

The Historical Society
The Bible Fellowship Church
July, 2009

Summer time is on us again. For those who remember Camp Meeting, you can easily conjure up memories of getting ready to go and the joy of meeting old friends and making new ones. Those who remember our camp meetings are fewer and fewer. I was at Mizpah once the year it ended and I have no memory of it. This year at Pinebrook Bible Conference, a "camp site" has been put up using some of our collection from the archives and should produce some memories for those who were there.

I will leave for Pinebrook in a week or two. I am probably among those who prefer the air conditioned rooms to the hot tents. In the fantasy world of memory, nostalgia triumphs over convenience and those who were there still think it was better and I offer no argument to the contrary.

For your summer reading, we are featuring the Woodring Family. LeRoy Wilcox has done a genealogical survey of the Woodrings. I recently found Dick Gehman's tribute for his mother. You will enjoy it. It is a good reminder of the significant role that pastor's wives had.

THE WOODRING (WOTRING) FAMILY
LeRoy Wilcox

The Wotring (Woodring) family is traced back to Herman Von Outring, born in 1540 in Alsace, France, one of two territories that shifted back and forth between France and Germany. The name, according to one source, means "one who works with horses", from the French word Voidrain. Another source says it means "a forester, or one who cuts down trees" (Wotring). A son of Herman, Paulus Vautring, was born in 1570 and died on May 3, 1652 in Pfalz, in the Palatinate, Germany. Paulus had a son, Hans Jean, born in 1605 in Goeberlingen, Germany and Hans Jean and the next two generations of Vautrins lived in the area of Kirberg. Hans Jean, like his father, Paulus, served as mayor of Kirberg, one of the Huguenot settlements in Saarwerden. This was the only one of the Huguenot settlements that survived the Thirty Years War largely intact and Hans Jean became mayor there after 1635. The nearest Protestant church was in Vinstingen so the baptismal records are found in the Lutheran church there. Jean purchased the

mill in Kirberg in 1639, thereby founding a family tradition of millers. The Thirty Years War ended in 1648 and it became obvious that a Reformed Church would not be tolerated in Rauweiler, the parish that included Kirberg and Goerlingen. Jean Vautrin and his family and several other families then emigrated to Bishweiler in Alsace, a Huguenot city 50 miles to the east. Jean's last child was born there.

The second child was Hans Peter, born on February 23, 1643. He became an Elder in the Lutheran Reformed church of Diedendorf in 1699 and was employed in a mill in Hellingen. In 1670 he returned to Kirberg and married Maria Simon, daughter of the mayor, Claude Simon. Hans Peter resided in the mill at Kirberg and later purchased the mill in nearby Hellingen.

After 1676 king Louis XIV of France determined to reaffirm Roman Catholicism as the exclusive religion of the country. In 1685 he revoked the Tolerance Edict of Nantes and Protestants were ordered to convert to Catholicism. As a result, about 300,000 Huguenots fled from France and French occupied lands. Louis the XIV was defeated in 1697 and Reformed parishes were again erected. Hans Peter Vautrin served as an Elder in the parish of Diedendorf.

A son, Abraham, was born around 1674 and became the miller in Vinstingen, a small market town on the Saar River. Abraham married Maria Catharine Brodt and eight children were born to them. The third child, Samuel, was born on February 23, 1714. He married Maria Elizabeth Becker on July 18, 1736 and they came to Philadelphia on September 15, 1749 on the ship Phoenix, the surname now Wotring. Samuel received a warrant for land on July 4, 1754 in Whitehall Township, now in Lehigh County, and by 1764 he was running a mill. The family attended Schlosser's (now Union) Reformed Church at Unionville. A son, Samuel Jr., who had been born in Alsace in 1743, married Maria Barbara Hoffman and their fifth child, Johann Michael, born in 1779, married Sarah Kennel. The fourth child of Johann and Sarah, Michael, married Esther Hausman. All of Johann Michael's children were born in North Whitehall Township (Whitehall Township was divided into North and South in 1810) and are buried in Neff's Union Cemetery.

Michael and Esther became parents of twelve children, the last being Amelia, who married Charles Gackenbach. His brother, Howard, became the grandfather of Arden Gackenbach, a long-time leading layman of our Conference who continues to serve in the Bethlehem church.

The tenth child of Michael and Esther was Lewis Edward, born on April 5, 1850. He learned the trade of a sawyer, working at the attached sawmill of his father's gristmill. He and Violetta Kemmerer had their first and only child, Richard Lewis, born on December 7, 1873 in Washington Township, Lehigh County. Lewis then moved to Indiana with his wife, Rosa Kemmerer, whom he had married on March 29, 1873, leaving Violetta and Richard behind. There is no record of a previous marriage with Violetta. Rosa and Violetta were sisters, daughters of Nathan and Sabina nee

Handwerk Kemmerer. Violetta was a descendent of Frederich Kemmerer as was Martin Kemmerer, who married Sarah Brunner, the sister of Joel and Lucy Brunner. Frederich came to Philadelphia from Germany in 1742 and settled near Dillengersville in Upper Milford Township. He was one of the founders of the Evangelical Lutheran church in Old Zionsville.

