

VOL. 13, NO. 1, SPRING 1993

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MCPHERSON

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Assemblies of God

# HERITAGE™



**1910 Baptism Near Joplin, Missouri**

SEE INSIDE COVER

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MRS. RAYE WILEY BATSON

# HERITAGE™

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**COVER:** Hannah Wiley being baptized near Joplin, Missouri, about 1910. She later married Talmadge Ashley who was a gospel singer. Readers who can identify others in the photo are asked to write to the Archives. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Raye Wiley Batson

Photo of Aimee Semple McPherson is a Markham Studio photo, Oregon Historical Society, #013167.

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# The *Ambassador* Has Been Found

*A/G Missionary Plane Destroyed in Hurricane Andrew*

By Wayne Warner

It's pretty hard to hide a C-46 Commando cargo plane. But for 44 years the old *Ambassador I* missionary plane had been missing.

Until last February.

Well, let me explain. After the Assemblies of God traded this plane in 1949 on a B-17—*Ambassador II*—it was exported to Brazil and dropped out of sight for us. We simply lost track of it and knew nothing of its whereabouts until last February. That's when we heard that the Drug Enforcement Administration had seized it and then, worse than that, it was destroyed by Hurricane Andrew last August.

It was one of 268 planes destroyed at Tamiami Airport during Hurricane Andrew. Airport manager Clair Sherrick said, "The airport looked like a war and that we had lost."

In its final flight tumbling down the Tamiami runway, it was far less dignified than in its first missionary run 45 years ago as it headed toward Liberia.

The late Gene Callentine, engineer and co-pilot, had little love for the Charlie 46, as he called it. "It was a bucket of bolts," he would say while showing partiality toward *Ambassador II*. But pilot Herman Revis, who is

Missionaries and the *Ambassador I* crew were part of history on September 3, 1948, when they returned from Africa on the first international missionary flight. It was the biggest plane flying out of Springfield at the time and usually drew a crowd whenever it took off or landed.



Above, the old *Ambassador I* C-46 was parked at Tamiami Airport when this photo was taken August 23, 1992, the day before Hurricane Andrew hit. Below, the photographer took this shot the day after the storm. Andrew took the plane about a mile and dumped it at the end of a runway. Photos courtesy of Clair Sherrick, airport manager



retired at Casselberry, Florida, some 200 miles from where the *Ambassador* met its end, called it a great plane.

It must have been more than a bucket of bolts to have survived nearly 50 years. And something less than a great plane.

For you who knew nothing about the Assemblies of God and its international flights (and missed the earlier *Heritage* and *Springfield!* magazine stories), here's a brief look at those three years, 1948-51.

Immediately after World War II, the Department of Foreign Missions discussed the possibility of buying a plane big enough to transport missionaries and materials to foreign fields. Word came to Director Noel Perkin that the army had surplus planes in Arkansas that were going for a fraction of their cost.

It was decided to buy two cargo planes, designated by the army as C-46 and which the Curtiss Wright factory



began delivering to the military in July 1942. Powered by two 18-cylinder Pratt & Whitney engines which developed 2,000 horsepower each on takeoff, the plane had a maximum speed of 264 mph and was the biggest two-engine land plane in the world when it was built. The C-46s gained their greatest fame during the war by flying war materials over the "Hump" from India to China after the Japanese closed the Burma Road.

The old C-46 cargo plane is nothing more than a fuselage, engines, instruments, and a cockpit. But for a few missionaries who still remember flying into Liberia and India and Brazil and other exotic airports, its final fate is sad.

To say that we got a bargain on the planes is an understatement. The original cost was \$233,000 each, and we paid but \$5,000. Then the Missions Department decided to park one of the planes and use it for parts. The other plane received a \$15,000 face lift, modified for 40 passengers and brought to civilian standards. A host of young people began raising money for the plane in one of the first Speed-the-Light projects.

Then take-off day August 12, 1948. What a day!

While hundreds cheered and prayed at the Springfield Airport, the *Ambassador* roared down the runway bound for Africa. Crammed inside was a small amphibian plane and other cargo. Seated in the cabin were 14 missionaries headed for their lands of calling.

"It's a dream come true," exclaimed Missions Director Noel Perkin. And George Carmichael agreed, seeing the world becoming smaller: "The heavens have become a highway linking the mission fields of the world."

A year later, following several trips to ports of call around the world, the C-46 was traded on the four-engine B-17 modified bomber which was once owned by the president of the Philippines Airlines. This plane continued the missionary flights for 2 years, but then the Missions Department decided the service had become impractical. That plane wound up in the hands of the French government and is now at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford Airfield, England. Now called *Mary Alice* after a World War II plane, it is said to be the most accurately restored B-17 in existence.

Wayne E. Warner is Director of the A/G Archives.



Above, pilot John Savage and the A/G King Air. It was his idea to continue the search for *Ambassador I*. Right, Herman Revis piloted the *Ambassador I* and *II* 1948-51. He is spending his retirement years in Florida.



Now for the mysterious disappearance of NC5925V, *Ambassador I*.

In researching for the planes in 1985, I checked with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and was told that the office had no further information on the C-46 after it was exported to Brazil in 1949 to be used on Varig Airlines flights. Then to further frustrate the search in Brazil we were using the wrong serial number and never found it. With the new serial number, we are hoping Varig can give information on its use in Brazil.

Enter John Savage, the current A/G pilot.

Last February John took a look at the large photograph of the *Ambassador I*, which is hanging on my office wall, and said, "We're going to find that plane!" He grabbed the phone and started dialing the FAA. All the time I knew we had gone as far as we could with the FAA since the plane was out of the country.

Now I'm glad John wasn't willing to give up that easily.

He discovered that the FAA employee in 1985 overlooked the fact that the plane was returned to the U.S. in 1969 and was used as a cargo plane for the next 22 years. Unknown to us at the time, a company in nearby Tulsa was one of the 10 registered owners.

A few days later, with microfiche of the complete

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# John Peter Kolenda

“A Man Sent From God Whose Name Was John”

By Lewis Wilson

As the lifeless body of John Peter Kolenda was carried from the bedroom of his home in Modesto, California, a tract fell from his hand. Its title, “Good Night or Good-bye,”<sup>1</sup> seemed a fitting final message from one who had preached the gospel for nearly 70 years on three continents.

J. P. Kolenda was a remarkable man. His deep convictions, strong physical frame, and quick and creative mind made him a leader, but he sought neither position nor recognition. An engaging smile, a voice that could both thunder and

whisper, his obvious love for people, a readiness to give of himself, and a total commitment to God won him a wide circle of friends and admirers. To many who loved him, he was, simply, “Uncle John,” “Tio Joao,” or, in his later years in Germany, “Opa.” William Menzies lists him with the “giants of faith who have left a worthy heritage,”<sup>2</sup> and none who knew John Kolenda would disagree.

With his seemingly boundless energy, he taught, preached, wrote, built, counseled, and raised funds to advance that portion of the work of God with which he was entrusted. Though a popular and powerful preacher whose sermons are still remembered, he was ready to exchange his suit for overalls if manual labor was required. On at least one occasion he poured the concrete floor of a new church until late at night and preached in the building the following day.

In his 60s, after a strenuous life, his family encouraged him to retire, but 20 years later, he was going

strong. Shortly after a serious heart attack, he drove across country in his little Carman Ghia to fulfill a preaching assignment, and after a hip replacement, though in his 80s, he traveled to scenes of his earlier ministry in the Amazon and Germany.

His inner strength was, of course, more important. It stemmed from his profound faith that God had called him and the projects he undertook were directed from heaven. Though a modest man, he was intimidated by no one. He once persuaded one of the world’s most famous evangelists to alter an ill-conceived project. But his strong convictions were tempered by a concern for God’s work. Building the Kingdom was more important than demonstrating the rightness of his position.

He was a man of vision who dared to undertake great projects that to others seemed impossible. And, over the years, his dreams were translated into an amazing list of churches, Bible schools, printing

Lewis Wilson is the vice-president for academic affairs at Southern California College. His wife, Lenore, is J. P. Kolenda’s niece. The assistance of Albert Brenda’s two privately published books, *The General* and *I Heard from Heaven*, is gratefully acknowledged.

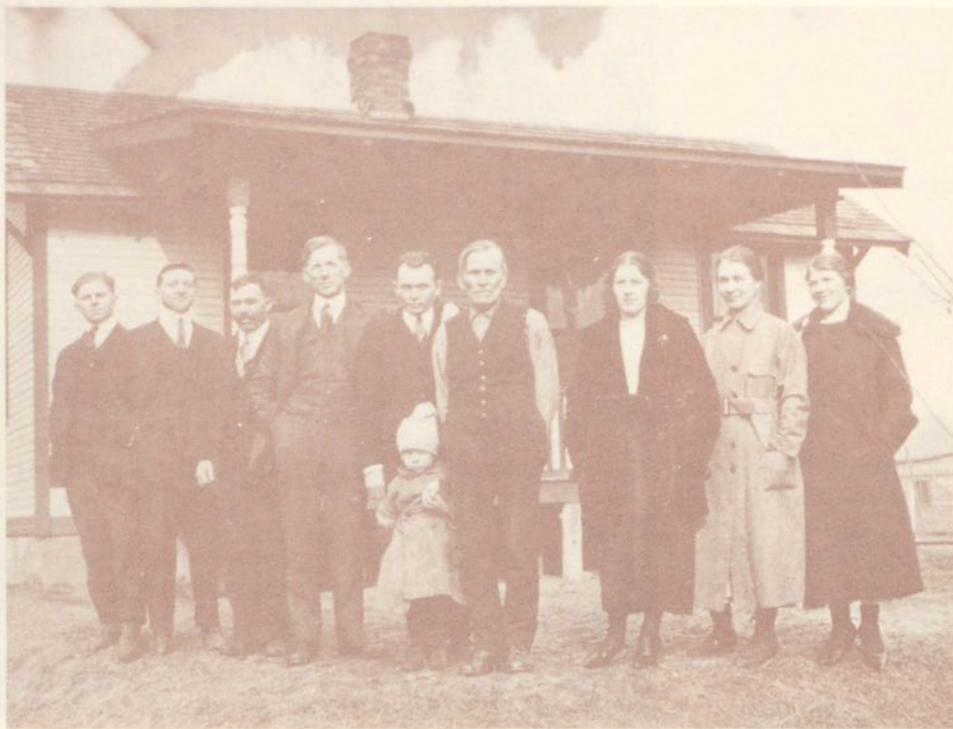
plants, and extension courses as a direct result of his vision and drive. Lawrence Olson, his long-time friend and missionary colleague, claimed he had never seen one of his projects fail.<sup>3</sup>

Though they stand as tangible testimonies to his life and work, his influence was even greater. Through his preaching and teaching he touched untold thousands. His work in training young ministers in Brazil and Germany has significantly shaped the Pentecostal work in those countries. J. Philip Hogan has described him as "a great teacher and trainer. He, perhaps more than any other man I have known, inspired young men to prepare themselves for the ministry."<sup>4</sup>

**J**ohn Kolenda was reared in a godly family. His father, Ludwig Kolenda, was a milk dealer in Germany and his mother, Emelia, was a seamstress. As an evangelical Lutheran lay preacher in Germany, Ludwig had established two churches before responding to a call from friends who had migrated to Brazil to join them.

He sold his apartment house and business and emigrated to Brazil.

John and Marguerite Kolenda with John's sister Martha and her son in 1937.



Future missionary John Kolenda is on the left with this family group in Michigan, about 1917.

His wife and family shared his burden for the spiritual needs there. In 7 years he started two schools and three churches in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul before moving to the United States.

After a brief tenure as pastor of a German-Russian church in Colorado, he settled in the thumb region of Michigan where he farmed and pastored a rural German church.

John had arrived at Ellis Island with his mother, two sisters, and two brothers in 1909, when he was 11. His father had preceded them and one sister, Martha, had remained in Brazil. Within a year the boy who already knew two languages had learned sufficient English to advance to his proper school grade. He liked to read, particularly works of history and geography, and pored over his books by lamplight even after a hard day's work on the farm.

In Michigan he was active in church youth activities, sang in the choir, taught a Sunday school class, and, when the family purchased a Model T Ford in 1916, became the church chauffeur. But at 18, he recognized his need for a personal conversion and gave his life to God. Through reading Maria Woodworth-Etter's, *Signs and Wonders*, he

accepted divine healing, and, shortly afterwards, witnessed an incredible miracle as a cobbler friend regained the use of legs which were thought to be hopelessly paralyzed.

Learning of Pentecostals in Detroit, he took a summer job in Royal Oak in order to attend their meetings. Not long afterwards, through the ministry of Aimee Semple McPherson, he and other members of his family were filled with the Spirit.

At 21, Kolenda's father's health began to decline, and he looked to John, the second of his three sons to take over the family farm in Michigan.

Though from boyhood he had felt an inclination to enter the ministry, John also seriously considered becoming a building contractor or a dentist. At 17 he had taken a business course at Ferris Institute in Detroit. But after his baptism in the Holy Spirit, he was confident that God had called him to full-time ministry, and so he declined his father's offer. Then after learning that D. W. Kerr, the highly respected former pastor in Cleveland, Ohio, would be teaching in a new Bible school in Los Angeles, he took the train to



A pastors conference in Brazil with John Kolenda in the center on the lower step.

California in the fall of 1920.

At Southern California Bible School, now Southern California College, he studied basic English Bible with a strong emphasis on practical ministry, and met expenses by painting houses and selling cars. The school's strong emphasis on missions and his knowledge of Portuguese encouraged Kolenda to consider that Brazil might be his calling. In 1922 he completed the 2-year course and was ordained by the newly organized Southern California District of the Assemblies of God.

Though he had not sought a wife, as he neared graduation he became acquainted with Marguerite Westmark who had accepted the Pentecostal message while attending a Nazarene college in nearby Pasadena. An accomplished pianist, she had become involved with the music program of the new Bible school. She had long felt a call to Brazil, and as the young couple recognized their common interest, romance developed. Their marriage in her home town, Minneapolis, Minnesota, that winter began a life-long ministry as they joined their gifts in a single-minded commitment to God's work. To a significant degree, "his" ministry

was "their" ministry.

Soon after graduation, Kolenda had returned to his home in Michigan to be with his father who was not well and died a few months later. To support himself and his new bride, he joined his brother-in-law's new business venture in Pigeon selling tires, batteries, and radios while he preached at various places in the vicinity. At the time, there were probably no more than 10 Assemblies of God churches in the entire state of Michigan, a part of the newly formed Central District.

