

# The Historical Society

## The Bible Fellowship Church

January, 2010

I am beginning to put this paper together on January 4, 2010. It usually takes me a couple of weeks so the date you receive this will be later. I am giving you this information so that you will understand that the New Year is what shapes my thoughts as I sit here at my laptop. The holidays are over. My family had a wonderful time. We enjoyed having our children and grandchildren here for a good bit of time. The schedule was not as hectic as in previous years. We all had a good time and ate too much. I can only hope that you enjoyed all of those holiday things as much as I did.

I will remind you that if you have not renewed your membership in the Society, January is the month when we make a final review to see who renewed and who did not. It is our version of “gonna find out who’s naughty and nice.” It is too late to make threats about coal in your stocking but I can say I am always disappointed to remove names from our list. At the end of the letter, I will give you the renewal information.

With the 2010 New Year in mind, I went back to the Gospel Herald of 1910 to dig out the first issue of 1910. What follows are selections from that issue. It will give you a sense of what was going on for the new year 100 years ago.

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Gospel Banner  
January 6, 1910

### General Editorial Page

By Eld. C. H. Brunner

NEW YEAR GREETINGS TO ALL.

The holidays are over now, and we no doubt have given and received some gifts, now let us all do what we can to bring the Gospel Banner to some new homes – perhaps some of the Lord's poor who would enjoy it very much; perhaps to some unsaved friend or acquaintance for whose salvation you have been praying. God will



C. H. Brunner

reward every honest effort put forth to His glory.

Great changes have taken place during the last year. Many thousands of our Fellowmen, some of whom we knew, a few no doubt very intimately, have started out on the march with us last New Year but have wearied by the way. We have seen them laid away to their last resting place, we wiped our weeping eyes as we passed on and continued our journey till we passed this, another milestone. A short pause, apparently, a reflection of the past, recollections of joys and sorrows, sunshine and shadows, meetings and partings, profits and losses, then a few solemn vows and earnest resolutions and forward we march again toward the next milestone.

Let us start out courageously, and move forward with the bold, firm tread of a conqueror.

Let us leave the past with all its failures, short-comings, faults and sins under the blood.

Let us leave all that was mysterious and dark to us in the hands of Him who "doeth all things well," and though the future may seem equally cloudy and unknown to us, yet we can say "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." Yes, rather walk with Him in the dark than go alone in the light. For where He is there is no darkness for He is the light. He knows the way, even if we don't.

"He knoweth the way that I take  
My Father leads aright;  
And through the trials He will make  
My faith like gold shine bright."

### Sunday School Lesson

By Eld. E. N. Cassel

Lesson III. First Quarter

Sunday, January 16, 1910

THE BEGINNING OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY.

LESSON TEXT. Matt. 4 : 12-25. Memory verse 23.

GOLDEN TEXT. "The people which sat in darkness



E. N. Cassel and family

saw great light." Matt. 4 : 16.

**Jesus Leaves Nazareth.**— According to the Gospel of Matthew, the ministry of Jesus did not formally begin until after the ministry of John had closed. John seemed to have understood well that his ministry was of a short duration, he said that He must increase but I must decrease. There appears to have been several reasons why Jesus left Nazareth at this time; one reason will be found in Luke 4: 16-30. Here He preached in the synagogue, this being His home town and at this time He publicly declared himself to be the Christ. This teaching did not meet with much favor: they would not receive one that was brought up among them as the anointed of God and as the promised saviour of the world. The people of Nazareth were very much incensed at the words of Jesus and took Him out of the city unto a steep precipice and would have hurled him headlong over it but He passed through their midst and left them. It is of interest to note that Jesus never forced His doctrine upon any one, nor is such to be the case now. All are to have an opportunity to receive the Savior but if they will not receive Him, He will go to some one else. Another reason seems to have been as the public ministry of John had ended, the time for the public ministry of Jesus must begin.

**Jesus At Capernaum.**— Matthew writes to the Jews—hitches the actions and teachings of Jesus to the predictions of Him in the Old Testament and even here gives it as a reason that Jesus came to Capernaum. He is the light of the world and when He came to this place, a great light sprang up.

