



Spring 2010

## "Under God": The Story of Gettysburg in India

Daniel J. Willever  
*Gettysburg College*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/hiddenpapers>

 Part of the [Public History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

**Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.**

---

Willever, Daniel J., "'Under God': The Story of Gettysburg in India" (2010). *Hidden in Plain Sight Projects*. 37.  
<https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/hiddenpapers/37>

This open access student research paper is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact [cupola@gettysburg.edu](mailto:cupola@gettysburg.edu).

---

# "Under God": The Story of Gettysburg in India

## Description

At Gettysburg College, any student who strolls through Pennsylvania Hall, Musselman Library, and the College Union Building cannot help but notice the colorful retro-style posters highlighting the accomplished alumni of this historical institution. Some students dream and joke of being included among these men and women, a television star, a children's author, and a Civil Rights activist among them. Sadly, for every pop culture icon and Nobel Prize winner, there are those who go unnoticed. Pictures of founders and theologians such as Samuel Simon Schmucker and Henry Baugher remain, but there could not be more of a general disinterest in their accomplishments or their lives. Since the mid-twentieth century, the Lutheran enrollment at Gettysburg has steadily withered, and people identified with denominations, sects, and religions (or none at all) have arrived to take their place. The founders are no longer honored as good Christian men, just some guys who wanted to build a liberal arts college in "the middle of nowhere," Pennsylvania, and very few people know even that much. Is there one place on campus where the Lutheran heritage endures? That is the question on my mind as I walk up the steps, passed the pillars, and through the doors of Christ Chapel. [*excerpt*]

## Course Information:

- Course Title: *HIST 300: Historical Method*
- Academic Term: Spring 2010
- Course Instructor: Dr. Michael J. Birkner '72

*Hidden in Plain Sight* is a collection of student papers on objects that are "hidden in plain sight" around the Gettysburg College campus. Topics range from the Glatfelter Hall gargoyles to the statue of Eisenhower and from historical markers to athletic accomplishments. You can download the paper in pdf format and click "View Photo" to see the image in greater detail.

## Keywords

Gettysburg College, Hidden in Plain Sight, Christ Chapel, Christian missionaries, missionaries in India

## Disciplines

Public History | United States History

## Campus Location

Christ Chapel

Gettysburg College

Hidden in Plain Sight

"Under God": The Story of Gettysburg in India

History 300

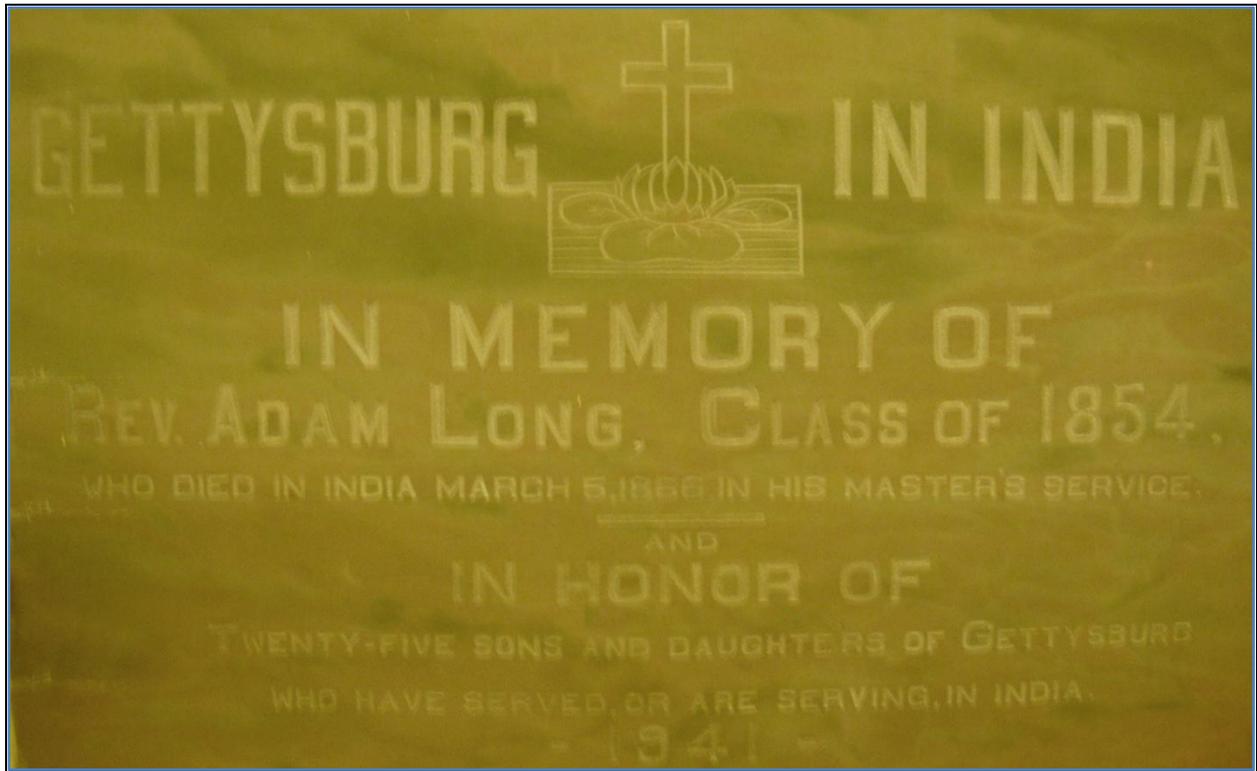
Historical Methods

Dr. Michael Birkner

By

Daniel J. Willever

Spring 2010



GETTYSBURG † IN INDIA

IN MEMORY OF

REV. ADAM LONG, CLASS OF 1854

WHO DIED IN INDIA MARCH 5 1866, IN HIS MASTER'S SERVICE

AND

IN HONOR OF

TWENTY-FIVE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GETTYSBURG

WHO HAVE SERVED, OR ARE SERVING, IN INDIA

1941

**Gettysburg's Lutheran affiliation, as well as its intention to perpetuate that church relatedness, makes evident the fact that it proceeds 'under God'.<sup>1</sup>**

