

HISTORY OF THE SEVENTH DAY CHURCH OF GOD

Richard C. Nickels

1973 - volume one

History of the Seventh Day Church of God
by Richard C. Nickels
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Raymond C. Cole, who asked me to write this book.

I am grateful for research assistance from the New York City Public Library, Aurora College, Midwest Bible College of Stanberry, Missouri and Floyd Turner, and Maranatha College of Meridian, Idaho. Thanks to many in the Church of God who answered my constant questions. Thanks to Ray Straub who encouraged me to copyright and distribute this book.

Thanks to my loving wife Shirley who retyped the original edition and ferreted out many typographical errors.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."
Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22.

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ISBN 1-887670-06-8

Distributed by:

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About the Book

History of the Seventh Day Church of God covers the controversial history of the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God from the 1850s to the 1990s. Those who never accepted the visions of Mrs. Ellen G. White, founder of the Seventh-day Adventists, became known as the Church of God. From Michigan to Iowa to Missouri, they continued to promote the seventh day Sabbath from a loose coalition that frequently endured splits and divisions. Jacob Brinkerhoff, Andrew N. Dugger, John Kiesz, and Herbert W. Armstrong were the most famous Church of God ministers, whose writings have been preserved to this day. This book serves to preserve the history of the Church of God for future generations.

About the Author

Richard C. Nickels (1947-), a native of Oregon, has also lived in Texas, California, Missouri, Washington, and Wyoming. He and his wife Shirley have three children: Barbara, Rachel and Amanda. An accountant and computer consultant, Nickels currently works for a major coal mining company in Gillette, Wyoming. He is a graduate of Linfield College (BA, 1969, *Summa Cum Laude*).

Richard Nickels became a *World Tomorrow* broadcast listener in 1961, was baptized in 1969, and was employed by the Worldwide Church of God from 1971-1973 in festival site construction and church administration. Since 1978, he has written numerous articles and books for **Giving & Sharing**, a non-profit mail order bookstore serving Sabbath-keepers around the world. These include *History of the Seventh Day Church of God*, *Six Papers on the History of the Church of God*, *Biblical Holy Days*, *Biblical Law*, *Biblical Health and Healing*, *Biblical Doctrine*, *Biblical Marriage and Family*, *Bible Studies*, *Newsletters*, and other articles.

Andrew N. Dugger (1886 - 1975) was the most famous Church of God leader in the twentieth century. Born in Bassett, Nebraska in 1886, Andrew N. Dugger's father, A.F. Dugger, Sr., had been an Advent Christian Minister. When commissioned by his church to do a study refuting the Sabbath, A.F. Dugger instead became convinced that the Sabbath should be observed. The result was a book he later published, called *The Bible Sabbath Defended*.

For more than thirty-five years until his death in 1910, A.F. Dugger, Sr., was a leader in the Church of God, Seventh Day. His son Andrew, a schoolteacher and farmer, was in his early 20's when his father died.

A bright light in the sky around him seemed to Dugger to be a sign from God that he should follow his father's footsteps in the ministry. A.N. Dugger immediately sold his large farm and equipment, and went to the University of Chicago, where he majored in theology and public speaking, mastering Greek, Hebrew, and German.

From time to time, Dugger returned to Bassett to visit his mother and Effie Carpenter (1895-1980), a student of his whom he wanted to marry. Although he first proposed to her when she was sixteen, it wasn't until 1925 until they were married. They shared fifty years together.

Soon after college graduation, Dugger was invited by the Executive Committee of the Church of God to move to Stanberry, Missouri, to become editor of *The Bible Advocate*, a position his father had held before being forced to retire because of ill health. In 1914, Dugger arrived in Stanberry to begin his work in the ministry. For eighteen years he was editor, also serving as President of the General Conference. As field representative, he traveled widely, holding evangelistic meetings and [public debates](#). The famous "Porter Dugger Debate," between Dugger and W. Curtis Porter, a Church of Christ minister, was later published as a book of over 230 pages. In 1919, Dugger wrote *The Bible Home Instructor*, which publicized the Seventh Day Church of God, and substantially increased its membership during the 1920's.

Two of Dugger's most adamant doctrinal positions were: a scriptural form of church organization with leaders chosen by lot rather than election, and a world headquarters in Jerusalem, Israel. After visiting Israel for only a year in 1931-32, Dugger returned to live in Sweet Home, Oregon. In 1935, A.N. Dugger and C.O. Dodd published a book, *A History of the True Church*, which traces Sabbath-keepers from apostolic times to modern days. Dugger greatly influenced Herbert Armstrong, who was for years affiliated with the Church of God, Seventh Day, but later formed his own church, the Radio (later Worldwide) Church of God.

Dugger remained pastor at Marion, Oregon until 1953, when he and Effie settled permanently in Jerusalem, and launched the *Mt. Zion Reporter*. His aggressive leadership resulted in thousands of converts around the world. Andrew N. Dugger died in 1975 at the age of 89. Dugger's son-in-law, Gordon Fauth, continued the Jerusalem work.

John Kiesz (1903-1996), one of the most remarkable ministers of the Church of God, Seventh Day, greatly influenced the Church of God, Seventh Day, in the twentieth century. The grandson of Philip Kiesz, Sr., John grew up in a German Sabbath-keeping Church of God near Eureka, South Dakota. In 1898, a minister named Halbesleben accepted the Sabbath, and as a result, a number of Seventh Day Adventist churches became independent Churches of God. John's uncle Christ Kiesz was converted with a large group of younger people in 1910. It was not until 1923 that the Germans came into contact with the Church of God General Conference at Stanberry, Missouri. John Kiesz was converted in 1924.

About 1925, John Kiesz became contributing editor of the German *Bible Advocate*. He met his wife-to-be, Katherine, at a camp meeting near Eureka in 1927. They were married in 1929. After graduation from Arizona Teacher's College, they began to travel and sing gospel songs. Their unique style of singing brought them to over forty states and several Canadian provinces. In 1931, John first came to Stanberry, where he served for two years as editor of *The Bible Advocate*.

In 1934, the Kieszes went into full-time evangelistic work. During the 1940's, Kiesz worked closely with Herbert Armstrong. The Kieszes lost their first two children, but their two younger daughters, Pearl and Martha, assisted them in evangelistic meetings by singing, from 1940 to

1956. From 1959 to 1963, Elder Kiesz was a professor at Midwest Bible College in Stanberry, continuing evangelistic activity in the summer months. For several years, John Kiesz pastored a church in St. Louis, Missouri. The Kieszes traveled widely, building up many churches around the country. Gaining funds from the sale of a record album of their gospel songs, the Kieszes conducted a missionary trip to many foreign countries in 1971. For many years, the Kieszes lived in Canon City, Colorado. Even in his later years, Elder John Kiesz was an excellent speaker, and very knowledgeable of the Scriptures. His faithful wife of sixty-four years, Katherine, died in 1993.

I. Introduction — Controversial History

The True Church

Is there a true church? Did Jesus Christ of Nazareth form one distinct church, or body of believers in Him, that as he stated (Matt. 16:18) would continue to the very time of His return to rule this earth as Lord of Lords and King of Kings? That church was prophesied to be a small, despised group (Luke 12:32) that would bear the name, "Church of God," the church name used in the Bible more than any other, and used to denote a local church as well as the church as a whole, the name used twelve times in the New Testament.

If there is a true church, it would have to be one church, not divided into hundreds of disagreeing denominations. It would have to live by the law of God. And, just before Christ's return, it would have to be proclaiming the gospel of Christ — the good news that Jesus is soon coming to rule this earth with His saints and make a utopia on earth — this church would have to be proclaiming this message to the world with power, as a witness to all nations, before Christ's return. If there is a true church today, it would have to be one group, alive with God's Spirit, living by the very words of the Bible. Where is the true Church of God today?.....

So then where was the true church, the one Christ founded and the one he said would never stop the Work He began?

Yet he found "a church, which, compared to the large-scale activities of the Catholic and big Protestant bodies, was ineffective. Yet Jesus Christ said: All power is given unto me, in heaven, and earth" (Matt. 28:18). If Jesus was to be in His Church, guiding and directing it, and giving the church power to proclaim His message, as He said, why wasn't the little Church of God from Stanberry, Missouri [where this minister was located] making the whole world conscious of its existence and its power? Further, [this minister] failed to see where this church was bearing much if any fruit, and asked himself the question: "Could a fruitless church be the one and only true Church of God on earth?"

In 1927, the Church of God (Seventh Day), or Church of God (Adventist), as it was variously known, had scattered members probably numbering less than 2,000, mostly in rural areas, and only a very limited number of local churches, none as large as 100 members. Its ministers seemed; to be men of little education. Yet, in the words of [this minister] , "Small and impotent though it appeared, it had more Bible truth than any church I could find!"

The history of the ***Church of God, Seventh Day***, is the purpose of this paper. From its modern crystalization in the 1860's to the present, this group of seventh-day-keepers has remained small, and almost unheard-of. The Church of God (Seventh Day) is one of "at least two hundred independent religious bodies in the United States bearing the name, Church of God, in one form or another.

It is still a group which claims to be the "true church."

Controversial History

To enter into the presentation of the history of the ***Seventh Day Church of God*** is to enter on a field rife with religious — and sometimes political — controversy. Today when the word, "Adventist" is mentioned, it is automatically associated with the ***Seventh Day Adventist*** church. Yet Seventh Day Adventists are only one — but by far the largest numerically — of several distinct church groups which trace their history through the Adventist movement. There are *three other major Adventist groups extant today*, the ***Advent Christian Church***, the ***Church of God (Oregon, Illinois)***, and the ***various factions of the Church of God (Seventh Day)***. **These groups all trace their history from the Adventist movement, which began in the 1840's in the United States by William Miller.**

That is what "official" history purports. However, ***Seventh Day Adventist*** history states that the Church of God (Seventh Day) "was actually an early offshoot of the Seventh-day Adventist Church." But the Church of God historian *Andrew N. Dugger* ***dogmatically contradicts this by stating that Sabbath-keeping Adventists were originally known as "Church of God" people, and that those who in October, 1860 formed the Seventh Day Adventist church at Battle Creek, Michigan "are a branch from [and withdrew from] the original church, 'The Church of God'."***

In other words, the Seventh Day Church of God believes that the Seventh Day Adventists withdrew from them, while the Seventh Day Adventists believe the Church of God withdrew from Seventh Day Adventists.

A modern Seventh Day Church of God minister and a Seventh Day Adventist minister concur on a more "liberal" viewpoint in the early 1860's, the two groups parted their ways.

Throughout the history of the ***Church of God (Seventh Day)*** and the ***Seventh Day Adventists***, the two groups have been in diametric opposition to each other. ***Thus the history of the Seventh Day Church of God is largely controversial.***

But considering the impotence of the Church of God, and its almost total lack of growth (while Seventh Day Adventists have grown to over a million members worldwide), its history is obscure and hard to trace. Only through its publications, which somehow have been largely preserved intact (with some exceptions) since 1863, can substantive history of the Church of God be traced. The rest comes from less friendly sources.

II. The Messenger Party

The Anti-White Party Before 1860

Seventh Day Adventist history, especially J.N. Loughborough's *Rise and Progress of the Seventh-Day Adventists* (1892), shows pre-1860 Sabbath Adventist history as entirely dominated by Mr. and Mrs. James White, and presents the origin of the Seventh Day Adventist church by 1863 as the natural outgrowth of the movement. Some opposition to the visions of Mrs. White is admitted, but such opponents are usually cast as ones who went out of the movement, went insane, or fell into weird beliefs. For the Seventh Day Adventists, those who "went out from them" never amounted to anything, and met with "utter failure".

Yet far from all Sabbath Adventists believed with their whole heart that Ellen G. White was a "prophetess." The most prominent group before 1860 opposing the Whites was termed by the Whites as the "Messenger Party."

The Messenger Party: Case and Russell

The so called "Messenger Party" concerned Hiram S. Case and C. P. Russell. Case was a pioneer preacher of the Adventist message in 1844 in New York. He accepted the Sabbath and sanctuary ideas from S. W. Rhodes in 1851 in North Plains, Michigan. Soon Case was out preaching in Michigan, Ohio, New York, Illinois, and Wisconsin, and writing articles also. He was the first to preach the Advent message in Wisconsin, in the spring of 1851. Waterman Phelps was among his first converts in southwest Wisconsin, a state that was to be one of the key areas of opposition to the Whites.

In June 1853 at Jackson, Michigan there were held a series of Adventist meetings attended by Loughborough and the Whites. It appears that (here was some dissension here in the church. Some members had bitter feelings against a certain church lady. H.S. Case and C.P. Russell strongly accused her and tried to make her confess her wrong doing, whatever it was. Mrs. White had a vision, and as a result reproved the lady and also rebuked Case and Russel for their un-Christian conduct towards the lady. Case and Russell complained bitterly of the reproof. Previously they had believed in Mrs. Whites visions, and now they became staunch opponents of her.

A few weeks later, Case and Russell got other "disaffected spirits" to join them and began publication in the fall of 1853 the *Messenger at Truth* at Jackson, Michigan. This is the origin of the "Messenger Party" according to the Seventh Day Adventist historian

Loughborough. He termed the paper a scandal sheet with "many falsehoods" in it. It apparently stirred the entire Sabbath Adventist movement as indicated by the strong rebuttals that were given in the *Review and Herald*, from January 1854 to June 26, 1855.

The opposition paper's stance has not yet been discovered because apparently all copies have been lost. It may have held other doctrines than those purported by the White Party.

Whites opposed by Messenger Party

By early 1855 James White and the *Review and Herald* were in serious financial trouble, possibly due to the influence of the Messenger Party.

White was ill and sought to free himself from the editorship of the paper but there was nobody to take his place. He jumped at the opportunity to move the paper to Rattle Creek, Michigan where Adventist brethren agreed to finance the paper. Headquarters of the White Party became established at Rattle Creek, and the Whites sought to gain control of the entire Sabbath Adventist movement, and quell all opposition to the "Spiritual Gifts" of Mrs. White.

On June 20, 1855 the Whites, Loughborough, and Elder Cottrell held a meeting in Oswego, New York. During the meeting they were harassed by a man named by Lillis who circulated some copies of the *Messenger of Truth* — termed "slandering documents" — among the people. If this was more than an isolated incident it appears that the White Party was facing considerable opposition.

To quell opposition to her, Mrs. White conveniently had a vision in which "she was shown that if we would keep at our work, preaching the truth, regardless of any such people as the 'Messenger Party' they would go to war among themselves and their paper would go down, and when that should happen we would find that our ranks had doubled."

Loughborough explains the origin of the *Messenger Party* and all subsequent opposers to Mrs. White's visions by stating that "those who have been reprov'd for defects in character, for wrong habits, or for some wrong course in their manner of life" were the ones that came out in opposition to Mrs. White. They felt hurt by the reproofs and protested that they were not as bad as her testimony said, and as a result left the ranks.

Within two years the paper was said to have died for lack of support. It must have continued though at least until 1858 when Loughborough states that the Messenger

ceased to exist and the Messenger Party split and withered away. James White in his *Life Incidents* states that those who left the White Party "purified" the church of "undesirable elements."

One of the top leaders of the *Messenger Party* was said to have stopped preaching and become a teacher. In a fit of anger he pulled a revolver on a disobedient student; it snapped but failed to fire and the teacher had to escape a lynching by fleeing to Canada. James White reports that some of the other leaders went out on their own and at least one became a Spiritualist. To White's knowledge, not one of the eighteen messengers continued as preachers and there was not a single place left where the *Messenger Party* had a regular meeting. Because they had rejected Mrs. Whites visions, James White said they had rejected the Gifts of the Spirit.

Wisconsin the Center of Further Opposition

The *Messenger Party* apparently believed strongly in the use of the name *Church of God*. Nowhere is this more evident than in Wisconsin where the Messenger Party was strong. Denounced by the Whites in their *Review* as "fanatics", Wisconsin Adventists were strongly against Ellen G. Whites visions.

C. W. Stanley of Lodi, Wisconsin upon his resignation from the ministry in December of 1860, said "I have so poorly filled the office of a good minister of Jesus Christ, in my ministration of the third angel's message in the 'Church of God' during the eleven years past, I do this day resign holy office." Stanley later was quoted in the *Review* as saying that he was acquainted with all those that were in the "fanaticism" (term Whites used for their opposition) and that not a single one to his knowledge adhered to Mrs. Whites visions.

Stephenson and Hall Join Messenger Party

Associated with the Messenger Party were J.M. Stephenson and D. P. Hall, some of the first converts of Adventist preacher J.H. Waggoner in Wisconsin. Stephenson and Hall soon became prominent Adventist preachers in their own right. At a conference in Jackson, Michigan, in April 1855, they appeared to be against the Messenger Party and said they would go back to Wisconsin to overcome the Messenger Party's opposition to the *Review*. Yet later they came out for the "age-to-come" doctrine, that of believing in a probationary period after Christ's coming.

At conferences in Eldorado and Koskonong, Wisconsin, on October 5th and 12th, 1855. They denounced the *Review* as sectarian and resolved to withdraw support from it. Soon Stephenson and Hall began to write for the Messenger and

associated themselves with the people they had said they would oppose. Yet in a few weeks, they gave up the Sabbath and opposed it, attempting to form an "age-to-come" party with themselves as its leaders. Later both Stephenson and Hall were said to have become insane.

Hall and the Hayfield, Pennsylvania Seventh Day Baptist Church

D. P. Hall figured prominently in the "sheep stealing" discord between *Adventists* and *Seventh Day Baptists*, which lasted from about 1850 to 1880. *These years saw the aggressive growth of Adventists and inevitable loss on the part of Seventh Day Baptists with much hard feelings as the result.*

In the winter of 1855, eight years before the Seventh Day Adventist General Conference was organized, Elder D. P. Hall arrived at the Seventh Day Baptist church at Hayfield, Pennsylvania, and challenged all comers to a rousing debate. Though he had no specific authority from the Adventists to do this, he presented what were supposed to be Adventist views. His work resulted in a split of the Hayfield church, with harsh feelings on both sides.

In 1879, James White alluded to the Hall Incident in Pennsylvania in the following vein: "We deeply regretted the havoc made in some of the Seventh Day Baptist churches in Pennsylvania, more than twenty years since, by men who do not now stand with us. For while that work weakened the Seventh Day Baptists. It brought but very little strength to our cause."

White introduced a resolution relative to this incident, to the 1879 Seventh Day Adventist General Conference, which passed unanimously. "Whereas, Certain preachers, who professed to be Seventh Day Adventists, at an early date in our brief history, did seek their field of labor in the localities where there were Seventh Day Baptist churches, and did weaken some of their feeble churches, and blot out others, resulting in harm and only harm, to the great grief of the Seventh Day Baptists, there... Resolved, That... we deeply regret the injury done... about twenty years since, by those men whom we could not control, and who have since done Seventh Day Adventists tenfold the injury they did the Seventh Day Baptists, resulting in weakening and grieving both denominations we ask not to be held responsible for that which we have no power to control."

Messenger of Truth the Predecessor of the Hope of Israel

Since almost the entirety of the available information on the *Messenger Party* comes from the White Party, it is difficult to arrive at a true picture of their beliefs and actions.

The Messenger Party is important in that it was a direct, if not organic, precursor of the Church of God (Seventh Day). The press used to print the *Messenger of Truth* was the very same one which began the printing of the *Hope of Israel*, the first paper of the Church of God.

And the Messenger Party was further important in that it brought to the fore the two key issues which created the division of Sabbath Adventists into the Seventh Day Adventist church and the Church of God: (1) the church name — Church of God versus Seventh Day Adventist, and (2) the question of the visions of Ellen G. White.

III. The "Church of God" Controversy

THE NAME AND ELLEN G. WHITE

Sabbath Adventists and the Name "Church of God"

Ellen G. White and her followers — the White Party — were distinctly against the use of the name "Church of God." Loughborough reports that she had a vision that the movement should be called "Seventh Day Adventist" and that to use the term "Church of God" would be to excite suspicion, conceal absurd errors, and be a mark of fanaticism.

But apparently the White party themselves used the name Church of God in several instances. Ellen G. White used the cognomen frequently in her spiritual gifts.

James White published a hymn book in 1855 called "Hymns for those who keep the commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus". The preface to the hymnal read "this work is prepared for the use of the Church of God scattered abroad... To the Church of God waiting for the coming and kingdom of Christ, is this book commended."

That the Sabbath Adventists were originally termed Church of God is shown in a December 18, 1860 article in the *Advent Review* and *Sabbath Herald* (page 40): S. W. Rhodes of Hubbardsville, New York, announced his resignation as a minister to Sabbath-keeping brethren, "...in my ministrations of the Third Angel's message and the Church of God, during eleven years past...."

This would mean that Rhodes began his ministry for the Church of God in the year 1849.

Joseph Marsh, in the *Voice of Truth*, May 21, 1845, objected to the 1845 Albany Conference of Adventists "because the proceedings as whole looked like forming a new sect under a sectarian name, instead of coming to the order of the New Testament under the name there given to the true church....." James White wrote a commendation at the end of the article, when it was reprinted in the August, 1850 *Advent Review*, showing he agreed with Marsh's sentiments.

Roswell F. Cottrell wrote in the May 3, 1860 *Review*, "I do not believe in popery; neither do I believe in anarchy; but in Bible order, discipline, and government in the Church of God."

Waterman Phelps contended of the name Church of God. Ridicule was heaped by the White Party upon those who supported the name Church of God. The pages of the *Review* became the battleground for the church name around 1860 when the organizational drive fostered by the Whites came to fruition.

Here is a typical presentation of the reasons for the use of the name *Seventh Day Adventist*: "From Green Springs, Ohio....We receive the name Seventh Day Adventist, because it contains the two leading principles of our faith: First, 'the second coming of our Lord', and second, it sets forth the 4th commandment. On the other hand, the name 'Church of God' is not appropriate, because there are several churches by that name, and so many by the same name would make confusion."

Waterman Phelps, previously mentioned as a convert of H.S. Case in Wisconsin, strongly supported "Church of God" in the *Review*:

"... I think it is not difficult to determine what name they will have, when we consult Rev. 14:1, 'having his father's name in their foreheads.' Chapter 3:12, 'I will write upon them the name of my God.' And with this agrees the apostle in all his epistles. They are addressed to the Church of God. Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 11:22,15,29; Gal. 1:13; I Tim. 3:5. Now if we have the right to depart from the simplicity of the gospel in one instance have we not in another?... If so, what does their confusion consist in?... If so, can we as a people do the same and not become a member of the same great family... one of the harlots?"

Phelps stated that he accepted the Law of God. In 1850, and in 1851 identified himself with the "Review Adventists." But after making a study of the "visions" of Ellen G. White, and the organization they went into, he could no longer go with them.

Changing the Church Name

The high pressure campaign lead by the Whites to organize Sabbath Adventists under the name "Seventh Day Adventists" was ostensibly conducted with the purpose of holding church property. In a corporation instead of being deeded to individuals. Michigan had recently passed a law allowing churches to organize, and an "official" organization was said to be an encouragement for increasing the membership.

The Battle Creek Michigan Conference

On legal organization, on September 26—October 1, 1860, officially chose the name "Seventh Day Adventist" and rejected "Church of God". It was decided to legally

organize as a church with the covenant as follows: "We the undersigned hereby associate ourselves together as a church, taking the name *Seventh Day Adventists* covenanting to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ."

It was at this point that the separation of Sabbath Adventists into two opposing groups became permanent. On the one side were those supporting the visions of Ellen G. White and the name Seventh Day Adventist. And on the other side were those opposing Mrs. White and adhering to "Church of God."

Ohio Objections to Church Name Change

Some Adventists did not go along with the change of the name from "Church of God" to "Seventh Day Adventist." Ohio appears to be a leading center of objection to the White Party. *The Review and Herald* of April 9, 1861, in the article, "Secession," reports the following:

Brother Smith: We conclude from present aspects that the name, 'Seventh Day Adventist,' is being made obligatory upon our brethren. Without further light Ohio cannot submit to the name 'SeventhDay Adventist,' as either a test, or an appropriate name for God's people. Being appointed a finance committee at the last conference, and having now on hand means for carrying on the cause in Ohio, we could not conscientiously expend those means in any other than the advancement and extension of the truth and the 'Church of God.' If such means are expended otherwise it will be necessary for the churches in Ohio to assemble in conference, and to give instruction to that effect, and to choose some other committee to make the disbursements.

(Signed) J. Dudley L.E. Jones J. P. Hemming
Finance committee of Ohio

James White replied in answer to the Ohio "secession" as follows:

The Battle Creek Conference October 1, 1860, voted that we call ourselves 'Seventh Day Adventists.' ... The brethren as far as we can learn are adopting the name, and we never heard of, or thought of, its being made a test until we read the above from Ohio. We will here add that as a friend from Gilboa complains of the non-publication of an article from Gilboa [Ohio] setting forth the evidence in favor of the name Church of God, we wish to say that at the time no one connected with the Review office objected to the name.

Iowa Church of God

In Southern Iowa, a brother Bartlett sought to organize the Adventist Churches under the name of Seventh Day Adventists. But one independent Iowa church was divided over the question. Half the church acceded to the pressure to go along with the majority; the rest, contending that the church was originally organized under the name Church of God, refused to break off from their original beliefs. Bartlett labeled those who held to the original faith as dividers because they had rejected the "Gifts of the Spirit" — Ellen G. White's visions, which, he believed, was essential to be a part of God's end time work.

Since there was as yet no Church of God organization, opposers to the White Party were with ease labeled "secessionists" and "offshoots."

Yet the facts are that Church of God groups preceded Seventh Day Adventists by at least a decade.

IV. the Question of Ellen G. White's Visions

Beliefs in Visions Made a Test of Faith

Adventist preachers such as Bartlett sought to overcome anti-organization sentiment by uniting all the churches to Battle Creek and the Whites. But, until legal organization, the necessity of accepting Ellen G. White's visions was not emphasized. Then the visions were indeed made a test.

In 1882, Uriah Smith, a leading Seventh Day Adventist writer, wrote an article in the Review captioned "The Visions a Test." In it he clearly states that to have union with the true church, you must believe in the visions. *"The perpetuity of the [spiritual] gifts is one of the fundamental points in the belief of this people and with those who differ with us here, we can have union and fellowship to no greater extent than we can have with those who differ with us. In the other important subjects of the coming of Christ, baptism, the Sabbath, etc. It is a fact that those who reject the gifts do not have true union with the body. From the very nature of the case, they cannot have it."*

Thus is succinctly stated the real, major reason why Sabbath Adventists split into two groups: the real issue was the visions of Ellen G. White.

Reason for Mrs. White's Visions

According to the Seventh Day Adventists, Mrs. White's visions are to "perfect the church and bring them to the unity of the faith (Ephesians 4:13)." The visions were said to correct members from wrong practices or beliefs.

Early opposers to the Whites, including the Church of God in Marion, Iowa, saw the visions in a different light: they were primarily feigned to enable the Whites to gain control of the church.

D.M. Canright, an early Seventh Day Adventist who was intimate with the Whites, left them in the 1880's because he saw the *"Elder and Mrs. White ran and ruled everything with an iron hand. Not a nomination to office, nor a resolution, not an item of business was ever acted upon in business meetings till all had been first submitted to Elder White for his approval [and Mrs. White's] revelations always favored Elder White and herself. If any dared question their course, they soon received a scathing revelation [based on a vision] denouncing the wrath of God against them."* Canright painted a picture of a "coldly legalistic" Seventh Day Adventist church governed by the fear of going against the "divine testimonies" of its "prophetess."

Canright too was the victim of its iron rule, forced to confess that he had been "blinded by Satan" for opposing the Whites' will. For years, Canright maintained, in the late 1860's, the main business at important meetings was the complaints of Elder White against leading ministers.

Jacob Brinkerhoff, a Church of God leader, one time editor of the *Bible Advocate*, expressed a less critical view of the reason for her visions: ***they were the product of an unhealthy mind and body.***

From her childhood, when she was struck in the head by a rock and was in a coma for days, until later life, Mrs. White suffered nervous and physical disorders. Later, when her health improved, her visions were less frequent and not as intense.

Regardless as to the cause — and the source — of Ellen G. White's visions, the content of them naturally led to controversy. The content of many of them was to prove a constant source of embarrassment, and potential source of opposition to Seventh Day Adventists. And even more were Mrs. White's visions a source of conflict among Sabbath Adventists in the 1850's and 1860's by those who never accepted them in the first place, but were subjected to extreme pressure to accept the "gifts of the Spirit" from a woman "prophetess," or be forever out of the "true Church" and bereft of salvation.

Only One Church — Here

Ellen G. White's visions consistently held that God was working only through her and her church group. And as for others, "Satan has taken full possession of the churches as a body."

Her church was the only true church, and it was the end time church of the Laodiceans: *"The Laodicean church is the church of Christ for the period In which we live, and He has no other. Those who renounce membership in the Laodicean church place themselves outside the fold of Christ."*

Shut Door Later Opened

For several years, the White party taught that after 1844 the time of salvation for sinners was past.

Ellen G. White's visions supporting the shut door idea were later explained away and altered, to make the way open for increases in church membership. Yet once again, because of diametrically altering their position, both occasions supposedly due

to the result of visions, the White party left themselves open to opposition and skepticism.

1844 Error Never Admitted

Though other Adventist groups admitted the gross error in assuming that October 22, 1844 was the date of the return of Christ to the earth, the group that later developed into Seventh Day Adventists never recanted, but instead changed their interpretation of what happened prophetically on that date. For them, on October 22, 1844, Christ cleansed the heavenly sanctuary and began His work of investigative judgment. This was based on a vision of the Adventist Hiram Edson in 1844, quickly accepted by the White group.

The "Sanctuary Question" was openly opposed by many within the Sabbath Adventist movement, and later continued to be a source of controversy between Seventh Day Adventists and the Church of God.

The most obvious point advanced by opponents of the Seventh Day Adventist position is that the Day of Atonement for 1844 was on September 23, not October 22. So whatever their supposed interpretation of prophecy in 1844, Seventh Day Adventists have the wrong date to start with, for the supposed cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary is tied by them to the Day of Atonement.

The Adventist Sanctuary position can be outlined as follows: *"Christ did not make the atonement when He shed His blood upon the cross. Let this fact be fixed forever in the mind."*

Until October 22, 1844, Christ was in the first, or outer, compartment of the heavenly sanctuary. Man's sins, by the blood of Christ, were transferred to the heavenly sanctuary's second compartment — the holy of holies — thus defiling it. Christ's blood was then defiling the heavenly sanctuary. And, on October 22, 1844 (the supposed fulfilling of Daniel 8:14, "Unto 2,300 days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed") Christ entered the second compartment in heaven and cleansed it, and began His investigative judgment preparatory to His return to cleanse the earth with fire and take the saints to Heaven.

Numerous obvious objections were raised against the White Party's interpretations of prophecy from the earliest days of their movement. Based as they were, and supported by, Ellen G. White's vision, rejection of the 1844 prophetic beliefs led naturally to a rejection of Mrs. White's visions.

One of the more notorious examples of Mrs. White's dubious quotation of scripture, is found in her most famous work, *The Great Controversy*.

She quotes only part of Isa. 24:6 to "prove" that at Christ's coming, all the wicked will be destroyed on the earth, leaving the earth desolate during the millennium, while the saints are supposed to be taken to Heaven. ***Yet the rest of the verse states that there will be a few men left.***

These and other objections have continually been raised by many who have confronted Seventh Day Adventist doctrine.

1856 Vision Proven False !!

Ellen G. White wrote in her *Testimonies for the Church* that "At the General Conference at Battle Creek, May 27, 1856, I was shown in vision some things which concern the church generally...I was shown the company present at the Conference, said the angel, 'Some food for worms, some subjects of the seven last plagues, some will be alive and remain upon the earth to be translated at the coming of Jesus'."

All of the people alive at that conference have died, presenting a serious question as to the authenticity of Mrs. White's visions.

Meat, Milk, Butter, Cheese, Eggs Condemned

The health ideas of the White Party did not come to be clearly expressed until after 1860 and the formation of the Seventh Day Adventist church. They too were based upon visions — "testimonies" — and were rigidly stressed, at least in the early days of the movement.

Mrs. White's visions gave "positive testimony against tobacco, spiritous liquors, snuff, tea, coffee, flesh-meats, butter, spices, rich cakes, mince pies, a large amount of salt, and all exciting substitutes used as articles of food."

Yet she was said to have eaten butter and meat for at least twenty years after she wrote this (1872).

In her *testimonies*, she stated that cheese should never enter the human stomach, and that "eggs should not be placed upon your table."

Marriage Discouraged

Besides the discouragement of meat and milk products, and eggs, Mrs. White's visions discouraged marriage.

"In this age of the world, "she stated, "as the scenes of earth's history are soon to close, and we are about to enter upon the time of trouble such as never was, the fewer marriages contracted, the better for all, both men and women."

The food and marriage issues bring to mind Paul's prophetic statement in his letter to Timothy: "Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats [food] which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." (I Timothy 4:1-3).

Other Controversies Surrounding the Visions

Mrs. White's visions supported the idea that Christ was crucified on a Friday and resurrected on a Sunday, despite the fact that this idea weakened the Seventh Day Adventist pro-Sabbath stance.

Visions farther supported the idea of a Trinity, which early American Sabbatarians, and the Church of God, rejected.

Because Mrs. White was originally a Methodist, she was probably led to continue the practice of observing communion quarterly. The Church of God observed it once a year, on the Jewish Passover.

These and other doctrines of the Seventh Day Adventists have been hotly disputed by the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Visions a Test — Opposers Labeled Fanatics

Since 1860, being a Seventh Day Adventist has virtually been synonymous with adhering to the visions of Ellen G. White. In the first *Seventh Day Adventist Church Manual*, published in 1932, one of the twenty-one questions ministers were to ask every candidate for baptism and membership was: "Do you believe the Bible doctrine of 'spiritual gifts' in the church, and do you believe in the gift of the Spirit of prophecy which has been manifested in the remnant church through the ministry and writings of Mrs. Ellen G. White?"

Visions were: — and are — a test. Those who refused to accept them in the 1860's and earlier were labeled by the Seventh Day Adventists as "fanatics." In the early years of the Church of God, the visions were perhaps the major issue of dispute.

"Fanatics" From the White Point of View

Throughout the 1850's and 1860's the Whites mentioned in their publications the existence of opposers to them. Even the Whites had to admit that far from all of the Sabbath keeping people accepted the visions and their form, of organization. The opposition was not localized, but spread from New England to western New York and Ohio and into Wisconsin and Iowa and Illinois.

James White reports that he and Mrs. White faced opposition from "fanatics" when they traveled to Johnson, Vermont in May of 1850.

Libbey and Bailey were outspoken against the visions. Bailey was reported as stating: "The Lord does not want your testimony here. The Lord does not want you here to distract and crush his people."

White reports that upon this denunciation, the "power of God filled the room," and Bailey fell over backward, and the opposers left the meeting house.

In the fall of 1853, during several conferences of believers in New York, Vermont, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, the Whites noted numerous elements of "strife and rebellion" against them. It was about this time that the *Messenger Party* came into being with its firm opposition to the Whites.

Shortly after the 1854 failure (another date set by some Adventists), Mrs. White wrote that "a spirit of fanaticism has ruled a certain class of Sabbath-keepers [in the East]... Some are not in harmony with the body... [and have] fanciful views."

Still before the 1860 name change, in the spring of 1858, the Whites visited Ohio. A certain man, H. (it was a common practice of the Whites in their publications not to give the full name of their opponents, but only their initial), was reproved by Mrs. White in a vision. He had said he believed in her visions, but that she was influenced by others in writing them. This she stated was warfare against the Holy Spirit.

Many in Ohio were rejecting the Whites. "The brethren in Ohio have been encouraged to look with distrust and suspicion at those who are in charge of the work at Battle Creek, and have stood prepared to rise against the body, and stood independent."

Further west, a certain brother and sister R. were said to have the spirit of the Messenger Party.

Wisconsin Opposers to Visions

In her early written *Testimonies*, Mrs. White gave reproof of brother G. in Wisconsin, the chief leader of "fanaticism" in that state. After the 1860 "organization", Wisconsin opposition to the Seventh Day Adventists was still strong, especially in the northern portion of the state. A *Review* article stated that "This strange fanaticism in Wisconsin grew out of the false theory of holiness, advocated by Brother K. — a holiness not dependent upon the Third Angel's Message, but outside of present truth," Sister G. had received this theory from K., who carried it to others as well.

On August 3, 1861, Mrs. White had visions about the "divisions" in northern Wisconsin. "Some receive a part of the message, and reject another portion. Some accept the Sabbath, and reject the Third Angel's Message. They are not responsible to any one. They have an independent faith of their own." Further, it was apparent, they were drawing followers away from the Whites, to the Age-to-Come idea.

Washington, New Hampshire— Ball's Opposition At Washington

New Hampshire, the site of the original group of Adventists who accepted the Sabbath, considerable opposition to the Whites persisted, led by a brother Ball. Mrs. White states in her written *Testimonies* that Ball had been "strengthening the hands of our enemies by holding the visions up to ridicule, and publishing bitter things against us in the *Crisis* [Advent Christian] of Boston, and in the *Hope of Israel* [Church of God, or Church of Christ], a paper issued in Iowa." In 1867 at Washington, Mrs., White reproved Ball, who tearfully confessed he had been a backslider and had been influenced by Satan.

Ball's confession, published in the July 7, 1868 *Review*, gave his revised feelings about Seventh Day Adventists: "Who are the most humble, devoted, self-sacrificing, godly persons to be found among Sabbath-keepers? Do they comprise that class who are doubting, halting ... disbelieving, and fighting the visions? Certainly not. This class are noted for their selfishness, their worldly-mindedness, and their lack of consecration to God and his cause. They are lukewarm, the half-hearted, the backslidden class, among Sabbath-keepers. This fact alone should teach us that God is in this work, and, no weapon raised against it can prosper. My own sad experience has taught me that it is spiritual death to doubt or oppose any part of this work. God's hand is set to the work, and it is destined to triumph, although men and devils may oppose."

Ball was a chief opponent, but he later recanted. But in Michigan, the same state of Battle Creek and the divisions on the name issue in 1860, a group of Sabbath keepers who never did accept the visions and who held to the name Church of God, continued to exist and oppose the attempt of the Whites to take all of the Sabbath Adventists with them. The title of their paper, which began in 1863, showed the difficulty of their task and the smallness of their power: it was entitled, *The Hope of Israel*.

V. The Michigan Church of God

On August 10, 1863 a paper was launched at Hartford, Michigan, entitled *The Hope of Israel*. Enos Easton was resident Editor, and Gilbert Cranmer and John Reed were corresponding Editors. Some of its fording principles were stated to be "that the Bible, and the Bible alone" contains the whole moral law and all necessary precepts to govern God's people in every age, without the addition of any human creed or articles of faith; that "sin is the transgression of the law" and that the law by which sin is known is the law of the Ten Commandments; that death is the total extinction of being; that God is about to set up His Kingdom on the Earth, that Christ as King will sit upon David's throne, the twelve apostles on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and that the reward of the righteous, as well as of the wicked, will be on the Earth; and finally, that the earth will be restored to its Edenic glory and beauty.

The supporters of the little paper, which began with less than forty subscribers, were known variously as "Church of Christ, " "Church of God, " and "Church of the Firstborn."

Origins of the Hope of Israel

It appears that *The Hope of Israel* was a direct successor to the *Messenger of Truth*, an earlier anti-White paper published in the later 1850's. According to A.N. Dugger, Church of God historian, the Church of God brethren who did not accept the name change at the 1860 Battle Creek conference met the following year at Battle Creek and began publication of *The Remnant of Israel*, which was later changed to *Sabbath Advocate*, and still later, to *Bible Advocate*. Possibly he had the wrong name, and the *Remnant of Israel* was in actuality *The Hope of Israel*; or possibly the *Remnant* was changed to *The Hope of Israel* in 1883.

Dugger farther reports that the Michigan Church of God brethren obtained a charter with the following names on the document: L. A. Monger, A.E. Case, Seth Monger, Will Slater, and John Campbell. In the 1930's, the Michigan Church of God brethren were said to still have the original charter.

The leader of the Michigan Church of God, termed by his stepson, M. A. Branch as "the founder of the Church of God in Michigan" and "the first president of the Church of God conference," was Elder Gilbert Cranmer.

VI. The Church of God in Marion, Iowa

Hope Moves to Iowa

October 18, 1865 was the date of the last issue of the *Hope of Israel* from Waverly, Michigan. Financial problems were probably the cause of the paper's demise.

On May 29, 1866, the paper was revived, published semi-monthly by the Christian Publishing Association, at Marion, Iowa. With sixteen pages per issue and a \$1.50 per year subscription price, the *Hope of Israel* entered a new era.

The President of the Christian Publishing Association, Henry E. Carver, wrote in the first issue at Marion explaining the origins of the move to Iowa. He and B. F. Snook and W.H. Brinkerhoff had been disfellowshipped from the Seventh Day Adventist church, primarily over the visions and their interpretations of Revelation 12 and 13. And a "Church of God" had grown up in Iowa at about the same time as Cranmer and the "Church of God" in Michigan. The Iowa group was mentioned frequently by the *Hope* while it was issued in Michigan, showing a close inter-relationship. Samuel Everett, 1865 editor of the *Hope*, was from Iowa.

The Iowa delegate to the Waverly Conference, possibly Everett or Kramer, was instructed by those in Iowa to urge for the continuation of the paper, and pledge support for it to be resuscitated in Michigan, Iowa, and sent the press, type and fixtures to Marion. (L. I. Rodgers reports that Cramer sold the paper to the Iowa group.) The same press that had been used to publish the *Messenger of Truth* published the *Hope of Israel* in Michigan and now was transferred to Iowa.

History of the Church of God in Iowa

The development of the Church of God in Iowa is every bit as controversial as that in Michigan. An even greater thorn in the side of the Review Adventists, the group in Iowa was derisively termed "the Marion Party".

Iowa Adventist History

The first Sabbath Adventist church in Iowa was at Waukon in the northeastern corner of the state. This church was said to be established by James N. Andrews, who supposedly at the behest of James White left Maine and settled there with his family in 1855-56. Others who came to Iowa from the East were E. P. Butler and his son George

I. Butler, J. N. Loughborough, Asa Hazelton, and Calvin Washburn. Thirty families in all settled in northeast Iowa, all Sabbath keepers.

James White had the object of spreading the Sabbath (Third Angel's Message) into the Midwest through these settlers.

However, White reports in his *Life Sketches* that Andrews and Loughborough had become discouraged and quit the work. While the Whites were working in Round Grove and Green Vale, Illinois, Mrs. White had a vision. In it she learned that the brethren that had moved to Waukon, Iowa were now opponents. "Their sympathies had withdrawn from the Review office, and from the Church of God generally." But eventually they recanted and returned to the work.

Jesse Dorcas made a lecturing tour of Iowa in the summer of 1856. In southern Iowa he lodged with David Christopher at that time. Toward the end of 1857, Moses Hull made the first sustained Adventist evangelistic work in Iowa, resulting in raising up about twenty Sabbath keepers. By the summer of 1858, a tent was secured by the Iowa Sabbath keepers. With the help of Adventist preacher J. H. Waggoner, little groups were raised up in several towns in southeast Iowa. Many more converts were gained in campaigns in the summer of 1859. In the autumn of 1859, a church of one hundred was organized at Knoxville, Iowa, with a Sabbath School of seventy. In 1860, a church building was erected there.

