



# Church of God Historian

Historical Society of the Church of God

Volume 12 Number 3 Spring 2012

Page No. 14 } Inquiries numbered 7, 16, and 17 are not to be asked in respect to infants. Inquiries numbered 7, 16, and 17 are not to be asked in respect to infants. Inquiries numbered 7, 16, and 17 are not to be asked in respect to infants.

SCHEDULE 1.—Inhabitants in Township of Channing, in the Co. of Michigan, enumerated by me on the 7th day of June, 1880.

Post Office: Channing

1	2	3	4			7	8		10
			5	6	9				
The name of every person whose place of abode on the first day of June, 1880, was in this family.									
Description.									
Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male or female.									
Place of Birth, naming State or Territory of U. S., or Country, if of foreign birth.									
1		John W.	11	M	At Home				Ohio
2		Emmett A.	7	F					"
3		Mrs E.	6	F					"
4		Joe L.	1	M					Mich.
5	117 118	Smith-John J.	11	M	Farmer	2500	200		N.Y.
6		Christina A.	25	F	Keeping House				"
7		Kellie E.	10	F	At Home				Mich.
8		Joe L.	5	M					"
9	118 119	Smith-John J.	67	M	Farmer	1500	300		N.Y.
10		Harriet	30	F	"				Ohio
11		Franklin	11	M	Working on Farm				"
12	119	John Elin J.	32	M	"				"
13		Leola M.	4	M	At Home				Mich.
14		Annella C.	3	F					"
15		Fred.	16	M					"
16	119								
17	120 116	Widow Ruthen	69	M	Farmer	2000	100		Canada
18		J. Burr	69	F	"				Scotland
19	117	Richardson John	35	M	Working on Farm				Germany
20		Mary	34	F	"				Scotland
21	121 118	Brown John	50	M	Farmer	2500			N.Y.
22		Maria	30	F	"				Mich.
23		Robert	8	M					"
24		Charles	12	M					"
25	122 117	Jacob Lee	34	M	Farmer	3000			Germany
26		Elizabeth	34	F	"				"
27		Mary	3	F					"
28		Leola	4	F					"
29		Kate	2	F					Mich.
30		Joseph	12	M					"
31		Hubert Louis	18	M	Day laborer				Ohio
32	123 120	Prof. Geo	31	M	Teacher	3000			Hamburg
33		Katherine	30	F	"				"
34		Fredrick	10	M	At Home				"
35		Jacob	8	M					"
36		Charles	4	M					"
37		Louis	2	M					Mich.
38		Kate	12	F					"
39	124 121	Fisher Joseph	24	M	Farmer	3500			England
40		Alice	16	F	"				Mich.

## FISHER WAS A FARMER

Indeed, farming is a worthy profession. Many of us began there. Historically, it is the case that most of our earliest forebears in the Church of God were farmers and small farm-town people.

But it's a long step from a Michigan farm to a worldwide fellowship of Christians. Joseph Fisher, who seems to have been 'gifted' far beyond his means of livelihood, took the first step in that journey. Had he not done so, it is likely there would be no Church of God (Anderson) today. As the inspired and inspiring leader of a 'come-out' movement in Michigan, he helped rescue *The Gospel Trumpet* from virtual oblivion and set it on its feet.

Why we did not discover this U.S. Census record during our years of work on *The Gospel Trumpet Years* escapes me now, but for some reason we (or our on-line archivist) missed it. We ended up knowing little about Joseph C. Fisher—even after he appeared in 'the evening light.'

We don't learn a lot from this Census record either, but the quest continues and every little bit helps. He was born in 1846, his birthplace was England, and he was married to a sixteen year old 'Alice.' He was, then, thirty-eight years of age when he became owner of *The Gospel Trumpet* and founder of the Company which led to us.

— DEW



## ***Church of God Historian***

***Newsletter of the Historical  
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(Anderson)***

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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](mailto: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.

Website:

**[www.choghistoricalsociety.org](http://www.choghistoricalsociety.org)**

## **The Sin of Plagiarism**

The young man was guarding his statements carefully for it was evident he was angry and disillusioned. He had left the Seminary and his pursuit of his theological studies and enrolled in the local state university to study psychology.

