

## PIONEERS OF GERMAN LUTHERANISM IN MINNESOTA

When the United States census of 1860 was taken there were 18,400 Germans in Minnesota and they outnumbered every other immigrant nationality in the state. The Prussians were the predominating group, forming thirty-two per cent of all Germans in Minnesota; Bavarians came next, with nine per cent; and Hanoverians, third, with eight and five-tenths per cent. Granting that the term "Prussian" often might have been confused by the census-takers with "German," the figures would seem to indicate a preponderance of people from the northern, or Protestant, section of Germany in Minnesota in 1860.<sup>1</sup> Such an influx of Germans with strong Lutheran leanings naturally caused eastern Lutheran pastors to think of going among them.

Five pioneer Lutheran pastors went to Minnesota from the East with the immigration into the "Suland," that extensive domain west of the Mississippi that was opened to settlement in 1851 by the treaties of Traverse des Sioux and Mendota. A sixth, a missionary among the Indians, was the only one who was placed in his work by the definite action of a German Lutheran synodical body. The others were free lances, seeking to pick up congregations wherever an opportunity arose among the Protestant immigrants of the state. Two of these men, and the only ones to found important congregations, were themselves recent immigrant Germans. Three of the early pastors had virtually no theological training and, naturally enough, were more successful as farmers than as congregational leaders.

<sup>1</sup> William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 2: 64 n. (St. Paul, 1921). The percentages were tabulated by the writer from the manuscript population schedules of the United States census for 1860, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Following on the heels of the German immigrants were four farming preachers or preaching farmers. The first of this group was William Thomson, who went to Minnesota in April, 1855. He was born at Taneytown, Maryland, on April 29, 1812. He learned to be a housebuilder in New York; but later, having been converted, he studied theology privately under a Lutheran pastor at Canton, Ohio. He was ordained in 1845 and for ten years he served congregations in Ohio and Pennsylvania. During this time he was a member of a liberal Lutheran church body known as the East Ohio Synod, and, like other members of that body, he had "no difficulty in fraternizing with all orthodox denominations."

About April 1, 1855, with his family and some members of his Ohio congregation, Thomson boarded a steamboat at Wellsville, Ohio; and after a long and tedious river voyage, he arrived at Hastings about the middle of July. His first official duty in Minnesota was that of burying two women of his party who had died on the journey. He first settled near Cannon City in Rice County, but early in May, 1856, after exchanging his preëmption rights for an ox team, a farm wagon, a cow, a calf, and seventy-five dollars in cash, he removed to Prairieville, in the neighborhood of Owatonna. He took possession of a quarter section of land, later acquired additional land, and was still living in this vicinity in 1887.<sup>2</sup>

The census of 1860 lists Thomson as a Baptist clergyman who was born in Maryland and was forty-eight years of age, and it names his children—Joseph, Hamilton, Cornelia, Luther, Louisa, and the twins Ezra and Samuel. His personal estate is valued at \$515, no mean sum for the time; his real estate, consisting of thirty acres of improved and two hundred and ten of unimproved land, is valued at three thousand dollars; his implements at sixty-five dollars.

<sup>2</sup>William Thomson, "Reminiscence and Biography," in *History of Steele and Waseca Counties*, 143, 144, 147 (Chicago, 1887).

In addition, he owned two horses, three cows, two oxen, four other cattle, and eleven swine, worth in all about \$350; and two hundred bushels of Indian corn.<sup>3</sup>

Thomson appears to have begun his ministerial labors as soon as he was settled in Rice County. He preached for any and all orthodox denominations—Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist—admitting members to these churches and administering communion. Between 1858 and 1887 he served not less than sixteen places in Rice, Dodge, Olmsted, and Fillmore counties. These included Cannon City, East Prairieville, Faribault, Morristown, Dodge City, and Eyota. He preached frequently also in country schoolhouses. It was no easy task for him to cover this territory, since, not owning a horse, he was obliged to travel on foot. During his first year in Minnesota the Home Missionary Society of the General Synod of the Lutheran church, of which the East Ohio Synod was a part, gave him a hundred dollars and from other sources he raised about sixty dollars. He organized the first English Lutheran congregation in the state at the home of J. C. Ide at East Prairieville in June, 1855.<sup>4</sup>