Lewis returned after twelve years and found employment in the car shop at Fullerton, just outside of Allentown. Violetta, meanwhile, had married Elias Zerfass, whose first two wives had died. Lewis died on March 10, 1913 and is buried in Neff's Union Cemetery. Rosa died on September 14, 1930 and is buried next to him. Violetta died on January 31, 1902 and Violetta and Elias Zerfass are also buried in Neff's Union Cemetery. The obituary of Richard in the Bethlehem Globe Times and in the Easton Express both state that he had stepbrothers, named Freeman, Walter and James Zerfass and Benjamin, Charles and Robert Woodring. He also had a stepsister, Mrs. Charles (Emma) Keiser, a daughter of Lewis and Rosa. Charles and Robert were sons of Lewis and Rosa. Kemmerer family history lists Violetta as the wife of Elias Zerfass and Rosa as the wife of Lewis Wotring. The obituaries of Violetta and Lewis also appear in the Allentown Morning Call.

Richard Lewis Wotring grew up in the household of Elias Zerfass. He became a blacksmith in Weissport and married Clara Ziegenfuss. They lived in Weissport and began attending the Zion Mission of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ church in Union Hill, a community adjacent to Weissport,

The name "Ziegenfuss" means "goat's foot" and probably denoted a goat herder. Clara's ancestry is traced back to Jakob Ziegenfuss, born around 1600 in Eichsfeld, Germany. Jakob, whose spouse is unknown, became the father of five children, Heinrich being the first. Heinrich married a woman named Ann, becoming the father of nine children, the third named Wilhelm. He married a woman named Anna Elisabeth and four children were born, Hans Jacob being the fourth. Hans was born on January 20, 1691 and married Anna Elisabeth Minck or Taub, (Jacob was married three times and it is not certain which one was the mother of his nine children). Hans Jacob and his family came to Philadelphia on the ship Thistle, arriving on October 28, 1738 from Rotterdam. He and his wife then served as indentured servants for seven years to pay for their passage and settled in Springfield Township in Bucks County. The oldest son, Johann Andres, purchased 51 acres from Henry Stover which included a grist mill. On August 2, 1775 Johann became a private in the Springfield Township Militia under the command of Captain Anthony Lark. In April 1782 he also enlisted in the Fourth Battalion of the Northampton County Militia. He died in 1778. A son, Andrew, born in 1747, married Maria Magdalena Reichert in 1773 and they had seven children, the third one named Johannes. In 1800 Johannes and two of his brothers crossed the Blue Mountains and settled in what is now the village of Aquashicola in present Carbon County. He married Susanna Olewein and they had eight children, the last one named

John Harrison Ziegenfuss. John, born in 1837 in Monroe County, married Sarah Hahn and settled in Franklin Township, Carbon County. They had seven children, the third one named Clara, born on April 27, 1871 in Franklin Township. She and Richard Wotring were married by Justice of the Peace J. Reit on December 10, 1892.

In 1893 Richard was converted through the ministry of Dora Rote at revival meetings held in Weissport by the Gospel Worker Society. He was then baptized (presumably with his wife) by Charles H. Brunner. The surname was now anglicized to Woodring (it was Wotring on the marriage certificate). Richard and Clara were received into church membership by Pastor Harvey B. Musselman. Richard Lewis Woodring's name first occurs in Quarterly Conference minutes on a page entitled "Statistical Report: January, 1895", where he is listed as Superintendent of the Sunday School at Weissport. John J. Ziegenfuss served the church, known as Mt. Zion Chapel, as a Trustee and is listed in the same statistical report with Richard. He was probably Clara's brother as the oldest son of John and Sarah was named John. Zion Chapel was erected in the summer of 1894 on Union Hill, just outside Weissport.

The first public record of Richard's interest in entering the ministry is recorded in the third quarterly conference on September 14, 1895:

Whereas Bro. R. L. Woodring, being recommended by the class at Weissport to this quarterly conference for a licence (sic) to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and after having given the nature of his call - this conference after due investigation granted Bro. R. L. Woodring a quarterly license as per his request until the Lord opens the way for him to go forth.

