

Vol. 26, No. 1, 2, Spring-Summer 2006

Assemblies of God
HERITAGE



HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON
EVERLASTING LIFE...” John



Fred Smolchuck

The story of a Ukrainian-American's
passion for his people



Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center



Come Explore Assemblies of God History

The above exhibit, displaying William J. Seymour and other leaders in the Azusa Street revival, is part of the inspiring Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center Museum.

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Published quarterly by
The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center
1445 N. Boonville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802-1894
Phone: 417-862-1447, ext. 4400
Fax: 417-862-6203
Toll Free: 877-840-5200
Email: archives@ag.org
Website: www.AGHeritage.org
ISSN 0896-4395

Assemblies of God HERITAGE

Spring-Summer 2006

Vol. 26, No. 1, 2

PUBLISHED BY THE FLOWER PENTECOSTAL HERITAGE CENTER

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Heritage is indexed in the ATLA
Religion Database, published by
the American Theological Library
Association, 250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th
Flr., Chicago, IL 60606;
E-mail: atla@atla.com
Web: www.atla.com

ATLA Religion Database (RDB) is
available on CD-ROM and US MARC
format directly from ATLA, as well
as online through five aggregators:
OCLC's FirstSearch, EBSCO
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Ovid Technologies, and Cambridge
Scientific Abstracts. Microfilm of
Heritage is available from Theological
Research Exchange Network (TREN),
P.O. Box 30183, 5420 N. E. Glisan,
Portland, OR 97294-3183. Heritage
on CD is available from the Flower
Pentecostal Heritage Center.

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Gospel Publishing House,
1445 N. Boonville Ave.,
Springfield, MO 65802-1894

POSTMASTER: Send address
change to *Heritage*, 1445 N. Boonville
Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894



A Passion for His People: Fred Smolchuck and Slavic Pentecostalism

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Cover: Fred Smolchuck leading songs at a meeting for U.S. servicemen in New
York's Times Square in the 1940s. Director Martin Busse is seated.

This is the final quarterly issue of *Heritage*. The next installment, the 2007
annual edition (Vol. 27), will be published November 2006. Annual edition
price, \$10.00.

Pentecostal Saints: Witnesses to God’s Faithfulness

When my great-grandparents, William and Irene Amundson, accepted Christ in the early 1930s in a little Pentecostal church in North Dakota, they probably didn’t realize they were getting in on the ground floor of something big. When they turned their lives over to God, they started out on a journey that would develop in them spiritual disciplines that would impact their family and those around them — and ultimately affect eternity.

My mother remembers that her Grandpa Bill was always faithful in his devotions — that he developed a discipline of daily Bible-reading and prayer, no matter what else was happening around him. Life often was a struggle, but my great-grandparents remained faithful to God, to their family, and to their church, the small Cando (ND) Assembly of God. These spiritual disciplines had broader implications; through them they learned that life is comprised of little decisions and that these habits of the heart would determine the direction that their lives would take.

Christianity stands on the precept that God acts in history, and the testimonies of God’s people throughout the ages are holy history. The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center is charged with the sacred task of preserving these stories. The example of the Amundsons’ faithfulness — and of God’s faithfulness to them — is not alone. This theme is repeated countless times in Scripture, Christian history, and the more recent Pentecostal past.

This issue of *Heritage* recounts stories of Pentecostal saints who were witnesses to God’s faithfulness — not



**William and Irene Amundson,
great-grandparents of the editor.**

only to those near them, but to the larger Christian community, across time and spanning cultures.

On the following pages, you will read about: Fred Smolchuck’s passion for his people — the Slavs; Carl M. “Daddy” Hanson, whose Pentecostal ministry among Scandinavian immigrants prefigured Azusa Street; evangelists Raymond and Fern Jones; A. H. Wendt, first Chairman of the German Branch; Niilo Yli-Vainio, the great Finnish revivalist; H. C. Noah, longtime pastor of Oak Cliff Assembly of God, Dallas, Texas; and memories of early Pentecost in Sisseton, South Dakota.

These and other Pentecostal pioneers were in on the ground floor of something larger than themselves. God changed their lives, and they impacted eternity by touching others. They were among the earliest members of a movement that has changed the face

of Christianity in one century. Since its 1914 organization, the Assemblies of God has grown to be the world’s largest Protestant fellowship (with over 55 million adherents in 2005).

Unfortunately, many people in the West seem to have fallen victim to a form of spiritual myopia — an inability to see beyond their immediate surroundings and to learn from the wisdom of the ages. Values that parents and grandparents deemed essential are today devalued. Materialism, hyper-individualism, and selfishness, under the guise of sophistication and individual rights, are tearing at the fabric of our families, churches, and broader society.

It has been said that he who marries the spirit of the age will soon be a widower. When current fads pass away, I pray that our Movement, too, won’t pass away because our identity has become so intertwined with the latest fashions.

Early Pentecostals claimed that their very reason for being was to restore the historic, biblical church. Banners, hanging in some of the first Pentecostal tabernacles, quoted Hebrews 13:8: “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today and forever.” Christianity, in its DNA, seems to require a commitment to history. To paraphrase author G. K. Chesterton, Christianity, with its insistence upon looking back to move forward, “is the only thing that saves a man from the degrading slavery of being a child of his age.”

How does a person put history into practice? I would suggest that one can start by reading the testimonies of the saints, including those faithful

Christians in one's own family, and by sharing those stories with the next generation. The job of the historian, according to Grant Wacker, is "to resurrect the dead and let them speak." That's our job at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center — to give voice to those who came before.

I am pleased to include the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center's 2006 resource guide in this issue of *Heritage*. In it you will find many ways to bring Pentecostal history into

your home, school and church. As was mentioned in the previous issue, this is the last quarterly issue of *Heritage*. More information about the change to an expanded annual edition can be found in the publication statement on page 33. I also encourage you to visit our website: www.AGHeritage.org, which is slated to be redeveloped during the next year. Thank you for your faithful support of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, and for your continuing interest in the people,

places, and events that made the Assemblies of God what it is today!



Darrin Rodgers is director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center and editor of *Heritage* magazine.

LETTERS

Appreciation from American Baptist Churches

Dear Darrin [Rodgers],

Congratulations again on your position as Director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center and editor of *Heritage*. I enjoyed all the time we shared at the Society for Pentecostal Studies in Pasadena.

Thank you for the complimentary copy of *Heritage*. I am enclosing a check for a subscription. A note of interest on page 55 [Dan Betzer, "Honoring Our Faithful Heroes," Summer-Fall 2005]. I was with Dan Betzer in my home town of Sandusky, Ohio, in the 1960s when he began broadcasting on the small local Sandusky radio station, WLEC. He interviewed the then Miss America, Vonda Kaye VanDyke, who married one of my former classmates and football buddies from Sandusky High School. Small world!

The hope is that the diligent Assemblies of God will pray for the Baptist charismatics for more power and endurance in our mission to put the Holy Ghost fire under all the Baptist water and produce evangelistic steam.

Looking forward to the next issue of *Heritage*.

Grace and peace,
Dr. Gary K. Clark
National Chairman
Holy Spirit Renewal Ministries in
American Baptist Churches
Pasadena, California

Dr. Clark donated to the FPHC a complete run of Refreshing Times (newsletter of Holy Spirit Renewal Ministries) and other materials documenting the charismatic renewal in American Baptist Churches.

Thanks For Wayne Warner's Contributions

Dear Wayne [Warner],

I have just been reading your last issue of *Heritage*, which has brought back a lot of memories for me: of times when we were mistaken for one another, of my visits to the Archives with a photo that found its way into the original *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, etc.

I just wanted to thank you for all that you have contributed to making Pentecostals aware of the importance of archival materials and their early history, and for your own research on interesting figures in the history.

May the Lord bless you in your retirement, may you have good health and continue to bless others with your service.

With all best wishes and warm greetings in the Lord,
Monsignor Dr. Peter Hocken
Vienna, Austria



Peter Hocken (left) standing with Wayne Warner in the AG Archives in 1986.

Photographs for Encyclopedia

Glenn [Gohr]

I received the downloads I requested, and I just wanted to say that it was a pleasure working with you. You responded in a very timely fashion, and

(Continued on page 33)

A Passion for His People



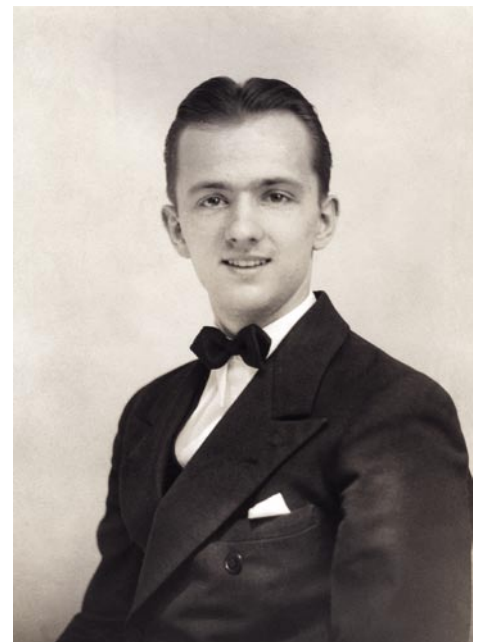
Fred and Stella Smolchuck dressed in Ukrainian ethnic costume and singing a duet at the General Council in Seattle, Washington, 1949.

Fred Smolchuck and Slavic Pentecostalism

by Fred Smolchuck

Almost eighty years ago, Fred Smolchuck felt God's call to the ministry. Following that call led him around the world, and he became a leader within Slavic Pentecostalism, both in the United States and in Eastern Europe. Smolchuck's strong voice and mind, his smoldering passion for souls, and his leadership gifts continue to make their mark on the Pentecostal landscape.

The son of Ukrainian immigrants to America, Smolchuck was a founding member of the Ukrainian Branch of the Assemblies of God, he served as a pastor and district official in Michigan, and he authored 16 books. His life is inextricably intertwined with the history of the Slavic churches in the Assemblies of God. In his latest book, *Who Else ... But God!*, he recounts the story of how God worked in his own life and in the broader Slavic Pentecostal movement. In the following account, Smolchuck shares this exciting story with *Heritage* readers. — Darrin Rodgers



Fred Smolchuck at his graduation from Zion Bible Institute in 1936 at age 19.

I was born on February 26, 1917 in Boston, a city teeming with immigrants. My parents, Kirilo and Sophia, were recent Ukrainian immigrants who had fled war-torn Europe. I attended public schools in Boston and graduated from Dorchester High School. My father, Kirilo, taught me the language, folklore, and customs of the Ukraine. It was this instruction that allowed me to bridge the cultural gap between the ways of my ancestral

land and my new land. When I felt God's call to the ministry, then, it was among Slavic immigrants to America that I began preaching the gospel.¹

In many ways I followed in the footsteps of my father. Kirilo Filipovich Smolchuck was 17 years old when he left his family in Pidlyptsi, the Ukraine² and set sail for the United States in 1914. He settled in Boston, Massachusetts, where he became a member of the Ukrainian Greek

Catholic Church.

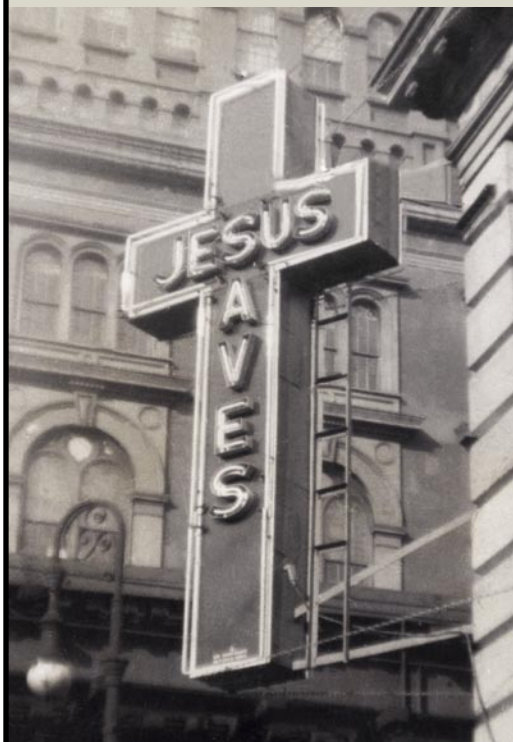
That year many immigrants from Eastern Europe came to America, but what a surprise when Kirilo discovered that Sophia Buksa, a young lady whom he knew in Pidlyptsi, also immigrated to Boston and began to attend the same church as he. It was a pleasant discovery, to say the least. The two never did show interest in each other when they attended their village school, but this was different. They kept

Slavic-American Pentecostals

Slavic Pentecostals imported aspects from their culture — most obviously their language — into their new faith. Other practices common in early Slavic Pentecostal churches in America were footwashing, the covering of heads by women, and separation of the sexes in church. Men sat on the right side of the church; women on the left. Another practice, borrowed from Eastern European Baptists, was a preference for a succession of short sermons by multiple preachers, instead of a single sermon by one minister. This arrangement provided opportunities for younger ministers to gain experience, particularly since it was rare for ministers to attend ministerial training schools in Eastern Europe.



Ukrainian Assembly of God,
New York City, about 1949.



Neon sign at Ukrainian Assembly of God
in New York City.

seeing each other, and within a year
were married.

God blessed their union with
a son they named Fred,
in memory of Sophia's
brother who was killed
during the war. Kirilo Smolchuck,
well liked by the people of the Catholic
church, was elected executive secretary
and also was chosen by the parish
priest to be his assistant.

A series of tragic events, beginning
with the death of my seven-year-old
sister Mary, led the Smolchucks to find
Christ. In the midst of their sorrow
and despair, the faithful witnessing
of their friends Josephine Iwasko and
Agafia Turchinetz brought Kirilo and

Sophia to a saving knowledge of Jesus
Christ as Savior. My parents and I,
then ten years old, also received the
baptism in the Holy Spirit. Life for the
Smolchucks was never the same after
that.

When the Catholic church
heard of what happened to our
family, we were declared “heretics”
and excommunicated from the
congregation. We were no longer
welcome. Although our close friends
ignored us, God gave us new friends,
“brethren” of the new church. We
became members of the Russian, Polish
and Ukrainian Pentecostal Church of
Chelsea, Massachusetts.

My father, Kirilo, grew in the
Lord. His knowledge of the Word of
God increased. Pastor Kondrat Kosuk
often called upon him to fill the pulpit
and preach the Word. The congregation
elected him to serve as executive
secretary of the church. Meanwhile,
Sophia became an outstanding witness
for Jesus, visiting unsaved old friends
and, one by one, winning them to the
Lord.

God chose to call Sophia to
Himself when she was only 43 years
old. After her death, Kirilo entered
full-time ministry. He conducted
evangelistic meetings, served as

Fred Smolchuck and Stella Hanko
before their wedding.

pastor of several churches, and was
elected by the Ukrainian Branch of the
Assemblies of God to serve as one of
its presbyters.

While God was dealing
with Kirilo and Sophia,
He was preparing me for
a life of ministry and
leadership among both Ukrainians and
Americans. When only ten years of
age, I received the baptism in the
Holy Spirit and received the call to
the ministry. When I completed high
school at age 17, I had already been
preaching in youth meetings for about
a year.





Fred Smolchuck introduces David du Plessis "Mr. Pentecost" to the New York City Ukrainian congregation.