Rapid growth continued into the summer of 1860, when the number of Sabbath keepers in the state quadrupled. This was the year the Marion, Iowa church was established. According to Seventh Day Adventist history, the first "Seventh Day Adventist" church in Iowa was organized at Richmond with thirty-one members.

In the spring of 1862, the Whites visited Iowa and spoke at the Knoxville court house. Here B. F. Snook and William H. Brinkerhoff were ordained to the ministry, soon becoming prominent leaders in the state. Snook had been a Methodist preacher, Brinkerhoff a lawyer.

A meeting was held at Fairview, Iowa, January, 1863, attended by delegates from nine churches favoring organization. They formed themselves into an Iowa State Conference of Seventh Day Adventists.

J. F. Mitchell was elected chairman of a committee of four to supervise the work. Apparently, B. F. Snook became its president.

Not all Iowa Sabbath Adventists went along with the Whites and their Seventh Day Adventist organization. These opposers were to form the nucleus of the Iowa Church of God.

Origins of the Marion, Iowa Church of God

I. N. Kramer, descendant of M. N. Kramer, who was one of the founders of the Marion church, has recorded the founding of the Marion, Iowa Church of God.

Early in 1860, Sabbath Adventist preacher Merritt E. Cornell came to Marion, Iowa, "preaching the second coming of Christ, the unconscious state of man in death, and the observance of the Sabbath day." Who sent him was not known, but his preaching, especially on the Sabbath, caused quite a stir. A "disciple-minister" debated Cornell over the Sabbath issue, and was utterly confounded.

The result was the organization of a "Church of Jesus Christ," composed of fifty or more members, mostly from the different churches of Marion. The church "compact," or "covenant," dated June 10, 1860, was:

We the undersigned, do hereby express our wish to be associated together in Christian fellowship as the Church of Jesus Christ, at Marion, whose covenant obligation is briefly expressed in keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, taking the Bible, and the Bible alone, as our rule of faith and practice.

As related in a letter signed by V. M. Gray, E. P. Goff and M. N. Kramer, published in the *Hope of Israel*, September 7, 1864, the Marion church was soon to be fraught by dissension. Nearly 1-1/2 years after the church's organization (1862), Elder Cornell held up Ellen G. White's visions as "of equal authority, and binding forever with the Bible, and urged us to adopt their teaching also, as a rule of faith and discipline." The result was that about one half of the Church prepare the members for a change in name and organization. In the words of Church of God historian Monroe, "Everywhere the remnant remained, there was suffering and pressure of the Adventists to accept the 'more perfect way' — loyalty to the new General Conference, which according to Mrs. White, was God's highest authority on earth; the visions and claims for [the divine inspiration of] Mrs. White; and other non-Biblical doctrines that were beginning to show up in Seventh Day Adventism.

Other Churches of God in Iowa after the 1860 organization of a church at Marion, churches were organized at Vinton, Iowa, with 100 members and also at La Porte City and Lisbon. They were tested the same way Marion was, and the faithful associated with the Church of God of Marion. A circular letter was written calling for a conference

of scattered believers, and a preliminary conference was held at Marion on November 5, 1862, where plans were made for further meetings.

Marion Establishes Contact with Michigan

The Seventh Day Adventists at Marion, who had withdrawn from the original church, came to believe that the object of the conference at Marion was to put E. W. Shortridge as their minister. He had been one of the Marion members and was in trouble with the Seventh Day Adventists probably because of his return to the original faith adopted by the Church of Christ. The *Advent Review* reported this rumor that the "rebels" were planning to put Shortridge in as minister. The Church of God at Marion had as yet no minister. All ministers that the Seventh Day Adventists sent out had to accept the visions of Ellen G. White.

Shortridge lived in Illinois some distance from Marion. A letter by an unnamed person in Michigan to Shortridge in Marion, where it was supposed he lived, found its way to him in Illinois. This opened up communication between the group at Marion and that in Michigan. The Marion people learned that they were not the first in rejecting the visions. Seventh Day Adventists had not publicized differences so the Marion people had not heard previously of Cranmer and the Church of God people in Michigan. But the Marion incident was too big to ignore. From this Michigan contact, Shortridge and the Marion people learned that in Michigan and other eastern states, anti-White, Sabbatarian churches were already holding state conferences and preparing to publish a paper, *Hope of Israel*. In the end, V. M. Gray took charge of the Sabbath meetings at Marion and was voted in as elder of the church.

The "Snook and Brinkerhoff Rebellion," or, "The Marion Party," it was the custom for one or more of the Seventh Day Adventist General Conference Committee to attend each of the State Conferences, reporting the proceedings in the Review. For the fall, 1864 conference in Iowa, circumstances prevented a General Conference Committee member from attending. No report came to the Review office, and no reason was given why not.

In the spring of 1865, the Whites and Loughborough made a trip west to hold meetings in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. Snook and Brinkerhoff had just returned to Iowa from the General Conference at Battle Creek held in the spring, 1865. They spread to Iowa their discontent of the Whites and other leaders among the Iowa churches. Elder B. F. Snook had begun to have serious doubts of the divine inspiration of Ellen G. White's visions, and he wrote to Elder Ingraham in Wisconsin proposing to him that they act independently of Battle Creek in proclaiming Bible truths. At Monroe, Wisconsin, Ingraham handed the letter to James White, who saw the proposal in a

postscript that Ingraham apparently overlooked, and wrote "There is rebellion in Iowa." When they traveled to Washington, Iowa, their knowledge was confirmed; they learned from R. M. Kilgore that Elders Snook and Brinkerhoff were stirring up war against the Whites.

Apparently, the Whites had the date for the next Iowa conference changed from the fall to the summer, scheduling it for Pilot Grove, Iowa, June 30—July 2, 1865. White wrote to Snook and Brinkerhoff, notifying them that their case would be attended to there, and asked them to be present.

Snook and Brinkerhoff, in the meantime, gathered information against Ellen G. White's visions to be used during their trial. Loughborough presided over the investigative meeting, which began June 29. He maintains that at the previous "secret" Iowa conference, Snook and Brinkerhoff had gotten themselves paid \$15 a week, paid in advance quarterly. Previously, no minister had gotten over \$12 a week. That is why the report had been withheld from the General Conference.

On the other hand, Carver maintains that the Whites refused to enter into a discussion of the merits of the visions until the "rebels" had capitulated. The Whites pledged they would not leave Iowa until every point of difference was made plain, and every objection to the visions was removed, but did not live up to their pledge.

On July 2, Snook admitted before the crowd at the conference that he had rebelled against the Battle Creek office and the Whites and that in so doing he had been serving Satan's purposes. Later both Snook and Brinkerhoff gave written confessions, which were printed in the *Review*, Vol. XXVI, No. 8. Snook said he was "led by the wicked one, " and Brinkerhoff said, "I have been deeply under the influence of Satan, and ... have done you [Elder White] a great wrong, and wounded the cause of God."

Snook had drawn his quarterly salary in advance and had spent at least half of it at home instead of working for the cause. George I. Butler was put in as State Conference President, and apparently the forces of "rebellion" were at bay.

Ellen G. White later reported that she was inspired to go to Iowa and knew nothing of the rebellion until a few hours before they met its leaders at Pilot Grove. This is patently false because two weeks earlier White found out about the "Rebellion in Iowa."

After the Pilot Grove meeting, the Whites visited Marion, but entered into no public vindication of the visions. To appear friendly, they stayed at the H. E. Carver house, one of the Marion Church of God people. Carver had previously been a believer in the shut-door error. Snook and Brinkerhoff were gathering evidence from early

publications to disprove the divine inspiration of Ellen G. White. Carver asked Ellen G. White if she was a believer of the shut-door theory at the time of her first vision, and she said yes. White admitted to Carver that it was likely that their belief of the shut door gave "coloring to the vision." (White's own words). Yet Snook and Brinkerhoff had , found in James White's 1847 pamphlet, "A Word to the Little Flock" that he maintained they had given up the shut-door belief before the vision. This is an open contradiction; one of these statements was a lie!

On the eve of their departure from Iowa, the Whites were at the house of Brother Hare. James White, in the midst of a roomful of brethren and sisters, in a contemptuous manner stigmatized Snook as a "church pauper." This was soon reported to Snook who was convinced that White's pretended reconciliation and friendship was untrue.

Carver maintains that although their group was all this time opposed to the visions, they hesitated from breaking openly with the Seventh Day Adventists because they held to the Seventh Day Adventist view of the Three Angels' Messages and the Two-horned Beast. Brinkerhoff thoroughly investigated these subjects in the next few months and soon came out against the Seventh Day Adventist view. Now there was nothing to hold them back.

The commotion brought a public discussion between Elder Brinkerhoff, assisted by Snook, versus Elder W. S. Ingraham, assisted by Elders Sanborn and R. F. Andrews. The discussion was abruptly terminated by Ingraham, who: refused to continue, notwithstanding the urging of the whole Marion church for him to continue. Instead, Ingraham called a private meeting; of those with his views and organized a new church outside: the majority of the old church. The Church of God thus became distinct when the Seventh Day Adventists withdrew. The meetinghouse was; sold and bought by those against the visions. Its upper story was soon to be the publishing house of the *Hope of Israel*. More than half of the church went with the rebels; Snook and Brinkerhoff names were dropped from the Seventh Day Adventist roll in 1866. They gathered the remnants of the now defunct *Hope of Israel* Cranmer party, and since the headquarters of the movement was at Marion, the Seventh Day Adventists termed them the "Marion Party." Previously, in 1865, discussion in the *Hope* had resulted in the changing of the name to Church of God from Church of Jesus Christ. The *Hope* now was reissued from Marion starting May 29 1866; Brinkerhoff became editor and Snook went out preaching. Kramer reports that Snook and Brinkerhoff had not led the Marion church to break with the Seventh Day Adventists, for the church had broken in 1862, three to four years before the "Great Rebellion in Iowa."

Contrary to what Seventh Day Adventists teach, Carver shows that the Seventh Day Adventists withdrew from the Church of God, not vice versa!

Church Meetings and Conferences

On July 14, 1866, the Marion church met to elect church officers. At this time they called themselves the "Church of God," whereas previously they had generally gone by the name "Church of Jesus Christ."

Another conference was held at Marion in November of that year, attended by Sabbath keepers from La Porte City, Marysville, Lisbon, Moscow, Keokuk County, and Fairfield, Iowa, as well as Keithsburg and Mt. Carroll, Illinois. Letters of correspondence were received from Wisconsin, Michigan, and the New England Sabbath keepers. Among those present were E. W. Shortridge of the church in Maple Grove, Illinois, whose ministerial credentials were accepted.

The Michigan Church of God met at Hartford, March 22, 1867, resolving to invite W. H. Brinkerhoff to participate in their conference, and appointing a committee of Samuel Everett, E. M. Kibbee, and Brother Wallen to drum up support for missionary work at home, and report to the "General Conference" at Marion what the Michigan brethren were doing.

The "Second Annual Meeting of the Christian Publishing Association" was held at Marion, May 8, 1868. It chose B. F. Snook to be the editor of the *Hope of Israel*, replacing W. H. Brinkerhoff (who resided at La Porte City) who had served since 1866. Brinkerhoff's health had been failing, and the mechanical publication of the paper had previously been given over to a D. W. Hull (possibly a former Seventh Day Baptist). Jacob Brinkerhoff, apparently the younger brother to W. H. Brinkerhoff, became the "office editor" when Hull was dropped for inefficiency. Hull drifted away from the church and became a Spiritualist.

W. H. Brinkerhoff is not heard of again until 1869, when H. E. Carver, President of the Publishing Association, wrote that the older Brinkerhoff had defected to the Universalists. This had a disastrous effect on the church at La Porte City, Iowa, where he was pastor. Another source reports that Brinkerhoff returned to teaching and law practice.

There are also reports of meetings of the Marion and Vinton, Iowa churches on November 28, 1868, and of the Hartford church on December 5 of that year.

Preaching Extent — Even into Missouri

B. F. Snook traveled for years, preaching and raising up numerous Sabbath groups. He went into southern Iowa, Illinois, and elsewhere.

A. C. Long wrote a letter to the *Hope* office from his home in Missouri, dated July 6, 1866, requesting a visit from Snook. Apparently Snook went there, and the Church of God in Missouri thus began. Another source indicates that the Sabbath was proclaimed in Hatfield, Missouri, before the Civil War. This was the home of the staunch Sabbath-keeping family of the Moores (D. P. Moore, Jasper Moore, and others), the Davlses and the Ayres.

In Horse Creek, Barton County, Missouri, J. Millard held meetings in 1866 which drew large crowds. Apparently he was a Sabbath preacher, and was unopposed by the White Party, which had not penetrated this far.

In September of 1868, Snook and "Brother Davison" journeyed to Daviess County in Missouri, stayed at the home of William Rogers,, and began meetings at the nearby Union Church, the following month. They held meetings also in Victoria, Altevista, Pattensburg, Salem, and Fairview School. Twelve new Sabbath keepers were said to have been added. Staunch local members, including Morrison, Long and Rogers, said they had been keeping the Sabbath for many years previously.

During the same time, a church was being organized (September 1, 1868) at Sulphur Springs, Indiana, due to the labors of Snook and Shortridge. It began with 28 members, and took the Bible alone as the rule of faith. This church immediately began a Sabbath School; J. B. Behbow was apparently its pastor. During the summer and fall of 1868, Snook was said to have preached 84 sermons in 82 days, traveling widely and organizing numerous Sabbath Schools and churches.

Prominent Iowa Sabbatarians

Iowa seems to have been the home of a number of prominent men who later became leading ministers in the Church of God (Seventh Day). Elder J. H. Nichols, grandfather of L. I. Rodgers, began preaching in La Porte City, Iowa in 1861. He was said to have been the first preacher of the Sabbath west of the Rocky Mountains, when in 1862 he preached at Santa Rosa, California. He also preached in Oregon. Nichols was frequently mentioned in the pages of the *Advocate* during the later years of the 1800's. When he died in 1916, it was stated that he had preached in every state of the union.

S. W. Mentzer, later president of the Church of God General Conference, accepted the Sabbath in 1860 in Iowa, and "Joined the church" in 1864. He was ordained in 1876, and died in 1927.

Alexander F. Dugger, Sr., editor of the *Bible Advocate* from 1903-1909, and father of Andrew N. Dugger, began preaching as an Advent Christian minister in Simpson, Iowa, in 1867-68. He later came to accept the Sabbath and became a Church of God leader.

Dugger is first mentioned in the Church of God paper in 1874. His first-day church had commissioned him to write a book against seventh day Sabbath keeping, but during his research he became convinced that the Sabbath must be kept in this dispensation. Instead, he wrote a booklet for the Sabbath, called "The Bible Sabbath Defended", which came to be an important tract of the Church of God, of which Dugger became a part.

Controversy Between the Seventh Day Adventists and the Church of God

The schisms that rocked the, Iowa Sabbath Adventist churches were also felt elsewhere, even in Michigan, the "home" of the Seventh Day Adventists. In the fall of 1866 James White broke the silence with regard to the "Marion Party" and denounced the group strongly in the pages of the *Review and Herald*. The Church of God paper responded and there ensued virtual mudslinging. In 1871, Elders L. R. Long, A. C. Long, and William Rogers of Civil Bend, Daviess County, Missouri, asserted in the Church of God paper that James White had used the epithets "as ignorant as a Missouri mule," "bold slanderer," "baptized liars," and such like in referring to the Church of God people.

B. F. Snook, during his evangelistic meetings, often engaged in debates with first-day ministers, but was unsuccessful in luring Seventh Day Adventist ministers into debates with him. Brinkerhoff likewise was rebuffed in his efforts to stir up debate.

Two main points raised by "The Marion Party" were (1) Ellen G. White's visions, and (2) the identity of the two-horned beast. Another concerned the Third Angel's Message.

Extreme opposition to Mrs. White's visions led many to hold that there were no spiritual gifts given to Christians in the present time.

Carver's Objections to Mrs. White

In 1877, a tract, published by the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* in Marion, Iowa, gave much of the history of the Marion period of the Church of God. It was called "Mrs. E. G. White's Claims to Divine Inspiration Examined," and it was written by H. E. Carver, the original president of the Christian Publishing Association which began the *Hope of Israel* in Iowa.

Carver states in this work that he became "fully convinced" of the Sabbath "about 20 years ago" (1857?) in Iowa City, through the preaching of J. H. Waggoner, a Sabbath Adventist preacher. He admitted that he became attached to the group of people who later became known as Seventh Day Adventists, and did so with a full knowledge of Ellen G. White's claims to divine inspiration. Carver's previous Advent ideas (apparently he had been a Millerite) predisposed him to receive the common Sabbath Adventist theory of the Three Messages of Revelation 14 and the Two-horned Beast of Revelation 13. He was in "perfect union" with the other brethren on these main points. Faith in the visions was not then made a test of fellowship, and Carver wanted to see them vindicated.

The Seventh Day Adventist historian Loughborough had stated that opposers to Ellen G. White's visions came from "those who have been reproved for defects in character, for wrong habits, or for some wrong course in their manner of life." And being thus reproved, the opposers maintained that they were not as bad as the "testimony" stated and broke off from the main body of Sabbath keepers.

Carver maintained that this was not the case with him. He had never used tobacco, had entirely discarded the use of pork, and was never reproved in any way by Ellen G. White, by a vision or otherwise. He long enjoyed the full confidence of both the Whites, and only by an accumulation of evidence was Carver forced to give up hope that the visions would be vindicated, and to have his confidence shaken as to the Christian integrity of the Whites.

Mrs. White maintained that "I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating, or writing a vision, as in having a vision." A "vision" of hers, published January 31, 1849, purported that she saw that those who stood in the present truth (Sabbath keepers), but rejected the visions, were speaking against the Holy Spirit. Thus, the fear to commit the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit undoubtedly made many reluctant to condemn Mrs. White's visions.

The Pork Question

A brother and sister Curtis were intimate friends of Carver in Iowa for many years. Mrs. Curtis, long before the Whites believed pork to be injurious, tried to banish it from her table. She was a sincere believer in Ellen G. White's visions, and wrote to Mrs. White for instruction in the matter. Ellen replied: "I believe you to be in error. The Lord showed me two or three years since that the use of swine's flesh was no test. Dear sister, if it is your husband's wish to use swine's flesh, you should be perfectly free to

use It." Mrs. White further stated that it was "fanatical" to "deprive yourselves of nourishing food."

At the time of the 1865 Pilot Grove conference, Curtis had Mrs. White's letter and promised Snook a copy. James White admitted to Carver at this conference that the Whites had just downed a 200-pound porker.

Strangely enough, with all this and other evidence to the contrary, Uriah Smith, an apologist for Ellen G. White, later reported that Mrs. White's visions never taught that swine's flesh was good and nourishing food.

Mrs. White was soon to have a vision contrary to her first one concerning pork. In *Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 4, p. 124, she claims a vision against the use of pork: "God never designed the swine to be eaten under any circumstances." Thus, "divine inspiration" was claimed for opposite doctrines.

Church of God in the Civil War — James White Counsels Breaking God's Law

H.E. Carver was conscientiously opposed to Christians fighting with carnal weapons, that is, in warfare. He believed that the church should adopt the same position and urged that the question be discussed in the columns of the *Advent Review*. This occurred at the outbreak of the Civil War, shortly before the foundation of the Seventh Day Adventist denomination.

The Whites stated at a council in Lisbon, Iowa, that the subject should not be discussed because of the danger of being destroyed by the war elements in the country for seeming to be unpatriotic. James White wrote in the *Review* that to engage in war would be a violation of two of God's commandments, but in case of being drafted, the government would be responsible for an individual's violation of God's commandments. In effect, he said that it was all right to break the law. This error was so obvious that Ellen G. White had to apologize in the *Review* for her husband, but maintained that something had to be said on this delicate subject.

Conscientious objection was too controversial for Mrs. White to pronounce a vision concerning it. Yet she did publish a vision purporting to foretell the outcome of the Battle of Bull Run, after it had been fought and the result was known.

The Iowa Church of God brethren were firmly convicted that it was wrong for Christians to engage in warfare. During the initial phase of the Civil War, Elders B. F. Snook and J. H. Waggoner prepared a petition to the Iowa state government, asking their church be exempted as non-combatants. The petition was circulated among the

brethren for signatures, and sent to the state capital. Battle Creek did not sanction this effort, terming it "fanaticism." But due largely to the Church of God petition, a law was enacted exempting non-combatants from bearing arms. Carver termed the non-action of the Battle Creek Seventh Day Adventists as "cowardly."

However, Uriah Smith reported that the Seventh Day Adventist General Conference did indirectly exempt Seventh Day Adventists by petitioning the government to exempt them through an already existing law.

Further Objections of Carver to Mrs. White's Visions

In Seventh Day Adventist publications, it was claimed that Ellen G. White's visions were given "to correct those who should err from Bible truth." Yet to Carver, it became more and more apparent that the visions were given to correct and rebuke those who disbelieved in their divine inspiration.

A friend of Carver's, Samuel Everett, protested Mrs. White's claim and was warned of the result: believe in the divine inspiration of Ellen G. White or be put out of the church. Carver reported that Elder Cornell acted very unkindly towards Everett in an attempt to force him into submission. Carver and most of the church were on Everett's side. Because of the incident, Carver refused to become a member of the Pilot Grove church. Carver did not openly break with the vision believers until after this incident, when he came to disagree with their two-horned beast interpretation. Despite the numerous contradictions he found in Mrs. White's visions, Carver did not separate himself from the White Party until doctrine forced him to do so.

Doctrine of the Church of God at Marion

Carver's 1877 pamphlet against Mrs. White was probably a reprint and revision of one published in 1871. The earlier tract was strongly refuted by James White in the June 13, 1871 *Review*.

On the cover of Elder Carver's 1877 tract is listed the purpose of the Church of God paper, the *Advent* and *Sabbath Advocate*, as it was then called:

The *Advocate* is devoted to the promulgation of the doctrines of The Second Advent of Christ, The Signs of the Times, The duty of mankind to observe the Bible Sabbath (the seventh day of the week) together with the other Commandments of God, The Nature of Man, his Unconscious state in Death, The End of the Wicked, The Earth restored to its original glory and condition as the future inheritance and abode of the Redeemed

and the Kingdom of God, The Atonement and Redemption by Jesus Christ, The Prophecies, The Christian Life, and kindred Bible subjects.

Further, the pamphlet lists several other Church of God tracts, offered for sale, as follows:

Tracts available, and the prices, were:

"The Bible Student's Assistant" .10	
The Seventh Day Sabbath .09	
The Second Coming of Christ .03	
Moody's sermon on the Second coming of Christ .03	
Who Changed the Sabbath? .02	
The Sabbath for both Jew and Gentiles .01	
What is the seal of God? .02	
Review of J.M. Stephenson on the Sabbath Question .10	
The Soul .02	
Where Are the Dead? .02	
Man, Mortal or immortal? .03	
Man's Condition on death .04	
Man, a living soul .02	
The Sanctuary .10	
The Saints' Inheritance .03	
The Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth .20	
Three important questions for Seventh Day Adventists to consider .10	
The testimonies of Mrs. E.G. White compared with the Bible .15	
Thoughts on the First day of the week .	04
Mrs. E.G. White's Claims to Divine Inspiration Examined .18	

Some of the doctrines expressed by the Church of God during the Iowa period are these:

(1) In 1869, the tithing principle, called a "systematic tax, " was definitely adopted at Marion. John Kiesz reports that "Tithing apparently was not much advocated and practiced in general among our people before 1881." He bases this assumption on a 1881 letter of W. C. Long in the *Advocate*, in favor of tithing.

(2) As early as 1866, the teaching was that the Jews would return to Palestine and become a nation once more.

(3) Apparently the Church of God was ahead of the Seventh Day Adventists in prohibiting the use of pork. Several articles appeared in the Church of God papers as early as 1866, reporting the dangers of trichinosis and the evils of eating pork. The editor was definitely against pork. But since the paper was free to upon discussion, pro-pork articles were also allowed.

(4) As for the proper time for celebrating the "Lord's Supper," the first definite report of a yearly Passover in Marion was in 1899.

According to Cramer in 1870, the Marion Church adopted foot washing and the Lord's Supper at least once in three months. But in April 23, 1867 issue of the *Hope of Israel* appeared an article by Samuel Cronce, Mt. Carroll, HI., contending that the early church, to the time of Constantine, observed the Lord's Supper annually at the beginning of the 14th of Abib, and then we should now show His death until He comes, by also observing it at the beginning of the 14th. Certainly this is a strong indication that some of the Church of God people observed the annual Passover.

Various Adventists apparently came independently to the observance of the Sabbath and/or Passover. In 1875, J.L. Boyd of Philadelphia wrote the Church of God paper, reporting that he and a group of about 175 Philadelphia Adventists learned to practice the Sabbath and the "feet-washing" accompanying the yearly recognition of the Lord's Supper. This practice began in 1845, the year following the Great Disappointment.

(5) Also in 1867, appeared an article by Thomas Hamilton stating that fermented wine is to be used in the Lord's Supper, since it was used in the drink offerings of the Old Testament, and also at the Passover. But another article refuted this.

(6) The August 27, 1867 *Hope* showed that the editorial position was anti-trinitarian, in opposition to the Seventh Day Adventist teaching.

(7) During 1868 there appeared a series of articles on the question whether the wicked dead will be resurrected or not. Some held they wouldn't, but others stated that since there was a second death, there had to be a resurrection of the wicked in order to mete out the second death penalty.

Later History of the Marion Period

Volumes of the *Hope of Israel* are missing from the official files between the May 4, 1869 and June 27, 1871 issues. Although not mentioned in the "official" church history of Klesz, it appears that during this time B. F. Snook left the ministry and the editorship of the magazine. Loughborough reports that Snook became a Universalist preacher for \$1,000 a year.

With the 1871 issue, thirty year old Jacob Brinkerhoff, a relative of W.H. Brinkerhoff, became editor of the paper. H.E. Carver was still President of the Publishing Association, and the Publishing Committee was composed of N.M. Kramer, Asahel Aldrich, and V.M. Gray.

On September 15, 1871, there was held the Second Annual Meeting of the General Conference of the Church of God at Marion. This indicates that in 1870 a General Conference had been organized. A Quarterly Meeting was also held in conjunction with this conference.

And on September 29, 1871, a "Conference of the Church of Christ" was held at Waverly, Michigan. Elder Gilbert Cranmer was still the leader of the work in Michigan.

During 1868-1869, there appeared articles in the *Hope* written by such men as Samuel Everett, I. N. Kramer, S. Davison, M. A. Harris, D. W. Randall, M. A. Dalbey, L. E. Horton, J. C. Day, J. H. Nichols, William O. Munro, J. R. Goodenough, and others.

Missouri Growth

Also in 1871 there began to appear reports of A. C. Long doing missionary work in Missouri and Kansas. In 1872 he preached in Harrison and Worth counties, close to Stanberry (Gentry County). One meeting lasted for three weeks, and was held at the Union School House near the Moore residence in Harrison County; Six convents were added, making 23 Sabbath keepers in the area. The Moore's reported they had been keeping the Sabbath there since 1861.

Name Changes and Internal Disputes

At the Third Annual Conference of the Church of God General Conference, reported in the March 12, 1872 issue, it was decided to change the name of the paper from the *Hope of Israel* to the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* and *Hope of Israel*, because the latter was

a more distinctive name that would appeal to more people. In March of 1874 the subtitle *Hope of Israel* was dropped altogether. Also at this conference the Church of God brethren heard the Seventh Day Baptist Elder V. Hull, a delegate from the American Sabbath Tract Society, give a report of the Seventh Day Baptist activity in promulgating the Sabbath. Hull lived in Welton, Clinton County, Iowa.

Because of the historical and geographical proximity of the Seventh Day Baptists and the Church of God, there may have been an attempt for some sort of Joint effort at this time. Indeed, Hull requested that a Church of God minister be sent to visit a group of Sabbath Adventists at Welton, Iowa. And the Conference voted to send M.N. Kramer as delegate to the Seventh Day Baptist Northwestern Association, as its next meeting at Albion, Wisconsin, in June.

In October of 1873, the paper was suspended, and not resumed until March of 1874. It appears that Brinkerhoff and the Publishing Association were at odds over something. The office property was sold, but to save the Advocate and the Church of God publishing work, Jacob Brinkerhoff sold his home and bought the office, press, and accoutrements so as to continue publishing. The Christian Publishing Association composed of Kramer, Carver, and Gray, previously the overseer of the magazine, was dissolved, although it appears in the end they approved of Brinkerhoff's buying the paper from Aldrich.

But they instructed Brinkerhoff that the paper's circulation must increase so as to make it self-supporting.

On April 5, 1874; the Marion church rented the upper floor of the church building to Brinkerhoff for the publication of the Advocate. Generally, the editorial policy of the Advocate remained the same as that of the Hope. In the March, 1874 issue, Brinkerhoff stated: "The editor of the Advocate does not hold himself responsible for the sentiments contained in articles written for the paper. Each writer will be responsible for his or her views of scripture. We hold ourselves responsible only for editorial selections and comments."

Missouri Becomes the Leading Center of the Church of God

Although Jacob Brinkerhoff of Marion, Iowa continued to be the editor of the Advocate until 1887, it appears that from 1874 on, the real thrust of the Church of God was carried on in Missouri rather than Iowa. Reasons for this are difficult to determine. Even today, besides the Church of God in Marion, there is little evidence of the church in Iowa; on the other hand, Missouri churches of God grew and flourished, several of which continue today.

A. C. Long's Missouri Efforts

Apparently, much of the Missouri growth was due to the preaching efforts of A.C. Long. In early 1874, he held three months of meetings in Harrison and Worth counties. At Martinsville, he garnered seventeen converts and began a church. In a series of meetings at Denver, Missouri, four more began the Sabbath, including S. C. B. Williams, owner of a large grist and saw mill. Williams posted an ad in the local paper stating that henceforth his mill would be closed on the Sabbath.

Long's July 30, 1874 meeting at Denver was a "Grove Meeting," one held out of doors in a grove of trees. This was a common practice of itinerant ministers, as the trees acted as a canopy and sound shell magnifying the voice. Church of God ministers in the 1920's were still continuing this practice.

Other evangelistic efforts in Missouri, as by W. C. Long in 1881, were done with the use of "Gospel Tents."

Moore's of Missouri

Jasper Moore and his family moved from Iowa to Missouri in about 1867. In 1873 or 1874, his son Samuel (S. A.) Moore, of Harrison County, Missouri, was baptized by Elder A.C. Long on one of his evangelistic campaigns. Moore claimed that "The Spirit of the Lord fell on me, and I felt the power of that Spirit so much so that I hurried over to Brother Long, and gave him my hand.... While this was all going on, my heart was just burning like fire. Oh, I never felt so good in-my life.—But that was all the Lord's work...." Chosen elder of a local church about 1879 at the age of twenty, Samuel Moore, and his father Jasper Moore, became leading Church of God ministers and officials.

Moore distributed tracts, and it may have been his urging that caused A. C. Long to travel to Missouri. Long organized two churches, one in Denver, Worth County, with sixty members. Here many of the new converts had been Seventh Day Baptists, and had believed in the immortality of the soul. But tracts from Moore convinced them otherwise. The second church Long organized was near the Moore place, with about forty members.

Missouri Conferences

Kramer reports that a Missouri state conference was organized in 1873. But Kiesz reports that it was 1874. From the pages of the *Advocate*, it appears that the Missouri Conference, known first as the Sabbatarian Adventist Conference of Missouri, was

organized on August 2, 1874, with a constitution and By-Laws. The officers were: S.C.B. Williams, President; A.C. Long, Vice-President; H.R. Perins, Secretary; Alistes Williams, Treasurer; and Executive Committee, S.C.B. Williams, Jasper Moore, and William C. Long. Ministers appointed to District Number 1 were W.C. Long and A.D. Leard; District 2, A.C. Long and I.N. Rogers; District 3, A.F. Dugger. The extent of such a work in Missouri apparently never had such a counterpart in Iowa-Northern Missouri and Southern Iowa Church of God brethren had a conference near Hopkins, Missouri on October 23, 1874.

The second Missouri conference was held at Pleasant Valley School House, Harrison County, Missouri on August 13, 1875. The following report was given: "Objections having been made to the name, 'Sabbatarian Adventist Church,' as adopted at our first conference, it was moved and carried that we select the scriptural name 'Church of God', and henceforth known in a church capacity by that name."

Present at this conference were the Long brothers, A.C. and W.C., A.C. Leard, Alistes Williams, R.S. Wheat, T.L. Davison, H.R. Perine, and Jasper Moore.

Missing Church History

Often, the critical years of Church of God history are obscure because of missing articles of the church paper. If all the issues were extant, presumably much more would be known. As the 1936 Census of Religious Bodies reports, "The history of the church is closely connected with the history of the publication...." I. N. Kramer of Iowa was responsible for preserving much of the early issues of the Church of God paper without which there would be very little to record.

There are no Issues available from late 1875 or early 1876, until April 5, 1881, when the *Advocate* went from semi-monthly to weekly.

Some of the new names of ministers and writers appearing after 1881 were N. A. Wells, R.E.Caviness, R. V. Lyon, J.A. Nugent, John Branch, G.W. Admire, W.O. Munro, and B.G. St. John.

Conferences and Campmeetings

What was life in the Church of God like during the 1880's? It seemed from the publications to be one consisting of going to Sabbath meetings and Sabbath Schools, campmeetings and conferences.

The "Annual Conference of the Church of God" was usually held in the fall, in August or September, in conjunction with a general church campmeeting. An example is the campmeeting held at Mineral Springs, Gentry County, Missouri beginning Thursday, September 1, 1881, and continuing until Thursday, September 6. The eighth annual conference meeting was held at the same time. The Long brothers and N. A. Wells comprised the executive committee.

Jacob Brinkerhoff, the editor of the *Advocate* from Iowa, attended this conference and reported of the prayer and social meetings and sermons. He stated that attendance rose as high as 1200 to 1500 people, and that the Church of God was greatly expanding in northwestern Missouri at this time.

The highlight of this meeting, as all others, was the official conference meeting, conducted according to parliamentary law. President W.C. Long presided. Leading members and ministers there were: W.C., A.G., A.C. Long, N. A. Wells, E.L. Pierce, Thomas Beckman, Elisha Marshall, A.C. Leard, Jacob Lippincott, Samuel A. Moore, Jasper Moore, J. W. Osborn, C.T. Pierce, James A. Sims, T.L. Davison, and Jill Nichols. Ministers reported on their work and Brinkerhoff gave an overall report of the state of the work, from the Advocate office. Businesslike and devoid of human interest and real life content, the reports of these meetings give little besides who attended and who were chosen new officers.

The year 1881 also saw Church of God meetings at Spring Ranch Grove, Nebraska and Hartford, Michigan. J.H. Nichols, Enoch Owens, John Sperry, and G. W. Admire were working in Nebraska, while Lemuel J. Branch reported from Michigan.

Two Types of Ministers

The Michigan meeting decided that "all who labor among us as ordained ministers must have credentials as such, and those preaching without being ordained must have license." This shows the existence of the two common types of church of God ministers: (1) credentialed, that is, ordained ministers, and (2) licensed, not ordained, ministers.

Credentials were issued by the General Conference, and renewable from, year to year.

Also in the 1880's, it appears that there began the practice of holding ministerial conferences. A ministerial conference was held in Stanberry, Missouri, on March 18, 1884.

Some Kept the Passover

The April 12, 1881 issue of the *Advocate* sets forth reasons for observing the Lord's Supper, or Passover, annually at the time of the Jewish Passover. Pro and con articles were printed on the subject, but Passover reports in the spring of that year showed that many brethren had accepted it. A group in Nebraska at Samuel Barackman's kept the Passover and footwashing on the evening after the 13th of Nisan, as did R.E. Caviness of Beckwith, Iowa, and a "Brother Davison." The May 24, 1881 issue of the **Advocate** contains a long article by A. F. Dugger explaining the reasons for annual observance.

The Year 1884: General Conference Organized Copies of the *Advocate* are missing for the year 1883. But the year 1884 seemed to show a decided upturn in events of the developing Church of God.

For one, there was the first mention of the Church of God at Stanberry, Missouri, where a Ministerial Conference was held, March 18, 1884. Churches and members had sprouted up around Stanberry for some time previously, and it appears that by now there was a church at Stanberry.

It appears that a move to closer Church of God organization was well underway. President W. C. Long of the Missouri Conference urged that the church elders choose a delegate for every ten members to represent the local congregations at the conference. The ministers present, and their areas of service, shows the extant of the church at that time: W. C. Long, N. A. Wells, A.C. Leard and J.C. Kerns were in Missouri; J. H. Nichols in Kansas; Jacob Brinkerhoff in Iowa; John and L.J. Branch in Michigan, S.W. Mentzer in Iowa; and Bro. Stahl in Indiana.

A meeting was held at Marion, beginning September 6th, attended by all the Iowa brethren as well as the Michigan brethren returning from the Missouri Conference. An Iowa Conference, with a Constitution and By-Laws, was adopted. Elder A.C. Long was elected President, indicating he had moved from Missouri to Iowa.

Next was held the "Fourth Annual Conference of the Church of God" in Michigan, October 2-6, at Irvington, in Van Buren County. Michigan finally moved to take the name Church of God, and as Kiesz later noted, 1884 was thus the year that "every local group associated with the General Conference, that had not done so previously, accepted the name of 'Church of God'."

L. J. Branch was then President of the Michigan Conference, While other Michigan ministers were Gilbert Cranmer, M. Davoist, Thomas Howe, Elsis L. Robinson, A.N.

Fisher, and John Branch. The Long brothers and I.N. Kramer visited the Michigan meeting.

With these several meetings, in Missouri, Iowa and then Michigan, the subject of a more unified body was brought forth. And during the Michigan Conference, it was voted to organize a General Conference, made up of the state conferences of Michigan, Iowa, Missouri, and Nebraska. The first officers were:

A. C. Long --President
A. F. Dugger --Vice-President
Jacob Brinkerhoff-- Secretary
I.N. Kramer-- Treasurer

General Conference Committeemen

A. C. Long
W. C. Long,
John Branch

It is surprising to note the full circle that the Church of God people had come to. In 1860 and 1861, they had vehemently been against any form of organization, especially that which the White Party formed at Battle Creek, with a "General Conference." Yet by 1884, they had come to form the same conference system that they previously had denounced. To be sure, there were articles in the Advocate as late as 1885 against organization. But before this, articles began appearing for organizing, written by Brinkerhoff and the Longs.

The General Conference System

As organized in 1884 (Kramer says it was 1883), the Church of God General Conference was in reality only a loose confederation. Individual churches and individuals seemed to have great liberty about many points of belief, although the 1885 session outlined 24 articles of common Church of God belief.

From the starts the *Hope of Israel* had been open to views from both sides of controversial issues. But now, beginning with the November 15, 1887 issue, the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* was published not by Jacob Brinkerhoff who had bought the press previously, but by the General Conference of the Church of God. Brinkerhoff was hired by the conference to publish the Advocate and the Missionary. And the General Conference Committee was to examine all articles not in harmony with the Church of God Constitution.

Apparently this "new editorial policy" did not in reality change anything, as far as article content. Controversy was still allowed. From W. H. Brinkerhoff on, articles had appeared advising strongly against the use of pork. Now, from 1885 and in following years, a number of articles appeared in favor of eating the unclean meats. A possible reason for this is that some of the brethren were so anti-Seventh Day Adventist that they become pro-pork.

The unclean meats issue was one that has long been, and still continues to be, a dividing factor in the Church of God, Seventh Day.

However, the general trend of articles on the subject of tobacco was that it was a "filthy weed."

In 1874, A. C. Long noted that he and some of his converts at Denver, Missouri, entered into a "solemn vow" never to engage in the "filthy habit" of tobacco. Mr. and Mrs. Williams, their sons Enoch and Amzy Williams, and Bro. Moore were among the signers of the pledge.

H.C. Blanchard Refused to Support Visions

In 1877, a 43-page tract was printed at Marion, Iowa by the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* press, entitled "The Testimonies of Mrs. E. G. White Compared with the Bible." Written by H.C. Blanchard, the tract records the plight of a man who refused to go along with Mrs. White's visions.

Blanchard united with the Seventh Day Adventists in 1861, covenanting to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Soon afterwards, he received a license to preach. At that time he knew little of the visions, had read a few of them, but believed they were of divine origin. He did not heartily endorse the "Health Reform" visions, but said little on the subject.

In 1869, he moved from Illinois to Missouri. He relates, "I did not preach the visions and health reform, but I still continued to labor with the Seventh Day Adventists." Officials of the Kansas and Missouri Seventh Day Adventist Conference checked up on Blanchard, discovering that he did not preach the visions nor proscribe tea, coffee, flesh meats, and pork. As a result, in 1874, Blanchard's ministerial credentials were withheld. In 1875, he was notified that they would be renewed, providing he accept the visions and Health Reform. He turned in the credentials, preaching his views fully for 4-5 months at the Labette, Kansas church, of which he was a member.

In March of 1876, Elder J. H. Cook visited the church, remaining several weeks, and condemning Blanchard's "rebellion." Most of the church sided with Blanchard, so he could not be put out. But at a church business meeting, on May 13, 1876 with the advice of G.I. Butler, some fourteen members withdrew in order to conform with Seventh Day Adventist teaching. Blanchard continued to hold regular meetings in the Labette church, now composed of independent Sabbath-keepers.

Blanchard's 1877 tract zeroes in on the Health Reform. Referring to Gen. 18:8; Isa. 9; I Sam. 17:18 and II Sam. 17:29, he showed that the Bible is not against meat, butter, cheese and eggs, as Ellen G. White's visions purported. To Seventh Day Adventists, the prohibition against pork was as binding as "thou shalt not steal," but Blanchard believed that pork was permissible.

Whether Blanchard joined the Church of God or not is as yet unknown.

Almon Hall Refutes Adventist 2300 Day Interpretation

Another tract writer during the Marion period was Almon Hall, who in 1880 published a 44-page tract, "The Command and the Weeks of Daniel 9: 24-27" at the Advocate press.

A native of Vermont, born in 1820 and "converted" in 1835, Hall received the Advent message of Miller prior to 1840. Shortly before October 22, 1844, he was convinced that no definite time for Christ's return could be known.

After a long and careful investigation, Hall embraced the Sabbath in September, 1849, and was one of the first Sabbath-keepers in Washington County, Vermont.

In 1880 his address was Transit, Sibley County, Minnesota. In his tract, Hall refuted the Millerite connection of the 70 weeks prophecy to the 2300 days prophecy, holding that 490 years are not part of the 2300 days, and was not sure that the 2300 mornings and evenings should even constitute 2300 years.

Jacob Brinkerhoff of the Seventh Day Adventists

In 1884, Jacob Brinkerhoff published a 16-page tract at Marlon (the third edition) entitled "The Seventh-Day Adventists and Mrs. White's Visions." It is of a rather mild tone and without caustic criticism or bitter vituperation, but simply explains why the visions are wrong. The main point Brinkerhoff emphasized was that Mrs. White's visions were of human origin. He quoted Elder White's 1868 edition of *Life Incidents*, noting that since 1845, Ellen had had some 100-200 visions, "the most

apparent change being that of late years they have grown less frequent and more comprehensive." Thus, Brinkerhoff concluded, after keeping "the laws of health," that is, abstaining from pork, she became more healthy in mind and body, and therefore had less visions, which were a product of an unhealthy body and mind.