The business went well but Kolenda became increasingly dissatisfied with his secular work. When two visitors to one of his services invited him to start a church in nearby Harbor Beach, he resigned from the business and took up residence with a church family there holding services in the upstairs Orange Hall.

Though attendance grew, his vision was to reach the community, and so that summer he bought a 300 seat tent and pitched it in the center of town. So many accepted Christ during the month it was in use that the hall was filled when services were resumed indoors.

The following summer, Kolenda pitched the tent in Bad Axe, the county seat, inviting George and Oda Payne, who were to remain life-long friends, as evangelists. The nucleus of a strong church was created and Kolenda assumed the responsibility for it as well. For over a year he not only pastored both churches, but assisted in establishing or strengthening others in Peck and Applegate.

In 1927 he joined with the Paynes, Rollin Severance, and others in forming the Michigan Evangelistic Association to establish churches throughout the state. The first effort was in South Flint as a large tent was pitched near the main highway. A church was established and a brick building seating 250 was built in a major act of faith.

That fall Kolenda accepted the pastorate and moved to South Flint. To meet expenses, he lived in the church basement and painted houses. But within months the congregation doubled, he ended his secular work, and the Kolendas moved into a new duplex.

That summer the church cooperated in a city-wide campaign held in a large, temporary tabernacle. At the end of the campaign, even though he had no funds, Kolenda purchased the building, moved it to a lot by the Flint River, and renamed the church Riverside Tabernacle. Within a year, the congregation had grown to 600 and a new brick church was undertaken.

The Great Depression hit the thriving church as many lost their jobs and left the area, but by 1932 the church had recovered and Kolenda was able to give more time to starting and assisting new churches. His first effort was in Bay City where he pitched a tent and preached nightly. At his encouragement, evangelist Wilbur Cox pitched a tent in Pontiac where he also visited and preached as often as possible. At Jackson, Alpena, and other towns in the northern part of the state he was involved in starting churches. Eventually he resigned the Flint

church, leaving it in the capable hands of Charles W. H. Scott, and gave himself completely to pioneering.

In 1934, he was asked to return to pastoring in Lansing. As a presbyter, Kolenda was aware that the church of about 80 members was torn by faction, and he resisted the invitation. But his life's rule was to obey the voice of the Spirit, and he eventually felt constrained to accept the unwanted responsibility. His commitment and gifts were honored as in the next three years the church united, built a new facility, grew to 300 members, and paid off the mortgage.

**I**n 1937 his vision turned toward Brazil. His sister Martha had married a Brazilian, Rodrigo Lemos, remaining behind when the rest of the family immigrated to the United States. Both a desire to see the sister he had not seen for nearly 30 years plus a concern for her spiritual welfare, caused Kolenda to use funds saved for a new car to send her steamship tickets. His brothers and other sisters had all become active Pentecostals, and were overjoyed as soon after her arrival their Brazilian sister committed her life to God and was filled with the Spirit. On her return to Brazil, her family of nine children sensed the difference in their mother, were converted, filled with the Spirit, and several entered the ministry.

This experience heightened Kolenda's long interest in Brazil, and soon after, on two successive days, he was approached independently by a Swedish missionary and Noel Perkin, the national Foreign Missions Secretary, with invitations to go to Brazil. Believing it was God's time, he resigned his church, and, as war was breaking out in Europe, John and Marguerite Kolenda with their two daughters, Dorothy and Grace Ann, sailed into Rio de Janeiro late in 1939.

During the 6 years of his first term, Kolenda's work was both regional and national. The Pentecostal message, first taken to Brazil in 1910, had enjoyed remarkable

growth. With 60,000 adherents, the *Assembleias de Deus* was already the second largest Protestant denomination in the country. In Rio alone there were 70 churches, and in Porto Alegre, the town where he had lived as a boy, on the very spot his father had often prayed, Kolenda found an Assembly of

## Missionary John Under Arrest

**W**hen the war [World War II] broke out, Dad could no longer get gas for the car, so he put it up on blocks in the neighbor's barn. So, when we traveled we had to ride the bus, or on a truck and the train when possible. One time we went on a train trip to visit a native minister and hold special meetings. At this time, there were soldiers riding on all trains, watching for foreigners. Dad warned us not to speak English, only Portuguese. Well, just before we arrived at our destination, Grace started to talk English to Mom.

That did it. They put Dad under arrest; and when we reached our destination and got off the train, we were startled to see Dad marched off between five soldiers with guns and mounted bayonets to the City Hall. We thought sure that Dad was going to prison, but were thrilled when, after about half an hour, he returned. After showing the city magistrate his American passport and that he was a citizen of the United States of America, which was allied with Brazil in the war against Germany, and that his children and wife were born in the U.S.A., and do not know how to speak German, the magistrate recognized the mistake of the soldiers in arresting Dad and apologized to him.

Dad made good use of this opportunity and asked for permission to conduct an open air meeting at the city square, which was granted. So, about two hours afterwards, the "prisoner" who had walked between five soldiers, was now preaching the gospel to a large crowd, after which the believers of that town sang happily, accompanied by mother on her accordion.

—Dorothy Kolenda

From *I Heard From Heaven* by Albert W. Brenda, As Told by J. P. Kolenda, pp. 121-22.

God church with a seating capacity of 2,000.<sup>5</sup>

Though invited to minister there, he chose to move into the neighboring state of Santa Catarina where there were only three Assemblies of God churches in an area about the size of Michigan without her lakes. He began the challenging task of reaching the state by starting a church in Florianopolis, the capital. The house he built, with personal funds, was to remain his Brazilian home for over 30 years.

His method in reaching out to the rest of Santa Catarina was to win converts and send them out to win others. Open air services, personal evangelism, Sunday schools, Bible studies, and classes for young men wishing to enter the ministry were all part of his program.

Travel was difficult. There was only a mile of paved road in the entire state, and, during the war years, fuel was rationed or simply unavailable, but when he could not use his car for lack of roads or fuel, he traveled on buses, motorcycles, narrow gauge railroads, horses, and even a sail boat. All of this required Kolenda to be away from home for weeks at a time preaching and holding Bible conferences.

But in 1942, when Santa Catarina had its first statewide convention, national pastors were ordained to the ministry and a drive begun to build an Assemblies of God church in every city, town, and village in the state. When Kolenda left for his first furlough, over a hundred churches or preaching points had been established, and the state has remained one of the most prosperous of the Assemblies of God fields in Brazil.

In addition to his work in Santa Catarina, Kolenda had important national responsibilities. The work in Brazil was indigenous but had been strongly influenced by Swedish missionaries. Differences in the Swedish and American methods and philosophy had caused some friction, and one of the reasons Kolenda had been sent was to determine what the American

Continued on page 30

# A Modern Miracle

## *The Healing of Private James P. Sturgeon*

James P. Sturgeon was called to the U.S. Army in January, 1942. His reception center was Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he was kept three days. After receiving his basic training at Camp Wallace, Texas, he was transferred to Fort Bliss, which is located far up the Rio Grande at El Paso, Texas.

On March 20, 1942, with full field pack, James started up Mount Franklin on a routine hike. Suddenly he was overcome with heat. He had a sunstroke which made him unconscious and caused him to fall backwards. The fall cracked his skull and as a result he suffered four paralytic strokes.

He was in a hospital for nearly 5 months. At the end of that time a number of doctors held a consultation and decided they could do nothing but send him home; so on August 12 he received an honorable discharge.

When discharged the young man was in such bad shape that he had to have an escort from the army camp to his home in Eagle City, Oklahoma. He had no use whatever of his entire right side, and had to drag his right foot around with a single crutch. His head hurt continually—he could hardly stand the pain. His eyesight was becoming poorer and poorer. He wore size eighteen glasses and could not read without them. His whole condition was growing worse all the time.

Then he went to Seminole, Oklahoma, where the annual convention of the Oklahoma District Council



of the Assemblies of God was in session.

He attended the great public service in the city auditorium on the night of October 7. Being affiliated with the District Council—he had exhorter's papers when he was drafted into the Army—he was carried to the platform, seated, and his crutch was put beneath a piano.

No plans had been made to pray for the sick in that service. However, James told the chairman of the meeting that he wanted to be anointed with oil and prayed for. He believed that God would heal him.

The meeting began, and after one song had been sung, the leader announced that this young man had requested prayer. There in the presence of more than 2,000 people James Sturgeon was anointed with oil. Two of the ministering brethren laid hands on him, and others gathered around and prayed that God would heal him.

As they prayed the young man's right hand, which had been badly drawn, straightened out; then he raised his whole right arm, which had been paralyzed.

Like a flash he jumped up from his chair and began leaping for joy

and dancing all over the platform. He was completely healed. He needed a crutch no longer. God had performed a wonderful miracle of healing before the eyes of more than 2,000 people, and they stood to their feet and for fully 20 minutes shouted and praised the Lord. Without waiting for an invitation, a great many came to the front to be prayed for, and many claimed to have been healed in that service.

The next day the miracle was headlined on the front page of the local newspaper. The whole town was stirred. The young man joyfully told to men and women who had seen him in his crippled state the glorious story of how God had healed him.

The manager of the hotel at which he was staying was present at the service and witnessed the healing. He was so impressed that he told James he would pay for the call if he wanted to telephone his parents at Eagle City and inform them of his healing.

Formerly a young black man who works for the hotel had to help him in and out of bed, because of his crippled condition. After his healing that was no longer necessary.

When James arrived at home his mother and sisters met with him their hands in the air, shouting for joy. His young brother was crying. His little nephew said, "I never thought this would happen."

Many do not expect such things to happen today, and that is why they don't happen more often. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, as the Bible says. "I am the Lord; I change not." Malachi 3:6. "I am the Lord that healeth thee." Exodus 15:26.

James is still well and he is using his health and strength to preach the gospel and to tell everyone what God has done for him.

This article is a reprint from the February 1943 *Christ's Ambassadors Herald*. After his healing, Sturgeon told his story many times in his pastoral and evangelistic meetings. He graduated from Southwestern Assemblies of God College in 1950. He and his wife Violet ministered in Cuba and Germany. On June 19-20 their three children and friends from the Germany ministry will help them observe their 50th wedding anniversary at the Grand Hotel, Heritage U.S.A.



J. Bashford Bishop, left, working with Stanley Frodsham, editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, 1939.

## J. Bashford Bishop

*A Look at China-born  
“Bash” Bishop’s  
50-year Ministry—  
including Bible School  
Teaching, Pastoring,  
and Writing Sunday  
School Lessons*

By Glenn Gohr

Thousands in the Assemblies of God are familiar with the name J. Bashford Bishop, but not everyone has had the opportunity to meet him face-to-face. He is possibly best known for his weekly Sunday school lesson which appeared in the *Pentecostal Evangel* from 1956 to 1978. He has

**He spent his first 7 years in China, and then his parents returned to this country.**

had 16 years of pastoral ministry, and he is also remembered for his 30 years of teaching, the last 23 of which were at Southeastern College in Lakeland, Florida.

J. Bashford Bishop has an unusual and colorful background. He was born in Chefoo, Shantung, China, on August 13, 1913. His mother, Luella Huelster, came from a very religious home. Her father was one of five preacher brothers who immigrated from Switzerland and evangelized in Wisconsin on behalf of the German Evangelical Church. She also felt a calling to Christian service and became a Methodist missionary to China, arriving there in about 1910. She was assigned to work as the private secretary for Bishop James Bashford, who is credited with having begun the first real missionary work in behalf of the Methodist Church in China.

Soon after arriving in China, Luella met Crawford Morrison Bishop, who was a member of the American Consular Service. After a short courtship, they were married in Nanking in 1912. First she had worked for a bishop, and now she was married to a man with Bishop for a last name. She thought highly of her former boss, so it just made sense to name her firstborn son James Bashford Bishop.

J. Bashford Bishop and two of his brothers were born in China. He spent the first 7 years of his life there, mainly in Peking. While a child he learned the Chinese language and could speak it about as well

as his parents. The family left China in 1921 and moved to Washington, D.C. where his father worked as an attorney for the U.S. government in the Mexican claims division. Crawford Bishop was a graduate of Dartmouth College and later attended Maryland University and Columbia University where he received a Ph.D. He was a specialist in international law.<sup>1</sup>

Moving to the States was quite an adjustment for young Bashford.

When we came to this country, it was like coming to a foreign country. I went to public school. In those days people didn't travel, so that anyone who had been to China was much more of a novelty than today.

Because of this, the kids began to call me "chink," which I didn't like very much. And then I would be pestered to death on the playground to demonstrate my Chinese. It got so bad that I had no time to myself. And it took getting into a fist fight and beating somebody up to get a little liberty, which I finally did.<sup>2</sup>

In Washington, D.C. the Bishop family attended the Foundry Methodist Church, a very fashionable congregation which boasted of having three or four U.S. presidents who attended the church during their term of office.

In addition to J. Bashford, four other children were born into the family. The second child was Crawford Morrison Bishop, Jr., named after the father. He was employed by the department of agriculture and did not serve God until late in life. The third brother, Richard Winston Bishop, attended Central Bible College, graduated with a B.A. from Taylor University,



Crawford M. Bishop, Sr., with his four sons in 1937. From the left, J. Bashford, Richard, Crawford, Sr., Crawford, Jr., and Leighton.

earned an M.A. from the University of Washington, and received a D.Min. from North American Baptist Seminary. He spent 31 years in pastoral and evangelistic work in Washington, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Michigan. He served 14 years on the faculty of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary and is now retired. The fourth son, Leighton Bishop, was named after a missionary family in China. He graduated from Benjamin Franklin University, became a Christian businessman in Washington, D.C., and was a minister in the Methodist Church for 20 years.

The last child born was a girl, Barbara Luella. The Bishops had always wanted a daughter, but unfortunately she was a mongoloid who was almost helpless. She required constant attention and never learned to talk. This was a dreadful blow to the family, but it was through her that the Bishops came into Pentecost.

The story of how the Bishop family came into Pentecost is fascinating. In about 1924 a woman came to the door who was selling brushes and brooms and noticed that the daughter had an affliction. She told Mrs. Bishop about her church where they prayed for the sick and God healed people.

