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General Lutheran History in America

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GENERAL LUTHERAN HISTORY IN AMERICA

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to consider the basic philosophical tenets which guided general Lutheran history in America; as well as the historiographical concerns used to support these tenets. According to Abdel Ross Wentz, there are two areas of source material which might be considered for such an attempt. The first area concentrates on a group of works which is very large. It includes a complete list of volumes and pamphlets dealing with the various aspects and details of the Lutheran Church in America. If this source was used, it would embrace some thirty thousand titles.[1]

> The one kind consists of special works that deal with some particular aspect of the subject, some period of time, some section of territory, some local congregation, some individual person, some separate institution, some special phase of the church's life, or some special type of work.[2]

The individuality of this particular source, together with the vast amount of material involved, deter its use for the all-inclusive view which the writer of this thesis wishes to investigate. For this reason, the second area of written materials will represent the primary source for this study.

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[1] Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 394.

[2] Ibid.

Wentz shows this second area of materials to be a group of general works that seeks to cover the whole field, omitting details important to the first area of source materials in an effort to emphasize the general course of events.[3] By concentrating on this source, a study can be made with regard to the important issues affecting the historical report of Lutheranism in America without becoming deeply involved with the concerns of each individual aspect within this history. It is this trait of generality which makes the second area of written materials a primary source for the writer of this thesis as he studies the historiographical and philosophical concerns behind general Lutheran history in America.

There are six primary works which can be used to study the general course of events.[4] Since they are interested in the general nature of Lutheran history in America, they will indicate for this study, a designation entitled:

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Ernest L. Hazelius, History of the American Lutheran Church (Zanesville, Ohio: Edwin C. Church, 1846); Edmund Jacob Wolf, The Lutherans in America, introduction by Henry Eyster Jacobs (New York: J. A. Hill & Co., 1890); Henry Eyster Jacobs, A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1893); August Lawrence Graebner, Geschichte Der Lutherischen Kirche in America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1892); Jürgin Ludwig Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America (3rd revised edition; Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1934); Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Revised edition; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965).

general Lutheran history. The men who wrote these works will be specified as general Lutheran historians. Through the use of these designations and the primary works on general Lutheran history, the writer will be able to determine those areas which were significant to the general Lutheran historians as they studied this factual information and wrote their histories. In this manner, a greater understanding can be gained concerning the choice of factual information exhibited in general Lutheran history.

The approach for discovering the significant areas in general Lutheran history is twofold. First, there is an effort to study each individual general Lutheran historian in order to realize his particular understanding of history and his historical method. Secondly, the published works which these men wrote are considered, in order to recognize the historiographical and philosophical trends recorded there. Through this approach, an analysis of the historiography and philosophy supporting general Lutheran history can be undertaken.

The writer takes for granted that the person approaching this work is acquainted with a basic knowledge of historiography and philosophy in the discipline of history. Lest there be some confusion concerning the meaning of philosophy, history, or historiography, a brief definition will follow. For this thesis, <u>philosophy of history</u> will indicate the basic assumptions, the certain characteristics

and the basic emotional involvement which act as the impetus behind the written material of the historian as he strives to understand his factual material.[5] The term history will mean that record of events passed down to the present for thought and study.[6] Finally, historiography will indicate that method used for critically examining and analyzing the records and remains of the past in an effort to reconstruct that past.[7] Operating with these definitions and the goals outlined, the study of general Lutheran history in America will begin with an examination of those men who are credited with writing a general history of Lutherans in America.

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[5]Albert Hofstadter, "The Philosophy of History," Philosophy and History, edited by Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1963), p. 244.

[6]James T. Shotwell, The History of History (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p. 4.

[7]Louis Gottschalk, Understanding History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), p. 193.

CHAPTER II

HISTORIANS OF GENERAL LUTHERAN HISTORY IN AMERICA

Ernest Lewis Hazelius

The first general Lutheran history ever written in America was that of Ernest Lewis Hazelius. Hazelius (1777-1853) wrote his History of the American Lutheran Church in 1846, approximately 170 years after the first Lutherans came to America.[1] Although only a limited perspective could be obtained at this early date, Hazelius laid the foundation for general Lutheran history.

Hazelius was born in the province of Silesia, Prussia, on 6 September 1777. He was descended from a long and honored line of Lutheran ministers who concentrated their work in Sweden. Eric Hazelius, his father, was educated for the Lutheran ministry at the University of Upsala, but did not become the pastor for which his studies qualified him. His mother, Christiana Brahtz, was a Moravian and a native of Stettin. Abdel Wentz states that from his infancy, Hazelius was imbued with a deep strain of evangelical piety through this source.[2]

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[1]Ernest L. Hazelius, History of the American Lutheran Church (Zanesville, Ohio: Edwin C. Church, 1846), pp. 1-300.

[2]Abdel Ross Wentz, History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1926), p. 302.

The academic preparation of young Hazelius was pursued at Barby. He received his theological training in the Moravian institution at Niesky where Moravian bishops licensed him to preach the Gospel. Hazelius came to America in 1800 and taught the classics in the Moravian school at Nazareth, Pennsylvania. A seminary was established at Nazareth in 1807 and he became the professor of theology as well as the head of the theological department at the school. Hazelius however, did not care for his position. Abdel Ross Wentz states:

> Hazelius did not agree with the Moravian views of Church government and discipline. This fact, together with other considerations, led him to sever his connections with the Seminary at Nazareth after eight years of service there and to return to the Church of his ancestors.[3]

This happened in 1809, enabling Hazelius to broaden his horizons and increase his understanding of the currents within Christianity. This influenced him when he considered the movement of Lutherans on the American scene.

After leaving the Moravian school in 1809, Hazelius went to Philadelphia where he gave private instruction in a special classical school of that vicinity. Besides being commissioned to preach the Gospels by the Moravians, Hazelius was ordained by the Lutheran Ministerium of New York and took charge of the united congregations at New

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[3]Wentz makes no reference to the sources he uses in order to make such a historical judgment. Wentz, p. 302.

Germantown, German Valley and Spruce Run in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. While at New Germantown, he also conducted another classical school, one of the very few in that area. During this time he married Miss Hulda Cumings Bray of Lebanon, New Jersey. They were married in the year 1810, but no children resulted from the union.

The educational career of Hazelius was both varied and extensive.

> When in 1815 Hartwick Seminary prepared to erect a building and began to look for a man to devote his entire time to the work of teaching, the selection fell on Pastor Hazelius. For fifteen years he served Hartwick as its professor of Christian theology and principal of the Classical Department. . . . He received the degree of Doctor of Divinity simultaneously in 1824 from Union and Columbia Colleges in New York. He was also invited to professorships in Lafayette College and in Princeton.
>
> By the year 1830 the Seminary at Gettysburg felt the need for a second professor and the unanimous choice of its Board of Directors fell on Dr. Hazelius. He was designated Professor of Biblical and Oriental Literature and of the German Language. He was inaugurated in September and his inaugural address was long afterwards expanded into a book entitled "The History of the American Lutheran Church." In addition to his work in the Seminary Dr. Hazelius was professor of Latin and German in the College at Gettysburg during its first year.[4]

This somewhat secondary position which he enjoyed on the faculty of this institution seemed to hamper Hazelius, causing him to take a position as teacher in Classical and Theological Institute of the Synod of South Carolina at

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[4]Wentz, pp. 302-3.

Lexington.[5] Hazelius received the nomination as replacement for Professor Schwartz who passed away sometime during the year 1833. Hazelius apparently enjoyed his position at Lexington for he declined every call later offered to him and eventually died there on 20 February 1853.

The theological views of Hazelius should be briefly considered since they prevented him from exerting harsh judgment on other Lutheran positions. Wentz comments on these views:

> In his theological views Hazelius was evangelical, but his Moravian training as well as the spirit of the times in which he lived made him adverse to strict doctrinal definitions. He accepted the current distinctions between the fundamental and non-fundamental articles of the Augsburg Confession, and he did not subscribe to all of the articles. His position on the Lord's Supper was that of low Calvinism. In his attitude towards other denominations he was broadly tolerant and catholic.[6]

These views are exemplified in his writings. He tried to remain as unbiased as possible in his choice of materials and in the historical record which he left for posterity.

Hazelius is to be given credit for being the first man to undertake a general Lutheran history.[7] Wentz points up the most difficult problem which confronted Hazelius at this time.

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[5]Once again, the judgment which Wentz makes concerning the current position of Hazelius gives no indication of the source material. Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Among the many works which are attributed to Hazelius, the following could be considered: Life of Luther (n.p.,

> In 1842 [when the history was written] only a limited perspective of our history was possible. Dr. Hazelius in his history makes the rounds of the several synods as they existed at that time and is chiefly concerned to call the roll of the personalities who served the various pastorates.[8]

This limited perspective affected the arrangement of material at his disposal, but this did not affect his remarkable objectivity in observing the factual information. Dr. Arthur Repp believed that this was due largely to his Moravian background which tended to see both sides to an issue that involved doctrinal disputes.[9] Nevertheless, even for his objectivity, Hazelius could not resist seeing the Lutherans as pilgrims under religious persecution and as a people moving out of bondage through a wilderness to freedom.[10] This attitude of Hazelius was to influence much of later general Lutheran history.

To summarize the manner in which Hazelius viewed history, three major emphases can be taken from his historical work. First of all, he refrained from exerting harsh judgments on

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n.d.); Life of Stilling (n.p., n.d.); The Augsburg Confession with Annotations (n.p., n.d.); Materials for Catechization on Passages of Scripture (n.p., n.d.); A History of the Christian Church (n.p., n.d.); History of the American Lutheran Church, pp. 1-300.

[8]Abdel Ross Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1933), p. 11.

[9]Arthur C. Repp, "The Lutheran Church in America a Century Ago," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XX (July 1947), 76.

[10]Hazelius, History of the American Lutheran Church, pp. 26-28.

deviators who did not agree with his own position within Lutheranism. This became evident in his general Lutheran history through his refusal to state that someone was wrong, even when that particular individual was not in complete agreement with his Moravian viewpoints.[11] Secondly, Hazelius attempted to remain as objective in his historical recording as possible. This is rather remarkable when the proximity of his history to the actual events of early American Lutheran history is considered. Finally, there is his attitude that Lutheran history displayed enough indications to enable the Lutherans to be seen as pilgrims moving out of bondage through a wilderness to freedom. The similarity to the movement of the Israelites out of Egypt is unmistakable.

Thus Hazelius undertook to write the first general Lutheran history of American Lutheranism. The emphases which he saw in this history were to influence much of the general Lutheran historical writing which would follow. It is this factor which makes him very necessary in a study of general Lutheran history in America.

Edmund Jacob Wolf

Edmund Jacob Wolf was the second man to attempt a general history of the Lutheran Church in America. His

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[11] Ibid., p. 35.

work, entitled The Lutherans in America, undertook to chronicle the results of previous historical study as they were made accessible.[12] It stimulated a higher appreciation and a more extensive study of history through widening the horizons and informing the various divisions within the Church of their historical relations.[13] In this manner, it took its place as one of the significant Lutheran histories written for the Lutheran Church in America.

Wolf was born in Brush Valley near Rebersburg, Center County, Pennsylvania, on 8 December 1840. His parents were Jacob Wolf and Mary nee Gast. His early childhood was spent on the farm where he was born. He attended the usual

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[12]Edmund Jacob Wolf, The Lutherans in America, introduction by Henry Eyster Jacobs (New York: J. A. Hill & Co., 1890), p. viii.

The previous historical study to which Jacobs alludes is primarily the following: Israel Acrelius, A History of New Sweden (Philadelphia: Publication Fund of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1874); Hallesche Nachrichten, 1787, edited by Mann, Schmucker, and Germann (New edition; n.p., 1886), I; ibid., II (1895); Ernest Hazelius, History of the American Lutheran Church (Zanesville, Ohio: Edwin C. Church, 1846); Justus Henry Christian Helmuth, A Short Account of the Yellow Fever in Philadelphia for the Reflecting Christian, translated from the German by Charles Erdmann (Philadelphia: Jones, Hoff & Derrick, 1794); William Julius Mann, Life and Times of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (2nd edition; Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1911); John Nicum, Notgedrungene Abwehr der neuesten Missourischen Angriffe auf das General-Konzil (Rochester, New York: n.p., 1890); John Nicum, Geschichte des Evangelisch-Lutherischen Ministeriums vom Staate New York und Angrenzenden Staaten und Laendern (New York: Verlag des New York-Ministeriums, 1888); Martin Luther Stoever, Memoir of the Life and Times of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1856).

[13]Wolf, p. vii.

public schools and then attended academies at Aaronsburg and Mifflinburg. His father died in 1852 and Wolf was forced to teach school a number of years at the academy at Bellefonte. In 1860 he entered the sophomore class at Gettysburg College, graduating with the highest honor in 1863. He entered the Seminary at Gettysburg in the fall of 1863.

Concerning the remainder of Wolf's life, Abdel Ross Wentz states the following:

> he went to Germany and spent two semesters studying theology at the Universities of Tuebingen and Erlangen. Licensed by the East Pennsylvania Synod in 1865, he accepted a call to the Paradise (or Turbotville) charge in Northumberland County, Pennsylvania. Here he had the great benefit of the counsel of the venerable Jacob Albert, who was living in retirement at Turbotville. Here, too, he had the care of four congregations, widely separated, each requiring ministration in both English and German. . . . the call to the Second Lutheran Church in Baltimore in 1868 was gladly accepted, and for six years he labored in the big city. Then came the call to the Seminary at Gettysburg. As early as 1871 he had been elected to the chair vacated by Dr. Valentine three years before, but he had declined the call. Other men were chosen: Dr. Sprecher, Dr. Valentine, Dr. L. E. Albert. Each in turn declined. Finally at a special meeting of the Seminary Board in December, 1873, Dr. Wolf was elected again, and this time he was prevailed on to accept. He removed to Gettysburg in 1874 and for the remaining thirty years of his life gave his best efforts to the work of preparing young men for the Gospel ministry.[14]

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[14]Wentz, History of Gettysburg Theological Seminary, p. 320.

Wolf died on 10 January 1905, leaving behind his wife whom he had married in December 1865 (Ella Kemp of Edgehill, Maryland), one son, Robbin B. Wolf, and two daughters, Mrs. Huber Gray Buehler and Mrs. Warren Hoysradt.[15]

Wolf led a very active life as his brief biography indicates. His literary productiveness was no less active.[16] Concerning the history which Wolf wrote on the Lutherans in America, Abdel Ross Wentz states that it rendered a most important service in making this church known in this country.[17] In a later general Lutheran history written by Wentz, he has several comments concerning the historical work of Wolf.

> His volume brings the narrative half the distance from Hazelius to our times. It is written with an objectivity and impartiality of judgment that was not very common at that time. It was intended for the general reader and is characterized chiefly by its readableness. The beauty of rhetoric and the eloquence of style carry the reader along from chapter to chapter and tend to fire him with enthusiasm for the Lutheran Church as a whole.[18]

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[15] Ibid., p. 322.