An examination of Mrs. White's visions convinced Brinkerhoff that they corresponded to what people already believed. "For instance, for a space of several years they believed that probation for sinners ceased in 1844, and the visions taught the same thing.... [viz.,] 'fee time of their salvation is past'." Later the visions said the opposite. Another case was that of conditionalism. In 1845 or 1846, Elder George Storrs had brought to the attention of Adventists at a conference at Exeter, New Hampshire, the doctrine that the dead sleep until the resurrection. Later, Mrs. White's visions upheld this.

Brinkerhoff felt that Mrs. White's visions had greatly hurt the spread of the Sabbath truth. He felt that the Whites had gotten lots of money because their people were led to believe that they were the only church and "are taught that to be saved they must be with 'the body', that is, their organization." Seventh Day Adventists treated their dissenters with intolerance, for "The power exercised over the people, and their treatment of dissenters, very much resembles the Roman Catholic Church."

How did Brinkerhoff explain the great growth of Seventh Day Adventists versus the insignificance of the Church of God at this time? "Some are held with that people because of the large work they are doing, saying they must be right, or they would not be so prospered; forgetting that other bodies of professedly religious people have had great prosperity, though holding and teaching gross errors." Their prosperity, Brinkerhoff believed, was not due to their being right, but because of the managing skill of James White.

A final interesting comment by Brinkerhoff is his reference to a conference in western New York in the early history of Adventists, where the Whites attended. There Mrs. White had visions against certain positions the Whites opposed, but that Brinkerhoff said were correct. This must have reference to the 1848 conference at Volney, New York and William E. Arnold, who held to a yearly Passover observance and the Age-to-Come doctrine.

Canright's Defection from Seventh Day Adventists

D. M. Canright began keeping the Sabbath in 1859 as a result of the preaching of the Whites. In 1864 he was licensed to preach by the Seventh Day Adventists, and in 1865 ordained by James White. He soon became dissatisfied with Seventh Day Adventists,

because he "saw that he [Elder White] ruled everything, and that all greatly feared him. I saw that he was often cross and unreasonable."

An incident occurred in 1867, in which Canright saw that Elder White was clearly wrong, but Mrs. White's "Testimonies" sustained him. J.N. Andrews was adamantly against White, and Canright was sympathetic to Andrews' position. But they were forced to make a written confession that they had "been blinded by Satan." Canright noted, "I saw that her revelations always favored Elder White and herself. If any dared question their course, they soon received a scathing revelation denouncing the wrath of God against them."

For years in the late 1860's, the main business at major Seventh Day Adventist meetings was the complaints of Elder White against leading ministers. Canright related that "Elder and Mrs. White ran and ruled everything with an iron hand. Not a nomination to office, not a resolution, not an item of business was even acted upon in business meetings till all had been first submitted to Elder White for his approval;" Seventh Day Adventism was a fear religion, a "yoke of bondage," or "cold legalism," Canright felt, because members were cowered by White's use of the visions, to either accept them or "fear of being damned if they refuse."

Canright left the Seventh Day Adventists in 1880, was back for a time, but left them for good in 1887 when he became a Baptist minister. He notes that most of those who left them became infidels, because "The natural rebound from fanaticism and superstition is into infidelity and scepticism....the ripe fruit of Adventism in the years to come will be a generation of infidels."

In her *Testimonies for the Church*, Ellen G. White seemed to show the corruption extant in her church, which was a cause for Canright and others withdrawing. She wrote, "The Spirit of the Lord has been dying away from the church.... The churches have nearly lost their spirituality and faith.... I saw the dreadful fact that God's people were conformed to the world with no distinction, except in name Covetousness, selfishness, love of money and love of the world, and all through the ranks of Sabbath-keepers.... There is little love for one another. A selfish spirit is manifest. Discouragement has come upon the church.... There is but little praying.... Right here in this church corruption is teeming on every hand.... There is a deplorable lack of spirituality among our people."

Canright on Others who left the Seventh Day Adventists

D.M. Canright's 1889 book, *Seventh-Day Adventism Renounced*, shows that he was not the only one to withdraw from the Seventh Day Adventists. He records others who had

also withdrawn. J.B. Cook and T.M. Preble, whose Sabbath tracts converted many to Sabbath-keeping in the 1840's, left Sabbath-keeping, as did O.R.L. Crozier. Elder B. F. Snook, a leading Sabbath Adventist minister, was in 1889 a Universalist. Elder W. H. Brinkerhoff of Iowa had also renounced the faith. Elders Moses Hull according to Canright, the most able speaker Adventists ever had and Shortridge had become Spiritualists. Elders Hall and Stephenson were with the "Age-to-Come" party. A.C.B. Reynolds of New York had become "a noted blasphemer." Elder H. C. Blanchard and T.J. Butler of Avilla, Missouri, had renounced the Seventh Day Adventist doctrine. Elder L.L. Howard of Maine left them, as did H. F. Haynes of New Hampshire. Nathan Fuller of Wellsville, New York became a libertine. M.B. Czechowski went to Europe and died in disgrace. H.S. Case, Elder Cranmer and Philip Strong of Michigan all left the Seventh Day Adventists, as did Elder J. B. Frisbie, a pioneer preacher for many years in Michigan.

Others who left included Dr. Lee of Minnesota, who inaugurated work among the Swedes there; Elder A.B. Oyen, missionary to Europe and editor of their Danish paper; Elder D.B. Oviatt, for many years President of the Seventh Day Adventist Pennsylvania Conference, who became a Baptist minister, as did Elders Rosquist and Whitelaw of Minnesota; Elder C.A. Russell of Otsego, Michigan, became a Methodist; and Elders Hiram Edson and S.W. Rhodes, pioneer preachers, died cranks and a trial to the church.

Those who wrote against their former church previous to Canright were H.E. Carver, H.C. Blanchard, J.W. Caasady, A.C.Long, Jacob Brinkerhoff, J.C. Day, H.W. Ball and Goodenough and Bunch.

The main reason why he and the others left, Canright states, was the question of Ellen G. White's visions.

Canright specifically mentions the Church of God with headquarters at Stanberry, Missouri, who separated from Adventists because of opposing Ellen G. White's visions. He notes that "they have grown steadily, and now have thirty ministers and about six thousand believers... They have done a good work in exposing the fallacy of Mrs. White's inspiration."

Extent of the Church of God on the Eve of the Stanberry Era

Statistics for the Church of God for the middle 1800's have been almost impossible to locate. The first instance occurs in the report of the fall, 1886 general conference meeting at Marion. Elder J.H. Nichols reported a membership of 75 in four churches in Kansas; Elder W.C. Long reported 440 members in 13 Missouri churches; Elder John Branch reported 365 members in 8 Michigan churches, and Jacob Brinkerhoff, 81

members, four churches in Iowa. Total was 961 members and 29 churches. At the same time, 485 copies of the *Advocate* were being published weekly.

Receipts for the year were \$1,032.38, total conversions for the year, 122, and number of ministers and licentiates, 30. And also in 1886, average salary for each minister and licentiate was \$34.40 per year. Mostly the ministers had farms of their own to supplement their income.

VII. The Move to Stanberry

It seemed inevitable that the Church of God headquarters would move to Stanberry, Missouri. The thrust of the work had long before been centered in northwestern Missouri. The building at Marion which had long been the publishing headquarters of the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* was sold in 1886 for \$1200.

And during the Fourth Annual Session of the General Conference, held at Stanberry, beginning October 28, 1887, Jacob Brinkerhoff resigned the editorship. A.C. Long immediately became the editor and publisher, beginning with the November 15 issue.

The new General Conference Committee was composed of W. C. Long of Stanberry, John Branch of Wayland, Michigan, and A. C. Long of Marion. The fourth session of the General Conference, which initiated these changes, is believed to have been the first one at Stanberry.

The General Conference had agreed to support A.C. Long financially for a year when he was appointed publisher and editor. He bought the equipment and continued to produce the paper from Marion. Because issues of the paper are missing from May of 1888 to May of 1892, it is difficult to determine the precise nature of events during the move from Marion to Stanberry.

According to the August 12, 1963 *Bible Advocate*, the first issue to be printed in Stanberry was that of June 26, 1888, showing that A. C. Long did not last a year as editor at Marion. A notation in the Marion church records shows that by October 13, 1889, the *Advocate* had already been moved to Stanberry, and the editorship had changed to W. C. Long.

According to S.J. Kauer, the change in editorship and office occurred in the summer of 1889. A.C. Long's health was bad, and it was thought best for him to move to a warmer climate. So W. C. Long, who lived in Stanberry, bought the equipment from his brother and moved it to Stanberry, where he began publishing the Church of God paper. "At this time — 1889," Kauer reports, "Stanberry was the center of the rapidly growing work of the Church of God in Missouri. It was also the location of the home of W. C. Long. These seem to be the reasons for the move from Marion, Iowa."

W. C. Long secured a building for the machinery, which was later so arranged that the upper story was used as a meeting place for the church.

Another innovation was the change in the name of the paper. From *Advent and Sabbath Advocate*, the name was changed to *Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Advent*. And, the paper was now issued weekly, by the General Conference of the Church of God, Stanberry, Missouri, and the General Conference Committee of A.C. and W.C. Long, and J.C. Branch.

Steam Press Increases Activity

Previously, the paper had always been published by use of a hand press. But beginning in October of 1892, the Advocate was printed by a steam press, acquired for \$130. A larger steam press was purchased in October, 1900. In the June 21, 1892 issue; Jasper Moore stated that according to W.C. Long, the Advocate office had printed 1,064,000 pages of tracts, presumably still on the hand press. With the acquisition of the steam press, the possibilities of expansion were greatly increased.

The Church of God, Incorporated

Legal incorporation had apparently been discussed previously, for at the 16th Annual Session of the Church of God General Conference, a committee of three, B.F. Whisler, M.A. Branch, and G.T. Rodgers, were appointed to consider the matter of incorporation. Their report in favor of legal organization was carried, and the January 2, 1900 issue of the *Sabbath Advocate* carried this report: "The General Conference of the Church of God is now incorporated. Articles, by-laws, etc., of incorporation will appear in the General Conference report which will be issued in pamphlet form and be ready for distribution in ten days. Price 10 cents."

Final Change of Name of the Paper

At the following annual Conference, the 17th, held at Stanberry, December 6, 1900, it was decided to change the name of the paper from *Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom* to *Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom*, the name that has continued to this day. N. A. Wells became editor, and W.C. Long stepped down to become office editor and business manager.

Thus, by the turn of the century, the Church of God and the *Bible Advocate* had acquired much of their present form, and the seeds of further growth were already sprouting.

Church of God Work to 1900

The Church of God made great strides in growth during the last years of the last century. In 1892, George Batten and Company's Directory of the Religious Press of the

United States took notice of the *Sabbath Advocate*. It stated that the paper was an eight-page weekly published in Stanberry, Missouri, and had been established in 1865 [sic.]. Its editor then was W. C. Long and the circulation was about 1000 copies.

A year's subscription was priced at \$2.00. The church also published *The Sabbath School Missionary*, twice a month, 50 cents a year, with Edwin H. Wilbur, editor. The directory reported that this paper had been established in 1884, and had a circulation of 460. (But it is interesting to note that by late 1969, the circulation of the *Advocate* had grown to only 2225).

According to the Eleventh Census (1890), the "Church of God (Adventist)" had 29 churches and 647 members. One of its churches had a building seating 200, and was valued at \$1400. And the Church of God at this time had 19 ministers.

In the spring of 1896, W. C. Long reported that over 100 converts had been made since the 1895 General Conference meeting.

To show the spread and growth of the Church of God in the years just preceding 1900, the following give some evidence:

Song Book Published

E.G. Blackmon of Neosho, Missouri, an ex-Seventh Day Adventist minister, was converted through the efforts of W. C. Long in 1886. He was a songwriter and became a leading minister in the Church of God.

By January of 1893 he had prepared a church hymnal called "Songs of Truth." Most of the hymns therein, the music as well as the words, were composed by Blackmon. The new church hymnal went through several revisions and "the black book" continued to be used for many years by the Church of God. As Kiesz stated, "The songs were slanted toward truth so that our people could freely sing them, not only with the spirit but with the understanding also." Blackmon died in 1912.

Cranmer and Branches continue in Michigan

Gilbert Cranmer and the Branches in Michigan continued to be mentioned in the *Advocate*. In 1887, at the age of 73, Cranmer held a meeting which resulted in 22 signing a church covenant. In reporting his efforts in the *Advocate*, Cranmer remarked, "I would rather wear out than rust out." At 86, Cranmer was still hale and hearty. He died in late 1903 at the Church of God hospital and sanatorium at White Cloud, Michigan.

Sanatorium at White Cloud

A Church of God sanatorium was established at White Cloud, Michigan, around 1900. In accordance with the Seventh Day Adventist practice of instituting hospitals and emphasizing bodily health and medicine, it appears that the Michigan brethren led a Church of God effort to establish a hospital. J.C. Branch became a medical doctor, and in the May 17, 1898 issue, he suggested that the Church of God build a sanatorium at White Cloud. The rest of the church seemed to support his move; the Stanberry church even subscribed the furnishing and keeping of a room in the White Cloud Hospital and Sanatorium, as it was called, known as the Stanberry Room. By September 25, 1900, the building was nearly finished, and sixty-six surgical operations had been performed. Elder Gilbert Cranmer became one of its patients and died there. Dr. J.C. Branch directed the sanatorium, assisted by two other doctors and three nurses.

The April 2, 1901 issue reported that the Sanatorium was a three-story, brick building. Micropal and chemical examinations were made to determine the cause of each patient's disease. Curative treatment included dietetics, Branch reported, while the "up to date laboratory" was used to fill prescriptions for the patients, "when it is found that medicine is necessary." Yinton, Iowa; Stanberry; Hartford, Michigan; and the Nebraska and South Dakota Conferences, provided money to furnish rooms in the hospital.

Little is heard of the Church of God Sanatorium at White Cloud after 1900. One reason is that the Michigan Church of God drifted away from the General Conference until in 1917 most of them joined with the Seventh Day Baptists.

Kiesz reports that at the turn of the century, there was a Normal School and a Sanatorium at Stanberry, which later became extinct. But the indication is that they were not direct projects of the Church of God.

The 1902 General Conference discussed the possibility of establishing a Church of God "Academy."

Church of God member M.J. Vanderschuur reported in the October 16, 1900 issue of the opening of an orphanage or children's home at his place in Kenwood Park, Iowa.

West Virginia Church of God

In 1887 appears the first mention in the *Advocate* of Church of God activity in West Virginia. A Seventh Day Adventist state meeting was held at Kanawha Station, West Virginia on May 18, 1887. The meeting was held because some Seventh Day

Adventists, such as Elder Chaffee, had refused to preach for the visions of Mrs. White, and a division was threatened. Emory Robinson and his wife, and six more, including Henry L. Lowe and wife, were put out of the Seventh Day Adventist church for refusing to accept the visions. They were subscribers to the *Advocate*, and though not claiming to be Church of God members in 1887, wrote a letter commending the *Advocate* because "it is not always calling other commandment keepers evil names."

Dugger, in his *History of the True Church*, refers to a Church of God established in Wilbur, West Virginia in 1859, by Elder J. W. Niles, who came from Erie, Pennsylvania. Derisively called "Nilesites" by their enemies, this group was said to have kept the Passover on the 14th of Nisan.

Church of God in Oklahoma

Cherokee Strip, Oklahoma was opened up for settlers in 1893. Among the early settlers were some Church of God Sabbatarians, the Wells, Websters, Hortons and Helsons. Elder J.R. Goodenough came to Oklahoma in 1896, holding services in the area, and adding new Sabbath keepers. Elder S.S. Davison, who appeared in the *Advocate* of 1892 from Woodward, Iowa, moved to Oklahoma in 1899, as did the Sheffields and the Baums. During World War I the Cherokee Strip area Sabbath keepers bought a meetinghouse from the Mennonites, as a permanent church was established.

The Fairview Church of God Sabbath School is reported to be the oldest in the state, with Claremore a close runner-up. J.K. Hinds founded the latter group, when he moved to Inola in 1905, and began preaching the Church of God message.

Up until 1905, the Church of God in Oklahoma was associated with the Missouri Conference. But at a meeting held at the Golden Valley School House near Fairview, Oklahoma, September 2 and 3, 1905, an Oklahoma Conference was formed. President was C.C. Wells; Vice-President, Frank Miller; Secretary, Blanche Sheffield; and Treasurer, Eber Davidson.

Church of God in Nebraska and the Dakotas

German Speaking Brethren the first mention in the *Advocate* of Church of God work in South Dakota comes in November, 1892, when it was announced that a Northwestern Nebraska and South Dakota Conference of the Church of God had been formed. A Quarterly Conference of the Church of God was held at Bonesteel, Gregory County, South Dakota on December 2, 1892.

The third annual session was held, September 27, 1895 at Bassett, Nebraska. J. A. Nugent was Secretary of the conference, and it was noted that most of the members lived within 10 to 15 miles of Bassett. Bassett, Nebraska was the home of Elder A. F. Dugger, and his son, A.N. Dugger. In 1896, Elder L.L. Presler was working in Nebraska, and a Brother Ellis in South Dakota.

In 1898, unknown to A.F. Dugger and the other Church of God people in Bassett, Nebraska, a German-speaking Church of God was organized near Eureka, South Dakota, in the northern part of the state. A minister named Halbesleben, formerly a Free Methodist preacher in Minnesota, moved to the Dakotas, and having accepted the Sabbath, began to work among the Seventh Day Adventists. His preaching emphasized "holiness or sanctification as a second experience, that is, another experience with God besides conversion." The result was the breaking up of a number of Seventh Day Adventist churches in both the Dakotas, and the formation of several independent Churches of God, including Eureka. In other words, Halbesleben was pentecostal, preaching about the "baptism of the Holy Spirit." John Kiesz reports that Halbesleben was against "speaking in tongues," although some people during the sermons were "taken possession of by the Holy Spirit." This explains why John Kiesz and other Germans in the Church of God tended to be "pentecostal." Kiesz' father, Philip Kiesz was one of the first leaders in the Eureka church.

For about twenty years, members met in homes for services, under the leadership of Philip Kiesz, Sr., and John Brenneise, Sr. A large group of younger people, including John Kiesz, became converted in 1910, and in 1918 a church building was erected five miles north of Eureka. Kiesz, Brenneise, Frederic Miller, George Dais, Sr., and Peter Schrenk were trustees. Later, in 1925 the church elders were Christ Kiesz and John B. Brenneise.

It was not until late 1923 that the group, calling itself the Church of God, came into contact with the Stanberry General Conference. R. P. Bossert of Montana, an *Advocate* subscriber, sent an issue to Eureka, which opened up the way for eventual union with Stanberry. Early in the spring of 1924, Elder A.N. Bugger was invited to hold services in Eureka and council with them on doctrinal points. There were a few differences, but Eureka soon became a General Conference member, and held its first campmeeting in 1925.

Dugger wrote of his contact with these German brethren in the March 4, 1824 *Advocate*. He reports his visit to a church of 100 people in Roseoe, South Dakota, who had been Sabbath keepers and holders to the name Church of God for more than 20 years. "They did not know of anyone else holding to the faith as they, except a few small companies...." Dugger reported that the church had no regular minister, but the leading

brethren spoke in turn, viz., John B, Jacob A., Henry A. and Daniel B. Brenneise; Christes and Philip Kiess; Jacob Dais; and John Schrenk. The older pioneer members were Johannes Brenneise, Philip Kiese, Fred K. Miller, George Dais, and Peter Schrenk. They were said to believe that Jesus was the Son of God (and not God himself), a Wednesday crucifixion, Sabbath resurrection, the 1000 year reign on the earth, unconscious state of the dead, destruction of the wicked, and other doctrines similiar to the Church of God. They wanted the Church of God General Conference to recognize them as one of its churches, but Dugger wanted to wait awhile in order for them to thoroughly understand what the church believed.

Brenneise and Christ Kiesz preached in Alberta, Manitoba and British Columbia, as well as several states. Thus it was that the Church of God contained many German-speaking members. Soon after 1925, a German *Bible Advocate* was started, with Christ Kiesz editor, and Bossert, Brenneise, and John Kiesz contributing editors. Kulm, Alfred, and Cleveland, North Dakota and Fellon and Glasgow, Montana, were prime mission fields.

North Dakota Church of God

Possibly even before the 1898 establishment of the Eureka, South Dakota Church of God, William Halbesleben established a church about twenty miles south of Kulm, North Dakota. About twelve or fourteen families began keeping the Sabbath, meeting in various homes. The Schlenker family, and the Moldenhauers later, were among the members.

The Henry Schlenkers later moved to Alfred, where a church developed. Alfred, North Dakota, was also the home of a Seventh Day Baptist church.

Parkston, South Dakota — Independent Church of God

The Church of God General Conference, organized in 1883-84, never contained all the Sabbath-keeping churches of God. One of them was at Parkston, South Dakota, the ancestor of the Lodi, California Church of God.

About 1876, a group of German immigrants from Russia began keeping the Sabbath at Parkston, South Dakota. They formed a congregation called the "Seventh Day Church of Cod." Its first elder was Henry Baumbach, who was succeeded by his son John. In 1908, a portion of this German church left South Dakota for Lodi, California. There, Henry Baumbach, Jr., served as elder for more than twenty years. The Lodi church was torn by dissensions through its years. In 1960 two factions of the church united. Elder

Leo Merriam became pastor, Claude Ellis assisting. John Brenneise and Joseph Reuscher were also elders at this time.

Besides the doctrines of the Sabbath, Ten Commandments, Water Baptism, and Salvation through Christ alone, the main element of the Lodi's doctrine was local autonomy. Charles Monroe reports that the Lodi church never has been part of any conference, and is a "free" church.

It has been reported that "The church is not subject to any national organization, but is governed strictly by local autonomy with every qualified member having equal voice and vote. The importance of brotherly love is stressed at all times."

Elder Merriam stated that in the new earth, God's people will be governed by Christ. But, "until that time, however, a democracy is the only form of government that will succeed in a church, if the people are to be free, happy, and get along together." "Getting along together," or rather, the lack of it, has been one of the recurring themes in Church of God history. The independent nature of Church of God Sabbatarians has resulted in one schism and division after another, and at the turn of the century, this issue begins to take on major significance.

Church of God In Oregon, Louisiana, and Pennsylvania

Also previous to 1900, the Church of God had expanded its message into far reaching areas from the Stanberry headquarters.

On October 25, 1894, the Second Annual Meeting of the Church of God in Louisiana was held at Hope Villa. B.F. Purdham, B.C. Causey, and H.G. Roberts were on the Executive Committee.

A.H.W. Barnes, ex-Seventh Day Adventist minister, had started a work In Salem, Oregon in the spring of 1884. And by the fall of 1894, an Oregon Conference of the Church of God was held in the Cole SchoolHouse, Linn County. Some of the Pacific Coast ministers were Elders R.H. Sherrill, H.M. Anderson, J.H. Sperry, J.W. Beatty, C.E. Whisler, and W.L. Raymond.

And a Pennsylvania Church of God meeting was held, November 1 and 2, 1895 at Geneva, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, announced by William M. Darrow. J.W. Niles of Edlnboro, Penhsylvania and Brother Wing of Blockvillej New York were expected to preach during the meeting.

26 Ministers, Circa 1900

Contributing editors of the *Advocate* in 1895 were listed as S.S. Davison, A. F. Dugger, A. C. Long and Jacob Brlnkerhoff. These were four important Church of God ministers of this period.

In 1896, there were these Church of God ministers working in scattered parts of the country: A.F. Dugger, Bassett, Nebraska; J.C. Bartlett in Missouri and Iowa; L.J. Branch in Michigan; Jacob Wilbur in Arkansas; R.H. Sherrill in Oregon; L.L. Presler in Nebraska; and M.B. Ellis in South Dakota.

Church of God credentialed ministers in 1899 were: W. C. and A. C. Long, A. C. Leard, Jasper Moore, D.M. Spencer, Z.V. Black, E.G. Blackmon, Jacob Wilbur, N. A. Wells, S.S. Davison, R.E. Caviness, S.W. Mentzer, E.S. Sheffield, J.R. Goodenough, L.L. Presler, Hiram Ward, A. F. Dugger, J. A. Nugent, J.T. Johnson, H. P. Peck, S. Pope, M.B. Ellis, J. C. Branch, M.D., L.J. Branch, M.S. Carlisle, M.A. Branch, W.H. Sloan, L.A. Wing, J.W. Niles, Hiram Harris, J.W. Sperry, H.T. Whitehall, F. C. Pixley, F. P. Kennedy, James Shingletan, Levi Watkins, Gilbert Cranmer, M.J. Vanderschuur, J.W. Beatty, S.P. Loop, A.P. Bacon, R.H. Sherrill, and L.J. Herriman.

In the year 1900, A. C. Long, perhaps the leading Church of God minister since the 1870's, died of brain fever at his home in Brownsdale, Missouri. A Church of God member since the 1860's, Long was born in Perry County, Pennsylvania, September 15, 1846. Previous to his taking over the press in Iowa (1887), Long preached for several months in San Francisco and other points on the Pacific Coast. After he relinquished the editorship due to ill health, he again went to the Pacific Coast for a time.

Also in 1900 Michael W. Unzicker(1873-1956) was ordained. The December 18, 1900 issue of the *Bible Advocate*, the first with the new name, listed Newman A. Wells as editor, W. C. Long as office editor and business manager, and A.F. Dugger, S.S. Davison, J.R. Goodenough and J.C. Branch as contributing editors.

Team of Wells and W. C. Long

Newman A. Wells (1848-1923) editor of the *Advocate* in 1900, had moved to Maysville (Marysville?), Missouri in 1865. In the early 1870's he became a Baptist, but in the autumn of 1878 he heard the Sabbath preached, and united with the Church of God. With Elder W. C. Long, Wells held meetings in northwestern Missouri for about ten years, preaching in churches and school houses in the winter, and in tents during the summer. Wells preached in Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Michigan and Louisville, Kentucky.

VIII. Independent Church of God Splits – 1905 - 1917

From the incorporation of the General Conference of the Church of God in 1900 to the first major problem of division within the church covered a time period of only five years. Although official reports, such as the United States Census of Religious Bodies, took note of the Church of God division in 1905, the Church of God historians Kiesz and Kauer do not directly mention the event. Neither apparently did the pages of the *Bible Advocate*.

The Schism, of 1905 — Unattached Congregations

Church of God members today commonly have memories of the 1933 division of their church between Stanberry, Missouri and Salem, West Virginia. But seemingly they know little or nothing about the major division of 1905. They give the picture that before 1933, the Church of God was fairly well united. But the census reports reveal otherwise.

The official name of the Church of God, because of its roots in the Adventist Movement, was at the time, "Church of God (Adventist)." According to the 1936 Census of Religious Bodies, in 1905 a number of churches withdrew from the Church of God (Adventist), "on the ground that the general conference assumed too great authority. They are in entire accord with the Church of God in doctrine and polity except that they reject the principle of a central representative conference and rely wholly upon the efforts of the individual church and its members. They are, however, associated or affiliated to a certain extent; and a publishing house at Stanberry, Missouri issues the *Bible Banner* to represent the views and work of their churches."

In the 1908 Census, these churches were registered under the name, "Churches of God (Adventist), Unattached Congregations," and had almost as many members as the main body. Yet this independent body is not mentioned in the following censuses, of 1916, 1926, and 1936. The reason given in the 1936 Census was that "if any of these churches existed in 1936, 1926, or 1916, they were probably included among the independent churches or merged with other Adventist bodies."

Therefore, between 1906 and 1916, the loose association of these independent Churches of God probably fell apart; some joined the General Conference, some joined other Sabbath churches, and others remained "free."

The 1906 Census shows that the "Unattached Congregations" numbered 10 churches and 257 members, while the regular conference body had 10 churches and 354 members. The independents were concentrated mostly in Michigan, with lesser numbers in Missouri, Oklahoma and Illinois. Iowa and Nebraska remained "loyal" to Stanberry. One of the dissenters, a Church of God leader in 1903 and 1905, was J. R. Goodenough of Oklahoma. He was denied ministerial credentials in 1908 because of his "attitude against the General Conference." It is significant to note that the 1906 combined figures are less than those of 1890, showing that apparently the division had seriously weakened the progress of Church of God growth.

As for the main body, the Church of God (Adventist), the 1906 Census reported the following: "The membership of the denomination is scattered over a large part of the United States, not merely as a result of removal from the chief centers of the denomination, but by the addition of individuals who, accepting the general principle of the observance of the seventh day and faith in the second coming of Christ, declined to join the main body of Seventh-day Adventists or withdrew from it. In a few cases such individuals have formed independent local bodies not identified ecclesiastically with the Church of God, and yet somewhat affiliated with it." In 1906, the church had "no organized missionary work," but resident ministers were conducting evangelistic services outside their parishes, and the conference employed two general missionaries.

Seeds of The Division — Politics and Disputes

The General Conference met in December of 1903 and appointed Elder A. F. Dugger as editor of the *Bible Advocate*. Contributing editors were L. J. Branch, S. S. Davison, J. R. Goodenough and J.V.C. Branch. W.C. Long continued as Office Editor and Business Manager. The former editor, N. A. Wells, continued as a minister, living in Palisade, Colorado in 1905.

But Long apparently had gained opponents to his position. He had been publishing *The Owl* (Stanberry's local newspaper) using the Advocate press, and was accused of using Conference money to operate this paper which he owned.

At the 32nd Annual Missouri Conference of the Church of God, held at Gentry, September 8-9, 1905, an exception was taken with regard to W. C. Long being granted renewal of his ministerial credentials. He was retained on condition that he justify himself of the mismanagement of funds charges. Later, on December 7-11, the conference met again to discuss Long's case, after which Long was asked to resign, and apparently later was disfellowshipped. Elder A. F. Dugger became both editor and manager. New General Conference officers were S. W. Mentzer, President; Jasper

Moore, Vice-President; G.T. Rodgers, Secretary; W. A. Cure, Treasurer; and H.T. Whitehall, L.L. Presler, D.P. Moore and M.B. Ellis, Executive Committee.

White Cloud and the other Michigan churches were greatly stirred by the issue of the departure of W. C. Long. It appears that his firing from the editorship of the paper sparked the beginning of an independent revolt against the Church of God General Conference.

Another issue may have been a resolution adopted during the 1905 Conference sessions: the church reaffirmed its belief in tithes and offerings as the Bible means of supporting the work. And it was recommended that each state's tithes be sent to the State Conference treasurer, who in turn would pay a tithe of the state tithes to the General Conference treasurer.

An internal power struggle and a drive to enforce tithing and make the General Conference stronger: these appear to be the key issues which precipitated the 1905 division.

Seventh Day Adventist Splits Produce Independent Sabbatarians

During the early years of the 1900's, it appears that many Seventh Day Adventists left that church over disagreement with Ellen G. White's visions. Some of them remained independent, and some united with the Church of God.

In 1907, R.K. Walker (1880-1970) of Bates, Oklahoma, became convinced of the Sabbath through a Seventh Day Adventist. He was baptized into the Seventh Day Adventist church in 1911. But because he did not endorse "The Testimonies for the Church," Walker withdrew from the church (or was disfellowshipped) with Lee Evler and J. W. Rich, causing the Seventh Day Adventist church there to disband.

The "cast outs," as they termed themselves, rented a hall near Alderson, and Walker joined Elders Evler and Rich, with others, in printing an anti-Seventh Day Adventist paper, *The Gathering Call*. Other ministers present at a week's campmeeting in Alderson were W. F. Talbert and a Mr. Gregory of Claremore. The next summer's meeting (1912 or 1913) was attended by Walker, Evler, Rich, Talbert, Haxtshorne, A.F. Ballenger, A.T. Jones, G.G. Rupert, J.M. Rodriquez (a well-educated preacher from Mexico), and J. J. Jobe: 27 ministers in all, cast out of the Seventh Day Adventist church. Here it was decided to make Ballenger editor of the paper, which was moved to Riverside, California. *The Gathering Call* continues to be a forum for anti-Seventh Day Adventist information. Rich later died, Evler went back into his law business, and Talbert went into the Church of God.

In 1920, R. K. Walker moved to Finley, Oklahoma, and soon met Elder M. W. Unzicker at Sardis, Oklahoma, the first Church of God man he had met. At the behest of Walker, Unzicker held meetings at Finley, and baptized Frank Walker, son of R.K. Walker. Unzicker invited R. K. Walker to be a Church of God evangelist for the Oklahoma Conference, and Walker began his first meeting for the Church of God on May 19, 1923. Frank Walker began preaching at Crowder, Oklahoma in 1924.

It is interesting that the Walkers, Rupert, and Rich held to "Anglo-Israel" beliefs, as did an Elder Ziegler, who put out a paper, *The Torch of Israel*, published in Washington, D. C. Ziegler tried unsuccessfully to work with Evler.

G.G. Rupert established his own paper, the *Remnant of Israel*, published in Britton, Oklahoma, beginning in 1915. Rupert, a former Seventh Day Adventist minister, taught and practiced the keeping of all the annual sabbaths, or holy days. He also had a form of "British Israelism," in which he identified the United States as Ephraim in Bible prophecy. Rupert's article on the holy days was printed in the *Bible Advocate* of 1913, and two of Rupert's books were *Yellow Peril* and *Inspired History of the Nations*.

Other independent Sabbatarian magazines of the period include *The Evangel of Hope*, Joplin, Missouri; *The Shining Light*, Almira, New York; *The Mispah*, Enid, Oklahoma; and *Religious Liberty*, Washington, D.C.

G.G. Rupert noted that the cause of so many independent Sabbath groups was their "desire for liberty which older organizations [had] not granted their teachers."

Further analysis of these periodicals, if available, will shed more light on the extent and beliefs of these independent groups. A most interesting enigma is the reason why the *Bible Banner*, the magazine of the Unattached Congregations, was published at Stanberry. Another is the question of exactly what were the doctrinal differences, if any, separating the groups.

Result of the 1905 Division — Losses to the Church of God

A pamphlet published by Dr. J. C. Branch, "Correspondence Relative to the Michigan Conference, Church of God and Seventh Day Baptist," (c.1919) shows that the end result of the conflict over W. C. Long was the defection of a large number of the Michigan Church of God to the Seventh Day Baptists. Adelbert Branch's pamphlet, "The Backward Look," published in 1937, gives much the same story.

The Church of God in Michigan apparently did not grow at all in the latter years of the 1800's. The older leaders, such as Cranmer and the Branches, were growing old and it seems that the cause was languishing, about ready to die out.

Adelbert Branch of White Cloud, Michigan attended the Stanberry General Conference as a delegate from the Michigan Conference for two years early after the turn of the century. He became dissatisfied with the General Conference, and the 1905 Long case apparently was the straw that broke the camel's back. The Branches led the Michigan Conference to, vote to withdraw support and membership in the General Conference.

The Independent stance in this period of the Michigan Church of God is shown by the notice in the *Advocate* of 1915 that the semi-annual meeting of the "Sabbath-keepers Association of Michigan" would be held at Battle Creek in November. Adelbert Branch of White Cloud was the President, and O. J. Davis of Battle Creek was Secretary. The wordage used showed that the Michigan people did not want to refer to themselves as "Church of God," being tied to Stanberry.

J. C. Branch was Michigan Conference President in 1916

The Michigan Church of God continued as independent until 1917, when at the 57th Annual Conference of the Michigan Church of God, held at White Cloud, September 27-30, it was voted to merge with the Seventh Day Baptists, and take their name. Thus it was that the Michigan Church of God, and especially the Branches, largely switched to the Seventh Day Baptists. The churches of White Cloud, Bangor, and Kalkaska County wholly went in with the Seventh Day Baptists.

Dugger Tries to Revive Michigan Church of God

To fully report the history of the Michigan split, it is necessary here to continue the story further, into the time when A. N. Dugger, son of A. F. Dugger, was editor of the *Advocate*.

Dugger tried desperately to revive the Michigan Church of God. One year after the 1917 defection, Dugger came to Michigan, gathered some remnants of the Church of God there that had not gone in with the Seventh Day Baptists, and held a Conference, which was labeled the 57th Annual Conference of the Church of God in Michigan. Thus it was that the original Michigan Conference was organized in 1860 (57 years previous to the 57th Conference in 1917), and not in 1861, as some sources state. The second 57th Conference, in 1918, was the basis used for numbering by the renewed Michigan Church of God, so that at the present, it appears, fallaciously, that counting backward, the Michigan Conference was organized in 1861.

Dugger's 57th Conference, held October 4-7 at Toquin (near Bangor), Michigan resulted in the election of Elder M. C. Pennell as President and State Evangelist; Elder L. A. Munger, Vice-President; G. L. Hart, Secretary and Treasurer; and Jim Sternamen, G. L. Hart and L. A. Munger, Executive Committee. Other ministers credentialed by the Conference were G. W. Sarber, W. F. Morse, E. L. Trowbridge and Lewis Buchtel.

The conference resolved "that the Church of God in Michigan awaken to greater zeal, and put forth renewed effort in sending out the gospel message of warning to the tens of thousands now living," And further, firm solidarity was affirmed with the General Conference, as well as for paying tithes to G. L. Hart of Covert, Michigan, the state treasurer.

Disputes and Counter Charges

In the pages of the *Bible Advocate*, Dugger reported the second 57th Conference as if it had been the only legitimate one. And he further reported that the 1918 Seventh Day Baptist General Conference had voted unanimously to join the "Federation of Churches in America" (the body of Protestant churches which later became the National Council of Churches), one clause of the Federation's platform was purported to state that Sunday observance should be enforced by Civil Law. Dugger further maintained that two Seventh Day Baptist churches, at White Cloud and Bangor, had opposed the union with the Federal Council, and encouraged them to come out of their false church. According to Dugger, the Bangor Seventh Day Baptist church did so, organizing a Church of God there, and several of the White Cloud Seventh Day Baptist church placed their membership in the Bangor Church of God. Further, three credentialed Seventh Day Baptist ministers joined the Michigan Conference of the Church of God, and would preach in Michigan and northern Indiana.

J. C. Branch disputed Dugger's facts, saying the three ministers had been given Church of God credentials before the dissolution of the White Cloud Church of God, and Pennell was at first with the Seventh Day Baptists, before enticed by a bigger money offer from Dugger. J. C. Branch's remarks were published in the *Evangel of Hope* and *Bible Banner*, the opposition papers to the *Bible Advocate*.

Dugger apparently refused to print Branch's challenges to his side of the story, stating that the *Advocate* must not be the scene of "strife and contention." He said that several had left the Church-of-God-turned-Seventh-Day-Baptist church at White Cloud and united with the Church of God General Conference before Dugger came to Michigan;

and they had in fact asked him to come. Dugger maintained that the Seventh Day Baptists were downgrading the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ, and some of their ministers were preaching about the Immortal Soul, Ever Burning Hell, and Going to Heaven, which obviated the necessity of Christ's coming. Pennell thought by being with the Seventh Day Baptists that he could reach more people by preaching in the field, but they, knowing he would not preach the Immortal Soul and like doctrines, muzzled him, and he had to reaffirm his original stand with the Church of God.

Dugger stated with authority: "The Lord is in the message of the Church of God, and it is going to go to Michigan in power, as well as to every other corner of the globe. It is the true doctrine of Jehovah, and the Almighty is in the move, and no power under heaven can stay his hand. It has got to go, and regardless of every obstacle it is going to go."

Dr. J. C. Branch maintained that some Seventh Day Baptist ministers did preach the coming of Christ and Restitution, and that he continued to be able to preach the same doctrines that he had preached in the Church of God. Branch asserted that Dugger was wrong in stating what the Seventh Day Baptists actually believed.

Legacy of the Independent Churches of God

Pennell and the revived Michigan Church of God did apparently prevent total collapse of the work in that state. But the Branch defection to the Seventh Day Baptists seemed to stifle any Church of God progress in the area. The 1928 Census reported only two churches and 20 members of the Church of God Michigan.

Independent Sabbatarians, terming themselves the Church of God, continued to exist down throughout the history of the Seventh Day Church of God, draining its strength and preventing real growth. Additional splits and feeble attempts at union were a continual problem, and one that did not begin in 1933, but long before. The Conference system, with election of officers and some "local autonomy," seemed to be a faulty one for the governing of the church. Robert A. Barnes, a Church of God evangelist since the 1920's and now working in Oregon, summed up the Church of God problem: "When someone asks me the address of the headquarters of the Church of God, I have to ask them, 'Which one?'"

The Division in Retrospect

In an editorial in the May 19, 1925 *Advocate*, Dugger gave a backward glance at the reasons for the period of division. He labels the era of 1905-1910 and earlier as the "period of debate," through which the church had now passed:

"The Church of God has a message today that must go, and is going to the world, and there is not power under heaven that can, or will stop the onward move. For many years in the past we have spent much time talking and discussing openly many Bible themes of importance. Many people have been thus benefitted, and the church through this long course has truly received much light and discarded error, but there was no forward advancement made, not much effort put forth to reach out into new fields with the gospel... but the periodicals were used to discuss pro and con important issues before us...[and] others not so important... Brethren of local churches also took up the same discussions, and divided on different sides taking issue with one another. Fifteen and twenty years ago [1905-10] some churches were broken up and scattered while the same topics that caused the contention were still freely put forth through the *Bible Advocate* just to please some one that made the request.... [But now] we have through this period of debate truly arrived at the blessed truth... And we do not have time to stop and longer contend with one another over some certain doctrinal point... Our ranks will never again be disrupted by taking issue through our papers on debatable questions, and thus spreading contention and strife... We have something more to do we have a definite message of salvation to carry out to the Lost: a warning of coming destruction and its terrible consequences to sin and sinners...."

But, ironically, it was scarcely eight years after this statement that "debatable questions" were again to split the Church of God.

IX. Andrew N. Dugger and the Church of God Surge in the 1920's

The Passing of A. F. Dugger

Elder A. F. Dugger became sole editor of the *Bible Advocate* in 1905 at the ousting of W. C. Long. Dugger's health was failing, and to assist him in the publishing work at Stanberry, he requested sixty-six year old Jacob Brinkerhoff, who became office editor in March of 1907. Exactly what had happened to Brinkerhoff since he had resigned the editorship in 1887 at Marion, is difficult to determine, for he is rarely mentioned in reports of the church leadership or ministerial activity. Presumably he remained at Marion.

On Sabbath evening, December 20, 1907, the *Advocate* building and offices were destroyed by a fire, and the press damaged. Most of the printing type and cases were carried out into the street, but the upper story, where the tracts were, was entirely burned. Insurance did not cover the entire loss, and a drive was started for financial contributions for another building and office. The "new" building was purchased for \$1000 on West First Street, the present location of the Stanberry church and Church of God college, and until recently, the home of the press. An old flatbed press, run by a gas engine, was obtained. In 1915 a cylinder press was added, and in 1916, the first unotype-was purchased.

The paper had long been printed in newspaper size, of eight pages. But in December of 1910 it was changed to a smaller, 9 x 12 inch, size, but expanded to sixteen pages.

Durtng the time when Brinkerhoff and A. F. Dugger were editors, numerous articles on prophecy appeared in the *Advocate*. One belief held by A. F. Dugger, was that the Gentile Times would end in 1914.

In 1909, A. F. Dugger's health would no longer permit him to continue as editor, so Brinkerhoff became sole editor. Dugger died in December of 1910.

Church of God Before 1914

The Church of God message went into several new areas from the turn of the century to the outbreak of World War I in 1914.

