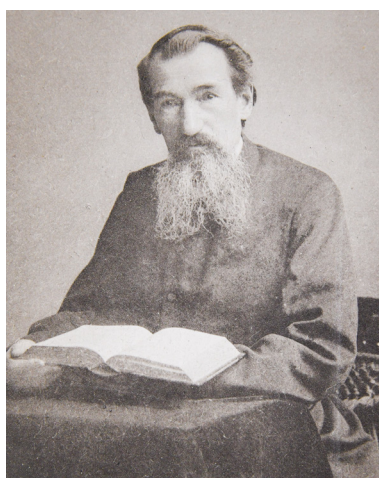


## FACES OF LUTHERAN MISSIONS IN INDIA



*ER Baierlein*

### Eduard Raimund Baierlein

**Born:** April 29, 1819 in Sierakowsky, Poznań, Poland

**Died:** October 12, 1901 in Clarens, Montreux, Switzerland

**Courageous Leipzig Mission Society missionary who, despite many physical ailments, served both in the Saginaw Valley in Michigan and in South India.**



Leipzig Mission work in Cuddalore

CHRIST SHOWED GRACE TO EDUARD RAIMUND BAIERLEIN DESPITE REPEATED REJECTIONS AND setbacks. Disowned by his father after Eduard embraced the Lutheran faith at age 21, Baierlein struggled to find purpose and direction in his life until he began studies to be a missionary of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission of Leipzig. Here he studied the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions under “old Lutheran” Karl Graul, preparing to be sent to share the Gospel with the people of India.

However, Baierlein became ill a few days before the ship was scheduled to leave for India. While he was recovering, the Leipzig Mission received a request to send a missionary to work under F. A. Craemer in evangelizing the local Chippewa Indians in Michigan. (Craemer had been sent to begin mission work in Michigan in 1845 by Wilhelm Löhe of Neuendettelsau, Germany.) The Leipzig Mission board selected Baierlein to assist Craemer in America.

Baierlein and his wife arrived in Frankemuth, Michigan on June 10, 1847, after suffering from attacks of fever and cholera during the 44 day voyage in close quarters.

Baierlein begins to learn the Chippewa / Ojibwa language. They decide that Baierlein would be much more effective if he would live among a neighboring tribe who would welcome his evangelism and the schooling of the children of the tribe. He is welcomed by Chief Bemassikke and his people and begins to live with them on July 19, 1848. Baierlein begins to minister to the physical and spiritual needs of the people and names the mission outpost “Bethany.”

After almost 6 years of mission work in Michigan, Baierlein is called by the Leipzig Mission to travel to India. On May 19, 1853, Baierlein, his wife and three small children leave Michigan for Germany. He is commissioned in Leipzig August 30, 1853 and leaves for India, arriving in Madras on December 17. He is assigned

to the Sadras mission and to the poor fisher-people there. While continuing his study of Tamil, Baierlein opens a school and orphanage. On March 8, 1855, Baierleins’ mourn the loss of their fourth child, Theodosius, who dies of cholera. Eduard begins to build a little church building utilizing blocks from the old and abandoned Dutch settlement. The church is dedicated on July 29, 1855, and Baierlein preaches to the gathered crowd in Tamil. Mark 1:15 is painted over the church doors: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel.”

On January 4, 1856, Baierlein becomes seriously ill and travels to Tranquebar for treatment. The doctor sends him to a more temperate climate in the mountains in order to recover. The family is blessed with their fifth child, Peregrina.

From the end of 1857 until the summer of 1858, Baierlein resumes missionary work, but in Tranquebar to fill in for absent director Cordes. He then returns to Cuddalore—as the Cuddalore and Sadras mission posts have been combined by decision of the annual missionary conference. Baierlein moves from Sadras to Cuddalore and dedicates a new church building there on December 25, 1859.

It is at this time that missionary Ochs begins to demand renunciation of caste for all converts to Christianity. Other Leipzig Mission missionaries disagree with Ochs’ demand to eat a meal or drink a cup of tea from someone of another caste as a prerequisite for becoming a member of a local Lutheran congregation. Baierlein is sympathetic but renounces this demand and threatens to resign. Leipzig informs the missionaries in India to solve the caste problem among themselves—with Christian love and patience.

