

Assemblies of God
HERITAGE™

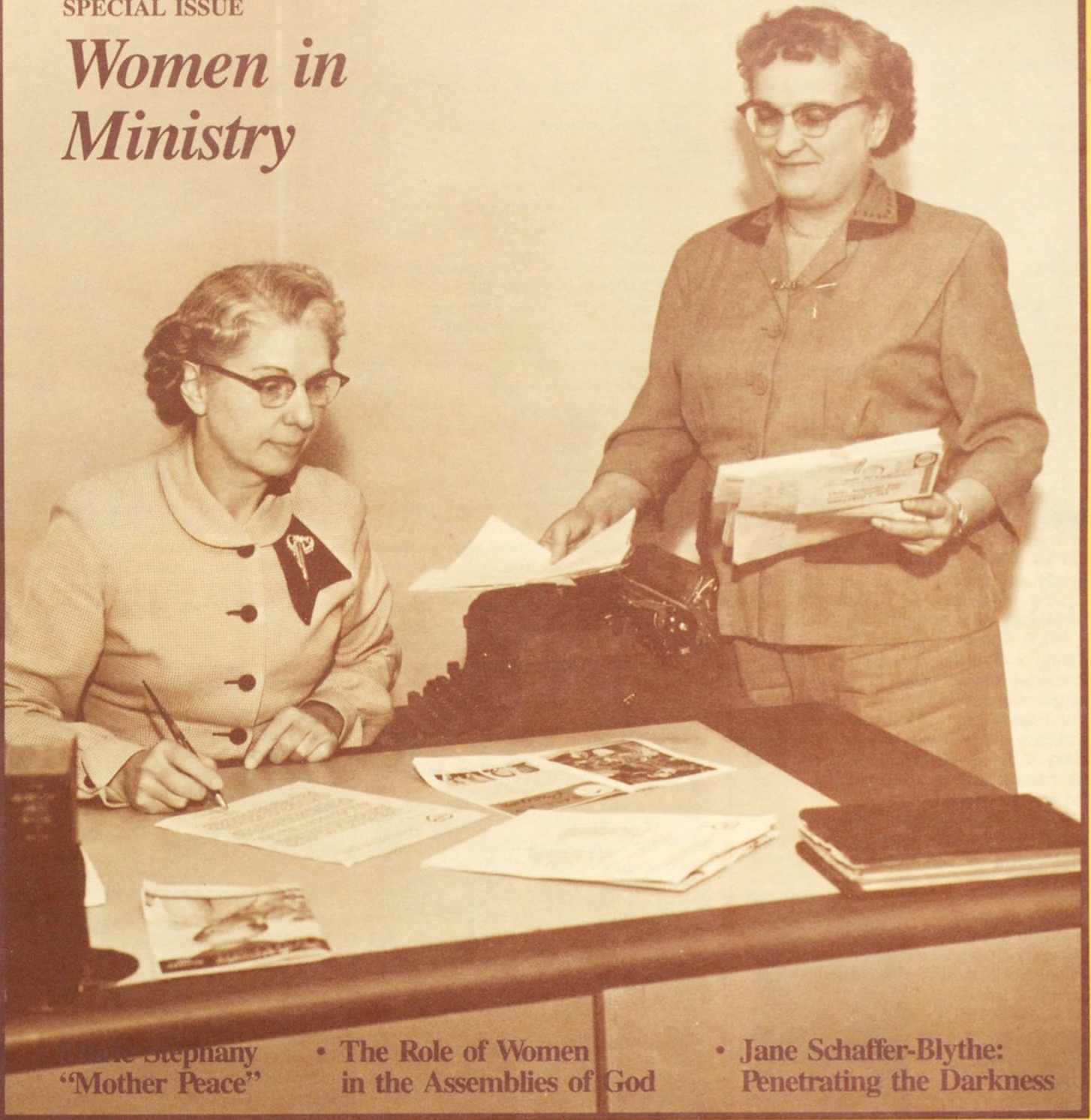
Edith Mae Pennington

*From Beauty Queen
To Pentecostal Evangelist*

VOL. 7, NO. 4, WINTER 1987-88

SPECIAL ISSUE

*Women in
Ministry*



• **Marie Stephany**
"Mother Peace"

• **The Role of Women**
in the Assemblies of God

• **Jane Schaffer-Blythe:**
Penetrating the Darkness

THE HERITAGE

LETTER Wayne Warner

Have you ever stopped to think about the tremendous contribution women have made in the kingdom of God? In the Pentecostal movement? In the Assemblies of God?

This issue is devoted to telling about that contribution, but 20 pages hardly scratches the surface. I do think, however, that the stories you will read in this issue represent a microcosm of the Assemblies of God and perhaps the Pentecostal movement.

And not only that, people you read about and see pictured in this issue might be women you know nothing about. We planned it that way, hoping to bring out of our rich history stories of people who were called to minister the message of redeeming grace and who perhaps have not received due recognition in recent years. And we are not saying that women featured are necessarily the people who have made the greatest contribution. If we didn't select your favorite female minister, perhaps her turn will come later. I hope so.

Beginning on the next page you will find the story of Marie Stephany, one of the missionaries who would be in our hall

Think how much more women could have contributed had men been more willing to recognize their calling and to make room for them.

of fame if we had one. Imagine striking out for China in 1916, rejected by her family and nobody to see her off at the station — simply because her friends mistakenly went to the wrong station!

What Marie Stephany did in China during a civil war and then a Japanese invasion, should never be forgotten by people who love and honor missionaries. But I don't need to tell you that Marie Stephany was only one of many who were ready to lay down their lives because of the burning passion to take the gospel to the regions beyond.

Some of our readers will draw a blank when they see the name of Edith Mae Pennington. Others of you, however, will

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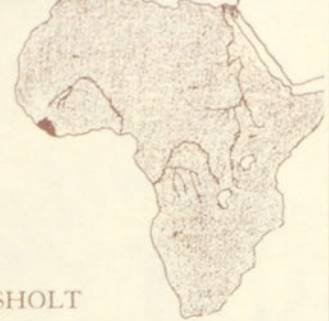


"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, . . . and, lo, I am with you alway!"

—(Matt. 28: 19-20).

ANNA B. STAFSHOLT

Missionary of
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD



Foreign Address:

CAPE PALMAS
LIBERIA
WEST AFRICA

remember her powerful evangelistic efforts from coast to coast during the 1930s. Some of her meetings moved heaven and earth, so to speak, for as long as 10 weeks! Hundreds were converted, others were baptized in the Spirit, and many of the newcomers joined the local churches.

Can you imagine a meeting today continuing practically every night for 10 weeks? Edith Mae Pennington obviously talked about something besides the beauty contest she had won in 1921.

A unique story in this issue is about Jane Schaffer-Blythe. The story is unique in that Jane is still active, very active, as the Women's Ministry president for the Tennessee District. Most of our stories are about people who *have* served, not about people who *continue* to minister. Here again, you will not want to miss the story of another woman who was called to "penetrate the darkness."

Her light is still brightly burning.

You might have mixed feelings about Edith Blumhofer's in depth article regarding the historical role of women in the ministry. You might not agree with all of her conclusions. You will, however, admire Edith for her careful research and the presentation of her facts. As always, Edith makes you think about the issues. We have added photographs to this article from our growing archives collection. Some of these are rare. Some of the people you will recognize. Others, you probably will not know.

Just a closing thought on the contents of this special women's issue. It, of course, could never happen, but what if, what if someone or something could delete the contribution women have made while serving in various ministries within the Assemblies of God. Completely wipe it out of our history. Never to be remembered again.

To begin with, think about the missionary beachheads that have been established around the world. Established by women because men could not or would not go.

Think about the many churches women have planted in this country, many of which are super churches today (and all too often, the founders forgotten).

Think, too, of the women evangelists, Sunday school and youth workers, musicians, thousands involved in Women's Ministries, pastors—everything with the exception of executive leadership—in which women have been given opportunity to minister.

To lose what women have contributed in our movement would be worse than a nightmare. It would be an irreplaceable loss for the Kingdom.

Their contribution, thank God, is a permanent part of our history. It cannot be deleted or erased!

And while we are thinking about women's involvement in the ministry, think how much more they could have given and shared had men been more willing to recognize their calling and made room for them. That's frightening.

Let us never forget women and their ministry in our history. And if God continues to call them—and I believe He will (and yes, maybe even to executive leadership roles)—let us not be guilty of stifling their ministries.

Future Lillian Trashers, Marie Browns, Marie Stephanys, Hattie Hammonds, and Mother Mary Arthurs need all the encouragement and prayers we can offer.

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD HERITAGE

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Persons wishing to donate historical materials such as correspondence, photographs, tapes, films, magazines, books, minutes, etc., are urged to write to the Archives at the above address.

Wayne E. Warner, Editor

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Marie Stephany in 1962, a few months before her death. Inset, Marie before going to China.

She was often described as fearless and strong,
but her Chinese believers, who knew
Marie Stephany best, called her

Mother Peace

By Adele Flower Dalton

I first became acquainted with Marie Stephany in 1943, when, as a new missionary, I was privileged to be with her in a missionary convention.

I shall never forget this valiant lady. After 26 years as a missionary in a hostile land, pioneering churches in regions untouched by the gospel, and suffering indignities at the hands of Japanese soldiers and communist bandits, Marie Stephany was still dauntless. Her roughened voice still rang out with the

conviction that had overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles as she ministered to the lost in North China.

Marie Stephany was born in 1878 in the land then called Austria-Hungary, the seventh of twelve children. At 10 years of age, she was earning adult wages in the wheat fields; at 11, her schooling ended, she was working as a nursemaid. When she was 12, Marie's father, who had emigrated to the United States, sent for her to join him in Cleveland, Ohio. Marie crossed the ocean alone. Later, the rest of her family also came to America.

With the passing years, Marie became increasingly hungry for the reality she did

not find in her Roman Catholic Church. One day while scrubbing the pantry floor, Marie cried, "If there is a true God, I want to know Him. I want my heart clean like this floor." Immediately, the pantry was suffused with light, and Marie was filled with joy. Later, when her priest told her to confess, she replied, "I have nothing to confess. Jesus has taken away all my sins."

For abandoning her traditional religion, Marie was persecuted by her family, but she did not waver. She was attending a Christian and Missionary Alliance church when she heard of the Pentecostal outpouring in Los Angeles in the early days of this century. In 1906, after much fasting

and prayer. Marie was filled with the Holy Spirit. At the same time, God called her to go as a missionary to China.

It was the fall of 1914 before Marie could enter Beulah Heights Bible School in North Bergen, New Jersey. At 35 years of age, with only scanty formal education in another language, Marie had difficulty with her studies and was often discouraged. But during her second year at Beulah Heights, God reaffirmed her call. On Thanksgiving Day, she declared, "Next Thanksgiving, I will be in China."

