

Church of God Historian

Photo Identification

The photo below was taken in Dale Stultz's computer office. On the left (standing) is Dr. Walter Froese, who hosted the European guests. Seated behind is Dieter Jeske. Front-center is Bert Hage and on the right is Dale Stultz.

Historical Society of the Church of God Vol 10 No 3 Spring 2010



CHURCH OF GOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY WELCOMES EUROPEAN VISITORS

In early March 2010, two Church of God leaders from Europe visited our Archives in Anderson. They were on their return trip from a meeting of German Church of God ministers in Canada and met with some of the members of the Historical Society of the Church of God.

One of the visitors was Dieter Jeske from Herford, Germany. The

Church of God congregation in Herford celebrated its Centennial in 2008. The number of believers in Herford is quite large, especially since many people with a German background from Russia settled in Herford in the 1980s and 1990s.

The second visitor was Bert Hage from Landgraaf, Holland. He is the great grandson of J. Jeninga, one of the pioneer Dutch Church

of God ministers who learned about the Church of God as a young person in Germany before World War I. The Church of God in Holland plans to celebrate its Centennial in 2012/2013. During his visit, Bro. Hage extended an invitation for a representative of the Historical Society of the Church of God to participate in their Centennial celebrations.

The welcome visitors were able to see some of the archival holdings related to the early Church of

(Continued on Page 8)

NEW BOOKS OF NOTE

Church of God Historian

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

Vol 10 No 3 Spring 2010

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

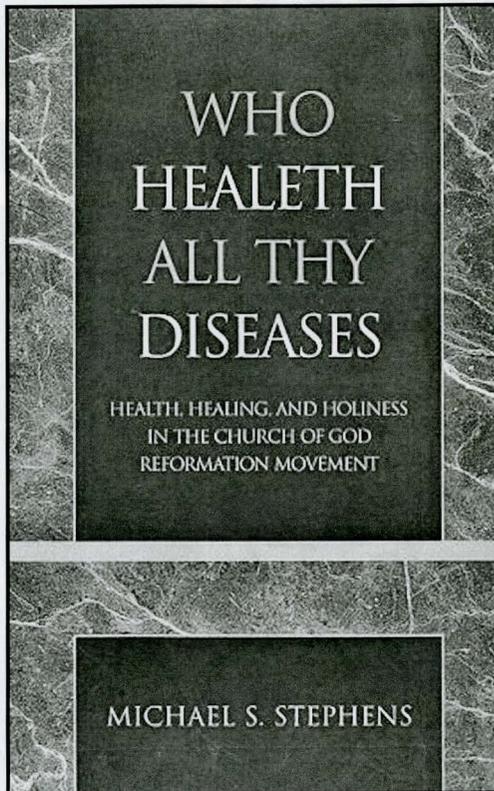
All correspondence should be addressed to: Historical Society of the Church of God, P.O. Box 702, Anderson, Indiana 46015. Email should be sent to *Merle D. Strege*, Historical Society President, at: mdstrege@anderson.edu.

Church of God Historian is managed by the Executive Committee of the Society. Merle D. Strege, President, Dale E. Stultz, Vice-President, Sadie B. Evans, Secretary-Treasurer, D.E. Welch, Publisher and Managing Editor.

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.

