

## This Week in Eden History

**March 1 | Emil W. Menzel**



*Emil W. Menzel, undated photo |  
Eden Seminary Archives*

Emil Wolfgang Menzel, missionary to India, was born March 1, 1897, in Washington, D.C. (died Jan. 12, 1995, Waverly, Ohio). He studied at Elmhurst College, Eden Theological Seminary (BD 1926), Union Theological Seminary, and Washington University (MA 1934). He was ordained at Concordia Evangelical Church, Washington D.C. in 1919 and served St. Andrews Evangelical Church, Buffalo, N.Y., 1920–1925.

Menzel and his wife, Ida, felt a call to become missionaries to India and were accepted by the Board of Foreign Missions and commissioned on Nov. 25, 1925. They arrived in India in 1926 and, after a year of language study, took up responsibilities at the Sakti Station of the American Evangelical Mission. Eventually they relocated to Bistrampur where Emil supervised the many educational institutions of the mission. The 1930s and 40s were interesting and challenging times in India. Economic, religious, and political tensions required the missionaries to create new ways to help their communities. Additionally, the evolution of mission practices away from paternalism to empowering individuals and congregations created difficulties, but eventually helped the Indian church achieve independence. The Menzels returned to the United States in 1958 and retired in Ohio.

Emil Menzel was born into a family that contributed many years of service in the Evangelical Synod and its successors. His grandfather, Emil Keuchen, was pastor in Chicago and Ohio. His father, Paul A. Menzel (Eden 1886), served congregations in Baltimore, Maryland and 23 years at

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Concordia Church, Washington, D.C. He also served on the Board of Foreign Missions of the Evangelical Synod, 1895–1919, and from 1919 until his death in 1934, was executive secretary. Emil's brother, Theophil W. Menzel, taught at Eden, 1932–1940 and Elmhurst College, 1940–1948 and served as pastor of Bethel Church, Manchester, Michigan.

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