Although she came from a strong Christian upbringing, divine healing was a brand new thing to Mrs. Bishop. But like many people who become desperate, she was willing to try any means to help her daughter. Soon the Bishop family made their way to a shabby little mission hall which was located on the second floor above an army-navy surplus goods store on Pennsylvania Avenue. It later became known as the Full Gospel Tabernacle.

The pastor was Harry L. Collier, who had been a government worker himself. When God had called him to preach, he had given up his office and founded a 30x30 foot mission in a run-down area by the wharf and near the city morgue. The first two times that Collier preached no one came. But eventually people started coming.

By 1924, when the Bishops first came to hear Collier's full gospel message, the church had moved to the upstairs mission at 930 Pennsylvania Avenue and had about 100 people attending. The mission was noisy, and people were praying in tongues.

Of course there were a lot of things they didn't like about it. They didn't

The contemplative J. Bashford Bishop in his Central Bible Institute dorm in 1936.



like the noisy praying or the speaking in tongues, which mystified them. And yet, notwithstanding the things that they didn't at that time appreciate or understand, the sense of the presence of God drew them back again.<sup>3</sup>

The Bishops returned to the mission, and within a short time the parents and the children accepted Christ as Savior. The daughter, Barbara, was never healed, but her affliction became the catalyst to bring the rest of the family into salvation and Pentecost.

For a short time, the Bishops attended the McKendree Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. which was pastored by Dr. Charles A. Shreve. He also came to accept the teachings of divine healing and the baptism in the Holy Spirit. One of the evangelists he invited to his church was Aimee Semple McPherson. After his Pentecostal beliefs became widely known, he was forced to leave the Methodist Church. Shreve went on to become a Pentecostal evangelist who was much in demand at camp meetings and churches across the nation.

About the same time that Shreve left McKendree, the Bishops began attending Harry Collier's Full Gospel Tabernacle regularly. The church held Sunday school and evangelistic meetings in the afternoon, and J. Bashford attended, although at 12 years old, he felt that sports and play activities would be a better way to spend Sunday afternoon. Shortly after the Bishops began attending Collier's church, J. Bashford gave his heart to the Lord.

For me to have to go to Sunday school in the afternoon, that interfered with my play. That was bad enough, and then on this particular Sunday night—it was in October—my mother announced that I was to go to church with her.

Well, in our family, when mother announced something like that, you went. You might not like it, but you went...

So I was mad as I could be, and I sat down next to her, and I just dared anybody to interest me in anything that was going on. I was 12...

I don't remember what the preacher's text was or what he said,

but from the moment he started to preach, everything he said hit me, and I experienced for the first time in my life conviction for sin.<sup>4</sup>

As the spirit of God moved in his heart, a change came over him in that Sunday night service. When the preacher gave the altar call, without hesitation he stood to his feet, went to the altar, repented, and committed his life to God.

At that point, an altar worker told him to say "Praise the Lord," so he did. Then he was instructed to say "Thank you, Jesus," and he did. He kept on praising God aloud until he was filled up with the presence of God. Soon he received the baptism of the Spirit and was speaking in tongues. He stayed at

**After he was healed of tuberculosis at the age of 13, he wrote his testimony for a 1927 *Pentecostal Evangel*. "I want to spend my life in His service," he wrote.**

the altar worshiping God for an hour or two.

That night he and his mother rode home on the streetcar, and J. Bashford was so full of joy that he covered his mouth. He feared that he might burst out in tongues or in praise while making the trip home.

Although this experience had changed his life, soon young Bashford became wrapped up in sports, and God began to take a back seat in his life. He was on the go all the time with swimming, tennis, football, and other physical activities. His ambition in life was to become a professional baseball player.

Then on his 13th birthday he developed a bad cold which hung on. He became weak and listless. It was soon evident that he had contracted tuberculosis. He began to feel the reason God had allowed him to get sick was because he had lost his first love for God.

After a time of repentance, he began to look with confidence for

the Lord to heal him. He put his faith in John 16:23: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you."<sup>5</sup>

Here follows J. Bashford's testimony of healing which appeared in the *Pentecostal Evangel* shortly after his prayers were answered.

A doctor was called, and he confirmed my mother's diagnosis of tuberculosis. He wanted me sent to a sanatorium; but I remained at home on my sunny sleeping-porch. I was X-rayed and the doctor said the lungs were in bad shape, both being entirely diseased. He said I would be in bed for years. Aside from these two occasions we never had a doctor, and I never took a drop of medicine, but trusted God entirely and had the assurance that I was going to be healed.

I grew continually worse, suffering from terrible sweats, chills and hemorrhages. I lost a fourth of my weight and was skin and bones. On December 7 while being anointed and prayed for I felt a warm, peaceful feeling go through my lungs and stomach, and then I knew I was healed. I had my first good night's sleep in months. But at 6:30 the next morning I had a sinking spell, the fifth or sixth one in a week, and mother began praying aloud for about two hours.

Mother says my eyes had a set look and she distinctly heard the death-rattle in my throat. When I could get my breath enough to pray, I joined in prayer and praise.

By 2 o'clock my breathing was normal. That was Thursday. On Sunday I walked from room to room and my voice was so strong that I read aloud to my brother. Two weeks later, December 23, I was out of doors for several hours, and now, January 20, I can walk 2 miles without tiring. I weigh about the same as before I was sick. I cannot praise the Lord enough for healing me, and I want to spend my life in His service.<sup>6</sup>

While being interviewed years later, J. Bashford relates what happened when he arose from his sick bed.

When I woke up, I said, "Mother, I'm going to get up. I'm healed."

Now I don't know why I said it. I didn't feel anything particular and God hadn't said anything to me. I just don't know why I said it.

I swung my feet off of that cot and I stood to my feet. And I didn't collapse and hit the floor like I

had done.

We had a Jericho march, my mother and I. I began to bawl and praise the Lord and she did too. That room had been stripped of about everything but this cot, a chair, and a little table. So we marched around them.

My healing was instantaneous in the sense that from that moment on I began to regain strength—I hadn't been able to eat anything for days and days. My appetite came back. The chills, hemorrhages, sweats, fever—they all stopped—and I began to recover.<sup>7</sup>

From the time of his healing, Bashford had a new zest for living, and he felt the call of God on his life to be a minister of the gospel.

In high school, Bashford continued his involvement with sports, excelling in underwater swimming and earning a letter in soccer. One of his closest friends was Oliver Collier, who was Pastor Harry Collier's son.

The church he attended, Full Gospel Tabernacle, continued to grow, and in 1927 it moved to North Capital and K. In the late 1930s the congregation moved into the old McKendree Methodist Church facilities. That congregation had dwindled and merged with another Methodist Church after Shreve and his followers left. It is ironic that some of the same former members, such as the Bishops, who had been forced to leave McKendree because of their Pentecostal beliefs, were able to march back into that church as members of the Assemblies of God.

After graduation, quite unexpectedly he was admitted to Central Bible Institute in Springfield, Missouri. An aunt paid all of his tuition for the first year.

He thrived in the Bible school atmosphere, especially with the chapel services and the teaching of the Word. The first year he minis-

tered in the local jail, and later he preached at Belleview, an outstation about 7 or 8 miles from Springfield. He was fortunate to have a Model A Ford for transportation. One of his favorite instructors was Myer Pearlman, who "was a man of God, a beautiful Christian. He knew how to make profound things beautifully simple."

Bishop met his wife, Ruth, while attending C.B.I. During his senior year, he happened to see her sitting at the dining table and spoke to her. He was a senior, and she was a

### **While in Bible college, he developed a skill for mimicking well-known A/G leaders.**

freshman. As the school year progressed, they developed a limited courtship.

Of course in those days you were very restricted. The social life was very limited. You couldn't date, you couldn't go out. When you got to be a senior they would allow you a date once every 2 weeks in the dean of women's parlor—chaperoned. That was the extent of dating. On special occasions the school had all-school outings and you could get together on those occasions, so the time spent together was very limited...

In my senior year I first met the girl who later became my wife. And we went together, and then I graduated. Of course she went one way and I went another.

We maintained correspondence for a year. Then I met her again at Central's graduation in 1937, and we broke up. We thought, "Well, this is it."

That was in the spring of 1937, and not till 1939 did we get back together again.<sup>8</sup>

Always noted for his good sense of humor, Bishop, while attending C.B.I., became talented at doing impersonations of the faculty and staff. He gained a reputation for this, and students enjoyed seeing him in action. But at least once, he ran into some difficulty when exhibiting this talent.

At our senior banquet, of all things, I was dumbfounded. Daddy Welch got up and said, "We have a request for Bash Bishop to give us a series of imitations."

I protested at first, but Brother [John W.] Welch insisted. [Some of the people he imitated were sitting in the audience.] I had done it with a group of boys. I had imitated A. L. Hoy one time and he heard me. So I went ahead. I imitated [J. Roswell] Flower, [Ralph] Riggs, and others, and some prominent evangelists who weren't there, such as Otto Klink.

When it was time to leave and everybody was shaking hands, Riggs said, "You didn't do right by me."

I said, "Brother Riggs, I think I did pretty well." I think I hurt his feelings.<sup>9</sup>

Bishop graduated from C.B.I. in 1936 and returned to his home church in Washington, D.C. to help with the C.A. group for awhile. That fall he was asked to serve as an assistant pastor to Robert and Rebecca Beisel in Allentown, Pennsylvania. He ministered with them until the following spring, when he felt it was time for him to move on.

### **Moving on in 1937 for J. Bashford Bishop meant—among other things—teaching in a small Bible school in the Kentucky Mountains, rebuilding a relationship with Ruth Garvin, developing a writing ministry, pastoring, fathering, and back to teaching. Look for the concluding part in the next issue of *Heritage*.**

#### NOTES

1. J. Bashford Bishop, taped interview by Wayne E. Warner, May 3, 1984, Oral History Collection, Assemblies of God Archives.

2. *Ibid.*

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. Carl Brumback, *Suddenly...From Heaven: The Story of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), p. 244.

6. "Tuberculosis Healed," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 2, 1927, p. 8.

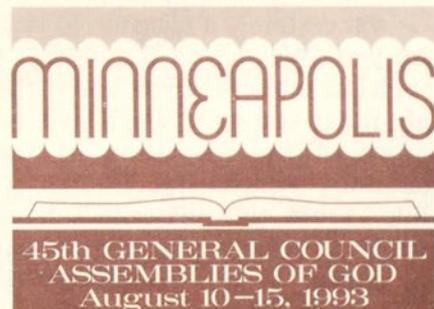
7. Bishop interview by Warner.

8. J. Bashford Bishop, taped interview by Glenn Gohr, February 26, 1993, Oral History Collection, Assemblies of God Archives.

9. Bishop interview by Warner.



Glenn Gohr is a staff member of the A/G Archives.



# FROM OUR READERS



## Identifies Couple as Wakefields

Just a note concerning your "Heritage Letter" in the winter issue. The couple pictured with Ernest and Emma Taylor at a camp in 1935 are Ray and Alyce Wakefield.

Alyce is still living and a blessing to many. She lives in Santa Maria, California.

Keep up the good work—we enjoy every issue!

Esther Steelberg Pearlman  
Tustin, California

*Thank you for the identification. Ruth Fox (Mrs. Lorne) also identified the Wakefields and sent Mrs. Wakefield a copy of the photo. We sent Mrs. Wakefield additional copies of the magazine, and I enjoyed a telephone conversation with Mrs. Wakefield who is now 88. Everyone who knew Alyce Wakefield will remember her accordion. She told me that she gave it to a missionary who took it to South America and eventually gave it to a national. Ray Wakefield passed away a few years ago. Readers wishing to drop Mrs. Wakefield a note may do so at 916 East Evergreen, Santa Maria, CA 93454.*

## Pentecostal Church in Chile

It was certainly a pleasure to visit with you [Wayne] on the phone. I appreciate more than you know, the eight pages you sent, which give the history of the formation of the Methodist Pentecostal Church in Chile. From this material I have written a brief description which will appear in our *Handbook of*

*Information*, which contains data not only about churches that hold membership in the World Methodist Council, but churches that have roots in the Wesleyan revival in 18th-century England.

*Heritage* magazine is beautifully produced, and I am especially grateful for the four-part series on Thomas F. Zimmerman. In reading some of the areas in which Tom was involved, many memories were stirred. We were together on the committee for the U.S. Congress on Evangelism; Lausanne Committee; Key '73; and were together in Pattaya, Thailand, and Manila for meetings of the Lausanne movement.

I was very pleased to learn that Arthur Landwehr is your brother-in-law. He is a good friend and is highly respected for his evangelical leadership in the United Methodist Church.

Dr. Joe Hale  
General Secretary  
World Methodist Council  
Lake Junaluska,  
North Carolina

*The four Heritage issues which contain the T. F. Zimmerman articles are available for \$2.50 each. Another issue sent to Dr. Hale has the article, "Willis Hoover Took a Stand," by Mario Hoover (fall 1988), which tells of Pentecostal origins in Chile. It too is available for \$2.50. See order form on page 35.*

## Adele Carmichael Ordained 75 Years

Greetings in His name.

Sorry to be so slow to send you some of the material I promised you, as per our telephone conversation.

Enclosed are some news reports of my ministry here and a video of the profile by the *700 Club*.

Today, January 5, is the 75th anniversary of my ordination to the ministry. I was 16 years old, but I had been preaching since my conversion at the age of 8. I received my

Holy Spirit baptism in Woodward, Iowa. Grandma Crouch [Agnes] prayed with me and I received my call at that time.

I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

Adele Carmichael  
Thousand Oaks, California

*Mrs. Carmichael is still active at age 91 in Southern California as a Bible teacher. One of her classes is a Sunday school class at North Hollywood First Assembly and then on Tuesdays she teaches an inter-denominational class in a Thousand*



Adele  
Carmichael  
at age 83.  
Craig Smith  
Photo

*Oaks bank building. A writer last year put her career in perspective when he said she had been teaching the Bible since World War I. Her husband Richard died in 1960. She has two children, Ruthadel and Ralph.*

*Our records show that only four other living A/G ministers have reached the 75-year-mark for ordination, all Texans: Mary Crouch Cadwalder, Sugarland; Waymon D. Taylor, Humble; Sunshine Ball, San Antonio; and Horace M. Reeves, Plainview.*

*It is interesting to note that Mary Cadwalder, widow of Hugh, is the daughter of Agnes Crouch—the woman who prayed with Adele Carmichael when she was baptized in the Holy Spirit. The editor's article, "Still Going Strong" featured Mrs. Carmichael in the Pentecostal Evangel, January 10, 1988.*

## Remembers W. Jethro Walthall

The Walthall story (fall and winter) was tremendous and brought back "precious memories." Malarial

fever was raging, and I was seriously ill. Brother Walthall visited me on Saturday and told me he was bringing communion to my mother in the afternoon and asked if I wanted to be included. Since I was a dedicated Christian, of course I did. As I partook of the precious elements, I was instantly and totally healed. I went to church that night.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and forever—even in 1992.

