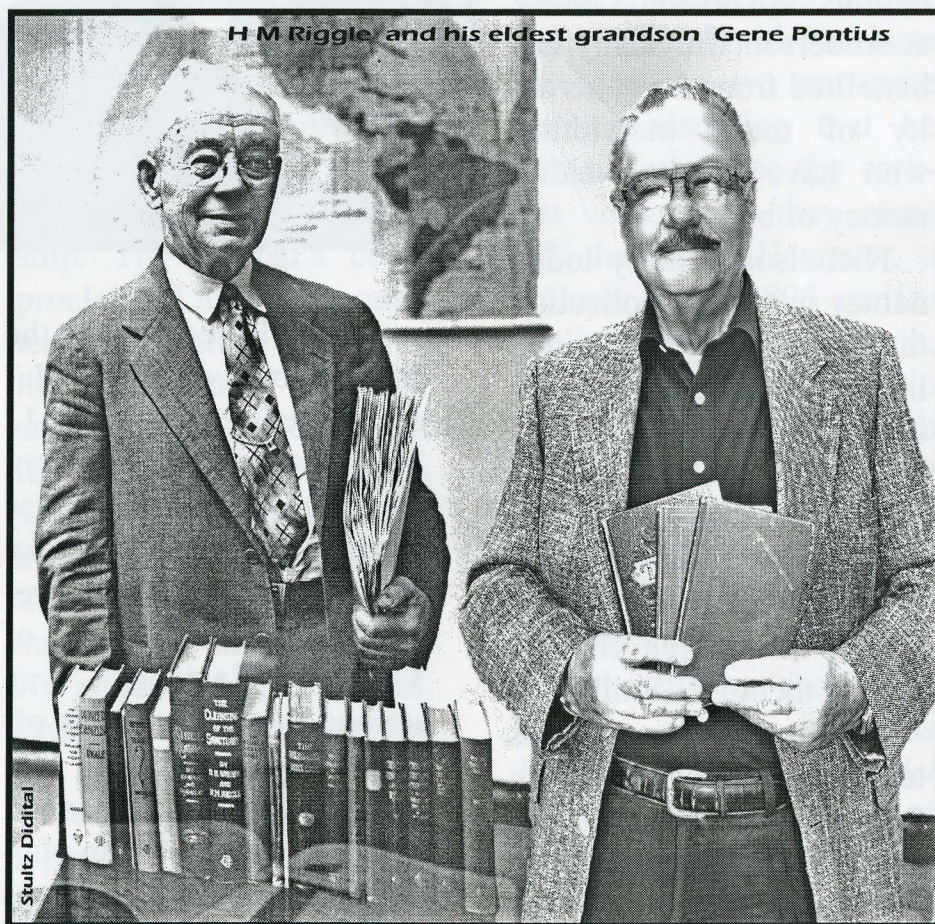


Church of God Historian

Historical Society of the Church of God Vol 6 No 2 Winter 2006



A SPECIAL ARCHIVAL ACQUISITION

Robert Reardon has referred to H.M. Riggle as “the Billy Graham” of the Church of God. I have been seeking to acquire a better understanding of this important pioneer of our reformation. It seemed to me the best way of doing this was through his descendants. After a considerable amount of searching I located his grandchildren in Indiana, Texas, and Florida.

After many months of work and numerous phone calls I found myself in Florida on the doorstep of Gene Pontius. Being the eldest grandson of H.M. Riggle, his grandfather chose to give him all of his personal library and some other items.

Gene himself is also a very giving man, as I found out. He has funded much of the Pontius Learning Center on the campus

of Warner Southern College. In addition, he has given most of his grandfather’s books and other items to the WPC learning center (or library).

But, so it turned out, he still has a few items in his possession—including some personal handwritten diaries from a later period of Bro. Riggle’s life. He has graciously allowed us to photocopy these to place in Church of God Archives.

The photo on the left is a composite made from two photos. On a fifty-year old picture of Bro. Riggle which was inside a glass case when I shot it, I have superimposed a recent photo of Gene Pontius holding his grandfather’s diaries. The Historical Society deeply appreciate having copies of these personal diaries. They gave us insights into Bro. Riggle’s life and thought we could not get any other way.