Thomson was evidently lonely for fellow Lutheran pastors, for in March, 1858, he wrote to others asking them to meet at his farm home to form a Lutheran synodical body for Minnesota. They doubted that he would be willing to join a strictly orthodox Lutheran body. He expressed himself as being heartily sick of church controversies. The meeting called to form the synod was, for some unknown reason, not held at his home but at Red Wing in the "Swedish barn" of the Reverend Eric Norelius. Thomson was present, however. Owing to opposition in the Swedish camp, the synod was not formed until November, 1860, when an organization meeting was held

<sup>3</sup> Manuscript population and agricultural schedules of the Steele County census, 1860.

<sup>4</sup> Thomson, in *Steele and Waseca Counties*, 146, 147.

at St. Paul.<sup>5</sup> Thomson was one of the charter members, and in 1864 he was named a member of a committee to voice the regret of the synod at the prolonging of the Civil War. He remained a member of the Minnesota Synod until 1869, when he was released upon his own request, evidently because the body was becoming too strictly orthodox to please him.<sup>6</sup> Thomson's labors as a Lutheran pastor seem not to have borne much fruit. The net result was a small English Lutheran congregation at Eyota, which in 1891 had about twenty-seven communicant members and which is recognized as the first English Lutheran church organized northwest of Chicago.<sup>7</sup>

Another eastern parson of little training who tried to earn a living at preaching and farming was Matthew Malinsson. Land office records show that he was among the first to claim land in Mount Vernon Township, Winona County. He filed for land on October 20, 1855. At the first town meeting, on May 11, 1858, he was elected overseer of the poor. There were, apparently, only two churches in Mount Vernon, one Methodist and one Catholic. He may have preached in the Methodist church. It is known that religious services were held as early as 1858

<sup>5</sup> Thomson to Eric Norelius, March 8, May 5, 1858; William A. Passavant to Norelius, February 18, 1858; Carl F. Heyer to Norelius, March 14, April 21, 1858. Copies of the Norelius, Thomson, Heyer, and Passavant letters relating to the founding of the Minnesota Synod have been made available through the courtesy of Professor George M. Stephenson of the University of Minnesota. The originals are in the library of Augustana College at Rock Island, Illinois. See also Eric Norelius, *De Svenska Lutenska församlingarna och Svenkarnes historia i Amerika*, 660, 840-848 (Rock Island, Illinois, 1890); *Geschichte der Minnesota Synode und ihrer einzelnen Gemeinden*, 4 (St. Louis, 1910).

<sup>6</sup> Deutschen Evangelischen-Lutherischen Synode von Minnesota und anderen Staaten, *Verhandlungen*, 1864, p. 7; 1869, p. 31 (St. Paul). There were probably no printed records of this synod before 1863. A file of these records is in the possession of the Historical Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

<sup>7</sup> G. H. Trabert, *English Lutheranism in the Northwest*, 18 (Philadelphia, 1914).

by "Elder Mallinson" at Minneiska in Wabasha County, which adjoined Mount Vernon.<sup>8</sup>

From the census of 1860 it appears that Mallinson owned a hundred and fifty acres of unimproved and ten acres of improved land, which were valued at five hundred dollars. His farming implements and machinery were worth fifty dollars. He also owned a horse, three cows, two oxen, two other cattle, and two swine, valued at two hundred dollars; and twenty-five bushels of wheat, forty of Indian corn, and twenty of oats.<sup>9</sup> The record shows that his wife and one son were born in New Jersey, and an older son in Canada. He probably married either in Canada or in New Jersey, lived for a time in Canada, and later went to New Jersey. Since his second son's name was J. Wesley, one may be permitted to infer that Mallinson had leanings toward or connections with Methodism.

