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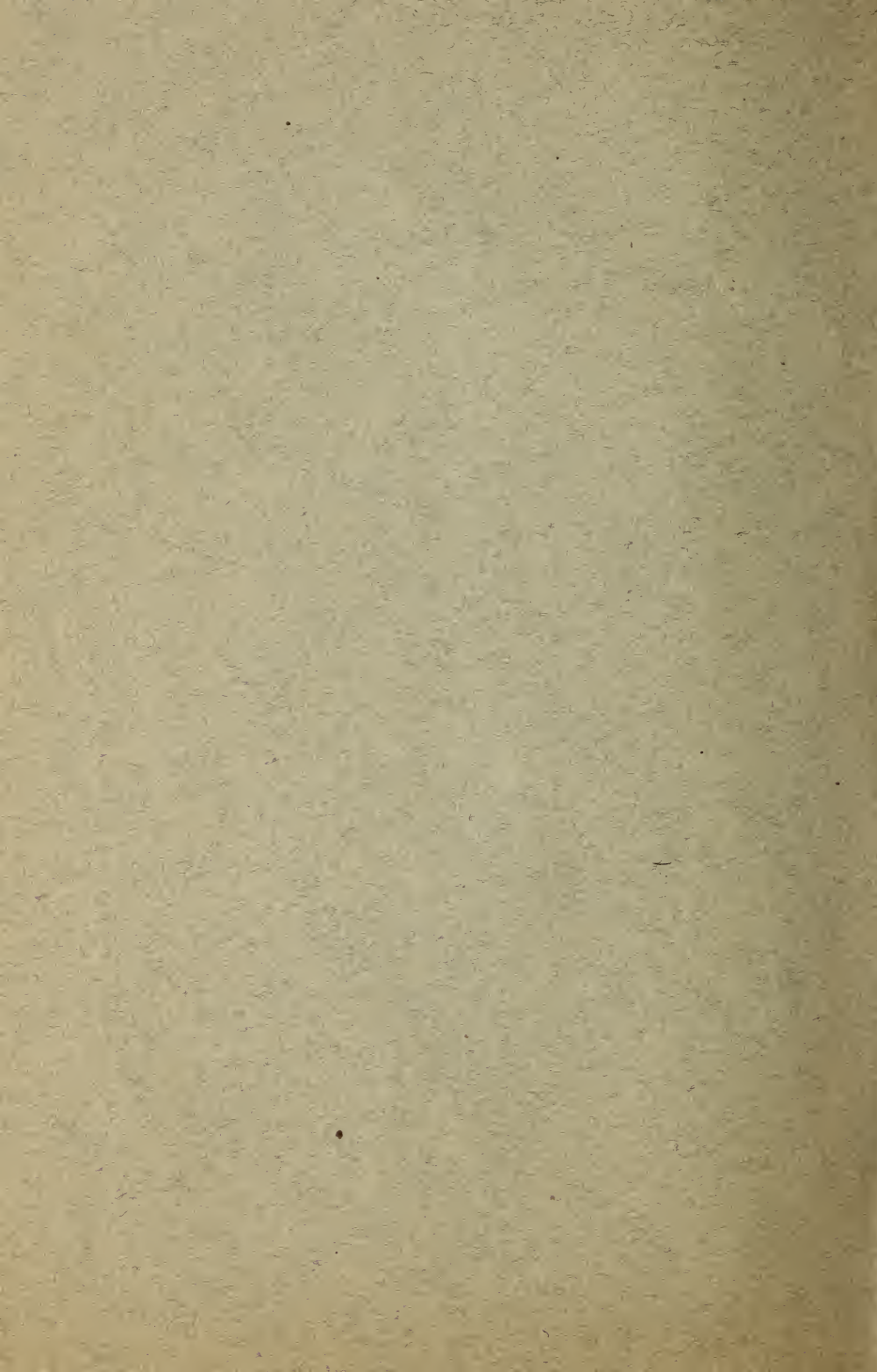
A SHORT BIOGRAPHY
OF
REVEREND DANIEL EFIRD.



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A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF REVEREND DANIEL EFIRD.

He was born of MARTIN EFIRD and his wife, MARY, November 10th, 1824, on Long Creek, about eight miles south west of Albermarle, county seat of Stanley County, and about four miles north of Rocky River; in State of North Carolina; and died of apoplexy, in Lexington County, South Carolina, at his residence on south side of Saluda River, about four miles from Lexington C. H., on 14th June, 1891.