Other Riggle grandchildren in Indiana also have archival items they intend to turn over to the Society soon. We are very thankful for such gifts.

— Dale E. Stultz

Please note the special announcement on Page 8 concerning the Historical Society Work Camp in late March. Society members have responded generously to the special effort to raise funds to move the Barney Warren cabin from Springfield to Anderson as a special memorial historical center. Details have been worked out and the project is definitely on.

Church of God Historian

*Newsletter of the Historical
Society of the Church of God
(Anderson)*

Vol 6 No 2 Winter 2006

This newsletter is published three times a year: Fall; Winter; and Spring. It is published by the Society on behalf of its members. Printed in Anderson Indiana.

All correspondence should be addressed to: Historical Society of the Church of God, P.O. Box 702, Anderson, Indiana 46015. Email should be sent to *Merle D. Strege*, Society President, at: mdstrege@anderson.edu.

Church of God Historian is managed by the Executive Committee of the Society. Merle D. Strege, President, Dale E. Stultz, Vice-President, and Douglas E. Welch, Secretary-Treasurer. Others serve on the Committee as requested by the President.

The Historical Society

The Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson) exists to encourage the collection and preservation of artifacts and documents relating to the history of the Church of God; to encourage historical research and the writing of Church of God history; and to provide a forum for like-minded people interested in participating in and furthering the study of Church of God history.

Membership is open to all who are vitally interested in what the Society desires to accomplish. Membership dues are \$15 per year (\$10 for students.) Checks should be made out to *Historical Society of the Church of God* and sent to Box 702, Anderson IN 46015.

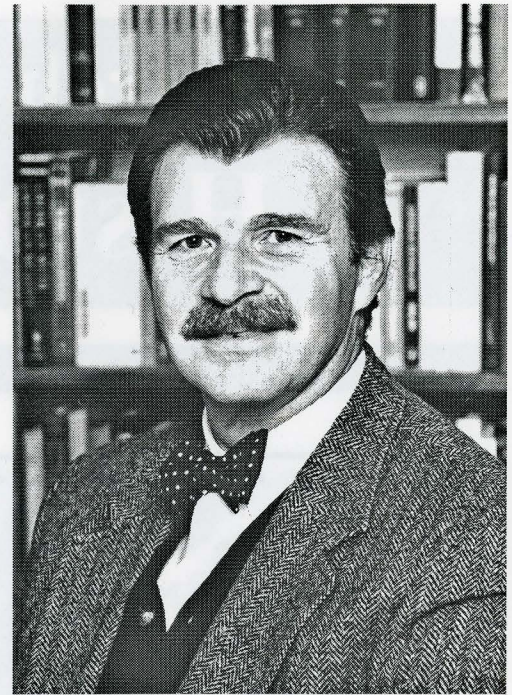
F.G. SMITH'S LIBRARY

Libraries grow by various means. Typically their budgets include funds for new purchases, but libraries also grow through donations. Nicholson Library at Anderson University has benefited from the generosity of many individuals who have donated either money or books.

Nicholson Library today names a unified collection that formerly was divided into the undergraduate Wilson Library and Byrd Library of the School of Theology. Especially has the latter grown through the donations of many ministers of the Church of God, among them F.G. Smith.

Given the sometimes testy relationship between Smith and the leaders of Anderson College, it may be surprising to learn that he gave some of his personal books to the college library. Nevertheless, now shelved in Nicholson Library and the Archives of the Church of God one may find here or there a book with Smith's name still inscribed inside in his fine secretarial hand.

Among Smith's donations is a collection of thirteen small volumes which



were published under the title, *The Anti-Infidel Library*, edited by H. L. Hastings. When the Advent Christian Association was formed in 1860 in the wake of yet another failed prediction of the return of Christ, Hastings was among the new group's officers and became the first president of its publication arm. In 1866 he began publication of the pro-revivalist paper, *The Christian*, as well as other populist journals.

Hastings was allied with the Baptist minister, A.J. Gordon, Pastor of the Clarendon Street Church in Boston, until Gordon's death in 1869. Gordon was a close associate of D.L. Moody and a leader in the emerging fundamentalist movement. A premillen-

nialist whose preaching also emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit and faith healing, Gordon teamed with Hastings and others to sharply criticize Boston's liberal theological establishment.