Baierlein is struck with fever in 1860 and is sent back to Germany to recover. Peregrina dies while the couple is in Germany.

Undaunted, Baierlein returns to India in November of 1862 to rebuild the church in Cuddalore. Despite successes there, Baierlein’s wife becomes seriously ill and returns to Germany. Eduard, suffering from severe headaches and weakness also returns to Germany in March of 1871.

The couple returns to India in December of 1872. Baierlein is assigned mission work in Bangalore. In the spring of 1886, he suffers a heart attack and is ordered to return to Germany. He dies in Clarens, Switzerland, on October 12, 1901.

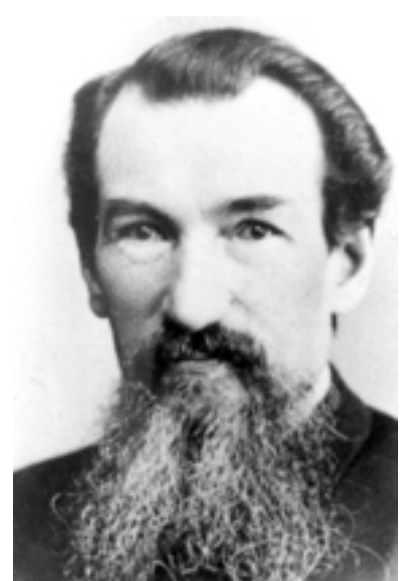
Walter P. Schoenfuhs. “Eduard Raimund Baierlein.” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*. 27:3, 4; 28:1 (1954–1955).

*Baierlein proclaimed the Gospel on two continents despite being disowned by his father and beset with recurring illnesses.*

