniforms or performing in plays.

Biography: Francis J. Uplegger was an ordained pastor of Saint John's Congregation in Hermansfort, Wisconsin,⁶ in July, 1891 and continued an active preaching career until his retirement. His son Alfred Uplegger followed in his father's footsteps by becoming a Lutheran minister and moved to Arizona to be a missionary to the Apache Indians on the San Carlos Reservation. Two years later Francis Uplegger joined him on the reservation and ministered there for the rest of his life.

Adept at languages, Francis quickly began to learn how to speak and write the Apache language. He went on to compile the first Apache dictionary. He also wrote approximately twenty-five Gospel hymns in Apache and translated several important Lutheran liturgical documents and portions of the Bible into Apache.

Held in high esteem by many of the members of the tribe, he was affectionately called "Old Man Missionary." He assisted the tribe in drawing up a constitution in 1930-31 that was later used as a model by several other tribes. In 1957 Concordia Theological Seminary conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon him. Francis Uplegger was married to Emma Plass, who had come from Germany to be his bride in 1891. Their children were Alfred, Gertrude, Johanna, and Dorothea.

Internet access includes correspondence, writings, Bible translations, sermons, reports, and audiotapes, chiefly from 1917-1960, of Francis J. Uplegger, 1867-1964, and his son, Alfred Uplegger, relating to their work as Lutheran missionaries on the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation in Arizona. Also included are biographical and background materials, mission records, and works of Alfred and Francis Uplegger. <http://speccoll.library.arizona.edu/collections/papers-francis-j-uplegger>

Endnotes

1. Pastor Francis Uplegger was about 86 years' old at the time of this writing.
2. A pericopé is a section of the Bible read in public services during the church year.
3. Luke 21:1ff
4. The descriptive German word used is *Anfechtung*, often used in Christian terms as "tests or attacks of Satan."

5. The German text is a play on words:..."In der Weisheit der Weiszen," refers to American public education.
6. The reference is to St. John's Lutheran Church at Hermansfort, 5416 N 5633 County Road U, Shawano, WI.

Traugott Bromme and the State of Wisconsin

Introduction and Translation by Richard L. Bland

In the early 1800s economic and political problems brought many Europeans to the United States. A large number came from Germany. Among them was Traugott Bromme, who in fact was more of a traveler than an immigrant. Bromme quickly saw a chance to make a profit from this movement of peoples by writing guide books for Germans entering the United States. Between 1840 and 1866 he wrote and published several editions. His guides included information on many regions of the Western Hemisphere, including all the states east of the Mississippi.

Simon Traugott Bromme was born on December 3, 1802, in Anger, near Leipzig, in what would later become Germany.¹ His father was apparently a well-to-do estate owner and *Gerichtsschöffe*, a legal assistant to the court. Traugott, who had at least four siblings, was orphaned at the age of five. He grew up witnessing, among other pivotal events of the era, Napoleon's troops marching to Russia in 1812.

In 1817 he attended a class at a Leipzig bookshop; this would eventually lead him into the book business. He did not immediately become a writer or publisher; instead, he spent three years studying and traveling, even finding adventure. In April 1821 Bromme emigrated to the United States and studied medicine. After this he is supposed to have served as a doctor in the "Columbian service" and also spent time in a Haitian jail.²

Bromme's writing career began in 1824. In June of that year he returned to Saxony, settling in Dresden. There he became a partner in the *Walther'schen Hoffbuchhandlung*, which his brother-in-law, the book dealer Johann Gottlieb Wagner, had purchased in the same year. In 1833 Bromme again traveled to the United States, this time to Baltimore (where he might have had relatives), and took up a partnership in the publishing house of Scheld and Company.³ While in Baltimore he published travel guides, producing eight titles between 1834 and 1837. He appears to have returned to Germany by about 1840, settling in Stuttgart.