When Marie graduated in May 1916, she was ordained as a "missionary and evangelist." By October, she had her outfit and the \$1,000 she needed for fare and other expenses. Bitterly opposed by her family and inadvertently deserted by her friends, who had mistakenly gone to see her off at another station, Marie set out for China, utterly alone. But she knew she was going in the will of God, and He

Bitterly opposed by her family, Marie prepared for the ministry and arrived in North China Thanksgiving Day 1916.

would not forsake her. On Thanksgiving Day, she disembarked at Tientsin, south of Peking, in North China.

During her second year of language study at Tai Yuan-Fu, the capital of Shansi Province, Marie had a short vacation in the mountains. As she looked down on the myriad settlements in the valley below, her heart was deeply stirred. "Oh Lord," she prayed, "send someone to take Christ to those villages."

In 1918 Marie looked for a place to begin her ministry. But in every city she tried to enter, some hindrance developed. Finally, in desperation, she cried, "Lord, where do You want me to go?" In answer, He reminded her of the villages in the valley.

The house Marie rented in Huei Ren was dilapidated and dirty. Four loads of mud had to be carted out of the two rooms she was preparing to use. By the time she brought in sand and laid a brick floor, her money was gone, and the workmen were not paid.

At the very moment when Marie asked God to supply this need, the Lord spoke to a missionary 25 miles away. In less than 2 hours, he rode into Huei Ren, bringing Marie \$25 of tithing money. This was one of the many miracles the Lord performed to supply her needs.

Among those who attended Marie's nightly meetings was a teenage boy who accepted the Lord. The day he was baptized, he was beaten unmercifully and cast out of his home. Marie named him Peter and took him in as her houseboy. Peter later became her faithful evangelist.

Marie Stephany's China

1916-42

Photos courtesy of Alice Stewart and the Division of Foreign Missions.



A group of baptismal candidates.



Some of the older children at the orphanage.

While ministering in Huei Ren, Marie wrote to the U.S. Assemblies of God headquarters, telling of her ordination and asking to be accepted as a member of this body. The credentials she received from this fellowship are dated May 17, 1919.

During Marie's 2 years in Huei Ren, many Chinese accepted Christ and were filled with the Holy Spirit; three were called to preach the gospel.

Feeling led to take her message to another village, Marie left the Huei Ren mission in the care of a Chinese worker. She rented a house in Ta Ch'ang and, with the help of a native evangelist, began to preach Christ in this new community.

Marie was appalled by the many Chinese who were addicted to smoking opium. So enslaved did they become that even men of prestigious families often sold everything they owned, including members of their families, to buy this drug. As Marie wrestled in prayer for the liberation of these souls, many were saved and delivered from this evil habit.

During the great famine that swept across China in 1920 and 1921, parents

who were unable to feed their children frequently sold their little boys. Many baby girls were drowned or left to perish in deserted fields. Moved with compassion, Marie shared her home with 30 of these unfortunate children. These were the first of many abandoned children who were brought to Marie.

Although she was never very strong physically, Marie often took Peter and the wife of her evangelist and walked from village to village, preaching Christ. The pockets of believers that were formed in these villages asked for evangelists, but Marie had no workers to send them. Soon, she was holding a meeting in a different village each night of the week.

When it was time for Marie's furlough, Assemblies of God missionaries from another part of North China came to care for the Ta Ch'ang mission during her absence.

Early in 1926, Marie returned, bringing two new missionaries—Alice Stewart and Henrietta Tieleman—and a tent.

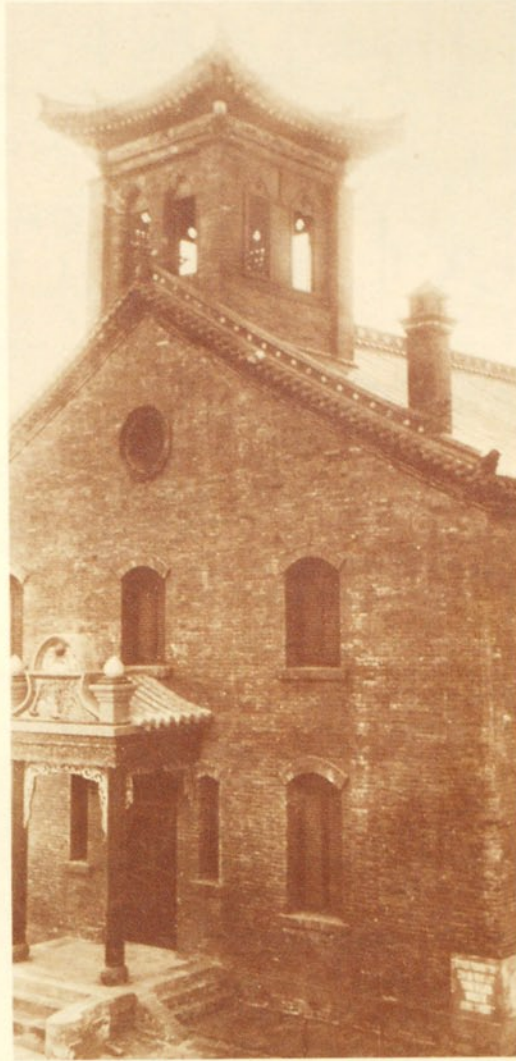
In spite of the cold, the tent meetings the missionaries began in March were well attended. To their delight, they discovered that many Chinese who were afraid to enter



Marie Stephany as a young missionary.



Marie with a former drug addict who was saved and baptized in the Spirit, 1940. He established an outpost church.



TaChang Assembly of God, Shansi, North China, built in 1939 during Japanese occupation. Building would seat a thousand people. Bell could be heard for miles.

the mission chapel would come into the tent. Through the years, many Chinese accepted Christ in the tent meetings that were held throughout the valley.

That fall, Marie opened a Bible school to train workers. Some of the students were ungainly and showed little promise. But after receiving the Holy Spirit, many of them became good students and developed into splendid evangelists.

Marie liked to tell of Mrs. Liu, a village woman who accepted the Lord in a tent meeting. For 7 years, she was afraid to confess Christ openly before her neighbors. It was a day of great rejoicing when, one by one, Mrs. Liu threw her idols into the fire. Afterward, she was greatly used of God in praying for dope addicts to be delivered.

Two of Marie's evangelists answered the call of God to minister in Mongolia. Marie fearlessly went to visit them in 1932, journeying through territory where many travelers had been beaten, robbed, or killed. She was overjoyed to see the work God had helped them to establish in Kiang Pao Hsien.

The congregation in Ta Ch'ang grew

until the mission church was far too small. The number of churches scattered throughout the valley also grew. As Marie taught the new believers to build their own chapels and support their evangelists, these works became self-supporting.

For many years, antforeign resentment had been building up throughout China. By 1936, rumors reached Ta Ch'ang of missions and missionaries that had been unspeakably mistreated by the communists.

"If I am taken," Marie told her believers, "do not pay any ransom money for me. Accept it as from the Lord." Then she added, "Psalm 91, verses 5 through 7 is the zone where you can safely dwell."

As the communist hordes came nearer, Marie stood firmly on the promise: "A thousand shall fall at thy side. . .but it shall not come nigh thee."

On the Sunday when a communist attack seemed imminent, Marie called her people together. As they prayed, the mighty presence of God descended, 12 believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, and a great wave of peace enveloped the

congregation. Although many in the vicinity suffered at the hands of the communists, God fulfilled His promise to Marie; not one of her believers was molested.

But the communists were only one of the problems in that area of China during the 1930s. The Japanese army took advantage of China's political unrest and occupied portions of the country—including the northern section where Marie and other missionaries were working. That occupation began in October 1937. The missionaries, however, were permitted to continue their ministry despite the war between Japan and China.

Marie's second term in China lengthened into 10 years. She was reluctant to leave her people during such perilous

Despite the political unrest and the war with Japan, Marie established a strong Christian base in North China.

times, but she finally agreed to go to America for her long overdue furlough.

Marie returned to China in 1939. After two long nights on the hard seats of a crowded train, she reached Tong Yang—a town 5 miles from Ta Ch'ang—where her evangelists met her with a springless horse cart. As they neared Ta Ch'ang, they were met by many Chinese believers, Miss Tieleman and Miss Stewart—who had ministered in Ta Ch'ang during her absence—and the orphanage children. The welcoming procession wound its joyful way through the village to the mission.

For many months, news from this interior region had not reached Marie. With thanksgiving, she learned how God had provided for His people and His work. In spite of the civil unrest and the war with Japan, the gospel had entered many new villages. A sanctuary, seating 1,000 people, had been built in Ta Ch'ang. On the dedication day, it was filled, and the presence of God came upon the people in Pentecostal power.

The Ta Ch'ang mission, that had begun in a rented house with only one Chinese evangelist, now had various buildings and almost 30 workers. (At least two-thirds of these had been miraculously delivered from slavery to opium.) Many new stations had been opened and were asking for evangelists. The work to which God had called Marie so long ago, was now widely scattered throughout the valley.

That year, 12 students from Ta Ch'ang were attending the Assemblies of God Bible school in Peking. Twenty others were studying in the local 4-month Bible school.

News of blessing and growth also reached Marie from her missionaries in Mongolia. In one town, a group of people

Continued on page 18

From the Footlights to the Light of the Cross

The Story of Evangelist Edith Mae Pennington

By Wayne Warner

The date was November 5, 1921, and the place was St. Louis, Missouri, at the final night of the contest to find the most beautiful girl in the United States. Nervous girls and family members held their breath as the judges announced that they had unanimously selected a 19-year-old Pine Bluff, Arkansas, school teacher, Edith Mae Patterson.

The long wait had finally ended.

More than 7,000 girls had entered the contest with hopes of copping the first prize, which besides the fame and opportunities to earn movie contracts, was worth \$2,500.

It isn't often that a school teacher becomes an instant celebrity. But it happened to Edith Mae Patterson on that memorable night 66 years ago last November.

Heritage readers who were around in the early 1930s will remember this beauty queen winner by her married name, Edith Mae Pennington. And they will remember that Edith gave up a promising stage and movie career for the life of an itinerant Assemblies of God evangelist.

Meetings Edith Mae Pennington conducted across America were marked by big crowds and old-fashioned revivals that lasted as long as 10 weeks. And when she told her life story—"From the Footlights to the Light of the Cross"—hundreds were converted and challenged to give up worldly pursuits to follow the humble man of Galilee.

The crowds knew they were hearing one who was not asking them to do something she herself was not willing to do.

The vital statistics on Edith Mae Patterson Pennington tell us that she was born June 9, 1902, and died May 16, 1974—a few days short of her 72nd birthday.

But that's only the perimeters of her life. What needs to be told, of course, are the events between 1902 and 1974—especially the years following her unusual conversion which happened in a small Pentecostal church in Oklahoma City.