At Gettysburg College, any student who strolls through Pennsylvania Hall, Musselman Library, and the College Union Building cannot help but notice the colorful retro-style posters highlighting the accomplished alumni of this historical institution. Some students dream and joke of being included among these men and women, a television star, a children's author, and a Civil Rights activist among them. Sadly, for every pop culture icon and Nobel Prize winner, there are those who go unnoticed. Pictures of founders and theologians such as Samuel Simon Schmucker and Henry Baugher remain, but there could not be more of a general disinterest in their accomplishments or their lives. Since the mid-twentieth century, the Lutheran enrollment at Gettysburg has steadily withered, and people identified with denominations, sects, and religions (or none at all) have arrived to take their place. The founders are no longer honored as good Christian men, just some guys who wanted to build a liberal arts college in "the middle of nowhere," Pennsylvania, and very few people know even that much. Is there one place on campus where the Lutheran heritage endures? That is the question on my mind as I walk up the steps, passed the pillars, and through the doors of Christ Chapel.

Nestled in the Narthex of the Chapel, behind a coat rack, the beautiful plaque of marble calls to me: "Gettysburg in India." The plaque is detailed, with only a few minor scratches and drops of paint as imperfections. Curiously, it commemorates a man who died in 1866, but the plaque itself was not dedicated until 1941. My own knowledge tells me

---

<sup>1</sup>. Covenant: The Maryland Synod, Lutheran Church in America, and Gettysburg College, Part I, Section A (October 1971), page 1; emphasis mine. Located in College Archives, Vertical Files, "College-Church Relationship."

that Christ Chapel was not built until the early 1950's. A million questions arise: who was Adam Long? What did he do? How did he die? How could such a large part of College history—missionary work—have been forgotten? From that moment, I knew that this plaque must have an important narrative, and my research began.

Gettysburg in India is a large story, but it is only a small part of the College-Church relationship as a whole. When the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg was established by Samuel Simon Schmucker in 1826, "it was soon discovered that another institution was necessary, in which young men, *destined for the ministry*, might receive academic training." In June, 1827 a classical school was established on the Seminary campus, and a scientific department was soon connected with it. In time, it was decided to expand the Gettysburg Gymnasium into "a more Collegiate form," and in April, 1832 the Pennsylvania State Legislature issued a charter for a college at Gettysburg. Three months later, on July 4, that institution was organized under the title of Pennsylvania College, the first Lutheran affiliated college in Pennsylvania.<sup>2</sup> In 1831, Samuel Simon Schmucker (referred to by Glatfelter as "the most influential Lutheran in the United States"), proclaimed that the College would be "prevailingly under Lutheran influence and control."<sup>3</sup>

The Pennsylvania College Book enumerates on how truly remarkable the birth of the College was:

Among the institutions of our country, there are instances in which the work of a College has led to the organization of a theological school. But the cases are very few, if this does not stand absolutely alone, in which the order has been reversed, and a Theological Seminary has led to the founding of a

---

<sup>2</sup> John Gottlieb Morris, *Fifty years in the Lutheran Ministry*, (Baltimore: James Young, 1878) 498. Italics mine. The combined classics and scientific departments at the Seminary were referred to as "Gettysburg Gymnasium" prior to the College being chartered.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Glatfelter, *A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985*, Volume 1 (Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania: C & J Enterprises, 1987), 173-176. While this is true, Glatfelter makes sure to note that the College charter of 1832 "made no reference whatsoever to the Lutheran church."

College. However distinctly separate they became in their corporate capacity, the two institutions sprang up on the same spot, the instruction and exercises of the Seminary and the Gymnasium being conducted in the same building, till the former moved into its new edifice in the fall of 1832. But both the Preparing School and the College arose out of the operations of the Seminary, and the leading enterprise and purposes of those who were working in it or with it.<sup>4</sup>

Pennsylvania College, now Gettysburg College, was born and raised with very strong Lutheran ties. Hundreds, possibly thousands of men have processed through Pennsylvania Hall and walked straight up the hill to the Theological Seminary to pursue ministry.<sup>5</sup> Early in its existence, the College and the Seminary shared many of their resources, and there were men who served on the trustee boards and faculty of both institutions. In the 1850's the College sent catalogues to pastors in seven Synods in the northeast, hoping to attract bright, young Lutheran men.<sup>6</sup>

Many of these men went on to the Seminary, and eventually traveled to the East Coast of India as Missionaries.<sup>7</sup> One of them was Adam Long, born in Reidsburg, Clarion County, Pennsylvania on December 14<sup>th</sup> 1825. As a boy, he attended the Lutheran Academy in Zelienople, Pennsylvania, before enrolling at Pennsylvania (Gettysburg) College in 1850, which at the time had a student body of 81. Not much is known about his time at the college, except that he was a member of the Philomathæan Literary Society and he took theological courses to prepare himself for the seminary.<sup>8</sup> At his commencement

---

<sup>4</sup> E. S. Breidenbaugh, *The Pennsylvania College Book: 1832-1882* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1882), pp. 2-3.

<sup>5</sup> Glatfelter, *A Salutory Influence*, 168.

<sup>6</sup> Glatfelter, *A Salutory Influence*, 174.