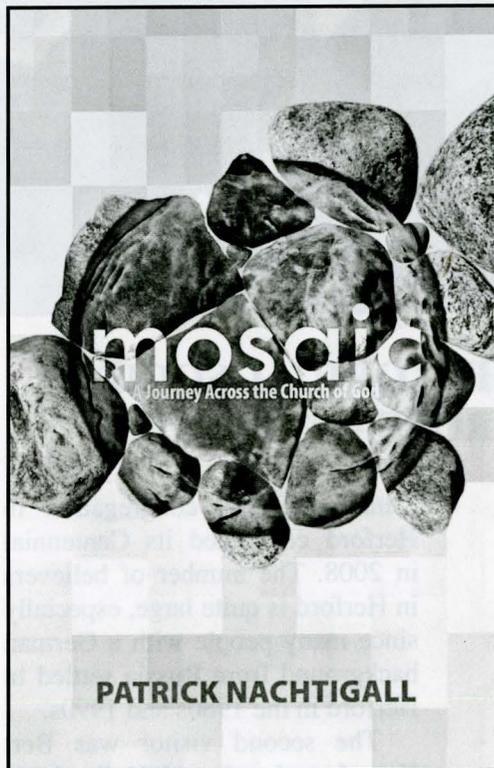
Membership is open to all who are vitally interested in what the Society desires to accomplish. Membership dues are \$15 per year (\$10 for students.) Checks should be made out to *Historical Society of the Church of God* and sent to Box 702, Anderson IN 46015.



Who Healeth All Thy Diseases: Health, Healing, and Holiness in the Church of God Reformation Movement.

Dr. Michael S. Stevens, author.

Available through Amazon. Com.



Mosaic: A Journey Across the Church of God.

Patrick Nachtigall, Author. (Church of God missionary to Asia and Europe).

Available through Warner Press, Anderson in late June 2010

JOHN MORRISON, THE KLAN, AND THE AFRICAN- AMERICAN CHURCH OF GOD

On December 28, 1933 Church of God ministers in Ohio reiterated their earlier resolution requesting the elimination of the college program at Anderson College in favor of retaining only the seminary. The December resolution further resolved to call for a general ministerial insistence that "...the School be placed in the hands of, and be directed and managed by, men who are known to be wholly committed to this TRUTH [such as 'the present-day call of God to his people to come out of all sectarianism, Papal and Protestant, the modern Babylon']; men who can and will pass it on, both in theological instruction and in burning reformatory emphasis, to the body of students."

The resolution targeted college leadership. That John Morrison was to stand for ratification the following June is one of the best-known elements of this story. We should note that the resolution expressed a concern for college leadership, of which Russell Olt was, by late 1933, also a controversial member. Morrison's impending ratification vote made him but the first and most visible target. This narrative has conventionally described the issue as a contest between Anderson College and Ohio ministers, but there is more to this story. Within two months of the publication of the second Ohio Resolution Morrison received letters from two African-American ministers in Ohio.

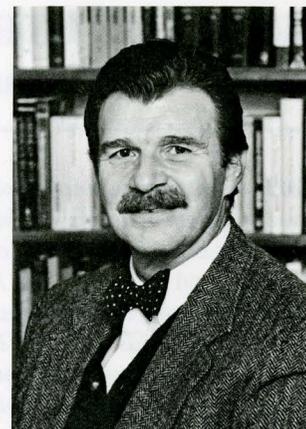
These letters shed light on a lesser-known dimension of the controversy between Ohio ministers and Anderson College in the 1930s. In late February 1934 Hammie Jeter wrote Morrison with a

protest that, even though Jeter attended the first two days of the Toledo meeting and chaired the "colored ministers" in Ohio, neither he nor his brethren knew anything of the December resolution. As Jeter wrote Morrison, "[W]e the colored ministers were not consulted about it until the action was taken and I felt it unfair to us to say all the ministers of the state, but leave it as it is."¹

Only a few days earlier another black minister, Joseph Crosswhite, manager of the West Middlesex meeting also wrote Morrison and included a set of charges that complained more pointedly about the rift between white and black ministeriums in Ohio. But Crosswhite commended Morrison for his "attitude towards the colored students that have attended the college, also our race."²

Morrison replied to Crosswhite taking pride in Gabriel Dixon's graduation the previous spring. Morrison also told Crosswhite of the college's plan to confer that June an honorary doctorate on S. P. Dunn, pastor of Langley Avenue Church of God in Chicago. In the course of his letter Morrison explained that early in his life he had read a biography of Booker T. Washington which had influenced Morrison's growing appreciation of African-Americans and their effort to advance their standing in American society. He also noted that his longstanding support of African-Americans, reaching back more than a decade to an article printed in the *Gospel Trumpet*.