By 1903, Elder M.S. Carlisle of Carter Creek, Tennessee, announced the holding of a yearly meeting in that state, August 7, showing that there had already developed a work in the area. Carlisle worked with Elder J. F. Williams of Boaz, Alabama, and the two preached together throughout the Southeast. Another annual Church of God area meeting was held July 26, 1907 at Phil Campbell, Alabama, site of a local church.

Elders Hiram Ward and J. L. Herriman held meetings near their home in Rollins, Montana in 1906, and a church was organized there.

S. W. Mentzer, who had accepted the Sabbath in Iowa in the 1860's, and was ordained in 1876, became a Church of God leader, frequently being elected President of the General Conference.

Credentialed Ministers, 1907 - 1908

Ministers given credentials by the 24th General Conference in December of 1907 included the following:

Blackmon, E.G. Brinkerhoff, Jacob Carlisle, M.S. Caviness, R. E. Davison, S.S. Dugger, A. F. Ellis, M.B. Harris, Hiram Johnson, J.T. Kennedy, F.P. Knight, E. Loop, S. P. Mentzer, S.W. Moore, Jasper Moore, S.A. Munger, Seth Nichols, J.H. Nugent, J. A. Osborn, J.W. Pope, S. Presler, L.L. Prime, J. T. Richards, G.W. Rodgers, G. T. Rogers, I.N. Shingleton, Jas. Sloan, A.B. Slown, W.H. Vandever, J.H. Ward, Hiram Wells, N.A. Whisler, B. F. Whitehall, H.T. Williams, Charlie Williams, J. F. Williamson, J.T. Wing.

In 1908, the following men were added: J.E. Wells, E.B. Cox, C. C. Wells, C.A. Blood, J.G. Gilstrap, A.J. Hayes, S.E. Northup, and J.L. Herriman, while the following men were deleted: E. Knight, S. P. Loop, Seth Munger, S. Pope, A.B. Sloan, W.H. Slown, N.A. Wells, and L.A. Wing.

J. R. Goodenough was suspended until he explained his attitude to the General Conference.

What a Church of God Campmeeting Was Like

The yearly campmeeting must have been a crowning event in the life of the zealous Church of God member in this period. Since many members were isolated, it was a chance to fellowship with others of like faith.

One such campmeeting at Stanberry, described in a 1908 issue, shows that members from Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska attended, over 110 in all. There were 22 family tents, plus a larger tent for services.

Sermons were given each evening, and during the days when the Iowa or Missouri conferences were not meeting. Speakers that year were Elders Whitehall, Munger, Presler, S.S. Davison, Mentzer, Whisler and Brinkerhoff. Subjects included Mt. 25:34, judgment, parables, love of God, duty of searching scriptures, Christian's hope, the return of Christ, Rev.14:6 and Nebuchadnezzar's image, these are the last days, and baptism. There was much singing, and seven were baptized, children of Church of God members.

Church of God Leaders, 1907 — 1910

The 1907 Church of God General Conference consisted of S. W. Mentzer of Robins, Iowa, H. T. Whitehall of Scranton, Iowa, L.L. Presler of Farnam, Nebraska, S.S. Davison of Roscoe, Oklahoma, D. P. Moore of Hatfield, Missouri and Chancy Anible of White Cloud, Michigan.

Some of the evangelistic meetings conducted in 1908 were those by Elders J. F. Williams and H. T. Whitehall at Kanawha Station, West Virginia, home of L.E. Robinson. Also, L.L. Presler, who was "General Evangelist" at the time, held extensive meetings in Oklahoma and Kansas in February and March of 1908. Whitehall held tent meetings at Piano, Iowa in August, and E.G. Blackmon kept up regular monthly meetings at Goodman, Missouri, and also went to Keystone and Manford, Oklahoma.

Officers chosen in 1908 were, again, S.W. Mentzer, President; L.L. Presler, Vice-President; G.T. Rodgers, Secretary; Jacob Brinkerhoff, Treasurer; and the Executive Committee of C.A. Shanklin, Springville, Iowa; A. F. Dugger, Jr., Selden, Nebraska; D. P. Moore, Hatfield, Missouri; and Frank Baum, Fairview, Oklahoma.

In 1909, reports of missionary labor done in the field were given by S.W. Mentzer and H.T. Whitehall in Iowa, L.L. Presler in Nebraska, S.S. Davison in Oklahoma, and E.G. Blackmon in Missouri.

In 1910 appear reports of elders M.W. Unzicker in Oklahoma; J.H. Nichols, California and Missouri; J.F. Williams, Alabama; M.S. Carlisle, West Virginia; W.T. Whitehall, Iowa; E.G. Blackmon and J. T. Williamson, Missouri; A. B. Sloan, Arkansas; G.W. Patison, California; L.L. Presler, Nebraska; and M.F. Ellis, South Dakota.

Leaders of the church in 1910 were S.W. Mentzer of Robins, Iowa, A. F. Dugger, Jr. of Selden, Nebraska, S. A. Moore of Hatfield, Missouri, C.A. Shanklin of Springville, Iowa, A.D. Youngs of Fairview, Oklahoma, and G.T. Rodgers of Ault, Colorado. Later that year, A. J. Hayes of Piano, Iowa, replaced Shanklin on the conference committee.

The Work, 1911 - 1913

In January of 1911, the newly built Wilbur, West Virginia Church of God building was deeded to the Church of God General Conference.

Also that year, two "gospel tents" were bought, one for Missouri and the other for use in the South. After a tent meeting near Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, a "Southern Conference" was formed, October 15, 1911, with Elder J.F. Williams President, J.H. Hinds Vice-President, and Elder N.B. Ellis, Secretary and Treasurer.

By 1912, there were 43 credentialed ministers listed by the General Conference. One of them, Andrew N. Dugger, held meetings around Stanberry in November which resulted in a "good interest to hear the truth presented."

At the 30th Annual Conference, held at Stanberry, October 19, 1913, Elder S. W. Mentzer was again re-elected President. Other officers were L.L. Presler, Vice-President; G. T. Rodgers, Secretary; Jacob Brinkerhoff, Treasurer; and G. W. Richards, H.T. Whitehall, A.D. Youngs, and A.N. Dugger, Executive Committee.

Brinkerhoff's salary as editor was \$10.00 per week.

In the late fall of 1913, Elder L.L. Presler rose up several Church of God members at Farmer and Waterville, Washington. Apparently these were mostly Church of God members that had moved there.

The General Conference Committee of 1913 had many familiar names:

S.W. Mentzer of Robins, Iowa; A.N. Dugger of Selden, Nebraska; G.W. Richards of Gentry, Missouri; H. T. Whitehall of Scranton, Iowa; A.D. Youngs of Fairvlew, Oklahoma; and G.T. Rodgers the Secretary, of Stanberry.

The Turning Point: 1914

As the year 1914 approached, many in the Church of God were predicting striking events to happen that year, based upon prophecies in the book of Daniel. World War I broke out in 1914 and in 1917 General Allenby captured Jerusalem from the Turks,

which seemed definitely to fulfill prophecies concerning the Times of the Gentiles. And 1917 marked the beginning of the return of the Jews to Palestine, which according to Church of God teaching, must occur before the Second Coming.

Death of Brinkerhoff, The Greatest Church of God Leader

Editor Jacob Brinkerhoff, now in his seventies, was facing a lingering fatal illness. The May 12, 1914 issue of the *Advocate* contained his last editorial. Having abdicated the editorship to a younger man, Jacob Brinkerhoff, termed by S.J. Kauer as "perhaps the greatest outstanding leader in the church," died at Stanberry on July 12, 1916, at the age of 75. Jacob Brinkerhoff had served the Church of God for over 40 years. He held the editor's job of the Church of God paper for more time than has any other, twenty-one years editor and two years office editor. In 1874, Brinkerhoff had used the money he had planned to buy a home, to buy the press equipment for the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* in order to save the material from being sold for the debt against the paper. Single-handedly, it seems, he had prevented the total collapse of the work.

Departure of the Pioneers

One of the older pioneer members was Elisha S. Sheffield (1824-1907), born in Bedfordshire, England, who came to America in 1841 and embraced the Advent faith in 1852. He has been said to have written a Church of God history.

Another was E.G. Blackmon (?-1913), who in the words of historian S.J. Kauer "was a most active evangelist and minister." He was also the musician and hymn writer of the church. He compiled the old 'Black Back' hymn books, 'Songs of Truth' and a great many of his hymns, to which he wrote both words and music, appear in them.

Isaac N. Kramer (1832-1923) was born in New Geneva, Pennsylvania, and moved with his parents to Lynn Grove, Iowa, near Marion, in 1839. He lived in Robins for ten years, and fifty years in Marion. Kramer "became a member of the Church of God" around 1863, and was a minister for fifty years. He was noted as a profound scholar, and remained mentally sharp up until his death in 1923. He left an unfinished work on the history of the Church of God.

A.C. Long in 1900, Gilbert Cranmer in 1903, Elisha S. Sheffield in 1907, A.F. Dugger in 1910, J.R. Goodenough and E.G. Blackmon in 1913, Joseph H. Nichols and Jacob Brinkerhoff in 1916: it seemed that the old ministers of the Church of God were all dying out, as a new breed of men entered the leadership of the work. The year 1914, it has been stated, "marks a decided awakening in the Church," as new leadership and

new efforts to expand were begun. The leader of the Church of God, and the editor of the *Bible Advocate*, from June of 1914 until 1932 was Andrew N. Dugger.

History of A.N. Dugger

Andrew N. Dugger, son of A. F. Dugger, Sr., was born and reared at Bassett, Nebraska. In his early years, he was a school teacher twenty miles south of Bassett. In the summer and his spare time, he and his brother Alexander F. Dugger, Jr., each homesteaded 640 acres, raising cattle and hay. Andrew saved up enough money to buy another 640 acres, which had a natural artesian well. One of his pupils, Effie Carpenter, later became his wife.

Dugger was taught by his parents to tithe, and apparently readily accepted the Church of God teachings. Andrew was granted his ministerial license, and received into the ministry, in 1906 at the Church of God campmeeting at Gentry, Missouri. After his father died in 1910, Dugger saw in a vision the light of heaven shining around him, and then moving in the direction of Jerusalem. In 1914, Dugger disposed of all his worldly possessions, his cattle, horses and land, and answered the call to the executive board and editorship of the *Bible Advocate*. In the move, he cleared some \$5,000.00, which he used part of later to finance his 1932 trip to Jerusalem.

Dugger's Prophetic Teachings

One of the main influences upon A.N. Dugger was his father's teachings, that there would be a world war in 1912 to 1914. This was based upon his understanding of Bible prophecies concerning a 2520 year period. A. F. Dugger may have received these views from a work on prophecy published by a Dr. Guinness of Australia in the 1860's. He put his ideas in the *Advocate* in the 1890's. Based upon the "seven times punishment" prophecy of Leviticus 26 and the "overturn, overturn, overturn" of Ezekiel 21:25-27, Dugger concluded that "As it required three successive strokes in the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the overturning three times by Nebuchadnezzar, so it is to require three strokes for the destruction of all Gentile nations," that is, three world wars. Judah was restored in three successive returns, just as it was destroyed in three strokes.

Beginning of great rebuilding at Jerusalem

The year 1917, the capture of Jerusalem by General Allenby, is seen by Dugger to be a fulfilled prophecy based upon his interpretation of the 1290 and 1335 year prophecies. Another "crisis date" he points to is 1975.

Prophecy inter-relation continued to be a major feature of Dugger's teaching, and Church of God in general. Directly contrary to William Miller's teaching that the Jews did not have to return to Palestine in order for Christ to return, the Church of God has long taught that a Jewish nation must be setup, and that the Battle of Armageddon, just before Christ's return, would be between Israel and the Gentile hordes, mainly Russia.

When A.N. Dugger took over the editorship of the *Advocate* in 1914, World War I was beginning, and soon the way was opened for the Jews to return to Palestine: these prophecies which the Church of God had taught were being fulfilled. This seems to have been an impetus for the year 1914 marking "a decided awakening in the Church." It marked the beginning of an explosion of "missionary work" performed by the Church of God in the years after the Great War and into the Roaring Twenties.

Dugger's Style

Apparently Dugger did not marry until later in life. His schedule in his early years as leader of the Church of God was extremely hectic, with much traveling. He has stated that he spent most of his time in lengthy revival and evangelistic meetings in new fields, and in answering calls for meetings from isolated brethren. The meetings were held at night, and during the day he prepared copy for the weekly *Bible Advocate* on a portable typewriter, and answered correspondence mailed to him from the office at Stanberry. Four to six weeks were spent at each site.

After each campaign, Dugger spent a short time at the office. His "backup men" at Stanberry were Elder R.C. Robinson, who ran the printing press, and Chester Walker, the book binder.

Dugger spent over a year compiling his "Bible Home Instructor," which is sort of a doctrinal compilation of Church of God doctrines. It draws together all scriptural references to each subject, listed alphabetically. It originally had some 400 pages, covered 195 Bible subjects, and contained 161 photos. The cost of printing these books, which must have been substantial, was mostly covered by the sale of the books by colporteurs, house to house religious salesmen. A good colporteur could more than cover his traveling expenses by commissions from the sale of the books. Associated with Dugger in preparing the lessons were Elders J. A. Nugent and Herbert Miles (one of Dugger's first converts, soon after 1914).

In 1924 Elder O.K. Osman, an ex-Seventh Day Adventist, was placed over the colporteur work, which began to greatly expand. However, the Executive Committee, under the influence of "opposition brethren" (to Dugger, that is) said that there was too

much profit being made on the books, and voted the price cut in half. Previously, the "Home Instructors" had sold for \$3.00 cloth and \$4.00 leather, with one half the money going to the colporteurs. Dugger strongly opposed this, maintaining that the colporteurs needed to be compensated for their travelling and lodging expenses. He lamented that this was a "fatal mistake" and that organized colporteur work never recovered from the blow. When the colporteur work was thriving, Dugger recalls, the church was growing and building.

Zealous young men in the church began as colporteurs, and many were then trained by Elder Herbert Miles in a sort of ministerial apprenticeship program. Among the "graduates" were L.I. Rodgers and R. A. Barnes. Women termed "Bible Workers," also became involved in tract distribution, such as Maud Rodgers and Emma Brown.

Two large 50 x 80 feet tents were purchased and used for extensive campmeetings and evangelistic meetings by trained evangelists such as Miles and Rodgers, with their Bible Worker assistants. Ed Severson, M.W. Unzicker and R. A. Barnes became leading evangelists.

Dugger'a Debates

The younger ministers often challenged and were challenged for public debates on the Sabbath question. Often they called for the well-versed Dugger to take over in their place. Stidham and Canadian, Oklahoma were scenes of two 1921 debates recalled by Dugger. His debate at Canadian shows the pattern that often developed:

Dugger's opponent at Canadian was Elder Searcy of Oklahoma City, one of the leading theological and political debaters of the south. They signed an agreement for ten nights of discussion in Canadian and Dale, Oklahoma. Each night there were two thirty-minute speeches by each debator. The one on the rostrum could ask questions of his opponent that had to be answered by a yes or no. Dugger deliberately played weak on certain scriptures, leading his opponent to grasp at them, resting the entire Sabbath question, and a \$1000 bet, on whether the word "rest" in Hebrews 4:9 was translated from the Greek word Sabbatismos meaning *Sabbath* instead of Katapausis meaning *rest*.

"Having held so many public investigations with different clergymen," Dugger had previously written ahead to a local university professor of Greek, and already had a letter from him stating that the word was Sabbatismos, meaning "a keeping of a Sabbath," and thus won the debate.

The whole town was said to have been convinced of the Sabbath, but Searcy refused to pay the \$1000, even though he was well able to do so. The debates at Canadian and

Dale resulted in the conversion of T. J. Marrs and his sons Burt and Mitchell, all of whom later became Church of God ministers. Forthwith, a Sabbath meeting was set up at Dale by Dugger, led by T. J. Marrs.

Chronology of Growth — Financial Increases

In 1912, the Church of God General Conference received only \$356.06 in tithes and offerings for ministerial funds (missionary work). The next year, 1913, this fell to a mere \$226.33. But from the time Dugger took over as editor, the income and pace of the work increased:

Year - Income Dollars

1917 -- 854.49
1918 -- 3,872.42
1919 -- 7,544.56
1920 -- 11,492.63
1921 -- 12,620.94
1922 -- 13,932.34
1923 -- 18,061.02

1924-25 Figures were down, because of organization of the Arkansas, Iowa, California, Wisconsin State Conferences, with tithes and offerings sent to them.

1926 -- 14,864.53

1927 -- 11,064.04 (Oregon and South Dakota retained their funds)

1928 -- 15,127.86

1929 -- 12,002.88

1925 Messenger gives slightly different income figures

Year - Income - dollars

1913 -- 226.72

1915 -- 803.05

1919 -- 7,964.77

1920 -- 10,903.57 Michigan and Oklahoma re-organized their conferences and retained their funds.

1921 -- 10,499.32

1922 -- 12,993.95

1923 -- 16,037.30 Arkansas organized and retained its funds.

1924 -- 14,392.30 California, Iowa, Missouri organized and withheld funds.

1925 -- 13,424.78 Texas and Wisconsin organized and withheld funds.

From examining the above lists, it shows that there was some opposition from state conferences to the sending of tithes and offerings to Stanberry. But the financial problem was even deeper than this.

Dugger Reorganizes Tithe System and Ministerial Salaries

In 1922, Dugger strongly opposed the practice of some ministers writing scattered brethren, asking them to send tithes to the ministers directly. Dugger believed that a minister should not need to do this, and could be supported by families tithes.

During the years when the General Conference was receiving around \$200.00 per year in tithes, equally small sums were being paid to state treasurers. Dugger, knowing the membership and that so many believed in tithe paying, knew that the money must be going to individual pastors. So he wrote a letter to each church member, and asked them to fill out a sheet and return, stating how much tithe they paid out the last year, and to whom they paid it. The results were that more than half the sheets returned showed that tithes were paid to a "certain minister" who preached little, was not working in new fields, and had a prosperous farm anyway. Whereupon Dugger re-wrote a general member letter, explaining that the money should go to the General and State Conference Treasurers.

The results were that many people stopped paying tithes to ministers that had been supported for twenty years. Because their source of income was cut off, these men were offended and began fighting church organization. Dugger reports that the worst opposers to organization came from this group of disaffected independent ministers.

As indicated previously, the new system was for tithes and offerings to be sent to a state treasurer, who in turn sent a tithe (tenth) of the state monies to the General Conference

Treasurer. The tithes sent to Stanberry were not spent in the State of Missouri, since the Missouri conference took care of its own churches and ministers. General Conference funds were used in opening up new fields, and to support ministers in states not yet organized, and also in foreign lands.

All Church of God ministers (credentialed) were considered evangelists, and there was no salary paid to any pastor. Their actual needs were met by tithes and offerings, and these funds were apportioned by a committee of seven men, patterned after the "deacons" of Acts 6, who kept strict financial records. A minister began preaching largely at his own expense.

If proven by a period of testing, and if accepted, he was licensed and later credentialed. If he did not make the grade, he was not funded to continue. Ministers with families received more than those with no families.

Donor List Published

Names and amounts of persons sending in money were printed regularly in the Field Messenger (which began in 1921), which also contained frequent calls for the necessity of paying tithes. A smaller list appeared in the *Bible Advocate*. A.N. Dugger stated that the reason for printing the names and amounts given was that the list made it "absolutely impossible for one cent to be misappropriated," because everything was done openly, and the board of finances had to be honest.

An example of the cash outflow is the report for the month of July, 1923. The General Conference received \$1419, and paid out \$1365 for home evangelistic work, and \$495 for foreign fields, totalling \$1860.

The Period of Evangelism

From 1914 to the late 1920's, the Church of God entered a period of intense evangelism and growth. Evangelists' reports seem to indicate a flurry of activity that intensified with each succeeding year.

In 1915, there is mention of a Church of God conference meeting at San Antonio, Texas, December 22. Elders J. W. Pruitt and H. G. (or H. C.) Kilgore were leaders of the Texas effort.

Ministers reporting work done in 1916 included G. E. Fifield of Lynn, Massachusetts; Herbert Miles of Maysville, Missouri; C. W. Blair and A. D. Porter in Oregon; M. C. Penneil and J. C. Branch in Michigan; M. W. Unzicker in Oklahoma; A. H. Stith and

F.C. Robinson in southern Missouri; G. W. Sarber of Indiana; H. A. Jenkins in Nebraska; and L. L. Presler of Nebraska, who worked in Oklahoma, Colorado, and Washington.

Debates in 1916 added church members.

The 1916 Census reports that the General Conference employed five evangelists in the states of Michigan, Nebraska, Texas, and two other states. There was even a missionary in China, and one in India, where in 1916 a 50-member church was organized.

Evangelism in the War years

When the United States entered the war in April, 1917, Dugger, with a Missouri congressman, had a personal interview with President Woodrow Wilson, obtaining Church of God exemption from combat service. The capture of Jerusalem in December of 1917 by General Allenby was fully covered in the *Advocate*.

Also that year, a typesetting and a folding machine was purchased, and a new edition of the songbook was printed. This was the first year that printed illustrations of subjects were used in gospel meetings (presumably this means the pictorial, charts on Bible prophecy). A special drive to increase the *Advocate* subscription list resulted in a thousand new names added to the list. The "Question Corner" section was started in the *Advocate*, and Dugger published the tract, "What the Church of God Believes and Why." At the 1917 conference, it was resolved that everyone try to convert someone in the coming year.

For the first time, in 1918 "Bible Workers" were used in connection with evangelistic efforts. In a Stanberry revival, aided by the Bible Workers Sister Brown and Sarah Corbet Phillipps, sixteen new members were added in a six week effort.

Also that year, Elders H. T. Whitehall of Scranton, Iowa, and Jasper Moore of Hatfield, Missouri died.

After the close of World War I, in the winter of 1918, A.N..Dugger went to Michigan to stem the drift there toward the Seventh Day Baptists. He also went to Oregon, and began meetings in Cecil, Oregon, where J. W. Osborn had lived for many years. Osborn was a contributor to the *Advocate* and presumably a Church of God member. After a week, the Oregon meetings were closed due to the flu epidemic, which resulted in a ban on all public gatherings.

After Cecil, Dugger went to Portland where he visited a Smith family, and then went south for more Oregon stops. Apparently he visited many of the *Advocate* subscribers in the area.

Dagger's West Coast trip probably continued into the first part of 1919.

The Year of 1919

Besides Dugger's efforts, there were other Church of God ministers active at this time. Elders F. C. Robinson and James Bartlett reportedly garnered forty converts in eastern Oklahoma in the month of June. Elder H.C. Kilgore added nine converts in Texas at the same time. Elder L. L. Presler was another major evangelist, as was Elder Herbert Miles, who baptised thirteen at Albany, Missouri, close to Stanberry. Contact was established with the Lodi, California German independent Church of God through W. A. H. Gilstrap. The leader of the Lodi church at that time was Henry Baumbach. Ed Severson's name appeared for the first time in the *Advocate*, as he was married to Florence Williams of Alabama at the August campmeeting at Albany, Missouri, Elder Miles officiating.

This year also saw the purchase of the first large assembly tent to be used in cities in the evangelist-Bible worker efforts. Miles held meetings at Corydon, Iowa, as well as other locations. *The Sabbath School Quarterlies* were also begun this year, which came to be used for Sabbath Bible studies in areas where there was no Church of God minister.

Plans for A Church of God College

In 1917, mention had been made in the *Advocate* of plans for starting a college at the Stanberry headquarters. With the advent of the war, the plans were laid aside, but now they were regenerated.

Dugger pressed the college proposal because of the need to have a trained, educated ministry. The school was to be on the standards of the rest of American colleges. A preparatory school of grades 9 through 12 was to be established also. Above grade 12, such courses as music, art, business, teaching, and science would be taught. There would be a School of Divinity within the college as well. According to Dugger, the school would aid Church of God small town brethren who, if they educated their children at all on the higher level, would have to send them away to city schools, where they were liable to fall under "worldly" influences. The college Dugger had in mind would not just be for Church of God brethren, but would be morally and ethically appealing to those outside the church.

Some Church of God brethren were opposed to the establishment of a college, because they thought that Holy Spirit would guide and inspire the ministers, and that colleges and schools were of the devil. Since Christ was coming soon, there was no need for a college. Dugger replied by quoting Matthew 24:46, "occupy till I come."

By early 1920, three persons had pledged \$1000 each, and the total college fund promises, including wills, by March of 1920 was over \$59,000.

The college idea apparently never came to fruition. However, a sort of ministerial apprenticeship program at Stanberry was instituted. Elder Herbert Miles trained a number of younger ministerial candidates, including Robert A. Barnes, and W. W. McMicken. It was not until 1948 that a Church of God college was actually established.

1920: Bible Home Instructor and Colporteur Work

In 1920 the first edition of the *Bible Home Instructor* was published, made possible by donations totalling \$2,835. Dugger's dream of a Bible subject book which would convince people of the Church of God doctrines and increase membership, had at last come into being. He later reported that he had spent more than a year compiling "true doctrine" for this book.

With the *Instructor* came the real impetus toward beginning the colporteur program, that of selling these books in a door to door effort.

Elder Herbert Miles, the leading evangelist in the Church of God at the time, held a long tent effort in Sabetha, Kansas in 1920, assisted by three Bible Workers, Sisters Corbett, McGaughey, and Browne. Also with Miles were several young men aspiring to the ministry, Melville Gilstrap, Horace Munro, Fred T. Conway, and R. A. Barnes. As later explained in the "Question Corner" section of the *Advocate*, Dugger said that women were not to be religious leaders with authority over men, but that they could be used as workers and have a part in evangelistic work (I Cor. 14:34-35, I Tim. 2:12 and Rom. 16).

After Sabetha, most of the group moved on to Maryville, Missouri, for a ten week tent meeting. Some forty-three new members were added there, and a Sabbath School was held with about seventy members. This became the largest Church of God ever started despite the fact that Maryville was a strongly Catholic area.

S.W. Mentzer Steps Down

Church leaders in 1920 included old S. W. Mentzer of Robins, Iowa, President; G. T. Rodgers of Stanberry as Vice-President; Chester Walker of Albany, Missouri, Secretary; A. N. Dugger of Stanberry, Treasurer; and L.L. Presler of Orafino, Nebraska as Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Mentzer had served as President since 1905. He reportedly always paid his own expenses to general meetings, and during his entire ministry never received one cent from the church for his services. At the 1921 Conference, Mentzer requested that the office be turned over to a younger man. Mentzer died in 1927.

The Big Push: 1921 and the Harvest Field Messenger

In February of 1921, a new kind of paper was begun, the *Harvest Field Messenger*, an official Church of God field organ, giving news of the churches and field evangelism work. It was issued monthly, at 25 cents per year. With this paper, a storehouse of information is available as to the activities of the Church of God, in home and foreign missionary fields.

That same year, the old publishing house was tripled in size, as a new building was constructed with a full basement. As one of the first issues of the Messenger reported, in the previous five years, 1916-1921, the Church of God had been carrying an "aggressive field work in territories where the 'Third Angel's Message' and the gospel of the coming kingdom has never been preached." Each year the field force had increased. And in the preceding nine months, over \$8000 had been paid out by the General Conference in missionary work. Further, "thousands of people have been reached with the message, and more converts made during the past year than during any preceding year of our history in America." The work had grown such that there weren't enough ministers, so Dugger exhorted the brethren "to carry on a greater work than we have ever done before....The Church of God must now be up and doing."

Was the Church of God really growing by leaps and bounds? Or does it only seem so because of "better reporting" (the Messenger)? There is proof that real growth did occur, for the 1921 General Conference set a goal of 1000 new members for the following year; which goal was exceeded. Dugger truthfully reported that "never before has the Church of God in North America launched such a drive for winning souls to the narrow way with Christ as now."

Many Evangelists Active

Leading the list of field evangelists during 1921 was Elder Herbert Miles, with some 63 converts. Besides Maryville, Missouri, Miles held meetings at Santa Rosa, Missouri

and Marion, Iowa, where he was assisted by J. T. Williamson and R.E. Hosteter. The Marion effort was financed by the local Church of God tithes and offerings. It was a common practice for local churches to initiate and support evangelistic efforts in their areas.

Williamson, of Appleton City, Missouri, had started out several years previously as a Church of God minister, but because of financial burdens, had gone back to teaching school and farming. His work with Miles at Marion, Iowa, marked his return to the ministry. Hosteter, a young ex-Christian Church member, was one of Miles' converts at Maryville, Missouri. Miles held a large tent meeting at Ghillicothe, Missouri, similar to the previous one at Maryville. He was assisted there by Elder J. A. Riggs and Mrs. Sarah Corbett, "a recognized missionary of the church, Miss Esther Smith, who has charge of the singing, and Mrs. J. J. Kramer.

Second in gaining converts in 1921 was Elder M. W. Unzicker, with 48 additions. Pierce, Crowder, Indianola and Cherokee, Oklahoma, as well as Tatum, Texas, were scenes of some of his evangelistic efforts. At Tatum, Unzicker stayed to raise up a church and a Sabbath school, prompting Dugger to remark that the Unzickers were "stayers, " for "they stay in one place until a company is raised up, and they are doing a fine work." At Pierce, Oklahoma, Unzicker gathered together some 86 Sabbath keepers, whereas only a few months previously, there had been none.

As noted earlier, Dugger in 1921 held debates in Stidham, Oklahoma. This resulted in 15 church members being raised up there, including the Marrs family, former Campbellites. Burt Marrs, a school teacher, later became one of the leading Church of God ministers. Another was Joe Cozad who was preparing to become a minister that same year.

Two more of the established, older ministers active were Elders J. C. Bartlett, at Salem, Oklahoma, and L. L. Presler, who spoke throughout Oklahoma: March 18 at Dane, then Enid, Fairview, Merrick, Keystone, and then Licking, Missouri. Presler was "devoting all his time to the ministry. "

New Preachers Enter the Field

Elder L.I. Rodgers, ordained at the 1920 campmeeting, held one of his first efforts at Keystone, Oklahoma. A two month effort resulted in "only one convert," because of the harassment of a Campbellite minister.

Elder J. A. Riggs, whom Dugger termed "a very spiritual man" (meaning he leaned toward the pentecostal side), was making calls on isolated brethren, and held a meeting

at Atoka, Oklahoma, with Ed Severson, who had recently been granted a license by the Nebraska Conference.

Elders Charlie Salkeld and Jack Slankard, long a ministerial team, held meetings in Des Moines that year.

Another large tent effort in 1921 was the one at Brookfield, Missouri, in a 50 by 80 foot tent. Elder Rodgers led the campaign, assisted by Elder J. W. Crouse and Bible-Workers Mrs. Emma Browne, Mrs. Maud Rodgers and Mrs. Mable Rodgers. Rodgers and Crouse later held a tent meeting at Milan, Missouri. In the summer of 1921, classes were conducted to train Bible Workers and Missionaries, with free tuition.

J. W. Crouse became stationed in Los Angeles, while Elder J. S. Jellison stayed at Salt Lake City, where a new church was located.

Robert A. Barnes' first ministerial effort was at Canadian, Oklahoma, having been trained by Elder Miles.

When Barnes first went to Stanberry in 1920 to study for the ministry, the eloquent Miles had told him he was too unlearned and that he should go home. But Dugger supported him, and at the end of the term, Barnes won the oratorical contest of the young minister candidates.

Another new man, who had been preparing for the ministry for two years under Miles, was W. W. McMicken of Alabama. His first effort was at Bear Creek, Oklahoma.

Some other new faces in the ministry in 1921 were Thos. J. Marrs, and his son, Burt F. Marrs. Like R.E. Hosteter, the Marrs previously were in the Christian Church, or Campbellites. T.J. Marrs had been a Campbellite minister and came to Sabbath observance through self study. Burt Marrs began preaching for the Campbellites at the age of 19 in 1910. After nine years a Christian Church minister, Burt Marrs was ordained a minister in the Church of God in 1919. He retired in 1958 and died of cancer in 1961. A graduate of Oklahoma State College, Marrs served 33 years as a school teacher and school superintendant. In 1921 he was apparently still teaching, near Earlsboro. Dugger urged him to enter the ministry actively.

Work in China

The work in China, first mentioned in 1916, was apparently growing, for in 1921 it was reported that Elder Bernstein was supervising the Church of God in Peking, and there were three other elders in different parts of China.

1922: Activity Expands worldwide, Mexican Work Grows

The 1921 goal of 1000 new members during the next year was exceeded. At the 1922 Missouri Campmeeting, six ministers reported a total of 230 converts. In the eastern United States, there were now over 300 new members, with fourteen ministers working there. One whole Seventh Day Adventist church in Mexico City came into the Church of God, with twenty-one members, and a Mexican Conference was formed with Elder J. M. Rodriguez in charge. It was reported that 500 new members were added in Mexico. One of the churches was at Torreon, Coah, Mexico, which had been established for some years, the work of J.M. Rodriguez.

There were about 40 ministers of the Church of God in America at this time, all of whom were considered evangelists. Over 400 Seventh Day Adventist ministers had reportedly dropped out of their church during the past five years, and the Church of God sought to get them to investigate the teachings of the Church of God. Some 150 letters were sent to prospective ministers in foreign fields, forty-two to Germany, twenty-eight to Russia, three to Denmark, and others to Norway, Sweden, China, Africa, Italy, Austria-Hungary, Japan, Philippines, western and eastern India, South America, and other places. These were Sabbath keeping ministers who were prospective allies of the Church of God.

Elder Y. M. Om Naerem, an ex-Seventh Day Adventist, began a work in Norway at this time. Interest was also expressed in New Zealand and Jerusalem. Elder A. Jacobs reported from India. And a Negro from Port of Spain, Trinidad, James A. Murray, formerly with the Seventh Day Adventists for some 12 years, came into the Church of God in 1922.

During 1922, state and district conferences were held in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Missouri, as well as in the South and West Coast.

Despite limited funds, Dugger reported that "our ministers and field workers are more than double what they were one year ago, and in a few months will be trebled, and we hope doubled or trebled again...."

In September of 1922, more than 25,000 pages of free reading matter were distributed by volunteer workers, missionary secretaries, and ministers. Elders J.W. Crouse of California and W.E. Carver of Iowa headed the list in this field.

Ministerial Fields of 1921 -1922

Of special interest in 1921 was the springing up of the large number (300) of Church of God members in the eastern United States. The exact origin of the eastern work at this time is not clear. One of the most frequently mentioned names is Elder, or Bishop R. A. R. Johnson of Virginia, who apparently was a pentecostal Church of God minister. The indication is that much of the sudden influx into the Church of God was from "outsiders" that joined the Church of God and were formerly pentecostals or Seventh Day Adventists. Other eastern ministers were Elder William Taylor Jones of Beacon, New York, (also a pentecostal), J. E. Codrington and E. J. Bensen in Philadelphia, W. A. Matthews and B.C. Manson of New York City, and V. A. Nelson, G. Lewis and Elder Samuel Smith. Elder B. C. Manson of New York City reported seventy-nine converts for the year. There were two churches on Long Island.

Elders L.I. Rodgers and J.W. Crouse had a very successful meeting at Milan, Missouri, with forty converts. The next year when a new church building was dedicated, there were sixty-five members in all.

Dugger held debates in Oklahoma and elsewhere. E. F. Thorpe worked in northeast Arkansas and held a debate at Grubbs. Elder D. C. Plumb began preaching in Robeline, Louisiana, while E. A. Williams was in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. Elder Z. V. Black preached regularly near De Queen, Arkansas.

Elder Dummond held a tent effort in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Other southern efforts were by C. C. Cramer in Florida and R.A.R. Johnson in Scottsville, Virginia. W. W. McMicken went to northern Alabama.

In Michigan, Elders L. A. Munger, Thomas Howe, George P. Wilson, M.C. Pennefl and W. J. Morse labored. A church of thirty-three members was raised up in West Olive. Four were baptized at Jenisor Michigan.

In Missouri, Elder J. T. Williamson, a former law student, held gospel meetings. L. I. Rodgers preached at Unionville, Missouri, and J. A. Riggs at Eastoh. Riggs also went into Oklahoma, where he baptized eight at Fairview. Unzicker preached at Dane Star Route, Oklahoma, while Barnes was in eastern Oklahoma.

In other areas, Salkeld and Slankard preached in Denver (Missouri?) and Elders J. G. Gilstrap and W. A. Damewood were in California. Elder G.W. Mossey preached in Kalispell, Montana.

A Negro "Elder James" reported that he and most of his Negro church of about fifty members in Kansas City were coming over to the Church of God. Another Negro elder considering the move was G.S. Hayden, who had worked for several years in Omaha.

The Texas Church of God held a conference in February, 1922, in which George Ramirez was elected President, E. Echavarria, Secretary, and N. Ramirez, Treasurer. There were 31 members in all, 19 at Hamlin, 6 in Olney, 2 each in Henrietta and Bridgeport, and one each in Wichita Falls and Dallas.

In the west, Elder A. H. Stith, formerly of Missouri, had moved to Idaho, where he initiated Church of God work there. And Audley D. Porter and Henry L. Snyder distributed literature at Aberdeen and Grays Harbor, Washington.

1923: To All Nations

By 1923, the "Big Push" was going at full gallop. The *Messenger* reported on January 16 that in the past month, some 41,888 pages of free literature had been distributed. Arrangements were being made to print Church of God literature in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, German, Spanish, and Chinese, as well as two of the languages of India. Dugger reported that "one hundred thousand dollars could be quickly used to great benefit in swiftly spreading the last message." Urgent calls for literature were coming in from all over the world. Dugger felt that Matthew 24:14 was being fulfilled, that Jesus would not come until the gospel of the kingdom went to every nation, and people of all languages entered the Church of God. This he believed would take several years yet.

Milton Grotz and Pentecostalism

As early as 1913 or 1914, some pentecostal ministers had accepted beliefs similar to the Church of God. An evangelist Boatwright of Missouri taught Sabbath keeping and an annual Lord's Supper.

About 1923 there emerged a number of pentecostal types who were associated with the Church of God. It was 1924 when the German Sabbath keepers of the Dakotas came to be associated with the Church of God (with men like Kiesz, Dais and Straub), and these were definitely of the more emotional, pentecostal philosophy.

In January of 1923, Dugger reported that "there have been a number of ministers come in among us lately from other churches to whom we're giving encouragement until they prove their ability as workers of the Lord." As previously noted, large numbers of these pentecostalists were in the eastern United States.

One of the most prominent pentecostal Church of God ministers that appears at this time is evangelist Milton Grotz of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, who emphasized a "divine healing" ministry. A.N. Dugger noted that he himself had believed from a child on the doctrine of prayer for the sick. His parents believed this, and his father, A. F. Dugger, practiced James 5:14-16. Dugger remembers a case when a man had been given up as a hopeless case by doctors. Elders A. F. Dugger and J. A. Nugent anointed the man with oil and prayed over him, and he was soon up and around, completely healed. This was when great healing revivals began in the 1920's, "the Church of God has not adopted anything new in the work of divine healing, but teachings long ago practiced, are simply coming to light in a general way." An article in the *Advocate* appeared in 1924, written by a Mrs. C. Nuzum, referring to I Peter 2:24. It appears from this that the Church of God understood that the bread taken at the annual Lord's Supper symbolized Christ's broken body, and that Christians were indeed "healed by His stripes."

Returning to his home in the east after a trip to Mexico, Grotz stopped at Stanberry in the spring of 1923, and held a general revival. People from miles around came, and there were a number of reported healings. Dugger reported, that "Stanberry has been stirred by the power of God during the past week as never before in her history... We are living in the days of the Latter Rain.... The church house, although large, will hardly accommodate the crowds. Brother Grotz is a minister of the Church of God.... We hope that God will pour out His Spirit on more of our ministers, and our people...."

Grotz reputedly preached and wrote against the eating of pork, use of tobacco, or the drinking of coffee, tea, and whiskey. He maintained that these were prime causes of sickness, and sickness was caused by sin. He further stated that too many ministers were feasting instead of fasting.

For a time, Grotz' ideas seemed to gain wide support in the Church of God, as he became an associate editor of the *Bible Advocate*. He traveled widely, and spoke before many churches of God, as well as before meetings open to the public. At St. Louis, he encountered many pentecostals. He reported: "I don't care to work in these wild Pentecostal Missions or churches. There is too much confusion and noise. It is grating on me and hinders the work. Yet they must be preached to on many lines (including the Sabbath), also many of the Church of God people need to be taught to seek and receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit."

Grotz may have been associated with the Church of the Firstborn. In 1923, A.N. Dugger took an eastern trip, visiting with Brother Grotz. At Jersey City, Dugger met with the headquarters church of the Church of the Firstborn, which was founded by a Sister A.

Jackson. Nearly 80, Sister Jackson was still very sharp. The Churches of the Firstborn had several churches in the east, including thousands of dollars worth of property in Jersey City. A common farm was owned by the group, which rigorously paid tithes. The churches were said to believe almost the same as the Church of God. Dugger also visited other independent Sabbath-keepers in the area, including Elder Sheafe in Washington, D.C.

At the same time, "Bishop" R. A. R. Johnson of Virginia wrote flowingly in the Messenger about a "Great Pentecostal Feast in Charlottesville, Virginia." A pentecostal minister from Pittsburg came there and the local churches were "greatly benefited." Johnson reports: "Sinners were converted; backsliders reclaimed. The devils were made to tremble at the preaching of the gospel of the Son of God. The whole community has taken on new life; and there is great rejoicing in this City." The pentecostal minister was said to have "the eloquence of a Paul, or a Barnabas. The people were heard saying never man spake like this man."

In August of 1923, Grotz held a large meeting in Washington, D. C., where again it was reported that many were healed. A whole church, under the leadership of Elder Lewis C. Sherfe, came into the Church of God.

Sheafe (1859-1938) was a Baptist minister from 1888-99, but was ordained by the Seventh Day Adventists in 1900. He apparently broke with them and worked with the Church of God for a time. He was listed as a licensed minister and an associate editor of the *Advocate* in 1924, but apparently became independent thereafter. In 1927 he became an accredited Seventh Day Baptist minister. He held evangelistic meetings at White Cloud in 1932 and continued to pastor the "People's Seventh Day Baptist Church" of Washington, D. C. until his death.

Previously, Elder H.M. Lawson, pastor of a Sunday Baptist church in the capital, went with the Church of God with most of his congregation.

On October 31, 1923 Grotz and A.N Dugger began evangelistic services in a hall at Baasett, Nebraska, the home town of Dugger. It was reported that even cripples were healed. After Grotz left Bassett, Dugger stayed on, and organized a local church. When Dugger traveled on, Elder J. F. Jenson and others continued services, W. J. Miller reporting that there were more than eighty local church members. A lot was secured, and a church building was built.

Later in the year, Grotz assisted Elder BurtMarrs in a campaign at Council Bluffs, Iowa.

In early January of 1924, Grotz again teamed with Dugger, this time at a meeting at Los Angeles, where a California State Conference of the Church of God was formed.

Pentecostalism on the Downgrade

After the 1924 Los Angeles meeting of Grotz and Dugger, there appears to be no further mention of the evangelist Milton Grotz. Grotz had been dropped as associate editor by March of 1924. Apparently his brand of pentecostalism became unpopular. In May of 1923, Dugger wrote that nowhere in the Bible were Christians termed pentecostal, but only "Church of God." Dugger asserted that Christians were not "saved" yet, for final salvation depends upon going God's way—until death or Christ's return, whichever comes first. Hundreds who have said they received the so-called "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" were still keeping Sunday, willfully violating several of God's commandments, yet claiming they were already saved.