The latter's *Anti-Infidel Library*, elements of which continue to attract a supportive readership on the Internet, was a principle weapon in their fight against modernist scholarship. The journal's cover proclaimed it to be "a quarterly publication devoted to the refutation of infidelity and to the defence (*sic*) of the Gospel." Hastings wrote many of the booklets himself, often defending traditional views of biblical authorship and authority. He attacked higher critics, evolutionists, and skeptics of all descriptions. Like Gordon, then, Hastings was a part of the emerging fundamentalist movement pro-



F.G. Smith

testing new intellectual and scientific forces emerging in American life.

A historian is bound to be curious about the manner by which Hastings' journal came into Smith's possession. The earliest of the volumes carrying his name is dated 1883 and the latest 1896. Smith was born in 1880, so we are quite safe in assuming that he did not purchase the earliest volumes as they came off the press. However, a volume from 1895 carries the inscription, "F.G. Smith, Lacota, Michigan," as do several of the others. Smith joined the *Trumpet* family at Grand Junction, Michigan in 1897 and moved with the Company to Moundville in 1898.

Although we cannot be entirely certain, it seems likely that *The Anti-Infidel Library* became part of Smith's personal theological library while he was yet a teen-ager and may have been among the earliest volumes in his collection. Does this tell us anything about the formation of his ideas?

— Merle D. Stregge

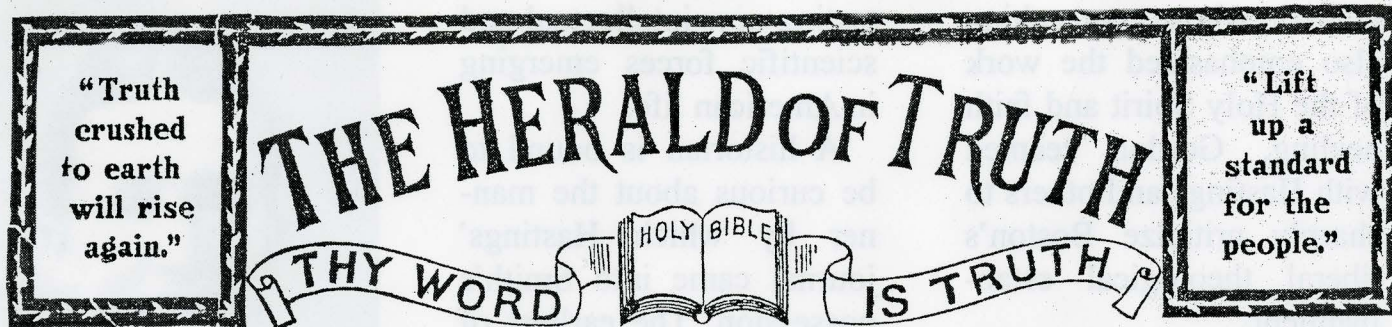
Are you aware that the classic Church of God film, "Heaven to Earth" is available in DVD format? Sponsored by Church of God Archives, it is being marketed by Church of God Ministries.



Josephine McCrie: ONE OF OUR FIRST MISSIONARIES

In 1886, Eliza J. White, a lay preacher from Ontario, Canada, began holding evangelistic meetings in her part of the Province. She happened across a copy of the *Gospel Trumpet* and wrote to D.S. Warner, inviting him to hold meetings in Ontario. In 1888, she was able to arrange such meetings and Warner and his 'evangelistic company' arrived in Welland in November, 1888, remaining in that part of the Province until March, 1889.

Out of the Church of God work that began as the result of these meetings came a young woman named Josephine McCrie. She was born in 1883 and converted in 1899. She joined the *Trumpet* family in Moundville in about 1900 and remained there until 1905 when she left for India. She served in India until retirement in 1946, returning to Canada as the second Mrs. George P. Tasker.



Vol. I.

ABERDEEN, SCOTLAND, JANUARY, 1914.

No. 4.