The article to which Morrison referred had been published in 1923 under the title, "The Menace of Ku Klux Klanism."³ Morrison's "menace" was the so-called sec-



ond Klan revival of the early 1920's. He labeled the Klan "un-Christian" because of its secrecy and because its class-antagonism. As Morrison put it, "Any movement that has for its special target of antagonism any special class of people is narrow and unchristian."⁴ Morrison argued that such antagonism was incompatible with the teachings and spirit of Jesus.

Morrison also identified the means by which he believed the Klan made some inroads into the Church of God. Not only the avowed enemy of African-Americans, the Klan also targeted Jews and Catholics, and it was this last posture that attracted some Church of God people. Morrison saw that anti-Catholicism furnished the Klan with "a leverage of power. It has caused many an honest Protestant who was eager to deal a death blow to Catholicism to yoke up with the Klan."⁵

This notion that the enemy of my enemy must be my friend was folly as far as Morrison was concerned. His argument was pure Missouri common sense: The fact that some snakes are natural predators of mice does not warrant turning snakes loose in a mice-infested house.

(Continued on Page 5)

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PULPIT: Of 'Commoners' and 'Kings'

Early on in what was to become the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), our history was written in terms of 'big' names, 'big' leaders, 'big' pulpits.' John W.V. Smith speaks in another context of "the 'big name' pattern of leadership" (The Quest for Holiness and Unity, p.327). Not much has been written about the 'little people,' who made up congregations and provided the means by which some 'little people' became 'big'—but most did not. This is a bias we think should be corrected.

In our research, we have quite occasionally come across journals, letters, and other writings from 'little' people who sat in front of the pulpit, not behind it. How they responded often indicates what they heard (which may or may not have been what those behind the pulpits thought they were saying) and gives us important clues about both the nature of the preaching and the shape of congregational life..

A 38-page typescript entitled simply, "The Life of Mary Wesley," (Wallace) is one such document. It was given to us by Don Dawson, Mary's grandson. Don's father, I.K. Dawson (Secretary of the Board of Evangelism of the Board of Church Extension and Home Missions from 1944-1948) was the husband of Mary's youngest daughter. We cannot, of course, reproduce the document here, so we shall have to be content with a few selected excerpts from it. It is not known who wrote it, but it is a classic example of the lives and memories of thousands of ordinary people who built churches and installed pulpits. As with many such writings, we are usually left to guess at the dates on which events occurred.

About all we know is that Mary's story began in the 19th century. She arrived in Jordon, Minnesota from Bohemia with her Catholic parents in 1862, when she was two years of age, (but spent her childhood years in the town of New Prague), left Minnesota in 1880 to work in North Dakota, was married in Montana, living near Three Forks for 4 years, Pennsylvania for 18 years (much of that time as a widow struggling to care for 7 children), then moved to Anderson, Indiana with her children, where she lived a number of years and is buried. —D. Stultz & D. Welch

"...A little later on a baby girl was born. She was baptized by the priest, but it was the last child to be baptized in that church. The priest kept urging that her husband ought to be in the same faith, and as she didn't understand what faith was, she said, 'if you don't quite talking about faith, I will quit church myself.'

Mary was much perplexed, because the priest and Rev. Marks [the Presbyterian pastor] were making calls. She felt very, very bad until her husband's aunt invited her to attend a Free Methodist revival. She didn't know what a revival was, never even heard the word [Mary did not attend school and learned English only as an adolescent]. ...Her husband persuaded her and she went....As she listened to the sermon, a strong conviction took hold of her heart and she cried all through the sermon....The minister's wife and

Aunt asked Mary if she wanted to go to the altar. She went up at once and repented bitterly. Soon the burden rolled away from her heart and she felt as free as a bird....She was filled with 'Joy unspeakable and full of glory.'"