In July of 1924, Dugger wrote in the "Question Corner" section in answer to a question on the Holy Ghost Baptism mentioned in Matthew. Some people, Dugger wrote, didn't understand the purpose of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, believing that it made people jump up and down and make a lot of noise at the place of worship instead of applying this gift for God's Work. The real reason for the Holy Spirit, Dugger stated categorically, is to give one power to finish the work of carrying the gospel message to the world.

Although working with Grotz on at least two campaigns, Dugger definitely turned against the more extreme form of pentecostalism. And it wasn't long before reports of R. A. R. Johnson and the eastern group of pentecostals vanish from available reports of Church of God history.

Name Changed to Church of God (Seventh Day)

At the 1923 Church of God General Conference, held at Stanberry, August 19, 1923, it was decided to drop all prefixes to the church name in distinguishing them from other churches of God. The new title of the group became "Church of God (Seventh Day)," whereas previously it had been known officially as "Church of God (Adventist)." The *Bible Advocate* had been published by the Church of God Publishing House; now the masthead stated that it was the official organ of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Plans for Seventh Day Baptist Union

Also at the 1923 conference on August 20, there were in attendance several delegates from the Seventh Day Baptist church, including Corliss Fitz Randolph. Both groups

had appointed committees for the purpose of working out plans or ways whereby the Church of God and the Seventh Day Baptists could co-operate and possibly even unite.

The Church of God committee consisted of A.N. Dugger, D. P. Moore, L. L. Presler, Carl Carver and G. T. Rbdgers. The Seventh Day Baptist committee was composed of W. D. Burdick, C. F. Randolph (Seventh Day Baptist historian), E. F. Randolph (Conference President), R. B. St. Clair and W. L. Burdick. Dugger was elected chairman of the combined committee, with W. D. Burdick vice-chairman. Delegates to the other group's conference were to be appointed by each body at the annual meeting. In localities where Seventh Day Baptists and Church of God congregations were in proximity, the ministers and members were encouraged to meet one another. Literature was exchanged, and pastors of each church were to speak at least once a year on unity.

Elder Lionel I. Rodgers, delegate from the Church of God, attended the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference at North Loup, Nebraska, shortly after the Stanberry meeting, and spoke on "The Second Coming of Christ."

Elder Burdette Coon of the Seventh Day Baptists delivered a series of sermons at Stanberry each evening for a week around December of 1922.

In July of 1923, C. A. Hansen of Chicago, a Seventh Day Baptist pastor wrote the *Advocate* noting that he had heard rumors of union between the groups. For 20 years a Seventh Day Adventist, he was now with the Seventh Day Baptists. Hansen liked the idea of union, for it would "almost double" the membership, and he could overlook "little differences." The article noted that "the Seventh Day Baptists are a progressive people; they accepted the doctrine of the personal coming of Christ in 1886..." And the aims of both were stated to be to bring the Sabbath truth to the world.

The 1923 union plan was not the first interaction between the two groups. In 1907, Seventh Day Baptist Elder H. D. Clark spoke at a Stanberry Sabbath meeting, and a later *Advocate* of that year noted that the new editor of the Seventh Day Baptist Sabbath Recorder, a Theodore L. Gardiner, was an able man.

Nothing further came of the unity idea, as it appears that doctrinal differences were actually too great.

The unity committees were disbanded in 1926, and according to Seventh Day Baptist historian Albert N. Rogers, "Later confusion [conflict which prevented union] arose from the false claims of Dugger to much Seventh Day Baptist history as the origin, of the Church of God [the 1938 book, *A History of the True Church*]."

Eastern churches appeared to be more inclined to a union effort, for it was reported in 1923 that "union meetings" were held at Beacon, New York, sponsored by W. T. Jones. Church of God people, independent Sabbath keepers, pentecostals, and Seventh Day Baptists were in attendance.

The 64th (since 1861) annual Church of God conference in Michigan, held at Jenison September 25-27, 1925 reports that talks were held with Elder R.B. St. Clair, a Seventh Day Baptist minister of Detroit. He gave a report of Seventh Day Baptist work in Michigan. A resolution passed in that conference was "Resolved, that we members of the Church of God (Seventh Day) do resolve that all members who may come to us from other organizations must conform to the fundamental doctrines held by us as a group."

Other Efforts During 1923

Leaders of the work in 1923 besides Dugger, who was editor, business manager and President, were I. N. Kramer of Marion, S. S. Davison of Fairview and A. F. Dugger, Jr. of Bassett, who served as contributing editors, G. T. Rodgers as Vice-President, P. C. Walker as Secretary, and Esther Smith as Treasurer. The Executive Committee consisted of S. A. Moore of Stanberry, L. L. Presler of Orafino, W. E. Carver of Marion, and S. S. Davison of Fairview.

In the east, Elder William Taylor Jones worked in New Jersey and New York. Elder Russell F. Barton was a Church of God evangelist and pastor in Waterbury, Vermont. Elder O. I. Gatchell was at Dixmont, Maine, and Elder Shorey worked in New Hampshire.

Another eastern leader was Elder W. A. Matthews, who received the truth in 1910-1918, and in 1923 supervised churches in New York City, Long Island, Jamaica, Asbury Park, New Jersey and St. Kitts, B.W.I.

In the South, W. W. McMicken, J. M. and A. B. Williams worked in Alabama. McMicken organized a Sabbath school of over forty members. E. A. Williams pastored in Tennessee. E. F. Thorp was at Heber Springs, Arkansas, and R. C. Ward at Ft. Smith. R. A. R. Johnson headed a group of southern churches, mainly in Virginia. B. C. Manson was stationed at Richmond. The Arkansas state conference was organized in 1923, the first meeting held at Newport, May 15-21, with Dugger in attendance.

In the Old Northwest, the first general meeting for the state of Wisconsin was held at Waupaca. J. S. Beggs held a tent meeting at Milton, Wisconsin in the summer. A brother Kornbaecher reported that a whole church in Chicago had accepted the teachings of the Church of God through his efforts. Elder M. C. Pennell organized a church of ten members at Battle Creek, Michigan. Burt Marrs and Grotz held a meeting at Council Bluffs, Iowa. The team of Salkeld and Slankard held meetings in Des Moines.

In Missouri, Elder William Alexander held meetings in Eldorado Springs, while Elder Lloyd Shanklin garnered 35 converts at Nevada. Elder R.E. Hosteter organized churches in Buffalo and Nevada, ordaining elders and deacons.

Other workers were Elder Unzlcker, who held a tent effort in Texas; Elder Arthur Jordan in Pueblo, Colorado; Elder S.W. Skinner in California.

In Los Angeles, on January 16, 1923, a group of scattered and independent Sabbath keepers met. Fifty signed a church covenant, and Elders Harry Horton and John Schaepe were chosen leaders. Otto Haerber, Dugger's cousin, was baptized.

At the August, 1923 General Conference and Campmeeting, there were 128, ministers listed, as credentialed, licensed, or missionary workers. From 1000 to 1500 attended evening services at the yearly meeting. One of the newer ministers was R. E. Winsett, a songbook publisher who was to carry on the work done by E. G. Blackmon in a Church of God hymnal.

Foreign Work Expands Also

In 1923, it was reported that converts, were made in Spain, Norway, Australia, Canada, India, and Syria. There were two missionaries stationed in India, A. Jacobs and D. Israel. Elder J. A. Murray of the British West Indies (Jamaica), began to work with the Church of God. He was a former Seventh Day Adventist that came into the Church of God through reading their literature.

Passover Reports — 1923

On Thursday evening, March 30, 1923 (the beginning of Nisan 14), many of the churches in the Church of God Conference reported that they observed the Passover. Although probably not all the churches sent in Passover Reports, those that did give a picture of the extent of the Church of God at this time. Places where the Passover was held include the following:

Missouri: Stanberry, Maryville, Green Castle, Milan, Unionville, South Gifford, Buffalo, Nevada, Eldorado Springs, Appleton City, Anderson, Pleasant Hill.

Kansas: Sabetha, Kansas City.

Nebraska: Orafino, Omaha.

Michigan: West Olive, Howard City, Battle Creek, Freeland.

Oklahoma: Pierce, Canadian, Hoffman, Atoka, Stidham, Crowder, Ulan.

Arkansas: Point Diuce, De Witt, Ft. Smith, Mena, Lonoke, Heber Springs, Little Rock, Grubbs, Herren Chapel, Vallier.

Eastern Division

New York: Beacon, New York City, Long Island.

New Jersey: Asbury Park (two churches)

Pennsylvania: Sharon,

Philadelphia (three churches)

Maryland: Baltimore (two churches), St. Marys

Virginia: Surrey, Hampton, Scottsville, Trevillingian, Thelma, Charlottesville, Harden.

Georgia: Athens, Savannah.

Florida: Key West

1924: Germans Contacted — California Conference Organized

As reported previously, 1924 was the year when Dugger contacted the German speaking independent churches of God in Mildred, Montant, and Eureka, South Dakota, as well as others in the Dakotas, Canada and California. The Germans had basically the same beliefs as the Church of God, but had until 1924 known nothing of the General Conference from Stanberry.

When Dugger went to Eureka in 1924, the line of contact was established between the German churches and the General Conference. That same year, the *Bible Advocate* came to be published in the German language.

When Dugger and Grotz met in January 1924 at the organizing of the California state conference, the work there was given a definite boost. J. N. Bishop and others there had been keeping the Sabbath for some years, but had been against organization. Their reservations were apparently overcome, and the General Conference was accepted. State evangelist was Elder J. G. Smith. One of the California churches that went into the General Conference was the one at Modesto, headed by Elder A. L. Neal. And Dugger reported that "A nice church house has been secured in Pasadena for regular Sabbath meetings, and a church will be set in order there very soon..." with elders soon to be ordained.

The California Conference began with the three churches at Modesto, Graham (Watts) and Pasadena. Later that year Elder J.G. Smith organized another church at Orange. In 1925, the Pasadena church organized a Missionary Society with L. D. Maple President, H. C. Severance Secretary, and Myrtle Davison Treasurer. Nine members worked with them.

Accelerating Growth

In April of 1924, it was reported that sixteen new churches had been organized since the previous September. And by the time of the fall General Conference meeting, it was reported that thirty-seven churches had been raised up in the past year in the United States alone. Of these there were six new churches in Oklahoma (and four others ready to be organized), six in Arkansas (and two others in adjoining states), five new churches in Missouri, and three in California. In finances, \$14,894.50 was received in tithes and offerings, and \$6,196.49 from *Advocate* subscriptions and sale of tracts. Some \$13,333 was paid out for opening the work in new fields.

Among the new churches was the one at Wilbur, West Virginia, formally organized by Dugger on June 1, 1924. Its elders were Lloyd George and Lawrence Mercer. Other churches organized were those at Knox, Indiana, by C. E. Groshans and G. W. Sarber; Emmett, Idaho, by A.H. Stith; Frisco, Missouri, by E. F. Thorp; North Uvalde, Texas, by Unzicker; Anderson, Missouri, by F. C. Robinson; and a re-organized Battle Creek, Michigan church, by Elders Hosteter and M. C. Pennell and Kusa, Oklahoma, by R. K. Walker. A church of 52 was organized by E. F. Thorp at Floral, Arkansas.

To Mexico, one million tracts were printed, and 800,000 distributed. Mexico now had twice as many churches as there were in the United States in 1917, while in 1917 there wasn't a single Church of God in Mexico at all. The *Bible Advocate* was now being printed in English, Spanish and German, and was regularly printed in Peking, China.

The reason for the growth, Dugger reported was "the faithfulness of our people in tithes and offerings."

Elder O.R. Osman and Colporteur Work

In May of 1924, Dugger went to High Point, North Carolina, where he and Elder O.R. Osman, a former Seventh Day Adventist, held separate meetings among the white and black people. A white Church of God was organized under Dugger's auspices.

At the August General Conference meeting at Stanberry, Osman was appointed as head of general missionary and colporteur, work in the United States. The next year he launched a "very aggressive program" to sell Bible Home Instructor, Bibles, and other Church of God tracts through colporteurs.

Colporteurs and Home Missionaries

In May of 1924, Dugger wrote an article in the Advocate entitled:

"Wanted: Men For Ministers." In it, he stated that "calls are coming in from far and near, from home and foreign fields for workers and ministers to come. We cannot begin to supply the need.... [therefore] We plead with young men earnestly to go to school, and to college, and prepare for the calling of God." Men of education were needed, especially for the foreign fields.

To augment training of workers for the church, a colporteur training class was held in connection with the yearly Missouri Campmeeting. A dozen or twenty were expected to enroll in a ten day free course in home missionary and colporteur work.

Each state conference (of which there were Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Michigan and others) had a "State Missionary Secretary," distinct from the State Secretary that was elected by the state conference. The Missionary Secretary was the representative of the General Conference, corresponded directly to the General Conference headquarters at Stanberry, and in general stimulated missionary activity in the state. The names of independent Sabbath keepers came to the general office through several sources, and a list was sent to each state secretary of those in his area. The state missionary secretary thereupon corresponded with them, sending them tracts and other literature.

Further, each church had a Local Missionary Secretary, for "preventing the spirit of lethargy and indifference.... [and] to awaken and enliven missionary zeal...."

Each church was supposed to set aside the first Sabbath of each month for a "testimonial service" in which brethren reported the missionary work they had done in the past month. The evening of the first Sabbath of the month was the time to pay tithes and offerings. Isolated members could mail their tithes to the State Treasurer, or the Missionary Secretary if there was no treasurer, or to the General Conference at Stanberry.

Tent Meetings Lead Church of God Growth

Dugger reported in 1921 that "The greatest success that has been achieved through the Church of God evangelists, has been accomplished by tent work." A Church of God tent campaign was a thoroughly prepared effort. Its meetings must have gained wide public interest. Systematic preparation was characteristic of each effort. Every house was notified of the coming meetings. From beginning to end, a meeting could take two or three months to "thoroughly educate the people in the fundamental truths."

A desirable piece of ground near the center of the city was obtained, the tent was erected and wired by city electricity. A piano was rented, and a pulpit and platform were acquired. Bills were printed at Stanberry, each bill announcing the sermons one week ahead of time.

Bible workers (usually women) divided the city into sections, and took a bill to every home, delivering it personally to the family, inviting them to come out the first night. Bills were attached in all the autos in the town. "The result is that the meetings start off with large crowds which steadily increase for a month or more, until the message delivered becomes too strong for some who will not yield, and consequently they discontinue their presence."

At the beginning of each week, Bible workers took new bills announcing sermons to every home, again issuing a friendly invitation. After the first few days, interested people began to invite the Bible workers into their homes, asking them many questions. Often there were more requests for visits than workers available. Frequently there was opposition and even heckling. The meetings were expensive, but Dugger and the rest of the church leadership felt that the results far outweighed the cost.

In justifying the extensive use of women in tent meetings as Bible Workers, Dugger explained in the "Question Corner" of the April 21, 1925 *Advocate* that I Cor. 14:34-35 and I Tim. 2:12 show that women are not to be religious leaders, but that they can be used as workers, having a part in the work, Rom. 16:1-2.

Some Churches and Their Ministers — 1924

Passover Reports for the year 1924 included the following churches with their pastors:

Hayward, California
Watts, California and Pasadena
De Luce, Arkansas
Tucson, Arizona

Maryville, Missouri
Anderson, Missouri
Jacksonville, Florida
Marion, Iowa

Ministers for above

W.H. Stanley
J.W. Crouse
J.D. Frazier
J.B. Rhodes
Brother West
F.C. Robinson
W.R. Peterson
Carl W. Carver

Ministers — 1924

Credentialed ministers in 1924 included the following:

Adair,
Blair,
Barnes,
Barton,
Black,
Buchtel,
Beggs,
Carlisle,
Crouse,
Coronado,
Cassillas,
Davison,
Dugger, A. F. (Jr.)
Dugger, A. N.
Dummond,
Fay,
Frazier,
Guevara,
Gilstrap,
Hayden,
Hayes,

Howe;
Hosteter,
Hinds,
Jensen,
Marra,
McMlcken,
Mossey,
Mentzer,
Murray,
Munger,
Naerem,
Osborn,
Plumb,
Rlggs,
Richards,
Robinson,
Rodgers,
Rodgers, G. T.
Rodriguez,
Sarber,
Severson,
Smith,
Stith,
Slankard,
Salkeld,
Thorp,
Torres,
Unzicker,
Ward,
Williams,
Andrew J.
Williams B.
Wlliams, S.E.
Williams, T. A.
Williams, J.F.
Williams, J.M.
Williamson,
Wilbur,
Winsett,

Licensed ministers for the same year included the following:

Bagwell,
Benson,
Codrington,
Conrad,
Echavaria,
Gatchell,
Groshans,
Hipolito,
Howe,
Jacobs,
James,
Lee,
Morse,
Marrs,
Murray,
Neal,
Nelson, A.
Nielson, N.
Osman,
Porter,
Raymond,
Rawson,
Shorey,
Sheafe,
Skinner,
Smith, A. A.
Smith, D.O.
Smith, J.G.
Snyder,
Stanley,
Williams, E.A.
Williams, T.L.
Walker,
Flo, Theo. J.

Advocate Staff - 1924

Dugger was editor and business manager of the *Bible Advocate* in 1924. Assisting him, and listed on the-masthead were G. E. Hughes, Assistant Editor; Evangelist Milton Grotz and Lewis Charles Sheafe, Associate Editors; S.S. Davison and A.F. Dugger, Jr.,

Contributing Editors, and R.F. Barton, B.C. Manson and W.T. Jones, Field Representatives.

The paper was termed the "Official Organ of the Church of God (Seventh Day)."

1925-1926: Tracts and Foreign Expansion

Elder O.R. Osman, newly appointed as the head of the colporteur work, launched an aggressive program to sell Bible Home Instructors and other tracts and books. Outstanding colporteurs under his guidance were Elder C. E. Groshans, a fairly new minister in Indiana, who baptized seventeen in Detroit. Among other colporteurs of note were Elders J. D. Bagwell, W. W. McMicken, Horace Munro, Rudolph Hafmer, G. A. Smith and sister Delphia Buck. An unsurpassed record in colporteur work was achieved in 1926 when Elder Osman and Brother E. S. Henderson sold \$88,00 worth of books in one day.

The 17-tract series on doctrinal issues, "Gems of Truth," was written and adapted for missionary work in 1925. One of these tracts was entitled, "The Third Angel's Message." In the period from August 1, 1925 to August 1, 1926, some 624,000 pages in English were printed in tract form on practical, doctrinal and prophetic subjects. A book bindery was bought and paid for to add to the press at Stanberry, and \$2300 was borrowed for an addition to the publishing house. The Sabbath School Missionary was changed to a weekly.

Under direction of the Executive Committee, the book "Our Time in Bible Prophecy" was published.

In the foreign work, two printing presses were purchased and established in foreign lands. In 1925, the message was being preached in ten foreign fields, and in 1926, ten more foreign areas were added to the list. Previously, the message had been established in England, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Trinidad, India, China, Norway, Mexico, South Africa, and Argentina. In 1926, Barbados, Bermuda, Cuba, Dominica, Jamaica, Central America, Bolivia, West Africa, Palestine and Sweden were added.

The *Bible Advocate* was being printed in German at Eureka, South Dakota and in Spanish at Dallas, Texas.

In Australia, W. Allport was reported doing missionary work in 1926.

In 1926, it was noted that a Catholic priest in Central America had recently accepted Church of God doctrine, and now had over fourteen churches of God in San Salvadore, Costa Rica and elsewhere. Apparently he had a printing press, and was

translating the message into Portuguese, Italian and French. There were prospects of uniting the Protestant Evangelical Church with the Church of God, and if successful, would total 40 churches in the area.

Elder B.L. Hamirez of Mexico City reported that he had three small presses there. And another minister, Elder Davis, united with the Church of God In Jamaica, where Elders Walters and Clark were working.

Of note is the establishment of the work in Palestine. A special fund was established for the Jerusalem work. The booklet, "How Shall We Know Him?", showing that Jesus was the Messiah the Jews were looking for, was published for distribution among Jews. The first Church of God in Jerusalem since 70 A.D. was organized in 1926 by Elder David Nield who was on a trip around the world. Afterwards he went to Ethiopia.

A certain F. Clouson, formerly from South Dakota, went to Sweden and in 1928 he translated English tracts into Swedish. Elder J. M. Orn-Naerem began to spread the Church of God message in Norway at about this time. And an A. H. Lindsay who lived in the Panama Canal Zone sparked interest in the Church of God in that area.

Field Work - 1925-1926

Among the Germans, Christ Kiesz, Jack Dais, John B. Brenneise, and P. J. Kornmesser held meetings in Wishek, North Dakota in 1925. Kornmesser, a German minister from Chicago, held several meetings in both North and South Dakota, as well as Canada where he met with Isolated brethren. Several of the Kainer family near Vibank, Saskatchewan, became members of the Church of God, one becoming wife of Elder John Kleaz. The *German Bible Advocate*, went into the Dakotas, Montana, California, Washington, Canada, and elsewhere. The first camp-meeting held at Eureka, South Dakota was in June of 1925. Among those attending were Kornmesser, Elder Christ Kiesz, John Brenneise, Martin Reuscher, Christ Meier, Burt F. Marris, and A.N. Dugger.

The Nebraska and Kansas Conferences met at Bassett on October 7, with elders Presler, Kornmesser, Jensen, Christ Kiesz and the Dugger brothers present.

The Wisconsin conference and campmeeting was held later in June of 1925 at Stanley. Leader of the state work, was Elder J.S. Beggs. Elder Ed Severson, who spoke Norwegian as well as English, worked among the Norwegians in Wisconsin. Dugger, Henry Brenneise, and a young ministerial aspirant, John Kiesz, traveled from South Dakota to attend the Wisconsin meeting.

In Oklahoma, Elder R. A. Barnes organized a church at Tahlequah, Ed Severson held meetings at Broken Bow, and R.K. Walker in Arpelar. The State Conference was held the first week of August at Fairview, succeeding the campmeeting preaching services which began on July 24.

In Arkansas, B.F. Daily seemed to be one of the leading brethren. A conference was held in August at Deluce, near DeWitt.

The Missouri Conference and Campmeeting as well as the General Conference and Campmeeting, were held jointly in August at Stanberry. Elders J. T. Williamson and William Alexander held a tent meeting at Gifford, Missouri in June of 1926.

Michigan had no campmeeting in 1925, but had its Conference sessions for three days near Jenison, with John Goodih as President.

The Iowa Conference met at Marion in October, and the Texas State Conference of the Mexican brethren met in November. Elder J.M. Rodriguez organized a church at Knox City, Texas in 1925.

Other ministers considered as "home evangelists" in 1925 were A.H. Stith, J.H. Hinds, R.K. Walker, J.W. Carroll, T.C. Robinson, G.W. Sarber, Jacob Wilbur, William Stanley, B.C. Delgado, B.L. Ramirez, J.S. Beggs, R.E. Hosteter, and T. J. Marrs.

In other fields, Elder J. G. Smith of California planned to start a tent work there in May of 1926. Elder W. W. West, one time associate with Parham (?) or the original Pentecostal movement in Kansas, held a Sabbath school in Los Angeles, and worked among both whites and Negroes. Michigan, Iowa, and the Dakota brethren each planned to buy a tent. George C. Shorey was pioneering the work in New Hampshire in East Rochester. Elder W. W. McMicken was in North Carolina, Elder E.J. Benson at Allentown, Pennsylvania, while Elders Salkeld and Slankard were holding meetings in Philadelphia in 1926.

At the close of the 1926 campmeeting, men were stationed as follows: C.E. Groshans, Michigan; L.L. Pressler, Nebraska and Wisconsin (New Auburn, Stanley); W.W. McMicken and J.D. Bagwell, Alabama; R.A. Barnes, R.K. Walker, Ed Severson, Enos Hawkins, J.W. Williams and Elders Quinton and Whitehead, Oklahoma; Roy Daily, E.F. Thorp, Z.B. Black, Horace Munro, Arkansas; M.W. Unzicker, Texas, after a Gentry, Missouri meeting; J. F. Jensen, Nebraska; Irvin Gillespie, Omaha; P.J. Kornmesser, Henry Brenneise, Jacob Dais, South Dakota; C. W. Salkeld and J. G. Slankard in Des Moines; Theo. J. Flo,

Chicago; L.I. Rodgers, Iowa; T.A. Williams and J.T. Williamson in southern Missouri, a new field; and A.D. Ross and Hiram Fay in St. Louis.

Churches — 1925

The September 22, 1925 *Advocate* lists some 79 Churches of God in 17 states. Although the state of each church area is not listed, the following is an attempted classification:

ALABAMA

Philcampbell
Russellville

ARKANSAS

De Luce
Floral
Ft. Smith
Hagler
Heber Springs
Humphrey
Mena
Newport
St. Charles
Salado

CALIFORNIA

Hayward
Los Angeles
Modesto
Orange
Pasadena

IDAHO

Emmett
Meridian

INDIANA

Knox

IOWA

Corydon
Council Bluffs
Marion

KANSAS

Sabetha

MICHIGAN

Battle Creek
Deckerville
Freeland
West Olive

MISSOURI

Anderson
Anderson (W. route)
Buffalo
Easton
El Dorado Springs
Frisco
Gentry
Green Castle
Hatfield
Maryville
Milan
Mt. Carmel
Nevada
Phillipsburg
Pleasant Hill
Rich Hill
Stanberry

NEBRASKA

Bassett
Omaha
Orafino

NORTH CAROLINA

High Point

OKLAHOMA

Alabama City (?)
Atoka
Broken Bow
Claremore
Crowder
Dale
Fairview
Fairview (Dane Star)
Foster (?)
Henrietta
Kusa
Lindsay
Pierce
Stidham

PENNSYLVANIA

Shingiehouse

SOUTH DAKOTA

Eureka

TEXAS

Hamlin
Hico
North Uvalde
Oakville

WASHINGTON D. C.

WEST VIRGINIA

Wilbur

WISCONSIN

Waupaca
Wisconsin Veterans Home

UNKNOWN

Badger
Dykes
Empire
Farmer
Marsh
Shaw

Advocate Staff - 1925

Even the listed *Advocate* staff of 1925 demonstrated the expansion and growth the church was going through. G.E. Hughes assisted Dugger who was editor. Lewis Charles Sheafe, S.S. Davison and A. F. Dugger, Jr. were associate editors. Dugger was President of the General Conference, G.T. Rodgers Vice-President, P.C. Walker Secretary, and Mrs. G.E. Hughes Treasurer. On the Executive Committee were S. A. Moore, L.L. Presler, W.E. Carver and Burt Fi Marrs.

Field Representatives of the Advocate that year were O.R. Osman, who was General Missionary Secretary and Field Manager of the Colporteur Department, R.F. Barton of Waterbury, Vermont, R. E. Hosteter of Jenison, Michigan, B.C. Manson of Richmond, Virginia, F.C. Robinson of Anderson, Missouri, R. A. Barnes of Crowder, Oklahoma, J.D. Frazier of Lonoke, Arkansas, G. W. Sarber of Knox, Indiana, C.E. Groshans of Barodaj Michigan, A. H. Stith of Nampa, Iowa, L.I. Rodgers of Milan, Missouri, J.W. Crouse of 134 Harriett Street, Pasadena, California, M.W. Unzicker of Oakville, Texas, J. G. Smith of Los Angeles, J.F. Jensen of Scotts Bluff, Nebraska, E.F. Thorp of Lonoke, Arkansas, J. T. Williamson of Appleton City, Missouri, W. W. McMicken of Russellville, Alabama, and W.H. Stanley of Hay ward, California.

Church History Begins to Develop — Seven Eras Taught

It was an axiomatic belief of Adventists, from which the Church of God sprang, that there were seven church eras in time (Revelation 2 and 3) and that they constituted the final, Laodicean era. William Miller was said to have sounded the First Angel's Message ("angel" being translated "messenger" and referring to humans occurs more times in Scripture than it does to heavenly angels) to the Sardis era of the church. His message was that the hour of God's Judgment was near (1843 or 1844). As Ellen G. White states in her *Great Controversy*, "The condition of the church at this time is pointed out in the Savior's words the Revelation: 'you have a name that you livest, and art dead.'" The reason for this condition, she states, was that the churches refused to learn new truths.

Adventists did not at first constitute a separate body, but were found throughout many denominations. When the Advent message became very strong, some Millerite ministers were put out of their churches; members were too. Charles Fitch, a leading Adventist, wrote an article, "Come Out of Her, My People!" which was said to constitute the Second Angel's Message: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!" Those who did come out of their churches (most of whom did not observe the Sabbath yet) were said to be the Philadelphia era.

When after the Great Disappointment the Sabbath became adopted by many Adventists, from the Seventh Day Baptists, the remnant, discouraged few were labeled Laodiceans, and the message of keeping God's Commandments, including the Sabbath, became referred to as the Third Angel's Message.

It appears that Church of God leaders like A. C. Long, and later, A.N. Dugger, taught essentially the same as the Adventist viewpoint on the Seven Church Eras and the Third Angel's Message, with the exception, of course, that the Church of God, and not the Seventh Day Adventists, which had changed the church name and gone after a false prophetess, were the true remnant church of the Laodiceans. The *Bible Advocate* of 1908 states flatly, "this is the Laodicean period."

Miller's Views on Church Eras

William Miller, the leader of the Adventist movement, and whose writings continued to have wide influence after his death, taught that the Ephesus era referred to the apostolic age. Smyrna lasted approximately from 100 to 312 A.D. The reference to it being persecuted 10 days was thought to be the ten imperial persecutions, the first under Nero and the last under Diocletian in 303. Pergamos was said to last from 312 to 538, when the anti-Christ (the Pope) became all powerful. Thyatira was from 538 to the 10th century, and reference is given to the book, *Israel of the Alps*, about the Waldenses.

Sardis was said by Miller to refer to the period of the later Waldenses, the 10th century to the Reformation. Philadelphia lasted from the beginning of the Reformation to 1798, and Laodicea began in 1798.

Miller said that Laodicea in its root meaning designates "judging of the people, " and refers to a "haughty, proud, self-exalted church" on which God pours out His judgment. "Is it not a general complaint," Miller wrote in the 1840's, "with all of our churches, of coldness, of a want of spiritual life, and a great failure in active spiritual duties? Yes."

Significantly, Miller notes lessons that we can learn from the last three church eras: (1) Sardis teaches us that we must be on guard against the introduction of errors into the church, and that we need to strengthen ourselves in the truth (see Jude 20), and have not only the proper name, but the power of the gospel. (2) The lesson from the Philadelphia era is that if we keep God's word, God will keep us from trials and Judgments, and open the door to spread the gospel that no man can shut, and that we must be on guard lest any man take our crown. (3) The Laodicean lesson is that we cannot serve two-masters; one cannot love the present evil world and at the same time be servants of God.

Seventh Day Adventist View on Church Eras

Uriah Smith, one of the leading Seventh Day Adventist doctrinal writers, wrote that the Pergamos era lasted from 323 to 538, the time of Constantine's professed conversion to the establishment of the papacy. Thyatira he said lasted for the 1260 years of papal supremacy, 538 to 1798. Sardis, which means "prince or song of joy," or "that which remains," lasted from 1798 to the time at the Second Advent message. Philadelphia was the shortest era, consisting of those who received the Advent message up until the autumn of 1844. Laodicea is since 1844, and Laodiceans consist of those who believe in the Third Angel's Message.

J. T. Williamson's Church of God Views

Whether the article entitled "Seven Churches of Revelation," by J. T. Williamson in the April 1, 1924 *Bible Advocate* was the first on the subject of church eras, is not known. But in it he definitely holds similar views, but not exactly, with the Seventh Day Adventist viewpoint.

Williamson begins by affirming that Jesus Christ, not John, was the revelator. And he goes on to show that the seven churches show the time period from Christ's first advent until His second coming. The seven churches are seven eras of time, "the 'Church of

God' in each of these seven periods of time, like a lamp or candlestick illuminates the life of Christ (light to the world)...." The "angels" of the seven Churches are the "agent, minister, or messenger... who had the oversight of the church as a comforting angel," in other words, the leading minister of the era. Few definite dates for the eras are given, although Williamson notes that the ten times persecution was the ten-year period of persecution under Diocletian, as reported in Myers General History, pages 330-331.

Sardis covers "that which remains," or the concluding period of papal supremacy, ending in 1798, when the pope was taken captive by General Berthier and the door opened to free public worship. Williamson does not elaborate when the Philadelphia era ended (but presumably it was in 1844), but notes that his was definitely the Laodicean era. He concludes, "We realize there is a proneness to apply the sad condition of the Laodicean church to nominal professors; but brethren, this is addressed to the Church of God in this period,"

Dugger's Research into Church History

In an article entitled, "History of the 'Church of God'," in the February 9, 1926 *Bible Advocate*, A.N. Dugger shows the origin of his understanding of church history, which was later to lead him to write the book, "History of the True Church" (1936, reprinted 1968).

On June 12, 1922, the prince of Ethiopia, Wixzezyard Challoughezilzise, accompanied by his secretary, Elder Robert B. St. Clair (an Adventist turned Seventh Day Baptist), arrived at Stanberry, Missouri, where he spoke to audiences for several nights. How he came to visit Stanberry is unknown. The prince was well-educated, and quite a musician. In 1922 it was said that Ethiopia kept the Sabbath as a nation, and held many tenets of faith similiar to the Church of God. While in Stanberry, the Prince was presented with two *Bible Home Instructors* (which have Church of God doctrine arranged according to subject in a question and answer form), which he apparently prized highly. From Stanberry he went to Marion, Iowa (previous headquarters of the Church of God), on his way to Chicago, from where he expected to return to Ethiopia.

From St. Clair, Dugger was given "first insight" into the true facts of church history. Dugger learned that the Ethiopian church were Sabbath keepers and dated their origin from seven hundred years before Moses, "and also that they called themselves the Church of Christ and Church of God." His curiosity piqued, Dugger learned from St. Clair that the Seventh Day Baptist church also called themselves "Church of God" during their early history in America, and showed Dugger certain books where this could be verified. Dugger learned that even as late as 1926, the name Church of God was on some old "Seventh Day Baptist" church houses in the East. Dugger came to

conclude "that the Church of God does not date its history back to 1861 and then follow through the Seventh Day Baptist channels, but rather through that company of people who held to the same name we hold today and consequently our history is perpetuated without a break."

In his 1926 article, Dugger maintained that the 1260 year period of the true church in the wilderness was from 538 to 1798. From 1844 and 1861, the Sabbath-keeping Adventists referred to themselves as the Church of God or the Church of Christ. But in October 1861 the Seventh Day Adventist group met at Battle Creek and selected Seventh Day Adventist instead of the true name, Church of God as their official name. They commanded people not to marry (fulfilling I Tim. 4), as verified by ministers living (in 1926), Elder R. F. Barton of Waterbury, Vermont, and J.J. Kolvoord, Irvindale, Battle Creek. They also commanded to abstain from meats which God created to be received, and lapsed into further errors. Seventh Day Baptist leaders drifted away from the true faith at this time and earlier (even began teaching evolution and "higher criticism"). Dugger concluded his remarks by stating that in the future he intended to go into more detail regarding the history of the Church of God.

In April of 1926 Dugger wrote to a "brother in England," George H. Vane of London (possibly a Seventh Day Baptist), asking him to make an investigation into church history at the London Public Library, and personally providing funds for this venture. By July 6, Dugger was able to report the first of Vane's findings, revealing "some remarkable facts, vindicating the word of God, and proving his care and preservation of the sacred name, 'The Church of God'." Dugger also noted that he had "long believed" that "the true church of the New Testament was called the Church of God, all through the gospel dispensation," and that the name was even preserved during the 1260 years in the wilderness. Now he was searching for more facts in order to publish a pamphlet or a book on "The History of the Church of God," which would "add great weight, force and strength to the message." Vane had made trips to the library and other places and was out of funds, Dugger requested the members to send in donations for this venture.

On July 20, Dugger reported that the Waldenses were especially being investigated in the research project. It was learned that "they observed the Lord's Supper yearly, and kept the true Sabbath, but also that they held to the name 'Church of God'." True Christians have existed under different names at different times, viz. Novatians, Donatists, Paulicians, and Albigenses, Cathars and Waldenses. The history of Peter Waldo is given, with the conclusion that "the Church of God of today is actually the remnant church, cared for in the wilderness, and preserved for a definite purpose in the end of this age."

The result of these researches was a book, "The History of the True Church," first published in 1936.

1927: Expansion into Oregon

The year 1927 saw the addition to the publishing plant completed and almost paid for. The plant must have been working at full speed, for in 1927, some 2, 526, 643 pages of literature were distributed; good portion of this being tracts on the Third Angel's Message (Sabbath keeping), sold by ministers, colporteurs, and volunteers.

Dugger stated that "this was the year that marked the real beginning of the work in North Carolina, Oregon and Panama." The Oregon work was led by G. A. Hobbs. Elder M. W. Unzicker held meetings in Oregon, gaining some nineteen converts.

Some of his newer young ministers in 1927 were Elders Roy Dailey (Arkansas), and Frank Walker and Ennis Hawkins (Oklahoma). C.E. Groshans spent sixteen weeks in field work in Michigan. Rudolph Haffner of Kansas was the leading colporteur of the year.

Among other ministerial reports, E.L. Diamond was working that year in Arkansas; O.R. Osman and L.B. Ramsey in North Carolina; J.F. Jensen in Nebraska; A.H. Stith in Idaho; W.W. McMlcken, Alabama; L.I. Rodgers, Missouri; M.W. Unzicker, Missouri, Texas and Oregon; R.K. Walker, R. A. Barnes, and Burt F. MARRS, Oklahoma; T.J. MARRS, Missouri and Arkansas; C.W. Salkeld and J.G. Slankard, Iowa and Glendale, California; W.M. Alexander, Rich Hill, Missouri; Christ Kiesz, Eureka, South Dakota; J.G. Smith, California; and L.L. Presler and Ed Severson, Wisconsin.

In the foreign work, J. A. Murray was doing Church of God work in Jamaica and Trinidad; J.M. Orn-Naerem in Norway, and B.L. Ramirez in Mexico. In Central America, Arthur G. Tavel brought 14 churches into the Church of God, and a press was established. Foreign printing plants numbered four, and the work was said to be expanding to Japan, several Balkan states, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and El Salvador.

Church Politics: MARRS Becomes President

At the campmeeting and conference for the entire church held at Rich Hill, Missouri in 1928, Elder Burt MARRS became President; Elder J.T. Williamson, Vice-President; and Charles E. Brush, Secretary-Treasurer.

The by-laws of the Constitution were altered so that no member could teach any doctrine in public which was not believed by the conference body, without clearly stating that such belief had not been endorsed by the Church of God, but that it was his own individual opinion.

Another decision was "that the Church of God believes and teaches the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but denies that 'speaking in tongues' is THE evidence."

On September 22, 1927, Elder S.W. Mentzer, a former long-time President of the General Conference, died. Marrs and Elder Stockwell of the Seventh Day Baptist church had charge of funeral services (possibly indicating that Mentzer later leaned to the Seventh Day Baptists).

1928: Field Events

The February 14, 1928 Messenger stated that a great many calls for literature and letters inquiring about Church of God doctrines were being received. It was thought that more new names were added to the *Advocate* subscription list in the previous two weeks than any such time period in the last fifteen years.

Elder William Fiedler, an ex-Seventh Day Adventist from North Dakota, moved to Stanberry in 1928 to take charge of the German department and the printing of the *Advocate* In German. Previously the German edition had been printed in Eureka.

Elder Charles J. Ellis was working for the Church of God in 1928 in Cuba. Later he worked in Jamaica. *Also in foreign fields, James Tolvana of South Africa* was called into the work, and made a missionary journey of over 900 miles, preaching to congregations he formerly knew, organizing several churches of God.

Talk of a Church of God Radio Work

Also in 1928 a drive to get the Church of God message on radio began, with Elder Ervin Sooter of Missouri starting the pledge for a broadcasting station. He was Joined by Sister Alpha Siddens, who wrote: "We must wake up, we don't need fine dresses, we don't need fine food, we have no need of jewelry, we've got to wake up and live up to our calling, that's all."

Previously, in 1925, Dugger wrote an article entitled, "The Third Angel's Message By Radio." He stated: "As God has a purpose in every achievement wrought by man.... We believe it is God's will that we make a proper use of this wonderful discovery of

'radio.', and put it to work for God.... [because this is a] great opportunity... to preach the gospel to the world."

Dugger's idea was to erect a broadcasting station in mid-America that would be powerful to reach all the United States and Canada, and even to Europe and Asia. One man (Sooter, possibly) offered \$1000 for this purpose, and was later joined by another in quest for a total of about \$50, 000.

Apparently little ever came of this project as the funds failed to materialize. When the first Church of God minister ever appeared on radio is not yet known.

The January 22, 1929 *Advocate* carried a report of the campaign to put the "Third Angel's Message" on radio stations, and had a blank form for contributions to the same. In the December 17 issue of that year is the report that A.N. Dugger would be broadcasting from WJSV radio of Washington, D.C. for ten straight evenings, at 7:30 p.m. The station reportedly reached all parts of the United States, and even England. This may have been the first time the Church of God message had ever appeared on radio.

By 1948, Elder R. A. Barnes (KWIL Albany), Elder Edgar Lippincott (KFNF Senandoah, Iowa), Elder W. T. McMickin (KTTR, Rolla, Missouri), and Elder Stanley J. Kauer (WFVR, Grand Rapids, Michigan) were giving once weekly half hour programs. In 1949, half hour Church of God programs were heard on KBRO Bremerton, KASH Eugene, and KRES St. Joseph.

1929: Attempt to Harmonize Disagreements

When the 1928 Passover date was announced, It was advised that to prepare for the event, Church of God members meet every night for a week previous, so "that there may be a general season of refreshing, a time of forgiveness and settling of differences should there be any, and a refilling of the Holy Spirit."

The year 1929 saw a downturn in events for the Church of God.

From 1922-1929, converts never matched the increase of 1000 in the year 1922. A possible reason is that Dugger had pushed through a tighter policy on doctrine: members were not so free to express their own views when they differed from "official" church doctrine, which had previously been the case (and which made it possible for the eastern pentecostals to enter Church of God ranks for a time). The turning point was possibly the year 1925, when Dugger's editorial stated that "our ranks will never again be disrupted by taking issue through our papers on debatable questions, and thus spreading contention and strife."

Dugger apparently was not alone in his effort to have all speak and write the "same thing." Kiesz notes that "many of our people were becoming disgusted with our way of doing things. Many felt that without a harmonious message they could not hand out our papers to newly interested folks, because of the confusion and discouragements that were being created thereby."

As a result, the 1929 General Conference at Stanberry resolved that the ministers teach against eating the Biblical unclean meats, and the use of tobacco. Some Church of God men resented this, and the fact that the *Advocate* refused to print their articles on controversial subjects. Some resorted to printing their views in independent bulletins.

Among the issues in question were the time of the New Birth, the time for observing the Lord's Supper, Meats, Tobacco, the work of the Holy Spirit (pentecostalism), and the Third Angel's Message. Some still held to the idea that Jesus was the son of Joseph, and therefore not divine.

The *Advocate* reported that the 1929 Conference was the scene of considerable confusion and dissension. On August 18, Marrs, Dugger, Unzicker, and other leading ministers signed a covenant "that in all matters of essential doctrines, we shall conform to the Bible standard of interpretation in our book known as *The Bible Home Instructor*;

and on other points, we shall either conform to the standard, or be silent on the same until accepted by two-thirds of the conference." Other signers were Sam Oberg, Pete Bartschi, Frank Walker, and William Alexander. The next meeting was slated for 1931. And, significantly, the Presidency changed hands, from Burt F. Marrs to A.N. Dugger.