That was in 1925 after she had made lots of money and gained fame from coast to coast.

People around Pine Bluff, Arkansas, knew Edith's parents, Arch and Julie Patterson, as hard-working and God-fearing people. Arch was a foreman for the Cotton Belt railroad, but few people knew his name outside of Jefferson County.

Understand, though, that was before his 19-year-old daughter entered the St. Louis beauty contest.

**From 7,000 entries,
Edith Mae Pennington
was judged
the most beautiful girl
in the United States for 1921.**

Actually, Edith Mae had nothing to do with entering the contest. Her aunt, Mrs. W.J. Miller, read about the contest in Pine Bluff's *Daily Graphic* and submitted Edith's photograph. The paper named Edith as a regional winner and submitted her photograph to the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, sponsors of the national contest. That put Edith in competition with other regional winners for a chance to win \$1,000 in the U.S. District. The other three districts were Missouri, Illinois, and St. Louis.

Edith won the U.S. District prize in October 1921, a month after a 15-year-old high school girl from Washington, D.C., won a similar contest in Atlantic City, New Jersey—the first Miss America competition.

After winning the district title, Edith was automatically entered in the Capital Prize competition which carried the honor as being the "Most Beautiful Girl in the U.S."

But according to the judges, it was no contest. The newspaper told about the award the next morning:

By a spontaneously unanimous decision of the judges the \$2500 capital prize, awarded to the queen of all the beauties in the *Globe-Democrat's* \$7100 beauty contest, goes to Miss Edith Mae Patterson of 106 Rutherford Place, Pine Bluff, Ark., who is already first prize winner in the United States District. With this announcement the *Globe-Democrat* ends its search among more than 7000 girls who took part in the contest."

One of the judges, a prize-winning sculptress, Nancy Coonsman Hahn, said, "The most effective role in which Edith could be cast would be that of Helen of Troy...From the first, her beauty arrested and compelled my attention."²

The judges were impressed with Edith's naturalness: "No rouge or lipstick, eyebrows weren't penciled nor pulled. Her lashes had no blacking around their rims. She wasn't chewing gum."³

Edith and her family and all of Pine Bluff were on top of the world.

Unknown to Edith, she was being pulled into a lifestyle that she had never known in Pine Bluff or at Rice Institute where she had attended for a year in preparation for a teaching career.

She would leave her beloved Lakeside School pupils in Pine Bluff and step into a world which she would later call a "modern Sodom."

At first Edith Patterson enjoyed the fame and the excitement which had jerked her away from Lakeside School. Nearly 4,000

Photos at Right

Edith Mae Pennington poses for an Associated Press photographer during a meeting she conducted in Glad Tidings Tabernacle, New York in 1932. WIDE WORLD PHOTOS. Inset, left, is Edith after being named the most beautiful girl in the United States, November 5, 1921. Photo courtesy of St. Louis Mercantile Library Assn. Inset, right, *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* story reporting the contest, November 6, 1921.



Democrat. SOCIETY NEWS, WOMEN'S COLUMN AND FEAT. PAGE 12

SEPTER 6, 1921.

Miss Edith Mae Patterson Awarded Grand

Judges Tell Why They Selected Pine Bluff, Ark., Girl as Winner of \$2500 Award in Globe-Democrat Beauty Contest

Capital Prize 'as Most Beautiful Girl in U. S.

B A SPONTANEOUSLY enthusiastic selection of the judges the Edith Mae Patterson, a native of Pine Bluff, Ark., who is currently 20, was crowned as the most beautiful girl in the world by the judges of the Globe-Democrat Beauty Contest at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria in New York City, Sept. 5, 1921. The prize money of \$2500 was awarded to her by the judges of the contest. The contest was held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City, Sept. 5, 1921. The prize money of \$2500 was awarded to her by the judges of the contest. The contest was held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City, Sept. 5, 1921.



On the stage and in Hollywood...
"It was very exciting, alluring,
inviting, yet, I was
far from being happy and
satisfied."

people wrote to her, several of whom proposed to her.

The first year after winning the award, Edith appeared on 101 stages around the country. She developed an act and was graciously welcomed into country clubs, honored at banquets, modeled expensive clothing and jewelry, and was chauffeured in expensive cars.

But the Roaring Twenties for Edith Patterson soon had a dull and empty sound. "It was very exciting, alluring, inviting, yet, I was far from being happy and satisfied," she wrote later.⁴

Hollywood promised great prizes to the young Pine Bluff native, but God began to deal with her heart, even while she worked toward a screen career. One day Edith told her mother that she was going to leave the entertainment field, that her desire for the stage and screen were gone.

Her mother was delighted. "Edith, I have been waiting for you to say that," she said. "I knew you would eventually make that decision."⁵

Sometime later Edith was drawn to a Pentecostal church in Oklahoma City. Edith's expensive mink coat, gold earrings and bracelets, and diamond rings marked her as one who didn't frequent typical Pentecostal store-front missions. Certainly she would never be mistaken for one of the altar workers or a Sunday school teacher.

But there she sat in a Pentecostal church, hungry for an experience with God.

A woman member of the church spotted the worldly looking Edith and knew from her appearance that she belonged on her knees at an old-fashioned altar. This worldly type, the woman probably reasoned as she approached Edith, needed the sledge hammer witnessing tactic. And so she immediately began to rebuke Edith for her worldliness.

**Her conversion came in 1925
at a small Pentecostal
church in Oklahoma City.**

Others would have recoiled and stomped out of the church. But Edith had been on a spiritual search long before she entered the little building. The rebuke was all Edith needed. "I tore the necklace from my throat," she would say whenever she related her life story, "and rushing to the altar I stripped off my fur coat and cast it at the feet of the benevolent-eyed preacher."⁶

The next day Edith sold her jewelry and donated the money to charity. That night she returned to the little church, looking more like the Pentecostals who sat around her, and preached an impromptu sermon.⁷

The break was clear. Edith—as she described it later—went from "Movieiland to Canaanland," and "From the Footlights to the Light of the Cross." And she didn't look back.

Edith was later baptized in the Spirit and "received my divinely appointed call to preach the full gospel."⁸

Pentecostalism had snatched someone from the entertainment world, one who would become a big drawing card and an effective evangelist. What more could they ask for in the on-going struggle with evil forces!

A big question in the minds of a lot of people who knew Edith was how the folks in Pine Bluff would react to the conversion. They had a chance to see up close their former beauty winner when Edith returned to her hometown where she became an assistant pastor at the Assembly of God, a position she kept for 2 years.

Pine Bluff offered Edith a place of ministry, but down deep within her heart was an urgency to expand her borders, to preach in evangelistic meetings across the nation. Before that ministry could get off the ground, however, she went through the agony of a marital separation.

She had earlier married her former business manager, J. B. Pennington, and had given birth to a daughter, Edith Lorraine. Edith Lorraine wrote recently that her father was saved at one time but chose not to follow Christ: "He seemed jealous of Mother's love for the Lord and also of her call into the ministry."⁹

To Edith Mae, forsaking the call of God on her life would be the worst thing she

could do. She hoped and prayed that J. B. and she could minister together; but if it came down to either her marriage or the call, the call would come first. J. B. Pennington was not interested in the ministry and walked out of the lives of his wife and little daughter.

Edith Mae Pennington, like Aimee Semple McPherson, Maria Woodworth-Etter, and the Pentecostal social worker Mary Moise (who also were married to men who did not feel called to preach), had accepted what she understood as a divine call to preach. And she was willing to pay the price. There was no other choice.¹⁰

The old Arkansas-Louisiana District of the Assemblies of God ordained Edith on September 26, 1930. She would remain with the denomination for 20 years, first as an evangelist and then as the founding pastor of a church in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Once Edith began holding evangelistic meetings, word traveled rapidly that a former beauty queen with an effective Pentecostal ministry was turning some churches upside down. And she wasn't getting the job done just on her beauty and personal testimony—although people who saw and heard her rated her high in both of those areas.

Some people, however, questioned whether a woman should preach. Edith would answer with a question of her own: "If God calls a woman to preach the gospel, and His blessings are upon her, 'in confirming His Word with signs following,' whose right is it to question her right to preach the gospel, pastor a church, or lead a movement under God?"¹¹

Without a doubt, Edith's loyalties were with the Assemblies of God. In the early 1930s she would frequently write to J. R. Evans, general secretary of the denomina-

**A 9-week meeting Edith
conducted in St. Louis in 1931
saw 330 converted, 125
baptized in the Spirit,
and 110 join the church.**

tion, for his advice concerning the many invitations she was receiving to preach.

Evans, who was never known for his ecumenical bridge-building, told Edith there were enough Assemblies of God churches to keep her busy "without going into undenominational places."¹²

Edith, according to her daughter, was invited to fill in at Angelus Temple (Foursquare), Los Angeles, during Aimee Semple McPherson's absence. But she declined, saying that she wished to remain in Assemblies of God churches.¹³

In another letter to J. R. Evans, Edith inquired about accepting meetings in a

large midwestern Assemblies of God church whose pastor had previously been under investigation by the denomination. Evans saw no reason why she shouldn't accept the invitation since the investigation had cleared the pastor. Evans added, however, that he had heard some rumors that the church in question was lacking in a Pentecostal spirit. "I trust," he wrote, "that you will give it to them pretty strong along the line of Pentecost."¹⁴

From the results Edith got from her preaching in other churches, this church no doubt received a "pretty strong" dose of Pentecost.

Wherever Edith Mae Pennington preached during the Great Depression, reporters and photographers surrounded her for stories and pictures. They were anxious to cover the young woman who—as a St. Louis reporter described it—"traded a budding movie career for the pulpit;...swapped the stage for the sawdust trail."¹⁵

Editors gave generous space for Edith's meetings, and consequently the publicity put little-known Pentecostal churches on the map.

In a St. Louis meeting in 1931, Pastor Henry Hoar wrote that the meetings ran for 9 weeks. Bethel Temple, where the meetings were held, saw 330 converted, 125 baptized in the Spirit, and 110 join the church.¹⁶

Another 9-week meeting was held in Springfield, Missouri, at the headquarters church, Central Assembly. Jim Dutton, a 15-year-old Baptist at the time, came to a service to see what all the excitement was about. Dutton, now 71, is still at the church.

"I saw a whole row of people under conviction," Dutton recalled, "and they all turned and kneeled to receive Christ."¹⁷



Edith Mae Pennington

Edith Pennington conducted meetings in Washington, D.C., in 1931 and 1932. The advertisement at the right was for the 1932 meeting, and the story below was published during her first meeting.



Edith Mae Pennington

Great Revival, September 25 to October 23

Former Winner National Beauty Prize

Full Gospel Tabernacle

North Capitol and K Streets
Washington, D. C.