"....She had an awful time and became lean in her soul, and went on that way for some time, until the Gospel Trumpet came into her hands. What a revelation it was to her....She read it and reread it. How she lived for that paper! It was so clear to her and fed her soul. ...She knew where to get it, because there was a family who received the paper by mail. They didn't read it, so they gave them to Mary. Later on she subscribed for it herself. That was in 1897."

"Mary's husband didn't like the Trumpet, because he didn't understand its teachings. She read in the Bible and thought it meant just what it said. She quit going to the

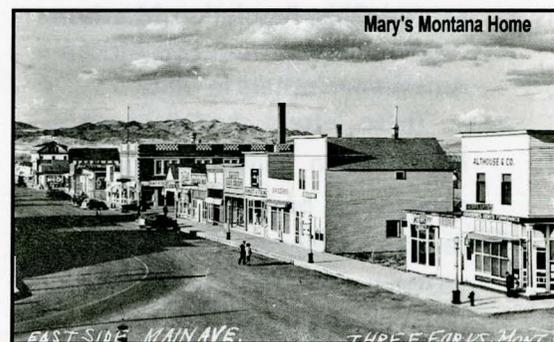
Presbyterian church and that made trouble with her husband. He was good to her, but he did not agree with her taking such a stand."

"....That same summer, when Bro. George Howard and Bro. Kilpatrick were in town Austin [her husband, Austin Wallace] got saved. He took the boys out of the other Sunday School, stayed out of the sect, read the Trumpet ever after that, and was learning much about the Lord...."

"....After Mary heard the truth and got into the pure light, and understood the Church of God, she went to Rev. Marks and asked him to take her name out of the Presbyterian church. ...Mary did not go to his church again. They had no Church of God services in their little town [in Pennsylvania], so she just stayed at home and read her Bible and the Trumpet. Her husband walked eight and ten miles to other towns where Church of God meetings were held."

"....They lived only sixty miles from the Penna. State Camp Meeting. She and her husband would take turns going. Sometimes they would go together. She did love to go to meetings. She didn't know how many times she was baptized when she was little, but she was baptized three times after she saw the light. ...Bro. Warren baptized her [the first time], and then when her husband was ready to be baptized she went with him. That time they had to cut a hole in the ice."

"....After Mary read the Trumpet and heard the saints preach, she walked in all the light and 'cleaned the shelf just behind the door' —took all the medicine and poured



them out, and washed the bottles and sold them. She has never used a teaspoonful since, nor gave any to her children.”

“...One time there was an assembly held at their place. During the meeting which lasted over a week, they kept fifteen people at their house: Bro. Rowe and his wife and sister, Bro. McCoy with his wife and two children, Bro. Dillon with wife and sister-in-law, Sister Cheatham, Bro. Marz, Bro. Dixon, Bro. and Sister Taylor and others.”

“...The first Church of God ministers she met were Bros. Speck and Warren, who were holding meetings out in the country in a tent. ...It was something new to the people there. The preaching was different than she was used to hearing, and she stepped out into all the truth. She heard they were going to have feet-washing at the close of the meeting. She made up her mind that she was going to take part, no matter what her husband would say about it.”

“...Mary picked enough berries one summer that she made enough money to go to Moundsville Camp Meeting....Such a wonderful nice ground, large tabernacle, and a cemetery nearby. She felt she was in a different, new

world. Such good meetings. She well remembers Bros. Bolds, Masters, and Tasker. They preached such good sermons. Sister Hunter preached on ‘Plainness of Dress.’ How the women did rip off their ruffles, laces, and trimmings from their hats. So many women had their scissors in their sleeping apartments and were busy measuring up.”

“...Mary had her mind on the young men and women who were working in the G.T. office, as the G.T. Co. was at that place at that time. She had children of that age at home, and she thought that those Trumpet workers looked like they had come down from heaven, so plain and angelic....She thought if she had only one of her children work in the G.T. office, it would be such an honor to her, but praise the Lord, up to this writing, she has had five children working in the Trumpet in Anderson [whom she helped support by working at house cleaning, baby-sitting, and numerous other domestic jobs].”