Last March 5th my son in California was in the very last stages of cancer. Lungs almost full. They brought in an oncologist who gave him 10% chance of surviving the chemo treatments.

God turned it around. The chemo didn't bother him. Last week [Feb. 1993] he had his last checkup and the doctor was elated. He is totally free of cancer and up from 135 to 198

pounds. Praise the Lord.

Mabel Davenport  
North Little Rock, Arkansas

### Good Reason to Renew

In the winter issue of *Heritage*, I was so thrilled to see Robert J. Craig in the group of ministers [pages 16-17]. This brought many memories. Brother Craig baptized me in water in his Glad Tidings Temple in San Francisco when I was 12 years old. My sister Verna also went to Glad Tidings Bible Institute, which Brother Craig founded along with the church.

So I decided to renew my subscription for another year and hope I'll have more surprises. I do enjoy seeing these old-time ministers honored in this way.

Christine Johnson  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

ing and clapping. We have adopted things foreign to the worship of God with the pretext of doing something new. It's unfortunate that this has crept into our religious services, imitating the practices of country music, rock and roll, etc. Asking the congregation to stand while we sing songs and choruses non-stop is a tiring and useless way to attract people to come worship God in "Spirit and Truth"!

When the Holy Spirit is moving, it is never necessary to ask people to stand and worship—they will do so without being asked, lift their hands and praise the Lord. These types of activities are the reason for people *not* coming to church. Young people want reality in worship that gives them the assurance of spiritual uplift, not physical activity designed for obeying someone who asks them to stand or clap. God hasn't changed.

I hope my viewpoint on this matter doesn't offend you or anyone who may enjoy clapping and standing as the type of worship we should practice. I prefer to accept the moving of the Holy Spirit in the services and the preaching of the Word to elicit responses of worship by praising God with my voice and with hands upraised in surrender to Almighty God.

Paul S. Carter  
Memphis, Tennessee

I was really delighted with your fall copy of the magazine featuring Donald Gee and Smith Wigglesworth. I knew both of these men in my early years in England and in Canada. My father and mother were pioneers in the Pentecostal movement and began one of the first Pentecostal churches in the U. K. in the little town of Crosskeys, Monmouth, England (South Wales) in 1914. So it brought back many memories of those early days.

I can vouch for and endorse everything you said in your editorial. ["Ah, for the Good Old Days!"] Through the years something vital has been lost out of our

Continued on page 29

## More Letters on Worship

I wholeheartedly agree with your stand on clapping ("Ah, for the Good Old Days!" fall 1992), although in our church we always do it [applauding after special numbers and during a sermon]. There are times that I feel that the Lord wants to do more, but we have so many young people and people who are new to our doctrine. They don't understand. As for me, I always get the deeper experiences with God in the quiet times.

A Member of the  
Older Generation

I am writing about your fall 1992 "Heritage Letter." In my opinion it's this kind of writing, preaching, speaking, etc., that has turned the Assemblies of God into church funeral homes. It has been said so often in so many different ways, "the silent theory." We must not become radicals, you know.

The part about clapping.... Brother, I am sorry, but more churches need to practice praise and letting the rafters loose. The silent theory about edification is good, but it doesn't bring the

power and the presence. What is in our hearts will come out of our mouths. We as Christians lack power, we are running behind the unsaved, lagging in all areas of our lives.

I am sorry, but the power of audible praise is actually quenched by words like these from our teachers. I wonder what would happen if you all got transported back in time with them. You would hold your breaths because silent they were not and silent they will never be because I bet heaven is full of audible praises to God.

Mrs. Wanda Grover  
Port Charlotte, Florida

P.S. I don't believe it's possible that the good old days are gone. There are a few churches left, but a lot of them are not Assemblies any more.

I noticed that Rev. Gary Denbo (winter 1992-93) has taken issue with your letter concerning clapping and standing in our services. I agree with your response and at the same time disagree with his idea that people worship God by stand-

## 500 Persons Attend Gathering Of Assemblies of God Council

*A Newspaper Report of Central District Council 50 Years Ago*

Approximately 500 persons from various cities in Ohio, Indiana and Michigan who have been attending sessions of the 24th annual Central District Council of the Assemblies of God at Trinity Methodist Church were preparing to leave for their homes following the final program to be held Thursday evening.

An ordination service is scheduled to start at 7 o'clock. There will be a class of 16. Dr. D. P. Holloway of Cleveland, executive presbyter, will deliver the charge and Rev. A. G. Ward, of Toronto, will give the concluding sermon following the ordination rites. Special music will be presented during the evening.

Results of the election of officers in the Wednesday afternoon session follow: Rev. G. F. Lewis, Youngstown, and Rev. A. B. Cox, Dayton, reelected on the nominating ballot; Rev. D. G. Foote, Port Huron, Mich., elected secretary-treasurer, who succeeds Rev. E. E. Bond who has resigned to re-enter the active ministry.

The Board of Presbyters are: Ohio, Rev. D. P. Holloway of Cleveland and Rev. I. A. Shank of Conneaut; Indiana, Rev. J. D. Menzie of Gary, Rev. Thomas Paino of Indianapolis, Rev. Cecil Good of Muncie; Michigan, Rev. W. C. Richardson of Lansing, Rev. C. W. H. Scott of Battle Creek. Rev. Good formerly was pastor at the Peniel Temple in Lima.

A missionary service was held Wednesday night with Elder A. G. Ward presiding. Representative



Gayle F. Lewis was reelected Central District superintendent at the 1943 Council. He and his wife Mary posed for this photo at the 1947 General Council.

missionaries were Marie Stephany, Rev. and Mrs. G. Horst and Miss Lula Bell Hough, all of China. Miss Hough was a prisoner of the Japanese for a short time and was reported to have received severe treatment. Mrs. H. T. Waggoner and Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Davis, India missionaries, also were present.

The missionary offering received for missions amounted to \$500.

Elder Ward addressed a closed session of ministers Thursday morning at 9 o'clock. At 10 a.m. a business session was held with Supt. G. F. Lewis in charge.

Thursday afternoon a devotional service will be in charge of lady ministers. Miss Jean Benefiel of Detroit, Mich., will speak and Mrs. P. J. Emery of Warren, will lead congregational singing. Mrs. E. T. Quanabush of Detroit will be pianist.

Rev. L. A. Sappington, pastor of the local Assembly of God church, and his members have been in charge of arrangements for all sessions.

A. B. Cox, left, Dayton, Ohio, pastor was reelected assistant superintendent; D. G. Foote, Port Huron, Michigan, shown here with his wife, was elected secretary-treasurer.



*Editor's Note. Mrs. Florence Baumgardner, Lakeview, Ohio, sent the 1943 Lima (Ohio) News clipping reprinted on this page. It is a report of one of the last Central District Councils as Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio formed their own districts a short time later. Mrs. Baumgardner has carefully maintained scrapbooks which tell the story of the Assemblies of God in Ohio.*

# Woodrow Stood Alone

## *Reflecting on a Missionary Commitment in 1939*

By Norma F. Oxner

Two years ago, on the opening Sunday morning service of our missions convention, our senior pastor, Dr. Don Paul Gray, was preaching from Isaiah 6 on commitment and dedication. And he asked the question, "Are we willing to respond as Isaiah, 'Lord, I will go; I will follow you wherever you want me to go,' and really mean it?"

I was alone that Sunday morning in church as my husband, Woodrow, was ministering in Cameroon, West Africa. Health reasons had kept me from going. I immediately had a flashback to a missions service in 1939 at Crichton Assembly of God (now Knollwood), Mobile, Alabama. Clyde Goree was pastor, and Fred Vogler from Springfield, Missouri, was with us for a missions rally.

When Brother Vogler finished his message, he said, "I see a large group of young people here. I want to ask you a question: How many of you would be willing to stand and say, I will go wherever the Lord wants me to go?"

Woodrow was the only one that stood! There were many young people in the church that night, but Woodrow stood alone! He had been saved for only a year but he responded to the call.

When Woodrow was 7 years old, walking down a country lane to the mailbox, he heard God call him by name: "Woodrow." He never forgot it! And neither did God. After Woodrow came to the Lord at age 21, one day while working on his job and praying, he heard the same voice. This time God finished the sentence: "I want you to go into all the world and preach the Gospel."

As I listened to Pastor Gray's message, I said, "Lord, Woodrow is still fulfilling that commitment. Look where he is today at age 73!



Woodrow and Norma Oxner

He is still proclaiming the glorious Gospel." He made a commitment to God and kept it. There's nothing that can take the place of the peace in your heart through knowing you have tried to be faithful. It wasn't

always easy but as the song goes, "Through it all, we've learned to trust in Jesus and to depend upon His Word."\*

We recently celebrated our 50th Wedding Anniversary here at Crichton/Knollwood.

God has been faithful to us. One of my favorite verses is Revelation 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." He is faithful! And a promise to God has been kept. Fifty-four years later Woodrow is still saying "I'll go" and is going.

*Woodrow and Norma Oxner have been active in pastoral and evangelistic ministry, including preaching and teaching on the mission fields. They observed their 50th wedding anniversary in 1992 in their home church, Knollwood Assembly of God, Mobile, Alabama. They have five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.*

\*Andraé Crouch



## *75 Years Ago: Ministering During World War I*

The Assemblies of God had no army chaplains during World War I but did have evangelists and local pastors who ministered to servicemen. Here evangelists Raymond T. Richey, left, and William Kirkpatrick, right, confer with an army captain at Galveston, Texas, 1918. Richey ministered to servicemen in his red, white, and blue tents which he set up near military bases during World War I and II.

# Aimee Semple McPherson and the Decisive Wichita Meeting

## *The Assemblies of God of the Roaring Twenties Wanted to Know: “Is Sister McPherson Pentecostal?”*

In 1922, Mother's Day fell on May 14, just one week into Aimee Semple McPherson's meetings at the 5,000-seat Forum in Wichita, Kansas. McPherson—known to her followers simply as “Sister”—decided that Mother's Day offered an appropriate occasion to tell the story of her life at the 7:30 evening service. By 6 p.m., crowds jammed the Forum, and the police locked the doors; more thousands were turned away than were admitted. When policemen turned their backs, journalists saw people crawl

through windows.

With a capacity crowd on hand, Sister opened the service early. The proceedings moved through songs and prayer to narration that had become the highlight of every crusade: her recitation of her life

**Aimee Semple McPherson, the most visible Pentecostal of the 1920s, was being challenged in the Pentecostal Evangel.**

story. By 1922, the story functioned as the vindication of her message: what she preached had happened to her. It was true because she had experienced it, and she invited any and all to experience it, too. It was at once an act of self-disclosure—a way of convincing the crowd of her transparency and vulnerability—and an act of distancing, setting herself apart as one specially called and chosen.

Half way through the narration, she turned from the story to reflect on Mother's Day and led the crowd in singing “Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight.” The old song brought tears to many eyes, and

nearly 100 repentant sinners pressed through the crowds to kneel at the altar. Afterwards, she promised to finish her life story another night, and sent the people home. The evening was vintage McPherson, and the adoring crowds and appreciative press gave her rave reviews.<sup>1</sup>

For the past few years, Aimee Semple McPherson, Canadian-born but California-based, had been a rising star on the religious horizon. In evangelistic crusades across North America since her small beginnings in Mt. Forest, Ontario, in 1915, she packed out the largest auditoriums in major cities and conducted huge tent campaigns that added thousands of members to Protestant churches.

Everywhere the press gave her positive coverage. They admired her creativity, her effervescence and her courage. Sister had shown ability as an orator from childhood when she had won regional competitions sponsored by the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and she held her audiences in rapt attention. In the pulpit, she spoke rapidly but simply,



Dr. Edith Blumhofer is the project director of the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals (ISAE) and associate professor of history at Wheaton College. She is the author of the two-volume history *Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism*, *Pentecost in My Soul*, and *The Assemblies of God: A Popular History*.



Aimee Semple McPherson held credentials with the Assemblies of God from 1918-22. This article deals with the question that bothered leaders of the Assemblies of God and led to her withdrawal and founding of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Despite the parting of the ways in 1922, and later tensions, the Assemblies of God and the church Mrs. McPherson founded are today fraternal Pentecostal organizations. Both belong to the National Association of Evangelicals, the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America, the Pentecostal World Conference, and cooperate in other ways.

Dr. Blumhofer's biography on Aimee Semple McPherson is scheduled for release by Eerdmans in November.

In this 1927 Denver meeting Aimee Semple McPherson kneels while praying for the sick. At the left is her secretary Emma Schaffer. Courtesy of Denver Public Library, Western History Department

punctuating her sermons with homespun advice and practical wisdom. She often used Bible readings rather than expository sermons, filling them with stories and painting word pictures that brought Bible scenes to life.

Sister was reared in the Salvation Army, and she seemed to have the Salvationist's eager passion to help the needy and save the sinner. She surveyed every city with the object of commanding attention, and she always succeeded. In San Diego she stood between rounds at a sold-out boxing match to encourage spectators to find the worst sinner in the city and bring that person to her meetings. In Winnipeg, 2,000 dancers at the Alhambra looked up in amazement when she strode on stage late one Saturday night, asked the orchestra to play her theme song, and invited the crowd to her meetings. In Denver (where one reviewer claimed that under her influence the city "was swept by the fire of machine guns from heaven"), she conducted midnight services in the city's red-light district, where she dispensed hope and hugs as readily as she did among the more respectable thousands who crowded her scheduled services afternoons and evenings at the Auditorium. Journalists everywhere compared her to Billy Sunday, and the comparison always worked in her favor.

For one thing, she did not rail against sin. The *Wichita Eagle* introduced her to its readers with the comments that she was "not the Billy Sunday type of evangelist."<sup>2</sup> In her opinion, plenty of people denounced, criticized and declared God's wrath: she focused, rather, on proclaiming God's love and forgiveness.