I graduated in 1936 and, one year later, I married Stella Hanko. We immediately launched out into active ministry. After a short time on the evangelistic field, we were called to pastor the Russian, Ukrainian and Polish Pentecostal Church, a congregation in Claremont, New Hampshire. Since I was fluent in Ukrainian and did fairly well in Russian and Polish, I fit right into the multilingual situation at Claremont.

In 1934, I enrolled at Zion Bible Institute (East Providence, Rhode Island), a "faith school" that did not charge tuition. We not only received a wonderful Bible education, we got an education in faith, in believing in God.

God blessed our ministry there. The church grew in number. Ministry in Claremont proved to be the training I needed to prepare for the work God had in store for me. We

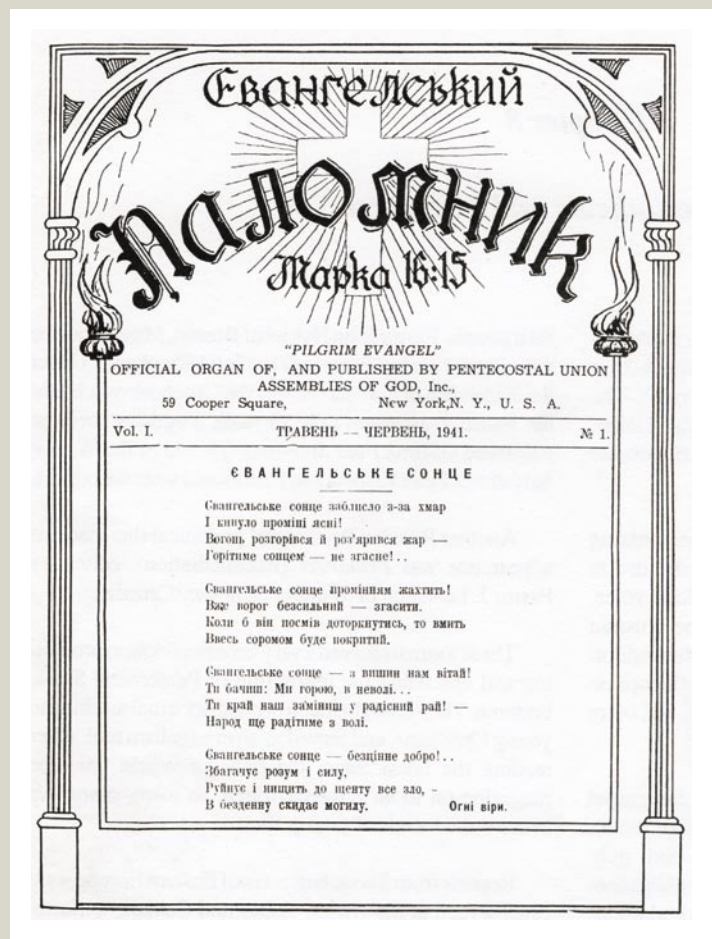
served there four years.

American Assemblies of God brethren granted me ministerial credentials in 1938, hoping I would work with them. However, having grown up in a Slavic church, and maintaining fellowship with such Slavic leaders as Joseph J. Matolina, Bartholomew Hutzaluk, Demian Matysuk, Stephen Zuck, and others from the days of my youth, and especially since I felt a burden for the Slavic people, I decided to work with the Slavic brethren. I did, however, maintain credentials as an Assemblies of God minister with the New England District.

My fellow ministers asked me to serve in numerous offices, offering opportunities to preach, write, and administrate. In 1941, I was elected

A New Slavic Fellowship

In the 1980s, a new wave of Slavic immigrants — including Pentecostals fleeing Communist persecution — began to arrive in America. In 1982, some of these new immigrants formed the Slavic Pentecostal Fellowship of North America. Fred Smolchuck served as a bridge between Slavic and American Pentecostals and was instrumental in helping to form a new Slavic Fellowship of the Assemblies of God, USA in 2002. This new Fellowship progressed to conference status in November 2005, the step prior to becoming a district. Alexander A. Shevchenko, whose parents fled from the Ukraine to China, and who now pastors the Russian Gospel Temple in San Francisco, California, is president of the Slavic Fellowship. Concerning Smolchuck, Shevchenko remarked, "He is well-known among Slavic Pentecostals in America, the Ukraine and Russia for his passion for his people. Not only is he an inspiring, encouraging preacher, but he ministers in the Ukrainian language. Most people of Ukrainian heritage born in America do not learn the language. Fred Smolchuck, however, developed these abilities and is an excellent preacher and author."



The front cover of the first issue of *Palomnyk*, a Ukrainian language Pentecostal periodical sent to readers all over the world.

to serve as executive secretary of the Pentecostal Union of the Assemblies of God (an independent Slavic organization of about 22 churches which, despite its name, was not officially a part of the Assemblies of God).

In 1943, the Pentecostal Union joined the Assemblies of God, and its Russian and Ukrainian member churches formed their own language branches. In 1947 I was elected superintendent of the Ukrainian Branch of the Assemblies of God, holding that position until 1952, when I resigned to accept the pastorate of the Detroit (Michigan) Russian, Ukrainian and Polish Pentecostal Church (later renamed Evangel Assembly of God).

While in Detroit, I furthered my own education, earning a bachelor's degree from Great Lakes College, and I helped further the education of others, by founding Central Bible College, Detroit Campus (an extension of the school located in Springfield, Missouri). I left the pastorate in 1964 upon my election to serve as executive secretary-treasurer of the Michigan District.

Fred Smolchuck sharing the good news with the people of Zolochiv, Ukraine.



Hymnology Hash

The Russian, Ukrainian and Polish Pentecostal Church of Chelsea, Massachusetts resolved the issue of which language should be used for the song service by allowing congregants to sing the same songs, from songbooks in their own languages, at the same time. For example, the worship leader would announce, "We shall sing 247 in Russian, 35 in Ukrainian, 164 in Polish and for those singing in English the number is 78." What may have appeared confusing to some became a process by which a number of people learned each others' languages.

The Slavic people weighed heavily upon my heart. In 1974, I had begun traveling to Eastern Europe where I developed valuable relationships with Pentecostal leaders. I wrote over a dozen books concerning Pentecostal theology and ministry, plus numerous pamphlets and manuals in the Ukrainian and Russian languages.

Upon my retirement in 1983, the General Council of the Assemblies of God voted to recognize me as an honorary presbyter for my 27 years of service as a general presbyter of the Ukrainian and Michigan Districts. Instead of slowing down, I viewed retirement as an opportunity to travel around the world as a missionary evangelist, unfettered by the daily

responsibilities at an office. My ministry spanned the globe, in places such as Eastern Europe, South America, Africa, Australia, and the Orient.

In 1995, Stella and I moved from Grass Lake, Michigan to Springfield, Missouri. After 65 years of sharing life and ministry together, Stella went to be with the Lord in 2002.

My close contact with Slavic ministries and a personal fellowship with Assemblies of God church leaders since 1927 permitted me to witness and record remarkable events as God worked among Ukrainian and Russian immigrants. How did it all come about? The title to my recent autobiography provides the answer: *Who Else ... But God!* could have done it!



For more information about Smolchuck's autobiography, see page 32.

Notes

¹ For more information about Fred Smolchuck and the history of Slavic Pentecostals in America, see: Fred Smolchuck, *From Azusa Street to the U.S.S.R.: A Brief History of Pentecost Among Slavic Immigrants, 1900-1991* (Arcadia, CA: North American Slavic Pentecostal Fellowship, 1992); Fred Smolchuck, *Who Else ... But God!* (Springfield, MO: the author, 2006).

² In 1914, Pidlyptsi was in Galicia, a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Galicia came under Soviet rule after World War II and became known as the Ukraine.

Carl M. Hanson

Scandinavian Harbinger of Pentecost

By Darrin J. Rodgers



Carl M. Hanson with one of his thirteen children, Anna, in 1910. Anna went on to serve, with her husband, Arthur F. Berg, as a missionary in Belgian Congo from 1922 to 1926.

Carl M. “Daddy” Hanson, a spiritual father to many early Pentecostals on the northern Great Plains, earned his Pentecostal stripes on both sides of Azusa Street. His brand of radical Scandinavian pietism prefigured the emerging Pentecostal movement, in which he became an early leader. Hanson traversed Minnesota and the eastern Dakotas during the late

1890s and early 1900s, spreading glossolalic revival even before the Topeka and Azusa Street revivals.¹

Hanson was born on December 15, 1865 in Minnesota to Norwegian immigrants.² In 1881, he enrolled in the college preparatory program at Augsburg Seminary, a Lutheran school in Minneapolis. Curriculum for the freshman class (known as the “Greek Division”) included the English, Norwegian, and Greek languages, Religion, History, and Geography. According to school records, he attended classes from October 1881 until March 1882. Presumably, Hanson was among the many students who left to engage in farm work and who did not return for April classes.³

Hanson converted to Christ while at Augsburg.⁴ In a 1906 tract, Hanson wrote that he began to experience conviction at age 14 and “became real earnest and was blessedly saved” nine months later.⁵ In 1904, he testified, “A short time after my conversion at the age of 16 years I was called of God to offer my life in the Lord’s service to preach the Gospel. But through Satan’s frightful might and cunning I was hindered for eleven years.”⁶ Hanson lamented

that he listened “to the voice of the enemy telling me I was too young, was uneducated and would only be a man going around doing nothing for his living.” Instead of following the call to ministry, Hanson recalled, “I yielded to his suggestions of waiting until I had become older and made some money.”⁷

Hanson married Mathilda Louise Folkedal of Blue Earth County, Minnesota, on November 28, 1888.⁸ The young couple moved to Lemond, Minnesota, where Carl operated a creamery and general merchandise store.⁹ While working in a saw mill in 1895, he severed a finger, developed blood poisoning, and entered a hospital in Wauseca, Minnesota, where Drs. Young and Swartz deemed his condition terminal.¹⁰ Facing death, Hanson turned to God and experienced conviction for his sin. Hanson testified:

My agony ... opened the dark of the abyss, and the revelation of the dreadful depths made me exclaim, “Thou condemn me in righteousness if Thou cast me into

Hell.” In a moment I experienced a burning of fire, and the peace of God with a glow overfilled my spirit, soul, and body. A peace, which cannot be described, came with new life and living power in my years. God’s power overshadowed me, and I gained life. The blood poisoning was no longer present and I began as a newborn child who gathered strength.¹¹

Shortly after his healing, Hanson became an evangelist. He recounted how, in 1895, he received his “anointing to preach”:

I commenced to witness for the Lord and after a series of meetings – we had had a cottage meeting in our home – as I arose to testify the Spirit of God came upon me in such a way that I became unconscious of a single word spoken. But the result was that the whole audience was moved. Some cried, others rejoiced, while others exclaimed, “The Lord has spoken.” I myself realized such a joy in my soul and a keenness in my spirit to know the condition of things, and received an anointing to preach, and revivals followed.¹²

Hanson recorded how his understanding of water baptism and spirit baptism evolved during that first year of ministry.

Soon after (receiving an anointing to preach) I became aware there was much more for me and that I needed it, as I realized in studying the Word that Jesus required the same works to be done now as in the days of the Apostles given by Jesus. Matt. 10, etc.

It was also made plain that if we came to the place the Apostles were (Acts 1 and 2), the same power would fall. This brought me to pray for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and searching the scriptures I soon found I was not baptized in water according to the Word. Also many false doctrines had to be cleansed out. My hunger became so great at times I made up my mind to go home and wait until I was endued, but had to go out again and again.

In 1895, while holding meetings and preaching the full gospel, as I saw it, with a full consecration, sanctification and Baptism in the Holy Spirit, one came clear through

and spoke in tongues, as in Acts 2.¹³

Significantly, the tongues-speech witnessed by Hanson occurred a decade prior to the Azusa Street revival. The 1895 instance of tongues took place during services he held on the H. N. Russum farm near Grafton, North Dakota, and the person to speak in tongues was a small girl. Hanson initially declared, “This must be that which was spoken by the prophet Joel,” referring to the prophecy in Joel 2:28. After searching Scripture, he became convinced the experience was of God, but he had not yet connected tongues to Spirit baptism. Former General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, G. Raymond Carlson, traced his family’s Pentecostal roots to that Grafton revival.¹⁴

Hanson continued to thirst for more of God and questioned whether he was truly Spirit-baptized.

While there (in Grafton) I met a Brother whom I thought had more than I had. I then thought that I had the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, but that he had the fire also. I asked him to pray for me, and I received a wonderful anointing, so that I was laid out under the Power a long time, being filled with exceeding joy. I had also gone through a wonderful cleansing before, and was clear in my spirit, but was struggling over Baptism in the Holy Spirit. With all this and many other blessings and administrations of the Holy Spirit I could not get satisfied.¹⁵

Hanson wrote that two years later (apparently in 1897) he prayed for a woman who, shortly after being Spirit-baptized, “leaped, shouted, and praised God, sang and prophesied and spoke in other tongues.”¹⁶ In another



Hanson (left) with John Feuk and Jennie Olson in front of a cabin in the Turtle Mountains of North Dakota. Early Pentecostal camp meetings were held in the Turtle Mountains in the 1910s.



C. M. Hanson (second row, fourth man from left) reported as many as 2,000 people in attendance at this September 1924 tent revival in Fargo, ND (pictured on pages 10 and 11). Two years later, Norwegian immigrant Henry H. Ness came to pastor the fledgling flock and organized Fargo Gospel Tabernacle (renamed First Assembly of God in 1949). Photos courtesy of Irene Hankin

two years (apparently in 1899), Hanson also received this experience.

But with all this, and many other wonderful experiences, I was not satisfied until two years later, while laboring in the country, I was led to get alone with the Lord. Opportunity was given, and as I knelt down to pray I fell backwards to the floor and all at once, like a mighty rushing wind, the Spiritual atmosphere was cleared up and my whole inward soul was enlightened. The atoning blood justifying me before God made everything clear. The Holy Spirit then, as a person, took possession of His Temple, speaking in other tongues, while I realized myself as a listener and an instrument in the hands of the Almighty. Oh, the joy that filled my soul; and how unworthy I felt as it now became clear that the Holy Spirit had come in to dwell, and I knew Him as a person, not merely as an influence or a blessing.¹⁷

Hanson continued to itinerate as an evangelist, preaching the Word and sharing with others how he was saved, healed, and baptized in the Holy Spirit. Hanson's daughter recounted, "My father began giving testimony wherever doors were open to him: in churches, schoolhouses, homes, and missions. The response was amazing. Everywhere

people were saved. This was usually followed by a consuming desire for more of God's power in their lives."¹⁸ Hanson was Norwegian, while the Scandinavians to whom he ministered were mostly Swedes. Hanson primarily preached in the Swedish and English languages, causing some Norwegian listeners to mistake him for a Swede.¹⁹

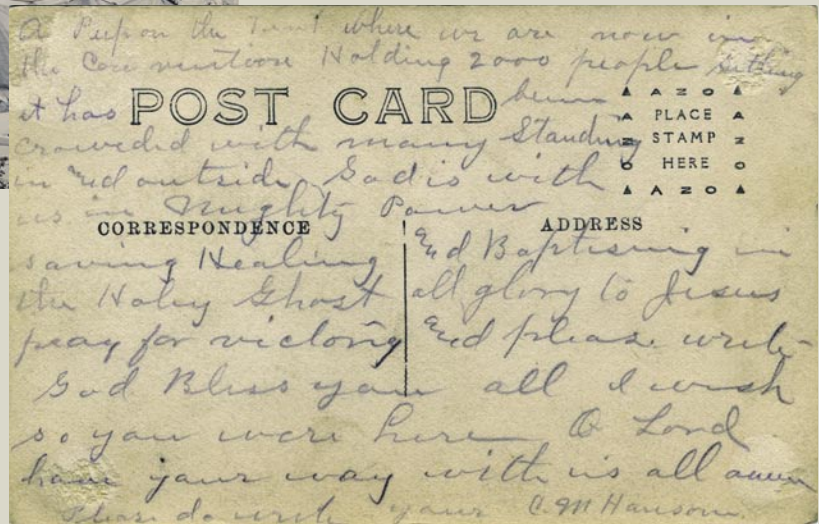
In 1900, the Hansons moved from Lemond, Minnesota to Minneapolis, where Carl worked as a carpenter to support his evangelistic ministry.²⁰ While in Minneapolis, Hanson attended Zion Tabernacle, a congregation pastored by Frederick A. Graves and affiliated with the Christian Catholic Church, a denomination founded by faith healer John Alexander Dowie.²¹ The Hansons moved in 1904 to a small farm near Anoka, Minnesota, located eighteen miles north of Minneapolis.

