

The Bible Fellowship Church Historical Society
October, 2018

As we have been unpacking and storing the archives in their new home, I have been finding some things I set aside. The following are a couple of reprints of materials I found.

The first is a copy of a chorus from Mizpah Grove. I suspect a few of you may even recall singing it. I don't have the music but if you remember you don't need it.

Camp Meeting Choruses – 1953

The windows of Heaven are open
 The Blessings are falling tonight.
I've joy, joy, joy in my heart
 Since Jesus made everything right.
I gave Him my old, tattered garment;
 He gave me a robe of pure white.
I'm feasting on Manna from Heaven
 And that's why I'm happy tonight.

My desire – to be like Jesus;
My desire – to be like Him.
 His Spirit fill me;
 His love o'erwhelm me;
In deed and word – to be like Him.

I keep in touch with Jesus,
 And He keeps in touch with me;
And so we walk together
 In perfect harmony.
There's not a day that passes;
 There's not an hour goes by
But that we have sweet fellowship –
 My precious Lord and I.

When the roll is called up yonder,
We'll be filled with joy and wonder
When we see the countless number –
Some from every tribe and nation will be there.

God can do anything, anything, anything;
God can do anything but fail.
He can save, satisfy; joy complete He'll supply
He can do anything but fail.
He's the Alpha and Omega; the beginning and the end;
He's the fairest of ten thousand to my soul.
God can do anything, anything, anything –
God can do anything but fail.

At one time, we had several missions in Philadelphia. The following is a one page summary that is detached, I suspect, from an anniversary booklet for the Philadelphia Emmanuel Church. It reminds of the significance of the Gospel Heralds and their evangelism as well as our desire to reach the city of Philadelphia. I believe the author to be Pastor John Dunn. The booklet will show up at some point. For now, remember the work.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE CHURCH (Compiled by the Pastor)

In November, 1917, two Gospel Herald brethren, W. F. Heffner and N. H. Wolf, were sent to Philadelphia to open a new Gospel Herald Society Mission. These men rented a store at the corner of Millick Street and Elmwood Avenue, and the work was started. In the Summer of 1918, tent meetings were held on Paschal Avenue near 62nd Street. Quite a number were saved and baptized as the Lord blessed these first tent meetings. In 1919 a Mission property was purchased at 6214 Grays Avenue. This was a dual purpose building housing a place of worship and an apartment for the pastor.

At the Annual Conference of 1919, W. F. Heffner, who was the first leader of the Mission, received a charge in the Conference and N. H. Wolf was appointed leader. The following are some of the brethren who labored here for the ten years the church was under the Gospel Herald Society: W. R. Stengele, C. L. Miller, Paul E. Baer, W. W. Hartman, M. M. Myers, Paul Tarbert, N. M. Cressman, and Paul Taylor.

At the 1927 Annual Conference, West Philadelphia was admitted into the Conference as an organized Church and was placed with Wissinoming on a circuit, with J. B. Henry becoming the first pastor. Brother Henry remained for 17 years as the pastor. On October 23, 1927, about 40 were received into church membership and became charter members. The first elected trustees were William T. Sharp, Walter S. Glass and Pastor Henry. The first Sunday School, Superintendent was Edward J. Dietzman and William T. Sharp was the first Class Leader. In 1943 Willard E. Cassel was stationed as Pastor. In 1944 the indebtedness on the church building was liquidated which was great cause for rejoicing. W. B. Hottel was stationed here in 1948 but remained only six months, since on May 15, 1949, he was transferred to

Wissinoming, when John Dunn succeeded him. In 1956 the Lord in a miraculous way opened up the opportunity to build the present church and purchase a parsonage located at 6902 Chelwynde Avenue.

In 1957 Russell T. Alien was stationed as pastor and remained four years. In 1961 John Dunn accepted a call to return again as pastor. Last year, after ten years of praying, planning and trusting, we were able to purchase the corner lot.

The following two articles are taken from the Mennonite Year Book and Almanac for the year, 1916. This was published by the Eastern Mennonite Conference.

What is interesting about these articles is how these men were “owned” by several groups. While we often look at divisions, these articles indicate connections.

Jonas Y. Shultz was connected early with the Evangelical Mennonites and listed as one of our preachers. You can read a more detailed account of his life written by Harold Shelly (<http://www.bfchistory.org/Schultz.htm>). Unfortunately, I do not have a picture of Shultz to reprint.