<sup>7</sup> Glatfelter, *A Salutory Influence*, 168. Alumni reports filed in the 1870 showed that, of the 455 graduates between 1834 and 1870, "390 were still alive. Of the larger number, 231 (about one-half) had entered the ministry." Alumni were scattered across 26 states, the District of Columbia, and 3 countries including India

<sup>8</sup> Breidenbaugh, 245. This source only provides Clarion County as the location of his birth, but "Commencement Program, Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, PA. Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1854" states that

ceremony in 1854, he was charged with delivering the Latin Salutatory, inferring that he studied that language and spoke it well.<sup>9</sup> Immediately after graduation he enrolled at the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary where he trained for two years, one of eleven in his class. In 1856, he was licensed by the West Pennsylvania Synod. On November 12, 1857 he married Mary Deitterich of Ohio, and shortly thereafter, he departed by ship from Boston with his seminary classmates W.E. Synder and Rev. Erias Unangst, and their wives.<sup>10</sup> They most likely would have sailed to Europe (usually England or Italy) and then traveled on to India. Upon their arrival in Guntur, India, which was the original Lutheran mission in that area, their first task would have been to learn the native language (Telugu) and study the culture of the Indians. Many of the natives were Hindus but there were also a large number of Muslims, and so the idea of monotheism was not as foreign as one might assume.<sup>11</sup> The Lutheran mission to India, which was begun in 1842 by Rev. John Christian Frederick Heyer, was still very new and had little support in terms of money or manpower at this time.<sup>12</sup>

---

Long was from Reidsville, Pennsylvania. Gettysburg College Archives, Vertical Files, Gettysburg College Commencement Broadside 1835 - 1852.

<sup>9</sup> "Commencement Program, Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, PA. Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1854," located in the Gettysburg College Archives, Vertical Files, Gettysburg Commencement Broadside 1835 - 1852.

<sup>10</sup> Abdel Ross Wentz, *Gettysburg Theological Seminary, Volume II, Alumni Record* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Evangelical Press, 1964) 44. This source lists the departure date as November 21. In contrast, *The Pennsylvania College Book: 1832-1882*, edited by E.S. Breidenbaugh, records their departure date as December 23, 1857. It also states that Long was licensed by the Synod in 1857, not 1856. The correct dates cannot be determined, but it is a possibility that Nov. 21 was the date that they departed Gettysburg, and December 23 was when they left Boston by ship.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Harold Aberly Dunkelberger, conducted in person, Gettysburg, PA, February 23, 2010. Dunkelberger is the son of missionary Roy Dunkelberger, and the grandson of John Aberly, both of whom attended Gettysburg Theological Seminary.

<sup>12</sup> Margaret R. Seebach, *A Century in India: 1842-1942* (Philadelphia: Women's Missionary Society, The United Lutheran Church In America, 1942), 2. "The lack of proper support from America caused Heyer much discontent. More than once he asked to be recalled unless the Church at home would contribute more adequately. 'It seems wrong and unjust,' he wrote, 'that the American Lutheran Mission should depend so much for support on a member of another ecclesiastical body.'" On a side note, Seebach was one of the first female graduates of Gettysburg College.

Missionary life was not kind to Long, and little is known about what he accomplished while stationed in India. One source states that they (Long, Synder, and Unangst) “entered upon their mission work on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1858.”<sup>13</sup> Upon his arrival in Guntur, on the southeastern coast of India, Long travelled to Rajahmundry, which was the oldest Lutheran mission in the Telugu country (the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh). A later missionary, Reverend George Henry Trabert, described that place in the following terms:

“Rajahmundry has a population of about twenty-five thousand, and was formerly the headquarters of a district of the same name. It is a very old city, beautifully located on high ground, and has successively been under Hindu, Mohammedan, French and British rule. The first Christian missionary that labored there was Rev. L. M. Valett, who was sent out in 1843 by the North German (Lutheran) Missionary Society.”<sup>14</sup>

Rajahmundry was also “the ancient seat of an Indian prince (rajah) and the center of Telugu culture and literature.”<sup>15</sup> To get to Rajahmundry from Guntur, Long may have travelled by palankeen (carriage), by train, or via boat, as Rajahmundry was located a few miles up the Godavari River.<sup>16</sup> Records show that he had four children, presumably all born in India between the years 1858 and 1866.<sup>17</sup> One event that may have shaped his time

---

<sup>13</sup> Morris, 479.

<sup>14</sup> George Henry Trabert, *Mission Among the Telegus* (Philadelphia: The Jas. B. Rodgers Printing Co., 1890), pp. 4-6.

<sup>15</sup> Seebach, 4. The author quotes the information on Rajahmundry but provides no source.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with Harold Aberly Dunkelberger, conducted in person, Gettysburg, PA. February 23, 2010. Dunkelberger claimed that the most common form of transportation for missionaries was by train, but his experience was 45 years removed from Long's.

“Map of Guntur and Rajahmundry fields” courtesy of Margaret R. Seebach, *A Century in India: 1842-1942* (Philadelphia: Women's Missionary Society, The United Lutheran Church In America, n.d.).

“Letter from Reverend C.F. Heyer to his son Theophilus,” found in C. F. Heyer, *Father Heyer's Own Story: Travel-Letters of the Rev. C.F. Heyer, Founder of the Guntur Mission* (N.P.: N.P., 1940), pg. 28. Heyer writes: “Travelling in India, however, is so very unlike to what we have been accustomed to, that our preparations must be differently made. The palankeen is generally made use of for travelling in India as the most convenient and safest conveyance. It is built of light but strong materials about six or seven feet long and three feet high. The inside is lined and trimmed somewhat in carriage style. It has a mattress and pillow and is arranged with straps that the traveller (sic) may sit upright or recline, as may best suit his convenience.”