Soon after leaving Minneapolis, Carl testified that the urgent need to save souls prior to Christ's second coming drew him back to urban ministry: "... in heartfelt prayer to God His Word became clear: Jesus soon arrives to fetch His own ... I must go down to Minneapolis and witness to many."²² On November 12, 1904, Hanson walked 18 miles to Minneapolis, then continued on to St. Paul, where he arrived that afternoon. Hanson, seeing men and women who were drunken, homeless, and poorly clothed, became convinced God wanted him to open a mission for "these wretched children of need."²³ In a plea for financial support to open a mission, Hanson set forth his needs: "... your sincere intercessory prayers and help for this 'God's Saving



Tent revival in Fargo, ND
September 1924.

Hanson described the crowded tent on the reverse of this postcard.



Arm Mission' that breaks the Living Bread for the Hungry, tells the Saving Word to the unsaved, nurses the sick both in body and soul, clads the naked, gives the homeless shelter and the hungry bread, the unemployed work."²⁴

Published writings offer a glimpse into Hanson's emerging Pentecostal theology. In a February 1905 letter, Hanson discussed the relationship between salvation and Spirit baptism: "With the New Birth one has the opportunity to see the Kingdom of God, but with the Spirit Baptism one comes into the Kingdom, into the Ark, into the Father's House."²⁵ He further claimed that with Spirit baptism, "The sin of mankind is annihilated and Christ is glorified in us."²⁶

Describing those Christians without Spirit baptism, Hanson wrote, "Without the power of the Holy Spirit the work became defective," and "their missions are not perfect for God."²⁷ Addressing the supposed novelty of his doctrines, he explained, "the question about spirit baptism has been buried in God's Word together with the teaching of baptism and the laying on of hands and recovery for the body, etc." These teachings, he claimed, were obscured by church leaders who kept the masses in the dark.²⁸

Hanson's bedrock belief in divine healing apparently excluded reliance upon modern medicine. When his daughter, Anna, contracted typhoid fever at age eight and again became ill at age eleven (approximately 1905 and 1908), Hanson refused medical treatment. In 1913, Anna testified, "Our neighbors were angry because we would not

send for a doctor. They said it was cruel and inhuman to let me sit there suffering and not to do anything to help me, but we trusted in the Great Physician and we did not trust in vain."²⁹ Interestingly, at the same time as he was promoting Spirit baptism and healing, Hanson named a son, Clarence Philip Melancthon Hanson (born December 1, 1904), after an early sixteenth century German Protestant reformer and systematic theologian.³⁰

As a Free Mission evangelist, Hanson itinerated in Minnesota, the Dakotas, Wisconsin, and Iowa, preaching his brand of radical evangelicalism, making converts, and seeking funds and workers for his new mission. In late February and early March 1905, Hanson held meetings in the Gotland neighborhood near Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Seizing upon local gossip, a reporter wrote, "Several young people have been attending these meetings and it is reported that they work themselves into a perfect frenzy, rolling on the floor, endeavoring to climb up the walls, tossing chairs about and talking oddly in what is supposed to be ancient or peculiar languages, imagining that they have the gift of tongues."³¹

Ostensibly sympathizing with one emotive 18-year-old participant (whom the reporter freely named), the article continued, "One of the meetings came to a climax Thursday evening when a young girl named Miss Olga Nelson appeared to lose her reason entirely, and became so violent that the family was finally compelled to take her to the county jail. She quieted down to some extent there, but



Fergus Falls (MN) Daily Journal, March 11, 1905.

does not appear to be very materially improved today, as she walks up and down in the jail, singing hymns and imagining she is going to Africa. It is hoped that she will come out all right in a few days.”³²

The next day, the newspaper reported that Hanson planned to take five or six young female converts to Minneapolis to help them find positions as domestics or to engage in mission work. According to the article, Nelson’s irate father swore out a warrant for Hanson’s arrest on charges of disorderly conduct. Hanson spent the night in jail, then appeared in court, where the judge fined him \$35 and ordered him to leave town. The reporter admitted, “nothing in the shape of assault or anything of that kind was alleged,” but wrote, “the evidence was decidedly interesting.”³³ Several boys testified that Hanson seemed to hypnotize his converts. According to the reporter, Hanson

claimed the testimony was somewhat exaggerated, although cheerfully admitting that he and his converts roll about on the floor whenever the spirit so moves them. He vehemently denied any insinuations as to hypnotic influence, and claims that the violent actions just described are the results of the working of spirits either of good or evil, and in some instances of the conflicts of the powers of light and darkness as described in the Scriptures. He also states that converts are frequently given the gift of tongues, as they were of old, and that they talk in whatever language the spirit directs. He claims further that he knew one lady who had no knowledge whatever of German who was able to talk this language when thus moved, and that the converts

know exactly what they are doing at all times.³⁴

Despite the controversy, some converts apparently stuck by Hanson and paid his fine.³⁵ In a November 1905 letter to *Folke-Vennen*, Hanson recounted opposition he faced, referred to his critics as false prophets, and reiterated his call to minister to youth.³⁶ Hanson’s daughter recalled angry mobs interrupting her father’s services: “Eggs, tomatoes, and even stones were thrown. In tent meetings the ropes were sometimes cut and at times burned.”³⁷

In 1906, the year of the Azusa Street revival, Hanson printed a tract, in which he testified to having already lived with the Pentecostal blessing for over seven years.

After over seven years of constant consciousness of the Holy Spirit dwelling within, witnessing for Himself, speaking in other tongues, praying, glorifying God, rebuking Satan, comforting, guiding, taking of Christ’s and committing unto me, pleading the Blood against principalities and powers, glorifying Christ, rejoicing unspeakably, suffering, etc., I am convinced beyond a doubt that now in the fulness of time this wonderful Baptism in the Spirit, that has been hid from the Church for over fifteen centuries, is brought back by the mighty power of God removing the covering and revealing the mighty arm of God that is to be revealed with a greater glory than on the day of Pentecost before the coming of the Lord, which is at hand.³⁸

C. M. Hanson soon identified with the emerging Pentecostal movement in Chicago, which had roots in the 1906 Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles.³⁹ On September 25, 1909, Chicago Pentecostal leader William Durham ordained Hanson as a minister with the Full Gospel Assembly.⁴⁰ Durham served as pastor of the North Avenue Mission, where F. A. Sandgren, editor of the Norwegian-language evangelical newspaper *Folke-Vennen*, was an elder.⁴¹ Hanson transferred his ordination to the Assemblies of God (AG) on September 11, 1917. Participants at the 1922 organizational meeting of the North Central District Council (AG) unanimously elected “Daddy” Hanson, revered as one of the region’s Pentecostal pioneers, to serve as the district’s first chairman (1922-23).⁴²

In addition to serving as an evangelist, pastor, and church official, Hanson provided for his large family by farming. In 1906, Hanson moved to a farm near Dalton, Minnesota, where he and Mathilda reared 13 children. Seven children preceded their parents in death; nine survived infancy.⁴³ Two daughters became missionaries:



C. M. Hanson's ordination certificate, signed by Chicago Pentecostal leader William H. Durham in 1909.

It is possible that early Pentecostals in Chicago first became aware of contemporary tongues-speech, not from news of Azusa Street, but from news of prior glossolalic revivals in Minnesota and the Dakotas. Durham and F. A. Sandgren may have known about pre-Azusa tongues in Minnesota, as reported in Sandgren's newspaper, *Folke-Vennen*, as early as 1904. Likewise, Frederick A. Graves, an early Pentecostal and noted musician in Zion City, IL, must have been aware that his friend, Carl M. Hanson, claimed to possess the gift of tongues when Hanson attended Graves' Minneapolis mission for several years at the turn of the twentieth century.

Skola de Heliga bortryckas i Skyar till Herens möte i Luften?

1 Tes. 4: 16.

Hvad säger det inspirerade Guds ord? "Men jag vill icke att I skolen vara i okunnighet, mina bröder, om de afsomnade, på det att I icke mån sörja såsom de andra, som icke hafva något hopp (1 Tess. 4: 13). Ty detta säga vi eder såsom Herrens ord, att vi, som lefva och lämnas kvar till Herrens tillkommelse, alls icke skola komma före dem, som äro afsomnade (v. 15); ty Herren själf skall stiga ned från himmelen, med öfverängels röst och med Guds basun, och de som hafva dött i Kristus skola uppstå först (v. 16). Därefter skola vi som lefva och äro kvar, tillika med dem bortryckas i skyar till Herrens möte i luften, och så skola vi vara med Herren alltid (v. 17). Så trösten hvarandra med dessa ord" (v. 18). Jesus säger (Mat. 24: 40-41): "Då skola två

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF THE GRACES OF SALVATION, HEALING AND BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

By C. M. Hanson, Dalton, Minn. 1906

At the age of fourteen, I was convicted of my lost condition and commenced to cry for salvation. After nine months of struggle I became real earnest and was blessedly saved through the merits of Jesus Christ. The blood was applied to my heart and I became a new creature in Christ Jesus. The new spirit within crieth, "Abba, Father."

Shortly after, I was divinely called to preach the gospel, but listening to the voice of the enemy telling me I was too young, was uneducated and would only be a man going around doing nothing for his living. I yielded to his suggestions of waiting until I had become older and made some money. This brought me eagerly to seek for these earthly goods, and I lost the victory in my soul, and commenced to drift away. For twelve years I drifted until I was sick with rheumatism, catarrh and unclean blood, until I could not sleep at nights. One day the Spirit of God came and strove with me, making plain that now, that very day or never, I had to yield to Him. I yielded to God and was again set free. Oh, the joy that filled my soul!

Shortly after, the same calling came to preach the gospel, but now the hindrances were ten-fold. The Spirit strove with me for six months, until one day while sawing wood with a circular saw, I had one of my

Tracts in Norwegian and English by C. M. Hanson.

Esther M. Hanson (who served at L. M. Anglin's orphanage in Taianfu, China from 1921 until her death in 1924)⁴⁴ and Anna C. (Mrs. Arthur F.) Berg (who with her husband served in Belgian Congo from 1922 to 1926 prior to pastoring in Sisseton and Sioux Falls, South Dakota).⁴⁵ C. M. Hanson served pastorates in Chicago, and in St. Paul, Sauk Centre, and Princeton, Minnesota. He and Mathilda moved to Braham, Minnesota in 1945 to live with their son, Arthur J., until their respective deaths on June 28, 1954⁴⁶ and January 16, 1957.⁴⁷

The Hanson family's Pentecostal witness has spanned more than a century. Carl M. Hanson's son, C. Lloyd, served for over forty years as deacon and Sunday School superintendent at Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle. A number of budding Assemblies of God preachers, including Ted Ness, Lloyd Christiansen, and Curtis Ringness, sat under his tutelage. C. Lloyd Hanson retired in San Jose, California, where he was active at Bethel Church until his death in 1984. His daughters, Ruth Erickson and Irene Hankin, have been active in Assemblies of God congregations in Minnesota and California. In April 2006, Irene's grandson, Wesley Sheley, was ordained by the Oregon District. Recognizing the significant impact that his great-grandfather's faith had on his family, Wesley used Carl M. Hanson's Bible in the ordination ceremony.⁴⁸

History has spiritual value; it gives witness of the faithfulness of the saints of the past. More importantly, history tells of God's faithfulness to his people. Carl M. Hanson, who preached Pentecost before the broader Pentecostal movement was recognized, was one of those saints. His testimony is important, not only because it provides intriguing insight into an often-forgotten aspect of Pentecostal origins, but also because it confirms that one person, working within the fabric of the Christian community, can make a difference that affects eternity.



Darrin Rodgers, M.A., J.D., is director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center and editor of *Heritage* magazine. He authored a book, *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota*, and numerous articles published in journals and reference works.

Notes

¹ Hanson was part of a larger movement among Scandinavian immigrants in America who practiced Pentecostal gifts, such as speaking in tongues and healing, prior to the revivals at Topeka, Kansas (1901) and Azusa Street, Los Angeles (1906-09). For

more information on these early Scandinavian pietists, see: Darrin J. Rodgers, *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota* (Bismarck, ND: North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003), 4-17, 58-62; Darrin J. Rodgers, "Rediscovering Our Diverse Roots: Pentecostal Origins in Scandinavian Pietism in Minnesota and the Dakotas," Paper presented at the 33rd annual meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, 2004.

² Carl M. Hanson, 1900 census, Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota, E.D. 105, sheet 16, line 97; Irene Hankin, phone conversation with author, October 1, 2002, notes from conversation.

³ "Rev. C. M. Hanson at Home with the Lord," *North Dakota District Echoes*, July-August 1954, 2, 7; Carl M. Hanson, student records, Augsburg College Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota. I owe the information regarding Hanson's school records to archivist Kristin Anderson.

⁴ "Rev. C. M. Hanson at Home with the Lord," *District Echoes*, July-August 1954, 2, 7.

⁵ Carl M. Hanson, "My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit," tract, 1906.

⁶ Carl M. Hanson, "Til Guds Menighed," [trans. Erik L. Williamson], *Folke-Vennen*, December 8, 1904, 4-5.

⁷ Carl M. Hanson, "My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit," tract, 1906.

⁸ Mathilda Louise Hanson, obituary, *Braham Journal*, January 24, 1957, 1, 5.

⁹ "Couple's 60th Wedding Anniversary Remembered at Two Occasions," *Braham Journal*, undated clipping, circa Thanksgiving 1948.

¹⁰ Carl M. Hanson, "My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit," tract, 1906; G. Raymond Carlson, "Rev. C. M. Hanson at Home with the Lord," *District Echoes*, July-August 1954, 2, 7; Anna Berg, "Early Days of the Pentecostal Renewal in Minnesota: A Pioneer Minister and Missionary Reminisces," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Winter 1996-97): 5; Anna Hanson Berg, interview by Wayne Warner, September 23, 1980, audio recording. Carlson dated the injury as 1893, while Hanson and Berg wrote that it occurred in 1895.

¹¹ Carl M. Hanson, "Til Guds Menighed," [trans. Erik L. Williamson], *Folke-Vennen*, December 8, 1904, 4-5.