HARRY L. COLLIER, Pastor

Sunday, 11:00 and 7:30

Nightly Except Saturday, 7:45

Christian Healing Service, Thursday, 7:45

Choir—Orchestra—Revival Music

COME—BRING YOUR FRIENDS

BEAUTY REVIVALIST TAKES LARGER HALL

Something new has broken out in Washington: a religious revival. It started at the Full Gospel Tabernacle, North Capitol and K Streets, which has been noted for its persistence in holding divine healing services. The pastor, the Rev. Harry L. Collier, has a passion for soul winning, the sort of passion that stirred Francis Xavier and John

Wesley and Francis Asbury and Dwight L. Moody.

In recent times this minister has had evangelists of one kind and another to come in and help him stir the embers of faith; but now he has one whom, after achieving fame on one field, has turned to another and is making quite a name for herself—Mrs. Edith Mae Pennington.

Her immediate success at the Full Gospel Tabernacle has drawn people to that little chapel who never darkened its doors before. Nightly the crowds have grown until many are being turned away.

—Washington (DC) Post, April 25, 1931

A second meeting at the church ran for 7 weeks.

Edith moved into the nation's capital at the invitation of Harry Collier, pastor of the Full Gospel Tabernacle. And the crowds came. Hundreds were turned away from the church before the meetings were moved to the Masonic Temple Auditorium. Here again, newspaper

publicity drew hundreds of people to the church. (See story above.)

Pastor Carl O'Guin, now past 90 years of age, remembers the "landslide revival" Edith conducted at his Granite City, Illinois church in 1931. Conversions numbered 112, and 105 were baptized in the Holy Spirit during this 7-week meeting.¹⁸

The famous Glad Tidings Tabernacle in New York celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1932 with Edith as the featured speaker in a revival series. A four-column photograph of Edith appeared in the *New York Evening Journal*, accompanied by a story, "Beauty Winner Forsakes Hollywood for the Pulpit."¹⁹

In the Glad Tidings meeting, Edith described herself as a "simple soul and a wanderer." She doesn't imitate other women evangelists, she added, but just goes around "saving souls."

Edith Mae Pennington kept up her evangelistic pace from coast to coast between 1930-36. One of the meetings in 1936 was in Shreveport, Louisiana. Later, she announced that God wanted her to establish a church in the city.

So, after traveling in evangelistic meetings for 7 strenuous years, the former beauty winner settled down to found Full Gospel Temple (Assembly of God) in 1937. She would travel occasionally after founding the church, but most of her

Continued on page 20



Edith Lorraine Pennington

Mother and Daughter. On the 25th anniversary of the beauty contest, the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* ran a feature on Edith Mae Pennington. The paper published the photo on the left in their March 24, 1946, issue. Following Edith Mae's death in 1974, her daughter became the pastor of Full Gospel Temple, Shreveport, Louisiana. Photos courtesy of St. Louis Mercantile Library Association and Edith Lorraine Pennington.



Jacob and Jane Schaffer, a photo taken for their wedding in 1934. Jane said of her late husband, "He never stopped me from fulfilling my call."



Jane being honored with crown, roses, and trophy for her ministry with the Tennessee District Women's Ministry. Making the presentation is Joan Scarbrough.

Preachers enjoying a cookout near Trinidad, Colorado, 1940. Left to right, Jane Schaffer, Dorothy Cook, Jacob Schaffer, and Paul Cook.



Jane Schaffer-Blythe: Penetrating the Darkness

By Darla Knoth

The year was 1930, and Jane Abrams was 16. Her family had become Christians only 3 years earlier and was now being introduced to the Pentecostal experience. As Jane walked to school in the early morning, she was reading her Bible and praying, which she often did. This morning as she prayed, she saw a vision. A world globe dropped in front of her, and a dark cloud was covering it. She heard a voice saying, "This cloud is what sin has done to my world. Will you help me penetrate the darkness?"¹

Jane responded to this call, which began a ministry that would last beyond 50 years and continues to the present. In 1984, she celebrated 50 years of marriage and ministry with her first husband, the late Jacob Schaffer.

She was born on July 10, 1914, to Leona and Trenton Abrams near Chivington, a small town in Eastern Colorado, and was the oldest of five girls. The family did not attend church. They lived in a tar-paper shack and ate many meals consisting of only cornmeal mush. However, Jane's memories of her childhood days are happy ones.

Jane turned 12 in 1926, the same year a federal loan officer foreclosed on the family homestead. "I remember sitting on the fence with my sisters and watching the auctioneer and the banker sell our land," states Jane. The family moved into the town of Chivington to live in a one-room house. They burned corn cobs to keep warm and pushed all their beds into one long row.²

In 1927, the Abrams family attended revival services of a Methodist congregation. On the first Sunday they attended, Mrs. Abrams was converted. The second Sunday, all five girls surrendered their hearts to the Lord. Finally, Mr. Abrams became a Christian. He immediately stopped smoking and cursing. Also Jane remembers that he went home and hung a full bag of Bull Durham tobacco in the window of their home. He let it hang there for 1 year to prove that he had been delivered from smoking. "We all experienced an 'old-time' conversion," Jane recalls.

Three years after the family's conversion, Jane's mother visited her parents in Great Bend, Kansas. Revival services were being held in the city's courthouse, with Paul Pittman as the speaker. Mrs. Abrams went with a neighbor to those services and experienced the power of Pentecost for the first time. She returned to Colorado and was instrumental in

introducing Pentecost to the Chivington community. The McNutts were a couple who came and held Pentecostal services in the schoolhouse where the Methodist congregation had been meeting. Later Mae Neeley and Faye Hughes came as evangelists. It was under their ministry that Jane was filled with the Spirit. "I remember that while Mae was preaching, I was praying for her to finish so I could go to the altar. I cried and spoke in tongues for 2 hours," Jane says of her experience.

Jane's first call to the ministry came at an Epworth League Institute camp, during a Vesper Service.³ A minister by the name of Morgan was the speaker. He asked Jane, "What does the Lord want you to do?" She replied that He wanted her to be a preacher. Although the minister was probably shocked at that answer coming from a girl, he responded by saying, "Daughter, if God wants you to be a lady

When Jane was 16, God spoke to her: "Will you help me penetrate the darkness?"

minister, He will help you do it." Jane's vision later confirmed this.

Her first preaching experience was in the schoolhouse-church in Chivington on a Wednesday night. Jane's text was from Isaiah 53. "When it was time for her to speak, she got up, closed her eyes, and talked fast. When she was through, she sat down. What she thought had been a half-hour sermon had only been 3 or 4 minutes!"⁴

Jane was still only 16 when she obtained permission to preach at an old Presbyterian church in Sheridan Lake, Colorado. One of her younger sisters would go along each Sunday to play the organ. They would have a morning and evening service before their dad came to get them for the return trip to Chivington. This schedule continued through the winter. Jane remembers that sometimes, having been there all day, she would have to wake her sister to play the evening altar call!⁵

The next year, Jane was asked by the sectional presbyter, C. F. Ferguson, to hold a 5 or 6-week revival in Good Pasture, near Pueblo. Jane took her sister Ethel to live in a one-room house near the city's dance hall and held services every night but Saturday. Often Jane was frightened while living there. After several sleepless nights, the Lord spoke to her and said, "You've lain awake several nights in a row, and nothing has happened. Why don't you go

to sleep and let Me take care of you?" Jane says of the experience, "It was a lesson about fear that I have never forgotten."

Jane felt she needed Bible training and chose to go to Rocky Mountain Bible College. She attended for 2 years, 1930 and 1931. Rocky Mountain Bible College was located on Leyden street in Denver. Floyd C. Woodworth was president of the school and also served as District Superintendent. Cecil J. Lowery was principal of the school and vice-president of the Board. A brochure from the school lists tuition at \$135 for 1 year. Books and street car fare were an extra \$10 per year. Jane recorded there were 18 students in attendance. Among those were Earl Cummings, who later served as district superintendent in Nebraska and Arizona; Gilbert Mort, who became a missionary to Alaska; and Easter Mae Cooper, a woman with whom Jane traveled for a brief time in evangelistic work.

Jane recalls the chapel services at Rocky Mountain Bible College as a time when God's Spirit mightily moved. She remembers that there would be singing in the Spirit by all the students. Opal Woodworth, a teacher at the school and dean of women, would play the piano in the Spirit for several hours at a time.⁶

Jane had worked in several locations with Adolf Schaffer, an evangelist in Colorado. It was through him that Jane met Jacob Schaffer. Jacob and Jane were married in December 1934 and began their ministry together. Jane says of this marriage, "The greatest thing, outside my salvation and calling, was the husband God gave me, because he never stopped me from fulfilling my call. Young girls with talent today need to consider how a husband will feel toward their ministry." Jane was ordained with the Rocky Mountain District in February 1940.

The Schaffers did some evangelistic work and in 1936 became the pastors of the Assembly of God in Fort Morgan, Colorado. From there they went to pastor in Brush, Colorado. In 1938, for a short while, the Schaffers ministered in Newcastle, Wyoming, and then returned to Trinidad, Colorado. They moved to Missouri in 1942, accepting the pastorate in Butler.

In October 1942, the Schaffers answered a call from Glad Tidings in Springfield, Missouri, and began their work there in January 1943. A brochure printed in 1981 states that the mortgage on the church was paid and the property next to the church was purchased during the time the Schaffers were the pastors.⁷

As a member of Glad Tidings for 48 years, Cora Miles, Springfield, reminisced about the Schaffers as pastors. "I couldn't have made it through everything that happened to me had they not been here," Cora states. She recalled a difficult time in her family when one of her children was born with facial defects. The baby

only lived 2 months, and during that time came Thanksgiving Day. She had decided not to cook anything for a special meal that day. "About 11 in the morning, the door flew open, and in walked the whole Schaffer family, each carrying items for a complete Thanksgiving meal. They even brought a tablecloth! The family shared their Thanksgiving meal with me and my family. I wish I could explain to you the concern that the Schaffers showed to each person who attended our church."

The Schaffers remained at Glad Tidings until 1953, during which time Jane served for a time as city-wide C.A. president.⁸ In 1953 they moved to Kennett, Missouri. From Kennett they went to Tennessee in 1955, pastoring first in Nashville, then Knoxville in 1961, and finally in Sweetwater from 1971 to 1977. In November 1977 the Schaffers moved to Hendersonville, where Brother Schaffer retired from full-time ministry.

Out of her years of experience, Jane offers this advice to those who would minister. "We must lead the people to find God for themselves. We cannot force or make them do the right thing." She also remembers that people used to seek God for several hours at a time. She suggests that churches today "keep the altar open. After the Word is ministered, people need to find God and respond to the Word that has been preached."⁹ Another suggestion she offers is that worship leaders not neglect the hymnbook. "The singing of hymns is a high form of worship. We should bring up children to know the beautiful hymns of the church."

