



Historical Footnotes

Concordia Historical Institute

Herman Ruhland: Sketches of Our Past by Hunter Richards

Ofentimes in history there is but one way to look at the past. Our histories and perceptions of the days past are often affected as much by the reporting of events as by the events themselves. History is written by a select few, by those who not only had the good luck to experience the event but also the foresight to write it down, painting for us landscapes of what went on and where, while those of us who study history are left to take their experiences and paint our own pictures from their landscapes.

The history of our Synod has often been told by our best and brightest, our professors and presidents, our scholars and historians. And it is history as history is supposed to be written, focusing on the noble deeds and actions of the people who made this Synod what it is today. Yet these histories often tell but one side of the story. They often tell the stories that make men into legends and portray only the finest of traits. They remind us of the important days and the greatness which dwells within our heroes.

And when we have only these histories, only these stories, they blind us to a very real truth: that these men and events were not simply legend, but real people and events which took place in real time. Our history is not one so much of tall tales and legends, but of real sinner-saint Christians whom God used in spite of their faults to bring our Synod to where it is today.

For this reason, I present to you another perspective on our history: the perspective of Rev. Herman Ruhland. Ruhland's history is told in art, not in words, and is history through the eyes of a seminarian and young pastor. He captured the Synod and its life in a way that no one else had: through drawing and caricatures. Through his unique perspective, Ruhland shows us the early days of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in a way that turns legends back into men and shows the intricate workings of the Synod's early days in simple and comedic ways.

Rev. Herman Ruhland was born in Buffalo, New York, on September 13, 1865. After attending college in Dresden, Germany, and Ft. Wayne, Indiana, the young Ruhland went on to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, where he graduated in 1886. It was during these seminary days that he was taught by the founders of our Synod and captured them in his own unique way. Blessed with an artist's hand, Ruhland captured Walther and the seminary faculty in sketches, often in caricature form.



Ruhland often characterized President Walther as a bird, possibly in homage to his fellow songbird.

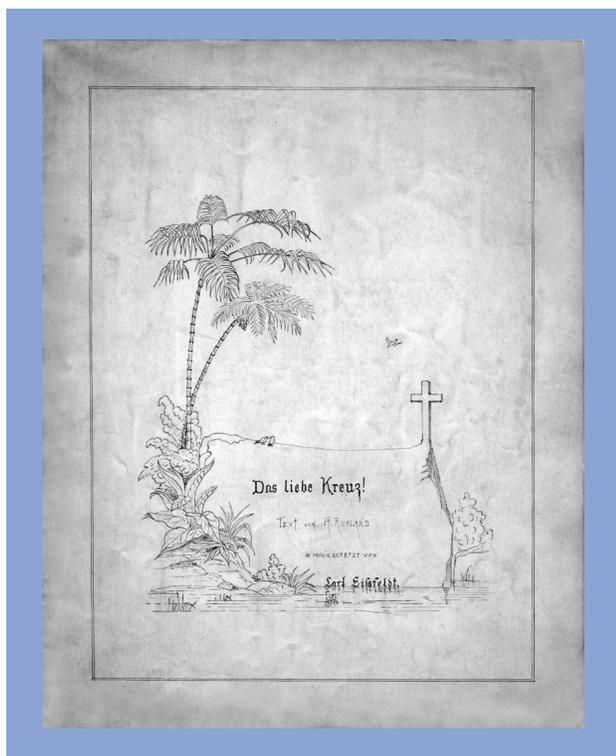
The most common subject of Ruhland's caricatures was C. F. W. Walther himself. But Walther did not often appear as we know him now. Indeed, Walther's recognizable hair and beard still graced his prestigious head, yet it was usually not a human face attached to these features, but a bird's head. This became one of Ruhland's most recognizable characters: President C. F. W. Walther as a bird.

Some might point to Walther's facial features or his slender figure as the sole reason for the bird comparison, as even Walther's passport refers to his nose as "aquiline" (or hooked like an bird's beak). But it should also be noted that Walther had a love for mu-

(continued from page 1)

sic, he was gifted at the organ and even wrote hymns we continue to sing today. Walther wrote in his diary in 1829, "I feel that I am born for nothing but music . . ." Ruhland himself had a love for music and even penned the lyrics for a hymn entitled *Das liebe Kreuz!* This shared interest might have given Ruhland even more respect for his beloved president. While Walther's physical features may lend themselves to the comparison, it could also be that the young Ruhland was paying homage to his "songbird" professor and president.