**The Opening Of His Ministry.**— The opening of the ministry of Jesus was much the same as that of his forerunner; the object seems to have been to get the people to change their minds, they have been thinking along one line for a long time and now a new order of things were to be set in and it was needful for them to think differently from now on. Repentance is a godly sorrow for past errors and mistakes and sins, and a turning from and forsaking of them and the cleaving to the right way. That to which they were to turn was to the coming kingdom which He said was at hand. This expression means that it is the impending act. Scofield says "At hand, is never a positive affirmation that the person or thing said to be 'at hand' will immediately appear, but only that no person or predicted event must intervene." When Christ appeared to the Jewish people, the next thing, in order of revelation as it then stood, would have been the setting up of the Davidic kingdom. In the knowledge of God not yet disclosed, lay the rejection of the kingdom (and King) the long period of the mystery form of the kingdom, the world-wide preaching of the cross, and the out-calling of the church. But this was yet locked up in the secret counsels of God (Matt. 13:2-17. Eph 3:3-10.).

**The Calling Of His Disciples.** — The disciples that had been called in this lesson had known the Lord prior to the meeting of Him on this occasion, and had undoubtedly been followers of Him before this time but now they are to be commissioned and sent forth: their call implied a leaving of ships, nets, and their father, and following Him. It is a hard tiling to serve the Lord acceptably in the capacity of a Messenger when you have a ship, or net, or even a father at home to take care of. The order here is suggestive — leave all and follow Him.

**The Continuation Of The Work Of Jesus.** — In the continuation of the work of Jesus He preached the Gospel to the regions around about in the synagogues of the Jews and healed all manner of sicknesses and diseases among the people. This had been the purpose that He had come into the world; to do and to teach. His teaching was accompanied with power. It was not what we so often have — a preaching simply of words but also a demonstration of the power of God. His fame spread abroad rapidly so that many were brought unto Him that were sick, with divers diseases and torments, and those that were possessed with devils, and those that were lunatics and those that had palsy. In every case He was the master of the situation. He healed them all.

God with us makes our service honorable, be that service what it may. — R.C.C.

### Testimony

Home Missionary, E. F. Richard, is Mission Helper in the Gospel Herald Society (Pennsylvania Conference). He was converted in 1906 in the Gospel Worker Society mission at York, Pa. On April 26, 1907, he entered the Gospel Herald Society where he has been laboring ever since. His own testimony:

"I gave my heart to God in the year 1906, in the Gospel Worker Society mission at York, Pa. After a short stay at the mission I entered the Gospel Herald Society (Apr. 26, 1907), was baptized at Shamokin, Pa. Soon afterward I joined the Mennonite Brethren in Christ church. Was stationed at Scranton, Shamokin, Sunbury, Pa., and Washington, N. J., and at present am laboring at East Stroudsburg, Pa. The Lord has been very good to me, has wonderfully healed my body and gives me a desire "to follow close by His side, to be used alone to His honor and glory."

"Christian people who have not repented of inbred sin, will have to pray without ceasing and trust continually for peace to keep it down or they will be overcome by it. It will be manifested in anger, pride, fear, selfishness, envy, jealousy, or probably in denominational jealousy." — Holiness Era.

[Editor's Note — I continue to accumulate names of men who served in the Gospel Heralds. Richardson is another new name to be added to the list which I have been

compiling. Alas, no definitive roster of Gospel Heralds exists. We will continue to record names when they show up. R.E.T.]

### Church News

WALNUTPORT, PA. — Our first Quarterly Conference for this year is just past. Though we had a terrific blizzard yet we had a most glorious time. Brother Gehman, our presiding elder, seemed to have been especially used of the Lord in the preaching of His word. The attendance was good as well as offering, considering all. The work in general is going along real nicely. We just built a vestibule to the front of our church. Every one is encouraged in the Lord. We mean to fight for Jesus till he comes.

P. J. Musselman, Pastor.

EASTON, PA. — The work of the Lord is moving along nicely, and His people are faithfully standing by the work and are happy in serving the Lord. The meetings are getting better right along and the pilgrims are free for the Lord. Christmas evening was a glorious time, leaping for joy and shouting the praises of God was in order by young and old. We were also remembered with quite a number of useful Christmas gifts from the different members of the class. Our table over Christmas was also well supplied with good things. To God be all the praise for His leadings. Our courage is good.

E. E. Kublic, Pastor.

BETHLEHEM, PA. — The work of the Lord is moving along nicely. The Lord is leading and we are having victory right along. Praise the Lord! The prayer meetings are largely attended and in the Sunday services, the large church is always about filled. The Sunday School is in a flourishing condition, the average attendance is now over two hundred. The members are standing by the work and are well united. On Sunday (Dec. 26) the class and the Sunday School together gave us fifty dollars in gold, besides over twenty dollars worth of other presents, all of which makes us feel very unworthy but praise the Lord for it and keep on giving to them the Word God as we did before and not shun to declare unto them the whole counsel of God. In His services,

J. C. Roth, Pastor

ALLENTOWN, PA. — We are on the upward march; the enemy is opposing but victory is the Lord's and we are His and are sharing it with Him. The meetings are grand. The glory of the Lord is manifest in every service. The young people are standing by well and are getting deeper in the Lord. God's word is effectual as of old in saving and healing the sick. The class in general are standing by well and have good courage to

press forward. On Sunday evening after the services they presented me with an envelope containing a large sum of money. May the Lord abundantly bless them for it.  
E. N. Cassel, Pastor.

