The three papers on Bishop Jacob Erb of the United Brethren Church are presented in the order in which they were originally published, the first being his memoir as read at the Pennsylvania Annual Conference session of 1884.

The second sketch of Jacob Erb was written by the Rev. Dr. Paul Elsworth Holdcraft (1891-1971), who used to need no introduction. Licensed to preach by the Pennsylvania Conference of the United Brethren Church in 1908, he immediately threw himself whole-heartedly into the ministry. He was elected to five General Conferences, including the 1946 session in Johnstown PA at which the Evangelical and United Brethren denominations united to form the EUB Church.

In addition to serving as an effective pastor, Paul Holdcraft was the conference historian. His 1939 History of the Pennsylvania Conference, with pictures and histories and lists of pastors for every congregation in the conference, was for many years the standard to which other conferences tried to hold themselves. Following the 1968 merger that formed the United Methodist Church, Paul Holdcraft was one of the key persons responsible for integrating the congregations and historical materials of the former Pennsylvania Conference of the United Brethren Church into the Baltimore and Central Pennsylvania Conferences of the United Methodist Church.

But Dr. Holdcraft also demonstrated a practical and personal spirit just as effective as his pulpit and administrative skills. In the words of his conference obituary: “This man of God exerted powerful influence on other persons for good. A host of young people were encouraged to enter the ministry and Christian vocations through his wise guidance and spiritual insight. He possessed unusual ability for leadership and organization, and he dedicated these talents to the cause of Christ. The force of his consecrated life is felt even today in the communities where he served and also in the general church.”

The section of the conference archives for holding publications by Central Pennsylvania Conference authors includes the following Holdcraft books, most of which were printed by Abingdon Press.

Outline Chalk Talks (1921)
Snappy Sentences for Church Bulletin Boards (1929)
Snappy Squibs for the Church Calendar (1931)
Snappy Stories that Preachers Tell (1932)
Snappy Schemes of Church Finance (1935)
Snappy Sketches for the Church Black Board (1937)
History of the Pennsylvania Conference (1939)
1000 More Snappy Sentences for Church Bulletin Boards (1939)
Snappy Sermon Starters (1940)
Cyclopedia of Biblical Illustrations (1947)
The collection also includes the following undated booklets.

What Saith the Scripture? A Self-Help Catechism

Que Dice la Biblia? Catecismo para Ayudar a Conocer las Sagradas Escrituras (a Spanish version of the above)

If you guessed from the above titles that Dr. Holdcraft was a man with a sense of humor, you would be correct. One could also make that deduction from the 1934 formal group photograph taken in front of Emmanuel Church in Hagerstown MD of the delegates to the 145\textsuperscript{th} annual session of the Pennsylvania Conference – a photograph approximately 10 inches high and 4 feet wide, taken in segments and seamlessly spliced together. Close examination of the photograph reveals a broadly smiling Paul Holdcraft among the delegates at both ends of the picture!

The Jacob Erb article by Dr. Holdcraft in this section was the lead story in the October 1, 1961, issue of Friends – a weekly publication of the Evangelical United Brethren Church for junior high youth. This periodical was begun by the United Brethren denomination in 1854 as The Friend for Boys and Girls. In 1918 it was separated into two publications: The Boy’s Friend and The Girl’s Friend. In 1928 it became a single publication again and re-named The Friend. Following the 1946 merger with the Evangelical denomination to form the EUB Church, the highly successful weekly continued simply as Friends. When discontinued as a result of the 1968 union that formed the United Methodist Church, Friends was a weekly 64-page magazine measuring 5½ by 8½ inches.

Jacob Erb, the subject of the article, was truly worthy of being featured in a national publication. But he was also a product of the Central Pennsylvania Conference – more specifically, of the present New Cumberland District. He is buried in Shopp’s Cemetery, the original site of the Shiremanstown United Methodist Church, on Simpson Ferry Road adjacent to Trinity High School – and his burial there was one of the factors in naming the Shopp home and cemetery one of our official conference historic sites.