Rev. Jonas Y. Schultz

Rev. Jonas Y. Schultz was born at Clayton, Berks county, Pa., March 31, 1829, of Schwenkfelder parents, the son of Casper and Christiana Yeakel Schultz. Having received such education as the common schools of his day afforded, he continued his studies in Freeland Seminary, Colledgeville, Pa., and the State Normal School of Millersville, Pa. He made an early choice of the profession of medicine and attended lectures in several institutions in Philadelphia, graduating from the Hahnemann College of Medicine, Philadelphia, at the age of 21. He practiced only about four years, principally for the reason, as he later explained to friends, that the cold scientific fashion of always tracing material effects to material causes involved in medical science tended to a religious skepticism and materialism. But while engaged in medical practice, he carried his methodical, essentially scientific, business habit of mind into his profession, and his medical memoranda and records are marked with precision.

He was of a deeply religious, mystical turn of mind. Nothing seemed to absorb him as much as deep spiritual contemplation of God's Word. On his birthday anniversaries he never engaged in work of any kind, nor in conversation with anybody, but fasted and prayed and meditated. His devout spirit and beautiful blending of piety with filial devotion are seen in the following touching words on his mother: “I have come to my mother and find the old home in its usual condition. Mother is very well at present. What a great blessing it is when age and infirmity come upon the frame and push the tottering body toward the grave, to live in the midst of good friends whose tender care leaves nothing unprovided for the comforts of this life, and to have, above all, a downy pillow upon the arms of Jesus to decline the departing spirit in the hour of dissolution. I

have always lacked too much that filial affection toward my parents that I ought to have had, and I have consequently not shown so much love and kindness toward them as I ought to have done." This is a sure indication of his deep attachment to his parents as well as of his tender, conscientious spirit; and it is typical of the man throughout his life.

When a young man he was baptized by immersion at Himmelwright's mill, near Niantic, Pa., by a Baptist minister. The subject of baptism was a favorite one with him. In his diary of 1856-57 he wrote notes on Infant Baptism taken from Rev. Edward's book. At Berlin, Canada, five young converts were admitted into the large Mennonite congregation there February, 1878, by immersion in a stream. He preached a sermon on Christian Baptism, containing the four headings: 1. Instituted by Christ; 2. The Form - Immersion (but other forms to be tolerated); 3. The Persons, Mature Believers; 4. The Object - Entrance into the Visible Church.

He began to preach soon after his baptism, and made preaching tours to Canada and the West. In 1859 he went to Wisconsin and Minnesota, stopping on the way at Wadsworth, Ohio, with Father Ephraim Hunsberger, preaching and visiting families, and passing thence through Toledo, Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, La Crosse to St. Paul. His visit to Canada, New Year 1878, lasted six months. He preached at Blair, Berlin, Breslau, Blumenthal, Dundee, at the Twenty, and other places, and visited 367 families. Here he met Dr. S. S. Haury and recorded Haury's texts in his diary. Here he also received a letter from Rev. S. F. Sprunger, asking him to visit the congregation at Linn Grove, Ind., where Schultz evidently declined. He seems to have made altogether five visits to Canada.

In the school-year of 1870-71 he was a teacher in the Mennonite school at Wadsworth, O., teaching Bible Lore, Bible History, Latin, Methods of Teaching, Penmanship, Reading, Grammar and Music. Here he made the acquaintance of many of our ministers and seemed to enjoy his years as instructor.

But most of his spiritual labors were carried on at Milford Square and Quakertown, Pa., in conjunction with the late Samuel Landis, and consisted principally of preaching in house gatherings. Thirty-four years of his life were spent in the home of Samuel Landis, at Quakertown, and the last six years with his nephew at Chapel, Pa.

But a review of his life would be incomplete without reference to his literary labors. In 1876 the late John G. Stauffer founded The Manna, published in Milford Square, the first issues being in German. From the beginning, Schultz was identified with the work, contributing the notes on the Sunday-school lessons. In 1879 the English Manna was launched, and Schultz thereafter edited its third page.

His literary leanings are manifest in the numerous essays he left among his papers. He wrote an extended "Ein Christliches Gespraech zwischen etlichen Nachbarn," among them Heinrich and Samuel, which covers a large range of Biblical topics. In 1908 he wrote a poem on "Die Freundliche Sonne."

He spent his last years in quiet reflection and in the peace of God at the home of his nephew, where he died in August, 1914.