¹² Carl M. Hanson, "My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit," tract, 1906.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ H. N. Russum was G. Raymond Carlson's grandfather. G. Raymond Carlson, "When Pentecost Came to the Upper Midwest," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Spring 1984): 3; Darrin J. Rodgers, *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota* (Bismarck, ND: North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003), 154-155.

¹⁵ Carl M. Hanson, "My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit," tract, 1906.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid. See also: Anna Berg, "Early Days of the Pentecostal Renewal in Minnesota: A Pioneer Minister and Missionary Reminisces," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Winter 1996-97): 5; G. Raymond Carlson, "When Pentecost Came to the Upper Midwest," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Spring 1984): 3; William W. Menzies,

Anointed to Serve: The Story of the Assemblies of God (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), 30-31; Carl Brumback, *Suddenly from Heaven: A History of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), 14; Henry H. Ness, *Demonstration of the Holy Spirit* (Seattle, WA: Hollywood Temple, n.d.), 7; Stanley H. Frodsham, *With Signs Following*. Rev. ed. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1946), 16. Historians differed on the dates of these events. Hanson and Berg wrote that the Grafton revival occurred in 1895. Frodsham and Brumback concurred with Hanson and Berg. Carlson and Menzies dated the revival as 1896, and Ness placed it in 1898. According to a careful reading of Hanson's 1906 tract, his Spirit baptism occurred four years after the Grafton revival (apparently in 1899). Berg, Frodsham, Brumback, and Menzies wrote Hanson was Spirit-baptized two years after the Grafton revival, Ness dated the Spirit baptism in 1899, and Carlson wrote that it occurred "shortly after" the Grafton revival.

¹⁸ Anna Berg, "Early Days of the Pentecostal Renewal in Minnesota: A Pioneer Minister and Missionary Reminisces," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Winter 1996-97): 5.

¹⁹ Irene Hankin, phone conversation with author, October 1, 2002, notes from conversation.

²⁰ Mathilda Louise Hanson, obituary, *Braham Journal*, January 24, 1957, 1, 5; Minneapolis City Directories, 1900-04.

²¹ G. Raymond Carlson, "When Pentecost Came to the Upper Midwest," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Spring 1984): 3; "Anna C. Berg," in *Historical Sketches of the Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle* (Minneapolis, MN: The Church, 1930), 13; Anna Hanson Berg, interview by Wayne Warner, September 23, 1980, audio recording. According to Anna, the Hansons attended Graves' mission for four years. Articles from Dowie's periodical placed Graves in Chicago in late 1902, where he served as an elder in Central Zion Tabernacle, then in Minneapolis as early as March 1903 through at least June 1905. *Leaves of Healing*, December 6, 1902, 223; *Leaves of Healing*, March 7, 1903, 635; *Leaves of Healing*, June 24, 1905, 349.

²² Carl M. Hanson, "Til Guds Menighed," [trans. Erik L. Williamson], *Folke-Vennen*, December 8, 1904, 4-5. Some sources indicate the Hansons resided near Andover, not Anoka.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Carl M. Hanson, letter, [trans. Erik L. Williamson], *Folke-Vennen*, February 2, 1905, 5.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Anna Hanson, "Personal Testimony," 1913, tract. Five of Hanson's thirteen children died before reaching adolescence. It is unknown whether Hanson sought medical treatment for their ailments.

³⁰ Irene Hankin, phone conversation with author, October 1, 2002, notes from conversation.

³¹ "Too Much Excitement," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, March 10, 1905, 3.

³² Ibid.

³³ "Fined \$35," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, March 11, 1905, 3.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Carl M. Hanson, letter, *Folke-Vennen*, November 30, 1905, 5.

³⁷ Anna Berg, "Early Days of the Pentecostal Renewal in Minnesota: A Pioneer Minister and Missionary Reminisces," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Winter 1996-97): 5.

³⁸ Carl M. Hanson, "My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit," tract, 1906.

³⁹ It is unknown when Hanson identified with the Chicago Pentecostals. He may have been influenced by his close friend and former pastor, Frederick A. Graves, who had moved to Zion City, Illinois in 1905 or 1906 and became an early Pentecostal. In a 1908 letter, Hanson recounted a trip to Detroit Harbor, Wisconsin, during which he apparently met with Chicago Pentecostals. Carl M. Hanson, untranslated letter, *Folke-Vennen*, September 24, 1908, 5. For another account of Hanson's trip, see: John Ommundsen, untranslated letter, *Folke-Vennen*, November 12, 1908, 4.

⁴⁰ Carl M. Hanson, ministerial file, FPHC.

⁴¹ Richard M. Riss, "William H. Durham," in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 594-95.

⁴² "Minutes of meeting held at Brainerd, Minn., November 10, 1922 for the purpose of forming a District Council," Minnesota District Council Archives, Minneapolis, MN. Hanson was succeeded as chairman by Frank J. Lindquist.

⁴³ Hanson's 13 children were: Clarence Martin Leonard (1889-1901), Arthur John (1890), Arthur John (1891-1984), Chester Lloyd (1892-1893), Chester Lloyd (1894-1984), Anna Charlotte (Mrs. Arthur F.) Berg (1897-1990), Harry (1899), Esther M. (1900-24), Ada (1902-1977), Clarence Philip Melanchthon (1904-1986), Mary (1906-35), Lily (twin of Mary, died 1906 in childbirth), and William Harold (1910-2005). Mathilda Louise Hanson, obituary, *Braham Journal*, January 24, 1957, 1, 5; Hanson family, 1900 census, Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minnesota, E.D. 105, sheet 16, line 97 through sheet 17, line 3; Hanson family, 1920 census, Tumuli Township, Otter Tail County, Minnesota, E.D. 128, sheet 6A, lines 1-8; Irene Hankin, phone conversation with author, October 1, 2002, notes from conversation.

⁴⁴ "Esther M. Hanson, Missionary," in *Historical Sketches of the Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle* (Minneapolis, MN: The Church, 1930), 15-16; Esther M. Hanson, missionary file, FPHC.

⁴⁵ "Anna C. Berg, Associate Pastor-Missionary," in *Historical Sketches of the Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle* (Minneapolis, MN: The Church, 1930), 13; Arthur F. and Anna C. Berg, missionary files, FPHC.

⁴⁶ Carl M. Hanson, obituary, *Braham Journal*, July 1, 1954, 1.

⁴⁷ Mathilda L. Hanson, obituary, *Braham Journal*, January 24, 1957, 1, 5.

⁴⁸ Irene Hankin, letter to author, June 23, 2006.



The author, Anita Jones Garner, singing at a revival in Sayre, Oklahoma in the early 1950s, while her father accompanies on steel guitar.

The Glory Road

By Anita Jones Garner

Have you ever wondered what the life of a traveling evangelist would be like? In this account, Anita Jones Garner recounts her childhood spent on the road with her parents, Assemblies of God evangelists Raymond D. and Fern Jones. The Joneses, who were traveling evangelists in the 1940s, later pioneered and pastored churches in Bogalusa, Louisiana; Murfreesboro and El Dorado, Arkansas; Atlanta, Texas; and Columbus, Georgia. Fern wrote gospel songs that were a hit with audiences everywhere. Louisiana Governor, Jimmie Davis and country music legend Johnny Cash both recorded her song, “I Was There When It Happened.”

We were a band of gospel gypsies, traveling down the bumpy roads of the Deep South in our old sedan during the 1940s, on our way to another church or tent revival or all-day singing. Daddy and Mother preached and sang just about any place we were invited, including campgrounds, brush arbors and tiny churches in the country, reachable only via rutted and sometimes flooded roads. They even held services on street corners, where the sermons and the prayers and the music were carried to the crowds through speakers mounted on the tops of parked cars.

Daddy said the country suited him best, so we stayed away from urban areas that were served by evangelists like Billy Graham and Oral Roberts, with their huge custom tents that seated

thousands. Still, the roads out there were getting more crowded as musical evangelists like my parents, Raymond (ordained AG 1945) and Fern Jones (ordained AG 1950), were in great demand. Preachers who could play instruments and sing and who would work in the rural areas were booked up steadily. Everyone traveling in the ministry seemed to know each other, which is a wonder, considering that we seldom stayed in one place for more than a few weeks at a time.

We criss-crossed several states over and over again: Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, with an occasional trip to Kansas and Missouri. And when we weren’t traveling in the ministry, we headed to California on Route 66 to visit our relatives there.

After World War II, music played an increasingly important role in evangelism, working hand in hand with sermons that spoke of a more personal religious experience. Some scholars credit this combination of testimonies about a personal Savior and a variety of musical expressions with helping propel Pentecostals into a new period of enormous growth.

Church music changed drastically during my childhood, evolving from the acoustic, folk and country-based renditions of old hymns to a sound no one had yet named—a style that



Raymond Jones preaching a morning radio sermon at Bogalusa, Louisiana.

involved syncopation and even—to the shock of some of the old-timers—amplified instruments. We heard the whispers about our own mother’s singing—how she sounded more like a Saturday night than a Sunday morning, while from the pulpit Daddy reminded worshipers that all the songs and words of praise offered in the Lord’s name were sanctified.

In some ways, the changes in church music were clearly reflected in the two distinct musical personalities in our house. Daddy, the eldest of ten children of a sharecropper, had studied shape note singing at singing schools held at the local schoolhouse. These lessons were taught by Stamps-Baxter and J. D. Vaughn and other publishers who sent out teachers in the early 1900s in an effort to sell more hymnals and sheet music. From these rudiments, Daddy took his education a step farther, teaching himself to play guitar and accompanying his family’s hymn singing every night after suppertime.

Mother, the eldest of three, was an early-maturing, lonely teenaged girl who already had an unusual singing voice when she fell in love with Raymond Jones and married him at age 16. She’d been playing guitar and piano and accordion—all self-taught—since the age of 12. By the time she was 14 she had her own radio show and regularly sang with dance bands.

When Daddy got saved at First Assembly of God in El Dorado, Arkansas in 1939, the first thing he did was race home, take his teenaged bride by the hand, and lead her back to the same altar. From there, each answered a calling to serve, but their approaches couldn’t have been more different. He took up the pastorate of a small church, putting much of the salary from his sales job into church repairs. He later said, “If it came down to buying new benches for the church or a newer car, well the church would generally win out.”

While Daddy tended to his budding congregation, Mother had already channeled her musical abilities



Fern Jones’s 1959 LP “Singing A Happy Song,” along with additional material, has been re-mastered and released as “Fern Jones: The Glory Road.”

into evangelism, and she was holding revivals on her own. Daddy was proud of her and since he was the only one who could drive, he often worked all day, fulfilled the duties of his pastorate, and also dropped mother off and went back to pick her up wherever she was preaching and singing. It wasn’t long before they came to the obvious conclusion—they needed to work together.

Their combined efforts resulted in dynamic evangelism, and as they traveled, Brother Jones was asked to pastor another church. He said yes, and headed to Columbus, Georgia, where he built a congregation, this time relying heavily on regular radio broadcasts to draw a crowd. The Joneses respected the power of radio and wherever there was a radio antenna, we stopped to sing. When the opportunity presented itself, Daddy offered a sermon on the air, and when time was limited, it was a few minutes of song and a prayer before closing.

Daddy sang like a country boy and he enjoyed singing, but he said if he’d been given his choice of gifts to

possess, he’d just as soon be a steel guitar player. Or he’d settle for being able to play any guitar half as good as his friend, the brilliant musician, Brother Gene Thompson.

Daddy liked singing the high harmony parts in the background, and only reluctantly took the lead once in a while. The music he sang and played in church was straight out of the old hymnals. Mother, however, heard a hymn completely differently in her head and her heart, and she added her own style to every note before she let it loose.

The Joneses had begun using newer songs, called “specials,” and among them were songs composed by Mother and her songwriting colleagues. They featured more prominent instrumental solos and focused on tight vocal harmonies, borrowing from the race music of the time, putting together old Pentecostal songs with the call and response that black churches used. The sum of all these parts was a spontaneous, joyous outpouring that was known, loosely, as Southern Gospel.

This new church music in the 1940s was nothing like what is now called Contemporary Christian. Nor was it like today's Praise Music. In fact, there wasn't anything else like it anywhere—not even on the radio—not yet. What these musical evangelists did was to redefine church music. Without knowing it, they were making history.

Every member of our family was put to work and every skill was employed to spread the gospel. I sang with the family in revivals, in churches and on the radio from the time I was three years old. Before my brother, Leslie Ray, was ten years old, he could fix anything mechanical. What he couldn't fix, he could patch together with tape and twine until our next stop.

Daddy and Leslie Ray packed up the car for every trip, and it was a masterful feat each time they managed to fit in our family belongings and the tools of the trade. Musical instruments and the amplifier with the treble cleft decorating the center of the speaker, Mother's oxblood color leather zippered music books, an assortment of Bibles and sermon notes that Daddy took along in his black briefcase, art supplies and easels for the pictures

Mother drew, publicity materials and photos they mailed out along the way, records we sold at singing appearances, and two long-legged kids with our clothes and schoolwork—all went into one old sedan.

Whatever didn't fit inside was stacked carefully on top of the car and covered with an old oilcloth, worn through in places from the corners of the kitchen table, carefully tucked around our belongings to keep the elements out. We emerged from windstorms on the road with that oilcloth flapping on top of the car, like our own family flag flying down the road.

We went to great lengths to attend regional events that drew fellow preachers and evangelists from several states. There were Assemblies of God district gatherings and also multi-denominational meetings, and all-day or all-night singings. We drove hundreds of miles to perform, and as soon as we arrived, we spent all our free time getting caught up with other preachers and their families.

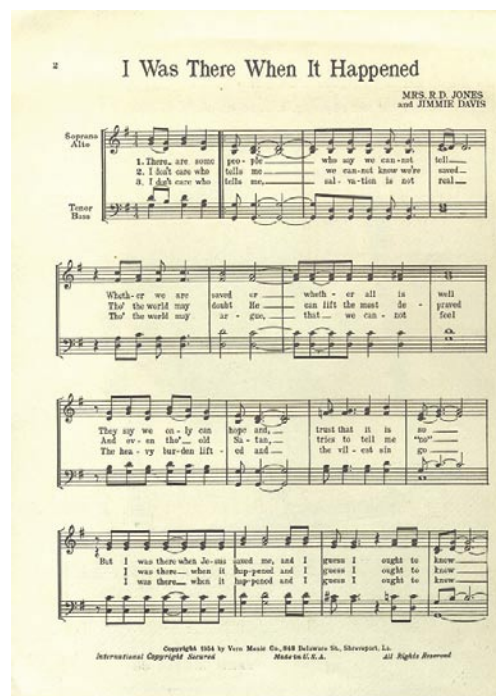
Grown-ups traded stories about the condition of the roads and the weather. We helped each other unpack instruments and set them up. We swapped stories about cars that broke

down in the middle of nowhere. We prayed for each other. And while we had the chance, we children ran around outside, gleeful at the freedom from cramped traveling quarters in the back seat.

We preachers' kids whooped and hollered in a clearing under the big trees in the piney woods, getting ourselves good and dusty until someone—a church woman or another preacher—suggested firmly that we might want to clean up before taking our seats inside the tabernacle, in the first few rows, where our parents could see our every move from their chairs on the platform.