<sup>17</sup> Wentz, 44.

there was the death of W.E. Snyder. James Gottlieb Morris writes: “In 1859 the mission in India sustained a sore bereavement in the death of Rev. [Snyder].”<sup>18</sup> Following this event, Rev. Long “was placed in charge of” a recently opened station 25 miles away at Samulcotta and “remained there until 1865, when he was obliged to go to Europe to recover his health.” Beyond this point, it becomes harder to track Adam Long, and it cannot be known if he did indeed travel to Europe for a short time, or whether he remained in India.<sup>19</sup> All sources agree that on March 5, 1866, he died of small-pox in Rajahmundry.<sup>20</sup> Mary Deitterich Long returned to America on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1867 after having lost her husband and two sons to illness. Long and his sons were buried in the local cemetery at Rajahmundry.<sup>21</sup>

Thus ends the story of Adam Long, who gave his life to the work of the Lutheran Church. According to Harold Dunkelberger, a Gettysburg College alumnus who was born in India to missionary parents, Long was remembered as a hero by many of the Lutheran Missionaries well after his death.<sup>22</sup> However, he was only one of many Gettysburgians to

---

<sup>18</sup> Morris, 479. On March 12, 1862, another individual, Rev. A.F. Heise, “completely broken down by work and sickness, withdrew from the mission and returned to Germany.” This is a reminder of how grueling the missionary lifestyle was for these men.

<sup>19</sup> Edwin Munsell Bliss, *The Encyclopædia of Missions: Descriptive, Historical, Biographical, Statistical; With a Full Assortment of Maps, a Complete Bibliography, and Lists of Bible Versions* (New York: Funk & Wagnall, 1891), Page 364; It does not seem likely that Long would have gone to Europe for medical reasons in 1865 only to return to India and die in less than a year. However, Morris writes about a different missionary, Rev. C.W. Grüning, who in September, 1865, “was obliged on account of impaired health to leave the mission and return to Germany.” Confusion is a possibility—no primary source documents are cited by either author.

<sup>20</sup> Breidenbaugh, 245. I searched for an obituary for Adam Long in two Adams County newspapers, *The Sentinel* and *The Gettysburg Compiler*, but was unable to locate one.

<sup>21</sup> Morris, 479.

George Henry Trabert, *Mission Among the Telegus* (Philadelphia: The Jas. B. Rodgers Printing Co., 1890), pg. 29. This source references Long’s death indirectly through the story of Reverend F. J. Becker and his short time in India: “A little over three months after reaching Rajahmundry he was suddenly called away by death. On May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1870, he attended service in the morning, enjoying ordinary good health, except that he suffered somewhat from prickly heat. It being very warm, he took a bath, which caused the eruption to subside, at the same time checking the vital forces, so that he expired the same evening. *He was buried in our cemetery at Rajahmundry, near Missionary Long and his two children.*” (Emphasis mine).

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Harold Aberly Dunkelberger, conducted in person February 23, 2010.

travel across the globe intent on spreading the word of God. His classmate, Erias Unangst has a much larger story.

Erias was born in Easton (Lehigh Valley), Pennsylvania to Jacob and Ellanora Unangst on August 8, 1824. He entered the Preparatory Department at Pennsylvania College in 1847, until, with Long, he enrolled at the College in 1850 and completed his theological course studies in four years. He was also a member of the Philomathæan Literary Society.<sup>23</sup> At their commencement ceremony in September, Unangst spoke on *Socrates and Paul in Prospect of Death*.<sup>24</sup> He and Long were again classmates at the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, but Unangst was still involved at the College as a tutor.<sup>25</sup> Ordained and married in 1857, he departed for India with Long. He remained there until 1871, when he returned to the United States briefly. He was awarded an honorary doctorate (D.D.) at Wittenberg College in 1878, and remained in India until 1895.<sup>26</sup>

Sources clearly indicate that Unangst's thirty five years in India were well spent. He served alongside Adam Long for several years, but when Long left for Europe or passed away, Unangst was left in charge of all four stations in the Telugu region: Guntur, Palnad, Rajahmundry, and Samulcotta.

It being utterly impossible for him to give proper attention to all, a proposition was made to transfer Rajahmundry station to the Church Missionary Society, but before the transfer was completed an arrangement was made with the Pennsylvania Synod, to take-charge of this and the Samulcotta stations. They were accordingly transferred to that body. . . . This arrangement left the Guntur and Palnad stations under the care of the

---

<sup>23</sup> Breidenbaugh, 246.

<sup>24</sup> "Commencement Program, Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, PA. Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1854." Gettysburg College Archives, Vertical Files, Gettysburg Commencement BroadSides 1835 - 1852.

<sup>25</sup> Morris, 498-502. The Preparatory Department predated the founding of the College by several years, and in many ways spurred its growth. At this time, prep classes were held in Linnaean Hall and were strictly instructed by tutors.

<sup>26</sup> Wentz, 45. Unangst married Phoebe Ann Milliken on Sept. 24 1857. They eventually had eight children, Eleanora, Elizabeth, Joseph, Emily, Phoebe, William, Luther, and David M.

General Synod, embracing a territory about one hundred miles in length by sixty miles in width, with a population of about 1,000,000 souls. Rev. E. Unangst remained the only missionary on this field until 1871, when he was obliged to bring his family to America.<sup>27</sup>

As the above quote explains, Unangst had the task of being the only representative of the General Synod in India for the length of six years.<sup>28</sup> This expresses an immeasurable amount of devotion on his part, and although he did return to the United States, he did not remain there very long. In 1872, he returned to India without his family, accompanied by J.H. Harpster.<sup>29</sup> En route, they visited many countries of Europe as well as Egypt and the Holy Land.<sup>30</sup> Upon his return to India, Unangst discovered that the missionary work there had changed very much in such a short period of time. In 1877, the first two native workers were ordained as ministers. Additionally, the mission structure had been reorganized into two different departments, evangelistic and educational. This furthered the interests of

---

<sup>27</sup>. Bliss, 364.

