

# Autobiography of



**John Fohl**

Autobiography of John Fohl  
by Milton Loyer, 2000

John Fohl (1815-1901) was a major figure in the early United Brethren Church. This dedicated pastor and presiding elder left his imprint in three conferences: Pennsylvania, East Pennsylvania, and White River. A principled visionary, he is the denomination's only member to have direct connections with both of its splits: the 1877 organization of the United Christian Church by George W. Hoffman and the 1889 organization of the Old Constitution faction by Milton Wright. The story presented here has been reconstructed from conference journals, articles on his theological beliefs and personal experiences written by John Fohl for religious newspapers, and other archival sources. In the first-person and in a style consistent with his surviving writings, the "autobiography" attempts to probe the mind of John Fohl while making only those factual statements which can be supported from the documentation at hand. The material has supposedly been prepared for the September 25, 1900, commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the formal founding of the United Brethren in Christ denomination – just four months before the death of Rev. Fohl.

The remaining pages, including the appendices, are presented as if prepared by Fohl without knowledge of any events past September 25, 1900. Research on John Fohl and his brother-in-law David O'Farrell continues, and it is hoped that an expanded version of this booklet will be available in the foreseeable future – with footnotes providing additional insights into people and places mentioned by Fohl and informing the reader of developments subsequent to September 1900.

# Autobiography of John Fohl

born June 7, 1815  
born again May 10, 1832

September 25, 1900

Dearest Reader,

I have been asked to record the story of my life and ministry in the United Brethren Church as an encouragement to those celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her founding by Bishops Otterbein and Boehm and anticipating continuing faithfully within the Church as she enters this new century. And so over these past months I have recorded my recollections. Give glory to our Lord where there is success, ponder the human condition where there is not, and forgive the frailty of this old man where there are errors. John Fohl – Chambersburg, Penna.

## **Early Life**

God leads his people onward. As far back as I have been told, each of my direct ancestors moved from the place of his birth in search of new frontiers. Immigrant great-grandfather Hans Jorg Voll [Fohl] left Europe to settle in Berks county in 1749. Grandfather David Fohl left his parents and siblings to settle in Adams county in the early 1790's. He was a shoemaker by trade. Father Johannes [John] Fohl continued by moving to Antrim township in Franklin county in 1809. I never knew my Adams county aunts and uncles or cousins, and trust that God in His mercy has provided each of them opportunity hear the blessed gospel.

Born June 7, 1815, I spent my childhood and youth on the farm, attended country schools during the winter, and learned the value and virtue of hard work. My parents were members of the Lutheran church who diligently instructed each of their children in the Holy Scriptures. It was my fortune to be reared in morality, and I was never guilty of profane language or any out-breaking crimes. My father was an elder (that being a lay office in Lutheranism) in the congregation, yet we all lived in ignorance of experiential religion for many years.

By the grace of God we were privileged to live in an area of United Brethren activity. I had the advantage of associating with many of our worthy fathers – who with great emphasis preached regeneration of the heart, baptism of the Holy Ghost, and (as a consequence) the example of the pure life. My pious mother found the Savior in 1827. Fully convinced of the natural depravity of the heart, I reasoned that without the new birth it was utterly impossible to enter heaven.

Shortly before my seventeenth birthday, we were visited by two United Brethren local preachers – Peter Hawbaker and John Dowe. Father Hawbaker, as he was known, was a blacksmith in Greencastle. It was when Christian Newcomer preached at his house in 1816 and a number of conversions resulted that the first United Brethren class in Franklin county was organized. Although ordained in 1831, he never accepted circuit but rather was called to open his home to traveling preachers and serve as a local evangelist-exhorter. As I was transporting these two men in my father's wagon, they enquired as to whether I had experienced conversion. Their words touched my heart and that day, May 10, 1832, was to become my spiritual birthday.

I returned home and prayed alone on my knees in an upper room in my father's house. I "mourned as a dove and chattered like a swallow." For the time being my distress was indescribable, all the while drinking the "wormwood and gall" of repentance. A voice spoke plainly, "Arise and go down stairs, and you shall get better." This was followed by another in about the same tone, saying, "Wait until tomorrow." Startled with such revelations, I exercised my free agency and happily obeyed the first voice.

Being weighed down with a load of sin, I got down the stairway with difficulty and entered the lower room. My parents and elder sisters were in the act of singing in family worship. In great agony of soul I cast myself at full length, tossing from side to side, upon the floor near to the side of my devoted mother. She, stooping down, enquired, "John, what's the matter?" My answer was, "Nothing but sin."

In the very act of confessing, the fallow ground of the heart was thoroughly broken up, and I wept as never before. After wrestling with God in prayer about one hour, I felt deliverance and the burden of sin was removed. With the baptism of the Holy Ghost received, and the evidence as clear as a sunbeam that my sins were pardoned, I was a new creature in Christ Jesus.

During that memorable hour on my knees, a text was given me out of the book of Job – and under the high pressure of divine grace it was as easy to preach as to breathe. This being ended I was raised to my feet, seemingly by a supernatural power, and threw my arms around the neck of my father, saying, "Father, you have a form of godliness, but know nothing of the power. Ye must be born again." He was 50 years old and an elder in the church, but like many others he had been lulled asleep in the cradle of carnal security. But I am happy to say the Holy Spirit disclosed to him his sandy foundation, and from that memorable hour he had no rest until he found the Savior in the pardon of his sins. Thus God gave me a seal to the ministry the first hour of my conversion in the person of my own dear father. To God alone be all the glory.

My father being a farmer with considerable live stock, the following day had been selected for sheep shearing. Mrs. Tenie Hart, one of the employees, came early. Not knowing what had occurred the previous night, and being naturally very jovial and mirthful, she began to joke and laugh as she drew nigh to the house. One of my sisters, standing in the door, raised her hand and said, "Hush, John got religion last night." From that hour she became distressed about her own soul and had no rest until deliverance came. She became one of the most active Christians we ever knew, and she died in the triumphs of faith in Greencastle some forty years ago.

Her son Charles G. Hart was employed by a neighbor in sight of our residence. Two weeks following he was suddenly stricken to the ground by the power of God. After repenting and weeping for three days, he found the Savior in the pardon of his sins. He proved faithful and died at Waterloo, Indiana, about the year 1885.

Another young man was employed as a hireling soon after my conversion, and I felt it my daily business to point him to the Savior. Three weeks following he found peace by my side. Thus God was gathering to himself a people, without any special external efforts. So thorough was the work, and so full the separation from the world, that there was no backsliding among us.

As there were no prayer or class meetings in that community, zeal for souls led me to organize prayer meetings in the neighborhood and exhort sinners to repentance. Too timid to announce the meetings publicly, we met for a time secretly (like the ancient disciples for fear of the Jews). But the leaven of Gospel was still working, and by the grace of God I assumed courage to appoint a meeting publicly and found a crowd assembled. No doubt many came out of vain curiosity, but God blessed these humble efforts and several professed conversion. Upon the encouragement of my Lutheran pastor, I enrolled at the Gettysburg Theological Seminary. When it became apparent that this was not the place God had prepared for His child, I returned home devoted to the study of the Scriptures and the search for His perfect will for this life.

## 1835-36

Called to the work of winning souls for Christ from the first hour of conversion, but naturally timid, I asked God whether my youth and the great need of laborers on my father's farm might not provide excuse for not pursuing the work. But while following the plow, I plainly heard from day to day the whisper of the Spirit, "Go to the mountains." Although a stranger to the mountain regions, I knew the people there were generally poor and of the sort that those who labored for filthy lucre would, like the priest and Levite, pass by. Yet the souls of the mountaineers as well as those who live in princely palaces cost the tears, sweat, blood and life of the blessed Son of God.

Fearful of running in advance of the Spirit, as many others have, I sought a sign of the Heavenly Father. After the labors of the day, the horses being turned into pasture, I had the custom of praying under a large and fruitful wild cherry tree, a full quarter of a mile north of my father's residence. I told the Lord that if the tree would wither in two weeks, that I should conclude definitely that He would have His child enter the ministry. But the summer season being dry, the thought occurred that the tree might die for natural lack of moisture and I would be deceived. To avoid this, each evening in the darkness of the night, and unknown to any of those I loved, I would take two large buckets of water across the fields. After pouring out my heart to God in prayer with tears, I poured out the water under the boughs of the tree. And the tree continued to prosper.

But still the echo continued, "Go to the mountains." The burden increased until came the cry, "Lord, here I am." Yet but a boy, I was furnished by my father with a horse and bridle and saddle. My own resources supplied a saddle-bag and the books necessary for equipment as an itinerant. Having too much principle to beg, and too timid to ask for remuneration, I was permitted by my father the privilege of gleaning during the harvest of 1835. After toiling with the company during the heat of the day, I ventured out by the light of the moon, while others were sleeping. With a horse and rake, I thus gleaned wheat which when threshed sold for \$32.50. This was considered a sacred fund to aid the poor and defray expenses in seeking to win souls to Christ.

With neither experience nor preaching license, I set out to "Try the Spirit." On the morning of December 2, 1835, I bade farewell to my father, mother, sisters and only little brother. We all wept, and it was a most solemn scene. Yet each was fully convinced that God had called, and not one said, "John, don't go."

The first day I crossed over the mountain and entered into Path Valley, tarrying over night with the Presbyterian family headed by Joseph Flickinger. Though naturally timid, I told them of my mission. The second day I ascended and descended towering mountains to tarry over night at Shirleysburg. A burden for souls prompted the sharing of the message of what one must do to be saved with those passed along the way.

The third day I arrived and stayed for the night near Huntingdon. Finally on the fourth day I came to Penn's Valley in Centre county – and fortunately met Rev. F. Gilbert, who gave me words of cheer. There I commenced to travel from cabin to cabin among the poor, many of whom to be sure had never been visited by a messenger of Christ. I met a congregation in a log school house in Brush Valley and selected Revelation 3:20 as a text, which I had committed to memory. But supposing that I should be "preacher-like," I opened and held the Bible before me. As I was trembling like as aspen leaf, this caused me to misread the passage.

From thence I came to Centre Furnace, then a place of some note, it being the first Sabbath of my mission. There I met a congregation assembled in the house of Brother William Wells, a man of eminent piety. With great reluctance I consented to preach, and soon became embarrassed and took my seat. For a time Satan sought to sift me as wheat and had almost prompted me to vow to return home and never expose my ignorance again before a congregation.

At the close of the service Brother Wells, I suppose seeing my countenance despondent, took his seat close by my side and sought to give me words of encouragement – but seemingly to no purpose. Then he said, "My young brother, I have an advice to give you, and it is a good one and I hope you will ever remember it." I expressed a willingness to receive it. Said he, "Here it is: The next time you get up to preach, just think you have a whole parcel of cabbage heads before you, and your head is the biggest." This single utterance from one whom I never saw before nor since, in my following experience for many years, proved "like apples of gold in pitchers of silver." No doubt that good man was prompted by the Spirit of God to give me that advice at that important crisis.

Kindly received by all classes, I continued to thus explore the mountainous country for between six and seven weeks. Having "tried the Spirit," I became fully convinced that it was the design of the Divine Master that this should be my life's work. In the meantime a deep snow had fallen. By the aid of a kind friend, I constructed a "jumper" by bending two hickory saplings and returned to my loved ones. They were overjoyed to see me once more. The facilities of communication not being as we have them now, they had not heard one word of my welfare during our separation. Thus ended my first mission.

### **1836-37 Clearfield Circuit**

In March 1836 I traveled to Lebanon county for my first United Brethren conference. There were at the time but two annual conferences: Virginia and Pennsylvania, the latter encompassing what is now Pennsylvania, East Pennsylvania and Allegheny. The conference assembled at Light's meeting house on the north edge of Lebanon. Erected in 1817 it was the second United Brethren building east of the Susquehanna. Bishop Hiestand presided, with presiding elder Jacob Erb elected to assist. A more humble and devoted body of men I never saw.

On Tuesday the 10th those desiring licenses from the conference to preach were summoned forward to present themselves before the entire body. With trembling hearts and many tears, we each gave account of our conversion and call to the ministry. Two were dismissed, and the others were referred to a committee for further examination. Daniel Hoffman, Adam Noon, Abraham Wengert and (though I had fewer years than any of the entire body) John Fohl were granted license to preach the gospel.

As the entire state of Pennsylvania was embraced within one conference, the fields of labor were very large. There was one circuit in the conference that was proverbially called "the college." It was 250 miles in circumference, met about 28 appointments, and embraced parts of 5 counties: Clearfield, Centre, Indiana, Cambria and Westmoreland. Owing to my youth and inexperience, I had a presentiment that "the college" was to be my lot. At the close of the conference the venerable bishop arose and read out the allotments for the ensuing year. I sat shaking like Belshazzar, so that it could be said "his knees smote one against the other."

As anticipated, the assignment was to Clearfield circuit. Inwardly I wept like a child. Some of the aged brethren gathered around, laid their hands upon my head, and commended me to God while saying, "Don't be discouraged, Brother Johnny." "I am not discouraged," I replied, "but who is sufficient for such things?" In a few short days I bade farewell to parents, an only little brother, and sisters.

