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A CENTURY TO REMEMBER

by

Shirley Ward McConnell

for

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Wheeling, Illinois

in honor of its

100th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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Narrators: Marilyn Miller Kelm  
Robert Falder

Dramatization: Mrs. S. Fenner Adam



## A Century To Remember

When Illinois became a state in 1818, the way was cleared for more settlers to move into the remote areas of the state. So it was between 1818 and 1850 that settlers were penetrating into the area north of Chicago, even though no white man could settle in Lake County without the permission of the Indians who held possession.

The noble prairie grass which could hide a horse and rider in its height and density and made a better thatched roof than did the shingles of the day was losing its battle for survival to the plow share of the pioneer. For, once turned over, it would never again rise.

The majestic groves, each like an island rising above the prairie grass, were now sheltering homes of the pioneers, where once only wild life or a summer encampment of Indians found warmth and security nestled in their density.

The Indian trails, too, had widened out into roads bearing the heavy wagons and oxen of the pioneers. Milwaukee Avenue was known as Milwaukee Plank Road, going from Chicago through Half Day, Libertyville, (then Independence Grove), and on to Milwaukee.

By 1835 pioneers cast their ballots in a polling place six miles south of Wheeling.

In the Patent Office Report on Agriculture for 1850-1851, John C. Cox of Quincy, Adams County, Illinois, states: "The average intelligence (of the people of Illinois) is worthy of particular notice, being inferior to no section I have seen in the Union.

"Moral character is highly appreciated. Good-fellowship among neighbors, and general interest in country affairs, are marked strongly in our society. Neatness about the homestead is receiving gratifying attention, evinced by the cultivation of shade trees, shrubbery, flowers, and garden fruits, such as berries, etc. The means, however, of a great number are insufficient yet to enable them to erect such dwellings as are desirable. Economy, too, is a Sucker virtue. Labor is, in the main, fairly employed, and the laborers treated with deserving consideration; average wages, about \$8 a month, with board and washing.

"The German population are generally excellent farmers, and, with the help of their wonderful frugality and industry, almost invariably succeed rapidly."

Thus, the early settlers of Illinois were apparently equaling the tradition established by the Illini Indians,--For the literal interpretation of the Indian word "Illini" means "men," and the French added the "ois" ending making the whole meaning of the word: "Tribe of real men"--as distinguished from the Iroquois Indians whom the Illini called beasts.

The flights of the Passenger Pigeons, those huge birds that migrated through the plains in flocks so vast that they darkened the sun as they flew south in the fall, devastating any crop when they stopped for the night, had ceased. So many were their numbers and so large were their wings that the beat of the wings as they flew was



ilies.

During the early 1860's oil lamps without chimneys were coming into use and on May 4, 1861, fourteen volunteers from Wheeling went to join the Union Rifle Guards at Camp Fry.

When the North was victorious in 1865, the news was told to the vicinity by those who returned from Chicago to Wheeling. Powder was placed on an anvil and when it was struck, the resulting explosion could be heard for several miles.

Illinois was the first state to ratify the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery. Less than three months later, the mortal remains of President Abraham Lincoln lay in state in the Chicago Court House en route to Springfield for burial.

The 1860's were exciting times: The first successful Trans-oceanic cable was laid from New Foundland to Ireland. The city of Chicago had built a transportation tunnel under the Chicago River to connect the south and west sides of the city. The east and west coasts of America were linked at Ogden, Utah, when the Union Pacific and Central Pacific tracks were joined. Just imagine, only  $6\frac{1}{2}$  days to cross the continent from California to New York; when, less than 30 years before, the founders of our community had spent 35 to 40 days at the mercy of the winds on the ocean, then a 3 week overland trip from New York!

The inhabitants of the Wheeling area saw the need for a church somewhat closer than those which were several miles away. So it was in October of 1864, the members of the German Evangelical United Reformed and Lutheran Church under the leadership of the Reverend F. C. Schwartz applied to the Presbytery of Chicago to become united with and be one of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America. This organization became complete on November 2, 1864, and the members of the new congregation called their group the German Presbyterian Zion Church. The first meetings were held in the school house which stood in the grove of trees where the shopping center is now located in the approximate position of the Jewel Food Store. The membership grew rapidly and in 1865, the church was completed on the Dundee Road site, directly across from the school grounds.

At a stated meeting of the North Presbyterian Church, Chicago, on April 11, 1865, the name of Zion Church (German) with 45 members, 4 Elders, and 4 Deacons was entered upon the rolls, and an Elder from the church, Jacob Glos, appeared and took his seat in Presbytery.