As the conversation progressed he revealed that in one of his assignments in Seminary he was researching what one of our earlier prestigious writers had written on a particular subject, comparing it with what another author from a different religious group had written. To his horror he discovered that the writings by this Church of God writer had revealed that he had picked up verbatim and used as his own, page after page from the other author's book, giving him no credit whatsoever.

The statement made by this student still sticks vividly in my memory. "If national leaders and writers do that, I want nothing to do with them."

For years the plagiarism accusation bothered me, and even caused me to say to one of our leading theologians in a question and answer period, "Many of the leaders of our movement were not scholars!" He very quickly came to their defense.

It was shortly after I was leafing through a little book written by D.S. Warner and made my own discovery, and here it is for your own enlightenment. The book is: *SALVATION: Present, Perfect, Now or Never*, by D.S. Warner (Gospel Trumpet Company Anderson, Indiana).

This book has no publication date, however, in the opening biographical sketch opposite D.S. Warner's picture, it says, "The subject of this sketch was born in Bristol, Wayne Co., Ohio, on the 25th of June, 1843."



So it is D.S. Warner himself who is telling his readers the following:

"Several years ago it occurred to our mind to prepare and preach the Word, thus placing in a balance the commands and promises of God. An abridgment of the lesson we then used found its way into the Bible Readings published by Brothers Kilpatrick and Speck, not, however, to their blame. (We speak of this that the reader may know we have not stolen the labors and credit of another. This is a thing we detest, likewise doth God)" (quoted from page 86).

The above quotation tells us that Warner had similar problems with his fellow writers but he kindly gave them the benefit of the doubt. However, he strongly states his own personal abhorrence with the sin of plagiarism. One wonders if the acts of his brethren had been as flagrant as our student had discovered? How would he have reacted? As this student did?

One bad action does not have to lead to another. Weakness and failure in leadership is not a valid reason to throw up your hands and quit, but it sure can make you feel like it. Right on Daniel!

— Robert J. Hazen

**Editorial Note:** The small book cited by Robert Hazen is, we think, in error in its Biographical Sketch. The 'accepted' birth year for D.S. Warner is 1842, not 1843.



The subject of my last column was Russell Olt and the difficulty people would have today in trying to classify him. Another person in the history of the Church of God, of a very different disposition, attempted to hold a middle position during a period of intense polarization.

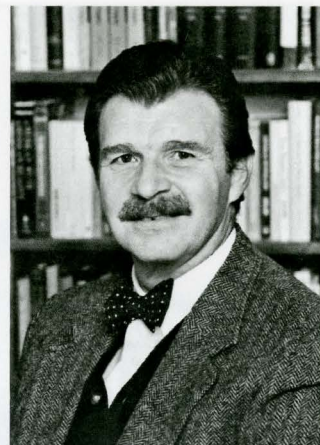
Those familiar with the history of the Church of God know the story of the battle waged by John Morrison and F. G. Smith between 1929 and 1934. Between E.A. Reardon and Smith stood A. F. Gray, one of the most widely respected ministers in the movement. From 1931 to 1946 he chaired the Anderson College trustee board, longer than any other individual.

In 1934 Gray was elected to his first term as chairman of the General Ministerial Assembly, an office to which he was re-elected for seventeen additional terms, also a record length of service. In 1929 ministers had elected Gray to succeed F. G. Smith as President of the Missionary Board. Gray was an important theological voice and one of the statesmen in the Church of God, a mediator who could see strengths and weaknesses on each side of an argument. After Reardon and Smith, Gray's was the third sermon of the 1929 camp-meeting to consider issues surrounding Christian unity.

Gray's sermon was titled "The Leaven of the Reformation."<sup>1</sup> In it he stipulated a

definition of reformation which regarded the restoration of the church as a developmental process, going so far as to assert that even the New Testament church had room for improvement.