Also interesting is that Walther is not portrayed as just any bird, but—as later sketches would



Ruhland not only penned the lyrics to the hymn *Das liebe Kreuz!* he also illustrated the cover.

show—as a bald eagle. In a sketch depicting a meeting between Missouri Synod leaders and a group of former Buffalo Synod leaders the comparison between Walther and the eagle becomes clear. Walther is the focal point of the drawing and his esteemed beak towers above the rest. While some may wonder about such a depiction of our beloved president, it is clear that Ruhland was not simply poking fun at Walther, but instead was showing a reverent respect for the president, while also bringing out an oft-forgotten side of Walther and his love for music.

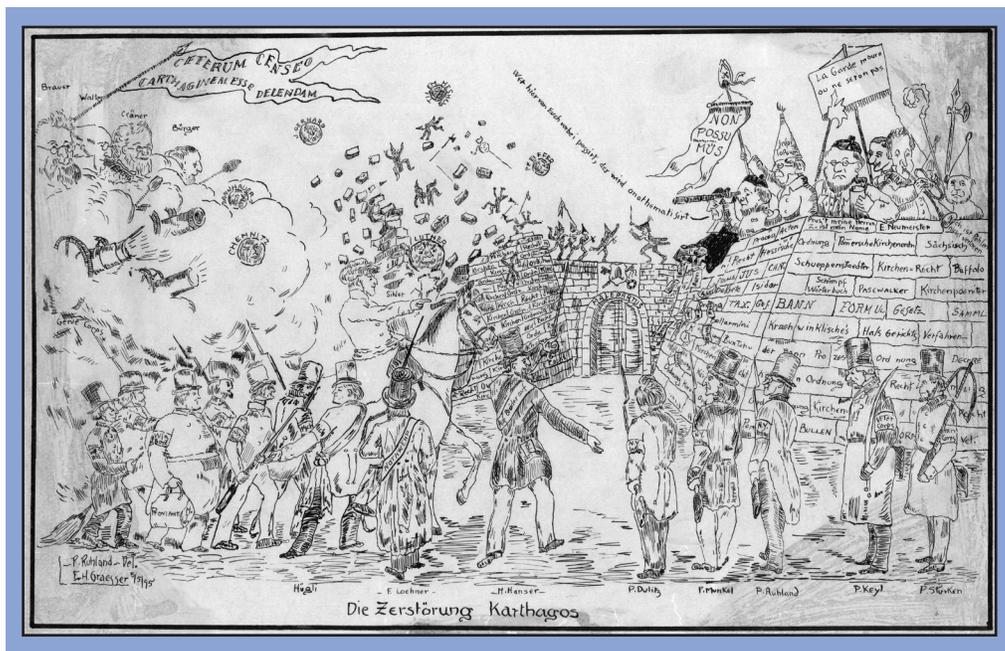
The interaction of the Missouri Synod with the Buffalo Synod was another topic on which Ruhland focused. One of his most elaborate sketches is *Die Zerstörung Karthagos* or *The Destruction of Carthage*, in which Ruhland compares the Synod's relations with the Buffalo Synod to the battle in which the Romans destroyed the city of Carthage. In this later sketch, Ruhland portrays the Missouri Synod as a great army that is sieging the Buffalo Synod fort. As the sketch shows, this elaborate drawing served as a commentary from Ruhland as to the state of relations between the synods at that time and Ruhland's belief that the Missouri Synod was playing the role of conqueror, championing right understanding of church hierarchy and polity.

The controversy between the Missouri and Buffalo Synods was a long and ugly affair. Early on, it was believed that the two synods might be able to merge, but hope for such a union died after the Martin Stephan scandal. Fearing that pastors might abuse their power as Stephan had, Walther and the LCMS became wary of any group that might ascribe an unbiblical amount of power and authority to the pastor. It was about this time that Rev. J. A. A. Grabau, the leader of the Buffalo Synod, sent out the *Pastoral Letter*, which said that all church matters were to be decided by the pastor alone and warned against "improperly" ordained pastors. This letter led to years of strife between the two sides, with Missouri arguing that the right to call and the right to make decisions on non-biblical matters lay with the congregation, while Grabau argued that church hierarchy must rule over the congregation. What would develop was a doctrinal battle that would last for years.

Yet this is not a simple battle scene which Ruhland lays out before us; the genius is in the details. The scene breaks down into three parts: the LCMS leaders to the left, the Buffalo Synod leaders behind their fortress wall to the top right, and the "infantry men" of the LCMS (and Wisconsin Synod) to the center. The LCMS leaders to the left, consisting of Walther, Craemer, Buerger and Brauer, shell the fortress of the Buffalo Synod doctrine with the writings of Lu-



Ruhland characterizes von Rohr (second from the right) and his synod as hairy beasts contrasted with the noble birds of the LCMS. Walther (second from left) is shown as an eagle.



