



Yours truly  
DeBennerville K. Ludwig.

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**DE BENNEVILLE KEIM LUDWIG, PH.D.:**  
1839-1915.

BY RUDOLPH M. SCHICK, ESQ.

De Benneville Keim Ludwig, Ph.D., who was treasurer of The Presbyterian Historical Society for nearly thirty-three years, died on October 2, 1915, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

Dr. Ludwig's ancestors, both paternal and maternal, were among the oldest families in Pennsylvania. His grandfather, Matthias Ludwig, was born August 7, 1773, and became a hardware merchant in Reading, Pa. His father, George Ege Ludwig, born February 17, 1808, was for a time an editor of a newspaper in Harrisburg. In 1840 he was admitted to the bar and practiced law in Reading, and for a number of years held the responsible position of notary public to all the banks in that city. In 1852 he moved to Philadelphia and entered the mercantile firm of Ludwig, Kneedler & Co., of which his brother was the senior partner. In 1862 he retired from business and afterwards devoted his leisure to literary studies, and wrote a number of valuable essays on theological and eschatological subjects. He died in 1890.

On his mother's side he was descended from the De Benneville and Keim families. The former is traced to the district of Rouen in France in 1495. In 1741 a branch of the family

migrated to America by way of England, and in the latter part of that century became connected by marriage with the Keim family in Reading; from whom was descended Matilda High Keim, Dr. Ludwig's mother, born February 26, 1815. She was married to George E. Ludwig on May 1, 1838, and Dr. Ludwig was born on July 16, 1839. His mother died in November of the same year.

Dr. Ludwig was reared under the guardianship of his father and two maiden aunts. He resided in Reading until of the age of sixteen, and then removed to Philadelphia. He was always of a studious habit. He was prepared for college at the then well known Union Academy, of which Thomas James was Headmaster, and entered as a student at the University of Pennsylvania in 1860. He was graduated in 1864, with high honor, and three years later received the degree of Master of Arts.

He adopted teaching as his life work, for which he was well fitted by his training, tastes and character. For two years he taught in Dr. Henry D. Gregory's Classical School in Philadelphia.

In 1886 he became teacher of the classics in Rittenhouse Academy, in the same city, of which Lucius Barrows was principal, and after three years he was made coprincipal. Upon the death of Mr. Barrows in 1880, he became sole proprietor and principal of the academy, and continued it until 1899; Mr. Erasmus B. Waples being associated as coprincipal for a number of the later years.

Dr. Ludwig was well qualified to be a teacher of youth. He loved the classics which he taught; he loved the work of teaching; but above all he loved his pupils. He had the warmth of affection of a parent for all his boys. But he was first a Christian man, so earnest that he looked upon his profession as a sacred, not a secular, calling. He delighted to call the attention of his pupils to the use in the Greek New Testament of words occurring in the classic writings, and in commenting on the expressions of the highest sentiments of the classic authors, and in pointing out the same expressed in more exalted form in the New Testament. Neither did he

omit any opportunity to press upon his pupils their personal duty as to their own salvation or their duty as Christian men. While he was principal of Rittenhouse Academy a large number of young men were there prepared for college and business life, many of whom attained distinguished positions in the learned professions and in their chosen calling. A number became ministers of the gospel, and to some of these he gave free tuition, and besides aided them by giving them much time outside the school hours to enable them to do the work of two or more years in one year, and thus hasten their entrance into their life work.

On June 20, 1894, Lafayette College, in acknowledgment of his successful teaching work of thirty years, conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, *causa honoris*. He was ever afterwards called Dr. Ludwig.

His Christian life began with his conversion when about seventeen years of age. He often spoke of a cousin whose timely word at first led him to Christ, and afterwards by her exhortation and example implanted in him the ideals of a Christian life, which ever after ruled him. He had before that attended the Episcopal Church, but he now joined the First Presbyterian Church of the Northern Liberties of which Dr. Thomas J. Shepherd was pastor.

He at once entered into the work of the church and became organist in the Sunday school and week-day meetings. He also became a Sunday-school teacher. One of the interesting things found among his papers is an autograph letter of Major-General George B. McClellan, then commanding the Army of the Potomac, and bearing his frank. It is dated Headquarters of the Army, January 31, 1862, and is addressed to "The Juvenile Missionary Society of the First Presbyterian Church (care De B. K. Ludwig, Secretary), Northern Liberties, Philadelphia." The letter acknowledges the receipt of a certificate of life membership in the American Bible Society, purchased for him with a contribution made by the Juvenile Missionary Society. He accepts the compliment, and continues, "I pray that you and I may be enabled to rule our lives according to the precepts of that Holy Word,

which is the best source of happiness here, and which offers hope and promise hereafter."

