

EDITOR'S PREFACE

On behalf of the Historical Society of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church, I am pleased to introduce volume IX of THE CHRONICLE. The theme of this volume is "On The Edge," and each paper presents the story of a phenomenon associated with a physical, theological or emotional boundary of the conference.

Those responsible for preserving Central Pennsylvania United Methodism as embodied in our three primary predecessor conferences have passed on a remarkable body of information. Since its founding in 1869, the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has been blessed with a steady stream of historian-scholars whose efforts came together in Maser's 1971 Methodism in Central Pennsylvania 1771-1969. The Pennsylvania Conference of the United Brethren in Christ Church produced Holdcraft's 1939 sesqui-centennial History of the Pennsylvania Conference, a classic work presenting the story of each congregation along with denominational and conference perspectives. Finally, the 1939 centennial History of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Evangelical Church passes on the stories of that body's churches and personalities.

Unfortunately, documented stories of congregations and perspectives outside of our three primary predecessor conferences are not so readily available. These include churches that were once Methodist Protestant congregations, Methodist Episcopal congregations of the northern tier that were historically part of New York conferences, western and northern United Brethren congregations of the former Allegheny Conference, EUB churches east of the Susquehanna River, and Methodist congregations of the former Washington and Philadelphia conferences. These also include ideas and para-church movements not endorsed by our three primary predecessor conferences.

The first pair of papers present the stories of two camp meetings that were "on the edge" in more ways than one. The Chautauqua that continued around the turn of the century for several years at Eagles Mere received a very cold shoulder from Central Pennsylvania Conference Methodism -- not only was it located on what was then the conference's extreme northern boundary, but also it was viewed as a meeting that put promotion and profits ahead of traditional conservative Methodist values. The one-time holiness meeting at Manheim, while within traveling distance from our conference, targeted a level of urban society present in Central Pennsylvania only in Harrisburg. In addition, except for a United Brethren contingent centered in Franklin County, strong holiness preaching was not really a hallmark of Central Pennsylvania United Methodism.

The second pair of papers introduce the Dauphin County EUB congregations that joined the Central Pennsylvania Conference as a result of boundary adjustments

associated with the 1968 denominational union that created the United Methodist Church. There were also EUB churches in Schuylkill and Northumberland counties and Methodist churches from the former Philadelphia Conference that were similarly affected, but the stories of those congregations will have to be told at another time. In addition, these are papers written in 1917 and 1953 -- some of the churches they describe are no longer in existence, and additional congregations have been created since then. As neither paper was ever published, however, THE CHRONICLE is pleased to present them here and to continue the practice of printing such informative papers just as they were originally written.

Although I.H. Albright titled his paper "History of the United Brethren Church in Dauphin County," it was prepared for delivery before the Harrisburg Area United Brethren Ministerium and covers only congregations included within that body. As Gibble's detailed 1951 History of the East Pennsylvania Conference covers all the former United Brethren churches east of the Susquehanna, a readily available definitive record now exists to supply the gaps in Albright's paper. The 1917 paper is still definitely worthy of print, however, for it includes excellent anecdotal items not given by Gibble and is one of the earliest primary source materials on the subject. Albright's comments on and first-hand dealings with the principals in the Hoffman schism are particularly valuable. The paper has been supplemented with 1917-era photographs from the conference archives, but otherwise is presented just as prepared by the author.

Paul Diener's paper truly covers all the documented Evangelical Association and United Evangelical work in Dauphin County. As the Evangelicals never produced a conference history comparable to Gibble's United Brethren work, this paper fills a definite gap. Diener also took photographs of almost every church covered in the paper -- and these have been placed in congregational files at the conference archives. In the interest of space and expense, THE CHRONICLE prints only those 1953 photographs of buildings that are no longer standing or have substantially changed in some way.

The final series of papers has been compiled from material at the conference archives on the Wellsboro District -- essentially those Methodist churches that came into the Central Pennsylvania Conference in 1962 from the Genesee and Central New York conferences, when most boundaries were adjusted to coincide with state lines.

Finally, THE CHRONICLE continues the tradition begun in 1993 of dedicating the journal to an individual whose life has reflected Jesus Christ and inspired others to live for Him. It is with special privilege, and through the generosity of an anonymous donor, that this volume of THE CHRONICLE is dedicated to Mary A. Davis Worthington.

MARY A. DAVIS WORTHINGTON

The death of Mary Davis Worthington on August 8, 1996, ended the Central Pennsylvania Conference's earthly association with the pioneering Davis Family. Mary's grandfather John Franklin Davis was a professor at Williamsport Dickinson Seminary, now Lycoming College. It was in the Davis home in 1868 that the first Sunday School north of the railroad tracks (now Little League Boulevard) and west of Market Street was organized in Williamsport. That union school, of which Professor Davis was superintendent for 26 successive years, gave rise to three churches -- Bethany Presbyterian, St. Luke's Lutheran, and High Street Methodist Episcopal.

John Franklin and Eliza Jane Davis were charter members of the High Street Church. Both originally from Fulton County, they raised three children -- all of which graduated from Williamsport Dickinson Seminary.

* Jane Dean Davis taught English at Williamsport High School. In college she studied Greek and Hebrew so that she could study the Bible in its original languages. Complications from a large goiter left her in poor health, and she died one night after teaching a full day at the high school.

* Alice R. Davis was planning to leave for the mission field with Bishop and Mrs. Eveland when a ruptured appendix and subsequent complications rendered her too frail for such a career. She served instead in various ways within the High Street Church, especially following in the footsteps of her mother and greatly promoting foreign missions, all of her life and was the last of the congregation's charter members to pass away.

* Andrew Crockett Davis entered the insurance industry and married Fannie Mae Kuntz. Active members of the High Street Church, they had one child -- Mary Alice.

Mary Alice Davis graduated from Mansfield State College in 1931 and continued the family traditions at High Street Church. She taught Sunday School classes, was an officer in both the Junior and Epworth Leagues, was the third generation Davis to actively promote the Missionary Societies, and served on the Sunday School and Official Boards. Several times the High Street lay delegate to annual conference, she was elected a delegate to the denomination's General and Jurisdictional Conferences of 1972 and the Jurisdictional Conference of 1976. She was the High Street church historian and active in the Conference Historical Society.

Mary married Harley R. Worthington in 1947. A great-nephew of the deaconess missionary Miss Hattie Worthington, Harley proved an appropriate extension of the Davis legacy. He headed the "Golden Rule Agency" insurance business and was a long-time member of the Conference Board of Pensions. Over the years, Harley and Mary Worthington became synonymous with the conference's Preachers' Aid Society. In appropriate appreciation, the Conference bestowed its highest award, the D. Frederick Wertz Award, on Harley R. Worthington in 1991 and on Mary Alice Davis Worthington in 1996. The Worthingtons had no children.