I traveled over rugged mountains about 100 miles, reaching the first appointment at the home of Brother George Goss, between Osceola and Philipsburg, on March 27, 1836. George was a brother to Sarah Goss Kephart, mother of that noted trio of Kepharts: Isaiah L., Ezekiel B., and Cyrus J. I preached as best I could. In the afternoon I met another congregation about eight miles distant at the house of Brother George Snell (or was it Smeal?). On the following day I had a long ride to reach the Monday evening appointment.

Though it was the latter part of March, I was in the Allegheny mountains and the snow was deep. In some places there was neither road nor path. I got into a snow drift that became deeper and deeper, with a heavy crust. I had been furnished with an excellent horse, the gift of a kind father, but the faithful beast became discouraged and came to a halt. Even under the whip he could go no farther. What shall I do? Seeing a cabin in the distance, I left the beast and baggage and plunged into the snow. Running on the crust to the cabin, I procured a shovel to extricate the animal and reached the evening appointment.

Though without a human pilot, I succeeded in making the first round of the circuit. Part of the path lay through dense forest, and blazed trees guided the way. There were three streams to cross, which in the spring season had become swollen and were overflowing their banks. I did not see or meet a person to enquire whether the streams were fordable or not, and return would mean failure to reach the other appointments. In such case I would dismount and plead on my knees my case before the Lord. I was engaged in His cause, the One who promised "Lo, I am with you always," and sink or swim I would cross. Throwing saddle-bags over shoulders, and kneeling on the saddle, I took a firm hold on the mane of the horse and entered the swollen streams. The water ran over the saddle, but the Lord tenderly cared and preserved. In addition, the forest was infested with bears, panthers and wildcats. But deer were very numerous, and I frequently feasted on venison. A Mr. Snider, in whose cabin I had a regular appointment, shot 25 deer during the winter of 1836-37.

In passing through a dense forest one day, my attention was suddenly arrested by a singular noise. After halting for a few moments, I discovered a huge rattle-snake lying in the path just before my horse. Having more zeal than knowledge, I dismounted and seized a stick and hastily made battle. Unfortunately, the stick proved defective and broke in my hand. I had no time or place to retreat, so I continued the assault until I had killed the reptile. This was the first of that species I had ever seen, and had the battle proved the reverse I might have died alone in that dense forest.

After filling one appointment in Brush Valley, I was informed that a young man had died with small pox in despair in that neighborhood a few days previous. His father, a Mr. Miller, was in great distress of mind. I hastened to pay him a visit, and I found him alone with grief seemingly indescribable. I endeavored to console him with the promises of God's Word, and I exhorted him to resignation to his Divine Providence. "Oh yes," said he, "to all this I could readily consent – had my son not died as he did." I then asked him to give me the particulars of his death.

"About one hour before his departure," the father replied, "he called me to his bedside,



saying, 'Father, I am dying and my soul will be lost and you are the cause of it, as your whole concern was in seeking after the things of this world. Family worship and religious training were neglected, and now for me it is too late. I am lost, forever lost.'" Never shall I forget the anguish depicted on the countenance of that man as he gave utterance to the forgoing incident of the death of his son, who was just 21 years of age. Surely parents should heed this warning and seek to rescue their children before it is too late.

On the second round, in the month of May, I met with a peculiar incident which I shall never forget. The weather was very inclement. Having a long ride, I failed to reach the evening appointment and called at a cabin. A young colored woman came to the door and to an enquiry about lodging replied that they were not prepared to entertain strangers. Her husband was not at home, but would return in an hour or two. When I answered that I was very tired and easily served, her sympathy was aroused and I was invited to dismount. They had no provision for my hungry horse. I enquired whether he might graze the night in a grass lot nearby, to which she consented.

In the meantime her husband came home. He was a bright young African about 25 years of age. Supper was prepared and we ate heartily. After supper we sat around a huge fire. I enquired if they could sing. They answered that neither of them could read, but that they had committed to memory several hymns. I asked whether we could sing a hymn and I offer a prayer, to which they readily consented.

Just as we knelt to pray there was a heavy rap at the door. In view of the late hour, falling rain, and dense forest in which we were lodged, the noise startled us all and we rose to our feet. In came a large colored man, about 45 years old. Not a word was spoken. I suggested that we return to our knees to continue in prayer. While leading in prayer, I heard the visitor walk across the cabin. He procured a tallow candle and held it before my face as I continued praying. After we arose he called my host out into the rain, and then called out his wife. I heard considerable noise and supposed there might be a conspiracy to take my life. I opened the door and meekly enquired what was wrong.

The old man fell in a great rage saying, "You are a kidnapper," and declaring that he would brew his hands in the blood of a kidnapper even if he would hang for it the next hour. I learned that he was the father-in-law of my host, and that I was suspected of coming to capture his son-in-law and daughter. When I professed to entering the mountainous country as a minister of the gospel to win souls for Christ, he said it was a disguise and that he would not believe a word of it. He was so enraged that I found it impossible to reason with him.

Finally I proposed that were I a kidnapper, any colored man of ordinary strength could easily overcome me, for I was but a youth. This seemed to appease his rage, and we returned to the cabin where he inspected me from head to foot. When he saw the truth he apologized saying, "I judged you too fast; I wonder I did not strike you." As he dried his clothes by the fire, he remarked again, "I wonder I did not strike you."

The evening being far spent, I proposed to retire on the floor. They objected and said I must take the bed, the only one in the one-room cabin. I invited the old man to accompany me – not so anxious to have him as bed-fellow as to convince him more fully of my good intentions. "I will take the floor with the rest," he replied. After the candle was extinguished, he once again repeated, "Bless your stars that I did not strike you." I learned that it was to see whether I was a white or a colored man that he held the candle to my face as I was praying. There was murder in his heart. It was the same Omnipotent Hand that saved Daniel in the den of lions that stayed the

wrath of that enraged African. Praise the Lord!

At that time Clearfield county had denser forests than any other county in Pennsylvania, and it was the refuge of fugitive slaves. The cabin in which I lodged had secreted a fugitive, whom they called Sam, for two weeks. He had gone out the previous day and was captured. The old man had come at that late hour to bring the news that Sam was kidnapped. The young man who was my host was also a fugitive. He was detected two months after my visit, taken from his wife, carried south, and not heard from again during my stay in that country.

Owing to the long rides, I had to do my principal reading and studying on horseback. Cut off from my ministerial brethren, I became at times depressed in spirit. Feeling such great responsibility resting on such a youth, I would sometimes weep as a child. To seek comfort I often got on my knees under the lofty white pines and told my sorrows to Jesus. I implored his sustaining grace which, happy to say, always proved sufficient.

By a little effort we succeeded in holding a camp-meeting in the month of August. The tents were made of small pine logs and covered with clap-boards, which presented a rather novel appearance. So far as I have any knowledge, it was the first camp-meeting ever held in Clearfield county. The attendance was good and the order was excellent. A number of souls were won to Christ. The managers decided that there should be no promiscuous sitting. A certain lady violated our rule by sitting on the male side. When I told her kindly to change her seat, she refused, saying, "I have heard so much about camp-meetings, and if anything serious should occur I prefer being near my husband."

At that early date we had but one log church on that large field of labor. Our meetings were generally held in one-room cabins. Church, parlor, dining-room, sleeping apartment, and kitchen were all combined into one. Frequently several large dogs claimed the right of way and were sure to be under the table while we were feeding the outward man.

As large as the work was, the love of souls prompted an increase in the number of appointments. I secured the court-house in Clearfield to hold a number of meetings, and a number of souls were converted to God. At the close of the meeting 6 or 7 of the converts made application for baptism by immersion, as the west branch of the Susquehanna river ran through the midst of the town. Owing to the absence of ordained ministers on the circuit, the annual conference had authorized me to perform the ordinances of the church, and so I would.

The day for baptizing was appointed, and the banks of the river on either side were lined with people. Here I met with one of the greatest trials of my young life. Being naturally timid and inexperienced, I had naught to lean upon but the arm of Omnipotence. With a trembling heart I entered the stream, leading one after another. One of the candidates was a very large colored woman. I seemed endued with supernatural strength, and a halo of glory seemed to characterize the entire assembly. Praise the Lord for victory!

At that time the salary allowed a single pastor was \$80.00. Being absorbed in preaching Christ and the resurrection, I gave no heed to finances, knowing that "our bread should be given us and our water should be sure." When the year closed and I was about to depart from those beloved people, they gave me \$81.00. The surplus dollar I paid over to the conference, and thus closed the labors of my first circuit. Despite constant exposure, my health remained good.

Owing to the great distance to my father's house, and the importance of my work, I remained on the circuit the entire year. Yet I often felt homesick and shed many tears to relieve my aching heart. Post-offices were few and far between, and for a single letter I paid 25 cents. At last ended the arduous labors of my first circuit. I was permitted again to see my native

home, and to greet once more my dear friends whom I tenderly loved. To God alone be all the glory!

### **1837-38 Washington Circuit**

In March 1837 the Pennsylvania Conference met near to my home at Fetterhoff's Chapel, Franklin county. Conference began on Tuesday the 8th with the usual elections, examinations and other official business. At 10 o'clock on Thursday the ordination sermon was preached by Bishop Hiestand from II Corinthians 5:5, and John Winters exhorted. Then ordination took place. The sermon was a blessed one, and the presence of the Lord was consciously felt. The name of the Lord be praised!

On Friday the conference was opened with singing and prayer. Supposing I had graduated from "the college," I waited with no little anxiety as the traveling preachers received their appointments. It was my lot to be junior preacher on Washington circuit to John Wallace, one of those ordained the previous day. Also ordained on that occasion was Henry Kephart, an honest laborer born and re-born in Clearfield county, among whose offspring are counted Bishops Ezekiel and Cyrus Kephart and Rev. Isaiah Kephart, editor of the Religious Telescope.

Brother Wallace had preceded me on Clearfield circuit and, having been properly educated by the experience, spent the last year traveling Washington mission. This seed had been sown by Newcomer and Pfrimmer and watered for many years by John Winter, the fruit of their labors. There now being sufficient appointments, it was deemed a two-handed circuit and covered five counties: Washington Allegheny, Butler, Beaver and Green. Zion Church, the first United Brethren building west of the Alleghenies was one of the appointments,

The whole circuit was 200 miles in circumference, having each round to cross by ferry the Allegheny and Ohio rivers – which during the spring season were such swollen and floating with ice as to endanger our lives.

A large portion of this field had been opened by the venerable Jacob Winter, of blessed memory, who was a man of talent and eminent in piety. He preached in both languages, English and German, and catechized and confirmed his members after the order of the Lutheran and Reformed churches. He made no report to annual conference, yet claimed membership in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. He was the means of winning many souls to Christ, and I found him highly esteemed among the people. As the infirmities of age were coming upon him, he wisely transferred his entire work to the Pennsylvania Conference.

The people then were a strange sort – mostly from the Lutherans or Reformed. While professing experiential religion, they disdained the mourner's bench and class meetings and found ample opportunity to use alcoholic spirits. And my co-laborer was of Scotch-Irish descent – more concerned I feared over pleasing the eye and tickling the ear than over winning souls to Christ. In consequence of these conditions, our labors were not crowned with that success I had anticipated.

We extended our mission along the state line between Pennsylvania and West Virginia, into one of the most desolate portions of country ever I visited. Having to ride 25 miles over hills and deep gorges, I found a community but little superior to the uncivilized Indians – living in cabins with puncheon floors and clapboard doors, without schools or churches. The people told me they had never heard a sermon prior to our coming.

During the month of July I was attacked by jaundice. My visage became changed, the whites of the eyes assuming a yellow appearance. My whole system becoming debilitated, I was advised to seek rest. As an itinerant, I had no home save my father's – a distance of nearly 200 miles to be made on horseback in the heat of mid-summer. Not favored at that early date with modern facilities of traveling, I undertook the tour in feeble state and reached my father's house safely by the blessing of kind Providence. After medical treatment for several weeks, I regained my health.

A camp-meeting was held the latter part of August at Rocky Spring in Franklin county, where I had been reared. I gladly took opportunity to attend. The meeting was under the superintendence of the once-noted Samuel Huber. He was a man of few words and stern countenance. On Saturday he said, "Brother Fohl, according to arrangements you will preach tomorrow at 2 o'clock." My answer was similar to that of the ancient prophet: "Oh, Lord God! Behold I cannot speak, for I am but a child." (Jeremiah 1:6) I suppose many were anxious to hear the "boy preacher."

I approached the presiding elder and he replied, "Well, you shall preach or get a substitute." I enjoyed the hope that the latter could be easily obtained, but all among the large number of ministers in the itinerancy refused. At last I went to Brother J\_\_\_ M\_\_\_, a local preacher who had come to us recently from another church. He was a gun-smith by trade and seemed flattered with the prospect of preaching to a large congregation. It was evident that he was more anxious to hear himself preach than were others.