If Mallinson was associated with the Methodist church, it is strange that his name should appear among the charter members of the Lutheran Minnesota Synod. He was present when that body was formed in St. Paul in 1860. In a letter to Norelius the Reverend William A. Passavant of Pittsburgh, whose interest in Minnesota missions was largely responsible for the founding of the Minnesota synod, expressed skepticism about Mallinson's joining a synodical body with a Lutheran basis.<sup>10</sup> He did join this body, however, and at the meeting of 1864 he delivered a sermon, in English, before the synod. He resided at Minneiska. Probably because he and Thomson were the only members of the synod who spoke English fluently, they were named members of a committee to protest the con-

<sup>8</sup> Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, *History of Winona County, Minnesota*, 2: 553 (Chicago, 1913); *History of Winona and Olmsted Counties*, 598 (Chicago, 1883); *History of Wabasha County*, 933 (Chicago, 1884).

<sup>9</sup> Manuscript agricultural schedule of the census for Mount Vernon, Winona County, 1860.

<sup>10</sup> *Geschichte der Minnesota Synode*, 4; Passavant to Norelius, February 18, 1858.

tinuation of the Civil War. Mallinson was also appointed an examiner for prospective candidates for the ministry. He was present at both the 1865 and 1866 meetings of the synod.<sup>11</sup> But his name does not appear in the Minnesota synodical proceedings for 1867, nor does it again appear. By this time a more strictly doctrinal group of Lutherans were working his field.

Albrecht Brandt, a Bavarian, was the third Lutheran farming preacher to establish himself in Minnesota. He arrived with a small group of Germans and settled on a farm in Hart Township, Winona County, in 1856. He brought with him "a large herd of cattle." At the time of his arrival in Minnesota Brandt was fifty-five years of age and had a numerous family. He had been a licensed lay preacher in Indiana and in Randolph County, Illinois. After the Reverend L. F. E. Krause left St. Martin's congregation at Winona in 1857, Brandt occasionally served that church. He seems to have officiated as a lay preacher for a time also at Hart, but eye trouble apparently led him to resign from that post.<sup>12</sup>

Brandt was present at the preliminary organization meeting at Red Wing in 1858, and was among the founders of the Minnesota Synod in 1860.<sup>13</sup> The next year he was in

<sup>11</sup> Minnesota Synode, *Verhandlungen*, 1864, p. 4; 1865, p. 2; 1866, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Winona and Olmsted Counties*, 607; *Tri-County Record* (Rushford), January 20, 1927; *50jähriges Jubiläum von der Evangelisch-Lutherischen St. Martins-Gemeinde zu Winona, Minnesota*, 7 (Milwaukee, 1906); *Der Lutheraner*, April 30, 1862. A file of the latter periodical, which was published at St. Louis from 1856 to 1881 as the organ of the strictly doctrinal Missouri Synod, is in the library of St. Paul Luther College and Theological Seminary at St. Paul. Some sources give the year 1855 as the date of Brandt's arrival in Minnesota. In the manuscript census of Hart Township for 1860 he is listed as a Unitarian clergyman, fifty-nine years of age. Brandt's license to preach in Franklin County, Indiana, in 1840 was found among his books and papers by the Reverend Otto C. Schultz, the present pastor at Hart, in 1927, according to a letter written to Dr. Carl Abbetmeyer on March 2, 1927. The letter is in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>13</sup> *Geschichte der Minnesota Synode*, 4; Norelius, *Forsamlingarna*, 840-848.

close contact with the strictly doctrinal Missouri Synod, and to this body he applied for a pastor for the Hart Township congregation. It is curious that in the census of 1860 this man, who was known to the fundamentalist "Missourians" as "lieber Bruder," should have been listed as a Unitarian clergyman. Despite his views, Brandt was more farmer than preacher, and he eventually retired to his farm, where he lived throughout the remainder of his life. He is buried in the Brandt cemetery near Rushford.<sup>14</sup>