We kids favored all-day singings with dinner on the grounds. This was where we ate the best food in the world—church food—supplied by all the great cooks in the region and set out on long tables formed by sawhorses with long planks laid on top. The church folks knew us by name from our many stops in their towns, and as we wandered from table to table outside, they offered a cup of sweet tea and a hug, and we heard over and over about how tall we were getting.

A crowd-pleaser at any gathering, and a special friend to all preachers'



kids in the south, was a young evangelist named Cecil Janway¹, whose unique style kept the piano keys bouncing. At times Brother Janway seemed like a big tall kid himself, leaning way over to make a sliding piano run on the treble keys, then grinning at us before laying down that booming bass left hand that so many people copied. It was Brother Janway who got the credit for inspiring many secular keyboard players like Jerry Lee Lewis.

We crossed paths with Southern Gospel quartets, who were the new stars of the singing circuit. They dressed alike in flashy suits and, while the songs they sang were about Jesus, they included comedy in their performances and thrilled the crowds with stratospheric notes sung by star tenors and low, low notes offered by bass singers who carried the music down to their toes.

Everyone knew they could hear great music at a revival, and at each stop, Daddy and Mother invited the best musicians in the area to join us. Many of these guests played popular songs on their own radio programs by day and then showed up at night to participate in our revival services. One night we might hear an old fiddler play a down-from-the-hills version of "Leaning On The Everlasting Arms" and the next night a young electric guitar player would take the lead on a syncopated version of "Take My Hand, Precious Lord." Mixed in were banjos, harmonicas, drums, Dobro guitar, trumpets, stand-up bass, accordions, steel guitars, and always, the joyous gospel piano that people now expected.

Late in the 1940s Mother was writing more songs, and the more she sang her original compositions, the more letters arrived after every radio show. Listeners were moved by her music and told her so. Mother believed her songs were gifts from the Creator, sent to her in a specific sequence. She said God sent her the titles first, and then the words and then, finally, the melodies.

She sent a song she wrote to former Louisiana Governor, Jimmie Davis, who had a successful career as a gospel singer and had written the hit song, "You Are My Sunshine." Governor Davis recorded mother's song, "I Was There When It Happened" and it became a hit on the radio.

And then the music began to move along almost more quickly than we could follow. On the radio, Elvis sang his hits, based on the style he'd learned in Pentecostal churches, and backed by the same gospel quartets who worked the Southern Gospel circuit. Somebody called this music rockabilly.

Johnny Cash heard Governor Davis sing "I Was There When It Happened" and he recorded it too.² So did several other artists. Mother was pleased that her music was being heard, but she wouldn't be happy until she got a chance to record her songs her own way, so she kept mailing out tapes to record companies.

Finally, her chance came. She signed a recording contract with gospel/bluegrass music legend Mac Wiseman, who took her to Dot Records in Hollywood. They set up recording sessions with the same musicians who backed Elvis and went into the studio in Nashville in 1958. Mother recorded several of her original songs, as well as a few old favorites. It was still unusual in the late 1950s to hear a female who sang like she did, and especially one who sang church music. Her album, "Singing A Happy Song," released in 1959, never got the attention she hoped it would.

Raymond and Fern Jones retired to Palm Springs, California, where Ray passed away in 1987, and Fern went to join him in 1996, but their story, and the stories of many of those gospel gypsies who traveled the same road, live on.

These pioneers changed the way worship was conducted. They helped write the history of religion in America after World War II, and along the way they added a chapter to the history of American music, changing the

culture for all time. Today the circle is complete, as the gospel music created by these believers decades ago enjoys renewed popularity. Millions of new fans are being introduced to the sounds of good old Southern Gospel.



Fern Jones' album has been re-mastered, nearly fifty years later, and has recently been released as *The Glory Road*. This CD is available at: www.amazon.com and in stores everywhere. Additional information is available at this website: www.thegloryroad.com

Notes

1. Cecil Janway was a pioneer pastor and evangelist, who later served as Louisiana District Superintendent, 1976-1994 (See "Ministering in Louisiana," *AG Heritage*, Spring 1999).

2. A recent development is that the movie about Johnny Cash's life, *Walk The Line*, features Fern Jones' song, "I Was There When It Happened." Cash recorded that song several times on many records, and it is currently on the best selling CD, *Johnny Cash: The Legend*.



Anita Garner, the daughter of Fern and Raymond Jones, is a writer/broadcaster, living near San Francisco, California.

The H. C. Noah Story

By J. Naaman Hall

H. C. Noah, who pastored Oak Cliff Assembly of God Church in Dallas, Texas for more than three decades, was a dynamic force for the gospel in our movement and was a faithful servant to our Lord throughout his ministry, during the good times and the bad. From nearly dying from a chronic illness during his early ministry, to his eventual healing, then nearly dying from an accident years later, he always remained true to his cherished goal of sharing the good news to his community.

The Early Days

Halley Cambrick “Hal” Noah was born in Marysville, Marion County, Iowa, on September 23, 1907 to David and Ola Noah. Hal and his siblings were not brought up in an overtly religious family, although they did attend a few revivals, and sometimes Sunday school. Hal grew up in Consol, Iowa, a mining town, as his father, David, was a miner. With no church in the town, occasionally Sunday school meetings or revivals were held in the school building, which the family attended.

Hal Noah felt the turning point in his life was at age fourteen, when he was deeply affected by a tragedy that happened to his childhood friend, Irving Peterson. Irving injured his toe and blood poisoning set in. It was through that disheartening event that God began to deal with Noah’s heart. After his friend passed away, his mother, Ola, told her son that Irving had given his heart to the Lord, and Hal realized that he needed to give his heart to the Lord also.

Years later in an interview, Noah avowed, “Well, I knew that I needed to be right with God, too. And the Lord dealt with my heart, and I broke down — just completely, melted, and thought about my friend going to heaven,



H. C. and Dorothy Noah with their daughter, Connie, 1934.

and I knew that I had lived a life that needed to be right with God, too.” For a while, he tried to serve the Lord, but eventually, he drifted back into his old ways.

Salvation

At about age twenty, H. C. Noah attended a Pentecostal meeting. During the service, one young married lady stood up during the meeting to give her testimony, and her face literally radiated. He could see the joy there, and he was amazed when she shouted and praised the Lord. Then, she began to dance in the Spirit, and he saw that, “... she was so lost in the Lord.” Noah

had never seen anything approaching that before, and felt that was just what he needed, to be born again and find such joy, so he humbled himself, knelt at the altar and asked God to save him — and when He did, great joy filled his heart.

Noah stated that one scripture in particular, Isaiah 61:10, defined that moment for him: “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.”

The Indwelling

At this time, the family was living near Ft. Madison, Iowa, and he began to attend a meeting at Calvary First Assembly of God. It was here (about 18 months after salvation) that Hal accepted and received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. At first, he struggled with the issue, trying to figure it out on his own; but finally, he decided to just yield and trust God, and he was filled.

After being filled with the Holy Spirit, Hal became very passionate about serving God. He was known to consistently start out to walk the ten miles from his home in order to attend church, but often various members of the church would pick him up so he wouldn't have to walk so far.

It was during these days that he began to feel a call into the ministry, which frightened him very much. Nothing was further from his mind. In fact, he would dismiss the feeling with a rebuke, but he couldn't escape it. The inner voice continued to increase as he studied his Bible, trying to prepare his heart for whatever God wanted him to do. His burden increased to a point where he had to respond to the call to minister.

The Ministry

A young evangelist named Dorothy Fae Tubbs from Lake City, Iowa, caught his eye while he was participating in a church "camp meeting" service one evening in 1931;



H. C. Noah (left) and David Nunn in the pulpit about 1996.

they fell in love, and were married in Iowa on February 3, 1932.

They began their ministry together in 1932, going to a new work in Eddyville, Iowa. God gave them an open door, so Hal and Dorothy decided to just walk through it. Dorothy had the most experience of the two at the time, since she had been already involved in the evangelistic ministry with another young lady, and he depended greatly on, and trusted, her judgment.

Later, they went to an older, established Assemblies of God work in Knoxville, Iowa (about 1932-1936), and the Lord gave them a very fruitful ministry there. They were pastoring in Knoxville during the Depression, when the banks all closed. Pastor Noah reflected that he and Sister Noah didn't lose a dime, for they were living by faith, rather than trusting in a bank account.

They saw many souls come into the kingdom during the hard times of the Depression, and they counted those difficult years as some of their happiest. The Noahs couldn't afford a car then, yet they still visited people (walking), and the Lord blessed their church in Knoxville with real growth.

However, Hal felt the need for greater education in order to be more effective in the ministry, and in (approximately) 1936, he attended Southwestern Bible School in Enid, Oklahoma, while pastoring a nearby church, the Covington-Garber Oil Field Church. He greatly admired several teachers at the school, and gave them credit for adding to his spiritual life.

Unfortunately, it was during this time that he became very ill, and nearly lost his life. He contracted rheumatic fever that went into his heart and began to bleed. This, along with a toxic goiter, made it almost impossible to carry out all his duties as student and pastor, and for much of the time, he became bedridden. Ultimately, he had to drop out of school and give up his pastorate due to his health.

He prayed, promising the Lord that if He would give him seven more



Lighthouse design of the entrance to Oak Cliff Assembly at 919 Morrell Street in Dallas.

years of life with his wife, children and ministry, he would be content. Years later, he told the Oak Cliff congregation that he was glad that God didn't always answer your prayers exactly as you asked. God did eventually heal him, but gave him many more years of life, instead of just a few. However, because of that illness, he decided not to complete his education at Southwestern.

Hal regained some of his strength back and he and Dorothy decided to just trust in God, and they entered the evangelistic field for a while (about 1936 or 1937). It wasn't long before they accepted a position at a church in Creston, Iowa, where they stayed for three years and two months (from around 1937 until 1940).

They began to feel a burden for a church in Rock Island, Illinois, and went to pastor that church from around 1940 until 1945. Hal's weakness in



H. C. Noah (left) and deacon Sam Monzingo watch as the steeple is raised on the new sanctuary at 110 Ann Arbor in 1964.



H. C. Noah at his desk about 1960.



An aerial view of Oak Cliff Assembly located at the corner of Ann Arbor and South R. L. Thornton Freeway.

body continued, and became much worse. Hal later found out that some in his congregation had been coming to the services certain that each sermon would be his last.

The Call to Oak Cliff Assembly

In 1945, the call came in for the Noahs to try out for a church in Dallas, Texas, called Oak Cliff Assembly of God. The church voted the Noahs in, and they pastored Oak Cliff for 33 years until their retirement in 1978, with only a short break to return to the evangelistic field for about a year in 1953.

That was the beginning of a great relationship of love between Pastor and Mrs. Noah and the congregation of Oak Cliff, which had far-reaching effects throughout the years. Nonetheless, H. C. Noah continued to have heart problems as he came to Dallas, but he credited his obedience to God's call with his eventual healing.

One of H. C. Noah's burdens was for evangelism, and under his leadership, Oak Cliff Assembly became involved in sponsoring and coordinating revival meetings during the 1940s and 1950s that changed the complexion of Dallas. Some of the better-known revivalists included Jack Coe, David Nunn, Gordon Lindsay, Gayle Jackson and Oral Roberts. The congregation grew, and the church relocated to a 17-acre site at 110 Ann Arbor, where a new 1,450-capacity sanctuary was completed in 1964.

The Valleys and the Mountaintop

Although he was always thankful for his life, Pastor Noah was rocked to the core by the tragedy of his son, Ken Noah's untimely death on March 10, 1970, and the loss of his beloved wife Dorothy, on June 6, 1989. He and Dorothy had been married fifty-seven years. Yet, God carried him through the valleys.

His "mountaintop" experience came during a service once, when he



H. C. and Dorothy Noah in the mid-1970s.

was taken to Calvary. Not in a vision or by miraculous visitation, but by a divine realization of what Calvary was all about — that everything, absolutely everything, connects back to Calvary — God's sacrifice for us, our healing, our salvation, everything.

During all of Pastor Noah's pastorates, his primary goal was always "outreach" to the community, in his quest for souls for the Kingdom. He did this through various means: citywide revivals, radio outreach (*The Morning Worship Hour*), tracts, door-to-door witnessing, a bus ministry, and advertising in the local newspapers.

On a Sunday morning in October 1978, Pastor Noah shocked the Oak Cliff family with the news of his impending resignation as pastor of the church. There was not a dry eye in the house.

Noah's Last Witness

Very late on Sunday evening, June 1, 1997, Pastor Noah's daughter, Connie Smith, felt a desire to call him. When he answered the phone, she could hear a crowd of people talking in the background, and thought it odd, for it was much too late for any activity in his room. They talked for a while, enjoying each other's company, and then he somewhat cryptically told her, "Well, I have to go. They are waiting for me." And he hung up the phone.

Early Monday morning, June 2, 1997, Pastor Noah slipped away again to join his Lord, and a host of his friends

and family in their heavenly abode.

When asked once in an interview with Everitt M. Fjordbak how he wanted to be remembered, H. C. Noah replied, "I just want to be remembered as just a person who loved the Lord with all his heart, and loved people because God put it into my heart; and, as one who served the Lord with all of his heart."



J. Naaman Hall, a third-generation member of the Assemblies of God, is editor of the *Ol' Fashion Camp Meeting Newsletter* which is distributed to past members

of Oak Cliff Assembly of God. This article is adapted from "And the Latter Days..." — a forthcoming history of Oak Cliff Assembly, now The Oaks Fellowship.

Resources

H. C. Noah, interview by Bill Smith, March 27, 1975, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

H. C. Noah, interview by Everitt M. Fjordbak, ca. 1980, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

H. C. Noah, interview by Wayne E. Warner, May 19, 1981, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

Recollections (oral and written) of longtime Oak Cliff members, including Spencer January, Cozadene Martin (the church's historian), Karen Singleterry, Betty Dempsey, and Noah family members.



God's Warrior

Niilo Yli-Vainio

The Great Finnish Revivalist

By Benjamin Ranta

From about 1977 to 1981, the small nation of Finland was shaken by one of the greatest revivals the country has ever seen. At the center of this awakening were the Holy Spirit and His instrument, Niilo Yli-Vainio. First, I will discuss the general context of the Finnish Pentecostal movement. Second, I will tell the fascinating story of Yli-Vainio's part in the revival. Finally, I will consider what possible lessons can be drawn from the revival of Yli-Vainio. The Pentecostal movement in Finland and the revival of Yli-Vainio show that although revivals often tend to center around charismatic leaders, they are fully dependent on the Holy Spirit and an attitude of prayer and humility on the part of their participants.

In 1906, an English Methodist missionary to Norway, Thomas Ball Barratt, itinerated in the United States in order to raise support funds for

his missionary work. He read about the Azusa Street Revival from a periodical and began to seek Spirit baptism at prayer meetings. Soon, he received Spirit baptism at a New York City prayer meeting. When he left the United States, he took the fire to England, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. In 1911, Barratt visited the Swedish-speaking areas of Finland. Although the revival meetings were first held among the Swedish minority of Finland, soon the Holy Ghost fire spread among the Finns themselves.

The early Finnish Pentecostals did not intend to leave their former denominations, but their churches did not tolerate healings, speaking in tongues, and the believer's water baptism. As a result, the Pentecostals began to gather in homes, taking turns at hosting meetings in each believer's home. The singing of hymns and fervent prayer while kneeling on the floor marked these meetings. Thus,

among Pentecostals a life of Pentecost came to be known as "traveling the way of the knees."