At the appointed hour the trumpet was sounded and the congregation was seated. Our Brother J\_\_\_ M\_\_\_ arose with an air of dignity and his voice was heard afar off. About the middle of his discourse, the venerable presiding elder whispered, "Brother Fohl, you will follow with an exhortation." This was equally as great a cross as to preach, yet I had too much principle to disobey. I arose before the large assembly and stood as speechless as a marble statue, having lost all consciousness of self and surroundings. How long I stood I was never told, but I remember being pulled to my seat by the hand of the presiding elder upon my coat-tail.

Had he not done so, who can tell but I might not yet be standing there like Lot's wife until this day as a warning to others. Upon due reflection it was apparent that my disobedience exemplified what God told the prophet: "Gird up thy loins and arise and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound you before them." (Jeremiah 1:17)

Children are commanded in the Holy Scriptures to obey their parents in the Lord, and we are also required to be subject to kings and those who are in authority. How much more should we obey God, who is the ruler of the entire universe. A profession without love is as a nut without a kernel, a shadow without substance, or a watch without a main-spring. As the love of God in the soul, so is the seal of our heir-ship. Paul gives a summary of what we might be or do: if destitute of love (the New Version; also, the German) we become as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." (I Corinthians 13:1-3)

A certain writer says "God has three kinds of servants in the world. The first are slaves and serve God through a principle of fear; the second are hirelings and serve God for wages; the third are sons and serve God through a principle of love." I learned from this incident to love God and serve Him with obedience. Nor was I an hireling serving for wages, as my reduced salary for the year was \$34.00.

## 1838-39 Chambersburg Circuit, and marriage

In March 1838 I traveled to Cumberland county, overlooking the Susquehanna near Wormleysburg, to the house of Bishop Jacob Erb. It was there the annual conference met, Brother Erb making good the invitation extended the year before, when he was not yet a bishop. Because of the size of the conference, it became difficult to find a place to entertain it. Finally Brother Erb volunteered to entertain the entire conference at his own expense. Ninety-six preachers reported.

The plan which he adopted to hold his session was this: First, he rented from Squire Black, of that town, a large hall used as a private school in which to hold the meetings of the conference. Second, he himself boarded 40 preachers and paid his sisters, who lived in the place, to board 40 more – the rest he assigned to places among his friends. Third, he laid in a good supply of oats and hay for the horses. Mother Erb was in charge of the cooking, and all passed off pleasantly.

Wednesday, March 7, the committee appointed to divide the Pennsylvania Conference reported as follows: the dividing line to commence at the Maryland line on the Tuscarora mountain, from thence north along the mountain to the Juniata river, from thence east to the mouth of said river, from thence north along the Susquehanna river to the North Branch, from thence along a straight line to Lake Erie. It was resolved that the part cut off by the committee be called the Allegheny Conference.

The following day the appointments were read and I was assigned to Chambersburg circuit, thus remaining in the Pennsylvania Conference. It was a two-handed appointment with Jacob Kessler, who had been ordained two days previous, in charge. The field embraced a large territory with about 18 appointments. It was called a four-week circuit, there being preaching at each appointment every two weeks with alternating pastors.

A camp-meeting was held in August 1838 near Greencastle. Brother Jacob Markwood, afterward bishop, and the writer became very intimate. In our zeal, we each had desire to labor in regions beyond our circuits. By consent of our presiding elders, we exchange work for one round of four weeks – he traveling the Chambersburg circuit, and I traversing the one for Hagerstown, Md. While attempting to uphold the banner of the cross in a strange state, I was led by my natural timidity to doubt for the first time the call to ministry. My voice, talents and delivery seemed deficient for me to be ranked with the ministry and standing in the way of another who might prove more effective.

At this time of crisis, known only to God and myself, I came to Father John Clopper's of blessed memory, near Rohrsersville, early in the day in the month of September. Being kindly received, I cared for my horse and told the family not to look for me until evening – while I repaired to an adjoining woods to spend the day in reading, fasting and prayer. My request to God was that if He designed for me to continue in the itinerancy, the evidence of such would be the conversion of a soul that night. There was no revival influence in the community at that time.

A large congregation attended that evening. After speaking for about 15 minutes from Proverbs 29:1, I felt a strange sensation – as if a person standing behind were anointing my head with oil. This I felt quite tangibly. At this moment the Holy Ghost descended, the congregation became electrified, and the penitent cry was heard, "What must we do to be saved?" Three grown persons came to the altar for prayers, one of whom received the evidence of her

acceptance with God as clear as a sunbeam.

But the conflict had not ended. The enemy came during the night to convince my soul that my predecessor had sown the seed that I had unjustly reaped. To learn the facts, I traveled several miles to visit the convert – but she had left home. To reach the next appointment near Harper's Ferry required a journey of about 18 miles. I wept like a child and cried mightily to God that if I were to continue in the work He should visit us with the conversion of a soul that night.

I lodged with Brother George Baker who treated me kindly and advised that a large congregation would be on hand that night to hear the stranger, which proved to be the case. After speaking for about 20 minutes from Numbers 10:29, I saw a tall lady spring to her feet. She pressed toward the stand with both arms extended and crying at the top of her voice, "I am lost; I am lost; O brother, pray for me." I replied that God was speaking, and we would pray after continuing for about an hour. The burden of sin was then removed and her soul was happy.

The next morning before leaving I called to visit her. She said that on the evening previous in going to church she had no concern for the salvation of her soul. But while sitting under God's word she saw her lost condition as she had never seen it before. She gave conclusive evidence that she was a new creature in Christ. Since that hour every doubt has been removed. Were it not for age and infirmities, I still feel a zeal to encircle the globe preaching Christ and the resurrection.

In Chambersburg we had a small stone church with a membership of about 25. They were pillars in the House of God, being true and tried, yet reckoned little and unknown by the world when contrasted with other popular churches. But God did not despise the day of small things.

A protracted meeting was appointed to commence on the 8th of November, 1838. Brother Jacob Rinehart of Maryland was invited to assist. Some weeks previous three of our devoted sisters who felt burdened for the salvation of souls entered into a band to meet once a week, fasting and praying for a revival of religion. This was concealed from all save God and themselves. In the meantime, one of the band sisters had a remarkable dream.

She dreamed that they were worshiping in the little stone church and a fountain of water clear as crystal gushed forth from the altar and flowed copiously down the aisle on the female side to the door. Then it repeated, but this time flowing down the aisle on the male side of the church. They all drank of the fountain and were joyous. The dream was related at their next meeting, and the two other sisters immediately interpreted, saying, "Surely God has heard our prayers and we shall have a revival."

The meeting commenced on the 8th of November. The weather was favorable and the attendance good. On Sunday evening, the 9th, Brother J. Rinehart was assigned to preach and the writer to follow with an exhortation. Suddenly the Spirit of God fell upon the congregation with supernatural power, filling the house, and the cry was heard, "What must we do to be saved?" When the invitation was given for mourners, the altar was soon crowded with – true to the dream – all females. During that memorable night, 14 of the mourners received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Among that number was one Mary Radebaugh. So far as is known, not one of the 14 who were converted on that night ever lost sight of the Cross – although the greater number have since been called from labor to their heavenly home.

The meeting was protracted for 5 weeks. After a few days, as the sister had dreamed, the living water flowed down the other aisle, and the conversion of souls was confined for a season

principally to the male part of the congregation.

But the tidal wave soon extended to other churches. Hundreds of souls were converted to God. The winter of 1838-39 will be read in history as one of the greatest revivals ever known in Chambersburg, Pa. In those days the policy of the church was the thorough breaking up of the fallow ground of the heart by conviction and confession of sins, and the restitution of wrongs. Each convert was expected to practice self denial by laying aside all superfluity in dress, and to pray and speak in prayer and class meetings, so that all the world might see that each had been with Jesus and learned of Him. Nor were revivals followed by the abominable curse of fairs and festivals which now snare the greater number of the so-called converts.

At this period of my history I was convinced that I could be more useful by having a pious help-mate. I accordingly made the matter a subject of special prayer. One of the young converts of this revival, Mary Radebaugh, had come under my exhortation to the altar as a penitent. A few days following I received her into the church. A correspondence by letter ensued, which by some means was communicated to her parents. Members of the Lutheran church, they felt indignant at the idea of having a daughter wedded to a United Brethren minister. But what God decrees it is hard for man to counteract.

After a few months they were disposed to send their daughter to Newville to evade the subject. On the 7th of March, 1839, while on my way to annual conference in Lebanon in company with Rev. Jacob Felmlee, we called at Newville. The marriage was consummated and she us accompanied to conference as my bride. But the news soon spread as upon the wings of the wind that John Fohl had "stolen a wife."

### **1839-40 Chambersburg Station**

Conference convened again in Light's meeting house, Lebanon county, Pa, on March 11, 1839. Despite the commotion caused by the recent matrimonial events, the character of the junior pastor of the Chambersburg circuit was passed. On Wednesday, the 13th, the brethren who stood three years on probation were examined whether they should be ordained as elders. It was found that the following brothers were worthy to take this responsible office: Christian Crider, John Fohl, Jacob Gallagher, Adam Noon and Christian Peffley. (Who but the Almighty knew at the time that Brother Peffley and I would be fellow soldiers for Christ in the United Christian Church some 40 years hence.) Following the conference sermon by John Russell – then serving Otterbein church in Baltimore and several years later elected bishop – and others, we were ordained. So far as is known, only the writer remains to this day from that class.

When the appointments were read the following day, Brother Kessler and I were returned to our circuit. But on our return from conference we were surprised to learn that suit was entered by my newly-formed father- and mother-in-law against the minister who performed the rite of matrimony, claiming their daughter was lacking about two months of being of age. The sheriff of Franklin county had already served the summons upon the Rev. J. Felmlee, and the excitement ran high among all. The penalty of the law in the forgoing case was £50 (\$133.33). I prevailed upon my kind father for the sum – which I placed in the hands of the squire to give to the offended father-in-law. Mark the change in sentiment: the community that before had accused the preacher of stealing a wife now arose to say, "Mr. Radebaugh sold his daughter for \$133, and he had better dispose of them all while the price is so high!"

It was then deemed appropriate to separate Chambersburg from the remainder of the circuit for a number of reasons: the work in town had greatly progressed on account of the revival, a settled ministry would be more suited for one with connubial responsibilities, and there was such lingering opinion on the circuit that some terrible indecency had been committed by their junior pastor that they refused to receive me upon the circuit. And so Chambersburg, denouncing the action of the circuit, became a station appointment. God moves in mysterious ways his wonders to perform!

Winter blessed the congregation with another glorious revival. Among those in attendance was one young man whose complexion was so dark as to attract attention. He seemed interested, always occupied the second seat from the rear entrance, and – unlike his companions – his deportment was serious. One night I approached him and asked him about the safety of his soul. Almost immediately he arose and went to the altar. After several nights had passed he became discouraged but agreed to try once more. That night Alexander Owen was born into the kingdom. One of five brothers, all of whom were called to Christian ministry, he entered the conference a few years later and became a minister, presiding elder, Sunday School editor, and president of Otterbein College. His death in 1861 in the prime of life was an inestimable loss to the church, and his body lies in the Oakville, Cumberland county, cemetery while his spirit communes on high.

### **1840-43 Presiding Elder, Chambersburg District**

The 1840 annual conference met in February at Otterbein church, Baltimore. It being my first occasion to visit the church and grave of Father Otterbein, I was deeply moved – even more so on the third day of conference, when John Light and I were elected by our brethren to assume the office of presiding elder. Brother Light was assigned to the Lebanon district and I to the Chambersburg district.

What a task for one so young! Yet our heavenly Father had called, and He would sustain. The district covered 5 counties: Franklin, Adams, Perry (south of the Juniata), Cumberland and York – some of the circuits including appointments in Maryland. The duties of a presiding elder are to travel throughout the appointed district, preaching as often as practical and seeing that the traveling and local preachers conduct themselves as becometh the gospel of Christ. With the help of the Almighty this was accomplished – along with the appointment of camp-meetings and quarterly meetings, and the administration of the Lord's Supper. Spiritual religion prevailed, revivals confirmed the approval of the Father, and the mission in the city of York prospered to be made a station.

The 1841 annual conference met in March at Rapho school house no. 3, the Strickler appointment, in Lancaster county. Bishop Erb held the chair, and I was elected by the brethren as the assistant to preside at the absence or discretion of the bishop. Charges and disagreements consumed much of the time. Why men who claim they are called of God cannot act in honesty and charity with one another at all times is a mystery.

Continuing dependent upon divine Providence, I was elected presiding elder a second time and returned to Chambersburg district. Our heavenly Father continued to pour out His Spirit across the district. Littlestown and the neighboring appointments were sufficiently blessed



to seek for withdrawal from York circuit as a separate mission.

The 1842 annual conference met in January at Funk's school house in Powell's Valley, Dauphin county. In the absence of Bishop Erb, conference was opened by John Light, presiding elder of Lebanon district. Simon Dresbach and I were elected substitutes to preside until the arrival of the bishop. Oh that preachers of the gospel could settle their quarrels between themselves, according to the Disciplines of the Church and the sure desires of God!