The Destruction of Carthage is one of Ruhland's most intricate sketches. This scene captures the height of the LCMS and Buffalo Synod conflict.

ther, Chemnitz, Dannhauer, Gerhard and Pfeiffer.

Meanwhile, the “infantrymen” in the center prepare to charge the fortress. This is a joint charge of both Wisconsin Synod and LCMS troops. To the right are the Missouri Synod soldiers, made up of the pastors serving in New York, including Ruhland, and to the left are the Wisconsin Synod soldiers, with their “Wisc Boys” arm bands. To the far right stands the “Vet Corps” made up of Sturken and Keyl, two missionaries to the area, who are armed with the old weapons of sword and cross bow.

To the right stand the leaders of the Buffalo Synod behind their fortress. To the far left in this group, still in his preaching gown, is Grabau himself, proclaiming that he will excommunicate anyone who dares to come too close. Here Ruhland mocks Grabau, who excommunicated the entire LCMS in 1859, along with many other church groups including the Methodists and Baptists. To the right of the fortress corner stands Heinrich von Rohr.

Considered Grabau's right hand man, von Rohr would be the subject of many Ruhland sketches and seldom were they flattering. Even after von Rohr split with the Buffalo Synod to create his own—which would join in colloquy with the LCMS some time later—von Rohr continued to be painted by Ruhland in a less than savory light (see page 10).

Thus, Ruhland lays out the battle before us. The LCMS lobbing their powerful mortars of doctrine and charging the fort with their faithful pastors, while the Buffalo Synod hides behind its fortress of bans, laws and structures. It was clear in Ruhland's

mind which side was in the right and would carry the day.

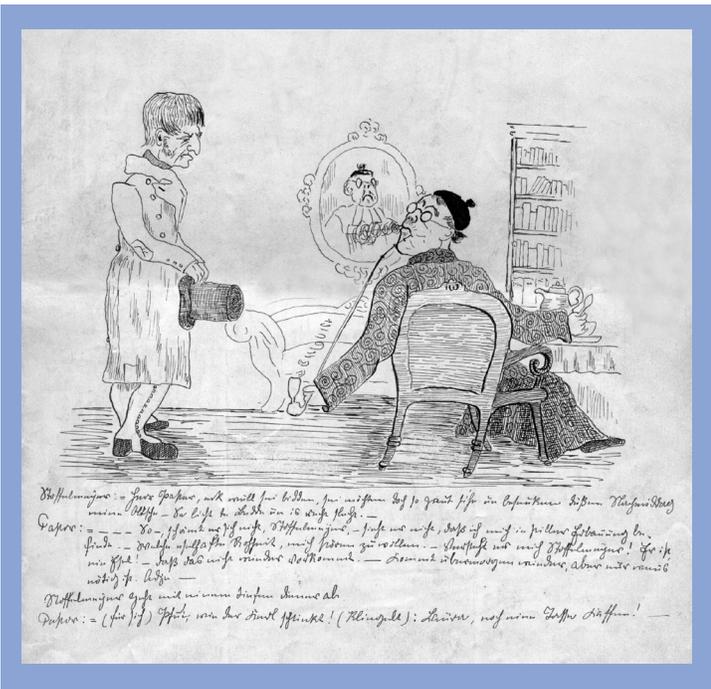
Ruhland also focused on keeping the pastor in his place. With the Buffalo Synod controversy and the earlier issues with Martin Stephan, the LCMS focus on congregational power and limiting the power of the pastor was not lost on Ruhland. Many of his sketches mocked what Ruhland perceived as an unmerited sense of prestige or power among pastors. One of his early sketches mocks a man who comes to America dressed as a theologian, calling it, “commendable dishonor.” Another sketch shows an ego-centric pastor who denies a parishioner's request for a home visit for his sick wife, explaining he is busy, but then simply orders coffee.

In these sketches, Ruhland takes the LCMS position that the pastor serves the congregation and not the other way around. In a time when this had become a huge matter in both the realms of theology and church polity, Ruhland attacks the opposition with the arrows of satire, showing the self-centered nature of believing that as a pastor one is above his congregation.