Shortly thereafter, the Reverend C. F. Waldecker became the second pastor of our church. In 1866, he recorded the passing of Salome Murbach, age 33 years, 1 month, and 5 days as the first death within the Church family. One year later, he also recorded the first church wedding: that of John Murbach and Sarah Retterer. It was with a heavy heart that he recorded the passing of Frank Edward Waldecker, his infant son. His tenure was filled with busy days. They must have been productive days, too, for the church debt was wiped out during his pastorate.

Historically, an event took place that was to change the area for generations. Early morning on Saturday, October 8, 1871, a fire had started in a stable in Chicago. The fall of the year had been ver



on September 1st, the Elders tendered their resignation and requested that the Pastor read the formal notice from the Pulpit. On September 15th no Quorum was present to constitute a lawful Session to take action in the above matter, so seven men were appointed by the Pastor to act as a Committee and if necessary, nominate candidates for Elders "and take such steps as they deem proper for the sake of Christ's Kingdom of this Place."

This situation was very serious. The committee of seven men had a hard job before them, for on their shoulders rested the burden of reweaving the torn mantle covering those who were part of Christ's kingdom. The rules were made, and the rule which was causing the controversy seemed to be the portion covering the infant baptisms. It was like condemning a babe who was here in our midst to becoming a heathen.

On September 26th the committee apparently analyzed the situation completely, for they wrote the following resolutions:

- I - Resolved to keep up the Organization
- II - Pastor ordered to carry out the rules passed on March 17, 1878
- III - Committee did not accept the resignation of the Elders
- IV - The Session is to collect twice a year for the money for the Pastor's salary that didn't come in regularly and that he be paid his day wages from the treasury of the congregation.

Thus, the groundwork was laid for the congregation to continue. However, these were some hard rules to live with, and obviously, some of the members had a hard time living with themselves. So many times a tense situation emerges in such a manner: We all know what should be done, but can it be done and still have anything left?

So it was, by May of 1879 when the records show the dismal failure of the earlier resolution. The record of May 27th is so beautifully worded that we quote:

"The Resolution of March 17, 1878, cannot be carried without doing injury to the church and congregation. Resolved that the Resolution be withdrawn and the treatment of such cases be committed to the discretion of and wisdom of the Pastor."

The storm had subsided, and as the invigorating new atmosphere filled the area, a unanimous call was extended to Mr. William R. Mundhenke to assume the pastoral labor of the church. Mr. Mundhenke must have had scholarly attributes, for the record shows that the Session gave him permission to comply with a request by the Presbyterian Missionary to write an article on the condition of and general work in this field, which article to be published in the Missionary column of "The Interior."

New interest was stimulated in our organization. In 1880 it was decreed that Lord's Supper should be celebrated 3 times in the year. 1st Sabbath in October--2nd Sabbath in January--and Good Friday. Also parents requesting infant baptism should notify the pastor in time for him to question and/or instruct them privately regarding the nature and design of Christian Baptism.



Fund for the relief of the aged and disabled ministers, and urge upon the people, especially the well-to-do among us, to contribute to this cause. Our contributions could not have been too much for it was about this same time that it was resolved within our church and presented to the people that each gift in the weekly collection for defraying of the running expenses of the church should be increased to 5 cents.

November 3, 1889, the Silver Anniversary of our Church! What joy and happiness abounded in and around our church! The problems were put aside for the time being. Services, both morning and evening, were crowded. The messages given were a blessing to all, and good wishes were extended to the effect that "May the Church enter upon the second quarter of a century of its life with new purpose and zeal."

Yes, the era that has gone down in history as "The Gay Nineties" was here. True, events were taking place that have had a lasting effect on the nation, and on the world. New inventions: Eastman perfected film in 1889 and Edison promptly put it to use in an instrument known as a kinoscope which was the fore-runner of motion pictures. Automobiles were perfected and in use. It was an age of inspiration to those who were in contact with the events of the day. The world of music was enriched by the works of Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Rimsky-Korsakov, Sibelius, and Richard Wagner. Chicago was the host to the Columbian Exposition, a World's Fair honoring the 400th Anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the New World. This spectacle has long been the talk of our ancestors. It was a white city,--every building being white, and the architecture made the buildings all compatible in design. The Museum of Science and Industry is a living memorial to the people of this day of that World's Fair. The Nobel prizes awarded for the outstanding contributions to Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Letters, and Inter-national Peace were established by the will of Swedish Scientist, Alfred Nobel. Indeed, an exciting world if you were in tune with the happenings. Most of these things were for those who lived in urban areas. Our colony of people, just 25 miles north of Chicago did not know of the Gay Nineties. They were much too busy with everyday living, such as keeping the farm well tilled and laying up sufficient food to keep the family through the long winter. The pioneer hardships of farm life had not eased to the point of where people could think of luxuries, and perhaps some of the folks of the community were not even aware of the growing use of some of the so-called "luxuries" of the day.

