

WELS Historical Institute

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Cover picture

The Gardner House in Watertown, Wisconsin—the first home of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Our Seminary in Watertown: 1863-1870

Part One

By Prof. James C. Danell, Jr.

Introduction

Though its doors did not open until September of 1863,¹ one could say that the seminary of our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod began on the morning of May 27th, 1861. As President Johannes Bading concluded his first yearly report to the Synod, meeting in convention at St. Mark's in Watertown, he offered the following suggestion: "The honorable Synod should try to get it straight in its own mind, whether or not the time has come to take appropriate steps toward the founding of our own seminary."² With that suggestion, President Bading literally put the establishment of a seminary at the top of synod's agenda.

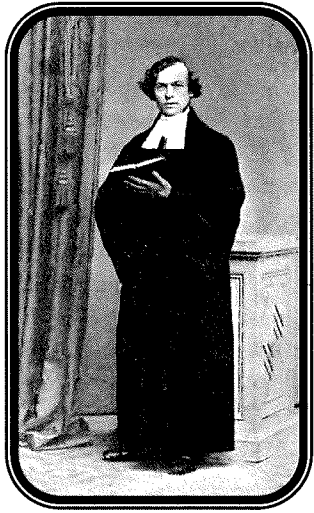
Actually, the idea of a seminary to train pastors for the Wisconsin Synod had been around for a number of years. Professor E.E. Kowalke says, "Even at the first meeting there was talk of having a seminary of our own. At every meeting in the early years the shortage of pastors and means of meeting the shortage was discussed."³ In his history of the Wisconsin Synod, J.P. Koehler says that "the idea of Synod's own seminary had been suggested by the German society agents."⁴

Ever since the Wisconsin Synod's founding, these mission societies in Germany had been a main source of pastors for the young synod in America. No matter how many pastors the mission societies were able to send, however, more were needed—and the members of the synod were at times not happy. In the minutes of the synod convention of 1853, the secretary records the remark that "people complained a great deal about the lack of preachers, and that in the past year, all hopes for help from the East had been unsuccessful."⁵

The second half of that remark reminds one that the synod was not relying solely on the German mission societies to provide it with pastors; synod, too, was doing what it could: looking for graduates from other Lutheran seminaries in America, exploring the possibility of making use of the Illinois Synod seminary in Springfield,⁶ ordaining candidates who had been trained in a congregation by the local pastor, and even resorting to "fly-by-night, would be pastors," who, however, "too often proved to be the cure that was worse than the original bite."⁷ But all of these efforts were not enough. One gets a feel for the massive numbers of German immigrants pouring into the American Midwest—and needing pastors—by glancing at just a couple of statistical reports. The 1858 report lists 25 congregations reporting 804 baptisms, with Mühlhäuser's Milwaukee congregation topping the list at 171.⁸ Six years later, 55 congregations reported 1,286 baptisms.⁹ The Wisconsin Synod was growing, and with that growth was the need for even more pastors.

President Bading assigned his suggestion of founding a seminary to a committee consisting of Pastors Mühlhäuser, Köhler, Böhner, and Sauer. The next day, Bading had synod's initial response. The committee reported "that as desirable as it

might be to have its own seminary, we just can't see how the goal could be reached at present." But there was a ray of hope. The committee continued, "We recommend that the Synod name a committee which in the course of the upcoming Synodical year directs its attention to this topic."¹⁰ And so the Wisconsin Synod earnestly began work that, under God, is still bearing fruit 150 years later.



President Johannes Bading

The first steps synod took toward establishing its own seminary can be described at best as small and cautious. In keeping with the initial resolution regarding a seminary, a "committee for the matter of education" was appointed. It consisted of Pastor C. F. Goldammer, Pastor J. Mühlhäuser, Pastor W. Streißguth, and Mr. D. Schwecke. They presented a report the next day. The report began by noting the significant growth in the synod, both in the number of members and in the amount of territory served. The committee then recommended three things: 1) that pastors be reminded of their duty not only to pray for more workers, but also to encourage young men toward the public ministry, and to provide some pre-seminary training for it; 2) that congregations be thanked for their past support, while at the same time be reminded of the ongoing, increasing need; and 3) that synod should continue to entrust its pastoral students to Gettysburg Seminary of the Pennsylvania Synod, and especially to the German evangelical Lutheran professor there, Dr. Schäffer, because the prospects for starting our own seminary looked dim. The minutes record that the committee recommendations precipitated "a rather lengthy discussion." There did seem to be more interest in the idea than there had been before.¹¹

A year later, President Bading had not forgotten the movement the 1861 convention had made in the direction of its own seminary, slight as it might have been. His strategy was to get behind the synod and push hard. He did that as he closed his yearly report to the convention on the morning of June 16th, 1862. At the end of a ten-page report, President Bading said,

I can't really believe that the synodical praesidium has ever, since the beginning of our synod, had to feel the lack of preachers as acutely as it happened in the course of the past synodical year. Old synodical congregations have stood there orphaned for many months, fighting for their life with the sects and schismatics. When they repeatedly asked for help, we could give them no comfort other than: wait with hope for the eventual help of the Lord. Requests for help have come in from new congregations which have not yet joined, but we were not able to grant their request. Where will this end, if we do not think more seriously about the founding of our own seminary and get to work with more strength and courageous faith. We cannot and we may not

rely on Germany. Even if a worker is sent to us now and then, whom we want to accept with heartfelt thanks to the Lord and to our German brothers who have a heart for us, that is only a drop in the bucket. We must dig a well in our land, in our synod, from which workers flow to us. If we want to wait with the founding of an institution of this kind until we are rich, then nothing will come of it. How did August Hermann Francke begin his orphanage in Halle? How did Pastor Harms begin his mission house in Hermannsburg? With little money, for they were poor, but with a strong faith in the almighty and rich Lord. Or do we want examples a little closer to home? Then let us look at the small beginnings of the educational institutions of the Missouri Synod, or at the small beginning of a seminary in the reformed fellowship of our land? All of them began in an unspectacular and insignificant way. And look, they have not only barely managed to survive, they have in part, by the grace of God, become large, flourishing institutions. Let us follow in their footsteps and just make a small beginning, with faith in the Lord's help. I hope in God, that a time will come also for us, when we can praise God about this with the Psalmist: "The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Come now, dear brothers and friends, let us at this synodical convention draw up a plan for the founding of an educational institution and call across the sea, "We are starting." I know for sure, some people from over there will call out to us, "We want to help."¹²

By synodical resolution, President Bading's report was handed over to a committee for their reaction. With Bading's closing words perhaps still ringing in their ears, the committee of Pastors Mühlhäuser, Fachtmann, Goldammer, and lay delegate Kiekhöfer responded that afternoon. "The committee acknowledges with joy the advisability of the suggestions and encouragements which have come from the *Langenberger Verein*¹³ for the establishment of a seminary for preachers in the evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and bordering states, and recommends the matter to the Synod for careful, serious consideration."¹⁴ The delegates agreed. It was another small step forward.

The extensive discussion that followed focused first on *the urgent need* synod had for its own seminary. The delegates mentioned a number of things that emphasized that need:

1. the growing influence of the Catholic church;
2. the exclusive spirit of the seminaries of Missouri and Iowa, of which the synod did not approve, and with which it did not want to fill its pastors;
3. the fact that at present thirteen congregations had vacancies, with no prospect of filling them;
4. requests for pastors from Minnesota and Iowa;
5. the fact that the lack of preachers was opening a big field of labor for the Methodists and *Albrechtsleute*;¹⁵ (Estimates at the convention were that the population of Wisconsin at that time was about 800,000, of which 250,000 were German. Of those, 160,000 were Protestant.)

6. the fact that though Minnesota was also very Protestant, there were just eight preachers there, only 2 or 3 of whom were full-time, while the *Albrechtsleute* and Methodists were doing missionary work like a well-oiled machine, rushing into every new settlement almost before the first house had been built.
7. the workload of the Lutheran preachers, which was so great that for some congregations, a sermon was a rare thing;
8. the fact that no schooling was available for the children;
9. the need for a strong unity, for a strong synodical spirit, and for interest in synod's congregations—something a seminary 1,000 miles away could not do.

The delegates were sure that such urgent need would awaken congregational interest in and support for a seminary.¹⁶

Convinced of the urgent need, the convention delegates got serious as they began to discuss not if, but how they could establish and maintain their own seminary. Their thought was to start small, and then gradually to expand, including also a college. They would rent a space and conduct a capital campaign. They estimated they would need between \$5,000 and \$6,000 to begin. A professor's salary would be another \$500. They were sure young men would come, especially if there were a college there. They also knew that the *Langenberger Verein* had promised to send them suitable students. As far as location was concerned, the delegates figured probably somewhere in the Milwaukee area. Wherever it would be, it needed to be a location that was easily accessible, that would show its support, and that had plenty of young people. As the day ended, the convention was "unanimous;" it needed its own seminary.¹⁷

When discussion of a seminary resumed the following morning, the conversation immediately turned to money. Pastor J. Mühlhäuser expressed his willingness to bring a synodical request for financial support before the *Gustav-Adolph-Verein*¹⁸ during his upcoming trip to Germany.¹⁹ The delegates empowered Pastor Mühlhäuser to act in synod's behalf while there, and voted to contribute to the cost of his travel.

Several delegates then spoke about the need synod would have to incorporate, since it might be buying property for a building. Pastor Stark was charged to look into the new incorporation law in Wisconsin and report back to the synod. When he did so that afternoon, the synod resolved to incorporate itself as "The German Evangelical-Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Bordering States." Synod's officers were legally empowered to transact business in the name of the synod.

Finally, the committee in charge of reacting to the president's report resolved "that we strongly support the recommendation of the praesidium with respect to the establishment of a preacher seminary."²⁰ The 1862 convention had unmistakably shown that synod was getting ever more serious about its own seminary.

The fact that a Wisconsin seminary seemed to be just on the horizon is something President Bading reflected in his report to the synod convention on May 9th, 1863, as it met at Grace Church in Milwaukee. The establishment of a seminary was

one of the first items of business he mentioned, and when he did, he spoke as forcefully about it as he could.