EASTON, PA. — "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" Rom. 5:8. The Lord has surely been with us again during the past week and has given us victory along various lines. The meetings were well attended and the pilgrims are rejoicing in the Lord, and are becoming more free right along. The services today were grand. The Spirit of God, having the right of way in each one, makes the meeting very interesting and wonderfully breaks up the monotony, some shouting, some leaping, some clapping their hands and weeping, and one sister, who was not so obedient for some time, broke down after meeting was dismissed, as we never saw her before and fully yielded her life to the Lord. We are expecting souls to be saved in the near future. Our courage is excellent.  
E. E. Kublic, Pastor.

SPRING CITY - ROYERSFORD, PA, - We are having victory upon victory through Him. Our first Quarterly Conference is now past but not forgotten. We had a grand season together, a real refreshing time. The Lord used our presiding elder, H. B. Musselman, to give us grand messages from the Word. We had good solid food all day long. We are at the extreme end of the district and don't so often see each other so it does us real good to have good heart to heart talks together (presiding elder and pastor). The work is on the forward move. We baptized five on Saturday afternoon. The dear ones are standing by well and can't do too much for their pastor it seems. Sunday Schools are grand. Prayer meetings are large and spiritual. Young and old are happy in His service. Folks around here leap and shout at every meeting. In His service,  
W. S. Hottel, Pastor.

GRATERS FORD - HARLEYSVILLE, PA. — "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want" Ps. 23: 1. The Lord is good to us at this place. He gives us glorious victories in our services. The prayer meetings are well attended and spiritual. The Sunday School is in a good healthy condition. We are expecting great things from the Lord at these places. The brethren and sisters of both classes stand by the work nobly, for which our heart rejoiceth. The class of Graters Ford surprised us greatly by way of a grand donation. This was one of the largest ever received. May the Lord bless them.

Our courage is good to work for Him who gave Himself for us. Praise His name!

**Later**

"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" Phil. 4: 19.

The Lord is graciously leading in both classes. The meetings are well attended by the members, and real spiritual.

The Harleysville class, through their loyal class leader, handed to the writer an envelope, containing a Christmas gift, and it was indeed wonderful – enough cash to buy a new suit and overcoat, amounting to four X's. Of this the writer feels unworthy and asks God that He may use His servant to impart unto them the spiritual gift. May God bless the donors.

R. Bergstresser, Pastor.

### Deaths

Hendricks. In Macungie, PA, December 11, 1909, Catherine Hendricks. Age 69 Years.

Catherine Hendricks, wife of Alfred Hendricks, was born September 22, 1840, and died in Macungie, Pa., December 11, 1909, aged 69 years, 2 months and 19 days. Death was due to the effects of paralysis. She was saved when young and died in the hope of seeing her Lord. A husband, two sons and two daughters preceded her in death. Services were conducted by Elders J. M. Fahl and H. K. Kratz. Interment in the Baptist cemetery, Macungie, Pa.

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### EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH (BETHLEHEM) HALL OF FAME

By LeRoy Wilcox

Many men from Ebenezer became pastors and many women married those who became pastors. Some served only briefly. The following are those who had a regular, sustained ministry.

JACOB FRANKLIN BARRALL

1867 - 1940

Jacob was born on December 3, 1867 in Stenton, Allen Township, Northampton County, to Daniel and Lavina nee Seip Barrall. On November 20, 1890 he married Annie J. Wolfe of East Allen Township, daughter of David and Sara Wolfe. Jacob was converted at the Bethlehem Church under the ministry of



J. F. Barrall (right) at Mizpah Grove

Pastor Harvey B. Musselman. In the 1901 Annual Conference, held at Bethlehem, he was recommended for the ministry by the Bethlehem church and was ordained to the ministry in 1904. Jacob served at the Lehigh and Weissport circuit, Allentown, the circuits of Coopersburg and Springtown, Fleetwood, Blandon and Terre Hill, Spring City and Royersford, and lastly, at Shamokin. In 1922 he retired from the ministry but continued in active service as long as he was able. He died in Selinsgrove, PA on October 10, 1940.