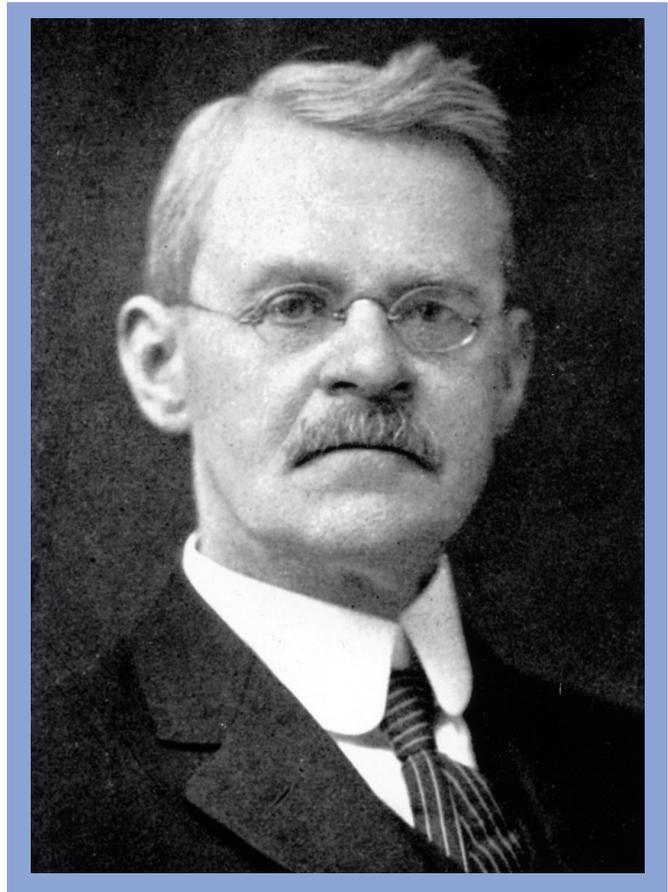
Like his sketches, Ruhland's story is truly original. He married Emma Brauns in 1887, soon after completing seminary. After seminary, he served as a missionary in Texas, where he contracted a case of laryngitis which was so severe that he was forced to leave Texas for cooler climates in the north. Upon recovering he spent sixteen years in Illinois at congregations in Manito and Altamont. In 1909 he was called to St. Paul's Lutheran in Ottawa, Canada,

(continued from page 3)

where he served for twenty-two years. During his time in Canada, he became the district's vice president. It seems the political cartoonist became a politician himself.



Yet it is this forgotten hero who has given us another view of the past. A romantic view perhaps, but in the same way, perhaps a more realistic view. A view that shows the emotion of two sides of a conflict. A view of our beloved Walther that might be just as telling as the photos of him. And a view of the world as it was seen by a person who lived through it. So often, it is the heroes who tell the history. But perhaps today, we'll simply let it be told by a man who has undeservedly been forgotten.



Rev. Herman Ruhland

In a letter Ruhland penned to CHI, he said the following:

In my former years I wondered why God took me away from Texas. Now, having become an old man and looking back, I see that God wanted to use me in Canada to render service there, not only to my congregation, but also the whole District, during the trying years of the World War.

On October 13, 1948, Herman Ruhland found eternal rest in the arms of the Lord and Savior he loved to serve.

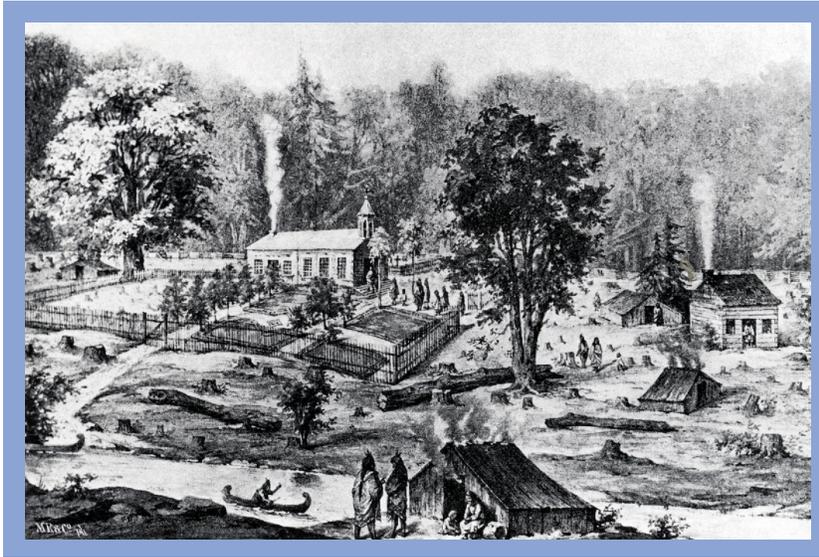
Herman Ruhland is one of the forgotten men of our history. He was a pastor who strove for sound doctrine, for the rights of the congregation and the spread of the Gospel. He helped grow churches from the southernmost districts to the northernmost districts of our Synod, and still few remember the name.