She left the selection of a church entirely up to her converts and welcomed altar workers from all Protestant congregations. She enlisted the support of all who were willing to help in any way, and she got a representative mix of Methodists, Presbyterians, United Brethren, Baptists, Salvation Army, Pentecostals, Christians,

and occasionally Lutherans. Her mother, Minnie Kennedy, saw to most of the details. Sister focused on the preaching—which she always followed with an invitation—and on praying for the sick.

**T**he throngs of invalids who flocked to Sister's meetings to beseech her prayers naturally captured the public eye. They had come from the beginning, but during her meetings in San Diego in January 1921, her ministry to the sick had assumed greater prominence. For two days, in mass

**Despite a Ministerial Association boycott, the 1922 Wichita meetings were unparalleled. The 5,000-seat Forum was much too small, so she moved the meetings outside where some 10,000 people gathered.**

meetings that the police estimated 30,000 people attended, she and a host of assisting pastors had devoted hours to anointing thousands with olive oil and praying for their healing. Some testified to immediate healing, and the press dubbed Sister a "miracle worker."

Sister took care not to pray for the sick in any crusade until she had preached for several days. She regarded healing as a blessing for the faithful rather than as a benefit for the masses, and so she refused to pray for any who did not first profess conversion. She generally began a crusade on Sunday and held her first healing service on Wednesday night. In Wichita as elsewhere, the first healing service made the front page, and crowds flocked in ever greater numbers to the Forum.

The people may have been impressed or curious, but the members of the Ministerial Association were not. The *Eagle* gave Sister due notice of their opposition in a first-page banner headline just three days after she came to town: "Wichita Ministers Boycott Woman Evangelist."<sup>3</sup> In the end it was their

loss, not hers.

Two days after the announcement, another banner headline disclosed that Sister's prayers melted goiters; farther on in the story, it was said that Sister had made the deaf hear and the lame walk at the Forum. So many people swarmed the meetings that on Friday night, May 12, Sister moved the service outdoors, preaching to an estimated 10,000 in Wichita's Riverside Park. Afterwards, Sister had difficulty disentangling from the throngs who wanted a personal word or a moment of prayer with her.<sup>4</sup> Sunday was Mother's Day, and the Forum could no longer contain the crowds.

**O**n Monday, May 15, Sister agreed to be questioned at the beginning of the afternoon service by reporters who promised to raise the issues the Ministerial Association held against her. The claims were revealing. First, it was alleged that she charged for the prayer cards that admitted the sick to the line for prayer, a claim Sister vehemently denied. To the second point, "It is charged that you are a member of a sect similar to the Holy Rollers and that you put converts into trances, sometimes holding them for hours," she responded that the question was "too foolish to answer." She dealt easily with two additional questions about healing.

Sister answered the fifth and last question readily, too, but her answer surfaced tensions that later forced her to deal with the broad and troublesome issue of Pentecostal identity. The question was forthright: "Is it true that you are a member of the Pentecostal church, Assembly of God, and that *The Evangel*, published by the Gospel Publishing company, Springfield, Mo., is the organ that attracts members from all over the country to your meetings?" Her answer was simple, and true: she was not a member, and she had nothing to do with publishing *The Evangel*. She issued a non-denominational publication called *The Bridal Call*.<sup>5</sup>

Sister turned her attention from the ministers' misgivings back to the meetings. They already held the record for religious services in the city, but still enthusiasm mounted. When Sister preached on the second coming later in the week, thousands were turned away. The *Eagle* reported that the sermon was "the most powerful ever heard in Wichita" on the subject, and popular demand forced Sister to repeat it to an audience holding tickets (which she distributed free) for the event.

Services for youth and for gypsies who were encamped nearby supplemented the regular schedule during Sister's last week in the city. Visitors from at least 28 states arrived to participate, too.

As the activities drew to a close at the end of May, the healing lines were longer than ever. At the last healing service, over 1,000 people appealed for prayer. Nearly 900 obtained cards that gave them access to the section reserved for invalids, and Sister begged the healthier among them to give their places to the helpless.

As she did elsewhere, Sister took freewill offerings at all of her services. She did not make much ado about money. The offerings went for expenses, and at the end of the meetings, she received a personal love offering. In turn, she appealed for an offering for the city's poor, and the audience gave several hundred dollars toward the alleviation of conditions in Squattertown, a section of the city on the west bank of the Arkansas River.

At the closing service, the choir presented Sister with a \$200 check toward the purchase of a grandfather clock for the school of evangelism she planned to build in Los Angeles. When it all ended, it took more than an hour for Sister to make her way from the stage to a waiting automobile. She spoke personally to the hundreds who blocked her way. She had taken the city by storm, and she left amid expressions of goodwill and invitations to return. Wichita



## INTER-DENOMINATIONAL REVIVAL CAMPAIGN

WITH  
**Aimee Semple McPherson**

A HOST OF WORKERS AND MUSICIANS  
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Services 2:30 P. M. and 7:30 P. M. Daily

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26th Street between Broadway and Telegraph

**JULY 15-30 ALL SEATS FREE**

A postcard advertising July 1922 Oakland meetings 2 months after Sister McPherson appeared in Wichita. Her mother Minnie Kennedy sent the post card to the A/G headquarters, probably to E. N. Bell, writing that Sister McPherson did not use the words the *Evangel* claimed she did during the Wichita meeting. "[Aimee] never wanted to be tied to any sort of movement labeled 'Pentecost.' She feels the Holy Spirit is for all flesh." It is signed "Mother for Sister."

businessmen approved her visit, too: they estimated that the meetings had brought them more than \$100,000 in added revenue.

To all appearances, Sister had answered her critics, put their charges behind her, and amazed the city. One problem refused to go away, however. A few determined people persisted in pressing the question: Where, precisely, did Sister fit on the American religious landscape? Was she really Pentecostal? Did she hold Assemblies of God credentials? What about the story of her ordination by First Baptist Church in San Jose?

In response to a deluge of letters of inquiry, Assemblies of God leaders addressed the question, "Is Mrs. McPherson Pentecostal?" in the *Pentecostal Evangel*.<sup>6</sup> The unsigned article acknowledged that Sister had turned in her Assemblies of God credentials, and its authors claimed no firsthand knowledge of her Baptist connections but admitted that the reports seemed credible.

If it had stopped there, it might have passed as the news story its authors claimed it was, but it went further. The authors clearly thought Sister needed to be "reclaimed to the full Pentecostal faith," and regretted the rumored loss of "full Pentecostal power" in her meet-

ings. The story implied that Sister "compromised the full Gospel" and was unwilling to "bear reproach" for being Pentecostal.

On the same page, an article by Ernest Williams, an esteemed Assemblies of God pastor in Philadelphia, and later general superintendent, discussed the underlying issue: "Pentecost as Understood by the Pentecostal People." While most of this article offered biblical proofs that modern Christians should receive "the Holy Spirit as at Pentecost," one paragraph focused more closely on the matter of definition. "Pentecostal fulness," Williams maintained, "is God's thought for His church today, which is being ripened for His glory as the world is being ripened for the judgment."<sup>7</sup>

According to Williams, "Pentecostal fulness" was manifested by tongues speech and accompanied by healings and miracles, and it had something to do with being ready for the second coming. Williams' summary probably aptly expressed typical Assemblies of God sentiments on the subject.

Sister, however, defied the stereotypes and offered a different view. In part, she had a different frame of reference rooted in her experience of small-town southern

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William and Susanna Mitchell

COURTESY OF FRED O. MACFEE

**O**n November 15, 1877, Corbett Mitchell and Julia Ann Janes were married at Hant's Harbour on the island of Newfoundland, a small British colony east of Canada. On July 11, 1878, a son—William James Mitchell—was born to the couple. Nobody could have imagined that the energetic child would live through an array of brisk experiences and, in God's plan, become a Pentecostal pioneer in New England.

Indeed, the Pentecostal revival in New England would stem from Chelsea, Massachusetts, where this Newfoundland son would begin an assembly. When he died in 1958 at 79 years of age, there stood in Everett, Massachusetts a Pentecostal church—Glad Tidings Tabernacle—as a sturdy monument to him. He is fondly remembered today in Malden's (Massachusetts) North Shore Assembly of God, the outgrowth of this mission he had founded.

His biography is visible proof of the power of God to change a person completely. This article is a modest attempt by a distant relative to retell the story of this inspiring individual who played a key role in introducing the Pentecostal movement into the Northeastern American States. A new generation can witness the great work he accomplished and, at the same time, see exhibited in his life something God desires of His children—availability to do the entire will of God.

**E**arly in 1927 William J. Mitchell rented a small back room on the second floor over a block of stores in Everett Square at 134 School Street. In May the doors of Glad Tidings Mission were opened to the public. Mitchell and his large family, along with friends, associated with him to establish the full gospel assembly in Everett. The six charter members were Mitchell's wife; the Arthur Fillmores of

# William J. Mitchell

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## *A Pentecostal Pioneer in New England*

By Burton K. Janes

## Concluding Part

Burton K. Janes is pastor of Mt. Carmel Pentecostal Church, Howley, Newfoundland. He is the author of the two-volume biography on Alice Garrigus, Pentecostal pioneer of Newfoundland. His current writing project is a history of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland.



Everett; Jennie French of Medford, Massachusetts; Elsie Copp of Boston; and Ernest Trainor of Brookline, Massachusetts. Allen Mitchell remembered that the hall had no windows. Because tires were stored nearby, the odor of rubber wafted through the sanctuary. "For three years [Mitchell] paid the rent and carried on," E. Irene King wrote, "still believing God had spoken."<sup>11</sup>

During the summer a few more friends aligned themselves with the mission. The fall season brought with it increased interest and attendance. An outstanding event gave impetus to the rapid growth of the congregation.

In 1927 Mrs. Henry Garland was instantly and completely healed of tuberculosis. Her physical condition had deteriorated so badly, plans were made to have her children taken from her. Her testimony to divine healing—a reality Mitchell had experienced with his daughter, Gladys, years earlier at Zion City—stirred many people and attendance at his mission doubled. The room, seating about 75, became crowded, and some people had to stand in the corridor.

After its opening, the mission was joined by 34 individuals, among whom were several Newfoundlanders who had relocated

to New England. Carl Brumback observed:

The Newfoundlanders who settled in the Boston area embraced the Pentecostal message as an extension of the Methodist revival. Who can ever forget their Spirit-filled singing of the traditional Wesleyan hymns? The "Newfies" were not much for choruses, but oh, how they could make the rafters ring with verse after verse of those grand old Methodist songs! One can imagine Charles and John Wesley saying, "This is the way these hymns were meant to be sung!"<sup>12</sup>

At the time of the founding of Mitchell's Glad Tidings Mission, "The 'Newfies' were not much for choruses, but oh, how they could make the rafters ring with verse after verse of those grand old Methodist songs!"

—Carl Brumback

two songbooks were being used by the congregation. One of them was *Victory Songs No. 4*, compiled and edited by Cornelius Agnew Demarest and his wife, Victoria Booth-Clibborn Demarest, a granddaughter of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. One can only imagine Mitchell or his song leader, Norman Milley, encouraging the congregation to sing such rousing and lilting

favorites as "I Would Be Like Jesus" by James Rowe and Bentley D. Ackley, and "Behold, the Bridegroom Cometh!" by William E. Booth-Clibborn. Mitchell wrote "good hymn" on "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder" by James M. Black, and "Fade, Fade Each Earthly Joy" by Catharine J. Bonar and T. E. Perkins.<sup>13</sup>

In April 1929 Mitchell's congregation, now numbering more than 40, decided to relocate to more spacious quarters. A large hall, with a seating capacity of over 300, was rented at the front of the same building that had housed the under-sized mission. A steady increase in attendance provided ample evidence that the location change had been necessary.

A prayer room was located behind the platform. Allen Mitchell fondly remembered several young men meeting there prior to the Sunday evening service, tarrying for the Spirit-baptism: "One of the deaconesses came in to pray with us. The tarrying carried over into the evening service, but none of us saw fit to leave the prayer room.... Back then, Pentecost was of utmost importance to us."

Mitchell's excellent reputation as a carpenter served him well in the community. Fred MacFee, Jr. commented: "Many of his parishioners were carpenters, painters and iron workers. Hence, he had contact with them during working days and situations. He...was the example which led so many of them to salvation and membership in the church."

A second event served to advance Mitchell's mission in Everett. In 1929 Rev. Loren B. Staats, an evangelist from Ohio, visited the town and held a series of meetings, sponsored by Glad Tidings Mission. Again interest ran high. Many individuals were converted, healed and filled with the Spirit. Indeed, the city itself felt the impact of the revival.

Toward the end of Staats' meetings, another hall had to be rented. This one, located in the same building, seated more than 600

This old dance hall in Everett, Massachusetts, became Glad Tidings Tabernacle in 1930 under the leadership of William J. Mitchell.



people. In addition, 200 folding chairs were rented. On the final Sunday of the evangelistic campaign, a few hundred people were turned away for lack of space.

Norman Milley, one of the first members of Mitchell's mission, started attending after being filled with the Spirit in the Salvation Army. Encountering great freedom to worship at Glad Tidings Mission, he became Mitchell's right-hand man, the first young people's leader and song leader for many years, and a deacon in the Everett assembly for 48 years. In 1944 he was granted an exhorter's license to preach by the Assemblies of God.

Milley's daughter, E. Irene King, related a healing that took place under Mitchell's ministry:

Dad was opening the service on a Sunday morning, when two men brought in James LeGrow...and laid him on the second pew. He had been suffering with rheumatic fever, and had been in bed for several weeks, losing much weight. Bro. Mitchell and the deacons had taken turns sitting up with him at nights so his wife could sleep.

After the song service Bro. LeGrow raised his head and said, "Bro. Milley, God told me He would heal me if I came to this service."

When Dad touched his forehead, anointing him with oil, the power of God came upon them. Dad fell to the floor in the Spirit, and Bro. LeGrow was healed immediately! Dad picked him up in his arms, ran around the church, and stood him back upon his feet at the altar. Bro. LeGrow lived many years after, and was never touched with rheumatic fever again!<sup>14</sup>

At some point prior to 1930 Mitchell returned to his hometown—Hant's Harbour—where he stayed for a couple of weeks with his brother-in-law. (The Pentecostal church would not be established there until Arthur S. Winsor arrived in October 1930.) One night Mitchell was invited to speak at the local Salvation Army citadel. My father, Eric R. Janes, who was present at the meeting, recalled Mitchell singing one of his favorite hymns,

*God is still on the throne and He will remember His own,  
Though trials may press us,  
and burdens distress us,*

*He never will leave us alone.  
God is still on the throne, He never forsaketh His own,  
His promise is true, He will not forget you  
God is still on the throne.*

Mitchell spoke plainly with a simple presentation of the Gospel. During one of his services conducted in the home of his brother-in-law, Samuel Soper became the first known believer in Hant's Harbour to receive the Pentecostal baptism.