CHARLES HENRY BRUNNER

1864 - 1948

Charles was born on January 2, 1864 to Joel and Rebecca nee Gehman Brunner in Hosensack, Lower Milford Township, in Lehigh County. He married Sarah Musselman, daughter of Abraham and Catherine Musselman, on September 27, 1888, the ceremony taking place in her parent's house. They moved to Bethlehem where he was employed as a carpenter helping to construct buildings at Lehigh University. They were members at Ebenezer and he served as the first Sunday School superintendent. He entered the ministry in 1892, was licensed in 1893 and was ordained in 1898. He served as Presiding Elder and organized and led the Gospel Herald Society. He also served on many boards and committees of our Conference. He suffered a stroke while speaking at Mizpah Grove Camp Meeting and died in Sacred Heart Hospital in Allentown on November 20, 1948. Sarah, who served as a local preacher for a time, died on February 17, 1950. Both are buried in our Zionsville cemetery.

HERMAN WALTER FELDGES

1879 - 1953

Herman was born on June 20, 1879 in Paterson, NJ. He later came to Bethlehem and became a member at Ebenezer. He entered the Gospel Herald Society and was licensed by the Conference in 1901. Feeling a call to the mission field he was accepted by the Christian Missionary Alliance Church but worked under our Conference. Herman was sent to Chile in 1904 and worked under H. L. Weiss at Anend. On January 12, 1906 he married a missionary from Ontario, Canada named Sara Klahr who



H. W. Feldges



was a member of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church in Ontario. A daughter, Grace, married a missionary, Fred Whales, and they worked in Nigeria

Herman and Sara served in Chile and later served in Ecuador and Columbia. They returned to the U.S. in September of 1939 and resided in Los Angeles, CA. Sara died on January 8, 1946 and Herman died on March 7, 1953. Both are buried in CA.

WILLIAM JAMES FRETZ

1877 - 1950

William was born on August 6, 1877 in Bedminster Township, Bucks County. He was converted at a revival service in Springtown but writes that he "settled it once and forever" at the last camp meeting held by our Conference at Chestnut Hill. He moved to Bethlehem and in December 16, 1894 he was baptized and taken into church membership by Pastor Adam B. Gehret. William was granted a Quarterly Conference license during the ministry of Oswin S. Hillegas and helped with meetings being held on New Street in



Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Fretz

Bethlehem. In 1898 he was recommended for the ministry by the Bethlehem church. He married Sallie Long on February 21, 1899, the marriage performed by the pastor, Charles H. Brunner, in South Bethlehem. Sallie was born on August 20, 1878 in Bethlehem Township, the daughter of Milton and Elizabeth Long. William entered the ministry in 1899, serving at Girardsville but in 1918 he left the ministry and reverted back to a Quarterly Conference license. He moved back to Bethlehem, found employment as a salesman for a grocery store, and taught a Sunday School class at Ebenezer for many years. His wife died on February 2, 1938 and he then married Matilda Keiper. He later moved to Allentown where he died on October 23, 1950. William, Sallie and Matilda are all buried at the Fairview Cemetery in Bethlehem. Sallie Long's sister, Mary, married Milton Musselman, who became a leader in the Bethlehem church.

TIMOTHY DONEY GEHRET

1895 - 1971

Timothy was born on April 28, 1895 at Terre Hill, PA to Adam and Ida nee Doney Gehret. Adam was an early pastor at Bethlehem and married Ida Doney, a member of the church. Adam died on June 1, 1898. Ida was unable to keep her children and Timothy was listed in the 1910 Census as living in Hanover Township in the household of John Balliet, listed as a grand nephew. He later came to Bethlehem where he worked as a machinist and taught Sunday School at Ebenezer . On November 27, 1919 he was united in marriage to a member of Ebenezer, Beulah Lutz, by William Hottel, pastor at Ebenezer. Timothy felt called to the ministry and was licensed to preach in 1921. He was ordained in 1925. He served at Harrisburg, Philadelphia (Calvary), Scranton, Sunbury, Easton, Blandon and Fleetwood. While Timothy was serving our church in Philadelphia, Beulah contracted diabetes there and died on September 10, 1924. Timothy later married Esther Deppe.



**T. D. Gehret**

From 1945 to 1954 he served as Presiding Elder for the Bethlehem district and again from 1962 to 1967 as District Superintendent for the Allentown District. He also served as chairman of Annual Conference. He died on November 21, 1971 in Allentown Hospital. His brother, Myron, was a leader in our Bethlehem church.