Field Events - 1929

Elder Ed Severson organized several Oklahoma churches in 1929. Elder C. F. Knott, an ex-Seventh Day Adventist minister, preached at Spokane, where he converted a young Pentecostal minister to the Sabbath. Oregon work was being conducted by elders A. J. Ray, Sam Oberg, and Roy Dailey. Elder Pete Bartchi was Arkansas State Evangelist. And three West Virginia churches, at Salem, Parkersburg and Moundsville, were organized (possibly with some former Seventh Day Adventists and Seventh Day Baptists).

A press was shipped to Central America to print Spanish and Portuguese literature. A press Intended for Jerusalem was delayed from shipment and sold, and another was sought for the Palestine work.

1930: A Quiet Year; Dodd Enters Church of God

Early in 1930, Dugger and A. A. Cramer of Washington, D.C. held an evangelistic effort near Canton, New York and organized a church there.

Elder W. W. McMicken moved from Alabama to West Virginia, and conducted a number of campaigns in the state. He was West Virginia state evangelist at the time. In August 1932, the first Church of God campmeeting in West Virginia was held in Salem.

And Elder C. O. Dodd of Salem, West Virginia, apparently came into the Church of God in 1930. He was said to have been divinely led into the Sabbath truth by a miracle. He began a preaching campaign in Salem in 1930.

1931: Dugger Goes to Palestine; Alexander Becomes President

Andrew N. Dugger had long felt the importance of going to Jerusalem and working to convert the Jews to Christianity. It was Church of God doctrine that the return of the Jews to Palestine must occur before the Second Coming, and events since the capture of Jerusalem by General Allenby in 1917 had been closely watched by Dugger. There had been numerous articles in the *Advocate* about "Jerusalem and the Jew." After A.F. Dugger, Sr. died in 1910, Andrew had a vision in which he saw the light of heaven

shining around him, and then moving in the direction of Jerusalem. He thus kept in the back of his mind the importance of this "divine mission" to the Church of God, when he accepted the call to edit the *Advocate* in 1914.

As noted previously, reportedly the first Church of God in Jerusalem since 70 A.D. was organized in 1926 by Elder David Nield, and the booklet, "How Shall We Know Him?" was printed for distribution among the Jews.

Earlier indications of Church of God work in Jerusalem go back as early as 1921, when the Messenger reported that a Brother J. A. Behar had been called to Jerusalem to establish the work there. He was conducting regular Sabbath services there, in a rented hall. A Church of God that same year was expected to begin at Corinth, Greece.

Also, in 1925, H.A. Volkovitch reportedly established a Sabbath-keeping church in Jerusalem, made up entirely of Jews, who believed on Christ. He asked for Church of God literature in Hebrew, and reported, another young man was requesting baptism.

In the fall of 1931, the General Conference voted that the church send some one to Jerusalem, to look after the work and prepare the way for moving the world headquarters of the Church of God there. The man chosen was the chief exponent of the ideas, A. N. Dugger. He had served as editor of the *Advocate* since 1914.

To fill the gap, Elder John Kiesz of South Dakota was called to Stanberry In September to be "copy editor," and later in 1932, to serve under the full editor, William Alexander.

On October 3, Dugger gave his farewell address at the Stanberry church. On his way to Palestine, he stopped off at England for a while, doing some "gospel work" there. He held meetings in London with Brother Samuel Brown, and arranged for the shipment of a printing press to Jerusalem.

The August General Conference had chosen Elder William Alexander President, Elder Frank Walker Vice-President, and Charles E. Brush, Secretary-Treasurer. Other members of the Executive Committee were Elders Enriis Hawkins, C. O. Dodd, John Kiesz, and A. N. Dugger.

Other Events in 1931

January, 1931 saw the establishment of the Young Peoples' Department, headed by Elder S.J. Kauer. Other moves included the moving of Frank Williams from Michigan to Stanberry to work in the Advocate office. The son of Elder Timothy Amzy Williams

of Missouri, Frank Williams, later became business manager of the Church of God publishing house.

Elder Archie B. Craig of Oklahoma, the youngest minister of the Church of God, started a campaign effort, in which he assisted Elder Ed Severson.

Sister Mary Welch of Ryan, Oklahoma was reportedly healed instantly through prayer of several years suffering of pellegra.

1932: Dugger and the Jews

Dugger's departure to Jerusalem did not mean that he no longer influenced the Church of God back in America. In his "Notes by the Way" column in the *Advocate*, Dugger reported much of his work in the Holy Land.

In the summer of 1932, Dugger with the help of a Jewish Christian, Elder Henry Cohen, published some 150, 000 gospel tracts in Hebrew. In August, Dugger, with Jacob Futerman, David Golden, Jacob Kort and Henry Cohen went all over Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee, systematically distributing tracts and preaching in all Jewish cities and towns. Dugger reports that "a good number" of Jewish converts to the Church of God were baptized in 1932, and Hebrew workers were carrying on with the message.

In the fall, Dugger and his family left Palestine, once again stopping off in England for some evangelizing there. Arriving in the United States in October, Dugger began holding meetings in St. Joseph, Missouri, and soon established a church there.

It was November 2, 1932 that Dugger returned to Stanberry. The *Advocate* reports that he was accompanied by Elder C. O. Dodd, possibly indicating that Dodd had been with Dugger on his trip.

Alexander Becomes Editor and a Key Figure

Already President of the General Conference

In September of 1932, William Alexander was chosen Editor of the *Advocate*, with Dugger associate editor, and John Kiesz remaining as office editor. Elder Alexander traveled extensively over the field, holding meetings in various places. *Alexander was to be a key figure in the developing threat of doctrinal division in the Church of God.*

The September 19 issue contained a notice: "Hints to Contributors — The Bible Advocate will strictly adhere to the Word of God, and send forth only doctrines in harmony therewith as accepted by the Church of God in general."

As if to underline the developing controversy within the church, Dugger in the January 9, 1933 issue wrote an article entitled, "Our Foundation":

"The 'Church of God' stands on the BIBLE, THE WHOLE BIBLE, AND NOTHING BUT THE BIBLE. We have no creed outside of the Bible. The Bible is the Book through which God has revealed His will to man, and if doctrine will not stand the fire of the Bible we reject it.... We do not stand upon any one-man interpretation of the Word of God, or any one-man leadership, save Jesus Christ the Son of God.... Paul warned the Church of God nearly two thousand years ago that men would arise among us speaking perverse things 'to draw away disciples after them'. Read, and re-read, Acts 20:28-31. For this reason the church humbly stands upon the Bible, and where the Bible speaks the Church of God speaks, and where the Bible is silent, the church is silent."

The only difficulty with Dugger's statement was that factions within the Church of God that differed with "official church policy" refused to keep silent. What had not been resolved in 1905 was to explode into a major catastrophe for the Church of God in 1933.

Doctrinal Framework Before the Division

Sketches of Church of God doctrine have been given previously in this paper. But before describing the momentous events of 1933, it is imperative to give a clearer picture of the doctrinal issues which precipitated the division.

The second session of the Church of God General Conference at Stanberry in 1885 outlined 24 articles of belief, a copy of which has not been obtained. Current Church of God beliefs are outlined in the booklet, "What the Church of God Believes, and Why", containing 38 articles.

The early groups, Church of God, Church of Christ, and Church of the Firstborn, probably held widely divergent views. A. F. Dugger, Jr. wrote that "It is doubtful if any one of these had all of the truths now taught by the church.... each contributor [was] responsible for his or her views of the Scriptures."

This long continued to be the policy of the Church of God papers, until Dugger in the 1920's attempted to clamp down on this confusion.

Differences Between the Church of God and Seventh Day Adventists

A. F. Dugger, Sr. wrote a tract at least as early as 1907, later reprinted, on the doctrinal differences between the Church of God and Seventh Day Adventists. He listed ten general points of difference:

(1) **The Basis of Faith and Belief.** Since the *Hope of Israel* stated its beliefs were solely on the Bible, the basis of faith and belief of the Church of God has been the Bible, and the Bible only, not the additional visions of Ellen G. White.

(2) **The Purpose and Place of Church Organization.** Seventh Day Adventists say that they are the true church, the "remnant people of God." They say there may be people saved that were never in their organization, but all who hear their message and have the opportunity to join them, must do so to be saved. They hold that they are the only organization God is directly leading. They reverence their organization and leaders, and the powers exercised by Seventh Day Adventist leaders are similar to those of the Catholic hierarchy. There is a strict test of fellowship, and those not complying are excommunicated.

The Church of God of Stanberry follows Christ, and they believe Christ has not established any exclusive church organization; membership in an "organization" is not, and never has been, a requisite for salvation. No "organization" has divine authority. "Mutual fellowship and cooperation, with brotherly love have always characterized the true followers of Christ." The Church of God is an association of believers working together to spread the gospel, and does not claim to have all God's people. "All who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are invited to fellowship with us."

(3) **The Church Name.** This difference is obvious, and the reasons have hitherto been explained for the Seventh Day Adventist—Church of God name difference.

(4) **The Atonement and the Sanctuary.** The 2300 days of Dan.8:14 are believed by Seventh Day Adventists to have been fulfilled on October 22, 1844, while the Church of God believes they were fulfilled in Antiochus Epiphanes. John Reed, an early preacher for the *Hope of Israel* in Michigan in the 1850's, wrote an article on the *Sanctuary Question* ridiculing the Seventh Day Adventist idea that Christ didn't enter the holy of holies until 1844, because Paul said Christ was at God's right hand in the first century, A.D.

(5) **The Judgment.** Seventh Day Adventists believe there are three periods of judgment, investigative judgment, executive judgment, and an investigative and review

judgment during the 1000 years when the saved are in heaven going over the books, deciding the amount of punishment of the wicked before they are destroyed.

The Church of God believes in one period of judgment for all who now have the opportunity to hear the gospel and either accept or reject it.

(6) **The Millennium.** The Church of God believes that Christ will come all the way to earth, Zech. 14:4, Acts 1:11. The earth was created to be the home of mankind, not to be destroyed, Isa. 45:18. The saints will rule during the 1000 years on the earth, Rev. 5:10, 20:6. Ellen G. White stops in the middle of the sentence in Isa. 24:6, supposedly showing that there will be no inhabitants left on earth.

(7) *The Second Coming of Christ.* Both Seventh Day Adventists and the Church of God believe the end is near, and don't set dates. But Seventh Day Adventists speak of the Advent as especially near, at any time. Seventh Day Adventists hold that Christ comes in clouds, and goes back to heaven. The Church of God teaches that the saints meet Christ in the air, and come back with him on the Mount of Olives, Zech. 14:4, 9. The Church of God is not sure just who will be on the earth besides saints, but that they are to preach the gospel until Christ comes.

(8) **The Time of Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection.** Seventh Day Adventists hold to the Friday-Sunday mainstream Christian belief, while the Church of God believes in a Wednesday-Sabbath time element.

(9) **Time of Observance of the Lord's Supper.** Seventh Day Adventists believe that there is no certain time, but follow the custom of observing it four times a year, in connection with their regular Sabbath services. The Church of God keeps it at the same time, beginning of evening, and the same day of the year as Christ did.

(10) **Differences in Prophetic Interpretation.** The Seventh Day Adventist church was founded on prophecy. The Church of God is greatly interested in prophecy, but its fundamental doctrines do not depend on prophecy. The Church of God believes that the prophecy of the return of the Jews to Palestine to be a sign of the Second Advent, while Seventh Day Adventists do not.

Tracts and Books

AS early as 1871, "The Bible Student's Assistant" was available to *Advocate* subscribers, as a compilation of Bible references on subjects as the Kingdom of God, the Millennium, the Resurrection, Sabbath, Ceremonial Sabbaths, Faith, Repentance, Baptism, State of the Dead, Destruction of the Wicked, Restoration of the Jews, name of the church, Daniel's image, etc. It was the predecessor of the *Bible Home Instructor*.

The tract, "The Bible Sabbath Defended," first printed around 1880, was still available in 1963. In the 1890's, tracts under the "Bible Truth Series" were printed, among them, "The Two Kingdoms, " which was about the "Kingdom of Grace" and the "Kingdom to Come." During this period, some 30-35 tracts were printed by the Church of God.

The tract, "Visions of Ellen G. White Not of God" by B. F. Snook and William H. Brinkerhoff, was advertised (price: 10\$ in the *Advent Christian* paper, *World's Crisis*, from October 10, 1866 until the end of 1868. Other anti-White tracts, such as the one of Carver, have previously been noted.

"The Two-Horned Beast of Revelation 13," by A. C. Long, refuted the Seventh Day Adventist view that this beast represented the United States, instead identifying it with a religious and ecclesiastical government, probably the Catholic Church.

Tracts, Circa 1907

Tracts, with their authors, pages and price, as advertised in 1907 issues and the *Bible Advocate* are as follows:

Baptism -- J.T. Williamson

20th Century Truisms -- W.C. Long

Is it a Literal Fact? (about Lazarus and the Rich Man) -- A. F. Dugger

Tithing System -- B. F. Purdham

The Two Kingdoms -- B. F. Purdham

An Old Habit -- C.S. De Ford

Meat in due season -- J.W. Mrash

Introduction to Open Letter No. 2 -- S.D. Heady

Reasons for Embracing and Observing Jehovah's Sabbath -- Almon Hall

The Two Laws -- A. C. Long

A Talk to the Children -- A.F. Dugger

The Thief on the Cross -- A. F. Dugger

Modern Prophets and Prophecies -- Harlan P. Peck

The Restitution -- A. F. Dugger

The Future Home of the Saints -- W.C. Long

The False and the True on the Law -- Eld. W. L. Crowe

The Holy City of God -- sermon by W.C. Long

The King of the North, who, or what is it? -- E.S. Sheffield

The Week -- A. J. Eychaner

Bible Lessons, No. 1 -- J.R. Goodenough

The Desolation of the Earth -- A.F. Dugger
Examined and refuted

The Two-Homed Beast of Revelation 13, Showing its Application to the Papacy -
- A. C. Long

Second Coming of Chris-- Jacob Brinkerhoff

God's Sabbath Day from Eden Until Now -- W.H. Ebert

The Two Covenants -- W.C. Long

Mrs. White's Visions - Jacob Brinkerhoff

The Restoration of the Jews to their own Land - W.C. Long

Jews to their own Land -- W. C. Lang

Thoughts on the Lord's Supper or The Christian Passover" -- W. C. Long

Thoughts on the First Day of the Week -- A.F.Dugger

The True Sabbath -- W.C. Long

Crucifixion and Resurrection -- C.S. De Ford

The Ten Commandments -- W.C. Long

Change of the Sabbath — Who Authorized It? -- A.C. Long

Christian Materialism -- Jacob Brinkerhoff

Sunday verses Sabbath -- Albert D. Rust

The Bible Student's Assistant

Points of Difference between The Church of God and Seventh Day Adventists.
-- A. F. Dagger

Begotten Again, or Born Again — Which? -- David Nield

Songs of Truth

The Gospel of the Sanctuary -- E. P. Dexter

The Good Friday Problem -- David Nield

Conditional Immortality -- E. E. Rogers

The Importance of Keeping the Sabbath -- L. Niel

Additional Tracts, 1913-1916

Future Punishment -- S. P. Whitney

Thoughts on Mart. 24 -- S.S. Davison

Repentance -- H.T. Whitehall

The Two Kingdoms -- B. F. Purdham

The Word Made Flesh -- Minnie Presler

A Sermon Submitted to Opposers of God's Law -- E.G. Blackmon

Why I Observe the Sabbath, the 7th day of the week -- Jacob Brinkerhoff

Meat for Thinking Minds -- H.T. Whitehall

Is the Soul Immortal? And, What is the soul? -- S.P. Whitney

The Coming King; Watchman, Where are we? Second Coming of Christ -- S.S. Davison

The Bible or Roman Catholic Catechism, Which? -- E.G. Blackmon

Bible Teaching of Future, Life in Kingdom of God, and a History of the Temple in Jerusalem -- Alpheus Davison

The Bible Student's Assistant, Doctrines of the Church of God

Rome in Prophecy -- I.N. Kramer

The Bible Sabbath Defended (3rd edition) A. F. Dugger

Truths, Past, Present, Future -- E.S. Sheffield

Law and Order, Disorder and Gospel -- J. F. Flory

Comparison of Early Writings of Ellen G. White with Later Publications -- A. G. Long

Power for Witnessing -- Albion F. Ballenger

The Reformation -- Alonzo T. Jones

The Turkish Tangle -- Alonzo T. Jones

An Appeal to Skeptics (Is the Bible true?) -- A. D. Rust

Are We Duty Bound to Keep the Sabbath in this Age? -- L. O. Van Nostrand

The Twelve Tribes Scattered Abroad -- Loretta Reynolds

Parable of Ten Virgins -- G.S. De Ford

The Plan of Redemption -- J.R. Goodenough

Liberty of Thought in School, or What is History -- Lloyd Shanklin

Babylon, The Great Systematical City of Confusion -- W.S.Ward

The Worship of the Beast and his Image -- Elder Willis Logan

The Passover and the Lord's Supper -- H.T. Whitehall

Destiny of the Wicked -- J.R. Goodenough

The Bible a Much Misunderstood Book — Why? -- Alpheus Davison

The Spirits in Prison -- J. Nuesch

New Tracts, 1920

The Battle of Armageddon -- A. N. Dugger

The New Testament -- J. R. Goodenough

Justification by Faith -- J. R. Goodenough

The Divine Paternity of Jesus -- E. G. Blackmon

The Intermediate State and Judgment Age -- I.N. Kramer

The Resurrection of Christ - Which Day Did it Occur? -- A.N. Dugger

The Name Church of God -- A. N. Dugger

Present Truth -- J. Neusch

A Glimpse of The Closing Work of God in the World and Its Relation to the Sabbath and Seventh-Day Adventists -- G.E. Fifield

1924 Tracts

Counterfeit and Genuine Sabbath, my experience with Both -- G. W. Sarber

Conditional Immortality -- E.E. Rogers

Future Punishment -- S.P. Whitnew

How to Tithe and Why -- a lay man

In Memory of Our Beloved Dead -- H.C. Killgore

Plan of Salvation -- Mary E. Eastman

Proclamation of Liberty

The Four World Empires -- A.N. Dugger

The Death Penalty -- A. N. Dugger

The Sign of Jonah -- John Kolvoord

The Sanctuary -- M. Yvonne Hastings

The Seal of God and the Mark of the Beast -- A. N. Dugger

Priest Enright's \$1,000 offer; an offer by a Catholic priest for Bible evidence of Sunday sacredness

Destiny of the Wicked

The Name Church of God

Does the Bible Teach Church Organization?

Vision of the late Mrs. Ellen G. White

The Two Laws

The Future Home of the Saints

Ten Commandments

Sunday and Sabbath

The "Gems of Truth" Series

To accompany the sale of *Bible Home Instructors*, a series of tracts were printed in the 1920's to outline more fully Church of God doctrines.

The purpose of the tracts was to build up churches and add members.

Colporteurs would call on homes, leaving tract #1, come back a week later, and if the response was favorable, leave tract #2, and so on.

They sold (probably to the colporteurs, who gave them, free) for 2 cent 3 each, or \$1.00 per 100 and \$5.00 for 1,000.

Tracts listed in the series in 1925 Included the following:

The Return of the Jews

The Signs of Our Times

The Battle of Armageddon

The Bible Name for the Bible Church

The Two Laws

Has Time Been Lost?

Bible Baptism

The Resurrection of Christ, Which Day?

The New Testament Sabbath, \$10,000 offered for opposing scriptures.

The Third Angel's Message

The Mark of the Beast

The Number of the Beast is 666

Where Are the Dead?

The Spirit, Eccl. 13:7, Explained

Bible Facts About Hell

Justified by Faith
In His Image

Laying On of Hands

A 1925 *Advocate* by Mrs. Rosa Frazier stated that laying on of hands after baptism is "plainly taught in Scriptures," and is part of the gospel, as believers who are baptized should have this done for the receipt of the Holy Spirit.

Passover Question

One of the Issues that was to prove critical in the 1933 division of the Church of God was the date of the Lord's Supper, or Passover.

The April 12, 1881 *Hope* set forth reasons for observing the ordinance annually at the time of the Passover. Pro and con articles followed, but Passover reports in the spring of 1881 showed that many brethren had accepted it.

The April 26, 1881 issue states that the Passover was kept on the evening after the 13th of Nisan, with footwashing, at Bro. Samuel Barackman's in Nebraska. Also, R.E. Caviness of Beckwith, Iowa reported observing it, and Bro. S.S. Davison spoke in favor of an annual Passover. The May 24, 1881 issue contained a long article by A. F. Dugger explaining reasons for annual Passover observance.

In 1907, a letter in the *Advocate* from Sister Katie R. Gilstrap reveals that she and her husband were Seventh Day Adventists, but came into Church of God beliefs because Seventh Day Adventists would not accept the Passover. She wishes "Brother [J.H.] Nichols" could visit them, as they live in an isolated place and have no contact with Church of God brethren. Mrs. Gilstrap noted that *Advocate* readers would probably not see the need of still keeping the seven days feast of unleavened bread with the two Sabbaths (March 31 and April 6 of that year, as she calculated, which is a day ahead), but she and her husband believed Christ and the disciples kept them, and we should too; referring to Acts 12:3 and 20:6. Mrs. Gilstrap was pleased to see from the last copy of the *Advocate* that the Church of God people would keep the Passover of 1907 on the "correct" time, on the 15th night. She notes that they formerly kept Passover on the night of the 14th, and is happy to see a church not bound up in a creed that doesn't turn from past errors. The Gilstraps had kept the Passover since 1893, but knew of no one else who kept it at the time they did. Subsequently, Bro. Nichols, De Ford and a Dr. Reed took up this truth, De Ford wrote it in *Azazel*, Dr. Reed in *Gleanings*, and both later in the *Advocate*.

Yet the *Advocate* of that same year also carried a letter of an Elder Richardson of London supporting observance of Passover on the night of the 14th, March 28 of that year. J. F. Flory of Lemoore, California kept the Passover with ten others at his house. First they had a supper, then washed each other's feet, had the bread and cup, and sang an hymn.

Two Dates Kept — 1908

Eider R.E. Caviness celebrated the Passover at Pleasant Plain, Iowa, with the Cramers and several others on the evening of the 14th, with feet washing afterwards. But at the Pleasant Hill, Missouri church, they celebrated it on Nisan 15, Bro. G. W. Richards officiating. And again, the Scranton, Iowa, church kept it on the 14th.

Further Date Controversy

In 1909, the correct date of Passover (Nisan 14) was April 5 (observed the evening of April 4). Yet in the 1909 *Advocate* is mention that Passover is to be observed on Monday night, April 5, and in so doing that this fulfilled keeping the Passover on the 14th of Nisan. But the Church of God at Glen, Colorado, observed Passover on the evening of April 3, or the evening of April 2. The Stanberry church met for the Passover the night after Sabbath, April 3. It is obvious that there was one or two days variance in Passover observance.

In 1910 the dispute was still on. S.W. Mentzer computed Passover as the evening after Sabbath, which fell on April 23. Nisan 14 that year was April 23. J. Nuesch refuted Mentzer, saying that the Pass over lamb was slain until the evening of the 14th, not until the 15th. J.G. Gilstrap disputed Nuesch, saying Passover should be observed that year Sunday evening April 24.

In 1917, the *Advocate* contained reference to observing Passover the beginning of the 14th of Nisan, which fell on that year on Friday April 6. Thus the observance was on Thursday evening, April 5.

In 1924, the term "Lord's Supper" appears to be used generally for the first time instead of "Passover." It was observed (correctly) on Thursday evening, April 17. A lead article in the April 8 issue is entitled, "Why Unfermented Wine Is Used at the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper," and written by Evelyn L. Long. The article stated that Jews used unfermented wine, Christ did, so we ought to also. The Church of God was listed as observing "the Passover or Lord's Supper" at the beginning of the 14th. Christ was killed between three and five o'clock in the afternoon of the 14th, the same time as when the Passover lamb was killed. This implied that the true Jewish Passover was on Nisan 15.

Regardless, 1924 was the first time generally that "Passover reports" of the churches were given, indicating the location of various churches keeping the Passover.

In 1926, there was a report of when the Millyard Church of God in London observed the Passover. It was correct, on Sunday evening, March 28, the beginning of the 29th. The *Advocate* noted that this was the same time calculated by the Church of God.

Passover — 14th or 15th of Nisan?

One of the key issues mentioned as the cause of the 1933 Church of God division was the issue of when to observe the Passover. Dugger leaned to observance on the *beginning* of the 14th, and this was adopted as the official church doctrine. But there was opposition. The Stanberry group (as opposed to the Salem group) leaned toward the 15th date. In a 1937 *Bible Advocate* of the Stanberry group, Darrell A. Davis wrote an article, "True Christian Observance of the Lord's Supper." He said that the wine should be grape juice, the footwashing before the ordinances, and the hymn should be afterwards, without a closing benediction. The leftover bread should be burnt, and leftover wine poured out. Interestingly enough, the paper listed two "Lord's Supper dates".

Custom of Fasting Before Passover

From time to time it has been noted that the Church of God advised a period of fasting prior to Passover observance in order to properly prepare for the important event. In 1924, the General Conference committee set aside a week of fasting and prayer to precede Passover of that year. It was not recommended that everyone fast an entire week, but each member was to use his own judgment. In 1925 again it was recommended a week prior to Passover, to get member's minds on the sacredness of the event.

Feast Days: Sleeper Issue

A more quiet issue, alluded to earlier by Mrs. J. G. Gilstrap, was that of whether or not the feast days should be observed. The discussion of the Sabbath question naturally raises to the fore the question of the validity of the *annual* sabbaths, or *holy days* of Leviticus 23. *The same arguments used against Sabbath observance are used against feast day observance.*

James White had early rejected the feast days. (See the first issue of *The Present Truth* in 1849.) Seventh Day Adventist J.N. Andrews refuted the feast days in his work in 1873. He said, "There is no evidence that the jubilee was ever observed, and it is certain that the sabbatical year was almost entirely disregarded. Lev. 26:34, 35,43 and II Chron. 36:21. "Pentecost nor the Feast of Tabernacles could not have been observed until after the Hebrews entered Palestine, and "The annual sabbaths were part and parcel

of these feasts, and could have no existence until after the feasts to which they belonged had been instituted." Isa. 1:13,14 shows that God hates "your new moons and your appointed feasts," while Hos. 2:11 shows God will cause to cease "her feast-days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts." Christ abolished them completely, according to Andrews.

Some Church of God Supporters Held to Feast Day Observance

In May, June and July of 1913, issues of the *Bible Advocate* carried articles supporting the observance of feast days. They were written by G. G. Rupert, later the publisher of the paper, *The Remnant of Israel* (1915-7), a former Seventh Day Adventist. Rupert's starting premise was that "there is not a single text in the New Testament that teaches that any law that God ever gave was abolished and nailed to the cross...." and that only the sacrifices and oblations have ceased, as stated in Daniel 9:27.

Rupert was an independent who for a time went along with the Church of God from Stanberry, but because they refused to accept his teachings, formed an independent movement.

Sarber Supports Annual Feast Days

In 1916, G. W. Sarber from Knox, Indiana, wrote in the *Advocate* supporting the annual holydays. He mentioned that Pentecost is 50 days from Nisan 16, the Feast of Tabernacles is the 15th day of the seventh month, and the eighth day of Tabernacles is also a sabbath rest. "These are the feasts of the Lord, and from the Bible standpoint they are as binding upon the sons of God at this present time as they were when God commanded them to Israel of old." The editor, A.N. Dagger, included a caption stating that "Every writer is held responsible for their sentiments."

Official Church of God Position Against Holy Days

The 1917 article, "What the Church of God Believes and Why?", written by A.N. Dagger, stated in Article 21 that the commandments nailed to the cross included only animal sacrifices, and yearly sabbath days that were governed by the day of the month, new moons, feasts, and other holydays, referring to Eph. 2:15, Heb. 9:10-12. In the same issue, in the "Question Corner" section, Dugger explained Rom. 14:15 as follows:

"The death of Christ made an end to the feast days, and meats and drinks, which were shadows. Those who rejected Christ were still keeping these feast day Sabbaths...." and Paul gave them contrary instruction, Col. 2:16.

Another "Question Corner" answer by Dugger in 1924 stated that Acts 18:21 refers to the feast of Passover day, and Acts 20:3 (days of unleavened bread) refers only to the Passover, not the whole week.

Holy Days were to be a latent issue within the Church of God, accepted by some, but rejected by many. **Though the official church position was against them, some supporters of the Church of God continued to believe and keep them, yet still maintaining Church of God membership.**

The Meats Issue

Also Tobacco

In 1866, articles began to appear in the *Hope of Israel* against the use of pork, apparently prompted by deaths from trichinosis.

Generally, the meats issue was not a test of doctrine, and not included specifically in Church of God articles of belief. Jacob Brinkerhoff and A. F. and A.N. Dugger, long editors of the *Advocate*, were personally opposed to eating pork. The May 12, 1908 issue noted that the editors believed in the law of clean and unclean, but others of the brethren believed it was a thing of the past.

In 1911, Editor Jacob Brinkerhoff stated that "on the subject of Food we must be lenient with those who do not see the matter as we do."

Yet in the 1929 General Conference at Stanberry, it was resolved that ministers teach against the eating of unclean meats, as well as tobacco.

As far as tobacco is concerned, Cranmer's associates were labeled by Seventh Day Adventists as tobacco users. But S.C. Hancock of the Church of the Firstborn in the East said that his people regarded tobacco as a "dirty, loathesome, expensive, unhealthy practice, and from which every disciple of Christ should abstain." John Reed, one of Cranmer's leading associates, reportedly quit the habit in late 1864.

In 1928, an unnamed man from Arkansas wrote in the *Advocate* saying that some Church of God brethren said they were too poor to pay tithes, yet they were heavy tobacco users. Bugger replied that they were not really in the church if they did so, for "The Church of God stands on record opposing the use of tobacco in every form, and our ministry is constantly teaching the people their duty along this line."

Passover and Meats were to be two key issues which were to precipitate- division in the Church of God in 1933.

The Jew and Israel

The "Age to Come" doctrine held to by the Church of God consists of the belief that the prophecies relating to the regathering of Israel in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ apply to literal Israel rather than spiritual Israel. But who is literal Israel?

In 1861, Elder R. V. Lyon (mentioned by Dugger's history as a Church of God minister) wrote a pamphlet entitled, "The Scattering and Restoration of Israel." In it he stated that in conjunction with the return of Christ, Judah and the Ten-tribed House of Israel would be regathered. They are spoken of as separate entities, and are the "two sticks" to be rejoined as foretold in the prophecy of Ezekiel 37:15-28. Lyon reported that this prophecy was written 134 years after the Ten Tribes went into captivity, and they were never brought back to their land, were never united with Judah. He neglected to report where they are today, though.

A 1903 issue of the *Advocate* contains a statement by S.S. Davison that "The [re] turn of the Jews to the land of Palestine is a sure sign and forerunner" that Christ is soon coming."

The capture of Jerusalem from the Turks by General Allenby In 1917 is especially noted as hastening the return of the Jew to Israel. In 1923 and later years, a regular section in the *Advocate* was devoted to "Zion News," and the regathering of the Jews. Note was made in 1923 that "27,000 Jews entered Palestine since 1918." In 1924, columns entitled "Palestine From Day to Day" noted further progress along this line.

Dugger and the Church of God in general have believed that the Jews are the only ones that fulfill prophecies relating to the regathering of Israel.

Merritt Dickinson and Anglo-Israelism

But besides R. V. Lyon, another Church of God minister held to the conviction that the Jews were separate from the Ten Tribes of the House of Israel. In December, 1919, Merritt Dickinson of Longdate, Oklahoma, wrote a series of articles in the *Advocate*, also printed into a tract, entitled "The Final Gathering of the Children of Israel." Only the concluding article has thus far been located.

Dickinson stated in the article that England is Ephraim and America is Manesseh, and presumably the rest of the lost Ten Tribes are in northwestern Europe. He stated that the Ten Lost Tribes were scattered as well as Judea, the Jew, and will just as certainly be gathered. His article concluded by stating that *Advocate* readers could write to the editor for a free supply of tracts on "The Final Gathering of the Children of Israel," for distribution.

Born about 1864 in Ohio, Merritt Dickinson as a boy moved with his his family to Michigan, where they lived near Saginaw. In 1883 at the age of 19, Merritt married Ida Nichols (possibly the daughter of J.H. Nichols), a colporteur that worked under Ellen G. White. Merritt and his brother Leroy knew the Whites' personally, and were

practically next door neighbors for a while, but reportedly never went along with the Seventh Day Adventists. They were part of the Church of God in Michigan, and attended conferences in White Cloud. Campmeetings those days lasted 8-10 days. Interestingly, some of the Dickinson's relatives were said to have been Seventh Day Baptists. And while in Michigan, Leroy and Merritt kept the Passover, but on Nisan 15.

Through self-study, Merritt Dickinson came to believe in Anglo-Israelism. He reportedly read the book, *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*. Leroy, Merritt and their mother went to Jerusalem for three years, 1898-1900, and along the trip, stopped off at London and saw the Stone of Scone. After the trip they settled in Oklahoma. By now, they were observing the Sabbath by themselves.

By 1912, Merritt was preaching, holding meetings in Oklahoma. It was that year that A.N. Dugger had a street conversation with Merritt as recalled by his niece. Dugger stated: "You can preach about that (Anglo-Israelism) if you want to, and there may be some truth to it; but you can't get anywhere with the people while preaching that."

Merritt Dickinson replied: "You admit it is the truth, but you won't preach it." This discouraged Dickinson about the Church of God. He later turned down ordination and a minister's license, because he refused to be tied down and muzzled. Yet in the General Conference Report on Ministers in 1923, M.N. Dickinson is listed as an ordained, recognized and credentialed minister, next to A.N. Dugger.

In 1913, Elder M. W. Unzicker began meetings at White Horse school house on June 1 at the request of Dickinson. Bad weather plagued the meeting, and Dickinson helped conduct a meeting also.

Elder L.O. Van Nostrand has been said to have typed the manuscript of Merritt Dickinson's tract on Anglo-Israel, and was listed as co-author in the tract when published at Stanberry.

Merritt Dickinson was not the only one in the Church of God that believed in Anglo-Israelism. R.K. Walker, Frank Walker, S.S. Davison, and Roy Davison were prominent Church of God ministers holding similar views. ***The issue was to be another question that tended to divide the Church of God, and continued to be held by some who stayed in the church.***

Sunday Church of God: Its Ties with Seventh Day Church of God

In relation to the restoration of the nation of Israel prior to the Second Coming, and its pre-eminence in the Kingdom of God, another church has taught much the same as the Church of God (Seventh Day). This is the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith, also known as the Churches of God in Christ Jesus, or Church of God (Oregon, Illinois).

The 1908 *Advocate* stated that **"these people hold the same faith and doctrines as we do with the exception of their rejection of the Sabbath."**

A 1907 issue even advertises the *Twelfth Annual Conference of the Churches of God in Christ Jesus*, held at Waterloo, Iowa, August 17-25. Again is mention that, though they do not observe the Sabbath, they were "believers of the other points of our faith."

The question naturally arises whether these people held to the observance of an annual Lord's Supper, certainly a primary Church of God (Seventh Day) doctrine.

Elder C. E. Groshans of Indiana used their church building in Grand Rapids for meetings, and noted that their "faith we heartily endorse."

The Restitution church appears to be an Adventist body whose origins may be traced back to Joseph Marsh. Scattered groups of Restitutionists, Age to Come Adventists and others organized in 1888 at Philadelphia as the Churches of God in Christ Jesus. The next year the "organization" ceased to function, and it wasn't until 1921 that a General Conference was organized at Waterloo, Iowa. Headquarters was established at Oregon, Illinois. A loose group, based on the state conference system of government, the church had 2224 members in 1916, 3528 members in 1926 and about 5800 in 1965.

In 1917 the church had two periodicals, *The Restitution* (Cleveland, Ohio) and *The Restitution Herald* (Oregon, Illinois), which paper had apparently been going since about 1851. Churches in 1890 were at Cleveland; Philadelphia; Brooklyn; San Diego; Seattle; Plymouth, Indiana; Salem, Ohio; Falrview, Nebraska (with N.H. Hornaday the elder); Andover, South Dakota; Frontier County, Nebraska; and Happy Woods, Louisiana. Interestingly, the 1917 Yearbook of Churches confused the Church of God (Adventist) with the Churches of God in Christ Jesus (Adventist).

One man did observe the Sabbath

The Restitution Church of God tended to consist of independents. One such "a man of strong individuality" who "followed no one's leading" was Bible scholar and debator Elder George M. Myers (1838-1908). His obituary in the 1908 *Bible Advocate* gives him as the author of "The Atonement," "The Covenants of Promise," and also a Church of God hymnal, "Glad Tidings." Myers was the publisher of secular and religious papers and periodicals in Illinois, Iowa and Kansas, and helped to organize and re-organize conferences of Illinois, Iowa, Missouri-Kansas, and Kansas-Oklahoma. He was President of the Missouri-Kansas Restitutionist Church of God at his death. He was termed a firm believer in the Sabbath, Anglo-Israelism, the covenants of promise, the Second Coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God on the earth.

Further research may show more of the interesting ties between the Church of God (Seventh Day) and the Churches of God in Christ Jesus.

Pagan Holidays

Similarly to the Seventh Day Baptists, the Church of God has from time to time preached against Christmas, and Easter, but has not been adamantly against the Christmas holiday.

A 1907 *Advocate* stated that Easter was of pagan origins. In 1909, W. A. H. Gilstrap wrote that Christmas is a pagan holiday, comparing it to the "day of the sun," or Sunday. In 1925, there was a strong article stating that Christ was not born on December 25, and that Christmas is of Papal origins. Readers were encouraged to read an encyclopedia article on Christmas, renounce the holiday custom of gift-giving, and put their money directly in the work of the Lord.

The Ministry — Ordination and Recommendation Church of God ministers fell into two categories: *licensed ministers and credentialed ministers*. *Young ministerial aspirants were first granted a license by their state organization, before being ordained and granted credentials by the General Conference*. As a "precaution against wolves," *the General Conference credentials went to ordained, fully recognized ministers who adhered to Church of God teachings*.

Ordination was done by anointing with oil and laying on of hands, as shown in the ordination of Harvey Briggs of Muskegon Heights, Michigan, by Elder C.E. Groshans.

Those reported as licensed and credentialed by the General Conference were not all the ministers of the church, for licensed ministers residing in a state that had a state conference were not listed by the General Conference.

About 1911, the Church of God required all ministers with credentials to report their work at the end of the year to headquarters, and they had to show some activity to be continued as church ministers. Later, because many ministers were getting old and became unable to be active, they were placed on a retired list, and still recognized in good standing.

Issue of Church Government — Critical Problem

As in 1905, doctrinal questions were allowed to split the Church of God because the issue of Church Government had not been resolved.

Was the church to have authority to discipline its members? Or was each allowed to have his own private opinion on various doctrinal subjects?

As early as 1908, the General Conference stated that "no member of this Conference shall be allowed to teach any doctrine in public which is not believed by us as a Conference until it is first investigated by said Conference and accepted."

Violation of this principle could bring refusal to renew a minister's credentials for one year.

It is interesting to note that at this Conference, the five member Executive Committee was elected by majority vote of ordained ministers.

Each state could send a delegate, even if it was not organized into a state conference. The General Conference allowed regular lay members to participate in deliberations, but not to vote in proceedings. And further, the Conference stated that it would withdraw fellowship from any of its members for a good cause.

In 1924, Elder J. T. Williamson reported that an unnamed "colaborer" had left the ranks, wanting to be independent, and feeling that the Church of God had "popes."

In 1928, the By-Laws of the Constitution were altered so that no member could teach any doctrine publicly which was not believed by the Conference, without clearly stating that such belief was not endorsed by the Church of God, but that it was his own individual opinion.

Clearly, such procedures were not to prove effective. Those who held divergent views refused to be kept silent. The result was division.

X. The Division of 1933 — Stanberry and Salem

The Reorganization

According to Church of God historian A.N. Dugger, this is how the division occurred:

Church of God members across the United States were simultaneously inspired to become impressed with the "improper and unscriptural organization of the church." They wrote one another of the "evils manifest in state and general elections of presidents, vice presidents, and suggesting the need of the restoration of the Scriptural organization of the twelve to look after the spiritual affairs of the church, and seven to take charge of the financial business, and also the seventy to go forth two by two in giving the warning message for the hour."

Elder Otto Haeber of California, Dugger's cousin, wrote A.N. Dugger in Battle Creek, laying out before him the need of the "Bible Organization," as had been suggested by others living in California. Coincidentally, before Dugger received Haeber's letter, he had written Haeber telling him of a movement in favor of this form of organization, and that it would be brought up the next fall at the General Conference at Stanberry.

Furthermore, unknown to the church in general, Elders R. A. Barnes of Arkansas and Ed Severson of Oklahoma had for some time been talking over the matter between themselves. A few months after Dugger returned from Palestine (early 1933), Theodore Gillespie, an old time member of the St. Joseph, Missouri church, suggested the matter to Dugger, who replied that the church at Jerusalem felt this way, and that others were seriously considering the matter.

It was felt by these members that Rev. 19:7-8 showed that the church was not ready and must "make herself ready," by conforming to "Scriptural organization," instead of patterning her government after the civil organizations of this world, and furthermore, the church should make herself ready by moving world headquarters to the place Jesus had chosen — Jerusalem.

November 4, 1933 — Salem, West Virginia

The time and place chosen to perform this work of "reorganization" was Salem, West Virginia, November 4, 1933.

For several weeks prior to November 4, a call was sent to many countries for prayer "That God would again choose men to lead His church as in the former time." Countries

listed were: Jerusalem, South Africa, Australia, Egypt, England, Norway, Germany, Switzerland, China, India, New Zealand, Panama, Japan, Jamaica, Cuba, Trinidad, Guam, Canada, Nova Scotia, Liberia, Barbados, Venezuela, Syria, Madagascar, Burma, Newfoundland, and Mexico. The call was also sent to about 10,000 people in America.

The incoming ministers and members arrived at the Salem Church of God, some of them having traveled 1,000 miles. Friday night the 4th was spent in prayer and fasting in a general church meeting. Services opened on Friday afternoon with "Oh, To Be More Like Jesus," "The Church of God," and "Humble Thyself to Walk With God."

Preparation For Lottery

Early Sabbath morning, letters from ministers all over the world were gone over, and 140 names were presented and placed in a box, to be drawn by lot for the new leaders of the church. This was supposed to be a continuation of the practice of drawing by lots, as in the choice of Matthias to replace Judas as apostle.

Dugger later described the selection of names in the following account:

In the fall a general meeting was called of many ministers and leaders of the church to consider a reorganization of the body patterning it more in accordance with the Bible organization....Ministers and local elders of congregations in many parts of the world were invited to attend or submit names of ministers favoring the reorganization policy, and consequently there were 145 names submitted together with the company assembled. These names were used in choosing officers, respectively, for the different offices according to the Scriptural organization. The Salem church chose three men whose names were placed on slips of paper and dropped into the box. Elder Dodd drew the slip containing John Adams of Salem, the one chosen to draw out the minister's names for the 12 and 70. Church of God ministers' names were placed in the box, a brief silent prayer given, and the drawing began by Adams at a few minutes past 11:00 a.m.