One thing that Bromme learned in his travels between Germany and America was that many immigrants to America arrived with no prospect of a job and were unable to speak English, the dominant language. He also would have seen that many of the people who were looking for a new start in life were Germans. These émigrés needed information that would let them know what to expect. In response, Bromme wrote a travel guide for German emigrants that became relatively popular. It was entitled: *Traugott Bromme's Hand- und Reisebuch für Auswanderer nach den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika, Texas, Ober- und Unter-Canada, Neu-Braunschweig, Neu-Schottland, Santo Thomas in Guatemala und den Mosquitoküsten* [Traugott Bromme's Hand- and Travel-Book for Emigrants to the United States of North America, Texas, Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Saint Thomas in Guatemala and the Mosquito Coast].⁴ Bromme's travel guide indicates that he did substantial research on the various states using the

maps of Henry Schenck Tanner and others.⁵

The book contains over 550 pages divided into two main parts. In the first part, Bromme gives a general overview of the United States, including thumbnail sketches of most of the states, territories, or countries that an emigrant might enter in North America. He devotes more attention to those places he considered most likely to benefit an immigrant. For example, the state of Pennsylvania is described in about six pages. Bromme devoted much less space to locales he considered inhospitable to immigrants. For example, "The Territory of Missouri and the Oregon Territory" received less than half a page, and Bromme tells his readers that for "settlement, this recommendation comes still too early . . . in the two here-named Indian territories with the wild inhabitants of the same."⁶

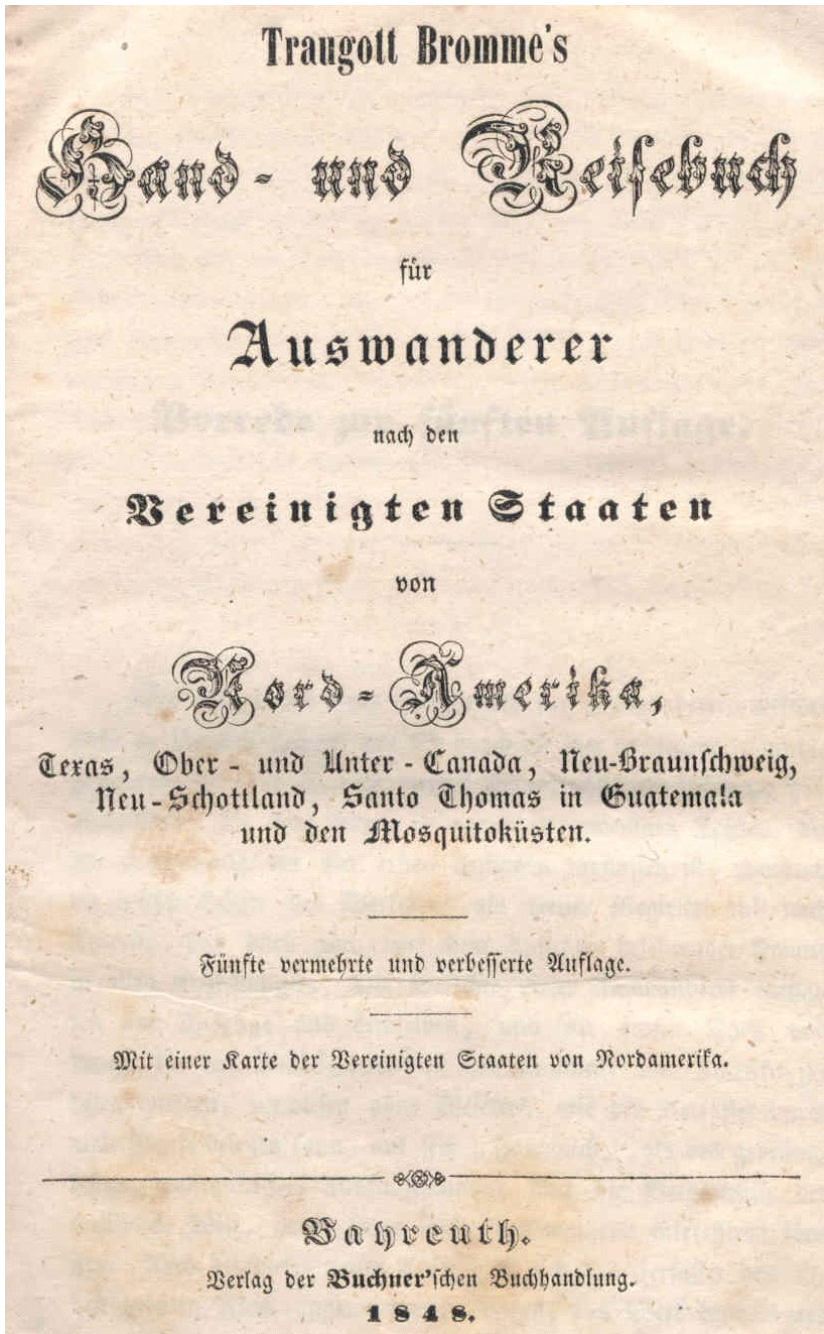
In the second part of his book Bromme deals with the problem of who should and should not emigrate; he discusses the various trades and professions most in demand in the region, about one hundred in all. Bromme touts his book "as the most crucial and accurate purveyor of information on the conditions of the western world, in so far as emigrants might be interested."⁷