In his diary of 1878, while in Canada, he wrote: "It is only because people do not believe that God means exactly what He says that we see so many intelligent men who cannot say whether they are saved or not. 'Feeling is hard, but faith is harder.' Take the lost sinner's place and claim the lost sinner's Saviour." This beautiful message was his unvarying burden to men, and may serve as his parting word to the readers of this

sketch.

Also included in the 1916 Year Book is an obituary of Henry L. Weiss. Weiss was considered part of our church as a missionary, a leader in the Christian Missionary Alliance and included in this publication of the Easter Conference Mennonites.

Rev. Henry L. Weiss

Rev. Henry L. Weiss was born March 14, 1867, near Milford Square, Bucks county, Pa. He was the son of Samuel and Rebecca (Lewis) Weiss. In his young manhood he taught school several years in his native county. He was converted to God as a young man, becoming a member of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ. In 1890 he went to Kansas and taught school a year in Marion county. This was followed by two years of teaching in the Indian Mission School, established by the late Rev. Christian Krehbiel at Halstead, Kan. From there he went on to Oklahoma to continue his work among the Indians.



His work at Cantonment began in 1893 as teacher of Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indian children in the old mission school there. In February, 1894, the building was burned to the ground. Rev. Weiss directed the erection of the new building, and when it was completed became superintendent of the school, continuing in that capacity several years. The energy and efficiency that characterized him were especially evident in his service here. But for years he had a vision of greater things. He longed to enter the foreign field. He said, "While superintendent of the school, I came to the conclusion that the only way to evangelize a nation was to study their language and give them the Bible in their own tongue. From the time I entered the school I had fully made up my mind to embark in missionary work."

On November 14, 1895, he was married to Miss Kate Zacharias, of Tuckerton, Pa. Their meeting was an answer to prayer. Before embarking for foreign missionary work, he said, "I prayed God to send me a companion, and He did so in the person of my wife." She too had engaged in missionary work near her home and in Indiana. From the latter state she drifted to Oklahoma, and met her future husband. They were married in the Indian church. Missionary Fetter performing the ceremony in the presence of a large number of Indians, who had never witnessed a Christian marriage before.

Some time after that he resigned his position and awaited the call to some foreign field. The Macedonian call came from distant Chile, and on. March 10 1897, they sailed from New York for Valdivia, Chile, under the direction of the Missionary Alliance of New York. He tarried several months at Concepcion to learn the Spanish language, after which he began to preach in Victoria. Later he made this his

headquarters. In less than two months some 80 souls, Chilenos and Germans, were converted. From this center, the Gospel was carried into various towns and districts. In 1899 he began his labors in Valdivia, a city of over 12,000 souls. By the middle of 1900 he had organized the work in North Chile into a German Missionary Society. He writes :

“We have now taken possession of the unoccupied southern part of Chile having a parish of 200,000. Our work here is Spanish. We have our own printing press and printed 1000 copies of our Spanish paper, 'La Alianza Cristiana,' weekly for free distribution, besides a large number of tracts.”

By the end of the year 1900 he had built up a Christian body of 228 members, secured the assistance of 11 native helpers, and organized 5 Sunday-schools.

In 1905 he and Mrs. Weiss enjoyed a furlough of eight months in the home land, returning to Chile in November of that year. By that time there were reported ten churches, fifteen foreign missionaries, three native workers, 736 communicants, and 175 baptisms. The mission in South America was one of the most prosperous in the Alliance work.

His health beginning to fail, he made occasional trips to more southern points for relief, carrying on his great work with as much vigor as he could command. In April, 1915, after ten years more of service, he came home on his second furlough. While attending a council of the Missionary Alliance at Nyack, N. Y., he was seized with a hemorrhage of the lungs and passed away without a struggle May 26, 1915.

A memorial service was held at Nyack, at which Bishop Simpson spoke in the highest terms of the work of the departed missionary. The funeral service was continued May 29th in the Mennonite Brethren in Christ church at Quakertown, Pa.

He had spent much time and energy in the building of churches and chapels in Chile. During his eighteen years of service, more than a dozen churches were established, almost a score of native pastors, and workers, and nearly two thousand converts baptized.

This is a bit shorter than the usual Historical Society publication but it will serve to remind you of our upcoming meeting in Harleysville on Saturday, October 27, 2018, at 10:00pm. If you have not signed up, you can still do so – and you can bring a friend. It is always a great day in good company. If you need another registration form, email me.

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