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# DISCIPLIANA

The Quarterly Historical Journal of the  
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society was established in 1941 "to maintain and further interest in religious heritage, backgrounds, origins, development, and general history of Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches, Churches of Christ and related groups."

Members of the Society receive *DISCIPLIANA* quarterly, along with other benefits. Annual membership categories are as follows: Sustaining - \$50 to \$249, Participating - \$25 to \$49, Regular - \$15, Students - \$7.50, Canadian and Overseas - \$20. Single payment Life Memberships are: Life - \$250, Life Link - \$500, Life Patron - \$1,000.

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## —From the Editor's Desk

With this issue of *Discipliana*, a new era in the life of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society has begun. For some time, the Society has considered publishing a historical journal that would provide for the reporting and discussing of scholarship about the Stone-Campbell Movement and related topics. Two years ago the Board of Trustees voted to move in that direction by turning *Discipliana* into a journal that would publish only articles that are based on sound scholarly principles and advance knowledge in the field.

With an accompanying change in format, it will be possible to publish two to three major articles per issue, four issues per year. The current plan calls for occasional book reviews. However, in order to carry out the primary purpose of the journal to publish new research in the form of articles, book reviews will be published only in a very limited way.

Authors are hereby invited to submit articles relating to the Stone-Campbell Movement (broadly conceived). Manuscripts should reflect new research or new interpretations that would be of interest to both scholars and the large general audience of people interested in the history of the Movement.

Authors should submit two copies of the manuscript with endnotes rather than footnotes. Endnotes should follow the form of Turabian, *A Manual for Writers . . .*, 5th Edition or later. Manuscripts, including endnotes, should be no longer than 20 double-spaced pages. They should be written in a form so that an educated non-historian could read with ease and benefit.

The current issue includes texts of the 1991 Forrest F. Reed Lectures given by Douglas A. Foster and Richard L. Harrison, Jr. Plans were made to publish these in this issue before the new editor of *Discipliana* was appointed. These two articles deal with those who tried to hold the difficult middle ground in the period of struggle and separation between the people now known as the non-instrumental Churches of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ-Christian Churches and Churches of Christ). Another article in this issue addresses Alexander Campbell's view on war; it was written by Darryl A. Parr. In addition, this issue contains a brief contribution from the pen of Lester G. McAllister. This represents an addition to his Reed Lectures of 1989. The stories and anecdotes given in those lectures were published in a little book entitled *Just Like I Heard It*. From time to time, more of McAllister's stories will be included in the pages of *Discipliana*.

It is our hope that our new format for *Discipliana* will provide helpful service to both the scholarly and the church community. Most important, we hope that this journal will add to our knowledge of that branch of the church whose roots go through the lives of Barton Warren Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, and their Protestant forebears.

## —From the President's Desk

Early in the history of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, the leaders looked forward to the time when the publication *Discipliana* would evolve into a more scholarly yet readable journal of history. That dream is coming true with the publication of this issue. As we looked at increasing the size from 16 to 32 pages we also had to look at the cost. In working with the printer (bids were taken from four printers) it was determined that it would be cost effective to reduce the size to six inches by nine inches. This saved the Society approximately \$200 per issue simply on the size of the paper used.

In the new format we will continue to carry brief articles about the establishment of Named Funds, but we will not carry the new members or current donors list. That information will be carried in an annual report to the membership. This annual report will also carry the financial information on the endowment program of the Historical Society.

The editor has mentioned in his column that Lester G. McAllister will be sharing brief anecdotes out of his experience with the history of the movement. These will be given under the heading, "Just As I Lived It." They will be poignant short stories that helped to shape persons lives, the development of the church, or had some influence on the church. We look forward to these insights into our past.

The editor also noted we will be publishing short book reviews from time to time. For an author to have a book considered for review, two copies should be furnished to the Historical Society. One copy would be placed in the Society's library and the other would be used by the reviewer.

There will continue to be a need for short as well as long articles in order to make the best use of space. Shorter articles highlighting the life of a person or giving information on a single subject such as the Parr article in this issue are definitely desired. Announcements of lectures being sponsored by the Society and the books and "Footnotes" published by the Society will also be listed in the journal in order that we may keep our readers informed. It is with great joy that we present this first issue of the enlarged *Discipliana*.

# **HOLDING BACK THE TIDE: T. B. LARIMORE AND THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST AND CHURCHES OF CHRIST DIVISION**

*by Douglas A. Foster\**

The name T. B. Larimore has all but faded from the collective memory of the Stone-Campbell Movement. Even among the Churches of Christ with which he was most closely identified in his last years he is a swiftly fleeting shadow—a name familiar to only a few. Yet from the 1880s through the early 1900s Larimore was arguably the most widely known evangelist of the movement.<sup>1</sup>

Ironically, Larimore reached the height of his career precisely during the years of the most intense strife between the groups eventually identified as the Christian Churches or Disciples and the Churches of Christ. Larimore's stance toward the rapidly solidifying division is significant, not only for what happened then but for what continues to happen in our fellowships and the religious world in general. His story is an important part of our story.

Theophilus Brown Larimore was born in Jefferson County, Tennessee, July 10, 1843. The family lived in extreme poverty, abandoned by the father early in Larimore's life. Although he studied under an itinerant teacher or two after the family moved to Sequatchie County, Tennessee, in 1852, Larimore was largely self-taught. At age seventeen he passed the entrance exams and entered Mossy Creek Baptist College, today Carson Newman, and there encountered the intense Calvinistic revivalism still common in many religious circles. Reminiscent of Barton Stone, Larimore failed to "get religion" during the school's 1859 revival, a fact that left him emotionally distressed.

It was not until after a two-year stint in the Confederate Army and a move to Hopkinsville, Kentucky, that Larimore came into direct contact with the Stone-Campbell Movement. His mother and sister had been baptized by Disciples preachers while he was away at Mossy Creek and they placed membership with the Hopkinsville Christian Church upon arrival. Under the teaching of Enos Campbell and others there, Larimore was baptized on his twenty-first birthday and soon resolved to give his life to the cause.

After more schooling at Tolbert Fanning's Franklin College and three years of teaching and preaching in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama, Larimore moved to near Florence, Alabama, in 1870 with his new wife Esther Gresham. There he started his own school on land Esther had recently inherited. Each year for the next seventeen he operated Mars' Hill College for six months then carried on a constantly expanding evangelistic ministry the other six.

As the controversies in the Stone-Campbell Movement intensified in the 1870s, Larimore, like so many before him, decided to become an editor. His motivation for doing so, however, was evidently

different from that of many who entered the rough world of journalism in those days. In 1875, he announced the publication of a journal he named *The Angel of Mercy, Love, Peace and Truth*. In contrast to the inflammatory journalism of the day, Larimore vowed to print only articles of a positive nature. He explained his editorial policy as follows:

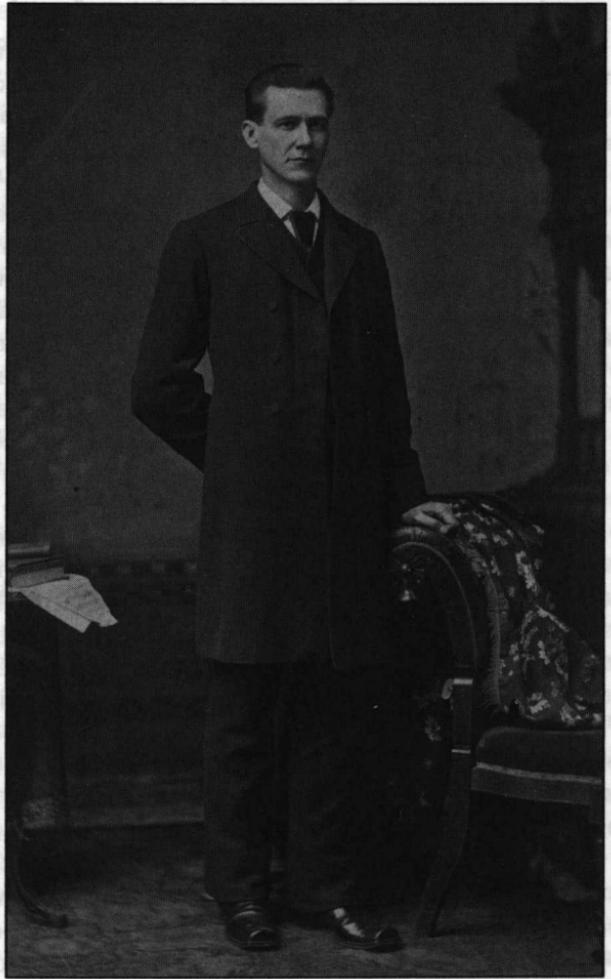
*The Angel* possesses not the slightest belligerent proclivity—not even in the latent or dormant state. It will avoid all unpleasant discussion and personal references. One harsh, unkind or unpleasant word will be sufficient reason for consigning to the flames any articles written for its pages.<sup>2</sup>

In an address to the reader from *The Angel* personified, Larimore closed saying “I am for Peace—my name is Peace—and no word of bitterness shall ever fall from my lips, even in self-defense.”<sup>3</sup> Two full pages of each issue were given free to advertise all the other Disciples periodicals whether conservative or progressive, with the endorsement, “We heartily commend them all.” He even offered a free subscription to *The Angel* to anyone who would take five of the papers listed.<sup>4</sup>

*The Angel* was published for seven months then suspended for lack of financial support. The main reason for the deficit was Larimore’s refusal to set a subscription price, allowing each reader to determine his or her own rate. A successor, *The Little Angel*, was published for a few months in 1876, but was also soon suspended even though this time the price was set as “\$1.25 invariably in advance.” Poor financial support was the apparent reason for the failure of Larimore’s editorial venture. Yet there is little doubt that the underlying reason was a perceived lack of relevance. The other papers were filled with arguments for and against the missionary societies, instrumental music in worship, and other assorted controversies involving exciting feuds between colorful leaders. Larimore’s periodicals carried articles on topics like heaven, obedience, and evil communications, most of a strongly devotional nature. Reading nothing but Larimore’s magazines, one would have had no idea there was any trouble in Disciples’ ranks.

Larimore was averse to any situation that involved discord and strife.<sup>5</sup> Yet he had become part of a religious movement that was becoming more and more characterized by internal dissension. His desire was to promote Christian unity, yet now he was being urged to take sides in the controversies, a step that would, he believed, further exacerbate the divided state of his own movement and all of Christendom. Larimore was convinced that his only course of action was to “simply try to ‘preach the word’,” a phrase he used repeatedly to mean teaching only things which were unmistakably taught in scripture.<sup>6</sup> He meticulously avoided being drawn into the heated discussions over the divisive issues, explaining that he would leave those things for “wiser and better men” than him to settle.<sup>7</sup>

T. B. Larimore



He was personally convinced that the matters of the instrument in worship and the missionary societies fit into the category of “foolish and untaught questions” mentioned in II Timothy 2:23. The Lord through Paul had positively ordered Christians to avoid such matters because they “gender [sic] strifes.”<sup>8</sup> “Untaught questions” were matters about which the scriptures said nothing. These were the items that divided Christians; not the things that were taught, but things about which the Bible had no specific teaching, or perhaps was not clear on.

After closing his Mars’ Hill school in 1887, Larimore devoted himself totally to evangelism. Voices from all sides continued to pressure Larimore to reveal with which part of the movement he identified. He always responded that as far as he knew, he belonged to nothing except that to which every Christian belonged—the church. “I have never belonged to a ‘wing’ of the church or anything else. I belong to Christ, hence to the *church* of Christ—not to a ‘wing’ of the

church."<sup>9</sup> The factions in the Movement were identified by their stands on the questions of the day. Tongue in cheek, Larimore suggested that these questions were not good things to stand on. If Christians thought they had to do something with the questions, it would be better to sit on them, and to stand on Christ and him crucified.<sup>10</sup>

Seeming to echo his contemporary David Lipscomb, Larimore insisted that while individual Christians had the right to hold opinions in matters of opinion, they did not have the right to force their opinions on others or to parade them in a way that would disturb others. He labeled it a privilege for Christians to be able to waive their preferences or opinions in the interest of peace.<sup>11</sup> Matters about which the scriptures said nothing were in the realm of opinion, including, evidently, the instrument and society matters. And being in the realm of opinion, he saw it as his duty never to preach about them. Yet his attitude was not exclusivistic. He feared the spirit of those who refused to recognize as Christians anyone except those who "ride their hobby."<sup>12</sup> This point will become more important later as we analyze Larimore's thought on unity and the disputed issues.

Larimore was not successful in his attempt to keep out of the fights. It was impossible for him to be in the Disciples Movement and not be in some sense part of what was going on. Perhaps the most significant incident in Larimore's life connected with the controversies took place in Sherman, Texas, in the mid-1890s. The Sherman church had been started in 1850, constructing its first meeting house in 1874 on Houston Street. A pro-society group separated and formed the Central Christian Church in 1882, but the Houston Street church continued to grow. Larimore held a one-month revival for that church during the summer of 1888 which resulted in 50 additions. In the early 1890s the congregation experienced increasing controversy over the instrumental music issue. Those favoring the use of an instrument brought an organ into the building sometime in 1893. Each faction threatened withdrawal if it did not get its way.<sup>13</sup>

It was against this backdrop that the congregation urgently called for Larimore to come help reunite it. Larimore had endeared himself to many members at Sherman during his earlier meeting, most of whom now found themselves lined up on one side or the other in the instrument fight. All, however, agreed that Larimore might be able to resolve the congregation's problems. Larimore agreed to come to Sherman and preach, not as the regular minister, but as a visiting evangelist. He would preach, he said, twice each day and three times on Sundays, indefinitely; that is, until he and the Sherman church believed he had done all the good he could. The revival began on 3 January 1894, and continued every day until 7 June. There were 254 additions to the Houston Street church, as well as a number to the pro-society Central Christian Church.<sup>14</sup> As long as Larimore was there, the instrument controversy seemed largely forgotten. All the members supported the meeting, and the organ, which was played

during the first few weeks of services but was later removed, was never so much as mentioned by Larimore.

At the end of the revival the elders unanimously adopted a series of resolutions urging Larimore to become the regular minister for the Houston Street congregation.<sup>15</sup> Larimore declined the invitation, however, believing he could best serve by being free to go wherever he was needed to evangelize. Shortly after Larimore left town the congregation divided. The anti-organ conservatives met at 11:00 a.m. each Sunday, while the progressives held their services at 3:00 p.m. This arrangement continued for several months, but the ill feelings became too strong for the groups to continue in the same building. In early 1895, the pro-organ group agreed to leave when they were offered \$2300 for their share of the church property. They formed a new congregation calling itself First Christian Church.<sup>16</sup>

When the 1894 split occurred in the Sherman church, the editor of the *Christian Courier*, a paper published by progressive Disciples in Dallas, Texas, insinuated that it was Larimore who had sown the seeds of discord and who was responsible for the division. Larimore, as usual, did not respond to the charges. However, his close personal friend, F. D. Srygley, then front page editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, took up the pen on behalf of Larimore. Charges and counter-charges, letters of explanation and retractions, resolutions and counter-resolutions were printed back and forth by the *Courier* and *Advocate*.<sup>17</sup> Srygley made it clear that he believed that whatever Larimore had done, he had done nothing to create or strengthen a spirit of contention or divisiveness. The controversy, however, had promoted bad feelings that would have serious repercussions for Larimore.

However much he tried to avoid being identified with one faction, Larimore found himself increasingly snubbed by the progressives and defended by the conservatives. Many of the progressives were frustrated that Larimore would not endorse the use of an instrument in worship. In fact, it seems that at first Larimore's personal opinion leaned toward a pro-instrument position (i.e., that the instrument was an expedient aid to good singing). In the biography of James A. Harding, co-worker with David Lipscomb and close friend of Larimore, Lloyd Cline Sears recounts an incident that was evidently one of a number of such episodes in Larimore's evangelistic work in the 1890s. After failing to force Larimore's open commitment to the use of the instrument, a group of leaders of the pro-organ group in an area where he was holding a revival decided to disrupt the services. They worked to keep people from attending, and organized a group which noisily entered the meeting place each night just after Larimore had begun preaching, and then "stampeded out" just as Larimore was preparing to offer the invitation. This action forced him to end the revival early. Such treatment hurt Larimore deeply.<sup>18</sup>

As with the instrument, there was no explicit discussion in any of his sermons or writings concerning the missionary societies. He was very much aware of the efforts at organization. The elders of the

Hopkinsville, Kentucky, church where he was baptized were active in the Kentucky Missionary organization.<sup>19</sup> He was a personal friend of the J. T. Barclays, first missionaries sent by the American Christian Missionary Society. Barclay even tried to secure the position of U.S. consul to Jerusalem for Larimore.<sup>20</sup> When the Alabama Christian Missionary Cooperation was organized in the mid-1880s, Larimore was one of the first contacted to give support to the new organization.

Yet the work done by Larimore and his Mars' Hill students in Northwest Alabama is the prime example of how Larimore felt mission work could best be done. Larimore and his students personally established hundreds of churches in North Alabama and southern Middle Tennessee without the aid of any kind of general organization. According to F. D. Srygley, the work was self-supporting and the workers self-reliant from the first. Each congregation was completely independent of all the others, and all grew to be efficient and hard-working churches.<sup>21</sup> The area, to this day, has one of the highest concentrations of Churches of Christ in the United States. Srygley, himself a proponent of the society at the time, admitted that he doubted whether any wisely managed general organization would have trusted Larimore to lead in such a task had he asked for its support.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps the harshest words Larimore ever expressed publicly concerning organized mission work were written in a letter to F. D. Srygley shortly before 1900 and published in volume two of *Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore*. He playfully suggested to his friend that he would like to spend the rest of his life "as State Evangelist—not 'Finangelist'—of Tennessee. It seems meet," he went on, "that Tennessee should have a native 'State Evangelist'—not an imported thoroughbred—just common, native, 'scrub' stock—and I am sure I can fit the bill, so far as the 'scrub' part of it is concerned."<sup>23</sup> Here he took a slap at the supposedly high salary paid by the Tennessee Christian Missionary Society to their evangelist A. I. Myhr, a Norwegian. The attacks on Myhr by the *Gospel Advocate*, particularly those by David Lipscomb, had been very intense, and no doubt Larimore felt some of the same resentment Lipscomb had experienced when Tennessee was "invaded" by the progressives.<sup>24</sup> He allowed himself this little jab, partially at his own expense, then quickly went on to say that he did not mean that he wanted any official position; he just wanted to spend the rest of his days evangelizing in Tennessee.

Yet Larimore drew no lines over the society. O. P. Spiegel, one of Larimore's Mar's Hill pupils, became prominent in the Alabama Missionary organization, and he always held Spiegel in high esteem as a Christian brother.<sup>25</sup> His brother-in-law, R. P. Meeks, worked with the Tennessee society, and his sister Mary served as an officer in the Tennessee Women's Missionary Society for many years.<sup>26</sup>

In the summer of 1897 an incident took place which severely tested Larimore's non-committal stance on the divisive issues. In July of that year, an "Open Letter to T. B. Larimore" written by former

pupil, then Alabama State Evangelist, Oscar Pendleton Spiegel appeared in the *Christian Standard* and *The Christian-Evangelist*. In the letter, Spiegel reminisced about the happy days at Mars' Hill over a decade before, then commented on the political and religious turmoil in the United States and the unrest in the Restoration Movement. He urged Larimore not to be silent while those of his own religious family were drifting apart. Larimore owed it, Spiegel insisted, to himself, his family, his friends, and to God to "speak out on some matters now retarding the progress of the cause of Christ." After a paragraph extolling Larimore's work and influence, Spiegel pressed him for his stance on whether a musical instrument was permissible in worship, if it were justifiable to organize groups other than local churches to promote mission work, whether or not consultation or cooperative meetings were antagonistic to the scriptures, and whether a regular, paid ministry was in harmony with the scriptures and conducive to the best interests of the cause of Christ.<sup>27</sup>

Larimore saw the letter for the first time when he received that copy of the *Christian Standard* and immediately penned a lengthy reply. The reply was so long, in fact, that J. H. Garrison of *The Christian-Evangelist* complained that while the circumstances compelled him to print it in full, he had to leave out several other interesting articles to do so.<sup>28</sup>

Larimore began his reply with an explanation of his stance of attempting to be nothing but a Christian.

Now my dear brother, if you deem it possible to believe it possible for a man to be *in no sense* a partisan, but just simply and solely a *Christian*, in this intensely partisan age, please *try* to believe that *I* am not a partisan, and that what I write—ALL I write—is written from no partisan point of view; but that I write simply and solely as a CHRISTIAN, with no selfish, partisan or personal purpose to subserve.<sup>29</sup>

He then made the point that the open letter was itself proof that he had never taken positions on any of the matters over which the movement was fighting. While he criticized no one for their part in the discussions, his duty was "to be, *in no sense* a partisan *in any thing*; to engage in *no* dispute, row or wrangle with *any one*; 'to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified'. . . ." He said that the fact he had never spoken out on the issues did not mean that he had no opinions about them. But no one could imply from his actions or words whether he was for or against any of the issues. He had always simply let those subjects alone, and could not be counted in any sense in that fight. He then made a powerful statement concerning his view of fellowship and unity.

When Bro. [Enos] Campbell took my confession, on my twenty-first birthday, he questioned me relative to none of these "matters now retarding the progress of the cause of Christ." While thousands have stood before me, hand in

mine, and made "the good confession," I have never questioned *one* of them about these "matters." Shall I now renounce and disfellowship all of these who do not understand these things exactly as *I* understand them? They may refuse to recognize or fellowship or affiliate with **ME**; but I will **NEVER** refuse to recognize or fellowship or affiliate with them-**NEVER**.<sup>30</sup>

In his answer to the open letter Larimore had tried to remain true to his policy of refusing to discuss the divisive issues. The *Christian Standard* printed and editorially endorsed the article. The *Gospel Advocate* printed it without comment in July. In the August 12 issue, however, Lipscomb responded to correspondence critical of Larimore's stance. He wrote that while he believed Larimore taught the truth, it was a serious misunderstanding of the teaching of Christ to think a person could see things introduced into the service which were not written in scripture and be silent. Lipscomb ended his remarks by saying that God did not give Christians the privilege of standing on neither side in such matters; they were given only the privilege of standing on the right or wrong side. If Larimore did not stand for what was right, he stood for what was wrong.<sup>31</sup>

As the century ended other issues arose for Larimore that were not of the same nature as the instrumental music and missionary society questions. These were not "untaught questions," but matters about which there was no room for doubt. The matter of biblical criticism was one of these. While Larimore vowed to remain silent on the earlier issues, he would not hold his tongue on the matter of biblical inerrancy and authority. He was certainly not averse to accepting any light that might be shed on scripture by critical study. Yet he came to the firm conviction that the general trend of higher criticism was destructive of belief in the inspiration and authority of scripture.

In a sermon entitled "Scoffers and Christians," he labeled higher criticism "infidelity masked."<sup>32</sup> He approved for publication in the second volume of his letters and sermons the words of Emma Page that he had nothing to do with higher criticism, "or any other form or phase of skepticism, infidelity or atheism, except to expose their weakness."<sup>33</sup> In the same volume, he was said to deplore the latter-day infidelity masked under the name of higher criticism. This subtle attack by Satan would take away faith in the Bible as the inspired word of God. To substitute belief in the Bible as a pure, true, excellent code of morals, but inspired only by human beings and therefore subject to the errors of human wisdom, would, he said, leave humanity in spiritual darkness.<sup>34</sup>

Perhaps a statement from a sermon entitled "Comment on II Tim. II" best sums up Larimore's stance on the Bible as authoritative and inerrant.

We believe the Bible. I may not fully understand it, and may make many embarrassing blunders in trying to preach it;

but the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible is our faith. Every syllable in the Bible is a part of our belief; therefore, [it is] as utterly impossible to quote one syllable of sacred scripture against our faith, as to fire a cannon at itself.<sup>35</sup>

Following the scriptures was the only pathway to unity among Christians. Since higher criticism tended, he believed, to destroy faith in the scriptures as the only authority in religion, it would destroy the only hope for unity.

Larimore's views on biblical criticism were undoubtedly influenced by the popular series written by J. W. McGarvey in the *Christian Standard* from 1893 to 1911. Remarkably I can find no specific mention of McGarvey or his work in Larimore's writings. There must have been a cordial, though not particularly personal, relationship between the two. Advertisements for the first of the so-called Larimore books, *Smiles and Tears* or *Larimore and His Boys*, quote McGarvey as saying "It is one of the most interesting and stimulating books I have ever read."<sup>36</sup> Larimore's position on "destructive criticism" is certainly that of McGarvey's, although Larimore was not as detailed in his expressions of it.

The division continued, and when the split became unmistakable, Larimore was seen by most as in the conservative camp. To be sure, some in Churches of Christ were antagonistic toward his stance. It is likely that he turned down the superintendency of David Lipscomb's Nashville Bible School, today David Lipscomb University, because he sensed potential conflict with Lipscomb over the instrument and society matters.<sup>37</sup> Yet, the treatment he received at the hands of some of the more zealous progressives, especially in Texas, undoubtedly pushed him farther from that position than he would have been otherwise.<sup>38</sup> Eventually, most conservatives came to understand Larimore as having always opposed the instrument and society, or at least coming to that position in the end though a little slow in stating it.<sup>39</sup>

In fact, while Larimore felt at home among the conservatives, he personally continued to do what he said he would in his reply to the open letter: he never refused to recognize, fellowship or affiliate with any of his fellow Christians. Any barriers that were erected were erected by others, not by Larimore. He kept up contacts with the "other" segments of the Disciples as best he could. While traveling through Alabama in 1916, he met with his old pupil O. P. Spiegel, who remained an active evangelist for the Christian Church until his death.<sup>40</sup> When preaching at Berkeley, California, in 1926, he had four people request baptism. It was quite natural, since the Church of Christ did not own a building, to ask the people of the Christian Church there for the use of their baptistry, to which they gladly agreed.<sup>41</sup> His relationship with the *Christian Standard* remained excellent, and he contributed articles to that paper as late as 1916, although infrequently. When David Lipscomb died, the *Standard*

asked Larimore to write the obituary for its readers.<sup>42</sup> When it was announced that Larimore was being officially added to the editorial staff of the *Gospel Advocate* in 1916, the *Standard* printed an editorial which praised Larimore as a Christian, preacher and writer. The article went on to say that with the addition of such men as Larimore to Disciples editorial forces, the day would not be long until "all journals among us [can] join hands in a common cause and go forward together, rather than tarry in endless bickerings."<sup>43</sup> Larimore continued to be included each year until 1925 in the "List of Preachers" published in the Disciples Year Book. One conservative critic of the list of preachers made the comment that T. B. Larimore was the only preacher that was listed on every one.<sup>44</sup> He became less known by the main constituency of *The Christian-Evangelist*, yet the second volume of his *Letters and Sermons* published in 1906 received a favorable review in its pages, and that paper published a long obituary notice at his death in 1929.<sup>45</sup>

Larimore is difficult to analyze. He received bitter criticism and adulating support from people in both the developing Churches of Christ and Disciples of Christ. In the final analysis, however, Larimore came to be clearly identified with the conservatives. What ingredient caused Larimore to be seen as part of that segment of the movement, and yet to maintain fellowship with those in other segments? I believe the key is in that perennial and fundamental matter in our movement of how to regard the silence of scripture.

The question of how to regard the Bible's silence is not a uniquely Disciples problem. It has been raised since the earliest days of Christianity. In the third century, the question of the propriety of Christians attending the pagan spectacles and wearing the laurel leaf was raised. Some said that since these things were not specifically prohibited in scripture, they were permitted. Tertulian, on the other hand, strongly opposed that position and insisted that whatever was not clearly permitted in scripture was forbidden. Both positions have found adherents in subsequent centuries.<sup>46</sup> Theologians have referred to things not mentioned in scripture that are in themselves neither good nor evil as *adiaphora*. The word is derived from Greek and means "morally indifferent," i.e., neither good nor bad. Those taking a permissive stance believe that such indifferent items or *adiaphora* can be allowed in the work and worship of the church if they promote the general well-being of the church and its ministries.

Bernard Verkamp, in a study of sixteenth-century English adiaphorism, points out three distinguishable positions concerning these things not mentioned in scripture. The first is that of biblical reductionism which rejected anything not explicitly commanded or permitted in scripture as sinful and damnable. Those in a second category advocated that unmentioned things that were "not repugnant" to scripture were to be permitted. Such *adiaphora* were to be permitted not because all such things should be allowed in the church regardless of circumstances. Rather, because they were inherently

neutral, their retention or rejection could only be determined by extrinsic factors. They might be used or not used according to the dictates of faith and love in each situation. Furthermore, the mainline reformers regarded it as legitimate to try to bring the use of adiaphora already in place into positive accord with scripture.<sup>47</sup> And so, for example, the Lutheran reformer Philip Melancthon contended that such Roman Catholic practices as Confirmation and Extreme Unction were not inherently contradictory to Biblical doctrine and could therefore be continued in controlled circumstances.

But there is a third stance that Verkamp identifies as that of the early English "puritans." While in theory they too rejected the biblical reductionism that allowed nothing in the church that could not be backed up with an explicit proof-text from scripture, their definition of adiaphora diverged slightly but significantly from that of the mainline reformers. The mainline reformers considered any belief or practice not mentioned in scripture that was "not repugnant" to it, i.e., not in contradiction to the spirit of scripture, to be permissible, considering individual circumstances and making an effort to bring already accepted practices into "positive accord" with scripture. The puritans defined adiaphora not simply as those things that were "not repugnant," but which were already in "positive accord" with the general direction of scripture for the glory of God and the edification of God's people. The actual effect of this attitude most often put the puritans in the same end position as the biblical reductionists. The strict interpretation the early puritans put on the "general direction of scripture" led them to a strong reluctance to recognize the indifferent and permitted nature of anything not covered by biblical commands, prohibitions or permissions.<sup>48</sup> Yet they did recognize the possibility of such adiaphora, or indifferent permitted items.

If only the first two attitudes toward adiaphora existed, one would be hard pressed to locate Larimore in the discussion. However, Verkamp's third position seems to describe Larimore's position well. While the puritans were not biblical reductionists who rejected all adiaphora, they defined adiaphora more narrowly than the mainstream reformers, insisting that things not specifically mentioned in scripture be inherently in "positive accord" with scripture, and not merely free from direct contradiction of it, in order to be used legitimately. As already mentioned, the actual working out of this position often brought its adherents to the same stance in the end as that of the biblical reductionists. Yet the route taken was different.

Such an interpretation helps put Lipscomb's mixed evaluation of Larimore for many years and his eventual defense of him in clearer light. Larimore's positions on the divisive issues finally came to be those of Lipscomb, i.e., essentially rejecting the "innovations" of the progressives. Yet Larimore's arrival at that position was not through a simple or automatic rejection of them because they were not mentioned in scripture. He took this stance after concluding that the issues made people who were supposed to be Christians act contrary

to the spirit of Christ, to the direction of scripture, and the law of love. He came to believe that these matters were not naturally glorifying to God nor strengthening to Christians. In fact, while not inherently "repugnant" to scripture, issues such as instrumental music and the missionary societies had caused such bitter feelings and resulted in such division they had to be rejected. It was when he realized that even without referring to the problems he was inevitably drawn into the conflict, that he concluded it was impossible that those matters could be in positive accord with the general directions of scriptures.<sup>49</sup> While he continued to recognize those who went with the "progressives" as his brothers and sisters in Christ, he was, by mutual recognition, clearly in the conservative ranks by the second decade of the twentieth century. He was never an exclusivist, but his own personal positions on the non-scriptural matters were quite firm.

His "puritan" position on adiaphora eventually brought Larimore into full favor with David Lipscomb. Yet, Lipscomb sensed that Larimore's stance was not exactly like his even when Larimore came to be clearly identified with the Churches of Christ.<sup>50</sup>

T. B. Larimore failed to hold back the tide of division. But he tried. He saw the unity of the movement as vital to the advancement of Christianity. He set his course and never wavered despite attacks from all sides. We might look at Larimore's stance as quaint and naive, and perhaps it was. But I cannot help wondering what would have happened if everyone had exhibited the attitude that Larimore expressed in the close to his reply to the "Open Letter."

I shall simply do as I have always done: "Love the brethren;" be true to my convictions; endure as patiently as possible whatsoever may come upon me; go when and where I am wanted and called, if I can; carefully avoid all questions that "do gender strifes" among God's people; preach the word; try to do my whole duty, and gladly leave all results with him from whom all blessings flow.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup>See John Thomas Brown, *Churches of Christ: a Historical, Biographical and Pictorial History of Churches of Christ in the United States, Australasia, England and Canada* (Louisville: J. P. Morton & Company, 1904), pp. 475-6.

<sup>2</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Special Notices," *The Angel of Mercy, Love, Peace and Truth* 1 (January 1875): 20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Our Own Periodicals," *The Angel of Mercy, Love, Peace and Truth* 1 (January 1875): 25.

<sup>5</sup>See Mrs. T. B. Larimore, *Life, Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Company, 1931), pp. 189-190.

<sup>6</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Preach the Word," *Christian Standard* (9 January 1897):44; Emma Page, *Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore* Vol. 2 (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Company, 1904): 261-62.

<sup>7</sup>F. D. Srygley, *Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore* (Nashville: McQuiddy Printing Company, 1900), p. 216.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 261-62.

<sup>9</sup>Emma Page, *Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore* Vol. 3 (Nashville: McQuiddy Printing Company, 1910), pp. 15-16.

<sup>10</sup>F. D. Srygley, *Smiles and Tears or Larimore and His Boys* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Company, 1889), p. 151.

<sup>11</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Unity," in *Biographies and Sermons*, ed. F. D. Srygley (Nashville: By the Author, 1898), p. 45.

<sup>12</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Fellowship," in Page, *Letters and Sermons*, 3: 184.

<sup>13</sup>Stephen David Eckstein, Jr., *History of the Churches of Christ in Texas* (Austin: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1963), pp. 116-17, 187; F. D. Srygley, "From the Papers," *Gospel Advocate* (6 September 1894): 556.

<sup>14</sup>W. C. Dimmitt, "Notice from Sherman," *Gospel Advocate* (10 May 1894): 291.

<sup>15</sup>Srygley, "From the Papers," p. 556.

<sup>16</sup>Eckstein, *Churches of Christ in Texas*, pp. 117, 247-48.

<sup>17</sup>See for example F. D. Srygley, "From the Papers," *Gospel Advocate* (18 October 1894): 551-52; Srygley, "From the Papers," pp. 555-56.

<sup>18</sup>Lloyd Cline Sears, *The Eyes of Jehovah: The Life and Faith of James Alexander Harding* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Company, 1970), p. 86; see also Page, *Letters and Sermons*, p. 434.

<sup>19</sup>T. B. Larimore, Note before manuscript of sermon entitled "Express the Faith by Works," *Personal Journal*, 1866, p. 110.

<sup>20</sup>J. T. Barclay, Transcript of letter of recommendation of T. B. Larimore, *Personal Journal*, 1871, p. 26; see also T. B. Larimore to J. T. Barclay, 15 November 1871, Julia Ann Barclay papers, Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville.

<sup>21</sup>Srygley, *Smiles and Tears*, pp. iv-vi, 140-41.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. vi. He also added parenthetically that he personally felt the work would have been more stable and would have been developed faster if it had been more systematic and directed by a general organization.

<sup>23</sup>Page, *Letters and Sermons*, p. 265.

<sup>24</sup>Herman Norton, *Tennessee Christians* (Nashville: Reed and Company, 1971), pp. 199-202.

<sup>25</sup>George H. and Mildred B. Watson, *History of the Christian Churches in the Alabama Area* (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1965), pp. 72-73.

<sup>26</sup>Interview with Mr. William H. Baldy, Grandson of Mary Larimore Meeks, Memphis, Tennessee, 23 September 1982.

<sup>27</sup>O. P. Spiegel, "An Open Letter to T. B. Larimore," *Christian Standard* (10 July 1897):891; also *The Christian-Evangelist* (15 July 1897): 441.

<sup>28</sup>"Our Budget," *The Christian-Evangelist* (22 July 1897): 453.

<sup>29</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Reply to O. P. Spiegel's Open Letter," *Christian Standard* (24 July 1897): 965; *The Christian-Evangelist* (22 July 1897): 460-61; *Gospel Advocate* (22 July 1897): 450-51.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>David Lipscomb, "Brother Larimore's Letter," *Gospel Advocate* (12 August 1897): 500.

<sup>32</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Scoffers and Christians," Sermon preached at Sherman, Texas, 3 March 1894, From manuscript sermon collection in possession of writer.

<sup>33</sup>Page, *Letters and Sermon*, p. 156.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 374-75.

<sup>35</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Comment on II Tim. II," Sermon Preached at Sherman, Texas, 12 March 1894, From manuscript sermon collection in possession of writer.