The Twelve

The twelve spiritual leaders chosen, corresponding to the twelve apostles, were the following Church of God elders:

J.M. Orn Naefem of Norway
F.C. Robinson of Missouri
R.A. Barnes of Arkansas
R.L. Taylor of Oregon

C. Heywood of Michigan
W. W. McMicken of West Virginia
C.E. Groshans of Indiana
Henry Wood of Massachusetts
Raymond Saenz of Mexico
H. Negby of Palestine
John Kiesz of Missouri
Charles L. Royer of Connecticut

The Seventy

And the seventy to go forth two by two, all Church of God elders, were these:

John Anderson, Missouri
D. Davis, Michigan
H. Tavel, Central America
Adolph Gusman, Mexico
William Bodine, Arkansas
Otto Haeber, California
E.H. Shadel, Arkansas
Robert Nance, Arkansas
L.M. Jackson, Alabama
William Berry, South America
W.A. Summers, Oklahoma
John Brenneise, South Dakota
V. Amos, India
Samuel Brown, London, England
Will Barnes, Arkansas
Andrew J. Williams, Texas
J.E. Benson, Panama
J.D. Bagwell, Alabama
N.P. Daniel, India
E.O. Bradberry, Arkansas
G, Flores, Mexico (?)
L.F. Claspell, Indiana
Kenneth Freeman, West Virginia
V.J. Benjamin, India
B. Israel, South India
Pete Bartschi, Arkansas
S. A. Oberg, Oregon
H. Snyder, Washington

J; A. Ijames, Jr., North Carolina
A.H. Stith, Idaho
Ti V. Taylor, Lousiana
D. B. Garcia, Mexico
E. Campos, Mexico
E.P. Roche, Michigan
J.E. Codrington, Pennsylvania Noah Barnabas, Palestine
C. Sobers, New York City
A. C. Turner, Michigan
E. Echiavaria, Texas
Herbert Armstrong, Oregon
A. Steede, Michigan
J. W. Tarver, Lousiana
J. A. Ijames, North Carolina
J.E. Hamilton, Central America
Allen Castor, British West Indies
J. G. Smith, California
L.W. Runyon, Oklahoma
CO. Vallery, Louisiana
J. M. Rodriguez, Texas
J. Servantes, Mexico
W.W. West, California
E.J. Younce, Illinois
V.J. Joseph, India
CO. Dodd, West Virginia
J. Siler, Michigan
Archie Craig, Oklahoma
Roy Kanady, Arkansas
B. Bernsten, China
G. Thompson, Panama Canal
James Relford, Kansas
Charles J. Ellis, British West Indies
Charles Welch, Oklahoma
E.H. Jenkins, Arkansas
EdSeverson, Oklahoma
W.C. Bryce, Texas
Albert Bodine, Arkansas
Arthur Barnes, Arkansas
Hugh Brown, London, England
Will Briley, Arkansas
F.-G. Zoller, Nebraska

The Seven

Dugger indicates that Adams chose ministers slips for the twelve and the seventy, but notes that after this was done, "the assembly proceeded as in Acts 6:1 and 6 in choosing the seven men to place over the business affairs of the church." The account in Acts 6 shows that the brethren chose seven men, not necessarily ministers, and there is no mention of use of lots. Thus, possibly the seven were voted on, and not chosen by lot.

The seven chosen were A.N. Dugger of Missouri, C. O. Dodd of West Virginia, John Brenneise of South Dakota, Hugh Miller of Nebraska, F. L. Summers of West Virginia, John Adams of West Virginia, and R.E. Winsett of Tennessee.

A prayer service followed in which the hands of those of the twelve that were present were laid upon the Seven. "A prayer then followed for the offices chosen who were not present, that God would lead them and fully set them apart for the life duties thus involved."

By this time it was late in the afternoon, and the brethren still had not eaten.

World Headquarters Chosen as Jerusalem

Following this selection the brethren voted unanimously for the world headquarters of the Church of God to be in Jerusalem, and money was secured for the purchase of a headquarters building there.

United States headquarters was named as Salem, West Virginia; Mexican headquarters at Mexico City; European headquarters at Rosenburg, Egersund, Norway; and Indian headquarters at Jonnalapalem, Penumentra, W. Godavaria, South India.

A.N. Dugger thus closed his account of the establishment of the Salem branch of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

What Dugger Left Out

The full story of the "Reorganization," as Dugger terms the 1933 split is not given in his *History of the True Church* (1936). So far, only pieces of the full story have been obtained.

The August, 1933 General Conference

As he said he would, Dugger brought up the issue of re-organization at the 1933 Church of God Conference at Stanberry, which convened on August 20. Kiesz' history notes that 1933 was "the fateful year for the Church of God," as "more and more pressure had been exerted by probably half of the membership, that all should speak the same thing. On the other hand, probably the other half felt that our people were denied their personal liberties and freedom of expression."

The church was in a crisis that split it right down the middle. On the one side, Andrew N. Dagger and others held to "reorganization," of church government, clean meats, no tobacco, and Passover on Nisan 14. On the other hand, Burt F. Marrs led a group of "independents" that were pro-pork and tobacco, and felt Passover should be on Nisan 15.

The issue of when to observe the Passover was debated for three days during the time of the division.

Possibly the issues were not this clear-cut. The real gut issue, as stated by R. A. Barnes, was not doctrine at all, but "who's going to drive the car", that is, whose policies would govern the church.

William Alexander, as President of the General Conference, apparently was stepping down. The center of the struggle was over the election of the next President. Dugger and Marrs were both running for the office, according to recollections of R. A. Barnes. The balloting resulted in a tie vote. The presiding President, Alexander, cast the deciding vote in favor of Marrs' candidate, A.S. Christenson.

The critical element was that previous to the Conference, Dugger had announced that if Marrs and his ideas won, that he would not accept the decision. Elder Barnes was President of the Arkansas Conference at the time, and he refused to attend with his delegates. He told the men: "If you love the church, you'll withdraw from the presidential race and accept any other office. If you split the church, I pronounce the curse of God upon you." Despite this stern warning, Dugger and Marrs refused to back down, and the split resulted. Dugger may have been the more adamant, because Marrs was not elected President, but Christenson.

Conflicting Viewpoints

In the January 9, 1933 *Advocate*, Dugger stated that the Church of God has only one creed: The Bible. "We do not stand upon anyone-man's interpretation of the Word of God, or any one-man leadership, save Jesus Christ the Son of God.... Paul warned the Church of God nearly two thousand years ago that men Would arise among us speaking

perverse things 'to draw away disciples after them'. Read, and re-read, Acts 20:28-31." To make this plea, Dugger must have felt very strongly that a division was coming.

In the August 14 issue, just before the Conference began, Dugger in the "Question Corner" stated that "the congregational form of government is both unreasonable and unscriptural, and if permitted to go uncorrected in the church, the body of Christ, the body becomes paralyzed and deformed, and unable to carry forth the work God has designed."

The August 28 issue reports the new officials. William Alexander was still editor, but Dugger is no longer associate editor, he is replaced by Roy Dailey, who apparently moved to Stanberry from Oregon. Kiesz was still listed as office editor, but was not in the October 30 issue.

Elder C.O. Dodd had a front page article in the September 18 issue on the Sabbath, and later on "unity." In the October 9, 1933 issue, John Kiesz wrote an editorial, that the Church of God does have a creed: it is "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Still there was no mention of the split as a result of the August Conference.

In the October 23 *Advocate*, William Alexander wrote an editorial in which he mentioned Dugger, but not by name: "He seems bound to sow discord by circulating false reports which cause division and strife." Dugger had been sending letters to Church of God members, saying, "I am burdened over the work at Stanberry much of late.... For some reason God is not blessing the work there....The printing establishment is in debt forty-two hundred dollars. I cannot advice (sic.) funds to be sent there and sunk in this way any longer, for God has visibly withdrawn his blessing. At this Conference they voted to open the *Advocate* to other doctrines beside what the church believes. This was at the strong protest of all Brethren who stand for the third Angel's message, the plagues being future, the passover being held on the 14m of Abib, and the paying of the tithes...." Alexander disputed this, saying that the *Advocate* was not in serious financial straits.

Yet In the November 13 issue, it was announced that because of budget cuts, Office Editor John Kiesz was leaving his post.

October 1933: Stanberry Counteracts Dugger Circular Letter

The October 30, 1933 issue of the Field Messenger, published at Stanberry, shows that the following men were elected officers at the August Conference at Stanberry:

A. S. Christenson, Fredric, Wisconsin, President;
Ennis Hawkins, Rattan, Oklahoma, Vice-President;
Roy Dailey, Stanberry, Missouri, Secretary-Treasurer.

Other members of the Executive Committee were:

William Alexander of Galena, Kansas,
C.E. Groshans of South Bend, Indiana,
Hugh Miller of Bassett, Nebraska,
Christ Kiesz of Eureka, South Dakota,
Frank Williams of Stanberry, Missouri.

In the February 28, 1934 *Messenger*, Alexander, Groshans and Kiesz are absent, showing that they had joined the Salem group. Replacements for them were S. A. Moore of Stanberry and H.N. Vander Schuur of Middleville, Michigan.

Not a single man from West Virginia or Michigan was on the list, showing that the Salem faction had totally lost out.

Notice was given in this issue that a pamphlet and circular letter was being sent out under the signatures of A.N. Dugger, C.O. Dodd and W.W. McMicken, calling for The Restoration of the Primitive Organization of THE CHURCH OF GOD, Salem, West Virginia, U.S.A., or Jerusalem, Palestine." Christenson and Dailey gave notice that Dugger and the others had been defeated at the last Conference,

after trying to dominate the conference by intimidation and otherwise, [and] are now calling for means to finance another organization.... These men teach in said pamphlet that our General Confence has fallen into the hands [of] dissenters who deny the Holy Spirit, sanction the use of unclean meats and tobacco, and want the Bible Advocate opened to the discussion of these topics. Furthermore, they teach that peace and harmony is no longer known in the Church of God, and the Lord's blessings have been withdrawn....these assertions are untrue. We are accused also of using tactics in getting delegates to the General Conference which are untrue. They telephoned and went after delegates after the conference was in session—still they could not control the conference. These men were disappointed, and are now trying to draw away disciples after them....It is furthermore stated that each General Conference for the past nine years [since 1924] has been a place of strife, confusion, discord and debate. Brother Dugger has published good reports of the conferences in the Bible Advocate for many years past, and we feel sure that if he had been elected to the office he aspired to, no criticism would be heard at this time....There may be a few who will be deceived by their call, but let all earnestly

pray God that these men will see the error of their way, and again join us in laboring for lost souls.

To Churches of God (Seventh Day)

Dugger did depart as he said he would. He succeeded in drawing nearly half the church with him. The November 4, 1933 Salem, West Virginia meeting followed with the establishment of Salem as U.S. headquarters for this group. On November 6, the *Bible Advocate* was printed at Salem, with the continuing volume number as the one still being published in Stanberry. Shortly thereafter, the number sequence was changed due to copyright laws.

From 1933 to 1949 there existed two separate Church of God organizations, one at Stanberry, Missouri and the other at Salem, West Virginia. God had withdrawn His blessing. A "united" Church of God (Seventh Day) was never again to be a reality.

XI. Two Groups: Stanberry and Salem, 1933 — 1949

As few issues of the Salem group have been located, information on their activities is rather scarce. A pointed question that still is not yet totally answered is: "Who belonged to which group?" and its corollary: "How did the two groups differ?"

Salem History

Some of the 12, 70, and 7, chosen at Salem did not accept their positions, remaining instead with Stanberry, while Salem did not accept all those who were chosen by their lots. Later other ministers were added to the list. The Salem group established their own printing house, although for several years their printing was done by a local printer in Salem.

Salem, West Virginia was probably chosen by Dugger's group because members there tended to side with his "clean church parry." Clarence O. Dodd lived there, who held an important position in a large oil company. F.L. Sumners owned a store in Salem, and W.W. McMicken lived there, along with other wealthy Church of God members. The Seventh Day Baptist college there was attended by many in the Church of God, since they had no Sabbatarian college of their own to attend.

In the 1940's, the name of the Salem magazine was *The Bible Advocate and Gospel Herald*, in contrast to the one at Stanberry: *The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom*. O.D. Grimm was editor, with W.W. McMicken and F.L. Sumners associate editors. The paper was entered as second class matter at Salem post office on November 10, 1933.

"World Headquarters" at Jerusalem

Dugger's trip to Jerusalem in 1931-32 was ostensibly to prepare for the establishment of world headquarters there, as had been voted by the General Conference in 1931.

After the division and the reaffirmation that Jerusalem should be world headquarters, Elder and Mrs. L.D. Snow were sent as representatives for the Church of God to Jerusalem to work among the Jews and try to establish headquarters there. They spent nearly a year there, facing "many disappointments." Shortly before the Snows left, Elders Dugger and Robert Young, a converted Jew, traveled extensively throughout the United States to raise funds to send Young as a missionary to work with Snow in Palestine. Young preceded Snow by several months, but "his venture did not turn out well for the church."

E. A. Straub, who became a Salem Church of God minister in 1934, reports that the ministerial certificates were signed in Israel. Later he found out that he had been deceived, and that ministerial licenses were made up in Salem and sent to Jerusalem to be stamped, and then returned. Dugger did not go to Jerusalem to stay; Jerusalem was not the real headquarters as he claimed; only a "Mrs. Miller" was there.

Pentecost and Feast of Tabernacles Observed by Salem Group

For a time, it appears that the Salem group observed the Feast days. Kiesz reports that their finances and enthusiasm picked up greatly throughout the country as nearly every state saw some churches going to Stanberry, some to Salem.

Kiesz reports: "In the spring of 1934 there was a wonderful campmeeting held in Salem [West Virginia?] during the time of the Feast of Pentecost, and another one at St. Joseph, Missouri, in the fall during the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. Many new and independent Sabbath-keepers were added to the fold for the next several years, but troubles soon also rose from within this group, which in time led to the defection of a number of the leading brethren."

Kiesz further notes, "During the summer of 1935 there was a blessed and successful campmeeting held at Jefferson, Oregon; and the fall campmeeting was held during the time of the Feast of Tabernacles at Galena, Kansas, where Elder William Alexander had a nice church group started."

According to Kiesz, who was part of the Salem group, "About two campmeetings were held by the Salem group every year during most of the years of separation, in various parts of the country."

M.L. Ogren, son of C.W. Ogren, reports that he was with the Salem group. He started keeping the Feast Days in 1934, at the age of 20.

He reports that Salem generally kept them from 1934 to 1937, but later dropped the practice. A meeting at Pentecost was observed, as well as a fall meeting at the Feast of Tabernacles. Ogren came to believe in Feast Days through C.O. Dodd and his own self-study.

Extent of Salem Group

Kiesz reports that the Salem group did a good deal of foreign work, especially in Mexico. This may explain why later on, Latin American churches of God tended to be Feast Day observers.

In 1936 and 1937, Elder John Kieaz did "quite an effective work" in several parts of Canada, as well as Elder E. A. Straub. In 1938 the first Church of God campmeeting was held in Canada, at Acme, Alberta.

Some of the Church of God people generally became so disgusted and disheartened at the division that they gave up the faith altogether. But enough remained to give Salem nearly equal membership with that of Stanberry. The 1936 Census listed Salem with 1154 members in 39 churches.

Another Look at Salem Organization

Elmer T. Clark's book, *The Small Sects in America* (1937), mentions the Salem group as the Church of God (Seventh Day). He grouped the church with Holiness and Pertecostal churches as the Church of God (Salem, West Virginia). Clark termed it an Adventist body that arose from a break in the Church of God (Adventist) in 1933.

When Dugger, the leader of the Church of God (Adventist) returned from Palestine, dissension arose over matters of church government. Dugger insisted that it be patterned more closely after the Biblical pattern, but he was deposed as leader by a majority of the general conference. He then went to Salem, West Virginia and formed the Church of God (Seventh Day), and established a periodical, the *Bible Advocate*, the name of the paper long published by the parent body at Stanberry.

Clark listed the following as its chief tenets of belief and practice: (1) Officers chosen by drawing names out of a hat, Dugger insisting that the Bible shows nothing of democratic elections. There were 12 apostles, 70 evangelists, and 7 elders or business committeemen. Although Dugger's name was not drawn, he remained leader of the sect (the 1936 Census lists Dugger as "General Overseer"). (2) Seventh day Sabbath observed. (3) Footwashing (4) Law of "clean and unclean" practiced, pork forbidden, (5) The church "displays considerable emotional enthusiasm in its meetings."

In an official report submitted by A. N. Dugger for publication in the 1936 Census, the organization of the Salem group was described as follows:

This body retains the apostolic form of the primitive church and consists of: The Twelve, The Seventy, The Seven, the elders, the overseers, the helpers, and the

disciples. The Twelve have the oversight over the body of believers as a whole; The Seventy give themselves to the evangelistic ministry of the Word; The Seven have general oversight and management of the business of the church; the elders give themselves to the ministry of the Word and to prayers; the overseer under the supervision of the Twelve has general care over the church as a whole and has assistant overseers to care for the affairs of the church in States, territories, or various countries, as the need may require; the helpers give themselves to the advancement of the work and the truth, as the Lord has given them talents and opportunities; and the disciples give themselves wholly into the Lord's hands to use as He will.

Robert A. Barnes, one of the Twelve, reported that he was elected the first chairman of the board of twelve. A friend of his was F. C. Robinson, another of the Twelve whom he visited in London, Ontario. E.A. Straub reports that he became one of the Twelve in 1942, and that these were lifetime, board members.

The Michigan Historical Records Survey, published in 1941, gave the officers of the "General Assembly of the Church of God, Salem, West Virginia.

Andrew N. Dugger of Sweethome, Oregon was listed as "General Overseer." His "counselors," the Twelve, were Elders Alexander of Missouri, McMicken of Salem, West Virginia, Grosshans of South Bend, Indiana, Haywood of Battle Creek, Michigan, Turner of Deckerville, Michigan, Robinson of Missouri, Haeber of California, Sines of Mexico, Royer of Connecticut, Ellis of Panama, and Orn Naerem of Norway. Listed as "assistant overseers" are Elders Grimm, Robinson, Pearson, Summers and Adams.

Doctrine of the Salem Group

Straub reports that the lines of demarcation doctrinally between Stanberry and Salem were not as sharp as might seem. He maintains that Dugger allowed some use of pork and smoking, yet the younger Stanberry ministers were "cleaner" than Salem pictured them. The essence of the differences were that Stanberry ministers tended to be more lenient, and would not disfellowship members for doing these things. Barnes, one of the 12, as well as Dugger, had been anti-pork all his life.

Dugger's report in the 1936 Census on the Salem group's doctrinal beliefs gives much information as to what was their official position:

The Bible was held to be the only inspired writing, the Holy Spirit that which abides in the believer and not a third person, Christ was in the tomb exactly three days and three nights, rising at the end of the Sabbath, the apostolic organization and government must be followed today, the "Church of God" is the inspired Bible name for God's people,

prayer and anointing will save the sick, laying on of hands (at baptism) is to be practiced, Lord's Supper is to be observed annually at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan, the Sabbath is to be observed from even to even, payment of tithes on increase is obligatory, participation in carnal warfare is condemned, law of clean and unclean meats to be observed by this age, habitual use of alcohol, tobacco, narcotics and habit-forming drugs is condemned, under this gospel age the judgment is upon the house of God, the return of Christ will be literal, personal and visible, and is imminent and He will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem, ruling the world with the righteous saints on the earth, who will be resurrected at His second coming, there will be a final regathering of the dispersed nation of fleshly Israel, the dead are unconscious, and the wicked dead are resurrected to final judgment, not to probation, but to be eternally destroyed, the third angel's message is a present day message, and the seven last plagues are literal and fall on the termination of the gospel age.

Michigan During the Division Years

The 1936 Census shows that two Michigan churches went with Stanberry while three went with the Salem organization. The Michigan Historical Records Survey, published in 1941, records all the churches of God there as affiliated with Salem. It gives records of the establishment and then current status of all the churches in the state.

The Michigan Assembly of the Church of God (notice: the word "conference" is not used because of aversion to the conference system) was said to have been organized in 1863. In 1941, it met annually for business and religious discussion, and its officers were elected for life. At that time, James Merriam of Detroit was President, A. C. Turner of Deckerville, Vice-President, Pearl Walkley of Detroit, Secretary, and Mable Cole of Detroit, Treasurer. Board members were Walter Spencer of Freeland, Garner Thomson of Vassar, and Cecil Hull of Detroit. The session minutes and membership records from 1863 to 1941 were in the custody of the secretary.

The Freeland Church of God, in Saginaw County, was organized in 1899. Services were held in private homes, rented building and Freeland School. Its first-settled elder was James Merriam, from 1899-1920. In 1941, Elder Edson Merriam presided. Myrtle Spencer, secretary of the church, had the church records since 1899.

Deckerville was organized as a church in the fall of 1924, where a brick church building was erected the same year. Elder Roy Hosteter ordained Elder E.J. Davis, who served from 1924 to his death in 1928. In 1941 the minister was Elder A.C. Turner.

Detroit's Church of God met at 700 Fairview Avenue in a building erected in 1940. Elder James A. Merriam founded the church in 1925, and was still serving in 1941. Pearl Walkley was custodian of the records.

The Detroit church began with home meetings before 1923. Elder O.R. Osman worked in the area, and in August, 1924 James Merriam and others went to the Stanberry campmeeting. In September, 1925, Elder C.E. Groshans established the Detroit church with some twenty members. A.N. Dugger's 1929 revival added more, and after the 1933 division, W.W. McMicken was sent there to preach.

A Spanish Church of God in Detroit, meeting at 3330 15th Street in a private home, was organized in 1931 by Elder R. R. Saenz, who served until 1935. In 1941, the elder was Adolfo Guzman.

Finally, the Spanish St. Charles church of Saginaw County was established on May 16, 1931, by Elder O.R. Osman. Its first settled minister was Elder Ermilo Duque, from 1939-40. In 1941, Elder Julian A. Ojeda served the church, meeting at 321 E. Water Street. It stemmed from Sabbath-keeping Mexican brethren who moved from Texas and Mexico to work in the fields of Michigan. The first Church of God minister to preach there was Elder E. Campos of Mexico.

Among other churches in Michigan was the one at Grand Rapids, where a church began in 1914. John De Wind began keeping the Sabbath there, and soon there was a Sabbath school, headed by M.J. Vander Schuur. They learned of the Church of God at White Cloud and visited with them. Elder L.L. Presler held evangelistic meetings at Jenison and West Olive, and Elder Thomas Howe organized a church at West Olive, with its own church building. Michigan's conference was held in the Jenison-Grand Rapids areata 1920, 1926, 1934 and 1944.

At West Olive, the first record of a Sabbath school was on September 20, 1902, with 48 scholars. Elder L.J. Branch baptized John and Nellie Goodin in 1902, and two others in 1903. In the summer of 1920, meetings by Elder Presler resulted in the baptism of several more. In 1922, Elders George P. Wilson and Thomas Howe added more. A church building was constructed in 1922, and Elder R.E. Hosteter pastored from 1924-36.

The Church of God at Battle Creek began anew when C.J. Heywood moved from Detroit in 1928-29. C.E. Groshana was informed of the move, and organized a church there with Heywood as elder in 1930.

Stanberry History — Independent Thought, "Debatable Questions"

Dugger reported that the August, 1933 Conference had voted to open the papers "to other doctrines beside what the church believes," despite protests by Dugger and his supporters. In this, he was correct, as the October 30, 1933 issue of the *Field Messenger* contains "Exchange of Views Department" that contains thought "on points of doctrine that have not yet been decided by the Church of God as its teachings or beliefs." That issue has one of these exchange of views articles, entitled, "Were Enoch and Elijah Human Beings?" by J. T. Williamson. Yet the December 25 *Advocate*, published at Stanberry, has articles that are anti-pork and tobacco, showing that Stanberry did not dogmatically hold to either side of these and other "debatable questions."

Growing in Knowledge

The 1936 Census contains a statement of beliefs of the Stanberry group, termed the Church of God (Adventist). Prepared by Roy Davison, then President of the General Conference, it begins with the statement that his church "has no formal written creed but believes, in constantly growing in the knowledge of the Bible, which it accepts as the sole rule of faith and practice."

Davison lists eleven "doctrines upon which the church as a whole stands united." They are very general, and include belief in the seventh day Sabbath, literal premillennial second coming of Christ to be near, unconscious state of the dead, resurrection of the righteous dead at the second coming to reign with Christ 1000 years on the earth, after which the wicked will be resurrected to be completely destroyed and the righteous receive their eternal reward on the renewed earth, Wednesday-Saturday crucifixion-resurrection, and that the ten commandments are distinct from the Law of Moses.

Of note is the statement that "the Lord's Supper service was instituted by Christ to take the place of the ancient Passover, and should be observed annually, at the time of the Passover." This left open the question of whether to observe the event on the 14th or 15th.

Passover Date in Question

In the February 25, 1935 *Advocate* from Stanberry is an article written by Roy Dailey on Passover. It gives the date for the 14th of Nisan as April 17 (date is correct). Dailey does not say when to celebrate the Lord's Supper, that it is a disputed question. It is useless to argue the point, Dailey maintained, because "some would see it one way and some another. Let the local churches decide for themselves, practice charity toward others and may there be no battles over the subject."

The March 15, 1937 *Advocate* from Stanberry contained both Nisan 14 and 15 as "Lord's Supper dates." This would be something that Dugger would not allow, as he strongly adhered to Nisan 14 as the only valid date.

Anglo-Israelism in Stanberry Camp

The March 14, 1938 *Advocate* from Stanberry contains an article by Roy Davison, President of the Conference, on the subject of Israel.

He stated, "The subject of 'Anglo Israel' and kindred thoughts in regard to the twelve tribes is quite well advanced in these last days. However it is not a new thought with the Church of God, for amongst our people it has held a prominent part in the message for many years. Both Judah and Israel must return to their homeland in conjunction with Christ's return. Israel today is where knowledge is increasing, in Western Europe, England and the United States. We as a people have not laid great stress upon the identify of the tribes, or so much as to which nations are included, believing God knows His own...."

Roy Davison, Frank Walker, R. K. Walker, J. W. Rich, Ted Flo, Claude Ellis and the Palmers of Idaho have all been listed as Anglo-Israel believers, yet this belief has not been generally accepted by the Church of God (Seventh Day). The freedom of expression allowed in the era of division (1933-1949) made it possible for the issue to gain acceptance, which still has not totally been eradicated, despite efforts to debunk the idea.

Marrs on Church Eras

In 1935, Burt Marrs wrote a series of articles published in the *Advocate* on the seven churches of Revelation. He equated the "Sardus (sic.)" period with the reformation, but added, "There are churches today that claim to be living while for the most part they are as dead as a door nail....Perhaps there is yet some good left in it, but it needs strengthening in order that what is left might not die." He believed the Philadelphia era began with religious toleration in America, and in the Laodicean article, he applied it to current conditions, saying that the Church of God should not have a lukewarm attitude.

Organization of Stanberry

Stanberry did not have a 12, 70 and 7 organization like Salem. But it did have an executive committee of 7 men. The 1936 Census states that "in polity the denomination

is essentially congregational," but a large proportion of the members were isolated and without a church. Nine states were organized into state conferences, each with an executive board that directed evangelistic work within its territory. Of the tithes received, one-tenth was sent to the General Conference, which included all the local conferences as well as unorganized territory. Essentially, the state conferences paid the evangelists in their area.

Ministerial candidates were first issued licenses on recommendation of a church or conference. And after having gained experience and proven their calling, they were ordained into the ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands in a public service by other ordained ministers of the church. "Elder" was the only title allowed by the Stanberry group.

Work of the Stanberry Group

The *Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom* continued to be published at Stanberry. Also printed were a bi-weekly children's paper, "The Sabbath School Missionary and Young People's Friend," and monthly church news magazine, "The Field Messenger," as well as a quarterly booklet of Bible lessons, "The Sabbath School Quarterly." The Stanberry plant was referred to as "The Church of God Publishing House."

Ministers — December, 1933

The December 25, 1933 *Advocate* from Stanberry lists a number of ministers and their locations. It appears that not all of these were in the Stanberry group, as the lines of division were not clear at this point.

Leading Figures of Stanberry

Elder Roy Dailey took over the editorship of the Stanberry *Advocate* from William Alexander in 1933, serving until 1935, and again from 1943 to 1945. He was chosen secretary-treasurer of the General Conference in August, 1933. Burt F. Marrs was associate editor in 1935.

In 1934, Elder L.L. Christenson came to Stanberry to learn to operate the linotype, taking over from Mrs. Brush. In August 1935, Elder W. C. Rodgers was appointed editor, with Elder S.J. Kauer, who had moved to Stanberry from Oregon, as office editor. Kauer served until 1942. Officers chosen at the 1935 Conference were A.S. Christenson, President; Carl Carver, Vice-President, and S.J. Kauer, Secretary-Treasurer.

During this time, Elder Ennis Hawkins was the general evangelist for the Church of God, and traveled extensively. On September 21, 1936, Hawkins was in Oregon at a meeting in Jefferson.

In 1936, Elders G. T. and W. C. Rodgers died. Elder Roy Davison was elected president of the General Conference and editor-in-chief of the *Advocate*.

In the spring or summer of 1938, Elder James A. Murray of Trinidad came to America and in June accompanied Elder Kauer on a long tour over the country, visiting many churches of God.

In 1939, Mrs. Roy Davison was instrumental in forming the Women's Association of the Church of God, in order to provide more tracts and booklets for ministers to distribute.

At the 1941 Conference, Carl W. Carver was elected President, and Elder Burt F. Marrs Vice-President.

In 1942, A.S. Christenson came to Stanberry to take over as Secretary-Treasurer of the General Conference, and manage the publishing house. In the summer of that year, a Bible School for young ministers was held in the Stanberry church, Elder S.J. Kauer the instructor. A short time later, Elder Archie B. Craig replaced Kauer as office editor, while Roy Davison continued as chief editor.

Christenson served as chief editor from 1945-1950, through the merger period. In January, 1948, his contributing editors were Burt F. Marrs, L.I. Rodgers, Frank M. Walker, Stanley J. Kauer, Roy Dailey and Ray E. Benight.

Damaging Effect of the Division

The division had certainly been a damaging influence on the Church of God as a whole. Numerous members were grieved at what occurred as Church of God leaders attacked one another in print. Kiesz notes that the church division "caused a lot of consternation and disturbances in the established policies and work of the church," and "because of all the friction that continued over the years.... a number of folks became discouraged and gave up the faith altogether." Yet nevertheless, Kiesz reports, "good was accomplished by most of the ministers during the years of separation" between the two groups.

Kiesz notes that by the late 1940's, "there had been a general feeling among the membership of the two churches that they were not receiving the blessings from the Almighty to the extent promised in the Word." A definite movement toward union came to the fore in the 1940's, in order to salvage what remained and to unify the Church of God.

Pre-Merger Developments: Armstrong and Dodd

But before the 1949 Merger of the Salem and Stanberry factions of the Church of God, there had already occurred at least two major developments in the Church of God.

Herbert Armstrong, ordained by the Church of God in 1931, began a radio broadcast in Eugene, Oregon on January 7, 1934 which developed into a distinct work, the Radio Church of God (later, the Worldwide Church of God), with the Plain Truth magazine. Herbert Armstrong taught annual Festivals and the identity of the English-speaking peoples with the birthright holding tribe of Joseph. He worked with the Salem group for a few years, though he did not consider himself to be a part of the political organization of the Church of God (Seventh Day). When Salem's beliefs changed, Armstrong found himself in a precarious position: either cease preaching Feast Day observance and the identity of Israel, or lose his minister's license. In 1937 he was definitely "on his own" as he refused to quit preaching these doctrines. A number of Church of God members in and around Eugene and Jefferson, Oregon, agreed that Armstrong was preaching truths which the Seventh Day Church of God did not have.

The work moved to Pasadena, California in 1947, with the beginning of Ambassador College. The Worldwide Church of God grew much larger work than the Church of God (Seventh Day) had ever been (some 80, 000 members in 1973).

Another Feast Day observer was C.O. Dodd; He was closely associated with A. N. Dugger (co-author of the *History of the True Church* in 1936), and, with Dugger, was one of the seven men to look after the financial affairs of the church. It appears that in 1937 he too departed from the Salem group, mainly over the issues of Feast Days, and later, the "Sacred Name." In 1937 he founded a magazine, *The Faith*, which still exists today.

Closely resembling the Church of God (Seventh Day) in many aspects, the Worldwide Church of God and the Sacred Names Movement (Assemblies of Yahweh) naturally weakened the original group.

XII. The Merger: 1948-1949

During the years following the 1933 Division, the composition of the Church of God appears to have been undergoing a gradual change. Younger men, such as E. A. Straub and others were coming in who were not part of the arguments and factions that led to the 1933 split. The positions of the two groups on doctrinal issues had never been clear-cut in the first place, and they seemed to be moving closer together in the 1940's.

1942 Feeler Attempt to Unity

The first attempt at a merger of the Salem and Stanberry groups occurred in 1942, when by mutual agreement between some members of Salem and Stanberry, a committee of three from each group met in Des Moines for the purpose of considering the possibilities for greater cooperation between ministers and members of the two groups.

The establishment of an Advisory Committee was suggested to their respective boards, and accepted. Members of this "Unity Committee" were Carl W. Carver (President of Stanberry General Conference), Stanley J. Kauer and A.S. Christenson of the Stanberry group, and William Alexander, K.H. Freeman and Otto Haeber of the Salem group. Efforts for unity at this time were apparently stymied.

Copyright Lawsuit Hinders Unity

As noted previously, the Salem *Advocate* had begun with the same volume number as that from Stanberry, but because of copyright laws had had to switch to a different numbering system.

Another issue which made friction between Stanberry and Salem happened a year or two after the 1942 merger attempt. Salem published a new *Bible Home Instructor* that was almost the same as that from Stanberry. A lawsuit resulted over the copyright of the Instructor which tended to dampen union attempts that were developing.

Another Try at Unity

Younger Salem ministers (such as E. A. Straub, who became one of the Twelve in 1942) convinced the older elders to have another attempt at a merger. Since Salem and Stanberry were to have their respective campmeetings on the same week in 1947, the Salem Council of Ministers asked Stanberry to appoint a committee to meet with their committee during this time in order to discuss a merger. Stanberry had in the meantime been working on the same idea.

The first meeting of the Merger Committee was therefore set on November 7, 1947. Some seven meetings were held in the next two years in the move toward merger. Members of the committee were the following:

Stanberry

S.J. Kauer
L.I. Rodgers
Charles E. Adams

Salem

E. A. Straub
K.H. Freeman
W.W. McMicken

A seventh member, and the chairman, was A.E. Lidell, who was supposedly neutral.

In 1946, previous to the Merger Committee's formation, there were plans for the purchase of property near Owosso, Michigan to establish a Church of God high school. It was planned to elect a bi-partisan (Stanberry and Salem) Board of Control for this purpose.

Issues Discussed at the Merger

There were several issues which the Merger Committee had to iron out before the actual union could take place.

One was the issue of church government. Stanberry had only a ruling group of seven, the Executive Committee; Salem on the other hand, had the 12, 70 and 7 form of government. It appears that Stanberry was willing to go along and compromise on this point.

Stanberry had no articles of belief per se, while Salem had its 38 articles of belief. The Merger Committee studied the 38 articles and accepted them as part of a union *Articles of Belief* in the Constitution.

The Fairvtew Conference of 1948 "The Great Compromise"

The Merger Committee called for a joint ministerial meeting of the two churches, at Fairview, Oklahoma, on February 12-17, 1948. Some 81 ministers were present, not all the ones from each group, but certainly the leading ones, split about evenly between Salem and Stanberry:

William Alexander, Leo Merriam, C.L. Faubion, Archie B. Craig, L.L. Christenson, Rudolph Haffner, D.G. Werner, Arthur Estep, Roy B. Dailey, A.N. Dugger, L.I. Rodgers, J. A. Ojeda, R.C. Moldenhauer, N.S. Marrs, Tieman DeWind, A. F. Dugger, Burt Ford, Pedro R. Parales, Philip Ojeda, Ivan Harlan, Christ Kiesz, E.A. Straub, Ennis Hawkins, A.E. Lldell, C.J. Hey-wood, K.H. Freeman, W.M. Olson, W. T. Bass, Ed Severson, Reuben Moldenhauer, Guadelupe Gonzales, A. Duque, Fred Krumsick, C. F. Wirth, Emmett Samson, O.T. Whitten, R.E. Burge, B.G. Sweet, S.J. Kauer, Thomas D. Foster, A.S. Christenson, A.L. McCoy, Claud McElrath, W; T. McMicken, W.W. McMicken, Burt F. Marrs, R.K. Walker, Edgar Lippencott, E.G. Harrington, Peter Hrenyk, H.W. Munro, Charles E. Adams, Joel Ling, A.C. Turner, Curley Hayes, J. B. Brenneise, J. W. Martin, Rollb Heebesch, K. C. Walker, H.N. Vander Schuur, and Ray Benight.

In 1933, at the last combined General Conference meeting at Stanberry the vote on crucial matters was 30-30, with the chair ruling in favor of the party which remained at the Stanberry headquarters. At Fairview there were also 61 present, this time all were ministers, and likewise the division was split evenly. But as recalled by Burt Marrs, there was a vast difference as to the outcome: "In 1933 they were divided. In 1948 they were unanimous. I never before in my life saw a greater demonstration of the power of God in bringing men together. Old men wept with joy and threw their arms about the necks of others with whom they had stood at variance all these years, and plans were made for a greater work for the whole church." Many changes were made as far as polity was concerned, "but no principle was sacrificed by either group."

The future thrust of the merged church was to be determined "through its ministers who are to move in unity with a message to be formulated by these ministers."

Elders Kauer and Freeman read the proposed constitution and articles of belief into a wire recorder for typing. When it was played back, somehow the strains of "Blessed Be the Tie That Binds," which must have been recorded previously, were heard in the background. This caused the ministers assembled to weep with joy, believing the merger was a providential occurrence. The vote was unanimous to accept the new constitution.

Because of the laws according to which the Stanberry group was incorporated, the earliest possible time for union could be August of 1949. The Executive Boards of the

two groups met and planned joint work for the final legal union which would, take place at the 1949 campmeeting held at Stanberry.

In the meantime, every local congregation was urged to accept any minister properly recommended by either group. Campmeetings were to be held jointly, and the next quarterly paper would be combined. Tithes and offerings were to be sent to the place the member chose, until treasuries could be consolidated.

Straub: Merger Engineer

Plans for the June California state conference were made; it was to be a joint effort, as Emmett Samson (Stanberry) was working with E. A. Straub (Salem). Straub, who may be referred to as "the engineer of the merger," exemplified the union spirit as he made it a point to work with Stanberry people. He glowingly refers to the Fairview meeting of 1948 as the "First Ministerial Conference."

Dugger and Marrs: Hatchet Buried?

One of the key problems that the Fairview meeting had to cope with was the friction between A.N. Dugger and Burt F. Marrs. As probably the major reason for the division in the first place, a reconciliation between these two antagonistic figures was necessary for the merger to be successful.

Straub reports that when Dugger heard Marrs preach a moving sermon at Fairview, tears came to Dugger eyes, and he got up and apologized.

The hatchet was apparently buried.

Shortly after the Fairview meeting, Dugger, who was then working in Oregon, wrote an *Advocate* article for the Stanberry group. In it he stated that he had started to work in the *Advocate* office in the summer of 1906 at Stanberry, "and from that time to the present there has been debate, and division among us. We have not been striving together for unity, but rather debating and striving to have our own way about certain doctrines, many of which were not the great central themes of salvation."

Dugger exhorted the brethren that the true church of God should be one, as John 17:11 states. He notes that at Fairview, "There was not one word that would mar our unity, or disrupt our peace. All was love."

Comparing the Fairview meeting to the day of Pentecost, the ministers were with one accord and close to God. When the body as a whole unites, Dugger stated, we can know that God will manifest every gift of the Holy Spirit to enable us to finish His work.

Other articles by Dugger followed later in the year in the *Stanberry Advocate*, on the food question, Jew-Arab problems, and the "Great Apostasy" of the Seventh Day Adventists falling away from the Church of God.

Marrs noted that those ministers opposing the merger were not at the Fairview meeting. At least 27 English-speaking Stanberry ministers were not present, and none of their Mexican or foreign ministers. An undetermined number of Salem ministers were missing also.

Burt Marrs stated in March, 1948, "that some have already been making remarks about how one side or the other got down on their knees and crawled to the other" at Fairview. Marrs shames them, stating that the Devil wanted the church to be divided.

The former opponent of Dugger publicly related: "Some have wondered whether Elder Dugger and I made it all right.... we are brethren, and though estranged for some years, I do not hold the slightest grudge against him, and I cannot believe that he holds any against me." The Stanberry leader said he never told any untruth about any brother during the time of separation, and if he did, he had the wrong information in the first place. "I did write hard letters which hurt the work in general. I had that fighting spirit which should not have been. For this I apologized to the brethren at Fairview and asked their forgiveness."

Oregon Campmeeting

Oregon's joint campmeeting was held on July 9-18, 1948 at Junction City. The campmeeting committee was composed of Roy Dailey of Junction City, A.N. Dugger of Turner, Frank Walker of Walton and Ed Severson of Harrisburg.

Also in the state, two previously separate churches, probably in Harrisburg, combined efforts, and fifteen members were added.

It appears that members from Washington and Idaho also attended the Oregon campmeeting. Burt Marrs was there, along with twenty other ministers, one from Arkansas, one from Oklahoma, two from Missouri and three from California. Twenty-three were baptized at the meeting, which was attended by over 400 brethren.

In August, a joint campmeeting was held at Stanberry, attended by 49 ministers, from both groups.

Joint Efforts on High School and College, New Press

Besides the 1946 joint plans for a Church of God high school at Owosso, Michigan, the two groups co-operated in plans to erect a college and new press at Stanberry. Elder Burt Marrs, with Roy Dailey and Horace Munro led an effort for a school for training young ministers for a more effective Church of God work. A new Stanberry church and publishing house were also needed, so the proposed new complex would serve all three purposes. In June of 1946 groundwork began for the new complex, but a building permit was denied until materials became more plentiful. By 1947 the cornerstone of the church section was laid.

The publishing house section was sufficiently finished so that the *Advocate* press staff moved in shortly before the August 1948 joint campmeeting. The building was dedicated on the Sabbath before Passover, April 9, 1949.

The college, located above the press, began for classes in September, 1951. At the time it was called *Midwest Theological Seminary*, with Elder Burt Marrs as President of the school. Later the name of the school was changed to *Midwest Bible College*. Among the first students, at the urging of Marrs, were Benny and Betty Rosell from the Philippines. Full support by the Church of God spurred the Stanberry building effort, as well as the one in Owosso, Michigan. There *Spring Vale Academy*, a boarding high school, opened with twelve students on September 15, 1944. Elder S.J. Kauer acting as principal. Adjacent to the Owosso high school was a farm of 146 acres, on which the students could learn to work, as well as earn part of their tuition and board. The Board of Directors was divided between the Salem and Stanberry groups, with "neutral" A.E. Lidell as President. Elder William Alexander spoke at the dedication ceremony on September 25.