<sup>28</sup>. *General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. Convention of the General Synod, Volumes 41-42* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1903), 105. In this volume, Unangst's obituary provides insight into how important he was to the Guntur Mission: "Dr. Unangst deserves to be held in grateful remembrance by the whole Church because of his long-continued and efficient labors at Guntur. For more than six years preceding 1872 he was our sole representative in the field, and under the most trying circumstances he so bore the burdens and met the duties of his position as to warrant the assertion that but for his patience, persistence, and self-denying fidelity our Guntur Mission would probably not be in existence to-day." He was, in short, "the leader and adviser of the faithful men and women" of the General Synod mission.

<sup>29</sup>. Bliss, 364.

<sup>30</sup>. *Portrait and Biographical Record of Stark County, Ohio, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, Together with Biographies and Portraits of all the President's the United States* (Chicago: Chapman Bros, 1892), 451; J.H. Harpster also had ties with Gettysburg and a very interesting life story, as told in the above source: "During the opening years of the Civil War, [Harpster] enlisted in 1861, at the age of seventeen years, becoming a member of Company G, One Hundred and Forty-eight Pennsylvania Infantry, (Gov. Beaver's Regiment), and was appointed Captain of his company. He was present at the surrender of Appomattox and served throughout the entire war. He was wounded at the battle of Chancellorsville by a gunshot, again at the battle of Gettysburg by a shell, and at the battle of the Wilderness by a gunshot in the head. He participated in every great engagement from Fredericksburgh (sic) to Appomattox, and at the close of hostilities resumed his studies, graduating [the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary] in 1872. . . . He remained in India for five years and accomplished much good there, baptizing over one thousand persons and establishing many churches."

the mission so much that by 1889, the Evangelistic Department was progressing on work in 322 villages, having constructed prayer houses in 98 of them. "The number of baptized members" was 10,256 with a total of 5,316 adults. There were at this time five Sunday-schools with around 615 pupils. The work in this department was carried out by one head missionary, assisted by "three native pastors and 126 evangelists, catechists, and village preachers." The Education Department had opened a college in Guntur, "with an enrollment of 360 students and 11 teachers; the mission boarding-school, with 132 pupils; and the elementary schools, with 2,177 and 145 teachers."<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the most important work that Erias Unangst completed during his time in India was the translation of the New Testament that was thereafter used in the mission field. He also composed various tracts and hymns, which he then translated into Telugu.<sup>32</sup> This type of communication with the natives would certainly have been invaluable to the missionaries, allowing them to convert even greater numbers of Indians.

In 1895, Unangst left India for the last time after 35 years of service there. Behind him, he left a legacy that may be considered unrivaled. One fellow missionary, Dr. Uhl, wrote after Unangst's death that "it was only when Dr. Unangst retired from the field that it was realized how the whole mission had leaned like a vine upon him; and that now his death fittingly recalls, emphasizes, and records the

---

<sup>31</sup> Bliss, 364.

<sup>32</sup> Breidenbaugh, 246.

great indebtedness of our India Mission to him.”<sup>33</sup> Unangst died on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 1903 at the home of his son-in-law in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, at 79 years of age.<sup>34</sup>

Erias Unangst leaves behind a story that many would imagine as unrivaled, but, as we know from the plaque in Christ Chapel, there were many more who followed in his footsteps and deserve equal attention. One of the men who served beside him in his later years and continued the Gettysburg legacy in India was Reverend John Aberly, who graduated Pennsylvania College in 1888, and started classes at the Lutheran Theological Seminary but never earned his degree.<sup>35</sup> He was deployed to the Guntur mission in 1889, where his legacy includes the creation of an English to Telugu dictionary for common religious and biblical terms. During his time in India, Aberly worked with about twenty other missionaries from the United States (mostly New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland) and Canada. In Aberly’s experience, it seems that missionary life was relatively unchanged from the time of Long and Unangst. Very few of the natives spoke English and so all communication needed to be done in Telugu. There was relatively little oversight from the Synod in the United States, and primary communication was through

---

<sup>33</sup> *General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. Convention of the General Synod, Volumes 41-42* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1903), 105.

<sup>34</sup> “Rev. Erias Unangat,” *Tyrone Herald*, Tyrone, Pa., October 15, 1903; accessed via internet, February 20, 2010, <http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/blair/obits/u1/unangst-erias.txt>.

“Rev. Erias Unangat [sic], D.D., a retired Lutheran missionary, was found dead Monday evening sitting in an easy chair at the home of his son-in-law, W. I. Woodcock, Esq., at Hollidaysburg. He was born in Easton, August 9, 1824, and was graduated from the Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg. About 1855 he was united in marriage with Miss Pheobe A. Milliken, of Lewistown. Rev. Dr. Unangst spent thirty-six years as a missionary at Guntar (sic), India. The death of his wife occurred at that place in 1896 and the year following he returned to this country and has since made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Woodcock, who is the sole survivor.”