<sup>36</sup>From advertising circular in possession of the writer, ca. 1890.

<sup>37</sup>Earl Irvin West, *The Search for the Ancient Order*, 4 vols. (Indianapolis: Religious Book Service, 1950, 1951, 1979, 1990), 2: 375.

<sup>38</sup>"Opinions a Test of Fellowship," *Gospel Advocate* (19 May 1892): 309; Sears, *The Eyes of Jehovah*, p. 86.

<sup>39</sup>S. P. Pittman, "A Prince Among Men: T. B. Larimore," *20th Century Christian* (January 1959): 6; David Lipscomb, *Gospel Advocate* (15 March 1894): 159.

<sup>40</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Way Down South In Dixie," *Gospel Advocate* (1 June 1916): 547.

<sup>41</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Greetings from the Golden Gate," *Gospel Advocate* (21 January 1926): 58.

<sup>42</sup>T. B. Larimore, "Providential Protection of the Jews," *Christian Standard* (26 February 1916): 739; T. B. Larimore, "David Lipscomb," *Christian Standard* (22 December 1917): 391.

<sup>43</sup>T. B. Larimore on the 'Gospel Advocate' Staff," *Christian Standard* (22 January 1916): 553.

<sup>44</sup>R. B. Neal, "Why is This Thus?" *Christian Standard* (23 December 1916): 369.

<sup>45</sup>Review of *Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore*, vol. 2, edited by Emma Page, in *The Christian-Evangelist* (19 May 1906): 926; Wayne Burton, "T. B. Larimore," *The Christian-Evangelist* (9 May 1929): 638.

<sup>46</sup>Tertullian, *De Corona* I: PL 2;77; II: PL 2, 78 in Bernard J. Verkamp, "The Zwinglians and Adiaphorism," *Church History* (December 1973): 496.

<sup>47</sup>Verkamp, *The Indifferent Mean*, p. 70.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 62-76.

<sup>49</sup>Srygley, *Letters and Sermons*, pp. 212, 214; Page, *Letters and Sermons*, 2: 434, 261-2; Page, *Letters and Sermons*, 3: 385; Sears, *The Eyes of Jehovah*, p. 86.

<sup>50</sup>See David Lipscomb, *Gospel Advocate* (15 March 1894): 159; David Lipscomb, *Gospel Advocate* (5 April 1906): 233.

## IS YOUR WILL UP TO DATE?

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# **HOLDING BACK THE TIDE: J. W. MCGARVEY AND DIVISION IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

*by Richard L. Harrison, Jr.\**

Holding back the tide. What an image of futility. Was division between the churches now called Churches of Christ and the Disciples of Christ as inevitable as the tide? If so, how is it that someone who resisted division as vigorously as John William McGarvey could end up being held in such reverence by the Disciples? In great historic struggles, moderates are rarely looked upon with favor, not to mention honor. Yet McGarvey was and is still honored, sometimes by both sides in the bitter battle.

McGarvey was born near Hopkinsville, Kentucky, in 1829. His father died a few years later. His mother remarried and the family relocated in Illinois. McGarvey attended Bethany College, and upon his graduation in 1850, he rejoined his family which had now moved to Fayette, Missouri. He decided to prepare himself for ministry, and so he entered a period of private study while supporting himself by operating a small school, as was the case with many early Disciples. In 1852, he was ordained, and served churches in Missouri for ten years. In 1862, he accepted a call to the Main Street Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky. In 1865, he began teaching on a part-time basis at the new College of the Bible. He would remain as teacher, and then President, until his death in 1911.<sup>1</sup>

In that period McGarvey became one of the primary leaders of the Disciples. Through his books and his contributions to periodicals, his became a commonplace name in Disciples pulpits and parlors. He was a teacher of several generations of Disciples ministers at the College of the Bible. So it was that McGarvey's position on the division between the Churches of Christ and the Disciples was looked to with interest and concern.

The issues on which there was greatest debate between the two sides were three: The "one man system" or "paid preacher practice" was opposed by those who came to be the Churches of Christ. They listened to some of the early views of Alexander Campbell, essentially pre 1830, and did not agree with, or perhaps did not pay attention to the ways in which Campbell's views evolved. McGarvey not only approved of a salaried ministry, he participated in it.

The use of missionary societies as a means by which congregations and individual Christians could cooperate in various evangelistic and other mission goals was uniformly rejected by the Churches of Christ. John McGarvey not only supported missionary societies, he led two, the Kentucky Christian Education Society and the Kentucky Christian Missionary Society, and participated in several other organizations of the Disciples.

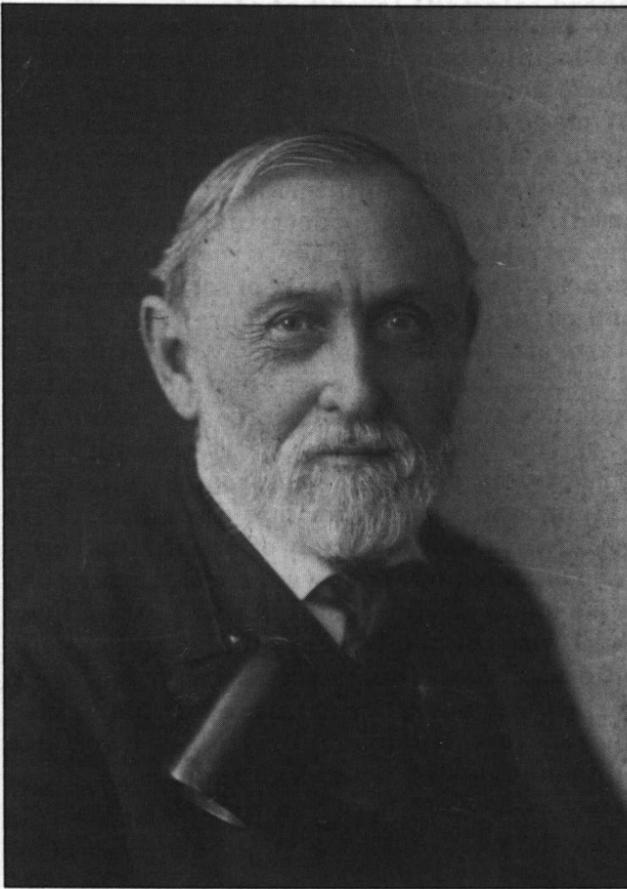
He agreed with the Churches of Christ that the ideal situation would be for each congregation to be its own missionary society. However, since that seemed impractical and unfeasible, and given the clear command to the church in the Great Commission, McGarvey supported missionary societies as cooperative actions of congregations and individuals. He further qualified his stance by saying that in any congregation, if only one member of that congregation as a matter of conscience opposed money from the church budget being given to missionary societies, the majority should yield to the minority. If individuals in the congregation wished to support the society, that would certainly be appropriate. In other words, in issues of conscience, the church should avoid any action that would offend even one of its members.

While both of these issues, the "one man system" and the question of missionary societies were of central importance in the division of the Disciples and the Churches of Christ, the issue that has continued to receive the most attention, the one that became the great symbol of division, was the matter of instrumental music in worship.

It is on this issue that the role of McGarvey is legendary. In the struggle for identity which resulted in schism, McGarvey chose the anti-instrumental music position. Yet he remained Disciple, decidedly so. By 1900, as Disciples churches by the hundreds were adding organs and pianos to their sanctuaries, McGarvey maintained his position that the instrument is an unauthorized innovation in worship. His views troubled and puzzled Disciples, though they continued to treat him with respect. The stories are many of churches refusing to use their instruments when he visited. The Churches of Christ must also have been puzzled. For on the issue of great symbolic importance, he seemed to stand with them, but he maintained fellowship with those who disagreed with him.<sup>2</sup>

There were other issues that figured in the Disciples-Churches of Christ schism, but no others had quite the emphasis, or general acceptance as these three. (In the century since the division was well underway, the Churches of Christ have largely, though not universally, backed away from the opposition to a paid ministry. They do continue, in general, opposition to missionary societies and the use of instrumental music in worship.) Among the other issues that could be listed, the two most often cited were opposition to Sunday schools and closed communion, that is, allowing only immersed believers to receive communion. Both positions were based on what was believed to be the teaching of the New Testament.

McGarvey's place in the history of the Stone-Campbell movement provides an interesting point for examining the question of why the schism took place. Up until twenty-five years ago, there was general consensus that the Disciples had been able to weather the Civil War without division, but simmering conflict broke out into open warfare during the forty years after the death of Alexander Campbell in 1866. The division, it was believed, had to do primarily



J. W. McGarvey

with conflict between liberals and conservatives, or conservatives over against moderates and liberals. The issues were as already given here, and interpreted primarily as matters of theological doctrine and practice. The basic question was one of the authority of scripture and how scripture is to be interpreted. The conservatives argued that unless scripture gave explicit permission or instruction, any idea or practice was forbidden. To bring into the life of faith and worship that which was not clearly commanded was to go against the divine will.

The moderates and liberals, while disagreeing among themselves, generally said that where there is explicit scriptural teaching, it is to be followed. Where scripture is silent, the community of faith may use its own judgment. Somewhere around this time someone first did a variation on one of the Disciples mottos, "Where the scriptures speak, we speak, where the scriptures are silent, we are silent." Attributed to J. H. Garrison was this variation, "Where the scriptures speak, we speak, where the scriptures are silent, we use sanctified common sense."

In the 1960s, the work of David Edwin Harrell began to change the traditional interpretation of what had happened to the move-

ment. Harrell, a historian using the newly emerging social history methods, argued that the Disciples had indeed divided over the Civil War, only the actual schism took place after the war rather than before or during. Harrell made the convincing argument that sectional tensions and sociological differences between North and South served as the ground and cause of the splintering of the Disciples church. According to Harrell, the particular doctrinal issues generally cited, as here, for the division, all have their roots not only in opposing views of the interpretation and authority of scripture, but in issues of war, poverty, and rural versus urban culture.<sup>3</sup>

According to this interpretation, J. W. McGarvey might be seen as representing a classic middle position. He was southern, neutral on the war, or even pacifist, as were many of those Tennesseans who came to be the leaders of the Churches of Christ. He differed, however, in that he was relatively affluent, and escaped the harsh aftermath of war, occupation, and utter economic devastation. He saw the war from the not always safe position of Lexington, Kentucky. He experienced some of the dangers of war. He certainly saw, and was challenged by, some of the raw emotions of war. But he lived in a state that never seceded. He thus never gave up his union gold, silver, and currency. He did lose his slaves to the thirteenth amendment. Indeed, his self-proclaimed neutrality is tainted by his having kept slaves through the war.<sup>4</sup> To claim neutrality in the American Civil War while also owning slaves was somewhat audacious.

Nevertheless, this mixed record might, given Harrell's interpretation of the Disciples-Churches of Christ schism, account for the middle of the road position taken by McGarvey.

However, there may be another way of looking at this. From the beginning of the work of Barton Warren Stone and the Campbells, two guiding principles were upheld: a deep and profound concern for the unity of the church of Jesus Christ, and a commitment to the restoration of the church as established in the first century. Christian Unity and Restorationism were the twin ideals of the Stone-Campbell movement. Both ideas were there from the first. Further, the unity concept was based on an Enlightenment era inspired valuing of freedom of opinion and an emphasis on the right and duty of each Christian to think through matters of faith for herself or himself.

It may well be that in the attempt to hold together Unity and Restoration, the Stone-Campbell "new Reformation" was condemned to walk the path of schism.

As it turns out, when one looks at how the separated branches of the movement interpret the Unity-Restoration schema, the basis for division becomes clearer. The more conservative branches, including the Churches of Christ and the Independent Christian Churches, understand Restoration to be the primary goal, with Unity as a by-product. Restore the church of the New Testament, restore the ancient order of things, and Christians will find themselves able to unite on the common denominator of the New Testament.<sup>5</sup>

The moderate to liberal Disciples branch has focused on Unity. The concept of Restoration has virtually disappeared from all Disciples literature and preaching, except for those occasions, all too rare, when historical reflection is called for. (In twelve years of teaching Disciples history in theological seminaries, I have found that fewer than forty percent of my students have entered the class with any awareness that the Disciples are part of what many have called the Restoration movement.) In transition to this state of affairs, Disciples leaders said that in seeking Christian unity we will restore the primary feature of the New Testament church: commitment to the lordship of Jesus Christ and his gospel message.<sup>6</sup>

The gulf between Churches of Christ Restorationism and Disciples ecumenism, commitment to Christian unity, could hardly be wider. That division has its roots in the very beginning of the movement, in the attempt to hold together Unity and Restorationism. In looking over the literature of the first fifty years of our common history, the themes of Unity and Restoration occur over and over again. Most often, however, the writers speak of one issue or the other. Or they speak of one as the means to the other. Restore the church of the first century and Christians will be united. Or, the way to Christian unity is to base faith and practice on the New Testament church.<sup>7</sup>

Few were able to hold the two ideas together in as creative and balanced tension as Alexander Campbell seems to have done. John W. McGarvey tried. Indeed, when examining the ideas of McGarvey, particularly those related to the issues surrounding the schism within the church, it is striking how faithful McGarvey tried to be to the original vision of Alexander Campbell. McGarvey studied with Campbell at Bethany from 1847 until 1850. And he studied Campbell for the rest of his life. McGarvey's approach to the interpretation of scripture is closely related to Campbell's principles of interpretation. His views on the three great issues of a paid ministry, missionary societies, and instrumental music, were also almost identical to those held by Campbell.

But McGarvey was not Campbell. As beloved a teacher and preacher as he became, he could not take Campbell's place as the patriarch of the movement. And where Campbell could hold together Restorationism and Christian Unity in his very being, McGarvey could not.

And the times had changed. When McGarvey entered into his mature ministry, and as he moved to leadership in the College of the Bible, change was rushing down on the Campbell-Stone movement with the force of a storm tide. Those who had been attracted to the movement by the teaching of Restorationism were always seeking a blueprint, a clear guide in the New Testament. They believed, they feared, that any deviation from the primitive pattern was an offence to God, and they feared for their very souls. And so they searched, focusing more and more precisely on what was clearly permitted.

What might be considered adiaphora, or the unessentials, were increasingly limited out of concern they could corrupt the total vision. This position was based on a view of scripture and an understanding of God's creation that had meaning and integrity.

Meanwhile, those attracted to the movement because of the teaching about unity and freedom of opinion were looking for ways to overcome division among the denominations, and they were open to cooperative efforts with Christians who differed on many issues. They cherished diversity as a rich by-product of the search for unity. They believed that Christians could, with integrity, differ among themselves and still maintain fellowship and cooperation in ministry and mission. And so they expanded their range of vision, and resisted limitations on their understanding of the nature of Christianity and Christian life.

Most of the people of the Stone-Campbell movement fell in between these extremes, but with an inclination to one side or the other. Clearly, the two extremes could not easily coexist. As it turns out, neither could the less extreme positions.

There were other factors as well. Restorationism was a value upheld by a number of Protestant and related groups in the early nineteenth century. Restorationism, also known as primitivism, was a widely held belief prior to the Civil War. Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, in some ways even the Mormons, would claim that their beliefs and practices were based on New Testament teachings.<sup>8</sup> It may be that Restorationism in religious circles was somewhat akin to the Romantic era in the arts and literature of early nineteenth century Europe and America:

For the Restorationist, any innovation had to be examined with a careful eye for deviation from the original pattern of the church. As McGarvey knew, the issue of instrumental music was a question not only among the Disciples, but also among all those whose roots were in the Reformed tradition of Protestantism, those Protestant churches which stemmed from the Reformation led by Zwingli and Calvin and John Knox. Up until the nineteenth century, at least in America, Baptist and Presbyterian churches worshiped without instrumental music. So far as is known, an American Presbyterian congregation first installed an organ in 1817. By the Civil War organs were commonplace along the eastern seaboard. After the Civil War they spread west of the mountains. There were small divisions over the issue. The same occurred with the Baptists, though a few years later than the Presbyterians. Some Baptist churches, such as the Primitive Baptists, still refuse on doctrinal grounds to use instrumental music.<sup>9</sup> What happened with the Disciples was not unique.

Further, in the period during which the move towards schism took place among the Disciples, specifically 1866-1906, American, indeed, all western Christianity, underwent the first phase of the modernist-fundamentalist controversy. Now, the division between the Churches of Christ and the Disciples was not technically over

fundamentalism, but it was a struggle between very conservative Christian faith and moderate to liberal views of faith. What is important is that the experience of the Disciples took place in a context in which other churches, Protestant and Catholic, were undergoing conflict, even heresy trials and some schisms.

J. W. McGarvey, characteristically, represented for the Disciples resistance against the position of modernism in the interpretation of the Bible. But his support for the institutions of the church, from Sunday schools to missionary societies to the Board of Church Extension, prevented him from walking away from a church that was moving, along with much of mainstream Protestantism, in the direction of moderate to liberal positions on most theological issues, and increasing participation in cooperative and ecumenical relationships.

The key here for McGarvey is that while maintaining allegiance to Campbell's approach to biblical interpretation, he also stood firm with Campbell's commitment to the movement and to the idea of unity. However, in the culture, the interpretation of the Bible continued to move towards acceptance of increasingly sophisticated historical/critical methods, leaving McGarvey behind.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, that same culture was also providing more opportunities for ecumenical contact and cooperation, which McGarvey could support in theory if not in actuality. Again, McGarvey was overwhelmed by the tide of biblical interpretation, and swept along by the flow of ecumenical rejection of sectarianism.

David Edwin Harrell's interpretation of the Disciples schism as a result largely of sectional differences and the harsh experiences of the South in the years after the war is clearly in the right direction, but does not tell the whole story.<sup>11</sup> I would argue that what Harrell sees as the grounds of division describes more accurately the occasion for division. However, the sociological factors Harrell cites, rural, economically weak cultures over against more affluent, increasingly urban cultures do help to explain why the lines of division occurred where they did.

Those initial followers of the Churches of Christ were largely, but not entirely, southern. They left behind them significant numbers who remained Disciples, as Harrell points out, mostly in southern cities and county seats. In the territory north of Tennessee, far, far fewer went with the Churches of Christ. Those that did were, it would seem, mostly in small rural churches. These churches represent perhaps some of the poverty of which Harrell speaks, but little of the sense of sectionalism.

The reason that these churches would move as they did is that we find a combination of the commitment to Restorationism and the sociological factors raised by Harrell. In the South, in the years after the war, significantly greater numbers suffered, significantly more felt alienated, significantly more felt betrayed by a missionary society which took a pro-union stand during the war. In Tennessee, for instance, the 1906 religious census revealed that the Churches of

Christ had four times as many congregations and three times as many members as the Disciples.<sup>12</sup>

But in the North, only in those places where there was a very strong commitment to Restorationism combined with poverty, or the presence of a number of Southern immigrants, or, as in a few places, under the leadership of a powerful personality, did the schism occur.<sup>13</sup>

Harrell is correct. The schism among the Disciples was deeply tied to the Civil War and its aftermath. But that is not all. Doctrinally, the commitment of people to the idea of Restorationism, which has to be understood as a commitment to what they believed to be the clear will of God, was also much involved. The religious context of the day played a part, as we have seen. Conflict over instrumental music was spread across Reformed Protestantism. And discord between conservative and moderate to liberal understandings of the Bible was also a factor.

And then there was for Disciples the issue of timing. Soon after the end of the war Alexander Campbell died. The last, and the most formative, of the four patriarchs of the movement was removed from the scene. No longer could arguments and disputes be brought before the throne at Bethany for a decision. The disciples (spelled with a lower case d) of Campbell had to fend for themselves. And as happened in the first century church, there were many who claimed authority, and each clashed with the others.

John W. McGarvey, along with a few others, tried to keep the peace and keep the faith with Alexander Campbell and the movement. But the times were against him. The deep roots of impossible tension between Unity and Restorationism, the bitter conflict called the Civil War, an age of religious struggle, and rapid change into the modern era, all worked against those who would freeze the views of Campbell, as if they could stand for all time.

Perhaps nothing illustrates the futility of McGarvey's situation than two events occurring closely together. In 1900, Professor Samuel Jefferson of the College of the Bible began using a textbook in the required homiletics course that advocated a modernist approach to the interpretation of scripture. The book, *The Christian Pastor and the Working Church*, by Washington Gladden, often called the "father" of the Social Gospel, could hardly have gone without notice by McGarvey. The faculty at that time was tiny, consisting primarily of six members. McGarvey was President and Professor of Bible, and kept a tight reign on everything that happened there. How this book could have been introduced into the curriculum is hard to explain. The event is telling. Even in McGarvey's own institution, change was rushing in.<sup>14</sup>

The second event had to do with the decision in 1902 of the Broadway Christian Church in Lexington to install an organ. The move had been delayed for years out of respect for and appreciation of McGarvey, their former pastor and long time elder. Shortly before the vote was taken, he moved his membership to the Chestnut Street

Church. But he stated publicly that he would not break fellowship, and were there not an alternative more suitable to his views easily accessible, he would not leave the congregation.<sup>15</sup>

The tide had flowed over and past McGarvey. He held on to his old positions, apparently aware that on some issues he had lost. He continued to preach and teach the importance of restoring the New Testament church. He continued to teach the Bible using carefully limited historical critical methods, those that would have received the approval of Campbell. And he continued to live his commitment to the movement and to the unity of the church.

McGarvey lost the struggle. Most of those Kentucky churches in which he was deeply beloved had added organs. Those Kentucky churches that went with the Churches of Christ were small in number, perhaps because of the influence of McGarvey in the state.<sup>16</sup> But the larger conflict was beyond his abilities. It is possible that even Alexander Campbell would have been unsuccessful in maintaining unity in the face of the great forces that worked to break fellowship.

Holding back the tide. An apt metaphor for the attempt to maintain the unity of the Disciples. And so the great irony appeared: The church established as a call to Christian unity was itself divided, not once, but twice for the Disciples, and arguably, many times for the Churches of Christ. Perhaps it is time for Christians to learn to harness the power of the tide for the good of the gospel, instead of feebly, wastefully, resisting the inevitable.

\*Richard L. Harrison, Jr., is Dean of the Disciples Divinity House and a member of the faculty of Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Nashville, Tennessee.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>W. C. Morro, "Brother McGarvey": *The Life of President J. W. McGarvey of the College of the Bible, Lexington, KY* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1940). See also the autobiography sometimes attributed to J. W. McGarvey, Jr., *The Autobiography of J. W. McGarvey*, edited by DeLoris Stevenson (Lexington, KY: College of the Bible, 1960).

<sup>2</sup>The literature on the instrumental music controversy is vast. A recent study is by J. E. Choate and William Woodson, *Sounding Brass and Clanging Cymbals: The History and Significance of Instrumental Music in the Restoration Movement (1827-1968)* (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman University, 1991). See especially Chapter 9.

<sup>3</sup>David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *A Social History of the Disciples of Christ*, vol. 1, *Quest for a Christian America: The Disciples of Christ and American Society to 1866* (Nashville: Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1966), vol. 2, *The Social Sources of Division in the Disciples of Christ, 1866-1900* (Atlanta: Publishing Systems, Inc., 1973).

<sup>4</sup>McGarvey, *Autobiography*, pp. 19-23.

<sup>5</sup>See, for example, Earl Irvin West, *The Search for the Ancient Order*, vols. 1-4 (See Foster endnote #37 for full information); James DeForrest

Murch, *Christians Only* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1962); Henry E. Webb, *In Search of Christian Unity: A History of the Restoration Movement* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Company, 1990).

<sup>6</sup>See, for example, Alfred T. DeGroot and Winfred E. Garrison, *The Disciples: A History* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1948); Lester G. McAllister and William E. Tucker, *Journey in Faith: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1975).

<sup>7</sup>Articles and letters in the *Christian Baptist* (1823-1830), *The Christian Messenger* (1826-1844), and the *Millennial Harbinger* (1830-1870) are especially rich with illustrations of these views.

<sup>8</sup>See the excellent study by Richard T. Hughes and C. Leonard Allen, *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America, 1630-1875* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

<sup>9</sup>Julius Melton, *Presbyterian Worship in America: Changing Patterns Since 1787* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1967), p. 35.

<sup>10</sup>Campbell's approach to the interpretation of scripture was in the middle of options available in his day. He was certainly not willing to go as far as some of the German scholars of the day, scholars whose work he knew primarily through reports in English. But he was willing to use the basic concerns of historical-critical methodology, examining the formation of the manuscript, the tradition of the manuscript, the historical context of the writing, the classic "by whom, to whom, when, why, and where" questions. What Campbell might have done had he lived another thirty or forty years cannot be answered. The reality is, McGarvey essentially remained with Campbell's approach while living working thirty and forty years later.

<sup>11</sup>Harrell notes the significance of the conflict between the two ideas of Restoration and Unity in the ultimate division, but he sees the conflict arising only in later years. This paper argues that from the earliest days conflict began to arise as individuals emphasized one point or the other. Vol. 1, *Quest*, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup>The Churches of Christ were reported to have 659 churches with 42,297 members, while the Disciples had 152 congregations and 14,960 members. Herman A. Norton, *Tennessee Christians: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Tennessee* (Nashville: Reed and Company, 1971), p. 218.

<sup>13</sup>See, for example, Henry K. Shaw, *Buckeye Disciples: A History of the Disciples of Christ in Ohio* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication for the Ohio Christian Missionary Society, 1952), pp. 332-333; and Henry K. Shaw, *Hoosier Disciples: A Comprehensive History of the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana* (St. Louis: Bethany Press for the Association of Christian Churches in Indiana, 1966), pp. 272-274.

<sup>14</sup>Richard L. Harrison, Jr., "Disciples Theological Formation: From a College of the Bible to a Theological Seminary," in *A Case Study of Mainstream Protestantism: The Disciples Relation to American Culture, 1880-1989*, edited by D. Newell Williams (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1991), p. 286.

<sup>15</sup>Morro, "Brother McGarvey", pp. 149-150; Letter to the editor from Mark Collis, *Christian Evangelist* (December 18, 1902), p. 895.

<sup>16</sup>Richard L. Harrison, Jr., *From Camp Meeting To Church: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky* (Lexington, KY: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) In Kentucky, 1992), Chapter 10.

# **“WAR NO MORE”: THE PACIFISM OF ALEXANDER CAMPBELL**

by Darryl A. Parr\*

Benjamin Franklin once said, “There never was a *good* war or a *bad* peace.” Alexander Campbell agreed wholeheartedly with that statement, and quoted it with approval in his “Address on War.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Franklin’s statement captures the essence of Campbell’s own position regarding war and peace. From his first article in the *Christian Baptist* through some of his later writings in the *Millennial Harbinger* over forty years later, Campbell never ceased to promote peace and oppose war.<sup>2</sup>

Campbell’s opposition to war stemmed from a number of sources. He often decried its human costs—the suffering of “innocent” soldiers due to the actions of “guilty” politicians; the countless widows and orphans it created. He railed against

. . . that Christian general, with his ten thousand soldiers, and his chaplain at his elbow . . . praying that the Lord would cause him to fight valiantly, and render their efforts successful in making as many widows and orphans as will afford sufficient opportunity for others to manifest the purity of their religion by taking care of them!!!<sup>3</sup>

Campbell was also greatly concerned about the economic costs of war. More than once he reprinted in the *Harbinger* estimates of the cost incurred by the United States in the Mexican war.<sup>4</sup> In his “Address on War” Campbell lamented the waste of vast sums which otherwise could have been used for constructive purposes:

Give me the money . . . that has been spent in wars, and I will clear up every acre of land in the world that ought to be cleared—drain every marsh—subdue every desert—fertilize every mountain and hill—and convert the whole earth into a continuous series of fruitful fields, verdant meadows, beautiful villas, hamlets, towns, cities. . . . What would be wanting on the part of man to “make the wilderness and solitary place glad;” and to cause “the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.”<sup>5</sup>

Pragmatically, Campbell objected to the so-called “just war theory,” stating that war could never be a process of justice, but was instead “either a mere game of chance, or a violent outrage of the strong upon the weak.”<sup>6</sup> Nor did Campbell believe that war could ever be justified as a means to restore peace. He noted that hostilities between nations are in fact terminated by treaties; it is “reason, reflection, and negotiation [sic]” rather than “powder and lead” which lead to peace.<sup>7</sup>

But important as those considerations are for Campbell, the real animus of his pacifism lay with the biblical witness. His study of the Bible led Campbell to concede that war had indeed been justified in

the Old Testament, as had polygamy, slavery, and divorce. But Campbell felt that the advent of Jesus Christ had resulted in a radical break with the ethics of the Old Testament. Since Christ had been given "all authority in heaven and on earth,"<sup>8</sup> its ethics were the proper norm for Christians. And as Campbell wrote, "Wars political, and wars theological or Christological, never had a warrant from the present reigning Monarch of the Universe."<sup>9</sup>

Campbell affirmed that Christ was the Sovereign of the Universe, but he also noted that "the church, and the church only, is under the special government and guardianship of our Christian King."<sup>10</sup> That meant that all Christians throughout the world were citizens of the one "nation" of which Christ was ruler. For while many earthly nations might claim to be "Christian" when it suited their purposes, there was in fact one Christian kingdom, made up of believers in every land. So for Campbell the question of war and peace was in reality, "Can Christ's kingdom or church in one nation wage war against his own kingdom or church in another nation?"<sup>11</sup> To this Campbell responded with an emphatic, "No!"

Lest anyone form the mistaken idea from his words that a crusade against non-Christians would still be acceptable, Campbell insisted that the spirit of Christianity

is essentially pacific, conciliatory, and forgiving. The Saviour of the world is the PRINCE OF PEACE, and all his true subjects are sons of peace and advocates of glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will amongst men.<sup>12</sup>

Because Christ's kingdom is "not of this world," Campbell concluded flatly that "the citizens of Christ's kingdom are, therefore, not to fight."<sup>13</sup> This absolute Christian pacifism was Campbell's guiding principle throughout his life.

Once war had been rejected as an option, some other method had to be found to settle international disputes. For this purpose Campbell proposed "arbitration by elected parties."<sup>14</sup> He asserted that by following such a policy in his own life he had been able to avoid instituting any lawsuits; by extension he felt that such arbitration would enable the nations of the world to avoid fighting wars.

Why not have a *by-law established Umpire*? Could not a united National Court be made as feasible and as practicable as a United States Court? Why not, as often proposed, and as eloquently, ably and humanely argued by the advocates of peace, have a Congress of Nations and a High Court of Nations for adjudicating and terminating all international misunderstandings and complaints, redressing and remedying all wrongs and grievances?<sup>15</sup>

Such an international body seemed to Campbell to be the most rational way to deal with the disputes which so often resulted in war. Yet Campbell recognized that this in itself would not be enough. Individuals needed to be informed about the causes and nature of the disputes in which they were called to take sides.

But a Christian man cannot conscientiously enter upon any business, nor lend his energies to any cause which he does not approve; and, in order to approve, he must understand the nature and object of the undertaking.<sup>16</sup>

Campbell felt that such understanding would naturally lead to the peaceful resolution of all conflict.

Perhaps Campbell was overly optimistic in this regard, but he does provide the example of one who thought deeply about the issues of war and peace, something to which all Christians are called. As Campbell wrote in his "Address on War,"

We have all much interest in the question; we can all do something in it, and it is every one's duty to do all the good he can. We must create a public opinion on this subject. We should inspire a pacific spirit, and show off on all proper occasions the chief objections to war.<sup>17</sup>

To this same sort of concern Campbell calls all who consider themselves his spiritual heirs, and indeed all Christians:

Let every one, then, who fears God and loves man, put his hand to the work; and the time is not far distant when—

'No longer host encount'ring hosts  
Shall crowds of slain deplore;  
They'll hang the trumpet in the hall,  
And study war no more!'<sup>18</sup>

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Alexander Campbell, "An Address on War," *Millennial Harbinger* (July 1848): 384.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander Campbell, "The Christian Religion," *Christian Baptist* (August 1823): 6; "Wars and Rumors of Wars," *MH* (June 1861): 347.

<sup>3</sup>Alexander Campbell, "The Christian Religion," *CB* (August 1823): 6.

<sup>4</sup>Alexander Campbell, "Cost of the War," *MH* (June 1847): 354; "War and Christianity Antipodal," *MH* (September 1850): 523-4.

<sup>5</sup>Alexander Campbell, "An Address on War," p. 384.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 377.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 382.

<sup>8</sup>Matthew 28: 18.

<sup>9</sup>Alexander Campbell, "The Good Fight of Faith," *MH* (July 1861): 366.

<sup>10</sup>"An Address on War," p. 381.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 367.

<sup>12</sup>"War and Christianity Antipodal," p. 524.

<sup>13</sup>Alexander Campbell, "War—No. I," *MH* (November 1846): 641.

<sup>14</sup>"Wars and Rumors of Wars," p. 347.

<sup>15</sup>"An Address on War," pp. 382-3.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 385.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 386.

### ***Earle and Rosella Barclay Named Fund***

In 1933, while attending Drake Bible College, Earle Barclay took his first pastorate, East Douglas Avenue Christian Church in Des Moines, Iowa. Soon thereafter, he met and married a college friend, Rosella Furness. The Barclays have served congregations in Kentucky, Illinois, Nebraska and Iowa. Although he retired in 1977, the Rev. and Mrs. Barclay served an "Extended Supply" pastorate at the Christian Church in Redfield for 12½ years. Today he serves part-time as Minister of Visitation and Assistant to the Pastor of Highland Park Christian Church, Des Moines, Iowa. Both Earle and Rosella are active volunteers at Ramsey Home in Des Moines. They conduct hymn sings and birthday dinners for the Ramsey Guild.

### ***CWF of Central Christian Church Bradenton, Florida Named Fund***

The Christian Women's Fellowship of Central Christian Church, Bradenton, Florida, is a close circle of caring friends who share a special ministry of Christ in and through their congregation. These women have a strong desire to serve their congregation in meeting its special needs. No project is too large or too small for them to undertake. Yet much of their service and concern is also shared with community needs and with the broader mission of the church through Basic Mission Finance giving, special offerings, and projects. This Named Fund is established through a gift from Mrs. Edna Lord Reynolds of Bainbridge, Georgia, who greatly appreciates the friendship and concern they have shown for her.

### ***John B. and Ola Cobb Named Fund***

John Cobb, Jr., was raised in the Campbell-Stone Movement and has spent much of his life actively involved in congregations in Nashville related to the Movement. He served as Elder in the Green Hill Church of Christ. Later his membership was moved to the Granny White Church of Christ where he and his wife were both active members. Later, Mr. Cobb was instrumental in helping to start the Hillwood Church of Christ. Today John and Ola are active members in that congregation. This Named Fund was established by Dr. and Mrs. Robert H. Edwards.

### ***James R. Craddock Named Fund***

Jim Craddock retired from the pastoral ministry of the church to go back to work for the church. His last pastorate was Augusta Christian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana. Since then, he has served as Marketing Counselor for Robin Run Village, a National Benevolent Association development in Indianapolis. He and his wife, Fran, were the first to move into a home in Robin Run Village. The Rev. Craddock currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Flinn Memorial Home, Marion, Indiana, and has served on a number of other church and community boards in the Indianapolis area. This Named Fund was established by his family in honor of his birthday.

## *Selected Additions to the Library*

- Wolfgang, James Stephen, *Fundamentalism and the Churches of Christ, 1910-1930*. M. A. Thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1990.
- Hook, Cecil, *Free to Change*. (Braunfels, Texas: Cecil and Lea Hook, 1990).
- Cane Ridge Bicentennial Sample: Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the 1791 Construction of Cane Ridge Meeting House*. An effort of the Program Committee. (Paris, Kentucky: Cane Ridge Preservation Project, 1991).
- Includes articles by Franklin Reid McGuire, Hoke S. Dickinson, Howard E. Short, Kenney S. Roseberry, E. E. Snoddy, Adron Doran, Elizabeth Hartsfield, Melvin Fields, Charles Duke Payne, Ann Bolton Bevins, and Rogers Roseberry Barde.
- Compton, Lucille A. *History of the Ministers' Wives: National Christian Missionary Convention and National Convocation (Disciples of Christ) Christian Church*. (Indianapolis: The Convocation, 1990).
- Richardson, William J. *The Role of Grace in the Thought of Alexander Campbell*. (Los Angeles: Westwood Christian Foundation, 1991). (Westwood Christian Foundation Annual Restoration Lectures; no. 1).
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- Jimenez, Pablo A. *¿Que es un Discipulo?*. (Rayamon, Puerto Rico: La Iglesia Cristiana (Discipulos de Cristo) en Puerto Rico, c1991). (Manual para candidatos; 2).
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- Berquist, Jon L. *Ancient Wine, New Wineskins: The Lord's Supper in Old Testament Perspective*. (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1991).
- Conservative, Moderate, Liberal: The Biblical Authority Debate*. ed. by Charles R. Blaisdell. (St. Louis: CBP Press, 1990).
- Papers presented at a conference held at Christian Theological Seminary, September 27-28, 1989. Includes papers by Barbara Blaisdell, Jack Cotrell and Edgar A. Towne.