Gray considered the Christian church's apostasy was a given. But in a related point he observed that the Jews were not the sole people of God even though they were the chosen people. In this he shared a perception in E.A. Reardon's more inflammatory discourse. Israel's mistake, said Gray, was their exclusivism, "... thinking that they were the only people



Suppose a Korean whose heart is enlightened by the Holy Spirit grasps the same truth as we have and goes forth with the same message, the same spiritual power and the same objective and he succeeds in raising up a congregation, his congregation

will not be materially different from ours. Is he in the reformation? Remember

he has never heard of me or of our Missionary Board or our publishing work. Yes, he is in the reformation as much as we are. . . No man and no body of people has a copyright on any truth. God can reveal truth he sees fit to anybody he sees fit in any way he sees fit without asking permission of anybody.

While Gray agreed with Smith's radical application notion of "Scripture alone," he also separated himself from the Editor by downplaying the role of "prophecy" in the life of the Church of God. Declared Gray, "With all due respect for the prophecies, and the interpretations our brethren have made of them, I must say that if it could be proved that none of them applied to this movement my

## Trying to Hold the Middle

God could have. They did not consider that God is the God of the whole race and no respecter of persons. Thus they lost their opportunity and went into darkness." In case his hearers missed the point, Gray added, "There is a lesson in this for us."

Gray questioned rhetoric like Smith's that uncritically took the early church as an ecclesiastical gold standard. But he also agreed with a point Smith had made the previous Sunday: God accomplished the work of reformation through the Bible and the Holy Spirit. Both men thought that preaching the "Bible only" would result in very similar congregations. But Gray pressed Smith to a different conclusion:





## WHAT'S

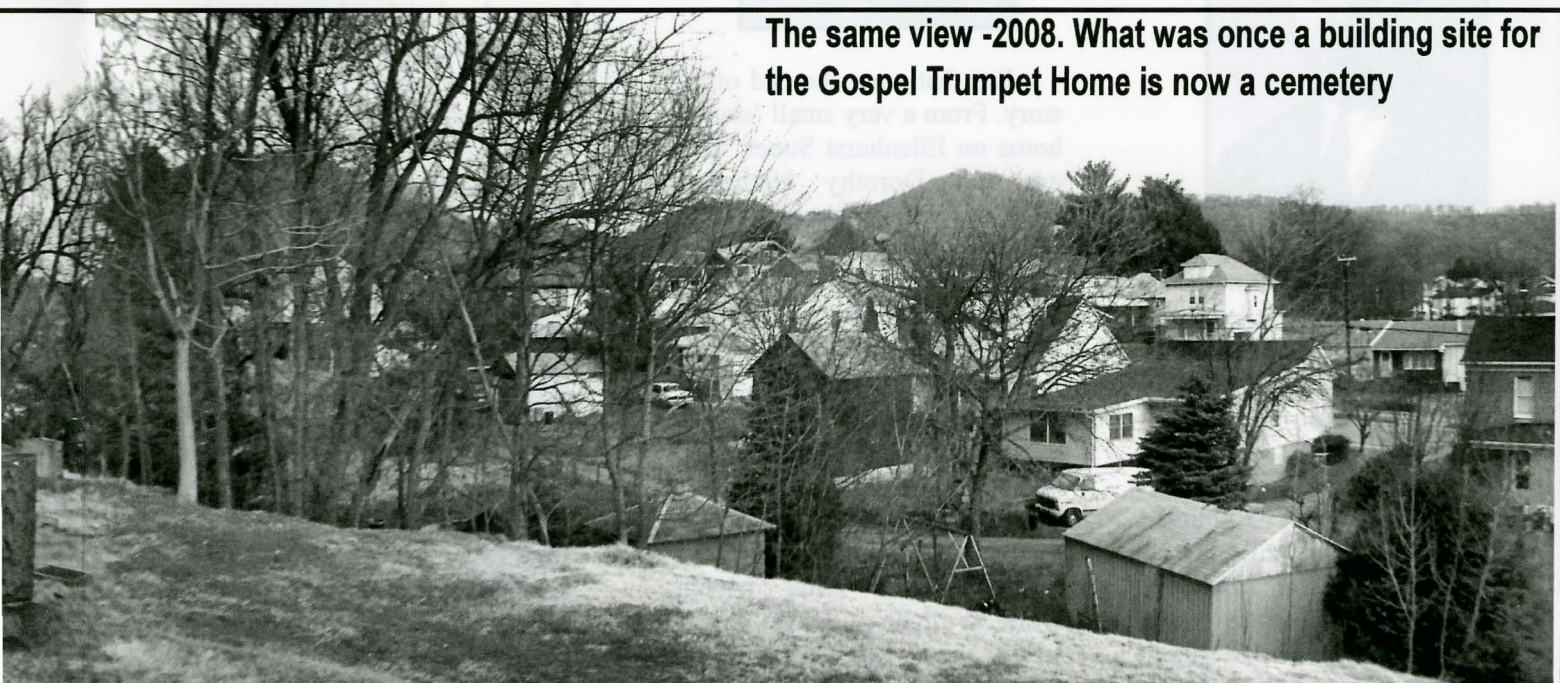
The topography is recognizably the same and the site is readily identifiable—in spite of the fact that over a hundred years have passed (Stultz, yet with careful attention to geographical accuracy). The second photograph of the former site of the Gospel Trumpet residential. In the first photo we find, for the first time, the Gospel Trumpet bookshop (close beside the camp meeting grounds). We know no photographer actually ‘took’ a picture of the Gospel Trumpet Company site such as we have today, but through the use of computer programs, and internet sites—plus the requisite skill and patience—such geographical ‘recovery’ is now possible.