[16] Some of the literary productivity of Wolf is as follows: The Lutheran Quarterly, I-LVII (January 1871 to October 1927). Wolf was editor from 1880 to 1897. Pastoral Epistles and Hebrews (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1897); The Lutheran Commentary (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1895-1898); An Exposition of the Gospels of the Church Year (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, c.1900).

[17] Wentz, History of Gettysburg Theological Seminary, p. 321.

[18] Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History, pp. 11-12.

This objectivity and impartiality of judgment which Wentz finds in Wolf can find roots in his activity with committees and in his capacity as official representative at inter-denominational meetings. Wentz recognizes this area in the background of Wolf when he states:

> He was a loyal member of the General Synod, but his wide contacts within and especially his historical point of view gave him a better understanding and more sense of fellowship with Lutherans outside of the General Synod than most of his colleagues had. . . . He was chairman of the Joint Committee of the General Synod, the General Council and the United Synod South that made the Common Service and afterwards prepared the book of Ministerial Acts.[19]

Even with his objectivity and impartial judgment, he still remained one of the more conservative men in the General Synod with regard to both his theology and his ecclesiasticism.[20]

When Wolf began to write his history, he was confronted with two difficulties. The first difficulty entered in the problem of perspective, the same problem which bothered Hazelius. A second difficulty arose with the goal of impartiality in historical writing. Concerning the first difficulty, Henry Eyster Jacobs comments:

> Historians speak of the necessity of an historical perspective. A photograph of a building cannot be taken unless the camera be placed at a considerable distance. Those who have made or who are closely related to those who make history, cannot well write

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[19] Wentz, History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary, p. 321.

[20] Ibid.

> it. They are the best witnesses concerning bare statements of facts, but not the best judges as to principles and results.[21]

Jacobs believed that Wolf was too close to the facts when he began to write and felt that Wolf could not detach himself enough from these facts to distil some general conclusions. If this was so, Jacobs saw this as a possible problem in Wolf's history.

The second difficulty concerned the problem of impartiality which Wolf himself admitted was impossible when he considered those segments of Lutheranism which did not agree with his particular emphasis. This was true especially in America since the Lutherans here were separated into several divisions on the grounds of principles which could not be reconciled at that time.

> It is too much to expect of any man, that even with the highest appreciation of those with whom he differs, he can be completely uninfluenced by his theological standpoint. The writer frankly confesses that he could not; and hence, would not demand of another, what he cannot plead for himself.[22]

The awareness which Wolf had of this problem influenced his methodology in historical writing. Because of this awareness, Jacobs can at least commend Wolf on his attempt at objectivity.[23]

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[21] Wolf, The Lutherans in America, pp. vii-viii.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Supra, p. 13.

The characteristics exemplified in Wolf's view of history can be distinguished by calling attention to the two tendencies which he saw in history. The one tendency he indicated as the conservative or "rigid" tendency. This represented an extreme position for Wolf and one which allowed little deviation from principles accepted by the majority within the church. The other tendency he believed evident in history can be called the liberal tendency. This tendency also included any moderate position within Lutheranism.

> It becomes manifest, with the clearness of sunlight, that the Church, even through her very infancy, and all along up to the vigor and maturity of her greatest strength and highest development, has been subject, like all great bodies of thinking men, to two tendencies; that it has always consisted of at least two parties, the one rigid and extreme, the other moderate and liberal, and that in consequence extensive and often violent controversies, have, from time to time, raged within her pale.[24]

Between these tendencies, history could be understood. The controversies which occurred between the tendency toward conservatism and the tendency toward liberalism were far from detrimental to the church and actually benefited it.[25]

> The mutual checks and impulses springing from them, the constant friction and collision between them, have brought out all the various shades and aspects of doctrine comprehended in every truth, and have been of inestimable value in bringing about that equilibrium so necessary in saving the whole or any

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[24] E. J. Wolf, "The Value of Ecclesiastical History to the Evangelical Lutheran Church," The Quarterly Review, IV (July 1874), 429-30.

[25] Ibid., IV, 430.

> part from running into extremes and excesses which are to be dreaded immeasurably more than diversities of doctrine.[26]

According to Wolf, only with these extremes operating without restraint, can the church grow in the knowledge of what it means to be the body of Christ and maintain a middle position of teachable truths.

Another characteristic exemplified by this second historian of general Lutheran history was the emphasis Wolf placed on fact. Fact for Wolf meant the event as it occurred in past time, as free from interpretation as it could possibly be. He states in an article he wrote for The Quarterly Review:

> Here are concrete facts, over against abstract theories, the sober, convincing logic of events over against plausible arguments. How many an object assumes an entirely different aspect as we look away from "the interests and illusions of the present," and concentrate upon it the powerful light of the past.[27]

Through this concentration on factual information, Wolf thought that the historian could be free from prejudice and bias allowing his mind to see the true message that lay hidden there.[28]

Together with his passion for factual information on the past, Wolf also believed that history was a legitimate

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., IV, 420.

[28] Ibid.

tool for understanding current events, as well as being prophetic for the future.

> Christianity is founded on historical events and the living facts of history are the best practical illustrations of its nature, character and aims. Next to Revelation, no realm of truth has richer instruction than the department of history. . . . It is even capable . . . of casting light upon the future with a voice as truly prophetic as any that ever fell from the lips of an inspired seer.[29]

On the basis of this reasoning, Wolf believed that through a study of her history, he could possibly see the direction of events for the Lutheran Church in America.

To summarize the comments on Wolf and his understanding of history as shown in his book The Lutherans in America, the following considerations can be pointed out: (1) He possessed wide contacts within the sphere of Lutheranism and enjoyed a broad overview of current events in this realm; (2) He realized that impartiality of judgment and objectivity are important for the writing of history; (3) He saw two extremes in history designated by conservatism and liberalism and found these helpful toward proper church growth; (4) He placed great importance on factual information and emphasized original sources; (5) And finally, he felt that history, properly interpreted, not only helped to understand the present, but could also become a prophet of the future.

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[29] Ibid., IV, 419.

August Lawrence Graebner

August Lawrence Graebner was the son of Johann Heinrich Philipp Graebner (1819-1898) and Jacobine nee Denninger (1830-1914). He was born in the area of the Saginaw Valley, at Frankentrost, Michigan on 10 July 1849. His father, born at Burghaig near Kulmbach in Upper Franconian Bavaria, studied under Wilhelm Loehe at Neuendettelsau, and emigrated to the United States in 1847 as pastor of a congregation of twenty-two families who bought government land in Saginaw County, Michigan. They established the settlement of Frankentrost. The years of his youth were spent at Frankentrost, and Roseville, Michigan, and St. Charles, Missouri. Graebner entered Concordia College at Fort Wayne, Indiana in 1865, and Concordia Seminary at St. Louis in 1870. Illness kept him from completing both his academic and his theological courses. In 1872 he became a teacher in the Lutheran High School at St. Louis.

The second year of his teaching at the Lutheran High School found Graebner married to Anna Schaller, the daughter of his teacher Professor Gottlieb Schaller at Concordia Seminary. Two years later Graebner accepted a position as professor in Northwestern College At Watertown, Wisconsin (1875-1878). In 1878, that synod elected him to a chair at its newly founded seminary at Milwaukee (1878-1887). When he went to Milwaukee, he was ordained as assistant pastor of St. Matthew's Church and also assumed the

editorship of the Synod's Gemeindeblätt in 1878. In 1887, on the death of his father-in-law, he succeeded to the professorship of church history at Concordia Seminary. After the retirement and death of Professor C. H. R. Lange in 1892, he also lectured in English on dogmatics and kindred subjects. He continued in this capacity until his death on 7 December 1904.[30]

Graebner was a prolific writer. Any attempt at gathering every single piece of literature he ever published would indeed be a tremendous task. It is possible however to recognize certain significant contributions which Graebner made in the area of history. Carl S. Meyer has gathered these together in his article which recognizes August L. Graebner as an historian of American Lutheranism.[31] Most significant for this study is, of course, his Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in America.[32] He wrote articles for the Theological

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[30]Articles used to write the biography of Graebner are as follows: Julius Bodensieck, editor, The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church, from a biography by Gerhard E. Lenski (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, c.1965), II, 958, passim; George Harvey Genzmer, Dictionary of American Biography, edited by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), VII, 462, passim; Erwin L. Lueker, editor-in-chief, Lutheran Cyclopedia (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), p. 430, passim; Carl S. Meyer, "August L. Graebner: An Historian of American Lutheranism," published in the Minutes and Reports of the 9th Archivists' and Historians' Conference at the Concordia Historical Institute (November 1968), pp. 28-29, passim.

[31]Meyer, p. 44.

[32]A. L. Graebner, Geschichte Der Lutherischen Kirche in America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1892).

Quarterly of which he was editor beginning with Volume I, Number 1, in January 1897.[33] There was one article of approximately forty-five pages in six issues of Lehre und Wehre about the General Council's "Four Points."[34] He contributed regularly to the "Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichteliches" (Contemporary Church History) of the journal.[35] Besides his Geschichte, which was only published in one volume even though two were written, there were other lesser contributions to the history of Lutheranism in America. Among these could be considered his "Two Hundred and Fifty Years of Lutheranism in America," an English address on Lutheran Day, 3 September 1893, at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.[36] His "Bis Hieher": Kurzgefasst Geschichte der Missouri-Synode (1897), and Half a Century of Sound Lutheranism in America: A Brief Sketch of the History of the

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[33] Theological Quarterly is published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

[34] A. Graebner, "Zur Geschichte der 'vier Punkte,'" Lehre und Wehre, XXXIV (June 1888), 167-73; ibid., XXXIV (July and August 1888), 217-24; ibid., XXXIV (September 1888), 257-64; ibid., XXXIV (October 1888), 302-10; ibid., XXXIV (November and December 1888), 342-54; ibid., XXXV (November 1889), 340-43.

[35] On the union movement among the Norwegian Lutherans, ibid., XXXV (January 1889); ibid., XXXV (February 1889), 64-67; ibid., XXXV (May 1889), 158-61; ibid., XXXV (July and August 1889), 247-48.

[36] A. C. Stellhorn, Schools of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), p. 265, with references to The Lutheran Witness, XII (7 January 1894), 118, and Der Lutheraner, XLIX (12 September 1893), 148.

Missouri Synod[37] help to show how Graebner viewed history. On the basis of these writings and other historical reviews which Graebner wrote, a study of this view will now be undertaken.

Graebner advocated a historical study which would be functional or practical. Church history was synonymous with historical theology and "God in History" was self-evident.[38]

> Church history is the history of the wonderous work of God carried on in this world by the Gospel of Christ for the salvation of sinners, and of the progress of this work, the obstacles thrown in its way, the reverses which it encounters, the persons by whom and the favorable or unfavorable circumstances under which it is advanced or retarded.[39]

The function of history therefore was to show the wonderous work of God. This was a sine qua non for Graebner and undergirded all of his historical work. The practical aspect revolved around understanding how this work of God became known

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[37] A. Graebner, "Bis Hieher": Kurzgefasst Geschichte der Missouri-Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1897); and A. Graebner, Half a Century of Sound Lutheranism in America: A Brief Sketch of the History of the Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.).

See also his "Festrede Gehalten bei der Gelegenheit des fuenfzigjaehrigen Jubilaemus der Dreieinigkeits-Gemeinde zu St. Louis, Mo." (St. Louis: Mimeography Printing Co., 1890), in the A. L. Graebner biography file at the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis; Predigt zum funfzigjaehrigen Jubilaeum der ev. Luth. St. Lorenz-Gemeinde zu Frankenmuth, am 25 August 1895 (Saginaw, Mich.: Drick der "Saginaw Post," 1896).

[38] Meyer, p. 30.

[39] August L. Graebner, "Theological Review," Theological Quarterly, from a review of Paul Van Dyke's The Age of the Renaissance, I (October 1897), 469.

and how it should be reported. If this aspect was done correctly, the functional concern would automatically follow.

His practical concern for church history becomes the area through which the historical work of Graebner can be studied. To see how he viewed this practical concern of recording factual information, a quotation will be given from the forward to his Geschichte. He states in translation:

> In the utilization of the acquired material I have set myself to write real history, to narrate truthfully what happened, to describe what existed and came about, and clearly to present the causal relationships in which events, persons, situations, and circumstances conditioned and influenced each other.[40]

Graebner believed that by observing the causal relationships between events and other influential factors, he could determine what really happened at a given time and a given place in history. Although this sounds a good deal like Leopold von Ranke, no proof can be given for the premise that Graebner was ever influenced by this man.[41]

Three historical categories existed for Graebner in the practical aspect of historical records. These could be designated as persons, events, and institutions.[42] Of these

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[40]Graebner, Geschichte Der Lutherischen Kirche in America, from a translation by Carl S. Meyer, pp. ix-x.

[41]Meyer, p. 31.

[42]Ibid., p. 32.

three, Graebner held the highest regard for the category of persons. He believed that they held this distinction primarily because they contained the highest degree of singularity.

> The most important historical realities of which the student of history must endeavor to obtain true concepts are persons. . . . The man Athanasius existed but once, and that was long ago. Every act he performed he performed but once, and that in a certain place and at a certain time, and under certain circumstances which were never precisely the same in any other case where he may have performed a similar act at another time.[43]

As a result of this emphasis, Graebner believed that in order for history to be properly understood, the fewer must be the influential elements on a fact. Since the individual was completely individual in both his deeds and his ideas, he did not hold as many possibilities for the historian to interpret. It was to the historian's advantage to make extensive use of this particular category.

In the category of events, although broader than the category of persons, Graebner also saw some real value. This value could be obtained through a twofold consideration. This consideration he designated as "natural" and "un-natural." Concerning the former he states:

> A historical event may be a very simple or a highly complicated affair, and the events recorded in historical composition are generally of the latter

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[43]August L. Graebner, "The Study of Church History," Theological Quarterly, II (October 1898), 426-27.

> kind. Some events, by their very nature, leave a record of what transpired in such an event.[44]

What makes other events "un-natural" according to Graebner, is the prejudice and/or apathy of the recorder.

> There is another and very comprehensive class of events, however, which do not naturally leave documentary evidence for future inspection and examination. . . . They were recorded by friends or enemies, or by friends and enemies, of the persons or causes connected with such events, or by such as had little or no special interest in the affairs themselves of which they wrote, but simply chronicled . . .[45]

Although both the natural and the un-natural recording of events were legitimate history for Graebner, he favored the natural since it contained the impetus of proper historical record within its very nature.

The category of institutions was added by Graebner in an effort to estimate the significance of the various areas of life which man deems important.

> A third general category of historical realities which should be here considered is that of institutions, as the ministerial office, public worship and its occasions and occupations, preaching, the administration of the sacraments, holy days, schools, church polity, monasticism, etc. . . . institutions have mostly been dealt with incidentally, in connection with other subjects.[46]

The way in which these various institutions were built up and were used by the men of a particular period gave

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[44] Ibid., II, 437-38.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., II, 440.

Graebner valuable insights into the movement of history in that particular period. It was this characteristic of institutions, as Graebner understood it, which caused him to relate its importance.

Although not in his original categorical system, Graebner developed an affinity for historical processes late in his career as a historian.[47] An example of how he developed this emphasis can be shown in his article on "A Lesson on the Language Question."