Of a stamp slightly different from that of the pastors whose careers have been described above was the German trained theological student, F. W. Wier, who arrived in Minnesota only three months after Thomson. Like them, however, he was interested primarily in farming; and like Brandt, he was a conservative Lutheran with crotchets of his own. He was almost the same age as Thomson, for he was born on September 1, 1812, at Tangermuende in Brandenburg. He studied theology in Berlin with a view to going to India as a missionary. Instead of doing so, however, he emigrated to America with his wife in 1841. His first charge was an Indiana congregation near Wiessburg, Dearborn County.<sup>15</sup> It was unable to support him and his family, however, and he therefore accepted a call to a non-Lutheran congregation at Rochester, New York. While there he joined the Buffalo Synod, and this strongly fundamentalist group sent him to Martinsville, New York. At Martinsville the youngest of his six children was born on November 4, 1854. Shortly after this his wife, worn out by hardship, privations, and worries, died. In 1855 Wier gave up his Martinsville congregation, an action that has been ascribed by some to certain alleged discrepancies in connection with the purchase of land for a Lutheran colony

<sup>14</sup> Clipping from *St. John's Lutheran Messenger* (Hart Township), April, 1926, in the possession of the writer; Schultz to Abbetmeyer, March 2, 1927.

<sup>15</sup> *Geschichte der Minnesota Synode*, 58, 221.

at Wollcottsville.<sup>16</sup> He next turned his eyes to the West, where so many people were seeking new starts in life. Shortly before setting out for Minnesota on June 14, 1855, he married Carolina Barbara Rosina Maertens, a widow. She had known the buffetings of ill fortune and, with her twelve-year-old daughter, hoped to find a haven with the widowed pastor in distant Minnesota. About the middle of July, 1855, Wier arrived in St. Paul with his family. At the time newcomers were camping in the streets for lack of hotel accommodations. He held his first services in an Episcopal church in St. Paul on July 22, 1855. Three days later, on July 25, a Lutheran congregation was organized and Wier was called as pastor. Later Lutheran services were held in a schoolhouse on what was then Fort Street. The congregation was incorporated on September 14, 1855, as the "Deutsche Evangelisch-Lutherischen Dreifaltigkeits-Gemeinde, U. A. C. von St. Paul, Minnesota." While in St. Paul Wier heard of a German Lutheran settlement at Baytown in Washington County, near Stillwater. A group of Germans from Baden had arrived there as early as 1851.<sup>17</sup> On August 17, 1855, on a borrowed horse, Wier rode out from St. Paul to this settlement, and on August 19 he held services there in the house of Albert Boese. Shortly thereafter St. John's Church of Baytown was organized.

Wier and his St. Paul church are described in a report of the Reverend Ferdinand Sievers, a Missouri Synod pastor

<sup>16</sup> Dr. E. Deneff, historian of the Buffalo Synod, to Abbtmeyer, February 12, 1927, a letter in the possession of the writer; "Kirchenbuch der Deutsch Evangelisch-Lutherischen St. Paulus Gemeinde in Washington County, Minnesota"; *Notwehrblatt, herausgegeben gegen Angriffe und Bestrebungen hierarchischen Geistes innerhalb der Lutherischen Kirche*, July, 1858, p. 127. The "Kirchenbuch" begun by Wier in September, 1855, is probably the oldest German Lutheran church book in Minnesota; it is still being used by the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church at Lake Elmo. A file of the *Notwehrblatt*, which was published at Milwaukee by the Missouri Synod, is in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary at St. Louis.