## FACES OF LUTHERAN MISSIONS IN INDIA

### Eduard Raimund Baierlein

- **April 24, 1819** Born to Graf von Valseck in Sierakowsky, Poznań, Poland. Baptized in Roman Catholic Church.
- **1840** Disinherited by father after period of restlessness followed by conversion to Lutheranism. Changes his family name to “Baierlein” (Little Bavarian) and joins the Breslau Free Church.
- **1843** Enrolls at the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission and trains for mission service in India. Studies under Karl Graul, a vocal supporter of the integrity of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.
- **1846** Commissioned to leave for India after successfully completing coursework. Becomes seriously ill two days before ship leaves for India.
- **April 19, 1847** Leaves for Frankenmuth, Michigan after being commissioned for service as a Leipzig Mission missionary to Chippewa / Ojibwa Indians. Both Eduard and his wife suffer illness (cholera?) in cramped quarters on the way to North America. Arrives in New York City May 31, 1847. Arrives in Frankenmuth June 10, 1847 and continues the work of Craemer in conducting classes in Christianity, German, English and mathematics. Preaches in Chippewa every Sunday (at first with aid of interpreter).
- **July 19, 1848** Baierlein begins to live with Chief Bemassike’s people on the Pine River. Calls mission outpost “Bethany.”
- Baierleins’ blessed with three children while living in Michigan: Theodosia, Theophile, and Ulrike.
- Clashes with whiskey traders and Methodists. Contributes articles about missionary life to *Der Lutheraner*. Leipzig Mission missionary E. G. H. Miessler arrives to assist Baierlein.
- **July 17, 1852** Leipzig Mission writes letter to LCMS and Baierlein that he is now assigned to mission work in South India.
- **May 19, 1853** Leaves with family for Germany after 6 years of service in Michigan. Stops and addresses Buffalo Synod in convention and LCMS in convention. Boards ship in New York City June 28, 1853. Arrives in Bremen July 25, 1853 and visits Wilhelm Löhe. Addresses attendees at annual Dresden mission festival.
- **August 30, 1853** Commissioned in Leipzig for service in India.
- **December 17, 1853** Arrives in Madras. Attends annual mission conference where Baierlein is assigned to Tamil-speaking fisher-people around the coastal town of Sadras. First converts are from the poor of Sadras. Baierlein opens a school and orphanage.
- **March 8, 1855** Baierlein’s fourth child, Theodosius, dies from cholera. Buried in Sadras.
- Begins building church building with blocks from old, abandoned Dutch settlement. Motto over church doors from Mark 1:15, “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Gospel.”
- **July 29, 1855** Church building dedicated. Baierlein preaches in Tamil.
- **January 4, 1856** Baierlein becomes seriously ill and is forced to move to Tranquebar for treatment. Baierlein sent to more temperate mountain climate of Ootacamund for about 12 months. Baierleins’ are blessed with fifth child, Peregrina.
- Leipzig Mission conference in Tranquebar decides to combine Sadras and Cuddalore missions. Baierlein returns from the mountains December 1856 and moves to Cuddalore January 2, 1857 after first preaching in Sadras on Christmas Day.
- **December 1857—Summer 1858** Temporarily reassigned to Tranquebar during absence of Mission Director Cordes.
- **December 25, 1859** Dedication of new church building in Cuddalore.
- Leipzig Mission missionary Ochs demands renunciation of caste at conversion to Christianity. Other Leipzig Mission missionaries disagree with demands imposed by Ochs for convert to either eat a meal or drink a cup of tea prepared by someone of another caste. Baierlein sides with those opposed to Ochs’ demands. Threatens to resign from Leipzig Mission. Leipzig informs Baierlein and other Leipzig Mission missionaries in India to solve caste problem themselves—with Christian love and patience for each other. Upon reflection Baierlein writes that only the Word of God can solve the caste problem.
- **1860** Struck with fever during trip to neighboring town and villages. Doctor sends Baierlein back to Germany for complete rest. Leaves for Germany July 12, 1860 and arrives January 17, 1861. During time in Germany, Peregrina dies.
- **July 24, 1862** Boards ship for India. Arrives at Madras November 1862. Rebuilds church building in Cuddalore and adds a bell in the new bell tower. Reinstates services every day at 6 o’clock in the morning. Increasing numbers of locals seek instruction and Baptism. In summer of 1863 the mission was blessed by 80 converts. Served 24 local communities around Cuddalore. Baptizes 100 souls in 1864.
- **Early 1870** Wife of Baierlein suffering from illness and returns to Germany. Eduard follows in March 1871 after severe headaches and physical weakness.
- **November 19, 1872** Baierlein and his wife board ship to return to India. Arrive in Bombay December 19, 1872. Assigned to Bangalore. Preaches the Gospel in Tamil and English. Church dedicated in Bangalore August 23, 1874.
- **1879** Recognized for 25 years of missionary service by Leipzig Mission, but constantly ill.
- **Spring 1886** Baierlein suffers heart attack and is ordered to return to Germany. Leaves India April 1886.
- Writes *In the Wilderness with the Red Indians: Missionary to the Michigan Indians, 1847–1853* (first published in 1889).
- **October 12, 1901** Dies in Clarens, Montreux, Switzerland.



Eduard Raimund Baierlein

MISSION WORK IS A WORK FOR ETERNITY. It is true that godliness has the promise of this life and of that hereafter; it is true that the outward temporal life of the Christian is very different to that of those who live without God; it is true that joy in the Lord is the strengthening of life here, and the consolation of everlasting life does not suffer even the most bitter sorrow of earth to penetrate to the most inmost depth of the soul; ... . But a Christian who has known the Lord and has Him in his heart never can be [unhappy]. ... there in the light of the eternal sun ... will it be clear and visible how ... much has been won by the salvation of one single soul. And if the angels in heaven, who live in eternal joy, are yet able to rejoice over one sinner that repents, how much more will we be able to rejoice over the hundreds who have turned from darkness to light, from their dead idols to the living God! May the blessing of the Lord rest upon, and His saving love preserve our station of Cuddalore now and in the future, and whoever loves Him let him answer—Amen!

—from Baierlein’s *Land of the Tamulians* (174)