The Schaffers have two daughters, Jacklyn and Joyce, who helped them in their ministry. Jane recalls a time when the girls were still very small, and she was quite concerned about their nutrition. As pastors, they would receive commodities from the parishioners, but rarely did this include eggs. Jane asked the Lord to

For 27 years she has been president of the Tennessee District WMs.

provide eggs when she felt her girls needed to have that nutrition. She found a dime in her purse, just at the time she needed it. Another time, someone handed them the exact money needed to pay a bill due. "These type of things happened over and over again as we ministered," Jane added.

Another avenue of ministry with which Jane has long been involved is Women's Ministries. She was elected as president of the Woman's Missionary Council for the Tennessee District in 1960, a position she still holds today. The title has changed to Women's Ministries president.

In 1966 Jane Schaffer served as president of the District President's Fellowship,



Wedding Bells

On March 11, 1987, Jane married Earl Blythe, former superintendent of the Tennessee District of the Assemblies of God.

and in 1980 she was honored by the National Women's Ministries department for 20 years of consecutive service.¹⁰ Her work as district president involves overseeing district women's retreats, record-keeping for the department, and working with the sectional representatives. She also works with district missionaries and serves as the speaker for many Women's Ministries functions across the state.

An article written in 1970 by Jenell Ogg, then National Auxiliaries Coordinator, has this to say about Sister Schaffer's ministry to women. "Jane Schaffer is a born leader. She knows how to get others to work with her, even those who did not intend to become involved. Under her leadership the Tennessee District Women's Ministries Department and its auxiliaries have grown at a rapid pace."¹¹

In January 1986 Jane Schaffer was saddened by the death of her husband and partner in ministry, Jacob Schaffer. He died after a long, full life of ministry. Jane continued to minister alone.

Another death occurred in the Tennessee district shortly after that of Jacob Schaffer. Mrs. Ruby Blythe, wife of former District Superintendent Earl E. Blythe died on February 23, 1986.¹² Jane Schaffer and Earl Blythe had worked together for several

years in the district office and shared sympathy for each other in the losses. This sympathy grew to a love for each other and in 1987 they announced they would be getting married. This small ceremony preceded the Wednesday evening service of the Tennessee District Council. A reception for everyone attending the Council followed the close of the service. So on March 11, 1987, Jane became Mrs. Jane Schaffer-Blythe. Together the couple continues in ministry to the Tennessee District.

When asked about being in ministry, Jane states, "It has not been easy to be a woman minister. There has been some criticism directed toward me because I am a woman. This has not made me angry, however, because I know that God is the one who called me. That call is as fresh today to me as the day He called me into the ministry. I have never doubted that call. Each time I stand to preach, I ask for a fresh anointing from the Lord."¹³

Jane Schaffer-Blythe also gives advice to young people entering the ministry. "Just because you have the ability, does not mean you are called. Make sure you have a genuine call. Then seek the Lord with all your heart. You can't help people unless you have something inside you to give."¹⁴

Helping people. For more than 50 years Jane Schaffer-Blythe has been helping people and "penetrating the darkness" in answer to the call of God.

Notes

1. Taped Interview with Jacob and Jane Schaffer, by Edsel Charles.
2. Manuscript by Judy Suckow-Jones, granddaughter-in-law to Jane Schaffer-Blythe.
3. Taped Interview.
4. Suckow-Jones manuscript.
5. Ibid.
6. Brochure from Rocky Mountain Bible College in Jane Schaffer-Blythe's scrapbook, which was donated to the Assemblies of God Archives.
7. 50th Anniversary brochure for Glad Tidings Assembly of God, Springfield, Missouri. Printed in 1981.
8. Undated announcement for a C.A. rally in the Springfield area.
9. Taped Interview.
10. National Women's Ministries Department records.
11. *Woman's Touch* magazine, September-October, 1970.
12. Earl E. Blythe served as Tennessee District Superintendent for 16 years.
13. Taped Interview.
14. Ibid.

Darla Knott is the editorial assistant for *Memos* magazine, published by the Women's Ministries, Springfield. Her husband Rick is youth editor for Church School Literature.



It is commonly assumed by scholars of women in American religion that Pentecostalism has historically been among the religious traditions most hospitable to women in ministry. (Ministry in this sense refers to leadership in public acts of worship.) Some students of Pentecostalism have claimed that the movement at first embraced women in ministry and then moved from that stance as it acculturated.² Certainly women played a

A woman's right to preach and evangelize did not generally include the right to administer the ordinances of the church.

prominent public role in early Pentecostalism; clearly, however, their public role has diminished over time. An examination of early Pentecostal assumptions yields insights that help explain the situation in the Assemblies of God.

Early Pentecostalism offered lay people, men and women, a wide range of opportunities for involvement. The urgency of the message combined with impatience, hierarchy, and denominationalism to enable women to serve as evangelists, pastors, teachers, editors, authors, and missionaries. The "call" (sometimes discovered through exercising spiritual gifts) and the "anointing" seemed vastly more important than credentials and authorization. Women's activity also had apparent theological warrant in the focal Pentecostal text: "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." For decades advocates of women in ministry had used those words to support women's right to preach.

Early Pentecostals claimed that the experience of Spirit baptism made them want to proclaim the gospel. Many eagerly anticipated domestic or foreign service, assured that the Spirit's special endowment would make them effective. In the movement's earliest phases, William Seymour (pastor of the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles) reminded husbands and wives of their responsibilities to one another and to their children. Contemporary conditions seemed to Seymour to render such advice necessary: situations in which one spouse neglected family obligations to follow a "leading," leaving a family in economic hardship, were all too common.

Numerous women became well-known in early Pentecostal ranks; their preaching, too, gained respect. To name but a few,

This article is adapted from the author's book *The Assemblies of God to 1941: A Chapter in the Story of Pentecostalism in America*, volume 1 of a new official history of the denomination. The book will be published in the fall of 1988.

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Soloist

DOREEN E. JUSUS
Evangelist

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A revival poster advertising meetings in about 1935. On the right are two early missionaries to China: Willa B. Lowther and Lavada Leonard.

The Role of Women in the Assemblies of God

A New Look at an Old Problem: Women's Rights in the Gospel

By Edith Blumhofer

Abbie Morrow wrote tracts and articles that circulated widely; Marie Burgess Brown established a thriving Pentecostal mission in New York City; after her ordination by A. J. Tomlinson at a campmeeting in Durant, Florida, Lillian Trasher chose to apply the training she had received at God's Bible School in Cincinnati and N. J. Holmes's school in Altamont, South Carolina as a missionary to Egypt; Ethel Goss evangelized; Anna Reiff edited the influential *Latter Rain Evangel*; Florence Crawford dominated the association of missions known as the Apostolic Faith (Portland, Oregon).

Efforts to understand women's prominence must take several factors into account. First, the movement in most places took the form of a lay movement, impatient with hierarchy and denominational structure. Some women held credentials from local missions; some had

been set apart for the ministry through prayer and the laying on of hands by a group of sympathetic people in a home or other nontraditional setting, as well as in missions; some claimed to have been "ordained by the Lord," an event which, to veteran missionary and Bible teacher Elizabeth Sisson's mind, needed no human ratification.

If early Pentecostal women were ordained, then, their ordinations had often been highly irregular, involving few issues such as their relationship to male pastors or participation in an organized denomination. Ordination was not so much an acknowledging of authority within a specific group as fervent prayer for effectiveness in witness.

To be sure, most considered ordination (or credentialing of any sort) relatively unimportant. The sense that God had called one to a specific task was infinitely

more important than gaining human authorization to perform the task. Some participants later recalled meetings that resembled early Quaker gatherings. Whether a man or a woman preached made no difference: the speaker, male or female, was the Spirit's choice, and essentially the Spirit's channel. The anointing, then, validated the message.

Lay men and women accomplished much in disseminating Pentecostal teaching. And it seems evident that, in this country at least, the assertion of women's right to preach and to assist in extending the movement did not generally involve the right to administer the ordinances of the church. Women (and men) regarded their opportunities essentially as Christian service rather than as sources of income. As a more professional concept of the ministry evolved within the movement, the participation of women preachers declined. The professionalization of the ministry is one important aspect of the story of women in American Pentecostalism.

Economic factors form another related consideration: women frequently accomplished tasks for which financial resources were meager. They proved adept at "pioneer" work; they performed tasks that some men disdained as "women's work." They had already become familiar figures in home missions; their service as city missionaries were recognized in many denominations, some of which provided training as deaconesses for women. The kinds of work Assemblies of God women accomplished did not differ markedly from tasks in which other religiously motivated Protestant women engaged. Many in the culture sensed an urgency, not necessarily rooted in premillennialism, to evangelize. For congregations that could support a man to perform the same duties, however, it became increasingly common, over time, to secure the services of men.³

A second factor is related to the first. As a revival movement that emphasized the Holy Spirit, Pentecostalism encouraged women's activity. Its focal text supported their public speech: "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy." Revivals have historically been vehicles through which women have discovered new avenues of Christian service.⁴ And Pentecostalism presented itself as a revival with a difference: the "latter rain" outpouring represented equipment for an urgent task. The expectation of Christ's second coming made the task of recruiting workers essential. Time was short; women workers were needed. Although they usually avoided setting dates for the advent, certain factors made them look toward 1917. When Christ did not return and concerns related to passing leadership on to the next generation surfaced, new questions became relevant.

Despite the openness toward women in ministry that a superficial survey indicates, however, deeply rooted prejudices both

against women exercising authority over men and against married women assuming responsibilities outside the home thrived within Pentecostal ranks. Even in its initial stages, Pentecostalism was not entirely supportive of ministering women, except in specific, well-defined roles. An examination of sentiments expressed in one of the settings from which people affiliated with the Assemblies of God helps provide a perspective essential for understanding the role of women in the denomination.

Among the pre-Pentecostal groups that provided both leadership and participants to the Assemblies of God, none figured more prominently than did the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Alliance founder, A. B. Simpson, shared the conviction that his contemporaries, A. J. Gordon and A. T. Pierson, had expressed: women should not be denied a range of public opportunities.⁵ In the Alliance, women led rescue missions; one



Millicent McClendon, a noted evangelist, married Howard A. Goss, and they pioneered what later became First Assembly in Malvern, Arkansas. She died at age 26 in 1910 after giving birth to a daughter.

directed Simpson's healing faith home; several did editorial work; many served as missionaries; a few sat on the Alliance's governing board, the Board of Managers.⁶

Women in Alliance outreaches worked under definite restrictions; however, these helped shape the expectations of Alliance people who affiliated with the Assemblies of God. Although Simpson admitted that women were "called without restriction to teach, to witness, to work in every department of the Church of Christ," he insisted that man was woman's head. Women were not to "rule in the ecclesiastical government of the Church of Christ, or to exercise the official ministry which the Holy Ghost has committed to the elders or bishops of His Church."⁷ He required women to function within their God-ordained (and male-defined) "woman's sphere." When she stepped out of that

sphere, Simpson insisted, woman "lost power."⁸ Woman's proper place was dictated by both "her nature" and "her distinct place in the social economy."⁹ Convinced that women were not "adapted to leadership," and affirming a conviction that few—if any—were so called, he nonetheless applauded their service as foreign and city missionaries (which he understood to parallel the New Testament role of deaconesses) and encouraged their cultivation of all opportunities they found within their "true spheres."