> All changes of whatever kind, in moral and social and physical life, even in inanimate nature, proceed with increasing rapidity unless the retarding agencies exceed the promoting causes in force or persistency. Again, every process of assimilation is favored by greater proximation and closer association of the elements between which this process is going on.[48]

Through this process of change, Graebner believed he saw a law in historical phenomena.[46] This law, if correctly used, could grant valuable insights into the interrelationship between the factual information and the interpreter.

Graebner saw other processes in history besides the process of change. In a discussion of the language question, Graebner outlined eleven conclusions some of which will be reiterated below.

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[47]Meyer, p. 35.

[48]August L. Graebner, "A Lesson on the Language Question," Theological Quarterly, V (July 1901), 186.

[49]Meyer, p. 35.

1. Periods of transition are apt to be fraught with peculiar dangers to the organisms passing from one state or condition into another.

2. Periods of transition also afford peculiar opportunities which, lest they be lost, must be turned to advantage while they are offered.

. . . . . .

8. Syncretistic practice on the part of pastors and teachers engenders indifference to doctrine and creed on the part of the congregations and is particularly baneful during the periods of transition.

9. When truth compromises with error, truth is always the loser and error the gainer.

. . . . . .

11. What was in the nature of things in the eighteenth century is in the nature of like things in the twentieth century.[50]

Whichever process was evident at a particular time, gave the historian valuable insights into a particular period and helped him render a proper interpretation.

There is one factor which must be mentioned concerning the Geschichte which is a primary source for this thesis. This factor is in the form of criticism by John Nicum who felt that the Geschichte displayed a rather one-sided emphasis.

> One of the impressions left upon the mind of the careful reader of this book is that Prof. Graebner considers it a great pity that Muehlenberg and men of his kind were the successful organizers of the Lutheran Church in this country, and that a professor

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[50]Graebner, "A Lesson on the Language Question," V, 235-36.

> of the Gnesio-Missouri stamp, like Pieper or Graebner, would have accomplished the task so much better.[51]

Graebner did not hesitate to criticize adversely not only the patriarch Muhlenberg, but also all others who did not take the position of Missouri Synod.[52] For all this prejudice and bias however, the history which he wrote, together with the historical thought behind it, probably ranks him as one of the two or three outstanding historians of Lutheranism.[53]

In summary, the historical thought of Graebner revealed that he saw history as functional in showing the work of God or practical in displaying the factual information of mankind. He found three categories with which to study historical happenings and these he specified as persons, events, and institutions. Towards the later part of his life, he began to place in writing his belief in certain historical processes and their value for interpretative functions. The confessional bias which permeates his Geschichte should not detract from the significant contributions which Graebner made towards historical thought within the Lutheran Church of America.

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[51]John Nicum, "Professor Graebner's History," Lutheran Church Review, XII (April 1893), 180.

[52]Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 396.

[53]Meyer, p. 41.

Henry Eyster Jacobs

Henry Eyster Jacobs was born at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on 10 November 1844. He was the son of Dr. Michael Jacobs who taught at that time in Gettysburg. Not much is known about his early childhood and even less about his education until he entered Gettysburg Lutheran College and Seminary. Jacobs graduated from this establishment in 1865 and became a teacher in Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg from 1865 to 1867. Between the years 1868-1870 he functioned as principal of Thiel College. In 1870 he accepted a call to teach history and Latin at Gettysburg College. He remained at this school until 1883 when he accepted another call to teach systematic theology in the Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia, eventually becoming Dean in 1895. Jacobs remained the Dean of the Lutheran Seminary until 1920 when he became the president of the institution. In 1928 he went into semi-retirement and continued his historical writing and work. He passed away on 7 July 1932.[54]

During his lifetime he served on several important boards and commissions of the General Council and of the United Lutheran Church. Besides these undertakings, he also wrote extensively and made many contributions to various theological journals and reference works. Author, editor

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[54]Bodensieck, II, 1168.

and translator, Jacobs was active in all fields of writing, making it almost impossible to compile a complete list of his written materials.[55]

His historical work, History of the Lutheran Church in America,[56] represented a type of transition in the science of historical method. Abdel Ross Wentz maintains that the method which Jacob used was a great improvement over all of the Lutheran historians who had preceded him.

> Dr. Jacob's method in writing church history differed considerably from that of Lutheran historians in this country who had preceded him. He could not be content, as some had been, to accept as true

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[55]A partial list of the written work for which Jacobs is responsible follows: Henry Eyster Jacobs, The Doctrine of the Ministry as Taught by the Dogmaticians of the Lutheran Church (Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store, 1874); A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1893); Works of Martin Luther with Introductions and Notes, 6 vols. (Philadelphia: A. J. Holman Co., c.1915-1932); Martin Luther, The Hero of the Reformation, 1483-1546 (New York: J. P. Putnam's Sons, 1898); A Summary of the Christian Faith (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1905); Henry Eyster Jacobs, translator, The Book of Concord (Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1912); Henry Eyster Jacobs, editor, The Lutheran Commentary, 12 vols. (New York: Christian Literature Co., 1895-1898).

For an extensive collection of the writings of Jacobs, the reader is referred to: E. S. Breidenbaugh, editor, The Pennsylvania College Book, 1832-1882 (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1882), pp. 270-71; The Lutheran Church Review, I-XV (January 1882 to October 1896). (The Lutheran Church Review was edited by Henry Eyster Jacobs and published by the Alumni Association of the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mt. Airy, Pennsylvania.)

[56]Jacobs, A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States.

> whatever had somehow got accepted by historians who had already written. He could not be satisfied merely with a new combination of the old traditions that had been uncritically repeated through the generations.[57]

Wentz also indicated that Jacobs refrained from exercising his prejudical bias in the writing of his history.

> Nor was he willing to write church history with a bias, so as to make his every production a Tendenzschrift, as was the case with nearly all writers on Lutheran history during Dr. Jacobs' childhood and as was done in one notable case in a general history of the Lutheran Church in this country as late as 1892, the year before the appearance of Dr. Jacobs' own History of the Lutheran Church in America.[58]

The historical method which Jacobs followed together with his concern for objectivity in the relating of historical information served to influence both Neve and Wentz, the remaining general Lutheran historians.[59]

In the matter of historical composition, Jacobs saw three different forms which must be inter-related if history is to be of any value at all. He named these as the documentary, the philosophical, and the popular.

> The documentary and the philosophical, the former furnishing the evidence for the facts stated, and the latter dealing with the principles which

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[57]Abdel Ross Wentz, "Henry Eyster Jacobs, The Church Historian," The Lutheran Church Quarterly, VI (January 1933), 17.

[58]Ibid. The reference to a history written in 1892 is a reference to the Geschichte written by Graebner.

[59]Wolf, The Lutherans in America, p. v.

> underlie the facts, are intended for scholars, who come to the study of the subject with some degree of preliminary knowledge of what is treated. . . . But there is no less room for the popular presentation of history. This is necessarily dependent upon what has been previously been accomplished in the other departments.[60]

Jacobs saw the popular presentation of history as that aspect of history which became important for later generations in understanding the development of events, since intricate factual material was already moulded into an interpretative shape by the historian.

> The main facts which have been gathered as the result of minute and extensive research, are woven together into a continuous narrative, which does not aim at being exhaustive, but simply at giving what, in the opinion of the historian, is most important and interesting to the general reader. He takes the reader with him to a mountain side, and points out the path through which the ascent has been made; but does not enter into the details as would the surveyor who had been commissioned to revise lines, and establish the validity of conflicting claims.[61]

It was in the form of a popular writer that Jacobs chose to write his general Lutheran history. In this manner, he attempted to relate the significant details of Lutheran history in America without being overconcerned about the amount of factual information displayed.

This emphasis on significant details however, did not keep Jacobs from trying to be as objective in historical reporting as possible. Benjamin Lotz points out this factor in Jacobs' historical work.

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Ibid.

> Generally there is an excellent objectivity to his historical writings. Knowing his development, his early and constant devotion to the Lutheran Confessions and his great antipathy to non-Confessional Lutheranism, he tells the story of the New Measures and the Definite Platform with great impartiality, especially when we consider that he had lived through the bitter controversy that led to the rupture of the General Synod.[62]

Nevertheless, Jacobs did have some trouble with the proper use of historical imagination in his attempt at objectivity. In showing a popular view of history, he often used this historical imagination to fill in certain vacant areas of his material without any real accurate reason being shown.[63]

Both the subjective and objective concerns of history are evident in his work. It appears that Jacobs recognized the dilemma that these poles create for the historian when he states:

> We have scarcely reached the point whence we can view the Lutheran Church in America of even the earlier period of this century with complete historical impartiality. This will be done in time. Everything will doubtless be subjected to critical, historical analysis. But, meanwhile, the story, so far as known, must be told; and the facts, so

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[62]Benjamin Lotz, "Henry Eyster Jacobs (1844-1932) in Retrospect," The Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII (October 1944), 385.

[63]An example of this is Jacobs' attempt to emphasize the transition which Muhlenberg provoked upon his coming. Jacobs states: "It was felt that if the connection with Sweden or Germany were broken, the ecclesiastical connection must be with England. For this we dare not blame them; their eyes were closed, since God's hour for action had not yet come. [Then] . . . Muhlenberg came with his favorite motto, Ecclesia Plantanda." Jacobs, A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States, p. 210.

> far as known, must be judged, in order to prepare the way for those who are to follow.[64]

With this realization, Jacobs proceded to write his history.

A History of the Lutheran Church in America exhibits two very concrete evidences of the historical method which was evident at that time through the influence of Leopold von Ranke.[65] According to Wentz, these evidences include:

> his consistent use of sources. Not content to take account merely of what had already been written by his predecessors, he explored the ultimate documents out of which the history had to be constructed in the first place . . . The other concrete evidence of the new historical method in Dr. Jacobs' presentation of Church history appears in the perspective and interpretation which he imparted to his narrative. History is not only a record, it is a reasoning science. There must be some meaning in it.[66]

Jacobs believed that this meaning displayed the fact that God's hand is in every event of history.[67] He also believed that history is an ongoing process, that it contained a meaning which involved a unity and a continuity.[68] It remains the job of the historian to use the original sources to discover where this unity and continuity lie.

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[64]Wolf, The Lutherans in America, pp. vii-viii.

[65]Wentz, "Henry Eyster Jacobs, The Church Historian," VI, 18-19.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid., VI, 19.

[68]Ibid.

Jacobs gave his views concerning the unity and continuity of history in an inaugural address as printed in the Lutheran Church Review.[69] Not only does history hold meaning for the present generation, a meaning which must be found, but history also allows the present reader to develop an empathy with the events as they occurred.

> Expecting to teach nothing that is new, it will be our privilege to unfold, in the history of the past, the reasons that have influenced the teachers of the Church in the determination of her definitions. So far as possible, the student should be led to live over the life of the Church by which her doctrines became fixed and to appreciate the sorrows and distractions of God's people . . .[70]

Only by entering, at least to some extent, into this experience, will he be qualified to assume the obligations the Church requires for active participation.[71] Herein lies the practical value of historical study for Jacobs. He was certain that a proper knowledge of Church history would enable a proper solution to some of the difficult controversies of his time.

In order to bring about this proper understanding, he divided the history of the Lutheran Church in America into two periods. The one period he called the period of

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[69]Henry Eyster Jacobs, "Inaugural Addresses," The Lutheran Church Review, III (January 1885), 1-16. These were given at the installation of H. E. Jacobs as Norton Professor of Systematic Theology in the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. It was delivered in St. John's English Church, Philadelphia, September 20th, 1883.

[70]Ibid., III, 11-12.

[71]Ibid.

origination, and the other he designated as the period of experimentation.[72]

> In one respect the period of origination was ever with the new era that entered with the landing of Muhlenberg. In another respect we are still in the midst of it, and will remain so long as the majority of our communicant membership are of foreign birth. The period of experimentation is marked by the several efforts that have been made to comprise all Lutheran Synods into a general organization. How far this has advanced, and how near or how far any of the general bodies is to this goal, may be learned from this volume.[73]

Through these designations, Jacobs hoped to be able to show his readers where proper development toward unification could take place. That this held forth great influence towards this development is advocated by F. H. Knubel, who states that Jacobs, Muhlenberg, Walther and Krauth above all others, have shaped the Lutheran Church of America.[74]

The historical work of Henry Eyster Jacobs can be summarized by showing four basic characteristics. (1) He tried to be as objective as possible, reflecting the possible influence of Leopold von Ranke. (2) He saw three different forms of historical composition in history and designated these by the terms: documentary, philosophical, and popular. The last one he believed to be the most important for the general public. (3) He found two periods in the history of

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[72] Wolf, The Lutherans in America, p. ix.

[73] Ibid.

[74] F. H. Knubel, "As His Contemporaries Knew Him," The Lutheran, XIV (July 1932), 3.

the Lutheran Church in America. These he classified as the period of origination and the period of experimentation. He understood himself to be in the age of experimentation, although he discovered vestiges of the origination period yet in evidence. (4) The value which he saw in history for the Lutheran Church in America was the contribution which it might make towards Lutheran unity. All of these characteristics are evident in his general Lutheran history. This helps direct the reader in discovering where important issues were centered among the events as Jacobs saw them. Through this direction, a study of his work can be undertaken and he can be considered

Jürgen Ludwig Neve

Jürgen Ludwig Neve was born 7 June 1865 in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany. He graduated from the Breklum Theological Seminary in 1886. He attended the University of Kiel from 1886 to 1887. The ordination of Neve was held in 1888. After his ordination, Neve served as professor of church history in the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Chicago, Illinois, from 1887 to 1892. He accepted a call to Chester, Illinois, and served as pastor there from 1892 to 1898. During this period, he also served as the editor

of the Zionsbote.[75] He then went to the Western Theological Seminary in Atchison, Kansas, where he served as professor from 1898 to 1909. In 1909 he received a call to the Hamma Divinity School in Springfield, Ohio, where he stayed until his death on 12 August 1943.[76]

Neve wrote a number of works dealing with American Lutheranism, the Lutheran Confessions, and the history of Christian thought. They display a wide range of interests as well as a diversity of ideas.[77] As a historian, Neve

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[75]The Zionsbote was first published in 1896 at Chicago, Illinois. The place of publication was later moved to Burlington, Iowa (1905-1928). Shortly after the ULC merger in 1918, the publication was absorbed into Der Lutherische Kirchenfreund and in 1928 merged with Der Lutheraner into the Lutherischer Herald. Other editors besides Neve, were W. Rosenstengel, E. E. Ortlepp, R. Newmann, and F. Bahr.

[76]Bodensieck, III, 1725.