The pastors were not highly educated, and their message was simple but effective. They taught the soon coming of the Lord, baptism in the Spirit, salvation from hell, and most importantly, the centrality of Jesus to the life of believers. In traditional Pentecostal fashion, Finnish believers also shared prayer requests and testimonies of how extraordinary God had been to them. The sharing of testimonies and prayer requests is still practiced in Finnish churches today.

Itinerant pastors were the norm, and even those who stayed in one city often traveled to nearby villages. Later, when the local churches obtained their own buildings, the pastors continued itinerating to reach the lost and thirsty of surrounding villages. Although this itineration caused loneliness and strain on families, the pastors often saw the

Niilo Ylivainio, center right in white shirt, ministers to a crowd at a three-day conference in Helsinki, about 1977, in which almost 400 accepted Christ.

church as having a higher priority than their wife and children; as one pastor remarked, “When I felt the call to be a minister, I thought to myself that God was calling me to the life of a wandering Gypsy.”

Another unique element in Finnish Pentecostalism is the guitar choir. The guitar choir is composed of both men and women, almost all of which strum guitars in harmony. Sometimes similar choirs were formed with accordions. These choirs were put to effective use with a strong beat, a minor key, and forlorn lyrics calling the unsaved to repentance. It was in this context that Yli-Vainio came to know Christ, and was called to the ministry.

Niilo Yli-Vainio was born in February 1920 to a mildly religious Lutheran home. His father was a soldier decorated in the Finnish War of Independence (from Russia, 1918), but had left the military to work in the logging industry; while his mother was a caring homemaker. The young couple lived with Yli-Vainio’s grandmother.

When Yli-Vainio was born, the doctor expected both him and his mother to die. However, the grandmother prophetically proclaimed that this son would not die, and since

the family already had a soldier of war, the son would grow up to be a strong soldier in the Kingdom of God. The father laughed at this idea. Nonetheless, both the mother and child survived the rigors of labor, and Yli-Vainio grew to the stature of a man.

for four years during the war, and I did not see anything other than deceit and wrongdoing. The chaplains blessed us and promised heaven to us if we fall in battle. Then, they drove us to be cannon fodder like lambs to the butcher... God does not exist. If humans do

Not long after his conversion, Yli-Vainio began seeing visions of lost souls being chained and sent to Hell.

In about 1938, Yli-Vainio married a young woman by the name of Linnea. Unfortunately, he had barely been married a year when the Finno-Russian war broke out in November 1939. During this war, Yli-Vainio was sent to the front as a soldier. (Many Pentecostals refused to bear arms and were imprisoned as a result. They saw their heavenly citizenship as transcending any human government and believed that to follow Jesus’ example in loving one’s enemy required that they love Russians as Jesus had loved them.)

Up until this time, Yli-Vainio had been a nominal Lutheran. On the battlefield, any faith that Yli-Vainio might have had was taken from him. He explains his attitude, “There is no such thing as the word of God. I crawled through forests and thickets

not help themselves, they will remain unhelped.” Little did he expect that a greater warrior than he would soon storm the ramparts of his soul.

After the war, Pentecostalism grew in many regions due to the relocation of refugees after the war. Before the war, many of these refugees were part of a Pentecostal revival in Viipuri (Vyborg) near the Russian border. Linnea began to attend house church meetings in nearby villages, while Yli-Vainio worked long days at a workshop. The Word of God was planted in Linnea’s heart, and she accepted Christ as her savior. Although Yli-Vainio was very much against this change, he sometimes visited Pentecostal house meetings. He was struck by the joy and authenticity of the believers’ faith. He was also touched by the beautiful songs sung by the guitar choirs. Soon, he too accepted Christ as Lord.

Not long after his conversion, Yli-Vainio began seeing visions of lost souls being chained and sent to Hell. He was greatly disturbed at these visions and felt that this was a call to ministry. Shortly thereafter, he began the process of visiting nearby villages with a friend, holding evangelistic meetings in homes. People were saved and filled with the Spirit at his meetings, and he received further confirmation of his calling through a personal prophecy.

The years passed in itinerating, and Yli-Vainio was even elected the pastor



Niilo Yli-Vainio addresses a crowd in Helsinki, about 1977.

Niilo Yli-Vainio speaking to a crowd of Finnish believers.



of an established church. Nevertheless, his messages were always centered on evangelization and repentance. During this time of persistent work, he lived in Sweden serving as the pastor of several Finnish immigrant churches. He was considered a successful pastor. Churches grew under his leadership, and he wrote tracts for Christian living and evangelization.

He also often contributed to *Ristin Voitto* (This publication, translated “The Victory of the Cross,” is the Finnish equivalent of the *Pentecostal Evangel*). In one of his articles, he wrote about peace. He proclaimed that individuals must have peace between both God and their fellow humans. The prophecy of his grandmother was being fulfilled; the son of a decorated soldier no longer served in an earthly army, but was a soldier for the Kingdom of God.

During one of the general councils of the Pentecostal Church of Finland, Yli-Vainio made a striking observation. He told the gathered pastorate that he had noticed that the fires of Pentecost had begun to ebb in Finland. He said that people were no longer being filled with the Spirit with the same frequency and zeal as before. He connected this development to the lack of prayer. The

intermittently for over ten years, his wife was also diagnosed with cancer in 1976. There was nothing that could be done. Yli-Vainio was operating at 80% effectiveness, and even his wife was ill. The middle-aged couple began to plan the rest of their lives. They would move to the countryside to die in peace. This time of sickness taught Yli-Vainio the humility he would later need.

That Christmas, Yli-Vainio went to Australia to preach at the Australian Finnish Pentecostal Conference. During his visit, he experienced a transformation. It was as though God

Yli-Vainio preached, people began to be slain in the Spirit (to fall under the power of the Spirit), others were healed, and still others spoke in tongues. In the first several meetings, there were several hundred listeners, but within weeks the meetings had to be moved to a large hall. Thousands flocked to Lapua. Busloads of people from all walks of life, Christians and non-Christians, and people from various denominations came. Meetings were held in Lapua once a week, and on other days Yli-Vainio itinerated.

At the nightly meetings one hundred to two hundred people regularly came to accept Christ as Lord. Newspaper reporters came to observe the meetings, some to mock, others recognizing the indisputable evidence of miracles. Between the years 1977 and 1980, each weekly issue of *Ristin Voitto* contained at least three articles and three advertisements for meetings concerning Yli-Vainio’s revival and his schedule. A film was shot concerning his revival, and his biography was published in 1978. One advertisement stated, “This is a different Lapua Movement,” in reference to a 1932 Fascist insurrection of the same name. Yli-Vainio, who became known as “God’s Warrior,” was at the center of a movement that was even renaming past militaristic movements.

Newspaper reporters came to observe the meetings, some to mock, others recognizing the indisputable evidence of miracles.

Finns were no longer “traveling the way of the knees” as they had before. This observation was duly noted in the minutes and in *Ristin Voitto*, but life went on as usual.

Then, in 1963, something terrible happened. Yli-Vainio began having heart trouble. Although God miraculously healed him, it was not long before he was also diagnosed with cancer. After struggling with cancer

had opened a window into his life and he was filled with joy and healing. After that point, his sermons changed. It was as though they were filled with light. At the prayer meetings in Australia, people began to be filled with the Spirit unlike Yli-Vainio had ever seen before. When he returned to Finland, his wife was miraculously healed at home.

In 1977, Yli-Vainio was invited to the city of Lapua, to preach. As

Yli-Vainio no longer itinerated in houses and villages, but in stadiums and cities. He even traveled to the Far East to spread the revival. The lame walked, the blind saw, and those with cancer received healing. Some people reported being healed merely at the sight of Yli-Vainio's picture, while others were healed by having a kerchief blessed by Yli-Vainio laid on him or her (this relic-based healing is still practiced among Finnish Pentecostals).

Needless to say, the great fame made humility quite difficult for Yli-Vainio. The revival caused almost a cultic following around him. People referred to him as "the miraculous healer Yli-Vainio" or simply "the healer Yli-Vainio." He received mail and continuous phone calls seeking appointments and asking him to heal individuals. Nevertheless, he remained humble.

He desperately sought to focus people's eyes on Christ and the Holy Spirit, as he taught in one sermon, "Do not tell others that someone has been healed by the power of a human here. Humans do not make anyone healthy, only God can do that.... The Holy Spirit descends on the person, moves as a gust of wind through the person, and if God so desires, the person is healed." He also declared, "I do not recommend some denomination to you, some church or organization. I recommend Jesus. He fills the person with the Holy Spirit and fire. The Bible says, 'There is no salvation in any other name.' God loves all people without paying attention to race, nationality, color, or denomination." The sermons and writing of Yli-Vainio reflect an almost desperate state. It seemed that people just did not understand; it was not about him, it was about God. At his meetings, he repeated almost like a mantra, "Jesus did it, Jesus did it."

By 1981, the revival appeared to be slowing down. Yli-Vainio wanted to take a month off to fast and pray, but his itineration was as feverish as ever. He went to Spain in February, and planned to visit Ukraine soon

after. Although the Spanish visit was intended as a vacation, Yli-Vainio still held meetings. Then, one day while jogging, he collapsed. His heart had become too weak with his furious pace of meetings and trips. He died as he had lived, far away from his family.

Yli-Vainio definitely made an impact on Finland. During his time of ministry, he visited or pastored in Sweden, Norway, Japan, Thailand, Spain, Australia, Canada, and Israel. Today, Yli-Vainio is still the second most known Pentecostal in Finland (69% of Finns can recognize his name) next to Sari Essayah, a Finnish Olympic athlete (88%).

All Pentecostals may learn from Yli-Vainio's life. He emphasized that an attitude of prayer and expectation is indispensable to experiencing Pentecost. In his ministry, he insisted on drawing people's eyes to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit, not to himself. He proclaimed that revival does not depend on what one does, whose meeting one attends, or even what label is plastered on the side of the church; it is the work of God. The Holy Spirit chooses which gifts are given to which people, and he decides the time and place of Spirit baptism.

Some people in Finland are asking the question, "Do we need another Niilo Yli-Vainio to gather the embers of revival?" I would suggest no. Yli-Vainio taught that Christians should focus on Christ, not on a person. The lesson for Pentecostals everywhere is that revival is the result of prayer, expectation, and Christ-centered teaching.



Benjamin Ranta is an undergraduate student at Evangel University. He was raised in an immigrant Finnish

Pentecostal church in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. He loves to study history and write poetry. This article, written in partial fulfillment of an internship at the FPHC, makes accessible for the first time to English-speaking audiences valuable information about the life and ministry of Niilo Yli-Vainio.

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Early Pentecost in Sisseton, South Dakota

By Avis Opsal Osland



Blanche Brittain, the spiritual “sod buster” of North and South Dakota.

Three score and 15 years ago God sent forth into this city two handmaidens with a wondrous message, conceived in God’s Word, and dedicated to the proposition that all its citizens might have the opportunity to hear the gospel.

We are here tonight to reflect on those who gave their dedication, energy and meager means that this city might be reached for God. After this 75th anniversary, many of you will little note or long remember what we say here, but let us never forget what God has done here.

These were my opening words as I began to relate the early history of the Assembly of God of Sisseton, South Dakota, on its 75th anniversary which was celebrated June 29 – July 1, 2001.*

God’s special servants who brought Pentecost to Sisseton were Anna Vassen of Westby, Montana, and Blanche Brittain, known as the spiritual “sod buster” of North and South Dakota. Anna’s brother Ole lived in Crosby, North Dakota, and was known as the town drunkard. Anna contacted evangelist Brittain and plans were made to launch a tent meeting in Crosby. Anna prayerfully believed that Ole would be reached by God — and he was! Now a new creature in Christ, he and Anna asked Sister Brittain to go to Sisseton, where two unsaved Vassen brothers resided.

In July 1926, a tent was erected in Sisseton. There, evangelist Brittain

accompanied by pianist and trombonist Marie Cowing and altar worker Ruth Larson, presented the Word of God each evening. Those sitting in the tent did not seem to think the long, 12-inch wide planks too uncomfortable. Nightly the tent was filled and many stood outside, some listening and others causing disturbances. Ole, the former drunkard, was the maintenance man. He, his wife, and four children completed the gospel team. Many responded to the altar call including my parents, Ole and Ollie Opsal.

One evening I, a little nine-year-old, was greatly under conviction. I had seen the altar worker speak to individuals and lead them to the altar.

I wanted her to speak to me, but she did not, so I did not go forward that evening.

When the tent was taken down, meetings continued in the old Opera House with Sister Brittain until the death of a loved one called her away. Peter Jepsen and Roy Reed ministered at different times. Anna Vassen, burdened for someone to come and shepherd the group of new believers, traveled to a fall convention in Alexandria, Minnesota. There she gave the Macedonian cry, “Will someone please come to Sisseton?” Arthur and Anna Berg, newly-returned missionaries who had spent four years in Belgian Congo, heard the plea and felt challenged. Later, enroute to the west coast, they stopped in Sisseton for a 10-day meeting and then returned to Minneapolis to spend the holidays with loved ones.

It was early January 1927 when the Bergs arrived in Sisseton. With them was the little three-year-old girl, Aggie, who had been born of Swedish

parents while in Congo. Her mother died when she was 17 days old, and her father left her with a missionary couple and returned to Sweden with his young son. This couple died within a couple of days of each other and then the Bergs took Aggie and she became known as “the little girl without a country.” Also accompanying the Bergs was Nina Englund (later Mrs. Glenn Renick), a former missionary to Brazil, who was a precious coworker.

The Bergs rented the Commercial Hall over the Golden Rule store. Here the benches were better than those in the tent, inasmuch as an upper plank afforded rest for tired backs. On plank-topped tables the Bergs placed African curios—an attraction and an introduction to customs of Congo.

I remember one Sunday evening service, on August 21, 1927, when my parents and others were at the homemade altar praying. My friend, Vonnie Fenske, and I were sitting back and softly whispering. Brother Berg came to us and asked, “Girls, how old are you?” “I’m ten,” Vonnie answered and I excitedly added, “I’m ten tomorrow!”

“Ten years old and you haven’t given your hearts to Jesus,” he said. I don’t know what Vonnie thought, but to me it sounded like we had done something very bad. Then he added,

Dexter Collins (center), his wife Elsie, and Bert Webb (right) in 1928.



“Girls, promise me you’ll ask the Lord to show you your need of Him.” We both promised, but I completely forgot my promise and I don’t know if my friend remembered.

The following Sunday I and my two younger sisters were sitting on a bench in front of our parents. At the close Mother reached forward, trying to clasp us three and said, “Girls, won’t you give your hearts to Jesus tonight?” We went forward and oh, how we cried out to Jesus. We did not have Kleenex® tissues in those days, so we each used Mama’s handkerchief.

Jesus became so precious to each of us, and we have served Him these many passing years. Esther, who was almost seven that night, went to be with Jesus in 1998. Yvonne, almost four, grew up and became a missionary with her husband, Orville Carlson, to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and the Fiji Islands. Her book, *Treasured Memories*, relates God’s loving care

and miraculous answers to prayer in those dedicated times.