A third time the brethren of the elected the writer to the position of presiding elder, and for as many years appointment was made to the Chambersburg district. It was during this year that we suffered the premature death of my earthly father, whose body lies in the United Brethren burying ground at Marion awaiting the Great Resurrection. A finer and more considerate example of mortal parentage would be hard to construct. Thanks be to God for care that ceaseth never! Particularly blessed were efforts on Carlisle circuit, with unusual outpouring of the Spirit at the Hershe and Shopp appointments. Also blessed by comfort of the Holy Spirit was our humble home, upon the death of our daughter Emma, age 1, in October. Thanks be to God for compassion that faileth not!

#### **1843-46 Shopp's Station, Shiremanstown**

The 1843 annual conference met at Fetterhoff's chapel, Franklin county. Hershe's and Shopp's were separated from Carlisle circuit and made station appointments, and when the assignments were made the latter was found to be my field of labor for the ensuing year. This was hallowed United Brethren ground, a powerful revival occurring in the John Shopp home on October 3, 1803, with Otterbein and Boehm and Newcomer all present. The church itself was erected in 1827 and was one of the denomination's earliest such structures. It was rebuilt in the village of Shiremanstown in 1854 and remains a strong appointment to this day. The mortal remains of our sainted Bishop Jacob Erb, who made his home in the village in his later years, lie in the Shopp church cemetery.

In addition to Shopp's church, the new assignment embraced a class at Wormleysburg formerly served from Lancaster county, a regular appointment at West Fairview formerly served from Carlisle circuit, and other territory and irregular appointments as directed of God. I secured a home for my family within the bounds of Shiremanstown, as in those days we had no parsonages.

In the same village was a licensed hotel, which was the resort of a number of persons who were addicted to the abominable curse of intemperance. Among that number was our next-door neighbor Thomas Shireman, being the son of the proprietor of the village. He spent the Sabbaths with his associates at this sink of iniquity, drinking the poisonous liquid as the ox drinketh water. But during the summer of 1843 he was stricken with typhoid fever. The skill of the physician seemed baffled, and for a time his recovery was supposed to be impossible. The Spirit of God disclosed to him his lost condition, and he became deeply concerned for the salvation of his soul. With tears of contrition he confessed his past profligacy, pled for pardon, and requested the writer again and again to pray for him that his sins might be pardoned and his life spared. He promised that instead of spending his time at the hotel among his drunken associates, he would lead an exemplary life and accompany us to the house of the Lord. As he

was a man of considerable prominence, we were hopeful.

He began to mend, the scene was changed, and he was soon able to walk our streets again. We fondly hoped that our next-door neighbor would now become "a new creature in Christ Jesus." But instead of paying his vows, alas, he was after the lapse of a few weeks like "the dog who is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (II Peter 2:22)

Two miles south of our village, a notorious universalist A\_\_\_ H \_\_\_ carried on a distillery. Some defects were found about the chimney, and our neighbor, being a brick-layer by trade, was called to make the repairs. To economize time in distilling the poisonous beverage, they continued in full blast while our neighbor was at work over the boiler on the second floor. At an unexpected moment, the cap of a very large boiler was blown off with a great noise which was heard for miles. The whole contents of boiling liquid was dashed against the roof and came down a boiling shower upon our unfortunate neighbor, who was scalded from head to foot.

A physician was called, his clothing taken off, and the body wrapped in raw cotton. After receiving this explanation I immediately hastened to the place and beheld a scene which was indeed heart-rending. He was still conscious and remembered his late vows, but said "It is too late now. I already feel the pangs of hell! I am lost! I am lost forever!" He tossed from side to side, screaming and raging like a maniac for 15 hours. Then his voice was hushed in death without a ray of hope.

He lived a Christless life, was wrapped in a Christless shroud, and laid in a Christless grave. Who among us would desire to die such a death? But what are the pains and excruciating agonies of 15 hours when compared to the second death?

The February 1844 annual conference was memorable to the writer. First, it was the privilege of Shopp's meeting house to host the conference. What a temporal responsibility. Second, I was invited to prepare the obituary of Father John Neidig. What a sacred responsibility. Third, David O'Farrell of the Virginia Conference was received on motion as a member of the Pennsylvania Conference. He was assigned Chambersburg circuit, my home attachment, with George Gilbert. It was there he was led of the Spirit to meet my younger sister Hannah and become my brother-in-law. Who but the All-knowing could perceive Brother O'Farrell from Virginia to be the one in whose home my mother would breathe her last, and who would be to me a kindred spirit closer than a brother.

During 1844 a general awakening occurred in Fishing Creek Valley, York county, and a number of souls were converted to God. An old Irish Catholic lay lived there, who had 3 sons: Francis, Charles and John. The two former were notorious drunkards, devoid of character and abusive to their families; whereas John was a sober, industrious and highly respected man. The Holy Spirit found way to those 3 brothers, and they were happily converted to God. When the news reached the old mother, she lamented greatly about her John. "O what a pity," she said, "for my John. But it may do Francis and Charles some good." And I am happy to say it did do them good. For after their hearts became changed by divine grace, they were baptized and united with the Church. They became men among men, and exemplified to the world that they had been with Jesus and learned of Him. They proved faithful until death, and those 3 brothers have gone to their reward.

A few years ago I was called to preach the funeral of Charles, who was highly esteemed in the community in which he lived and died. I visited and prayed with the old lady during her

last hours. But sorry to say, I found her ignorant of God and of the plan of salvation. As far as can be judged, her Catholicism "done her no good," for she died as she lived.

The February 1845 annual conference met at Highspire, Dauphin county. Bishop Kumler presided, with my new brother-in-law David O'Farrell and myself in attendance – the former attending conference without the matrimonial complexities that several years ago accompanied the writer to his first conference as a man of family. When the appointments were given out on the final day, I was returned to Shopp's station for a third year. God continued to pour out His Spirit and the work prospered.

As the time for annual conference neared, it was with considerable reflection, humility and gratitude that we pondered our stay at this place. Though there were but scattered appointments, two organized classes and only one church building when conference first heard "Shopp's station: John Fohl," the Lord graciously allowed the organization of classes and the erection of two additional church buildings.

In 1844, Salem church was erected in Fishing Creek Valley – the class having just been organized by the writer following a gracious revival. The church was built of brown sandstone quarried on the farm of Jacob Haldeman. Under the leadership of the writer, most of the materials, labor and hauling were donated. The simple architectural lines of the building, together with the massiveness of the masonry, bespeak the permanency of our work in this community. To this day the structure stands as a monument to the ability of God to supply the every need of His people.

In December 1845 Zion's Church of the United Brethren in Christ was dedicated In West Fairview – the class having been organized by the writer on June 17, 1843. The trustees were John Olwine, Moses Hoover, Henry Batdorf, Benjamin Erb, and Frederick May – the latter having donated the land. Word reaches the writer that this congregation has since erected a new building and is now the seat of a circuit appointment.

The year was spent without the comradeship of my brother-in-law O'Farrell. In the spring he and my sister Hannah temporarily removed to Grant county, Indiana, where they proved useful to the United Brethren cause by becoming charter members of the Salem class. Who but the All-knowing could perceive that this sojourn would be precursory to our families residing in those regions for some fifteen years, and that the cemetery of the Salem church would be the final resting place of my sister, niece and mother as the result of a third residence there by the O'Farrells.

### **1846-47 Chambersburg Station, again**

The February 1846 annual conference met at Springville (now Florin), Lancaster county, with Bishop J.J. Glossbrenner presiding. Among the much business, it was discussed whether members of the Sons of Temperance could also be members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. It was the decided opinion of the conference and so resolved that "in view of our constitution, our brethren in the ministry and laity should not be associated with the order called the Sons of Temperance."

Owing to the distances involved in gathering the brothers and the desire to concentrate efforts to reach the lost, it was decided to divide the conference at the Susquehanna river into the

East Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania conferences. The roll was called, each member answering either east or west to signify with which conference he wished to be a member. Although David O'Farrell and myself each responded for the east, I was assigned a second term at Chambersburg station. Greencastle having been connected with Chambersburg the previous year, the station now encompassed two appointments. Brother O'Farrell was assigned New Holland circuit with Christian Peffley, a gentlemen of considerable conviction and honor who some twenty years later would join with George Hoffman to form the United Christian church.

### **1847-49 Littlestown Circuit**

The March 1847 annual conference met at Hershe's station, Cumberland county, with Bishop William Hanby presiding. The business of conference seemed to me to be conducted with unusual fervor. Through interesting circumstances, the first United Brethren work was attempted in Philadelphia. Brother J.W. Bonewell, a local pastor of the American Primitive Methodist church (begun in England under stimulation from the enthusiast Lorenzo Dow) asked that he and his congregation be considered by this conference – the East Pennsylvania Conference being unable to spare any preachers fluent in the English language. After debate it was determined that presiding elder George Miller visit Philadelphia, with discretionary power to receive the congregation and minister. This was accomplished and ratified at the next annual conference. Though 30 members grew to near 300 within a few years, and Bonewell entered the United Brethren itinerancy, the call to remain faithful and apart is a difficult one for those of the world. Support for the congregation was removed after a few more years, there being unwillingness in Philadelphia to take appropriate action regarding secret societies.

The conference entertained curious discussion on educational institutions. It was resolved that presiding elder John Russell, despite personal convictions to the contrary, write an admonitory letter to Brother Gilbert in reference to his preaching against studying or becoming learned. This writer was appointed to a committee of three to respectfully answer a letter received from the Virginia Conference in relation to a literary institution. It was resolved by recorded roll call that the conference consider Blendon Seminary at Westerville (formerly Methodist Episcopal, and purchased by the United Brethren to become Otterbein University) all sufficient as an institution of learning at this time and hereby opposes cooperation with efforts to establish another by the Allegheny Conference at Mount Pleasant. The latter resolution was justified a decade later when the remaining assets at Mount Pleasant were transferred to Westerville.

Other curious discussion evolved from the resolution that ladies be invited to attend as spectators during the sessions of conference. In this connection, this writer was appointed to prepare a few lines for the sisters of Hershe's station, who presented to the conference a petition praying reconsideration of the election of their pastor George Miller to the office of presiding elder. The letter of reply being adopted by the conference, the election of Brother Miller stood.

In confirmation of the action of the last annual conference, it was resolved that "no minister or member belonging to our Church can consistently be a member of the order of the Sons of Temperance or the Odd Fellows."

Seeking the will of the Almighty, and ready to serve wherever He deigned to lead, the writer was granted by conference resolution a transfer to any conference, whether east or west,

that he might desire to join. Trusting in Him who has never been known to fail, however, I declared myself willing to travel without reserve.

When at the last the stationing committee reported the fields of labor for the ensuing year, the name John Fohl was read for Littlestown circuit. The United Brethren meeting house on the circuit, being the first Protestant house of worship in Littlestown, was erected in 1822 and dedicated by Bishop Newcomer. The land was given by father Philip Bishop, Sr, and the carpenter work performed by the father of Zephaniah Colestock. By coincidence, James M. Bishop and Z.A. Colestock comprised the ordination class of this conference.

Missionary efforts begun by my predecessors into the northern part of Adams county were expanded and enjoyed the blessing of our heavenly Father. Among the people who opened their homes for religious meetings were the Cline family in the vicinity of Idaville, the Stahle family in the vicinity of Centre Mills, Thomas Gardner of Latimore township, and others.

In March 1848 the writer was privileged to host the annual sessions of the Pennsylvania Conference at Littlestown, Adams county, the presiding bishop being John Russell. The General Conference of 1845 had elected an entire new board of bishops in the persons of Glossbrenner, Hanby and Russell. In the succession of three years, each has now administrated an annual session of this conference. All are able men of humble origins who seek to lift Christ and not themselves.

Returning to Littlestown for a second year proved indeed a sacred responsibility. Opportunities provided by the Spirit in the north doubled the number of appointments in this single year from 16 to 32, there now being 10 organized classes. God had multiplied the circuit, and now He would provide!

### **1849-51 Franklin Mission**

The February 1849 annual conference met at Mower's church, Franklin county. The committee on boundaries proposed that Littlestown circuit be divided, and that the turn-pike leading from York to Chambersburg be the dividing line. All south of this line, with the addition of three Maryland appointments formerly served by the Virginia Conference, will retain the name Littlestown circuit. All north of this line will be designated Franklin mission. On motion the report was adopted.

It was resolved that this conference fully concurs with the brethren of the Allegheny Conference that the apparel of our preachers should be plain and not costly, shunning the appearance of evil, and that they may be examples of piety to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers. It was further resolved that those who have wives and children use their influence that they be in like manner. Oh, brothers and sisters, I feel impressed at this writing to call especial attention to this matter and ask your indulgence.