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Harold Aberly Dunkelberger, conducted in person, Gettysburg, PA, February 23, 2010. Dunkelberger is Aberly’s grandson and lived with him in childhood. Although he never completed Seminary, Aberly was granted an honorary degree by that same institution in recognition of his service in India.

mail or by telegraph. By the turn of the century, more women missionaries came to work, specifically in teaching and medicine.<sup>36</sup>

Throughout his time there, Aberly was fascinated by the native culture, and he took special notice in the way Indians absorbed the Christian faith. For example, Indians had a habit of relating Khali, the demon god, to wicked women in the Bible; Shiva, the God of Life and Death, was associated with Jesus Christ. It was in these ways that Christian ideas were slowly filtered into the culture. In his time there, Aberly very rarely witnessed any violent hostility to the missionaries or their work, although there was an anti-Christian Hindu group in existence.<sup>37</sup> That is not to say that the missionaries were never targets of violence. In 1884, before Aberly but during Unangst's time there, a group of anti-Christian Hindus attacked the Mission. The events were recounted by Reverend N. Paulus, a native pastor:

“On the Sunday after Christmas. . . when we were making preparations for our morning service, the enemies of Christianity, mischievous devotees of Hinduism, amounting to nearly two hundred in number, came, all of a sudden, and tried to fall on me and make me their devotee. I frightened them off, somehow or other, and escaped from their hands by the grace of God. The conspirators call themselves ‘Ramadandu,’ meaning the army of Rama. Their aim is to make those whom they meet utter the word ‘Gorinda,’ which is one of the names of Krishna, their god. The conspirators made every effort to seize me, and to force me to join their army, if not, to injure me. They, with much passion, uprooted the young plants and small trees, and destroyed the Palmyra verandah of our church. As some friends of ours (Hindus) interfered, they all went away, unwillingly. . . . In the afternoon they made another attempt to come to our house, but were forced by our friends to go away. I wrote to the police for help, and three constables were sent; nevertheless, in the evening they made another attempt to come down on us all, but the constables and some Hindu friends made every effort to send them away, and they were forced to withdraw. They are troubling our Christians everywhere, and doing all sorts of mischief.”<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> According to Dunkelberger, this was part of a larger trend that continued through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As India changed from a British state to an independent nation, the missionaries switched from an evangelical role to that of medical care. Most of the hospitals and medical facilities in the Andhra Pradesh region were founded by the Lutheran missions.

<sup>37</sup> Dunkelberger interview, February 23, 2010.

<sup>38</sup> Trabert, pp. 96-97.

In 1909, Aberly's daughter and son-in-law, Roy Dunkelberger joined him in India, where his grandson, Harold, was born in 1915. Following World War I, as the missions had seen a drop off in support, Aberly returned to the United States with Harold. Three years after his return, he moved to Maywood, Illinois to serve as a professor there. From 1928 to 1940 he served as President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg. As mentioned earlier, his daughter and son-in-law remained in India, from 1909 until 1954. Roy Dunkelberger was a graduate of Dickinson College and of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary. His wife Amy received her education at Irving College. She and Roy were married in India in 1909. Their time in India paralleled a great shift in power; as the British Empire faded a new India was born. There was very little disruption when Gandhi came to power, but with new ideas—"India for Indians"—came changes in the missionary field. More so than before, missionaries were only admitted to the country if they had experience in medical fields, the sciences, or education.<sup>39</sup> After more than 100 years of work, the evangelical mission of the Lutheran Church was drawing to a close in India.

Gettysburgians had been in India, on the front lines for over 80 of those 100 years before a proper commemoration was established in the form of the "Gettysburg in India" plaque. The plaque came about in 1941 as a gift from the Gettysburg in India alumni association, and it was intended to go into the new chapel being planned at the time. The plaque was made out of authentic Indian Palnad marble.<sup>40</sup> Because construction plans had

---

<sup>39</sup> Dunkelberger Interview, February 23, 2010.

<sup>40</sup> R. Lewis Hoffacker, "India Alumni Give Plaque for New College Chapel," *The Gettysburgian*, Nov 26, 1941, page 4. Located in Digital Collections, College Archives.

Kathy Schnoltz, "Tour Reveals Progress in Chapel Construction," *The Gettysburgian*, March 6, 1953, page 1. Located in Digital Collections, College Archives. This source reveals the plaque was placed in Christ Chapel as early as March, 1953.

to be delayed due to World War II, the plaque was placed in Brua Chapel in 1941.<sup>41</sup> When Christ Chapel was completed in 1953, the plaque was moved to its current location in the Narthex.<sup>42</sup>

Although Long's name was chosen to grace the Gettysburg in India plaque (he being the only one to die in the service), the work of great men such as Erias Unangst, John Aberly, J.H. Harpster, and the dozens of others who served there cannot be forgotten.<sup>43</sup> Whether they served for fifty years for five, a piece of marble on the wall of Christ Chapel is currently the only thing that stands between the Indian missionaries and obscurity. No matter what creed, religion, sect, or belief we may adhere to, no matter how diverse Gettysburg College may be, we have a common bond with these great men. They were crusaders not just for Christianity and Lutheranism, but also for Gettysburg.

Thy children have gone forth,  
Great Mother, yearly, from about thy feet;  
They speed them east and west, and south and north,  
    To labor as is meet;  
    Perhaps they have outgrown  
The garments that their souls wore, long ago,  
Yet thou hast kept the fragments for thine own,  
    And treasured them, we know,  
    Here, then, is joy for thee,  
To see them grouped together at the last,  
And glorify the work with memory,  
    From out the happy past!<sup>44</sup>