Bromme obviously traveled some in the United States and perhaps in other countries of the Western Hemisphere, but it is equally obvious that it was not possible for him to have visited all the places he described in his *Hand-und Reisebuch*. His travel guide is rather formulaic with regard to the information provided for each state. He gives the general geography, economy, industry, some vital statistics, and so on, generally devoting two to four pages to each state. His information appears to have been gleaned from other sources. Historian Klaus Dieter Hein-Mooren, in his study of German travel guides, says of Bromme: "His writings were no scientific works, but rather generally intelligible, popular representations. He also sweepingly declined to name his sources and to state whether his workmanship was only translations of foreign-language works."⁸

According to Joseph Sabin, who in 1869 published a massive catalog of books related to America, Bromme produced at least twenty-three titles, all of them concerned with geography. Some were multiple volumes and some were supplements to the works of others, such as those of Alexander von Humboldt, a famous naturalist and explorer.⁹ Just as Bromme's use of sources is uncertain, it is also questionable whether Bromme was actually associated in any way with von Humboldt. Hein-Mooren believes it is more likely that he, or his publisher, was simply using von Humboldt's name to increase sales.¹⁰

Bromme did not intend that all his books be used solely as guides. For example, in 1842 he published the second volume of his two-volume set *Gemälde von Nord-Amerika* (Portrait of North America).¹¹ As is apparent in the full title, these volumes were intended not only as travel guides but as entertaining instruction as well.

In 1866 Bromme's 8th and final edition of the *Hand-und Reisebuch* was published posthumously. With regard to the number of books he produced detailing this country, Bromme may be one of America's most forgotten authors.¹²



The Territory of Wisconsin

Wisconsin, formerly West Michigan, includes the rich stretch of land lying between the Mississippi and Lake Michigan that runs from the Illinois border 490 miles to the north. It extends 380 miles from east to west and embraces a surface area of 186,200 square miles or 119,168,000 acres.¹³ With the Mississippi and its tributaries—the Fox, Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and others—flowing through, Wisconsin combines all the advantages of the states of Illinois and Missouri.

The soil is rich and fertile. The land offers minerals in quantity, the animal and plant kingdoms are extraordinary treasures, and the population, lured by the climate, rich soil, and the advantages of the place, increases to such a degree that the territory will probably be accepted into the Union as a state this year. The entire land, from the Des Moines River to as far as the waterfalls of St. Antony, distinguishes itself through its beauty and fertility, as well being advantageous through the healthy nature of its wholesome climate. It is open throughout to commerce and offers a surplus of minerals and game.