My companion, with whom joys and sorrows were shared for 58 years, and who bade farewell to this world three years ago, was the mother of five daughters, all of whom were converted in early girlhood and not one of whom backslid. She who nourished them at her breast taught them to shun the superfluity of the world. How it pains me today to see mothers who profess to be followers of the Savior, and their daughters by their sides, dressed in the style of the world. They spend their money in buying these costly articles while millions of our fellows in

India are starving for bread, and also millions elsewhere for the Word of Life. We are to be “transformed by the renewing of our minds.” How vain and incongruous to see wives and daughters of preachers wearing jewelry, feathers and artificials.

The January 1850 annual conference meeting in York, re-appointed John Fohl to Franklin mission. Would that the conference could re-appoint common decency to some who profess the name of Christ. It was deemed necessary to adopt 10 rules to govern the body during the conference, each rule less necessary than the preceding for those of a mind to participate civilly. Rule #9: No member of conference shall leave after the conference appointments are read out until the final close. Rule #10: No member shall be allowed to peruse any newspaper, book, or pamphlet during the business of conference. What tom-foolery!

Appointments were established into York and Cumberland counties as far as Lisburn and Cocklin’s church, near Shepherdstown. As our Father poured out his saving and reviving grace, His people formed into classes and erected structures for the gathering of more souls. A church building was erected and dedicated at Clines, and construction was begun on houses of worship at Gardner’s and Franklintown.

God had blessed, and blessed abundantly, the efforts of His servant in the Pennsylvania Conference. After much prayer and consideration, we determined the Father’s desire was that we join ourselves with the East Conference.

### **1851-53 Lancaster Circuit**

The January 1851 annual session of the East Pennsylvania Conference met at Rank’s church, Lancaster county. The meeting-house stands near the foothills of the Welsh Mountain, east of which is no United Brethren activity. The journey was a cold one, taking me to a part of the county into which I had not previously ventured. It was good to attend with my brother-in-law David O’Farrell, and the joy of his company brought warmth and familiarity. I was at first admitted as an advisory member from the Pennsylvania Conference, and then received on transfer from my former association.

I was assigned Lancaster circuit with George Mark. At this time but two large circuits covered the county: Lancaster and New Holland. Twice the size of its companion assignment, Lancaster circuit required service of two men and encompassed some two dozen appointments. The circuit included the noted church building at Springville (now Florin), which structure enjoyed the double distinction of being the first such erected by the United Brethren in Lancaster county and the site of the 1846 annual conference that divided the original conference along the Susquehanna river to form the East Pennsylvania Conference.

David O’Farrell was elected conference book agent and appointed for a second year to Harrisburg mission, having completed two prior years on Lancaster circuit and two years before that on New Holland circuit. What knowledge I lacked of the county, my brother-in-law could provide.

In February the writer journeyed to attend the annual session of the Pennsylvania Conference at Jefferson, York county to present the report for Franklin mission. To the disappointment of several and the relief of others, the resolution relative to secret societies was postponed until the next annual conference. Does procrastination resolve? I think not. To the

credit of the brethren, the favorable action of the succeeding conference included the following three resolutions.

- ◆ Whereas this conference has learned with pain that in several instances the Discipline, touching secret societies, has been violated by the reception and retention of their members in church fellowship, and whereas for its peace and happiness as well as for its desire of good government this conference is determined to maintain the rule of Discipline on the subject, therefore, resolved that the preachers who may find their churches entangled with such alliances be required to rid them of them during this conference year and report accordingly to the next annual conference.
- ◆ Resolved that local beneficial societies without passwords, secrets and mysteries are not in the opinion of this conference in the prohibition clause above referred to.
- ◆ Resolved that we recommend the work “Plain Thoughts on Secret Societies” to our preachers and members as soon as the price is reduced to what is equitable and right.

The February 1852 annual session of the East Pennsylvania Conference met at Mountville, Lancaster county. Of the various duties that fell to the writer, some were pleasurable and others were not. What a responsibility to reside on a committee of 3 to plan for the devotional exercises of the conference. What a sacred task to reside on a similar committee to examine the applicants presenting themselves before the conference. In accordance with the Biblical instructions of our Lord, I was appointed to speak to George Gilbert regarding complaints. If not heard, I am to return with 1 or 2 others. If these are not heard, a committee will hear the case in a formal manner.

The reading of the appointments for the ensuing year placed John Fohl on the Lancaster circuit with John Stamm. I found Brother Stamm a man of particular conviction. Later elected presiding elder by his brethren, he was one of too few willing to stand in 1869 with George W. Hoffman in defense of Christian holiness and the Discipline of the Church. Our heavenly Father blessed the work on the Lancaster circuit. Though the travel was much, revivals and increases were the rewards of labor given in the name of Jesus.

David O’Farrell was returned to Harrisburg mission for a third year. The previous year a trustee board had been formed and purchased a substantial brick structure on Front Street, lot #52 in the town plan, previously erected by the Baptists. Though naming 100 members by the close of this year, the mission a decade later became so weakened and disorganized that the property was abandoned.

After much prayer and deliberation, it was determined that the fields to west were “ripe unto harvest” and that the Holy Spirit was prompting this writer to bear the message of scriptural holiness in those environs. As a consequence of this decision, and in anticipation of receiving heavenly direction, my brother-in-law David O’Farrell and myself returned our families to Franklin county.

### **1853-67 White River Conference, Indiana**

The January 1853 annual session of the Pennsylvania Conference met at Littlestown, Adams county. Though no longer a voting member, I attended the meetings and was requested along with John Dickson and James M. Bishop to prepare the obituary for our recently deceased

Brother William Miller. How good to renew friendships. David O'Farrell accepted assignment to the Rocky Springs circuit, Franklin county.

The January 1853 annual session of the East Pennsylvania Conference met later in the month at Zion Church in Lykens Valley, Dauphin county, and reluctantly granted the writer, who was not present, transfer to the White River Conference in Indiana. David O'Farrell, who made the journey, was granted transfer to the Pennsylvania Conference. And so rolls of East Pennsylvania, at least for a season, will lack the names of Fohl and O'Farrell.

The travel to Indiana was truly a sojourn of faith. With wife, six children, and only such worldly possessions as necessary, the writer proceeded under protection of the Spirit through Pittsburgh, Columbus, Xenia and Dayton to new quarters in Dublin, Wayne county, our Heavenly Father having prepared the path each step of the way.

The annual meetings of the White River Conference were held in August. Added to the rolls each year were those whom God had prepared to gather souls in this portion of his vineyard. In 1853 Milton Wright was admitted to the conference. The following year my brother-in-law, the Spirit having confirmed in divers manners our prior assessment of the heavenly design, moved his family and my widowed mother from Pennsylvania to join us in the west. Granted transfer to White River Conference, he accepted appointment while I continued to labor on behalf of Sabbath School and Bible Society interests.

While efficiency of presentation and the passage of time discourage full detail regarding the conferences in Indiana, the next two come to memory as worthy of note. In August 1856, Wright and O'Farrell and Fohl were present all at Abington, Wayne county. Wright and Fohl were elected secretaries. The writer also had the privilege of serving on the Committee on Ordination, whose duty it was to examine those presenting themselves for the sacred office. Among the latter was Milton Wright, whose three years of diligent ministry God had abundantly blessed. He was a friend whom we were permitted to refresh with food and lodging on several occasions, and one whose conscience and convictions agreed with ours on the necessity to forsake all compromise with the world. He was ordained and posted to Andersonville circuit, Fayette county, to replace one who had been uncovered to be a Mason. In the early spring of 1857, Brother Wright accepted a call to join the Oregon mission for an anticipated service of at least two years with the possibility of receiving the divine call to remain at that post. Leaving Miss Susan Koerner, who consented to be his bride upon his return, if both of them were still willing and sensing the affirmation of Heaven, he bade his friends and family farewell.

At the following conference in August 1857, the writer was invited to deliver a discourse on behalf of Sabbath Schools. With my brother-in-law O'Farrell, I moved "that we in the future manifest more concern for the rising generation by organizing Sunday Schools where it may be considered expedient and endeavor to stimulate those already organized by a lecture or sermon upon the subject." The resolution passed without dissent and was directed to accompany the minutes of the Conference in the Telescope. In addition to serving on the committee on the first year's course reading, I was appointed by the chair on two committees of three to hear complaints against members. This pattern of usefulness at annual conference I was able to continue during the years in Indiana. O'Farrell was appointed to give the introductory sermon the evening before next year's conference. Wright was given transfer to Oregon Conference.



It was my distinction to address the 1859 conference on behalf of missions and to present resolutions on the subject. Without dissent it was declared "that the members of this conference, both local and itinerant, will make zealous and persevering efforts...to create a deeper interest in the missionary cause and raise funds for the missionary Society by collections, donations and bequests." Wright returned from Oregon in November 1859. It was I who had the privilege of officiating at the marriage of Milton Wright and Miss Susan Koerner at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on Thanksgiving Day. Praise be to God for the honorable institution of marriage. Brother Wright spent the winter and spring teaching school and supplying pulpits as needed, including occasion for my brother-in-law (who was presiding elder of East district) while his little Eddy was ill.

In August 1860 O'Farrell was elected presiding elder of Marion district and delegate to the 1861 General Conference in Westerville, Ohio. He voted with all but three of the delegates in a near unanimous condemnation of secret societies. Either the law of the Church is enforced or it breaks down. To make certain of the enforcement of the law, it was prescribed that violators of the same should "be dealt with as in the case of other immorality." Oh that men would honor the law of the Word above the lure of the world!

Wright was elected presiding elder in 1861, and O'Farrell and Wright both elected to that position in 1862 and 1863. Thanks be to God for faithful leaders in positions of authority! But not all, I say with sorrow, were willing to follow their example and commit to lives of holiness. How often do those who feel the condemnation of their consciences strike out against the faithful. And so with divided opinion the conference of 1866, meeting in Dublin, did "recommend that Brother J. Fohl in the future endeavor to be less faultfinding and labor harmoniously with his ministerial brethren for the promotion of the cause of Christ in the U.B. Church." Knowing that Brother Wright would continued to stand for the right in Indiana, my brother-in-law O'Farrell and I made preparations to return our families to Pennsylvania.

I close the account of our western sojourn with the following true incident. From the beginning of his ministry, it was evident that God's call upon this writer was especially to the poor and outcast. In consequence, the exploration of isolated places where the people were destitute of the means of grace has always been of prime import.

Near the end our of labors in the west, I came to a place where a new school house had been erected on an eminence and felt impressed to preach there. Two men in the community were large land-holders and had under their control a number of farmers, woodchoppers and widows as tenants. I called upon these two gentlemen and was received very kindly. Stating the nature of the call, I said that by their consent I would be glad to preach in their school house. To this they both readily consented.

On the arranged Sabbath morning, a good attendance of the land-holders and their employees occupied the edifice. Among the widows was an old lady, Lydia Cox, who with her grandson of about seven lived in a hut. This woman was said to be very wicked. In the summer season she would spend a great part of the Sabbath in fishing and would swear like a sailor. I was told that she had not heard a sermon for 13 years. Yet this old lady, very poorly clad, with her ragged grandson, was attracted by the Holy Spirit to attend.

After preaching the first time, I offered to come again. They readily consented, and thus I

continued preaching every four weeks for one year. I then proposed, if agreeable to their wishes, to preach for them day and night for one week – not calling it a series of meetings. To this they consented.

At the appointed time I came with a heart burdened for their salvation and imploring the blessing of God upon our feeble efforts. After 3 or 4 days, it was evident that the Holy Spirit was moving the hearts of the people. When the invitation was extended for the penitent to come to the altar, Lydia led the way. Weeping like Mary of old at the feet of Jesus, she was followed by the wife of one of the land-owners. Others came, and before the close of the week quite a reformation was effected in that neighborhood. God had gathered to Himself a people. We organized a church and called it Mars Hill. I continued to serve them a second year, preaching Christ and the resurrection and not asking any remuneration – in case it might militate against our usefulness, as some of them had been raised under the Quaker influence.

In the month of September, 1867, I told the people that our work in the west was done and we were impressed to return east to our native state, Pennsylvania, to labor and die. At the next appointment I would deliver my last sermon and depart, commending them to God and the word of His grace. Many wept, and the scene shall never be forgotten. After the benediction, Lydia Cox came forward and said, “Minister, will you go home and dine with me today?”

Having no lack of invitations and knowing that she was very poor, I sought the Lord. As refusal might tempt her to accuse the writer of being a respecter of persons and cause her to suffer spiritual loss, and as “Christ sought not to please himself,” I readily consented to go – following on horseback as Lydia and her barefoot grandson led the way on a winding path through the forest.

Finally we came to an open place of probably half an acre. There stood the hut, about 12 by 15 feet, in which this humble widow and her grandson lived. The chimney, built of sticks and mud, was about six feet high. The joists were very low and her minister, being 6 feet 2 inches tall, had to stoop. As four or five hungry chickens clustered around in greeting, the kind hostess began to catch one to prepare for the dinner. As it was then about noon and I had little time to tarry, I persuaded her otherwise.