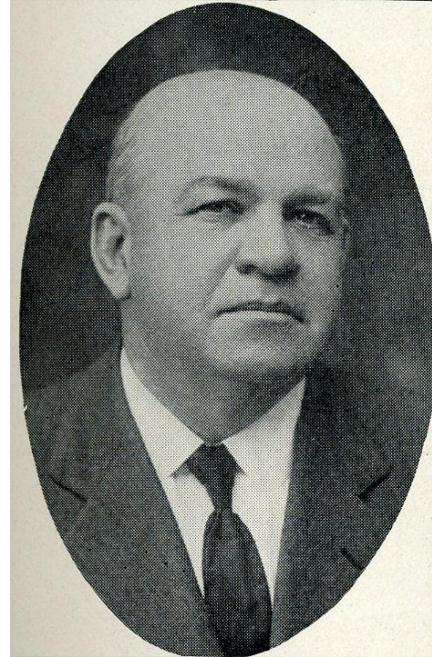
By the first quarterly conference, held on March 21, 1896, Richard was no longer Superintendent of the Sunday School at Weissport but was now listed as 'helper'. In 1896 he served as an assistant to Pastor Musselman. He continued to report to Quarterly Conference as helper until the first Quarterly Conference that met on April 15, 1897, where the following record is found: "Moved and seconded that Bro. Woodring should have permission to work under the direction of the Presiding Elder instead of the Quarterly Conference." He was then recommended by the Quarterly Conference to Annual Conference for a license on January 11, 1898, which he received on March 5, 1898. His obituary, in the 1934 Year Book, records that Richard "held tent and hall meetings at Trout Run, Ralston and Roaring Branch", the last place located above Wilkes-Barre.

He was ordained at Reading on September 16, 1900 and served at Bethlehem from 1899 to 1901 and then went to Mt. Carmel until 1904. While at Bethlehem he held tabernacle meetings on West Broad Street. His last charge was at Nazareth, where he served from 1924 until his death.

Richard was admitted to St. Luke's Hospital in Fountain Hill, a borough adjoining Bethlehem, on June 3, 1934 for the removal of a pelvic abscess. He failed to recover and died on Sunday morning, June 10. A brief funeral service was conducted at the parsonage in Nazareth and the main service was held at our Bethel Church in Allentown. H. B. Musselman, Presiding Elder of the Allentown District, officiated. Richard was buried in the Union Hill cemetery at Weissport.

Richard and Clara only had two children, a son and a daughter. Allen was born on July 10, 1893 at Weissport. He later became a member of the Bethlehem church and married a young woman he met there, Hilda Margaret Moyer. Hilda's sister, Ida Gertrude Moyer, also met a young man from Bethlehem named Franklin M. Hottel, who after marriage became a Conference pastor. The Moyers had moved to Bethlehem from Springfield Township and joined our church at Bethlehem. The mother, Sallie Ann nee Landis, died in Bethlehem when Hilda was only eight years old. Both Hilda and Allen became Sunday School teachers at Bethlehem and were married on October 8, 1915. Allen was employed as a printer for the Quakertown Free Press but desired to enter the ministry. He was licensed by Annual Conference in 1917 and was ordained in 1920. Only one child, Leonard, was born to Allen and Hilda and he became a doctor in Reading.

Allen's first charge was at Walnutport and Northampton where he served for six years. He served the circuit of Fleetwood, Blandon and Terre Hill from 1923 to 1943 and at Reading for eight years. He then served two years at Quakertown, retiring from the active ministry in 1955. During his remaining years he worshipped at the Reading church and died on April 11, 1965. Funeral services were held at the Reading church on April 11 and he was buried in the Laureldale Cemetery on April 15. His wife, Hilda, died in June,



R. L. Woodring - 1929



A. G. Woodring Family

1980 and Leonard died in 1989. Hilda, Leonard and his wife, Frances, are also buried at Laureldale.

The daughter of Richard and Clara was Dora Naomi, who was born on November 22, 1901 at Bethlehem. She met a young pastor from Lancaster County named Rudy Gehman and they were married on August 6, 1931 in the parsonage at Nazareth, the marriage performed by her father, Richard Lewis Woodring. Rudy had previously been ordained by the Mennonites in 1926 but began serving in the Gospel Herald Society in October 1927, going to Jersey City. In October 1935 he was ordained by our Conference. His son, Richard, relates that Rudy was sent to the Graterford-



Rudy, Dora, and Richard Gehman at Graterford

Harleysville circuit and preached his first sermon at Graterford on December 21.

Three days later Richard was born in the Riverview Hospital in Norristown. Rudy served in the ministry until 1961 when he died suddenly on August 17 while serving at Lancaster. Dora died on April 11, 1992 in Fellowship Manor in Lehigh County.

Richard attended Berean Bible School, graduating in 1957, and then attended Wheaton College. After graduation he went to South Africa as a missionary and helped establish Scott



R. L. Woodring baptizing in the Moncacy Creek, Bethlehem, ca. 1890 (Notice snow on the bank.)

Theological College. He continued working with the school until

retirement. He and his wife, Florence now live in Florida. Florence, daughter of Kyron Hilbert and Ruth Gehman, is a great-granddaughter of William Gehman, credited with founding our present Bible Fellowship Church..