While we must think about the situation of our land and people with such sighing, and while we were plagued the whole year through with the horrors of war, in the affairs of the church, the Lord showed us grace beyond all our asking and comprehension. When we left our synodical convention last year, an overview of our fields of labor and of our workers had called to mind the Word of the Lord, "The harvest is great but the workers are few." Not less than thirteen vacant congregations had sent us urgent requests for preachers and pastors. Some of them had been without spiritual care for a long time already and had been plagued most severely by Methodists, *Albrechtsleute*, and other enthusiasts. Yet we had no idea where so many workers should come from to satisfy all these needs. But the Lord was gracious to us. He knew ways and means. He crowned the trip of our honorable *Senior* in Germany with such success, that a whole group of evangelists came across the ocean to work in fellowship with us in the labor of the Lord. Then we were able to meet the many needs with help, and give our travelling missionary opportunity, with his tireless, zealous spirit to open new fields and to prepare them for a pastor. To be sure, that requires new workers. For if the thousands of our fellow countrymen are not to fall prey to the sectarians in their forests and prairies, or become victims of unbelief, if the thousands who settle each year in Wisconsin and the bordering states are to remain in the Lutheran church, then every year we have a need for a significant increase in workers. In this we may certainly still look back to our old fatherland and live in the confidence that our German brothers, who have the spiritual well-being of their fellow Germans in America on their heart, will keep sending us workers we can use. But as thankfully as we recognize every bit of help which is sent to us from the German societies and fellowships to be, because of the great spiritual need of America and for the sake of the well-being of our synod and of our congregations, we must come back again and again to the establishment of our own theological seminary. The desire for one has already been expressed long ago. The plan for the founding was talked through rather extensively at the last synod convention. Now it depends on this: that it be implemented boldly and courageously. Certainly one should first estimate the costs, if one wants to build a tower. But just doing arithmetic won't get anything done. That does more to discourage than to encourage the founding of a seminary. We must include the calculating faith in the almighty Savior who will strengthen the weak and bless the small; indeed we must put that at the top, and then confidently begin, small and humbly, with the meager means and strength which are available to us. When we start something to the glory of our Savior and for the salvation of immortal souls, then we may entrust something to our Lord, to his almighty power and grace, without having to fear that we will come to shame with our work. Therefore, if we step forward

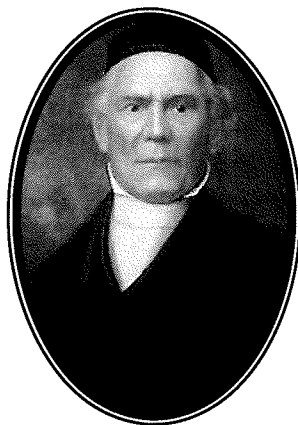
confidently with the founding of an educational institution at this synod convention, the Lord will provide it and carry forward the work we start to its glorious goal.²¹

The floor committees then took up the business of the 1863 convention. Much of it dealt with the founding of our own seminary. After accepting the documentation presented for incorporating the synod, the delegates authorized its submission to the state of Wisconsin for approval. They also ratified three additional synodical trustees President Bading had had to appoint, since the state of Wisconsin required six. Later, the delegates discussed at length sending their synod president to Germany for the express purpose of collecting funds for a seminary. Since they felt this visit was necessary, they would also need to find a substitute for his Watertown congregation. Step by step things were moving forward.

On Monday morning, Floor Committee 6 brought its report. As far as the committee was concerned, "the need for such an institution can't be emphasized strongly enough." The committee felt that synod needed to decide on a location. The place needed to have a good sized population and be centrally located; Watertown was preferable. The committee also recommended that synod get going with establishing a seminary, keeping the costs low. Synod should also give most careful thought to finding a suitable *Inspektor*.²² Floor Committee 6 ended its report by reminding the members of synod of their duty both to work and to pray for this goal.²³

As discussion began, reports of two conferences and another floor committee were read aloud. Once again, the suggestion was made that synod establish its seminary in Watertown. It was more centrally located, had cheaper land, was a smaller city, did not have as many distractions as a larger city, and had people who were in a position to donate goods for the support of a seminary. People in Milwaukee were busy supporting a hospital.²⁴

The discussion about location went back and forth; some delegates in favor of Milwaukee, others Watertown. For almost each point one delegate made, another had a counterpoint. Worth noting in the debate is the participation of Senior Mühlhäuser and President Bading. As one might expect, Mühlhäuser favored Milwaukee and Bading, Watertown. It is worth noting because of a comment J.P. Koehler makes in his *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*. He writes, "The personal choice, Bading or Muehlhaeuser, was a subject that was, of course, taboo in the discussion, but according to the unanimous testimony of the old-timers, pastors and laymen, who were actively interested at the time and still living thirty to fifty years ago, that was the potent though silent factor." Finally, the delegates decided to vote, and to



Pastor Johannes
Muehlhaeuser

do so by ballot. When all the ballots were in, the vote was Watertown 45, Milwaukee 19.²⁵

The only thing left to consider was who would be the teacher. Whom would synod choose to be its first seminary professor? President Bading wasted no time. "He suggested excusing Pastor Moldehnke from his position as travelling missionary so that he could move to Watertown and begin with the training of any available pupils."²⁶ Synod agreed, and so did Pastor Moldehnke, provided synod would allow him three months to complete his work as travelling missionary.²⁷ That was June 1st, 1863. Just over three months later, Professor Moldehnke opened the doors of synod's seminary in Watertown. He was just shy of 27 years old at the time.

When the convention resumed its business the next morning, however, Pastor Fachtmann and Senior Mühlhäuser immediately moved to reopen the discussion about the location of the seminary. They felt synod had acted unwisely from the perspective of money, and that it had rushed its decision on location. The delegates agreed to revisit the decision, but place the discussion at the end of the convention. Instead, the discussion resumed the next morning; the majority of the delegates wanted to settle the question sooner rather than later. Again Senior Mühlhäuser feared that Watertown would not show itself willing to support a seminary. In addition, Pastors Fachtmann and Streißguth expressed their opinion that Milwaukee was a better place for a college, which synod would also need. After considering these additional points, synod reaffirmed its decision for Watertown, but this time with the proviso that Watertown would need to show its willingness to support a seminary by raising \$2,000 for it. If it did not, synod reserved the right to revisit its decision about location once again.

As the convention of 1863 wound down, three other matters related to the Watertown seminary were decided. The delegates approved an expenditure of \$75 toward President Bading's trip to Germany to raise funds for the seminary. They also arranged for the pastoral vacancy which would then exist at St. Mark's in Watertown because of Bading's absence. Finally, they named an admissions committee for the seminary.

About a month later, in early July of 1863, President Bading left for Germany as synod had charged him to do. He would be gone for over a year. His task was to collect funds for the new seminary. He travelled extensively through northern Germany, and in the fall of 1863 moved on to the Baltic provinces and to parts of Russia. Seemingly, it was this first phase of his trip about which J.P. Koehler is speaking when he says, "The total net amount of his cash collection abroad, according to the next year's synodical report, was 10,294 *Thaler*, not quite \$13,000 according to the then rate of exchange."²⁸ Because of that success, synod voted to extend President Bading's trip abroad so that he could travel through Prussia and continue to gather offerings. In his history, Prof. E. Fredrich reports that this second and final phase "in Prussia raised another \$7,500 ... in the form of endowment funds."²⁹ Finally, on October 15th, 1864, President Bading and his family returned to America, arriving in Watertown about a month later. They had been gone for fifteen months. Unfortu-

nately, synod and its new seminary never saw any of the money that had been raised during the latter phase of the trip through Prussia.³⁰ As synod continued to become more and more confessional, it also continued to distance itself more and more from the mission societies and the Prussian High Consistory. Though it did not yet know it, synod would be pretty much on its own in financing its new seminary. At the time, synod had 31 congregations.

Year One: 1863-1864

While President Bading was travelling through Germany and Russia, back in his hometown of Watertown the seminary for which he had worked so hard opened its doors for the first time. The delegates had repeatedly expressed the thought that the seminary should start small, and that our seminary did. "In the fall of 1863 a seminary was opened in a rented house that also served as the dwelling of the one professor,"³¹ Dr. Edward Frederick Moldehnke (Moldenke). J.P. Koehler identifies the first home of Dr. Moldehnke as "the Stoppenbach house. That was the house at 814 North Fourth St.³² that later, after the Civil War which was now raging, was bought by (Confederate) Col. Gardner (*Gaertner*) and then by that name known as the original home of the college."³³ J.P. Koehler also says that "by the end of September Moldehnke had moved to Watertown."³⁴

Rev. Edward Friedrich Moldehnke, Ph.D., D.D., was born on August 10, 1836, in Insterburg, East Prussia. Today, this is the city of Chernyakhovsk in Russia. His parents were Franz August and Justine (Kessler) Moldehnke. His mother's family had originally come from Salzburg. When Moldehnke was nine, his mother died. His father remarried, but Moldehnke "had a very sad life under the harsh treatment of a step-mother."³⁵

Moldehnke received a very traditional, classical education. He began as a student at the Gymnasium (high school) in Lyck in 1845. At age 17, he enrolled at the University of Königsberg as a student of philosophy and theology. In the spring of 1855, he transferred to the University at Halle, where he lived for two years in the home of Prof. Dr. August Tholuck whom he served as private secretary.

Moldehnke first worked as rector of a parochial school in Eckersberg, East Prussia, where he was also an assistant to the pastor. The year was 1859. He did not work here long, however. In July of that year, Moldehnke returned home to teach religion at the College of Lyck/Lyck Gymnasium. For two years he taught four upper level religion courses, two upper level Hebrew courses, and Latin and German. At this time he married Elise Harder.

In July of 1861, Moldehnke responded to an appeal from the Langenberg and Berlin mission societies "for a travelling missionary for the Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, and as he had a great desire to do missionary work, he was ... ordained at Königsberg and sent out to Wisconsin."³⁶ The mission societies provided his annual salary of \$200. Moldehnke, along with his wife³⁷ and their one child, arrived in Wisconsin on August 3rd. Here he began "with undefatigable (sic) zeal"³⁸ his work as Synod's only *Reiseprediger*. In Berlin, a monthly publication entitled *Ansiedler im*

*Westen*³⁹ printed reports of his work. Moldehnke continued in this field of labor until synod called him to be its first seminary professor in the summer of 1863.