Special thanks to Sieghart (Ziggy) Rein, who translated the captions and provided insights for this article.



A Story of Missions to Native Americans: The Demise of the Bethany Mission *by Rebecca Wells*

The article below continues the story of the Native American mission work that began in Frankenmuth, Michigan, and continued at the Bethany mission. Parts I and II were printed in the previous two issues of Historical Footnotes, which are available at CHI (quantities limited), or on our website (lutheranhistory.org/publications/histfoot.htm).



Bethany Mission



E. G. H. Miessler

Pine trees as far as the eye could see. The sound of a river flowing nearby. A large clearing interspersed with Ojibwe wigwags, a log cabin or two and a new log church. This was the Bethany mission when Missionary E. G. H. Miessler arrived in 1851. The Bethany mission (so-named by its first missionary, Rev. Edward Baierlein) was known as *Shingwakonsking* to the Ojibwe living there, meaning “the place of young or small pine trees.” Begun some years earlier by Baierlein as an outgrowth of mission work to the Ojibwe by the Franconian settlers in Frankenmuth, the mission was flourishing by the time Miessler arrived as Baierlein’s assistant.

Born in 1826 in Silesia (in what is now Poland), Ernst Gustav Herman Miessler was inspired as a young boy to follow in his uncle’s footsteps and become a missionary. His family’s finances, however, prevented Miessler from pursuing this desire and he was forced to choose a trade instead. After training in the weaving trade, he moved to Saxony and quickly became an expert pattern weaver. Miessler’s desire for mission work was rekindled when a missionary visited the church he attended. This time he was able to pursue his dream and he entered the Dresden Mission Society’s school. A few years later

Miessler was to be ordained and commissioned to the India mission field. Plans changed, however, when Miessler was selected to answer Baierlein’s request for an assistant to help him in his mission to the Ojibwe.

Michigan was a whole new world for Miessler, from the untouched and unspoiled forests to the Ojibwe way-of-life. Even his first experience riding a horse was in Michigan—on the 50-mile trek from Saginaw to the Bethany mission in November 1851. Miessler’s first duty as Baierlein’s assistant was to the school. He faced difficulties early on as he did not know the language, something he would struggle with learning throughout most of his ministry with the Ojibwe in Michigan. Miessler’s arrival allowed Baierlein the time to work on a spelling and reading book with his interpreter. When Baierlein was required to be away in Detroit for a number of weeks for the printing and publication of the book, Miessler took over conducting all services, prayers and meetings. Those weeks alone were good training for Miessler, as shortly thereafter Baierlein left to serve as a missionary in India. Although the tribe had lost their beloved “Black Coat” (Baierlein had been named for his black pulpit robe), Miessler, or “Small Black Coat,” remained and stayed with them for nearly twenty years.

Miessler took over leadership of the mission in May 1853, just sixteen months after his arrival. As there was enough work to still merit two missionaries, he was given an assistant before long. Edmund Roeder came to Bethany from assisting in another mission station at Sebewaing, Michigan. He took over the duties of the school and Sunday afternoon services. Roeder remained at Bethany for only two years before leaving for another call. Despite numerous attempts to call another assistant, Miessler remained alone in the work of the mission. He conducted Sunday morning and afternoon services, taught school during the week and in the winter traveled in his horse and sleigh to visit with his scattered parishioners who were on long hunting trips much of the season. Some of these visits were quite harrowing as, among other things, his horse or sleigh would break through the ice over the river, which served as the only road for a number of years. This was one of many difficulties Miessler had to overcome in his mission work.

Another stumbling block was teaching English to his students without a dictionary available. Thus Miessler, along with his interpreter, James Gruet, began the daunting task of compiling an Ojibwe-English dictionary in 1853. Using a good dictionary he had, Miessler read the words aloud and Gruet supplied the Ojibwe equivalent. This tedious work lasted four years, but in the end they had a complete dictionary in two parts: English-Ojibwe and Ojibwe-English. Before arranging the financing needed to publish the dictionary, Miessler came across a newly published dictionary by a Roman Catholic missionary and no longer saw the need to publish his work.

In 1856 Miessler traveled to Minnesota at the request of the Missouri Synod's mission board to explore the possibility of establishing a mission to the Ojibwe there. Still not having mastered the Ojibwe language, Miessler was accompanied by his interpreter. They arrived in the town of Crow Wing where they learned of a group of Ojibwe living along Rabbit Lake. Miessler proceeded there to share the Gospel with the group, and afterward they indicated an interest in having a teacher among them. Rev. Ottomar Cloeter was willing to begin that mission and Miessler returned with Cloeter to install him. Despite the promising start, this mission did not last long, closing the next year following a Native American uprising in the area.