From the very beginning, the Church of God movement used literature to spread its message. It quite literally, in fact, centered around the publication of the *Gospel Trumpet* during the early years under D.S. Warner. The pages of the *Trumpet* were used to instruct, inspire, warn, debate, testify—and advertise a great many things from camp and grove meetings to books and tracts. It was not just a messenger and evangelist, but a ‘paper pastor’ as well.

Herald of Truth

It was inevitable, then, that Church of God persons who took exception to some teaching or practice of the movement should think of publishing their own paper. **Charles E. Orr** was just such a person. In a dispute with E.E. Byrum and others at the helm of the *Trumpet* over ‘holiness standards’ (in Orr’s case specifically the wearing of the necktie) he decided to begin his own paper in which he could let the rest of the Church in on the debate. Accordingly, late in 1913, he began publishing *The Herald of Truth*.

In 1906-1907 Charles and Minnie Orr served as Church of

God missionaries in Trinidad and Jamaica. Several years later they traveled to Great Britain in the same capacity, serving there (probably in Scotland) from 1913 to 1914. It was during this time that the first issues of *The Herald of Truth* were published in Aberdeen by Orr (Volume 1, Number 4, January 1914 is shown above.)

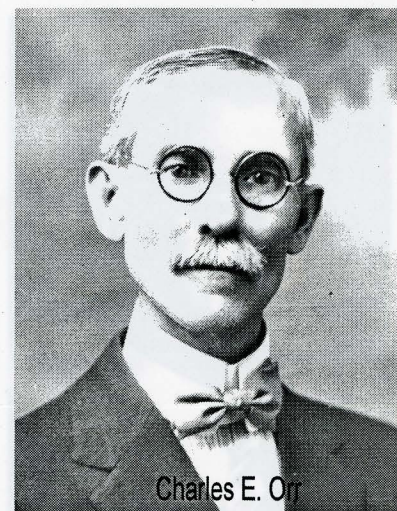
In February, 1914 Orr began publishing *The Herald* in Anderson, Indiana. After several issues, he moved the operation to Tennessee, continuing publishing there with Volume 1, Number 10. A few months later he moved *The Herald* again, this time to California. It appears that he later relinquished it into other hands, but no one seems to know whose.

According to Merle D. Strege, sometime in March 1915, in a letter to the *Gospel Trumpet*, Orr backed away from some of his extreme views (*I Saw the Church* p.47). But by then, “a number of disaffected saints sufficient to keep the cause alive had emerged (p. 48).

Here the documentary record becomes murky. It has been widely assumed that Orr discontinued publication of *The Herald* in 1915. It seems more like-

ly from the documentary evidence that its publication was continued by others of the “disaffected saints.” At the back of *The Herald of Truth* file in Church of God Archives is a single copy of *The Herald* published October 20, 1920. It is identified as Vol 7, No 1. We do not know when Orr left off publishing the paper, but the last issue in the file is Volume 2, Number 15. The Editor of Vol 7, No 1, was Miss Katherine Gubser. It was published in Carthage, Missouri.

So publication of the paper seems to have gone on until at least October, 1920. It is possible that it continued for several months, even a year or more, beyond that.



Charles E. Orr

Faith and Victory

Another of the so-called "disaffected saints," Fred Pruitt began publication of *Faith and Victory* (which has generally been seen as the successor of *The Herald*) on March 23, 1923. This new publication then became the voice of those who had 'come out' along with Charles Orr.

In the archives of *Faith and Victory* (now being edited by Fred Pruitt's grandson, Willie Murphy) are four other papers. The earliest of these is *Field Views and Testimonies*, published by L.Y. Janes, who served as a missionary from 1911 to 1913, first in Jamaica, where he worked briefly with the Olsons, then in Panama. He appears later to have been associated with Fred Pruitt. *Field Views* was published in Panama, Houston, and Walnut KS.

A second paper, according to Bro. Murphy, was *Christian Encouragement*, published for several months in late 1914 and early 1915. It is apparently not known who of the "disaffected" brethren published this.