The *Dictionary of American Biography* describes Moldehnke as "a man of commanding presence and great personal charm," who "conversed fluently in German, English, Latin, Polish, French, and Italian, and had few equals as an orator in German."⁴⁰

Dr. Moldehnke⁴¹ began the seminary's first academic year in September of 1863 with one student, a man whose last name was Engelhardt. In addition to his seminary duties, Moldehnke also helped take care of the Watertown vacancy caused by Pastor Bading's trip to Europe. On top of that, he reported to the 1864 convention that he had made two small mission trips during the winter, visiting 23 different places, setting up Sunday schools and worship services where possible, baptizing 70 children, and distributing the Lord's Supper to 79 communicants.⁴²

Unfortunately Watertown's first seminary student, Mr. Engelhardt, did not last long. J.P. Koehler reports, he "had to be shipped by Moldehnke by the end of October."⁴³ In his report to the synod convention in May of 1864, Vice President G. Reim said it was because of the "lack of a decidedly Christian way of thinking."⁴⁴ Fortunately, God provided another seminary student in November, a man by the name of A.F. Siegler from Wollin, Hinterpommern. According to Koehler, "A. Siegler had already received teacher's training and had served as an assistant teacher from November 1862 - April 1863 in the parish of Pastor Lohmann at Glowitz."⁴⁵ Mr. Siegler roomed in the Bading's empty parsonage and ate his meals with the Moldehnkes. In addition to his seminary studies, Siegler also helped at the parochial school.

What exactly the seminary curriculum looked like that first year is, to the best of my knowledge, impossible to say. The earliest seminary catalog available in our Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary library is from the 1903 school year. The *Gemeinde-Blatt* did not begin until September, 1865. Though a seminary report was made to the synod convention, the curriculum during the first year was not a part of it. In his book *Centennial Story*, Kowalke describes the class day and curriculum this way.

The day's work began at eight o'clock in the winter, a half-hour earlier in summer, and continued with a short intermission till twelve noon. In the afternoon, again with a short intermission, the work went on till six o'clock in the winter and five-thirty in the summer. Hours like these were obviously needed if the subject matter assigned for treatment was to be covered even with greatest brevity. For example, the schedule for Monday morning included dogmatics, church history, exegesis of the Old Testament, German, mathematics, and Latin. The afternoon schedule was equally formidable: Greek New Testament, the Symbolical Books, Greek grammar, English, Hebrew, exegesis of the Old Testament, history, geography. According to the schedule submitted, this continued through the week until Friday afternoon, when only Greek and geometry were scheduled. But the slack was taken up at eight-

thirty on Friday evenings by ex tempore speeches.⁴⁶

J.P. Koehler was not impressed. He comments, "It may be that the apparent confusion is more in the hastily printed program than in the actual work, for Moldehnke, as a former German *Schulrektor*, certainly must have known better. On the other hand, it is in keeping with the impression that otherwise, too, Moldehnke's whole work leaves, to wit: that he was a man devoted to *multa* and hence did not accomplish the *multum*, despite his unflinching zeal and devotion to duty."⁴⁷

In the end, the curriculum was not the big issue; money was. Money was the seminary topic that would dominate the discussion at the upcoming synod convention. Koehler comments, "The lack of response on the part of Synod's constituency to the efforts of raising funds for the Seminary — lack of interest and hence of contributions, naturally aggravated by the war conditions — was doubly disappointing to a man of Moldehnke's volatile temperament."⁴⁸

The synod met in convention from May 27-31, 1864, in Manitowoc. In President Bading's absence, Vice President G. Reim chaired the convention and made the annual report. At the top of the convention agenda was the seminary. Reim's opening remarks made clear how much synod was depending on money from Germany for the support of the seminary. "The eager participation of our friends in the old homeland is supporting our honorable president in his efforts for the founding of our seminary most richly, and we can keep the seminary, which we have already begun, going without anxious worries. ... He has been successful to a great degree in awakening among our friends there interest in this goal and in collecting a significant sum."⁴⁹ He also announced that at the request of those in Germany, President Bading would be extending his stay to finish this seminary collection, and was therefore asking for a synodical salary of \$42 per month. Vice President Reim further reported the successful incorporation of the synod, and the acceptance of its legal charter by the state legislature of Wisconsin. Finally, he shared the information that the founding of a college in Watertown would have to wait until synod had the necessary facilities.

It was then that the floor committees got to work. After a longer debate about where to keep the money President Bading had collected so far, the convention decided to deposit it in a Milwaukee bank owned by Mr. Imbusch and Mr. Mitchel. They also asked synod officials, in light of the important seminary collection to be held in Prussia, to clear up any misunderstanding with the Prussian High Consistory which might prevent their approving this collection.

The next morning the committee charged with seminary matters was first on the agenda. It reported that Watertown had indeed raised the \$2,000 for the seminary which the 1863 convention had requested to show that it would support a seminary at that location. The committee recommended using the money to buy the property Professor Moldehnke was renting. It also asked the synod either to confirm Dr. Moldehnke as seminary professor or to call Pastor Giese. Some people in Germany wanted Moldehnke, whom they were paying to serve as travelling mis-

sionary, to remain the *Reiseprediger*. These same people also felt that Pastor Giese was better suited for the work of seminary professor. The committee also recommended to synod that it should conduct a special offering for the purpose of enlarging the home where Professor Moldehnke was living, and that synod should employ a teacher with strong English language skills in addition to the seminary professor. Perhaps of greatest importance was resolution 6: "The committee assumes it is self-evident that only those who faithfully adhere to the doctrine of our church be chosen for the theological teaching positions, and that they be pledged to all the confessional writings of our church."⁵⁰

The delegates accepted the report and began to discuss it. After asking for and hearing proof that Watertown had indeed raised the \$2,000, synod in essence confirmed Watertown as the location of the seminary. The delegates also authorized the Board of Trustees to use the \$2,000 collected in the Watertown area, along with any other money it might collect, to buy suitable property. When the convention resumed the next morning, the delegates heard more about the desire of the Minnesota Synod to make use of Wisconsin's new seminary, and of the willingness of Minnesota Synod President Heyer in return, to undertake a collection "in the east" for the support of the seminary. The delegates approved. They also approved a special collection in the congregations of their own synod. After debating how this might best work, the delegates adopted the following resolution: "A committee shall be appointed to formulate an address in which on the one hand, the necessity of a seminary for our synod is presented and laid on the hearts of the congregations and, on the other hand, the assurance is given that this seminary shall also serve, to the best of its ability, the interest of the school."⁵¹ The last seminary actions the delegates took that day included approving the recommendations for a teacher with strong English skills and for the confessional requirements for all theological professors.

When the convention resumed on Monday morning, seminary matters were again on the agenda. First up was the charter of incorporation. The floor committee felt that some things needed to be clarified and/or corrected. The delegates twice decided to seek legal counsel. Finally, synod resolved to appoint a committee which would present the next convention with either one or two fully worked-out charters, along with any necessary by-laws. The delegates also decided to move the synodical library to Watertown so that it would be available to the seminary students.

That left only one major seminary item on the convention agenda: the funding appeal to the congregations which synod had charged a committee to compose.

To Our Dear Congregations. "Knock, and it will be opened to you."

We are following the exhortation, we trust the promise of our Savior, therefore we are turning to you, dear congregations, in the sincere confidence that you will be willing to continue laboring with us in the work of the Lord and to help us, where it is necessary, to found a seminary for preachers and school

teachers, a workshop of the Holy Spirit, in which he forms capable young people and prepares them for his service.

Not only for the salvation and blessing of the members of our dear evangelical Lutheran church scattered here in the northwest and lacking shepherds, not only for the salvation and blessing of the new immigrants, but also for your salvation and blessing and for that of your children and descendants, have we, with much prayer and supplication to the Lord, decided in the last year to establish a seminary for the education of capable Lutheran preachers and teachers, "so that one may raise up people, capable to teach in the church. For some imagine it is enough for a preacher that he can read German. But that is a harmful delusion. It is also not an insignificant skill to teach and instruct others in a way that is clear and correct; and it is also not possible for unschooled people to have this skill." "The Word and the preaching office," says our dear Dr. Martin Luther, "is the highest and chief thing." He says further with respect to the office of teachers: "and I, if I could and would have to stop doing the work of preaching, then I would prefer to have no other work than to be a schoolmaster or a teacher of young boys. For I know that this work, after the work of preaching, is the most useful, greatest, and best, and I do not yet know which of the two is the best."

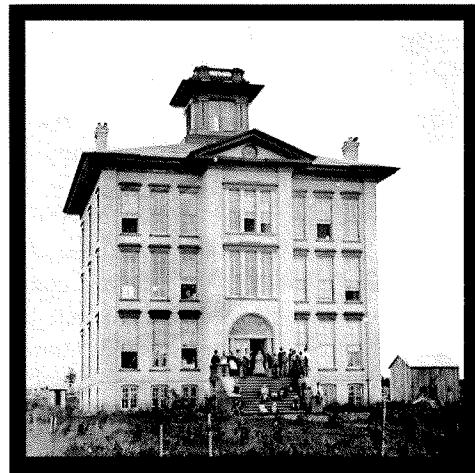
If, with our Lord's help, the pure teaching of the sweet Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be further preserved for the old and young, for their comfort in life and death, and that is the Lord's will, then it is our duty to provide for the training of orthodox preachers and teachers. The urgent need of such a seminary is something your own experience teaches you. Indeed, you have yearned for shepherds for a long time. And the longer a soul recognizes and experiences the grace of God, which he grants you through the preaching office, the greater is your desire for it, where it is lacking. Through the Lord's grace you are provided with preachers, some of you also with teachers. Some have preachers, who likewise can also have school with the dear youth. Others by contrast can only be sparingly served with Word and Sacrament and must do without an organized school for their children. Indeed, many congregations which belong to our synod presently don't have a preacher or a teacher, and continually call for help. "Man does not live on bread alone." Therefore, when we look at so many, many scattered fellow believers who emigrated to the west going without any and all church care, when we see the lambs of Jesus Christ growing up without Christian training and instruction and being carried away more and more by the flood of corruption, our hearts go out to these people, and we feel their cry: "come and help us!" deep in our hearts. In addition, there is what the sects are doing, who in great haste are preying on our shepherdless Lutheran brothers to lead them astray into their fanatical ways, and from justification by faith to work righteousness. "Therefore, let us do good to everyone, but most of all to fellow believers." New immigrants are coming from the old German homeland in droves. Our own congregations are

growing and need more and more preachers and teachers. — "O Lord of the harvest, look. The harvest is great; the number of harvesters is small." —

