

# PILOTS OF THE REPUBLIC

THE ROMANCE OF THE PIONEER  
PROMOTER IN THE MIDDLE WEST

*UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME*

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**THE GLORY SEEKERS:** The Romance of  
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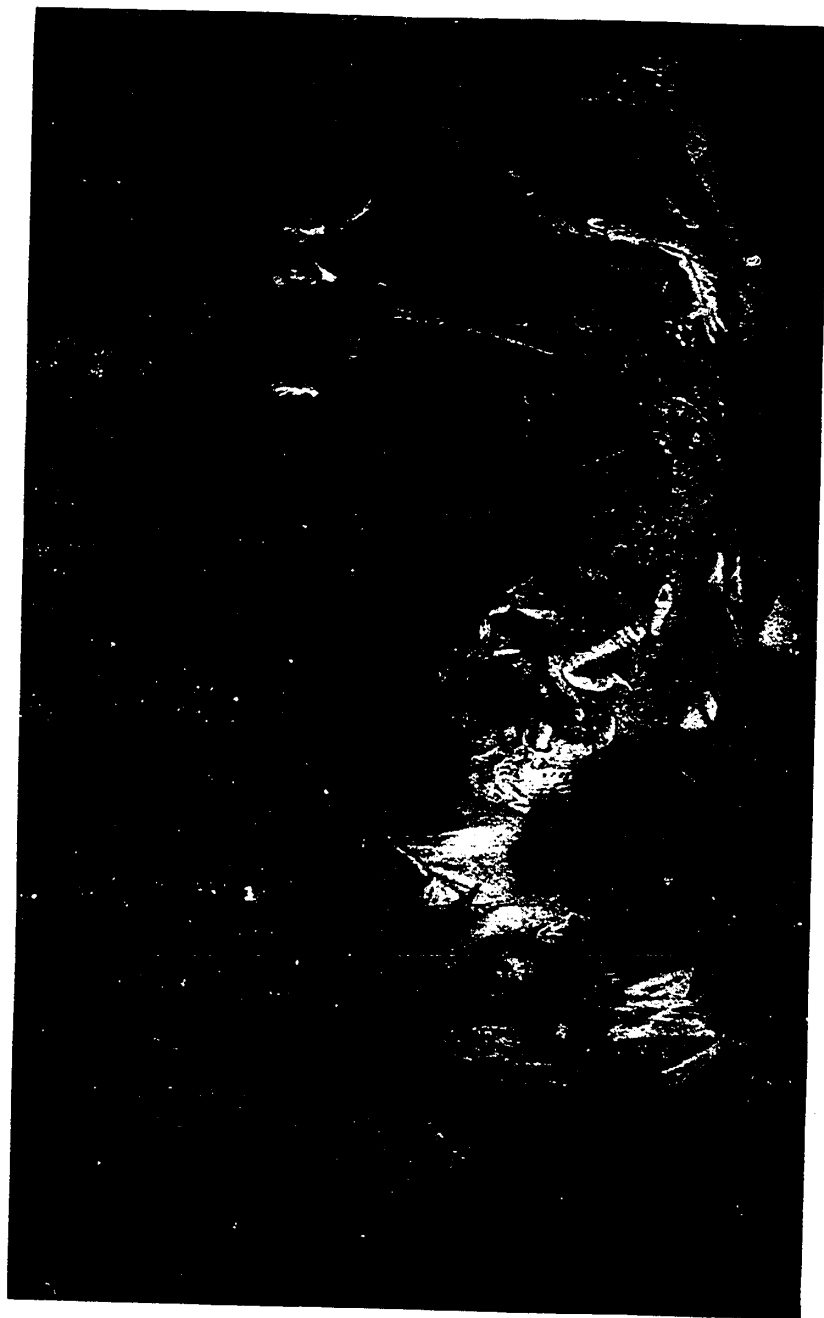
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ZEISBERGER PREACHING TO THE INDIANS  
*At Coshocton, Ohio, in 1793*

# PILOTS OF THE REPUBLIC

THE ROMANCE OF THE PIONEER PROMOTER  
IN THE MIDDLE WEST

BY

ARCHER BUTLER HULBERT

*Author of "Historic Highways of America," "Washington  
and the West," etc.*

WITH SIXTEEN PORTRAITS, AND ILLUSTRATIVE INITIALS

BY WALTER J. ENRIGHT



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To

CHARLES G. DAWES, Esq.