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The Second  
Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Lecture

Paul A. Crow, Jr.  
Lecturer

Disciples of Christ Historical Society  
UCC Historical Council Joint Dinner

Convention Center  
St. Louis, Missouri

July 16, 1993 - 5:30 p.m.

Watch for details in Summer Issue of *Discipliana*

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***Just As I Lived It***  
by Lester G. McAllister

(Recalling events occurring during a 70-plus year fellowship in the Stone-Campbell Movement.)

The public has been generally shocked at the many financial scandals that have hit the world of televangelism in recent years. That the Billy Graham Crusade organization has been spared this notoriety has been credited by Billy Graham himself to a former executive of the Disciples and the Federal Council of Churches, the late Jesse M. Bader (1886-1963).

At the beginning of Graham's evangelistic career in the 1940s and early 1950s, he followed the usual practice of taking a "love offering" to pay for his crusades. When the *Atlanta Constitution* printed a picture of crusade ushers lifting heavy sacks filled with offering money next to Graham getting into a sporty convertible, Graham was embarrassed.

He sought someone who could advise him on his finances and how to handle them. It was then Graham turned to Jesse Bader who told him "You're going to make every evangelist in the country angry, but cut out the love offerings."

Bader further advised him to incorporate, form a board of trustees and let them pay a salary comparable to the salary of the pastor of a large congregation. He suggested that the board account for all income and expenditures. Graham accepted Bader's suggestions, incorporated and established a board. Since then full information regarding the income and expenditures of Billy Graham crusades has been readily available to the public.

# DISCIPLIANA

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DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society was established in 1941 "to maintain and further interest in religious heritage, backgrounds, origins, development, and general history of Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches, Churches of Christ and related groups."

Members of the Society receive *DISCIPLIANA* quarterly, along with other benefits. Annual membership categories are as follows: Sustaining - \$50 to \$249, Participating - \$25 to \$49, Regular - \$15, Students - \$7.50, Canadian and Overseas - \$20. Single payment Life Memberships are: Life - \$250, Life Link - \$500, Life Patron - \$1,000.

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## —From the Editor's Desk

In this issue are articles on some of the most interesting areas of Stone-Campbell movement history, the story of women in the church and the early history of the relationship between Christians of European ancestry and those of African ancestry.

The article by William McDonald on Lewis Letig Pinkerton deals with an early Disciple who by any standards was one of the first Disciple liberals. Theologically, he advocated an understanding of the authority of scripture that places the Bible under the scrutiny of historical critical scholarship. Ecclesiologically, he argued for and then placed an organ in a church for use in congregational worship—probably the first of the Stone-Campbell churches to use instrumental music in worship. Socially, he established a school for orphan girls and worked for civil rights for Black Americans (having actively opposed slavery while living in a slave state). In the sections dealing with the question of race, McDonald presents in published form his research showing that historians have been incorrect on the dating of the first Black Disciples congregation.

The article by Glenn Zuber carries forward an argument showing that early Disciples ordained women were very much influenced by the activism of the Prohibition movement. Four streams came together in the latter part of the nineteenth century which erupted in the strong wave for women's rights that continues to roll forward today: Prohibition, the women's suffrage movement, women's missionary societies, and the ordination of women to ministry. This is an area that cries out for further investigation. Of particular importance would be research into the relationship between the early Disciples leaders of missions groups, such as the Christian Woman's Board of Missions and the National Benevolent Association, and both the Prohibition movement and the women's suffrage movement.

Your editor, after only these first two issues, has found it necessary to depart from this chair. I have accepted a call to become President of Lexington Theological Seminary, a call that puts me in another chair, with little time to move from chair to chair. Dr. D. Newell Williams, Dean of Christian Theological Seminary, will assume the office of Editor of *Discipliana* and Chair of the Board of Editors. Dr. Williams is well known as an outstanding historian and interpreter of the Stone-Campbell movement. *Discipliana* is in fine hands indeed. The "chair" should fit him just right.

## —From the President's Desk

Thank you for your many expressions of appreciation following the publication of the first expanded issue of *Discipliana*. They warmed our hearts and caused our Board to feel that the effort was worthwhile. We trust you will find as much joy and appreciation in this issue. We do appreciate hearing from you.

Let me alert you to several forthcoming programs of lectures being sponsored by the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and to a brand new venture which has caused a great amount of excitement around the Society recently.

On July 16, 1993, Dr. Paul A. Crow, Jr. will deliver the second Forrest H. Kirkpatrick lecture at the dinner sponsored by the Historical Society and the Historical Council of the United Church of Christ. The theme for Dr. Crow's lecture will be: "Cinderella, Ecumenism, and the Kingdom: History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Church." The lecture will be delivered at the dinner from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Convention Center in St. Louis, Missouri. Tickets are available for \$15.00 from the Historical Society until July 3rd. Tickets will be available at the Convention Center on Thursday, July 15th.

The Rev. Kenneth Henry will deliver two lectures on the theme: "Learning Among African American Disciples of Christ." These lectures will be given at Barton College, Wilson, North Carolina, on Tuesday, September 14, 1993. These will be the Forrest F. Reed Lectures sponsored by the Historical Society. The subjects for the two lectures will be: "Beginnings In Black and White: The Piedmont and the West" and "New Challenges In The South: Alabama to Texas."

The new exciting adventure on the horizon is the Stone-Campbell Historical Seminar scheduled for April 29 and 30, 1994. In order to promote and encourage historical research and study the Disciples of Christ Historical Society will sponsor a seminar which will encompass up to three lectures, symposia, personal research time, a sharing of current historical concerns and ideas for research. This program is under the leadership of the Editorial Committee of *Discipliana* and will be funded by the Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Lecture and Research Endowment Fund.

This seminar will be open to anyone who wants to attend and the lectures will be geared to laypersons as well as clergy and historians. The general theme for the seminar is "A 19th Century American Religious Movement Faces the 21st Century: Can We Survive?" There will be participants from all branches of the Movement. Lecturers for the seminar will be announced in the next issue of *Discipliana* and more information will be available.

These are exciting days in the life of the church and the Disciples of Christ Historical Society is happy to be in the midst of the excitement.

## ***Whatever Others Might Do: A Look at the Principles of L. L. Pinkerton***

*by William H. McDonald\**

L.L. Pinkerton—the founder of Midway College, the greatest minister ever at Midway Christian Church; L.L. Pinkerton—who built Disciple church buildings in Lexington, Paris and Versailles; L.L. Pinkerton—physician, evangelist, preacher, editor.

It was a beautiful warm day as I walked through the Lexington Cemetery admiring the bronze statues, and the beautiful stone carvings searching for the final resting place of L.L. Pinkerton. I had held him in such high esteem that I hoped for a columned pedestal topped by a huge bronze statue of this tall, lean Kentucky minister. But having read Pinkerton's life story, I should have known better. I found his grave and atop it a simple small arched stone that gave his name and the dates of his birth and death. John Shackelford, Pinkerton's best friend, described his humility saying, "He has no resounding stories of his own performances to blurt into the ears of heaven."<sup>1</sup> No showy statues or grand carved stones for Pinkerton. Let others claim their triumphs; Pinkerton would be as different in death as he was in life. Shackelford once wrote of Pinkerton using the phrase: "Whatever others might do, Pinkerton would . . ." There is no more apt description of his attitude. In all circumstances of life Pinkerton would follow the dictates of his conscience which was grounded in his faith in Jesus. He would at all costs maintain his integrity and his principles. And the costs during his lifetime were great.

Lewis Letig Pinkerton was born in Baltimore County, Maryland, January 28, 1812. He was the son of William Pinkerton, Sr., and Elizabeth Letig Pinkerton, five of whose seven sons became ministers. At age 18 L.L. Pinkerton was baptized by Alexander Campbell, one of the founders of the Campbell-Stone Movement. Pinkerton studied medicine at Cincinnati during the winters and taught school at Trenton, Ohio, during the summers. He fell in love with and married one of his students, Sarah A. Ball. In 1836 he left the medical profession to go into the ministry and two years later he arrived in Kentucky to do evangelism work. And he was good at it. Elder John T. Johnson of Georgetown, himself a famous evangelist, proclaimed, "I must say that Bro. Pinkerton fills my eye. I could sit and listen to him all the time."<sup>2</sup>

In 1844 at age 32 he came to minister in the small town of Midway, Kentucky. Several historians have called Pinkerton the best preacher amongst the Disciples, the most colorful of Disciple ministers, and the Disciples' first liberal. He believed strongly in evangelism, the Reformation movement, scholarship, good grammar, the equality of the black race in God's eyes, the care for the poor, the friendship of children, wit and humor, humility, spiritual obedience to God, unity of Christians, the spirit of the Word as opposed to the letter of it, and the Union. He absolutely did **not** believe in slavery, the inerrancy of the scriptures, the necessity of immersion, the eternal damnation of the unsaved, the

consumption of alcohol, puffed-up church leaders, and war. Pinkerton's characteristics of liberality, honesty, generosity, and compassion endeared him to the hearts of many people and yet it was these same characteristics that would cause him to take stands that would anger and alarm many people inside and outside the churches of Central Kentucky in the mid-1800s. He was not always what his contemporaries expected him to be. Pinkerton may have been a committed citizen of Central Kentucky and a minister in a fairly typical congregation but he never tried to conform to anybody's image. He was true to his own nature—whatever others might do.

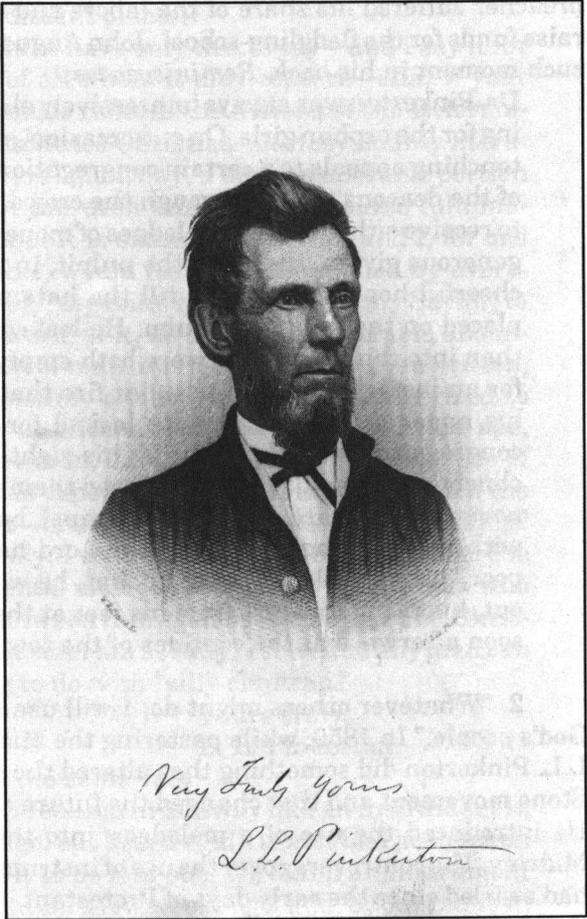
Four instances when he ventured down paths new and strange to the people of his time and situation give insight to his character:

1. "Whatever others might do, I will found a school that will help orphan girls and involve church people in benevolence." The modern day students of Midway College today may not be aware that their college began as a pioneering effort in feminism. In the 1840s education was a difficult thing to acquire for any children. Very few women were allowed to pursue an education at all. Even those from well-to-do homes were denied this privilege since it was considered a waste of time and resources to educate women who would simply spend all their lives involved in household concerns. If education was rare for women from stable homes and supportive families, one can imagine the plight of the orphan girl who had no family or kinfolk or friends or welfare agencies to which to turn. They were left to face the world totally ignorant, often frail or physically affected and doomed to a life of drudgery or even worse.<sup>3</sup>

For several years L.L. Pinkerton had traveled as an evangelist across the state of Kentucky seeing impoverished towns and people first hand. The great educator believed that the only way out of this poverty lay in the hope of education for the people. With a fondness and special sensitivity toward children, Pinkerton's concern centered on the ignorant young lives he was seeing. His logical mind also realized that the training of women to teach was essential to the development of enough teachers to reach the masses. So his concern focused on the education of poor young girls. Seated one night in the old Round Top Church in Madison County, Kentucky, the Doctor was subjected to a boring sermon by the local minister. Never tolerant of boring speakers, he leafed through a Bible, then a hymnbook, and then his mind and his eyes began wandering through the church house. They came to rest on a poor ill-clad young girl who was blind. His sensitive nature was outraged and his spirit began to be more troubled over the plight of the poor. He soon discovered that the girl was also an orphan. Then and there he resolved to build a school for the education of poor orphan girls.<sup>4</sup>

On a stormy night in 1845 a prayer meeting was scheduled at the Midway Christian Church. The minister, L.L. Pinkerton, waited for the congregation to arrive but, due to the storm no one ventured forth—no one except one very loyal elder, the everfaithful man with the weak body

*Lewis  
Letig  
Pinkerton*



and strong heart, James Ware Parrish. Sitting down in a pew with his friend, Pinkerton took the opportunity to discuss the future work of the young church and in doing so, he confided to Parrish his dreams about a school for orphan girls. Parrish was touched by the need and was excited by the hope of such an endeavor. He told Pinkerton that his life would no doubt be a short one and that time to accomplish this goal was scarce.<sup>5</sup> The dreams of both men turned to resolution that night and their work began immediately. And so out of a boring sermon and out of a meeting where only one person showed up was born a school that has touched countless numbers of lives. It was a great step forward for women in Central Kentucky. In addition to the good done in the lives of the women attending the school, the people of the churches of Kentucky were brought to an awareness of the contributions to society that were possible by women and the poor. This heightened awareness was a strategy typical of Pinkerton.

He sought to change people's attitudes and broaden their concern and he became quickly irritated when unsuccessful. The fiery-tempered

preacher suffered his share of the labors and frustrations of trying to raise funds for the fledgling-school. John Augustus Williams relates one such moment in his book, *Reminiscences*.

Dr. Pinkerton was always impressively eloquent when pleading for the orphan girls. On one occasion, after one of his most touching appeals to a certain congregation, he requested two of the deacons to pass through the crowded house with hats to receive either money or pledges of money, as might suit the generous givers. He sat in the pulpit, in the confidence of a cheerful hope, and waited till the hats were returned and placed on the desk before him. He looked first into one and then into the other: they were both empty! His eyes flashed for an instant with that peculiar fire that always expressed his anger or indignation. He looked for a moment at the congregation, and then raising his right hand with fingers clinched to the palms, he dismissed them with a benediction never before heard in church or chapel, but now pronounced with intense sincerity: "May the Lord have mercy on your poor, stingy souls!" Seizing his hat, he was the first to pass out, knocking the dust from his feet at the church door, and soon afterward at the confines of the town.<sup>6</sup>

2. "Whatever others might do, I will use new methods to inspire God's people." In 1859, while pastoring the Midway Christian Church, L.L. Pinkerton did something that altered the course of the Campbell-Stone movement and that changed the future of the Christian Church. He introduced the use of a melodeon into the service of worship at Midway. The controversy over the use of instrumental music in churches had swirled since the early days of Protestant history with Zwingli and Calvin, but came, to a head in the Disciples Church in about 1860 when organs started to become available on the Middle Western Frontier. Sides were quickly formed and the controversy raged across the pages of the religious periodicals of the day. L.L. Pinkerton, who naturally seemed to be present at the center of most controversies, appears to have been the first Disciples minister to publicly support the use of the organ and to attempt to introduce it into his church. Benjamin Franklin, editor of the *American Christian Review*, published an attack on the promoters of instrumental music. Pinkerton took the attack personally. His rebuttal and Franklin's response are classics of wit and sarcasm. Pinkerton commented:

So far as known to me, or, I presume, to you, I am the only "preacher" in Kentucky of our brotherhood who has publicly advocated the propriety of employing instrumental music in some churches, and that the church of God in Midway is the only church that has yet made a decided effort to introduce it. The calls for your opinion, it is probable, came from these regions. The paper containing your strictures has been much circulated among our congregation, and even sent to some of

its members from distant places.

Now, touching this I have only this to say—and I say it for the consideration of all whom it may concern—that if your article on church music reflects the notions of the Reformation as to what constitutes Christian courtesy, manly literature, logic, rhetoric, religion; nay, if any considerable portion of the Reformation can even tolerate such coarse fulminations, then the sooner it is extinct, the better; and I, for one being assured of this, would feel myself impelled by everything I owe my family, my country, myself, and my Savior, to aid in ridding the world of it, as of an immeasurable abomination. By what law of man or of God, written or unwritten, what law of gentlemanly civility, is one man authorized to denounce another as without the spirit of Christ, an ape, carnal, without devotion, etc., on account of a difference of opinion as to what is expedient in a community of which the denounced is a part—of which the denouncer knows nothing? But I forbear. Finally, I am ready and willing to discuss the subject of instrumental music in churches with any man who can discriminate between railing in bad grammar and Christian argumentation; but I am as fully resolved as any man can be to have nothing to do with “silly claptrap.”

Yours truly,

L. L. Pinkerton

Franklin's reply was in the same vein:

We heard that the church in Midway had an instrument in it probably a year ago, but heard again that it had been taken out, and supposed it to be still out. We found an instrument in another congregation a few weeks ago, and, by our request, it did not sound a note in our hearing, nor did we see it afterwards. By several persons at this point, and several at other points, we were called out, and certainly did not intend to be personal, especially toward the Doctor. We have aimed for several years to let him pass quietly without the slightest interruption from us. We do not wish to annoy him in the least, as we do not desire to make him unhappy in the least degree; and ask him if, he possibly can, to forgive us grammatically, logically, ironically, and every other way, and then rest assured that we do not mean him in anything he may find in the Review; or, if he does not read it, and any one should call his attention to anything we say, he may explain that he has assurance that it does not mean him.

As to any extra copies sent him, or any in his community, we know nothing. We ordered no copies sent to anybody in his vicinity, and did not write the article for any particular community, nor to fit any particular person. One thing is certain, and that is, if the instrumental music had as happy an influence upon his “poor heart” as he appears to think, our

article or something else has had a very different influence upon it since, judging from what he had written above. We wish the Doctor well, and think he will feel better after meditation, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. He does not do himself justice in this article. He is a much better man than any one would suppose from this piece. By the way, we would rather let him have his plaything in the church than to have him so much out of sorts again. Will some one who understands "English syntax," "logic," "courtesy," etc., discuss the merits of instrumental music in churches with the doctor?<sup>7</sup>

Pinkerton had stated that the reason for the instrument at Midway was the poor singing, which was so bad that it would "scare even the rats from worship."<sup>8</sup> But not everyone in the congregation was happy with the melodeon. According to the story, the melodeon caused so much trouble in the Midway Church that Adam Hibler, an elder of the church, removed the "instrument of Satan" from the church late one night with the assistance of a servant, Rueben, who passed it out to his master through a window.<sup>9</sup> (That same melodeon is now on display at Midway College.) Unfortunately, this organ controversy was one of the main conflicts that led to a split in the Christian Church. The noninstrumental churches eventually withdrew into their own associations and are known today as the Churches of Christ. But whatever others believed, Pinkerton would continue to be on the leading edge of progressive thought in the church.

3. "Whatever others might do, I believe according to my interpretation of God's Word and my God-given intellect." In 1871 the Main Street Christian Church elders in Lexington, Kentucky, attempted to try Pinkerton for heresy. They sent a rather lengthy document to the church at Harrodsburg which held authority over Pinkerton's membership. Pinkerton received the charges and "when he looked at his indictment which was about ten feet long, he said that he would rather plead guilty than read it. After getting well into the thing, however, he found it such capital reading that he regretted its brevity." He said that "if the Lexington bishops had called on him for assistance he could have gotten up a much stronger case against himself."<sup>10</sup>

Being the Disciples' first true liberal, Pinkerton held several convictions that bordered on heresy for many. First of all, he believed in church organizations, not as being scriptural, but simply being practical. He believed in the cooperation of churches to achieve the goals of ministry. He stated "the greatest little tyrants I have known have been the greatest sticklers for what they call the independence of churches." Secondly, he believed in allowing church membership without requiring immersion. He saw immersion as the only way of baptism for himself but said "I will not thrust my translation of a Greek word between your conscience and your God." Thirdly, he did not ascribe to the belief that all scripture is the literally inspired word of God. He said that young preachers who did were going to have a hard time proving that the ninth

verse of the 137th Psalm, which says that happy is the man who smashes Babylon's babies against a rock, was inspired by the gentle, loving God who "hears the cry of the young raven." At one point he said "the dear old gospels are mere fragmentary memoirs." Pinkerton also said, "The New Testament is not a code of cast-iron laws for trembling slaves; but a rule of life for loving children." He defied all Biblical theories and theorists saying that "it is more important to know in *whom* we believe than what theories we believe."<sup>11</sup> He claimed that "Christianity meets us first, not as a theory, not as a series of doctrines not as truth expressed in scientific formulas, but as a history, a biography—a history of a life and a death, of a burial and a resurrection."<sup>12</sup> And again, "The Church will never be united in doctrines of any kind. She must be one in Christ Jesus, or divide still more, and remain divided till the Lord shall come."<sup>13</sup> These startling ideas drew for Pinkerton the label of the Disciples first liberal. Even though he was constantly in conflict over his ideas, they were true to his nature as a scholarly, deep thinking, compassionate man. He would hold on to them whatever the cost.

4. "Whatever others might do, I will view the black race as equals in the eyes of God and society and I will help them gain independence." As in most churches during that era, the slaves of the Midway Christian Church members attended worship with their masters, being taught the Gospel and baptized just the same as the whites. However, that is where the equality and influence of the blacks ended. They had no voice in the decision-making process in their church. The Midway church, in a daring move which was ahead of its time, built a separate meeting-house for its black members and assisted them in setting up a separate organization through which they could govern their own church. Pinkerton reported on this in a sermon given at Midway on January 1, 1854. In setting a time frame he recorded that "for nearly two years they have carried on their own affairs." This means that sometime during 1852 the black Christian Church in Midway, which is now known as the Second Christian Church was founded as a separate organization, one of the earliest black Disciple churches. In that same sermon Pinkerton stated:

Believing that our colored brethren would enjoy greater prosperity and be happier in a separate organization than with us, a comfortable meeting-house was built for them, and for nearly two years they have carried on their own affairs, with occasional assistance from the officers of this congregation. I have preached for them as often as I considered it profitable to them. Two of their number read and speak well—Alexander Campbell and George Williams. They have been able this year to raise sixty dollars "to pay their preacher." All things considered, ten thousand times as much as is given by some white congregations for similar purposes. Twenty-five have been added during the past year, two have died, and one has been excluded. The present number of members is

eighty-nine. I take it for granted that you all feel an interest in the welfare of our African church, and will hear with gratitude of her prosperity.<sup>14</sup>

This last line may have been delivered with Pinkerton's well-known sarcasm since the sympathies of Kentuckians during the 1850s and 1860s were not inclined towards independence and respect for blacks. But Pinkerton's sense of justice was strong. "He was at ease in the palace of the rich and in the hovel of the negro—always the same." Also, "the rights, interests, honor and happiness of Essex, the old black man who worked with him in his garden, were as dear to him as the rights, interests, honor and happiness of the President of the United States." Pinkerton was a vocal emancipationist, which was a risky position in a slave state during the era of the Civil War. Slavery to Pinkerton was not only abhorrent and unethical but was also a sacrilege toward God. The depth of his conviction can be felt in a lecture he delivered in Midway, Mt. Sterling, and Paris in 1856.

It is a county court-day in one of our rich counties and a great crowd is gathered about the public square. The shadow of the temple of justice lies upon the throng, and near by are sundry churches, sacred to the worship of Him who came to set the captive free, to unbind heavy burdens, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort the mourner, and to heal the broken hearts of earth. The crowd is promiscuous. Old and young, rich and poor, saint and sinner, are mingled together. Toothless old men, somewhat drunk, and striplings, piping oaths and imprecations in soprano, are there. Our glorious civilization and our piebald religion are both of them represented. Let us see, then what this civilization did in that year of our Lord 1856.

'Here,' cries a Stentor, standing on high, 'here is a chance for bargains. I will sell, under decree of court this yellow woman and her five children to the highest bidder, without reserve.'

The mother, tall and graceful, her large black eyes suffused in tears, looks into the crowd anxiously and sadly—(not imploringly) for hope is gone. Her color indicates that the blood has gathered about her heart—this mother is put on the block first. The bidding is brisk, and she is soon off at a handsome price. [It was \$1,200.] Then came the children—the oldest fifteen, the youngest, perhaps, three years of age. The mother watches as each new bid is cried, anxious, doubtless, to discover where her children are to go. 'Berry,' a boy of six summers, appalled at the prospect, dashes suddenly into the crowd as if to escape; he is caught and replaced on the block. His eyes swim, but he utters no sound—his young heart is crushed. And now, at last, comes the turn of little 'Lucy.' She clings to her mother's skirts, screaming wildly. It shall not

avail thee, Lucy; nor yet that dumb eloquent despair of thy poor mother's countenance. What are lacerated, bleeding hearts, and streaming eyes to these civilized gentlemen! 'Tis over; the mother is gone, and her children are scattered to the four winds of heaven. Not one of them accompanies her to her new home.

God help you, good people! Help for you in our civilization or in our religion, there is none. Oh Mammon! thou blind, heartless god, when will thy reign come to an end? Ah! does not Mammon hold it against Jesus in our civilization too? Is not wealth more than immortality—the dollar more potent than the pleadings of inspiration.<sup>15</sup>

In commenting on this lecture and on the Southerner's use of Genesis 9:18-27 to claim that Negroes were the descendants of Noah's cursed grandson, Canaan, and were therefore intended by God to be slaves, Pinkerton said:

Such were some of our utterances in three of the 'Blue Grass' centers four years before the war; and we can testify that to talk thus before crowds of the wealthiest, most ultra pro-slavery citizens of Kentucky, at that time, was 'no child's play.' No doubt many of them thought it all a mere 'splurge,' the result of 'dyspepsia.'

At that time I was an emancipationist, and desired the repeal of all inhuman laws in relation to the colored race, bond and free; for the free-negro code was not less barbarous than the slave code. I insisted that such scenes as the one above described—a scene that I witnessed with horror—should not be possible in a civilized community; that the rite of matrimony among slaves should be enjoined, and measures adopted by which slavery should be abolished without serious shock to our industrial, social, and political systems. . . .

Was Noah, waking out of a drunken snooze, indeed inspired of God to curse his grandson on account of the indiscretion of his son—the nature of which indiscretion is not very apparent in the 'Common Version?' Well, be it so; but does it thence follow that the people of the United States may treat men, women and children as if they were cattle, four thousand years after the death of Noah, and in the nineteenth century of the blessed Jesus? How will the story of slavery read in the millennium? 'Cursed be Canaan,' said an old man somewhere not far from Ararat, more than four thousand years ago; and disciples of Jesus in the United States, cry out, 'That means the "nigger," sure as the judgment. Where is he? Let me at him, for the word of the Lord must be fulfilled, and that blessed scripture will fail if we do not perpetuate human bondage till Jesus comes to take his saints to glory.'

These disciples, so zealous for the fulfillment of prophecy, seem to forget that a greater than Noah has appeared, of whom a prophet had said, 'He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.' They do not seem to care whether this scripture is fulfilled or not; but that other sweet, precious, humane, Christ-like passage, 'Cursed be Canaan,' has corn and cotton in it.<sup>16</sup>

In 1869 a negro man stole a hog and, during his escape, fell on his own butcher knife and died in Dr. Pinkerton's garden. A columnist in the Cincinnati *Enquirer* wrote a heartless account of the matter filled with racist attempts at humor. Pinkerton could not let the article go unchallenged and in a stinging rebuttal wrote:

From that weary body, in the depth of the still night, a sinful human soul, for which Jesus died, had passed out and away into the infinite abyss, with no watchers but the stars, and him who appoints their goings.

Under any circumstances, the death of a human being is a great solemnity; but to die alone and abroad in the night, with the evidences of theft all about one, is unspeakably appalling. Not unlikely, a thousand darker deeds than hog-stealing were perpetrated that very night in the cities of Cincinnati and New York, by the wealthy and the wise, and in the midst of what is called elegance and refinement—deeds that will never be heard of till 'the Books are opened.' Poor Martin! he had been reared in the Kentucky negro cabin of forty years ago, amidst darkness and dirt. He had passed his days in sight of luxuries, the fruit of his own toil, but which were not for him; and, stimulated by strong desire, and tantalized by the nearness of the coveted enjoyment, he became a thief, and a thief he died. To him the lettered page was all unknown, nor had the glorious light of science gilded even the borders of his dark spirit. Left to welter in the muck of low and sensual desire, his life was a failure, and his death sorrowful, tragical enough. God is just; God is merciful; and so it is, we would prefer to stand in the judgment with the negro thief, rather than with the man who wrote the text of this article, or with anyone who approves of its tone and spirit.<sup>17</sup>

Pinkerton's position on slavery and his service as a surgeon and chaplain in the Union army alienated him from the Pro-Southern majority which filled the Disciple churches of Kentucky. After the Civil War, Pinkerton was never allowed to preach in a white church in Kentucky again. Pinkerton tried for a while to seek peace with his estranged Disciples but found no sign of reconciliation on their parts. Finally in January of 1866 "he drew the sword and threw away the Scabbard, determined, as he said, if he must die ecclesiastically, that he would die fighting." For the rest of his life, which was only nine more

years, he pursued an aggressive defense of the Union and launched a vigorous campaign against those who would split the church along geographic or political lines and against those who sacrificed their true beliefs to gain acceptance among their hostile Kentucky brethren. Sadly, the Midway Church also turned her back on the man who had loved her so dearly. After his expulsion from the white pulpits of Kentucky, Pinkerton began work amongst the black Disciples and this led him back to the center of the black church strength, to the town of Midway. "I shall be compelled to proceed cautiously, especially in Midway, my old home, a village into *all* the houses of which I was accustomed to enter in times of distress for the space of sixteen years."<sup>18</sup>

In an 1870 letter he wrote,

I spent a part of last week in Midway, fourteen miles from this place, a village where I lived sixteen years, where I built the orphan girl school, a congregation of disciples, and where for six years I conducted a female academy. A protracted meeting was under way there in my old church, conducted by two young men whom I baptized. I went to the meeting three or four times, but was not in any way recognized as a preacher. On Thursday night I attended the colored people's prayer meeting and made appointments for Saturday night, Lord's Day morning and night. We had a house built for them while I lived in Midway, and I baptized a great many, but they have become scattered and demoralized. They were most grateful for my attention to them, and I promised to return soon and to take Brother Shackelford with me. I felt on Sunday night that if the Lord would open a way for me, I would spend the remnant of my active life among this poor people.<sup>19</sup>

Though he did not get to build the school for black children that he hoped to build, he did much work in reorganizing and strengthening black churches in Kentucky. And he did it at great personal cost, for he was falling further into poverty. Several churches in the North wanted him to move there as their pastor, and he was offered the presidency of Hiram College in Ohio. But he refused them all, choosing instead to remain in Kentucky and to do the work to which he felt God had called him. Pinkerton stated, "My work is not wholly confined to the colored people. My mere presence in a town is a protest against the ungodliness of white disciples, and a rebuke of their inhumanity, and they feel it to be so."<sup>20</sup>

Shortly before his death, in the midst of great suffering, Pinkerton said, "The principles involved in the controversy I have waged I can never yield, but personal matters I desire to forgive. I wish to die at peace with all men."<sup>21</sup> In the same spirit many of his estranged friends came to call upon him one last time before his death. On his sixty-third birthday, Thursday, January 28, 1875, just before sunrise L. L. Pinkerton died. His funeral was held in the Main Street Christian Church in Lexington, beginning a healing process that finally gave him the esteem

of which he was so richly deserving but which he eluded him the last decade of his life. The same reconciliation of feelings took place at Midway for when the new sanctuary was dedicated on Sunday, April 12, 1896, one of the guests of honor was Professor Burnett J. Pinkerton and the main stained-glass window bore the portrait of his father, Lewis Letig Pinkerton. From this spot Pinkerton's portrait has kept watch on the pulpit and over the people of the church to which he gave his heart and indomitable spirit.

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### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>John Shackleford, *Life, Letters, and Addresses of Dr. L. L. Pinkerton* (Cincinnati: Chase and Hall, 1876), p. 173.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 28

<sup>3</sup>M. C. Tiers, *The Christian Portrait Gallery* (Cincinnati: M. C. Tiers, 1864), pp. 208-9.

<sup>4</sup>Shackleford, p. 299.

<sup>5</sup>J. J. Haley, "An Historic Church in a New Home," *Christian Evangelist* (April 23, 1896): 258.

<sup>6</sup>John Augustus Williams, *Reminiscences* (Cincinnati: F.L. Rowe, 1898), pp. 105-6.

<sup>7</sup>Joseph Franklin and J. A. Headington, *The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin* (St. Louis: John Burns, 1879), pp. 409-12.

<sup>8</sup>B. J. Humble, *The Story of the Restoration* (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation Publishing, 1969), p. 58.

<sup>9</sup>Mrs. A. P. Bryan, "First Musical Instrument in Christian Church, Meoldeon Spirited Away to End Discord, Is Now at Midway College," *Lexington (KY) Herald*, April 10, 1938.

<sup>10</sup>Shackleford, p. 104.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 108, 112, 63, 111, 113.

<sup>12</sup>William Thomas Moore, *The Living Pulpit of the Christian Church* (Cincinnati: R. W. Carroll, 1869), p. 110.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>14</sup>Shackleford, pp. 45-6.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 296, 179, 51-3.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 137-8.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 183.

### **Michigan Disciple Historical Information Wanted**

Dr. Stanley Harbison is working on a history of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Michigan. Anyone having information or material should contact Dr. Harbison at 1434 Collegewood, Ypsilanti, MI 48197, (313-483-8344).  
Michigan Disciple Historical

**"The Gospel of Temperance"**  
**Early Disciple Women Preachers and the WCTU**  
**1887-1912**

by Glenn M. Zuber\*

Between 1874 and 1900, the interdenominational Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) was the main agency through which American middle- and upper-class women changed and expanded their role in society. After 1900, the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and the General Federation of Women's Clubs surpassed the WCTU in both size and influence.<sup>1</sup> Yet the WCTU remained one of the most important women's organizations in the lives of reformed-minded Disciple women: second in importance only the Disciples' own Christian Woman's Board of Missions (CWBM). Women reformers in the WCTU and CWBM sought to expand "woman's sphere" to include areas outside of the home, but not abolish that sphere like many suffragists of their time. In the process of expanding their own sphere, Disciple women lecturers and leaders spread the gospel of women's special duty to reform society. This essay attempts to show the ways in which the WCTU enabled women to become preachers in the Christian Churches (Disciples) and how these preacher's experiences in the WCTU, concentrating especially on the lives of Clara C. Babcock and Sadie McCoy Crank, affected the way these women carried out their new roles in the church.