Although the wind was furious and the chimney so low, an effort was made to kindle a fire. Soon the hut was filled with smoke so dense that we were compelled to seek fresh air. But finally the kind hostess announced dinner ready and, after a blessing upon the food, we undertook to eat. All told, we had the darkest and hardest bread this writer ever saw, a saucer of molasses and a cup of either coffee or tea – I being no longer able to remember distinctly which of the two.

After eating as best as I could, I told the kind hostess that we should kneel and give thanks. Knowing this would be our last intercourse on earth, I implored the blessing of God to abide with us all until we should meet again in our Father’s kingdom. We both wept freely. After rising from prayer our kind hostess said, “Brother Fohl, you have been my minister for two years and I never gave you anything, and I have nothing to give you now but my cat. She is a very good cat of four colors.” To gratify her wishes, I readily consented.

She then procured a little poke of about 15 inches, well smoked, in which she had some medical roots she had gathered to sell to doctors to obtain a little change. She gave me a root, saying, “Chew it, as it is healthy.” The cat was caught and forced into the poke, with a cord affixed to hang it over the horn of my saddle. The hungry horse carried home its rider and the cat – the latter being the wages for two years of labor among that dear people.

Yet I am consoled with the blessed assurance that a record is kept in an upper court. And in that day when the books shall be opened and the accounts adjusted, those will be disappointed who labored for the sake of honor and filthy lucre alone and the true ambassadors of Christ who had his glory and the salvation of souls alone in view will be rewarded. Praise the Lord!

### **1867-68 Shippensburg and Plainfield**

The January 1867 session of the Pennsylvania Conference met at West Fairview, Cumberland county. O'Farrell, though still a member of the White River Conference, was assigned to York Springs circuit, and I continued to serve the cause of Christ under the direction of the Spirit. During November I supplied both Shippensburg mission station and Plainfield circuit with preaching, the brother assigned to the latter having declined to travel the circuit and thus creating the need for arrangements all the year.

### **1868-69 York Springs**

The January 1868 session of the Pennsylvania Conference met in York, York county, and there arose some confusion on my status. My brother-in-law was seated as an advisory member to present the report for York Springs. I was received by transfer into the Pennsylvania Conference "on the statement of Rev. D. O'Farrell that such transfer had been given by the said White River Conference." I was assigned to the Baltimore 2<sup>nd</sup> church (English), to follow Zephaniah Colestock. While the preaching at Baltimore 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> churches continued in German, this congregation had been established in 1855 as an English mission and first supplied by Nehemiah Altman, a converted German Jew. H.A. Schlichter was assigned to York Springs.

Willing to serve where appointed and anointed by the Spirit which confirms the work of earthly hands, but not willing to neglect family and reason to serve the world, I earnestly sought God's will. It was determined that Brother Schlichter supply the pulpit in Baltimore and that I follow my brother-in-law on York Springs circuit. The substitution of 9 appointments for a settled station was confirmed by the Spirit the following conference when my successor was presented 13 appointments to fill.

The February 1868 session of the East Pennsylvania Conference met in Allentown and was attended by my brother-in-law O'Farrell. He was received on transfer from the White River Conference and assigned to Mt. Joy circuit, Lancaster county. This circuit included the historic church at Florin, at which my brother-in-law and I attended the memorable 1846 annual session that divided the conference along the Susquehanna river and declared that the denominational constitution forbade membership in the Sons of Temperance, even though its goals were more noble than those of other secret societies. The Florin congregation had four classes, one of which was German.

Storms had been brewing in the East Pennsylvania Conference over the establishment of Lebanon Valley College. While none oppose education, it must never be supposed that head-learning from a school can substitute for heart-warming from the Spirit. The wisdom of the previous conference had assigned George W. Hoffman, outspoken preacher of holiness and opponent of preacher factories, to Annville station. When he invited that old soldier of the Cross Bishop Russell to preach on June 30, the good Father Russell preached on "Knowledge puffeth

up” and over a quarter of the students were moved to withdraw. Relieved of his charge in August, Hoffman’s love for the Savior and His Church compelled him to return in 1869 to accept appointment to Sinking Springs.

### **1869-70 Alto Dale**

The January 1869 session of the Pennsylvania Conference met at Chambersburg, Franklin county. Although I was unable to attend, the cause of holiness was championed by Brother James M. Bishop who moved, when it came time to examine the moral and official character of the members, “that all the members of this Conference be asked the following question – ‘Are you in connection with any secret society, or are you in sympathy therewith?’”

During the year three sainted pilgrims of the conference made their final journey to the heavenly reward. The obituary of Rev. Martin Lohr was prepared by Jacob Smith and followed by moving sentiments delivered by J.M. Bishop. The obituary of H.Y. Hummelbaugh was prepared by Jacob Hoke. The obituary of Rev. Samuel Huber was prepared by Jeremiah P. Bishop. What a memorable time, I am told, for those in attendance. Praise God for those who have faithfully run the race and thank him for those who continue with uncompromising faith.

Greencastle circuit was divided, the new part to be called Alto Dale circuit and appointed to John Fohl. This work embraced several appointments and 4 organized classes: Alto Dale, Quincy, Fetterhoff’s and Mt. Union – all but the last in possession of church buildings. Before the year was complete, a class was organized at Fayetteville and preparations made to erect a church edifice there.

The February 1869 session of the East Pennsylvania Conference was hosted by D. O’Farrell at Mt. Joy. He was appointed to New Holland, where he had been the first pastor of record when the circuit was created in 1846. In the intervening years, a house on Main Street had been purchased for the circuit parsonage, eliminating the need for appointees to secure their own accommodations.

A most remarkable session of the East Pennsylvania Conference this proved to be. For some years there had been controversy over modern trends within the church – the baptizing of infants, the wearing of rings and fashionable clothing, bearing arms in war, membership in secret societies, and the support of preacher factories. Some had left the conference in previous years, but this was to be occasion for those who saw no future for reform to make the break. Solomon Weidman surrendered his license and Ephraim Light withdrew. The names of George W. Hoffman (the perceived leader of the reform movement), George Landis and John Stamm were erased from the rolls. The removal of these respected leaders and their followers weakened many congregations.

The crisis arose because Hoffman had traveled in December from his appointment at Sinking Springs to hold Watch Night services at the private house of Frank Balsbaugh. There were seekers, and the meetings continued and grew in numbers. The attendance became so large that the meeting was moved into Fishburn’s church, where it continued with immense crowds and an uncommon awakening. In all over 130 persons professed conversion, but the revival produced jealousy among those with unlike religious zeal and convictions. Following the East Pennsylvania Conference at Mt. Joy, many of these persons held a conference at Union Deposit, where it was agreed that George W. Hoffman, assisted by others, should be their regular

preacher.

O what problems when temporal rules replace true religion. Can no one stem the tide? Early in the conference O'Farrell submitted a resolution recognizing as a binding obligation the command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" and that we "most heartily disapprove of spending the day in visiting, worldly conversation, or in sleep." This was adopted. On the final day, following the withdrawals and erasures, one was still emboldened to offer a resolution strongly endorsing the present rule on secrecy, and instructing the delegates to General Conference to use their influence to have it maintained in our discipline. This was voted down, there being but two affirmative votes.

### **1870-71 Mercersburg**

The January 1870 session of the Pennsylvania Conference met at Newville, Cumberland county. The previous year Mercersburg mission had been united with St. Thomas circuit to form Mercersburg circuit. Now John Fohl was being appointed to settle the dust. The class at Mercersburg had been organized during 1867 of former members of the Methodist Episcopal church. Trustees had been elected twice (first from the circuit at large, later locally) for the purpose of obtaining a house of worship; still the class worships in homes. Where there is no vision, the people perish; where there is vision but no venture, the people still perish.

O'Farrell was appointed by East Pennsylvania Conference to a second year at New Holland.

### **1871-72 Mount Joy**

The February 1871 session of the Pennsylvania Conference met in Baltimore MD. The election for presiding elder resulted in 32 votes for Zephaniah Colestock and 27 votes for Jacob Smith. Brother Smith offered his resignation as an elder, and on motion of Brother Colestock he was given a day to consider the matter. What politics! Both come from good stock, but seem more concerned about the praise of men than following the Discipline. Zephaniah Colestock is from Littlestown, which gave the blessed Bishop family to the United Brethren Church, and his father was the earthly carpenter of that structure. Jacob Smith of Franklin county first enjoyed salvation during the memorable November 1838 revival at which my beloved Mary and others professed the Savior. As I pondered the direction of the Conference and the promptings of the Spirit, I declined to be available for appointment.

The March 1871 session of the East Pennsylvania Conference met at Mountville, Lancaster county. Here I answered the call and was given to the ministry at Mt. Joy. Previously a circuit, Mt. Joy was made a station appointment at this conference. O'Farrell was assigned to serve Hummelstown and Highspire, the two circuits having been combined at this conference to a single appointment.. The work on each these circuits, particularly at Fishburn's and at Neidig's, was considerably disrupted as a result of the Hoffmanites (as the followers of George Hoffman had come to be called). Without formal organization, they gathered separately across the region under the direction of former conference pastors sympathetic to the cause.

At Mt. Joy we held, as has been my custom at every appointment, a series of meetings. A number of souls were won to Christ. Among the converts was an elderly lady of about sixty

years. This not only created joy and gladness among the people of God, but seemingly in the entire community – as she was called a "tartar," being a disturber of peace and having an unruly tongue and an ungovernable temper. She gave evidence that the work of regeneration was thoroughly done, and was accordingly received into the church.

In my pastoral work I soon called to visit her with the design of speaking to her particularly in reference to her besetting sin – with, however, some degree of diffidence. She soon relieved my mind by introducing the subject herself, saying, "Brother Fohl, I have indeed experienced a great change. I am determined by the grace of God to save my soul, but I apprehend one trial. I am naturally high strung, and when excited I have an ungovernable temper for which afterward I feel very sorry." I replied that I could give her an infallible recipe. She of course was anxious to know what it was. I replied that if any thing occurred in her daily life to irritate or excite her mind that she should keep her mouth shut. By so doing she could easily "bridle her tongue." I am happy now to report that my counsel was kindly received, and the aged convert proved faithful. I am told that she died some time ago with the assurance of a blessed immortality. The law may restrain, but only the religion of Christ can reform.

### **1872-79 Retired, but not retiring**

Thirty-six years after accepting my first appointment to Clearfield, I became convinced by the Spirit it was time to clear the fields for others. Mary and I returned to Chambersburg, the town of her childhood and the home of our daughter Annie and son-in-law D.D. Sollenberger. My brother-in-law served one more year in East Pennsylvania, this on the Highspire circuit – the circuit, along with Hummelstown, having been sufficiently strengthened to support the work of an itinerant. In 1873 he and Hannah returned with their daughter Eddy and my mother to the work in Indiana.

My heart saddens to think of the difficulties in Chambersburg and across the Church created by those who refused to submit to authority. Some say it was Fohl who refused to submit, but my conscience declares before God that such was not the case. The reader is no doubt familiar with the particulars. Proceeding with compassion rather than malice, the writer refers to public records those interested in confirming the names of specific individuals involved in the following account.

When a Constitution that clearly forbids membership in secret societies is regarded by neither congregation or pastor, it becomes the duty of the presiding elder to intervene. Should the presiding elder fail to act, it becomes the duty of the Conference to reprimand. When compromise with the world replaces conviction with the Word, the name of Christ suffers open shame. Yet in 1876 the Pennsylvania Conference did compromise. After much debate and clear demonstration of the folly of such action, it moved to "beseech and admonish all of our ministers and members to abstain from all connection" with secret societies but "favor the abrogation of our present law and the passage of one more in harmony with our practice."

It was at the same conference that a second mission congregation was established in Chambersburg. When those of the Chambersburg mission, including the writer, expressed clear desire to follow the Constitution in all matters, the presiding elder who had previously failed to act declared the work "an utter failure" and the conference of February 1877 ceased to recognize the efforts. When the entire matter was brought before the May 1877 General Conference in

Illinois, that body declared there were irregularities in the proceedings and rulings “by which the rights of some parties have been prejudiced” but declined to assume jurisdiction in the case. Believing the mission to be of God, courageous souls continued the work in a private house on East Broad Street as an act of faith and petitioned the conference of February 1878 to restore the classes as they had been so conditioned in 1876. Instead, grievances were advanced against John Fohl, James M. Bishop and August Bickley: While they may not have violated the letter of the Discipline, they have plainly violated its spirit. We recommended that they receive the censure of the Conference, and also that the Chair admonish them to desist in the future.

Affirming as Peter and the other apostles that “We ought to obey God rather than men,” the mission was continued. In April 1878, seeing there was no redress of their grievances to be had from the powers that be, and determined to have a house of their own where they could worship in peace, the people bought the church building on the northeast corner of Second and King Streets from the Second Congregation of the Methodist Episcopal church. In March 1879, at the Pennsylvania Conference annual session meeting in Chambersburg, grievances were advanced declaring that officiating for a congregation within the bounds of the Chambersburg station was contrary to the Discipline. The name of James Bishop was erased from the conference journal. John Fohl and August Bickley were granted, at their own request, dismissal from the Conference.