Brother Berg, upon hearing that the Methodist church was vacant and might be for sale, made an inquiry. The Methodist board members did not want to sell to a group of “holy rollers.” Berg then learned of empty lots and



Arthur and Anna (Hanson) Berg with daughter Aggie, about 1927. Aggie later became the wife of D. V. Hurst.

A New Work

Sister Blanche Brittain writes from Sisseton, S. Dak.: “Our tent meeting at Sisseton closed Aug. 1 at high tide. There were good crowds and many church people partook with us. Over 30 sought salvation and restoration at the altar. The meetings are now being continued four times a week in the opera house. Baptismal service will be held Aug. 15. The prospects are good for an established work. Pray for us.” — *The Pentecostal Evangel*, Sept. 11, 1926.

inquired as to their possible sale. The owners would sell and Berg advanced \$50. Then the Methodist men changed their minds, thinking “if these people are going to build, we might as well let them have our building.”

It was a happy group who came and worked to get the building ready to use. Men, women and even we kids were out on the lawn with old-fashioned rug beaters, pounding the “Methodist dust” out of pew cushions.

The first Sunday of October 1927, we were in our new building, which we called Bethel Church, and many of us children sat on the front row.



The Assembly of God at Sisseton, about 1930, during the time Bartlett Peterson was pastor.

When Thanksgiving Day came, our congregation celebrated as one big family with a turkey dinner with all its trimmings in the basement. Pastor Berg knew business procedures and presented a financial plan for the coming year. The believers, with their newfound love for Jesus, quickly responded with pledges and within 13 months paid off the church debt.

The side room of the church was the first “parsonage” with a small movable partition separating it into two rooms. Not long after the church debt was cleared, members purchased the old Methodist parsonage, located next to the church.

The ministry of the Bergs was extensive as each of them preached and taught Bible studies using illustrated charts. We children were as interested as the older people. Sister Berg formed a “Glory Choir” and our theme chorus was “We are the Savior’s boys and girls.” She announced that we could even sing it backwards — which we did by turning our backs to the audience and singing. She also organized a “Glory Orchestra” with many different small and inexpensive instruments.

The summer of 1928 the Bergs invited Dexter Collins and Bert

Webb to hold tent meetings in Sisseton and also in a rural area out where the Vassen brothers lived. Pentecostal practices sparked curiosity within many local residents. When a number of new believers were baptized in Red Iron Lake, curious onlookers also attended. When a young lady who was one of the early believers died, the church was packed for the funeral. Some residents thought that a Pentecostal funeral would somehow be different than Lutheran funerals (with all those holy rollers!). The funeral wasn’t shocking, it turned out, and with the passing of time, some of these onlookers were saved and joined the Pentecostals. The Bergs also conducted weekly services in the Roberts County jail.

It was a very sad day when the

Blessings Overflow at Sisseton, S.D.

Sister Berg Reports Fine Results
From Zelma Argue Campaign

We have just closed a series of revival services with Sister Zelma Argue of Winnipeg, Canada, as the evangelist. She was with us for three weeks and from the very first service God’s power and glory were present in a remarkable way. The showers of “Latter Rain” fell in the real old-time way; and we were made to rejoice as we saw the Lord working. Several sought God for salvation and twenty-one were gloriously filled with the Holy Spirit. Among them were a number of mature men who had been seeking the baptism of the Holy Ghost for some time. At one meeting there were three ministers tarrying for the Holy Spirit, of whom two, a Holiness minister and a Nazarene lay-preacher both received an Acts 2:4 experience. The Holiness minister whose home is in Ellendale, N.D., and has been holding meetings in Rutland, N.D., just 60 miles from Sisseton, came down for the purpose of receiving the Holy Spirit and both he and the brother with him were blessedly filled.

According to our custom we continued with our weekly meetings in the jail and twice during the revival we had as our guests the prisoners from the County jail, brought at their request by the sheriff. They were deeply moved and several requested prayer.

The ministry of Sister Argue was of great blessing to the entire community, and the Word of God preached in power and with anointing brought conviction upon the unsaved, and the saints were wonderfully strengthened and encouraged to press the battle until Jesus comes.

Brother Berg could not be home for the meetings as he is in Montana traveling in the interest of World Missions. He reports victory and blessing in his work there. — Mrs. Arthur F. Berg, *The Gospel Broadcast*, May 1930.



Anna Vassen and her brother Ole.



A few of the people who attended Blanche Brittain's tent meeting at Sisseton in July 1926. L-r: Blanche Brittain, unidentified, Ole Vassen's daughter, 2 unidentified, and Inga and Ole Vassen with 3 children. The tent in the background says "Pentecostal Revival."

Bergs said "Goodbye" and moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, after having pastored Bethel Church for four years.

The church body elected E. Bartlett Peterson as their new pastor. He and his wife were newlyweds. She had been part of the Espeseth trio (which consisted of her and her brother and sister-in-law). Now she and her husband sang duets, accompanying themselves on string instruments. The congregation continued to hold jail services and also began ministering at the County Farm, a place for older, needy people.


Pastor Peterson's evening prophetic messages attracted many, even a group of prisoners from the county jail accompanied by the deputy sheriff. The Petersons also reached out to neighboring towns, including New Effington, South Dakota, where they held services twice a week and organized a Sunday School. He participated in city events and entered parades with posters announcing church activities. We young people

were active in Christ's Ambassadors programs. It was another sad day when the Petersons resigned and entered the evangelistic field.

This was followed by an interim period with Clarence Gordon and Tommy McNickle serving at different times. Later C. E. Thurmond was elected pastor. During his stay the nationally-known Lorne Fox Party of Canada held a two-week campaign. They gave a concert at the Sisseton High School gym. Being a student there, I was very happy to have them in our school. The church was filled each evening, and many gave their hearts to the Lord.

This history of the first nine years of the Sisseton Assembly recounts my memories from age nine until I graduated from high school and left home to attend North Central Bible Institute. Many have pastored in the passing years and many are now in glory.

I feel I have fulfilled Joel's admonition when he said, "Tell your

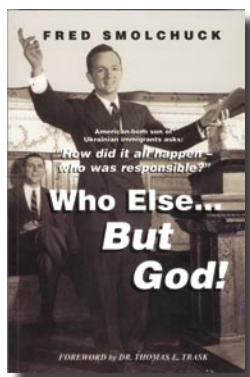
children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation" (Joel 1:3). 

*Founded in July 1926, Sisseton Assembly of God is now 80 years old. The church affiliated with the Assemblies of God on August 15, 1928, during the time that Arthur Berg was pastor.



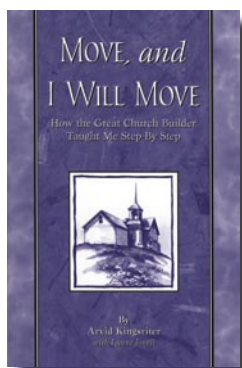
Avis Opsal Osland, formerly of Saint Thomas, North Dakota, is a licensed Assemblies of God minister and a freelance writer living in Springfield, Missouri.

SEEN IN PRINT



Who Else ... But God! by Fred Smolchuck. Springfield, MO: the author, 2006. Fred Smolchuck, the son of Ukrainian immigrants, became a leader within Slavic Pentecostalism, both in the U.S. and in eastern Europe. His story is significant, as he traces not only his family's spiritual pilgrimage, but the development of Pentecostalism among the Slavic peoples in the U.S. from the 1920s until the present. A prolific author, Smolchuck is former superintendent of the Ukrainian District Council of the Assemblies of God.

Paperback, 366 pages, \$10, plus \$2.50 shipping (\$6.50 shipping on foreign orders). Order from: Fred Smolchuck, c/o Maranatha Village, 233 E. Norton Rd., Springfield, MO 65803.

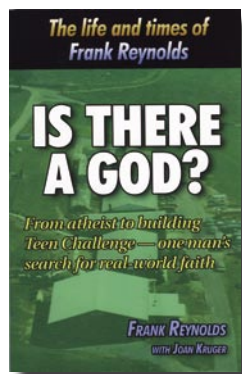


Move, and I Will Move: How the Great Church Builder Taught Me Step by Step, by Arvid Kingsriter with Lynne Jonell. Minneapolis, MN: North Central University Press, 2006. When Arvid Kingsriter pioneered

Bloomington AG in 1953, he could not have known that the congregation would become one of the largest in Minnesota, or that he would continue to pastor the church until 1989. Kingsriter, through his leadership in the Minnesota District, his steady and balanced life, and his passion for missions and church planting, has influenced generations of Pentecostals.

In *Move, and I Will Move*, Kingsriter aims to share lessons from his life and ministry. From his recollections as a student at North Central Bible Institute in the 1930s, to accounts of various revivals and leaders with whom he worked, to leadership lessons learned through crises such as the Latter Rain movement, to advice offered to ministers, this book will prove a valuable resource for pastors, scholars, and people in the pew.

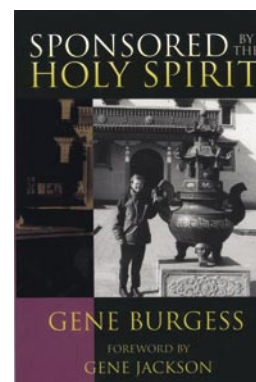
Paperback, 210 pages, illustrated. \$12.95 plus shipping. Order from: University Bookstore, North Central University, 910 Elliot Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404. Ph. 612-343-7887.



Is There a God?, by Frank Reynolds with Joan Kruger. Lenexa, KS: 3Cross Publishing, 2006. Filled with anger after his father deserted his family in the midst of the Depression, Frank Reynolds was determined to graduate from high school and go to college. He became an atheist early in life, was convinced success was in wealth and education, and graduated from Cornell University.

However, after an extended period of research and reflection, he came to believe in God and accepted Christ. He immediately felt a call to the ministry, was ordained by the Assemblies of God, and became one of the early leaders in Teen Challenge, a Christian drug and alcohol treatment program. He ultimately served as the first National Representative for Teen Challenge. In *Is There a God?*, Reynolds shares his own faith-building story, which provides an insider's perspective concerning the early years of Teen Challenge.

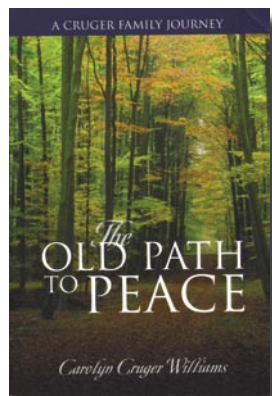
Paperback, 139 pages, \$12, plus \$1.60 shipping. Order from: Frank Reynolds, 4626 S. Crescent Ave., Springfield, MO 65804.



Sponsored by the Holy Spirit, by Gene Burgess. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, Inc., 2005. Burgess, pastor of First Assembly of God (Bartlett, TN), has written an inspiring account of his life and ministry. Raised in Memphis (TN) First Assembly, he recounts his youthful friends and acquaintances, including the Blackwood Brothers, James Hamill, and Elvis Presley. When Burgess left his position as a pharmacist in 1963 to launch out into evangelistic ministry, many people questioned his wisdom. However, God's call was evident, and he went on to serve as an international evangelist, missionary and pastor.

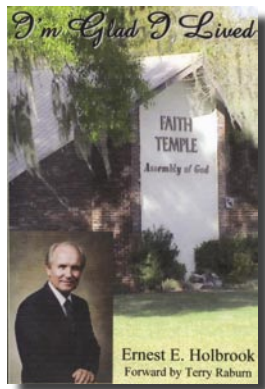
Paperback, 164 pages, illustrated.

Available at www.amazon.com.
\$16.95 retail.



The Old Path to Peace: A Cruger Family Journey, by Carolyn Cruger Williams. Enumclaw, WA: Pleasant Word, 2003. This well-documented family history contains a treasure trove of information about early Pentecostals in Spokane, Washington, including stories of John G. Lake, Aimee Semple McPherson, the Philadelphian Church, and Bernard Hebden.

Paperback, 438 pages, illustrated. Available at www.amazon.com. \$22.99 retail.



I'm Glad I Lived, by Ernest E. Holbrook. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2005. Ernest Holbrook, raised on a farm near Lakeland, Florida, entered the ministry at age 18. Ordained by the Assemblies of God in 1952, he served as senior pastor of Faith Temple Assembly of God (Plant City, FL) for 27 years. Holbrook, in a folksy style and with humorous stories, tells his story and provides insight into grassroots Pentecostal ministry.

Paperback, 474 pages, illustrated. Available at www.amazon.com. \$22.95 retail.

Publication Statement

This issue, Spring-Summer 2006, is the last quarterly installment of *Assemblies of God Heritage*. Scheduled to make its debut in 2007 is an expanded 64-page annual edition of *Heritage*, which will be sent to all AG ministers in addition to subscribers. The annual edition will continue to provide enriching and inspiring information about our Pentecostal heritage, as you have come to expect.

All who currently receive *Heritage* will receive a letter containing further information about their subscription and instructions for ordering the 2007 annual edition.

Ordering information is below:

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(Continued from page 3)

this greatly expedited my work on illustrations for the encyclopedia.

Thanks!

Mike McClymond

Saint Louis University

The Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America (Greenwood Press), edited by Michael McClymond, is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2006.

The Ed Cole Library

Darrin [Rodgers],

Your team at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center was amazing. Fast, courteous, professional and above all gracious to take the time to help put the life's work of my grandfather [Dr. Edwin Louis Cole] in a place where it can be preserved for the benefit of unknown numbers of people. It means a lot to me to have established our relationship, to work towards preserving an incredible legacy and

to complete the task that Joann Cole Webster [Dr. Cole's daughter] and Dr. Trask tasked us to do. I look forward to an ongoing relationship. If there is anything you guys should need from us don't hesitate to ask!

From the bottom of my heart...

thank you!

In Christ,

Seth M. Webster, Administrator

Ed Cole® Library

The family of the late Dr. Edwin Louis Cole, a men's ministry pioneer and former Assemblies of God minister, has established The Ed Cole Library in order to make materials from his life and ministry more accessible to a global audience. The website, www.EdColeLibrary.org, includes scanned images of Dr. Cole's personal sermon outlines and notes, his ministry itinerary, and additional resources for pastors and men. In June 2006, The Ed Cole Library deposited Dr. Cole's original sermon outlines and notes at the FPHC for preservation and research purposes.

August Herman Wendt: German District Pioneer

By A. Reuben Hartwick

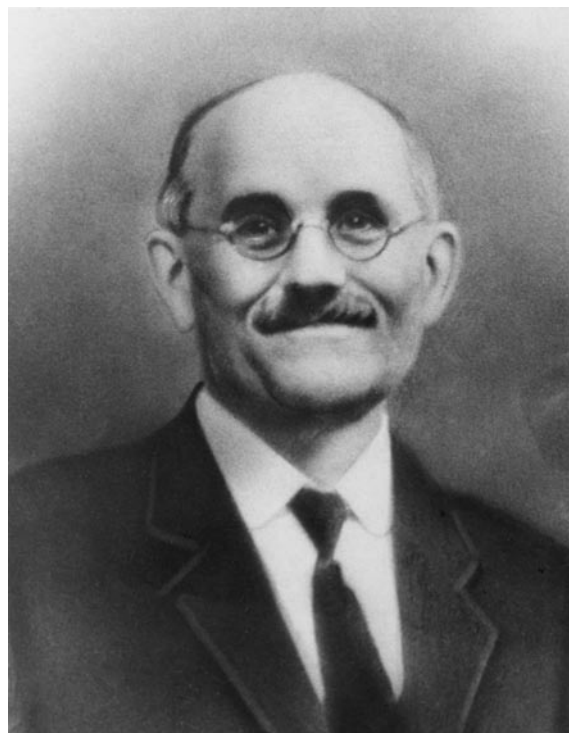
When the German Branch (renamed German District in 1973) of the Assemblies of God was organized in New Castle, Pennsylvania in 1922, participants elected August Herman Wendt to serve as its first chairman.