**The Temperance Movement, Women,  
and Disciples of Christ Congregational Life  
at the Turn of the Century.**

While numerous women reformers in the WCTU and CWBM advocated a woman's right to preach, a smaller number of WCTU and CWBM speakers and leaders actually found opportunities to do such preaching over an extended period. While it is impossible to estimate the number of women who preached temporarily from pulpits—a common experience in many churches by the first decade of the twentieth century—one finds in national Disciple year books and church periodicals at least fifteen women who held their own pastorates or held revivals over an extended period of many years during the era covered in this study or beginning during this period. More than thirty other women appear at least once as the pastor of a church in the *Disciple Year Book* in 1912—the first year pastors were listed with their churches—or in the one state (Kansas) from where early state *Year Books* have survived. *Kansas Year Books* list numerous women pastors between 1908 and 1912.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time that CWBM and WCTU women lecturers advocated the right for women to preach (and pastored struggling churches occasionally), the Disciples of Christ continued to suffer from a severe shortage of trained men preachers. By their own enthusiastic estimates

in 1909, the Disciples claimed 11,647 congregations, 1,250,000 members but only 6,877 ministers.<sup>3</sup> In such a context the Disciples of Christ, similar to Baptists, relied mostly on the efforts of consecrated part-time preachers who served churches while earning most of their income from secular occupations (i.e., bivocational ministers) or circuit riders with many churches under their pastoral care. In such circumstances, it was not unusual for churches to gather only once or twice every month. As 1909 figures suggest, most churches only had a small number of members. Coupled with the problem of small, poor, and isolated rural churches, was a restless preaching force; as late as the 1920s, the average length of a pastorate was less than three years and two months.<sup>4</sup>

The WCTU's political and reform goals propelled tens of thousands of women into public life to achieve Prohibition and other reform-minded aims during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>5</sup> The role the WCTU, as well as the Temperance cause, played in American culture is still being debated. Various historians argue whether the WCTU was primarily an organization through which women exerted political influence in the late nineteenth century or the result of increased antagonism between the sexes or a form of social control over recent immigrants or a response to the growing problems of alcohol consumption after the Civil War. The limited historical records related to the Disciple involvement in the WCTU do not permit an exhaustive analysis of the reasons Disciple women embraced the WCTU and the Temperance cause in general. The available historical evidence only allows a more limited study of the WCTU's influence on early Disciple women preachers.<sup>6</sup>

The exact influence of the WCTU on early women preachers is hard to discern because of many reasons—one being the way past Disciples histories have been written about the women. Most women preachers left almost no record of their ministries. And those histories of early women preachers that do exist mostly concern the women's lives as ministers—not the work that led them to contemplate the ministry or the causes that also engaged their attention while they ministered. Despite this paucity of information concerning the WCTU's role in the lives of Disciple women, the few surviving records do reveal that the WCTU informed women preachers' conceptions of their own ministries. A comparison of men's and women's efforts in the ministry at the turn of the century suggest many early Disciple women preachers actively linked Christianity and Prohibition to a greater degree than Disciple men preachers linked the two.<sup>7</sup>

Obituaries, speeches, and newspaper articles allow one to reconstruct a picture of early women preachers and their WCTU work. For example, obituaries make it clear that three early women preachers, Clara H. Hazelrigg (1860-1937) of Kansas, Emma Gates Moxley (1865-1919) and Ella P. McConnell (d. 1952), both of Ohio, had early and significant WCTU experiences. This limited information in obituaries concerning the WCTU establishes the possibility that this organization influenced, trained, and politicized Disciple women to the same extent

that other Protestant women were influenced by their involvement in the WCTU. The fact that Emma Moxley's obituary described her CWBM and WCTU work as "well known throughout the state" suggests the importance of the WCTU in her life, and, by extension, other Disciple women.<sup>8</sup>

The interdenominational WCTU, with its much larger size than the denominational CWBM, often offered young Disciple girls more opportunities for significant leadership than Disciple churches themselves. In an era when most Disciple churches did not have CWBM societies, city-wide WCTU chapters and youth organizations provided the first opportunities for significant work and leadership experience for many future Disciple women lecturers and preachers. Francis "Birdie" Farrar Omer (1874-1970), a preacher between the 1920s and 1960s, recalled in her 1955 autobiography that she had been active in the WCTU from the age of fourteen. Her leadership experiences in life "began by leading a Band of Hope, which we then called the children's organization."<sup>9</sup> The obituary of Mrs. Ella P. McConnell stated that as early as her childhood, McConnell had been active in Sunday-school teaching, Christian women's organizations and the WCTU.<sup>10</sup>

Disciple women's involvement in the WCTU was part of a more general concern Disciples held for the effects of alcohol on families, the poor, and American society. Although many men Disciple leaders and preachers considered legal prohibition as one of the goals of their religious and political lives, temperance and prohibition were frequently considered women's causes because of the WCTU's influence and the fact that Victorian society believed that women, in their roles as mothers and wives, were created and obligated to protect their homes from all forms of vice, including imbibing alcohol.<sup>11</sup> The congregationalism of Disciple churches and Disciple enthusiasm for hearing temperance speakers resulted in a situation where one WCTU lecturer noted to a Disciple minister in 1896 that "the Christian and Methodist churches were generally at the service of the W.C.T.U. workers and speakers, while some of the other churches were not so liberal."<sup>12</sup> In fact, to supporters of women's preaching, the widespread use of alcohol justified a woman's right to preach. It was argued that when women became preachers they would use their new position to oppose alcohol and its perceived destruction of people's lives. As early as 1881, a prominent CWBM leader, Mrs. M. M. B. Goodwin, urged that women be allowed to preach in order to combat both religious apathy and strong drink. In a *Christian Standard* article, Goodwin intoned that "The night of unbelief darkens our land, and King Alcohol holds an almost universal scepter. . . . Yet we are told that it is a shame for a woman to raise her voice against this o'ermastering tide of sin and woe. . . ."<sup>13</sup>

Women preachers themselves urged greater acceptance of their preaching in order that the battle against "King Alcohol" might be won. Clara H. Hazelrigg, a woman involved in the powerful Kansas WCTU, linked the church's success in outlawing alcohol with greater opportunities for women to preach in an address at the Evangelistic Conference

during the 1901 Minneapolis General Convention. Hazelrigg explained that “Women in gospel work means an increase in gospel forces against that bitter foe of the human race—the saloon. It means the hastening of the day when the church shall rise up *en masse* . . . and declare the saloon business to be outlawed by man and accursed by God, and that by his grace it must be swept off the face of the earth.”<sup>14</sup>

### Clara Celestia Babcock (1850-1925)

Newspaper accounts of many instances in the lives of Clara C. Babcock and Sadie McCoy Crank, two of the earliest and most successful Disciple women preachers, demonstrate the role the WCTU played in Disciple women becoming preachers and how the WCTU influenced two women’s conceptions of their ministries. When Clara Babcock first began lecturing for the WCTU is unknown. However, in 1887 Babcock was serving as county president for the WCTU in Whiteside County, Illinois. Between July, 1887, and July, 1888, she held forty-eight temperance meetings during which she obtained 196 abstinence pledges.<sup>15</sup> Babcock also began thinking about women’s roles in the church during her first known WCTU county presidency.

Sometime during her 1887-88 presidency, Babcock felt compelled to re-examine the reasons used by her contemporaries to prohibit women preaching. Babcock arrived at a definite conclusion during this time (c. 1887-88) for she wrote in an 1892 defense of “Woman in the Pulpit” that she had settled that preaching question “Nearly five years ago.” During her study of the issue she wrestled with the question of whether God allowed women to publicly speak and teach in the church. After “careful study and prayer and mature deliberation” she concluded that if one were to “harmonize” scripture one had to grant women’s right to preach. According to Babcock, the Pauline prohibitions referred to a different set of circumstances than Babcock’s and other Victorian Disciple women’s and therefore did not have the same prohibitive authority for the women of her time. Babcock argues that the prohibitions applied to the unruly women in Paul’s time who were “just brought out of heathenism” and described a wife’s subordinate relationship to her husband; the prohibitions did not apply to a mature Christian woman’s ability to preach. The timing of Babcock’s conclusion (c. 1887) was important because it was also the time she began speaking in church on behalf of the WCTU. The date that Babcock changed her mind about preaching suggests that being WCTU lecturer provided a catalyst for her to think through the reasons women could give temperance lectures, but not sermons, from the pulpit.<sup>16</sup>

Although Babcock was ordained and installed as pastor of Erie Christian Church in August, 1889, she had already been considered a preacher more than a year. The first evidence of Babcock acting as a preacher appeared in a *Sterling Gazette* article of June, 1888. The correspondent for Deer Grove, Illinois, described Mrs. Babcock’s WCTU work in the following manner: “Last Thursday evening Mrs. Babcock, of Sterling, a preacher, delivered a very appropriate sermon to the

drinkers of Deer Grove. After the sermon the women, girls, and children, organized a W.C.T.U."<sup>17</sup> Thus while Babcock became an ordained Disciple minister in 1889, she first began preaching in a WCTU context in 1888, if not before.

*Clara  
Celestia  
Babcock*



As a WCTU lecturer, Babcock was required to speak in many different kinds of Protestant churches in order to broaden the support for the WCTU and the cause of Prohibition. Many church-goers felt that the Bible and their Protestantism compelled them to live temperate lives; in addition, all people truly interested in reforming and Christianizing America would support Prohibition. This close association between Protestant practice and Prohibition manifested itself in how WCTU supporters spoke of "gospel temperance" being the solution to the severe problems in Victorian America. When all Americans were converted into temperate Protestants, most social problems would disappear, including slums, radical labor agitation, and political corruption.<sup>18</sup> During one Saturday in May, 1889, Babcock herself held a "gospel temperance" meeting at the Fulton (Illinois) Methodist Episcopal church. And even after preaching regularly at the Erie Christian Church, Babcock continued speaking on the topic of gospel temperance. While preaching at Erie in 1889, Babcock gave two lectures on "gospel temperance" work to the Erie Methodist Episcopal church and a

Woman's Missionary Convention.<sup>19</sup> She also held a "Union Gospel Temperance" meeting at Erie Christian Church in December, 1890.<sup>20</sup> WCTU speakers like Babcock found great freedom to speak before churches because they spoke on the subject of temperance, not exclusively on a Biblical text in a regular Sunday service. Yet, these WCTU speaking opportunities could lead to opportunities to speak before regular church services. The *Sterling Gazette* reported in April 1889 that Babcock conducted the Sunday evening service in the same Erie Methodist Episcopal church where, the previous day, she had given a "gospel temperance" lecture.<sup>21</sup>

Babcock's experiences speaking before church groups as county WCTU president and lecturer probably led her to be asked to become a regular Christian Church preacher. Sometime in 1888, Erie Christian Church asked Babcock to speak during a Sunday service. Nathaniel Haynes' *History of the Disciples in Illinois* (1914) records the results of Babcock's speech:

Being in Erie on a Sunday, she was induced to speak to the Christian congregation in the forenoon. The presence and approval of God were so manifest that she was led to continue in the service of that congregation.<sup>22</sup>

Haynes' report describes Babcock's visit as intending to last for a Sunday but earning such a positive reception that she was asked to speak again. The fact that Babcock was asked to appear for a temporary speaking engagement implies that Babcock was asked to deliver a WCTU lecture, although Babcock could very well have been asked to preach a regular sermon for a Sunday. The kind of speech Babcock gave is less important than the fact that she eventually became a regular Disciple preacher as a result of the experience. By February, 1889, Babcock was occupying the Erie Christian Church pulpit to hold "a series of revival meetings."<sup>23</sup>

Between June and August, 1889, Babcock's energies clearly shifted into more exclusively Disciple concerns. While she continued to lecture for the WCTU and hold office she began to devote most of her energy to preaching and CWBM organizing. At the July 30th Whiteside County WCTU convention Babcock reported her year's work as president and, in turn, the convention wished her luck in her new work as preacher and CWBM organizer. In a newspaper report of the convention, a WCTU correspondent remarked about Babcock, "We were impressed that in selecting our president we had made no mistake." Babcock had organized three new WCTU chapters, enrolled 125 new members, and traveled 670 miles in fulfilling her duties. She put in 75 days of reimbursed work as well as donating two months of her own time for the WCTU cause.<sup>24</sup>

Clara C. Babcock was ordained "as a minister of the gospel of the Christian church . . ." Friday evening, August 2, 1889. She had been preaching regularly at Erie and with her ordination was "installed as pastor" of the Erie Christian Church. Andrew Scott, minister of the nearby Sterling Christian Church, ordained her. The *Sterling Gazette*

commented: "She is a preacher of much influence and power and being the only lady minister in this part of the State she is quite a curiosity."<sup>25</sup>

Babcock found role models of women preachers in the WCTU and, furthermore, acted herself as a role model for other would-be women preachers involved in the WCTU. Newspaper articles indicate that Babcock personally knew women preachers through the WCTU. For example, a well-known woman preacher was featured during an 1888 Fourth of July picnic sponsored by Babcock's county WCTU. The Jordan, Illinois, picnic celebration had the Reverend Anna Howard Shaw, prominent suffragist and ordained minister of the small Protestant Methodist Church, speaking on the topic of women's suffrage.<sup>26</sup> The gathered crowd also enjoyed a brass band and a poem reading by Babcock. At the time, the Reverend Shaw was serving as the superintendent of the WCTU Department of Franchisement, a position she held until 1892. Shaw later served as vice-president (1892-1904) and president (1904-1915) of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. If Shaw did encourage Babcock about the possibility of becoming a minister it would not have been the only instance when Shaw inspired a potential woman minister. A recent study on Unitarian-Universalist women ministers documents the encouragement this suffragist WCTU leader gave to both aspiring and established women ministers during the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>27</sup>

Other women involved in Clara Babcock's county WCTU looked to her as an example of a successful woman preacher. While the *Sterling Gazette* noted in 1889 that Mrs. Babcock was the first "lady preacher" in the region, by 1892 there were at least four "lady preachers" in Whiteside County alone. At the 1892 Whiteside County WCTU convention, Babcock was only one of four women "Reverends" conducting the program. The "Mrs. Rev. Gostelow," "Mrs. Rev. Sebart," and "Mrs. Rev. Clark" also participated in the thirty-eight delegate convention. The Mrs. Rev. Gostelow presided over the convention in the capacity of President of the County WCTU, just as Babcock had presided three years previously. The emergence of four women preachers in one WCTU county convention poses interesting questions about the history of women Protestant ministers and the WCTU. Babcock appears to have been one of many WCTU leaders to have won the right to preach and pastor in Whiteside County churches.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the emergence of three later women preachers in a WCTU setting after Babcock's ordination underscores the interdenominational context in which Babcock began preaching and contemplating the Disciple ministry.

Newspaper accounts of Babcock's ministry before and after her 1889 ordination suggest that she maintained surprisingly good relations with other Christian Churches despite her novel status as a woman preacher. The prominence and acceptance of her ministry can be explained both by her reputed speaking ability and a history of well-known WCTU efforts. Without a history of WCTU lecturers in Illinois, women's preaching might possibly have been much more controversial. As it was, regional conventions of Disciples as well as local congrega-

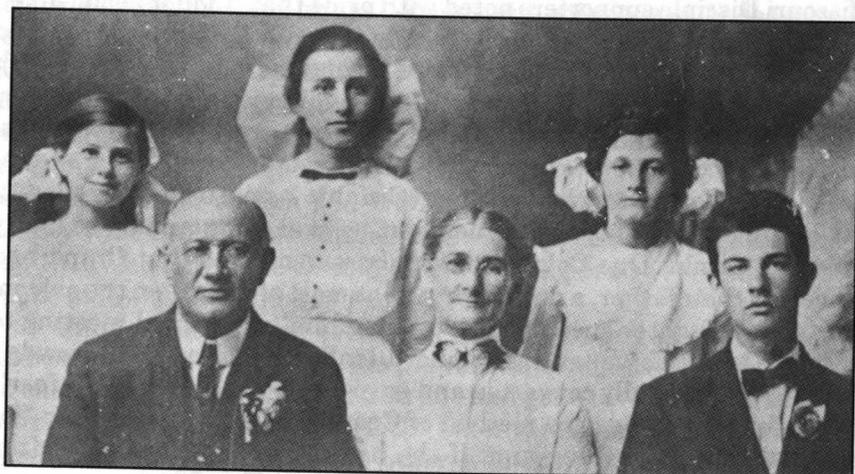
tions, both Disciple and non-Disciple, accepted Babcock's ministry. The 21st District Convention of the Illinois Christian Missionary Society in 1889 elected Babcock as CWBM Organizer and Treasurer.<sup>29</sup> The next year, the 21st District Convention was held in Babcock's church.<sup>30</sup> Disciple ministers and leaders also visited Babcock's church and invited her to speak in their churches. The State Evangelist of the Illinois Missionary Society, the "Rev. Pearl," reportedly held revival meetings in Erie Christian Church during March, 1890.<sup>31</sup> And in turn, Babcock preached at the nearby Coleta Christian Church, pastored by an "Elder Irvin," in January, 1892, indicating that her preaching was in demand at other Disciple churches.<sup>32</sup> Denominational leaders in other churches and community leaders apparently accepted Babcock's ministry for she was asked to lead the community Thanksgiving services at the Erie Baptist church in 1889, and delivered the 1890 Memorial Day address at nearby Lyndon, Illinois.<sup>33</sup> Another indication of her community acceptance, even popularity, is found in the numerical growth of the churches she pastored. By the end of 1889, Babcock pastored churches in two Illinois towns, Erie and Thompson. Her ministry proved so popular with the communities in which she preached that by 1890 the Erie church erected a new building—and even this building was full by 1891. In addition, Thompson's church building was remodeled in 1891 to double seating capacity. Babcock reported that her preaching during 1891 had brought 96 new members to both churches.<sup>34</sup>

While Babcock pastored her first churches between 1888 and 1892 she remained active in the WCTU. Babcock was elected secretary of the 7th Illinois District of the WCTU in October, 1889. She also served as 3rd Vice-President of the Rock Falls, Illinois union, and one of the two delegates to the state WCTU convention in 1892.<sup>35</sup> Proceedings from the 1892 WCTU Convention of Whiteside County reveal that Mrs. Babcock continued to be heavily involved in the WCTU a full three years after her ordination. At the 1892 convention she served as one of three members on both the Committees of Courtesies and Resolutions, as well as giving the address of welcome to the convention on the first day. Another important indication of Babcock's continuing involvement in the WCTU was the "Evangelistic" Resolution passed by the convention. It declared "Whereas, the evangelistic department is the foundation stone of all departments, therefore Resolved: It shall be first of all our work." Significantly, Mrs. Babcock gave the report on the success of that year's "evangelistic" work in increasing the number of women involved in the County WCTU. The fact that Babcock delivered such an important report implies that Babcock was either supervising WCTU lecturers or lecturing herself, or perhaps doing both.<sup>36</sup>

### **Sarah "Sadie" McCoy Crank (1863-1948)**

Sarah McCoy Crank was also a prolific early woman preacher and WCTU figure. Newspaper accounts and a small biographical monograph show that the WCTU continued to significantly influence Sarah McCoy Crank's ministry for years after she became a preacher. In the

early 1890s, just before her transition to preaching in 1891 or 1892, Crank had been a WCTU organizer and Sunday-school evangelist simultaneously. Nothing is known of her WCTU and Prohibition work from the years 1892 to 1900, but newspaper articles between 1902 and 1912 indicate that she was heavily involved in the WCTU; that her ministry was distinctively influenced by the WCTU; and that she spoke in the cause of enacting legal Prohibition. Crank's commitment to the WCTU was no doubt strengthened by her experience growing up with a frequently abusive and violent alcoholic father. In fact, Crank became a school teacher in the early 1880s to support her mother, invalid sister, and two little brothers because her father did not support the family.<sup>37</sup>



*The Crank Family*  
back row from left: *Chloe, Ruth, Esther*  
front row: *Rausser, Sadie, Paul*

The very course of Crank's ministry was often determined by her leadership in the WCTU and by her interest in furthering the cause of Prohibition, but in slightly different ways from Clara C. Babcock's ministry. In 1902, Crank and her husband considered moving to a new location from their pastorate in Blue Mound, Illinois. The Cranks had been preaching at Blue Mound since 1899. At first they considered moving to a location near Chicago. But while an epidemic stopped a revival of Sadie Crank in Illinois, she received two appeals to hold meetings in two Missouri towns, Minden Mines and Liberal. Crank's reputation as a "temperance preacher" had spread from Illinois to Southwest Missouri. Catherine Letton of Minden Mines originally appealed to Crank to come to Missouri because she "had heard of Mrs. Crank's temperance power." Minden Mines was a small town with six saloons. Mr. and Mrs. David Littlejohn of nearby Liberal also sent an appeal to Crank; they hoped she would "hold a meeting in Liberal, because she fought saloons." The Missouri appeals demonstrate that

Crank was popular among Disciples because of her persuasive rhetoric both in the cause of Protestant revivalism and legal Prohibition. Crank, on her part, welcomed the chance to hold revivals in this area of Missouri and preach against saloons. Indeed, she intended to shut down as many saloons as possible by converting alcohol drinkers into temperate Protestants. There was no difference in her mind between convincing people to give up alcohol and living a Christian life. The timing of the unexpected epidemic in Illinois and the Missouri appeals in 1902 had convinced Crank "it [was] a call of God to come to Missouri."<sup>38</sup>

Disciples were not disappointed in Crank's ability to win a hearing for the cause of temperance and Protestantism. During her first year of holding revivals and preaching in her own churches in Southwest Missouri Disciple supporters noted with pride that "Liquor people liked her." One saloon-keeper and his family joined a Disciple church and even Roman Catholics could be found among her audiences (of which one family joined.)<sup>39</sup> When Crank held revival meetings in Colchester, Illinois, in 1905 and 1906, she aimed to both convert people to Protestantism and to temperate living. One person remembered "[There were] 7 saloons in Colchester the first time [Crank] . . . held a meeting there[;] she had the [aim] of running them out by preaching and by so many giving up drink." One Colchester family remembered that Crank had converted their father, a miner who spent most of his pay in the saloon. A favorite daughter succeeded in coaxing him to a revival meeting to "hear the lady who was such a wonderful talker and drew such crowds." The father eventually converted and gave up strong drink. The miner's family fondly recalled the method of Crank's effective preaching: "for her kind way of touching him. If she had thundered at him . . . [the preaching probably] would [not] have had any effect."<sup>40</sup>

The most obvious way the WCTU exerted a continuing influence on Crank was in her public campaigning for Prohibition. Crank believed that saloons should not only be opposed by persuasive speaking, and revivalistic religion, but also by political campaigns and referendums. During the 1912 Barton County, Missouri, election Crank gave speeches encouraging resident to exercise their "local option" to prohibit alcohol in the county. At this time, Crank resided and preached in nearby Lawrence County. Thus, Crank intended to reform more than just her own county. The *Liberal Enterprise* commented: "Mrs. S. M. Crank, of Mt. Vernon, pastor of the Christian church there, has been in Liberal and the surrounding towns [in Barton County] this week speaking in the interest of Prohibition. On the temperance question Mrs. Crank has no equal and is doing an excellent work in the great cause."<sup>41</sup> Crank was an enthusiastic Prohibition campaigner who spoke both to large groups and individuals in the cause of legal Prohibition. One election day, Crank could be found personally meeting "wet" voters in the attempt to persuade them to change their minds as they waited in line to vote. When asked by friends to help the Prohibition campaign in Lamar (Barton Co.), Missouri, in 1912, Crank agreed to come. On election day it was reported that when Crank's "friends took her up town, she started

getting out [of the wagon]. They said, 'O, you aren't going over there, are you?' (indicating the booze element) 'What did you send for me for? [she replied] You don't need me to tell any of you how to vote, do you?'"<sup>42</sup>

Although the exact character of Crank's Prohibition campaigning is unknown, it probably bore a distinctively WCTU stamp. Crank was a WCTU lecturer and she organized WCTU chapters during the early 1900s. Crank's involvement with the WCTU was only one part of a general vision of creating a distinctly Protestant and reformed America, a vision shared by many Protestants of her time. An example of this ideology can be found in the addresses given at a women's missionary convention in which Crank spoke. The November 1912 Union Missionary Society's meeting held at the Mt. Vernon Baptist Church addressed topics related to conventional Protestant missionary endeavors in foreign countries as well as other issues. "Saloon and Temperance Reform," "America's Opportunity for Christ," "Mormonism in America" as with Crank's own "Unity in Making Our Country God's Country" were all topics discussed.<sup>43</sup> Both Cranks were prominently involved at a "Campaign Institute" held in the Mt. Vernon Baptist Church which brought together church and WCTU leaders to speak in the cause of county-wide Prohibition. While Mr. Crank spoke on the significance of the 1910 election, Sadie Crank led the opening praise service and later spoke on "Missions and Temperance."<sup>44</sup>

Often while talking to church audiences, or right after church addresses, Crank also promoted the value and objectives of the WCTU. In early 1909 Crank reported that she had gone to "Minden to attend a missionary meeting and W.C.T.U." Later that year, Crank traveled to Nashville, Missouri, with two other women to organize a CWBM of sixteen members at a local church. One the way back from Nashville, the women stopped for dinner, called on friends and organized a WCTU with eleven members.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, the next month Crank travelled with a member of her Liberal church, "Sister Cora Brown," to Verdella to organize a WCTU of 23 members with the help of some local Baptist WCTU women.<sup>46</sup>

Crank also made sure that her own parishioners were involved in, and informed about, the Prohibition cause. The WCTU message of Prohibition could be the subject of Sunday sermons. In April, 1903, she reported that a "Brother Newlin" had delivered a great address at the church's Temperance Rally.<sup>47</sup> Six years later, the local newspaper reported that the Liberal Christian Church held exercises for State Temperance Day and took up a collection for the WCTU campaign fund.<sup>48</sup> Crank encouraged her members to be involved in the WCTU in other ways as well. Church meetings were rescheduled to guarantee that all could attend WCTU gatherings. The city-wide WCTU of Liberal, Missouri, not only occasionally met at Crank's church, but the women of her church organized their own WCTU chapter.<sup>49</sup>

## **The Legacy of the WCTU in Disciple Women's History**

By their well-known WCTU activities, many Disciple women were able to establish a reputation as "orthodox" Christian women before becoming preachers, a more controversial role. It is inconceivable that a Disciple church would have listened to, let alone hired, a woman who sought to preach at the expense of traditional men's and women's spheres. Babcock's and Crank's continued lecturing for the WCTU after their ordinations probably also continued to build indirect support for their innovative ministries. The fact that Babcock and Crank used their public position as ministers to strengthen the WCTU is just as significant as the fact that both women emerged from the WCTU to become Disciple preachers. In effect, Disciple women reformers appropriated the "masculine" role of preacher to further the "feminine" cause of temperance as much as their WCTU lecturing offered a stepping-stone to Disciple preaching. It would be a gross oversimplification to see these two women as leaving the women's culture and political causes of the WCTU once they proved successful in the male-dominated preaching profession. Both Disciple preaching and WCTU lecturing played a part in the public life of the women even after their ordinations. The influences of both these roles, one innovative and the other more traditional, continued unvaried in these women's lives after they began their formal preaching careers.

The ministries of Babcock and Crank, and even perhaps preachers such as Hazelrigg, Moxley, McConnell and others, demonstrate that early women preachers engaged in traditionally feminine reform efforts, such as Temperance, alongside their effort to fill the traditionally masculine role of preacher. The involvement of Disciple women in the WCTU led some to consider both preaching and ministry in a different light than Disciple men did. The success of these WCTU leaders in winning the right to preach among Disciples shows the pervasive influence and achievement of the WCTU in elevating and dignifying women's efforts in society and particularly in conservative churches. The reasons women became Disciple preachers owe as much to internal Disciple developments as to the development of the WCTU's influence within the Disciples of Christ. The complex reasons women became Disciple ministers and the many goals they sought to achieve through their preaching point to the fact that between 1887 and 1912 women became both Disciple ministers and more effective missionaries of the gospel of temperance.

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### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900* (Philadelphia: Temple, 1981), p. xxvi.

<sup>2</sup>1912 *Disciples of Christ Year Book* (Cincinnati: American Christian Missionary Society, 1912); *Kansas Messenger Year Book, 1905-06, 1908-12* (Topeka, KS: Kansas Messenger, 1905-06, 1908-12). The 1905 and 1906 *Kansas Messenger Year Books* do not list any women as pastors of churches.

<sup>3</sup>Lester G. McAllister and William E. Tucker, *Journey in Faith, A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1975), p. 311.

<sup>4</sup>Riley Benjamin Montgomery, *The Education of Ministers of Disciples of Christ* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1931), pp. 66-114.

<sup>5</sup>Bordin, *Woman and Temperance*, pp. xv-xvi.

<sup>6</sup>Significant studies of the Prohibition movement and WCTU include: Ruth Bordin, *Woman and Temperance* (1981); Barbara Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity* (1981); Jack S. Blocker, Jr., ed., *Alcohol, Reform and Society: The Liquor Question in Social Context* (1979); and Joseph Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status, Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (1966). For a treatment of Disciple involvement in the prohibition cause see David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *The Social Sources of Division in the Disciples of Christ, 1865-1900*, Vol. 2, *A Social History of the Disciples of Christ* (Atlanta: Publishing Systems, 1973), pp. 208-42, and McAllister and Tucker, *Journey in Faith*, pp. 291-93.

<sup>7</sup>Various reasons have been offered for the emergence of Disciple women preachers during late 1880s and the 1890s. McAllister and Tucker link the emergence of ordained women among the Disciples of Christ with the desire of the CWBM to take advantage of reduced railroad fares offered to ordained clergy. More recent studies have challenged this argument. See McAllister and Tucker, *Journey in Faith*, p. 263. Cf. David A. Jones, "The Ordination of Women in the Christian Church: An Examination of the Debate, 1880-93," *Encounter* 50:3 (Summer 1989): 199-216, and Janet Riley, "The Ordination of Disciple Women: A Matter of Economy or Theology?" *Encounter* 50:3 (Summer, 1989): 219-33.

<sup>8</sup>"Moxley [obit.]," *Christian Standard* (hereafter referred to as CS), August 16, 1919, p. 1145.

<sup>9</sup>Birdie Farrar Omer, *Mine Eyes have Seen the Glory* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1955), p. 41.

<sup>10</sup>"Mrs. L. J. McConnell [obit.]," *Christian Evangelist* (hereafter referred to as CE) May 21, 1952, p. 523.

<sup>11</sup>Fred A. Bailey, "Disciple Images of Victorian Womanhood" *Discipliana* 40:1 (Spring 1988): 7-8.

<sup>12</sup>"W.C.T.U. National Convention," *Christian Oracle*, November 19, 1896, p. 739, quoted in David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *Division in the Disciples of Christ, 1865-1900*, p. 229.

<sup>13</sup>Mrs. M.M.B. Goodwin, "From My Stand Point," CS, June 11, 1881, p. 186.

<sup>14</sup>Clara Hazelrigg, "Help Those Men," CS, January 18, 1902, pp. 82-3; "Hazelrigg, Clara H. (Mrs. W. A.) [obit.]," CS, February 27, 1937, p. 164.

<sup>15</sup>"Rock Falls," *Sterling Gazette* (hereafter referred to as SG), July 20, 1888.

<sup>16</sup>Clara C. Babcock, "Woman in the Pulpit," CS, June 4, 1892, p. 482.

<sup>17</sup>Thad, "From Deer Grove," SG, June 15, 1888.

<sup>18</sup>McAllister and Tucker, *Journey in Faith*, p. 291.

<sup>19</sup>"Rock Falls," SG, April 24 and September 13, 1889.

<sup>20</sup>"From Erie," SG, December 10, 1890.

<sup>21</sup>"Rock Falls," SG, April 24, 1889. Babcock also addressed more overtly political gatherings, such as Prohibition Party rallies, as WCTU County President. See "Penrose and Suburbs," SG, October 12, 1888.

<sup>22</sup>Nathaniel S. Haynes, *History of the Disciples in Illinois, 1819-1914*. (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1915), pp. 464-6. Haynes and Babcock's obituary notices claim Babcock was ordained in 1888. However, according to a local paper Babcock was actually ordained in August, 1889. Babcock probably began preaching at Erie Christian Church in 1888, but was not ordained until 1889. See B. H. Cleaver, "Mrs. C. C. Babcock [obit.]," CE, December 31, 1925, p. 1703; Ernest R. Babcock, "Babcock [obit.]," CS July 25, 1925, p. 1045; "Saturday," SG, August 9, 1889.

<sup>23</sup>"From Rock Falls," SG, February 22, 1889.

<sup>24</sup>"W.C.T.U. Convention," SG, August 2, 1889. The resolution paying tribute to Babcock's work stated: "Resolved, That we regret very much that other work has deprived us of our president whom we have learned to love, admire and pattern after.

That we appreciate the grand work she had done for us in the interest of God and home and native land, in arousing interest and enthusiasm in the cause and in bringing up the number of Unions to fifteen and our membership to three hundred and fifty members. That we request her to be with us whenever her duties will admit, and we wish her abundant success in her new field of labor."

<sup>25</sup>"Saturday," *SG*, Friday August 9, 1889.

<sup>26</sup>"Penrose and Suburbs," *SG*, June 29 and July 6, 1888.

<sup>27</sup>Cynthia Grant Tucker, *Prophetic Sisterhood, Liberal Women Ministers of the Frontier, 1880-1930* (Boston: Beacon, 1990), pp. 44, 59.

<sup>28</sup>"W.C.T.U. The Ninth Annual Convention of the Whiteside County Union a Glorious Success. Report of the Proceedings.," *SG*, September 9, 1892.

<sup>29</sup>"Missionary Convention," *SG*, June 14, 1889.

<sup>30</sup>"From Erie," *SG*, June 27, 1890.

<sup>31</sup>"From Erie," *SG*, March 14, 1890.

<sup>32</sup>"From Coleta," *SG*, January 22, 1892.

<sup>33</sup>"From Erie," *SG*, November 29, 1889; "Thursday," *SG*, May 16, 1890.

<sup>34</sup>C. C. Babcock, "From the Field," *CS*, January 2, 1892, p. 21.

<sup>35</sup>"From Montmoremey," *SG*, October 18, 1889; 7th District W.C.T. U. Convention," *SG*, October 4, 1889; "Rock Falls News," *SG*, September 23, 1892.

<sup>36</sup>Mrs. E. L. Champlin, Secretary, "W.C.T.U.: The Ninth Annual Convention of the Whiteside County Union Glorious Success. Report of the Proceedings.," *SG*, September 9, 1892.

<sup>37</sup>E. T. Sechler, *Sadie McCoy Crank (1863-1948), Pioneer Woman Preacher in the Christian Church (Disciples)* (Hermitage, MO: Index, 1950), pp. 2-3. Another work concerning Crank's life is Ruth Black Aten's historical novel, *She Kept Men Standing* (Chicago: Adams, 1967).

<sup>38</sup>Sechler, *Crank*, pp. 12, 16.

<sup>39</sup>Sechler, *Crank*, pp. 12, 16.

<sup>40</sup>Sechler, *Crank*, p. 44. Another excerpt from this book of reminiscences makes a connection between successful revivals and people voting for local Prohibition: "A report received from Bell Jackson of Colchester, Illinois, two years after holding a meeting there, the first of six meetings told of 75 baptisms. The saloons were voted out in April following the meeting in February. (c. 1900)."

<sup>41</sup>Sechler, *Crank*, p. 18.

<sup>42</sup>Sechler, *Crank*, p. 42.

<sup>43</sup>"Program," *Lawrence Chiefton* (hereafter referred to as *LC*), November 14, 1912.

<sup>44</sup>"Program," Campaign Institute to be Held in the Baptist Church, Tuesday, April 26, 1910," *LC*, April 21, 1910.

<sup>45</sup>Sadie Crank, "Christian Church Notes, By the Pastor," *Liberal Enterprise* (hereafter referred to as *LE*), February 5, and August 20, 1909.

<sup>46</sup>Sadie Crank, "Christian Church Notes, By the Pastor," *LE*, June 25 and July 16, 1909. See "Christian Church Notes," *LE*, August 20, 1909.

<sup>47</sup>Sadie Crank, "Christian Church Notes, By the Pastor," *LE*, April 3, 1903.

<sup>48</sup>Sadie Crank, "Christian Church Notes, By the Pastor," *LE*, April 2, 1909.

<sup>49</sup>Sadie Crank, "Christian Church Notes, By the Pastor," *LE*, January 22, 1909; Press Correspondent, "W. C. T. U. Notes," *LE*, November 12, 1909; Sechler, *Crank*, p. 15.

### ***Ingleside Christian Church, Phoenix, Arizona Named Fund***

This congregation was founded in 1959 by a nucleus of 70 persons from Creighton Christian Church. Its first pastor was George J. Schilling. It maintained an active ministry until it closed its doors in 1992. From its assets a Named Fund was established with the Disciples of Christ Historical Society.



### ***Inez Moore Turner Named Fund***

Inez Turner was an active member of First Christian Church of Pettus, Texas, for 60 years. As a teacher she led the young people's class for many years and then taught the women's class. In 1991 she was honored by her congregation by being named Deaconess Emeritus, having served for a number of years as Deaconess. Mrs. Turner was quite active in the Christian Women's Fellowship and attended the World Convention of the Churches of Christ. Recently she was honored by being presented her 25 year perfect attendance Sunday School pin. This Named Fund was established with a bequest to the Historical Society in Mrs. Turner's Will.

### ***Lester and Phyllis Ringham Named Fund***

The church has been the center of their lives for almost half a century as a minister and wife team. Prior to retirement they served the Boyd Memorial Christian Church of Charleston, West Virginia. Currently they are serving as interim minister at First Christian Church, Springfield, Illinois. When Phyllis was in high school she served one summer on a Christian Youth Fellowship Caravan Team with the Historical Society. That summer they were supposed to have trained at the Historical Society in Canton, Missouri, but due to a flood they trained at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis where Lester McAllister was one of the leaders. The group did visit the Society headquarters during the summer. Both Lester and Phyllis have been Life Members of the Society since the mid 1970's. This Named Fund was established with gifts given in memory of their daughter Daunita Maye Ringham whose primary interest in life was audio-visual media. The income for the Ringham Named Fund will be used by the Society in its work with audio-visual historical records.

### ***Russell L. Burton Named Fund***

Mr. Burton was a quiet and reserved man, not one to assume leadership roles. He was raised as a member of the Methodist Church in Plato, Pulaski County, Kentucky, which can only be found on older maps. When he married Edna she was a member of the Southern Baptist Church but they decided on the First Christian Church in Black Mountain as their church home. There Russell served as a Deacon. While only having a sixth grade education he was an avid reader and served for several years as Librarian for his church. This Named Fund is established by his two sons, both of whom are ministers: James R. Burton and Jerry L. Burton.