<sup>17</sup> *Geschichte der Minnesota Synode*, 22, 223.

who visited St. Paul in August, 1856. Trinity Lutheran Church, as the congregation was called, was in that year still a very feeble affair, lacking in solid organization. Wier was unable to make both ends meet on his St. Paul church salary, and shortly before Sievers' arrival he purchased a farm of a hundred and sixty acres seven miles from St. Paul, where he resided with his large family. In the vicinity lived a number of Lutheran families whom he served, and he preached for the St. Paul people every other Sunday. Just how long he was connected with Trinity Lutheran Church has not been ascertained, but eventually he resigned.<sup>18</sup> He has to his credit the founding of three of the oldest existing Lutheran congregations in Minnesota—Trinity Lutheran Church in St. Paul, St. John's Lutheran Church at Baytown, and Emmanuel's Lutheran Church near Inver Grove in Dakota County. Like Thomson, Mallinson, and Brandt, Wier participated in the founding of the Minnesota Synod.<sup>19</sup>

Lebrecht Friedrich Ehregott Krause was the fifth pastor to officiate among German Lutherans in Minnesota. Though in many ways like Wier, he was not interested in farming. Krause arrived at Winona in the spring of 1856 "after a considerable period of wandering." He was a Silesian by birth and he had been imprisoned in Germany and exiled for his religious convictions. His was a superior mind. His inconsistencies may perhaps be explained by a melancholy and moody disposition caused by physical ailments. In 1838 he went to America to select land for his

<sup>18</sup> *Lutheraner*, February 24, 1857; "Kirchenbuch der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Dreifaltigkeits-Gemeinde zu St. Paul," in the possession of the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Paul. This manuscript volume contains a "Kurzgefaszte Geschichte der Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Dreifaltigkeits-Gemeinde zu St. Paul, Minnesota," begun by C. F. Heyer in 1857. "Father" Heyer writes: "Pastor Wier war der erste lutherische Pastor in St. Paul. Er kam im Jahre 1855 vom Staat New York nach Minnesota, und hielt alle drei Wochen Gottesdienst im Courthouse. . . . Verschiedener Ursachen wegen legte Pastor Wier sein Amt in St. Paul nieder."

<sup>19</sup> *Geschichte der Minnesota Synode*, 4.

German congregation, the members of which were planning to emigrate. Krause himself preferred Australia as a place for a settlement. When the congregation reached Hamburg in 1839, half of the members decided to go to Australia, and the rest to America. Those who went to America settled in Buffalo, where Krause ministered to them for a time. He tired of this, however, returned to Germany, and left the Lutheran fold. But he soon joined the denomination again, and accepted a call to Freistatt, Wisconsin. There he came into contact with the Norwegian Lutherans and "in the presence of A. Hanson, S. Bakke, Even Hegg, and 'Kirke-forstanders i Freystat'" on October 18, 1843, Krause examined and ordained the Reverend Claus Lauritz Clausen, the first Norwegian Lutheran minister in the first Norwegian settlement in Wisconsin.<sup>20</sup> Krause got into difficulties everywhere he went—at Freistatt, at Milwaukee, at Martinsville, New York. He returned to Germany again, and in 1856 he was back in America. After leaving Martinsville, he sought admission to the orthodox Missouri Synod, but he was not received as a member. So he made his peace with the Buffalo Synod, with which he had quarreled, but did not accept a call from it. It appears then that when he went to Winona in 1856 he was either without synodical connection in a Lutheran body or was on probation.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *St. Martins-Gemeinde*, 7; Deneff to Abbtmeyer, February 12, 1927; *Lutheraner*, January 4, 1853; Johan A. Bergh, *Den Norsk Lutherske historie kirke i Amerika*, 16, 17 (Minneapolis, 1914). G. H. Gerberding, in his *Life and Letters of W. A. Passavant*, 204 (Greenville, Pennsylvania, 1905), writes: "This Mr. Clausen was a Dane. He had intended to become a foreign missionary, but the pious pastor Schreuder of Christiania had persuaded him to go and labor as a school-master among the destitute Norwegians in Muskego. Arriving in 1843, he found them without a minister, church, sermons or sacraments. They implored him to become their pastor. This he was unwilling to do without being regularly examined and ordained. He therefore applied to the German Lutheran pastor, L. F. E. Krause, who was laboring among the Germans near Milwaukee."