Simpson and Gordon enjoyed the friendship of F. L. Chapell, a prominent contemporary Bible teacher. Chapell, too, encouraged women to "respond to the divine call" to preach. He considered their quiet, unassuming participation in contemporary church life a "marked phenomenon of the times."¹⁰ Claiming that women's increasing involvement was a response on their part to "the strong impulsion of the Spirit, as He voices the divine purpose in the closing of the age," Chapell nonetheless demonstrated convictions similar to those held by others who did not share his excitement about women "laborers in the gospel."

For one thing, women's involvement demonstrated the essentially simple nature of the gospel. Unqualified for "elaborate argumentative discourses intended to convince the intellect," women showed that "simple, heartfelt" discourse was sufficient. Clearly, Chapell concluded, "the excellency of the power is of God and not in the agent."

For another thing, women's activities demonstrated that "genuine Gospel service" could be "free from ecclesiastical ambition." Whereas men were both tempted and taught to covet position or title, such designs were assumed to be absent in women. "Ecclesiastical promotion does not come in her thought at all, and is out of the question in most quarters," Chapell maintained.¹¹ Ministering women, then, were a "sign of the times," "eleventh-hour laborers" whose assistance, though welcomed, was limited both by their nature and calling.

When the Assemblies of God was organized in 1914, former adherents of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (as well as Pentecostals with roots in the Apostolic Faith movement and participants at Rochester (New York) Bible Training School) gained prominence in the new organization. It is not surprising, then, that from its inception the Assemblies of God promulgated a view of woman's "proper sphere" that paralleled those considered above. All of its leaders were men: in fact, only male ministers and delegates were originally eligible to vote in denominational deliberations.¹²

The founding council of the Assemblies of God declared (by male vote) its acceptance of the view that Galatians 3:28 (in Christ there is neither male nor female),

a passage often introduced in support of women's ministry, meant rather that, "in the matter of salvation, the lines of sex are blotted out."¹³ Citing 1 Timothy 2:11-15, it affirmed that women were to be in subjection to men. On a more positive note, it acknowledged their call to "prophesy" as well as to be "helpers in the Gospel." The Assemblies of God offered women credentials as evangelists or as missionaries, but not as pastors.¹⁴

The next year the General Council created a category of "advisory members"

Even in its initial stages, Pentecostalism was not entirely supportive of ministering women, except in specific, well-defined roles.

of the Council and invited women who were "mature believers" to register as such. This ambiguous status, which did not allow women to vote, was definitely inferior to that of males, on whom the responsibility of being "mature believers" was not imposed.¹⁵

The practice of Assemblies of God congregations having women pastors were clearly discouraged, not only in official periodicals but also in the consistent restrictions on their participation at General Councils. In 1919, for example, the Council's male leadership reiterated the limitation of the vote to "all male ministers." While by 1919 those women whose rights were "accepted by the Roster Committee" were granted the right to engage in discussion from the floor, they could not vote even if they were ordained.¹⁶ And the credentialing as evangelists and missionaries which was officially sanctioned for women neither qualified them to administer church ordinances nor to receive much coveted clergy discount passes on the railroads.¹⁷ In 1920, the General Council extended to women the right to vote at Councils and also added to the list of acceptable offices for women that of assistant pastor.¹⁸

For several of his 9 years as a denominational leader, Eudorus Bell authored a question and answer column in the denomination's weekly publication. He frequently found opportunity to articulate his opposition to women functioning in ways that gave them authority over men. Given the variety of circumstances—ranging from claims of spiritual authority to a shortage of workers—that encouraged public roles for women in some areas, however, Bell found it necessary occasionally to justify the status quo.

Such justifications make interesting reading. Structurally clumsy because they are punctuated with qualifying phrases,

they grudgingly accorded women no more than the right to pastor on a temporary basis. The dilemma between Bell's personal inclinations (which he shared with his friend, W. F. Carothers) and the movement's commitment to the Holy Spirit's authority within believers surfaces repeatedly. If God "granted women the privilege. . . in His sovereignty," if He "set His seal" on her leadership by "granting her souls," and if she had the ability to "build up the assembly in the Lord and in peace," then how could "the brethren" oppose her *temporary* service?¹⁹ Even given her charismatic endowment, however, Bell simply could not conceive of a woman pastoring on more than a supply basis. Neither "female rights" nor "New Testament command or example" established her place as a pastor.²⁰

Circumstances forced Bell to agree reluctantly that women might temporarily "do a work. . . that no man at that place is prepared to do." But "if she is wise," he continued, "she will push the man."²¹ The right person for congregational and administrative leadership, every time, was a man; after all, God had "specially designed" the ministry "for strong shoulders."²²

In September 1916, Bell suggested a second way of perceiving ministering women: not only were they infrequently "naturally suited" temporarily to meet certain needs; they also occasionally filled in for men who "failed God." In such cases, women were God's "second best" option for the task. Among people constantly enjoined to know and experience "God's best," the "second best" had little appeal. If, temporarily, in the absence of male deacons, women served as "deacons" in a congregation, Bell insisted that such service did not make a woman a deacon: she was "only" a deaconess.²³

A married woman's proper place, then, as portrayed in the official journal of the Assemblies of God during its formative years, was in the home, "in subjection to her husband." When asked directly what Paul had intended when he had instructed women to be silent in the church, Bell responded: "He meant what he said. . . The squabbles in the church, the disputing and disorder, men should handle it."²⁴

Early Pentecostal women were admonished to "adorn themselves with a meek and quiet spirit." They were told that the women's movement threatened the social order and represented rebellion against God. While all were not so outspoken as Frank Bartleman (whose articles on various subjects appeared in the denomination's periodicals throughout its first several years), Bartleman's strong injunctions to women to accept their role in the home as God's call were echoed in many places.²⁵

Threatened by cultural changes that they perceived as "signs of the times," many Pentecostals honestly wanted to disas-

sociate themselves in conspicuous ways from the "flapper generation" of "new" women. In this regard, it is probably significant that many Assemblies of God adherents urged certain fashions on women. Among Pentecostals, long skirts, long sleeves and long hair, anthropologist Elaine Lawless has argued, had theological significance as tokens of woman's submission to male authority.²⁶ The familiar refrain of heavenly citizenship, applied somewhat inconsistently, reinforced such visible "rejection" of the world.

As among other Protestants, the foreign mission field provided a setting in which Pentecostal women more successfully asserted their need for official endorsement. But even there, restrictions were a reality. In keeping with the general profile of American missionaries, a large majority of early Assemblies of God missionaries were women. Several months after the denomination was established, two women missionaries to India requested Assemblies of God executives to grant them the "privilege to fulfill the functions of the Christian ministry."²⁷ Their request was granted, but with a restrictive proviso: they could fulfill those functions only when a man was unavailable to do so. Their authorization was "a special privilege," for use "in case of emergency only."²⁸

As time passed, Assemblies of God officials expressed concern about the predominance of women on the mission field. At the denomination's General Council in 1931, Missionary Secretary Noel Perkin cited the findings of "competent authorities" who, he claimed, had advised him, that "the work of the General Council of the Assemblies of God depends too much on women workers."²⁹ Noting gratitude to the women who valiantly "filled the gap" (implying both that men were not fulfilling their calls and that women were only temporarily supplying

It was not until 1920 that women could vote at General Councils. Women could officially pastor churches beginning in 1935.

a need), he explicitly urged single men and married couples to seek missionary appointment.³⁰

Early in its history, the Assemblies of God ordained people to various types of ministry or office: elder, evangelist, missionary. Later the General Council voted to change that format and simply to ordain "to the full gospel ministry." It is uncertain precisely how this affected women. Given earlier proscriptions about ordaining women as pastors, it seems likely that it meant, in effect, that the

leadership frowned on women's ordination. Women continued to be endorsed as foreign missionaries or evangelists. On the other hand, however, it seems evident that some people—and districts—ignored the ruling. David McDowell, an executive officer and a pastor in Pennsylvania, for example, in a highly irregular proceeding, ordained his wife himself so that she could serve the congregation more effectively during his frequent travels. Other women, like Helen Wannemacher in Milwaukee, preached regularly, and conducted services in their pastor-husbands' absences. It seems evident, however, that their ministry conformed to the denomination's earlier requirements of submission to male leadership.

Several women evangelists also found receptive audiences in the worldwide Assemblies of God constituency. But it is evident that they took seriously urgings to modesty and "womanly demeanor." And usually they spoke in settings controlled by men. Men invited them, and, when it was time for preaching, turned the service over to them. But their speech was in a controlled environment, and occasionally they were introduced with apology, as exceptions to the "rule" of male dominance.

It is likely that Aimee Semple McPherson became, at least partially, a victim of the prevalent uneasiness about women ministers operating in settings they controlled. Although several factors influenced her departure from the Assemblies of God, she increasingly defied the norms for denominational evangelists. After a brief, unsuccessful attempt to work with her husband, Harold McPherson, she launched out on her own to minister in an environment she dominated. It is interesting that her early independent ministry attracted a higher percentage of males than did the Assemblies of God.³¹ As time passed, she, too, associated with men in the performance of such acts as baptism. And when Angelus Temple needed someone to cover for "Sister," Temple leaders turned to men like Paul Rader.

This brief survey of the limitations on women from the inception of the Assemblies of God provides context for the decision of the General Council in 1935 to grant full ordination to women. Given a brief statement on women at the 1931 council, the action of the 1935 council (which was recorded without comment) is surprising.

In 1931, apparently some ordination certificates were issued to women in spite of earlier ambiguity on the subject. The Council ruled that such certificates should "clearly state that women are ordained only as evangelists." It further required that the words "bury the dead, administer the ordinances of the church, and perform the rite of marriage, when such acts are necessary" (language that had

been on women's missionary credentials), be omitted entirely from women's credentials.

The pertinent resolution of the 1935 Council began by noting that the "plain teaching of Scripture" supported the view that men and women had different ministries within the church. Nonetheless, it continued, "women may also serve the church in the ministry of the Word."³² Women seeking ordination as either evangelists or pastors were required to be at least 25 years old and "matured." They needed, further, to give evidence of both "development in the ministry of the Word" and "actual service." Their "right to administer the ordinances of the church, when such acts are necessary" was included in their ordination. The resolution was made retroactive, presumably to



Mary Ramsey Woodbury pioneered and evangelized in Arkansas. This photo is from her early ministry. She now lives at Maranatha Village, Springfield, Missouri.

authorize the actions of some district councils during the preceding decade when the status of women had been ambiguous.