## ***James and Olivia Pennington Named Fund***

Through the generous gifts and at the request of Philip and Stephen Pennington the Named Fund for their father James Pennington has been renamed the James and Olivia Pennington Named Fund. This is being done on the occasion of Mrs. Pennington's birthday.

## ***Loren E. Lair Named Fund***

For Loren Lair all but a short period of his life was spent in Iowa, his native state. Born in Toddville, educated at Drake University with both B.S.L. and M.A. degrees, he served congregations in Corydon and Sioux City. His greatest service came through the Iowa Christian Missionary Society (Disciples of Christ). He served as Executive Secretary and later as Executive Minister for more than 20 years. Dr. Lair served as President of the Iowa Council of Churches, member of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of Drake University and on many committees and boards of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In 1959 he served as President of the International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ). From his youthful days he always had a keen interest in history. He was a Life Member of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Society. This Named Fund was established by Mrs. Loren E. Lair, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Schneider and Dr. and Mrs. George Lair.

## ***Robert W. and Virgie Lee J. Shaw Named Fund***

The Shaws have been very active members of the Christian Church for many years. Robert served congregations in Bethesda, Maryland and Miami, Florida. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Johnson Bible College and a Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Arts Degree from Butler University. He was a "Founder" of Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, Tennessee. Virgie Lee received her B.A. degree from Peru State College, Nebraska and her Master of Fine Arts in Drama degree from Catholic University of America. She has been active in all phases of congregational life but devoted a major portion of her time to work with youth in the church. Currently she is secretary for the Florida Christian Women's Fellowship and is Vice-President of Church Women United of Miami. Robert retired as Senior Minister of Central Christian Church, Coral Gables, Florida, in 1976 and since has given almost full time service as President of the European Evangelistic Association, a volunteer position to which he was elected in 1974. This Named Fund was established by Robert and Virgie Lee Shaw.

## ***Just As I Lived It***

*by Lester G. McAllister*

(Recalling events occurring during a 70-plus year fellowship in the Stone-Campbell Movement.)

Before Lyndon B. Johnson was Vice President or President, when he was majority leader in the U. S. Senate, he was invited to give the commencement address at Bethany College. The year was 1958 and none of us knew what was in store for us or for the nation. We did know of Johnson's membership in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

President Perry E. Gresham planned a luncheon in honor of Senator Johnson and his party. Several hundred guests were expected. My job was to be certain that the room and speaker's table were prepared and that sufficient food was on hand. This is not easy when the number invited keeps changing from moment to moment.

Dr. Gresham asked Senator Johnson to speak and say whatever was on his heart. To everyone's surprise he spoke on his and his family's relationship to Alexander Campbell and the Disciples. There is no way he could have been briefed or prepared. Without a note he spoke for some time on the disciples and their beliefs, revealing a considerable knowledge of Alexander Campbell and Bethany. I, for one, was impressed.

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### **Disciples of Christ Historical Society General Assembly Dinner**

The Historical Society in cooperation with the Historical Council of the United Church of Christ is sponsoring a dinner at the General Assembly/Synod to be held in St. Louis Cervantes Convention Center, Room 130-132, on Friday, July 16, 1993, at 5:15 p.m. Tickets are \$15 each and should be order if possible from the Historical Society using this form. Dr. Paul A. Crow, Jr. will be the speaker. Tickes will be on sale at the Assembly on Thursday, July 15, 1993.

### **Reservations for Disciples of Christ Historical Society/United Church of Christ Historical Council Dinner**

Number of Tickets Desired: \_\_\_\_\_ . Enclosed is \$15 per ticket.

Please send tickets to: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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# DISCIPLIANA

The Quarterly Historical Journal of the  
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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JUST AS I LIVED IT

*Lester G. McAllister*

FORREST H. KIRKPATRICK LECTURES

APRIL 11-12, 1994

First Christian Church, Portland Oregon

Lester G. McAllister and William J. Richardson, Lecturers



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#### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society was established in 1941 "to maintain and further interest in religious heritage, backgrounds, origins, development, and general history of Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches, Churches of Christ and related groups."

Members of the Society receive *DISCIPLIANA* quarterly, along with other benefits. Annual membership categories are as follows: Sustaining - \$50 to \$249, Participating - \$25 to \$49, Regular - \$15, Students - \$7.50, Canadian and Overseas - \$20. Single payment Life Memberships are: Life - \$250, Life Link - \$500, Life Patron - \$1,000.

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## —From the Editor's Desk

No theme is more central to the history of the Stone-Campbell Movement than the pursuit of Christian unity. Conflicts in the movement have often been over the vision of unity that is sought and implications regarding the ways unity is to be achieved. Related to differences over "the unity we seek" are social and theological factors which add complexity and breadth to the story of the Stone-Campbell Movement and make it clearly relevant to contemporary issues facing Christians of all traditions.

This issue of *Discipliana* focuses on leaders who shared a vision of Christian unity that Paul Crow describes as "evangelical catholicity." In "The Quest for Unity Between The Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ: History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Church," Crow describes twentieth century unity overtures between Disciples and bodies now represented by the United Church of Christ, giving particular attention to the vision and work of Disciples, Peter Ainslie, C. C. Morrison, and Ronald E. Osborn; Congregationalist, Newman Smyth; Congregational-Christian, Douglas Horton; and United Church of Christ theologian of Evangelical and Reformed Church background, Elmer J. F. Arndt. Crow, President of the Disciples Council of Christian Unity, and himself a leader in the current Disciples-United Church of Christ unity overture, also identifies lessons that he believes can be learned from this history.

"What a Disciple Learned from a Church Library: A Tribute to Peter Ainslie, III" was contributed by David A. Caldwell, Pastor of the congregation that preserved Ainslie's library for fifty years. Caldwell discusses Ainslie's attitude and activities in regard to war, race and Christian unity, describing as well Ainslie's evangelistic passion and program.

And, "Just As I Lived It," by veteran Disciples historian Lester G. McAllister, tells how Ainslie's library first got to First Christian Church, Baltimore and then to Nashville.

The vision of Christian unity that Crow describes as "evangelical catholicism" is not the only vision of Christian unity produced by the Stone-Campbell Movement. Indeed, many of the persons who opposed the unity efforts of Ainslie, Morrison, Osborn and Crow also had a vision of Christian unity. Those visions also deserve study.

As the new editor, I wish to express my appreciation to Richard Harrison for his leadership in establishing the current format and direction of *Discipliana* and to James Seale for his abiding support of the study of the history of the Stone-Campbell Movement.

## —From the President's Desk

It is a pleasure to welcome Dr. D. Newell Williams as Editor of *Discipliana* after the short tenure of Dr. Richard L. Harrison, Jr. All matters concerning publication of articles should be addressed to Dr. Williams but mailed to the Historical Society here in Nashville. We look forward to the leadership that Dr. Williams will give as Editor.

John McCullough, the biographer of Harry S. Truman, said at Chautauqua, New York, this summer: "It is not just ignorant to be indifferent to history. It is rude!" He repeated his statement. Where are our manners? KNOWING ABOUT HISTORY is important but KNOWING HISTORY is even more important.

Through the generosity of Forrest H. Kirkpatrick and the Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Endowment for Lectures and Research, the Society is embarking on a course to try to share more of the Stone-Campbell History with interpretation of it in light of the life of the church today and tomorrow. It begins with a set of lectures to be given at the Historical Society on April 29-30, 1994. All lecturers have now been named by the Editorial Committee of *Discipliana*. They are Kathy Pulley, Southwest Missouri State University, from the Church of Christ; Clark Williamson, Christian Theological Seminary, from the Disciples of Christ; and G. Richard Phillips, retired from Milligan College, from the Christian Church.

These lectures are open to all persons interested in history. There will be a \$25 registration fee and the attendance will be limited to 75 persons. The general theme for these lectures for the next three years is "How does a Nineteenth Century American Religious Movement face the Twenty-first Century?" The particular theme for 1994 will be: "A Nineteenth Century American Religious Movement Faces the Twenty-first Century: From Modern Theology to a Post-Modern World." The theme for 1995 will be: "A Nineteenth Century Religious Movement Faces the Twenty-first Century: From Rural Churches to an Urban World." In 1996 the theme will be: "A Nineteenth Century Religious Movement Faces the Twenty-first Century: From Anglo-American Tradition to a Multi-Cultural World."

The lectures begin on Friday evening, the 29th of April, 1994, and will conclude on Saturday, the 30th. There will be a period of open discussion following each lecture and a time for small group discussions concerning historical themes which need to be addressed. All sessions will be held at the Disciples of Christ Historical Society's Thomas W. Phillips Memorial. Registration and lodging materials will be available later this fall.

# ***The Quest for Unity Between The Disciples of Christ and The United Church of Christ: History's Lessons for Tomorrow's Church***

Paul A. Crow, Jr.\*

*The Second Annual Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Lecture on Disciples History delivered at the joint dinner of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and the Historical Council of the United Church of Christ, St. Louis, Missouri, July 16, 1993. This lecture is dedicated to Dr. Howard E. Short, affectionately known to generations of seminarians as "Prof." As scholar, Church historian, ecumenist, editor, and friend within the Church Universal, he has tutored countless Disciples and others about the one Spirit that creates one Body.*

On the eve of the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948—one of the celebrated events in Christian history—a Dutch Roman Catholic theologian courageously wrote a major book interpreting the new action of God in the modern Ecumenical Movement. Amid the churches of the world, he wrote, there is a widespread interest in the unity of the Church, but the existence of the churches—Catholic and Protestant—is a sign of “the Christian dilemma.”<sup>1</sup>

The dilemma is that while biblically and theologically Christians hear, and most believe, that the Church is one, the church in history is broken and fragmented.

At the centre of the history of the human race, divided by sin, discord and strife, stands One whose word and work betoken complete reconciliation, absolute unity and perfect peace: the Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him God has willed to win back all things, to resume all things, to restore to order all things; in Him we all have been reconciled to God, and thereby to one another. Christ is the Redeemer of a world that was lost; He is our peace and in Him we are all one. He is the realization and embodiment of God's order in a world of human disorder . . . Yet, in actual fact, Christendom does not present a picture of unity, reconciliation and peace in a world of disruption and disorder, but instead we are confronted with the alarming spectacle of hopeless dissension even among Christians themselves.<sup>2</sup>

While in the New Testament the Church is one, today we can only confess that the Church *ought to be one*. The odium of division starkly remains in every town and city in the U.S. and Canada and in every

country and every continent, even though we have learned how to live with insensitivity to and denial of all forms of alienations—divorce, poverty, ethnic and racial conflict, and church divisions.

By the same token, we know the Ecumenical Movement has taught the churches how to work and witness irenically and creatively amid the Christian dilemma. The result is an ecumenical tradition that time after time brings hope to divisive situations. The source of energy and power of this vibrant ecumenism is the obedience of countless Christians to the vision of the Church. For them Christian unity is the inescapable obligation and joy of all who understand the mission of the Church and God's intention to bring love and reconciliation for all humanity. In every generation of this century heroic women and men have engaged in efforts for church unity with courage and passion because their imagination has been enlarged. They believe the Church is "a redeemed society of men and women of all races whose outstanding characteristic is its unity, a unity that is deep and far-reaching, affecting the most intimate parts of the lives of its members, rendering them dependent on each other, a unity essential to the proper functioning of the society, expressed in all the members sharing the same sacrament of Holy Communion."<sup>3</sup>

These visionaries have sensed—in whatever century or decade—that history is posing new questions, especially to Christians, which cannot be answered simply with old answers. Western civilization, despite its material and technological gains, is in crisis, no longer able to act like the center of the universe. The Gospel of the Realm of God needs to be proclaimed anew and translated in the world's new situation. These Christian leaders became aware that their idea of the Church was far too narrow. They were led back, with new eyes and ears, to the Bible and the Christian Tradition, and made new discoveries about the Gospel and the Church.

Among all the drama and heartbreak of the modern Ecumenical Movement, there is a chapter, though little known, that needs to be remembered and exegeted. Telling that story is my purpose in this lecture. The Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ and its predecessors have given extraordinary leadership towards Christian unity that surpasses their relatively small size or their predominately American character. Further, these two traditions—their history reveals really more than two—have regularly reached out for each other since the turn of the 20th century. Among the hidden stories of the modern Ecumenical Movement, Disciples-UCC relations is a fascinating chapter, punctuated by at least four overtures toward unity over the past 80 years. Indeed, no two churches in the United States have been so constant in testing the possibilities of a united church, yet until now can only point to a chain of unsuccessful flirtations. Come with me to reclaim this history and to learn the lessons it teaches. We shall also meet some of the key players—one from each church—who motivated these ecumenical explorations.

1. The first mingling of Disciples and the predecessors of the United Church of Christ came in 1910, the symbolic date for the birth of the modern Ecumenical Movement. Under the leadership of Charles Henry Brent (1862-1929), a missionary bishop in the Philippines, the Protestant Episcopal Church at their General Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, on October 19, 1910, took a dramatic action to bring the churches into unprecedented conversations about the divisive theological issues which have fragmented Christian fellowship over the centuries. The House of Bishops and the House of Deputies unanimously approved the resolution:

that a Joint Commission be appointed to bring about a Conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith and Order, and that all Christian Communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour be asked to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a conference.<sup>4</sup>

From this Episcopal initiative two churches in the U.S.—the Disciples of Christ and the Congregational Church—gave positive reaction immediately and became the first two churches in the world to pledge support for the emerging Faith and Order Movement. In one of those unsolved historical mysteries, the National Convention of the Disciples of Christ, in session at Topeka, Kansas, took two historic actions on October 18—the day before the Protestant Episcopal action. First, under the inspiration of Peter Ainslie III, minister of the Christian Temple, an historic congregation in Baltimore, the Disciples created a Council on Christian Union (later Unity), and became the first church in the world to have a permanent churchly agency with the purpose of linking this church with the Ecumenical Movement and leading it toward the visible unity of Christ's Church.

Second, they issued a call for a World Conference on Christian Union (Faith and Order) and sent a cable to the Episcopalians applauding and joining company with their vision. The Topeka Convention was embroiled in several controversies—not an uncommon situation for Disciples in any decade! So it would not surprise you to learn that a goodly number of conservative Disciples criticized Ainslie and these decisive actions, especially because they might lead to union with the unimmersed. Winifred E. Garrison, beloved Disciples church historian, once speculated about these ecumenical decisions: the empowerment of Christian unity “might seem to be the very thing about which a convention of Disciples of Christ would have been unanimous and enthusiastic,” but a vocal minority of leaders and congregations did not share the vision of unity or drew very different implications about the way unity should be pursued.<sup>5</sup> Fortunately the majority of the Disciples leaders led in the direction of visible Christian unity with all churches. Ainslie was elected the first president of the Council and immediately sent a congratulatory cable to Bishop Brent in Cincinnati.

On the very same day of the Disciples action, the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States, meeting in Boston, voted: "That in view of the possibility of fraternal discussion of Church Unity suggested by the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops in 1908, a special commission of five representatives be appointed to consider any overtures that may come to our denomination as a result of this Conference."<sup>6</sup>

Newman Smyth, a leading Congregational pastor in New Haven, Connecticut, was appointed chairperson and an official word was sent to the Episcopalians unanimously endorsing the plans for a World Conference on Faith and Order. A certain Congregational confidence was spoken in the original resolution: "Forgetting not that our forefathers, whose orderly ministry is our inheritance, were not willingly separatists [i.e., the Established Church forced them out.] we would loyally contribute the precious things of which as Congregationalists we are stewards, to the Church of the future."<sup>7</sup>

What drew Disciples and Congregationalists closer was the friendship of Peter Ainslie (1867-1934) and Newman Smyth (1843-1925). A New Englander in spirit and geography, Smyth was a major constructive theologian in his generation. For twenty-six years he served as pastor of the historic First Church of Christ (Congregational) in New Haven, Connecticut. Upon retirement from the pulpit, he was elected a Fellow of Yale University. In his later years he devoted himself to church union "with a zeal no adverse winds could chill," wrote one of his biographers. Peter Ainslie was a Southerner, the child of an important family of Tidewater Virginia. As Edgar DeWitt Jones (father of Willis Jones, beloved president emeritus of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society) described him, Ainslie was "urbane, endowed with a great deal of Old-World charm, a diplomat of the first order." He was "a master of the Conference idea, where the like- and the unlike-minded put their legs beneath a mahogany table and discussed leisurely the issues, both great and small."<sup>8</sup> The respect for his leadership, his preaching, and his caring manner led many to call Ainslie "Saint Peter," or, as his friend Cardinal Gibbon entitled him, "the unordained bishop of Baltimore."

Peter Ainslie's conversion to Christian unity as a vocation came after years of theological conservatism and, as he confessed, actions of a prideful denominationalist. But it was this man who "kept the fire burning on the altar of Christian unity when most of us had permitted it to burn fearfully low, and in some instances to go out entirely."<sup>9</sup> Both Ainslie and Smyth were pastors who became two of the most articulate and respected ecumenists of their generation. They were to become main American players in the worldwide Faith and Order movement. In December, 1913 to February, 1914, a three-person delegation was sent to interpret Faith and Order to the Free Churches in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Newman Smyth was the chairperson, Peter Ainslie was the secretary; William H. Roberts, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church, was the third member. Ainslie and Smyth together gave leadership to the Federal Council of Churches, serving on its Executive Committee,

and to an early multilateral attempt at organic union, the Philadelphia Plan (1918-1920). They proved that friendship and trust among leaders is a deciding factor in the prospects of reconciliation.

Beyond their friendship and their common traits of leadership, Peter Ainslie and Newman Smyth shared a common vision of the unity of the Church. Their vision can be described as evangelical catholicity. In 1908 Smyth published a book entitled *Passing Protestantism and Coming Catholicism* that deeply challenged divisive Protestantism. His apologia for the ecumenical Church was also contained in his *Approaches Towards Church Unity* (published in 1919 with Williston Walker) and *A Story of Church Unity* (1923). He had welcomed the modernist movement of Alfred Loisy, George Tyrrell, et. al, within the Roman Catholic Church, believing they might lay the bridge between Catholic and Protestant churches.

Believing that the divisions among Protestants have caused the loss of Christianity's authority in the culture and created a perilous situation, he foresaw the recovery of "the ideal of one organic Church."<sup>10</sup> This unity will be "manifested henceforth in a sacred and perpetual visibility in the Lord's Supper."<sup>11</sup> None of the divided churches can be the umbrella that receives the other traditions. Certainly "the desired end of Christian unity" cannot be achieved by "a Congregationalism that would protect its own life by excreting a new ecclesiastical shell, larger indeed, but harder than the old, enclosing itself in a system of standing councils, executive committees, general superintendents, moderators enduring for a while—extemporized reverence."<sup>12</sup> The reunion of the Protestant churches will come as Christians live in the love of the Son of God who is the servant of all and is seeking to know all and live in communion with God.

Peter Ainslie's sense of catholicity was equally passionate. His journal, *The Christian Union Quarterly*, and his many books, especially *The Message of the Disciples for the Union of the Church* (1913), *If Not A United Church—What?* (1920), *Towards Christian Unity* (1918) inspired a generation of seekers of unity. He had a deep-seated conviction that divisiveness and sectarianism—prideful belief that our church has unique possession of God's truth—is a sin that causes most of the woes of the Church and the world. Divisions among Christians are "cancerous sores upon the body of Christ," "terrible wounds on the body of our blessed Lord," and "the scandal of Christianity." The Baltimore ecumenist, like Smyth, had long given up the illusion that the Disciples or any other denomination could be the sole instrument of unity. Indeed in his later years he became disillusioned with ecclesiastical inertia and sought to attract individuals from all communions through a covenant he called "The Pact of Reconciliation," and to nurture them to take actions toward Christian unity that church bodies were wary to take.

Ainslie claimed for Disciples the role of bearer of catholicity. Often in his writings he summed up their catholicity under five themes, which he said, rests upon Scripture, history and experience:

1. *A Catholic Name*

While other names were witnesses to division, such names as Christian, Disciples, Church of Christ, were "the catholic names of the Scripture."

2. *A Catholic Creed*

Most of the confessions and creeds, while teaching truth were used in divisive rather than catholic ways. Disciples have sought to lift up the confession of the Messiahship and Lordship of Jesus Christ as "catholic ground for all believers."

3. *A Catholic Book*

Every communion accepts the Scriptures as the Word of God. While various systems of theology were destructive to the peace and unity of the Church when used as "tests of fellowship," Disciples believe the Bible teaches truth upon which all Christians can agree.

4. *A Catholic Mode of Baptism*

The immersion of believers witnesses to the great Christian tradition. (Later Ainslie became an advocate of "open-membership," the acceptance into full church membership of those who were baptized as infants by sprinkling or pouring.)

5. *Catholic Fellowship*

"All who call upon the Lord Jesus Christ are in the household of faith." In their weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper, all Christians are welcome. In this eucharistic sharing, Disciples have recaptured a celebration that expresses the faith and life of the one, Catholic Church.<sup>13</sup>

But fundamental catholicity and unity come whenever Christians are possessed by the spirit of Christ. For Ainslie, visible church unity becomes a possibility only when it is founded on spirituality. "There is no advance toward the unity of ourselves or toward God," he wrote, "without moving in the atmosphere of prayer."<sup>14</sup>

After the formation of the Council on Christian Union, the Disciples initiated several dialogues with churches of a spiritual kinship—the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, the American Baptists, the Congregational Church, and the Christian Connection Church (the latter two became formative parts of the United Church of Christ).

In April, 1912, Disciples and Congregationalists met in Brooklyn, New York and reached these conclusions:

First, there are no essential differences of faith which need keep Congregationalists and Disciples apart.

Second, that our respective polities have so many points of resemblance that no elaborate reconstructions would seem necessary to bring congregations of the two bodies into working harmony.

Third, two practical steps are suggested for the initiation of closer affiliation: (1) Where there are two churches, one of

the Disciples and the other of the Congregationalists, in a community where the conditions justify the existence of only one, these two churches might agree to worship as one congregation and unite in the support of one minister. (2) The members thus uniting for greater efficiency be enrolled as members of their respective bodies, and their missionary offerings forwarded through such boards or societies as each may elect. Furthermore, in order that the standing of the common minister may be deemed regular in them both, it is desirable that the Congregationalists and the Disciples should give each other recognition and regularity of standing as ministers of Christ.<sup>15</sup>

In January, 1917, eight persons from these two churches met again in New York City. Afterwards a joint paper entitled "Congregationalists and Disciples," was drafted by H.C. Herring and Henry C. Armstrong and approved by the respective bodies in July, 1917.<sup>16</sup> Acknowledging a "quickened sense of kinship," the two commissions made clear: "It is not in the thought of these commissions that such endeavor should take the form of proposals of union, either now or at any assignable future date."<sup>17</sup> In doctrine and polity these two churches have remarkable agreement in their (1) common acceptance of the historic body of the Christian faith; (2) a democratic and congregational Church order; (3) the belief that the organ of religious knowledge is reason; (4) acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as a revelation of God; (5) support of popular education; (6) commitment to the missionary witness of the Kingdom; (7) the deep desire for the unity of the Church of Christ.<sup>18</sup> Differences in the practice of the sacraments are "conspicuous," but they are external and "have to do with manner and season more than with meaning and value."<sup>19</sup>

Another bilateral conference was held in New York in April, 1918. The focus this time was on cooperation between the two churches rather than on theological issues. Proposals were made for a joint national conference, ministerial conferences at different colleges and seminaries, and possibly joint state conventions, especially in states where Disciples and Congregationalists are approximately of equal strength. These ideas reflect some dimensions of the current Ecumenical Partnership.

**2.** The second overture between Disciples and Congregationalists came in 1940 in a trilateral context. During the Second World Conference on Faith and Order in August, 1937, at Edinburgh, representatives of the Baptists, the Congregationalists, the Disciples, and other congregationally organized churches from various countries met several times. They were concerned about the inability of this spectrum of churches to define and articulate their convictions about Faith and Order issues and the need to express the common ground they share in ways that might impact Faith and Order.

Robert A. Ashworth, a Northern (later American) Baptist delegate at Edinburgh, used colorful language to describe their sense of frustration: "From the beginning the Faith and Order movement has exhaled a distinctly Episcopal and Anglican fragrance, which is not strange in view of the stem from which is originally budded. To change the figure, at the start the Episcopalians paid the Faith and Order piper and naturally they called the tune."<sup>20</sup> Among the churches, the issue was not personal pique but the yearning for a comprehensive ecclesiology. Other informal gatherings took place in the U.S. around meetings of the Federal Council of Churches.

Eventually in early 1940 the three larger "churches of the congregational order" (the Congregational-Christian was a new name) decided to set up a series of conferences and to exchange theological papers by authors from all three traditions. Eighteen persons, six from each denomination, reflecting different theological perspectives in each church, would be the authors and core group.

It was decided to concentrate on the five themes of the Edinburgh World Conference: the Faith and its creedal formulations, the Church, the Sacraments, the Ministry and the Priesthood of all Believers, and Church Polity in the Light of Christian Democracy. Each church prepared three presentations on each of the themes. The Congregational-Christian authors included Matthew Spinka, Roland Bainton, Gaius Glenn Atkins, Raymond Calkins, and Rockwell Hermon Potter—all luminaries in that tradition. The Disciples authors were equally important: Clarence E. Lemon, Frederick D. Kershner, Finis Idleman, Winifred E. Garrison, and Frederick D. Burnham. These papers reflected honesty and theological depth.<sup>21</sup>

After the sharing of the papers, three notable ecumenists—Robert A. Ashworth (Northern Baptist), Douglas Horton (Congregational-Christian), and Charles Clayton Morrison (Disciples of Christ) were appointed as "a synthesizing group" to draw together the points made in all the papers, identifying—in the usual Faith and Order methodology—their agreements and disagreements. The ultimate question was "Can these three congregationally-oriented communions, on the basis of these papers, become one?" The integrated papers were published in *Christendom*, a major American ecumenical quarterly.<sup>22</sup>

This trilateral—although in this lecture I am concentrating on two of the churches—draws our attention to Charles Clayton Morrison (1874-1966) and Douglas Horton, undoubtedly two premier ecumenists of their generation. Their analysis of the witness of the churches of the congregational order is intriguing.

C. C. Morrison was born in Harrison, Ohio, and studied at Drake University and the University of Chicago. A Disciples minister, he served congregations in Iowa and Illinois. In 1908 he bought a small, struggling, liberal Disciples journal named *The Christian Century* and transformed it into "an undenominational journal of religion" that became the major voice of liberal Protestantism and a regular reporter on the Ecumenical Movement. Dr. Morrison became a distinguished

editor, ecumenist, preacher, and lecturer. His book, *What Is Christianity?* (1940), a highly respected book on Christianity as "the revelation of God in history," represented the thought of the first Disciples scholar to deliver the Lyman Beecher Lectures at Yale Divinity School. Dr. Morrison shared leadership with the famous Chicago Disciples group, involving Edward Scribner Ames, Herbert L. Willett, and Winifred E. Garrison, who dominated Disciples intellectual and theological thought for several decades. Dr. Morrison's first book, *The Meaning of Baptism* (1914), opposed the rigid use of baptism by immersion as a dogma that spawned legalism and radical individualism. Describing baptism as a social act that defines and constitutes the Church, he sought to recover the corporate nature of the sacrament.

His ecumenical involvements were legion—from being a delegate at the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910 to drafting the historic Greenwich Plan for Church Union (1946-1957) that prefigured the Consultation on Church Union. His most articulate vision of church unity, however, came in his 1951 Hoover Lectures at the Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago, that were published under the title *The Unfinished Reformation*.<sup>23</sup> Morrison was adamant in calling divisions in the Church "sin," and "evil . . . a decadent survival of an era that is past . . . the very nub of the problem of Christian Unity."<sup>24</sup>

What is sinful about denominationalism is its "churchism," the pretense that divided, separate churches are faithful expressions of the Great Church. His fiery critique of the scandal of denominationalism or a divided church, made in nine points, is unrivaled in ecumenical apologetics. Denominationalism (1) wastes Protestant resources; (2) is a shameful embarrassment to mission expansion; (3) frustrates social responsibility; (4) robs Protestantism of its strength in its "inescapable competition with a formidable and aggressive Roman Catholic Church" (a pre-Vatican II judgment!); (5) provincializes Protestant thinking by stopping free thought; (6) breeds moral insensitivity among Protestants; (7) denies the catholicity and richness of the fellowship of the congregation; (8) condemns the local pastor to undignified methods; (9) glorifies false freedom and denies freedom in Christ.<sup>25</sup>

A united church will (1) release Christians from "the static uniformity of the denomination into the inspiring diversity that belongs to the Church of Christ;" (2) challenge the disruptive class distinctions that mark the denominational system; (3) free the congregation of representing a fraction of the Church and allowing it to become the ecumenical church in a particular locality; (4) bring a new birth of freedom to Christians.<sup>26</sup> In a special chapter for Disciples, Morrison calls them away from "the illusion of Restorationism" that produces constant controversy and sectarianism, and can never be the basis for the full unity of the Church of Christ.

With his usual candor Dr. Morrison identified three salient obstacles to the coming of a united church, if either of them is considered as a *sine qua non*: (1) the historic episcopate, (2) immersion baptism, and (3) congregationalism as a polity. The test case for catholicity is

commitment to the *fullness* of the Church. For him catholicity means that "unqualified congregational independence and autonomy is incompatible with the ecumenical ideal."<sup>27</sup> Union requires interdependence and the mutual responsibility of local churches toward one another and the wider Church.

In Dr. Morrison's synthesis of the 1940 Disciples-Congregational Christian dialogue, his conclusions were bold. (1) "There exists no substantial or vital differences of faith or belief or practice or ecclesiastical structure among these three bodies which justify their separate existence, if they really desire to be one body." (2) If their congregational ideology is maintained in its present form, it will be "an insuperable barrier to their union with churches representing any other type of organization."<sup>28</sup>

In his early ministry Douglas Horton was a pastor in Chicago and a visiting professor in several theological seminaries. He eventually turned to denominational leadership, serving as the chief executive of the General Council of the Congregational-Christian Church and a major architect of the United Church of Christ, constituted in 1957. He later became Dean of the Harvard University Divinity School and Moderator of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. Along with Howard E. Short, W. Barnett Blakemore, William G. Baker and other Disciples, he was an observer to all sessions of the Second Vatican Council; his four-volume *Vatican Diary* (United Church Press, 1962-1965) gave some choice insights to the workings of that ecumenical council.

In his coordination of the Disciples-Congregational-Christian papers, Douglas Horton identified several issues that these churches will need to resolve, as they move toward the ecumenical Church. (1) The relation between freedom and unity is critical. True congregationalism "neglects neither its freedom nor its fellowship." Such a church, therefore, is wholly committed to the Ecumenical Movement" and "passionately desires to be related to the other branches of the Church."<sup>29</sup> (2) In ecclesiology, those of the congregational order will have a high doctrine of the Church, believing it is "the divine society through which God purposes to save the world."<sup>30</sup> (3) When congregationalism sees its role as only protecting individualism, it becomes distorted. "Congregationalism as a polity is neither individualism nor socialism: it is individualism balanced with socialism, a demand for freedom held in tension with an equal demand for fellowship (koinonia)."

In his reflections on the sacraments, Horton applauded the Disciples practice of celebrating the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week without exception. "The Lord's Supper is"—as he perceived Disciples saying—"the sacrament of sacraments, for it imparts with the vividness which material things possess a refreshing sign not only of what God has already done for humanity in Christ but what humanity will be like when once it appropriates God's divine gifts."<sup>31</sup>

This round of dialogue, especially fed by the passion and theological insights of Morrison and Horton, reached a conclusion: the congre-

gational order is not sufficient to unite the Church. Yet in this period Disciples and Congregational-Christians found a richer vision of the unity of the Church.

3. A new intensity between Disciples and the United Church of Christ took shape in the 1960s. The formation of the United Church of Christ happened, by the grace of God, in 1957. For ecumenical relations this meant that for the first time the Disciples met at the conference table representatives of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, new partners whose roots went back to Protestant pietism in Germany and Switzerland. The diversity of the dialogue was considerably enhanced, but some time would pass before the new partners would discover their commonality. There was a sense of strangeness once the Anglo-Saxon heritage was complimented by emigres from the Palatinate, "possessed by God" and armed with the Bible and the Heidelberg Catechism. One complimentary grace brought by the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States was a high commitment to the unity of the Church. Through the Mercersburg Movement, graced by the leadership of John Williamson Nevin and Phillip Schaff, the Reformed Church brought a profound theological vision of "evangelical catholicity and the catholic unity of the Church."<sup>32</sup>

Between 1962-1966 four official meetings took place between Disciples and the UCC. The topics in the first two meetings concentrated on "Grace and Faith" (Ronald E. Osborn) and "Freedom and Order" (Clyde J. Steckel)<sup>33</sup> and a comparison of each other's origins and histories. The third session (1964) addressed questions of ecclesiology and of the sacrament,<sup>34</sup> producing, as George G. Beazley quipped, both puzzlement and hope.

The fourth session in Chicago (November 1964) was among the more substantial. It addressed the possibility of "One Ministry," using the theological energy of the Consultation on Church Union. Papers by Elmer J.F. Arndt, Frederick W. Whittaker, John Park Winkler, and George G. Beazley, Jr., gave substance to the dialogue. These papers revealed that the theological differences about the ministry—whether functional or catholic and the relationship between lay and ordained ministries—do not follow denominational boundaries but exist *within* both churches. In this session one sensed that the interests of the church leaders and theologians turned from a bilateral to the multilateral Consultation on Church Union.

In 1966 the Disciples-UCC unity conversations were "suspended," with a clear option to resume them in the future, "if there is a will to do so." Ironically, participants in both churches indicated a sense of relief. Among the issues at stake, four can be identified. (1) Within the UCC there were disagreements over the role and authority of the Commission on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Study and Service. (The hesitancy of the UCC to have a distinct instrumentality for Christian unity and

ecumenism is an ongoing tension between them and the Disciples, whose Council on Christian Unity serves and leads their whole church toward visible unity.) (2) Articulate differences over the Vietnam War developed between leaders in the two churches, causing people in both churches to make negative judgments about the other. Note the insight this brings: differences about social witness and methods of prophetic witness can become as divisive as differences about ministry and sacraments. (3) More importantly, the birth in 1962 of the Consultation on Church Union—which eventually involved the UCC (1962) and the Disciples (1963)—called into question the value of a bilateral. It could be poor stewardship of people and funds. It could detract the churches from the wider goal of a united church “truly catholic, truly evangelical, truly reformed.” (4) Already both churches were in the early stages of a crisis of identity, revealed in the fact that among the Disciples and the UCC the historic vocation toward unity and union was being marginalized. Yet despite the negativism implied in the action to suspend, both churches brought excitement, energy, and hope to the COCU prospects.

Two theologians deserve to be singled out for their impact on the third phase of Disciples-UCC dialogue and equally on the work of the Consultation on Church Union—Elmer J.F. Arndt and Ronald E. Osborn. Both were involved in the major ecumenical events of the day; both kept themselves out of the limelight but played formative roles.

Elmer Arndt (1908-1969) was for forty years Professor of Historical Theology and Ethics at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis. A German Evangelical, he studied with Reinhold Niebuhr at Union Theological Seminary and Robert Calhoun at Yale. For over two decades he was chairperson of the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and chaired the Commission to Prepare a Statement of Faith of the UCC. In the service of Christian unity, Elmer was a longtime member of the UCC's Commission on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Study and Service; the WCC's Faith and Order Commission; and the Executive Committee and various theological Commission of COCU. Always with a quiet manner and sometimes with a disheveled presence, he spoke with authority and ecumenical intent. His greatest skill was as a drafter. He could participate in a meeting, listening to different positions on crucial issues, and then draft a couple of pages which brought all voices into a cohesive whole. His drafting—whether at a World Conference on Faith and Order or a COCU plenary—drew the churches toward each other in unity. At the 4th World Conference on Faith and Order at Montreal in 1963, he was part of a drafting team that produced the historic consensus on “Scripture, Tradition and Traditions,” that broke new ground on the question of authority in the Church. Elmer and Methodist theologian Albert C. Outler brought this consensus into COCU's theological consensus.<sup>35</sup>

Within the Disciples-UCC conversations Elmer Arndt and Ronald Osborn did innovative work on ministry, drawing on their Faith and Order involvements. At the November, 1964 meeting Elmer gave a

paper on "The One Ministry" that set the pace for some important reflections. The standard questions and the standard answers on ministry, usually conditioned by our separate histories are not sufficient, he declared, for the 1960s. Comparative ecclesiology leads, willingly or unwillingly, in the direction of organizational merger. This approach sets the question of a united ministry in the context of only reconciling or adjudicating past offices and forms of ministry. What is urgently needed is a reconciliation of ministries that will renew the Church. For this to happen the churches must begin the discussion with Christology, the ministry of Jesus Christ, rather than with sacred denominational self-justifications.