The charter members in 1927 were the Mitchells, the Fillmores, Jennie French, Elsie Copp, and Ernest Trainor.

Back in Everett, Mitchell's congregation was becoming so large by 1930 or so, it needed a full-time pastor. "Realizing that this was God's plan for his life," Gordon Gardiner wrote, "Mr. Mitchell gave up his building contractor business and faithfully served the assembly...."

Allen Mitchell recalled,

And what a shepherd!...No pastor was anymore unfairly maligned by a few in the church, who would try to usurp leadership. And yet, no pastor would bear it more patiently and show such measure of love.

If there is any one thing about Dad that stands out above all others, it was his private prayer life....Many, many were the times I was awakened from sleep before daybreak with the sound of Dad's voice raised in prayer. Sometimes prayers and groanings could be heard coming from the back seat of his car, parked in the garage under the house (hopefully not to disturb anyone). Other times his travailing in prayer would issue from the privacy of his study.

This characteristic of Mitchell impressed many individuals. Although he possessed limited formal education, he really knew God, and was a man of much prayer. Mary Campbell Wilson, Dean of Education for 25 years at Zion Bible Institute in East Providence, Rhode Island, remembered Mitchell as "a prominent prayer warrior."<sup>15</sup> Books in his personal library included *Praying Hyde, Intercessory Prayer*, and Andrew

Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*.

Allen Mitchell felt his father "was everything one would look for and respect in a pastor, based on Biblical qualifications....[H]e relied heavily upon the Holy Spirit. Therein lay the secret of the man as a deeply committed Christian and pastor/teacher. This same Holy Spirit provided him a depth of insight into human nature and the Word of God that was a rare gift. I have heard him deliver, without an understanding of homiletics or the laws of hermeneutics, sermons that were correct in both these areas." Admittedly, he sometimes stumbled over the infamous "begets" of the Bible. At such times Mitchell would say, "Oh, we'll call it 'Moses' and pass on!"

A five-foot, 11-inch, 180 pound, physically active and attractive man, Mitchell was soft-spoken, everybody's friend and usually ready with advice and counsel. He was especially easy to talk to by the youth. According to Allen Mitchell, he "never resorted to pharisaical trumpeting abroad any deeds of charity. As God would direct, he quietly and generously gave where needed." He visited parishioners who were sick. Never one to show favoritism, he wanted to be known simply as "Brother Mitchell."

June 1930 marked another locality change for Glad Tidings Mission. The congregation, now numbering over 110, began worshipping in a separate building, known as "Emmet Bungalow," that had been a dance hall. It was purchased, renovated and enlarged, resulting in a seating capacity of 400. The mission, located at the corner of Second and Cabot Streets in Everett, received a name change on June 19 of that year. The new name was Glad Tidings Tabernacle. The church remained in this spot until 1958.

Eugene Vaters, former General Superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Newfoundland, thought highly of Mitchell's work in Everett. Late in life he fondly

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## □ Aimee Semple McPherson / from page 21

Ontario Protestantism where denominational rivalry and fundamentalist bickering were less troublesome. But she also used another idiom, one that appealed to a wider audience and that decentralized a few of the doctrines Assemblies of God people cherished.

No one contested the Pentecostal roots of her ministry. As Aimee Semple, she had spent a year in association with William Durham—the Chicago Pentecostal who popularized the “finished work” doctrine. She and her husband Robert Semple had been sent to China by two of the best-known North American Pentecostal missions, Durham’s in Chicago and the Hebden’s in Toronto. After her widowhood and remarriage, she returned to ministry in Pentecostal contexts. To be sure, she and her mother, Minnie Kennedy, always maintained good relationships with their Salvation Army friends. The ease with which they moved back and forth suggests that perhaps the boundaries were less rigid than some imagined.

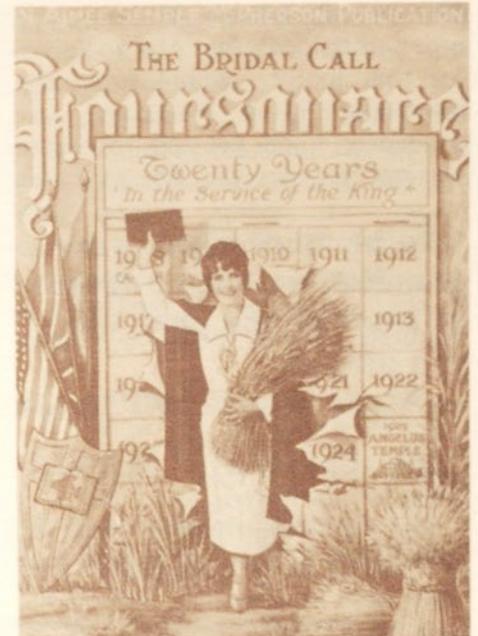
Although the differences were not always readily apparent, Sister nuanced her understanding of Pente-

costalism in ways that contrasted with the typical Assemblies of God approach but that reflected her background. Sister had first encountered Pentecostalism in a strongly congregationalist mode. Her primary mentor, William Durham, insisted that the congregation, as a community of saints responsible to God and one another, had all of the resources and authority to operate without denominational affiliation.

She moved freely among the Pentecostal camp meetings and conventions that attracted all types

**The writers of the *Evangel* article thought Sister McPherson needed to be “reclaimed to the full Pentecostal power.”**

of radical evangelicals and were often accountable to no one beyond a local committee. Her only recorded conflict with Pentecostals occurred in the south when she encountered resistance to the teaching on sanctification she had imbibed under Durham. Her early ministry coincided with the organizing of the Assemblies of God and



A 1928 *Bridal Call* Foursquare marking Sister McPherson's 20 years in the ministry.

was never confined to any single network, Pentecostal or otherwise: in fact, it transcended existing networks from the beginning.

Sister's consistent use of the idiom of early Pentecostalism suggests why. In the days before they began reducing the meaning of Pentecostal experience by defining it, Pentecostals had stressed the inclusive nature of their movement: it was “the restoration of the faith once delivered to the saints—the old time religion, camp meetings, revivals, missions, street and prison work and Christian unity everywhere.”<sup>8</sup>

That description—advanced in the first publication issued by the hallowed Azusa Street Mission—exactly described Sister, who marketed her gospel with an old chorus: “It's the old-time religion, and it's good enough for me.”

Sister perhaps better represented this early Pentecostal ethos than did the Assemblies of God. The issues which had come into focus in the course of denominational organization had largely reshaped the meaning within the constituency of being Pentecostal. Whether or not tongues speech uniformly evidenced Spirit baptism simply did not matter to Sister. She refused to be diverted by such discussions: they were unimportant in her

### *Sister Unexpectedly Involved in Shootings*

The fact that Aimee Semple McPherson's name appeared on the front page of the two Wichita newspapers was hardly surprising when she returned to the city in 1934. She had made far more news than most preachers of her era, and it was common for the news media to reserve space on page 1 for McPherson stories.

But this one was different. Mrs. McPherson was indirectly linked to a murder-suicide in the city.

The *Wichita Eagle* story, “KILLS MATE IN QUARREL OVER AIMEE MEETINGS,” told of Emma Turney's desire to hear Sister McPherson preach. She asked her husband Clyde to take her to the McPherson tent service in Matthewson's pasture a block away from their apartment. “He wouldn't take me to the meeting tonight,” the mortally wounded woman told an officer. “I put an end to it all.”

Saying that her husband had been drinking and “running around,” Mrs. Turney admitted shooting him with a .32 caliber pistol she had purchased at a pawn shop and then turning the pistol on herself. Her husband's death came almost immediately, but Mrs. Turney lived for 2 days before dying of her wounds.

Without her knowledge, Sister McPherson once again found herself on the front page.

Taken from *Wichita Eagle* article: “Kills Mate in Quarrel over Aimee Meetings,” May 26, 1934; and *Wichita Beacon* articles: “Wichita Slayer of Mate Hovers Near Death,” May 26, 1934, and “Death Unites Wichita Pair,” May 28, 1934.

scheme of things. Tongues, or other gifts of the Holy Spirit, for that matter, would ordinarily manifest Spirit baptism, she conceded when pressed, but that was not her message. She preached

**“To be Spirit-filled is the grandest, proudest tribute of sobriety and piety one can possess.”**

**—Aimee Semple McPherson**

“Bible Christianity,” and everything else followed.

She affiliated briefly with the Assemblies of God at least in part

to take advantage of the railroad discount credentials brought, but also because she thought the denomination shared her passion for “Bible Christianity.”

For the same reason, she accepted a Methodist exhorter’s license and a Baptist preaching license. She did not consider that such credentialing limited her or that any of these groups necessarily best articulated her own theology. She stood in general agreement with their basic orientation, but her calling was broader—more like that of the early Methodist circuit rider than that of a denominational evangelist.

In Portland, Oregon, during a 1934 meeting, Sister McPherson took on evolution as she battled the “Godless Gorilla,” in one of her many illustrated sermons. International Newsreel photo, Oregon Historical Society, #013168.



When the *Pentecostal Evangel* raised the issue and accused Sister of compromising in a slavish quest for respectability, she for once chose to respond directly to criticism. She wrote a surprising pamphlet, which she called “The Narrow Line—Or, Is Mrs. McPherson Pentecostal?”, in which she offered a thoughtful reflection on Pentecostal identity and defended her ministry as an expression of biblical Pentecostalism.

She used her Wichita meetings as a case in point. Several times, she had silenced people who had noisily shouted or in other ways drawn attention to themselves. The instant response had been, “Why, Sister McPherson, don’t you believe in manifestations?” She had been accused of the ultimate betrayal of her Pentecostalism—“quenching the Spirit.” She had acted similarly in Baltimore, when people who equated noise, spontaneity, and apparent disorder with spiritual power had distracted the audience.

On the other hand, it was well known that she sometimes tolerated emotional displays; audible, unorchestrated individual and congregational praise; and the manifestation of spiritual gifts, especially in the prayer rooms set aside for tarrying for the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

She seemed, to some, to be sending mixed signals. As her evangelistic services had gotten larger, they had become more structured, and she had assumed the responsibility of deciding what was—and was not—“of the Spirit.” That was a subjective decision, and it was bound to displease some.

Sister started at a different point from her Assemblies of God critics. “To be Pentecostal in Spirit,” she maintained, “is to be something far different than many suppose.” It had nothing to do with noise, emotion, tongues or healings, and everything to do with spirituality:

To be Spirit filled is the grandest, proudest tribute of sobriety and piety one can possess. The Holy Spirit is not marked by wildness, hysteria, screaming, or unseemly manifesta-



Sister McPherson viewed herself as taking the middle of the road, between formality and fanaticism, as this illustration in the *Bridal Call* shows. The caption reads, "At first it was a lonely road, but now thousands are scrambling up the steep sides to walk with me."

star who influenced millions by the force of her personality and the power of her oratory.

Acting on an early Pentecostal understanding of what the movement was about, she preached the transforming power of religious experience in vernacular terms that appealed to pervasive nostalgia for the old-fashioned ways in an era of equal fascination with the modern.

#### NOTES

1. "Reveals Her Life Story to Throngs," *Wichita Eagle*, May 15, 1922, p. 2.
2. "Called to Come to Wichita," *Wichita Eagle*, May 7, 1922, p. 5.
3. *Wichita Eagle*, May 10, 1922, p. 1.
4. "Park Scene is Likened Unto Christ's Time," *Wichita Eagle*, May 13, 1922, p. 3.
5. "Replies to Attacks of Opponents," *Wichita Eagle*, May 16, 1922, p. 1.
6. "Is Mrs. McPherson Pentecostal?" *The Pentecostal Evangel*, June 10, 1922, p. 9.
7. Ernest S. Williams, "Pentecost as Understood by the Pentecostal People," *The Pentecostal Evangel*, June 10, 1922, p. 9.
8. "The Apostolic Faith Movement," *The Apostolic Faith*, September 1906, p. 2.
9. Aimee Semple McPherson, "The Narrow Line," (Los Angeles: Foursquare Gospel Publications, n.d.), p. 2.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
11. *Ibid.*

tion; but by deep, holy, sober, godly, reverent, prayerful exaltation of the gentle Christ of Galilee, an earnest passion for souls, a biblical and scriptural Holy Ghost boldness and wisdom that will be the means of leading men and women to the Cross in which we glory.<sup>9</sup>

Vehemently denying that she had ever "compromised the full Gospel message," Sister drew on the Old Testament story of David's returning the Ark to Jerusalem to explain what she thought was happening in the contemporary American church. Just as the Ark had not been intended for the house of Obadom [the Assemblies of God] but, rather, as "a diadem of power and glory upon God's children," so "biblical Christianity," with its reappropriation of the gifts of the Spirit, was intended for the whole church rather than for a select group known as Pentecostals or Apostolic Faith.

Against those who resisted bringing the message into the churches and advocated that church members find their way to Pentecostal settings Sister insisted that true Pentecostalism was apparently sweeping through the churches. Much as they might disagree, no one "small company... had a corner on it." It belonged to the church, and it was being recovered by the church in a dynamic, exuberant, all-encompassing revival. Sister

liked to lead her congregations in the old song:

*I now believe without a doubt  
The Ark is coming up the road;  
And the child of the Lord  
has a right to shout,  
The Ark is coming up the road.  
It's coming! Hallelujah!*

*The Ark is coming up the road.*  
"Obadom," Sister observed pointedly, "as a whole, is not fully pleased to see it either, after feeling he had a monopoly on the Ark for so long."<sup>10</sup> Sister characteristically attempted to rally her growing group of supporters: "I say let's join the procession... Hallelujah! Alone or in a multitude, 'delivered up to the council' or standing alone, there—there ever just before is the vision. None can stop it—the devil can't detain it... Obadom will be left behind if he sulks or rejects it—The Ark, the Ark is coming up the road."<sup>11</sup>

Aimee Semple McPherson's Wichita meetings focused the question that had agitated among some Assemblies of God adherents for several years, especially since she had preached several times at the General Council in 1919. The meetings in Wichita were typical of her ministry between 1919 and 1923. They were part of the sequence that established her as a national figure, a popular cultural

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IPPA Scholarship Coordinator  
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1910 W. Sunset Blvd., Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90026-3282

## □ *Ambassador I Found* / from page 4

FAA records in hand, we began to trace *Ambassador I's* life after 1969. We learned that old Charlie 46 began its second stint in the U.S. with a company called Flight Lease, Inc. in Columbus, Ohio. Then its checkered career took it to Ft. Lauderdale, Tulsa, out of the country again to Honduras, then back to Ft. Lauderdale, and Miami. FAA records show that it was sold in 1986 to a man who abandoned it in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. It was repossessed, sold to another company and repossessed a second time.