**LEROY STEWART HELLER**

LeRoy was born on November 10, 1932 to Lyman and Arlene nee Bachman Heller. He was converted when attending an evangelistic service at Ebenezer on May 17, 1950. The speaker was Jim Vaus, an electronics genius who had been saved at a Billy Graham Crusade in Los Angeles, CA. LeRoy enrolled in Berean Bible School in September of 1950. In his second year



**LeRoy Heller**

he heard Dr. Francis Steele, of the North African Mission, challenge the students to commit themselves to Christ's work. LeRoy then sensed God's call for him to enter the ministry and after graduation was asked to serve in Church Planting and helped at Finesville and Paradise.

He met a young woman named Patricia Musser at Mizpah Grove Camp Meeting and they were married on October 2, 1954. Patricia was from our Reading church and also attended Berean Bible School. Her grandparents were related to the Gehmans, Hertzogs and Heffners.

LeRoy served at four mission churches and then was pastor of a regular church at Newark, NJ. After two years he went to our Philadelphia church for five years and also attended Temple University and Westminster Theological Seminary. He served at our Coopersburg church for 11 years and then at Sunbury for 23 years. He is now retired from being a Senior Pastor and serves as an assistant to Pastor Calvin Reed at Lebanon. LeRoy and Pat have two daughters, Deborah Jean and Barbara.

JOSEPH BUFFINGTON HENRY

1903 - 1962

Joseph was born on June 28, 1903 in Birdsboro, PA to Charles and Etta nee Woodward Henry. He came to Bethlehem where he was saved at the age of eight under the ministry of Charles Brunner. He entered the ministry at the age of eighteen, serving for six years under the Gospel Herald Society at Scranton, Harrisburg, Jersey City and West Philadelphia. He was licensed to preach in 1924 and ordained in 1928. While at West Philadelphia he married Mildred Gehman on November 11, 1927 at her father's house in Easton, her father performing the marriage. Mildred, born in Bethlehem on November 30, 1903, was a daughter of William and Emma nee Kinsell Gehman. William George Gehman was an outstanding leader in our Conference and served as Presiding Elder and leader of the Gospel Herald Society. Joseph was licensed in 1924 and ordained in 1928.



**Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Henry**

He served as a pastor for 23 years. In October 1950 Joseph accepted a position as Associate General Secretary of the African Inland Mission and moved to Brooklyn, NY, where he died on April 6, 1962. Mildred died in January 1997. Both are buried in our Zionsville cemetery.

FRANKLIN MUSSELMAN HOTTEL

1882 - 1960

Franklin was born on August 20, 1882 near Coopersburg. He was converted as a young boy and was baptized in the Saucon Creek, which flows behind the Coopersburg church. On March 3, 1906 he married Ida Moyer, a member at Bethlehem. He worked on Third Street in South Bethlehem but felt called to the ministry. Franklin was licensed in 1905 and began serving at Washington, NJ under the Gospel Herald Society. In 1907 he received a conference appointment and served at the Fleetwood, Blandon and Terre Hill circuit. He was ordained in 1909. He came to Bethlehem in 1923 and by 1932 Sunday School attendance averaged 678. One Easter Sunday an announcement was made that the attendance was just short of 1000. Franklin's two sons then went outside and brought in the two or three needed to make the 1,000 mark. Franklin began a cradle roll and the first baby enrolled was Robert



**F. M. Hottel**

Smock, who became a pastor in our Conference.

Pastor Hottel's last charge was at Shamokin where he served from 1947 to 1954. He then retired and moved to Allentown where he became active in Bethel church, serving as class leader, member of the Official Board and choir member. He loved to sing and was gifted with a good voice. He was also known for his ability to deal with people. He died on October 24, 1960 and was buried at the Coopersburg church. Ida, born on March 2, 1906 to Joseph and Sarah nee Landis Moyer, died on August 26, 1981 and is buried beside her husband.

BAIRD BRYAN MUSSELMAN

1890 - 1957

Baird was born in Allentown on October 18, 1890 to Harvey and Ann nee Baus Musselman. Harvey was the presiding elder of the Allentown District and later lived in Bethlehem. Harvey and his mother, Ann, were members of the Ebenezer church in Bethlehem. He married a Fleetwood woman, Cora Rothermel, on December 7, 1911 and his father, Harvey Musselman, the presiding elder of the Bethlehem District, performed the ceremony. Baird Bryan, better known as B.