Several events of our church which are worthy of note during "The Nineties" cover the redesigning of the pulpit area by making the raised platform deeper and wider so that the organ could be placed on the platform. Money must have been scarce, for in 1895, the membership was canvassed by the officers who solicited subscriptions for the Pastor's salary. One of the trustees was appointed to collect the amount due with fair wages being allowed him for those services.

Again the language problem comes under scrutiny. It is recommended that the Sabbath School be conducted in the English language and that the new methods of teaching the Bible be adopted. However, the Session feared such radical change would meet with disfavor, so it was decided to maintain the German Language with both teachers and pastor requested to devote more time to help the students acquire the German language. Apparently Minnie Welflin Belling knew her



building. The Session also received a letter from the Reverend William Boetcher, pastor of the German Presbyterian Church of Shelbyville, Indiana, requesting help towards building a new house of worship. It was decided to give them financial assistance after being more fully informed of the plan of said church.

On June 27, 1905, Henry Wiegand was ordained in our church, and became its pastor. Regular contributions to the mission work of the church was established and in November 1906, out of a mission fund of \$26.33, \$4.36 went to the Presbyterian Hospital of Chicago, and \$9.97 to "Selbsterhaltungs Sache," which seems to be a self-help fund of the Presbytery.

In 1908, our church became a member of the Galena Presbytery, probably because they were basically the German group. Here at our church the new hot air furnace was installed. A new organ was also installed. Ah, such sweet sounds when it was properly played! Oh, yes, it was during this time that a new choir alcove was built and opera-type chairs replaced the uncomfortable pews. The melodic tones of the Reverend Wiegand's voice were an inspiration to the choir and to all who heard him. It was during his pastorate that the choir of Zion Presbyterian Church greatly enriched the services of the church.

During the period of 1910 to 1912, the first locally owned automobiles appeared in the village. The Sigwalts purchased a Stanley Steamer and gave their neighbors and friends rides,--the trip being from Wheeling to Half Day and return. Soon afterwards, John Schminke purchased a Ford. He, too, gave round-trip rides from Wheeling to Half Day, pausing briefly in Half Day to "let the motor cool off."

The Fiftieth Anniversary was celebrated in 1914, with the details handled by the Ladies Aid. It is a note of interest to see by their records that the Reverend William R. Mundhenke, the Reverend Oltman B. Oltmans, former pastors, and Mrs. Ernest Shuette, the wife of a former pastor, were invited to attend the special services in April with all expenses paid. The Ladies Aid also helped procure photos of charter members and former pastors.

By 1915, electricity was available to the church, and the Ladies Aid Society were thanked by the congregation for meeting the expenses of wiring the church and installing electrical fixtures.

Yes, it was ever thus, things near to one always have a deeper effect than do the events that go into history books. Why, in 1914, the Panama Canal was opened for world traffic. Everyone is willing to acknowledge that this was a great engineering feat, but interest quickens even faster when Milwaukee Ave. was paved from Niles to Dundee Road. It was about this time when telephone service was extended out of Wheeling. There were 8 parties on a line. This was some advancement, for when the Deerfield area first had telephones, it took 10 subscribers for a line. It was during the winter of 1917 that the snow was so very deep! Our parents tell us that not a wheel turned on the road for 3 days, and to avoid being caught in the barn with all paths leading to the house closed by drifts, shovels were kept in the house and in the barn so that paths could be shoveled from either end.

Our parents, or perhaps our grandparents always tend to pause



The name of Mrs. Conrad Reeb was entered on the roll of Church members, and now she has achieved the distinction of being the oldest living church member.

The post-war economy ran high. Chicago was growing outward. Motor cars were common now, even though, in the country, horses and buggies were still in use. The local business district still had hitching posts and it was not at all uncommon to see a stair-step platform used to assist the ladies into the carriages.