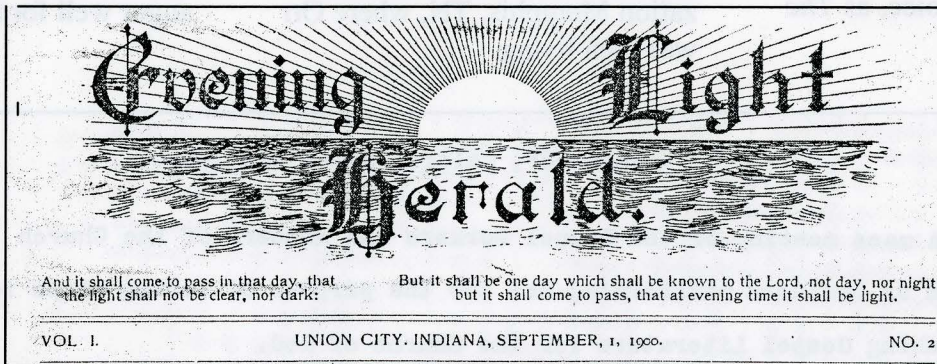
The third paper is *Christian Triumph*, which was published from 1918 to 1922. Apparently Fred Pruitt was associated with this paper, so it may have been the direct predecessor of *Faith and Victory*. Katherine Gubser, who served as a time as Editor of the *Herald of Truth*, perhaps following Charles Orr, later worked with Pruitt in Guthrie.

A fourth paper was *Path of*

Life, a children's paper. Orr began private publication of this paper in 1928. In 1932 it was merged with *Faith and Victory*, and Orr became a page-editor of that paper until his death about a year later. In 1915, Orr, as we have noted, had published in the *Trumpet* a sincere 'apology' for his 'divisive' actions, but never could seem to work comfortably with Editors of the *Trumpet* (which did not make him terribly unusual).

Evening Light Herald

The *Herald of Truth*, however, was not by any means the first 'independent' periodical to



be published in the Church of God 'reformation movement.' Thirteen years earlier, in 1900, H.C. Wickersham, began publication of *Evening Light Herald* on a semi-monthly basis. Wickersham, author of *A History of the Church* (Published by the Gospel Trumpet Company in 1900), had been led into the Church of God through the preaching of Daniel S. Warner. Just why Wickersham decided to publish the paper is not known—or how long it was published. But it was "Devoted to the publication of full salvation and all Bible subjects. Definite, Radical, and against all the works of the devil."

In Volume 1, Number 2, August 1, 1900 Wickersham writes as follows: "Some of the dear brethren are being very much burdened on my account, thinking that I have gone astray, because I am editing a paper; supposing my place and calling is to preach the gospel. . . . But I do feel clear in preaching, teaching, and publishing this journal for the Lord. . . . I know I am in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Gospel Trumpet Company of Moundsville, W.Va. . . . I know two papers can be in harmony and co-operate in the same work as well as two ministers. I know that all of God's children are in

harmony with each other. And I know too that the Holy Spirit is our guide, leader, and teacher. . . . We have no right to hinder our brother or sister from preaching, teaching, or presenting to the public

in writing or print, anything that is in harmony with the teaching of Jesus Christ."

It was in this spirit that J.W. and Jennie Byers, who were living in Oakland, California at the time, began publish *Tidings of Healing*. This publication venture began in 1896 and continued for only a few years—but perhaps longer than Wickersham's *Evening Light Herald*. It may be that he received more opposition from 'the saints' than encouragement and help. It is not likely that E.E. Byrum would have been too happy about this venture, perhaps fearing it would draw away *Trumpet* subscribers.

— Continued, Page 6

(Cont'd from Page 5)

A Proposal That Failed

Recently we have discovered evidence that a group of 'saints' in California (who may have been only *somewhat* "disaffected") also proposed the publication of a paper, which would presumably express their views and opinions as opposed to those of the *Gospel Trumpet*—or at least in addition to those of the *Trumpet*. (It seems to be the case that a considerable number of Church of God ministers and lay persons felt that the Church of God needed an alternative voice—but that it need not be a "shrill" and angry voice, as *The Herald* often was.)