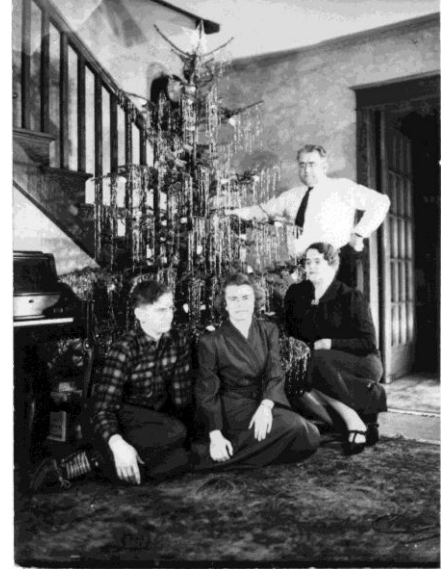
Bryan, felt called to follow in his father's footsteps and in 1913 the Bethlehem church recommended him for the ministry. This was noted at the Annual Conference held that year in Reading. On September 24, 1916, he was ordained in our Philadelphia church. He served in the circuit of Fleetwood, Blandon and Terre Hill and in 1920 came to Bethel Church in Allentown. He began a radio ministry in 1925 and for more than 32 years conducted an early morning program. He resigned from the ministry in 1945 stating that he wanted to devote all of his time to his radio ministry. He owned the radio station and when his two children were grown, Olivia and Reuel, they became part owners.

B. Bryan died on July 27, 1957. During his years of ministry he was on many committees and also served as a Vice-Presiding Elder of the Allentown District. He was active in community affairs and worked with the Community Chest and the annual March of Dimes.

Cora, born in Fleetwood on March 31, 1887 to Harrison and Bridgetta nee Mangel Rothermel, died on August 12, 1979.

ARLINGTON LEROY SEIFERT

Arlington was born in Lower Saucon Township on March 16, 1921 to Thurston



**B. Bryan Musselman and family**



**A. L. Seifert**

Earl and Beulah Mae nee Sloyer Seifert. His parents were members at Ebenezer and Arlington entered the Gospel Herald Society in 1947. On May 2, 1947 he married Ruth Gehret of our Bethlehem church, a daughter of Myron Gehret, a leading layman at our Bethlehem church. Pastor N. H. Wolf performed the wedding. He was licensed in 1950, ordained in 1953 and served as pastor at various churches. He served as Conference Superintendent from 1967 to 1970 and in 1968 he accepted the position of Director of Pinebrook Bible Conference. He also served as Chairman of Annual Conference. Now retired, he lives in northeast PA near Newfoundland.

Ruth was the granddaughter of Adam Gehret, a pastor at Ebenezer from 1892-1895. She was also the sister of Eleanor, who married Arden Gackenbach. Ruth went to be with the Lord on September 19, 2009, and her funeral was held at Ebenezer on September 24.

JOHN GEORGE SHIREMAN  
1870 - 1938

John was born in Saylorburg in Hamilton Township, Monroe County on February 20, 1870, to Henry Lewis and Ellen L. Shireman. On May 12, 1888 he was united in marriage to Sarah L. Edmonds by Rev. Isaac Loos, pastor of the Christ Reformed church in Bethlehem. They began attending Ebenezer church during the ministry of Oswin Hillegas and on August 16, 1897 he and Sarah joined the church. The next year he was recommended for the ministry by the church. Sarah, born on

December 18, 1871, died on October 14, 1918 in Catasauqua. He then married Kathryn Godshall, daughter of Daniel and Anna nee Garis Godshall, in November 1926 in Nazareth. Kathryn became a licensed Local Conference missionary

He felt called to the ministry and was licensed on May 5, 1898. His first charge was the circuit of Reading, Athol and Blandon. He also served at Zionsville, Hereford, Fleetwood, Macungie, Royersford, Spring City, Mount Carmel, Girardville, Philadelphia (Salem), Easton, Stroudsburg, Nazareth, Plainfield and Shamokin. While stationed at Easton he built their first



**J. G. Shireman**

church building, located on Fourteenth Street. While at Shamokin he built the parsonage and the foundation walls of the present church building. He was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Home and Orphanage at Center Valley and a member of the General Conference at Kitchner, Ontario, Canada in 1900. He reverted back to a Local Preacher at the 1935 Conference because of failing health.

John died in Philadelphia at the home of his brother-in-law, Howard Weiss, on September 6, 1938. His wife, Kathryn, died in Philadelphia on May 17, 1952. John, Sarah and Kathryn are all buried in Fairview Cemetery, Bethlehem.

ROBERT W. SMOCK

Robert W. Smock was born and raised in Bethlehem and was the first baby to be placed on Ebenezer's Cradle Roll. At age 11 he felt the call of God to go into the ministry and began that calling at age 17 when he was assigned to the Gospel Herald Society.