His father died when he was quite young, leaving very little property for the family, and he worked his own way in the world. At first he began to learn the cabinet maker's trade, but after awhile concluded that he must preach; and then set about giving himself such education as he could obtain from the schools of his native County. He worked awhile and then went to school, and, when sufficiently advanced, alternately taught and went to school until his attainments were thought by the older ministers, with whom he was then surrounded, to be sufficient to enable him to preach. He sang fairly well and taught old fashion singing classes whenever he could, and thus also assisted himself. His education was what was in those days furnished in the common country schools, and was of no high order. There were not in those days, as now, denominational colleges of high grade and small expenses.

His theological training was done by Revs. Moser and P. C.

Henkel, and was as thorough as those men could make it. He was received by the Tennessee Synod as a student of theology at Solomon's Church, Shanandoah County, Va., September 30th, 1848. He received from Rev. P. C. Henkel, August 3d, 1849, license to preach until meeting of Synod. At the following meeting of Synod, October 25th, 1849, he was examined by Revs. J. R. Peterson and T. Moser, and licensed to preach, catechise and marry. At the meeting at Solomon's Church, Green County, Tenn., September 14th, 1850, he was ordained Deacon. He preached his first sermon while a student of theology at Grace Church, Catawba County, North Carolina, 30th June, 1849, and during these years he preached at various points in North Carolina and upper South Carolina, but his labors were confined chiefly to the Churches of Flat Rock, Morning Star, Emanuel, Luther Union and St. Martin's in North Carolina, and Bethlehem in Lancaster County, South Carolina, which Churches he seems to have regularly supplied.

His first visit to South Carolina was made in March, 1851, on horseback. He rode from his home in North Carolina, through Lancaster County, to Camden, thence to Columbia and across Broad River into the Dutch Fork to the home of Rev. G. Dreher, living then on the north side of Saluda River, about fourteen miles from Columbia and six miles from Lexington Village, near the memorable "Dreher's Ford." I have not been able to ascertain what influence brought him to South Carolina, but I infer from his associations that he was influenced to come by Rev. T. Moser, who had been here and knew the condition of things, and I am reliably informed that Rev. G. Dreher had asked the ministers in North Carolina to send some one to his assistance, and it may also have been the combined influence of the ministers in his vicinity. Upon his arrival he found Rev. G. Dreher exceedingly feeble in health, and the eight Churches under his pastoral care in bad condition, only three of which were really fully sustaining themselves as church organizations; and now, since others had failed to come to their assistance and their pastor was fast stepping from his active labors, they felt as if they must soon give

up all and go into the other Churches surrounding them, with whom they did not entirely agree in doctrine and practice, and which would have been unpleasant to many of them.

Previous to this they had been visited by Revs. A. J. Brown, —. —. Roads, —. —. Hull, T. Moser, A. J. Fox and E. Rudisill, neither of whom would consent to remain and engage in the work.

He preached his first sermon in Lexington County in St. Peter's (Meetze's Church) on Saturday, the 24th of March, 1851, and then consecutively at Salem, St. Paul's, St. Jacob's, St. Peter's, (Piney Woods) and Zion, returning to his work in North Carolina by April 6th, 1851. There he remained preaching regularly in the Churches above mentioned until November, 1851; when he left his native State, and his family, and his connections, and his home, and his friends to come into a strange land, among strangers, and among people disheartened and dispirited by a twenty years' religious strife. Upon this second and final trip his first sermon was preached in Salem Church on twenty-third of November, 1851.

At that time there were eight Churches under the care of Rev. G. Dreher, St. Paul's, Salem, St. Peter's (Meetze's,) and Zion on the south side of Saluda River, and Bethlehem, St. Jacob's, St. John's and St. Peter's (Piney Woods), on the north side. Of these Churches two, St. John and Salem, were used by two congregations each, one served by Rev. Dreher and the other in connection with the South Carolina Synod and served by various pastors. In Salem Church this continued until about 1857, when, by general consent, the congregation, then in connection with the Tennessee Synod, built Cedar Grove Church, about one-half mile from Salem, and continued to worship there. At St. John's Church, the two congregations continued to worship in the same house until 1891.