Richard Lewis Woodring began the family tradition of Christian service which continued through the families of his son and daughter. His son, Allen, served as a pastor, his daughter Dora, married a pastor and Dora's son served as a missionary. We thank God for their contributions to His kingdom.

Life of Mrs. Dora Naomi Gehman
Richard J. Gehman

Mrs. Dora N. Gehman was the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Richard Leonard Woodring, pastor in the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church, 1898-1934. She was the sister of Rev. A.G. Woodring, also pastor in the M.B.C.

Dora Gehman was born on November 22, 1901 in Bethlehem. She came to know Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior at the age of eight; was baptized thereafter in Easton in April, 1910 by her father, R.L. Woodring; became a member of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church, Quaker-town in April, 1910.

While growing up, she lived in the parsonages of the following places: Bethlehem, 1901-1902; Mt. Carmel, 1902-1905; Graterford, 1905- 1908; Quakertown, 1908-1911; South Allentown, 1911-1914; Easton, 1914-1918; Coopersburg, 1918-1925; Nazareth, 1925-1931.

After high school and before marriage Dora Woodring attended secretarial college and worked as a secretary.

On August 6, 1931 she was married to Rev. Rudy H. Gehman, a pastor in the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church.



Rudy H. Gehman

During her marriage she lived in the following places where her husband served as pastor: Gospel Heralds (to 1935); Graterford, 1935-1945; Newark, N.J., 1945-1948; Mt. Carmel, 1948-1954; South Allentown, 1954-1958; Lancaster, 1958-1961.

On December 24, 1935, her only child, Richard Joseph Gehman, was born.

During her married life, she served the Lord faithfully as pianist, organist, Sunday School teacher, counselor and as a suitable helper to her husband.

Dora's husband, R.H. Gehman, passed suddenly without illness into the presence of the Lord on August 17, 1961 while he was preparing for the final service of Vacation Bible School in the Lancaster Bible Fellowship Church.

After the death of her husband, she lived in Allentown for one year, and in Reading for 18 years, much of that time with her brother's widow, Mrs. Hilda Woodring. On two occasions she travelled to Kenya for extended visits with her son and family.

In 1980 she began living in the Bible Fellowship Home in Nazareth with intermediate care. In August, 1988 she was among the first residents in the BFC Fellowship Manor, a skilled nursing facility in Whitehall.

In April, 1990 she became seriously ill, and finally was called into the presence of the Lord on April 11, 1992.

She is survived by a son, the Reverend Dr. Richard J. Gehman, missionary with the Africa Inland Mission International, serving in Kenya East Africa with his wife Florence, and two grandchildren, Nathan Scott and Joy Elizabeth.

A TRIBUTE TO MY MOTHER

Richard J. Gehman

April 11, 1992

As the only child of my mother I want to "rise up and call her blessed." She was a woman who feared the Lord and is therefore worthy of praise, according to Proverbs 31. From my mother radiated many blessings which helped to mold me into what I am today. As the Bible says, "Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate."

My mother was born in a parsonage in Bethlehem on November 22, 1901. Although I never saw my grandfather, the late Rev. R.L. Woodring, my grandmother lived with us after his death in 1934 until she passed away in Mt. Carmel in the early 1950's. My mother was molded through her Christian parents even as I was. I trust that our two children, Nathan and Joy, will also be nurtured in their Christian faith in our home. And so, by God's grace, the faith moves on and on from one generation to another.

Some of the blessings which my mother passed on to me are as follows.

My mother introduced me to Christ when I was five years old in the Graterford parsonage. During the reading of Scripture she presented the claims of Christ and encouraged me to trust Him as my Saviour. When my response was positive my parents did something that I always thought strange. They asked me to wait until Sunday night when my father gave the invitation in church for people to come forward and receive Christ. I know that was not because my parents thought a person could only be saved in church, for my own dad received Christ on his knees in his sister's bedroom. Could the purpose have been to make an indelible impression on me? If so, this proved to be very effective for I well remember that time when I knelt in the Graterford church, repented of my sin and invited Christ to be my Lord and Saviour.

Growing up in the parsonage my mother knew poverty. She never outgrew her sense of deprivation when she only had two dresses while attending high school. At one point her parents used newspapers for window shades. She knew how to do without things, something that has been passed on to me in some measure.

My mother was a creative, intelligent woman.

Unfortunately, some of this has not been passed on to me. She took art lessons as a teenager. Some of our treasured possessions include water color paintings stored in our barrels.

What would a missionary do without barrels? These water color paintings are, in my opinion, very beautiful. One is a head of a horse. Her father loved horses. Another beautiful one is a peacock. Hopefully in retirement we will enjoy these and pass them on as family treasures to our children.



Rudy, Richard, and Dora Gehman

My mother was trained as a secretary and worked in an office before marriage. Some of my earliest lessons in the writing of letters came from my mother. She was a whiz in vocabulary and spelling, something I always struggled with. Even in her old age she used college level vocabulary, using words that have astonished me and others. And she remembered names so well.