We touch on this here in more detail than we did in the overview of the other states in order at the same time to show what progress the new territories of the Union are engaged in and how few years it takes to make a mighty state out of a wilderness. Construction has already begun on the 168-mile-long Milwaukee and Prairie du Chien Railroad, which is supposed to join Lake Michigan with the Wisconsin River in the vicinity of its mouth. The entire stretch of this road touches upon the most fertile lands, as well as the middle point of this region so rich in mineral treasures, and unites the incipient cities of Madison, Messer Grove, Dodgeville (where a branch road separates toward Helena and Mineral Point), Wingville, Grant, Patch Grove, and Port Hudson. Furthermore, shares have been signed for a railroad that takes its course from “Grand Kakalia Rapids” or from Lafontaine to the city of Winnebago, and through which a 20-mile route by water will be shortened by 13 miles. Construction has already begun. Moreover, a railroad from Belmonte to Dubuque is authorized and guaranteed; it is planned to extend to Mineral Point. And several others, from Illinois, are projected.

The shares of a canal company are already signed for the construction of a 52-mile canal from Milwaukee to Lake Kuskenny. Another canal has been applied for. It will go from the city of Madison to Arena, on the Wisconsin River, a stretch of 20 miles. And then from the Manitowoc River, after a stretch of 18 miles, it is intended to reach Lake Winnebago. In addition, two canal companies have been incorporated for joining the Fox River, which empties into Green Bay, with the Wisconsin River in the vicinity of Fort Winnebago. This goal will be reached in part through laying out the Marquette and Kentucky City Canal of approximately 24 miles and in another part through a canal suitable for steamboats. This canal needs to be only 502 rods long,¹⁴ but is supposed to be 50 feet wide on the bottom and 70 feet on the surface, and to have a depth of 7 feet. The work on this latter, the “Portage Canal,” is already completed and the canal for steamship navigation opened.

The completion of this canal brings the Wisconsin Territory nearer to the Atlantic Coast, the eastern markets, by 10 days’ travel. The canal is large enough for

all steamboats that travel the Wisconsin and upper Mississippi. Thus, goods need to be transhipped only a single time on the entire long trip between Buffalo and the Mississippi. Through use of the Portage Canal the traversed distance between Buffalo and Galena is brought to 1,146 miles. This can be comfortably done in 10 days, while up to now the trip requires a doubled amount of time, namely 20 days.

The territory stands under a governor installed by Congress, who has the assistance of a council of 13 members and a house of representatives of 26 members. Wisconsin is broken into 26 counties, with 75,446 residents. Educational facilities consist at present of 11 academies and 128 elementary schools. No colleges have yet been established. The main city is Madison, on a peninsula between a lake chain that is called Four Lakes, with 493 residents. The most important place in the state up to now is Milwaukee, on Lake Michigan—the only good port between Chicago and Green Bay. Other promising, if still small, cities are: Prairie du Chien, Green Bay, Navarin, Racine, Mineral Point, Winnebago, and those previously mentioned.

Endnotes

1. At that time the region consisted of small independent states that would later unify as the country of Germany.
2. According to James Grant Wilson and John Fiske, Bromme “settled in the United States in 1820, and afterward traveled extensively in Texas and Mexico, became surgeon on a Columbian war-schooner cruising in the West Indies, and was detained for a year as a prisoner in Hayti” (Wilson and Fiske, eds., *Appleton’s Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York, 1888), 1:384). Historian Klaus Dieter Hein-Mooren’s research indicates that Bromme came to the United States in 1821, studied medicine (although he does not say where), later became a doctor in the “Colombian service,” and spent some time in Haiti, returning to Saxony in 1824 (Hein-Mooren, “‘Gediegene Schriften für Auswanderer’: Bromme, Buchner und die Auswandererliteratur” [“Dependable Publications for Emigrants’: Bromme, Buchner and the Emigrant Literature”] *Buchhandelsgeschichte* 15: B45–B46, 2001).
3. Hein-Mooren, “Gediegene,” B45–B47.
4. The fifth edition of Bromme’s *Hand- und Reisebuch*, which is used in this document, was published in Bayreuth, Germany, 1848.
5. Henry Tanner created numerous maps in the early 1800s. As a result, it is difficult to say with certainty which ones Bromme used. For those interested, Tanner’s maps can be viewed online at, for example, <http://www.davidrumsey.com/maps2741.html>. Regarding his maps, Bromme wrote the following work: *Post-, Kanal- und Eisenbahn-Karte der Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika: nach Smith, Tanner, Mitchel und den Berichten des General-Postamts, bearb. von Traugott Bromme* [Postal, Canal, and Railroad Maps of the United States of North America: After Smith, Tanner, Mitchel, and Reports of the General Post Office, elaborated by Traugott Bromme] (Stuttgart, Germany, 1850).