Milwaukee Avenue was being paved north of Dundee Road. Oh, what a fascinating thing to watch! The road bed was dug out and smoothed by slip scrapers pulled by mules. Forms were laid to mark the road edge and then, right next to the side of the road were the rails of a miniature train. At regular intervals, a little steam engine known as a "dinky" came down the tracks. It pulled a whole string of little cars, each carrying its appointed quantity of material for a batch of concrete. These ingredients were dumped into the cavity of a huge mixer where they churned for what seemed like an endless time, when all at once, an eruption took place and all of the grey soupy mixture flowed into the area delineated by the steel forms. It was tamped and smoothed and finally covered by canvass, watered down and left to season. The crew were respectable men and the night watchman loved children. More than once he shared a special candy treat from his lunch box with some child. It was on this crew that one of the boys of our church "nitched" about his age so that he could be the water boy.

1924 was a memorable year. A new gasoline driven fire engine was purchased to replace the hand pumper which had been in use since 1876. What a change! The old pumper was designed to be drawn by horses and to be manned by twelve men, six per side working in a teeter-totter manner like the railroad hand cars. With the retirement of the old pumper, hose cart, and ladder truck, came the legendary tales of the volunteer firemen. When the bell atop the old village hall rang to sound the alarm of "fire," men swarmed to the station grabbed the poles of the equipment and ran down the street to the scene of the fire. Frequently, the pumper was attached to the only fire plug in Wheeling, located at the corner of Milwaukee Avenue and Dundee Road where it was tapped into the pipe line that extended from the Soo Line pumping station next to the river to the water tower at Wheeling Station, then known as Camp Twenty. Of course, if the fire was interesting, the men operating the pumper might leave their post and go to see how the fire was progressing until the hose handlers would yell "water," and send the pump operators scurrying back to their posts.

The old elementary school, where the congregation held its first meetings had its last graduating class in 1925. In September, all classes were over at the present Walt Whitman school.

On March 12, 1926, the Ladies Aid Society of Wheeling brought three lovely bouquets to Mrs. Barbara Lesser in honor of her 90th birthday. Her husband, Philip Lesser, had been an elder of our church for over 30 years. In July, the church was struck by lightning, and the splendid spire was ruined. The cost of replacing it was prohibitive in relation to the means of the Treasury, so the bell tower was roofed over without a steeple. Although everyone regretted the loss of the steeple, many people were relieved that its height did



done, and at times it was very gratifying to see a horse relieved of pain from a tender foot.

The funeral customs, too, changed sharply. Many people remember the horse-drawn hearse draped in black carrying the casket of the deceased; and if the deceased happened to be a church member, the bell was tolled in strict cadence the exact years of the deceased's life.

Thus, we have this period when horse-drawn vehicles were still common on the streets, and Mr. Welflin would take time to fill a little bag of candy for the youngsters from his Lazy-susan candy counter near the back of his General Store. Yet, many of us can recall taking our first airplane ride with Charles "Chuck" Balling handling the controls in his open cockpit Waco biplane. The Stutz Bearcat was the most! Wages were high, as was the economy, when all at once the bubble burst, and as we entered the 1930's the economy had hit an unheard of low. It wasn't how much you earned, it was just to have a job!

The area in the Middle West in and around Chicago was hurt extensively by the depression.

This was the period that the Reverent E. Leslie Shaw served as our pastor. Inasmuch as he was not married, the manse was rented out. The sheds which had been constructed to shelter the horses and later sheltered the canvass tops of the automobiles, were removed and replaced by a garage.

Jig saw puzzles were the favorite form of home entertainment, and on special occasions, we might be permitted to go to the movies to see Shirley Temple.

Money was spent sparingly, but the church kitchen was remodeled and both the church and the manse were repainted in 1933.

It was during 1932 that a second World's Fair opened on the lake-front in Chicago. The exposition was named "A Century of Progress," in honor of the 100th anniversary of the pioneers in this area. The architecture was done in the modern theme and quite a let-down for those who remembered the 1893 World's Fair. The exhibits were wonderful, and during the second year of the Fair, the breath-takingly beautiful "Chalice of The Holy Grail" was on display in the Hall of Religion. It was in 1934 that the Chicago Zoological Garden, locally known as Brookfield Zoo, opened its doors.

We thrilled to the National Air Races held at Glenview at the new Curtiss Field. Who can forget the sight of the mass parachute jumps, or the special races for large planes. At the end of each race, the winning pilot might put on an acrobatic display. It was thrilling to watch the regulation racers dart around the pylons, but few of us will ever forget the sight of the tri-motor Ford looping-the-loop!

In 1936, the great German Zeppelin, "The Hindenburg" visited Chicago, and although it did not come north of the city, we could see it, a huge silver cigar floating along, as it left the city to the southwest.