To give more local information about Bishop Erb, we also present an account of his life written by Milton Loyer in 1984 for inclusion in the History of the New Cumberland District prepared for the bicentennial of American Methodism. Along with a history of each congregation in the district, that publication featured four persons from each of our three predecessor traditions: Evangelical, Methodist, and United Brethren. It was not a hard choice to select Bishop Erb for inclusion with Philip William Otterbein, Martin Boehm and Christian Newcomer to represent the United Brethren Church. Though separated by time, these four spiritual giants of the United Brethren denomination are
connected through the Shopp site. Otterbein and Boehm and Newcomer were all present in the Shopp home in the fall of 1803, on their way back from annual conference, when a powerful revival broke out that solidified the United Brethren work in the area.

It’s not often in *The Chronicle* that a featured historical figure gets to write about himself, but that is precisely the situation in this volume. After attending 60 consecutive annual conferences, Bishop Erb was unable for reason of failing health to attend in 1883. *The Religious Telescope* noted that fact and printed the letter the beloved bishop sent to be read before the Conference. We present the statement and letter just as they appeared in the denominational newspaper in 1883.

Finally, those interested in reading more about Jacob Erb, tenth bishop of the United Brethren Church, are referred to H.A. Thompson’s *Our Bishops* (originally printed in 1889 and updated periodically until about 1910) or the two-volume *The Bishops of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ* (1950, complete from the denomination’s founding in 1800 until its union to form the EUB Church in 1946) by Paul Rodes Koontz and Walter Edwin Roush.

---

Home of John Shopp as it appeared in 1911. The building is still standing – on the south side of PA581 between St. John’s Church Road and US 15.
Memoir of Bishop J. Erb
by D.R. Burkholder, 1884

Sadness steals upon us while, with bowed heads and submissive hearts, we part with our venerable father and counselor – whose precious memory we fondly cherish, while we mourn our loss which is his gain.

Ex-Bishop J. Erb was born near Manheim, Lancaster County, May 25, 1804, and died at Shiremanstown, Cumberland County, April 29, 1883, aged 78 years, 11 months and 4 days. His grandfather Christian Erb was born in Switzerland, in 1773, and was brought to America when only 3 years old. His father’s name was also Christian, and he was born in Lancaster County in 1758. When J. Erb was 6 years old, his parents moved to Cumberland County and settled on the west bank of the Susquehanna, west of Harrisburg. He was converted at the home of his parents in the month of January 1820, at the age of 16, and joined the church of the United Brethren in Christ. The following year he began to exhort the people to attain to an experimental knowledge of saving grace.

On being urged by fathers Hershey and Neidig to enter the active ministry, after mature thought and much prayer, he entered the Pennsylvania Annual Conference May 3, 1823, which was then in session at the house of John Cronise, Frederick County, Md. He was appointed to Lancaster circuit, which then embraced thirty appointments – but in his zeal to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, he enlarged the work to forty appointments. At the conference of 1824 he was appointed to Hagerstown circuit, as junior preacher with Henry Burtner. At the conference of May 10, 1825, he was again appointed to Lancaster circuit and opened a mission towards Philadelphia. During this time he also made trips to Rochester, N.Y., and, in company with Christian Smith, to Camden, N.J.

At the conference of November 17, 1825¹, held at Chambersburg, Franklin County, he was ordained. Delegates from Westmoreland County were present, who asked for a preacher, and J. Erb volunteered to go. This proved a pleasing field of labor to him. At the conference of April 3, 1826, held at John Shopp’s near Shiremanstown, Cumberland County, he was appointed to make a second tour of New York State and Canada, and to labor there. At the conference of 1827, he was appointed to labor in the work, called New York mission. During a visit to his home in Pennsylvania, he organized the first class of members² of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ – east of the Susquehanna River, at a place called Sherk’s meeting house, in the northwestern part of Lebanon County.

¹ It is not known why there were two “annual” conferences that year. As Paul Holdcraft’s History of the Pennsylvania Conference, page 61, states: “A second conference was held in the year 1825. It not clear why two conferences were held that year. No urgent business seems to have come before the group.”
² Until this time no formal membership lists were kept. The prevailing opinion had always been that it was God and not man who kept the only membership list that counted. This was truly a bold and progressive step on the part of Jacob Erb.
about 1½ miles east of Grantville, Dauphin County. At the conference of 1828 he was appointed to Susquehanna circuit.