My mother was also a musician who played the piano and organ. One thrill of her life was to play the pipe organ every Sunday in our little, white church in Newark, New Jersey. She often referred to this as a delightful experience. As a young person I had wanted to play a violin, for a good violinist can melt my heart. But through her encouragement I ended up taking accordion lessons for seven years. When she was pregnant with child, before I was born in December 1935, she played the piano a lot, believing that this love of music would be transmitted to her child. For years the professionals dismissed this idea as an old wives' fable. But in recent years I have read that there is new faith that this may indeed be true. What little musical and artistic talent is in me has come from my mother.

My mother tended to be a somewhat quiet, shy person with a retiring personality. In her high school year book was this statement: "If silence is golden, Dora is rich." But she made many enduring friendships throughout the years. A girlfriend from high school days has been corresponding and visiting with her to the very end. She had many close and wonderful friends from all the churches where my dad pastored. Just a few weeks before she died I told her that an old friend, Liz Snyder, had passed away. During the rest of my visit she seemed quiet with a distant gaze in her eye. When I inquired about her thoughts, she referred to the close friendship she felt with Liz Snyder. Over the years various ones from different churches have come regularly to visit her.

My mother was a great help to my father in the ministry. My dad was a very wonderful man of God who profoundly influenced me in many ways. Yet he needed my mother. In the past two years she mentioned once again in our conversations how she would accompany him on many of his pastoral visits. Years ago he told my mother that he needed her to help build bridges, make friends and communicate with people. My mother was a devoted and faithful wife who never, never spoke ill of my dad. She was completely united with him in the ministry.

She was also adventuresome. Vacations were not common for pastors when I was growing up. Probably my father would not have had money for much travel. But he did give to my mother each month enough money to buy food for the family. It was her custom to save some of this money every month. At the end of the year she had accumulated enough money for us to take a trip. Once we went to Florida; another time to New England. Those are memories I will always treasure and these travels would not have happened if it were not for my mother.

Even in her older years she loved to travel. Twice she visited us in Kenya. On her way home one time she had a brief stopover in London. She was determined to see David Livingston's grave in Westminster Abbey. So she hired a taxie to take her to

Westminster Abbey, pleading with the driver not to leave the Abbey until she returned. She even took a cruise in the Caribbean; I believe it was with Spiros Zodiates.

In our home we had love and peace. There were never any quarrels. Never any raised voices. I never heard any grumbling or gossip about church members. My parents endeavored to create a positive environment in which I would grow. Recently, I spoke with Rev. C.E. Kirkwood on the phone. He began his ministry in the Gospel Herald Society as a teen age boy by living with my parents. C.E. Kirkwood spoke with deep respect and fond memories of my parents. He said that in those early days in the Gospel Herald Society he did not know of any couple more godly than they were.

But that does not mean there was no need to spank their boy. My dad was quiet and gentle, a real gentleman. I do not remember many spankings but I do remember one or two. On one occasion my dad spoke to me and warned me what would happen if I continued in my disobedient way. In order to illustrate what he would do, he smacked his own face and in the process broke his glasses. I never forgot that. On another occasion my father took me into the basement in Graterford for a spanking. Sometime during the ordeal, my mother called from upstairs, "Spank him harder."

A profound influence on my life was the entertaining in our home of many missionaries by my parents. There is no doubt in my mind that these missionaries in our home were a major contributing factor in my call to Africa. Later in seminary I began to question, "Why Africa?" "Why not India or South America or somewhere else?" For me the question had always been settled, even before I thought of it. It was always Africa. I believe it was because in our home in those early days my parents entertained many missionaries, like Harry and Elma Stam, Mary and Bertha Miller, Luella Reinhart- all missionaries to Africa.

Apart from all this I believe the greatest blessing that my mother bestowed on me was her wholehearted and unreserved support for my call to serve in Africa. When my dad suddenly passed away in July 1961 my mother fell into an old problem of depression. Contrary to my previous plans, therefore, I delayed my going to Kenya for three years so I could stay home and be near my mother. During that time I taught in Berean Bible School and at that time met Flo and was married. When my mother became well Flo and I began to think and pray about leaving for Africa. When the time came for our departure to Africa in 1966, even though there were no other brothers and sisters at home and my dad had passed away, she never expressed hesitation. For she and my father had dedicated me to the Lord in the Harleysville Church with H.B. Musselman officiating. She always supported and believed our call to serve in Kenya.

"Should we stay home from Africa" was a question I often asked, "in order to be closer to my mother?" Never did my mother hint or suggest or imply that she wanted us to stay home for her sake. Fortunately, she had visited us twice in Kenya and stayed for several months each time. We took her all over Kenya. She made a complete journal of her trips and made some picture albums. Thereafter, she could visualize what we were doing and where we were going whenever I mentioned these places in my letters. She often read those journals and looked at the pictures in her albums. Because of my mother's wonderful faith in God in dedicating me to the Lord for His service and surrendering me to do God's will, we have been able to serve in Kenya.