Excerpts from the Minutes of a "mass meeting of the Gospel workers and members of the Church of God of Southern California" appear below. This group are proposing to organize themselves into a "corporation" to be known as "The Church of God Missionary Publishing Company." It will be the purpose of this company to publish Gospel literature, including a new paper to be named *Church of God Herald of Truth*. Willis Brown of New Mexico was appointed President of the new Company. The Editor, most interestingly, was to be C.E. Orr—but without controlling power—and the place of organization Memphis, TN, where Orr was then living.

The Minutes did, however, state a *proviso*. The proposition was to be presented to the Gospel Trumpet Company for their approval. But if approval was not given, the proposal would become "null and void." They did not, so the proposed publication did not get beyond a desire—in spite of the fact that they had already raised \$1300 to launch it. E.E. Byrum apparently wanted no competition either with the Company or the *Gospel Trumpet*.

But it may be that the Gospel Trumpet Company was concerned about the fact that the proposed editor of the periodical was C.E. Orr. This did not augur well for its future.

— D.E. Welch

Whittier, Calif., March 23, 1914.


A mass meeting of the Gospel Workers and members of the Church of God of Southern California, met for the purpose of taking steps for publishing Gospel Literature for the Church of God.

First in order was to elect a President. Brother J. W. Youngblood was nominated and elected.

Second, Secretary. Brother L. C. Kuns was elected Secretary.

Moved by Brother R. M. Trimble that the name of this incorporation shall be "The Church of God Missionary Publishing Company". Motion seconded by Brother E. M. Zinn, and carried.

Suggested that a weekly paper be published, price to be \$1.00 per year. The name of this paper to be the "Church of God Herald of Truth".

Motion made by Brother W. M. Brown that we recommend Bro. C. E. Orr as editor of the company, but not having controlling power. Seconded by Bro. George E. Bolds. Motion carried, and Bro.  L. Walker be assistant editor. *Pro. G. J. Editorial Brown*

Moved by Bro. F. J. Embay that Bro. Anderson Brown act as contributing editor. Seconded by Bro. R. M. Trimble. Carried.

"Growing Up in the Church of God"

In 1872 a young man 16 years old built a United Brethren Church building. His name was Robert L. Byrum. His mother's name was Lucinda Byrum, my grandmother. Her farm was two and a half miles from this little church. Her five sisters and their families attended there also.

The name of this church was "Prospect." This was near Union City, Indiana. About eight years later D.S. Warner's group, including B.E. Warren, held a meeting at Prospect. This simply tore up the Church and later the church doors were locked for good. So the Saints, as they called them, built their own church one half mile away and called it "Praise Chapel," the church I grew up in. I used to hear stories of how mud was sometimes thrown in the door and the harness cut off the horses.

I'll mention some of the family names of descendants of the people who went to Praise Chapel. Marsh (of Marsh's store), Hardacre (of the dairy), Wickersham (wrote for the Gospel Trumpet), A.L. Byers (song writer) and family, Alexander, Clough, Whitsel, Fowler, Trick, Kaufman, Geeting, McFarland, Copran, besides all six Byrum sons and one daughter (my mother) of Lucinda Byrum's family (my grandmother).

I was born in 1905 and started attending school in

1910. The school had all twelve grades so this gave me a chance to hear the high school kids that attended our revival meetings at Praise Chapel just to make fun and make remarks about the Saints. They also called them Sanctys. They'd mention manner and plainness of dress, no neckties, no jewelry, wedding rings, no piano or organ in the church. They'd talk about the singing with uplifted hands and made light of being saved.

So all this caused me to rebel against the Church of God at an early age. I thought if they don't change by the time I'm grown I don't want to have anything to do with them. One day one of my friends said she was converted in her church. I thought that sounded better than being saved.

Bro. H.M. Riggle came and held a revival meeting when I was twelve years old and I got saved. I promised my mother on her death bed when I was 10 years old that I would give my heart to God the following June camp meeting. I was baptized here on the camp ground. The Lord sure poured out his Spirit on me that day and I felt he wanted me to be interested in missions.