We welcomed the Reverend Donald C. Morrison in 1937. The general economy had improved, but money was still very scarce. Under his guidance, memorial windows were contributed and installed in the church.



houses,--we can not help but ask ourselves as time hurries on: "What will the next century bring, and just what type of age will it be?" But wait! Time does not hurry on;--we hurry on and time is Eternal. That which is Eternal comes of God! Shall we pray?







Many times during his pastorate here, he gave his thanks that the church was clear of long-term debt.

In 1941, on New Year's Day, Mrs. Magdalene Redlinger, a member of our church, celebrated her 100th birthday. By December, our country was again involved in war. Rationing of every kind was imposed, and we bid Mr. Morrison "Godspeed" in 1942, when he left to join the Chaplain Corps of the Army. Many of the young men of our church had already put in many months of service overseas. People here at home were busy at war work in factories and saving for the future with War Bonds. The war ended for many of our men in 1945, and once again we had to adjust to peace-time living. Commodities became easier to obtain, and by 1949, the entire area was involved in a building boom.

Television had been perfected for use in the home, and many sets were installed and enjoyed in our area. This was one factor in bringing urban activities closer to us. Another factor was the building boom. Little by little, the farms that our parents or our grandparents had worked so hard to pay for were being sold and a new subdivision would start. Wheeling became the fastest growing community in Illinois. The population jumped from 750 to over 10,000 inhabitants. With the heavy influx of population, the old gave way to the new. A shopping center was constructed across from the church. The town hall and fire station were now located next to the church. Traffic passing by on Dundee Road was so noisy during the summer that, at times, the minister had to stop speaking in order for the congregation to hear his message.

The decade of the 1950s had closed the chapter on the use of steam locomotives on the railroads. Diesel locomotives became the active power units. New horizons were opened to us all when we watched the man-made Russian satellite "Sputnik" on its appointed overhead orbit. Toll roads and expressways were now constructed to handle the traffic. O'Hare Field was in use for non-stop oceanic jet flights.

All of these things are so very close to us that sometimes we overlook their importance! Another event which was even closer to us was the financing, construction, and the opening of our new church on December 23, 1962. As we entered our new sanctuary on Christmas Eve, our thoughts returned to the austere chapel on Dundee Road. We could not help but reflect back to the memory of the beautiful Christmas Eve candlelight service. It was always lovely in its simplicity, for no service could be pretentious in that structure where we were surrounded by constant reminders of the humbleness of our ancestors. Thus, it was with mixed emotions that we entered the new sanctuary for our Christmas-time devotions. Suddenly we knew that it would take the efforts of each member of our church to bring those humanly qualities of warmth, understanding, love, and humility into this new structure. Some of our members had already left their mark on the sanctuary in the design and execution of the chancel furniture, the wood carvings, the lettering, the Celtic cross, and the dove atop the Baptismal font. Others enhanced the services through their work in the choir. Gradually, each member will find his spot for that extra bit that makes a structure a "home." May we find the threads to add to the tapestry to help complete the picture.

The wonders that a century of time doth bring! From oxen to orbiting the Earth,--from gun-powder messages to Telstar satellite,--from earthen floor cabins and wood stoves to centrally heated insulate



not add to the problems of aviation, for our community now had one established airport and another was talked of.

In June of 1927, the resignation of Mr. Wiegand was accepted and he was succeeded by the Reverend E. Leslie Shaw.

Nineteen twenty-seven was an eventful year! In May, Charles Augustus Lindbergh flew non-stop from New York to Paris in a plane about the size of a Piper Cub. Wheeling lost its small-town charm when the trees were removed to permit Milwaukee Ave. to be widened to four lanes. Oh, how that traffic had increased! During the summer season we had seen traffic jams that extended more than 10 miles. Motorists drove on the shoulder of the road. Cars seemed to be everywhere. The dust on the shoulders lay so deep during the summer that when an automobile stirred it up, no one could walk or sit in the front yard of the homes that lined the highway. This was the year that we first heard of a machine called a "combine." It cut and threshed oats in one operation. This new contraption harvested 40 acres of grain in one day using only 3 men!

Yes, the days of the large threshing crews were numbered. What a time that was on the farm. There was always the anxiety of the exact day that the housewife must be ready, for the weather was just apt to be contrary and if it was too damp or too wet, nothing moved! Then the crew arrived. First a wagon or two, then the off-beat "plump" of the terrifying tractor, followed by the thresher creaking on its axles. In due time, thresher and tractor were properly aligned, orders were given to all children to stay away from the belt, and finally everything was in motion. The machine shook, the engine quivered and emitted puffs of smoke, and the chaff flew, but, oh, the fun of riding on the filled grain wagon! Of course, just a few years ago, the grain was bagged and had to be carried, sack by sack, into the granary; but now it was run loose into a tight-boxed wagon and carried to the elevator where it was mechanically raised into the bins in the granary.