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED  
IN TOKEN OF THE AUTHOR'S APPRECIATION OF  
A MODERN PROMOTER  
WHOSE IDEALS AND CHIVALRY TAKE RANK  
WITH THOSE OF THE OLDEN TIME

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## PREFACE

**T**HE student of European history is not surprised to find that individuals stand out prominently in every activity that occupied man's attention; that even though there be under consideration great popular movements, such as the Crusades or the Reformation or French Revolution, attention centres around significant personalities. In the day of monarchies and despotisms, individual initiative very naturally led the way in outlining policies, selecting lieutenants, finding ways and means.

It is singular to what a great extent this is true in the history of democratic America, preëminently the land where the people have ruled and where the usurper of power has had, comparatively, no opportunity whatever. And yet it is not too much to say that the history of our nation may be suggested in a skeleton way by a mere list of names, as, for instance, the history of the fourteenth century in Europe might easily be sketched. While we are proud to proclaim that America has given all men an equal opportunity, that the most humble may rise to the proudest position known among us, it yet remains singular

that in this land where the popular voice has ruled as nowhere else almost every national movement or phase of development may be signified by the name of one man.

This comes with appealing force to one who has attempted to make a catalogue of the men who have in a personal sense *led* the Star of Empire across this continent ; men who have, in a way, pooled issues with their country in the mutual hope of personal advantage and national advance. It then becomes plain to the investigator, if he never realized it before, that, at times, the nation has waited, even halted in its progress, for a single man, or a set of men, to plan what may have seemed an entirely selfish adventure and which yet has proved to be a great national advantage. In certain instances there was a clear and fair understanding between such promoters and the reigning administration, looking toward mutual benefit. At times the movement was in direct defiance of law and order, with a resulting effect of immeasurable moment for good. Again, there may have been no thought of national welfare or extension ; personal gain and success may have been the only end ; and the resultant may have been a powerful national stimulus.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature that appears on an examination of American history along these lines (compared, for instance, with that of European powers) is that comparatively few leaders of military campaigns are to be classed among promoters who advanced national

ends in conjunction with personal ambitions. In the Old World numberless provinces came into the possession of military favorites after successful campaigns. In the many expeditions to the westward of the Alleghanies in America what commanders turned their attention later to the regions subdued? Forbes, the conqueror of Fort Duquesne, never saw the Ohio Valley again; Bouquet, the other hero, with Gladwin, of Pontiac's Rebellion, never returned to the Muskingum, nor did Gladwin come back to Detroit; Lewis, the victor at Point Pleasant, led no colony to the Ohio again; "Mad Anthony" Wayne never had other than military interest in the beautiful Maumee Valley, where, in the cyclone's path, he crushed the dream of a powerful Indian confederacy lying on the flanks of the new Republic. To a singular degree the leaders of the military vanguard across the continent had really little to do personally with the actual social movement that made the wilderness blossom as the rose. True, bounty lands were given to commanders and men in many instances, as in the case of Washington and George Rogers Clark; but it was the occupation of such tracts by the rank and file of the armies that actually made for advancement and national growth, and in perhaps only one case was the movement appreciably accelerated by the course of action pursued in a civil way by those who had been the leaders of a former military expansion. How are we to explain the interesting fact that none of the generals who led into the West the