### **1879-99 New Directions**

How can man deny the work confirmed by the Spirit? And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

In July 1879 a meeting house in Chambersburg was deeded to the United Zion’s Children, an organized group having separated from the Brethren in Christ in Dauphin and Lebanon and Lancaster counties many years prior and now seeking to establish missions in the west. Some gathered with them, but problems over doctrine and practice – strict Anabaptism and plain dress – were soon apparent. A small group continues to this day under leadership of Rev. William Turner. O for an umbrella under which the faithful United Brethren remnant might gather!

In spring 1880 I received from O’Farrell in Indiana the news of the death of my mother. She was 95. While her body failed, her sharp mind and perceptive spirit continued to praise God until the final glory. My brother-in-law had considered moving even farther west for some time, and now removed to Kansas.

In May 1880 the Spirit led the writer to Campbelltown, Lebanon county, for the annual session of the United Christian Church – for such was the name under which the Hoffmanites had formally organized a few years prior. On motion of George Hoffman, the writer was admitted as an advisory member and accepted appointment to visit and preach within the stations as often as practical. O to be used again of God in proclaiming the Word of Life freely within the beloved Church!

Once the writer supposed that a United Christian mission might be established in the west – but the Spirit seemed to lead otherwise. Hoffman, Peffley, Stamm and others O’Farrell and I knew well. What principled men of God to gather the faithful together in the east, and how the

effort was blessed of Him who pours forth the Spirit. The movement of these brothers to strict Anabaptism and their insistence on plain dress, and the distances involved, determined that the efforts in Chambersburg should continue seeking the will of the Spirit.

Our friend and kindred spirit Milton Wright had been elected bishop in 1877. The counsel of his correspondence was inspiration. When his continued support of the letter of the Constitution denied him re-elected in 1881, he proved a faithful servant and returned to his own Conference as presiding elder and publisher of a monthly journal against secret societies and their recognition by the church. Praise God.

When the 1885 General Conference met in Fostoria, Ohio, Wright was re-elected bishop. The movement to revise the Constitution was now on a course that could not be stayed, though Bishop Wright unalterably opposed each step taken.

In April 1887 I was privileged to make a tour of some months to visit my daughter in Connecticut. That summer I received word of the death of my brother-in-law O'Farrell in Kansas. He was 65, an age that once to me seemed old – but not so now. It was reported in the Telescope: He died the most peaceful and happy death I have ever witnessed. A few moments before his death he said, "Thank God, I am almost across. It is getting brighter every step I take." Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.

The 1889 General Conference was to begin in York on Thursday, May 9. Bishop Wright traveled from Dayton to Chambersburg to spend a few days in preparation. On Sunday May 5, exactly 11 years to the day that we took possession of the King Street building, Bishop Wright preached from Micah at 10 o'clock. At 2 o'clock he taught the entire Sabbath School on Matthew 24. Monday he met with Bishop Dickson, who shared our sympathies and convictions. That evening Bishop Wright dined at the writer's humble table, and we conversed and prayed. His wife Susan, who had remained at Dayton, continues quite ill. His sons Orville and Wilbur engage in the printing business and other mechanical interests. Their printing of conservative United Brethren pamphlets for their father and others continues to earn them recognition in heaven and on earth. The intercourse extended into the night. Wright was preparing to dissent, and others had promised their support.

On Monday, May 13, following "adoption" of the new "constitution," Wright and others walked out of the meetings on Newberry Street to continue the true sessions of General Conference in the Park Opera House using the original constitution. Bishop Dickson, though torn in spirit, remained with the majority as he had forewarned.

After much litigation, secular courts decreed the liberals (the name given to those of the 1889 constitution) to be the legal continuation of the denomination and the rightful owners of all buildings deeded to the denomination. The radicals (the name given to those who followed Bishop Wright) were forced to reorganize and, for the most part, erect new church buildings. And so the "United Brethren (Old Constitution)" exists today as a separate denomination with faithful conferences and congregations parallel to those of the majority faction that changed the discipline to suit their practices. When all was settled, the King Street congregation joined faithful sister congregations in the re-formed Pennsylvania Conference.

Wright informed me that Susan celebrated her physical independence on July 4, 1889. In spring 1891 I received news of the death of my sister Hannah in Indiana. She was 65, the same age at which her companion had left this earthly world four years prior. Her remains lie at Salem beside those of her daughter and our mother.



In my advancing age I continued to feel the same readiness to go forth as in former years, but the chilly winters kept this worn and fragile earthen vessel near the fire. For a few years, however, I was impressed in the summer season to take extensive eastern missionary tours. Being well-furnished with excellent tracts and cards for holy living, I explored parts of eastern Pennsylvania and into New York – pointing sinners of all classes to the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Once after spending some time in New York City, feeling somewhat weary and the day being far spent, I sought lodging in a large stately hotel on one of the principle streets. Upon entering I was hailed by the proprietor, a well-dressed and intelligent-looking gentleman about 35 years old. Strange to tell, the host seemed very inquisitive to know from whence I hailed and what was my calling. I told him I was traveling as a missionary and my business was to win souls for Christ. He said, "I am Roman Catholic and am anxious to know what doctrine you preach."

I proposed to him if he would call his neighbors and customers after supper, I would by his consent preach in his bar room. He readily consented. Supper being ended, the invited guests came and were seated in the bar room. Last of all came our host, leading his wife – an intelligent, fine-looking lady. I arose and preached to them Jesus as our only Savior. At the close a large robust man seized my arm, saying, "Come to the bar and I will treat you." Though I respectfully declined, he insisted to the point where I told him plainly that if he did not release me I would call for an officer.

From New York I passed to New Haven and visited the far-famed Yale University. From thence I visited Cheshire and Waterbury. Then I spent 5 days in Boston, attended a number of meetings, and witnessed some remarkable scenes. While there I felt impressed to take a voyage on the great deep. Being introduced as a missionary to the proprietor of one of the largest vessels in port, I was kindly furnished a free pass. After 4 days and 4 nights of the most dense fog that had been experienced for years, which exposed us to considerable danger, we landed safely late Saturday night in Baltimore.

On the Sabbath I worshiped in the memorable Otterbein Church. During my stay I lodged in the old parsonage erected almost 100 years ago by our worthy founder. I stood by his grave in front of the church. In this city the Pennsylvania Conference convened in 1840, at which time your humble scribe was elected presiding elder – and continued for 3 consecutive years, the entire present conference being the district. Those were days of union and great prosperity for the church. Now after the lapse of 60 years, that noble body of ministers who then met in the city of Baltimore have all been called to their humble reward save this one. Surely we have here no continuing city. The Lord grant that we may meet in heaven after the conflict of life is ended.

On September 11, 1895, Mrs. Fohl and I left Chambersburg for a western tour. We tarried over night in the city of Dayton, Ohio, and had the pleasure of visiting our printing office and having a talk with the managers and employees – all of whom gave evidence of prosperity. We missed seeing Bishop Wright, who was holding conferences in Wisconsin. From thence we went to Marion, Indiana, which during the 18 years since we were there has become a city of more than 20,000 inhabitants – with 8 glass manufacturing factories, all run by natural gas. We visited the State Soldiers Home and had the opportunity of holding up Christ as our only Savior to a large number of inmates. We also had the honor of preaching to a large assembly in the church connected with the cemetery in which our own dear mother and younger sister are now resting until the resurrection morn.

From thence we visited Wabash county and talked to a large congregation. On October 1st we went to Indianapolis, where we had the pleasure of meeting our eldest and youngest sons and their families, who had resided there for some years. We also had the privilege of holding religious services at different places. An electric elevator to the top of the Soldiers and Sailors' monument, over 300 feet high and costing the state over \$200,000, afforded a humbling and captivating sight of a city of 175,000 inhabitants. During our stay here the city election was held and the "whiskey ring" achieved a signal victory, from which we may infer that wickedness abounds to a fearful extent.

From that city we came to Dublin, Indiana, to which place we had emigrated with our family in 1853 and remained in the vicinity until fall 1867. There we had the pleasure of renewing our acquaintance with many warm-hearted friends, preaching on Sabbath morn in the Friends (Quaker) church, and in the evening in the United Brethren church. Aware this would perhaps be our last earthly interview here, we took an early train the next morning and by the blessing of kind Providence arrived safely at Chambersburg the following day. Praise the Lord!

My Mary received her coronation February 18, 1897. I continue teaching and preaching at King Street and abroad as the Spirit directs. My Annie and son-in-law D.D. Sollenberger have identify with the Methodists, whose structure stands beside the Masonic Temple. Their home on Washington Street is beside the house in which my Mary was raised. What a reminder of the faithfulness of God in preserving those who obey his call.

## **1900 A New Millennium**

On September 25, 1900, we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United Brethren Church, for which occasion I have been asked to write these memoirs. Bishop Wright leads the Pennsylvania Conference at our church in Carlisle September 20-23 before departing to convene the Erie Conference September 27. How good it will be to see my friend again. Our churches in Carlisle, Mechanicsburg and other parts of Cumberland county do not match the liberals in numbers, but thanks be to God that He reveals his truth to the faithful. I am content in the kingdom of God and not the democracy of the world. I pray for the true United Brethren Church.

Marvelous have been the changes, both in church and state, that the Father has permitted His servant to observe. I am now the only surviving member of the Pennsylvania Conference with 64 years or more of service. Reared in a family of ten children, all of whom with my dear parents having passed over the river of death, I am now at the age of 85 and waiting for the call. The river has never appeared so narrow, nor heaven so near, as now. My kindred, friends, and the greater part of our membership with whom I enjoyed sweet fellowship have long since bade me adieu.

As a church we need higher attainments, as the general tendency is too much conformity to the world. The duties of reading God's word, secret prayer, and family worship are not enjoined upon our membership as in the former years. And as a result we are shorn to a great degree of our spiritual strength. According to the teaching of God's word, many who are ranked nominally, when weighed in the balance, will be found wanting – "for if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

To fill our mission acceptably before God we need the baptism of power all along the line.

Shall we not have it by humbling ourselves before God, and confessing out faults one to another, and consecrating ourselves anew to God by giving the Holy Ghost the right of way? Then we may expect prosperity throughout our boundaries. I am now mingling with the second generation and expect soon to be identified with the redeemed hosts in the kingdom of heaven.

I close by providing the reader summaries of the ministries of Fohl and O'Farrelll, the family of John Fohl, and a brief account of scriptural Christianity found in the writer's correspondence published in the Evangelical Visitor of the Brethen in Christ and the Christian Conservator of our own denomination.

### **Appendix A: the ministry of John Fohl**

1836-37 Clearfield circuit (Pa Conf)  
1837-38 Washington circuit  
1838-39 Chambersburg circuit  
1839-40 Chambersburg station  
1840-43 presiding elder, Chambersburg District  
1843-46 Shopp's [Shiremanstown]  
1846-47 Chambersburg station  
1847-49 Littlestown circuit  
1849-51 Franklin circuit  
1851-53 Lancaster circuit (East Pa Conf)  
1853-67 non-itinerating (White River Conf)  
1867-68 [supply] (Pa Conf)  
1868-69 York Springs  
1869-70 Alto Dale [Mont Alto]  
1870-71 Mercersburg  
1871-72 Mt Joy (East Pa Conf)  
1872 retired

## **Appendix B: the ministry of David O'Farrell**

1844-45 Chambersburg circuit (Pa Conf)  
1845-46 [no assignment, living in Indiana]  
1846-48 New Holland (East Pa Conf)  
1848-50 Lancaster  
1850-53 Harrisburg  
1853-54 Rocky Springs (Pa Conf)  
1854-55 Dublin (White River Conf)  
1855-56 ?  
1856-57 Marion  
1857-58 Fall Creek  
1858-60 presiding elder, East District  
1860-61 presiding elder, Marion District  
1861-62 Antioch  
1862-63 presiding elder, Indianapolis District  
1863-64 presiding elder, Marion District  
1864-65 Antioch  
1865-66 Salamony  
1866-67 [no assignment]  
1867-68 York Springs (Pa Conf)  
1868-69 Mt. Joy (East Pa Conf)  
1869-71 New Holland  
1871-72 Hummelstown-Highspire  
1872-72 Highspire  
1873-74 Williamsburg (White River Conf)  
1874-75 Dundee  
1875-76 presiding elder, Dublin District  
1876-77 Lincolnville  
1877-80 [location]  
1880-84 ? (Osage\* Conf)  
1884-87 Parsons

\*The Osage Conference (later re-named Neosho) was created in 1869 and included parts of Kansas and Missouri.