The kitchen buzzed! Bread and pies were made. Meat was cooking. Endless cobs of corn were husked, or huge bowls of cabbage were shaved for slaw. The table was spread to full length and covered by a dark cloth so the men wouldn't be embarrassed if they got soil from their shirtsleeves on it. Then they descended,--like hungry wolves. Food was devoured in record time without any ceremony, and only a small amount of conversation. What mother wouldn't have done for some of the kitchen conveniences of today!

The decade of the 1920's was a period of contrasts. Wheeling still had its blacksmith shops for horse-shoeing and iron work. The children of the village passed many idle hours watching the blacksmith at his work, painstakingly shaping iron to replace a broken brace. He knew just when to force air into his fire by pumping the huge bellows that hung nearby, and he knew, too, when the crude iron rod was ready to be shaped. How fascinating to watch that rod take on the scarlet glow of deep heat, followed by the sizzling boil of water as it was "dunked" into the cooling vat after it had been shaped. It was interesting, too, to see a horse getting a pair of shoes. Giant chisels trimmed the hoof; the "frog" of the foot was cleaned out; the shoe carefully fitted and finally nailed into place with large nails. This sounds somewhat like a weird ritual, yet it was painstakingly



and reflect on this age from the late 1890's to 1917. As senior citizens, they reflect back and say that to them it glistens as a Golden Age. They have very valid reasons for their reflections and for the images that they see, and it is not yearning for one's lost youth!

During the 20 years just past, the people lived by a high moral code of conduct. Life did not move at such a fast pace as it did in the years following. There was time for religion, time to work, and time to play. Social events were less frequent than in later years and everyone attended them. Families attended from the youngest to the eldest. The word "baby-sitter" was unknown. The rural communities enjoyed a wholesomeness that is indeed something to envy, for intermingled with wholesomeness was the deep humility of respect for one's self and for your neighbor. Those who had received personal gain due to a steady job, and at the time, those who worked steadily and conscientiously could end up as executives, and those who benefited because of the advantage of more education did not tend to show snobbishness because, perhaps, they were still too close to the unsophisticated job of making a living from the land.

A very difficult and unusual situation occurred in 1916 when a petition in behalf of the wife of a Civil War veteran was presented. The pastor recorded 1872 on the church record as the date of the marriage of these two people. However, the certificate given to the bride and groom showed the date the marriage was solemnized as 1869. This lady needed the date verified in applying for the pension due her as the widow of the late Civil War veteran. Session considered the matter carefully and found that they were powerless to help her, or to straighten out the record. They decided that the 1872 date was in error, but also concluded that our records would not meet the demands of the government were they to be altered, also, they decided that it would be improper for the pastor to swear to a record after the same had been altered.

Then came World War I! Many men of the area went to war. Some didn't come back, others came back very changed and very restless. Women, too, had taken on an entirely new role,--that of gainful employment outside the home. Home was changed, too. The influenza epidemic of 1918 had taken many lives.

Yes, even the church services and the annual meeting were omitted from January 1, through January 27th. Earlier in that same year, a congregational committee consisting of Elder Lesser, Mrs. E. Porte, and Deacon John A. Schminke were appointed to attend Presbytery to inform it that the church did not concur in Mr. Wiegand's request for the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Mr. Wiegand remained with out church.

This was the same year that our church took action to sever connections with Galena Presbytery and return to Chicago Presbytery. During the year, the use of the German language was dropped from the services.

The use of individual Communion cups and the envelope system for contributions were adopted in 1917. By 1919 efforts were made to start the Youth Budget system. This system met with only a limited success.



Bible well in German, for this was the year she was accepted into membership.

This same year, 1897, the purchase of 2 additional small pieces of property adjoining the church was considered, and if the cost was not more than \$150 with the present owner agreeing to wait for payment for 6 months after the date of purchase without interest, the deal would be made. The owner agreed to these terms and the purchase was consummated. However, when these 2 newly acquired pieces of property were being co-ordinated with the piece of property that the church already owned, it was discovered that the location of the church's real estate was incorrectly described. The Trustees were given special orders charging them with the responsibility of getting this situation straightened out and to personally see to it that the Warranty Deed was recorded in the Cook County Recorder's office.

In due time the real estate was properly recorded and the old barn on the property was to be torn down and the lumber to be used for the building of sheds, for this was the era when families traveled to church and elsewhere via horse and buggy. Ten sheds were built on the newly acquired property. Stalls were 9 feet wide and there was 20 feet under roof.