After many years service in the Northern Liberties church, Dr. Ludwig removed his membership to the West Arch Street Church, where he was made an elder and one of the superintendents of the Sabbath schools. In 1890 he removed to West Philadelphia and took his letter to Tabernacle Church, of which Dr. Henry C. McCook was then pastor. He was there soon made an elder and superintendent of its Sabbath schools, and held this latter position until 1912, when he resigned and was made superintendent emeritus, and superintendent of the Home Department; and so continued until his death. In all of these positions he devoted to the performance of their duties a degree of work and care far beyond what is usual, and attached the people of the church and the children of the schools to him with the warmest affection.

Dr. Ludwig was twice married: first to Emma A., daughter of Charles A. Daniels, of Milford, N. H.; second to Carrie Hallett, daughter of Nathna Ayer, of Concord, N. H.

On February 26, 1883, Dr. Ludwig was elected treasurer of The Presbyterian Historical Society. He had been a member of the Executive Council since the previous year. He continued to be treasurer until his death. During these nearly thirty-three years this Society had his devoted service to its finances. This Society's interests were second only to his own private affairs. He was a daily visitor at its rooms and himself bore the whole burden of concern when its resources were low. It almost seems to some that its very existence at times depended on his efforts.

This faithful attention to the manifold duties which he had assumed as an elder in the Tabernacle Church, and to the interests of this Society, continued until his death, though the last year was filled with anxious care for the health of his wife, to whom he was tenderly devoted. After her death, which occurred on July 14, 1915, his remaining days were filled with sorrow and suffering, and he survived her only until October 2, following. He and his wife were buried on

the same day in his lot in Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia.

At the meeting of the Executive Council on November 9, 1915, the death of Dr. Ludwig was formally announced, and a suitable record of his services was ordered to be entered upon the Minutes.

Upon that occasion the Rev. Dr. Francis H. Moore said:

"It was with intense sorrow that I learned of the death of my preceptor De Benneville K. Ludwig, Ph.D., to whom I am greatly indebted, for he prepared me for college, and some of the hardest study I ever did was under the inspiration of his leadership and encouragement. Day after day, after five hours of study, I would spend two hours with Professor Ludwig in the study of the Greek and Latin required for college entrance; and so thorough was his method, that at the end of a year he had not only prepared me for entrance into the freshman class, but also for the sophomore class of Lafayette College.

"During those delightful days, I was impressed with his great ability as a teacher of the Greek and Latin classics. But above the Greek and Roman authors, he placed his Bible, and he delighted in citing parallels of Greek words, in the text of his Greek Testament, and also in appreciating the expression of the highest aspirations of the classic writer, and then citing the fulfillment in the Greek New Testament.

"During his preceptorship he was a ruling elder in the Presbyterian church on Buttonwood Street east of Eighth; and he frequently told me of remarks which he had made at prayer meeting, and of aspects of church work in which he was interested. Above the classical scholar towered the Christian believer, and my association with him I regard as one of the delightful memories of my life. It was at his solicitation that I became a member of The Presbyterian Historical Society; and, in expressing my sense of loss at Professor Ludwig's death, I desire to testify to the healthy, Christian influence he exerted upon me. Doctor Ludwig, who prepared me for college, and Professor Francis A. March, both Christian men, stand out as the two teachers who have made

the greatest impression upon me. And I gladly and gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to them."

He was followed by the Rev. Dr. Louis F. Benson, who said:

"There is none of us, I am sure, who does not feel to-day a sense of the loss sustained by this Council and the Society in the death of Dr. Ludwig. But I question if many of us are fully aware of the real character and extent of his services as treasurer. We think of a treasurer as an accountant. Dr. Ludwig was more like a lover. He carried this Society in his heart, and that is where he recorded its accounts. They were as personal to him as his own affairs. When the balance was favorable he was cheerful; when funds ran low he was anxious and depressed, as though there was sickness at home; when there was an actual deficit, you would have thought there was a death in the family. The financial welfare of this Society was his particular trust, and in that trusteeship he was willing to take infinite pains toward an end that most men would have counted as rather insignificant. He came here to his desk every morning of his life unless prevented; he went forth to cajole our friends and to dun our debtors. He paid our bills by hand where he could save a postage stamp; he kept our books with an accuracy that somehow did not come naturally to him, and was only attained by doggedness. There have been some lean years in our history when Dr. Ludwig's quiet and persistent devotion carried us through. I am not sure that without him the Society could have survived to these comparatively prosperous times. We ought to hold him in very grateful memory; and our debt to him is really a personal one, because we are all enriched by our contact with a grace of loyalty so beautiful and so inspiring."