[77]Some of the works of Neve which help to illustrate the point are as follows: Jürgen Ludwig Neve, The Augsburg Confession (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1914); Jürgen Ludwig Neve, A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, Iowa: German Literary Board, 1916); Jürgen Ludwig Neve, Charakterzuege des Amerikanischen Volkes (Leipzig: H. G. Wallmann, 1902); Jürgen Ludwig Neve and O. W. Heick, A History of Christian Thought (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1943); Jürgen Ludwig Neve, Introduction to Lutheran Symbolics (Columbus, Ohio: F. J. Heer Printing Co., 1917); Jürgen Ludwig Neve, The Lutherans in the Movements for Church Union (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication House, 1921); Jürgen Ludwig Neve, Churches and Sects of Christendom (Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1940); Jürgen Ludwig Neve, The Formulation of the General Synod's Confessional Basis (Burlington, Iowa: German Literary Board, 1911).

can be classified among those men who believe that a proper study of past events will grant valuable insights into the problems of the present. In one of his works concerning the movement toward unity among various Church bodies, he makes the following comments:

> This leads us to a study of the union movements among the Germans in the sixteenth, the seventeenth and the nineteenth century. Here alone is where the union movements between Lutherans and Reformed have had a history. A careful student will find that the union problem is fundamentally the same today as it was in the sixteenth and succeeding centuries. It is the question of how to overcome the doctrinal difference between the Lutheran and the Reformed types of Protestantism.[78]

Neve believed that a study of these problems among the Reformed and Lutherans together with the solutions proposed would enable Lutherans to follow similar procedures and gain some type of rapport between one another. The importance of history for Neve, therefore, is its ability to give guidance when similar issues arise in future generations.

With this recognition of the importance of history for future generations, Neve recognized the necessity for proper historical review. One of his characteristics in presenting proper historical review is pointed out by O. W. Heick in A History of Christian Thought. In this work, he states that:

> as a scholar he was possessed of a keen mind. Though firmly grounded in the Confessions of

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[78]Neve, The Lutherans in the Movements for Church Union, pp. 1-2.

> his Church, he wrote, as a historian, "with malice toward none," being always mindful of the dictum . . . that the "peace of history" must rest over the mind and work of the investigating theologian. . . .[79]

This concern for keeping personal feelings away from his historical writing was added to his realization that adequate documentation also made a significant contribution towards proper and accurate reporting or reviewing of history. In his book on The Lutherans in the Movements for Church Union, Neve comments on why he included so many footnotes in this particular work.

> Inasmuch as the historical material on the problem of union between Lutherans and Reformed has never been written up in English, we felt that the foundation for a . . . discussion of the subject . . . ought to be in this form of critical research. For this reason we have been liberal in attaching footnotes, 491 in number, in which, for the most part, we have aimed to indicate the literature for re-examination and perhaps, for a further development of the study.[80]

Neve finds the value of extensive documentation in the foundations which are laid. In other words, the initial research is to be built upon by later research until a final goal is reached, whatever this goal may be.

The emphasis which Neve placed on objectivity and his concern for adequate documentation become evident in his

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[79]J. L. Neve, A History of Christian Thought, from the forward by O. W. Heick (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946), II, v.

[80]Ibid., II, 4.

work on general Lutheran history. An example of both can be shown by his report concerning Zion Lutheran Church in Baltimore.

> Zion Church in Baltimore had a feeble beginning and very slow growth, being dependent on immigration from Europe. In 1755 it had as pastor John George Bager, pastor at Hanover. A building was erected in 1762. The first settled pastor was John Caspar Kirchner. The congregation enjoyed great prosperity under John Siegfried Gerok and John Daniel Kurtz. But it was subsequently lost to the Lutheran Church under the influence of a rationalist pastor. It is now independent but served by a pastor of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.[81]

This characteristic recording of historical information continues throughout Neve's work. In doing so, he helps to assemble much information which normally would not be at the disposal of students of general Lutheran history.

Part of the contribution which Neve makes to general Lutheran history lies also in the manner of presentation which Neve chose. He has a unique approach to general Lutheran history which other general Lutheran historians did not use.

> He . . . set about to present the materials "simply from the viewpoint of organization and growth." He divided his general subject into three parts: (1) Origin of individual congregations; (2) Congregations organized into synods; (3) Synods organized into larger bodies. Each of these parts constitutes a

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[81] J. L. Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1934), p. 42.

> "period" of the history. The result is that the student gets a vivid impression of a multitude of parts and organizations in the Lutheran Church in America . . .[82]

The problem with this method of reporting is in the difficulty of continuity. There is a danger of failing to see any connection or relation to the general history and the culture surrounding this history.[83] As such, the reader has a tendency to become lost in a maze of factual information which in many instances never seems to be brought together. Nevertheless, the contribution which Neve makes towards general Lutheran history is important enough to warrant consideration when general Lutheran history is being discussed.

To summarize the historical work of Neve, attention is drawn to three basic considerations which act as guiding principles for his historical method. (1) History should be studied because it teaches the lessons necessary for understanding current positions in controversies. (2) Prejudice, if possible, should be kept at a minimum. Objectivity is always the most excellent point to be reached in critical research. (3) In any type of pioneer attempt in history, including American Lutheran history, a large amount of scientific-critical research is necessary. Interwoven with

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[82]Abdel Ross Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (2nd edition, revised; Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1933), p. 14.

[83]Ibid.

these considerations is a concern for Lutheran unity, a concern which could not help but affect his choice of factual information. It must be said that in the area of historical documentation and review, Neve represents a significant advance over much of the general Lutheran history which preceded him.

Abdel Ross Wentz

Abdel Ross Wentz was born at Black Rock in York County, Pennsylvania, on 8 October 1883. His parents were J. Valentine and Ellen (Tracy) Wentz. His childhood and early youth were spent at Lineboro, Maryland. While in Maryland, he attended the Franklin High School in Reistertown. Wentz graduated from the College at Gettysburg in 1904 with an A. B. He received his B. D. from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 1907. After graduating from the Seminary, he spent one year at the University of Leipzig under such men as Ihmels and Hauck. The following year, he studied at Berlin under Seeberg and Holl. After the year at Leipzig and the year at Berlin, he pursued a final year of study at Tuebingen under Schlatter and Mueller. In 1909 he accepted a call to be professor of history and English Bible in the college at Gettysburg. He stayed in this position for seven years, relinquishing it in 1916 for a position in a newly-established chair of Church History at the same

institution.[84] Wentz continued to stay quite active and has been a member of countless boards and committees.[85]

Wentz holds two earned doctorates, one in philosophy from George Washington University granted in 1914 and another in divinity granted from the Gettysburg College in 1921. He is also an honorary member of the Iota Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.[86]

Wentz has been quite active as an author.[87] Through this activity, he has given considerable information about

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[84] Wentz, History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary, pp. 338-39.

[85] A partial list of the various boards and committees as taken from Who's Who in America (Chicago: A. N. Marquis Company, 1966), XXXIV, 2268-69, is as follows: "Member of the executive body of the United Lutheran Church in America, also a member of the board of foreign missions . . . secretary to the American Association of Theological Schools, 1934-36, treasurer, 1936-46; member American Bible Revision Committee; member executive committee Lutheran World Federation, 1935-52, vice president, 1946-52; member executive committee World's Conference on Faith and Order; member of the Committee of Fourteen to form World Council of Churches. Member American Society of Church History, president 1931-32, secretary 1934-37. Lutheran Historical Society curator. President of the German Society, member of Phi Betta Kappa."

[86] Ibid.

[87] A partial list of the work which Wentz has done in the area of historical study is as follows: Abdel Ross Wentz, The Beginnings of the German Element in York County Pennsylvania (Lancaster, Pa.: Pennsylvania German Society, 1916); Pioneer in Christian Unity: Samuel Simon Schmucker (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967); When Two Worlds Met (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1921; A New Strategy for Theological Education (n.p., 1937); Fliedner the Faithful (Philadelphia: Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, c.1936); History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Frederick, Maryland, 1738-1938 (Harrisburg, Pa.: Evangelical Press, 1938); History of the

what presuppositions are necessary for the proper recording of history. To begin with, he saw a relationship between church history and the cultural history of a given period. In the second edition of his book on general Lutheran history entitled The Lutheran Church in American History, he states:

> This succession of parallels between Church history and general culture is not an accident. From the nature of the case there is a reciprocal relation between nationality and religion, between a man's conduct as a citizen and his conduct as a church member, between the political history of a country and the ecclesiastical history of that country.[88]

Wentz believes that it is extremely important that Lutherans should view their history in the framework of general American civilization if they are to take their rightful place in the Christian world of today.[89] By means of understanding this framework, Wentz indicates that a more wholesome perspective can be achieved for the writing of history.

The method for obtaining this proper perspective is pointed out by Wentz when he states that this perspective:

> is based upon an analysis of the facts of Lutheran history in America and a synthesis of those facts in a continuous line of interpretation down to our own

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Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Maryland of the United Lutheran Church in America, 1820-1920 (Harrisburg: Evangelical Press, 1920); and Abdel Ross Wentz, editor, The Lutheran Churches of the World, 1952 (Geneva: Lutheran World Federation, 1952). The reader is also referred to the bibliography of this thesis.

[88] Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (2nd edition), pp. 3-4.

[89] Ibid.

> day. The main purpose is to enable the reader to see the relation of the Church's history to the history of society in general and so to interpret the main direction of events, particularly in the present day.[90]

Through a proper perspective based on adequate factual information, Wentz believes that history can be a real aid in making influential decisions about church polity, whether it is for Lutheran unity or some other worthy endeavor.

Wentz sees factual information as the basic core of the proper perspective in history.[91] Upon this factual information the historian places an interpretation which enables the student of history to understand himself in the situation which he presently finds himself.[92] It is at the point of interpretation that Wentz saw a real danger for the historian which he tried to correct in his own historical writing. Henry Eyster Jacobs points out how Wentz tried to do this.

> By his method of presentation in this volume the writer has sought to avoid the danger of abstraction that lurks in the study of Church History and that so often leads to a false detachment of the life and work of the Church from the social and political environment in which it grew up.[93]

It was this danger of abstraction which Wentz dutifully tried to avoid in his editions on American Lutheranism.

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[90] Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. vi.

[91] Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (1st edition), p. 9.

[92] Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, pp. v-vi.

[93] Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (1st edition), p. 9.

In an effort to remain aloft from abstractionism in interpretation, Wentz tried to keep in mind the necessity for objectivity in historical reports. He shows this trait in his History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary when he states:

> The author has tried to be a faithful reporter and not a critic. He has honestly striven to be fair to all individuals, parties, and movements. His statements are based for the most part on primary sources, such as private letters, unpublished reports of officers, manuscripts, minutes of the Faculty and the Board of Directors, and proceedings of districts, synods and general bodies. Hundreds of volumes of the religious press, particularly the Lutheran Observer, were used.[94]

This objectivity became even more important when coupled with the fact that Wentz, like Neve, believed that his material could be used by later historians to carry on the historical study of a particular subject.[95]

Wentz did not deviate from the basic concerns which he had for history, its method and its interpretation. In the latest edition of his work on general Lutheran history, the concerns of his earlier historical writing are still evident.

> In this volume I have used the same method that was employed on a more limited scale in my Lutheran Church in American History. The framework for the interpretation of Lutheran Church history continues to be the general history of America. Some of the materials of that earlier volume are included in this new and more detailed narrative. In accordance

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[94]Wentz, History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary, p. 5.

[95]Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (2nd edition), pp. 4-5.

> with our purpose to focus upon the situation of our own day, the scale of presentation grows larger as the narrative progresses. Moreover, in order that the attention of the reader might not be fixed entirely upon the church as an institution, I have sought to include in this account some of the social and cultural history of the Lutheran people in America.[96]

This quotation can help summarize the basic concerns of Wentz in the area of historical endeavor. (1) He sees a parallel between church history and the general culture in which this history develops. Neither exists without the other. (2) Wentz analyzes facts into a synthesis which allows an interpretation that can be expanded by future generations of historians. (3) Wentz believes that factual information is the basic core of history and is necessary for interpretation to develop. (4) Original source materials are necessary in order for history to be faithful in attempting the interpretation of an event.

Because of his concern for objectivity and faithful reporting, Wentz is one of the more reliable of all the general Lutheran historians. He also represents, together with Neve, a more scientific approach to historical study among Lutherans. Perhaps this is an evidence of the influence of modern historical research upon general Lutheran history.

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[96]Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. vi.

Other General Lutheran Historians

Besides the general Lutheran historians which have been mentioned, there are several other men that deserve recognition. They do not rank as primary sources in this study for various reasons that will become clear as this section develops. This in no way indicates that these men were not important to general Lutheran history or that their contribution was not very significant in this area. It merely indicates that their contributions were just not as significant as those which this study considers primary source material.

The first of these general Lutheran historians under consideration is George John Fritschel. Fritschel was born 24 May 1867 at St. Sebald, Iowa. He was educated at Mendota school and attended Thiel College in Greenville, Pennsylvania. He was called to be an assistant to his father at the seminary in Mendota. In 1889 he studied at the University of Rostock, Erlangen, and Leipzig, graduating in 1892. In 1892 he received a call to be pastor at Superior, Wisconsin, where he stayed only a short while before accepting a position in the College of the Texas Synod Seminary at Brenham, Texas that same year. While there, he undertook the responsibility for a church in Galveston, Texas. He also held pastorates at Loganville and Fond du lac, Wisconsin. From 1905 to 1936, he held a professorship at Wartburg Seminary. His death occurred on 5 October 1941. Perhaps the most significant

contribution he made for Lutheran history was the influence he exerted in the merging of the Texas Synod with the Iowa Synod.[97]

Among the significant works which Fritschel wrote,[98] was a work on general Lutheran history entitled: Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in Amerika.[99] This work proved to be a translation of the earlier general Lutheran history written by Jacobs.[100] The translation was expanded when the German Iowa Synod was discussed, but this remained the only deviation from the earlier work by Jacobs. The report on the German Iowa Synod followed the same pattern which Jacobs

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[97]Lueker, p. 395.

[98]Some of the written works of George John Fritschel which have been published are: Aus Den Tagen der Vaeter; Geschichten Aus den Anfanszeiten der Iowa-Synode (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1930); Die Lehre von der Bekehrung nach D. Hoenickes Dogmatik. Eine Freundschaftliche Pruefung und Kritik (Dubuque, Ia.: Seminar Wartburg, n.d.); Quellen und Dokumente zur Geschichte und Lehrstellung der Ev.-Lutheran Synode von Iowa u.a. Staaten (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, n.d.); Zur Einigung der Amerikanisch-Lutherischen Kirche in der Lehre von der Bekehrung und Gnadenwohl (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1914); Die Urformen des 11 Artikels der KonKordienformel (Dubuque, Ia.: Seminar Wartburg, n.d.); The Formula of Concord, Its Origin and Contents: A Contribution to Symbolics (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1916); Die Schriftlehre von der Gnadenwohl (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1906).

[99]George John Fritschel, Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in Amerika (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1896), I; ibid. (1897), II.

[100]Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. 396.

established and indicated no unique contribution to the understanding of the historiography behind general Lutheran history. This being the case, Fritschel becomes a secondary source for this study, important in his own right,[101] but not important for this study.