God has been good to my mother and to our family in so many ways. We shall always be indebted to the -Bible Fellowship Church and to Rev. James Beil in particular for the care they provided my mother, first in the Nazareth home and then in Fellowship Manor. My mother first entered the Nazareth home with intermediate care back in 1980, almost twelve years ago. I do not believe we could have served in Kenya, far from my mother, without the Christian environment and loving care she received in our Bible Fellowship facilities. Without this provision by the Bible Fellowship Church I could not have served in Kenya with a good conscience. So to Rev. Beil and all the faithful, dedicated staff in Fellowship Manor, I owe a great debt that cannot be repaid. Thank you.

During our service overseas, without other brothers or sisters, the Lord has provided so many others who have helped. My cousin, the late Dr. Leonard Woodring, was ever so kind and generous with my mother when she lived with his mother, Mrs. Hilda Woodring. Pastor Jansen E. Hartman was my mother's pastor in Reading and assumed responsibility, at my request, to look after my mother. When my mother lived in Reading, Dorothy Martin, the wife of my cousin, Lester Martin, became such a dear friend and helped in so many ways. Just last week a nurse gave me a picture of my mother during Easter last year when she wore a dress that Dorothy had made. The nurses said they never saw anyone more thrilled than my mother when she received this dress in the mail from Dorothy. Then when my mother moved to Nazareth, far from Lancaster County, Elthea Martin, the wife of cousin Paul Martin, became a special friend to my mother, giving her so many dresses and goodies and visiting her faithfully. We shall ever be grateful for the kindness of so many people in so many places who have showed love to my mother in our absence.

During the past two years my mother has been in gradually declining health. Due to stomach problems she disliked food and ate very little. Although we knew she was declining, it all seemed so slow and gradual. About ten days before her death she took a sudden turn for the worse. Before we realized what was happening, the Lord took her home to be with Himself this past Saturday, April 11, 1992.

As a woman and as a pastor's wife, she always served in the background. She did not bask in the limelight of public attention. But in my own heart I believe that her reward is very great. She, together with my dad, dedicated me to the Lord. She shaped and molded my life and values through teaching and example. And when God called me to serve in Africa she denied herself, gave up her rights, and offered me to the Lord for service. She never complained or lamented that we served far from her. She loved her grandchildren, Nathan and Joy, ever so much. She was proud of them. But she never expressed any regret that they were growing up far from her. My mother was a perfect example of a good and godly woman who loved God and served Him well in her generation. In her Bible my mother had underlined and placed a large star beside the verse: "By the grace of God I am what I am; and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain." Neither do we believe God's grace was in vain when showered on my mother.

After ninety years and twenty weeks the Lord called her home to be with him in glory for ever. "Then I heard a voice from heaven say, 'Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them'" (Revelation 14:13).

While sorting and filing in my archive room, I came across the following tract by H. B. Musselman. I am not sure who gave it to me and it might have fallen out of a book. It was a reprint of an address he gave at a Ministerial Convention in April, 1906. I have no records for Ministerial Conventions at any other time than those held in conjunction with the annual conferences held in October. So, it is a bit of a surprise to discover another. You can see the minutes of the October Ministerial Conventions from 1899 - 1911 at our website, www.bfchistory.org.

**The Necessity, Conditions Leading to, and Evidences of a Minister Being Spirit-Filled.
ELD. H. B. MUSSELMAN.**

The Holy Spirit was in the world, and active before this age began (Gen. 1, 2 ; 6:3; Num. 11:16,17 ; Judges 13:25) but was promised as an indwelling Holy Spirit, a divine guest for this age, to the believing, obedient disciples of Jesus Christ. (Jno. 14:15-18 ; Acts 5:32.) This promise began to be fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, indwelling and

forming the disciples into the "unity of the spirit." (Eph. 4:3-6; with Acts 11:1-4.) Therefore the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, is now present in the Church of God, and in believers as members of it. He should be recognized as present, indwelling, administering in the church and in the believer, co-operating as witnesses and workers ministering his various gifts, services and in workings. (I Cor. 12:4-27.)

It should never be forgotten that the Apostles and early preachers became efficient in their holy and arduous calling, not through native gifts and worldly education, but by the Holy Ghost coming and resting upon them.

The Holy Spirit is the clamant need of the times. The meaning of the word "clamant" is urgent, specially arising from necessity. Dr. Josiah Strong said: "The ministry of to-day lacks enthusiasm, for the reason that it lacks a message. Many a preacher speaks, not because he has something to say, but because he has to say something." Such a statement would be a libel upon every true preacher of the Gospel, for he knows that he has a distinct and definite message, first to the world, that Christ in his death and resurrection meets the necessity of the sinner, and second that the Holy Spirit in his worth and work meets the requirements of the Saint and is all his efficiency for all that God asks him to be and do.