6. Bromme, *Hand- und Reisebuch*, 186–89, 225–26.
7. *Ibid.*, v.
8. Hein-Mooren, “Gediegene,” B48. This and other quotations from Hein-Mooren’s article are translations from the German provided by the translator.
9. Joseph Sabin, *Dictionary of Books Related to America* (New York, 1869), 2:516–18.
10. Hein-Mooren, “Gediegene,” B45. Alexander Freiherr von Humboldt (1769–1859) was a German explorer, scientist, and natural philosopher who conducted expeditions to Cuba and Central and South America. His greatest work was the five-volume *Kosmos* (1845–62). Bromme is credited with working on the illustrations in *Kosmos* by some scholars of the era (Sabin, *Dictionary of Books*, 2:516); this, however, is questionable.
11. Traugott Bromme, *Gemälde von Nord-Amerika in allen Beziehungen von der Entdeckung an bis auf die neueste Zeit—Eine pittoreske Geographie für Alle, welche unterhaltende Belehrung suchen und ein Umfassendes Reise-Handbuch für Jene, welche in diesem Lande wandern wollen* [Portrait of North America in All Connections from the Discovery to the Most Recent Time—A Picturesque Geography for Everyone Who Seeks Entertaining Instruction, and a Comprehensive Traveler’s Handbook for Anyone Who Wants to Travel in this Land] (Stuttgart, Germany, 1842).
12. I have left Bromme’s spellings, errors, and omissions as they are in the original, trying not to intrude upon the author. However, I have at times changed his punctuation and syntax in order to bring the text somewhat more in line with modern idiomatic English. I have also broken the text into several paragraphs—only two in the original. I would like to thank the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin for helpfully providing materials and Nan Coppock for editorial assistance.
13. □ is Bromme’s way of indicating square miles.
14. One rod equals 16.5 feet.

Lutherans in America: A New History, by Mark Granquist.

Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015. 388 pp, pb, \$60.00.

It's been several decades since the acclaimed *The Lutherans in North America*, edited by E. Clifford Nelson, was published. A successor was long overdue. Mark Granquist's *Lutherans in America: A New History* is a worthy replacement.

The history of Lutheranism in America is rather complex and can be confusing, but Granquist tells the story in a clear and succinct way without getting bogged down with unnecessary details. He also includes material often found only in specialized histories. For example, he provides information on African American Lutheranism and Lutheran worship. Most chapters close with a convenient summary. After each chapter he offers a two-page excursus on a topic of interest. A random sampling will demonstrate the wide-ranging nature of the topics covered: Lutherans in the Caribbean; Colonial Pastoral Care; Red and Green and Black and Blue: Lutheran Hymnals and their Impact; "Praise the Lord": Lutherans and Revivalism; Lutherans and the Lodge; Hispanic Lutheranism. The volume also includes helpful statistical charts of Lutheran membership growth and Lutheran mergers, maps of Lutheran concentrations by county at different times in history, and historical pictures.

Granquist's concluding chapter is entitled "Uncertain Present, Uneasy Future, 1988-2013." He recognizes the difficulties involved when an historian writes on contemporary events and trends. Yet his observations and comments on this period, particularly in regard to the ELCA and, to a lesser extent, the LCMS are insightful and to the point. He wisely refrains from making predictions about the future.

In the Epilogue Granquist says that the way Lutherans in America will meet the needs of the future is by finding creative ways to re-appropriate their theological and spiritual traditions. He sees two problems that must be overcome before this can happen.