By 1935, assumptions about proper spheres of public activity for women were so ingrained that the resolution made little difference. It was formulated during the administration of Ernest Williams, a beloved leader whose personal views on women in ministry closely paralleled Bell's.³³ The predominance of males in both the denomination's administration and its congregational leadership was not affected by permitting the ordination of women "to the full ministry." The language of the denomination's constitution and bylaws continued to reinforce

assumptions that authority should be exercised by males. And, more often than not, women who obtained credentials and used them ministered in cooperation with their husbands. At any rate, they functioned under male leadership, since all leadership above the congregational level was male.

From one perspective, at least little, if anything, changed in 1935. Altering the denomination's technical rule did not, in itself, negate longheld assumptions. The failure to address the underlying reservations about women in leadership made the decision to ordain women little more than a technical improvement. One student of ministering women noted in another context: "Emphasis was always on woman's responsibility, not her rights; on her service to the cause of Christ, not her leadership of it."³⁴ That observation applies to the Assemblies of God as well.

Failure to shift the emphasis assured the existence of a wide gap between technical rights and actual service. In fact, in most major American denominations, the successful implementation of the conviction that women could (and should) minister had only come after a thorough consideration of lay rights and responsibilities. Issues pertaining to women's place in the authority structure of local congregations and districts had been addressed before women had been considered as pastors.³⁵

The credence sometimes given Bell's assertion that the Assemblies of God offered women more opportunities than did any other religious organization is historically uninformed. Historical perspective must also inform sociological analyses of the situation. In several major denominations women could be ordained; they exercised leadership through missionary agencies; Belle Bennett championed the rights of the laity in Southern Methodism, establishing a basis for women to serve the church at all levels; in 1921, Helen Barrett Montgomery became the first woman to lead the national governing agency of a mainstream denomination when she was elected president of the Northern Baptist Convention. In evangelical circles, however, women gradually lost the prominence they had quietly gained. The rapid acceptance of the Scofield Bible is part of that story; the gradual ascendancy of Dallas Theological Seminary trained men in the Bible school movement is another. John Roach Straton's impassioned defense of the youthful woman evangelist, Uldine Utley, in 1926 was the last public advocacy of women preachers from the conservative camp for decades. (Straton, pastor of New York City's Calvary Baptist Church and a leader of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association, was the father of Assemblies of God minister, Warren Straton.)

The above information should not obscure the vital contributions women

made to early Assemblies of God efforts. They evangelized, served on the mission field, taught at Bible institutes, and served local congregations in countless ways. They ministered effectively, even if they did so in a restrictive environment. And most of them apparently found that ministry fulfilling.

It does, however, suggest that the declining percentage of actively ministering women (when ministering is understood in a professional sense) is not merely a function of sociological change. Professionalization of the ministry went hand-in-hand with the articulation of prevalent assumptions about women's proper role. Basic points were never discussed: they were assumed. It is hardly surprising, then, that Pentecostals failed to produce a body of literature comparable to holiness tracts and books supporting the ministry of women. They tended, rather, to find congenial attitudes about women's public ministry that suited as well their focus on family life. And Assemblies of God women tended, on their part, to acquiesce.

Examples of married women holding a pastorate apart from their spouse and succeeding (in the denomination's terms) in family roles are relatively scarce: the most outstanding in the early years was probably Carrie Judd Montgomery.³⁶ In a setting increasingly wary of the cultural implications of feminism, Assemblies of God adherents opted for a moderately authoritarian resolution to the tension between authority and Spirit that the subject of women in ministry raised.

Notes

1. See, for example, standard articles, like Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Susan Setta, "Women in Evangelical, Holiness, and Pentecostal Traditions," in Rosemary Ruether and Rosemary Keller, eds., *Women and Religion in America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 3: 223-265; Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider Dayton, and Donald W. Dayton, "Women in the Holiness Movement: Feminism in the Evangelical Tradition," in Eleanor McLaughlin, ed. *Women of Spirit*, pp. 226-254.

2. Charles H. Barfoot and Gerald T. Sheppard, "Prophetic Vs. Priestly Religion: The Changing Role of Women Clergy in Classical Pentecostal Churches," *Review of Religious Research*, 22 (September 1980), 2-10.

3. See, for example, Virginia Lieson Brereton, "Preparing Women for the Lord's Work," in Rosemary Skinner Keller, Louise L. Queen, Hilah F. Thomas, eds., *Women in New Worlds* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1982), 1, 178-199; Virginia Lieson Brereton and Christa Ressmeyer Klein, "American

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Women Who Have Served

Ministering in a variety of ways, these women will be remembered by many *Heritage* readers. Clockwise, beginning above, Eleanor "Mother" Bowie, Central Bible College dean of women; Ruth Cox, evangelist and pastor; Nettie Nichols, missionary to China; Roxie Hughes Alford, pastor, evangelist, and Bible school teacher.



COME! HEAR!

The Woman Evangelist
MRS. H. E. ALFORD
 Former School Mistress, Preach the Old Time Gospel in the Power of the Spirit.

AT THE MAMMOTH TENT
 Cor. McKee & Browder St. Take Erway or Akard Car
SERVICES EVERY NIGHT 8:00
 Except Saturday Night

Salvation, Baptism of Holy Ghost, Divine Healing
 and Second Coming of the Lord.

COME, BRING THE SICK
 Under the Auspices of
 The Pentecostal Gospel Tabernacle,
 Fourth & Grand Ave.

Women in Ministry," in Janet Wilson James, ed., *Women in American Religion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1980), pp. 171-190; Barbara Welter, "She Hath Done What She Could," in *ibid.*, pp. 111-126; Janette Hassey, *No Time for Silence* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), pp. 123-143.

4. See, for example, Martha Tomhave Blauvelt, "Women and Revivalism," in Rosemary Ruether and Rosemary Keller, eds., *Women and Religion in America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981), 1, 1-47; for the use of the text "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy" to legitimate women's ministry, see Barbara Brown Zikmund, "The Struggle for the Right to Preach," in *ibid.*, pp. 193-241.

5. See, for example, A. J. Gordon, "The Ministry of Women," *Missionary Review of the World* (December 1894), 910-921; A. T. Pierson, "Woman as a Factor in the World's Evangelization," *Missionary Review of the World* (July 1895): 520.

6. Janette Hassey overstates women's involvement in the Alliance in *No Time for Silence* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), pp. 15-19. The largest number of women to serve on the Alliance Board of Managers at one time was six. They served in 1893 with 24 men. An historical statement of the Alliance attitude toward women in ministry is contained in the "Minutes" of the 1981 General Council, pp. 307-328 ("Report of the Board of Managers Regarding the Role of Women in Ministry in The Christian and Missionary Alliance").

7. Albert B. Simpson, *The Holy Spirit, or Power from on High* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1895), p. 112.

8. A. B. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible*, 1 Cor., pp. 124-127. This book was part of a series published from 1888 by Simpson's Word, Work and World Publishing Co., New York.

9. A. B. Simpson, *Christ in the Bible*, Romans, p. 286. This was part of a series published from 1888 by Simpson's Word, Work and World Publishing Co. in New York.

10. F. L. Chapell, *Eleventh-Hour Laborers* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co., 1898), pp. 59-65.

11. *Ibid.*

12. GCM, 1914, p. 1. Early council minutes do

not state, however, that delegates had to be men; that they generally were seems supported by conceptions of authority and woman's sphere.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

14. *Ibid.*

15. GCM, 1915, p. 3.

16. GCM, 1919, p. 7.

17. See ad in the *Weekly Evangel*, 1 January 1916, p. 9.

18. GCM, 1920, pp. 9, 48. One should not overlook two facts: in 1920, women first exercised their new privilege of voting in a national election; and in 1920, Aimee Semple McPherson preached to the General Council.

19. *WE*, 29 January and 5 February, 1916, p. 8.

20. *Ibid.*

21. *WE*, 2 September 1916, p. 8.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *WE*, 10 March 1917, p. 9.

24. *WE*, 22 July 1916, p. 8.

25. Frank Bartleman, "Flapper Evangelists, Fashion's Fools," privately published. A/G Archives.

26. Elaine Lawless, "Women's Speech in the Pentecostal Religious Service." Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1982.

27. Executive Presbytery Minutes, 23 November 1914, p. 1.

28. *Ibid.*

29. General Council Minutes, 1931, p. 58.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Figures from the 1936 religious census demonstrate that her denomination had some 65.5 males for each 100 females; for the Assemblies of God, the figure was 58.7. See Barfoot and Sheppard, "Prophetic vs. Priestly Religion," p. 3.

32. GCM, 1935, p. 111.

33. See Ernest Williams, "May Women Preach?" Assemblies of God Archives.

34. Brereton, "Preparing Women," p. 184.

35. Barbara Brown Zikmund, "Winning Ordination for Women in Mainstream Protestant Churches," in Ruether and Keller, *Women and Religion*, 3, 339-340.

36. See Montgomery's autobiography, *Under His Wings* (Oakland, CA: Triumphs of Faith, 1936).

Mother Peace/*from page 5*

who had heard the gospel only once had built a chapel and were asking for a teacher.

During this time, Marie wrote, "Many young people are turning to God. The dope addicts who enter our refugee stations are coming to God and being delivered."

When Japan struck Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the Japanese occupational troops announced that the missionaries in China were prisoners of war. Even though they were not interned, the



Henrietta Tieleman (left) and Alice Stewart joined Marie Stephany and the mission in 1926. Miss Tieleman is deceased; Alice Stewart lives in Florida.

missionaries were restricted and abused by their captors.

By the summer of 1942, Marie was being greatly harassed by the Japanese. But then news came that the missionaries were to be repatriated. Marie recognized that her days of ministry in Ta Ch'ang were numbered.

With mingled emotions—joy as she thought of the victories God had used her to accomplish, and sadness because she must leave the people she loved—Marie turned the work in Ta Ch'ang and the surrounding villages over to her faithful Chinese workers. Marie was 63 years old when she left China, never to return.

Marie was living at the Bethany Retirement Home in Lakeland, Florida on November 28, 1962, the day she quietly slipped into the presence of God.

By her friends, Marie Stephany is still remembered as a woman of courage and strength. But of all the qualities attributed to this valiant lady, the name she treasured most was given to her by her beloved Chinese:

Mother Peace.

Adele Flower Dalton is a former missionary and now senior editorial assistant in the Division of Foreign Missions of the Assemblies of God.



LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Members of A/G 55 Years Appreciate Their Heritage

We received the tape ["Gospel Radio Classics"] and were thrilled to hear the voices of Brothers Williams [E.S.] and Steelberg [W.R., Sr.]. They being dead yet speak. That powerful message from Brother Ward [C.M.] was wonderful. I told my wife that I wish the whole world could hear this message.

