

Who's Who In Wisconsin Rapids

The Who's Who column will be run each Saturday in the Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune. It will include a brief sketch of the life of citizens who have helped make history for Wisconsin Rapids.

Rev. Carl Arthur Meilicke



In the many dignified professions, the highest and greatest is that of the ministry. Among the number who have answered the call from the bible, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," is the subject of our sketch, Rev. Carl Arthur Meilicke, pastor of the First Moravian church of this city.

Rev. Meilicke is a son of Edward and Wilhelmina (Dittmar) Meilicke, who both emigrated from Woldenberg, North Germany, to this country. His mother left her home in Germany in June, 1866, arriving in New York City early in July. His father came to America the following year, arriving at his destination in the month of September, 1867. Both located at Oak Ridge, Minnesota, where they were united in marriage, November 4, 1867, residing on a farm near that village about seven years, where their son Carl Arthur was born in their log cabin on July 1, 1872.

Father Was Miller

When Carl was five years old he moved with his parents to Elba, Minn., where his father, who was a miller by trade, purchased and operated a flour mill. Young Carl attended the public school at Elba until 1882 when his father again changed his occupation and residence, and moved with his family on a farm near Casselton, North Dakota, and where Carl continued his search for knowledge at the country schools. His father, being a man of education, served as a member of the State Normal board of North Dakota for several years, and was successful in helping to organize the first graded school in North Dakota which was located at Goshen.

Entered Moravian College

Rev. Meilicke finished his preparatory school work at Oak Ridge and entered the Moravian College and Theological Seminary at Bethlehem, Pa., at the fall term of 1892. He stood one hundred percent in the knowledge of studies required, with the exception of Latin and ancient and medieval history. While attending college, he won first place in a collegiate and oratorical contest, with an oration on Abraham Lincoln. He graduated with high honors, in the month of June, 1898, when he was chosen salutatorian of his class.

Ordained In 1898

He was ordained a minister of the gospel at his home church in Goshen, N. D., July 28, 1898. The month following, he was called to the Moravian Church at Hector, Minn., with a filial church at Elim. He preached the word of God at both churches for four and a half years, when he was called to the charge of the church in this city, vacated by Frank Zeller on account of ill health.

Came Here in 1903

Rev. Meilicke arrived with his family in this city January 15, 1903, preaching his first sermon here three days later, January 18, to the nine members of the church. Through the untiring efforts of Rev. Christian Madsen, the first Moravian church of this city was organized, January 20, 1885, with only a few members. Rev. Madsen preached the first sermon and continued to occupy the pulpit for about seven years, when he was called to Unionville, Mich. On account of his advanced age, Rev. Madsen finally retired from active service and returned to this city to spend the remainder of his days.

The Ladies Aid Society of the First Moravian Church, which has been a great aid to the church, both socially and financially, was organized with a few members January 23, 1895, and like the church, has greatly increased its membership, and today is in a splendid financial condition.

At the time Rev. Meilicke came here the church was indebted to the sum of \$2,300 which was fully paid during the first five years following, and the parsonage property was bought and paid for.

Rev. Meilicke began his work here with 130 communicants and through his efforts and appeals, the membership has steadily increased to the num-

ber of 200, steady church attendants and helpful members.

Raised Large Funds

This church was the first to respond to the call to the Larger Life Fund campaign, the interest on the amount to be raised, to be used for foreign and home mission work, and old folks homes and the orphanages. The apportionment of the local church was \$12,000. It was oversubscribed \$2,000 on the first day of the drive, February 13, 1921, and was the first church to report the same day to headquarters at New Dorp, Staten Island, N. Y. The congregation also raised for benevolences during the past year, the sum of \$4,262.36.

Celebration for Him

The members of the church and Ladies Aid Society recently held a joint anniversary celebration and also the celebration of the nineteen years of service of Rev. Meilicke. The event was held in the church parlors, where a fine supper was served, followed by a delightful program, consisting of music, readings and short talks.

Rev. Meilicke is a member of the board of trustees of the Moravian College and Theological Seminary at Bethlehem, Pa. Among other members are included James M. Beck of Washington, D. C., who is noted as one of the ablest attorneys in the United States, also Archibald Johnson, vice-president of the Bethlehem Steel Co., and many other men of prominence and note.

Represented The Church

He was elected as one of the nine American delegates to represent the church at the General Synod of the Moravian church which was held at Herrenhuth, Germany, from the middle of May to the first week in July, 1909. This is the highest legislative body of the Moravian church in the world. It is an international gathering, meeting once every ten years. Besides the nine American delegates there were nine English delegates, nine German delegates as well as delegates from all parts of the universe. Rev. Meilicke left Wisconsin Rapids for Germany early in the month of April and returned in the month of August.

Toured Europe

His travelling companions were Bishop Karl Miller, D. D., of Watertown, Wis., and Rev. H. Richter of Lake Mills, Wis. During their stay abroad they visited Gibraltar, Algiers, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Bohemia and England. While in Rome, through the courtesy of the cardinal, they were given special admission cards to a special service conducted by Pope Pious X. They also visited the birthplace of the first Moravian church at Prague, Bohemia, where John Huss, the martyred university professor and court preacher, delivered sermons in the first years of the fifteenth century and was burned at the stake at Constance, Switzerland, July 6, 1415.

Attended International Synod

Rev. Meilicke also visited his grandparents' estate at Woldenberg, North Germany. In the year 1908, he was elected as delegate to the International Synod, held at Lititz, Pennsylvania, and was the youngest delegate present. He was appointed a delegate to the Church Federal Council in Chicago

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office until 1918.

Former School Board Member

He was a member of the local school board for ten years and at the time of his resignation in September, 1918, was chairman of the Teachers and Text Committees.

Since being in charge of the local church, he has organized two Moravian churches, the first at Kellier, where he was instrumental in the building of a very complete and well appointed church. The next church was at Veedum. The latter church is now in charge of Rev. Frank Spies, a young man and a member of Rev. Meilicke's congregation. The local church has among its members a large percentage of young people, and has furnished the greatest number of candidates for the ministry and mission work of the American branch of

them being the First Moravian Church at Philadelphia, Pa., which is reputed to be one of the wealthiest churches of that denomination in the United States. Although several other flattering calls from other churches have come to him, his love for his congregation and this city caused him to remain here, where his congregation and church people are just like one big family.

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He was united in marriage to Miss Eugenia Strehlow on October 12, 1898 at Casselton, N. D. Five sons have been born to Rev. and Mrs. Meilicke, three of whom are living. They are Clement, the eldest, who is attending Ripon College, Myron, a student at the local high school, and Francis, the youngest, a pupil at the Lowell school.

Rev. Meilicke has a magnetic per-

sonality. He is a thorough student with a full knowledge of the bible and its teachings, which he imparts to his hearers in a strong and convincing manner. He is a man of quiet and refined tastes, and is greatly loved by all the members of his congregation, and is held in high esteem by the residents of this city, who enjoy the honor and pleasure of his acquaintance.