armies that won it for America are to be found at the head, for instance, of the land companies that later attempted to open the West to the flood-tide of immigration? Did they know too well the herculean toils that such work demanded? Why should General Rufus Putnam, General Moses Cleaveland, General Benjamin Tupper, General Samuel Holden Parsons, Colonel Abraham Whipple, — famous leader of the night attack on the *Gaspee* in the pre-Revolutionary days, — Judge John Cleve Symmes, Colonel Richard Henderson, lead companies of men to settle in the region which Andrew Lewis, Arthur St. Clair, Joseph Harmar, Anthony Wayne, and William Henry Harrison had learned so well? Of course more than one reason, or one train of reasons, exist for these facts; but it is not to be denied that those best acquainted with the existing facts, those having the clearest knowledge of the trials, dangers, and risks, both as regards health and finances, were not in any degree prominent in the later social movements. Many, of course, were soldiers by profession, and itched not in the least for opportunity to increase their possessions by investment and speculation in a hazardous undertaking. But, had there been certain assurance of success, these men, or some of them, would, without doubt, have found ways and means of taking a part. Had one attempt proven successful, an impetus would have been given to other like speculations; yet one will look in vain for a really profitable outcome to any

undertaking described in these studies. The judgment of those best posted, therefore, was fully justified.

But at the same time the American nation was greatly in the debt of the men who made these poor investments; and, in one way or another, it came about that no great hardship resulted. This was no secret when these propositions were under consideration, and the men interested were influenced not a little by the fact that their adventure would result in benefit to the cause of national advance. There was a kind of patriotism then shown that is to be remembered by all who care to think of the steps taken by a weak, hopeful Republic; in some ways the same body politic is still weak, and vastly in need of a patriotism not less warm than that shown in those early days of wonderment and anxiety.

The reader of the succeeding pages may conceive that the author has not taken up each study in the same method, and judged the performances of each so-called "Pilot" by the same rule and standard. In the present instance the writer has considered that such treatment would be highly incongruous, there being almost nothing in common between the various exploits here reviewed, save only those that were incidental and adventitious. Each chapter may seem an independent study, related to that one following only through the general title that covers them all; this, in the author's opinion, is better far than to attempt to emphasize a likeness, or over-color

apparent resemblances, until each event may seem a natural sequence from a former. A babe's steps are seldom alike ; one is long and inaccurate, another short and sure, with many a misstep and tumble, and the whole a characterless procedure bespeaking only weakness and lack both of confidence and knowledge. Such, in a measure, was the progress of young America in the early days of her national existence.

A. B. H.

MARIETTA COLLEGE,  
MARIETTA, OHIO, May 31, 1906.

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## CHAPTER V

*The Grave of David Zeisberger, Moravian Missionary to the Indians. — The Great Length of his Service. — His Flight from Moravia to Saxony. — Arrival at Bethlehem, Pa. — He studies the Mohawk Language. — Visits the Land of the Iroquois and is captured as a French Spy. — Imprisoned by Governor Clinton and freed by Parliament. — The Iroquois place in his Mission-house the Archives of their Nation. — He converts Many Delawares in Western Pennsylvania. — His Work interrupted by Pontiac's Rebellion. — The Delawares invite him to the Black Forest of Ohio. — He takes with him Two Whole Villages of Christian Indians. — Their Unfortunate Location between Fort Pitt and Fort Detroit in the Revolutionary War. — They are removed by the British to Sandusky. — One Hundred of them, being permitted to return, are murdered by the Americans. — The Remnant, after Many Hardships, rest for Six Years in Canada, and return to Ohio. — Zeisberger's Death.*



## CHAPTER V

### DAVID ZEISBERGER: HERO OF "THE MEADOW OF LIGHT"



**I**N the centre of the old Black Forest of America, near New Philadelphia, Ohio, a half-forgotten Indian graveyard lies beside the dusty country road. You may count here several score of graves

by the slight mounds of earth that were raised above them a century or so ago.

At one extremity of this plot of ground an iron railing incloses another grave, marked by a

plain, marble slab, where rest the mortal remains of a hero, the latchets of whose shoes few men of his race have been worthy to unloose. And those of us who hold duty a sacred trust, and likeness unto the Nazarene the first and chiefest duty, will do well to make the acquaintance of this daring and faithful hero, whose very memory throws over the darkest period of our history the light that never was on sea or land.

The grave is that of David Zeisberger, the Moravian missionary to the Indians in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Canada for fifty active years, who was buried at this spot at his dying request, that he might await the Resurrection among his faithful Indians. His record is perhaps unequalled in point of length of service, by the record of any missionary of any church or sect in any land at any time. Among stories of promotion and daring in early America, this one is most unique and most uplifting.