“...Mary always had a desire to live near where they printed that wonderful paper. Now she prayed that before she would die, she would move to Anderson to live there the rest of her life [which she did].

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Morrison had little good to say about the Roman Catholic Church, but in the Ku Klux Klan he saw the evil of what he termed an un-American racial bigotry. From his earliest days at Anderson Bible Training School his personal commitment to racial justice—paralleled by Russell Olt’s—ensured that the school’s doors remained open to people of color whether on the faculty, as in the case of Jamaican Amy Lopez or students such as Gabriel Dixon. This policy meant that when the question of Morrison’s ratification rose in 1934 he could count on the support of many African-American ministers.

— Merle D. Strege

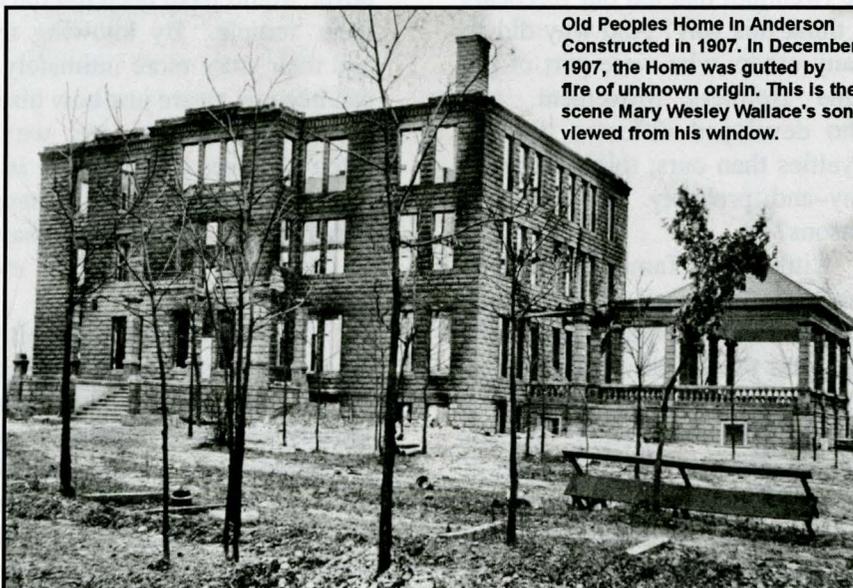
1 H. Jeter to John A. Morrison, February 28, 1934, Archives of the Church of God, AC Box 15 File 5

2 Joseph Crosswhite to John A. Morrison, February 24, 1934, Archives of the Church of God, AC Box 15, File 4

3 *Gospel Trumpet*, February 15, 1923, pp. 7-8

4 *Ibid.*, p. 7

5 *Ibid.*



Old Peoples Home in Anderson Constructed in 1907. In December 1907, the Home was gutted by fire of unknown origin. This is the scene Mary Wesley Wallace's son viewed from his window.

A REMINDER

Tenth Annual Meeting of
the Historical Society of
the Church of God

Saturday, June 26, 2010
Decker Hall #133

Guest Speaker
Patrick Nachtigall

Subject:

“*Rich History, Challenging Future: The Complicated Quest for Holiness and Unity in the 21st Century*”

WHEN IS ENOUGH TOO MUCH?

In the past eight years, my colleague, Dale Stultz, and I have ranged broadly over the historical landscape, patiently excavating and analyzing, trying to sift fact from fancy, extracting real people and events from the theological mythos in which they have been encapsulated, insisting that our 'conclusions' must be based on primary sources, not oral tradition or hearsay (no matter how many times they've been repeated in print). In other words, we've had to 'demythologize' our past as an ecclesiastical 'family.' Historical honesty demands it.