The first is the general American tendency to believe that history has little value or worth—it is just the record of the past that must be overcome. America was built on almost the divine belief in progress, that as a nation and society we are always progressing and getting better. This is a secular theology which states the telos or salvific goal can be realized in time and space, especially in America—this is quite literally a secular version of realized eschatology, or the building of God's millennial kingdom right here in the United States. A healthy Lutheran skepticism, along with a solid understanding of the distinction between law and gospel, church and state, ought to be more than enough to demolish these pretensions. But this leads us directly to the second problem: most Lutherans do not really know or understand their theological traditions very well, and would not be able to apply its critiques to the secular and reli-

gious theologies that dominate American society. . . It is not possible to critique society without a clear position from which to do this (pp. 356-257).

For Lutherans the study of history and theology must go together. Church history is really theology in action. Insights from history may prevent repeating the mistakes of the past. Each generation must make Scripture's doctrines its own through their own study of the Bible. But it would be foolish not to learn from the theological giants of the past like Luther.

There are a couple of minor mistakes that don't really detract from the value of this volume. For example, the amalgamation of synods that produced our current Wisconsin Synod took place in 1917, not 1919 (p. 207). Granquist credits the preaching of Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley for sparking the Great Awakening. He undoubtedly meant Edwards and George Whitefield. Wesley had returned to England before the Great Awakening began and did not see much success during his short time in America. Whitefield's preaching tours in America were far more significant.

We recommend *Lutherans in America: A New History* as a generally reliable and readable history. Our readers will enjoy this fresh treatment of the story of Lutheranism in America.

John M. Brenner

Looking Back

by John M. Brenner

25 years ago – 1991

- Three Southeast Asian Missionaries visit Thailand. Gary Schroeder (Hong Kong), Bruce Ahlers (Indonesia), and Robert Meister (Taiwan) spend ten days exploring the feasibility of a WELS mission in Thailand. They report that Thailand is “ripe for the gospel.”
- The Wisconsin Synod holds its first teaching seminar in India, at Nellore, north of Nayadupeta.
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention authorizes additional staffing for Dr. Martin Luther College (DMLC) to continue to offer a secondary teacher education program (STEP).
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention authorizes DMLC to provide a program for the training of staff ministers.
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention resolves not to develop an early childhood education program on the DMLC campus. Synodical budget stringencies are cited as the reason for the decision. The convention asks DMLC to offer early childhood education workshops for existing early childhood educators based on user fees.
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention resolves to combine Martin Luther Preparatory School with Northwestern Preparatory School on the Watertown campus and to combine Northwestern College with Dr. Martin Luther College on the New Ulm campus. The synod also asks the Conference of Presidents to appoint an independent committee to determine the feasibility of this plan, including when and how this new structure may begin to function. The districts are to respond to this proposal in 1992 with the report of the study committee to be given to the 1993 synod convention for action.
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention adopts the statement, “Scriptural Principles of Man and Woman Roles,” (revised 4/24/91) as a correct exposition of the scriptural teachings in this matter. Suggestions for any refinement of wording are to be forwarded to the Conference of Presidents.
- Alfred von Rohr Sauer dies at Saint Louis, Missouri (b. 1908, Winona, Minnesota). He was graduated from Northwestern College (Watertown, Wisconsin) in 1929 and from the Wisconsin Synod seminary in Thiensville, Wisconsin, in 1932. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Bonn in 1939. He taught Old Testament theology from 1948 until 1973 at Concordia Seminary (Saint Louis) and from 1974 until 1983 at Christ Seminary-Seminex.

- Wisconsin Synod Statistics:

421,189 souls	317,793 communicants
1,222 congregations	1,206 pastors
365 elementary schools	32,000 students
659 male teachers	1,102 female teachers

50 years ago – 1966

- The Bible Institute of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa graduates its first class: Benford Kawiliza, Charles Manangi, Ignatius Mwanabaleya and Timothy Tonga

- Wisconsin Synod Statistics:

367,959 souls	253,450 communicants
908 congregations	679 pastors
230 elementary schools	25,710 students
327 male teachers	594 female teachers

- William Frederick Henry Beck, editor at Concordia Publishing House and author, dies on October 24 (b. 28 August 1904). Beck is best known for his *The Holy Bible: An American Translation*.
- The National Lutheran Council ceases operation and is replaced by the Lutheran Council in the USA. The Missouri Synod becomes a member of LCUSA, marking the first time the synod joins an inter-Lutheran organization in America that includes synods with which it is not in fellowship.