When Adolphe Monod was lying on his death-bed there were a few words which escaped from his lips which expresses the personal need of the minister and, the clamant need of the church. He said: "All in Christ, by the Holy Spirit for the glory of God; all else is nothing."

"All in Christ,"—God has nothing to give us apart from him. Every blessing is found in him, and each blessing is possessed by possessing him.

"By the Holy Spirit,"—The Holy Spirit is the medium by whom God communicates Himself to us, and by whom we hold communication with Him. He is the Executive of the Godhead and makes everything in the spiritual life efficient.

"For the Glory of God,"—not for the glory of self ; nor for the enhancing of the glory of any church; nor for our own personal comfort; nor that honor may be brought to ourselves, but for His glory absolutely and alone. " All else is nothing. "

There are five things which we must never forget:

1. That the believer owes his new life to a spiritual source. We are born of the Holy Spirit.



Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Musselman

2. The new life must be sustained by spiritual food, namely the Word of God, by which means the Spirit is continually imparting to us His own life and grace.

3. The believer is to move in a spiritual world. He is in the world, but he is not of the world. He is surrounded by a spiritual atmosphere as he walks in the Spirit, even as the water spider lives in the air it takes with it as it goes under the water.

4 He has to communicate the spiritual things of the truth of God by means of spiritual power. We are told to "compare spiritual things with spiritual," or as Darby renders the sentence, "communicating spiritual things by means of spiritual power." If the ministry and church of to-day were to recognize this they would not resort to church fairs, bazaars and a hundred and one questionable things in order to carry on what is called God's work, for they would know that only the spiritual force of the Holy Spirit is efficient to carry on spiritual work.

5. The end of the believer's life and labor are spiritual. He truly LIVES in this world who moves in the spiritual realm of the Spirit's grace and power.

I. We Need to be Filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 5:18) The Holy Spirit is the spirit of light to illuminate the Word and enables us to comprehend the Truth as it is in Jesus. He is the Spirit of life to quicken. He is the spirit of peace and joy, bringing comfort, rest and gladness to the heart. He is the Spirit of prayer, awakening within us holy desires, purifying our petitions, inspiring them with faith, and bringing back to us the witness of God's answer. He is the Spirit of power, giving efficiency to our words and works, and enabling us so to minister Christ that men shall be convicted and converted. He is the Spirit of love, shedding abroad the love of God in our hearts and enabling us to love others, even "as He has loved us." He is the Spirit of quickening for our physical life and for all the powers of our mind and being. He is the Spirit of hope, showing us things to come, and giving to us the earnest of our future inheritance. He is the Spirit of sonship, witnessing to our spirit that we are sons of God, and imparting to our nature the confidence and love of children of God. He is the Spirit of faith, giving to us the faith of God and enabling us to believe even as Jesus believed and to overcome through the omnipotence of faith. All this and much more the Holy Spirit is able and willing to be in our human life and all this is included in the filling of the Spirit.

The necessity for being spirit-filled is :—

1. This alone gives us victory over sin.

2. This alone delivers us from a life of self. It is vain to resist this our most subtle and persistent foe by mere will power. The only way is to be lifted above self by a superior affection. When the cloud of glory filled the tabernacle of old, there was no room for Moses. He had to get out when God came in. The secret of death to self is love to God and the only victory is to have God live in us.

3. This alone makes us always ready for service. It will give you the desire and instinct for service. We will not need to wait for baptisms and blessings and fresh

anointings, but we will be always ready and prepared for any opportunity for helping others, cheerfully responding to any call of the Lord: "Here am I, send me."

4. This alone makes our lives uniformly happy and joyous, enabling us to rise above unfavorable surroundings and circumstances, because the fountain of our happiness is within.

5. Thus only can we have a symmetrical life. We shall be safe from extravagances and extremes, and like our Lord be always in time and in order; not having to retrace our stoppings and undo our mistakes, but moving on calmly in the will of God, and always reflecting Christ, "so letting our light shine before men that they shall see our good works and glorify our Father in Heaven."

II. Some of the Conditions Leading to a Spirit-filled Life are: —

1. We must get a Scriptural conception of the reality and possibility of such a life.
2. The next condition for being filled with the Spirit is a deep desire for His indwelling and complete possession.
3. It is necessary to be emptied in order to be filled.
4. After this we must come to a definite transaction, where we actually yield up ourselves in positive surrender to His control, and take Him by a specific act of faith.
5. We must by habit keep abiding and absorbing the Spirit's presence.
6. We must see Him in everything and "practice the presence of God" in all the situations and circumstances of our lives.
7. We must make use of the resources of the Holy Spirit. Take Him for the real things that come in our life. Elisha appropriated the mantle and immediately used it for the first need. The need was the dividing of Jordan. As you receive the Holy Ghost, you will find immediately some need confront you in your life. Take Him for victory and you will not only find the deliverance you took, but you will find that you have ONE with you as a STANDBY and strength of all your life that you need never again be disappointed or defeated.