The agenda for unity and the reconciliation of the ministry is therefore twofold, says Professor Arndt. First, the central affirmation must be that "Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is the Minister whose ministry of reconciliation is a continuing one and whose ministry is the source of all ministry in the Church and of the Church's ministry in the world." Second, the Church is commissioned to minister to the world, but this ministry is empowered only by the benefits of Christ's ministry. The Church is the community that "witnesses to the sovereignty of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, the gift of the Holy Spirit for renewal and eternal life." In other words, what authenticates the ministry of the one Church is obedience to Jesus Christ and his ministry.<sup>36</sup>

Ronald E. Osborn—church historian, ecumenist, theologian, preacher, author—was the off-spring of a celebrated Disciples family. His father, G. Edwin Osborn, was one of the greatest liturgists and professors of preaching among the Disciples. Ronald's professional and spiritual trek took him from professorships at Northwest Christian College to Christian Theological Seminary (where he was also Dean), and to Claremont School of Theology, punctuated with sabbaticals in the Philippines and the Ecumenical Institute Bossey. His *The Spirit of American Christianity* (1958) placed him among the leading Church historians in the U.S. His book on the Christian ministry, *In Christ's Place; Christian Ministry in Today's World* (1967) remains the best challenge to Disciples who want to understand the nature and function of the ministry. He sets our servanthood for Christ in the world in a truly ecumenical context. In the midst of the Restructure of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada, Ronald Osborn was the one who articulated our emerging ecclesiology.<sup>37</sup>

It is in his ecumenical work, however, that Ronald Osborn, the servant of the oikoumene, emerges as a powerful presence. Early he was one of those who stimulated the search for unity through the Conference on Church Union, which produced the Greenwich Plan. He was a delegate to the world conferences on Faith and Order at Lund (1952) and Montreal (1963). He contributed enormously to the Consultation on Church Union, especially its pivotal theological work on ministry. His book, *A Church for These Times* (1965) is the clearest and most spiritually deep interpretation of COCU's vision of a Church "truly

catholic, truly evangelical, truly reformed." So also in the Disciples-UCC conversations in the 1960s: Ronald was the privileged theological voice from the Disciples side. His most eloquent plea for the unity of the Church, however, is a relatively hidden essay in Volume 1 of the Panel of Scholars publications, entitled "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church: The Continuing Witness of the Disciples of Christ."<sup>38</sup> Here is vintage Disciples' ecumenism, liberated from the Restoration dilemma and rooted in the saving Gospel and the Church's mission in a hurting world. Unity, he sketches, is (1) *given* (accomplished by God's act in Jesus Christ); (2) *imperative* (inherent in the nature of the Church, a divine mandate to all the baptized); (3) *personal* (an expression of a relationship with God); (4) *institutional* (visibly made real in the life of the Church); (5) *sacramental* (most deeply expressed at the Lord's Supper and the one Baptism); (6) *local* (removing the scandal of division in local communities). Courageously, Ronald entreats Disciples and others to give up the illusion that the restoration of the New Testament Church is possible or can ever bring the Church to its unity. Instead Disciples should probe and pursue *the apostolic faith* and its meaning for the Church.

So too catholicity is essential to any concept of the Church that reflects the Gospel and the biblical doctrine of the Church. Catholicity is "that quality of the Church's life which transcends all local and particular distinctions, personal or cultural, and which may be recognized by any Christian anywhere as authentic. The term witnesses to the universality, the validity, the common inheritance of the Church . . . it testifies to all that makes for the completion or perfection of the Church."<sup>39</sup>

This third phase of Disciples-UCC relations did not produce any grand achievements, but these two churches were mobilized for deeper involvements in the dramatic search for organic union. Also in this period some of their most faithful ecumenical leaders surfaced as witnesses to reconciliation in the present generation.

4. The fourth and possibly most mature stage came alive in the mid-1970s and has produced a new ecumenical expression between these two churches defined as "ecumenical partnership." I do not intend here to deal fully with this stage, since I have exegeted it rather fully in the July, 1993 issue of *Mid-Stream*.<sup>40</sup> A new intentionality began in 1975 when Paul A. Crow Jr., and Robert V. Moss, late president of the UCC, attended together a WCC Consultation of United and Uniting Churches, held in Toronto, Canada. After listening for a week to the witnesses of united churches in South India, North India, the Philippines, Japan, Thailand and Zaire—places where these two traditions are already united—these two friends talked about the continuing scandal of a divided church in the U.S. and decided to test the will of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada and the United Church of Christ. Other important voices in both churches joined

this important initiative and in 1977 the Disciples General Assembly (Kansas City) and the UCC General Synod XI acted to "resume conversations." In 1979 a "covenant" was jointly adopted "to work toward embodying God's gift of oneness in Jesus Christ," and a six-year (1979-1985) period of study and work was undertaken with direction by a Steering Committee of twenty persons. The struggles of those years—testing the will toward visible unity, exploring an ecumenical relationship that is visible but not merger—were genuine. In 1985 General Synod XV and the General Assembly (Des Moines) declared an "ecumenical partnership" between these two churches, based on common theological reflection, common worship and sacramental life, and common mission wherever possible.<sup>41</sup>

**I**n conclusion, I wish to point to several lessons which I hope we have learned from these eight decades of new hope, exploration, frustration, and service (*diakonia*) toward becoming the Church.

(1) Unity is given, becomes real and lasting, when it is pursued according to the rhythm of the Gospel. Politics, polity adjustments, theological consensus will produce dead fruits unless these two churches and others become preoccupied with discerning God's will, receiving God's grace and forgiveness given in Christ who alone is our peace. For this to happen spiritually and theologically, the Scriptures and theology will need to become as important as programmatic strategies and plenary decisions.

(2) No doctrine—the mode of baptism, congregationalism, the historic episcopate or the eldership—will be an adequate basis for a united church. The vision of the unity for which Christ prayed will be incarnated only when the quest is led by those with a commitment to the fullness and catholicity of the Church.

(3) Visible church unity will be constantly thwarted if it is pursued as a negotiation between competing, self-sufficient denominations. The danger of comparative ecclesiology is that some people will begin to believe that unity is achievable by the adjustment of the current polities and practices. This creates the temptation to think of unity as a relationship among like-minded Christians, when truthfully the deepest need is to understand that unity is given among the dramatically different, unlike Christians. In this respect the new emphasis in the Ecumenical Movement on *koinonia* (communion) ecclesiology is promising.

(4) Authentic unity is problematic, if not impossible, unless we realize that "our deepest divisions" in the Church and society relate to racism, sexism, nationalism, conflicts over sexuality, ethics, and social justice. This spiritual insight will bring new energy to ecumenism and should not be missed. The Church's unity is given by Christ as a sign and sacrament of the unity of human community.

(5) Unity and reconciliation depends upon repentance of our sins of division, exclusiveness, and smallness of heart. The trading of

triumphalisms, even when done gently and with humor, will prevent us from receiving the gift of Church unity. W. A. Visser't Hooft, first general secretary of the World Council of Churches and one of the wisest ecumenical leaders of the 20th century, wrote at the founding of that privileged instrument of unity: the fruits of unity and fellowship (*koinonia*) will not flourish until the churches repent and show the fruits of repentance. "The congregations must confront the small proportions of their life with the proportions of the Church Universal in which they pretend to believe; they must face the judgment pronounced upon them by the King who desires the Church to be a sign of the unity and universality of the Kingdom . . . we may not rest until that offense—which is not the offense of Christ but of men [and women]—is removed."<sup>42</sup>

Disciples and the UCC have not reached the land of glory. Our journey has been marked by joy as well as misdirections, apathy, and limited visions, but God may yet use us for the reconciliation of the churches and the nations. Either way we may not rest until the Realm of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit comes.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup>W.H. van de Pol, *The Christian Dilemma; Catholic Church-Reformation* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1948, 1952.).

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup>Richard P.C. Hanson, *The Summons to Unity* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1954), p. 33.

<sup>4</sup>Faith and Order Papers, Series I, No. 1, p. 4. A slightly different text was approved by the House of Deputies.

<sup>5</sup>W.E. Garrison, *Christian Unity and Disciples of Christ* (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1955), p. 160.

<sup>6</sup>Faith and Order Papers, Series I, No. 25, pp. 4-5.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup>Edgar DeWitt Jones, *American Preachers of Today* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1933) p. 47.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>10</sup>Norman Smyth, *Passing Protestantism and Coming Catholicism*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), p. 24.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.* p. 168.

<sup>13</sup>Peter Ainslie, "The Disciples of Christ and Christian Union," *The Churchman* [Episcopal], March 28, 1914; also "The Disciples of Christ," *The Christian Union Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, No. 4 (April, 1919) pp. 32-36.

<sup>14</sup>Peter Ainslie, *Working With God* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1917), pp. 329-330.

<sup>15</sup>Quoted in Peter Ainslie, *Working With God* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1919) pp. 327-328.

<sup>16</sup>See Peter Ainslie, *Towards Christian Unity*, op. cit., pp. 63-66.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid*, p. 63.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid*, p. 64-65.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid*, p. 66; see also the *Seventh Annual Report of the Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity*, Kansas City, Missouri, October 27, 1917 (Baltimore: Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity, 1917) pp. 8-12.

<sup>20</sup>Robert A. Ashworth, "The Witness of the Churches of the Congregational Order," *Christendom*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (Autumn, 1940) p. 432.

<sup>21</sup>Harlan Paul Douglas, *The Witness of the Churches of the Congregational Order: Papers Exchanged by Baptists, Congregationalists-Christian and Disciples in 1940* (Anderson, Indiana: The Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity, 1940). By now Peter Ainslie was dead and H.C. Armstrong, the number two person in the Association, was a minister in Anderson, Indiana. Hence, the unusual place of publication.

<sup>22</sup>See papers by Ashworth, Morrison, and Horton in *Christendom*, Vol. V, No. 4 (Autumn, 1940).

<sup>23</sup>C.C. Morrison, *The Unfinished Reformation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953).

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 13, 26.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 81-97.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid*, p. 175.

<sup>28</sup>C.C. Morrison, "Can These Three Be One? *Christendom*, Vol. V, No. 4 (Autumn, 1940) p. 492.

<sup>29</sup>Douglas Horton, "Can Basic Attitudes Be 'Synthesized'?" *Christendom*, Vol. V, No. 4 (Autumn, 1940) p. 510.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid*, p. 509.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid*, p. 508.

<sup>32</sup>Claude Welch, *Protestant Thought in the Nineteenth Century, 1799-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1972) p. 232.

<sup>33</sup>See *Mid-Stream*, Vol. II, No. 1 (September, 1962) and Vol. II, No. 3 (March, 1963).

<sup>34</sup>See *Mid-Stream*, Vol. III, No. 3 (March, 1964).

<sup>35</sup>See Elmer J.F. Arndt, "Scripture and Tradition," in *Where We Are In Church Union*, ed. by George L. Hunt and Paul A. Crow, Jr. (New York: Association Press, 1965) pp. 78-88.

<sup>36</sup>Elmer F.J. Arndt, "Reflections on the Report on 'One Ministry'," *Mid-Stream*, Vol. IV, No. 3 (Spring, 1965) pp. 5-14.

<sup>37</sup>See his three lectures on "The Church of Christ on Earth," in *Mid-Stream*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (Fall, 1964) pp. 32-77. Reprinted as *Toward the Christian Church*.

<sup>38</sup>See Ronald E. Osborn, ed., *The Reformation of Tradition* (The Renewal of the Church, Volume 1) St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1963, pp. 305-352.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid*, p. 336.

<sup>40</sup>See Paul A. Crow, Jr., "The Lure and Languishing of Disciples-United Church of Christ Unity," *Mid-Stream*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (July, 1993) pp. 1-8.

<sup>41</sup>The enabling actions and other important documents of the Ecumenical Partnership were printed in *Mid-Stream*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (July, 1993) pp. 71-89.

<sup>42</sup>W.A. Visser 't Hooft, *The Kingship of Christ* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948) pp. 112-113.

## **Book Review** by James M. Seale

Harrison, Richard L. *From Camp Meeting to Church: A History of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky*. St. Louis, MO: Christian Board of Publication, 1992, XIV, 343 p.: illus.; 23 cm.

Regional histories are difficult to write. There are so many names, events, dates and congregations all of which cry out for not only being mentioned but for being highlighted. Richard Harrison has done an excellent writing of history in which he set out to write the story of the development of the regional work and he did not deviate, essentially, from the task. It is more than the history of the growth of a particular region of the Christian Church. It is the story of the growth of a movement which became a church.

Out of the roots of Cane Ridge and Bethany, from the preaching and writing of Stone and Campbell came an umbrella organization called the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky. It is a region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) but it is more than a region. It is a church with members, organizations, programs, persons; yet with ties to many other sister groups and organizations.

Harrison gives a clear picture of how the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky was born, grew as a child, teen, adult and how it faces the future. Congregations and individuals play major roles in this development process but all are reflected in the growth of the whole. Every facet of the work of the inclusive church is quickly but carefully described. The growing organization and organizations are clearly shown as part of a larger movement and church.

This work is very well documented with names, dates, places, and quotations. It is clear it required extensive research. There is a good cross reference within the text pointing the reader to additional information on special subjects in other chapters.

The growing church had its pains and divisions and these are dealt with in honesty and with forthrightness. Two distinct divisions took place and the roots are there in Kentucky for all to see just as we see the results. The writing is both chronological and topical so that you move forward in time but you gain an inclusive picture of the immediate history of a particular institution, subject or group.

If there are shortcomings I found them in only two areas. The writer calls attention to a special person being involved in the unfolding history but sometimes the person's name is not given. For instance, there was the future president who visited Alexander Campbell's home but the name is not given. This reader would also have liked to have seen more space given to showing the continual development of Cane Ridge and of the secondary but meaningful place Cane Ridge has held in the Kentucky church history since the Great Revival.

It is certainly a history worth reading and gives much information about the overall direction and growth of the church. The people of the Christian Church in Kentucky can be proud to have this in their church library as it is interwoven with their congregational history.

# ***What a Disciple Learned from a Church Library: A Tribute to Peter Ainslie, III***

by David A. Caldwell\*

I used to hear my father say that if he had a dozen sons he would try to make them all ministers of the Gospel. In that atmosphere I came to believe that there is no service superior to that of the ministry when it is crowded with toil, hardship, faith, and love.<sup>1</sup> *Peter Ainslie, III*

Peter Ainslie, III, was born June 3, 1867, the son of Peter Ainslie, II, a Disciple of Christ preacher, and the grandson of Peter Ainslie, a preacher who was first a Presbyterian in Scotland, then a Baptist in America and, finally, a Disciple of Christ in the great Commonwealth of Virginia. Peter Ainslie was born in Dunnsville, Virginia, fifteen months after Alexander Campbell died in his home in Bethany, West Virginia.

One hundred years later on June 7, 1967, the centennial of his birth was celebrated by the congregation of the Christian Temple, of which Peter Ainslie, III, was the founder and pastor from 1904 until his death in 1934. The featured speaker was his only son, Peter Ainslie, IV, then the pastor of Mount Troy United Church of Christ, Pittsburgh. The son spoke of his famous father:

I was quite young when he died, but I have come to know him through my experiences with you, my mother, and my sister, and I had the advantage unknown to many boys, who lose their fathers, that I could read books he had written.

My father stressed some areas, which were very basic to his life. He believed in Christian unity, for which he was loved and hated. He spoke out for racial justice, which was not so revolutionary as today, but to which he was sensitive, since he was a Southerner and lived among Negroes. He was opposed to war, which he felt was irreconcilable with Christianity.<sup>2</sup>

That evening the son spoke of the "adventurous, creative and compassionate" spirit of his father which enabled him to deal with the complexities of these three priorities of his ministry. We shall look at them in reverse order i.e., war, race and Christian unity. Perhaps in doing so we can catch anew for our time the legacy of Peter Ainslie, III, who wrote on the flyleaf of one of his books these words of hope for his son, "that you may go beyond where I have gone in adventuring toward making the world a more decent place in which to live."<sup>3</sup>

## **A Pastor Becomes A Preacher At A Temple**

On October 1, 1891, Peter Ainslie was called as the pastor of the Third Church in Baltimore City. The membership was under one

hundred. The congregation had formed just three years earlier, when thirty three persons had withdrawn from First Church, over a disagreement concerning the construction of their new church building on Harlem Avenue.

Within two years the new congregation had a church edifice constructed. Peter Ainslie was hired at a annual salary of eight hundred dollars. Peter Ainslie remembered that "from the condition of their finances it looked exceedingly doubtful whether they would be able to pay that."<sup>4</sup>

There were a number of reasons he had wanted to come to Baltimore. His father had died four years earlier when Ainslie was nineteen and a first year student in seminary at the College of the Bible in Lexington, Kentucky. His mother and sister still lived on a farm near the Rappahannock River in Virginia. "Boats plied nearly every day between Baltimore and the Rappahannock River, making Baltimore the most convenient city to my home." Additionally, Baltimore was home to Johns Hopkins University where Ainslie hoped to complete his college degree. This goal he abandoned within the year when the University authorities observed the growth of Third Church and strongly advised him that if it were his purpose to remain in the ministry he should abandon the regular course work for full time ministry and keep in touch with the University through its special lectures, which is what he did.<sup>5</sup>

With evangelistic meetings and hard work the congregation grew by 126 members in the first year. Peter was ordained there on May 8, 1892. That same month he printed the "... first copy of *The Christian Tribune*, which later became a sixteen page weekly paper, serving as the medium of communication between the Disciples in the Atlantic Coast States." He became known city wide after he spoke at the annual ceremony on the anniversary of the birth of Edgar Allen Poe, who is buried in Baltimore. Later, he spoke out on the strikes which were common across America in 1894. His sermons were reprinted in papers around the country as he developed his fame and his skills as a leader beyond the local congregation. On the dispute between management and labor, he wrote:

... both sides were wrong, both being selfish, arrogant and unbrotherly; consequently both had left out of their thought the one Arbiter of all difficulties, Jesus Christ, who taught, 'All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them.' Between the upper and nether millstones of capital and labor, manhood was being ground out of human life, manhood out of the capitalist and manhood out of the workingman. The price of progress is dear, but a society so organized that the precepts of Jesus are counted impracticable in it cannot claim to be a Christian society.<sup>6</sup>

In this way he increasingly became a national figure and was invited to speak on occasions to promote peace between capital and

labor. The more outspoken he became the more renown he acquired and thus the national, and later, international scope of his ministry was fashioned.

During these years Ainslie continued to preach at evangelistic meetings for Third Church. He felt evangelism was the fundamental task of the church. He said, "The inactivity of a church in the work of attempting to save men and women is an indication that it has lost its commission for service. The same principal applies to an individual. If a Christian has no interest in the salvation of others, it indicates a decaying faith—an unholy condition of heart and life."<sup>7</sup>

His growing pace of activities as pastor, editor of the weekly *The Christian Tribune*, and as public speaker was hard on his health. At age twelve Ainslie had contracted a severe case of typhoid fever which affected his teen years greatly. He wrote that "Hunting, fishing, swimming and all those sports so common to a country boy were largely cut out of my life." His home was a house of prayer. Each morning and evening his father read several chapters of scripture to the family. Peter, along with his brother and sister, were summoned to worship with a bell. God was personal, near and treasured, and this gave strength to Peter to deal with his recurring illness.<sup>8</sup>

After six years in Baltimore at Third Church and as editor of *The Christian Tribune*, he consolidated it "... with the *Christian Century* of Chicago."<sup>9</sup> This greatly expanded his interdenominational ties and interests.

In October of 1902, Ainslie had been the pastor at Third Church for ten years. The membership had grown to nearly 600, and they had outgrown the facility. At that time a parcel of land on North Fulton street became available. It was decided to purchase the land and move the ministry there but to retain "the Third Church property as one of the branch stations in the larger programme that was gradually unfolding." Five thousand two hundred fifty dollars was borrowed from the "... Church Extension Society of the Disciples ..." and a chapel was built on the rear of the property. At this time his mother and sister who were both invalids, and had lived with him in Baltimore, died within a few days of each other. His sister had helped him greatly with the weekly *Christian Tribune*. They were both buried near the family home in Dunnsville.<sup>10</sup>

"... On January 15, 1905, the chapel was opened under the name of Christian Temple, with G. W. Muckley, of Kansas City, preaching the sermon. A small debt was on the property, which up to that time had cost about \$22,000." The first person baptized in it was a Chinese immigrant who was part of the Chinese Sunday School that the congregation operated. The name Christian Temple was suggested by a leader of the church and adapted as "... a name that would bring us into fellowship with all believers in Jesus."<sup>11</sup>

On the last Sunday before the new church opened, the members of Third Church signed one of two books to indicate where they wanted to worship. Of the nearly 600 members, 237 chose to belong to the new

church where Ainslie would preach. The Third Church thence became known as Calhoun Street Church. Growth was rapid at Christian Temple, and in May, 1908, the sanctuary was completed at a cost of nearly \$40,000. The membership had grown from 237 to over 1,000 in three years and they owed only \$15,000 when the sanctuary was completed.

### **A Passion for a Purposeful Peace**

Evangelistic meetings were Ainslie's primary way of reaching the unchurched and gaining city wide audiences. Evangelistic service at the Temple were held each night of Holy Week. Peter Ainslie was often the preacher for the services. During 1914 there were 114 additions to the Temple. Another meeting was held in the fall of each year, sometimes with a visiting preacher. City wide meetings would soon follow.

War broke out in Europe in the summer of 1914. The American people were a nation of immigrants and there was much support for both sides. "Neutrality, since the days of George Washington, had become an American tradition."<sup>12</sup> The sinking on May 7, 1915, of the British passenger liner, Lusitania, off the Irish coast with the loss of over 1,100 lives including 128 Americans, ended our policy of neutrality. America prepared for war while preacher like Peter Ainslie spoke against entering the war.

In the winter of 1914, Ainslie began to hold evangelistic meetings in large downtown theaters. The first was at the Hippodrome, which was the largest theater in the city. It was packed and that gave Ainslie a broader audience to hear him preach the gospel of peace. "A chorus of two hundred voices had been leading the singing, having sung half a dozen hymns. I read the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and prayed. A well known Roman Catholic soloist sang, and I spoke on 'War and Prophecy'. About ten thousand tracts bearing on Christian unity and on the scourge of war were distributed." This set the pattern for more theater meetings which followed.<sup>13</sup>

In February of 1914, Peter Ainslie joined other clergy at the home of Andrew Carnegie in new York City. That day twenty nine persons formed the Church Peace Union. Its purpose, Ainslie wrote, "... was to educate the church into a comprehensive and intelligent understanding of the peace movement and also to use the Christian forces as agencies in hastening the time when nations will substitute law for war in the settlement of international disputes . . ." Peter Ainslie did not approve of force being used to settle disputes by individuals or nations. "Hardly anything could be more extremely opposite to Christianity than war," he wrote. The Peace Union sponsored a World Conference at Constance, Germany, in August, 1914. Church leaders from all over Europe were to attend. As Ainslie arrived in Paris on his way to Constance, war was declared between Germany and France. World War I would soon follow. The appeal of Ainslie and the Church Peace Union, to President Woodrow Wilson to avert war was made and then he headed for home with others fleeing the war in Europe. Their endeavor and energy were

partially the seeds for the efforts of Christian Unity following the war.

America entered World War I in 1917, the same year Peter Ainslie celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination. During the war, Ainslie preached against the conflict. In "... his Baltimore church he condemned the war throughout its duration and prayed always for both Germany and America. Eighty Christian Temple boys, he said, were in the services." George Walker Buckner tells us that after World War I, the veterans returned home but many did not take an active role in the congregation. Peter Ainslie wondered why. "Getting a group of them together, he asked if his opposition to the conflict was responsible for their attitude. A spokesman, backed up by the others, replied, "No, Mr. Ainslie. We know it was wrong—all that blood and killing. Yet the churches approved it. If it were not for you, we might not come to church at all."<sup>15</sup>

### **A Righteous Cause**

Peter Ainslie had a friendly feeling for the cause of Black Americans. He was an advocate for racial justice. "I have heired my friendly feeling for the Negro from my forebears, as have many other descendants of slaveholders."<sup>16</sup> One touching and powerful story illustrates the point.

In 1835, the grandfather of Peter Ainslie, his namesake, drowned. It happened this way. His grandfather married his second wife Miss Matilda Gregory, March 25, 1834. They settled on the Mattaponi River in King William County on a farm called Kentucky. Her father had sold a female slave married to a slave she considered special. Peter Ainslie determined to purchase the female slave for his new bride so the woman could be reunited with her husband. The owner of the slave woman refused to sell her. A few months later that man died and his whole estate was to be auctioned. Peter Ainslie was determined to purchase the woman with an offer above the usual price.

On a cold morning in February, 1835, Peter Ainslie set out with the slave who was the husband of the woman he intended to purchase. Crossing the narrow river to the landing of the courthouse, their boat became caught in the drifting ice and capsized. Both men drowned. Their bodies were not recovered for six weeks. When he was found, the money to purchase the slave woman was still in the pocket of Peter Ainslie.

A teenage boy of Kind and Queen County at that time grew to become a renowned physician. He, like many others, was greatly influenced by the events of the death of Peter Ainslie. On December 6, 1906, he wrote: "It was a tragical scene when Mr. Ainslie drowned. Persons on the shore witnessed it, but were powerless to help. He was regarded as the ablest of the seven preachers, who were excommunicated by the Dover decrees of the Baptist Church in 1832 because of his holding to the views of the Disciples."<sup>17</sup>

Peter Ainslie recounted that his own father had more than twenty slaves in Essex County, Virginia. They lived at Dunnsville, and his

father wanted to free his slaves as had Alexander Campbell in Brooke County, Virginia. However, his father had only a small amount of land and not enough to free his slaves and deed them sufficient land to live on, as the employment of free Negroes in the South was very difficult. When the Civil War ended, Peter Ainslie was made the civilian member of the Court of Arbitration, and, along with a military officer, they formed the provisional government for Essex County, Virginia. Reflecting on that era, judge T.R.B. Wright of Tappahaanock, Virginia, wrote of Peter Ainslie on May 3, 1907: "This brave, fearless, clear-headed and just citizen stood as a breakwater against confiscation and bloodshed that were momentarily threatened. He was a tower of strength and a bulwark of the liberties of a defenseless people."<sup>18</sup>

Peter Ainslie was proud of the heritage of his father and his grandfather and like them he was a proponent of justice for, and friendly to, the African American's cause. He felt that if we were proud of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock and of the Cavaliers at Jamestown, then "... we must be no less proud of those ship loads of Africans, ... that came through serfdom to America."<sup>19</sup>

He believed that those who cultivate mistrust between the races injure all of us. Doing so he felt was folly, even treason. "Negroes have accompanied us in our ventures of discovery. They have fought in our battles. They have added to our wealth by their labor, and their inner life has touched our lives . . ."<sup>20</sup> Ainslie, who helped begin churches for Blacks, was often asked to be a speaker at their gatherings, and did what he could to be a friend.

Justice and equality for the people of all races was a common theme in the ministry of Peter Ainslie. This truth is well illustrated by George Walker Buckner, who tells us:

Ainslie's stand on race was the more impressive because it was influenced by his beloved native state of Virginia. His heritage included affection for Negroes and a deep sense of the justice due them. He told me once the story of a trip through Virginia on a crowded Jim Crow car. Forgetting about the law of segregated travel, he motioned to a little Negro girl to take the seat by him. The uproar caused included threats to have this "damn Yankee" put off the train. As the furor grew the conductor came to explain the law. Ainslie said he was sorry the state had such a law and, raising his voice, asked the conductor if he thought Virginia would honor the memory of Robert E. Lee if he sat there and refused to seat to a little colored girl. The conductor agreed and said he would lose his job before he did anything about it. When the tumult subsided, a passenger wondered aloud "who was the damn Virginian who talked about Robert E. Lee."<sup>21</sup>

In 1911, Ainslie wrote *My Brother and I, A Brief Manual of the Principles that Makes for a Wider Brotherhood with All Mankind*. Its

purpose was to help all who wish to conform to the will of God by embracing the unity of the whole human race. In it he wrote "Humanity is one. Conditions changes, but nothing can break the tie of my common kinship with all mankind. I am neither above nor below men, but I stand on the level with them all and all whom I look in the face bear the marks of my brother. Cares may have burdened them, sin may have scarred them, the rugged way may have tired them, but out of the weariness, I spell the language of brotherhood, for my brother and I are in the same battle and elbow touches elbow in the contention for the mastery."<sup>22</sup>

### **An Advocate for Unity**

Peter Ainslie traced his interest in Christian unity to his boyhood days and the example of his grandfather adapting the teachings of Alexander Campbell, and joining the Disciples. Also, his father continued in that same tradition and passed the heritage on to his son, a third generation Disciple. He was convinced that unfriendly divisions within Christianity was its greatest weakness. Ainslie felt that only the teachings of Christ should be our guide, in particular, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Ainslie wrote "This badge of discipleship has been lost—lost so long that many think the quest for its recovery is not worth the task. Whatever others may think, in the light of the teachings of Jesus and His apostles, the greatest issue of these times is the unity of Christendom. It was His prayer: 'Father . . . I pray . . . that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, are in me, and I in Thee, that thou didst send me.'"<sup>23</sup>

In 1910 Peter Ainslie was the President of the American Christian Missionary Society and thus presided at many of the sessions of the annual gathering of the Disciples, held in Topeka, Kansas. The Disciples were in the midst of the change from mass meetings to a delegate convention. He had quite a time keeping order. Ainslie heeded others advice not to bring the issue of forming a body for Christian unity to the floor. Instead, a meeting was held at the First Christian Church with about fifty attending. Interest was so keen that a public meeting was called and the church was packed. "R. A. Long, of Kansas City, president of the Christian Board of Publication, offered to give twenty thousand dollars in the publication of literature for this cause." Later, the amount was cut to ten thousand but could be used for printing, conference expenses and other expenses. After a committee recommended it, "The Council on Christian Union of the Disciples of Christ," was formed with a board of nine members. Peter Ainslie was selected as the first president.<sup>24</sup>

The Episcopalians, under the influence of Bishop Brent, earlier that years at the International Missionary Conference at Edinburgh had decided to seek the creation of a commission on unity at their General Convention. They were meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, while the Disciples met in Topeka. Telegrams of congratulations were exchanged between Topeka and Cincinnati. The Episcopalians voted to work with all other churches "which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and

Saviour 'to set up a world conference to consider' questions touching faith and order."<sup>25</sup> The Congregationalists and the Presbyterians took similar actions.

In 1916 the Disciples changed the name "The Council on Christian Union of the Disciples of Christ" to the "Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity," and in 1954 the present name "Council on Christian Unity" was adopted. Peter Ainslie played a significant role in the effort at Christian unity until his death. "In the spring of 1914 he was one of three American church leaders . . . to visit the Free Churches in Great Britain to secure their support for the Faith and Order cause."<sup>26</sup>

The work toward Christian Union led to closer ties with many communions. In 1916 the Disciples and the Presbyterians made attempts at reconciliation by having each body vote on a document called the "Declaration of Agreement," which allowed members of each group to take communion in churches of the other; recognized the ordination of each group; recognized the elders and deacons of both churches; recognized that both are members of the Christian Church Universal and Catholic; and recognized that both use the Holy Scriptures for the rule of faith and practice. This was an important step for the ecumenical efforts of both churches. Similar strong efforts at strengthening relationships with the Congregationalist and with the Northern Baptists were made between 1911 and 1917. Ainslie devoted much time to this.

The First World Conference on Faith and Order, for which Peter Ainslie had labored for years was held in August of 1927. Peter Ainslie was in attendance, but not as an official delegate of the Disciples. Paul Crow, Jr. helps us understand why.

By this time the breadth of his Catholic spirit was looked upon with distrust by many of his denomination brethren. Especially suspect were, on the one hand, his advocacy that different baptismal concepts and practices should be mutually recognized in the Christian fellowship and, on the other hand, the penetrating way he tried to bring the Disciples to see that they, as much as any communion, were a part of the ecumenical problem. But regardless of the stature of appointments, Dr. Ainslie was the Disciples' most admired participant and articulate spokesman at Lausanne. In official capacities he led the devotions at an afternoon session, presented the report of the Continuation Committee, and read a paper on the conference's seventh subtheme "The Unity of Christendom and the Relation thereto of Existing Churches."<sup>27</sup>

The final decade of his life Peter Ainslie did not speak on the floor of the Disciples annual convention. After fifteen years as the president of the Council on Christian Union he did not run again. That decision was met with satisfaction by the Independents who resisted not only Ainslie's efforts at Christian unity, but the entire direction of the convention, toward being a delegate body with a number of organiza-

tional structures. George G. Beazley, Jr., explained how a man of the stature of Peter Ainslie could fail to enjoy the respect of all Disciples. "We have two strands in our history. One is a truly Catholic comprehension, with an emphasis on Christian unity. The other is a strong taint of sectarianism. Ainslie never allowed his rage at the latter to dim his appreciation of the former . . . . Ainslie's first great contribution to the ecumenical movement was his love for the tradition which had led him to Christ."<sup>28</sup>

On June 30, 1925, at age 56, Peter Ainslie married "Mary Weisel, dean of a Presbyterian Girl's Seminary in Baltimore. They shared common concerns for inter-social understanding, international peace, and for social and human problems." They were married for just under ten years when Peter died of cancer on February 24, 1934. They had two children Mary Elizabeth and Peter Ainslie IV.<sup>29</sup>

Edgar DeWitt Jones gave an address at the International Convention, in Des Moines, Iowa, on October 17, 1934, to honor and remember the contributions of Peter Ainslie to the Disciples. In it he said:

I do not wish to be extravagant in statement; I do not forget the noble men among us from the most conspicuous national leader to the humblest and most obscure preacher, but I state a plain truth when I aver that this is the man who kept ever to the foreground the mending of the road to unity, made the subject paramount, glorified it, lived for it and died for it, a flaming apostle of Christian Unity.<sup>30</sup>

Let us give the last word to Peter Ainslie himself. In 1914 he was given the degree of Doctor of Divinity, at Yale University. The year before he had given a series of lectures before the Yale Divinity School. They were first printed in 1913 under the title *The Message of the Disciples for the Union of the Church, Including Their Origin and History*. In it Ainslie showed that he had the deft touch of a historian, the passion of a powerful preacher and the courage of a crusader for Christian Unity. This can be clearly seen in the dedication at the beginning of the book and the last words of the last paragraph of the book. First, from the dedication:

To my grandfather PETER AINSLIE of Edinburgh, Scotland (1788-1834), first a Presbyterian, then a Baptist, then a Disciple of Christ and all the time a Christian; and to my father PETER AINSLIE of Dunnsville, Virginia (1816-1887), a Disciple of Christ and always a Christian, both ministers of the Gospel and both throughout their lives unreservedly committed to the union of the divided house of God.

And finally, these words with which he closed his lectures and by which he lived and made his faithful witness to Christian Unity:

... the Disciples still have their faces set for the union of the Church in order that the world may believe that Jesus is the Christ. To obtain closer access both to His sacred heart and to all who believe in Him, the Bible must be the basis of our approach—the Bible freed from every remnant of systems of theology—and the history of the Disciples has no higher desire than to be a voice calling for peace in the divided house of God.

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#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Peter Ainslie, *Working With God or The Story of a Twenty-five Year Pastorate in Baltimore*, (Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, 1917), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Peter Ainslie, IV, "That You May Go Beyond Where I Have Gone," *Discipliana*, 27:2, (July 1967): 35.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 35.

<sup>4</sup>Peter Ainslie, *Working With God*, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. pp. 25-26.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. pp. 35, 37.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. pp. 55-56.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. pp. 65, 69.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid. p. 73.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. pp. 87-88.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. p. 91.

<sup>12</sup>John D. Hicks, *The American Nation*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1958), pp. 408, 413.

<sup>13</sup>Peter Ainslie, *Working With God*, pp. 109, 111.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. pp. 335, 337.

<sup>15</sup>George Buckner, "Peter Ainslie and the Younger Ministers," *Discipliana*, 27:2, (July 1967): 33.

<sup>16</sup>Peter Ainslie, *Working With God*, p. 279.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. p. 280.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid. p. 283.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid. p. 286.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. p. 293.

<sup>21</sup>George Buckner, "Peter Ainslie and the Younger Ministers," p. 33.

<sup>22</sup>Peter Ainslie, *My Brother and I* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1911), p. 9.

<sup>23</sup>Peter Ainslie, *Working With God*, p. 298-299.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. p. 300.

<sup>25</sup>Paul Crow, Jr., "Peter Ainslie And The Beginnings of Faith And Order," *Discipliana*, 27:2 (July 1967): 29.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid. p. 30.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid. p. 30.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid. p. 25.

<sup>29</sup>Paul Crow, Jr., Program from "The Inaugural Peter Ainslie Lecture on Christian Unity," Christian Temple, Catonsville, MD, October 20, 1982, p. 2.