Over these years, I've learned a great deal about the 'family' in which I've spent the past sixty years as student, pastor, missionary, educator, and archivist. And I've learned most people don't really care where we've come from, that is, what our roots are. They care only about where we are going at the moment. Fair enough! But many of us are not there. We care deeply about our past, convinced that it has shaped us and has a good deal to do with how we think and behave in the present as an ecclesiastical 'family.'

I have also learned that a hefty minority of our 'family' are not just disinterested, but actually opposed to laying bare the past. 'Some things are best forgotten,' we've been told. 'The past is the past and it should be left in the past.'

I had to deal with a lot of this when I published *Ahead of His Times: A Life of George P. Tasker* (certainly a cautionary tale dealing with the middle third of our past). I was shocked to be told that 'the Church doesn't need to know what went on back there. Those were regrettable decisions and abuses of power never to be repeated and they are best forgotten.'

But how, I wonder, does one settle for a sanitized history (and

especially one in which abuses of power and poorly-informed decisions have persisted), a mythological history, in which all the events were 'miraculous' and predetermined by biblical prophecy, all the actors, unlike us, motivated only by lofty ideals, all their thoughts divinely given, and all their efforts the epitome of inspiration and wisdom? That seems to be the kind of history many members of our 'family' would rather have. But it is a mythic history.

Any other kind shouts much too loudly for some that our forebears were just as human as we are and fully as prone to be mistaken in their views and judgments. They were people just like the rest of us. There was much they didn't—and couldn't have—known. They were often short-sighted and caught up in a kind of spiritualized 'exceptionalism' that said, 'God has chosen us to be in the driver's seat. In the end, everyone will see things our way and come to us.' The idea of 'the driver's seat' pleased them. Many were totally convinced 'we' were the faithful 'remnant,' the few whom God had chosen to reform his church in the Last Days.

But they were wrong—and we would like to know why. What was it about the last half of the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth that led our forebears to think this way? And why did so many others who were part of the same Holiness Movement, and who developed different 'family' loyalties than ours, think the same way—and probably for the same reasons?

Little our 'family' forebears hoped for happened. Nothing they predicted came to pass. The world still goes on and the restoration of 'primitive Christianity' which they so confidently expected in their lifetime did not occur. Nor has it happened in ours. It is now generally seen as a 'period piece'—a kind of 'utopian' daydream.

Most of us today have concluded that rivers do not flow

backwards because they cannot. Yet, restorationism was a very strong component of our past. This complex of beliefs shaped us.

In a way, I suppose, those who are 'anti-history' in their inclinations and sentiments are right. But the drive to know (the 'fire in the belly' as it were) never stops. As Dale and I work on our next book, *The Gospel Trumpet Years: 1881-1961* (which we hope will be finished next year), we are convinced we have not yet found out enough; the anti-historians among us feel even that is too much.

To be sure, intensive historical research does demythologize the past—even relativize it. While that can be very unsettling for those who believe either the past was 'golden,' or all history must be upbeat and affirming, it can also assure us that God is at work in common events and through ordinary people—people such as we ourselves are.

Often the story we write will be 'upbeat' and we can learn much from it that will be inspiring and affirming. Our forebears did as a matter of course what we have not seemed able to do. They rejected secular strategies and worldly success. They followed Jesus to the best of their knowledge, not the dictates of the marketplace, which never would have been tolerated in their 'temple.' By knowing them and their story more intimately we can become aware just how historically connected we are; we can catch glimpses of how to be *in* the world and not *of* it; and, perhaps as importantly, we can avoid having to 'reinvent the wheel' in every generation.

I am all too aware after all this time that most 'family' members want 'positive,' 'uplifting,' 'inspiring,' happy history. In fact, many insist on it. And thus they write the history they want. It may be 'mythic,' but it is what they want to 'remember' and pass on to their descendants. Often, what actually happened and why seems to

be immaterial. Their 'story,' they feel, is more celebrative, more uplifting, and, after all, could have happened. But, if it didn't, they'd really rather not know.