75 years ago – 1941

- *The Lutheran Hymnal* is published by the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America.
- Pastor F. Stern is called to be missionary-at-large in the Wisconsin Synod’s Pacific Northwest District, particularly the population centers of Seattle and Spokane.
- The Wisconsin Synod grants the requests of the Colorado and Arizona Conferences to have the status of “mission districts.”
- The Missouri Synod in convention unanimously adopts a resolution to continue negotiations with the American Lutheran Church.

100 years ago – 1916

- The first Lutheran congregation is organized in Hankow, China, as a result of the work Missouri Synod missionary of Eduard L. Arndt (1864–1929).

- The first baptism of African Americans in connection with the mission work of the Lutheran Synodical Conference in Alabama takes place.

125 years ago – 1891

- The Bennett Law, passed by the Wisconsin State Legislature for the regulation of private (particularly church) schools is repealed. Professor Ernst of Watertown is credited with success in the campaign to repeal the law. Dr. Notz, at the same time, gains favor in the Democrat Party and is appointed by Governor Peck as regent of the University of Wisconsin.
- President C.J. Albrecht of the Minnesota Synod and President Lederer of the Michigan Synod, classmates from Basel Mission House at St. Chrischona, consider the possibility of the Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin Synods forming a general body. The overture includes the Michigan Synod joining of the Synodical Conference.
- Representatives of the Michigan Synod meet in Watertown with representatives of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Synods to discuss the possibility of forming a new synod.
- Northwestern Publishing House is founded as a printer and publishing firm for the Wisconsin Synod. It is located at 310 North Third Street in downtown Milwaukee and takes over the printing of *Gemeinde-Blatt* ["Church News"] and *Schulzeitung* ["School News"].
- William J. Schaefer, hymn translator, is born in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. He was educated at Northwestern College (Watertown, Wisconsin) and Concordia Theological Seminary (Springfield, Illinois), from which he was graduated in 1913. In 1935 he was appointed associate editor of the *Northwestern Lutheran*, the official periodical of the Wisconsin Synod, and became managing editor in 1939. He was a member of the Intersynodical Committee on Hymnology and Liturgics, which prepared *The Lutheran Hymnal*.
- Friedrich August Craemer dies (born 1812). He was sent to America by Wilhelm Loehe. He founded Frankenmuth, Michigan, and served as pastor there. Later he was president of the Missouri Synod's practical seminary at Fort Wayne, Indiana; and the practical seminary's moves to Saint Louis, Missouri; and Springfield, Illinois.
- The English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri and Other States is organized.

150 years ago – 1866

- The Minnesota Synod meets at Red Wing. President Fachtmann suggests the founding of a German/English college in St. Paul. The Minnesota Synod aban-

dons the practice of licensing its pastors. Professor Moldehnke of the Wisconsin Synod recommends close relations between the Wisconsin and Minnesota.