The second general Lutheran historian considered in this section is G. Friedrich Bente. Bente was born at Wimmer, Hanover, on 22 January 1858, to Johann Friedrich Bente and Anna Marie (Snider) Bente. His family emigrated to Cleveland, Ohio, in 1866 and settled there. G. Friedrich Bente received his early education at Trinity School in Cleveland and entered Concordia College at Fort Wayne, Indiana, in September, 1872. In the fall of 1878, Bente entered the Theological Seminary at St. Louis, graduating in 1881. Upon graduation, he took a call to be pastor at Humberstone, Stonebridge, and Jordan, Ontario. Here he remained from 1882 to 1893. He became the vice-president of Canada (now the Ontario district) in 1885. He moved up to presidency in 1887 and stayed at this position until 1893 when he accepted a call to become a professor at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He stayed at Concordia until 1926

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[101] Fritschel's Geschichte, together with his Quellen und Dokumente, should always be considered if information is desired concerning the origin and development of the German Iowa Synod.

when he retired and moved to California. He died on 15 December 1930 at Redwood City, California.[102]

Professor Bente was a prodigious writer and any attempt to indicate his most significant works would do him an injustice.[103] Significant for this study is the historical work for which he was responsible entitled American Lutheranism.[104] This was published in two volumes with the first volume covering the early history of American Lutheranism and the Tennessee Synod. The second volume concerned itself with the United Lutheran Church. Concerning this work, Abdel Ross Wentz writes in the revised edition to his Basic History of Lutheranism in America:

> The first of these little volumes is taken mainly from Dr. Graebner's book . . . [Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in America]. . . . The second volume is little more than a prolonged criticism of the theological positions of the former General Synod, General Council, and United Synod in the South. Volumes III and IV were to deal in similar fashion with other general bodies of Lutherans, but they have not appeared.[105]

Due to the nature of this work, it was not considered a primary source for this study. As with the general Lutheran history

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[102]Josephine Bente, Biography of Dr. Friedrich Bente (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1936), passim.

[103]Ibid., pp. 77-112, for an extensive treatment of the written works by Bente. Another detailed description of the works of F. Bente can be found in Concordia Theological Monthly, II (July 1931), 510-13.

[104]G. Friedrich Bente, American Lutheranism (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1919), I and II.

[105]Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. 397.

written by Fritschel, it is important in its own right,[106] but not significant for understanding the philosophy of history behind general Lutheran history in America. It does however, represent a determined effort to clarify doctrinal positions within Lutheranism and as such deserves mention in a discussion of general Lutheran history.

Charles W. Schaeffer is the last general Lutheran historian to be considered in this section. He was born on 3 September 1807 in Germantown, Pennsylvania. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania in the arts and received theological training under his father. He held several pastorates, among them are New York in 1829, and Carlisle, Pennsylvania from 1829 to 1831. He became the Lutheran professor of theology in the Columbus Seminary in 1840 where he stayed until 1846. He taught at Gettysburg from 1857 to 1864 and at Philadelphia from 1864 to 1879. He died on 23 November 1879.[107]

Professor Schaeffer did not write as much as the other general Lutheran historians which have been considered. He

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[106] If the reader is interested in understanding the various doctrinal positions of the various individuals as well as the synodical organizations which were then current, the volumes by Bente are a must.

[107] Lueker, p. 948.

did make some contributions to the Evangelical Review and wrote several books.[108] The book which entitles Schaeffer to be considered among the general Lutheran historians is entitled: Early History of the Lutheran Church in America.[109] In this work, Schaeffer relies quite heavily on Hazelius who published his work in 1846. In most instances there was very little, if any, original research done. His contribution to general Lutheran history is primarily in the role of editor with regard to the style of Hazelius. In this manner, certain transitional sections which troubled Hazelius were redone in a much more popular style. Hevertheless, since Professor Schaeffer did undertake the task of writing a general Lutheran history, he deserves mention.

The works of George Fritschel, Fredrich Bente, and Charles Schaeffer serve a very legitimate purpose for this study. They serve as a control on the primary sources in certain areas where these sources are unclear. By the very evidence which they extracted from the primary general Lutheran histories, they help indicate what was considered important for those who were writing general Lutheran history at that particular time. They help underline certain emphases

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[108]The titles of the following works are attributed to Schaeffer: Commentary on Matthew (n.p., n.d.); Life of Martin Luther (n.p., n.d.).

[109]Charles W. Schaeffer, Early History of the Lutheran Church in America (Philadelphia: Lutheran Board of Publication, 1857).

which might be overlooked if they were not used. With this in mind, a brief recognition was given them by the author of this study.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL LUTHERAN HISTORIOGRAPHY IN AMERICA

The Use of Heuristic

General Lutheran historians generally held the sources for their writings in very high regard. Although the science of heuristic (the study of sources) was not yet fully developed during the period when most of them wrote, they still practiced certain basic considerations of this science. Abdel Ross Wentz and Jürgen Ludwig Neve could probably be considered the most accurate since they reaped the fruits which a developed historical consciousness deposited upon them. If this is true, it automatically points up the fact that the general Lutheran historians which preceded them might have been deficient in some area since they did not possess the historical development which Neve and Wentz inherited. A consideration of this possibility will serve as a guideline for observing the use which general Lutheran historians made of heuristic.

General Lutheran historians made little, if any, use of remains as a source for historical thought. The use of tombstones, church architecture, or maybe even old garments did not impress these historians as a useful source of historical information. Several reasons could be given for this. First of all, the proximity of the writers to the events themselves

could detract from a study of this sort especially in the case of Hazelius. Secondly, the novelty of the idea that this type of item could be of use as possible source material probably deterred its use somewhat. Finally, there was the purpose for which much of general Lutheran history was written. In many instances, this purpose revolved around a defense for some existing institution within the Lutheran church or some type of confessional position. This type of attitude did not lend well to probing source material which was not generally recognized. The study of remains therefore, as a legitimate source for general Lutheran history, has always been a lost art among the historians of this history.

The use of records, however, as a legitimate source for history, indicates a decided shift of emphasis from the use made of remains. Although it is almost impossible to document adequately, it is safe to assume that the oral record did exert some influence on general Lutheran history especially where materials were lost or destroyed.[1] This dearth

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[1]The question of how much oral tradition was influential in the actual writing of general Lutheran history in America is impossible to answer. The way in which its influence was exerted is indirectly indicated by A. L. Graebner who discovered some written sources which had been automatically assumed burned by previous general Lutheran historians. This is in reference to the books and papers belonging to St. Matthew's Church in New York City assumed burned in 1776. Because this assumption was passed on from historian to historian, little or no research was directed toward their discovery, a definite indication of the influence of oral tradition. J. Nicum, "Professor Graebner's History," The Lutheran Church Review, XII (April 1893), 179.

of information with regard to oral records however, is not true with regard to the written record. This record became the foremost source for general Lutheran history in America from its inception. Ernest L. Hazelius set the precedent for this stress when he pointed out the sources which he used in compiling his history.

> The contents of the third section are principally drawn from the letters and accounts of the first ministers sent to America collected in two works, the one bearing the title: "Nachrichten aus Pennsylvanien," i.e. "Accounts from Pennsylvania," given by Dr. H. M. Muhlenberg and others to the Theological faculty at Halle in Germany, as well as to private friends, collected and edited by the superintendents of the Halle Orphan house; the other bears the title: "Nachrichten von der ersten Niederlassung der Saltzburger Emigranten in Georgien," i.e. "Accounts of the first settlements of the Salzburg emigrants in Georgia," likewise edited by the Orphan house of Halle.[2]

Through the use of these written materials, Hazelius compiled the first general Lutheran history of American Lutheranism. This appears to have alerted everyone to the possibility of this major source.

Once the importance of the written record was established, general Lutheran history became quite dependent on them. To show what records were used and where they were kept, Henry Eyster Jacobs is quoted at length as he records his source material.

> The library of the Lutheran Historical Society at Gettysburg, Pa., contains MSS. of Berkenmeyer, Muhlenberg, Brunnholtz, and Goering. The archives

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[2]Ernest L. Hazelius, History of the American Lutheran Church (Zanesville, Ohio: Edwin C. Church, 1846), p. v.

> of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania at Mount Airy contain the journals of Muhlenberg, beginning with his voyage and continuing, with a few interruptions, almost to his death, besides volumes of letters and other material from his hand. An extensive collection of the papers of Schaum, the journals, papers, and correspondence of Helmuth, volumes of notes by H. E. Muhlenberg, MSS. relating to J. F. Schmidt, the diary of the pioneer home missionary Paul Henkel, the protocol of the minutes of the Ministerium from 1784, the files of official papers complete and admirable arranged from 1800, transcripts from the papers of the Halle archives by Dr. W. Germann, transcript of J. C. Stover's private journal of ministerial acts, and a large number of papers of the pioneer foreign missionary, Heyer, are among its treasures. Valuable material is preserved at Amsterdam, Holland; at Gloria Dei Church, Philadelphia, and Old Swedes' Church, Wilmington, and at St. Matthew's German Church (Broome and Elizabeth Streets), New York. The material at Amsterdam has recently been carefully examined by Dr. Nicum; and the documents at New York, Gloria Dei, Wilmington, and Gettysburg by Professor Graebner. The revised edition of the "Hall-Nachrichten" has been embodied, so far as published, the results of the thorough study by Dr. Mann of the large mass of MSS. that gradually accumulated under his care at Mount Airy.[3]

Jacobs also indicates in this excerpt, the written materials which were preferred by historians writing general Lutheran history.

Within this preferred material, diaries were held in very high regard. Many chapters were filled from the material of this unpublished source. Hazelius shows how this popular written source was used.

> "On the 15th of June," says Mr. Bolzius, in his Diary of 1743, "a little Girl came to me, confessing

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[3]Henry Eyster Jacobs, A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1893), p. x.

> with many tears, that she had stolen a peach, and that her conscience disturbed her so much on that account, that she could neither sleep nor work. . . ."[4]

The importance of this written record lay in its proximity to the actual event as it was taking place. General Lutheran historians apparently believed that a man actually involved in the circumstances being studied, and who wrote his interpretation of the circumstances in a diary, made this source much more accurate than something written much later by an uninvolved individual.

This attitude of proximity to the actual event as it was taking place also caused the general Lutheran historians to place a great emphasis on reports of particular meetings written by the secretaries who were present. These reports or "minutes" were believed to contain everything of value that occurred during that particular event. J. L. Neve used them most extensively and except for transitional paragraphs, copied them verbatim in many instances. Concerning a meeting of the Pennsylvania Ministerium he states:

> At the opening of the afternoon session, Dr. Sprecher gave his decision which is on record as follows: "The chair regards the act of delegates of the Pennsylvania Synod by which they severed their practical relations with the General Synod, and withdrew from the partnership of the synods in the governing

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[4]Hazelius, p. 59.

> functions of the General Synod, as the act of the Synod of Pennsylvania . . ."[5]

This concern for reports or minutes of particular meetings also included constitutions and their resolutions which were evolved during a particular meeting.

> the General Synod passed the following resolution as an interpretation of its constitution:
>
> "Whereas, a fear is expressed by some that the basis of the General Synod may be changed by enlargement so as to include other symbolical books beside the Augustana, and
>
> "Whereas, a conviction is held that an effort is in progress to reduce to a lower standard, in thought and spirit . . .
>
> "Resolved . . .[6]

A. L. Graebner made extensive use of minutes to fill in certain vacant areas which previous general Lutheran history had protracted. In order, for example, to determine the movement of individuals within a given time period, he would use the minutes of meetings at which these individuals were supposed to have attended. This use becomes quite evident in the following passage:

> On 23 October 1786, the Conference was addressed by D. Joh. Christoph Kunze, Pastor at New York, and who was also elected and recognized as President for the opening session and for the remaining five. The President called the roll.

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[5] J. L. Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1934), p. 112.

[6] Ibid., p. 123.

> Present at this committee were the pastors:
> Joh. Christoph Kunze from New York
> Samuel Schwerdfeger from Feilstown
> Heinrich Moeller from Albany. . . .[7]

Other general Lutheran historians continued to make use of minutes and even included those minutes which evolved from rather unimportant committee meetings within a major synodical assembly.[8] Whether through convenience, a concern for accuracy or volume of material, minutes continue to be a major source for Lutheran historical writing in America.

Another very important written source for general Lutheran history was the use made of newspaper articles and editorials. All of the general Lutheran historians made extensive use of these sources. This could include anything from reminiscences[9] to personal comments on a particular man.[10] The primary use of this written source was to alert the reader concerning how various developments within the church were being viewed. The negative, the positive and the apprehensive articles were used to recognize current ideas with regard to a specific turn of events. Neve gives an example of this type of reporting.

> After the convention at York, The Lutheran Observer had viewed the situation from every point of the compass. In the edition of October 21, 1864, it

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[7] A. L. Graebner, Geschichte Der Lutherischen Kirche in America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1892), p. 469.

[8] Hazelius, pp. 226-27.

[9] Ibid., p. 134.

[10] Neve, p. 96.

> carried an article on the "Coming Theological Conflict," in which the fear was expressed that the Church might be increasingly dominated by the conservative minority led by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and articulate by means of The Lutheran and Missionary, the new seminary, and a number of liturgical publications.[11]

In this manner, the general Lutheran historians tried to see certain trends of thought which were in evidence when these original sources were written.

Still another primary source for general Lutheran historians was the written record represented by the letter. This differed from a diary in involving two individuals. Also, the written letter was expected to be read which diaries, in many instances, were not. Edmund Jacob Wolf made the most extensive use of this record among general Lutheran historians. Apparently, it was the best record he had at his disposal for the establishment of statistics. He makes considerable use of letters which contain numerical indications in the body of the letter. Take for example, the following quotation:

> from a letter dated September 28, 1715, and written by . . . Rev. Justus Falckner, we learn that at that time four small congregations existed in the province of New York, "and all these four consist in all of about one hundred constant communicants, besides strangers going and coming in the city of New York."[12]

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[11] Ibid., p. 109.

[12] Edmund Jacob Wolf, The Lutherans in America (New York: J. A. Hill & Company, 1890), p. 131.

Other general Lutheran historians also made use of this source and in many instances merely copied verbatim, in an effort to retain the true sense of the original. Henry Eyster Jacobs records an obvious indication of this practice.

> Gentlemen: I have received letters from the Duke, wherein it is particularly signified unto me that his Royall Highness doth approve of the toleration given to the Lutheran Church in these parts. I do, therefore, expect that you live friendly and peaceably with those of that profession, giving them no disturbance in the exercise of their religion, as they shall receive no countenance in, but on the contrary strictly answer, any disturbance they shall presume to give unto any of you in your divine worship. So I bid you farewell, being
>
> Your very loving friend
> Richard Nicolls
>
> For James, In New York
> this 13th day of October, 1666.[13]

The value of the letter for general Lutheran history lay in its individuality since it was written by an individual and written only once. Recognizing this characteristic of the letter, general Lutheran historians made extensive use of its information.

The last major source which can be considered principal for general Lutheran historians is the source designated by the title: Hallische Nachrichten. These were reports which Muhlenberg and his associates sent regularly to the fathers

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[13]Jacobs, p. 56.

in Halle and which give a rather clear view of their activity during the period in which they lived.[14]

> These reports were published from time to time in 16 continuations from 1745 to 1786. They were compiled and re-edited in two volumes in 1787 by Rev. J. L. Schulze, D. D., of Halle. They were edited in 1886 by Dr. W. J. Mann and Dr. B. M. Schmucker with the help of Dr. W. Germann of Halle.[15]

These reports could be considered the most important single source for general Lutheran history during the period in which Muhlenberg lived including a few years immediately after his death in 1787.