Gospel Trumpet Co. Properties, Moundsville WV c.1904



The same view -2008. What was once a building site for the Gospel Trumpet Home is now a cemetery



## IS IN A PICTURE?

ed years have passed since the first photograph was taken (or, more correctly, a series of photographs artfully combined by Dale l Trumpet Company shows the same site as it looks now. Then it was a kind of 'manufacturing' area of the city; now it is largely ing tabernacle itself). Of course, no such photo as the first one actually exists historically, but that does not mean it is historically have shown above. It is a composite of several actual photos and geographically informed by many others. With high-end comput- w possible. Even photographs can add to our historical knowledge if we spend enough time of the right kind with them.



# THE REST OF THE STORY

This story begins in Clinton, Iowa in 1914 with the marriage of Arthur Nicholson and Ethel Weeden. The officiating minister was William H. Oldham, the father of Dr. W. Dale Oldham.

As a young man, the Nicholson's son, Robert, who was born in 1923, was greatly influenced by his pastor in St. Paul Park, Minnesota, Clair W. Shultz, who saw qualities in this young man which could be highly developed by further education. He then persuaded Robert that he ought to attend Anderson College.



Thus, Robert, accompanied by his mother, visited Anderson in 1940, where he enrolled as a student. Still only sixteen and hundreds of miles from home, he moved that Fall into the 'barnatory' [a men's residence hall on the second floor of the Camp Meeting dining hall building—the name says it all!].

He graduated on June 16, 1944 and married Dorothy Nelis the very next day. Robert spent the following year in New York in graduate school, returning to Anderson College in 1945 to teach. He was only twenty-one years of age. (He continued graduate education, attending classes in the Summers. By 1953 he had earned a PhD degree.)

In 1945, W. Dale Oldham (son of the pastor who had united Robert's parents in marriage) became the pastor of Park Place Church of God and the Oldham

and Nicholson families were again united. When the Christian Brotherhood Hour was launched early in 1947 with Dale Oldham at the helm, Robert Nicholson soon became CBH's director of music, replacing Cynthia Kane. He worked closely with his friend for many years in that capacity.



But that's not the end of the story. From a very small 'starter' home on Ellenhurst Street, Robert and Dorothy Nicholson moved into a newly-built home on East 7th Street. Soon after, a young college student, Laura Lee Makings moved into their home. In exchange for childcare and household duties, Laura Lee received her room and board.

Before long, Laura Lee began dating one of the young men of the Church of God community: Doug Oldham, son of pastor Dale Oldham. After leaving work at night at Delco Remy, Doug, so Laura Lee reports, would come to the Nicholson residence and scratch on the screen of the front bedroom window where she slept, 'courting' her through the screen. She and Doug married in 1951.