At the conference of 1829 he was appointed to do the German preaching on the York, Littlestown and Carlisle circuits. During this year he preached from 30 to 40 times a month. At the conference of 1830 he was appointed to Halifax circuit, and during this year he baptized Rev. John Winebrenner. At the conference of 1831 he was appointed to Littlestown circuit. The year 1832 he spent in the general work, and with Bishop Brown compiled the English Hymn Book. In the year 1833 he was elected presiding elder of the Carlisle District and also made a visit to Canada. During the years 1834 and 1835 he was again re-elected and appointed to the same District.

At the conference of 1836 he was sent to Canada mission, and on May 3 of the same year he was married to Elizabeth Shirk of Erie County, N.Y. In 1837 J. Erb was elected bishop, and again in 1841 was re-elected. He was also appointed pastor of the church in Baltimore, and was present and took part in the great trial of the church property. He was also editor of the “Busy Martha.” At the close of his term of office as Bishop in 1845, he was continued pastor of the Otterbein Church in Baltimore, and was re-appointed in 1846 and 1847. In 1848 he was elected presiding elder, with William Wagoner as his assistant. In 1849 he was elected Bishop for the third term.

In 1854 he was elected presiding elder of York District, and in 1855 was re-elected to the same district. In 1856 he was appointed agent to collect money for Philadelphia circuit. In 1857 he was elected presiding elder of Chambersburg District. In 1858 he was appointed to Liverpool circuit and was elected a trustee of Otterbein University. In the spring of the same year the Board of Missions appointed him presiding elder of the Canada Mission Conference. In 1860 and 1861 he labored in the interest of Otterbein University and the printing establishment. He also preached in Centre County, Pa. In 1862 he was appointed to Carlisle circuit. In 1863, 1864 and 1865 he had charge of York station. In the years 1866, 1867 and 1868 he was engaged as proprietor in Cottage Hill Female

---

3 Comments on this event and its significance appear in the final article in this series on Bishop Erb.
4 Most other sources name William R. Rhinehart, first editor of the Religious Telescope, and not Bishop Brown as Erb’s collaborator. This first English collection of hymns prepared by the United Brethren in Christ denomination was printed in Hagerstown MD by Kapp & Reid in 1832, and the Central Pennsylvania Conference archives has a copy of this very rare volume.
5 Presiding elder is the former term for district superintendent. In the United Brethren in Christ Church, presiding elders were elected each year by the Annual Conference. In addition, Bishops were elected by the General Conference for four year terms. In each case, there was no limit to the number of re-elections. Jacob Erb was elected to each of these offices on numerous occasions.
6 This Elizabeth is assumed to be part of the extended Shirk/Sherk family connected with historic Sherk’s United Brethren Church 1½ miles east of Grantville.
7 Comments on this event and its significance appear in the final article in this series on Bishop Erb.
Seminary located at York.

In the fall of this year he moved to Shiremanstown, Cumberland County. In 1869 he was engaged in the erection of the Boas Street church edifice at Harrisburg. His more active work ceased with this, but during the remaining years of his pilgrimage he could never entertain the idea of being local. During these years in his co-operation in the cause of Christ, he sustained the relation college agent, conference evangelist, and superannuated itinerant, preaching as occasion called for.

During his ministry of 60 years, it was his privilege to attend 60 sessions of the Pennsylvania Annual Conference, being present at all of its sessions during his ministerial life – except our last session which he desired so much to attend, which his letter to conference clearly indicated, but owing to failing health and mortal powers he was unable to do so. His labor in the Master’s vineyard indicates that he had more than ordinary zeal for Christ and his cause – and with the world before him as his field, no sacrifice was too great for him to make to advance the cause of Christ and the interests of the church of his choice.

As an organizer he was a leader in his day and church – being esteemed by his ministerial brethren, his counsel and influence was far-reaching. As a minister he was studious, thoughtful and logical. His power was felt and his fame went abroad. He advocated and contended for harmony between the outer rectitude and the inner experience.

He proved his sincerity in the last months of his life, for when tempted to be impatient with his lot he could not and would not rest satisfied until delivered from such emotions that would not be perfectly reconciled to God’s will. He called upon God and deliverance came – and from that hour harmony prevailed, and ever after he could sweetly say the will of the Lord be done, all is well. His chief concern was for the different interests of the church, which lay so near to his heart. No interest on which God’s blessing was asked brought forth such hearty “Amens” as when the divine benediction was invoked upon the church and his family. During the latter days of his protracted illness his mind wandered in the past, but prayer would almost invariably stay his mind. His faith was strong; his hope was bright; his end was peaceful. As the shades of night were gathering around us, he calmly fell asleep in Jesus. Peace be still. The Master called his aged servant from labor to rest, to the home of the blessed. And while we miss the presence and counsel, his influence lives. Let us emulate his virtues and gather sheaves, that in great and glorious day of the Lord we may meet and with him bring our sheaves with rejoicing.