Other source material used by general Lutheran historians is almost incapable of classification. It depended greatly on the historian and the period under consideration. They literally used anything which even remotely applied to the subject under discussion. Everything from statistical reviews to sermons was given close scrutinization.[16] An extensive use of secular transactions was made in order to see the influence which the government had on the Lutheran Church in America.[17] The use of chronicles seemed a legitimate source for most of the general Lutheran historians. Neve

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[14] Neve, p. 57.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Hazelius, pp. 175, 163.

[17] Wolf, p. 138.

did not make much use of them, but Graebner relied on them heavily.[18]

A somewhat new element was added to the idea of written source by Henry Eyster Jacobs when he did not hesitate to mention in writing, the use he made of a previous general Lutheran historian, in this case Graebner.[19] Neve, for example, gives evidence of an exact quotation taken from the general Lutheran history written by Jacobs.

> With wounded hearts, but with hymns of praise on their lips, they wandered through the cities and villages of Germany singing the song composed by Shaitberger, the leader of a former exile:
>
> An exile poor, and nothing more,
> This is my sole profession . . .[20]

Through these men, general Lutheran history formally recognized all the work done by previous general Lutheran historians as a legitimate source upon which later historical study could build.

Abdel Ross Wentz can be considered the "Dean" of the general Lutheran historians since he represents a culmination of the historical work accomplished by earlier general Lutheran historians and because he tried to be as scientific as possible in his historical efforts. For these reasons,

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[18]Graebner, pp. 117-18.

[19]Jacobs, p. 118.

[20]Neve, pp. 35-36. Taken from Henry Eyster Jacobs, A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1893), p. 154.

his use of source material is particularly singled out for consideration.

Besides the sources used by other general Lutheran historians, that is, diaries, "minutes" of meetings, articles, editorials and letters, Wentz viewed certain other sources as equally important.

> Of special value are the journals of Paul Henkel. Some of the reports of these missionaries are published with the minutes of the synods in the East. The early histories of the Bible, tract, and missionary societies also help to portray the life of the people in this period. Some light is provided by the early parts of congregational and synodical histories. The social and cultural life of Lutherans is illuminated also by the studies of American life in general . . .[21]

When considering the social and cultural life of Lutherans as over against American life in general, Wentz continually makes use of secular materials, even when it concerns the decorations of a particular church building.[22]

Through extending the source material to include cultural factors surrounding general Lutheran history on the secular level, Wentz broadened the possibilities for ever wider interpretations of the various phases within this history. This unique contribution by Wentz enlarged the scope of general Lutheran history and helped give it a new impetus towards a greater and more realistic understanding

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[21]Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 406.

[22]Ibid., p. 23.

of the factual information gleaned from its past. For this contribution, Wentz is extremely important to any future general Lutheran history which may be written.

The Use of Criticism

The use of criticism in general Lutheran history is in evidence, but rather difficult to document. The use made by the general Lutheran historians of diaries, journals and other previous historical writings necessitated some form of criticism concerning this material. Hazelius, for example, used criticism to verify the source materials whenever possible.[23] Attempts by general Lutheran historians to correct source material give a good example of how this criticism was attempted.

> In the summer of 1657 (June 6th) the Lutheran Pastor had arrived. His name, in printed documents, is generally given as John Ernst Goetwater. A recent examination of the archives of the Lutheran consistorium at Amsterdam shows that the name, as there known, was Goetwasser. The MSS. at Albany spell his name (April 15, 1758) as Gutwater and (November 11, 1658) as Gutwasser.[24]

Through correction and verification of source material, criticism became a noticeable element in general Lutheran history. The necessity for some kind of accuracy in

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[23]Hazelius, p. 163. In this particular instance, Hazelius compares the text of a sermon with the words as extracted from a newspaper article.

[24]Jacobs, pp. 52-53.

historical reporting forced general Lutheran historians to recognize the importance of using this element in historiography.[25]

Concerns for a General Lutheran Historiography

The first query into the concerns for a general Lutheran historiography must concentrate on the aspect of generalization[26] to make transitional statements between certain sections of factual information. It gave the historians a chance to exercise their feelings towards a particular denomination,[27] individuals,[28] or a turn of events.[29] Edmund Jacob Wolf shows what can happen and what did happen with most of the general Lutheran historians who used generalization to make transitional sentences.

In attempting to make a transition to the affects of current situations from the period between the French-Indian

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[25]The reader is referred to the summary statements on the various general Lutheran historians mentioned in Chapter II. Although not specifically stated, the approach they used for gathering information and writing their histories indicate the necessity for criticism even if not always consciously recognized by the historian himself.

[26]Generalization in historiography, is that problem whereby the facts at the disposal of a historian do not always completely support certain all-conclusive statements which are made.

[27]Hazelius, p. 56.

[28]Graebner, p. 321.

[29]Wolf, p. 220.

war and the inauguration of President Washington, Wolf comments:

> the whole country was torn and swept by the ravages of war, and the churches, besides sharing in the general suffering, were rent and desolated by the greater ravages of party violence and passion. A period of endless antagonism and irritation, a state of restlessness, recklessness and insecurity, brought the public mind to the verge of despair, the Church to the borders of destruction.[30]

Wolf offers no proof for these statements and, it seems, a good case could be made against the idea that the whole country suffered in this manner. According to George Howard (died 1928) a professor at the University of Nebraska, the colonies actually advanced in population and business grew indicating that whatever suffering there was did not affect the whole country.[31] The southern plantation owners and their particular mode of extravagant living for that time period, would also indicate disapproval with the general statements by Wolf.[32] Through this use it can be seen that general Lutheran history developed some areas of inaccuracy with the use of generalization.

Another rather prevalent use of generalization, besides that of transition, is that of indicating special influential

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[30]Wolf, p. 275.

[31]George Elliott Howard, Preliminaries of the Revolution (New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1905), p. 11.

[32]Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Background of the American Revolution (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924), p. 102.

aspects within general Lutheran history. These aspects could be in the area of individuals such as Muhlenberg,[33] or a philosophical term like rationalism.[34] Neve shows this form of generalization when he comments on the influence of rationalism with regard to the church of Norway.

> At the beginning of the nineteenth century a wave of rationalism deluged the Church of Norway, as it had other European countries, and put its mark on every feature of that country's spiritual life. Then there came an awakening over the whole land through the earnest preaching of a pious layman, Hans Nielsen Hauge.[35]

A more careful manner for reporting an influential aspect of history through generalization has been developed by Abdel Ross Wentz. For Wentz, generalization has become a summarization of factual information which was presented earlier in a chapter. An example of this would be his statements with regard to the increase of evangelization and growth in the churches:

> For American Christianity in general there was an increase in what is sometimes called churchliness, in some quarters an increase in particular theories of church polity. Everywhere it meant a decided increase in the enterprise of evangelization, both at home and abroad.[36]

The problem of generalization for general Lutheran history therefore, is the problem of trying to bring together factual

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[33] Hazelius, p. 289.

[34] Wolf, p. 276.

[35] Neve, p. 290.

[36] Wentz, p. 176.

information through transitional statements and special emphases. Although open to the criticism of excess in personal bias and prejudice,[37] general Lutheran history still gives evidence of a strong desire to keep the excesses of generalization at a minimum and remain as accurate as possible.

Another concern for general Lutheran historiography is the problem of objectivity. Evidence of this problem is shown throughout general Lutheran history, from the area of inhuman treatment,[38] to that of different understandings with regard to certain Lutheran principles.[39] In much of general Lutheran history, flagrant abuse of objectivity abounds as when Wolf states that were it not for the Lutheran Church being the "Saviour" of the age, civilization would still be living in Medieval darkness.[40]

> She is distinguished as "the church of Theologians." Her scholars were the principal teachers of Christendom in the Sixteenth century, and they have within the present century restored the glories of the best age of Christian learning. "Her wonderful literature, her great universities, her systems of popular education are felt by the world."[41]

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[37] Graebner, p. 605.

[38] Hazelius, p. 28.

[39] Wolf, p. 94.

[40] Ibid., p. 426.

[41] Ibid.

Coupled with this attitude towards the Lutheran Church was the emphasis that language[42] and ethnic backgrounds contributed towards this individual superiority of the Lutheran Church. There appears to have been a definite belief that the German nation automatically represented the best in human beings. This is shown quite decisively by Jacobs when he states:

> Wherever . . . a German farmer lived, there were industry, order, and thrift. The size of the barns, the height of the fences, the well-kept wheat fields and orchards, marked off the domain of such a farmer from the lands of his shiftless Irish neighbors.[43]

Objectivity, therefore, in the sense of keeping as much bias and prejudice away from the observing and recording of factual information is lacking in much of general Lutheran history. It is somewhat strange that this should occur since all of the general Lutheran historians emphasized objectivity in the writing of history.[44] The reader of this history should keep this factor constantly in mind to help understand what information is being indicated by some of the more flagrant violations of objectivity.

A third historiographical concern directed towards general Lutheran history is that of methodology. What factors

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[42] Graebner, p. 537.

[43] Jacobs, pp. 234-35.

[44] Supra, pp. 10, 18, 36, 42, 47.

in the methodology of the general Lutheran historians help discern certain information available in general Lutheran history? Historical judgments[45] can be considered as the first factor in this methodology. There are many examples of these historical judgments throughout general Lutheran history. Hazelius gives an example when he states:

> Another great evil arose from men who during these troublesome times came into the country, as ministers of the gospel, but were in fact wolves in sheep's clothing, leading profligate lives, destroying the flocks, who in the absence and want of better men, had entrusted themselves to their care.[46]

The fact in evidence here is that there were certain individuals who were of questionable character, and who were exerting a negative influence on the congregations under their jurisdiction. Hazelius judged this as a great evil.

Another way in which this historical judgment became used is shown by Jacobs when he comments on the poetical work of Paul Henkel.

> Contemporary with these later efforts were those of Rev. Paul Henkel, both in German and English whose missionary zeal did not prevent him from attempting to preserve orthodox teaching in rhymes of a not very high literary standard.[47]

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[45]Historical judgments are judgments made by the historian on his factual information. These always reflect the thoughts and bias of the historian since the factual information per se does not contain the judgment.

[46]Hazelius, pp. 113-14.

[47]Jacobs, pp. 342-43.

In this manner, general Lutheran historians could reflect their feelings and attitudes toward certain materials. It indicates a definite trait which general Lutheran historians used to direct their readers properly as these individuals undertook a study of general Lutheran history in America.

Historical imagination is also a definite part of the methodological concerns for general Lutheran historiography. This occurred due to deficiencies in the source material of general Lutheran historians. These men were forced to use their imagination to fill in certain "gaps" which arose in their source material. In discussing the church organization within the New York area, Jacobs points out how this imagination was used.

> The provision for a "church council" in these congregations, while in entire harmony with what became the established practice in Sweden toward the close of the seventeenth century, was probably first introduced from the Dutch churches in New York by Fabritius. While the Swedish pastors of the first period had no precedent in Sweden to follow at that time, the Dutch Lutherans had from the time of the Reformation in Holland this organization in its fully developed form. As we find it mentioned, during the pastorate of Fabritius in 1684, the conclusion is irrestible that he organized his Swedish congregation after the model of his former Dutch congregation.[48]

The tendency in general Lutheran history however, was to deviate from this very proper use of historical imagination into an all conclusive generalization reflecting the emotional bias of the individual historian.[49] Yet, historical

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[48] Ibid., pp. 106-7.

[49] Wolf, p. 333.

imagination remained a necessary element throughout the methodology exhibited in general Lutheran history.

The last concern for this study in the problematical areas of general Lutheran historiography concentrates on the idea of properly acknowledged materials taken from previous general Lutheran history. Although this factor, like criticism,[50] is difficult to document on the basis of the written history, there is evidence that a large amount of copying was involved in the transmission of unverifiable factual material such as lost records.[51] Whenever a general Lutheran historian felt compelled to agree with a previous historian, he would usually display the particular agreement on the basis of that historian's work. This is perhaps the largest use of previous historical in general Lutheran history. It becomes quite evident in an excerpt made by Jacobs from the work of Graebner.

> With great correctness, Professor Graebner designates the proceedings of that day, August 26 . . . 1748, as "The most important event in the history of the American Lutheran Church of the eighteenth century."[52]

In some instances, whole historical works of previous general Lutheran historians were taken over by a later historian in an effort to have a greater segment of Lutheranism

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[50] Supra, p. 68.

[51] Nicum, XII, 179.

[52] Jacobs, p. 243.

acquainted with the earlier historian's publication.[53] This usually involved the translation from one language to another or an effort to supplement through additions to what had been written.

Proper acknowledgment of previous general Lutheran history which was taken over by later historians, represented a very real factor in general Lutheran historiography. Through the use of certain materials which earlier historians had researched, later historians could continue to emphasize similar important issues. In this manner a continuity was developed in general Lutheran history which has continued into the present.

Diversification Within General Lutheran Historiography

A change in the manner of writing historical materials can be observed in general Lutheran history. Beginning with Hazelius and ending with Wentz, there is movement in the historical process from a rather strict narrative style,[54] through a didactic emphasis[55] to a genetic type of report,[56]

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[53] Supra, pp. 50-53.

[54] Narrative writing in history is that writing which is satisfied with merely relating or enumerating interesting historical materials. L. W. Spitz, "History as a Weapon in Controversy," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (October 1947), 747-48.

[55] In didactic history, there is a conscious effort to either teach the past or predict the future. Ibid., XVIII, 748.

[56] In writing a genetic type of history, the writer is

finally culminating in a combination of the various methods. Although strict distinctions are not always evident, major accentuations can be obtained from the general Lutheran histories which were written.

Hazelius, who wrote the first general Lutheran history in America, concentrated primarily on the narrative style. His rather limited perspective influenced his decision to use this style.[57] His general Lutheran history shows that he tended to enumerate historical materials in their chronological order with little interpretation being given.

> The Rev. John William Starman, still living, became the successor of Mr. Ritz. Mr. Starman was born at Lennep, in the Duchy of Berg, in Germany, in 1773. His father, was, at the time of our brother's birth, the Lutheran minister of that town, and at the same time, Superintendent over the adjoining diocese. Our brother received his first education in the schools of his native town . . .[58]

Wolf on the other hand, as the second of the historians to write a general Lutheran history, already displays a didactic emphasis in his writing of history. While reflecting on the facts which he wished to use, Wolf made the following comments:

> The arduous labor of collecting and digesting the material has been inspired and sustained by the

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interested in the use of cause and effect to show the movement of history. Ibid., XVIII, 761.

[57]Wentz, p. 395.

[58]Hazelius, p. 128.

> supreme desire to afford to the Lutheran people, as well as the general Christian public, a better acquaintance with their glorious church, under the firm conviction that to know her is to love her, and that those knowing and loving her true character will consecrate themselves to the maintenance of her purity in faith and life, and the enlargement of her efficiency in extending the word and kingdom of Jesus.[59]

Unlike Hazelius, who made personal reflections on his history only when extremely necessary for transitional purposes, Wolf's history shows a marked characteristic of reflection in an effort to teach the world the heritage of the Lutheran Church in America. Through this emphasis, general Lutheran history began to exhibit a different style of historical writing. This diversification was to continue in the work written by Graebner.