Many full, rich years passed. Families were reared and grandchildren were brought into the world. Then, in 2010, Doug Oldham, husband of Laura Lee, died and in 2011, Dorothy, wife of Robert Nicholson passed away.

Both Robert and Laura Lee had to deal with grief and loss.

The story might have ended there had not Laura Lee sent Robert a card expressing her condolences. It was one of many cards Robert received from friends, but this one more memorable than most. Nonetheless, it was several months before he responded to Laura Lee. In a personal letter, he expressed the hope that he and Laura Lee might soon again "cross paths." (Robert had worked closely with Doug Oldham in the music development of CBH and greatly appreciated both Doug's friendship and his musical talents.)

So, the rest of the story is that Robert and Laura Lee's paths did "cross"—in September, 2011, to be exact, when Laura Lee's daughter brought her to Anderson. Robert ('Bob,' 'Nick') and Laura Lee were married in Adam Miller Chapel (at AU SOT) on January 14, 2012.



And so it was that two families, the Nicholson's and the Oldham's, were reunited after all those years and a lot of water had passed under the bridge of Church of God history. The circle is complete. And that, my friends, is 'the rest of the story.' This is history, but it's more than history. It is life—and we invite you to celebrate life with us.

— Dale E. Stultz  
(with D. Welch)



## Remembering A Faithful Servant: Mary Cole

Mary Cole heeded God's call and her service led her to minister as an early pioneer of the Church of God. Her life of faithful obedience led her to put her trust in God to provide for all her earthly needs as did many other early Church of God leaders. In many ways Mary Cole could be referred to as a missionary, evangelist, and even one of the early Church of God "flying messengers" as she traveled throughout the United States; especially the Midwest preaching and teaching.

*Trials and Triumphs of Faith* tells the story of Mary Cole's life and the many times in which her faith and body were tested by illness [which included epilepsy], dangers she and other pioneers faced sharing God's message, and the difficulties she encountered as a woman in ministry. Her life is an inspiration.

Sister Mary informs us in *Trials and Triumphs of Faith* that early in her life she was engaged to be married, but after much prayer and testing she felt called to a life of singleness. "When I sought God for healing, he showed me that he wanted my entire service and that I must seek his benefits for his glory only" (Mary Cole, 1914:67).

Mary wrote of a time in Kingston, Missouri when one of her friends counseled her daughter on the subject of marriage and told her daughter if she followed God's order to marry that she would have someone to love her and care for her in her old age. Mary later wrote: "The enemy took advantage of this to hurl a dart

at me, because I was growing old, might soon become helpless, and had no one to sympathize with or care for me" (1914:268). Mary shared her faith, moments of question and how God reinforced her faith even at this point in her life. Psalm 37:3-4(KJV) reminded her to "Trust in the Lord, and do good. So shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Sister Cole wrote; "Well I have obeyed the Lord, have done what he wanted me to do. He certainly will not forsake me now. If I should live to be old and helpless, he will not let any serious thing come on me, because I have been obedient" (1914:268).

Mary Cole preached alongside D. S. Warner, her brothers George and Jeremiah Cole, helped start the Chicago Mission home, and helped develop and teach early Church of God leaders such as E.A. Reardon. She and her brother Jeremiah traveled to San Diego, California with Bro. and Sis. Dansberger, Bro. and Sis. Gates, and Sis. Lodema Kaser to teach and preach (1914:205). She spoke at Camp Meetings in many states such as Grand Forks, South Dakota where she was summoned to speak in Hammond, Louisiana, in addition to meetings in Moundsville W.V., Anderson, IN., Missouri, Kansas, and more.

Throughout her life, Mary Cole trusted God to provide food, money for her accommodations, train travel, housing, clothing, or horses and mules to travel between cities to preach and teach, and more. Sister Cole also raised and contributed funds for many projects during her life such as the Chicago Mission home.