On a July night in 1726 a man and his wife fled from their home in Austrian Moravia toward

the mountains on the border of Saxony for conscience' sake. They took with them nothing save their five-year-old boy, who ran stumbling between them, holding to their hands. The family of three remained in Saxony ten years. Then the parents emigrated to America, leaving the son of fifteen years in Saxony to continue his education. But within a year he took passage for America and joined his parents in Georgia, just previous to their removal to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

The lad soon became interested in the study of the Delaware Indian language among the natives of that tribe living along the Susquehanna, and at once showed great proficiency. Appreciating his talent, the fathers of the Moravian Church determined to send the young man to Europe, that in the best universities he might secure the finest training. He went as far as New York. There, just as his ship was to sail, he pleaded with tears and on his knees to be allowed to return to the woods of Pennsylvania and the school of the red men there.

The words of the wise were overcome by those of the youth, and an earnest soul, as brave as it was earnest, was saved to a life of unparalleled sacrifice and devotion.

On returning to Bethlehem Zeisberger joined a class that was studying the Mohawk tongue, the language of that most powerful tribe of the Iroquois nation which practically controlled, by tomahawk and threat, all the territory between the colonies and the Mississippi. Soon the looked-for opportunity of visiting the Iroquois land came, and the young student was told off to accompany the heroic Frederick Christian Post. This was in the dark year 1744, only a few months previous to the outbreak of the Old French War. The lad was now in his twenty-third year.

In February of the next year, after these two men entered the shadow of New York, the report was circulated in New York City that two spies had been captured among the Iroquois, who were guilty of attempting to win that nation over to the French. Such a charge at this



time was the most serious imaginable, for the contest for the friendship of the Iroquois between the French on the St. Lawrence and the English on the Atlantic was now of great importance. Upon that friendship, and the support it guaranteed, seemed to hang the destiny of the continent. The report created endless consternation, and the spies were hurried on to Governor Clinton, who demanded that the younger be brought before him instantly.

"Why do you go among the Indians?" asked Clinton, savagely. It was David Zeisberger to whom he spoke, a youth not daunted by arrogance and bluster.

"To learn their language," he replied, calmly.

"And what use will you make of their language?"

"We hope," replied the lad, "to get the liberty to preach among the Indians the Gospel of our crucified Saviour, and to declare to them what we have personally experienced of His grace in our hearts."

The Governor was taken aback. This was a

strange answer to have come from a spy's lips. Yet he drove on rough-shod, taking it for granted that the lad was lying, and that there was an ulterior motive for the dangerous journey at such a time. Remembering the fort the English had built near the present site of Rome, New York, and by which they hoped to command the Mohawk Valley and the portage path to Wood Creek and Lake Oneida, he continued :

“You observed how many cannon were in Fort William, and how many soldiers and Indians in the castle ?”

“I was not so much as in the fort, nor did I count the soldiers or Indians.”

Balked and angry, as well as nonplussed, Governor Clinton insisted :

“Our laws require that all travellers in this government of New York shall swear allegiance to the King of England and have a license from the Governor.”

Governor Clinton's name would certainly not adorn a license for these men. Whether or not

the youth saw the trap, he was as frank as his interrogator :

“I never before heard of such a law in any country or kingdom in the world,” replied Zeisberger.

“Will you not take the oath?” roared Governor Clinton, amazed.

“I will not,” said the prisoner, and he was straightway cast into a prison, where he and his companion lay for six weeks, until freed by an ordinance passed by Parliament exempting the missionaries of the Moravian Church from taking oath to the British crown.

Back into the Iroquois land journeyed the liberated prisoner, and for ten doubtful years, until 1755, Zeisberger was engaged in learning the languages of the various tribes of the Six Nations, and in active missionary service. His success was very great. Perhaps in all the history of these famous Indians there was no other man, with the exception of Sir William Johnson, whom they trusted as much as they trusted David Zeisberger. Cheated on the one hand

by the Dutch of New York, and robbed on the other by agents of the French and the English, the Iroquois became suspicious of all men ; and it is vastly more than a friendly compliment to record that in his mission-house at Onondaga they placed the entire archives of their nation, comprising the most valuable collection of treaties and letters from colonial governors ever made by an Indian nation on this continent. But war now drove the missionary away, as throughout his life war was ever to dash his fondest dreams and ever to drive him back.