---

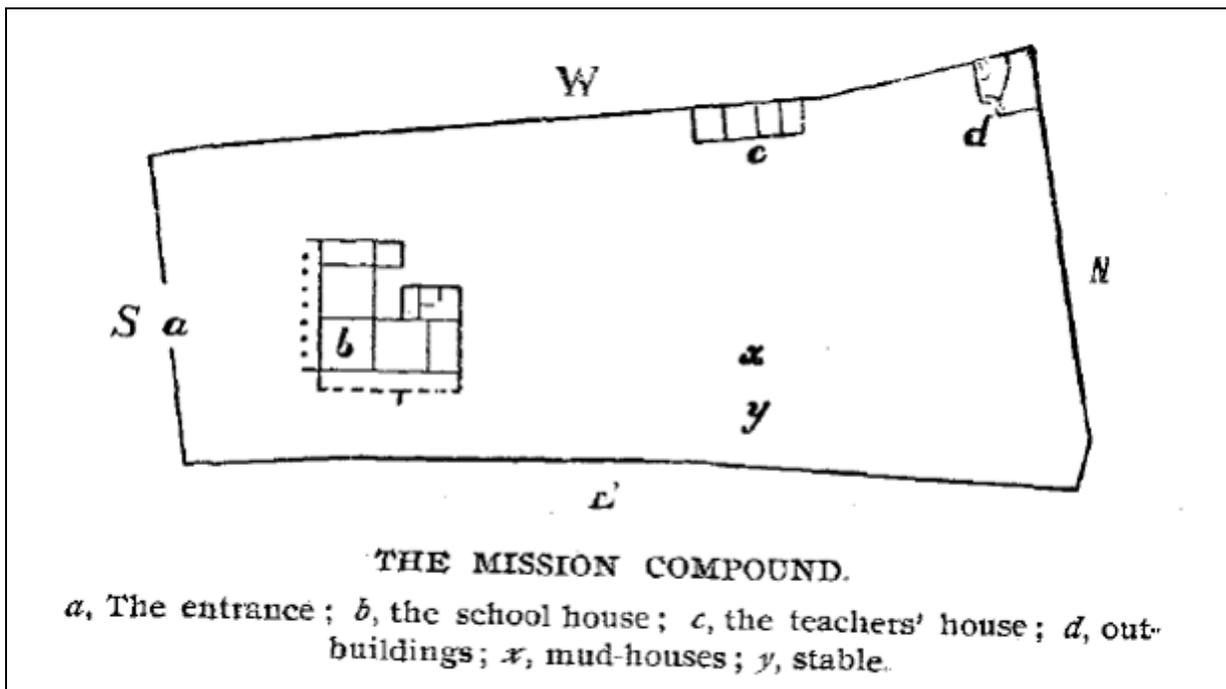
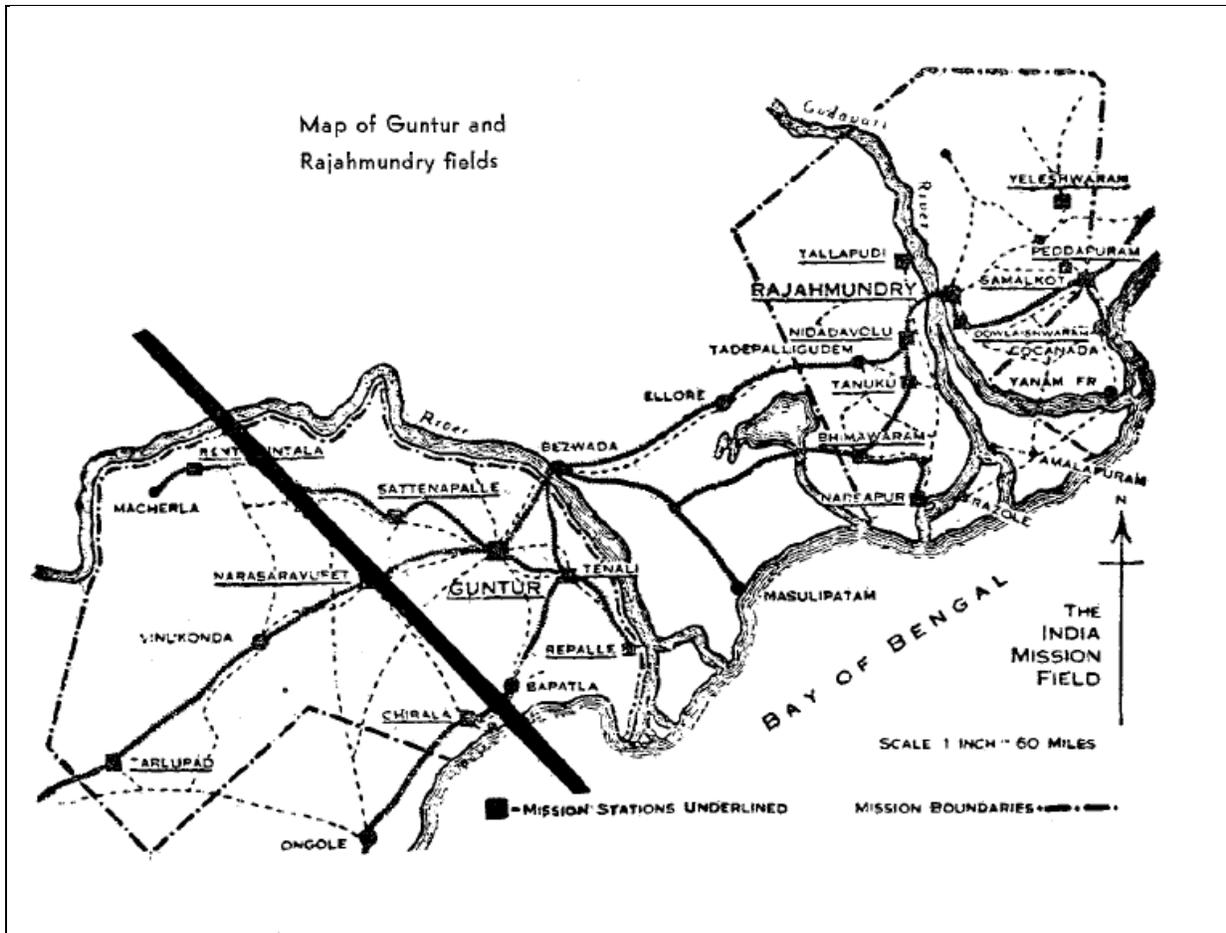
<sup>41</sup> Kenneth L. Smoke, ed., "Christ Chapel," brochure, Gettysburg College. Located in Special Collections, Gettysburgiana, Barbara Holley Scrapbook, Class of 1954, 3 of 3.