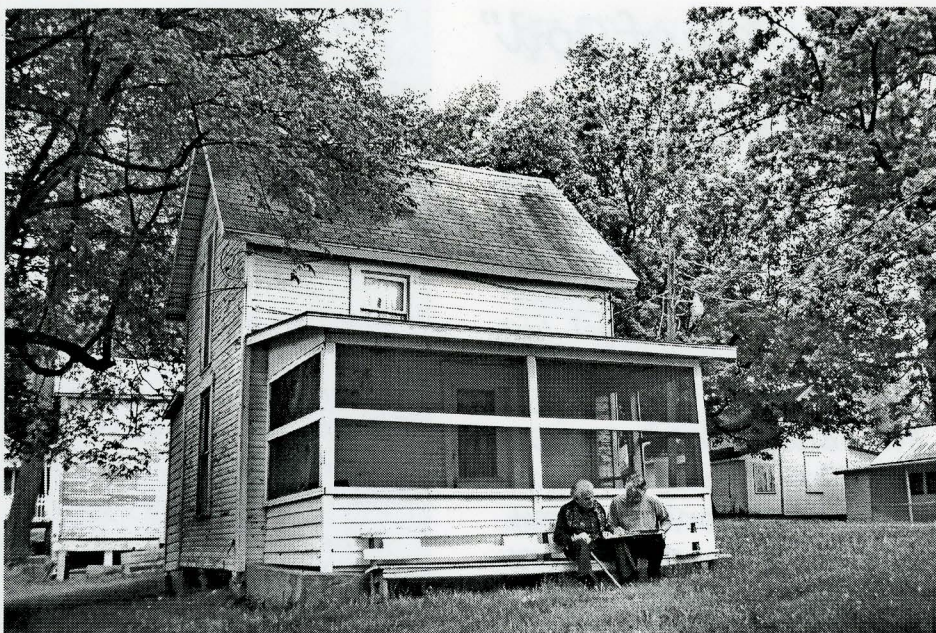
I had been attending the camp meeting every year with my mother since

I was 3 years old and I was always thrilled with the children's meeting and the singing when they'd sing "I am a child of God" and the preaching and the divine healing services held in what is now Byrum Hall. E.E. Byrum anointed me and prayed and the Lord healed me instantly of the flu when I was 4. I always enjoyed Dunn's chorus from Chicago every year.

When I finished high school in 1923 I came here and lived with my Uncle Enoch Byrum's family and went to Anderson Bible Training School. I enjoyed Russell Byrum's Theology class and also Bessie Byrum's classes on teaching Religious Education and Henry Clausen's music classes. Then I started singing solos. I did not know that I had a talent for this.

When I was 21 years old I went on a six month missionary trip with Enoch and Lucena Byrum and Lafe Brookover to Haiti, West Indies, S. America, and Panama. Many were saved and healed and also we distributed a lot of English and Spanish literature. . . . It was a wonderful experience for me. While on the trip my Uncle talked to me about carrying on his work [but] I did not see how I could do it.

(This may have been written for a Church of God Reformation History class in the late 1970s. It is not dated and it is not signed. If you think you know who might have written it, please let us know.)



HISTORICAL SOCIETY WORK CAMP

**The First Work Camp
of the Historical Society of the Church of God
New Date: March 28-30, 2006
Springfield Church of God Camp Grounds
3251 W. National Road
Springfield, Ohio 45504**

**If you would like to participate please contact
Dale E. Stultz, 3440 E. 200 N, Anderson IN 46012
Home: 765-378-5558 Cell: 765-621-3161
Email: destultz@earthlink.net**

The purpose of this work camp will be to disassemble and move the Barney E. Warren cabin (shown left) to Anderson IN where it will be reassembled on the grounds of Anderson University or the camp meeting grounds there. The permanent location has, as of this writing, not been decided.

Some **lodging** is available on the campgrounds and parking for RVs—but no water hookups that early in the year. Rooms in the Lodge are limited in number, so early application is advisable. We will also have access to **cooking** and **dining** facilities. If anyone would like to volunteer for kitchen and dining room service please let us know as soon as possible.

We look forward to three days of work, fellowship, and retreat. This is an exciting project and well worth any time and money you can give to it. Remember, we are an independently managed volunteer Church of God organization dedicated to recovering and preserving as much of our history as we can, not only for our own benefit, but for the benefit of our future generations. We invite you to join us.

**Historical Society of the Church of God
P.O. Box 702
Anderson, Indiana 46015**

First Class Postage