At the close of the Old French War, the missionaries of the Moravian Church were out again upon the Indian trails that led to the North and West. The first to start was Zeisberger, now in the prime of life, forty-two years old. But he did not turn northward. A call that he could not ignore had come to him from the friends of his boyhood days, the Delawares, who lived now in Western Pennsylvania. With a single companion he pushed outward to them. Taking up his residence in what is now Bradford

County, Pennsylvania, he soon began to repeat the successes he had achieved in the Iroquois land, many being converted, and the whole nation learning to love and trust the earnest preacher. Then came Pontiac's terrible rebellion. Compelled to hurry back to the settlements again, Zeisberger awaited the end of that bloody storm, which swept away every fort in the West save only Fort Pitt and Fort Detroit.

At last the way was again open, and Zeisberger soon faced the wilderness. The Church fathers now came to the conclusion that it was best to extend missionary labor farther than ever before. The entire West had been saved to England, and the future was bright. It was Zeisberger to whom they looked, and not for a moment did the veteran flinch.

"Whither is the white man going?" asked an old Seneca chieftain of Zeisberger.

"To the Alleghany River," was the reply.

"Why does the paleface travel such unknown roads? This is no road for white

people, and no white man has come this trail before."

"Seneca," said the pale man, "the business I am on is different from that of other white men, and the roads I travel are different too. I am come to bring the Indian great and good words."

The work now begun in Potter County, and later extended to Lawrence County, on the Beaver River, in the province of Pennsylvania, was not less successful than Zeisberger's work in New York. "You are right," said the bravest Indian of the nation to his Indian chieftain; "I have joined the Moravians. Where they go I will go; where they lodge I will lodge; their God shall be my God." His faith was soon tested, as was that of all Zeisberger's converts.

For there was yet a farther West. Beyond the Beaver, the Delaware nation had spread throughout the Black Forest that covered what is now Ohio to the dots of prairie land on the edge of what is Indiana. Somewhere here the prairie fires had ceased their devastation. Between the Wabash and the crest of the

Alleghanies lay the heaviest forest of the old New World. Of its eastern half the Delawares were now masters, with their capital at Goschgoschunk on the Muskingum, the present Coshocton, Ohio. The fame of Zeisberger had come even here, and the grand council of the Delawares sent him a call to bring his great and good words into the Black Forest. It was an irresistible appeal. Yet the Moravian Church could not allow Zeisberger to leave the congregations in Pennsylvania, for no one could take his place. The brave man gave his answer quickly: "I will take them with me."

He kept his word, and in the Spring of 1772 the heroic man could have been seen floating down the Beaver and Ohio rivers with two whole villages of Christian Indians, seeking a new home in the Black Forest on the Upper Muskingum. Here they founded three settlements in all, Schönbrunn (Beautiful Spring), Lichtenau (Meadow of Light), Gnadenhütten (Tents of Grace), where the fabled wanderer is made by the poet to extend his search for

Evangeline. Here the Moravian missionaries, Zeisberger and his noble assistant, Heckewelder, spent five marvellously successful years, in what is known as the first settlements of whites in the present State of Ohio, excepting such French as had lived in the Lake region. The settlements were governed by a complete set of published laws, and in many respects the experiment was an ideality fully achieved. The good influence of the orderly and devout colony spread throughout the Central West at a time when every influence was bad and growing rapidly worse. For five or six years Zeisberger here saw the richest fruit of his life; here also he was doomed to see what was undoubtedly the most disgraceful and dastardly crime ever committed in the name of freedom on this continent.