To be sure through messengers from Germany, through efforts of our own preachers, and through organized mission work, we have tried to help and with thanks to the Lord, we must confess, that he has blessed our small efforts richly. But help which will be enough, which will also stretch into the future can only be afforded by the founding of an institution in which preachers and teachers are trained. "And because the greatest need, lack, and complaint everywhere is that we don't have enough people, we must not wait until they grow themselves. We won't hew them out of stone or carve them out of wood either. God will also not do miracles, as long as we can accomplish something with what he has already given. Therefore **we must do our part and apply effort and money to it.** We must educate them and do it."⁵² And so we have made a beginning, in weakness, and taken a few students. In addition, our president last year, Pastor Bading, has at this point gathered a significant sum in Germany and Russia for our seminary. With new courage, we have in mind, with our Lord's help, to continue laboring in our work, to the honor of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the eternal salvation of immortal souls. **We anticipate your willing help with joyful confidence.** For the institution is chiefly for your good. "Everything happens for your sake." We are all the more dependent on your help, as little is to be expected for a Lutheran seminary and for a seminary of the Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin from the English churches. Above all, we need your whole-hearted participation, your zeal, especially your prayers, then your young, capable people. "If you don't want to encourage your child to do this, and someone else doesn't want to encourage his, and so on and so forth, if neither father nor mother want to give their child to our God, where then will the spiritual office and estate be?" Furthermore, we need money, food, and things necessary for the equipping of the seminary. We point you to the example of other branches of our Lutheran church, especially the Norwegians, who are building one institution after another and from whom a synod recently gathered \$18,000 in their congregations without outside help. If every family just does something—and we hope that no family will exclude itself from the work of the Lord, we can gather a significant sum in our own synodical congregations. It is in your hands to exercise, with the Lord's help, incalculable influence on this and the coming generations. Help plant and water so that, provided the Lord gives the increase, you and your descendants can enjoy the fruit. "And may the Lord our God be gracious to us and may he establish the work of our hands. Yes, may he establish the work of our hands." Amen.⁵³

The delegates accepted the document, directed that 5,000 copies be printed, and that delegates write down how many copies each of them needed.

This left only a few seminary matters to attend to as the 1864 convention



The Kaffeemuehle 1866

came to a close. The delegates added a sixth man to the seminary's Board of Trustees, and then made Moldehnke's call as seminary professor permanent. They also established a seminary admissions committee consisting of the trustees and seminary professor. Looking back at this convention a year later, President G. Reim would call it "a great turning point in the development of our synod."⁵⁴

The months between the end of the 1864 synod convention on May 31st and the opening of the seminary's second academic year were busy ones on a number of fronts. Since a large

part of financing a seminary (and college) depended on offerings coming from Germany, including the planned collection in Prussia about to begin, it is worth mentioning that it was at just this time that questions about the relationship between synod and the unionistic German mission societies were coming to a head. A letter from the *Langenberger Verein* dated July 3, 1864, asked for a definitive answer from synod regarding its doctrinal confession and practice. Synod secretary Adolf Hönecke replied on July 30th; his letter was not particularly conciliatory. Nonetheless, the Seminary Board went ahead with the purchase of land. Acting on the authority of the convention, they purchased 5.5 acres of land at a cost of \$687.50. The land was a pasture on the corner of Western and College.⁵⁵ Though other sites were available, J.P. Koehler indicates that the trustees chose the parcel of land they did for a very specific reason. "There were two other available sites which would have afforded the school a more commanding view than its present location. ... Fifty years ago, Chr. Gamm told the author that the farm could have been too readily disposed of again and thus might have facilitated the removal or discontinuance of the school, and that would have militated against raising contributions in Watertown. The 'experimental' talk at synod, though squelched, had evidently raised new fears."⁵⁶

The trustees, however, did not stop with the purchase of land. They also proceeded with the construction of a building. The facility the trustees had designed and built was a style common at the time. According to Koehler, it was known as the "old coffee mill."⁵⁷ It was to house the seminary, the college, a preparatory school, and an academy or general high school. The building design provided for future wings, but these were never erected. The cost of the building was not to exceed \$10,000. Initially, the trustees used money which Bading had collected abroad to make the payments. When Bading heard that this is how the money was being used, however, he put a stop to it immediately, indicating that these funds were to be used as an endowment for teachers' salaries. Ground was broken in July

or August of 1864.⁵⁸

The trustees realized that they would now need more than the general appeal letter which had been drawn up at the synod convention. They would need a second appeal, and a special collector. When they appointed one, however, their appointment raised questions of authority. G. Reim, who in Bading's extended absence had been elected synod president at the 1864 convention, vetoed the board's resolutions, and the visitors⁵⁹ demanded the right to vote with the trustees and to participate with them in their supervision and reporting roles. In addition, the visitors protested against the building project, saying that the 1864 synod convention had not authorized it. It was in this context that the Watertown seminary began its second academic year in the fall of 1864.

Year Two: 1864-1865⁶⁰

It was an eventful year. One bright spot for the seminary was the fact that in its second year of operation, enrollment jumped from one to eleven.⁶¹ A. F. Siegler returned for another year of seminary training.⁶² He was joined by Hermann Hoffmann, "who already had had three years of training in the Berlin Mission House and for one-and-a-half years had attended the theological lectures at the university there." Koehler says that of the remaining nine students, "two were the oppidans⁶³ Max Gaebler and Johann (?) Gamm. Three probationers were denied enrolment after seven weeks." These "nine students formed the lower division, which was calculated to offer some teacher training (Joh. Gamm)." In addition to their studies, the students were expected to help out in the garden, in the kitchen, at church, and at the school.⁶⁴ The older seminarians along with Professor Moldehnke also preached at vacant congregations in the area. In addition, Dr. Moldehnke made three trips, one to Milwaukee, one to Racine, and one to Fond du Lac, "in the middle of the school year, to drum up the wherewithal to keep the school going."⁶⁵ He was gone for three and a half weeks in January and February.⁶⁶ He wanted to make other trips, but just couldn't. He also tried, unsuccessfully, to drum up support for the seminary out east. In addition, the seminary students themselves collected food in Dodge County and in Town Lebanon over the winter. As the year started, meals were prepared by Mrs. Moldehnke. When meal preparation became too much for her alone, she was joined by Mrs. Koester, a pastor's widow, who took over the work of *Hausmutter*.⁶⁷ That was in November. Only by the grace of God could the Watertown seminary finish its second year. But what a joyful spring it was, when on April 25th, 1865, seminary student Hermann Hoffmann passed his examinations and was called as pastor of the congregation in Portage. Synod's seminary had its very first graduate.

The year had taken a real toll on Professor and Mrs. Moldehnke, however. In a letter to Synod President Reim in October of 1864, Moldehnke wrote,

And the actions of the trustees are a matter of total regret for me, since they seem to think I can handle the whole burden alone.

I am hereby letting you know that my wife is giving up the upkeep of the seminary; and I will likewise be looking for another position. Therefore see to it in due time, because if you don't want everything to fall to pieces, you have to show some concern for your teacher and students. It's just finally getting to be too much, the way I have to wear myself out and watch my wife wear herself out. I'd like to get together with Fachtmann in Minnesota, as has been my intention for some time now. You can certainly call Hoenecke or someone else here.⁶⁸

The 1865 synod convention began just as the 1864 convention had ended—with the Watertown seminary. Because of the very recent and unexpected resignation of President Reim, Vice President Wilhelm Streißguth presented the annual report of the president, which still appeared under Reim's name. It spoke of the very positive impact the seminary would have on doctrinal correctness and unity. The fact that Wisconsin now had its very own seminary would show other confessional Lutherans in America that it did indeed want to be confessional and orthodox. With great joy synod looked forward to the ordination of candidate Hermann Hoffmann, the Watertown seminary's first graduate, which would take place during the convention. But the report also had some questions for the convention. It asked them this way.

People said, 'let's start now.' Last year, through their delegates, our congregations called to us, 'Begin in God's name.' We did that in faith. But where is the energetic support from our congregations? An appeal to our congregations for the support of our seminary was appended to the last synod proceedings. During the year, the trustees of the seminary issued a second appeal. Yet only a part of our congregations supported the seminary with contributions. The others did nothing. We hear people say, 'Times are tough.' And that is true. But the times aren't so tough that one couldn't support the seminary if one wanted to. Do you want to help with the shortage of preachers? Then support the seminary. That is the only advice we can give you."⁶⁹

In closing, the report mentioned a number of other seminary matters that the delegates either should know, or that would need their attention. It informed them that the trustees had not had enough time to carry out the synodical resolution regarding the charter. Nor had Minnesota Synod President Heyer had the time to conduct a collection for the seminary. And finally, it reported that construction of the building in Watertown had progressed to such an extent that it would be ready to use in a few weeks. When that happened, synod could and should also open the college, which would mean that synod would need to provide a college instructor.