Undoubtedly its best flights were behind it.

The worst blotch on its record came while a Miami company owned it. In 1991 two potential buyers, who were Drug Enforcement Administration agents, supposedly offered a supply of cocaine for the plane—which the owner accepted, putting him behind bars. The plane was seized and sold at auction in March 1992 to International Flight Center, Inc., at Tamiami Airport, Miami. There the new owners were repairing it when Hurricane Andrew swept it off its parking spot, bounced it down the runway, and dumped it in a heap about a mile away. Missing were a wing and an engine and it was obvious that it had landed nose first at least once.

I learned that the airport fire department had used the wrecked plane in training, so I called Chief Tom McKay. He told me that the department had set fire

to the tail and had cut into the fuselage, simulating the rescue of passengers in an actual crash. Because the department was making a video of the training, McKay asked me for a photo of the plane when it was *Ambassador I*. I was happy to cooperate.

The next step was to get souvenirs off of the plane for display here in the Archives. Dennis Mayo, who had flown the plane and even thought about bidding on it at the auction, salvaged it and graciously told me we could have items for our display cases.

In the course of our recent search, I talked with several people in Florida who had in some way been associated with the plane. Nobody could figure out why the Assemblies of God was interested in an army surplus C-46. So I repeated my narration several times. They then became interested and wanted to learn more about the glory years of 1948-49. And some of them have promised to send photographs of the *Ambassador I* in its twilight years.

So, that's the end of *Ambassador I*. It's sad to think that our old pride and joy of the late 1940s would tumble down its last runway being propelled by a hurricane rather than its snorting twin Pratt & Whitney engines. And sad too because the Springfield Confederate Air Force was interested in obtaining old Charlie 46 for restoration and local display.

Hurricane Andrew changed all of that. ♦

## SEEN IN PRINT

***Pentecostal Pioneering*, by George W. Flattery, Sr., \$7.95, plus \$1.19 postage and handling.**

What can we say about this new book? The first thing is to commend the author for his many hours on the project and being willing to finance it himself.

If we knew this much about all of the missionaries who have served with the Division of Foreign Missions, we would be blessed indeed—and certainly more appreciative of their work to spread the gospel.

Unfortunately, not all missionaries can put together their stories for a book as we have in *Pentecostal Pioneering* by George W. Flattery, Sr. Others who were capable of writing their autobiographies either died before they could get around to it or were never challenged to do so.

This big 320-page book is the result of the author's diligent search of correspondence during a missionary career with his wife Stella in Africa between 1944-64, memories, and other sources. Photographs are in abundance—166 with descriptive captions. And the text is not only inspiring but also educational.

The reader will learn about life on the mission field, from the everyday events to the sublime—which might include everything from installing a sewer system to praying repentant Africans into the Kingdom. In



George Flattery using a water hole to baptize new converts.

between there could be a hunting trip to provide guinea or partridge for the evening's meal, Stella performing midwifery duties, and the Flatterys treating their own children for malaria.

"Our missionary work was hard," Flattery remembers, "but never dull!"

George was born and reared in wheat country around Wichita, Kansas, where as a teenager he decided that the most important thing in life was playing baseball. That is until August 1931, when Kenneth Haines invited him

to the Pentecostal Tabernacle in Wichita.

That night George listened as Ruth Garlock (Mrs. H. B.) preached the gospel. When she issued an invitation to receive Christ, George went to the altar and was saved.

George felt God was calling him to Africa, and the Garlocks—who had been pioneer missionaries to Liberia—encouraged him to prepare for that field.

Another important decision he made in the Wichita church was to fall in love with Stella Engel, whom he married in 1934.

In the meantime, it was off to Enid, Oklahoma, where he enrolled in P. C. Nelson's Southwestern Bible School. Stella followed him to Southwestern.

Following their marriage they pastored and evangelized and then made missionary application to Africa with the Assemblies of God in 1937. But the war postponed their appointment until 1944 when they received the green light to itinerate for service in Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso).

Finally, with their two boys—Warren and George II—they set foot on the continent in August 1945.

Evangelizing, discipling nationals, building missionary stations, preaching, teaching their two boys at home, and translating consumed George and Stella's waking hours during four terms of service—first in Upper Volta

and then in Senegal. George gives insight into the life of missionaries during this critical period when the continent was going through change.

Returning to the states in 1964, George accepted a teaching position with Evangel College and Stella prepared for a public school teaching career. By this time, in addition to Warren and George II (who had gone to Central Bible College, completed graduate work, and were preparing for missionary service themselves), the Flatterys had two daughters, Doris and Sharon.

While George taught at Evangel, he continued ministering abroad and was pleased to see George II develop a concept of correspondence work for nationals. That small work became the International Correspondence Institute which enrolls students around the world.

How does a missionary career begin? This one started when Kenneth Haines invited his friend George to a Pentecostal church service in Wichita, Kansas. His conversion and call to serve around the world during the past 61 years is narrated and neatly packaged in *Pentecostal Pioneering*.

The book can be ordered from Gospel Publishing House, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802.

—Wayne Warner

## FROM OUR READERS

### **Worship**/from page 15

Pentecostal movement. But lately I have sensed a deep longing to revive some of the genuine spiritual quality of our relationship with God and corporately in our meetings that we experienced in the early days of the movement and that phenomenal outpouring of the Holy Spirit during the first 2 decades of the century.

Your article was most encouraging as an indication of a growing awareness of the need to seek God for a fresh outpouring of the Spirit and renewal of the inward man rather than outward carnal manifestations such as excessive boisterousness and clapping, swaying, jumping, dancing and outward enthusiasms which are all "of the flesh" in our services.

As an older person I feel deep regret that the younger generations of Pentecostal children are growing up without any inkling of knowledge of the true nature of the Spiritual movement that gave birth

to this present religious system that is known to the world as "Pentecostal."

Thank God for your work. Let us keep pressing toward the mark of the prize of the High calling of God in Christ Jesus till He come.

Naomi Hildebrandt  
San Jose, California

### **"Oh, for the men of God who will stand against the tide today."**

—Jewel van der Merwe

I do believe the modern way of worship is a far cry from where we were!

I do confess that many times even in our conferences and camp meetings I just get up and walk out. I can't handle the music. It is canned and man is the center. Sorry to say that. Television has brought this in to a great degree.

What is also very upsetting is that the attitude is fast becoming, "give the people what they want." Oh,

for men of God who will stand against the tide today.

May God bless you as you uphold the truth.

Jewel van der Merwe  
*Discernment* Newsletter  
Holly, Michigan

### **Philippines Church Writing History: Can You Help?**

At the request of the Philippines General Council, the Archives and the Division of Foreign Missions are providing information for a new history book on the Philippines.

If you have information concerning the Philippines which should be considered for a history, you can write to the address below:

Rev. Trinidad E. Selek  
Philippines General Council  
Assemblies of God  
P.O. Box 49, Valenzuela  
1405 Metro Manila, Philippines

## □ Missionary John Kolenda/ from page 8

contribution to the Brazilian church should be. He early recognized that to challenge the Swedish way could only further fragment the work, and so the Americans pledged their cooperation with the National Conference, and unity was maintained.

**T**hough Kolenda continued to serve as superintendent of the work in Santa Catarina and was kept busy as a Bible conference

**“In his 60s, after a strenuous life, his family encouraged him to retire, but 20 years later, he was going strong.”**

teacher and preacher, certainly one of his greatest contributions was the publishing house. The national monthly *Messenger of Peace* was produced in a tiny office in Rio which also provided Sunday school literature. Printing was done by a commercial press. Kolenda recognized that adequate literature was essential to continued growth and accepted the need for a publishing house as a personal challenge.

With war's end, it was possible for the family to return home for its first furlough, and with Springfield's blessing Kolenda used the opportunity to raise funds for the Brazilian publishing house. In the next several years he not only raised thousands of dollars, but he located a press in South Dakota, found a missionary-printer ready to move to Brazil, and bought suitable property in Rio.

He was less successful in fulfilling another dream, the building of a Bible school. The need for trained workers in the rapidly growing Brazilian church was obvious, and while on furlough he had actually raised the money to build a school. But national leaders mistrusted Bible schools, believing instruction should be centered in the local church. Though deeply disappointed, in keeping with his pledge, Kolenda bowed to the will of the National Conference. He was able to develop short-term and correspondence courses. In time resistance to Bible schools waned and Kolenda's nephew and namesake, John Kolenda Lemos, established a strong Bible school at Pindamonhangaba, between Rio

and Sao Paulo.

During the 5 years of his second term in Brazil, Kolenda's preaching, teaching and administrative responsibilities required a great deal of traveling both within the country and to the United States. His ministry was much sought after, and he maintained a busy schedule of evangelistic campaigns and Bible conferences. By 1952, his missionary colleagues became so concerned for the toll his activities were taking on his health that they requested a special furlough to allow him to recoup his strength.

The request was granted, and, on the way home, Kolenda attended the World Pentecostal Conference in London using the opportunity to again visit his native Germany. He had first viewed the war's devastation 5 years earlier during the Zurich conference. On that occasion, when walking through the streets of Gelsen-kirchen, his birthplace, an inner voice had prompted, "This is your field of labor."

During his years in Lansing, Kolenda had attended the German camp at Benton Harbor and when asked to preach in German was surprised at his fluency. In later years he was frequently the featured speaker at German camps. And so he was not entirely unprepared when the Missions Department, which had just granted him a furlough for health reasons, asked him to undertake a special assignment in Germany.

**T**he German Pentecostal work which had survived the Nazi era was small and divided. Only 26 pastors attended Kolenda's first general conference. The prewar Bible school in Danzig had been destroyed, and realizing that the German church was in no position to do it, concerned Americans purchased a 16-room stone villa in Stuttgart and began the *Bibelschule Beroa* (Berean Bible School) in 1951. Unfortunately, the effort was problem-plagued. Many Germans were apprehensive about American influence, tensions existed among school personnel, and the facility

## John and Marguerite Kolenda Putting God First

**D**ad always practiced and taught us to put God first, others second, and ourselves last. This seemed entirely wrong to us, for we observed that he was always liberal, giving to others, especially to the very poor in Brazil, until once, at the end of the month he lacked sufficient bus fare to go to the city post office after his monthly check. Another time we were tempted to doubt the wisdom of his policy. It was just before Christmas during the time of the war. Mail was irregular and uncertain, yet we noticed how he and mother were always able to meet the desperate needs of the people who came to them.

Two days before Christmas, Dad took my sister Dorothy and me [aside] and explained to us that unless God would provide in a special way, there would be no Christmas presents coming to our house, for—after providing for the needy children in the Sunday School and others—there was nothing left. Also, there was no hope for a check from the United States until after Christmas or New Year's. We tried to be brave but were not very happy. That night we heard the prayers of Mother and Dad to be in an unusual, fervent way. The next morning Dad tried to encourage us. When he came from the post office there was the answer to their prayers—an unexpected check which made our Christmas outstanding.

—Graceann Kolenda

From *I Heard From Heaven* by Albert W. Brenda, As Told by J. P. Kolenda, pp. 124-25.

was too small.

Kolenda's gifts, maturity, and empathy with the national church uniquely qualified him to deal with these problems, and so, in 1952, he began the third major phase of his ministry. Though he initially was met with suspicion, through a meeting with each of the Pentecostal pastors he was able to assure them that the Americans did not wish to establish a German Assemblies of God and in fact would give ownership and control of the Bible school as soon as the Germans were ready to assume them.

He hoped that the historic Muhlheim Alliance and two Pentecostal groups, *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Christengemeinden* and *Volksmision*, would eventually unite. He believed that the Bible school could assist by training workers from each of these Pentecostal groups.

Because the Stuttgart property could not be enlarged, it was sold in the spring of 1954, and a larger, more central site was sought. The task proved difficult in the war-ravaged country, but eventually a few weed-covered acres at Erzhausen, near Frankfurt, which had been slated for a tire factory, were purchased. The property had only two small cottages and little more than the foundations of two build-



Lewis Wilson is the vice-president for academic affairs at Southern California College. His wife Lenore is J. P. Kolenda's niece. He wrote an article, "The Kerr-Peirce Role in A/G Education," which appeared in the spring 1990 issue of *Heritage*.



The Kolendas retired in California where they lived out their remaining years.

ings, and only a few months remained before the opening of the new school year.

But in spite of permit problems, bad weather, and limited funds, classes at the new site began in the fall of 1954 and have continued to the present. American gifts of \$12,000 completed the initial buildings, but the German church then assumed full financial responsibility and, over the years, has developed a handsome campus. In 10 years enrollment grew to 70 and the majority of graduates entered full-time ministry.<sup>6</sup> Early on Kolenda turned over administrative leadership to a German president, continuing as vice-president, teacher, counselor, and father.

From the beginning evangelism was stressed as students assisted in the pioneering of churches. Twelve tents were used for crusades which resulted in the establishment of several new churches each summer. Kolenda was always ready to assist by preaching, counseling, and encouraging young pastors who were often his former students. A publishing house to provide Sunday school and other literature was also developed on campus.

**W**ith the school and press well established under German

leadership, Kolenda, at 67, returned to Turlock, California, where several years earlier, friends and relatives had demonstrated their love by building "Uncle John and Aunt Marguerite" a retirement home.

But retirement proved to be just another phase of ministry. After a few months, he was off again to minister in southern Brazil. There he found that the Bible school at Pinda was developing nicely but that its continued growth required costly building. With the agreement of those who had provided the debt-free retirement home, he sold it using most of the proceeds for the school.

After another 3 years of Brazilian ministry, he returned home intending to retire, but before he could do so agreed to an urgent request from German leaders to return to Berean Bible School for another 2 years. Finally in 1972, at 74, he bought a home in Florida near his brother, sister, and other relatives and formally retired.