A. L. Graebner wrote his general Lutheran history from what is known as a confessional viewpoint.[60] In doing this, he was interested in giving the public, information concerning the deviations from this viewpoint together with the consequences that resulted from them. He saw a warning in general Lutheran history as shown in his decision to quote Quitman, an American Lutheran pastor who lived from 1760 to 1832.

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[59] Wolf, p. iii.

[60] The confessional viewpoint is that opinion which emphasizes the use of doctrinal teachings evidenced in the Book of Concord. This viewpoint lays heavy emphasis on the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord as the primary guidelines for doctrinal discussions. Wentz, p. 396.

> Not only had the teacher Quitman gone over to the neighboring congregation, but in the final decade of his life he wrote concerning the Lutherans and the Reformed: "No fundamental difference exists between the two parties" . . .[61]

Graebner's history indicates that this attitude helped the Lutheran Church deviate from some basic beliefs in order to compromise. In doing this, Graebner thought that the Lutheran Church became something other than the Lutheran Church. In wishing to apply these lessons to current controversies among Lutherans, Graebner chose the didactic method for recording history. Perhaps this concern and method of Graebner help explain the somewhat polemical nature of his history for which he has been criticized.[62]

The genetic type of historical writing is evident in all three of the remaining general Lutheran historians. Although his history does not present the objectivity of Neve and Wentz, Jacobs for example, is quite interested in showing cause and effect relationship.

> Industry, thrift, and the able management of their senior pastor, and, above all, the blessing of the Lord, brought to them prosperity. They enjoyed the fulfillment of the promise of the "hundredfold" to those who for Christ's name, leave all that they have.[63]

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[61] Graebner, p. 663.

[62] J. Nicum, "Professor Graebner's History," Lutheran Church Review, XII (April 1893), 179-80.

[63] Jacobs, p. 162.

Utilizing this method for historical reporting, Neve combines the genetic with the narrative resolving his factual material into a summarized cause and effect relationship.

> In the Synod of Northern Illinois, a district synod of the General Synod, there was a large number of Swedes. In 1859 they formed about one-half of the whole synod. They were divided into three conferences: Chicago, Mississippi and Minnesota. At Springfield, Ill., they cooperated with the English part of their synod in the management of the Illinois State University where W. M. Reynolds was president and S. W. Harkey was professor of theology. . . . They . . . had the satisfaction of causing the Northern Illinois Synod to speak of the Augsburg Confession as "a correct and true summary of the teachings of the Christian religion."[64]

In this manner, general Lutheran history displayed an attempt to show the genetic reason for the Lutheran dilemma concerning confessional difficulties through the background involved with the arrangement and growth of various organizations within the Lutheran church of America.

Wentz combines all three methods of historical reporting without giving too much preference towards any single one. In some instances his general Lutheran history will display strict narrative:

> There were fifty-four institutions. Among them were twelve children's homes, eleven hospitals, twenty-one old folk's homes, and ten hospices. The deaconess mother house at Omaha . . . had eighty-eight deaconesses.[65]

In other instances, a definite didactic method can be discerned.

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[64]Neve, p. 101.

[65]Wentz, p. 197.

> In the Lutheran church in this period, therefore, we find a deepening of church consciousness and an increase in loyalty to historic Lutheranism in doctrine and worship and practice, and at the same time a more tolerant attitude towards all Christians everywhere.[66]

In still other instances, Wentz does not hesitate to give a genetic evaluation of his factual information.

> The same spirit of enterprise and large undertaking that charged the atmosphere of society in general and characterized the life of American Christianity as a whole and manifested itself in other lines of activity among Lutherans, naturally made itself felt also in the sphere of doctrine and brought most of the general bodies of Lutherans into such close approach to one another in their attitude towards the confessions that it foreshadowed an era of still larger undertakings among them.[67]

By using all three methods in fairly equal proportions, Wentz was able to give a more concise history than the general Lutheran historians who preceeded him and still remain reasonably objective.

Writing diversification within general Lutheran history therefore, is quite evident. This diversification, besides showing the favorite method of the historian, also points out how general Lutheran history has covered the broad expanse of her history in America. Where one history failed in some area, another history would compensate in that area. The overall problem of leaving out significant information

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[66] Ibid., p. 176.

[67] Ibid., pp. 238-39.

which should have been included could not be avoided. Nevertheless, by complimenting one another, the historians who wrote general Lutheran history were able to keep track of many significant items which would have been lost. Taken as a unit, they present an adequate picture of general Lutheran history in America and give valuable insights into the direction of the Lutheran Church in this country.

Conclusion

The author attempted to take a close look at several spheres of general Lutheran history which are important as concerns for historiography. He considered those spheres in historiography which it is possible to observe, if even to a limited degree, in the primary source material chosen for this study. The source material, the method of criticism, as it can be determined, and the concerns which a historiography of general Lutheran history must undertake, all came under consideration. The diversification of writing within general Lutheran history was considered in an effort to recognize the writing style which directed the general Lutheran historians in their choice and use of factual information. Other areas of historiography could possibly have been considered, but an attempt to do this would have taken the study away from general Lutheran history and into the more intricate histories of individual synods and confessional positions.

The understanding of Lutheran historiography in America could not be properly understood however, without a consideration of some of the basic postulates[68] which guided general Lutheran historians. These postulates could be considered the general Lutheran philosophy of history. On the basis of the primary sources for this study, this philosophy of history will now be considered. It is hoped that the points made for general Lutheran historiography will aid in the understanding of this philosophy of history. The two combined will enhance the appreciation of the problems which these historians faced, as well as their method for discussing the history of the Lutheran Church in America.

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[68]For this study, postulate will indicate an underlying hypothesis or assumption. Philip Gove, editor-in-chief, Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Company, Publishers, c.1961), p. 1773.

CHAPTER IV

GENERAL LUTHERAN PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY IN AMERICA

The Five Postulates

Any attempt to study the underlying assumptions of a particular discipline in a precise manner, is beset with many problems. This is true especially in the area of church history, since this history has often been used to display a particular theological bias.[1] In the case of general Lutheran history however, a study of this nature is possible if undertaken through five postulates which guided the interpretation of factual information into the final product of written history. All of the postulates which will be studied, are continually in operation throughout general Lutheran history; although, certain of them will hold predominance over the others within a particular historical work. Because these postulates represent the underlying assumptions for the writing of general Lutheran history, they will represent in this study, the philosophy of history for that discipline.

The first postulate which guided general Lutheran historians was an emphasis on Providence or the Hand of God.

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[1] L. W. Spitz, "History as a Weapon in Controversy," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVIII (October 1947), 747.

Secondly, there was a concern to show through history, that the grace of God was upon all Lutherans in America. The third postulate indicated a strong impetus for seeing the Lutherans of America as the Elect of God. The fourth postulate concentrated on the idea that history possesses the ability to teach lessons for the present and for the future. Finally, the historian of general Lutheran history saw their church as being in a state of constant growth, always for the good. Through these five postulates, the reader of general Lutheran history is presented with the heat and core of those interpretive influences which indicate a philosophic concern. Each of these postulates will now be studied in detail.

The Postulate of Providence

Providence is defined as that which is under divine guidance or care by a rational personal God.[2] General Lutheran historians would agree with this definition, but would tend to make it a little more anthropomorphic, emphasizing the hand of God or some similar expression. While these exact words are not used, the idea becomes very clear already in Hazelius who uses a primary source of a party who participated in the crossing of the Atlantic by the Salzburgers.

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[2]Philip Gove, editor-in-chief, Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, c.1961), p. 1827.

> The providence of a wise and a gracious God has directed me and my children, to go with other Salzburgers to America. During our passage we frequently asked ourselves, what the designs of our heavenly Father probably were in regard to us, but now, since he has brought us across the ocean, we discover, that he intended to make the doctrine of Christ's atonement truly precious to our souls, that we might find our happiness in it during our present life, might die happily, and live forever in the enjoyment of bliss and communion with him.[3]

According to general Lutheran history, almost every aspect of the daily life for the Lutheran seemed permeated with a belief in some type of Divine guidance. A problem such as obtaining a passport could be used to indicate one of these areas of guidance.

> The daily ingranting of this permission and issuing the proper passport, turned out to be one of those kind providences which at the time of their occurrence appear so mysterious and so trying to faith but turn out so happy in the issue.[4]

The active intervention of God thus reached down to the most individual levels of existence for general Lutheran history. The historians did not shirk their responsibility as they saw it, to record this point.

A patriotic flavor was introduced into the whole idea of Providence and its influence by Abdel Ross Wentz. Henry Eyster Jacobs calls attention to this factor by some remarks he made in an introduction to one of Wentz's historical works.

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[3]Ernest L. Hazelius, History of the American Lutheran Church (Zanesville, Ohio: Edwin C. Church, 1846), p. 41.

[4]Edmund Jacob Wolf, The Lutherans in America (New York: J. A. Hill & Company, 1890), p. 160.

> This volume shows also how the development of the nation, and the growth of the organization known as The Lutheran Church have progressed side by side. The parallels traced are not mere fortuitous coincidences; they exhibit Providential leadings.[5]

Providence apparently operated in the secular society as well. The Lutheran Church did not operate in a vacuum, but in conjunction with the culture around her. In showing this, general Lutheran history indicated that Providence was quite active in both realms.

Whether showing the wondrous works of God for the salvation of sinners,[6] or displaying how the hand of God organizes and directs the church,[7] general Lutheran historians emphasized the importance of this element in history. In no small way, this factor guided the interpretation of factual material for general Lutheran history. In so doing, it became a recognizable element in understanding the philosophy behind this history.

The Postulate of the Grace of God

The general Lutheran historians saw a direct correlation between the grace of God and general Lutheran history.

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[5] Abdel Ross Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History, from an introduction by Henry Eyster Jacobs (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1923), p. 5.

[6] A. L. G[raebner], "Theological Review," Theological Quarterly, I (October 1897), 469.

[7] Abdel Ross Wentz, History of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, 1926), p. 6.

This grace could be evident in the blessings which were indicated by the development of a particular Synod.

> The history of the Lutheran Church in the United States does not afford another example of an equally rapid progress of a Synod, than is exhibited in the exertions of our brethren in the West; six ministers united in one ecclesiastical body in 1835 . . . May the blessing of the Lord also in future crown the labors of our brethren.[8]

In other instances, the grace of God was evident through blessings received for encouragement in dire circumstances. By observing where these blessings could be found in the past events, individuals who were currently making general Lutheran history could recognize that they also would reap the benefits of this grace.

> And Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and forever. Let us therefore take courage, we serve a good cause. He who supported our forefathers, will also support us if we with faithfulness and in singleness of heart will serve him; his blessing will accompany our labors, and we shall see, if not here on earth, certainly in the kingdom of heaven, that we have not labored in vain.[9]

In this manner, the grace of God became very real for general Lutheran history as a dominant factor in directing the events.

The influence of this grace on Lutheran history in America was not always presented in the same manner. In some instances, this influence was indicated through basing predictions upon past events.

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[8]Hazelius, p. 225.

[9]Ibid., p. 260.

> The seeds of Lutheranism, it seems, were destined to be scattered, even in the earliest period of American history over every portion of the country --a prophecy and a pledge that the Lutheran Church was ultimately to reap a harvest here co-extensive with the length and breadth of this vast domain.[10]

In other instances, general Lutheran history exhibits a strong emphasis on showing God's grace through the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

> The Lutheran Church, however, is certainly what it is because it has rarely lacked the courage to frankly say that it heartily believes that it has received the form of Christian life which it possesses from the quickening power of the Holy Spirit and the unerring Word of God.[11]

Whatever the method or evidence for the Grace of God in history, Lutheran historians sincerely believed that general Lutheran history could show that this grace existed.

The recognition of this grace inspired a large amount of confidence among general Lutheran historians as they studied history. They were convinced that the same grace which so abundantly blessed their fathers, would enable coming generations to read the lessons of the present as they read the lessons of the past.[12] The postulate of the grace of God therefore, not only made history important for relating information, but also for delivering a type of message similar to the Word of God proclaimed every Sunday morning.

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[10]Wolf, p. 206.

[11]Henry Eyster Jacobs, A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, c.1893), p. 3.

[12]Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History, pp. 7-8.

The Postulate of the Elect of God

The third postulate for general Lutheran history was indicated through the firm belief that the Lutheran people could be shown as the elect or chosen people of God. The grace which had been bestowed upon the Lutherans through Providence as seen by the men who wrote this history, contributed towards this idea. As they studied the past, the historians began to feel that only the elect could make such tremendous strides in the development of a civilization from a material and a spiritual wilderness. Hazelius set the precedent for this attitude by his emphasis on the Lutheran Church as Zion.

> "The Observer," a paper, intended to embrace the interests of the whole Lutheran church, closed the publication of a monthly pamphlet, which had been established chiefly for the information of the Northern portion of our Zion.[13]

Not content with referring to the Lutheran Church as Zion, other general Lutheran historians also saw the Lutheran people as parallel with the ancient Israelites and their difficulties.

> This land, heretofore unimproved, they were to hold and cultivate as tenants, and the government expected large returns from their thrifty toil. They soon found themselves in the clutches of hard masters and their condition was but little better than the Egyptian slavery of the Israelites.[14]

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[13] Hazelius, p. 173.

[14] Wolf, p. 179.

By means of this analogy, the historians could search out facts which would substantiate this idea.

The idea of there being an old Israel before the dispersion and a new Israel after, also found its reproduction in the history of the Lutheran Church.[15] Since the Lutherans were a chosen people, general Lutheran historians saw no problem with comparing them with other chosen people. Efforts were even made to place Lutherans into the teachings of 1 Peter and his comments concerning the elect of the dispersion.[16] This basic idea of election indicating that the Lutherans were a special people of God, never really diminished throughout general Lutheran history. Although it was not as prevalent in some histories as in others, it still ranks as a significant postulate which guided the writing and interpretation of the general Lutheran history as indicated by Hazelius and Wolf.

The Postulate that History Teaches Lessons

The fourth area which comes up for consideration in a study of the postulates which guided general Lutheran history is the postulate that history <u>teaches lessons</u>. The mere recording of events will automatically reveal certain

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[15] <u>Ibid</u>., p. x.

[16] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 210.

errors of truths made by individuals or various branches within Lutheranism. In this revelation, history teaches lessons to the present. It was believed that the knowledge of the historical facts would produce the necessary reaction of rational analysis towards one's own position and the position of someone else.[17]

An example of this type of attitude is brought out very clearly by Neve, when he emphasized that certain misinterpretations of Confessional interpretations have contributed towards a general misunderstanding that blocks any type of Lutheran unity.