When the convention reconvened that afternoon, Professor Moldehnke was first on the agenda with the seminary report. Given the kind of year it had been, Dr. Moldehnke struck a very positive tone, putting the best construction on the lack of

financial support. Though congregational support had not been what he had hoped for, he attributed it to the Civil War, a bad harvest, and other problems in congregations which had made pastors hesitant to ask for support for the seminary. He looked confidently toward a new academic year, quoting Psalm 68, "Praise be the Lord every day. God lays a burden on us, but he also helps us. Sela." and the words of 1 Samuel 7, "Thus far has the Lord helped us." He did, however, suggest that synod consider sending out a collector to raise money for the seminary. He also asked the convention to arrange for a summer vacation for the seminary. There had not been one the previous year, and the students, most of whom were quite poor, needed time to earn enough money to buy clothes. They also needed some rest. In addition, he asked synod to donate clothes for the seminary students. After that came the seminary's financial report. Dr. Moldehnke reported an operating deficit for the year of \$705.88,⁷⁰ followed by a detailed report of all expenses and all income as of July 1, 1865. Among the expenses was money for sheets, towels, wool blankets, tablecloths, washcloths, lamps, chairs, firewood, tools, dishes, laundry, lumber, a mirror, a clock, a scale, beds, tables, and two ovens, one for heating and one for cooking. Following that was a list of the names of every individual or group that had given a gift of money or goods to the seminary. Among the donations were potatoes, meat, butter, cabbage, carrots, turnips, beans, flour, onions, chicories, towels, soap, wood, barrels, sheets, quilts, pillow cases, and wool socks, plus some trees, plants, and labor for a bit of landscaping in front of the new building.⁷¹

Discussion of Dr. Moldehnke's report followed. The main focus was on the lack of money and students. The delegates could only say that if synod's congregations showed as much interest in the Watertown seminary as the people in Germany did, the kind of needs Dr. Moldehnke had outlined would not exist. They enjoined the pastors to place the seminary's needs emphatically on the hearts of their congregations, and bemoaned the fact that synod had no publication which could regularly bring these needs before the members of the synod, and encourage them to do their duty and to help.⁷² The delegates promised to do what they could and asked everyone to pray for the seminary. As far as the lack of students was concerned, the delegates expressed the thought that because people in America were so materialistic, it would be good to follow Dr. Moldehnke's lead and look into establishing a pre-seminary program in Germany.⁷³

Not until a day later did seminary matters once again come before the convention. The floor committee responsible for the seminary asked that the Board of Trustees report on the actions they had taken since the last convention. They especially wanted to hear about the use of the money Bading had collected, the position of an English professor, and the purchase of land. In addition, they recommended that the board be empowered to determine the curriculum, the school calendar, and the employment of the students during breaks. Last of all, they wanted the synod to discuss whether or not the Board of Trustees had the authority to send a collector outside the congregations of the synod.⁷⁴

That afternoon, the floor committee charged with reviewing the charter re-

ported that the trustees had not had time to carry out the resolution of the previous convention and that therefore synod should appoint a committee which would not fail to see to this work. The previous year's difficulties between the board and the visitors, and the fact that President Reim had vetoed a board resolution, illustrated the importance of this work.⁷⁵

When the convention resumed on Monday morning, the seminary floor committee added an addendum to their report. They asked the convention to thank Dr. Moldehnke publicly for his tireless efforts for the seminary, to pray for and support him, as well as to provide him with some relief in his work so that he might have a little time to rest.

The synod accepted these resolutions and then moved on to the report of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees took the opportunity to respond to the specific questions which the convention had asked of it. Speaking for the board, Pastor Huber told the delegates that if the board had acted contrary to the wishes of the synod and in a way that was in fact beyond its authority, this action was due only to the imprecision both of the charter and of the way synod had expressed its wishes the previous year. The lack of clarity in the charter was also the reason, he said, for the difficulties with the visitors. The board also wanted the assembly to know that they had been very careful regarding the finances of the new building. After hearing the report, the delegates resolved to let bygones be bygones, and in unity to move forward in support of the seminary. Shortly thereafter, they approved the positions of two teachers for the college, and called upon Professor Moldehnke and the trustees to draw up a provisional constitution for the seminary and college which would contain specifics about the ages and acceptance of students, to be valid until the next synod convention, at which time synod would review it. They also resolved to ask each of the delegates present to write down how much he could contribute to the annual salary of Professor Moldehnke.⁷⁶

That afternoon the convention continued with seminary matters. The committee charged with the topic of establishing a pre-seminary program in Germany which would serve as a feeder for the Watertown seminary recommended to synod that Pastor Lohmann in Glowitz begin such a program as soon as possible. This pre-seminary program should reflect synod's doctrinal position, provide a thorough elementary training, good knowledge of Bible history and the Catechisms, and, if possible, begin with the old languages. Synod did want Pastor Glowitz to know that it could not afford to send any financial assistance now, but hoped that people in Germany would provide such support. Synod approved these recommendations. After voting to raise Professor Moldehnke's annual salary from \$500 to \$800, in addition to free rent, the convention approved the gathering of a special offering for the poorest students. They then rescinded the motion regarding Professor Moldehnke's raise and committed the matter to the trustees. That afternoon the delegates heard the final report regarding the money Pastor Bading had raised for the seminary during his trip abroad. The synod could hardly thank him enough for all he had done. Shortly thereafter, the delegates empowered the trustees to appoint a collector to gather a special offering during the year in Wisconsin for the

seminary. This convention had once again been dominated to a large extent by the seminary in Watertown.⁷⁷

Shortly after the end of the 1865 convention, the first edition of the synod's church newspaper, the *Gemeinde-Blatt*, appeared. Its editors, Dr. Moldehnke, Pastor Bading, and Pastor Hönecke wasted no time in using it to support the Watertown schools. The September 1 edition contained an open letter "to our dear congregations." Once again the author highlighted the great need for preachers. The author acknowledged that Germany was doing all it could to send pastors. But their effort was not enough. The article continued,

We need young people for service in the church and in schools **from our own congregations**. What do you say about those people who are physically strong enough to work, but prefer to put their hands in their lap and wait for the help of others? ... Where appropriate, offer your sons to the Lord for service in church and school and **do not hinder their work**, but rather pray that the Lord prepare for himself among your children willing workers and **urge** them into his service. ... The Lord deigned to need the service of poor humans: he has need of weak tools for the preservation and spreading of his kingdom. Those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus are happy to have children who have received from God the **natural** and **spiritual** gifts for service in the church and school. Such parents will start early, directing the hearts of their children to the precious work. Even if a preacher in this country must perhaps bear more shame and want than in other countries, even that is something salutary.⁷⁸

Year Three: 1865-1866

On the afternoon of September 14th, 1865, synod dedicated its seminary's first building. Pastor Bading, as president of the trustees, spoke first, and presided over the actual dedication. Professor Moldehnke then spoke about the significance of religion, especially Christianity, in the history of the world. Finally, the new college professor, Adam Martin, spoke to the gathering in English about the significance of the college for the education of the individual, for the well-being of the state, and for the interests of the church. Pastor Gausewitz closed the dedication ceremony with prayer and the blessing, after which those in attendance sang, "Now Thank We All Our God."

Erecting this building had not been easy, by any means. As Pastor Bading, the president of the trustees, began his report to the synod convention in the summer of 1866, he spoke of the "discouraging state of affairs" with which the year had begun. He was referring in particular to the debt synod had incurred in erecting a building for the seminary and college in Watertown. Costs had exhausted the funds and created a significant debt-load, which had hindered the completion of the building.⁷⁹ Pastor Bading attributed this set of circumstances to the fact that synod's congregations did not know about "the troubling situation of their scattered

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and abandoned brothers in faith," and so did little to support the costs of the building. Nonetheless, the board had found ways of completing the work, "leaving it to God's care to provide the required means for doing it." And provide God did, through some generous gifts from congregations, through a special collection, through gifts from Europe, and through interest-free loans.⁸⁰

With a new facility now ready for occupation (according to Frey, the seminary occupied the third floor), synod also opened a college—something it had wanted to do from the start. Though not meant to serve exclusively as a pre-seminary institution, the college did intentionally have that function as part of its mission, and therefore offered instruction in German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in addition to courses in French, mathematics, history, geography, physics, chemistry, and astronomy.⁸¹

With the start of a college department, which saw an enrollment of 66 by year's end, synod had to increase the teaching staff, first to two and then to four. As the "theological professor," Moldehnke "was to be the ranking teacher." Koehler calls Professor Adam Martin the "head and organizer of the new school, or department." According to Koehler, Martin's "call apparently specified that he should organize the college." In addition, Moldehnke was "not to have anything to do with the management of the household; Bading was to be the Board's executive in that respect."⁸²

The next day, the seminary began its third year with eight students preparing for the pastoral office. (The seminary also played a role in the training of those preparing for the office of teacher.) Of the eight seminary students, three were new: Aug. Schmidt, Louis Junker, and J. Grotheer. Four students also returned, among them was A. Siegler. The others were Achilles, Horwinsky, Schwarting, and Denke.⁸³ Moldehnke also mentions three students who were in the college's pre-seminary program: Dahlke, Denninger, and Gamm.⁸⁴

Not all eight completed the year, however. Hönecke says that five were dismissed, some temporarily and some permanently. Synod *Proceedings* provide some details. "One student, by the name of Schwarting, despite all his effort, could not make up for the lack of natural gifts. Dismissal, at his request, was not denied. Unfortunately, it became clear that the other, Wilh. Denke, was a hypocrite and a malicious person, and had to be excluded because of his unworthiness which had become evident."⁸⁵ Apparently, attrition has always been an issue.

The seminary, and now also college, continued to receive gifts of food and handiwork from people in the area. J.P. Koehler says, "The keep of the students thru (sic) the year probably would not have been possible without that."⁸⁶ Bading reported that because of gifts like these, and the careful management of the housemother, Mrs. Koester, the institution ended the year only a few hundred dollars in the red.⁸⁷ The seminary also received one gift during the year worthy of special mention: a number of valuable books from Mr. Oscar Steinmeyer of Berlin, who also promised to send more.

Professor Kowalke provides the following picture of life in the new building. "Rising time in the summer was 5:00, in the winter 6:00; chapel was held one-half

hour later. Breakfast was served at 7:00, dinner at 12:00, supper at 6:00; bedtime was at 10:00. The hours from seven o'clock till eight, from twelve till two, and from five-thirty till seven-thirty were free periods; at all other hours students had to be either in the classroom or in their study rooms. No student was permitted to leave the grounds without permission."⁸⁸ The rules were in place; the problem was, there was very little supervision in the dormitory to enforce them.

With so many more students, "the domestic and dormitory management of the school now created a problem."⁸⁹ During this school year, the work Mrs. Koester was being asked to do became too much, and she asked to be relieved of her duties. Bading reported this matter to the synod convention this way.