Another promising situation for Miessler occurred when the Synod decided to merge the Bethany and Sebewaing missions. It was thought that the small groups could be served well by one mis-

sionary and an interpreter. This would have greatly enlarged the Bethany mission, but unfortunately the move did not take place. At first it seemed that the Sebewaing group was willing to move to Bethany, but then outside forces – especially nearby traders – convinced the group not to move. In fact, rather than simply remaining at Sebewaing, the tribe chose to sever all ties to the missionaries and the Synod. This was yet another mission that ended unceremoniously. Bethany would soon face a similar fate.

The United States government renegotiated a treaty with all the chiefs in the state of Michigan in the mid-1850s. A reservation was established in Isabella County (north of Bethany) where each family was given land. Although the Synod had purchased acreage around the mission for the members to clear and farm, they soon left Bethany and settled on the reservation near Mt. Pleasant. Miessler moved along with them in 1859, but the mission would never be the same. Notably, Miessler was not allowed to live on the reservation. Whereas at Bethany he had lived amongst the tribe, in Isabella County he was forced to live some five miles away. Miessler had a difficult time conducting services in one of the huts, thus he soon had a chapel built. Nevertheless, church attendance continued to dwindle. In order to have more contact with the Ojibwe, he offered to teach at the new reservation school, which he did for two semesters. While Miessler was clearly dedicated to his mission work, he could not overcome the problems the move had caused with the distances involved. After nearly ten years of declining numbers while at the reservation, the Synod decided to discontinue the mission work in 1869. After his hope for a call nearby that would allow him to remain in contact with his former members did not materialize, Miessler took a call to teach at a school in Saginaw, Michigan. Following a prolonged illness two years later, he was forced to give up his chosen profession due to his health. He went on to study medicine and had a nearly thirty-year practice as a homeopathic physician.

You can learn more about the Missouri Synod's mission work with Native Americans when you visit the Concordia Historical Institute Museum at the LCMS International Center in Kirkwood, Missouri.

August Craemer under Surveillance by Rebecca Wells

This year CHI is honoring the bicentennial of one of the Synod's founding fathers – August Craemer. While working on a display on his life and ministry (which will remain in the CHI lobby until late September), we had some documents in our Craemer collection transcribed and translated from German to English by Sieghart (Ziggy) Rein. These documents deal mostly with his life before he emigrated. On this page and the next are translations of two of these documents, which relate to the surveillance that Craemer was under following his release from prison in Germany.

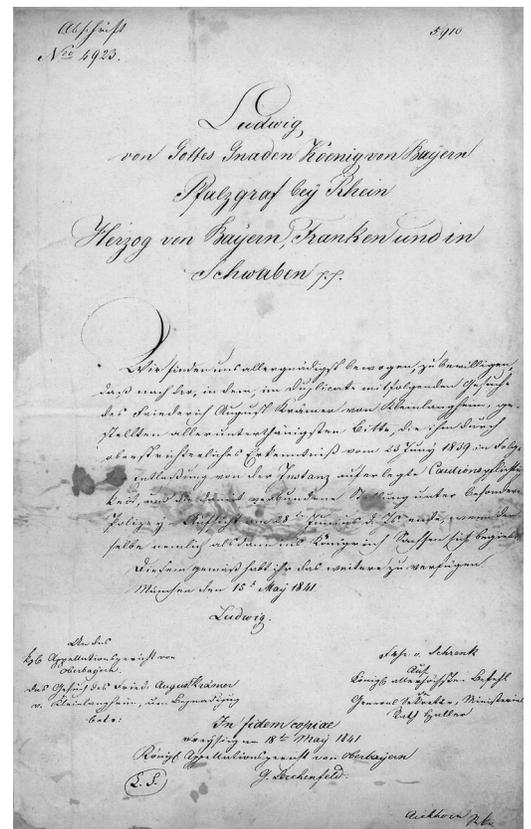
While studying at the university in Erlangen, Craemer became involved with a student association known as the *Burschenschaft Germania*, which was a fraternity committed to the unification of Germany. Craemer quickly moved up the ladder into leadership positions within the fraternity at Erlangen, eventually becoming its president. In 1833 leaders from *Burschenschaften* throughout Germany joined together in Frankfurt in an attempt to instigate a revolution. On April 3 the group stormed the guard house but was quickly subdued by the authorities, who had received word about the attempted coup

beforehand. Craemer, along with some fellow revolutionaries, was captured, charged with treason and imprisoned awaiting trial. It was three years before his case was tried, and his punishment was another three years in prison.