He began under the monitoring of Pastor John Dunn in Trenton, N. J. and then went to Binghamton, NY, under Pastor William Heffner, followed by a leave of absence for schooling at the Bible Institute of Pennsylvania. He then was assigned to head the mission at Trenton and at the age of 21 married Thelma D. Wolf, daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Wolf.



R. W. Smock

Together they served in Trenton for 2 years. He took part time courses eventually securing his B.S. from Philadelphia College of Bible. His next assignment was to Terre Hill after which he went to Easton.

After three years he was assigned to open a ministry at Ephrata. He commuted from Ephrata for several years to the Evangelical School of Theology where he secured his Master of Divinity Degree. After 9 years he went to Royersford, PA where he served for over 12 years.

Having reached what he called his "Medicare Age", he accepted a call to be Pastor of Visitation at Ephrata and, for 16 years served in that capacity. He was licensed in 1950, ordained in 1953 and has served in the ministry for 63 years.



Bob died on November 4, 2009, in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. His funeral was held November 7, 2009.

ALLEN GEORGE WOODRING

1893 - 1965

Allen was born in Weissport, PA on July 10, 1893 to Richard and Clara nee Ziegenfuss Woodring. He later lived in Bethlehem and became employed as a printer for the Quakertown Free Press. On October 8, 1915 he was married to Hilda Moyer of the Bethlehem church. Allen's father, Richard, an early pastor at Bethlehem, performed the ceremony in Easton at the parsonage. Allen felt led to follow his father in the ministry and was licensed to preach in 1917. Ordination followed in 1920. Allen served the circuit of Walnutport and Northampton, followed by the circuit of Fleetwood, Blandon and Terre Hill. He served eight years at Reading and two years at Quakertown. He resigned from the ministry in 1955 because of ill health and died on April 11, 1965. Hilda died in June 1980 and both are buried in the cemetery at Laureldale in Berks County.



**A. G. Woodring family**

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The last contribution for this issue begins with a letter from Barry Kauffman. Barry is the son of the later Horace Kauffman and grandson of Mennonite Brethren in Christ preacher, Horace Kauffman. He is also the step grandson of Norman Henry Wolf, known to most as preachers were, by his initials, N. H. He sent me the text of two of the letters of N. H. Wolf which give a wonderful glimpse into the daily life of the Gospel Heralds. Thank you, Barry, for sharing these letters.

I will set the background of the letters. Because you have received the Jill Davidson paper on the Kauffman family, you can go there to refresh your memory with regard to the Kauffman family. Horace A. Kauffman, the preacher, was raised in the area of Upper Milford, the son of Charles and Ellen Kauffman. Brother Kauffman entered the



ministry and was licensed to preach in 1908 and ordained in 1916. He served for a number of years in the Gospel Herald where he mentored, among others, N. H. Wolf. In addition to being ordained in 1916, he took a wife, Esther D. Gehret. In 1917, he was assigned to the Spring City / Royersford Circuit. Horace and Esther were blessed with a son, Horace (father of Barry). In 1918, a flu spread throughout which took the lives of many. Horace, a faithful pastor, continued to visit and pray for the sick despite the warnings about the killer flu. On October 28, 1918, Horace died leaving his wife and son. At the time of his death, Esther was pregnant with their second child, a girl, who would be born and named Ellen.

While I do not know all the details, provision for the widow and children was made by arranging for a marriage between Esther Gehret Kauffman and the dear of her deceased husband, N. H. Wolf. My recollection is that this was more an arranged marriage than a “romance.” I am not sure such things were talked about much. According to the family, a better husband for Esther could not have been found. N. H. raised Horace and Ellen and did not allow their last names to be changed so as to honor his dear friend and mentor. N. H. and Esther would have two daughters of their own, Beatrice and Thelma.



**N. H. Wolf family**

N. H. had entered the Gospel Herald on March 3, 1911, at the ripe age of 15. He was the son of Daniel C. and Theresa E. (Kirtchner) Wolf. They lived in Philadelphia where Daniel was a chemist who worked for a printer. They must have, in some way, been reached or drawn to the new urban ministry of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ. N. H. served the Gospel Herald in Lebanon where he came under the mentorship of Horace Kauffman. He was ordained in 1920 and served in Lebanon, Harrisburg, Lehighon, Weissport, Shamokin, Sunbury, Spring City, Royersford and Bethlehem. He died on June 8, 1976, just 19 days after the death of Esther. His obituary is found in the 1976 BFC Year Book.