Joseph Donnella, via email correspondence, Gettysburg, PA, February 19, 2010. When I questioned Pastor Donnella, I was disappointed to find out that this was the only information that he could give me.

<sup>42</sup> A similar plaque is located at the Gettysburg Theological Seminary's Church of the Abiding Presence.

<sup>43</sup> I attempted to interview another Gettysburg College alumnus and Indian Missionary, Samuel Schmitthener, class of '48, but he was unavailable on three separate occasions. I have omitted his story from this paper in part because he served after the dedication of the plaque, and so his story is of no direct pertinence. His story is just as important and valuable as that of the others in terms of Gettysburg's continuing relationship with India. Finally, there are other alumni who served in Gettysburg, but because of limited time and a limited number of sources on those individuals, I chose to focus on those Gettysburgians who had the best narratives.

<sup>44</sup> M.R.S. "Dedication," *Gettysburg in Verse*, edited and compiled by Joseph Arnold and George T. Heintz (Gettysburg, PA: Arnold and Heintz, 1908), page 7.



“Map of Guntur and Rajahmundry fields” courtesy of Margaret R. Seebach, *A Century in India: 1842-1942* (Philadelphia: Women’s Missionary Society, The United Lutheran Church In America, ND).

“The Mission Compound” courtesy of George Henry Trabert, *Mission Among the Telegus* (Philadelphia: The Jas. B. Rodgers Printing Co., 1890), pg. 84. This is a rough map of the Rajahmundry Mission Compound.

---

\*A Biographical Note on Harold Aberly Dunkelberger: Although he never served as a missionary in India, Harold Dunkelberger provides us with a near direct link back to the days of Long and Unangst, his grandfather having served beside the latter. Born in India in 1915 to Roy Dunkelberger and Amy Aberly, Harold first came to the United States with his grandparents in 1923. Because he parents remained in India, he lived with his grandparents for some time. His grandfather, John Aberly, eventually became President of the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Harold entered Gettysburg College in 1930. After graduating in 1934, he too entered the Seminary, but he chose not pursue missionary work. After 3 years in the Army Reserves during World War II, Dunkelberger served as a local chaplain at several parishes. Finally, he earned his Doctoral degree in theology from Columbia University and served as Assistant for Protestants at that institution. He became a Professor at Gettysburg College in 1950. Over the course of his tenure here, Dunkelberger served in many capacities, but especially as a professor in the Bible Department (later the Bible Literature and Religion Department, and finally the Department of Religion). He ended his service there in 1983, but has since resided just off the campus, so as to better satisfy the curiosity of young students such as myself. He has my thanks and appreciation for providing so much information for this paper.

## Works Cited

- Bliss, Edwin Munsell. *The Encyclopædia of Missions: Descriptive, Historical, Biographical, Statistical; With a Full Assortment of Maps, a Complete Bibliography, and Lists of Bible Versions*. New York: Funk & Wagnall, 1891.
- Breidenbaugh, E. S. *The Pennsylvania College Book: 1832-1882*. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1882.
- COVENANT: The Maryland Synod, Lutheran Church in America, and Gettysburg College, Part I, Section A (October 1971).
- “Commencement Program, Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, PA. Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1854,” located in the Gettysburg College Archives, Vertical Files, Gettysburg Commencement BroadSides 1835 – 1852.
- Donnella, Joseph. Email correspondence, Gettysburg, PA, February 19, 2010.
- Dunkelberger, Harold Aberly. Interview by author, conducted in person with handwritten notes, Gettysburg, PA, February 23, 2010.
- General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. Convention of the General Synod*, Volumes 41-42. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1903.
- Glatfelter, Charles. *A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985*, Volume 1. Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania: C & J Enterprises, 1987.
- Heyer, C.F. *Father Heyer's Own Story: Travel-Letters of the Rev. C.F. Heyer, Founder of the Guntur Mission* (N.P.: N.P., 1940).
- Hoffacker, R. Lewis. “India Alumni Give Plaque for New College Chapel,” *The Gettysburgian*. Nov 26, 1941.
- Morris, John Gottlieb. *Fifty years in the Lutheran Ministry*. Baltimore: James Young, 1878.
- M.R.S. “Dedication,” *Gettysburg in Verse*, edited and compiled by Joseph Arnold and George T. Heintz. Gettysburg, PA: Arnold and Heintz, 1908.
- Portrait and Biographical Record of Stark County, Ohio, Containing Biographical Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, Together with Biographies and Portraits of all the President's of the United States*. Chicago: Chapman Bros, 1892.
- “Rev. Erias Unangat.” *Tyrone Herald*, Tyrone, Pa., October 15, 1903. Accessed via internet, February 20, 2010: <http://files.usgwarchives.net/pa/blair/obits/u1/unangst-erias.txt>.

Schnoltz, Kathy. "Tour Reveals Progress in Chapel Construction," *The Gettysburgian*, March 6, 1953.

Seebach, Margaret R. *A Century in India:1842-1942*. Philadelphia: Women's Missionary Society, The United Lutheran Church In America, ND.

Smoke, Kenneth L. ed., "Christ Chapel," brochure, Gettysburg College.

Trabert, George Henry. *Mission Among the Telegus*. Philadelphia: The Jas. B. Rodgers Printing Co., 1890.

Wentz, Abdel Ross. *Gettysburg Theological Seminary, Volume II, Alumni Record*. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Evangelical Press, 1964.