The Revolutionary War now broke out, as if to despoil wantonly this aged hero's last and happiest triumph. The Moravians determined upon the impossible role of neutrality, with their settlements just beside the hard, wide





JOHN HECKEWELDER  
*Missionary to the Indians*

war-path which ran between Fort Pitt and Fort Detroit; these were the strongholds, respectively, of the Americans and the British, who were quarrelling bitterly for the allegiance of the savages in the Black Forest between them. The policy was wholly disastrous. For some time the Christian Indians, because the influence of the past few years had been so uplifting, escaped unharmed. But as the conflict grew, bitter suspicion arose among both the Americans in Western Pennsylvania and the British at Sandusky and Detroit.

The British first took action. In 1781 three hundred Indians under a British officer appeared and ordered the inhabitants of the three villages to leave the valley they loved and go to Sandusky, where a stricter watch might be kept over them. Like sheep they were driven northward, the aged Zeisberger toiling at the head of the broken-hearted company. As Winter came down from the north, there being very little food, a company of one hundred Christian Indians obtained permission to return to their

former homes to harvest corn which had been left standing in the fields. It was an unfortunate moment for the return, and the borderers on the ravaged Pennsylvania frontier looked upon the movement with suspicion. It is said that a party of British Indians, returning from a Pennsylvania raid, left here a sign of their bloody triumph. Be that as it may, a posse of Americans suddenly appeared on the scene. The entire company of Moravian sufferers was surrounded and taken captive. The question was raised, "Shall we take our prisoners to Pittsburg, or kill them?" The answer of the majority was, "Kill." The men were hurried into one building and the women into another, and the murderers went to work.

"My arm fails me," said one desperado, as he knocked his fourteenth bound victim on the head. "I think I have done pretty well. Go on in the same way." And that night, as the moon arose above the Tuscarawas, the wolves and panthers fought in the moonlight for the bodies of ninety Christian Indians most foully murdered.

Had each been his own child, the great grief

of the aged Zeisberger could not have been more heartrending. After the storm had swept over him and a shadow of the old peace came back to his stricken heart, Zeisberger called his children about him and offered a most patient prayer.

The record of Zeisberger's resolute faithfulness to the remnant of his church from this time onward is almost incredible. Like a Moses he led them always, and first to a temporary home in Macomb County, Michigan. From there they were in four years driven by the Chippewas. The forlorn pilgrims now set sail in two sloops on Lake Erie; they took refuge from a terrible storm in the mouth of the Cuyahoga River. For a time they rested at a temporary home in Independence Township, Cuyahoga County. Famine drove them in turn from here. Setting out on foot, Zeisberger led them next along the shore of Lake Erie westward to the present site of Milan, Erie County, Ohio. Here they resided until the outbreak of the savage Indian War of 1791. To escape from this, Zeisberger secured from the British government a tract of

land twelve miles long and six miles wide for the Moravian Indians along the Grand River in Canada. Here the pilgrims remained six years. But with the close of the Indian War, it was possible for them to return to their beloved home in the Tuscarawas Valley. The United States had given to the Moravian Church two tracts of land here, embracing the sites of the three towns formerly built, containing in all twelve thousand acres.

Back to the old home the patriarch Zeisberger brought his little company in the year 1798. His first duty in the gloomy Gnadenhütten was not forgotten. With a bowed head and heavy heart the old man and one assistant gathered from beneath the dense mass of bush and vine, whither the wild beasts had carried them, the bones of the ninety and more sacrificed Christians, and over their present resting-place one of the proudest of monuments now rises. For full ten years more this hero labored in the shadow of the forests where his happiest days had been spent, and only as the Winter of 1808 came

down upon the valley from the lakes did his great heart cease beating and his spirit pass through the heavenly gates.

The dust of this true hero lies, as he requested, surrounded by the remains of those "brown brethren" whom he led and loved so long, when all the world reviled them and persecuted them and said all manner of evil against them falsely. In 1908 the memory of this man will have blessed us for a full century. Shall not a more appropriate token of our esteem replace the little slab that now marks that hallowed grave? And yet no monument can be raised to the memory of David Zeisberger so valuable or so significant as the little pile of his own manuscripts collected by Edward Everett and deposited by him under lock and key, in a special case in the library of Harvard University. Here are fourteen manuscripts, including a Delaware Indian dictionary, a hymn book, a harmony of the Gospels, a volume of litanies and liturgies, and a volume of sermons to children.