8. Work according to His plan. Keep in harmony with the Holy Ghost, and he will teach you the plan of Christ for this age; obey him and work accordingly. By thus waiting upon God in the silence of communion, we drink in His fulness, and by keeping our heart open unto Him, we will find that as the rod of Aaron, when laid up all night in the Holy of Holies was brought forth covered with buds and blossoms and fresh fruit, so our hearts and lives as they step in the presence of God will be enriched with fragrance, the freshness and the fulness of His blessing, and men will take knowledge that we have been with Jesus.

III. Conclusively we will mention

A Few Evidences to be Seen in the life of a Minister that is Spirit-filled:

The receiving of the Holy Spirit is not a supplement to conversion, or a mere spiritual luxury : He is an indispensable and absolute necessity to fulfill life's mission. Therefore the minister should first of all be spirit-filled, the evidences of which will be clearly seen.

1. In Far-sightedness. — The teachings of the Cross which before Pentecost Peter failed to see clearly, he afterwards both preached and lived. The Spirit of Truth guides into all truth. He causes us to see that salvation from sin is not all of the Gospel. He opens our eyes to all God's Truths, such as sanctification, Divine Healing, the Lord's return, Missions, etc. He is a wonderful eye-opener, and causes us to see the Truth as we never saw it before.

2. In Enlargement of Heart. — Before Pentecost Peter said, "Pity thyself," but afterwards he quite forgot all about that. It cures the Sons of Thunder from desiring to call fire down from heaven upon rejecters of Christ, and fills them with a spirit of love and longsuffering for the lost. There is no tearing down of fences, but a growing above them and shaking hands across the line, with all such who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

3. In Efficiency.—Before Pentecost Peter failed before a maid; afterwards he stood boldly for his Lord, in jeopardy of life and persecution. Our Lord causes us to triumph over sin and to overcome the flesh. " (Gal. 5:17-18.)

In all things we are to be more than conquerors through Him who is our sufficiency. Samson was as big as ever after he had been in Delilah's lap—he weighed as much as ever—but he had lost the power —the Spirit of God upon him. He did not take Iron Bitters, or go to the gymnasium, but went and waited for power,—then he put his arms around pillars and he was as strong as ever. How many ministers of to-day lack efficiency in their respective calling. May we ever remember the words of our Blessed Master: "Without Me ye can do nothing."

4. In Witnessing.—"They were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues." (Acts 2:4) Again we read in (Matt. 12: 34) "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "It needs the overflow of the heart to give the mouth full speech" says the poet.

5. In Answering Objectors.—We read in (Acts 4:8-12) of Peter's bold defence, "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them: "Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel... be it known unto you all, etc." Has not the Lord promised to give unto us mouth and wisdom that no adversary shall be able to gainsay or resist ?

6. In Suffering Persecution.—"Stephen... being full of the Holy Ghost looked up steadfastly," etc., "and was stoned... praying for his persecutors." "Yea all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) A spirit-filled minister is more concerned to be found pleasing in the eyes of God, than to be applauded of men. Paul declared in Gal. 1:10, "Do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ."

Jesus taught : "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of man's sake," but "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you: for so did their fathers to the false prophets. (Luke 6:22-26.)

7. Boldly Speaking the Word of God.—We read in Acts 4:31, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost and they spoke the Word of God with boldness." Preaching from a full heart will accomplish its purpose. The secret and source of the increase of the Word of God and the multiplication of disciples is a church with officers that are full of the Spirit. (Acts 6:1-7.)

In all matters God through the Holy Spirit must have the pre-eminence. His pre-eminence in matters of church authority is implied in Acts 15:28. "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." Many a body of ministers would state if they even recognized the Holy Ghost at all, "It seemed good to us and to the Holy Ghost." The Holy Ghost was the invisible Chairman of that Great Council and possessed the reins of every member present. Recognition of and obedience to Him is the only sure way to a speedy and peaceful settlement of every problem for us, however difficult and involved. May God bless these lines in encouraging us in the Spirit's work concerning us for this age, and may we not grieve Him in His Work.

[Essay read before the Ministerial Convention of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, at Royersford, Pa., April 12, 1906, and ordered to be printed in tract form.]

I always end my work on one of these issues with the wish that you enjoy and learn from these presentations. I always have a good time assembling them. My thanks to LeRoy Wilcox and Richard Gehman for their submissions.

I want to remind about our exciting new DVD which celebrates the 150th Anniversary of our first meeting in September, 1858. The jacket of the DVD says:

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