Rev. Dreher retained the pastoral care of these Churches so long as he was able until about January, 1854, and REV. EFIRD labored under him as assistant. During 1852 the question of Synodical connection came up and was generally and fully discussed. Rev. Dreher wanted to get another minister to join him

in forming another Synod in South Carolina, but REV. EPIRD took the view that the Churches in South Carolina were too weak to form a body. The people concluded, after a careful examination of the Constitution of the Tennessee Synod, which was during this summer read and explained in each Church, that they would go into that Synod upon condition that REV. EPIRD would agree to remain with them and take charge of their Churches after Rev. Dreher had complete his work for them. A Council meeting was called at Zion's Church during the summer of 1852, which was composed of the Elders of the various Churches, and at that meeting it was decided to petition the Tennessee Synod at its next session for admission. The necessary papers were then prepared in the form of petitions signed by the members of the different Churches, and the Churches collectively elected as commissioners to present these papers to the Tennessee Synod at its meeting October 27, 1852, in Salem Church, Lincoln County, N. C.: Brethren John Mayer, Micheal Drafts and Jacob Wheeler. At this meeting of Synod the proper action was taken to connect these Churches with the Tennessee Synod, which connection they maintain until this day. He was ordained at this meeting of Synod.

He married July 1st, 1852, Henrietta M. Dreher, youngest daughter of Rev G. Dreher. Of this union came six children, Alice M., Mary Jane, Cyprian M., D. Franklin, Emilie and Belle, of which Mary Jane died when an infant, and Emilie and Belle died each at about the age of nine years. He made his home with Rev. G. Dreher until in 1854, he purchased and moved to a small farm in the Piney Woods section of the Fork, on the Ridge Road, about three miles from Saluda River, and about ten miles further up the River than the settlement of Rev. Dreher. This place he settled and improved and lived thereon with his family, whom he raised and educated, until the spring of 1884, when he moved to the south side of Saluda River just across from the Old Dreher Home-stead.

When Rev. Dreher was stricken with paralysis about January, 1854, REV. EPIRD was called to take pastoral care of all the Churches in South Carolina in Tennessee Synod. He then lived

about ten miles from St. John's, fourteen from Bethlehem, seven from St. Jacob's, three from St. Peter's (Piney Woods), seventeen from Zion, twelve from Salem, ten from St. Paul's, eight from (Meetze's or) St. Peter's. During this year there were a number of deaths in this territory and REV. EFIRD, much of the time, was almost continuously in the saddle and he rode down one of the best horses he ever owned. In October, 1854, Rev. Adam Efird, a brother of REV. D. EFIRD, moved to South Carolina from North Carolina in wagons with his family, and located near Lexington C. H., on the "Addison Place." (one of the gentlemen who carried his wagon from South Carolina to North Carolina to assist in moving Rev. A. Efird, Brother John Mayer, is still alive), and he took pastoral charge of the Churches south of Saluda River, Zion, Cedar Grove, St. Paul and St. Peter's (Meetze's) and Emanuel's, which was organized during 1854, and received into the Synod at its meeting at Piney Woods Church, November, 1854.

From this time until 1869, the two brothers labored in and cultivated as best they could the field. DANIEL having the pastoral care of the four Churches on north side of Saluda, and Adam the five on south side, each labored in his own field, except that they both tried to be present at the communions held in each Church. In 1869 Rev. Adam's health began to fail and the care of the whole field again devolved on DANIEL. Adam died in September, 1870, and DANIEL kept watch over and labored for the nine congregations alone until Rev. A. L. Crouse came down in 1871 as an assistant. DANIEL retained control and management of the work, until in December, 1872, Rev. Crouse was elected pastor of the Churches south of the River, which relation he sustained until his health compelled him to resign (about 1876) the care of Zion's, Emanuel's, Cedar Grove and St. Paul. During this time Rev. Crouse, had organized and built two Churches—St. James' at Summit, on Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta Railroad in 1873, and St. Thomas in Fork, near Saluda River in 1875.

For the third time the pastoral relations and general oversight of eight Churches again pressed upon the now greying

brow of REV. D. EFIRD, and he continued to labor as best he could for them, but being separated by miles of rough country and a large river and the preaching, marrying and burying taking up almost all his time, very little visiting was done. This was not so occasioned because he did not attach importance to these visits, but because the other pastoral duties left no time for such things.