---

8 Cottage Hill Female Seminary in York, just across the Codorus Creek from First Church, operated as a United Brethren institution beginning in 1866, when it was purchased by Jacob Erb and Daniel Eberly. This was the same year that the denomination founded Lebanon Valley College in Annville. For several years there was strong feeling that Lebanon Valley should accommodate only males, and that Cottage Hill should be the school for females. When the Pennsylvania Conference finally accepted the co-educational reality of Lebanon Valley in 1872, United Brethren interest diminished and the school became Presbyterian in 1874.
You’ve read about the circuit riders – pioneer preachers on horseback, following the frontier and sometimes getting ahead of it. But Jacob Erb was a circuit hiker. With a knapsack on his back and pennies in his pocket, Erb walked 400 miles through the wilderness from his Pennsylvania home to places in Canada where the gospel wasn’t being preached. And he did it not just once, but many times.

Erb, who someday would be able to say he held every job in our denomination from janitor to bishop, was born in Pennsylvania in 1804. When he was 16 he accepted Christ as Savior, and immediately dedicated his life to the ministry. By the time he was 19 he had been appointed pastor of Lancaster circuit, which had 30 different preaching places! He hiked to each – and before he had been on the job a year, he had increased the number to 40.

America was moving west, and families trying to scratch a living out of the wilderness welcomed the sight of the circuit hiker. When he appeared down the trail, word would be sent to nearby homesteads, and dozens would gather to hear preaching that night – maybe the only preaching they would hear in months. Those who knew him described him this way: “He was full of fun and enjoyed a good joke and a pleasant sally of wit, but was not foolish about it. He was open-hearted and generous, giving freely of his money to advance the interests that he loved.” His free giving means more when you know that in his first year of preaching he earned $47.58!

Jacob Erb was 21 when relatives told him of the great need for Gospel preaching in western New York and in Canada. He started walking. He followed obscure wilderness trails and waded swollen streams. He slept in cabins, barns, and under the stars, enduring hardships for Christ that few of us know anything about today. When Erb started out, there was no missionary society or church-extension board to support him. He knew that when he got where he was going, there would be no chapel to preach in – nor a single United Brethren home to give him welcome. Several times he had to stop and work for the settlers, clearing the forest, to earn money to go on.

In 1837, after several fruitful trips to Canada, the General Conference of the United Brethren Church elected Jacob Erb a bishop. He was only 33 years old. One of the first things he did as a bishop was make good on a promise he had made earlier: to feed and house the whole annual conference.

By that time the Pennsylvania Conference had grown to include more than 100 ministers. Bishop Erb kept and fed 40 of them in his home, paid his sisters who lived near by to take care of 40 more, and talked friends into accommodating 27 more. This really meant more than 200 mouths to feed – for most of the delegates came on horseback, and the bishop had to feed the horses too!
While serving as bishop, Erb also was pastor of the Old Otterbein church in Baltimore MD. This meant being involved in a long, heated lawsuit. The church had been organized in 1771 as an independent Reformed church. But when the United Brethren denomination was launched in 1800, the congregation voted to go along with the new group. (Philip William Otterbein, one of the founders of the UB church, was a Reformed pastor and had served the church.) The Reformed denomination sued to get the church property back, and Bishop Erb had to fight all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States for a decision. The church was awarded to the United Brethren, and is today a historic landmark in Baltimore. Not satisfied with all this activity, Erb started a German magazine for the denomination, since most of the preachers and members still spoke more German than English. He closed down the paper after a year, though, and in its pages gave the following reasons.

1. *It appears to me that the trustees who were elected by the General Conference care nothing about the matter.*
2. *The printer is not disposed to print it any longer.*
3. *A considerable number of subscribers have not paid…*

Bishop Erb was a pioneer in more ways than one. In a day when most of his fellow pastors opposed any kind of organization – they wanted the groups to which they preached to remain just “classes” – he began taking in church members. Soon the practice spread – and he had laid the foundation for the East Pennsylvania Conference, which is still one of the largest in our denomination.