As the Twentieth Century started, that which was new was gradually eroding the old. The word "janitor" appears in the record where the word "Sexton" had formerly been used, and, under the leadership of a new pastor, Sunday evening services were started with every third meeting to be in English. New song books were purchased because the old type had gone out of print. A new organ was purchased and the old organ was sold to the highest bidder. There was also an appeal made for an organist.

Shortly, thereafter, a winsome young lady of fourteen years of age responded to the appeal. So it was that Laure Ott, now Mrs. Koebelin, became the regular organist. Inasmuch as her home was off of Huehl Road east of Wheeling, she stayed in Wheeling Sunday afternoon in order to be there for the evening song service. So much did she enjoy playing the organ, that she was willing to walk all of that distance for mid-week choir rehearsal. So great was her ability that she was the regular organist for over thirty years, and so great was her mastery of the organ that she played a five manual organ for Lyon and Healy. These factors laid the foundation for good music in our church.

It is recorded that Miss Adeline Schneider became a member of the church during this time.

In 1902, the decision was made to take collections every first sabbath of the month instead of only four collections for the entire year.

By 1902, horseback riding had declined and many homes had a bicycle as well as a carriage. Automobiles were being used in the city and on rare occasion one was even seen out in the country. In 1903 in far-off North Carolina, the Wright Brothers had made the first successful flight of an heavier-than-air machine.

It was in 1903 that it was resolved to get subscriptions for the purpose of collecting money to put in a new furnace under the church



This was an active year! It was necessary to build a new foundation well under the church building. "The wall should be 8 inches thick with abutments 12 inches square and as many as deemed necessary. The entire basement should be 3 feet above ground. Also, a platform 6 feet long and as wide as the building, 26 feet, be erected in front of the church to which the stairs, 14 feet wide be attached. The church and manse are to be repainted slate colored. Blinds to be fixed to all windows of the manse, and the ceiling of the church to be white washed. Fences are to be made around the church yard and painted slate colored so as to make it agree with the color of the buildings." To complete the "new look" given the church structure by these improvements, the Ladies' Pastor's Society had the bell cast and when it was finished, it was presented to the church.

These events seem so every day,--but to bring the picture into focus, we must realize that during the 1880's, walking was the favorite mode of transportation. Horseback riders were rare in the countryside, but most families had oxen. Appleton's Fifth Reader was used in the schools and the students of literature were reading works by Walt Whitman, Eugene Field, Mark Twain, and O. Henry.

The next year, 1881, started us off on a new activity,--that of a "Week of Prayer," which was to be observed the first week of the New Year, and if Providence indicate or demand a continuation of the meetings, they shall be continued some time longer. Weekly prayer meetings were to be held regularly each Wednesday night. The Pastor was to present the benefits and necessity of such meetings. In August \$34.00 was collected at a "Missionfeast."

1882 started off with an attempt to clear up the church debt. Each member shall contribute according to his own ability. Tolerance and understanding seemed to have taken over as the code of the day, for one boy didn't pass his catechism test but was received into Church membership at a special Session meeting on his profession of faith in Christ.

1887 was a year of extensive review. In January, the Church treasurer was unable to present a full report of the finances of the church and was requested to lay his books before the officers of the church for their inspection. In March, the Session was to review the Church Register, officially notifying those absent members whose exact address is known that they ask for a letter of dismissal to another church and to drop from the roll the names of those whose address is unknown. Within the next year, the record indicates that the Elders were to officially visit the families of the church and congregation, especially those that needed encouragement or admonition to a strict attendance to their several duties as Church members.

It is also worthy of note that although traveling was hard, and consumed many hours of time, the German Presbyterian Church of Woodstock, Illinois, a distance of over 30 miles, requested our pastor's services one Sabbath in each month as a temporary provision. The Session asked the minister to propose to the German Presbyterian Church of Woodstock the plan to preach to the congregation 2 Sabbath evenings in each month until a pastor should be secured.

The following year, 1888, the General Assembly requested that the pastor publicly present their propositions to raise in commemoration of the Centennial year, One Million Dollars as an Endowment



dry and the fire spread. On Monday morning, October 10, George Rockenbach, who lived near Wheeling, took a load of oats, potatoes, butter and eggs to Chicago. He heard of the city burning when he reached Niles, but proceeded because he figures that food was necessary. He brought back a load of furniture, his brother Fred, and Mrs. Martin Stanger to the home of Daniel Stanger in Wheeling. The fire illuminated the area so brilliantly that a newspaper could be read in Wheeling and Deerfield at Midnight. Two hundred fifty persons were killed; 17,450 buildings were destroyed with \$196 million dollars worth of damage.