We are still reading all of the back issues of *Heritage*. We think the Assemblies of God is the greatest in the world. My dear wife is 80, and I will be 86 in December. We came into the Assemblies of God in 1932; that is 55 years ago. Our church was then called the Pentecostal Church of Cleveland but is now First Assembly and located in Lyndhurst.

Enclosed are photographs and other material for the Archives. May God bless you in your good work.

William and Frances Harman
South Euclid, Ohio

Mr. and Mrs. Harman were featured in the January 15, 1981, issue of the Sunday School Times and Gospel Herald for their

The Sunday School Times AND Gospel Herald



William and Frances Harman

literature distribution ministry in Cleveland's Metropolitan General Hospital. The feature included 16 pictures of the ministry with which the Harmans had been involved for 48 years. They are members of First Assembly, Lyndhurst, which is a suburb of Cleveland.

Heritage Lifts Spirit

Happy 6th Birthday [for *Heritage* magazine], and may it continue until Jesus returns!

Enclosed please find a check for my

Heritage renewal. I have all the issues, and my spirit is lifted high as I enjoy each issue.

I started in evangelistic work in 1931. I graduated from Southwestern Bible



Helen M. Earley

Institute, Enid, Oklahoma, and I am still working for Jesus in Pittsfield Assembly as a pianist.

Love you in Christ.

Helen M. Earley
Pittsfield, Illinois

New Order of the Latter Rain

Thank you for the article on the Latter Rain Movement "The New Order of the Latter Rain," by Richard Riss, (Fall 1987). I have been with the Assemblies of God only since 1981. For the 25 years prior to that, I was associated with the Elim Fellowship, having also graduated from Elim Bible Institute. I even married President Carlton Spencer's daughter.

Through my 6 years in the Assemblies of God it has always grieved me to see that so few realize that, along with the negative aspects of the Latter Rain Movement, there were also some things very positive. The *Heritage* article put the whole matter in proper perspective. Thank you very much.

Saied Adour, Pastor
Church of the Resurrection
East Syracuse, New York



TIME FRAME

A QUICK LOOK INTO THE PAST

Each issue the editor selects items of interest for this column from the *Pentecostal Evangel*, *Latter Rain Evangel*, *Apostolic Faith*, *Word and Witness*, and other publications. Comments and suggestions from our readers are invited.

10 Years Ago—1977

Four students attending Bethany Bible College, Santa Cruz, California, were killed November 4 when their private plane crashed. They were C. Rickie Berry, David E. Fagerstrom, Russell W. Franks, and Perry E. Harbin. They were enroute to a singing engagement.

Guy Duty, 70, an ordained minister with the Potomac District and a writer, died November 21. He authored five books, the best known being *Divorce and Remarriage*.

20 Years Ago—1967

J. Philip Hogan, Division of Foreign Missions director, spoke at the 8th Inter-University Missionary Convention at the University of Illinois. His message, "The Bush or the Boulevard?" challenged missionaries and organizations to establish evangelism centers in the big cities of the world for the best results.

At the annual meeting of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America, the delegates passed a resolution reaffirming their responsibility to evangelize the world. Officers elected were R. Bryant Mitchell, chairman; T.F. Zimmerman, first vice-chairman; and Charles Conn, secretary.

30 Years Ago—1957

Richard Champion, editorial assistant and circulation manager of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, succeeds Vernon McLellan as editor of the *C.A. Herald*. McLellan is the new editor of the *Youth for Christ* magazine.

Missionaries Adele Flower and Roy Dalton were married December 8 and plan to sail for Spain in January. Adele has ministered in several Latin American countries and in the Spanish Literature Division. Roy served as a missionary to Cuba before transferring to Spain in 1951.

40 Years Ago—1947

A 5-week revival meeting at Bethel Temple, Dallas, Texas, was described by Pastor Albert Ott as the greatest meeting in the history of the church. At least 150 believers were baptized in the Spirit. Clara Grace was the evangelist.

A mighty revival in which classes were suspended for a week has stirred the Central Bible Institute campus in Springfield, Missouri. W.I. Evans, CBI dean said he had never seen so many people "maintained and sustained" for so many days in such an intense spiritual atmosphere. Reports of healings, conversions, restitutions, visions, baptisms in the Spirit, calls to mission fields, and other supernatural acts were daily occurrences.

50 Years Ago—1937

After preaching in the U.S. for several months, David du Plessis is returning to South Africa. He wrote to the Assemblies of God on his departure that he had a good report to take home. "My opinion [of the Assemblies of God] is that a great revival is coming, and the work is advancing along sane, balanced lines."

The *Sunday School Times* reports that Russia has a program to turn people against missionaries serving in countries throughout the world. "Missionaries," a communist wrote, "should be ridiculed and their converts boycotted. The watchword should be 'Christ does not fill the stomach, but Marxism does.'"

60 Years Ago—1927

The Monte Vista Christian School, Watsonville, California, with elementary and high school, is now in its 2nd year of operation. (*Monte Vista, one of the first Christian schools in the Assemblies of God, is still going strong after 61 years.*)

Pastor T.B. Barratt, Christiania, Norway, is conducting services at Glad Tidings Tabernacle, New York. In 1906, when Barratt was visiting America, a Norwegian immigrant by the name of Vingren, took him to a mission, Glad Tidings Hall—the

forerunner of the Tabernacle—where Barratt was exposed to the Pentecostal experience. Vingren also took Robert Brown to the same mission. Brown later married the pastor, Marie Burgess, and became the pastor of the church.

70 Years Ago—1917

The Great War has created difficult circumstances for missionaries trying to return to their fields of service and obtain supplies. A bright spot in the great tragedy facing the world right now is the ministry to American servicemen by Raymond T. Richey and others. They are ministering to our servicemen near military bases and providing gospel literature.

One of the greatest opportunities to reach Russia with the gospel has resulted from the revolution. The revolution has thrown the door open to 182,000,000 people in that great land.

80 Years Ago—1907

A Pentecostal revival in Lamont, Oklahoma, has stirred this area for miles around. Glen A. Cook, who received the Pentecostal experience at the Azusa Street Mission, preached to a group praying for the baptism in the Spirit. He found them teaching that eating pork, wearing neckties, drinking coffee, and wearing moustaches were sinful. Cook said that after the Lord delivered them from this bondage, they were baptized in the Spirit.

Thomas Junk, Seattle, Washington, reports that some 75 people have been baptized in the Spirit in their mission on 7th Avenue. One 12-year-old girl was baptized in the Spirit while being baptized in water. ♦



47 Years Ago—1940. How many of these people can you identify? If you need help, they are Richard Orchard and Martha Jane Ward in front; standing, from the left, are Tommy Hollingsworth, Dorothy Ward, C.M. Ward, and Tommy Emmett. Picture was taken during a revival meeting in the Gospel Tabernacle, Aberdeen South Dakota, which Emmett pastored. Photo courtesy of Katherine Trygg.



□ Edith Mae Pennington/ from page 9

remaining years were spent with the local congregation.²⁰

As far as many of the old-timers who were in her meetings during the Great Depression are concerned, there never will be another Edith Mae Pennington. She could attract the crowds and draw the net for conversions. And few evangelists were as successful in leading believers into the Pentecostal experience. Many Pentecostal churches really didn't get a good start until Edith Mae Pennington visited their cities.

Her critics said she was foolish to give up a promising career for the ministry. Edith had one answer: "The Light of the Cross exceeded the bright lights of the stage. I exchanged the glamour of the world for the glory of the cross."²¹

It's pretty safe to add that she never looked back.

Notes

1. "Miss Edith Mae Patterson Awarded Grand Capital Prize as Most Beautiful Girl in the U.S.," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* (Nov. 6, 1921), sec. 3, p. 1. Edith would stress later that the contest was not in bathing suits. On March 24, 1946, the newspaper ran a feature with seven photographs in their Sunday supplement, titled "Most Beautiful Girl in America—25 Years Later."

2. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

4. Edith Mae Pennington, *From the Footlights to the Light of the Cross* (Shreveport, LA, n.d.), p. 4.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

6. "Beauty Winner Opens Revival Service Here," *The Washington Herald* (April 1931).

7. *Ibid.* The Oklahoma City church was not the first Pentecostal church she had visited. According to her daughter, Edith Lorraine Pennington, in a letter to me Nov. 1, 1987, Edith attended a service at Angelus Temple in Los Angeles and was healed of a goiter.

8. Pennington, p. 7.

9. Letter to author, Nov. 1, 1987.

10. Both McPherson and Woodworth-Etter's marriages ended in divorce. Mary Moise opened a rescue mission in St. Louis which brought a separation from her husband (see *A/G Heritage*, spring 1986).

11. Pennington, *Should Women Preach the Gospel?* (Shreveport, LA: Plant of Renown, 1982), p. 19.

12. Correspondence, Assemblies of God ministers file, April 12, 1932.

13. Letter to author, Nov. 1, 1987.

14. Correspondence, Assemblies of God ministers file, Feb. 23, 1932.

15. "Former Champion Beauty of Nation Is Evangelist Now," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* (Oct. 10, 1930). Newspaper coverage was during meeting at Granite City, IL.

16. Henry Hoar, "Marvelous Inflow of Hundreds," *Pentecostal Evangel* (Nov. 14, 1931).

17. Interview, Nov. 22, 1987.

18. Telephone interview, Oct. 31, 1987.

19. *New York Evening Journal* (May 4, 1932).

20. In Feb. 1950, Edith Mae Pennington—"with a tinge of regret"—severed her relationship with the Assemblies of God. She wrote the general secretary, J. Roswell Flower, stating that she had no new "teaching, practices, or interpretation." She added that God wanted her to separate from the Assemblies of God

and call her independent church, "The Plant of Renown" (Ez. 34:29). Flower answered, saying that the Assemblies of God had considerable latitude for various types of ministries and saw no reason for Edith's withdrawal. Others thought that the church had embraced some of the Latter Rain teachings that were in wide use in 1950.

Following Edith Mae Pennington's death in 1974, her daughter, Edith Lorraine Pennington, assumed the pastorate of the church.

21. Pennington, *From the Footlights*, p. 7.



Congregation in old Glad Tidings building, about 1920.

Glad Tidings Temple 1913-1988

We at Glad Tidings Temple are preparing to celebrate our 75th anniversary next July. As part of our celebration, we are publishing an anniversary book containing photographs, stories, and historic background never before published.

Your help is needed! Please contact us should you have:

- Photographs of any period of our history
- An anecdote regarding individuals in our past
- Any items of historic interest
- Any other information relating to Glad Tidings

Arrangements can be made for us to safely borrow your old documents or photographs. Perhaps you would like to record your story on a cassette tape.

Please Contact Us As Soon As Possible

Glad Tidings Temple/1475 Ellis Street, San Francisco, CA 94115
 Phone (415) 346-1111