<sup>30</sup>Edgar DeWitt Jones, "A Flaming Apostle of Christian Unity," *Discipliana* 27:2 (July 1967): 22.

<sup>31</sup>Peter Ainslie, *The Message of the Disciples for the Union of the Church*, (New York: Fleming Revell Co., 1913), Dedication page, p. 136.

### ***The Christian Church of Thayer Named Fund***

The Christian Church of Thayer (Missouri) was organized on April 15, 1887, by A. S. Wright. There were 41 members who began with this congregation which was then located two miles from Mammoth Springs. History records that six years intervened before there was additional news about the congregation. At that time it is recorded that "Eighty-seven added in J. M. Hoffman's meeting in Thayer, Missouri." The congregation continues though much weaker than in previous days. Recently the congregation placed with the Disciples of Christ Historical Society the old communion ware that were used in the early church. It now is on permanent loan to the Society from the congregation. At the same time a gift was given by the congregation to establish this Named Fund for the Christian Church of Thayer.

### ***Westbury Christian Church Named Fund***

A congregation had met for some time under the name of Southwest Christian Church in Houston, Texas, but on January 3, 1960, that congregation became a part of a new congregation being established in Houston. The name of the new congregation was Westbury Christian Church. James H. Bealer was the organizing minister of the congregation. The congregation began with 85 members. It continued until 1992 when because of the small size of the congregation it was forced to close its doors. The assets of that congregation have been used to strengthen the life of the church and the community both at present and in the future. A gift from Westbury congregation has been given to the Disciples of Christ Historical Society for the permanent preservation of their records. With this gift a Named Fund has been established for the congregation.

### ***"Unsung Hero" Halsey Wakelin Recognized***

Halsey Wakelin is a Canadian by birth, but with a God to serve in two countries. From 1933 to 1953 he served pastorates, served as Secretary of the Ontario Board of Cooperation and was Field Secretary of the All Canada Committee. Following that he served congregations in Iowa and served as Associate Regional Minister for the Christian Church in the Upper Midwest. He officially took retirement in 1977 but continues to serve the church in many ways, both in Canada and the United States. This Life Patron Membership was given to Wakelin at the 1993 General Assembly through the generosity of an anonymous couple deeply concerned for the ministry of the Historical Society.





*Dr. Seale acknowledges the gift of The Ainsley Library on Christian Unity from the Reverend David Caldwell and the congregation of First Christian Church, Baltimore, Maryland.*

## ***Just As I Lived It***

*by Lester G. McAllister*

(Recalling events occurring during a 70-plus year fellowship in the Stone-Campbell Movement.)

On September 13, 1992, First Christian Church, Baltimore, Maryland, (Rev. David A. Caldwell, Minister) presented the Peter Ainslie Library on Christian Unity to the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, represented by Dr. James M. Seale, President. It was exactly 50 years to the day that Mrs. Peter Ainslie had given the library to the congregation for safekeeping.

After the death of Peter Ainslie in 1934 Mrs. Ainslie transferred her membership from Christian Temple in Baltimore to First Christian Church. In giving the library to her new church home, a library containing many valuable and rare books so carefully collected by her late husband, she was seeking to preserve it. Through the years, however, its location was unknown to most of the larger church and its use was minimal.

Three years ago, on a visit to Baltimore, I discovered the library and suggested to David Caldwell that such a collection should be placed in a location readily available to a wide number of scholars and researchers. David took the matter to the board of the congregation. The members decided to place the Ainslie library in Nashville with the Disciples of Christ Historical Society. There it will be found intact and available for years to come to anyone wishing to study Christian unity.

The "rediscovery" of this valuable collection should remind each of us that in our church buildings, in basements, closets and attics, or in our personal possession, may be equally important materials concerning the Stone-Campbell movement. If we have such materials shouldn't we consider placing them (or at least good copies) in a carefully maintained library and archives? The Disciples of Christ Historical Society is ready to receive them.

# DISCIPLIANA

The Quarterly Historical Journal of the  
DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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THE FIRST ANNUAL FORREST H. KIRKPATRICK SEMINAR FOR STONE-CAMPBELL HISTORIANS WILL BE HELD IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, AT THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY, APRIL 29-30, 1994. REGISTRATION INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED BY WRITING TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY. LECTURERS ARE KATHY J. PULLEY, G. RICHARD PHILLIPS AND CLARK M. WILLIAMSON.



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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society was established in 1941 "to maintain and further interest in religious heritage, backgrounds, origins, development, and general history of Disciples of Christ, Christian Churches, Churches of Christ and related groups."

Members of the Society receive *DISCIPLIANA* quarterly, along with other benefits. Annual membership categories are as follows: Sustaining - \$50 to \$249, Participating - \$25 to \$49, Regular - \$15, Students - \$7.50, Canadian and Overseas - \$20. Single payment Life Memberships are: Life - \$250, Life Link - \$500, Life Patron - \$1,000.

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—From the Editor's Desk

Kenneth L. Woodward, commenting in *Newsweek* on the findings of Kosmin and Lachman's recent survey of religion in America, *One Nation Under God*, expressed surprise at the high percentage of college graduates among the members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). For readers not acquainted with this study, Kosmin and Lachman report that Disciples have the highest percentage of college graduates of the major Protestant denominations in the United States (39.3%). Woodward identified the Disciples of Christ as "Ronald Reagan's, denomination, a solidly Midwestern tradition that emerged only in the nineteenth century." Apparently, Woodward does not identify high educational achievement with the Midwest or religious traditions of "recent" origin.

Students of the Stone-Campbell Movement should not be surprised by Kosmin and Lachman's discovery of the high percentage of college graduates among Disciples of Christ. Education has always held a place of honor in the Stone-Campbell tradition. The early support of Bacon College and Alexander Campbell's passion for establishing a distinctive educational institution at Bethany are well known to students of the Stone-Campbell Movement. In this issue, Kenneth Henry investigates the important but little known story of the commitment and efforts of African American and other Disciples to establish and develop educational institutions to serve the African American community.

Professor Henry's article began as the Historical Society's Reed Lectures for 1993, delivered at Barton College, Wilson, North Carolina, September 14, 1993. The Reed Lectures honor Forrest F. Reed, Nashville, Tennessee publisher and leader of the Disciples of Christ.

The article by Reverend Hannah Jane Hurdle-Toomey is a daughter's reflections on the influence of African American Disciples educator and pastor, Andrew Jackson Hurdle. Hurdle, a former slave, played a leading role in the establishment of the Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College. Founded in 1912, the school offered classes until the main building was destroyed by fire around 1920.

Through the efforts of Professor Henry, Reverend Hurdle-Toomey and others a long neglected story is being told. *Discipliana* is proud to have a part in disseminating this story.

### —From the President's Desk

As we look back across this year when the length of *Discipliana* was doubled, we take pride and look with some introspection at what has happened. The articles have been substantive and revealing of history. Many people, both lay and clergy, have expressed appreciation for the enlarged format. We are grateful for this expression of confidence. Yet we know there are still some adjustments and improvements to be made.

Working with the Editorial Committee has slowed our process of getting material ready and the last two volumes have been late. Part of this has been due also to changing mailing software. Hopefully, by the spring issue we will be back on track.

Working with an Editorial Committee assures our readers the best of scholarship and historical information. It is the desire of the Editorial Committee to present as much new research and writing as possible. It requires time to move into this mode and get all articles reviewed, edited, and ready for print.

When a paper is received for possible publication it is reviewed by two church historians as well as the editor. The decision is then made whether or not to publish. Often the author is requested to make changes for publication. The editor has a final look at the paper and makes any editorial changes that are needed. This process takes longer than our previous way of preparing each volume, but it assures you, the reader, of a strong quality of historical reading.

We do solicit articles for consideration for publishing. Articles should be not more than 20 typed, double-spaced pages. This includes footnotes. Wherever possible we would like to have the article submitted in print form, two copies, and on disk. With articles this length there will be room in *Discipliana* for short book reviews and for news of the Historical Society. We look forward to 1994.

# **FAITH AND LEARNING AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN DISCIPLES OF CHRIST**

by Kenneth E. Henry\*

African American Disciples of Christ have relied heavily upon religion and education to clarify and maintain their place in church and society. The strong link between faith and learning has roots within the African holistic view of life. The two elements became part of the survival strategy of Africans enslaved at the time of the earliest congregations of Disciples of Christ. This combination has been basic to the liberation struggle in every period. It is the most enduring answer to the American dilemma—racism—in church and society.

This article will seek to explore how this dynamic was operative within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Selected centers of early Disciples witness among African Americans will be reviewed focusing on the initiative, activity and results of black and white Disciples. Vignettes of key individuals, churches and educational institutions will be incorporated.

It is not by accident that several writings on African American Disciples history bear such titles as *The Untold Story: A Short History of Black Disciples or Unknown Prophets: Black Disciples Ministry in Historical Perspective*. Equally revealing are the titles, *Two Races in One Fellowship and Journey Toward Wholeness: A History of Black Disciples of Christ in the Mission of the Christian Church*.<sup>1</sup> Obviously there is a clear perception that the story of African American Disciples is not well known but also that it is an integral part of the total witness of the Disciples of Christ.

Given these conditions, Vincent Harding's analysis of history provides a helpful interpretive framework.<sup>2</sup> He identifies three historiographical postures or overlapping emphases in the study of American history. There is first "American" or "standard" history that makes the Euro American perspective normative, absolute and ideal. The romanticized exploits of Europeans in this country are seen as fulfillment of God's plan; an errand into the wilderness to establish the righteous empire with a covenant theology to justify it.<sup>3</sup>

With this scenario the contribution of Africans, imported as slaves, is generally ignored or greatly distorted. They are portrayed as docile, happy, superstitious, lazy, uncivilized, immoral, and natural subjects for enslavement. There were pro-slavery advocates among the early Disciples who shared these views (as well as abolitionists who did not).<sup>4</sup>

The second approach Harding defines allows for the introduction of "Negro History." The fundamental premises of American history remain but African American achievements are added whenever they conform to the prevailing pattern. This was an attempt to say African Americans have paid their dues and can play the game successfully even by Euro American rules if given equal opportunity. Merle Eppse, an African American historian, wrote a book with the provocative title: *The*

*Negro, Too, in American History.*<sup>4</sup> This was the era of a few paragraphs or a chapter on "Our Negro Work" in standard Disciples histories.<sup>5</sup>

The third approach is that of "Black History." This method questions the fundamental assumptions of standard history and declares some are distortions and some are deliberate lies that must be destroyed. It is a call to recognize the validity of the African heritage throughout history and give credit for the indispensable role Africans played in making America the powerful nation it was to become. While it is becoming more generally admitted that the material success of America north and south was made possible by slave labor,<sup>6</sup> we still have trouble admitting the practical, intellectual, social and spiritual contributions of African Americans absorbed by the dominant culture.

All of the above is an attempt to say this article cannot rewrite history in the sense of changing publicly verifiable data. The third approach will be used to affirm the distinctive insights born of a unique heritage touched by the witness of the Disciples.<sup>7</sup> Within the designated geographical areas the development will be chronological.

A personal experience of the writer may clarify "the distinctive insights born of a unique heritage" as implied in the writing. As a seminary student many years ago I wrote one of the fairly standard term papers most students write at one time or another, "A Socio-Religious Study of \_\_\_\_\_ and you fill in the name of the selected congregation. The selected congregation was a Freewill Baptist Church in New Haven, Connecticut. It was a small congregation, worshipping in a dilapidated building.

My method of investigation was participant observation. I shared in the rather spontaneous Sunday worship, dominated by the part-time pastor; a person short of stature with one stiff leg. His preaching style seemed to include at least 30 minutes of scolding the congregation and almost equal time devoted to the blessings and joy of obedience. There was no youth program other than a Sunday school class, and the women met occasionally to sponsor special money-raising projects. On the basis of what I observed I surmised that it was only a matter of time before the building collapsed, the congregation drifted away, or urban renewal required relocation. My paper received a grade of "A."

Almost ten years later I returned to New Haven and often walked to churches near the Divinity School campus. When I arrived at one church that ten years ago had housed a white congregation and saw two black girls entering, I noted to myself, "They have integrated." As I entered the sanctuary I saw wall-to-wall black people! A team of uniformed ushers were finding seats and doing other important things. A men's chorus and youth choir were in place. At about 11:00 a.m., onto the platform came, yes, that short minister with the stiff leg; this time with three or four assistants. To the sound of organ and piano music, a third choir was moving down the center aisle. Beautifully attired in peach-colored robes, they moved with syncopated rhythm as they sang to me, and perhaps the others present, "We've Come This Far by Faith, Leaning on the Lord."

Many African American Disciples congregations sing a similar song, and that is the story that must be told.

## **Beginnings in Black and White: The Piedmont Region**

The area of Virginia, North Carolina and West Virginia has been referred to as the Piedmont Tri-State area for the organization of African American churches. This area was an early center for reformation and restoration minded church leaders. The conditions of a young and expanding nation created a climate of adventure that often meant abandoning old patterns and seeking new ways of meeting the necessities of life. Natural resources were bountiful but persistence and hard work were necessary to sustain the growth of the young nation. The dominant culture was transplanted from England, purged of what was regarded as negative elements.

In religious circles this meant taking the English Protestant tradition and freeing it from the corruptions and restrictions of the past. A popular formula was to seek to restore New Testament Christianity and eliminate the creeds, structures and practices that tended to obscure the biblical model. Out of the Anglican Church emerged the Methodists and by 1792 James O'Kelley led a movement that objected to the authority and life tenure of the superintendents of the Methodists. When the General Conference did not support his views he led a secession which formed the Republican Methodists who adopted the name the Christian Church. By 1795 the Methodists reported "decreases of 4,673 among white and 1,644 among the colored" with the assumption that most of these were claimed by the O'Kelley Movement.<sup>8</sup>

Out of the Baptist tradition another reform movement was taking shape. The spirit of freedom and independence, warm and simple faith had gained momentum. One stream, the Freewill Baptists, became Arminian rather than Calvinist and championed a non-creedal, clearly autonomous expression of the church. The movement was strong in North Carolina and many of these congregations became Churches of Christ. Baptist and Methodist traditions had great impact upon African Americans in this area even before the Campbell-Stone Movement was established.

The element seldom recognized was the influence of traditional African religion or spirituality. There is no agreement relative to the amount of African culture that was transplanted to America. On the one hand, there are scholars who are convinced that little or nothing of African culture was preserved due to the conditions under which Africans were brought to this country. Captured and enslaved, there was no provision for perpetuating social, economic, political or even family ties.

On the other hand, there are scholars who perceive Africanisms that not only were retained by Africans but also had their impact on the dominant culture. These embrace the wider realms of music, dance,

medicine, language, folkways, oral tradition and others. Religion provided the vehicle for passing on the essence of the African way of life, not simply duplication of forms.

African style of worship, forms of ritual, systems of belief, and fundamental perspectives have remained vital on this side of the Atlantic, not because they were preserved in a 'Pure' orthodoxy but because they were transformed. Adaptability, based upon respect for spiritual power wherever it originated, accounted for the openness of African religion to syncretism with other religious traditions and for the continuity of a distinctly African religious consciousness.<sup>9</sup>

All of the components mentioned above may be seen in the history of African American Disciples of Christ. Among the earliest Disciple congregations at Cane Ridge, Kentucky and Washington, Pennsylvania there were black members before the Civil War.<sup>10</sup> Most of the blacks were slaves on hand to render whatever services were needed. Upon hearing the gospel they were permitted to become members of the church without any change in their status as slaves. Some of the gifted ones were ordained to preach.<sup>11</sup>

We have no records of the sermons by these first black preachers but they exhibited talent for exhortation and leadership. E. Franklin Frazier has suggested that the earliest black preachers may have continued a leadership tradition that has roots in Africa. These were the persons who kept alive hope for a better day. The African traditional religion belief in a most high God manifest in various forms in the universe and whose spirit may possess the believer was accommodated to the Christian teaching of a God of love and power. This God liberated Israel and has shown his love and power through prophets, priests and his own son. Knowledge of this God was indeed good news to an oppressed people.

Evidently they were effective in communicating to other slaves as congregations developed in Kentucky, North Carolina and beyond. A former slave named Alexander Campbell led a congregation at Midway, Kentucky as early as 1834. There were churches that included free blacks as well as whites, Indians, and slaves. Among the Black Disciples in Eastern North Carolina, the oldest church on the northeast side of the Tar River (known as the Mother Church in the Washington-Norfolk District) is the Uniontown Church.<sup>12</sup> William Barber has noted that traditional accounts indicate this church was at first a Freewill Baptist Church but became Disciple before the Civil War. Churches developed in free states also, occasionally with integrated congregations.<sup>13</sup>

The churches became the focal points for improving the condition of the African Americans with evangelism and education their major strategy. Denominations established before the Disciples had pioneered in this role. Anglicans, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists were the most prominent. Churches became the first schools and the Bible the first textbook. Here was laid the foundation for a new orientation to the world so greatly different for the African American.

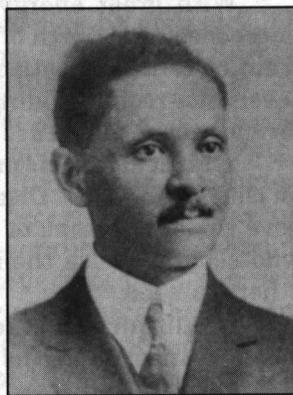
This story is customarily told in terms of what whites did for blacks who passively received according to standard history. Black history informs us that many Africans were rebelling at every point. They were not all anxious to adapt a version of Christianity that served to reinforce slavery. In many instances, the "Invisible Institution" was alive and well. Slaves took the Christian teachings and fused them with their African heritage and gave expression to their spirituality in their own way. In the cabins late at night, in the woods and fields away from the masters, they expressed themselves in song and dance, prayer and exhortation.

More specifically, after emancipation struggling black congregations often launched efforts to organize schools and were joined by white Disciples. Schools were thought to be the best answer to the question of what to do with the Negro. Increasingly there was awareness that the Negro should be a party to answering the question.

A Board of Education and Evangelism was established to coordinate the program. An example of local Black Church initiative and cooperative response was the Piedmont Christian Institute. A report in a comprehensive study of Disciple service institutions gives the following:

The Piedmont Christian Institute had its inception in the minds of a group of Negro Disciples in the Piedmont section of Virginia and North Carolina. They were eager to provide educational advantages for their children and youth, and especially that these advantages should be afforded under the influence and in the atmosphere of their own religious communion.<sup>14</sup>

The small one-room building of the Fayette Street Christian Church, a Negro congregation in Martinsville, Virginia was the place of beginning in 1900. The person called to head the school was James H. Thomas who was born in 1877.<sup>15</sup> His father had been a slave and after emancipation mastered the art of brick masonry. The father and mother were charter members of the Church of Christ in Chatham, Virginia. Consequently, James felt born into that communion! His parents were strongly committed to seeing that he received every opportunity for an education. He attended State College at Petersburg and taught at Chatham before accepting the position at Martinsville. His ties with the church remained strong. The founder and pastor at Fayette Street, Elder R. A. Spencer, encouraged him to enter the ministry. Eventually he did and this helped supplement his small salary at the school.



James H. Thomas

The history of the school is one of heroic efforts by Thomas and the churches with some assistance from the Christian Women's Board of Missions. They acquired property, built facilities and served many

students more than thirty years before the economic depression forced them to close in 1932.<sup>16</sup>

This account illustrates the great commitment of Black Disciples to faith and learning. The church provided the vision, rallying point and resources. Education in turn would empower its students with knowledge for the uplift of the race and witness of the church to black and white. The realistic, hard working, holistic approach gained tangible results far beyond the relatively brief period the school existed.

From this general region may be drawn another example of faith and learning in action.

Among the colored Disciples of Christ, as they were described in the early history of the movement, there was a hunger and thirst for knowledge and the betterment of the Negro race and the 'Brotherhood.' So in the 40th session of the Colored Disciples of Christ in Eastern North Carolina which convened at Broad Creek, North Carolina with Elder I. Darden, chief, presiding, a report was received from the newly appointed School Work Committee.<sup>17</sup>

The essence of the report was the election of E. S. L. Whitfield as president of their school work and granting him power "to lay such plans as he thought wise for the success of the work."<sup>18</sup>

In recognition of Whitfield's scholarship, business principles, energy, forethought and determination he was granted all the powers regularly possessed by the president of the recognized colleges of the state. The action is not to ask permission or guidance or funds (at this point). Their confidence was in themselves as servants of God's people.

With great energy Whitfield began his work as the assembly purchased land north of Goldsboro, with the intention of developing a training center for both clergy and laity. After completion of a two-story seventeen-room building the Goldsboro Christian Institute (G.C.I.) formally opened in 1911.

Whitfield reflects much of the history of initiative and achievement on the part of black Disciples in the area. He was one of a family that gave several persons to the ministry. They stand beside many others who sought to use their education and commitment to reach many others in need.<sup>19</sup>

In all fairness, the story of G.C.I. reflects the challenges and opportunities, strengths and weaknesses, achievements and failures of cooperative enterprises. Over the years, many types of programs drawing upon varied resources have been tried. The challenge remains.<sup>20</sup>

## **Kentucky and Tennessee**

The witness of Disciples among Negroes in Kentucky embraces all the stages and patterns that would be duplicated elsewhere. Not only were there African American converts at Cane Ridge as noted earlier—Alexander Campbell, Samuel Buckner, and Charles

Spencer—but other congregations listed African American members before the Civil War.<sup>21</sup>

The slave members of white congregations became the core groups of independent black congregations. After the Midway Congregation there were congregations developed at East Second Street in Lexington, Hancock Hill at Louisville and Little Rock in Bourbon County organized by Samuel Buckner. After the Civil War nearly 70 more were organized before 1900. During this time a state organization of Negro churches came into being in 1872-73.<sup>22</sup>

At the point of statewide cooperation the passion of the black churches for tangible enhancement of faith and learning is made clear. In 1865 the convention hired an evangelist, W. P. Richards, and voiced its interest in education of men for ministry. This interest gave rise to the establishment of a Bible School in the Hancock Street Church in Louisville<sup>23</sup> where there were 25 student preachers in 1875. An earlier school at Louisville had operated about four years. John Long has gathered data suggesting there was a P. H. Marse who headed the school rather than the more widely known P. H. Moss.<sup>24</sup>

A number of schools were started that lasted for brief periods: Christian Bible College, Louisville Bible School, Central Christian Institute. Some of the most prominent leaders of black Disciples were involved as leaders or students with these schools, including Preston Taylor, Thomas B. Frost and Jason Cowan.<sup>25</sup> Preston Taylor was hired as a National Evangelist about 1900 by the American Christian Missionary Society. He was given the responsibility of organizing churches and raising funds for the establishment of Louisville Bible School.<sup>26</sup>



Preston Taylor

The Preston Taylor story truly belongs to the whole church but may be appropriately introduced here. Born in slavery in Shreveport, Louisiana in 1849 his life story reflects the dramatic changes of the period. Taylor resolved to become a minister after hearing a sermon by Samuel Buckner in Lexington, Kentucky.<sup>27</sup> Taylor became an outstanding example of the multi-vocational black Disciple minister. He was a stone cutter, railroad work contractor, manager of a funeral home, cemetery and recreational park in addition to becoming minister of High Street Christian Church in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky.

Every aspect of the work among black Disciples received attention from Preston Taylor. He served as a local pastor, state and national evangelist, fund raiser for churches and schools, founder and guiding spirit of the National Christian Missionary Convention. A major emphasis at the founding of the convention was to help bring into existence a college level institution for the training of black church leaders. His impact is most pronounced in Tennessee and Kentucky.

A final microcosm of the total witness was the development in Tennessee. The white congregation at Nashville had the largest number of African American members prior to the Civil War and organized two Sunday Schools for them as early as 1849. Ten years later one was constituted a church and led by a free Negro, Peter Lowery. The independent congregation was called the Grapevine Church which some scholars have labeled the first independent Negro congregation in the South.<sup>28</sup> After emancipation several congregations were organized. From these came representatives to form the American Evangelical and Education Association in 1867.<sup>29</sup> An annual Missionary Convention was organized in 1880. Tennessee also claims one of the early, though short-lived, schools for Negroes. John Long asserts that the School known as Central Christian Institute opened first as Warner Christian Institute in 1908. When Disciples began negotiating for the purchase, "a committee from the Negro churches had raised the first payment of \$400.00."<sup>30</sup>

Christian and industrial training was the dominant educational model of the age for equipping African Americans for a better life. The school was relocated at Shelbyville and known as Tennessee Christian Institute. The World War aborted the plan for opening the school. Eventually the property was sold and the proceeds spent on work among Negro churches.

## **New Challenges in the South: Alabama to Texas**

From the end of the Civil War to the present is a period of dramatic change in the history of the United States. During this period the churches have been challenged to radically transform their programs to keep abreast of changes in the social, economic, educational and political spheres. The scope and intensity of change for African Americans has few parallels in modern history. Faith and learning appear to be the only guidelines, the only principles on which the African Americans find agreement within and support beyond their immediate community. At this stage of the history we now discover that the words of Benjamin E. Mays still ring true. The Negro church, in harmony with the larger church in doctrine and structure, emerges as a sociological necessity.<sup>31</sup> Faith and learning must be regularly appraised from the African American perspective for the most effective strategies to serve the present age.

The new challenges in the South were, of course, the rapid changes following the Civil War. It is important to clarify how these changes impacted the lives of African Americans. The end of the war and adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th constitutional amendments (abolishing slavery, establishing citizenship and [male] voting rights) are at the heart of the changes.<sup>32</sup> For the implementation of these changes, federal agents and troops were dispersed throughout the South for a period of about twelve years, the Era of Reconstruction.

Among the changes were the following:

1. Blacks began to work for pay, however minimal and irregular it might be.

2. The acquisition of land on their own terms became a possibility for more African Americans.

3. African Americans were free to travel at the time and place of their choosing.

4. Families could reunite without the fear of being sold apart at the convenience of a slave master.

5. Participation in the political process was protected as state constitutions were rewritten and state and national leaders were chosen.<sup>33</sup>

While these may not sound extraordinary to us looking back from 1993, they were radical changes to the social, economic, political and religious order of the South with implications for the North as well. Working for pay meant some control over one's labor, time, energy and what goals one might set. Freedom to acquire property began to put former house servants (overwhelmingly mulatto) and former field hands on level footing. The former were often given property by their slave master fathers, while the latter were denied ownership of land.

Freedom to travel opened the door to major population shifts: from the plantations and rural areas to the growing population centers; from the South to the North and West, from former slave territory to the open frontier. Black males could assume responsibility for their families as they worked to provide food, clothing and shelter, perhaps to restore the patterns of apprenticeship so much a part of maturation within African society. Participation in the political process resulted in the election of two black senators—Hiram Revels and Blanch K. Bruce—and 20 congressmen from eight southern states.<sup>34</sup>

This period of change came to a dramatic halt when white males cut deals for their best interest at the expense of the freedom of the African American. In order to resolve a contested presidential election and avoid the uncertainty of a congressional resolution, northerners (Republicans) agreed to withdraw the federal troops from the South in return for the southerners' agreement to allow the Republican candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes, to assume the presidency uncontested. This Compromise of 1877 set the stage for the rise of white supremacy in the South. Through intimidation and violence, economic pressure, political maneuverings, African Americans were essentially disenfranchised and the rigid patterns of segregation were put in place.

Now just in case there is the impression that this is a mere recital of irrelevant, distant history, I would share with you this personal note. I never knew my paternal grandfather because he was shot to death around 1915 as he returned in a wagon from paying his poll taxes. My father was only 21 at the time. Although it was generally known that the perpetrators were white men, no formal charges were brought against anyone. My maternal grandfather, clearly a mulatto from the one photograph I have seen, never formally knew his father, although he recalled having seen his mother beaten on many occasions by her slave master.<sup>35</sup>

This is the context within which African Americans had to make sense of the fellowship of the church, empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the justice of God, theodicy and eschatology. From this background, my father, older brother, five uncles and myself have given collectively more than 350 years to the ministry of the Christian Church.<sup>36</sup>

Let us sharpen the focus on the challenge of these conditions to the church and what response was made by the churches. The most obvious and significant response was the evangelism of black and white northern churches in the South. Frazier suggests the institutionalized churches of the North joined ranks with the invisible institution alive and well among blacks in the South. The only leader permitted among the slaves—the slave preacher—and the only semblance of an organization—the church—could now surface and receive a little help from the North.

Church membership statistics are impressive. All of the predominantly black denominations greatly increased their memberships immediately after the Civil War. Among Disciples of Christ the number of independent black churches dramatically increased due to separation of blacks from white congregations as well as the formation of new congregations. A summary statement from Hap Lyda in *The Untold Story* will give the picture clearly:

In 1861 there were known black churches in the states of Kentucky, Ohio, North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. By the end of 1876 congregations were organized in the additional states of Indiana, Texas, Virginia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Michigan, Alabama, Kansas, Missouri and Louisiana.

During the era of 1861-1876 there were marked gains in the numbers of black churches and members; from churches in five states to churches in 15 states; from about 7,000 to approximately 20,000 members.<sup>37</sup>

Robert L. Jordan has preserved an impressive list of the pioneer preachers/evangelists of this era. Among them are outstanding women as well as men.<sup>38</sup>

The churches offered a model for the reconstruction of the black family. The patriarchal society of the Old Testament came close to the conditioning received in America with all the promises of rewards for obedience and punishment for disobedience intact. The New Testament community of sharing and caring inspired not only the church and families but the fraternal orders, insurance and burial associations also.

While the churches held sway in the rural areas, they were slow to adjust to the urban migration.<sup>39</sup> This situation claimed the attention of leaders for many years to come. The height of this concern was eventually expressed in a study, *Design for Renewal and Growth*.<sup>40</sup> It was noted that in the 15 cities showing black population growth of over 58% between 1940 and 1960, black Disciples claimed less than one-half of 1% of the total. New lifestyles and the lack of community structure left the churches out of touch with thousands who clustered around the

places of work. Other community services were equally slow—schools, medical services, recreational facilities—all experienced overload.

The basic discomfort of the black Disciples lay in the fact that the church seemed to have no effective comprehensive churchwide strategy. R. H. Peoples reported in a study, "Historical Development of Negro Work and Its Relation to Organized Brotherhood Life":

Between 1860 and 1880 much work was done in Negro churches by individuals, both Negro and white. Many of the white leaders made repeated requests each year in the General Convention for the American Missionary Society to do something for the Negro work. Each year for a number of years the Convention appointed a committee to study this problem and bring in recommendations. This was done many, many times but that was as far as the action went until 1890 when the Board of Negro Education and Evangelism was set up. In the meantime, some individuals were stimulated to do something for the freedmen because of some of these recommendations, all of which emphasized education and evangelization as the only way to help the Negro.<sup>41</sup>

Coordination at the national level moved slowly with limited attention from the American Christian Missionary Society until C. C. Smith was elected as secretary for the Board of Education and Evangelization. Raising money for the Negro churches and educational institutions was his major responsibility. We will return to the key role of Southern Christian Institute later.

The next shift in the national strategy was for the Negro work to be lodged with the Christian Woman's Board of Mission (CWBM). While many were convinced that the church manifested a rather cavalier attitude toward the work among Negroes,<sup>42</sup> C. C. Smith felt this was a constructive move. Peoples affirmed C. C. Smith's analysis of the need.

For development of the Negro church we need: first, an educated ministry, and the church needs to be taught to appreciate and support such a ministry. Second, they need a well trained general evangelist who would be in touch and sympathy with his people and yet by his training would be able to organize and give the work unity and cohesion. Third, they need a competent woman who can organize and lead the women in each state.<sup>43</sup>

C. C. Smith was succeeded by J. B. Lehman which brought together the interest of our oldest education venture for African Americans—the Southern Christian Institute—of which Lehman was president, and the structured direction of the CWBM. In response to the growing unrest concerning lack of participation in decisions regarding black people, two black national staff persons were named: Rosa B.



Rosa B. Bracey

Bracey to work with women's organizations and P. H. Moss as church school and young people's worker. State and regional structures were developing among the African American churches. Before the end of the 19th century there were state or regional conventions or assemblies in North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Alabama, Texas, Virginia (in the Piedmont Tri-State Convention), and Mississippi. With the 20th century came expansion along the east coast of the Assembly Churches into the northeast.

The stage is set for a national voice of the black churches. The most concrete, though not the only, expression of this concern was the development of the National Christian Missionary Convention. Both "pushing" and "pulling" forces were at work in the formation of the Convention.

From the address delivered by Preston Taylor, the most prominent leader in the organization, and the views expressed by many at the historic meeting on August 5-9, 1917 in Nashville, Tennessee, these pushing and pulling forces may be characterized in the following way:

1. Black Disciples were pushed in the direction of forming the convention by a general attitude of many Whites that the Negro was a ward, pet, or second class human being, not a full equal partner in the family of Disciples.

2. The question of race was addressed in moving speeches at the General Convention occasionally, but little application was made to how Blacks were treated in terms of accommodations at the meetings, or even as they travelled in the interest of the church program.

3. A lack of communication and misunderstanding of how Blacks were served by the agencies of the church was another pushing force.

The formation of the convention was not just a negative reaction, but also an affirmation of basic beliefs that may be regarded as pulling forces.

1. Black Disciples were seeking a mechanism for discussion and decision-making about their own needs. Nurturing the faith, strengthening the witness among Black Americans needed the regular and systematic input of Black Disciples.

2. Recognizing immediately their need for prepared leadership, they affirmed a desire for a school of higher education, particularly for ministerial training. Preston Taylor charged that there was no first-rate, four year college for Negroes in 1917. As recently as 1940, *The Christian Plea* reported that while there were twenty-one Disciples related colleges for Whites to study for the ministry, only Drake, Eureka and Butler would accept Negroes. Chapman was later added to this list.

3. The need for a medium of communication was identified for continued nurture of Black church life.<sup>44</sup>

Many of the challenges of the period are clearly focused in the complementary emphasis on education. A few examples from the period must serve our purpose.

About 35 miles southwest of Montgomery, Alabama in Lowndes County, Robert D. Brooks opened a school in a miserable shanty on

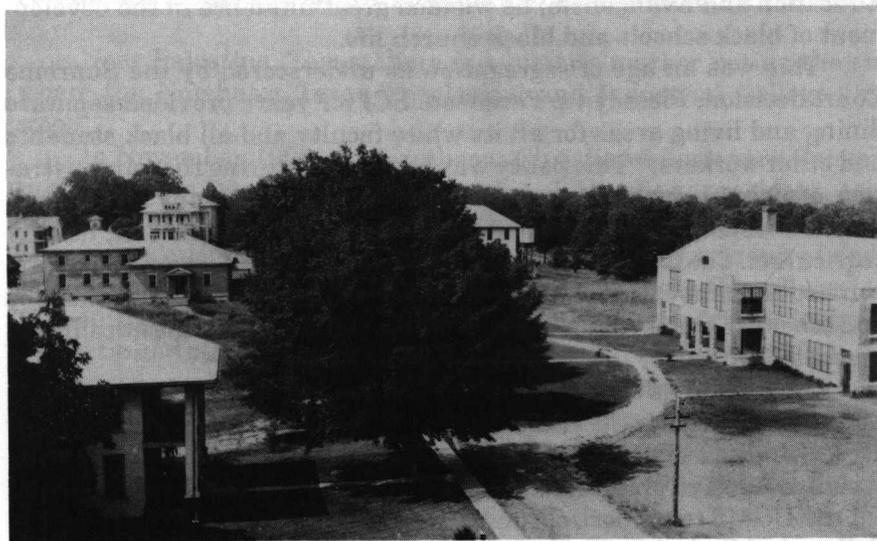
October 15, 1894. The community was called Lum and C. C. Smith referred to it as one of the blackest parts of the Black Belt.<sup>45</sup>

No public schools were in existence for more than 1000 Negroes in the area. From this community Robert D. Brooks and J. E. Bowie had attended Southern Christian Institute (SCI) and returned with the determination to establish a school. H. J. Brayboy, who had attended the Louisville Bible School, was a land owner who returned to Lum to lead the movement for a school. They sought to generate support from whites and blacks. A white woman donated five acres of land and the blacks raised funds among themselves to start the school. They began work in a little old church, hanging cloth to divide it into classrooms. They started with three teachers and a lot of determination. Mr. Brayboy mortgaged his property to buy lumber to build a school.

C. C. Smith visited on several occasions and shared the story of the struggling school. Long cites his statement in *Missionary Tidings*:

Negroes in Alabama have put up a school building which will be large enough for their school for years to come, . . . it is not ceiled [*sic*] on the outside, hence, quite incomplete. They have insufficient stoves and their blackboards are not worthy of the name and they have no maps or other school furniture. In this building they have a fine school of 110 pupils.<sup>46</sup>

Eventually the school included 70 acres and several buildings, including a church, dormitory, classroom building and various shops. Support and actual labor on the buildings came primarily from the black churches of the area. C. C. Smith praised them for their sacrificial giving for the uplift of their people. The campus became the meeting place for the state convention of Negro churches. The convention voted to change



Southern Christian Institute

the name from the Lum Grade School to the Alabama Christian Institute.<sup>47</sup>

As the county school system improved and the cost of operation increased, United Christian Missionary Society (UCMS) officials decided to discontinue support and decided to close the school in 1924.