He stuck his neck out, too, on the business of education. Many ministers (and some of his fellow bishops) opposed any higher education for ministers. “Preacher factories” is what Bishop Russell called them. Bishop Erb not only spoke strongly in favor of higher education, but also served as an agent for what is now Otterbein College – and he was co-owner of a college for young women.

After his 12 years as a bishop he returned to the pastorate. Election to the bishopric then – as now – was for a four-year term rather than for life. He was elected conference superintendent (they called it “presiding elder” in those days) in Canada and Pennsylvania. He was pastor of York First Church and then helped found First Church in Harrisburg PA.

He had attended 60 consecutive sessions of the Pennsylvania Conference, but in 1883 Jacob Erb had to write to his brethren and tell them ill health would make it impossible for him to attend. He died on April 29, 1883 – two months after the conference.

Nobody knows how many were led to Christ because he had been willing to work and walk an 800-mile preaching circuit. But undoubtedly some of the readers of *Friends* today know Christ because their great-great-grandparents heard the “circuit hiker” preach.
Bishop Jacob Erb (1804-1883)
by Milton Loyer, 1984

Jacob Erb’s boyhood home was the second United Brethren preaching station, after the Shopp home near Shiremanstown, in the New Cumberland District. His father Christian Erb moved the family from Lancaster County to their new farm outside Wormleysburg in 1810. Mrs. Erb’s brothers, prominent preachers Christian and Abraham Hershey, made regular visits to the home – and the future bishop was converted there at the age of 16. Although some services seem to have been conducted in a small brick Methodist church, the Erb home continued to be the United Brethren preaching place until 1850 – when alternating union services with the Church of God were instituted using various buildings. The Erb house stood on the present Harsco property, was moved and carefully restored at 2900 Arcona Road in Upper Allen township, and is now a private residence.

He was licensed to preach in 1823 at the age of 19, and assigned to the 30 preaching appointments of the Lancaster circuit – which he had enlarged to 40 within the year. Later he was sent as a missionary to New York state and Canada, and he was present in Rochester in 1825 when the first water was let into the Erie Canal. He journeyed alone, on foot, and carried his knapsack on his back.

Most of the rest of Erb’s long ministry was spent in the Pennsylvania Conference of the United Brethren Church, and he attended 60 successive annual sessions of that body. He was elected presiding elder (district superintendent) of an area roughly comparable to today’s New Cumberland District in 1833. He was elected bishop by the General Conferences of 1837, 1841 and 1849. Over the years he also served as editor of The Busy Martha, a German paper authorized by the General Conference, and pastored New Cumberland District congregations at Mechanicsburg, Marsh Run (Mount Olivet – the predecessor of Trinity in New Cumberland), Shiremanstown, and Boiling Springs.

On July 4, 1830, Erb re-baptized Rev. John Winebrenner, the Reformed pastor who later that same year founded the Churches of God denomination, by immersion in the Susquehanna River. Erb and Winebrenner had often held revivals together. When Winebrenner changed many of his views on church matters, he preached what became known as The 1830 Sermon on Baptism. His dramatic re-baptism by Erb took place immediately after the delivery of that sermon.

Erb was also involved in one of the denomination’s more unfortunate court battles. When he was bishop in 1842, dissatisfied church members and local sympathizers with the Reformed Church tried to regain control of the Otterbein Church in Baltimore. This was the United Brethren denomination’s “Mother Church” which Otterbein had served from 1774 until his death in 1813. The doors of the building were locked for four years, during which time services
were held outdoors in the cemetery and in the parsonage, before the magistrates decided in favor of the existing United Brethren congregation.

A final anecdote illustrates both the character of Bishop Erb and the working of the United Brethren denomination. It is taken from the 1889 book *Our Bishops: A Sketch of the Origin and Growth of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ* by H.A. Thompson, page 239.