I've occasionally been surprised and disappointed to hear 'family' members deny the occurrence of an event or statement which is clearly documented. But we cannot write history on the basis of what 'should not' have happened or 'should not' have been said. Denying what we don't like and writing it out of our history simply because we don't like it, or because it is not 'uplifting' or convenient is less than honest.

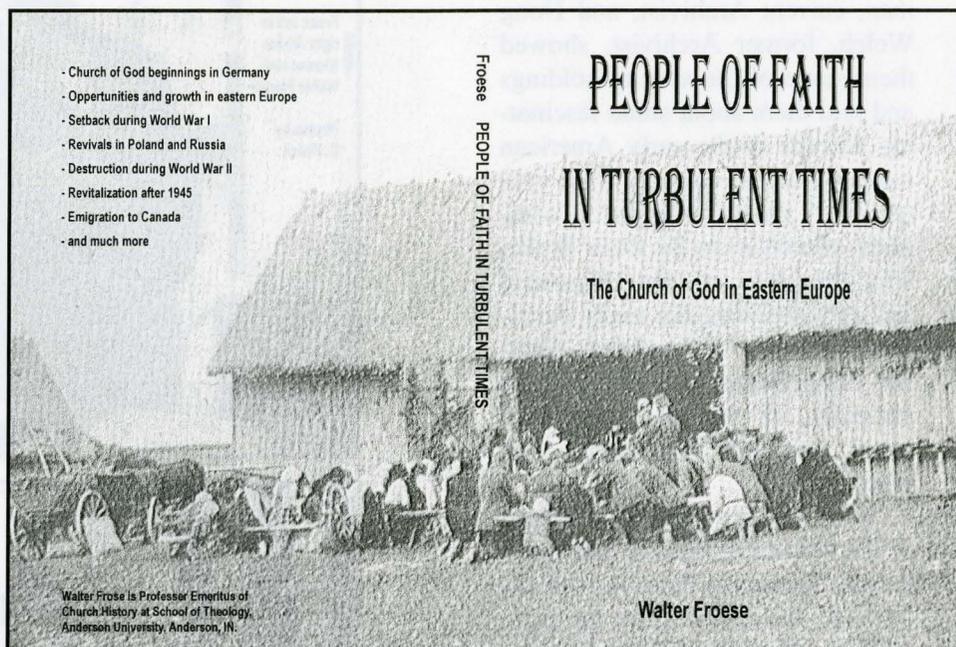
History must be written honestly. Truthfulness matters. Leaving out what tells the story more accurately, more fully, more truthfully, is not an option, even if it changes that story from a 'panegyric' (a hero-story) or extraordinary event to a story which warns against false assumptions, or pride, or dogmatism, or overconfidence. Truthful history will often prevent us from laying claim to a historical continuity with the past which does not exist—as useful as that may be at times when the legitimacy of innovation is at stake.

History which is not honest is hardly fitting in 'a family of God' such as we claim to be. To insist on what documentary evidence denies or declares improbable is to engage in ideological games, not truth telling. Our commitment is to truth, even truth we don't particularly like and wish were not the case—which we've often found.