The larger question remains in regards to criteria for decisions and policy that relate to the service of institutions and lives of persons.

### **Southern Christian Institute**

Southern Christian Institute (SCI) may be regarded as the prototype of Disciples' efforts to serve the educational needs of the black constituency of the church. In an age when the Booker T. Washington philosophy of education for the Negro received such overwhelming support from blacks and whites, North and South, it is not surprising that many supporters would visualize SCI as "Our Tuskegee."

The school had many spurts of life with the American Christian Missionary Society taking the initiative in 1874. Randall and Letitia Faurot were called into service but all of the support system was not in place.<sup>48</sup> R. L. Jordan reports that a Negro, A. I. Williams, made a second attempt to continue SCI after the school closed the first time.<sup>49</sup>

The coming of J. B. Lehman in 1890 provided stability and direction for the program. He was able to deal effectively with southern whites as well as blacks. Beginning at grade school level, SCI upgraded its program until it reached junior college level under the administration of John Long. Lehman conducted workers' conferences for the training of black church leadership. He seemed convinced that this was the appropriate and adequate level of training for black church ministry. When he succeeded C. C. Smith as secretary of the Board of Education and Evangelism, he wielded great influence in the development of black schools and black church life.

This was an age of segregation as underscored by the Supreme Court decision, *Plessey vs. Ferguson*. SCI for years provided separate dining and living areas for all its white faculty and all black students and other workers.<sup>50</sup> This policy was eliminated during the administration of John Long who succeeded John Lehman. Many traditional customs were defied as SCI tried to develop a more relevant, quality curriculum. The faculty became almost evenly divided, black and white. Curriculum innovations included a traveling library, health workshops and other programs taken into the community. By 1949 the enrollment reached 597.<sup>51</sup>

Once again as the public education system improved, the need for SCI seemed less urgent. There was some opposition to the school among accrediting association personnel as SCI continued to advocate a more racially inclusive program. The dual issues of cost and changing times led the UCMS to propose closing SCI and joining forces with Tougaloo College in Mississippi in 1953.

No other school had educated as many black church leaders as SCI.

Many who continued their education at senior colleges and graduate schools received their early education at SCI. The list would include such notables as Cleo Blackburn, W. K. Fox, P. H. Moss, S. S. Myers and many others.



**Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College  
Main Classroom Building**

This drawing by Mrs. Sylvia Baker of Neches, Texas, was taken from a small metal tray found among the possessions of Hattie P. Hurdle Zollar, sister of I. Q. Hurdle, who was president of the college.

**Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College**

Near Palestine, Texas, there is a historic marker noting the site where the Northeast Texas Theological and Industrial College once stood.

In November 1900, the Northeast Christian Missionary Convention, located in Dangerfield, Texas, with A. J. Hurdle as president, took action toward the goal of a college. This action was supported by the Christian College Building Association, organized by a group of dedicated women. Over \$10,000 was accumulated to begin the college.

In 1904, 49 acres were purchased. In 1910, a contract was let by H. D. Dartie and others to J. L. Randolph, contractor. On May 26, 1911, the cornerstone was placed and on January 2, 1912 the school opened with D. T. Cleaver as president and about eight faculty and staff. One of the college's first students was Ophelia Henry (she is my mother, age 96, and still lives in Palestine, Texas). A fire destroyed the main building in 1920 and the school was never rebuilt.

## Jarvis Christian College

The only institution to achieve fully accredited senior college status is Jarvis College at Hawkins, Texas. Its pattern of growth is perhaps more clearly reflected in the outstanding black leaders who have guided the institution throughout its existence.

Black Disciples of East Texas were determined to have a school and began a fund toward that end before the idea was taken seriously by white Disciples. Colby Hall quotes Mrs. Mary Alphin, the organizer of the Negro Women's Work in these terms:

Among the Negro churches of Texas there had been for years a silently growing fund for a Negro college. This came mostly from small country churches, there being few city churches. . . . When it came to the attention of some white friends in Texas, it was between four hundred and five hundred dollars . . . a large sum to have been secured noiselessly and without effort.<sup>52</sup>

Much of the pioneering spirit and determination noted earlier comes to full expression in the story of Jarvis College. The *Jarvis Bulletin* for 1929-30 offered the following description of the school:

Jarvis Christian College was founded in 1912 under the leadership of the Christian Women's Board of Missions of the Christian Church. The institution was made possible by Mayor and Mrs. J. J. Jarvis of Ft. Worth, Texas who gave the tract of land and designated that it be used specifically for Negro education. The college, by the action and repeated expression of its founders and benefactors, is independent of ecclesiastical control, but under special auspices and fostering care of the Disciples of Christ a democratic religious communion.<sup>53</sup>

Onto the scene at Hawkins came persons who had already demonstrated their capacity to build. Professor T. B. Frost began the initial clearing of the land, fencing the property and producing crops. He was joined by C. A. Berry, a SCI graduate, who helped build the first dormitory which contained classrooms, dining facilities and living quarters. All of this was accomplished in about the span of a year and an opening date of January 1913 was announced. Professors Frost and Berry began with 14 pupils and had 34 by the next June.

J. N. Ervin was called as the first president of the Institute. He was born May 6, 1873 in Johnson City, Tennessee. His formal education was received at Knoxville College, Columbia University and Leland Stanford University. He was a high school principal prior to coming to Jarvis.

Ervin initiated a philosophy at Jarvis of training the head, heart and hand. Students could work for a year to pay their school expenses. There developed a family atmosphere with faculty, administration and students in elementary through high school work.<sup>54</sup> There was a close working relationship between Jarvis and SCI. With Jarvis' accredited status, it had to require SCI students to receive additional training

before they were qualified to teach at Jarvis. Under Ervin's leadership, the junior college program was added and the way cleared for a senior college in 1937 before his death in 1938.

Ervin was succeeded by Peter C. Washington in 1938. Born in Alabama, Washington was a graduate of SCI. He was also a graduate of Eureka College and University of Illinois. He held pastorates in St. Louis while serving as a high school principal before coming to Jarvis; he served from 1938 to 1949.

During Washington's tenure the college received state senior college recognition. Substantial improvements to the physical plant were made possible by discovery of oil on the property. The pressure to receive Southern Association accreditation also marked the period of growth. Jarvis grew in stature with the churches as the number of alumni serving at all levels of the church increased.<sup>55</sup>

Washington was succeeded by Dr. John Eubanks. "Vigorous and forward-looking administration characterize the third college president." A native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, his formal education includes the B.Th. and A.B. from Howard University, the M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, specializing in history of cultures. He was head of the Division of Social Science at Morris Brown College before becoming president of Jarvis.<sup>56</sup> His vigorous academic leadership resulted in the accreditation of the college by the Southern Association in 1950. At the time that was the only accreditation available to Negro institutions.

Dr. Cleo W. Blackburn brought to the presidency of Jarvis the vision of a broader educational enterprise identified as Fundamental Education. With a major concern for addressing the problems of the poor, it is a comprehensive approach to the use of human and material resources to improve the quality of life. Dr. Blackburn was born in Port Gibson, Mississippi and was educated at Butler and Fisk Universities. He had served as director of research at Tuskegee and director of Flanner House in Indianapolis before becoming president. The Board of Fundamental Education was the only such board founded by an African American to receive a federal charter. A truly modern campus building program was begun during the Blackburn administration.<sup>57</sup>

Space does not permit completing the profiles of presidential leadership to the present, but it is clear that this latest educational institution has made the transition from mission status to independent church-related institution. It has continued the preparation of leaders for church and society. The number of graduates continuing in graduate and professional schools grows each year and the curriculum is update.

There have been notable achievements during the successive administrations of Dr. J. O. Perpener, Dr. John Paul Jones, Dr. E. W. Rand, Dr. Charles A. Berry, Dr. Julius Nemmons and currently Dr. Sabetha Jenkins, the first woman to become president. A new chapter is needed for the full account through the dramatic changes of the '70s—'90s.

## Conclusions

Examples could be multiplied of the churches, pioneer preachers/teachers, missionaries and other leaders. The picture drawn suggests the following:

1. Disciple witness is strengthened by recognition of the rich diversity of our roots. We spring not from Scotch, Irish and European alone but African American also.
2. The most profound testing of the inclusive, New Testament, egalitarian posture of our pioneers has come with the need to deal with the African American.
3. African Americans have taken initiative and used their meager resources to begin churches, schools, and programs. They have not been merely passive recipients of the resources of white people.
4. Black spirituality has been a positive, creative force within the church though subject to misunderstanding and abuse.
5. African Americans could never afford to ignore the significant theme of God's liberating and sustaining love for all God's people.

We have come into a period of renewed awareness of the African American cultural heritage. High technology, global economics, the capacity to annihilate humankind through nuclear war and the massive problems of hunger, disease and poverty are undeniable realities of our age. Are education and evangelization still appropriate emphases for Disciples' witness among African Americans? Narrowly conceived, no! Attuned to a culturally pluralistic society, hungering for guiding principles, personal fulfillment and ultimate purpose, we may do well to revisit what the principles have taught us about abundant life.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>William K. Fox, ed., *The Untold Story: A Short History of Black Disciples* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1976); Kenneth E. Henry, "Unknown Prophets: Black Disciple Ministry in Historical Perspective," *Discipliana* 46 (Spring 1986); R. L. Jordan, *Two Races in One Fellowship* (Detroit: United Christian Church, 1944); Brenda Caldwell and William K. Fox, Sr., *Journey Toward Wholeness: A History of Black Disciples of Christ in the Mission of the Christian Church* (Indianapolis: National Convocation of the Christian Church, 1990).

<sup>2</sup>Vincent Harding, *American History, Negro History, Black History*, cassette, Atlanta: Institute of the Black World.

<sup>3</sup>Currently, most historians tend to identify this tendency without subscribing to it, e.g., Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American*; Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness*, Martin Marty, *Righteous Empire*, and Robert T. Hardy, *A Christian America*.

<sup>4</sup>Merle Eppse, *The Negro, Too, in American History* (Nashville: National Publication Co., 1943).

<sup>5</sup>Recent Disciples histories have tended to integrate the African American contribution within the period and logical topic under discussion. Cf. Lester McAllister and William E. Tucker, *Journey in Faith* (St. Louis: CBP, 1989).

- <sup>6</sup>Lester P. Scherer, *Slavery and the Churches in Early America, 1619-1819* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), 106-107.
- <sup>7</sup>Caldwell and Fox, *Journey Toward Wholeness* is a creative use of this perspective.
- <sup>8</sup>W. E. Garrison & Alfred T. DeGroot, *The Disciples of Christ: A History* (St. Louis: CBP, 1948).
- <sup>9</sup>Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 4-5.
- <sup>10</sup>Robert L. Jordan, *Two Races in One Fellowship* and William J. Barber, *Disciple Assemblies of Eastern North Carolina*; all accounts attest to the slave presence.
- <sup>11</sup>Hap Lyda, "Black Disciples in the 19th Century," in *The Untold Story*, ed. William K. Fox (St. Louis, CBP, 1976), 9.
- <sup>12</sup>Barber, *Disciple Assemblies of Eastern North Carolina*, 2.
- <sup>13</sup>Lyda, "Black Disciples in the 19th Century," 9.
- <sup>14</sup>*Survey of Service* (St. Louis: CBP, 1928).
- <sup>15</sup>James H. Thomas, *These Recurring Memories*, unpublished autobiography (United Christian Missionary society), selected materials.
- <sup>16</sup>John C. Long, "The Disciples of Christ and Negro Education" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1960), 191.
- <sup>17</sup>J. O. Williams, "Goldsboro Christian Institute," unpublished manuscript, 1.
- <sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup>Barber, *Disciple Assemblies of Eastern North Carolina*, following page 244.
- <sup>20</sup>Williams, "Goldsboro Education Institute," 17.
- <sup>21</sup>Claude Walker, "Negro Disciples in Kentucky" (B.D. thesis, College of the Bible, 1969), 8.
- <sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, 14.
- <sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, 6.
- <sup>24</sup>Long, *Disciples of Christ*, 137.
- <sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup>James Blair, "The National Convention Facing Integration" (B.D. thesis, Butler University, 1958).
- <sup>27</sup>James Blair, "Preston Taylor: A Doer of the Word" in *The Untold Story*, ed. William K. Fox (St. Louis: CBP, 1976), 30-34.
- <sup>28</sup>Herman A. Norton, *Tennessee Christians* (Nashville: Reed & Co., 1971), 129.
- <sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 134-135.
- <sup>30</sup>Long, *Disciples of Christ*, 195.
- <sup>31</sup>Benjamin E. Mays and J. W. Nicholson, *The Negro's Church* (Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1933) was the earliest comprehensive study of the black church using social science methodology. The most recent and comprehensive is C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990).
- <sup>32</sup>Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Making of America*, 3d ed. (New York: Collier Macmillan, 1987), 109-155.
- <sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 132.
- <sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 135.
- <sup>35</sup>Personal reflections of my mother, Ophelia Henry (age 95), Summer 1993.
- <sup>36</sup>A plaque noting these facts was awarded the Henry family by the National Convocation of the Christian Church.
- <sup>37</sup>Hap Lyda, "Black Disciples in the 19th Century," in *The Untold Story: A Short History of Black Disciples* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1976), 14-15.
- <sup>38</sup>R. L. Jordan, *Two Races in One Fellowship* (Detroit: United Christian Church, 1944), 35-42.
- <sup>39</sup>E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro Church in America* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), 54-7.
- <sup>40</sup>Paul A. Sims, "Church Development," in *Design for Renewal and Growth* (Indianapolis: National Christian Missionary Convention, 1966), 26.
- <sup>41</sup>Robert H. Peoples, "Historical Development of Negro Work and Its Relation to Organized Brotherhood Life," unpublished, n.d.
- <sup>42</sup>Brenda M. Cardwell and William K. Fox, *Journey Toward Wholeness: A History of Black Disciples of Christ in the Mission of the Christian Church*, vol. I (Indianapolis: National Convocation of the Christian Church, 1990), 13-14.
- <sup>43</sup>Peoples, "Historical Development of Negro Work."
- <sup>44</sup>Kenneth E. Henry, "Unknown Prophets: Black Disciple Ministry in Historical Perspective," *Discipliana* 46 (Spring 1986): 6.

<sup>45</sup>John C. Long, "The Disciples of Christ and Negro Education" (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1960), 167.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 171.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 177.

<sup>48</sup>Cardwell and Fox, *Journey Toward Wholeness*, 13-14.

<sup>49</sup>Jordan, *Two Races in One Fellowship*.

<sup>50</sup>Long, 122.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Colby D. Hall, *Texas Disciples* (Ft. Worth: T. C. U. Press, 1953), 332.

<sup>53</sup>*Bulletin*, Junior College, High and Elementary Schools of Jarvis Christian College, Hawkins, Texas, 1929-1930, 8.

<sup>54</sup>Charles C. Mosley, Sr., "James Nelson Ervin," Archives, Jarvis Christian College.

<sup>55</sup>Peter C. Washington, "Archives, Jarvis Christian College.

<sup>56</sup>John B. Eubanks, "Archives, Jarvis Christian College.

<sup>57</sup>Cleo W. Blackburn, "Indianapolis Star, 7 June 1978; Progress Report on the Board for Fundamental Education, 1965.



### **Minnie Eleanor Warren Wisdom and Kathryn Wisdom Named Fund**

Kathryn Wisdom, at her death, left a gift to the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in her Will. It was her desire that a Named Fund be established for her mother, Minnie Eleanor Warren Wisdom. Mrs. Wisdom had served as superintendent of the church school in her congregation in Chetopa, Kansas, and later served as a teacher for an adult ladies class in Coffeyville, Kansas, for almost 20 years. Kathryn taught the kindergarten Sunday school class in the First Christian Church of Coffeyville, Kansas, for more than 36 years. Both were devoted members of the Christian Church all of their lives and were held in high and tender regard by their many church and community friends. This Named Fund was established with the gift from the Estate of Kathryn Wisdom.

### **Lynnette F. Reed Named Fund**

In 1988, Lynnette Reed, a graduate of Tennessee State University, was the first winner of the Miss Black Tennessee pageant. An active member of Alameda Christian Church in Nashville, Tennessee, she used her versatile talents for singing and sharing her life with many people in the church and in the community. She personified the saying, "Somebody said it couldn't be done, but he/she with a chuckle replied, that maybe it couldn't but he/she wouldn't be the one who wouldn't try." Lynnette was an employee of the U. S. Post Office in Nashville and was active as a volunteer in working with the Miss Black Tennessee pageant. She died November 6, 1993, in an automobile accident. This Named Fund was established in memory of Lynnette by members of the Historical Society in love for May and Norman Reed.

### **Robert C. and Karen D. Nolan Named Fund**

Robert and Karen Nolan have served the church in many different ways in both official and volunteer capacities. Karen served for many years as Associate Director of the Heritage Resource Center at Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia. A fourth generation Disciple, Karen has been active in the church on a congregational, regional and general level. Robert has also served the church in many areas. He has concentrated in Development work, having given specific direction for the National Benevolent Association, Texas Christian University, and Bethany College. He is currently developing his own Fund Raising Counsel enterprise as he completes his work with Ducks Unlimited. Robert and Karen are active members of Kingsway Christian Church, Memphis, Tennessee, where they make their home. Robert has served as consultant to the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in its most recent financial campaign. Karen currently serves as a member of the Society's Board of Trustees.

### **William Henry and Mary Boswell Smith Named Fund**

If Bill Smith was the silent member of the church, Mary was the vocal member of Woodmont Christian Church, Nashville, Tennessee. Bill served as a member of the Board and was a member of the Men's Club. He worked hard at sharing the tape ministry with members of Woodmont. He moved quietly, always doing his job and giving support to the church in many ways. Mary served as President of the Christian Women's Fellowship and a member of the Christian Women's Fellowship State Board. She was an active and vital member of the Board of Trustees of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society following her father, Bebe Boswell. She currently is a member of the Altar Flower Committee and Congregational Representative to Church Women United, but her most vocal place is her presence in the choir of Woodmont Christian Church. Bill is deceased. Mary continues to serve the church and the Historical Society.

### **Mirror Lake Christian Church Named Fund**

This congregation in St. Petersburg, Florida, was founded in 1900. During its varied and interesting history it established three new congregations. On November 15, 1992, the congregation held their final worship service after having developed *The Last Will and Testament of Mirror Lake Christian Church*. Building on the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery* of the Cane Ridge congregation in 1804 in Kentucky, this congregation willed that its physical body die and be dissolved into union with the whole body of Christ at large. The assets of the congregation were used to further the work of the church and the physical possessions of the congregation were distributed, free of charge, to sister congregations in the area. Those sister congregations, in turn, gave gifts to the Disciples of Christ Historical Society to establish a Named Fund for Mirror Lake Christian Church.

## **In Memory of Lynnette F. Reed**

Lynnette, daughter of May Reed (member of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society staff) and Norman Reed, was killed in an auto accident on November 6, 1993. The staff and Board of Trustees join with you in expressing our sincere and heartfelt sympathy to May, Norman and Lamont, their son. Lynnette was 30 years of age.

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES ESTABLISHES ORDER OF THE STONE-CAMPBELL FELLOWSHIP**

To recognize those individuals who have included the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in their estate plans the Board of Trustees has established the Order of the Stone-Campbell Fellowship. This fellowship recognizes those persons who have made an estate gift or who have planned for another form of gift in the future. Membership in the Order of Stone-Campbell Fellowship exemplifies the importance of gifts made through Wills and other planned gifts for the Historical Society. Through the Fellowship the Society is able to express its grateful appreciation to the individuals who take this forward step in support of the Society's ongoing mission and ministry.

A number of persons have already indicated their gifts through annuities, trust agreements, Wills and in Living Trusts. The Historical Society is very grateful for these expressions of confidence in its future. Other gifts may be made through the gift of property for which the donor maintains rights until death.

If you have already remembered the Society in your estate plans and the Society staff are unaware of this you are encouraged to contact President Seale. For those who have given thought to recognizing the Historical Society through an estate gift and would like to talk to President Seale, please contact the Society and Mr. Seale will be glad to be in touch with you.

# **BIRTH OF A COLLEGE: ANDREW JACKSON HURDLE, FOUNDER**

*by Hannah Hurdle-Toomey\**

On New Year's Day, 1912, the bleakness of winter, the Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College convened its first classes. Pioneer students of this institution gathered to study History, English, Music and other utile subjects.<sup>1</sup> Nestled in a wooded expanse near Palestine, Texas, this fledgling college was the issue of dreams and dauntless determination of the Northeast Christian Missionary Convention (Disciples of Christ). The Reverend Andrew Jackson Hurdle, former slave, pastor, and educator, was the leader of the convention and the new college.

The coat of arms for the Hurdle surname classifies them as weavers. Woven into the impressive biography of Andrew Jackson Hurdle are the strands of slavery, self-reliance, a noble character, a voracious desire for knowledge, and unremitting faith in God.

## **THE DARK STRAND OF SLAVERY**

Andrew Jackson Hurdle was probably the youngest of six children born to his slave parents, Steve and Hannah Hurdle in Alamance County, North Carolina. By his own account, he was born on Christmas Day, 1847.<sup>2</sup> The appalling conditions of slavery could not eclipse the sense of unity and stability that permeated this sturdy family. Family cohesiveness could not, however, postpone the dreadful day when this loving family was torn asunder on the auction block in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Five of the Hurdle children were auctioned off to Mr. Bennett Hazel, but remained near their birthplace. Unfortunately young Andrew, who was only eight or nine, was snatched from the loving arms of his parents and carried away to Dangerfield,<sup>3</sup> Texas by his new owner, Mr. T. H. Turner. Andrew retained the Hurdle surname. This provided him with a connection to the devoted parents he left behind.

Mr. Turner had a son about the same age as the newly purchased slave boy. Master James was a close companion to Andrew. They became inseparable playmates.

The doleful afflictions of slavery ended for Andrew Hurdle when he was set free in June 1865. The dark thread of slavery that was woven so deeply into his life tapestry may have, at times, nearly broken his physical body, but slavery could not break his courageous spirit. Much of his august life after slavery can be attributed to his strong sense of self reliance.

## **STRANDS OF SELF-RELIANCE**

In 1919 Reverend Andrew Jackson Hurdle penned these words: "I am a self-made man: have never gone to school a day in my life; got what

little education I have by studying at night by a pine torchlight a great many times.”<sup>4</sup> How did this former slave pull himself up from slavery to a position of prominence in the church and in the community? “I studied . . . I am self-made . . .” Andrew J. Hurdle believed in himself, taught his children to believe in themselves, and thus he was able to motivate others to attainment. He did not believe in begging for that which one was capable of obtaining for oneself.

At the turn of the century, the Christian Women’s Board of Missions (Disciples of Christ) planned to assist Black Disciples in Texas to establish two new colleges. The project seemed moved at an unhurried pace. This inactivity and lassitude, even among his own Black brethren, ignited within Reverend Hurdle the flame of constructive impatience. He and other Black Disciples withdrew from the Texas Christian Missionary Convention and formed their own convention, “The Northeast Christian Missionary Convention.” Reverend Hurdle wrote, “I was elected President of North East Christian Missionary Convention in 1901 . . . we organized the Christian Theological College at Palestine, Texas. Paid three-thousand dollars for 49-4/5 acres of land for the college there and had a two-story building on it, built at a cost of \$1,900.”<sup>5</sup>

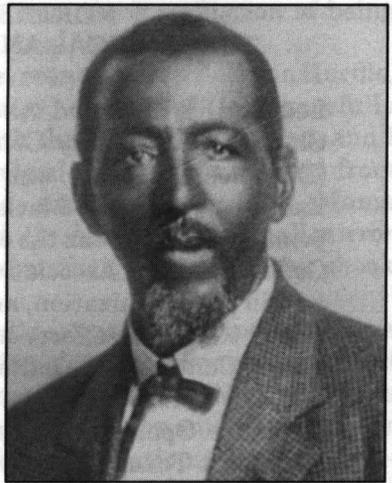
What Andrew Jackson Hurdle lacked in formal education he gained through practical life experiences. It is amazing that he and his small group could reach their goal of establishing a new college so quickly. This splinter group did not seek self-aggrandizement, but rather to glorify God and uplift the race. Reverend Hurdle was considered a saint by some, but a rebel by others. When he was old and feeble, after fifty years of service to the Disciples church, he applied for a pension to help care for his young family. The application required character references. One person who replied said, I don’t think Reverend Hurdle should have a pension for he “stirs up the brethren.”

Had he not stirred up the brethren there might have been an even longer delay in establishing the Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College!

## STRANDS OF REVERENCE

On February 4, 1990, seventy-eight years after the Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College opened its doors, an eclectic group of people gathered at New Fellowship Christian Church in Palestine, Texas. Descendants of Reverend Andrew J. Hurdle, State and Local dignitaries, and even one of the College’s first students joined in the ceremonies preceding the unveiling of an historical marker. The Texas Historical Commission staff had worked for months gathering information and artifacts to permanently document the history of Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College and its leader, Reverend Hurdle. Edwina Miller, resident of Palestine, and great-granddaughter of the Reverend Hurdle, learned of the impending celebration by chance. She saw the notice in a shop window, then

hastened to inform the commission that several descendants of the honoree resided in the area. She also contacted me in Columbia, Missouri where I was serving as pastor of Fifth Street Christian Church (Disciples).



A. J. Hurdle

I am the youngest of Reverend Andrew J. Hurdle's twenty-five children and was honored to be chosen to unveil the marker. I hardly knew my father for he was 87 when I was born and died three years later. Although I could scarcely remember him I did remember our paying homage to him at our family reunions. Whenever the Hurdle-Hazels gathered hundreds of Papa's descendants had an illustrious history recounted to them in detail. In early years our older siblings, some of whom were old enough to be our grandparents, frequently spoke of "Papa's College in Palestine". They told us of our brother I. Q. who once served as President of the college and of how Papa married our mother, Catherine Bailey in 1913, just one year after the College opened. I surmise that Mama not only had to adjust to living with her husband's grandchildren, but also adjust to the absence of her husband as he traveled 150 miles from their home in Greenville to Palestine to attend to college business.

The dedication program was quite lengthy as numerous persons paid homage to Andrew Jackson Hurdle, pathfinder, crusader, and innovative educator. As I listened, I looked across the room at the Reverend Don Gibson, great-grandson of Andrew Hurdle. He bore a striking resemblance to our father! Even though he carried out his successful ministry in Dallas, Texas and I ministered in Missouri, both of us were engaged in the same types of community projects to help those in need. At that moment I realized that the Reverend Andrew Jackson Hurdle remains an eternal presence in our family to this day.

At last the songs, speeches and tributes ended and it was time for the long line of cars to wind its way from the church to State Highway 155 at the intersection of Old Kickapoo Road where the unveiling was to take place. The brilliant sun warmed the joyous crowd as we pulled up in front of the marker. A reverent hush fell over the crowd. Cameras stood ready to record this historic moment. For a brief moment I thought how much courage it took not only to build a monument of metal, but also to build one upon the hearts and minds of so many people.

I carefully lifted the cord that raised the gray coverings. The marker was beautiful! Recorded for generations present and future were these words:

## SITE OF NORTHEAST TEXAS CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE

Led by the Reverend A. J. Hurdle, The Northeast Texas Christian Missionary Convention of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was formed in Daingerfield in 1900. Established to serve Black members of the denomination, its primary purpose was the creation of a college. The Christian College Building Association was formed by a group of women within the organization, and by 1904 enough funds had been raised to purchase forty-nine acres of land near Palestine, Texas. Contractor J. L. Randolph was hired in 1910, and on May 26, 1911, the cornerstone was laid for the main college structure. Opening with seven students in January, 1912 the Northeast Texas Christian Theological and Industrial College consisted of several large frame buildings and had a faculty of four. D. T. Cleaver served as first president and was succeeded by I. Q. Hurdle. In addition to their classroom studies, the students farmed the college lands and raised livestock. After the main college building was destroyed by fire about 1920, the school was razed, leaving no visible reminders of the institution that once provided an education to students from several states.<sup>6</sup>

After the ceremony we returned to the home of Mrs. Edwina Miller to enjoy the famous "Hurdle Hospitality." Tables were laden with good homecooked food; clusters of kinfolks sat in the living room enjoying each other's company, singing, and reminiscing about a perfect day.

### THE PIVOTAL LEGACY OF ANDREW JACKSON HURDLE

Palestine Texas may be devoid of any physical evidence that NTCTIC existed, but evidence of the rich legacy of the Reverend Hurdle abounds. His life after the college closed reflected a struggle of a different sort.

Andrew J. Hurdle was ravaged by the stock crash of 1929 and the Depression that followed. Cotton prices had plummeted, his livestock were old and dying off and there were no resources to replace them. His beloved wife, Catherine, who never worked outside the home remained there, but now had the enormous task of caring for her feeble husband and their young family. Oatmeal, which was plentiful, became the staple and she thought up innovative dishes to feed her family. Hurdle could have sold some of his land to provide some income and make life easier in his declining years, but he did not. He wanted to leave this land for his children.

The Reverend Hurdle was no longer the vigorous man he had been. He felt useless to his family, his community, and his God. For three

years he prayed for God to spare him from the humiliation of being unable to provide for his family and just call him home.

On Thanksgiving Eve, 1935, the Reverend Andrew Jackson Hurdle, Minister, farmer, entrepreneur, educator, servant of God peacefully closed his eyes and went home to be with the Lord. My playmate and I watched the crowd in the room. We edged closer, then peeked from behind the piano leg in the parlor to see what was happening. Mama stood motionless, gazing straight ahead. Dr. Atkins held a small mirror close to Papa's nose. No steam appeared on the glass. The doctor shook his head and said, "He's gone."

"He's gone, Andrew Jackson Hurdle is gone." Or was he? Mama mortgaged two acres of land to pay for Papa's burial expenses - some of the same land that he so wisely held on to. The next year Mama sold one of our best milch cows, "Old Jersey", to rent the cap and gown for our sister Florence's and our brother Daniel's graduation. Mama remembered how much Papa valued education. "Andrew J. Hurdle is gone." Is he really? He lives on in so many ways in the lives of those of us who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. We are continuations and extensions of the rich legacy incumbent in the "Hurdle" name. In our family to be a "Hurdle" means you are expected to have a strong faith in God, an appreciation for education, independence, and to lead in the community.

Andrew Jackson Hurdle was proud of his children. In an open letter written in 1919, Reverend Hurdle wrote, "All my children by the first marriage own homes. All are members of the church. None of them have paid fines or [are] known to do any violation that would lead to arrest. . . . God has blessed me in raising my children."<sup>1</sup> If Reverend Hurdle had lived to see his and Catherine's children reach adulthood he could still truthfully write, "All my children are members of the church, own their own homes and have paid no fines." He could add that numbered among his hundreds of descendants are ministers, missionaries, musicians, educators, entrepreneurs, farmers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, seamstresses, community leaders, bankers . . .

"He's gone, Andrew Jackson Hurdle is gone." Is he really?

\*The Reverend Hurdle-Toomey currently serves as a Missionary to Jamaica, United Church in Jamaica/Cayman Islands

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Based on information taken from the official program of the unveiling ceremony.

<sup>2</sup> Hurdle's tombstone, my birth certificate, and other records list his birth year as 1845.

<sup>3</sup> Spelling varies: Daingerfield, Dangerfield

<sup>4</sup> Hurdle-Zollar, Hattie P. *The A. J. Hurdle Family Heritage*, (Austin, TX: Shelby Printing, 1975), p. viii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. viii

<sup>6</sup> The complete text as printed on the historical marker.

<sup>7</sup> Hurdle-Zollar, p. vii

## Book Review

*Restructure: Four Historical Ideals in the Campbell-Stone Movement and the Development of the Polity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* By Anthony L. Dunnivant. American University Studies. Series VII Theology and Religion. Vol. 85. Peter Lang. New York. 265 p. 1993.

Professor Dunnivant has produced an excellent summary of Disciples history with the emphasis on structure. He has quoted the historians of this generation to support his thesis along with extensive references from the first and second generations. In addition to unity, restoration and freedom he adds mission as the fourth historical ideal of the movement.

Dunnivant cites "book, chapter and verse" for every disagreement and divergence that has taken place. I would offer a mild rejoinder to the view that the Churches of Christ, under David Lipscomb's leadership were "predominately southern." (p.47) In southern Indiana many scores of churches blindly followed Daniel Sommer, in Indianapolis and never heard of Lipscomb except that he had a college which Sommer condemned. These churches have relented a bit in the latter half of this century and are an important part of the Churches of Christ.

If one expects 265 pages on the Restructure of the 1960's there is a surprise in store. The first six chapters tell how the first two generations developed the society concept of structure and only the last two deal with the Modern Restructure. From the Disciple point of view our current structure is pictured as a logical development from the beginning, with only a few flaws.

The rump convention held in the Pantages Theater during the International Convention in Memphis in 1926 deserved a paragraph because it resulted in the North American Christian Convention. These churches spearheaded the opposition to Restructure and the NACC provides an annual gathering for the Christian Churches and Churches of Christ.

Restructure is said to have begun with the appointment of the Committee on Brotherhood Structure by the International Convention board of directors in 1958. However, this action was the result of an earlier committee that met in Bethany, West Virginia, probably in 1957. Four college presidents, four deans and a lowly professor of church history from Lexington (who contributed very little) made up this original group that recommended the appointment of a committee on structure.

This is an excellent book. Dunnivant is a wordsmith of the first order and he is a meticulous research scholar, handling his references carefully. Whatever one thinks about Restructure this books tells a lot that you didn't know.

-Howard E. Short

**LESTER G. MCALLISTER AND WILLIAM J. RICHARDSON  
TO DELIVER  
KIRKPATRICK LECTURES  
IN PORTLAND, OREGON**

"Models of Ministerial Preparation in the Stone-Campbell Tradition" will be the theme of the two lectures which will be given at First Christian Church, Portland, Oregon, April 11 and 12, 1994. The lectures will be given at 7:00 p.m. on Monday evening and at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday. A response will be made by Ronald E. Osborn, and Stephen Goetz will lead a dialogue between the lecturers and Dr. Osborn. There is a \$5.00 registration fee payable to Disciples Seminary Foundation, P. O. Box 1177, Claremont, CA 91711-1177. These lectures are made possible by the Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Endowment for Lectures and Research with the Historical Society. They are sponsored jointly by the Disciples Seminary Foundation and the Disciples of Christ Historical Society.



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**CALL FOR PAPERS**

*Discipliana* invites proposals for 20-page, double-spaced papers addressing the theme of the 1995 Forrest H. Kirkpatrick Seminar for Stone-Campbell Historians — "A 19th Century North American Tradition Faces the 21st Century: From Rural Churches to an Urban World." Proposals stating the topic and sources to be employed should be sent by April 20, 1994 to D. Newell Williams, Editor, *Discipliana*, 1101 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212-2196.

## ***Just As I Lived It*** **by Lester G. McAllister**

(Recalling events occurring during a 70-plus year fellowship in the Stone-Campbell Movement.)

Evangelism was the center of church activity in the 1920s. Following in the footsteps of the famous 19th century evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, was the flamboyant ex-baseball player, Billy Sunday. Each denomination had its own outstanding evangelist.

The leading evangelist of the Disciples was Charles Reign Scoville (1869-1937). Following the pattern of Dwight L. Moody and Billy Sunday, Scoville had a master plan for community involvement in his campaigns. Effective organizations were built with local committees carrying out the numerous details.

One of the most successful of Scoville's campaigns was held in Little Rock, Arkansas, over a seven-week period in 1923-1924. In all there were 1,302 conversions, more than 400 persons agreed to become tithers and 51 committed themselves to enter the Christian ministry.

Even though I was only four years old at the time, I well remember attending the meetings with my family. The services were held in a large wooden tabernacle located at 12th and Main Streets. The building would hold approximately 2,000 people. The floor was covered with sawdust and rude benches were made out of untreated lumber. Provision was made on the platform for a choir of several hundred voices and was composed of singers from the four congregations sponsoring the meetings.

Scoville preached for results but did not turn his revivals into emotional binges. Nevertheless, while the enthusiasm was great the long-term results were questionable. I accompanied my parents as they made follow-up calls on the converts. Only about one in five could be found as false names and addresses had been given. Our family, at least, did not believe much permanent good came from the meetings.

Years later, while attending University Park Christian Church, Indianapolis, in the early 1960s, I frequently sat in a pew directly behind Arlene Dux Scoville, the widow of Charles Reign Scoville. She was a trained musician, possessed a beautiful voice, and had led the music program of the Scoville organization.