Several years earlier he had declined an invitation to establish a Bible school at Belem in the northern Amazon region. It was the first Brazilian city to receive the Pentecostal message, and the work had prospered. The main Assemblies of God church had 17,000

members and many outstations.

Although the much-needed Bible school had been begun with an impressive building and some night classes, the missionary directing the project had been forced to leave for health reasons. Kolenda was again asked to go to Belem to complete the building and develop a residence Bible school. The intense heat, which forced up to five shirt changes a day, was only one of the problems, but within 2 years, the building was completed and the school had an enrollment of 200 students. With responsible leadership in place he returned to Florida.

But not for long. While at Belem his travels in the Amazon made him realize that unique communication problems made conventional Bible training impossible for workers in the region. Though retired, the challenge of providing Bible training for the Amazon became almost an obsession.

Gradually he devised a plan which would employ booklets on doctrinal topics to allow advanced home study and a faculty of circuit-riding teachers to periodically meet with their widely scattered students at central locations for short-term schools based on the booklets.

Within weeks Kolenda was back in the Amazon to implement the program. Over the next months, he located qualified personnel, wrote courses, and raised funds for teachers and printing. As one of his last acts, several years later, he returned to the Amazon to hand diplomas to over 1,000 Brazilians who had completed the first 4-year extension program.

In his 80s, Kolenda had completed his last major project, and returned to Florida. But with the death of his brother and sister there, he joined his remaining sister and her family in California. Though truly retired, he continued to preach making final trips to both Germany and Brazil. He had fervently hoped to meet the Lord in the air, but on June 19, 1984, at 85, he was taken in his sleep.

His funeral service in Modesto

was modest and his headstone in Turlock, shared with his wife on her death 4 years later, bears only their names, dates, and the words, "Be patient and stand firm because the Lord's coming is near," (James 5:8, NIV). But the life and ministry of this choice servant of God will continue to live in the hearts of multiplied thousands throughout the world who are grateful that their lives were touched by "a man sent from God whose name was John."

#### NOTES

1. Good Night or Good-bye" (Westchester, IL: Good News Publishers, n.d.).
2. William W. Menzies, *Anointed to Serve:*

*The Story of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), 169.

3. Albert W. Brenda, *I Heard from Heaven: A Biography of J. P. Kolenda* (Turlock, CA: the author, [1981?]), 11.

4. *Ibid.*, 6.

5. John P. Kolenda, *The Scissors Sharpener and Other Missionary Stories* (Darmstadt, Germany: Leuchter-Verlag, [197?]), 34.

6. Peter Johnson, "Forty Years of Building the Kingdom," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 18, 1991, 18. ♦

## MINNEAPOLIS

45th GENERAL COUNCIL  
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD  
August 10-15, 1993

### Wanted: 1967 Pentecostal Evangel

A friend of the Assemblies of God Archives needs three issues of the *Pentecostal Evangel* to round out his personal collection. Maybe you can help.

Retired U.S. Army chaplain Talmadge McNabb needs the following issues from 1967: June 18, July 16, October 1.

You may contact him at One Springfield Road, Browns Mills, NJ 08015, or phone (609) 894-4992.



### Do you have something that belongs in the Assemblies of God Archives?

If you have collected Pentecostal magazines, books, films, recordings, photographs, correspondence, or other historical materials, the Archives needs to hear from you. The material you have access to might be just what we need to complete one of our several collections. And you can be assured the donated materials will be preserved so they can help tell the story of the Assemblies of God.

Please write today, giving information on materials you have to donate or lend to the Archives.



ASSEMBLIES OF GOD ARCHIVES

1445 Boonville Avenue, Springfield, Missouri 65802

## □ William J. Mitchell/ from page 24

remembered listening to Mitchell in the Massachusetts town. The distinctive Newfoundland accent of the Hant's Harbour native, which was so familiar to Vaters, sounded like music in his ears!<sup>16</sup>

The church continued to experience growth and, on July 15, 1932, became affiliated with the New England District of the Assemblies of God.

Although the New England brethren had been loosely organized for several years, in November 1923 a convention had been held at Springfield, Massachusetts where H. T. Carpenter was pastoring. Joseph Tunmore, one of the early leaders and a superintendent of the Eastern District of the Assemblies of God, chaired the meeting. At that time the New England District was reorganized and officially recognized by the General Council of the Assemblies of God. (The district was later separated into the Northern and Southern New England Districts.) Arthur Lewis

### Glad Tidings affiliated with the old New England District in 1932.

was elected the first district superintendent, followed by James Hicks, Charles F. Moyer, Alfred Wight, H. T. Carpenter, William J. Mitchell, and Roy Smuland.

The Everett Assembly of God was duly set in order at a business meeting chaired by District Presbyter William J. Mitchell, who was designated as "Founder pastor."<sup>17</sup> Kenneth C. Pyne was elected to the dual office of secretary/treasurer. Elected deacons were George Bailey, S. J. Burden, Norman Milley, John Skane, and James Snook. Nine trustees were elected: Joseph Jenkins, Albert Earle, Fred MacFee, George Mercer, Hugh Snow, James LeGrow, Joseph Pynn, George Ellis and Fred Parsons. Church membership had risen to 143.

"In this new place of worship," the historian of Glad Tidings Tabernacle wrote in 1977, "God's power fell upon His people in a mighty way. Countless numbers of souls were prayed through to salvation at its altar. Hundreds received the precious outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Many, many miraculous healings took place. The Sunday school grew until there were so many classes meeting in the auditorium that each teacher had difficulty trying to make himself heard over the other teachers."<sup>18</sup>

On March 24, 1933, Nicholas Short, Jr., a Salvationist who also lived in Everett, wrote a Hant's Harbour resident. He commented, "Billie [Mitchell] had a little stir down to the 'Mission.' But it has quieted down."<sup>19</sup>

From December 7 to 24, 1933, Dr. Charles A. Shreve, pastor of McKendree Methodist Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., held a series of evangelistic meetings at Everett's Glad Tidings Tabernacle. The services began at 7:45 nightly from Tuesday to Saturday, with Sunday meetings at 3:00 and 7:00 p.m. Shreve espoused divine healing; his ministry at Mitchell's church served the assembly well.

In addition to his busy schedule as pastor of a thriving congregation, Mitchell served from 1936 to 1938 as sixth superintendent of the old New England District of the Assemblies of God, comprising the six New England states. This office necessitated active involvement in district affairs. When he served, the district office was the parsonage. His reputation within the Assemblies of God was high. He also maintained close ties with other Pentecostal bodies, such as Christine A. Gibson's Zion Bible Institute and her associated network of churches over New England.

Mary Campbell Wilson, who was associated with Zion Bible Institute from 1935 to 1981, started hearing Mitchell's name during the time she

was a student there. She eventually saw him, and he seemed "quite old"<sup>20</sup> to her at the time. She also remembered him as being very kind. It is possible that he performed the marriage ceremony of Reuben and Christine Gibson in 1910, as he was a close friend of the former.

### As a carpenter Mitchell influenced men on the job and then led them to Christ and into the church.

My father had an interesting encounter with Mitchell. While attending Bible college in Ontario, Canada, in the 1940s my father visited the 67-year old Everett minister. That afternoon the senior man lay down on the daybed in his study, from where he entertained the visiting Bible college student, a sign that old age was creeping upon him. He gave my father a book from his personal library, Henry T. Sell's *Bible Studies in the Life of Paul*. Some of the other books in Mitchell's library were *Ever Increasing Faith* by Smith Wigglesworth, *Readings in Ephesians* by Malachi Taylor, *The Patmos Vision*, and *The Sufferings of Christ*. My father attended the Sunday afternoon service. "The touch of God was on it mightily," he recollected.<sup>21</sup> Mitchell was pastoring a church that was on fire for God, and worthy to bear the name Pentecostal.

In 1949 W. Clifford Nelson received from Mitchell an invitation to hold revival meetings at Everett. In April 1950 Mitchell resigned as pastor of Glad Tidings Tabernacle, to be effective July 30. In the midst of revival in the assembly Nelson was asked to consider assuming the pastorate, which he did. This marked Mitchell's formal retirement from a pastorate, for he continued to preach as an arm of the district, filling in often for Assemblies of God pastors in eastern Massachusetts.

Susanna Mitchell died in 1953. After her death William Mitchell

spent time visiting his family in the Boston area. During this time he met a widow at the Quincy, Massachusetts, Assembly of God, in which two of his children worshipped. Julia Anne Bourne was 6 years younger than Mitchell. Friendship resulted in marriage. The couple set up residence in Whitman, Massachusetts, located south of Boston.

The end for William Mitchell came at 79 on March 14, 1958, as a result of pancreatic cancer. Christine Gibson conducted the funeral. His second wife lived to be

101 years of age, dying in 1985.

In a tribute to the founders of their assembly, published on the occasion of their 50th anniversary in 1977, Glad Tidings Tabernacle in Everett wrote that Mitchell's "dedication, wonderful pastoral spirit and many hours of prayer each day were instrumental in the growth and health of the church under his leadership....Glad Tidings Tabernacle stands as a living monument to the toil and loving service of this spiritual couple. We shall always remember Brother and Sister Mitchell."<sup>22</sup> He

had maintained the assembly for years in top spiritual condition. There was no doubt in anybody's mind that he had been taught by God. What he had accomplished with so few earthly qualifications was nothing short of a miracle!

While reading Andrew Murray's *Like Christ*, Mitchell had underlined three short but pertinent phrases:

The meanness of a work never lowers the person; the person honours and elevates the work, and imparts his own worth even to the meanest service...

In thus taking the form of a servant, Jesus proclaims the law of rank in the Church of Christ. The higher one wishes to stand in grace, the more it must be his joy to be servant of all....

The reason why we so often do not bless others is that we wish to address them as their superiors in grace or gifts, or at least their equals.<sup>23</sup>

Mitchell admirably fits the biblical model of a pastor given in I Timothy 3:1-7. To 1977 at least 35 individuals had left Everett's Glad Tidings Tabernacle to enter the pastoral ministry. Gordon Gardiner must have the last word: "Thus it was that the Pentecostal work in New England received a great impetus from one who had his roots in Zion."

#### NOTES

11. E. Irene King to the author, May 12, 1990.
12. Carl Brumback, *Like A River* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), p. 100.
13. *Victory Songs No. 4*, compilers and editors, Agnew and Victoria Booth-Clibborn Demarest (Chicago, IL: Demarest Book Concern, n.d.). Mitchell wrote "good hymn" over numbers 204 and 207.
14. Irene King to the author, May 12, 1990.
15. Patricia P. Pickard to the author, February 29, 1992.
16. Eugene Vaters, unpublished second volume of his autobiography, *Reminiscence*.
17. "Church Set in Order" document. In *Glad Tidings Tabernacle, Everett, Massachusetts Golden Jubilee 1927-1977* (no publisher given, 1977), unpaginated.
18. *Glad Tidings Tabernacle, Everett, Massachusetts Golden Jubilee 1927-1977*.
19. Nicholas Short to Caleb Janes, March 24, 1933.
20. Patricia P. Pickard to the author, February 29, 1992.
21. Informal conversations between Eric R. Janes and the author.
22. *Glad Tidings Tabernacle, Everett, Massachusetts Golden Jubilee 1927-1977*.
23. Andrew Murray, *Like Christ* (Chicago, IL: Fleming H. Revell Company, [1895?]), pp. 26-27.



Humbug citizens freeze for the photographer in their best clothes. Courtesy Sharon Graves and the Siskiyou County Museum

## Remember the Story About Humbug?

Lloyd Christiansen furnished the story, "A Miracle in Humbug," for the winter issue. Writing of the Pioneer Quartet in which he sang in 1937, he told of their ministry in a small community in Northern California. When the altar call was given, all 77 people responded. Unfortunately, the above photo of Humbug residents at about the turn of the century arrived too late for publication.

## ARCHIVES ACTIVITIES

**George Wood:** Photo, early missions convention in Cleveland. **Don Smeeton:** missions book by Mary G. Mullan. **Danny Jefferson:** miscellaneous early Church of God in Christ materials. **C. A. Herring:** five early song books. **World Pentecostal Solidarity:** miscellaneous Pentecostal items. **Gerard Flokstra:** miscellaneous printed matter, tapes. **E. C. Bredbenner:** handwritten sermon notes by Donald Gee, 1922-28; 1950-60. **Mrs. Nell Hall:** *For the Duration*, book by A. Walker and Nell Hall on internment in World War II. **A. Wendell St. Clair:** autobiography *Unsung Songs* and Audrey Miec songbook. **Division of Home Missions:** 15 boxes of materials from offices.

**Adele Carmichael:** 700 Club interview and clippings. **Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Cowen:** photographs. **William H. Treglown:** C. Orville Benham books and periodicals. **Letitia Goodman:** Charles S. Price magazines and book. **Justus du Plessis:** photographs which include David du Plessis. **Ernest Tavilla:** Kathryn Kuhlman materials and photographs. **Edith Blumhofer:** *Christian Evangel*, March 28, 1914; *Times of Refreshing*, June 1923; memo from Allan A. Swift to Gordon Gardiner, 1961. **Division of Foreign Missions:** China Focus, tapes, transcript of 1979 L.F.T.L. message by J. Philip Hogan. **Ruth Toczek:** *The Hebrew Evangel*, prayer bulletins, dedication brochure.

**Brightmoor Tabernacle, Southfield, Michigan:** video of musical drama, "The Touch Felt 'Round the World" (Azusa Street revival). **John Maracle:** Thohate—"He Knows the Road," slide presentation of Menominee Indian Reservation. **Alice R. Falk (for her mother Mildred M. Hamlin):** framed photos of 1932-33 Central Bible Institute. **Southwestern Assemblies of God College:** *Bridegroom's Messenger*, Jan. and May 1940; Aug.-Sept. 1952. **Jewel van der Merwe:** *Discernment* newsletter. **Tom Sanders:** 13 Jimmy Swaggart cassettes. **Alexander C. Stewart:** miscellaneous items about the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Church of The Lord Jesus Christ, and Bible Way Churches World Wide.

Ernie Tavilla with Kathryn Kuhlman in 1974 Providence, Rhode Island, meeting. Tavilla, an active A/G layman and volunteer chaplain of the Boston Red Sox, donated Kuhlman materials to the Archives.



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Why does *Heritage* editor Wayne Warner have an airplane photo hanging behind his desk? See page 3 for the story.