- The Wisconsin Synod attempts to give some help to Edward Moldehnke, *Reiseprediger* (missionary-at-large, serving as many as twenty-two preaching stations) and sole seminary professor. The synod calls Adolf Hoeneke to be an additional professor. Moldehnke, believing that this was a waste of synodical money, leaves the Wisconsin Synod and returns to Germany before settling in New York. He will join the New York Ministerium and eventually become its president.
- The 16th annual Wisconsin Synod convention meets in Fond du Lac on June 7-13. The resolution on the production of a new hymnal for the synod includes the following: "Restore the original text as much as possible; give special attention to old choice Lutheran hymns, but include the best offerings of modern times; increase the number of mission and marriage songs and add rain and storm hymns." Teacher Siefert of Grace, Milwaukee, asks that tunes in the proposed hymnal be given rhythmical settings like those in the Missouri Synod.
- The Michigan Synod loosens ties with the Basel Mission Society.
- The first Lutheran Church of New Ulm, Minnesota, is dedicated on June 17.
- The Fort Wayne Convention of the General Synod refuses to seat Pennsylvania delegates. A few weeks later Charles Porterfield Krauth issues a call "to all the synods which confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, for the purpose of organizing a new general body upon distinctively Lutheran principles."
- Twelve pastors withdraw from the Buffalo Synod and join the Missouri Synod.
- Lutherans adhering to the Lutheran Confessions meet in Reading, Pennsylvania in December. Thirteen synods including the Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin Synods attend. This meeting leads to the founding of the General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America.
- A colloquy between the Missouri Synod and the Buffalo Synod begins on November 20 in Buffalo, New York (through 5 December).

175 years ago – 1841

- Otto Hermann Walther, first pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church (Saint Louis) and brother of C. F. W. Walther, dies at Saint Louis on January 21.
- Fredrick Wyneken, German Lutheran missionary in the American Midwest, issues an appeal to Lutherans in Germany in a pamphlet, *The Need of the German Lutherans in North America*. It stirs the conscience of many Lutherans in Germany, including Wilhelm Loehe, and results in a number of pastors and pastoral candidates coming to America to serve the scattered German immigrants.

- The Neuendettelsau Missionary Society is founded in Bavaria by Wilhelm Loehe. It is a confessional Lutheran mission society. Loehe eventually sends groups of immigrants to found Frankenmuth, Frankenlust, Frantentrost, and Frankenhilf in the Saginaw Valley of Michigan. Pastors sent to America by Loehe eventually establish a Lutheran seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and help found the Missouri Synod with the Saxons in Missouri. Others found the Iowa Synod.
- The Altenburg Debate – In the aftermath of the removal from office of Pastor Martin Stephan by the Saxons in Missouri, Franz Adolph Marbach, an immigrant Saxon lawyer in St. Louis publicly debates the young Pastor C.F.W. Walther over the doctrine of the church and the ministry. Walther wins the day and puts the Saxon religious turmoil to rest.
- Pastor John C.F. Heyer is sent as a missionary to India, becoming the first foreign missionary sent out by Lutherans in America. He founds a Lutheran mission in Guntur. After returning to America he becomes a missionary in Minnesota and is the prime mover behind the founding of the Minnesota Synod in 1860.
- Friedrich Wilhelm August Notz, professor of Greek and Hebrew at Northwestern College in Watertown is born in Lehren-Steinsfeld, near Weinsberg, Wuerttemberg. He dies on 16 December 1922 after many years of faithful service.
- Frederick William Stellhorn is born in Bruening-Horstedt, Hannover, Germany on October 2 (d. 17 March 1919). Stellhorn will serve as the Missouri Synod's professor at Wisconsin's Northwestern College in Watertown. He leaves the Missouri Synod during the Election Controversy.

200 years ago – 1816

- The American Bible Society (ABS) is organized in New York to distribute Bibles throughout the world.
- Georg Ernst Christian Ferdinand Sievers, founding pastor of the mission congregation at Frankenlust, Michigan, as well as other missions throughout Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and Minnesota, is born in Lueneburg, Hannover, Germany (died 1893). He becomes the founder of Missouri Synod foreign missions and the synod's chronologist.

The WELS Historical Institute was given formal approval by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in convention in 1981 to organize for the purpose of collecting and preserving historical data and artifacts that are related to the various periods of Lutheranism in America, especially of the WELS. In recent years the synod took over the responsibility of maintaining the archives. The Institute maintains a museum and publishes a *JOURNAL* and *NEWSLETTER*. Membership is open. Fees, including a subscription to the *Journal* and *Newsletter*, are: Individual: \$20.00; Husband/Wife: \$25.00 (2 votes but only one publication issue); Congregation, School, Library, Corporation: \$40.00; and Student: \$15.00. Fees may be sent to the WELS Historical Institute, N15W23377 Stone Ridge Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53188.

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