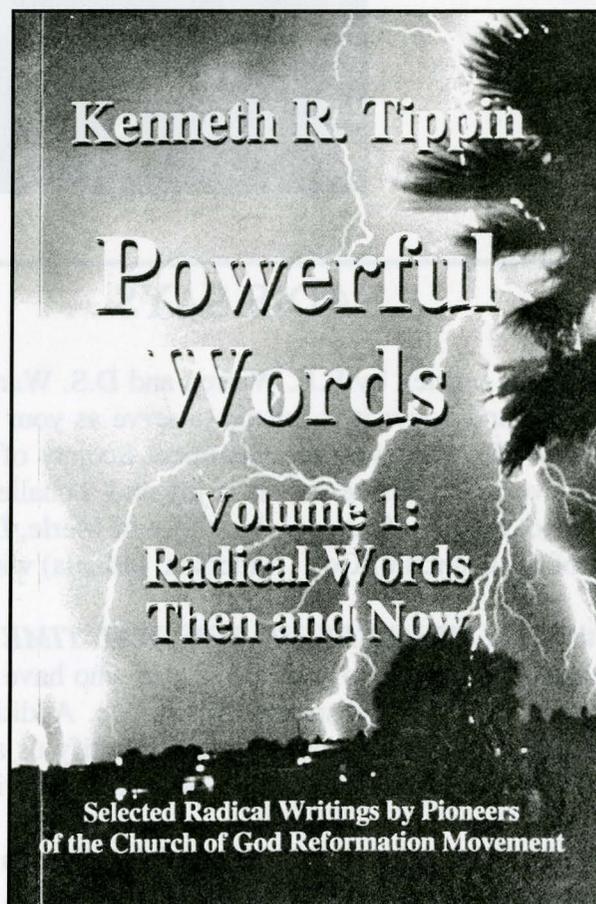
We cannot, therefore, simply avoid what 'the rest of the story' may be even when the story will be materially altered by its telling. In our view, what is to be avoided is 'supermarket tabloid' history, the kind that gives a distorted and imaginary view of reality—whether positive or negative—in which half-truths and innuendo are freely employed. Avoiding that is all we can promise.

— Douglas E. Welch

MORE NEW BOOKS OF NOTE



People of Faith in Turbulent Times: The Church of God in Eastern Europe is written by Dr. Walter Froese and issued by Reformation Publishers. Available in July 2010. Painstakingly researched and highly-readable, this is a 'must-read' for Church of God history 'buffs,' as well as those interested in the Church of God in Europe. You may contact Reformation Publishers for copies.



Powerful Words is being published posthumously for Kenneth Tippin by Reformation Publishers. It comes in two volumes: *Radical Words Then and Now*; and Vol. II, *Apostolic Power for Today*. To purchase, contact Reformation Publishers, 1-800-765-7222 or email rpub-lisher@aol.com.

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God work in Europe. Vivian Nieman, current Archivist, and Doug Welch, former Archivist, showed them some of the special holdings and told them about some fascinating records of the early American missionaries to Europe. The visitors also greatly enjoyed a computer presentation by Dale Stultz, Vice-President of the Historical Society, detailing the early developments and travels of D.S. Warner, Allie Fisher, and others. Quite naturally, at various moments, some spirited discussion took place.

Both visitors became members of the Historical Society and Sadie Evans, Secretary-Treasurer of the Society, welcomed them as such. As they left, they expressed sincere gratitude for the profound enrichment they had received. Members of the Historical Society who met with them were also thankful for having had an opportunity to fulfill in a very tangible way some important goals of our Society.

— Walter Froese



Back: left to right: Bert Hage, Dieter Jeske

Front: left to right: Vivian Nieman and Walter Froese

Photos by D. Welch



SADIE SAYS . . .

Greetings! As the familiar hymn written by B.E. Warren and D.S. Warner states: "There is joy in the service of the Master...." What a joy and honor it is for me to serve as your Secretary-Treasurer! It does not seem possible that I will begin my fifth year with the Historical Society of the Church of God this coming June 26th. The time has flown! Every day has been both a joy and a challenge, bathed in prayer, asking that our Lord will continue to guide not only my footsteps, but those of Merle, Dale, and Doug as well, as we continue to share the great heritage of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) with all who are interested.

It is time to remind you that it is **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME**. The renewal cost is still \$15 a year, with the Society year running from July 1 to June 30. Those who have already renewed their membership, or have sent dues for multiple years, please disregard this notice. Additional gifts are welcome. Also, should your address change during the next year, please be sure to notify us at the address in the newsletter so you will not miss out on any of the exciting information we want to share with you.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the **Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 26 2010. The time is 3:30 to 5:00 in the afternoon. We will meet in Decker Hall Room 133.** May God guide you. Sincerely, Sadie.