The in part very sad experiences with the students led us to recognize that a thorough change in the internal management of the institution must occur. And so also in this matter, a difficult task for the Board had become more difficult. The command and the promise of our faithful God alone were able to keep us from despondency, and show us the straight way of a faith-filled, joyful continuation of the work. The board could beseech God's blessing with confidence, because (no matter how many mistakes may have occurred) the founding of the institution was no presumptuous step, but an absolute necessity. ... In keeping with the nature of the matter, the regulation of the internal affairs of the institutions: the management of the students, the engaging of teachers, the establishment of the limits of various authority, etc., requires greater attention than the administration of the externals. ... Accordingly, the board drew up a provisional set of rules, after inspection of all the regulations we could get ahold of from other, similar institutions. It is placed before the honorable synod for approval or improvement. ... A further point, which the board believes it can't emphasize seriously enough, has to do with the daily management and oversight of the students by an inspector enabled to do so. Aside from the fact that many evils which occurred in the course of the year establish this measure as very necessary and desirable, many other circumstances make this arrangement an irrefutable necessity. Professor Moldehnke is thinking about a possible return to Germany very soon. The housemother, Mrs. Koester, has likewise decided to retire from her sphere of activity, so that the seminary finds itself, possibly soon, standing there completely orphaned. With such a state of affairs, serious prayer for God's leading, to whom the matter belongs, and most zealous effort to find and get the right man, are well in place. May God be gracious to us and help us! When the necessity of the engagement of an inspector was deduced just from the resignation of Mrs. Koester, and some other reasons, the board decided to suggest for this office Pastor Hönecke, the honorable secretary of the synod. Whether or not this decision in view of the most recent development of our relationships is to be upheld is for an honorable synod to decide.⁹⁰

The third year of its existence had been a strenuous one for the young seminary. Professor Kowalke sums up Dr. Moldehnke's report to the synod this way. "In his report Professor Moldehnke referred to the unremitting battle to overcome physical difficulties, to the debt that was strangling the institutions, to the many discouraging occurrences in the schools, and to the struggle to keep the infant college alive and to harmonize its work with that of the seminary. Besides all this, he says, the three enemies that Luther mentions in the Small Catechism, the world, the flesh, and the devil were inordinately active within and without the institutions. He had never favored locating the college in Watertown and remarked that the college was now harvesting the bitter consequences of the mistake that was made in placing the school in a small city."⁹¹

As President W. Streißguth began his annual report to the 1866 convention, point number one in his report was the seminary. He summarized the seminary's situation well.

At the time of our last convention, our schools were in a situation which justified both great hopes and great concerns. They did not come into existence following a path of quiet development, but with a sudden, powerful jolt. They will therefore need more than the usual amount of time, as well as wisdom and love from the synod and its officials. It will also need to have more than the usual measure of divine blessing, patience, and help in order to achieve its purpose. May the rich God grant both!

For the first time, the Board of Trustees presented a formal, written report to the convention. Much of its contents you have already heard, as we reviewed the 1865-1866 school year. Just one more thing pertained specifically to the seminary—enrollment. Eight students were not enough to meet synod's need for pastors. Since, in the board's opinion, the American frame of mind was so materialistic, it could not expect to find many acceptable young men here who would be willing to work in the Lord's vineyard. Therefore it encouraged synod to continue urgently pursuing the establishment of a pre-seminary program in Germany. It also reported encouraging news on that front from both Professor Moldehnke and Board President Bading.⁹²

Immediately following the report of the Board of Trustees was that of Professor Moldehnke. He acknowledged that it had been a difficult year, for all the reasons Bading had mentioned. But he also reminded the delegates that what is worthwhile always is hard work. In addition, they could count on God's help. He informed the delegates that in addition to his teaching duties in the seminary, and now also the college, he had his work as editor of the *Gemeinde-Blatt*. From Christmas through around Easter, he had also served the vacancy in Columbus and the surrounding area. On top of that, he had gathered a special offering. Then, in order to "recover from great stresses" he made a nine-week mission trip in Minnesota during the winter. Because he used four weeks of break to do it, he only missed five weeks of class! He further reported that the plans for starting a pre-seminary

program in Germany had hit a few bumps, but if synod was willing to cover some of the cost, the program could possibly begin that year.⁹³

Synod acted almost immediately on the matter of a pre-seminary program in Germany. It resolved to ask the Prussian High Council to use the interest on the money President Bading had raised in Prussia, along with the interest from a planned collection in Mecklenburg, to help fund the program, but under the condition that the program teach synod's doctrinal position. It also said it would provide what help it could, but could not make any promises.

The next major matter to come before the convention was the report of the committee responsible for the seminary. Its report included the following on the provisional handbook (*Hausordnung*) which the board had drawn up. In general, it approved of the document as presented. It added its voice to that of the trustees in establishing the position of inspector. It did, however, feel that the inspector should have more authority over the students, in particular in the interaction between male and female students. The committee called for narrower limits in the interactions. It also felt there should be more details in the authority for discipline. Though the individual members of the committee approved of the mission trip Prof. Moldehnke had made, and which the board had approved, it did call on the board to provide its rationale. The whole topic was later "hotly debated." The convention subsequently resolved that the permission given was "justified under the circumstances at the time." One of the floor committees did, however, "express its wonder, how it has become possible for Prof. Moldehnke to exchange his teaching office at the seminary for an extended period with his office of travelling missionary." Last of all, the committee felt that the matter of suspending a student was too vague. They also felt that the inspector should do some teaching, and supported the board in its choice of Pastor Hönecke.⁹⁴

The delegates agreed with the committee's feelings about the handbook (*Hausordnung*). They also agreed to establish the position of inspector, who would also teach theology in the seminary. The synod elected Pastor Adolf Hönecke. At this point, the minutes record something that no doubt surprised, if not shocked those who were there. "As a result of this motion, Professor E. Moldehnke announces that he is resigning his office" (professor and editor of the *Gemeindeblatt*). In his synodical history, Professor Fredrich says that Moldehnke "insisted that he could not consent to such a lavish waste of manpower for such few students enrolled. There were no personal problems. Adolph Hoenecke, the synod's choice for the second post, was a Halle fellow student whom Moldehnke himself had recommended for a college teaching post."⁹⁵ J.P. Koehler also offers this thought: "We have heard before, in the correspondence of the German societies, that Eichler didn't consider Moldehnke the man to start or head the Seminary. This sentiment was evidently shared within the Synod and sought vent, the year before, in the questioning of Moldehnke's tenure and the year after in the election of Hoenecke."⁹⁶ The following two entries in the convention minutes say, "Professor Moldehnke's reasoning is not recognized as sound as far as a number of people are concerned, and for the sake of the future, his remaining as theological professor is

urgently desired.” That’s how things remained until the next morning. As the convention was drawing to a close, this entry is also included in the minutes, “Upon his request, the synod announces to Prof. Moldehnke that the resignation he offered is not accepted.”⁹⁷ As a follow-up to the convention, J. P. Koehler reports, “For the time being the matter was adjusted with the understanding that he was to devote seven months to his missionary work, as he himself had wished, but within the week after synod he sent his definite resignation, in very cross humor, stating that he was returning to Germany.”⁹⁸ In a letter dated June 19, 1866, this is what Moldehnke said.

As soon as I returned home and spoke with several synod associates, it became clear to me that I could not keep my position. I was called by the synod as a theological professor, not as a dorm father. Nevertheless, out of necessity I encountered innumerable difficulties, which lay outside of the proper sphere of my call. How could I deny that things should have been handled much better! But that I have been condemned for not being able to maintain discipline, and for having had difficulties with discipline also during the last year—well, that I just can’t figure out. I guess I’m just not sure what my call as theological professor involves. The fact that I had extensive dealings with an unruly college student is a completely different matter; but still, I think that I had a right to complain, since I was burdened with him in several classes—after all, the other teachers who hardly had anything to do with him keep complaining endlessly. For the very reason that I am concerned about discipline, I became deeply involved with several English boys, and my successors will soon understand what I’m talking about.

Now I’ll come to the consideration of the position to which I have been appointed by the honorable synod. Although I have been assigned as a theologian and professor and in this convention there has been no complaint raised against me, nevertheless, according to the committee report to appoint an inspector who can at the same time instruct, the very next proposal was to call an inspector who should at the same time be a theological professor. Now, as I pointed out in Fond du Lac, two theological professors are too many; consequently I have been virtually forced out of my position in an underhanded way, without anyone actually coming right out and saying so. My resignation, which I had no choice but to offer if I didn’t want to lose all respect, was not accepted; but now I found out that this non-acceptance was due to this reason: “He worked too much, we shouldn’t wear him out”; “If he had said he was going to Germany, then we would have gladly accepted his resignation”; “Who’s going to tell him he should go to Germany?” Remarks such as these naturally are making life bitter for me; things like this are said in order to avoid hurting my feelings, but they’re just a cover-up for the real reason. As a front they tell me that they’re offering me the *Reisepredigt* so that I don’t get worn out; and without suspecting what their real intention

was when they spoke of my travels, I joined in their discussions. But now I hear that the synod expects me to travel for seven months. Well, they will have to admit that I know more than they do about what condition my bodily strength is in. Physically I’m so low that I couldn’t possibly undertake such difficult travels. In addition, spreading myself too thin goes against my grain; I would neither be able to edit the *Gemeinde-Blatt* nor carry out my duties in my capacity as professor; and inwardly I would be even more torn apart than I already am. As I said previously to Pastor Bading and others, if a dorm father could have been acquired who would also teach at the college, then naturally my course would be all laid out before me—my duty being to remain here—and everything would be clear to me. But now, in a manner which I cannot comprehend, and which is totally unexpected, my whole position has gone down the drain, and I can’t see any other course than to go to Germany. You can imagine what thoughts and feelings I will have as I go over there. Being bound by no promise or fixed date, I permit myself to inform you hereby that I will take the first opportunity which presents itself to go to Germany. The Lord also will not forsake me there.

You yourself, highly esteemed Mr. President, will understand, since you are a man full of insight and good judgment, that after such events, it had become impossible for me to remain here. I simply ask you to put yourself into my place; and I assure you that nothing personal has moved me to my decision; it’s just the way things turned out.