<sup>21</sup> *Lutheraner*, December 7, 1852; January 4, 1853; Deutschen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und anderen Staaten,

At Winona Krause organized St. Martin's Church with a small number of members. The congregation purchased a piece of property for \$130 and erected on it a little church, which was dedicated in August, 1856. After a year at Winona, Krause returned to New York. In 1861 he was recalled by the Winona congregation, however, and he remained there as its pastor until 1864, leaving it a thriving congregation. In the same year he became the *Senior Ministerii* of a short-lived church body known as the Lutheran Concordia Synod. After it broke up, Krause left Minnesota and went back to New York. Early in 1870 this much-traveled man shipped to Australia, where he served as a pastor and where, in the early eighties, he died.<sup>22</sup>

A somewhat different venture in pioneer preaching from those already described was undertaken by Ottomar Cloeter, a missionary. He did not attempt to follow German Lutheran immigration into Minnesota, but went to that region to convert the Chippewa Indians to Lutheranism. In 1856, Sievers, on behalf of the Missouri Synod, had visited the Minnesota Chippewa, and in a letter dated at the Falls of St. Anthony, August 21, 1856, he describes a two-day stage trip to Crow Wing and thence fifteen miles to the north to St. Colombo, where his party was hospitably received by the Episcopal missionary, J. Lloyd Breck. In 1857 Sievers published in the *Lutheraner* a letter in which he said that he had promised to found a Lutheran mission at Rabbit Lake and asked for a man to do this work.<sup>23</sup>

*Synodalbericht*, 1847, p. 11-13; 1851, p. 6; 1852, p. 4; *Lehre und Wehre* (St. Louis), June, 1856, p. 189. Files of the two latter publications are in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary.

<sup>22</sup> *St. Martins-Gemeinde*, 7; Denef to Abbetmeyer, February 12, 1927; *Lehre und Wehre*, 1859, p. 349; 1864, p. 130; *Zeugnisse fuer die Wahrheit, dargethan in dem vom 9 bis zum 13 Oktober des Jahres 1863 zu Winona in Staate Minnesota gehaltenen Versammlungen der Deutsch Evangelisch-Lutherischen Concordia Synode von Amerika*, 11 (La Crosse, 1863). What is probably the only existing copy of the latter publication is owned by the Reverend Theodore Rolf of New Germany.

<sup>23</sup> Nördlichen Distrikts der Deutsch Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten, *Bericht*, 1856, p. 23 (St.

The Reverend Ottomar Cloeter, in response to this appeal, volunteered to go to Rabbit Lake and work among the Indians of Minnesota. With his family, he left Saginaw City, Michigan, on May 28, 1857, for Crow Wing; and after journeying by express, emigrant train, steamboat, wagon, and canoe, he arrived there on June 12. A missionary named Miessler, who had traveled with Sievers in 1856, accompanied Cloeter in order to introduce him to the Indians; and Henry Craemer, the son of a former missionary to the Chippewa in Michigan, went with the party to serve for a time as interpreter. At Fort Ripley the Lutheran missionary met Breck, who had been mistreated by the Indians and was thinking of leaving his post.<sup>24</sup>

Cloeter delayed for some time before he established his mission. He was seriously considering founding a central missionary station, with a farm and a school, from which roving bands of Indians could be visited. Life among the Chippewa was not easy. There was drunkenness and murder, especially after the natives received their annuities from the government. Grasshoppers had destroyed the crops of 1856 and 1857 and provisions were scarce and expensive. The progress of the work, its hardships, and the difficulty of learning the Chippewa tongue are described in the missionary's letters.<sup>25</sup>

Probably late in 1857 or early in 1858 Cloeter built a house north of Crow Wing and settled there with his family to begin the Chippewa Lutheran mission. The location of his station can be quite accurately determined. "About 30

Louis); *Lutheraner*, September 9, 1856; February 10, 24, March 10, 1857. A file of the *Bericht* is in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary.