Craemer was finally released in June 1839, but not without conditions. He was on probation and kept under surveillance in order to assure his proper political conduct. After his release, Craemer went to Munich to continue his studies in philology. In 1841 he finished his studies and was hired as a tutor for the son of the Saxon Duke of Einsiedel. This meant, however, that Craemer would need to leave Bavaria, which was against the conditions of his probation.

The two documents come into play at this point in Craemer's life. The first document, dated 15 May 1841, is from King Ludwig of Bavaria removing the conditions of bail and surveillance on Craemer. The second is a testimonial of good conduct, dated 22 June 1841, from the university police stating that Craemer's conduct since his enrollment had been above reproach and that he had not become affiliated with any organization that was not authorized by the king.

Copy	5901
No. 4923	
Ludwig by the grace of God King of Bavaria Count Palatine of the Rhine Duke of Bavaria, Franconia and in Swabia, etc.	
We feel most graciously moved to grant the most humble request, in the petitions enclosed in duplicate, presented by Friedrich August Krämer of Kleinlangheim, ¹ which by the supreme court verdict of 23 June 1839 as a result of the release from the obligation of bail was imposed by the judiciary and the condition associated with it under special police surveillance of the 28th of June of this year, namely when he betakes himself to the kingdom of Saxony.	
According to this you have to regulate further details. Munich, 15 May 1841.	
Ludwig	
To the	/s/ Baron von Schrank
Royal Appellate Court of	Upon
Upper Bavaria	Royal sovereign command
the petition of Friedrich August Krämer ¹	the
of Kleinlangheim for pardon	General Secretary, Ministry Official
	/s/ Alchorn, Secretary
In fidem copiae Freising on 18th May 1841 Royal Appellate Court of Upper Bavaria /s/G. Lerchenfeld	
	/s/ Alchhorn, Secretary



The original document (translation at the left)

Certificate of Morals

for the complete separation from the University

The candidate [student] of Philology Mr. August Craemer of Kleinlangheim, enrolled on 14 May 1840, is attested to in regard to his conduct at the local university, from the time above to the present, that he has always observed a complaint-free conduct respective to the statutes.

He has not been guilty here of participating in any kind of affiliation not explicitly authorized by his royal majesty.

In verification of this, this certificate under the seal of the university police directorate has been issued, and has been signed by the temporary rector and the chairman of the university police directorate in their own hand.

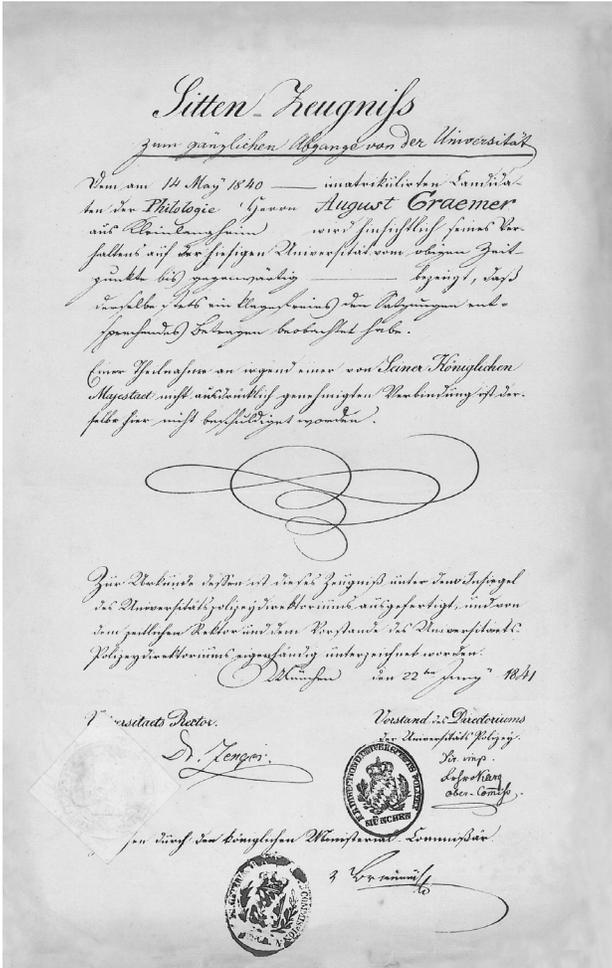
University Rector	Munich, 22 June 1841
/s/ Dr. Zenger [??]	Chairman of the Directorate
Seal]	of the University Police