> I feel sure that we as a General Synod in mentioning the Augsburg Confession as the symbol on which we place ourselves, will be ready to insert the word "unaltered," as employed in the Hagerstown Resolution. Not that we meant anything else in our old formula. But in the confessional history of the Lutheran Church that qualification "unaltered" has come to stand for a conservative theology that means to maintain the genuine Lutheran principles in a number of questions of vital importance.[18]

As Neve discussed the roll of Synods, he aimed to show how they developed and what problems they had in their growth.[19]

The lessons which could be gained from general Lutheran history were manifold. In some instances, it showed how Confessional confusion can develop.

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[17]A. L. Graebner, Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1892), p. 111.

[18]J. L. Neve, The Formulation of the General Synod's Confessional Basis (Burlington, Iowa: German Literary Board, 1911), p. 12.

[19]Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History, p. 14.

> Muhlenberg . . . had . . . shown his Pietistic training by occasionally practicing pulpit fellowship with the Reformed denominations. His successors went even further, not hesitating to make a regular practice of it. From this practice to a general confessional confusion was but a single step.[20]

Through this method, general Lutheran history helped bring the various branches of Lutheranism into a deeper understanding of the various positions. Lutherans began to know one another better and to benefit from one another's mistakes.

Although this knowledge of one another's mistakes sometimes contributed towards a polemical viewpoint,[21] the fact remains that a greater appreciation of one another developed between Lutheran bodies through general Lutheran history. The problem of growth and decay among relationships between various Lutheran bodies exhibited in the disruptions they faced, also became evident in the manner through which they tried to adapt first to the American way of life and then to one another.

> In the critical decades of the beginnings of a free American republic, American Lutherans in their accommodation to the voluntary principle in church life, in the modifications they made during those decades in language and liturgy and synodical organization, in their zealous support of the cause of political independence, and in their

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[20] J. L. Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1934), p. 84.

[21] Graebner, Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in America, p. 322.

> loyalty to American principles of government, gave abundant evidence that they were constituent elements of American citizenry and integral parts of American society.[22]

In adapting to one another, general Lutheran history gives a consideration of the difficulty which surrounded the formation of the Central Pennsylvania Synod.

> The formation of the Central Pennsylvania Synod led directly to the problem of overlapping territory with the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. Through the former East Pennsylvania Synod, the new body included congregations located in almost every part of the Ministerium . . . This situation was part of the heritage of the split in the General Synod in the mid-nineteenth century. After the organization of the United Lutheran Church in 1918 the problem that had persisted for a hundred years called for solution, and became acute with the formulation of the new Central Pennsylvania Synod in 1938.[23]

History, and the controversies which are a part of this history, became a means for helping growth in the Lutheran Church of America. Although general Lutheran history did not give solutions to present problems, it did show what had happened in the past when similar problems evolved. By using history in this manner, the general Lutheran historians saw history as a tool for developing unity and understanding between Lutheran bodies. Using this tool in this manner, they also hoped to promote the next postulate under consideration: the idea of constant growth.

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[22]Abdel Ross Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), p. 59.

[23]Ibid., p. 281.

The Postulate of Constant Growth

The firm conviction that the Lutheran Church in America is in a constant state of growth permeates most of general Lutheran history. A. L. Graebner's history might be listed as an exception due to the confessional viewpoint from which the work was written.[24] The remaining histories however, exhibit this postulate quite readily and therefore making it of use in attempting to understand another predominant influence in the philosophy of general Lutheran history.

General Lutheran history shows this attitude toward constant growth by emphasizing greater unification,[25] greater numbers,[26] and a more wholesome and congenial attitude towards the society which was outside the Lutheran church.[27] The type of attitude that prevailed can be displayed by the following belief:

> Ought not the liveliest feelings of gratitude fill our hearts, when we take a general view of our church as planted in America and compare its present state and growth with the small beginnings in the days of our fathers? For we cannot deny it, rich are the fruits which the seed sown and watered with the tears and the prayers of God's servants, whom a century since he sent into his labor, has borne.[28]

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[24] Supra, p. 27.

[25] E. J. Wolf, "The Value of Ecclesiastical History to the Evangelical Lutheran Church," The Quarterly Review, IV (July 1874), 442.

[26] Hazelius, p. 248.

[27] Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. 238.

[28] Hazelius, p. 248.

All of this not only indicated growth, but also a definite progress towards a newer and better Lutheran church.[29]

Growth as indicated by unification and displaying continual progress for the Lutheran Church in America is most carefully exemplified by the history written by J. L. Neve. He helped show through general Lutheran history that the more the various synodical organizations unified, the greater the strength of the Lutheran Church and hence the more growth that was exemplified. An example of his contribution in this area is shown in how he relates information concerning the merger between the Michigan Synod and the Synodical Conference.

> Thus isolated, the Michigan Synod considered a return to the Synodical conference. The new men at the helm of the synod, mostly graduates of Saginaw seminary, advocated conferences with Missouri in 1904, and with the Michigan District in 1906. In 1909 it was decided to annul the suspension of the minority and a reunion followed that same year at Fort Atkinson, Wis.[30]

Although there was some disunification as well as unification, Neve's history showed that the trend of general Lutheran history was towards an ever greater understanding between synodical groups and hence unification. In this manner the Lutheran Church could be seen as a growing institution encompassing ever greater boundaries and more numbers.

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[29]Jacobs, p. 415.

[30]Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America, p. 246.

The settlement of the language problem impressed some of the general Lutheran historians as important for unification and became therefore, a significant indication of growth in general Lutheran history. Several ways were used to display this attitude, but eventually they all saw its significance for preaching the Word of God to all Lutherans everywhere.

> it is certainly not to the discredit of those people that they clung with a religious and passionated devotion to their mother tongue . . . . It is almost equivalent to the immolation of a people on the altar of a foreign and unfriendly race. . . . The Lutheran Church of America glories to-day in her polyglot character and rejoices in the Providence that enables her ministers, like the Apostles . . . to declare to all the diversified nationalities that flock to these shores . . . the wonderful works of God.[31]

Through the development of one language through which all Lutherans could be understood could hardly be under emphasized in general Lutheran history. This unifying factor alone could indicate that the Lutheran Church was increasing in vigor and in stature.[32]

Later general Lutheran history evidences a strong desire to parallel the growth of the Lutheran Church with the general growth assumed evident in the nation. Although the transition between the two was not always clear, enough parallel information could be found to indicate some type of correlation.

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[31] Wolf, The Lutherans in America, pp. 281-82.

[32] Ibid., p. xi.

> That the Lutheran churches are an integral and molding element in American Christianity and that Lutherans are a constituent and determining part of the American nation can be appreciated only when it is observed that our Church and our nation were born at the same time, grew up side by side, and developed by similar stages of progress.[33]

This idea included recognizing the contribution which the Lutheran Church made in America during her various wars as well.[34] As the nation fared, so fared the Lutheran Church in war and in peace.

The idea of constant growth therefore, permeated all of general Lutheran history. Whether it be due to the increase of numbers, the influence worked by the unification of the various synods, or the influence of national ideas, one of the factors would rise to predominance and indicate growth was taking place in general Lutheran history. Even Graebner would agree with some of this emphasis since he continually makes use of periodic roll calls to indicate numerical increase.[35] Thus the attitude displayed in general Lutheran history concerning the possibility of constant growth gives it a place among the postulates which guided the philosophy behind this history.

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[33]Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History, p. 3.

[34]Wolf, The Lutherans in America, p. 271.

[35]Graebner, Geschichte der Lutherischen Kirche in America, pp. 440-41.

Other Philosophical Factors in General Lutheran History

There are two more elements in general Lutheran history which deserve mention with regard to the philosophic concerns behind this history. The first element concerns itself with the manner in which time is indicated. A brief look at this factor will give insights into the direction of movement in history as well as the importance of this movement. The second element is the shift or change in general Lutheran history, which indicates a movement away from significant individuals within that history, towards organizations and their importance. A study of this element will help show the change in historical reporting that occurred in general Lutheran history. The factor of time and the factor of change in this history, when combined, help complete the overall view of the philosophy which guided this history. The significance of this contribution makes these factors worthy of special study.

It is not too difficult to discover how general Lutheran history shows its view of time. This view operates as a direct corollary to the postulate of growth as discussed in this chapter.[36] The time line which is in evidence throughout is that of linear, moving from a beginning to an end. There are many indications of this attitude and a

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[36] Supra, pp. 96-98.

multiplication of instances would serve no purpose. Suffice it to say that phrases like "from the beginning,"[37] "of the beginnings,"[38] indicate a definite starting position. Similarly, phrases like "reached their culmination,"[39] and "Our end . . ."[40] display the idea of finality in the process of time. Through this media, the stage was set for the ability of the general Lutheran historians to exercise the postulate of growth. The volume of instances where the linear time is indicated, show that general Lutheran history was quite comfortable in using this idea of time and quite able to manipulate factual information to fit this pattern. As such, its significance demands notice.

To show the element of change in general Lutheran historical reporting, one must begin with the early recording of general Lutheran history. In this period, there was an affinity for showing the importance of influential men in the shaping of the Lutheran Church in America. Some of this affinity could be attributed to the source material used since this usually consisted of diaries or journals written by these men.[41] Another reason could be the characteristics attributed to these men by individuals who knew them

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[37] Hazelius, p. 248.

[38] Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. 59.

[39] Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America, p. 85.

[40] Jacobs, p. 169.

[41] Supra, pp. 57-64.

personally. In any event, one of the best examples of this kind of recording, is written by Wolf in a chapter on Muhlenberg and his colleagues.

> And He who sent Moses to his people groaning in Egypt, who sent out Paul far hence to the Gentiles sitting in darkness, who raised up Luther with the light of His Word for those who were watching for the dawn, now also, in answer to many prayers, brought forth a deliverer and an apostle for America . . . . His name was Heinrich Melchior Muhlenberg.[42]

Henry Eyster Jacobs continued to emphasize the importance of singular individuals, and compared them with biblical characters.

> This was due in large measure to the overpowering influence of Frederick Henry Quitmann, D. D., pastor at Rhine Beck . . . . He was a man of commanding presence, who stood in the midst of his brethren like Saul among the hosts of Israel, and by his intellectual force silenced opposition.[43]

But after Jacobs, this emphasis began to shift in general Lutheran history, from a concern for great individuals to a more general concern about groups of people and their interaction. The acknowledged great men of general Lutheran history are recognised, but they are not the chief method through which historical material is transmitted.

An example of the shift in emphasis from important individuals to other concerns can be shown through Neve's history. In his history, he simply lists at the end of a chapter the

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[42]Wolf, The Lutherans in America, p. 241.

[43]Jacobs, p. 315.

men who helped establish the significant events of the chapter.[44] This shift becomes even more evident in the history written by Wentz. In many instances, the individuals which other general Lutheran histories deemed important are mentioned in passing or not mentioned at all.[45] Groups of people seem more important than singular individuals.

> At mid-century Lutherans were prepared to bear corporate witness to the power of the gospel as a leaven in social life. To the multitudes who are caught in the hard social conditions imposed by the industrial, economic, and political situation of our time, such witness through social action may prove to be more convincing than organic union or any other testimony that Lutherans might present. Certainly it has no less scriptural warrant.[46]

Through this concern for a more corporate recording in general Lutheran history, and a concern for broadening the scope of this history which included more aspects of the historical record than those events surrounding significant individuals in that history, general Lutheran history developed into a more inclusive discipline. The scope of this history was widened and areas which had never been considered were brought out for observation. It is this development which the author deemed necessary to point out.

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[44] Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America, pp. 152-53.

[45] Wentz, A Basic History of Lutheranism in America, p. 137.

[46] Ibid., p. 326.

The trend of linear time and the trend of change in the reporting of general Lutheran history give another influence on the philosophy of history which undergirds general Lutheran history in America. The choice of factual information to report and the manner in which it is presented could not help but be influenced by these concerns as evidenced in the histories written by the general Lutheran historians. The factor of time is so common that most of the historians were probably not even aware that they were using this concept. They were so intent on showing the growth of the Lutheran Church that the concept of time as a contributing factor did not even enter their minds. At least, there is no evidence that they were specifically aware of it in general Lutheran history even though the application is quite evident. The factor of change is a little different matter since it revolved around the organizational structure of writing to some degree. Most of the general Lutheran historians were aware of their structure and where it would lead. That there was a shift of emphasis through this historical structure however, cannot be denied.

Conclusion

The five postulates of providence, grace, election, instruction and growth, together with the factors of time and change give the philosophy of history, which directed

the general Lutheran historians in their work of sorting out information and reporting it in an acceptible manner. Although all of them are not in evidence all of the time, and in similar quantities; yet, they give an adequate insight into the thought process which developed Lutheran history in America.

The method used in this chapter emphasized the most predominant aspects in the whole field of general Lutheran history. Each individual historian could be studied for the deviations which he made from the basic patterns in an effort to establish a particular emphasis of his own; but, the author did not deem this necessary at this point; since this aspect was intimated in Chapter II. Also, this would detract from the concern of this thesis to establish the overall pattern of general Lutheran history in America. With this thought in mind, the philosophy of history represented in this chapter, based on the histories written by these men, makes its contribution towards the total understanding of the impetus behind general Lutheran history in America.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

General Lutheran history in America has been shown to indicate some very real historiographical and philosophical concerns. These concerns gave this history some very conclusive characteristics.

First of all, there is a strong desire apparent throughout all of general Lutheran history to keep the Lutherans aware of their heritage, their origin, and their development. In many instances, this desire might have detracted from the scientific accuracy of the historical material, but the purpose appears noble nonetheless. Secondly, in line with the first characteristic, there seems to be an attempt displayed which trys to establish an esprit de corps among Lutherans. Even the polemics exhibited in some of the history shows a strong desire for the Lutheran Church to recognize that they are one, if not in body, at least in spirit. Thirdly, there is a definite tendency to try and keep Lutheran history God-centered. Phrases like "Children of Zion" and "chosen people" are evident throughout. Finally, there is a definite concern shown to remind the Lutherans that difficult problems have always been with their church and that some of these problems will continue into the future. It is noticeable in the twentieth-century reporting of general Lutheran history however, that there is developing

a belief that if the Lutherans were unified into one body, many of the problems which have plagued Lutherans in the past might be overcome both in the present and in the future.

These conclusive factors are the most predominant in general Lutheran history using the method of study suggested by this thesis. The author wishes to emphasize however, that this method in no way suggests that it is the only method which might be used. It is hoped that this method might stimulate further study into the history of the Lutherans who have lived and died in America.

Other areas which could be considered worthy of study would concentrate on the individual general Lutheran historians mentioned in this thesis. A. L. Graebner could well use a doctoral study on his life and the voluminous works which he authored. The individual histories of synods, congregations and institutions might be studied, compiled and become primary source material for general Lutheran histories yet to be written. Actually, any study of any written history within the Lutheran Church of America is open to the individual who wishes to go behind the written word and see where the impetus for such an endeavor lay. The boundaries are really quite unlimited.

In conclusion, the writer of this thesis has attempted to establish a new way to look at the Lutheran history in America. He has attempted to consider the guidelines which directed this history and how the interpretation of historical

information developed through the years. Since this method of analyzing historical materials, although not new by any means, has not been attempted with Lutheran history in America, this represents a pilot project for this area of study. Perhaps this work can make some type of contribution towards a new direction in historical studies for Lutherans in America.

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