To provide for preachers once they had passed their years of service, it had been arranged that each new preacher pay ten dollars upon joining the Conference. This amount, together with the accumulated interest, would then be available in later years. At one particular conference, the new preachers, anticipating the small salaries that would be theirs for the coming year, were not in a great hurry to give their monies. Bishop Erb arose and said:

“Brethren, a few years ago I was a missionary in Canada. I was traveling along the road one day on foot, with my knapsack on my back, thinking of the friends I had left behind me in the States… when on making a turn in the road, I saw the Devil. He addressed me and said, ‘Erb, you are making a great fool of yourself… You might have had a pleasant time at home among your friends if you had remained there, but you have come over here, and you are traveling up and down these valleys with no pay, no means of support, no one caring for you. If you are able to endure it for a few years, you will become old and crippled and poor, and you can then go home and live for a time in poverty and die in disgrace.’

“I then became a little excited and told the Devil he lied; that the preachers had organized a benevolent society, and that the interest of the money they paid was to aid needy preachers, and that when I reached old age, if I had nothing of my own, I would be cared for by my Brethren. Brethren, I want you to make good my statements to the Devil.” Needless to say, the new preachers responded freely with their contributions.

Home of Christian Erb, Jacob Erb’s boyhood home, as it appeared in 1911. This site is on the north side of the Forster Street/Camp Hill Bypass, between the railroad overpass and Erford Road. Some foundations remain. The building has been removed to 2900 Arcona Road and restored as a private home.
Papers Relating to Jacob Erb
by Jacob Erb, 1883

editor’s note: The following statement and letter are reprinted as they appeared in 1883 in the *Religious Telescope*.

Father Erb, of Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania, is the oldest preacher of our church so far as we know, having been in the ministry sixty years. His face has been the reflection of amiableness, and love for the church and its progress in conference after conference gathering for more than half a century.

At the late Pennsylvania Conference he was absent on account of his infirmities and his great age. A letter written to the conference by him was listened to with profoundest and deepest sympathy. Our readers will be glad to read it in full:

SHIREMANSTOWN, PA  
February 1883  
To the Pennsylvania and East Pennsylvania Conference  
in session in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania:

Dear Brethren,

It would give me great pleasure to be present with you in conference this year, especially since you are assembled in the town where I was ordained to the office of elder, fifty years ago. I had hoped to be with you in the new and enlarged church edifice which now takes the place of the small building in which we worshiped in former years, and where God so graciously poured out his Spirit upon his people.

A kind heavenly Father granted to me the privilege of attending, in consecutive order, sixty annual sessions of Pennsylvania Conference. Could I be with you it would be my sixty-first. For several months past my bodily powers have been failing. My mind is good. I can remember and carry a train of thought without difficulty.

My faith in God is strong, my confidence in his words is unshaken, and I know by personal experience that there is a power in true religion. The future of a blessed life is to me full of hope and promise. God is my refuge and my strength.

I joined the conference in 1823. It convened at John Crouse’s, near Frederick, Maryland. I was then nineteen years of age. Now after the lapse of sixty years – when nearly seventy-nine years of age – I love to look back and see the progress which we as a church have made. How our brethren have pushed forward the work is seen in the hundreds of churches built, the thousands of members received – many of whom are already safe in heaven – in the schools which have been founded, in the institutions of benevolence, in our
publishing house, becoming every year more extensive, and in the noble work of our missionary society.

I thank God that I have lived to see this day which presents such grand monuments of substantial growth in the church of the United Brethren in Christ. As a humble member of this conference, I have always tried to do my duty. In looking back I can see where I might have done better service. But I console myself with this thought, that I always endeavored to bring an honest heart to the work.

In the early part of my ministry I had to travel on very large circuits, which entailed much work. I labored mostly in this conference, though I also preached in fields outside our boundaries. After my ordination in 1825 I was sent to Westmoreland circuit, which then belonged to Muskingum Conference, and by organizing the forces there the nucleus of Allegheny Conference was formed, which was set off in 1839.

I also did missionary work in the state of New York, in that part now occupied by Erie Conference. My labors extended into Canada, where in early life I was a missionary, and in advanced years I had the honor to serve as presiding elder. I had the office of bishop three terms – from 1837 to 1845, and again from 1849 to 1853. I do not wish to weary this conference by a recital of my labors, but if you permit me I will state that few of the younger members of this conference have any proper conception of my labors in the city of Baltimore.

My letter is already too long. I close abruptly with the sincere hope and prayer that you have a good session of conference. May God direct you, my dear brethren, in all that you do. The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up his countenance to you and give you peace.

Your brother in Christ,
Jacob Erb