A. H. Wendt was born in Schoenberg, Wurttemberg, Germany, on October 12, 1864. After receiving an education in Europe, he immigrated to the United States and became a naturalized citizen on March 26,

1892. He married Lucinda Gonawein of Fremont, Ohio, in 1888. Of their eight children, four daughters and one son survived into adulthood. While attending a conference at Linwood Park, Ohio, in 1904, Lucinda took ill and died. Wendt married Bertha Ursula Hoch of New Castle, Pennsylvania, the following year. They had no surviving children.

Wendt held credentials with the Evangelical Association of North America-Erie Conference for 35 years. He pastored at least eight German-speaking churches in that fellowship, including ones in Rocky Ridge, Youngstown, and Huron, Ohio; and Altoona, Freedom, and New Castle, Pennsylvania. While in New Castle, he became acquainted with former members of the German Evangelical Church who had received the Pentecostal experience in the local Christian and Missionary Alliance congregation. They were worshipping at the newly-formed English-speaking Assembly of God, which was meeting directly across from the Evangelical Church.

A. H. Wendt (left) and his wife, Bertha, with her father, Charles Hoch, about 1905.



A. H. Wendt, first chairman of the German Branch.

For several years the Assembly of God sponsored three-week-long tent meetings in Cunningham's Woods (now Gaston Park) in New Castle. Wendt cooperated with the meetings, hearing early Assemblies of God luminaries such as Robert and Marie Brown of New York City, David McDowell of Scranton, Pennsylvania, Joseph Tunmore of Pittsburgh, E. S. Williams of Philadelphia, and D. W. Kerr of Cleveland, Ohio. He also heard Pentecostal missionaries, including the Christian Schoonmakers of India, the Victor Plymires of China, and others during the meetings.

Wendt's fellowship with Pentecostals and his desire for the deeper spiritual life that he sensed in them came to the attention of the bishop, who reassigned him to a parish near Toledo, Ohio. His wife, Bertha, later related that spiritual awakenings occurred in that church and in the subsequent parish to which he was assigned. He continued his quest for the deeper life of the Spirit, resigned his credentials with the Evangelical Church, and returned to New Castle,



where he pioneered the German Pentecostal Tabernacle. He applied for credentials with the Assemblies of God, which recognized his former ordination and welcomed him into their fellowship on December 2, 1921.

In his travels among the German Pentecostal believers, he observed the need for an organizational bond such as was offered by the newly-formed Assemblies of God. After contacting Chairman E. N. Bell and Secretary John W. Welch, he received a letter in November 1922 that said in part: "We should be glad to have a German Branch to recommend Germans for credentials and to encourage you in every way possible. God bless and guide you. Door is open. In His love, E. N. Bell."¹

With approval granted, a group of ministers and delegates of the German Pentecostal churches in North America gathered for a conference a few weeks later at New Castle, Pennsylvania, resolving to form the German Branch of the Assemblies of God, and Wendt

was elected chairman.

Wendt remained as pastor of the German Pentecostal Tabernacle and as chairman of the German Branch until his death on January 2, 1929. He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery, New Castle, Pennsylvania. While Wendt came into Pentecost late in life, he made a significant impact on German-speaking Pentecostal churches in America. C. W. Loenser, secretary of the German Branch, offered the following praise of Wendt's faithfulness:

The Lord honored our dear brother's efforts by giving him souls wherever he went. His fatherly counsel and timely messages were a great help and inspiration to all the German assemblies which he visited from time to time... We will always cherish the memory of our esteemed brother as a loyal coworker, a beloved spiritual father, a faithful pastor, and humble servant of the Lord.²



A. Reuben Hartwick and his wife, Thelma, reside in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. A. H. Wendt was Thelma's grandfather. Reuben is professor emeritus at Valley Forge Christian College, where he taught from 1969 to 1995.

Notes

¹ E. N. Bell, letter possibly to A. H. Wendt, November 9, 1922. German District files, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

² A. H. Wendt, obituary, *New Castle News*, undated clipping (January 1929).

Help us Share the Story of the Assemblies of God by donating materials from your life and ministry

The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center is actively seeking the following materials related to your ministry and the worldwide Pentecostal movement:

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ARCHIVES ACTIVITIES

Robert and Norma Allen: Songbook used in the Ponpei Assembly of God, Micronesia. **Jackie C. Ashpole:** *Constitution and By-laws, 1949-1950, Oklahoma District Council of the Assemblies of God Inc.; 1949-1950 Minutes, Arkansas District Council of the Assemblies of God*; booklet: *Echoes from Calvary's Call*; yearbook: IBI, *The Torch*, 1957; *Workers Together* / Jim Grant. **Harry and Martha Bartel:** Books: *La Historia de las Asambleas de Dios de Colombia: 1942-1992, Los Primeros Cincuenta Anos* / Judy Bartel Graner; *The Secret of Joy in Our Golden Years* / Martha Bartel; *Getting Old is For the Brave* / Martha Bartel; *Envejecer es de Valientes* / Martha Bartel; *Loving Jesus' Names and Finding Peace* / Martha Bartel; *Seize the Times to Proclaim the Savior* / Harry Bartel. **Richard W. Bishop:** *The Second Coming of Christ* / Aimee Semple McPherson; *Mussolini: Is He the Antichrist?* / Charles S. Price; *Northwest District Messenger* (scattered issues, 1940s-1950s); and other books and periodicals.

Diane Carter: Wooden BGMC Buddy Barrel (c.1955); Speed the Light coin collector (c.1979); misc. books. **Gary K. Clark:** *Refreshing Times: The Voice of Holy Spirit Renewal Ministries in American Baptist Churches* (1990-2006); misc. pamphlets concerning the charismatic movement in the American Baptist Churches USA. **Daniel Donelson:** Dispensational chart of Finis Dake, 1949; photograph of Davis City, Iowa, 1939; audio tapes of David Roeber and Jack Moore. **Donald Edson:** Flyers for Gospel Tabernacle of Bismarck, North Dakota and Gospel Tabernacle of Fargo, North Dakota. **Jack R. Evans:** Commentaries by Leland B. Good.

Linda Fields: Miscellaneous items relating to home missionary Pauline Mastries. **Gary and Glenna**

Flokstra: Misc. Pentecostal books, tracts, periodicals, photographs, and audio and video recordings. **Gerard Flokstra, Jr.:** Misc. books, tracts, and papers, including many early Pentecostal materials from New England. **Verna Flower:** Publications from the New England and Southern New England Districts; sermon notes from George E. Flower; materials relating to First Pentecostal Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania; clippings about and correspondence from missionaries Leonard and Ada Bolton and Beulah Buchwalter; publications from the AG in the Gold Coast (Africa); misc. clippings, music, correspondence, etc.

Rod Gerhart: Tracts: *Is It Necessary to Praise God?* / by Raymond T. Richey; *Healing for All!* / by Raymond T. Richey; *Houston Times All Church Press*, February 20, 1976 [features Evangelistic Temple]; *The Christian World News*, May 1951; clippings and photographs about Raymond T. Richey and the Richey family. **Marilyn R. Goswick:** St. Louis (MO) newspaper article on Brother Ben / by Dickson Terry, April 4, 1948. **Lucille Green** (estate): 100 boxes of misc. books, periodicals, papers, audio and video tapes, etc. **Stephen P. Green:** "The Experience of Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers"; *Power From On High* / by John Greenfield; *The Holy Spirit* / by Thomas H. Wilson, 1911; miscellaneous periodicals.

Jeffrey M. Hall: Congregational Missionary Leadership Institute notebook used at the Assemblies of God Conference Center. **John N. Hall:** *Selected Days from the Life of Mayburn P. Potts' Family, Part One, 1902-1909*; photographs of former pastors of Oak Cliff Assembly, Dallas, Texas. **George Jenkins:** Photo album that belonged to Helen Earley. **Charles Jennings:** *70 times 7: Selected Subjects for Bible Studies* /

by R. Field; *General Constitution and By Laws of the Pentecostal Church of God of America*, 1960; *Gospel Rays in Manchoukuo* / by Foreign Missions Department; *The Baptism In The Holy Ghost* / by K. E. Abraham; *How to Make the Most of Life's Opportunities* / by A. E. Stuernagel; 5 boxes of books, magazines, and cassette tapes. **Richard Justinger:** Reel-to-reel audio tapes of sermons, teaching, etc. from various Pentecostal/charismatic leaders, mostly from the 1960s. **Dayton Kingsriter:** Casino (MN) Assembly of God, 80th anniversary booklet, 1922-2002. **Ruth Lyon:** 15 boxes of misc. books, periodicals, papers, etc., mostly relating to Home Missions.

W. A. and Ruth McCann: Photographs from their ministry in Texas and other places. **Gary B. McGee:** *Historia de las Asambleas de Dios en Mexico 2 la Consolidacion, 1930-1960* / Alfonso de los Reyes Valdez. **K. D. Mailes:** *Articles of Faith and Bylaws of the Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, Inc.*, sixth edition, 1936; camper manual: *Explore the Lord's Word*, Southern Missouri District Camp, Rocky Mount, Missouri, 1973 / by John Eller. **Jared Martin:** *Tales of Paul Lowenberg* / by Jared Martin, March 5, 2006. **Brenda (Clouse) Mosher** [granddaughter of Walter Clouse]: Photographs of the AG Headquarters plant being built in late 1940s (Walter Clouse was the foreman on the job).

Polly Brown Olive: Tracts: *Women's Missionary Council of the Northern California and Nevada District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc.; An Actor's Conversion* / by Duncan McNeil; *What Shall We Call It? December 1948*; books: *Mighty Prevailing Prayer* / edited by A. Sims; *The Overcomer*, Sunday School Department / Joseph K. Larrimore, editor; *Stories of Salvation*, Alliance Press Company. **Oregon District**

Council: *The World God Made*, VBS Beginner Pupil's Workbook, Gospel Publishing House, 1949; *My Bible Solves the Mystery*, Intermediate Pupil's Workbook, Vacation Bible School, Gospel Publishing House, 1952.

Kenneth Perkin: Photographs, memorabilia, articles, etc. from the families of Noel Perkin and Andrew Teuber. **John F. Perry:** Christmas card from Herbert Buffum and his evangelist family; evangelistic campaign flyer, August 15th, 1917; evangelistic campaign flyer, June 24th, 1919. **C. Byron and Marjory Personeus:** Photographs of their life and ministry in Alaska. **Patricia Pickard:** Tract: *Report of the Mrs. M. B. Woodworth-Etter Pentecostal Camp meeting held at Petoskey, Michigan, July 1914*; poster from "Jesus 77." **Frank Reynolds:** Book: *Is there a God?* / Frank Reynolds. **Lyman W. Richardson:** *All or Nothing* / by Harold Cole [about his

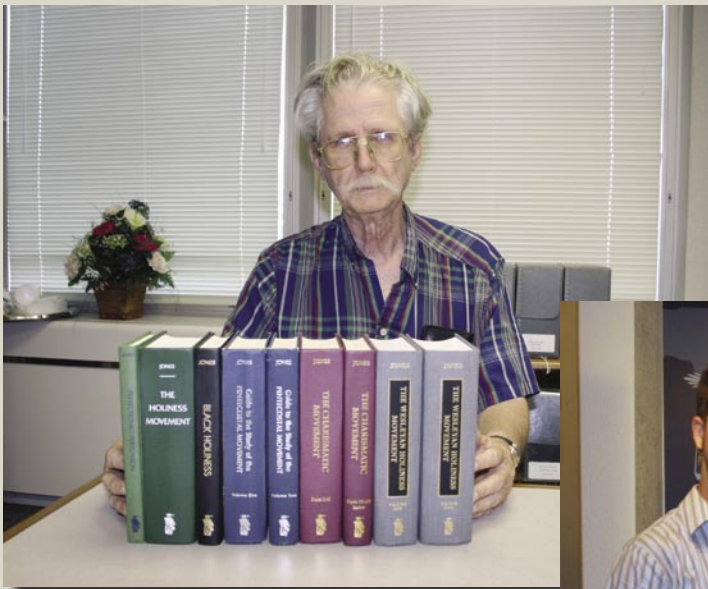
salvation experience under Lyman B. Richardson]. **Darrin Rodgers:** Audio interview with Fred Smolchuck / by Darrin Rodgers; audio interview with Carl Callihan / by Darrin Rodgers and Woodvall Moore. **Mary Rodgers:** Calvary Chapel AG (Sawyer, ND) church records; misc. books. **Berneice Rogers:** Photographs, slides, clippings, audio recording, buckskin costume and Indian headdress relating to ministry of Berneice and Burl Rogers.

Harold and Alvina Scott: Cassette tapes of sermons and music. **Paul Smith:** Photos and papers relating to the Church School Literature Department. **Fred Smolchuck:** Book: *Who Else ... But God!* / Fred Smolchuck; photographs of Ukrainian District, sermon notes, various Slavic-language books, tracts, and periodicals. **Katherine Sobey:** Photographs of Beulah Heights Missionary Training School, North Bergen, New Jersey. **Charles W.**

Spong: *The Life and Times of Norman T. Spong, Pentecostal Pioneer Pastor: Insights into Pioneer Ministry* / Charles W. Spong. **Juanita Stetz:** *Madam Guyon: An Autobiography* / Anna C. Reiff; miscellaneous Pentecostal books and materials; 6 boxes of sermon notes of Peter Stetz; prayer cards.

Ella Mae Teuber: Slides of Israel from Andrew Teuber. **Kenneth Allen Tinch:** Pamphlet: *Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International, May 17-19, 1979*.

James Tygrett: Framed photo of Central District Council at Dayton, Ohio, 1928. **Margaret Underwood:** Rolled photograph of Jack Coe tent meeting in Springfield, Missouri, 1950s. **Wayne Warner:** Misc. files and books. **George O. Wood:** Diaries kept by Missionary Mrs. L. M. Johnson of the Pentecostal Mission at Big East Gate, Canton, China, 1915, 1917, 1921, and 1923.



◀ Dr. Charles Edwin Jones, premier bibliographer of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements, visited the FPHC in June 2006. Here, he displays his published books.

▶ Darrin Rodgers (right) accepts the donation of Edwin Louis Cole's personal sermon outlines and notes from Seth Webster (left) of the Ed Cole Library, June 2006.



Richey Family Photographs



Raymond T. Richey (left) and Elmer Gerhart in 1928.



Raymond T. Richey (2nd from left), George Bowman (center), and Andrew Richey (right) giving Gideon Bibles to new army recruits in Houston, Texas.



Advertisements for Raymond T. Richey meetings.



Front Row: Eli and Sarah Richey on their 50th wedding anniversary, 1931. Back Row: Leonard F., Ziona F., Earl A., Mary Jane, Bessie M., Andrew J., Roxanna N., Raymond T.



Raymond T. Richey (1893-1968) was a prominent Assemblies of God evangelist.

Photographs donated by Rod Gerhart