In 1876 Messrs. J. K. Efird, E. L. Lybrand and J. A. Cromer came to his assistance and preached and studied under his direction. They were ordained in 1878, but the pastoral care of the eight Churches was still left with him until about 1879, when all the others, except the four on the north side of river—St. Peter's, St. John's, St. Jacob's and Bethlehem—were placed under the care of the younger ministers, they still assisting him in his work by preaching once a month in his Churches while he did the same. This arrangement was continued until the summer of 1881, when he resigned these Churches on account of failing health and of dissatisfaction in St. Jacob's and Piney Woods Churches. There were divisions of the people, a majority wanting to retain the old pastor and a good minority desiring to elect a younger man. For the purpose of restoring peace and harmony among the members this step was taken, and the man who had preached the Gospel of his Master to these people, who had amid adverse criticism, and unduly exalted human reason, preached the simple Biblical doctrines of the Lutheran Church, who had administered to them the sacraments of the Church, who had buried their dead, and married their sons and daughters and baptized, catechised and confirmed their children for a period of thirty consecutive years; laid down once for all their pastoral care, and what a load it must have been of not less than 2,000 souls. But his works do follow him, the Churches speak for themselves, and no words of mine can show the reader the results thereof better than to point to them now and point to them in 1851, then they stood a disheartened, weak and dispirited band, almost afraid to confess their faith before men; but today they stand with heads erect, with loving and firm convictions that the

faith they then confessed was right and is right, and now all Lutherans in the South are united upon the common confessions. And all this he lived to see. How his soul must have leaped for joy to see this happy result from so much dissension and bickerings. But let us ascribe it all as he did to the wondrous workings of our God.

About 1878 and 1879 Rev. J. K. Efird was called to Cedar Grove and St. Peter's (Méeetze's); Rev. E. L. Lybrand to St. Paul's, Zion's and St. Andrews and Rev. J. A. Cromer to Emanuel's and as assistant pastor in Piney Woods, St. Jacob's and Bethlehem. Rev. Crouse retaining St. James' and St. Thomas.

His ministerial diaries show that he has preached 3,626 sermons; performed 1,589 baptisms; confirmed 1,111 persons and married 255 couples. What Lutheran minister in the last half century has accomplished so much under similar circumstances?

In his sermons, REV. EFIRD used very brief notes, if any at all. His style was animated; he spoke with spirit and rapidity and his supply of language was free and ready. His sermons were seldom embellished or explained by anecdote or narrative, but were of the old school Lutheran type. Biblical doctrine being explained, sustained or modified as occasion required by quotations from the Bible itself. His voice was naturally strong, and in speaking he raised it almost to its highest key, which made him easily heard in every portion of a large building.

In his business affairs he was frugal and industrious. He cultivated successfully his little farm and almost raised his family thereon, as the Churches at no time paid him a living salary.

In 1869 he, in copartnership with Hon. J. H. Counts, commenced a small mercantile business at Pine Ridge, his home, which was conducted mostly by him until the dissolution of the partnership in 1875, and the business was then continued for several years and then permitted to go down as his family decreased.

Not long after he moved to the Piney Woods in connection with several neighbors, a framed school house was built near his home. This was supplied with a large chimney and the windows

with glass. The house was much better than most school houses of that day in this county, and he was one of the leaders in the enterprise. In this little school house all his children received the rudiments of their education.

In 1869 and '70 he induced the people of the vicinity to form a joint stock company and build a large two story school house, and open the large and flourishing Pine Ridge Academy, to which institution many young persons of the surrounding country can point as their academical alma mater.

While this institution was conceived and originated by him, and while it has done more than any other single thing to awaken an interest in education in that vicinity, yet he lived to see in it the severest trial of his life. He was for a number of years continuously made the treasurer of its Board of Trustees, and handled in that time all the funds for the school. Some difference between himself and the Board as to his liability for certain funds coming into his hands finally came to the Synod in 1876, and it appointed as a committee to take the testimony and report it to the Synod: Rev. A. J. Fox and Hon. A. Costner. In May, 1877, they took the testimony of both sides in writing at Piney Woods Church. At the meeting of Synod in 1877 the matter was taken up and fully considered, and he was exonerated.

This was in the next two years followed by two suits in the civil courts—one by him against several parties for libel, and one by the Trustees of the school against him for an accounting. The first was non suited, and the second compromised. These suits, the only ones in which he was ever personally engaged, caused him much mental distress and had much to do with breaking down his health. Thus has many a good man been brought to grief by his friends and by those for whom he has done much.

In writing these pages my only object has been to put in shape for preservation, the plain and ungarnished facts of my beloved father's life. I have stated them as I understand them,

having gathered and verified them as best I could from every available source ; and my only request of those to whom this pamphlet is sent is that they properly preserve the same, for soon these things will be forgotten of men and it may be pleasant for future generations to refer to them.

C. M. EFIRD.