Even in her later years when she lived at the Old People's Home in Anderson she used opportunities there to minister to



other residents and foster the growth and faith development of younger workers seeking to answer their call to ministry and develop their preaching skills. She continued to trust God and do good throughout her life. She even included a chapter in her biography titled, "Exhortation to Workers and Ministers" because she felt called to continue to teach and contribute to the ongoing growth and development of the Movement.

Sister Mary Cole is buried in a simple, unmarked grave in Anderson, Indiana. I propose that we raise funds to provide and place a grave marker for Mary Cole. She contributed generously of her work, life, and resources to the early Church of God movement and trusted God to provide all her needs as she worked for God. Purchasing and installing a grave marker is one way to recognize and remember all the contributions Sister Mary Cole made throughout her life and teachings.

— Melissa K. Berry

**The cost of providing the in-ground marker of which Melissa speaks is about \$1200. If you are interested in helping in this project, please contact the Historical Society at P.O. Box 702. Anderson 46015**



## Cont'd from Page 3 — Strege

faith in the movement would not be lessened in the least thereby. I believe in this movement for what it is. I hold that it is a necessity and that it would have come if no prophecy had ever been written."<sup>2</sup>

Late in his Park Place pastorate Gray addressed the topic directly in a talk given to the Anderson Ministerial Association.<sup>3</sup> "The rule to follow," said Gray, "is quiet simple; Let us cooperate in the things we are doing, or should be doing, alike and let us be friends in the things we can do best separately."<sup>4</sup> True unity would come about only as Christian hearts conformed to biblical teaching.

As Gray summarized his talk, "It is important that we reach agreement in all the essentials . . . To gain this necessary unity we must disregard the teachings of the elders, ignore shelf-worn creeds and

seek the full truth as it is found in the Scriptures. We must be of one heart and soul, then of one mind and mouth, and then we will have little difficulty in practical cooperation in all the things where cooperation is desirable."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gray's sermon has been largely overshadowed by the more argumentative and controversial one delivered E. A. Reardon, a sermon also quoted and cited far more frequently than Gray's. If Reardon's work illustrates a growing dissatisfaction with reformationism, Gray's sermon is evidence of a middle position between both sides. In a marginal comment later added to the original manuscript of "The Leaven of the Reformation" Gray wrote, "There was much tension at the campmeeting of 1929, resulting in R. R. Byrum resigning from the faculty of Anderson College. This sermon received general approval from both sides." (Warner Pacific College Archives, Box 3.) <sup>2</sup> Gray offered his sermon for publication in *The Gospel Trumpet*, but Smith declined, ostensibly because the sermon had already

received a wide hearing. Gray may have wondered at Smith's explanation since the Editor reprinted his own 1928 sermon in the *Gospel Trumpet* in 1929 despite having been published in an anthology of 1928 campmeeting sermons. Smith's handwritten explanation is attached to Gray's manuscript in the Warner Pacific College Archives, *Loc cit.*

<sup>3</sup> That Gray was a member of the Anderson ministerium is noteworthy. Many Church of God ministers of this era refused to associate formally or informally with ministers of any Protestant denomination, being as they were part of "sect Babylon." Gray did not share this point of view.

<sup>4</sup> A. F. Gray, "Federated Ministerial and Church Activity," unpublished manuscript, (Warner Pacific College Archives, Box 3).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

*The material for this column comes from my forthcoming history of AU and is not to be copied, transmitted, or re-used in any fashion.*

Merle D. Strege  
Historian of the Church of God

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 2012

TIME: 3:00 - 5:00 P.M.

This year, our Annual Meeting will be held in an unusual place and in unusual circumstances. (Do not, therefore, go by the information in the campmeeting book of events.)

This year, Dale Stultz will host a bus tour of Church of God historical sites in the Anderson area. Please gather at the Barney Warren Cabin at 3:00 o'clock for a 3:15 departure. (There will be no charge for Historical Society members)

## NOTE

We regret to inform you that our esteemed Secretary-Treasurer, Sadie Evans, has been seriously ill for some time and will not be able to perform her usual duties at the Annual Meeting or for much of the Summer. We shall do our best to carry on as normally as we possibly can during her absence. And we will continue to join with you in prayer for her speedy and full recovery.