**A LETTER HOME FROM A 15 YEAR OLD SON  
WHO HAD ENTERED THE MINISTRY  
By Barry Kauffman**

This is the first letter written home to Pastor N. H. Wolf’s parents, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel C. Wolf, 3050 Boudinot St., Philadelphia PA, after leaving home to serve the Lord, at the

age of 15. The letter required a two cent stamp to send. It is interesting to note that in 1919 N. H. Wolf would marry the widow of the Bro. Kauffman who he mentions in this letter. During their time together the two young ministers became very good friends, not realizing the future events that would soon unite their lives, in a unique way, and continue a godly heritage which has influenced generations that have followed. Before the death of H. A. Kauffman, in 1918, the Kauffmans had two children, Horace and Ellen. Out of respect to H. A. Kauffman, N. H. Wolf never had their names changed. The Wolfs would then have two daughters, Beatrice and Thelma. The four children grew up to love and serve the Lord and share the Gospel with their children.

Lebanon, March 8, 1911

Dear Popa and Mamma,

I am well & happy in the service of the Lord. I am going to stick, by God's help. It has been smooth sailing so far, no bread and water meals. The Lord is bountifully supplying our needs. We have a bag of beans and a bag of corn meal & I don't know what all. I arrived here 3:57 P.M. Friday. I met Bro. Kauffman. He took me to the mission which is in the heart of the town, in the business section. Bro. Gehman was here. I gave him \$13.00 to put in the bank for me. I now have 3 dollars & 28 cents in my pocket besides yet. So you see I have not much use for the money at the present time. I am well taken care of. I have dried dishes almost every meal now. I have washed clothes & hung them up in the mission, Monday is washing day. I have ironed some clothes already also. That was on Tuesday. I have my new hat. It was 1 size too small. So we had it stretched. I have been out visiting on Tues. afternoon & on Sat. morning. I like Bro. Kauffman & Bro. Reinhold fine. I do like Bro. Witt who is from the Gospel Workers at Pittsburg. I sleep on a cot. The rooms are so full that Br. Reinhold & Bro. Kauffman slept on a bed in the house while Br. Witt & I slept on cots in the mission. Oh I forgot, I didn't tell you that the rooms, or our house, is part of the big room, the mission & the house. Well the rooms are divided off from the mission part by curtains.

We generally have baked beans for dinner. They are great. We have home made biscuits & cinnamon buns. Br. Witt was once a baker & he certainly can bake.

The shirts fit fine. They are alright. I have all my clothes marked so that I know them from the rest of the brethren's.

I am praying for you all & I am praying for to sell that house. I often think of you. I don't wish I was home but I do wish sometimes that you were here. I am singing bass here. Tell Helen Shireman I won't forget it. We have a new verse to learn every day and we quote it at dinner time at the dinner table. We also have family worship every morning. We have open air meeting at 7 o'clock every evening and indoor meeting at 8 o'clock. Meeting every night except Monday. I spoke on "Love" last Sat. or Sun. I forget which.

Tell Bro. Klinger I am sorry I didn't see him, but then, "I must obey". Tell James Layn to look up & not to forget to fix the chairs.

From what the Brethren say, I catch that we will all be at the Sunday School Convention.

I am getting tired. I hope you will write again some time.

Chorus – For you I am praying  
For you I am praying  
For you I am praying  
I am praying for you.

Let us all sing.  
Kisses.

Your Son,  
N. H. Wolf  
781 Cumberland St.  
Lebanon Pa

Write soon. I am not homesick.  
Praise the Lord My Courage Is good.

Which way? Home or The Lord's Work

Praise the Lord.

I am Rich with Jesus.

Five years later H. A. Kauffman sent the following note to N. H. Wolf

Shamokin, Pa  
August 3, 1916

Dear Bro. Wolf,

Greetings. When you receive this letter I will have been married to Esther D. Gehret. We both invite you to visit us in our house.

Sincerely Yours,  
H. A. Kauffman



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Thus another installment of BFC history ends. I trust you found these various bits of heritage interesting. I welcome your letters and memories. If you can fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge, we will all will be grateful.

Don't forget to renew your membership. If you have renewed, you need not contact us. If you need to renew, send your name and address to Jack English, 19 Arbor Drive, Myerstown PA, 17067-3114. The dues for membership are \$18.00 per individual and \$25.00 per couple.

You can contact me in one of several ways:

Mail- 723 South Providence Road, Wallingford PA 19086

Email – RETaylor@cavtel.net

Phone or fax – 610-876-8725.

Don't forget the resources available at our website – [www.BFCHistory.org](http://www.BFCHistory.org).

Dick Taylor