<sup>24</sup> *Lutheraner*, September 22, October 6, 1857; O. Cloeter to Abbetmeyer, October 31, 1926. This letter, written by a son of the missionary, is in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>25</sup> *Lutheraner*, September 22, October 6, 1857; March 23, December 25, 1858; January 11, 25, 1859; January 10, February 7, 1860; October 2, 16, November 13, 1861; October 1, 1862; October 15, November 1, 1863; July 1, 1865; November 1, 1866; August 1, 15, 1868.

miles north of Crow Wing and about 14 miles north of the present site of Brainerd," writes his son, "you will find on the west side of the Mississippi river a lake, or rather two twin lakes. They are about one mile west of the river and run parallel with the river for about 8 miles. The Indians called this strip of land Gabitaweegama, meaning parallel waters. On this strip of land father settled, and gave to this mission station the name of Gabitaweegama." Cloeter, in a letter of May 5, 1858, tells of living at "Kabitawigama," about fifteen miles from the Episcopal mission station at St. Colombo. In the same letter he mentions war parties of three hundred Chippewa going out to fight the Sioux. In another communication he gives an interesting account of a trip to the Pillager country. By 1858 his work was becoming known to other Lutheran pastors in the state. Two years later, however, Cloeter was much discouraged with his mission work; he found it all but impossible to explain the Gospel to the Indians and he complained that they persisted in their ancient modes of thought and life and in their "heathen immoralities."<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, he continued his labors at Gabitaweegama until the Sioux Outbreak in August, 1862, when life seemed no longer safe even in the Chippewa country. A friendly chief aided the missionary and his family, who fled from their home, leaving nearly everything behind. They wandered for three days in the woods before they reached Fort Ripley, eight miles south of Crow Wing.<sup>27</sup> Cloeter did not return to Gabitaweegama after the outbreak, but with Crow Wing as his headquarters he continued his mission for a time. Acting on a resolution of the Missouri Synod to carry on the Indian missions until "the Lord Himself

<sup>26</sup> Cloeter to Abbtmeyer, October 31, 1926; *Lutheraner*, October 19, December 28, 1858; January 11, 25, 1859; January 10, February 7, 1860. Heyer, writing to Norelius, on April 14, 1858, says that "there is a Rev. O. Cloeter at Crow Wing, a missionary among the Indians."

<sup>27</sup> *Lutheraner*, October 1, 1862; Cloeter to Abbtmeyer, October 31, 1926.

should stop them," Cloeter in 1867 built a log house on Moose Water Lake. The removal of the Chippewa to the Red River and to White Oak Point above Pokegama in 1867 put an end to all hope of further success, however, and in 1868 the committee on missions of the Missouri Synod regarded the work of the mission ended. Cloeter, advised to accept a call to some congregation in Minnesota, went to Afton in August, 1868. Only a few place names remain to remind one of this early Lutheran mission station. The parallel lakes are called "Mission Lakes," the creek that empties from the southern end of the lakes into the Mississippi is known as "Mission Creek," and a post office and a township bear the name "Mission."<sup>28</sup>

The efforts of the six pioneer Lutheran pastors in Minnesota seem to have resulted in the establishment of four thriving congregations. Of these three resulted from one man's labor, namely Wier's. The fourth organization, at Winona, was established by a man who was carefully trained for ministerial activity. The failure of the Indian mission cannot be attributed to lack of zeal, for the circumstances under which it was conducted were unfavorable. In general, the results of the labors in Minnesota of the Lutheran preacher-farmers—other than Wier—seem to have been negligible.

ESTHER ABETMEYER SELKE

DICKINSON, NORTH DAKOTA

<sup>28</sup> *Lutheraner*, August 1, 15, 1868; Albert Keiser, *Lutheran Mission Work among the American Indians*, 93 (Minneapolis, 1922); Cloeter to Abbetmeyer, October 31, 1926.



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