You would be doing me a big favor if you would send these lines, hastily thrown together as they are, over to the Board of Trustees.⁹⁹

Board President Bading, in his 1867 report to the convention does remark that “after the administration officials had seen to a few negotiations with him, they did accept his resignation and gave him his certificate of release, wishing him the blessing of the Lord for his further activity in the kingdom of God.”¹⁰⁰

The report of the treasurer for the Watertown schools showed a budget deficit of \$443.08 for the year. When added to the building debt and the interest-free loans, the total debt of the seminary and college was \$1,802.86. The treasurer for the seminary, Mr. Daniel Kusel, called upon the delegates to offer interest-free loans in the amount of \$50 or \$25. Later the convention heard again of the willingness of the Minnesota Synod to provide financial support.¹⁰¹

To be continued

Endnotes

1. Though one source gives September 1, 1863, as the start of the Watertown seminary, I have not been able to confirm that in any primary source. The convention proceedings say that Moldehnke did not arrive in Watertown until the

end of September. Interestingly, the *Katalog des Evang. Luth. Theol. Seminars von 1907-1908* says that the seminary was founded in 1865. (p. 9)

2. *Verhandlungen der Elften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 12.
3. Erwin Ernst Kowalke, *Historical Highlights of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary* (WLS Archives, Box 9), p. 33.
4. John Philipp Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (Sauk Rapids, MN: Sentinel Printing Company, 1981), p. 83.
5. *Synodalversammlung in der Gnaden-Gemeinde in Town Herman, Dodge Co., Wi., den 22., 23. u. 24. Mai 1853*, p. 18.
6. Kowalke says, "The Synod rejected plans to cooperate with the Iowa Synod, two Illinois Synods and the Norwegian and Swedish Synods in conducting a joint theological seminary in Springfield, Illinois, to be called Illinois State University. (This was not the University of Illinois.) *Historical Highlights*, p. 33. In his history of the seminary, Immanuel Frey says the Illinois seminary "was being sponsored by two Synods of the General Synod in Illinois. At first our fathers seemed inclined to avail themselves of this offer. However, the matter was finally dropped, chiefly, because of the fear that the German professorship would not amount to much in an otherwise English-speaking institution. How much confessionalism played a role is not apparent." *Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary: 1863-1963* (WLS Essay File), pp. 3-4.
7. Edward C. Friedrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992), p. 15.
8. *Synodal-Bericht der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, 1858, p. 5.
9. *Verhandlungen der Elften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 13.
10. *Verhandlungen der Elften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 22.
11. *Verhandlungen der Elften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 25-26.
12. *Verhandlungen der Zwölften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 13-14.
13. The *Langenberger Verein* was a division of the United Rhine Mission Society, a mission society formed in 1828 by Christians in a number of German towns along the Rhine River. They operated a mission school in Barmen.
14. *Verhandlungen der Zwölften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 14.
15. "Jacob Albrecht, known to English-speaking people as Jacob Albright, was a layman, the son of a Lutheran pastor. The son turned Methodist and became a lay evangelist, an enthusiastic preacher of Methodism among the German immigrants. The Church of the United Brethren followed the Germans into Ohio and Wisconsin whither the main stream of immigrants was flowing. Since their preachers themselves were German and preached German, and since they

called themselves 'Evangelisch' (Evangelical), the same name by which the immigrants had known the Lutheran Church in Germany, they found it a relatively easy task to gather Lutheran settlers into their congregations. The missionaries of the Wisconsin Synod in the 1860's, wherever they went, found these 'Albrechtsbrueder' as they were known, active among the Lutherans, persuading them that their Methodism was an American brand of Lutheranism. The familiar German language and the name Evangelical often were sufficient to quiet any suspicion that the simple people might have had that they were being led into Methodism. The letters and reports that the missionaries wrote describing their journeys through Wisconsin seldom fail to mention with vexation that the Albrechtsbrueder had been at work in the missionaries' preaching places." Erwin E. Kowalke, *Northwestern Lutheran*. January 8, 1967, p. 3.

16. *Verhandlungen der Zwölften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 17-18.
17. *Verhandlungen der Zwölften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 18-19.
18. The *Gustav-Adolf-Verein* was a mission society established in 1832 to help needy Protestants. It began in the area of Leipzig and Dresden. A second, similar movement began in 1841. The following year, the two groups united to form the *Evangelischer Verein der Gustav-Adolf-Stiftung*. (*Christian Cyclopedia*. <http://cyclopedia.lcms.org/display.asp?t1=g&word=GUSTAV-ADOLF-VEREIN>, accessed on October 8, 2013.)
19. The *Langenberger Verein* had invited Pastor Mühlhäuser, its first missionary, to return to Germany to celebrate in its midst his 25th anniversary in the ministry and the 25th anniversary of the *Verein*.
20. *Verhandlungen der Zwölften Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 20
21. *Verhandlungen der Dreizehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 9-10
22. We would call an *Inspector* a dean of students.
23. *Verhandlungen der Dreizehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 22
24. *Verhandlungen der Dreizehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 22-23. The hospital was the Passavant hospital.
25. Koehler, J.P., *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 89.
26. *Verhandlungen der Dreizehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 24
27. The report of the floor committee for the seminary at the Synod convention of 1864 says that Pastor Moldehnke's call at this time was temporary" (*vorläufig*). See *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 13.
28. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 104. Kowalke says that "the total sum collected everywhere and deposited to the credit of the Synod was

- \$10,215 in American money." *Centennial Story*, p. 25. I freely admit some confusion in exactly how much was collected, from where, and when.
29. Fredrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*, p. 16.
 30. The reason for this will come later in the story of our seminary in Watertown.
 31. Fredrich, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*, p. 16. It is interesting that the current WLS catalog says "The Theological Seminary of the Wisconsin Synod was formally opened in the fall of 1863 at Watertown, WI. Instruction in theology was initially given by Professor Edward Moldehnke, Ph.D., in the school building of St. Mark's congregation" (emphasis added). *WLS Catalog*, 2013-14, p. 4. I have not been able to confirm this in any primary source. In a 1969 editorial in the "Northwestern Lutheran," Erwin Kowalke wrote, "Within a year, according to one uncertain record, it moved into another house next door to the old St. Mark's Church in Watertown" (emphasis added). August 3, 1969. I do not know to what "uncertain record" Kowalke is referring.
 32. Kowalke, *Historical Highlights of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary*, p. 33.
 33. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119.
 34. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119.
 35. J.C. Jensson, "Rev. E.F. Moldehnke, Ph.D.. D.D." in *American Lutheran Biographies*, 1890, p. 525.
 36. Jensson, in *American Lutheran Biographies*, p. 526.
 37. It took a good deal of time and persuasion before Mrs. Moldehnke agreed to come.
 38. Jensson, in *American Lutheran Biographies*, p. 526.
 39. *Ansiedler im Westen* was a publication of the Berlin Society for the German Mission in North America. The periodical began in 1863 and appeared monthly. The articles were devoted to accounts of mission work among Germans in the Midwest, especially in Wisconsin. Dr. Moldehnke bound the issues from 1863-1867 into a single volume for his own library. In 1967, the Moldehnke family presented this volume to the Northwestern College library as a gift. ("The Northwestern Lutheran," November 12, 1967.)
 40. *Dictionary of American Biography*, Volume 13. (American Council of Learned Societies. New York: Scribner, 1927).
 41. He was made an honorary Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.) by the University of Rostock in 1865 or 1866, and in 1877 a Doctor of Sacred Theology (D.D.) by Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA
 42. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 7.
 43. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119.
 44. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 6.
 45. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 6.
 46. Erwin Ernst Kowalke, *Centennial Story* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1965), pp. 26-27.

47. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 120.
48. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119.
49. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 5.
50. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 13.
51. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 15.
52. Pastor Bading is quoting Luther's text: *An den Ratsherren aller Städte Deutschlands, daß sie Christliche Schulen aufrichten und halten sollen*.
53. *Verhandlungen der Vierzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 19-21.
54. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 5.
55. Kowalke, *Centennial Story*, p. 31.
56. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 120.
57. The Watertown Historical Society has a number of pictures of this building on their website. According to the information there, this building was destroyed by fire on the evening of July 30, 1894. All that was left standing were the walls. A year later synod rebuilt the facility. It was a large recitation hall with nine classrooms, a faculty lounge, science lab rooms, an assembly hall and chapel on the third floor, and a library room. Some pastors living today still remember this building from their student days.
58. Koehler. *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119. Kowalke gives July 22, 1864, as the date of the purchase of land, and August 10, 1864, as the date of the ground breaking. (*Centennial Story*, p. 31)
59. The visitors (*Visitatoren*) functioned in some respects like our circuit pastors today.
60. In his revision of *You and Your Synod*, Elmer Kiessling adds the following, not in Kowalke's original. "After a year, Dr. Moldehnke and his seminarians moved to St. Mark's parish school, where they remained until the synod's first college...was founded in 1865." (*Our Church its Life and Mission*, Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1990), pp. 142-143. This contradicts Kowalke's original, which specifically names the new 1865 building the seminary's second home. Some attribute this information to a history of the seminary written by Dr. Adolf Hönecke for the 1903 *Seminary Katalog*, but I do not find this information there.
61. There had been 14 students, but "three of these had to be dropped after a short trial because they had not had enough schooling to be able to follow the instruction in the Seminary." Kowalke, *Centennial Story*, p. 45.
62. He had transferred to St. Louis for a year, feeling that he had been treated unfairly in Watertown. Kowalke, *Centennial Story*, p. 49.
63. town students
64. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119.

65. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 119.
66. Kowalke says that during one of these trips, A. Hönecke "took the professor's place three days in a week." *Centennial Story*, p. 24.
67. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 10.
68. Moldehnke, Reim correspondence as translated in *Edward Frederick Moldehnke: The Wisconsin Synod's First Seminary Professor* by Mark Porinski, 1978. WLS Essay File, p. 13.
69. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 5.
70. Various thoughts in Kowalke's centennial history of the college might be considered when looking at this deficit and the lack of support. First he says that in 1862 congregations had contributed \$620.14. He also says, "The people who would have to support the school, once it was founded, were still busy clearing the land, laying out homesteads, building small churches, and doing their best to support pastors, and although the Civil War was beginning to take an even larger toll in men and money... ." Last of all is the fact that the vast majority were coming from a state church system in Germany in which the government provided a great deal. *Centennial Story*, pp. 15-18.
71. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 8-13.
72. The convention later resolved to begin publication of the *Evangelisches-Lutherisches Gemeinde-Blatt*.
73. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 8-13.
74. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 15.
75. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 18.
76. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 18-19.
77. *Verhandlungen der Fünfzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 20-24.
78. *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gemeinde-Blatt*, Jahrg. 1, No. 1. Sept. 1, 1865, p. 2. (Note: This article also provided the following details regarding admission to the seminary. "The provisions for acceptance in our seminary are the following: 1) Young people who want to be accepted into the evangelical Lutheran seminary in Watertown, Wisconsin must have reached their 18th year of age. 2) They must submit a curriculum vitae which they have written themselves, along with recommendations from reliable men concerning their conduct until now. 3) If it is clear from the curriculum vitae and the recommendations that the applicants look promising, they shall be called before the Board of Trustees for a personal interview. If no important concerns arise, things will move to a vote, decided by the majority. 4) The tuition will be

- given free of charge. 5) For food, a room, heat, etc. a sum of \$100 is to be paid for the year. With respect to young people who are not able to pay this sum, a discount will be granted according to individual circumstances, so that even the poorest can receive an education for the preaching or teaching ministry."
79. Frey gives the actual cost as \$16,906.07. There is some question about whether this included necessary furnishings. Kowalke cites J.P. Koehler's grand total for everything as \$22,000. (*Centennial Story*, p. 32) Frey also says that "Except for a few hundred dollars, it was debt free on the day of dedication." (*Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary*, p. 6). Kowalke seems to describe things a bit differently. He says that there was a debt of \$1,400 that remained six months after completion. This was after spending all the money Bading had collected in Europe. Funding for the building caused a rift between the Board of Trustees and the Board of Visitors which spilled over onto the convention floor, the visitors wanting the synod officially to censure the trustees for exceeding their authority in spending so much for the building. (*Centennial Story*, p. 3.)
80. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 12.
81. *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gemeindeblatt*, Jahrgang 1, No. 2. Oktober 1, 1865, p. 3. In his history of Northwestern, Professor Kowalke draws attention to the fact that the September 1, 1865, issue of the *Gemeinde-Blatt* ran an entire article which announced the opening of the college, but did not say a single word about its pre-seminary function. *Centennial Story*, p. 35.
82. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 121.
83. Adolf Hönecke, "The History of the Wisconsin Synod," *Seminary Katalog*, 1903. Translation by W. Gawrisch, p. 1.
84. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 16
85. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 14. Kowalke adds considerable detail, calling him a combination of "pietist and rascal." He referred to fellow students as "the world," did not do the work required of those who paid no board, attended other churches on Sunday, did not do work for which he had accepted payment, and was especially cruel to the housemother. (*Centennial Story*, pp. 49-50).
86. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 121. In his history of the college, Kowalke reports that "before the very first term was completed," there was a debt of \$2,700 which shocked the board, a debt he calls a "disaster" given the wages of the day. As a result, Moldehnke, Sieker, and Goldammer set out to collect funds in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania with little success. He says that this crisis prolonged the bad feelings between the trustees and the visitors. Kowalke also says that this played a role in President Adam Martin's plan to sell scholarships. (*Centennial Story*, p. 39).
87. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen*

- Synode von Wisconsin. p. 13.
88. Kowalke, *Centennial Story*, p. 49.
 89. Koehler, *Centennial Story*, p. 121.
 90. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 12-15
 91. *Northwestern Lutheran*, December 11, 1966, pp. 391-392.
 92. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 15.
 93. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 16.
 94. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 20-22, 25, 34.
 95. Fredrich. *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*, pp. 16-17.
 96. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 120.
 97. *Verhandlungen der Sechszehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 20-22, 25, 30, 37.
 98. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, p. 121.
 99. Porinsky, Mark, *Edward Frederick Moldehnke*, pp. 16-17. Translation by Pastor Mark Porinsky. Pastor Mark Porinsky wrote this paper as his 1978 Senior Church History project while a student at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. His main sources included personal correspondence, which he reported at the time as being in the Northwestern College Archives, and an article by Moldehnke in the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* entitled "Fünf Jahre in Amerika."
 100. *Verhandlungen der Siebzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, p. 16.
 101. *Verhandlungen der Siebzehnten Versammlung der Evangel.-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*, pp. 24- 25.

**Jars of Clay: A History of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
(1863-2013), by John M. Brenner and Peter M. Prange
Mequon: Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Press, 2013. 323pp, pb, \$12.00.**

The history of the Wisconsin Synod's seminary is unique and endearing, from its founding in Watertown in the middle of the Civil War to its migration to St. Louis; from the heady days in Wauwatosa to its beautiful campus on the hill in Mequon. Peter Prange and John Brenner make a valuable contribution by telling the story of 150 years of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

While *Jars of Clay* is written in a popular style without footnotes, it is clearly well-researched. The first half of the book routinely quotes minutes from convention reports and essays. Major portions of the second half of the book are told by a professor writing from personal experience and observation. In addition, various authors contributed short vignettes on each of the 12 presidents of the seminary. At the end of each vignette, several suggestions are offered for further reading. By using different authors, each president is presented in a slightly different and unique way.

Since *Jars of Clay* is written in a popular style, it includes numerous photos, many of which have been unearthed from the archives, providing a special visual insight into the seminary's history. Several appendices are included which give information such as the enrollment and graduate numbers for each school year, as well as a list of the professors who have served at the seminary.

Jars of Clay is appropriately titled. The seminary has served to prepare "jars of clay" throughout its 150 years men who have carried the treasure of the gospel to gathered German immigrants, established congregations and missions at home and abroad. At the same time, the seminary itself has been a clay jar as it has held out the treasure of the gospel to the men who have sat in its classrooms. Sometimes the jar has endured cracks and blemishes, something which the authors do not shy away from as they relate the challenges the seminary endured from the dismissal of one seminary president as a result of the Protestant Controversy and the resignation of another president during the tumultuous days of the intersynodical debates with the Missouri Synod. Through all of the ups and downs, one thing has remained constant in the seminary's history, a fact brought out in this book: Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was founded and continues to exist to prepare Lutheran pastors to serve Christ's church with the Word and sacraments. May this book be read by many so that this unique history and purpose of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary continues to be acknowledged and appreciated.

Joel D. Otto

A Seminary in Crisis: The Inside Story of the Preus Fact Finding Committee, by Paul A. Zimmerman

St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007. 444 pp, hc, \$51.99.

When the undersigned was in his last years as a student at Northwestern College and first year at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, the crisis in the Missouri Synod and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, dominated the religious news. We read the news reports with interest and a bit of horror at what had happened in our former sister synod. Student publications from St. Louis displayed an irreverence and anti-establishment attitude that surprised even those accustomed to watching student demonstrations and protests on TV. As we read and watched we also hoped that President J.A.O. Preus and his supporters would be able to stem the tide of liberalism in the Missouri Synod.

Paul A. Zimmermann, one of two surviving members of Preus' Fact Finding Committee, has penned an account of this conflict in St. Louis that is compelling and thorough. He combines insights from his first-hand experiences with careful documentation of original sources to produce a reliable account of what happened during those turbulent years leading up to and including the Seminex walkout and its aftermath. Zimmermann closes his account with five lessons for the present and the future that can be learned from this historic conflict.

The first chapter of *Seminary in Crisis* documents the development of the doctrinal problems that led to the showdown in St. Louis. Zimmerman approvingly quotes this comment by John Stritelmeier, a professor at Valparaiso University, that appeared in the university journal, *The Cresset*: "For something like 25 years prior to 1969 the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was controlled by a coalition of liberals and moderates. . . . These years of liberal ascendancy ended suddenly and decisively at the Synodical convention in Denver in the summer of 1969" (p 27-28). That was the convention that elected Preus as president.

As evidence of the growing disunity in Missouri Zimmerman cites a memorial to the 1959 LCMS convention signed by Professor Siegbert Becker which spoke of Becker's dealings with men who denied the infallibility and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. Some of these men claimed that the inspiration of Scripture was not a doctrine that all Missouri Synod pastors, professors, and teachers were expected to subscribe (p 16-17). Our readers will remember that after Becker left the Missouri Synod in the early 1960s, he taught at the old Wisconsin Lutheran College and at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

The next chapters of *A Seminary in Crisis* explain the careful process that was employed to investigate the St. Louis faculty. Every effort was made to be fair to the individual professors and to allow them to confess what they believed and taught. Each man was able to review what he said and make any changes that he deemed necessary. Zimmermann also reveals how seminary president John Tietjen and the faculty majority often fought their battles in the public press.

Many on the St. Louis faculty were open about their use of the historical criti-

cal method, but they claimed that their Lutheran presuppositions protected them from the perils of using these critical approaches to Scripture (p 85). Many also claimed that they should not be required to teach according to synodically adopted doctrinal statements (p 66) but should be bound only by Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. It should be noted that the Fact Finding Committee examined the faculty members only on the basis of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions (p 45). The committee nevertheless found that there were those on the faculty who had a false view of the Holy Scriptures, a permissive attitude toward doctrine, and faulty commitment to the Lutheran Confessions (84-90).

The seminary board was initially dominated by those who sympathized with the faculty majority. In fact, those who supported John Tietjen, the president of the seminary, held a 7-4 majority position. In May of 1973 the synod's Board for Higher Education joined the fray and sent a letter to the seminary's Board of Control criticizing the board's less than satisfactory dealings with Tietjen and the faculty majority (p 77). The 1973 LCMS convention elected new members to the seminary board giving the Preus' supporters a narrow majority.

The decisions of the 1973 convention in New Orleans set the stage for the formation of the Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELIM), the infamous Seminex walkout, and the departure of 250 congregations to form the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC). The AELC was the prime mover behind the ELCA merger in 1988.

The Seminex walkout included 90 percent of the faculty and 85 percent of the Concordia student body. The walkout was staged as a perfect media event. Ironically many of the students who participated in the walkout returned to eat lunch in the seminary dining hall and continued to use the dining hall, library, and gymnasium in the days that followed (p 128).

Every effort was made to resolve the differences with the dissident professors. Efforts were also made to give the Seminex students the opportunity to be certified for placement in the synod. An interview process was established for those desiring certification. Only a handful of Seminex graduates participated in the process.

A Seminary in Crisis contains a wealth of historical information. It includes the entire *Report of the Fact Finding Committee* and the entire *Report of the Synodical President to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*. The latter document was popularly known as the *Blue Book*. These two reports cover some 273 pages and provide an invaluable resource for those who want to understand the conflict. The usefulness of the volume, however, could have been improved by the addition of an index.

Although the cost of this volume may deter some from purchasing it, those who do will find it well worth the price.

John M. Brenner

This review first appeared in the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* and is printed with permission.

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 are as follows, which include the subscription fees: 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, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222.

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