[Seal:	[??] imp.
Director of the	/s/ Kerotarg [??]
University	Chief Commissioner
Police, Munich]	

[??] by the Royal Ministerial Commissioner

[Seal: (illegible) Commission Munich]

[illegible signature]



The original document (translation at the left)

Something should be said about Craemer's name. In the first document on the previous page—and in many references in LCMS literature—he is referred to as "Friedrich August Craemer" (or in this instance, "Krämer"). In the second document that we are presenting, his name is given as "August Craemer." Other documents, including his marriage certificate, have "August Friedrich Craemer." It seems clear that he went by the given name of "August" during his lifetime; published articles are often signed "A. Craemer." Since we are lacking a baptismal certificate or documentation of a baptismal record, we have generally chosen to use the name "August Friedrich Craemer" in our publications and in the description of the Craemer manuscript collection at the Institute.

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 Interest in Loeber History

Frank Loeber from Hamburg, Germany, is interested in exchanging information on Loeber history with reference to Rev. Gotthold Heinrich Loeber.
 Frank Loeber can be contacted at Frank.Loeber@t-online.de

*Auxiliary of Concordia Historical Institute
Program Schedule
2012 to 2013*

October 11, 2012

1:00 pm

CHI Conference Room

“Religion in the People’s Republic of China”

by Professor Henry Rowold, Professor Emeritus

International Research

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

December 13, 2012

12:00 noon Christmas Luncheon

Koburg Dining Hall, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

“Untold Tales from Concordia’s Art”

by Eric R. Stancliff, Seminary Art Curator,

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

March 14, 2013

1:00 pm

Balcony, The Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

“Inside the Organ: An Organ Crawl & Aural Tour of the Seminary Casavant Organ”

by Professor James Brauer, Professor Emeritus

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

May 9, 2013

12:00 noon Spring Luncheon

Koburg Dining Hall, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

“Witness, Mercy, Life Together Yesterday, Today, and Forever”

by Deaconess Pamela J. Nielsen, Managing Editor for Witness, Mercy, Life Together

Department of Communications, LCMS



Volunteers Needed at the Institute

Are you (or someone you know) looking for a volunteer opportunity where you will feel needed? CHI is seeking one or more volunteers who can commit to assist with filing on a regular basis. The person(s) must be able to alphabetize materials, move five-inch-wide file boxes from shelves that may be overhead or near floor level, and interfile as needed. Appropriate training in CHI filing procedures will be provided. Benefits include working with dedicated CHI staff members, a flexible schedule to fit your needs, an invitation to our annual volunteer luncheon, occasionally coming across items from people or places you know and the satisfaction of filling a real need. Please contact Bonnie Schmidt, 314-505-7925 on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday, or at bschmidt@lutheran-history.org for further information.

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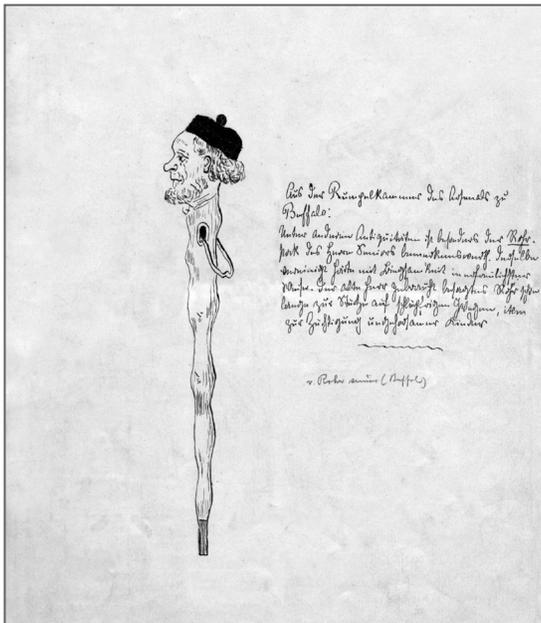
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To Our Friends of History:



FALL 2012 ISSUE



The Rohrstock: (translation) Among other antiques the Rohr cane of the Senior is particularly noteworthy. It [He] combines hardness with flexibility in the most delightful manner. The old gentleman uses the aforementioned cane a long time already as a crutch on slippery roads, ditto for chastising disobedient children. [This play on Rohr's name mocks von Rohr as little more than an instrument of Grabau's.] (See story on page 1)

Historical Footnotes is a quarterly publication of Concordia Historical Institute (CHI). The Institute is the Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and is a not-for-profit corporation registered in the State of Missouri.

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