## Appendix C: the family of John Fohl

1. David Fohl (c1740-12/?/1812)
  - m. 4/21/1767 Elisabeth Schaedin (c1740-c1808)
2. Elisabeth Fohl (11/2/1768-1844)
  - m. John Michael Hoffman
2. Johannes Jacob Fohl (6/30/1770-1828)
  - m. Margaret Bittinger - sister of Michael Bittinger
2. Catharina Margaretha Fohl (9/30/1775-?)
  - m. Stough
2. Magdalena Fohl (c1776-?)
  - m. Michael Bittinger - brother of Margaret Bittinger
2. Johannes Fohl (11/5/1782-8/30/1842)
  - m Susannah Gilbert (5/20/1784-2/24/1880)
3. Susannah Fohl (7/2/1812-4/11/1843)
  - m. Solomon Feighner 1811-7/12/1886)
3. Rev. John Fohl (6/7/1815- )
  - m. 3/7/1839 Mary Radebaugh (3/5/1820-2/18/1897)
  4. Emma Fohl (6/4/1841-10/4/1842)
  4. Cassie (Catherine) Fohl (12/3/1842-11/5/1876)
    - m. Maple
  4. Annie A. Fohl (10/13/1844- )
    - m. David Denison Sollenberger (2/10/1848- )
    5. Mary F. Sollenberger (2/15/1876-5/6/1879)
    5. Lallie Sollenberger (4/24/1879- )
      - m. Joseph I. Hickley
  4. Charles H. Fohl (3/16/1848-8/30/1879)
  4. Dr. Benjamin Franklin Fohl (7/16/1856- )
    - m. Fannie Davis (12/9/1858- ) - dau of Peter W. Davis
  4. Sarah Leona Fohl (1861- )
    - m. G. Howard Peters (1860- )
    5. Ruth L. Peters (1892- )
  4. John R. Fohl
  4. William Otterbein Fohl
  4. George M. Fohl
  4. Bernard A. Fohl
  4. Susan Fohl
    - m. Franklin Hotchkiss
3. George Gilbert Fohl (1822-1856)
  - m. 1846 Jane Peyton (1822-1900)
4. Elizabeth Fohl (1847- )
  - m. David K. Appenzellar (1842- )
  5. Russell Appenzellar (1880-1885)

3. Hannah Fohl (1/2/1826-4/13/1891)  
m. Rev. D. O'Farrell (11/22/1821-6/28/1887)
4. Robert O'Farrell (?-1854)
4. Edwina O'Farrell (11/5/1853-11/20/1875)

#### **Appendix D: Contributions of Rev. John Fohl to the *Evangelical Visitor***

<u>no.</u>	<u>date</u>	<u>pages</u>	<u>title</u>
01	01/01/93	13-14	The Body of Moses (Jude 9)
02	01/15/93	25	Honest Christianity (corrupt ministry)
03	02/01/93	38	Our First Mission (personal: 1835)
04	02/15/93	51	Melchisedec
05	03/01/93	69-70	Blessing the Children (against infant baptism)
06	07/01/93	198	Sixty-First Spiritual Birthday (personal)
07	09/15/93	278-9	Let Your Women Keep Silence in the Churches
08	01/15/94	26-7	Consolation (letter by John & Mrs. Fohl)
09	04/01/94	100	She Nursed a Child (Moses, etc.)
10	05/15/94	148	A Brand Plucked (a lady's conversion)
11	06/01/94	161	Depravity and Its Cure
12	06/15/94	178-9	The Guiding Hand (personal: 1849, house fire)
13	08/15/94	250-1	From the East (liberal ministers)
14	09/01/94	259	A Fearful Incident (1843, Shiremanstown)
15	09/15/94	275-6	Amusements (looseness thereof)
16	10/01/94	291	Evidences of Christ's Coming
17	11/15/94	350-1	After the Revival (dangers)
18	12/01/94	367-8	Victory Over Death
19	01/15/95	21	Past and Future
20	03/01/95	69	The Way of Salvation (no denominations)
21	04/01/95	101-2	Here and There (personal: review of his ministry)
22	06/15/95	183	From an Aged Christian (personal)
23	07/01/95	207	Second Coming of Christ
24	07/15/95	212-3	Obedience (to Christ)
25	08/01/95	227-8	A True Incident (personal: Indiana, a cat)
26	08/15/95	247	Latter Day Religion
27	12/01/95	357	An Incident (personal: 1844, York Co)
28	01/15/96	23	Growth in Grace
29	02/15/96	58-9	Heaven
30	04/15/96	113	The Ministry (each does his part)
31	05/01/96	132-3	The Great Commission
32	05/15/96	148-9	Depravity (sins deprives us of blessings)
33	06/15/96	179-80	Feed My Lambs (God supplies)
34	07/01/96	193-4	Swine's Flesh (against eating pork)
35	07/15/96	210-2	Our First Circuit (personal: 1836, Clearfield)

36	08/15/96	245-6	Looking Unto Jesus
37	09/01/96	261	The Necessity of a General Judgment
38	09/15/96	284-5	Born Again
39	11/15/96	338-9	Deluded (don't be)
40	12/15/96	372-3	How a Revival Began (1838, Chambersburg)
41	01/15/97	23	Keep Your Mouth Shut (controlling the tongue)
42	02/15/97	50-1	City of God (heaven)
43	03/15/97	84	Close of the Present Century
44	05/01/97	130-1	Reiteration of Judgments (scriptural judgments)
45	06/01/97	162-3	Corrupt Ministry (worse than murder or treason)
46	06/15/97	180	Anniversary Thoughts (personal)
47	09/01/97	277	That Mustache (ministers should shave it off)
48	09/15/97	300-1	Examples (be one)
49	10/01/97	319	Closing of the Nineteenth Century (time is short)
50	12/01/97	400-1	Second Coming of Christ
51	01/01/98	6-7	Ministry and Prayers Answered (personal)
52	02/15/98	68-9	The Witness of the Spirit (leading the believer)
53	03/01/98	82	Time Is Short (prepare for the future)
54	06/15/98	222	The Great Commission
55	08/15/98	303-4	Old Time Religion (we need it)
56	09/01/98	322	Radical Truths (corrupt ministry)
57	11/01/98	403	Early Piety (importance of youthful belief)
58	01/01/99	4-5	Victory Over Death (hope of eternal life)
59	01/15/99	22-3	I Came to Kindle a Fire (fire in scripture)
60	02/15/99	63	Higher Life (sanctification is not perfection)
61	03/15/99	105-6	An Incident (1837, Rocky Springs)
62	05/01/99	168-9	Two Conversions (dark to light, Satan to God)
63	06/15/99	225	Spiritual Birthday
64	07/01/99	244-5	Melchisedec
65	08/15/99	302	Rights of Women
66	09/15/99	344-5	Rewards (for service)
67	10/01/99	362-3	What Sin Has Done (evils of sin)
68	02/15/00	61	The Assurance of the Believer (sanctification)
69	03/01/00	84-5	Christ Our Savior
70	03/15/00	104-5	An Open Letter (plainness, jewelry)
71	04/01/00	127-8	Children Obey Your Parents
72	04/15/00	147-8	Heavenly Recognition
73	05/15/00	183-4	Resurrection (Easter, second coming)
74	06/15/00	224-5	A Review (personal)
75	07/01/00	242-3	Church Order (disturbances in church)
76	07/15/00	265-6	The True Church (salvation, spirit baptism)
77	08/01/00	283-4	Time Is Short (life is brief)
78	09/01/00	326	A Mystery (unidentified poem)

## Appendix E: Contributions of Rev. John Fohl to the *Christian Conservator*

<u>no.</u>	<u>date</u>	<u>page</u>	<u>title</u>
01	04/29/86	3	Humility (oppose conformity and pride)
02	09/29/87	1	Experience and Incidents (his conversion)
	04/28/87	3	personal news (visit to daughter in Conn)
03	10/06/87	3	Experience (1832-35)
04	10/13/87	1	Experience (enters the ministry)
05	11/03/87	3	Experience (Clearfield circuit)
06	11/10/87	4	Faithfulness (need for new birth)
07	11/24/87	1	Journeys (Clearfield circuit)
08	12/22/87	3	Experience (1837)
09	01/19/88	3	Experience (1837)
10	03/01/88	2	Experience (1838)
11	05/10/88	2	Experience (his marriage)
12	03/28/89	3	Heaven (new birth necessary)
13	09/12/89	3	Early Piety (conversion less likely with aging)
14	10/31/89	3	Bible View (creeping liberalism)
15	12/05/89	3	A Church received (Reading PA)
16	01/10/90	6	My Tour (eastern PA)
17	09/04/90	1	Sad State of the Churches (backsliding, etc)
18	11/27/90	1	To Die Is Gain (Philippians 1:21)
19	04/09/91	2	Plain Thoughts (Telescope, mustaches, evil)
20	04/30/91	2	Time (shortness of life)
21	06/17/91	2	We Ought to Know (God's will)
22	08/26/91	2	Indorsement (against Calvinism)
23	12/16/91	2	Restitution (pay your debts)
24	02/10/92	2	Melchisedec (was he really Noah's son Shem)
25	03/23/92	3	The Church and the World (lack of true religion)
26	05/04/92	2	A Comparison (church and school)
27	06/22/92	2	Birthday (60th spiritual birthday)
28	06/29/92	2	Our First Mission (1832)
29	09/21/92	4	Pennsylvania (Radicals doing well vs. Liberals)
30	10/12/92	2	A Cause (holiness)
31	12/28/92	2	Moses (reject idolatry)
32	03/08/93	2	So-called Infant Baptism (pro consecration)
33	07/12/93	2	Sixty-First Spiritual Birthday
34	12/06/93	1	Two Bibles (we are a Bible people read)
35	02/21/94	3	She Nursed a Child (pious mothers)
36	04/25/94	2	Spiritual Pollution (human depravity)
37	05/09/94	4	A Brand Plucked (near-death conversion)
38	05/23/94	4	Letter (sixty-second spiritual birthday)
39	05/30/94	2	Old Land-Marks (corruption in the church)
40	06/13/94	2	The Guiding Hand (1849 incidents)
41	08/01/94	3	Letter (recent travels)



42	08/22/94	3	A Fearful Incident (1843 Shiremanstown)
43	09/12/94	2	A Solution (worldly entertainment)
44	10/10/94	3	The Second Coming (man of sin is the pope)
45	11/14/94	2	Revivals, Converts, and the State of the Church
46	11/28/94	2	Christ Only
47	02/27/95	2	Here and There (1890's, eastern tour)
48	02/06/95	3	Past and Future (signs)
49	03/06/95	3	A Corrupt Ministry (blind leading the blind)
50	06/19/95	2	A True Incident (1860's, Indiana)
51	07/10/95	3	The Second Coming of Christ
52	07/17/95	3	Obedience (dress, denial, etc)
53	09/10/95	2	An Open Letter (liberal churches, preachers)
54	11/13/95	3	Western Tour (1895 visit to Indiana)
55	11/10/95	3	The Condition of the Church (lazy preachers)
56	12/25/95	3	An Incident (1844, York Co)
57	02/05/96	3	Heaven
58	03/11/96	3	Depravity (deal with sin)
59	04/29/96	2	The Great Commission (throughout history)
60	05/27/96	2	Feed My Lambs (time is short)
61	07/22/96	2	Swine's Flesh (don't eat pork)
62	07/29/96	2	Looking Unto Jesus
63	08/26/96	3	The Necessity of a General Judgment
64	09/30/96	2	True Religion (regeneration and sanctification)
65	11/04/96	2	Deluded (by sin)
66	12/09/96	2	How a Revival Began (1838, Chambersburg)
67	01/13/97	3	Keep Your Mouth Shut (1871, mt. Joy)
68	01/20/97	2	Closing of the 19th Century (be prepared)
69	02/17/97	3	City of God (lack of ministerial consecration)
70	03/31/97	3	Death (spiritual, natural and eternal)
71	07/28/97	5	Sustained (through a recent illness)
72	08/25/97	4	The Ordinances (foot-washing, baptism, etc)
73	09/29/97	3	The Closing Century (modernism)
74	11/17/97	2	Second Coming of Christ (signs and wonders)
75	02/16/98	5	The Witness (the Holy Spirit)
76	03/23/98	3	Ministry and Prayer Answered (1838, Md)
77	03/30/98	3	Time Is Short (resist the world)
78	05/18/98	4	Anniversary (66th spiritual birthday)
79	06/18/98	3	The Great Commission (focus on missions)
80	10/12/98	6	Early Piety (conversion is less likely with aging)
81	12/12/98	5	Victory Over Death (first and second Adam)
82	01/25/99	4	Rev. C. Newcomer – An Incident (a good death)
83	07/26/99	3	Rights of Women (preach, but not administrate)
84	09/13/99	2	Sin (sin kills)
85	02/07/00	4	Christ Our Savior a conversion incident)
86	03/07/00	2	Obedience (parental love fosters obedience)

87	04/04/00	3	Heavenly Recognition (attested by David, etc)
88	04/11/00	2	An Open Letter (children, wearing rings, etc)
89	05/02/00	2	Easter (God's mercy)
90	05/09/00	2	A Bible Session (OT character lessons)
91	06/06/00	3	Church Order (dealing with rowdies)
92	07/11/00	2	A Mile-stone (68th spiritual birthday)
93	08/22/00	2	Time Is Short: I Corinthians 7:29 (be ready)
94	08/22/00	4	Saved (Lydia Goble of Scioto conference)