Just 3 days after Christmas in 1871, the congregation rejoiced to learn of the birth of twins, Anna and Minna Schwingel. The infants were baptized on February 22, 1872. During this same year, the birth and baptism of Karl (Charles) Murbach, the son of the young couple married in 1867, was recorded. To our knowledge, Mr. Charles Murbach is the oldest living person baptized in our church as an infant.

But, to make a church a living home, every facet of human living must enter and leave its portals and find strength and humility at its altar. In February of 1873, one family laid to rest 7 children in the interim of one short month, probably victims of the cholera epidemic which swept the country at that time. Only God must know the dignity of such human tragedy.

By 1875, under the pastorate of the Reverend Charles Selden, our church made a missionary offering of \$6.75 to the Board of Home Missions. That year the salary of the minister was \$430. The Session of our church submitted its records from 1864 to 1875 to Presbytery for inspection. The approval of the records was given with the recommendation that the records be kept in the English language.

By 1876, the storm of discontent was brewing, and at the Congregational meeting held on January 2nd, the office of trustees was transferred upon the Elders and Deacons. In addition, all papers which were the property of this church were ordered transferred from the holder to another member. Affairs were not straightened out for some little time!

These next few years stand out as crucial in the annals of our church history. Apparently each dry twig added fuel to the fire until the smoldering erupted in 1878, on St. Patrick's Day, of all days! Thus it was on March 17th that the following item appeared on the record:

"Whereas it appears that many families reside at Wheeling and Vicinity, who never attend Church, neither are they willing to support the congregation with their earthly Means--the Money; but if they have a child to be Baptised or Lords Supper to be taken, or if they have funeral, they want the Church to be opened and the pastor to administer to them. Therefore: Resolved: That in the future, the church be closed for the above named people and facts; and the Pastor of our church shall not administer to them in the church or the use of God."

The practicality of the above items is given to the wisdom of the pastor.

The final sentence giving the pastor discretion of carrying out this resolution at least tempers the situation a trifle. However,



like the roar of an airplane.

The early communities and homes lived by the code of "industry" and waste not--want not, for it was only by this rigid selfdiscipline that the families could survive. One helped the other. Few people had money, at least in any quantity. For example: In 1841, one of the early settlers purchased a farm on Milwaukee Ave. near Wheeling for \$4.00 per acre. The original owner had paid the government \$1.25 per acre.

The German and Alsatian women had brought spinning wheels with them, so that they could make yarn for knitted garments. They also made a large knitted scarf that took the place of an overcoat. Very little, if any, of the wool was carded at home. Most of it was taken to Elgin for this process. They also made comforters of the carded wool which were wonderfully warm without being extremely heavy.

During the early 1850's a four-horse rake was used as a welcome successor to the back-breaking grain cradle.

The mail stage between Waukegan and Chicago by way of Libertyville, Half Day, and Wheeling was started in 1855. German was the language of the residents.

The general progress of the area was reflected by the industry of the people. They, who were creating homes out of wilderness and prairie, were not neglecting the spiritual values. They were simple people in many ways. Their wants were few beyond actual necessities. Indeed, it was cause for great rejoicing and thankfulness when crops were safely harvested, or when a winter passed without serious illness.

In 1845 the first Evangelical Association Church was being built on Plagge's Hill. This church was used three years and was not large enough to accommodate the people, so they moved it to the northwest corner of Dundee Road and Sanders Road. Later another church was built in this same location with old fashioned straight seats, a double row in the center with an aisle on each side and seats on the other side of the aisle against the wall.

Where is Plagge's Hill, you ask?--Why, that is now part of Sportsman's Golf Course where the square house stands next to Dundee Road. The top of that hill is actually the divide between the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi waterways. By natural course, all water east of this point found its way into the St. Lawrence River and all water west of this point found its way to the Mississippi River.

During these years, Chicago had grown substantially. By 1872, one hundred five miles of water pipe had been laid in the city; and in 1873 the city had constructed a tunnel beneath the lake through which to draw pure water.

But, this was Chicago! People of the area north of the city were busy leading their own lives and were only remotely affected by the city and its growth. It was during this period that some of the people of the first congregation of the German Evangelical Calvinist or Reformed United Lutheran Church (founded in 1845) joined the group in Wheeling. Among these were the Lesser, Koebelin, and Sigwalt families.