The *Spring Vale* project had been initiated in 1944 by Lidell, who led a group of the Michigan Church of God people in organizing the Michigan Fellowship Movement, whose purpose was to establish a christian school. In 1946, Elder Kauer joined the effort to establish a non-profit school. He was to be joined on the faculty by Mr. and Mrs. Clair W. Ahlborn, who formerly was a Church of God elder in Oregon. The Fairview meeting of 1948 heartily backed the school, feeling that a system of church schools was necessary to make organization really effective.

May, 1949: Salem Preliminary to Unity

During May of 1949 there was a "Special Committee Meeting" for unity held at Salem, West Virginia. It was agreed that there would be four adult Church of God periodicals: (1) The Bible Advocate of Salem would merge with the one of Stanberry, and be published at Stanberry, (2) A prophetic and evangelistic magazine, *The Voice of Hope* would be published at Salem, (3) *The Church of God Messenger*, merging *The Field Messenger* and *The Harvest Messenger* would be printed at Salem, and (4) the Spanish *Advocate*, *El Abogado de la Biblia*, would be printed also at Salem.

Further it was agreed that the radio work would be unified under the name, "Voice of Hope," in co-operation with the magazine of the same name.

As for the ministry, it was agreed that there would be no new licenses issued until after the merger took place. Only if both groups agreed could a new minister receive a license. Ministers and laymen could hold their own belief as regards the articles of faith as long as they didn't sow discord or create a disturbance. The articles of belief were regarded not as a closed creed, but the church was willing to accept new light.

The Unity Committee, led by William Alexander and Burt Marrs, advised that at the joint campmeeting to be held at Stanberry, the two groups meet separately and vote on the merger, and if successful, meet as a whole and vote on the constitution and by-laws. It was further agreed that the first Executive Committee should have an equal number of men from Salem and Stanberry.

Thus by August of 1949, the Merger was practically a foregone conclusion.

August, 1949 Merger at Stanberry

The joint campmeetings for the two groups was held at Stanberry, August 12-20, 1949. The proposal to merge Stanberry and Salem was put to the membership. Straub reports that Dugger tried very hard to prevent the merger, but to no avail. The final vote showed an overwhelming favor of unity: Stanberry voted 121-15, and Salem 75-1. There was reported to be great rejoicing, now that the Church of God had finally become one again.

Merger Constitution: Systematic Organization, 12 and 7

The Merger Constitution, as agreed upon by the 1949 Stanberry meeting, was a dramatic shift from the days when the Church of God was a loose and often disorganized association of state conferences. As the March, 1948 *Advocate* from

Stanberry noted, "The plan of organization is more complete and systematic than any ever attempted in the Church of God."

At the top of the new structure was an Executive Board of twelve men. They were referred to as apostles, as had been the practice of the Salem group. They would serve for a term of six years. Four new ones elected at each biennial session of the conference. Members of the new Executive Board were chosen from the ranks of credentialed ministers. Voting in the General Conference was to be by all members twenty years old and up. Officers of the Board served for two year terms and met annually, and the General Conference itself was to meet biennially.

On the original Board of the Merger Group, six were chosen from Stanberry (C.E. Adams, A.E. Lidell, L.I. Rodgers, R.E. Burge, Archie B. Craig, and Ennis Hawkins) and six from Salem (E. A. Straub, William Alexander, K.H. Freeman, W.W. McMicken, Otto Haeber and Christ Kiesz). Lidell was chosen Chairman, Straub the Vice-Chairman, Haeber the Treasurer, and Adams Secretary.

Appointed by the Executive Board was an Administrative Committee of Seven, who were the chairmen of the seven general departments of the church. The original, seven were: Publishing, Ray E. Benight; Sabbath School, C.L. Faubion; Young People's, Spurgeon Tedrow; Home Missions, M.L. Bartholomew; Christian Education, S.J. Kauer; Foreign Missions, A.N. Dugger; and Ministerial, B.F. Marrs. - State Conferences were also to have an executive committee of seven men.

Ray Benight was chosen as editor of the combined *Bible Advocates*, and it was agreed that both publishing houses would continue to operate.

The Constitution, By-Laws and a statement of beliefs were developed by the Merger Committee and were adopted by the 1949 Stanberry meeting with only minor changes.

Districts and Overseers

The field was to be organized into general districts, presided over by a member of the Executive Board who lived in the district.

Original districts, their overseers and territory, are as follows:

Ministerial Council

Instead of a council of 70 ministers, all credentialed ministers were made members of a new Ministerial Council, which was to hold regular annual meetings.

A new concept, as defined in Article III, Section 3 of the *Merger Constitution*, stated that "The essential doctrines to be taught by this organization shall be set forth by the Ministerial Council of the Church." Thus, the ministers, and not the General Conference, would decide whether or not to credential ministers. Doctrines would be decided by the ministers, not the laymen. The tone of the Merger Group placed the control of the church squarely on the shoulders of the ministers. When the Ministerial Council was discussing doctrinal points, "any spirit of contention or strife will be declared out of order," and doctrinal points passed by a 3/4 majority would be placed in the church *Articles of Belief*.

It was further noted that Sabbath Schools should be presided over by a minister, and should not be the scene of debate.

The main reason for the division in the first place, the debate of doctrinal issues, was thought to be solved by the *Merger Constitution*.

Advocates Merged

The first issue of the combined *Bible Advocate* came out on October 3, 1949. It had a front page picture of the new Executive Board, with the caption, "United We Stand" - Ray Benight of Oregon was now editor elect, with A.S. Christenson as assistant editor. The Salem edition had been issued everytwo weeks, but the new paper began as a weekly, just about doubling the circulation. A youth paper, *The Christian Youth Herald-Gospel Call* was printed at Salem. And the children's papers, *The Sabbath School Missionary*, and *The Golden Gems*, were printed at Stanberry.

Headquarters Moved to Denver

In order to placate both the Salem people and the Stanberry people, it was agreed to move the headquarters of the Merger Group, and scene of the Executive Committee board meetings, to Denver. But the college and press were to continue to be in Stanberry. However, in early 1973, the press and General Conference headquarters moved to a new building just outside of Denver. However, Stanberry remained the location of the college.

Going Along With the Merger

Although Dugger had striven to block the merger, he appeared for a time to go along with the move. He wrote an *Advocate* article in November, 1949 entitled "Let Us Finish

The Work," and had another article supporting unity, "Unity, Power and Victory," in the June 1948 issue.

He and others who did not really approve of the whole idea went along with the merger for a time.

Significance of the Merger

From Eyes of an Independent

The strong organization of the Merger Group proved to be a point of dissension by many. Charles Monroe, who wrote "A Synoptic History of the Churches of God in the Latter Days" (Facts of Our Faith, January, 1969, pages 12-25) has voiced the view of an independent Church of God member who did not agree with the Merger of 1949.

Monroe states that after the merger, the Stanberry remnant had actually lost ground, the membership had declined during the years due to the division. Ironically, some 89 years after the "Schism of 1860," the Church of God made the same mistake the Adventists did, in adopting a "centralized system of government," with twelve board members and seven department heads, a ministerial council and district overseers.

The real causes of the schisms of 1860 and 1933, according to Monroe, were "personality and church government." He noted "The first step away from the faith of Jesus in the early days of this Gospel Age was the path of wrong government. The simple eldership in the local church, soon [gave way to]... a presiding elder, and later a president, then a bishop over several congregations, and then we know the results — the apostasy."

Some churches refused to go along with the Merger Group; these "free" churches of God, Monroe stated, were seeking to recapture the true Biblical church, in both worship and government. They voluntarily co-operate in joint projects, and do not have a headquarters machinery, which was a waste of money. Their sole purpose is to preach the gospel, and Christ is their only authority.

Thus, Monroe related, "the merger did not unite all of the Church of God. This great disappointment brought additional division,, and it even 'mothered' more independent congregations."

The hopes engendered at the 1949 Merger were soon to be dashed forever. The phrase, "we are not divided," from the song, "Onward, Christian Soldiers," was to be an illusory and impossible goal to achieve for the Church of God (Seventh Day).

XIII. The Post Merger Period, 1949 — Present

1950: New Church Buildings, Travels of Marrs

A new church building at the headquarters in Denver was dedicated on March 4, 1950 by Elder Frank Walker. Among post-merger developments was the construction of several new church buildings over the country, one of which was the Los Angeles church, pastored by Elder Carl Stacey.

Elder Burt Marrs soon replaced A.N. Dugger as head of the Foreign Missions Department and made a two-month trip to Jamaica and Trinidad in the summer of 1950, finding that the brethren there really were "God's people." Later in the year, Marrs went to Mexico, and attended a conference in Mexico City. There were reported to be some 120 churches of God in Mexico at that time. President of their Conference was Elder Jose Kim Peck.

Mexico the Center of a Tug of War

The February 27, 1950 *Advocate* reveals that the Churches of God (Seventh Day) of Mexico were well organized, never had any cleft or division, but considered themselves closer to Salem than Stanberry.

Alberto Garcia reported that there were 91 churches there.

The same issue also reported that a few scattered people were not going along with the merger. But James Merriam wrote that he was firmly with the merger.

As noted previously, Salem had done considerable work in Mexico previous to the 1949 merger. Mexico, though, had had little contact with the headquarters of the Church of God in the United States. Some Mexican ministers were chosen for the Salem group's 12, 7 and 70, but they served in name only, since there was little or no contact with them.

Dugger and others did not long remain with the Merger; in March of 1950 they launched the "Back to Salem" movement, and sought to draw the entire Mexican work behind them.

Straub, though with Salem, was the strongest advocate of the merger.

He went to Mexico in 1948 and again in 1949, in an effort to counteract the possibility of losing the Mexican churches to the "Back to Salem" people. "He apparently succeeded in overcoming Dugger's "lying literature" and organized the Mexican work in 1949. Marrs' trip of 1950 appears to be also spurred by the Mexican conflict.

"Back to Salem" Movement of 1950

Besides Dugger, there were other key figures in the "Back to Salem" movement. It may have been as early as 1949 when F. L. Summers and his son-in-law Chris Royer went back to Salem and established headquarters there. Royer was married to Summers' daughter, who apparently was divorced previously. The Merger Group held firmly that no one could be divorced and remarried, or married to a divorcee, and still be a minister. Members who are divorced and remarried before they come into the church are allowed. But no divorce except for adultery is allowed after one is in the church. The "divorce and remarriage" issue is thus seen as a major reason why some went "Back to Salem."

Another dissident was M.L. Bartholomew, who was in Oregon at the time and tried to push "Back to Salem" ideas in Harrisburg and Marion.

He and Dugger told lies to get people to go against the Merger, according to Straub. In 1950, Straub traveled the country seeking to stop the "Back to Salem" movement, and did succeed in getting most of the people to support the Merger, at least for a time. Straub maintains that he heard from Dugger himself that Dugger believed it was all right once in a while to tell a lie if it was to the benefit of the church.

Robert A. Barnes reports that Summers, a native of Salem, never did go along with the Merger. The Merger Group sued him for the publishing building in Salem, and he beat them, thus all the Merger Group's papers had to be printed at Stanberry. Barnes (one of the Twelve of the Salem Group) went along with the Merger for a short time, but left because he did not like the "German leaders" such as Marrs, Charles Adams, and Straub. He said that in the Stanberry park he heard Straub say that when they got in power they would change a few things, and even allow pork. Barnes felt that the Merger Group's organization was a "dictatorship."

Salem apparently established a Bible School about the same time the one in Stanberry was begun. One of its students that later became a minister was Martin L. Ogren, who was attending in 1952.

Breaks in the "Back to Salem" Movement

The "Back to Salem" movement broke into at least three factions, (1) the original Salem people who stayed at Salem with it as headquarters, (2) Dugger and Severson, who went to Jerusalem, and (3) Olson and Groshans, who formed the Seventh Day Church of God in Caldwell, Idaho.

Original Salem Group Continues

Summers, Royer and Bartholomew stayed with Salem. M.L. Bartholomew is said to preach to a substantial church in Cleveland, and there is at least one other Salem church, in Parma, Idaho where Otis Home is pastor. The group publishes a magazine, *The Advocate of Truth*, which probably began in February of 1950. On its masthead is the caption, "Come out of her, my people." The Staff in 1971 consisted of Chris W. Royer, editor; John F. Curran, managing editor; Kenneth C. Summers, associate editor; M. L. Bartholomew, contributing editor; and Heidi De Long, children's page editor.

The 1971 Yearbook of American Churches states that the Church of God (Seventh Day) of Salem has an apostolic council which meets bi-yearly in Salem, on the first Sunday in January, and July. Headquarters is 79 Water Street, Box 328, Salem, West Virginia, 26426. Bartholomew is current chairman of the Apostolic Council, with Chris W. Royer secretary. John F. Curran, Senior is chairman of the Board of Financial Stewards.

Salem is purported to believe that the saints will be raptured to the sea of glass while the seven last plagues will be poured out. The 1971 figures given for Salem show 7 churches, 9 ministers, and 2000 members, and also 15 Sabbath Schools, 100 teachers and 3000 students.

Dugger and Severson: On to Jerusalem

In September, 1952, Dugger had just returned to Oregon from an extended trip to Nigeria, where, with five native ministers and Elder A.C. Olson of Wisconsin, he rode bicycles through the jungles visiting groups of Church of God people. The whole family upon the return had contracted typhoid fever. All recovered through anointing and prayer, except Dugger's wife, Effie. The hospital in Portland said she would die, and Dugger and his two young daughters prayed all night, Dugger vowing that if God would heal her, he would sell all of his belonging and go to Jerusalem. Dugger recalls, "I had many times definitely felt the urge to go to Jerusalem and publish a paper there, but had made excuses." Effie did recover, and Dugger sold his place in Oregon and took the family to Jerusalem, starting *The Mount Zion Reporter* in 1953. His address became

P.O. Box 568, Jerusalem, Israel, and he reports that his office miraculously survived the 1967 Jew-Arab war.

Possibly doctrinal Issues led to Dugger's exit to Israel. In July, 1950 the Salem Apostolic Council met at Salem and voted the headquarters to be transferred from Jerusalem to Salem. Possibly this was the last straw that broke Dugger with the Back to Salem movement.

Severson reportedly went with Dugger to Jerusalem and died there later.

Dugger's Associates

Dugger's assistant editor on the *Reporter* is Gordon M. Tauth, his son in law. In 1960, Dugger established a missionary paper, **Jerusalem Messenger**, which reports on activities of ministers in foreign fields that associate with Dugger.

A traveling evangelist is white-haired A.M. Shoemaker. In Oregon, R.K. Hart of Bandon writes to Dugger's paper, as does Ernest W. Baker of Lake wood, California, Elder J. D. Stewart of Chicago and Black Aaron Reld of Brooklyn and V. McIntyre of Mount Vernon, New York.

In foreign fields, these are some of the areas and men Dugger reports:

In Nigeria, Elder R.D. Orukwowula overseer of many Churches of God, which were apparently established in the 1920's as a result of Church of Godevangelistic work. Another Nigerian overseer is Elder J.A. Agileb of the Agilebu, Ogba-Ahoadia area. **A white missionary, Elder Kenneth Oglesby, has been in Ethiopia for 28 years**, since 1944. Bishop Samuel M. Fab and and Elder Francis Thuku are in **Kenya**.

Some of the Indian elders reported in Dugger's Jerusalem Messenger have been Khamzalang, Thankamlova, Zamkhosem, Douthang, Henngam, K. Isaac, Gindai Thang, Thangkhai, and Ngehpu. Elder S. Matthews is overseer of a large district in India. A school in India with 70 students was started in 1971 near Pastor Thankamlova's home in Churachandpur, Manipur, India, the headquarters of the Indian work. The Feast of Tabernacles is kept by the Indians.

Numerous churches exist in the West Indies. Apparently Elder William Heuer is overseer of the West Indies in general.

In Jamaica, Pastor George S. Thompson is General Overseer. Other elders there are McLish at Barton, Mitchell at Salmon Town, McFarlene at Hamstead and Reid at Miles End.

Other workers are Elder J. Eudovique at **St. Croix, Virgin Islands**;

Elder J. Ernest and Overseer Hilton Winston at **Dominica**;

Elder Clive Peters at **Grenada**;

Elder Hercules Charles, **St. Lucia**;

Elder Persey **St. Ange at Cayenne**;

Elder Solomon Bramble at **St. Vincent**;

Elder V. Watson at **Trinidad**;

Elder A. Nicholls at **Tobago**.

In the Philippines, there is Elder Michael Postrers, evangelist of the province of Zamboanga del Norte, and Elder L.G. Cabardo of Leyte. Cabardo reported groups of believers in Hilusig, Makenhas, Baybay Leyte, Taligi, Abuyog, and also in Satmon.

In Formosa, there is a Church of God group which publishes a paper in Chinese, "The Holy Spirit Times." This group originated in Peking over fifty years ago. While editor of the *Bible Advocate*, Dugger sent tracts to two Sabbath ministers, for them to translate into Chinese; one of them was Elder Pilquist. The Formosa church reported to Dugger that there were one thousand churches in China when they had to flee (1949) to Formosa. A few thousand actually did escape Communist China to Taiwan.

In Korea, David G. Beattie is a missionary.

In England, there is a Church of God (Seventh Day) at 83 Raglan Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk, where Elders Hart and Williams preside. They keep the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles, and have done so since 1966. Another is Pastor W. D. Robinson, at 12 Ancherton Road, Spark Brook, Birmingham.

Bennie Maxfield, a Negro, leads a church in **Tulsa** called the Branch of Jerusalem, and is associated with "The Day Star Foundation of North America."

In Burma is Elder Robin H. Seia at Kalemmyo, Upper Chindwin.

South African overseer is J.J Kondlo.

In Israel, one of Dugger's chief associates in evangelizing among the Jews has been Elder Shlomo Hizak.

Dugger's African trip of 1951 apparently paid off, as many of the churches there support his efforts.

In foreign areas, the appeal of a Church of God headquartered at Jerusalem seems to be an important element in directing people to Dugger's group.

Dugger's Call for Unity

Dugger apparently does not have any firm organization, because he feels that all Sabbatarian Churches of God should work together. He certainly believes that his work is God's work, and not that he split off from the Church of God. He states that the 1931 Church of God General Conference passed a resolution by a unanimous vote that the headquarters should be moved back to Jerusalem as soon as conditions there would permit. Those who refused to carry out this resolution, Dugger believes, have separated themselves from the original "Family of Elohim" (name of Old Testament church Dugger uses in the masthead of the *Mt. Zion Reporter*, besides "Messianic Jews" as the name of his followers), and are a branch of the ancient true church.

The "Church of God," Dugger states, is now represented in all parts of the world with "the same doctrine, " with "little differences on some minor points." The Sabbath, Lord's Supper Annually, the inspired Bible Name for the Church, the Kingdom, the soon Return of Christ, the regathering of the Jews preparatory to Armageddon have been common doctrines binding the Church of God together. He implores that we should "refrain from passing judgment (Matt 7:1-2, Luke 6:37) and... in spite of minor differences LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Dugger has further stated, "Let us all be one. In times like these, all variance and divisions among Sabbath-keepers should be forgotten. All trouble forgiven, and all groups fellowship together, for they are the Father's children if in harmony with Rev. 12:17 and Eph. 3:14 and15." Dugger advises that the seeker for the true church connect himself with the group nearest him that has the right name and keeps the Sabbath, and be a peace maker, not bringing up strife.

Presumably this means that Dugger feels all Church of God Sabbath keepers of the Church of God should work together, and also look to him because Jerusalem, he believes, is the only true headquarters of the church.

Dugger and the Feast Days, Sacred Name, Anglo Israelism

Dugger himself keeps the Feast Days, according to the Jewish manner of calculating. But he says that others do not have to keep them, because Paul stated in Colossians 2 not to let any man judge us for keeping them, in other words, Paul didn't take sides in the issue. It is not wrong to keep them, and is even good, because they commemorate days of mighty work, not only for the Jews, but for the church. In 1972, Dugger kept the feast of Pentecost on Friday with his group at Jerusalem.

Dugger appears to believe that the Feast Days are not mandatory during this age, because they were nailed to the cross, but that they will be kept in the next age, as Zechariah 14:16 and 17 shows.

Also, in order to appeal more to the Jews, who are offended by the name of Jesus and Christ, Dugger also uses Yahshua as a descriptive title of Jesus. This is adhering to the Sacred Names concept. But like the matter of Feast Days, this is not a cardinal point.

As for Anglo-Israelism, Dugger wrote an article in the March 21, 1949 Bible Advocate from Stanberry, "The Jews' Civilization and Economy," in which he says all Jews are Israelites, but not all Israelites are Jews. He neglected to say what the Ten Tribes were.

Seventh Day Church of God at Caldwell, Idaho

The third split of the "Back to Salem" group was that of Olson and Groshans, who formed the Seventh Day Church of God in Caldwell, Idaho, in 1954.

Signers of the incorporation of the Seventh Day Church of God in 1954 were Joel Ling, A.C. Olson of Wisconsin (deceased), Paul Groshans of Indiana (not with the movement since 1961), C. W. Ogren and his son M.L. Ogren, and R. A. Schaeffer.

Doctrinal disputes appeared to be the reason for the new group. Salem allowed a divorced and remarried person to be a credentialed minister (namely, Chris Royer), and Bartholomew said that people sinned every day, while Salem also maintained that a Christian is not born again until the resurrection. These and other points instigated a departure of some from the Salem and the Merger Group organizations. Probably the biggest reason was the one of the feast days.

Martin L. Ogren maintains that he and Salem generally did keep the Feast Days from 1934 to 1937. He continued to believe in them after they stopped observing the days, and came to a firm belief in the validity of the Feast Days through C.O. Dodd and self-study. Ogren reports that he neglected to observe the Feast Days for some years until he began anew in 1954-55. This appears to be a prime reason why the Caldwell Group began.

Background of Ogren

Martin L. Ogren and his parents met Church of God minister J.T. Williamson in Missouri in 1926, and Ogren was baptized (he was re-baptized in 1934). He moved to Idaho in 1938, and was with Salem during the years of division. Ogren became a minister in 1952, having attended Salem's Bible College of the Church of God.

Ogren began the Caldwell church in 1952, and currently there are 47-60 in attendance.

Groshans of Indiana comes from an area that had long observed the Feast Days, but little yet is known of him.

Doctrine of Caldwell

The "40 Doctrinal Points of Faith," adopted on November 4, 1933 at Salem, West Virginia are held to by the Caldwell Group, with a 41st point, the Feast Days, added.

Passover is kept on the beginning of Nisan 14, with footwashing. Pentecost is always kept on a Sunday, the other Feast Days kept according to the Jewish calendar. Unclean meats, alcohol and tobacco, and carnal warfare are forbidden, while tithe-paying, laying on of hands and anointing the sick is practiced. The organization of the 12-70-7 is also practiced, but Ogren admits his group does not have enough ministers to fill the slate. He is one of the 12, chosen by lot, while Art Schaeffer, also of the 12, is the current chairman. He objects to the lot system of the Merger Group, which puts back into the pot names not chosen.

The Feast of Tabernacles is kept for eight days at a common place. In 1971, it was observed by 125 people at Puget Sound, Washington. And in 1972 it was held at a YMCA camp at Lake Wenatchee.

Tithes are paid in tithe envelopes to the local church, where they are used. Fulltime ministers are salaried, and a Council of Ministers decides what to do with deviant ministers. A ministerial school is in the process of being set up. The church doctrine

states that "no member who teaches a doctrine contrary to any point of our essentials of faith as taught by the body and published through our literature, either by precept or example, shall be considered a member in good standing of this body

Like Dugger, Ogren believes in fellowshipping with the other Church of God groups. One Sabbath a month the Nampa (Merger Group), Caldwell and Meridian ("Back to Stanberry" Group), churches get together. "There is only one church," Ogren maintains, but it won't be until the Millennium until they all see eye to eye. He is not out to convert others of the Church of God into keeping the Feast Days. President Robert Coulter of the Merger Group visited him recently, proposing that Ogren and his group join with them, and promising that their Feast Day observance would not be hindered. Ogren maintains that some of the Merger Group believe in and keep the Feast Days, but feels he cannot conscientiously be apart of a group that teaches against them.

He says Dugger keeps the Feast Days in Jerusalem, but believes that Jerusalem is the only place of worship. Ogren points to John 4:21-24 as a text to prove the opposite. An acquaintance of Dugger since 1930, Ogren and most of his church help support Dugger's foreign work.

Associates of the Caldwell Group

The Herald of Truth, the Seventh Day Church of God paper, was started in 1954. Its current circulation is about 600, and some 500-1000 members are claimed in the United States. A Spanish minister from Chicago says that there are some 80, 000 believers in Mexico. There are supposed to be some 40 native ministers in Africa, mostly in Nigeria. They incorporated with the name, Seventh Day Church of God, in 1925, and have been affiliated with Caldwell for 15 years. The Caldwell Group supplies them money, and literature for distribution. There are said to be many thousands of black African members, one congregation of a 1000 alone. Elder R.D. Orukwogu, overseer of Nigeria, writes letters published in the *Herald of Truth*.

In the States, churches affiliated with Caldwell are those in Gait, California; Richland, Washington; Wenatchee (Elder Easterly), and Everett (Elder Art Smith), Washington; Maywood, Illinois (Elder J.D.Stewart); Chicago (Spanish elder Augustus Grenada); New Mexico; and Ohio (Elder Roberts).

Other writers to *The Herald of Truth* are Paul A. Dreher of Iowa, Elder L.S. Howard of Indiana, Elder Hubert Thomas of Oklahoma, Elder Joe Moore of Oregon and Viola Senn of Washington.

"Back to Stanberry" Group

Perhaps the major departure from the Merger Group took place in 1950-51. At Meridian, Idaho, the "Bible Church of God - Seventh DaY" was formed by elements formerly of Stanberry that refused to go along with the Merger. In spirit, if not in name, they constituted a "Back to Stanberry" Group.

Philosophy of Local Autonomy

The 1948-49 Merger of the Salem and Stanberry groups "did not unite all of the Church of God. This great disappointment brought additional division, and it even 'mothered' more independent congregations. In the eyes of many, especially some of the former Stanberry churches, the merger showed that the Church of God had made the same mistake the Adventists did in the "schism of 1860" in adopting a "centralized system of government." The anti-organization idea, so prevalent in the Church of God in the 1860's, again raised its hoary head, so that the merger was only another futile attempt to bring unity to the church.

Many "free" and "independent" Churches of God have existed outside the organization of the General Conference since its formation. Their idea is that "the first step away from the faith of Jesus in the early days of this Gospel age was the path of wrong government. The simple eldership in the local church soon gave way to a presiding elder and later a president, then a bishop over several congregations, and then we know the results — the apostasy." The "free" churches seek to recapture the "Biblical church," in both worship and government. They voluntarily cooperate in missionary projects. With no headquarters machinery, they can devote themselves to the sole purpose of preaching the Gospel.

Christ is the only authority they say they are subject to.

In the words of Elder Frank M. Walker, the Church of God is united — under Christ. Christ is the "only ONE HEAD" of the Church, and the record of membership is kept in heaven (Heb, 12:23, Phil. 4:3, Rev. 3:5). Walker states, "Jesus did not establish any such thing as we now know as a general organization in the church. There is no divine authority in the New Testament Scriptures for any general organization to direct and control the activities of the local assemblies of the church in general. The book of Acts gives us a picture of real unity under Christ without any general organization such as we know today, yes, they had unity with 'Local Autonomy' or congregational government."

Elder Robert A. Barnes sums up the idea of local autonomy with his Harry Truman-like bluntness: "I'll let no man or group tell me what to preach." If all the Churches of God

(Seventh Day) believed the same, there would be no objections to a central form of government. The local autonomy idea is only a cover so individual ministers can preach the doctrines that they want to preach.

The Meats Issue

The doctrine of abstaining from unclean meats has long been an issue of dispute in the Church of God. A "Seventh-Day Baptist" church on the South Fork of the Hughes River in West Virginia which existed in the 1840's, 1850's, and 1860's was looked upon as somewhat of an oddity. It termed itself "the Church of Christ," observed the Passover once a year, was governed by the elders, and forbade the use of unclean meats.

The Whites [of the SDA church] for some time, until the early 1860's, believed pork was to be eaten.

Carver states he always was opposed to its use. Apparently the use of unclean meats was not doctrinalized in the Church of God. Some did speak out against its use in the pages of the *Advocate*.

In 1908, the editors of the *Advocate* (A. F. Dugger and Jacob Brinkerhoff) stated that they did not eat pork, but said other brethren did. And Brinkerhoff wrote in 1911, "on the subject of Food we must be lenient with those who do not see the matter as we do."

In the eyes of the pork eaters, those in the Church of God who forbade its use were mainly ex-Seventh-Day Adventists, or influenced by their views.

Ostensibly, the split of 1933 resulted largely over doctrinal issues, such as clean and unclean meats, Dugger of Salem holding to abstinence and Marrs of Stanberry approving of its use. During the years between the merger, many Stanberry ministers came around to the anti-pork position, and the Merger Constitution included an anti-pork provision, copied from the Old Salem articles.

Those who had not changed their ideas and still held to usage of pork were for the Merger, but against the Merger Constitution which was made a test of faith. A minister that believed pork was all right would not get credentialed by the Merger Group. Before the 1933 split, pork or no pork was not a test; as Clair W. Abloom states, issues like this were "handled in Christian love." Now it was being insisted upon.

The Organization Issue

Salem had been organized with the "Bible numbers" of 12, 7, and 70. Stanberry was not so tightly organized. It had a committee of 7. The Merger Constitution was almost a carbon copy of the Old Salem articles, and carried over the tight organization with the 12-7-70. The "local autonomy" people did not go for this.

Organization of Meridian Group

A.H. Stith and several other staunch pork eaters voted for the merger, because they were for unity, but their revulsion to the Merger Constitution led them to break away and in effect formulate a "Back to Stanberry" movement.

"... several of the ministers and members of the former Stanberry General Conference could not accept the compromise in doctrine and practice that their church had made, forsaking the principles so dear to the members of God's Church. They had remained faithful to congregational government and other Biblical truths when the division came in 1933, they reasoned that now was no time to forsake those same principles and truths."

A meeting at Meridian, Idaho was called during the summer of 1950 which resulted in the organizing of former Stanberry churches and 36 members across the country that refused to go with the Merger. Originally called the "Bible Church of God — Seventh Day," the name was changed about 1963 to "General Council of the Churches of God — Seventh Day. " There was to be no "test of fellowship" for the group except "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

Organizers of the Movement

A group of ministers from Idaho led the movement from the start. They put out a paper, *The Acts*, and in the first issue, March 1, 1951, stated: "We believe firmly in unify among the Brethren. However, we are convinced that such unity cannot be achieved by a set of rules imposed upon the Brethren by a majority. This is not God's Way...we cannot expect to see eye to eye upon all things, for we have not all reached the same spiritual growth. This does not mean that God rejects us. He teaches us unity through tolerance and charity or Christian love....Thus our motto is: 'Unity through tolerance and Christian love,!'.... rather than unity through force."

Clair W. Ahlborn, a former teacher at Spring Vale Academy in Owosso, Michigan, and a native to Idaho, was first editor of the *Acts*. But he was not a real minister and not the leader of the movement. The first officers were:

General Conference Officers

Mark Burnham, President, Meridian
Nettie Burnham; Secretary, Meridian
Arthur Estep, Vice President, Port Orchard, Washington
Edna Palmer, Treasurer, Kuna, Idaho

Committeemen

A.H. Stith, Meridian
Frank Williamson, Caldwell
James Kling, Nampa
Clair Ahlborn, Meridian
Luvelt Palmer, Kuna

The first camp meeting was held in late June of 1951 at Meridian. Attendance for the evening services ranged from 60 to 200, and there 39 were 250 on the last Sabbath. Those preaching were Elders:

Edgar Lippincott of Missouri
A. H. Stith of Idaho
M. W. Unzicker, Oregon
Arthur Estep, Washington
Boyd Dowers, Idaho
R.C. Glassford, California
Roy Davison, Idaho
Mark Burnham

At the 1952 camp meeting, 144-200 were present. The elders present were Harry Ford, Marion; Jack Slankard and Charlie Salkald, Iowa; Lippincott, Unzicker, Estep, Stith, Ahlborn and Burnham; Valencia, California. By July of 1952, the Church of God Publishing House, which today houses the press and college, was ready for use. Another paper, reporting church news, *The Fellowship Herald*, was established.

Beliefs of Meridian Group

The Acts (stands for: "Advocating Christ the Savior") magazine contains a brief statement of beliefs, which closes with the statement "We believe the true church organization taught in the Bible is local autonomy and that the Bible name for the church is THE CHURCH OF GOD. That the test of Christian fellowship is the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Local autonomy and no test of fellowship appears to be the big difference between Meridian and Denver-Stanberry.

But the Meridians have come out with the nearest thing to a statement of belief, a "Declaration of Things Most Commonly Believed Among Us," which they stress is not a test of fellowship.

At first, most of their people ate pork; now most of them do not. Not all their young men become conscientious objectors, but the church supports the convictions of those who do. "Pentecostalism" of the "spiritual" style rather than speaking in tongues is commonly adhered to. However, Billy Watts of Springfield, Oregon apparently went overboard on this and is no longer in good graces with them.

Mark Burnham, pastor of the Meridian church, and son in law of Arvin H. Stith (deceased), is one who says a Christian should have "a real experience with the Lord." He says he is saved and that he is working with many young people who want a "born again" experience. Burnham eats pork, and probably got his ideas from his father-in-law Stith.

Burnham reports there are at least 17 divisions of the Church of God which have come about since the initial split in 1933.

Carl Palmer, minister of the Milwaukie, Oregon Church of God, tied to Meridian, states that there is speaking to tongues in his church, but it is not emphasized. About 1/3 of the ministers speak in tongues, and the movement has been growing lately. But he does not do so.

British-Israelism at Meridian

Frank Walker quit the Merger Group in 1951 because he was against their kind of organization. Currently he is teaching at Meridian's Maranatha College.

Walker's "Anglo-Israel" ideas have already been discussed. He estimates that 1/3 to 2/3 of the Meridian group leans in this direction. Roy Davison (now dead), who worked in Idaho for some time, was a firm believer in Anglo-Israelism. Other believers besides Walker are Claude Ellis and the Palmers.

The Church of God has long taught that the Jews will be restored to their homeland, and Armageddon will be fought by the Jews and their allies versus Russia (Gog) and their allies. The Two-Horned Beast is said to be the Holy Roman Empire, and Babylon the Catholic Church.

Walker and his father R.K. Walker may have gotten their Anglo-Israel ideas through G. G. Rupert, whom they met in 1913-1914. Walker admits that he believes a lot with Herbert Armstrong on the question, but he differs in that he thinks the United States is Ephraim, the younger and greater nation. His 32-page pamphlet, "Hope of Israel," explains that the Ten Tribes were never amalgamated with the Jews, but continue to exist as the Celtic and Teutonic peoples of Europe and America, and elsewhere. They will remain separate until they become one nation, when the two sticks are put together (Erek. 37).

Joseph is not dead, but he cares for his brethren (the 5 1/2 million Jews in the United States). Thus, according to Walker, the United States will defend the Jews at Armageddon against Russia, which will be a battle of Israelites versus Gentiles.

Walker was speaker of the Bible Sabbath Association's radio program, "Echoes from Eden, " for eleven years, from 1960 to 1971.

Meridian Not Only True Church

Both Palmer and Walker do not believe theirs is the "true church." Palmer notes that people in his church are baptized into Christ not into the Church of God. The people in the true church have their names written in heaven, and no organization exists that one must belong to in order to be a true Christian. Walker, in referring to Armstrong's later development of a tight church government, says "Any people that claim to be the only people of God, I am against, because we are all God's children." Palmer works with the Merger Group people, and has a very broad view of the Church of God.

Differences of opinion must certainly be rife in the Meridian Group, owing to the nature of their organization. As Clair Ahlborn states, doctrinal differences, such as pork, are handled the same way the church handled them before the division of 1933, "in Christian love."

Organization

The church government of Meridian Group is highly congregational; the ministers serve "at the pleasure of the membership." Elders are elected by the local congregations, and

the churches determine to what extent they will cooperate with the General Council program.

There are seven Board of Directors made up of ministers and laymen. In 1971 these consisted of President Lee Roy Sticker, Vice-President Charles Ward, and Delbert Alloway, Claude Ellis, Jay Ellsworth, Jim Kling and Luvelt B. Palmer, committeemen.

Maranatha College, founded in 1963-64, has 17 students currently; and plans are to build a new campus for expansion to 150-200 students, a rather ambitious project. David Gjesdal is director and Frank Walker and Clair Ahlborn teachers.

Extent of Meridian Group

It is rather difficult to determine just who is a part of Meridian because it is an association rather than an organization. A "Church Directory" from the 1965 Fellowship Herald lists the following churches as constituents:

California: Areatata, Fresno, Lodi, Los Angeles, Olivehurst, Pico Rivera

Oregon: Coos Bay (Empire), "Harmony" (Junction City), Milwaukee, "Scravel Hill" (Jefferson)

Washington: Olympia, Port Orchard, Richland, Toppinish, Wenatchee

Idaho: Boise, Emmett, Meridian

Colorado: Denver

Iowa: Cedar Rapids, Clio, Davenport, Ottumwa, Muscatine

Kentucky: Browder

Michigan: Detroit, Newton, Battle Creek

Missouri: Buffalo, Easton, El Dorado Springs, Ethel, Maryville, Milan

North Carolina: Farmville

Texas: Borger, Stinnett

Alabama: Phllcampbeli

Tennessee: Dyersbury

Oklahoma: Wagoner

Kansas: Pawnee Rock

Canada: Langley, Vancouver, B. C.

More recent mention of affiliates to Meridian include Elders Richard Chatfield of the Maryland Heights (St. Louis! "Remnant at Seventh Day Church of God;") William Dornberger of Huntington Beach, California; David Blanke and Sid Sikkema of Lodi, California; Billy Watts of Springfield, Oregon; R.A. Barnes of Harrisburg; Albert Keating of Harmony; David Killgore of Scrael Hill, Oregon; Claude Diiwe of Phoenix, Arizona; Arthur Estep of Washington state; and Evangelist A. O'Reggio of Washington, D. C. Even Martin Ogren of Caldwell, Idaho of the Seventh Day Church of God has been mentioned in Meridian papers.

Foreign workers mentioned by Meridian publications have been Teofilo A. Donal of Binalonan, Pangasinan, Philippines; A. A. Bryson of Jamaica; and Calvin V. Ledger of St. Vincent, West Indies.

As for numbers, it is difficult to tell, since the Meridian headquarters keeps no records and the association is loose. About 1600-1800 magazines are mailed out monthly.

Some ministers apparently do not really want any central location or publishing work at all. Barnes says he is "going along" with the Meridian group, but he believes they have gone overboard on the idea of local autonomy. "It won't work," he states. Yet he is the most esteemed minister of the Idaho group and the oldest, for he is given the privilege of giving the opening sermon at each year's camp meeting. Frank Walker is going along with them, but because of his British-Israel ideas, he has plans for doing things on his own as well.

The "Missouri Conference of the Church of God (Old Time)" was apparently organized in 1951, as its 13th annual campmeeting was held at Milan, Missouri in 1964. Leaders then were Edgar Lippincott and Keith Slddens.

To be affiliated with Meridian, but incorporated separately.

For a time, the "River Road Church of God" of Eugene, Oregon associated with the Meridian Group. It originated from a division of the Radio Church of God congregation

of Eugene, and was led by Elders Emil Heiebel, and J.O. Spires. But because of their Feast Day observance, the alliance with Meridian was transitory.

UN-Denominational Split; The Ultimate Trip

Splits for local autonomy, splits for feast day observance, splits for this and splits for that: the Church of God (Seventh Day) in recent years came to a full circle when there developed a non-denominational movement, the ultimate split of all.

In late 1943, correspondence between a few Sabbath-keepers of different beliefs and affiliations led to a self-appointed Committee of Six who in early 1944 sought to ascertain there was enough interest in an undenominational organization for promoting the Sabbath. Circular letters were sent to many known Sabbath-keepers, which resulted in the establishment of the ***Bible Sabbath Association*** at Fairview, Oklahoma in 1945. One of the leaders in the movement appears to be Lawrence Burrell of Fairview. Its founder was the late George Main, a Seventh Day Baptist.

In 1949, it appears, a paper, *The Sabbath Sentinel* was established. Since 1962, it has been published by the Bible Advocate Press in Stanberry, recently moved to Denver.

Some of the Bible Sabbath Association's aims are to restore the true Sabbath worldwide repeal all existing Sunday "Blue Laws," oppose adoption of a World Calendar (already adopted by Sweden) which would upset the weekly cycle. It publishes tracts for the Sabbath, Sabbath calendars and localized sunset tables, a *Directory of Sabbath Observing Organizations*, as well as supporting a radio broadcast, "Echoes From Eden, with Bob Rogers, heard on eight stations across the United States. Elder Frank Walker of the Meridian Group was the radio speaker from 1960 to 1971.

There is a separately incorporated *Bible Sabbath Association* in New Zealand.

Beliefs of the Bible Sabbath Association

The *Bible Sabbath Association* is held to be strictly undenominational and nonsectarian. The *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Organizations* is sent to those interested in affiliating themselves with a church, but is not offered unless someone asks for it.

Succinctly stated, the whole purpose is to promote Sabbath observance, for "None who are directors of the Bible Sabbath Association intend to turn the association into a church; The Bible Sabbath Association was founded upon the principle of various Sabbatarian groups WORKING TOGETHER."

Supposedly non-sectarian, the Bible Sabbath Association does take a side on the issue of Feast Days: they are held to be done away, as "shadows of good things to come."

Significance of the Bible Sabbath Association

Of minor importance as far as numbers, the key significance of the Bible Sabbath Association is that it keeps alive the principles of local autonomy and "working together" among independent Sabbath groups. By publishing and publicizing the small splinter groups of Sabbatarians, the Bible Sabbath Association serves to perpetuate them. But it also definitely helps the historian attempting to keep track of them.

The Merger Group Continues

Having carried on the story of the splits and divisions following the 1948-49 Merger of the Church of God, there remains the story of the Merger Group itself. Without at first a background of the post-Merger splits, one would have a distorted picture of Church of God history. The Merger Group contains the largest number of Church of God people today, but it would be inaccurate to describe it as the-only significant Church of God center, as the foregoing has shown.

Worldwide Trips to Unite Church of God Efforts

As reported earlier, Burt Marrs traveled to Jamaica, Trinidad and Mexico in 1950. Also of the Merger Group, Elder Charles E. Adams went in 1951 to Africa for almost a year, and then on to India and the Philippines.

Before leaving Nigeria, Elder Adams organized a board of seven men, with Elder Tlkili chairman. In 1953 he toured the Caribbean islands. In the meantime, Elder E. A. Straub, chairman of the General Conference, made an extended tour of the United States and Canada, in order to stem the "Back to Salem" movement.

As noted earlier, Elder A.N. Dugger and Elder A.C. Olson toured Nigeria in 1951-52, apparently for the same reason: to garner the foreign work under their particular organization. Also in 1951, Elder Charles J. Ellis of Jamaica spent several months in America, and attended the Red Rocks Church of God campmeeting of 1951, near Denver.

Canadian Churches Dedicated

In June of 1952 a church building was dedicated at Nipawin, Saskatchewan, with Elders Pete Hrenyk, R. C. Moldenhauer and John Kiesz present. The following July another building was dedicated at Calgary, with guest ministers Charles E. Adams, E.A. Straub and John Kiesz.

New Developments, 1952-1955

Dr. A.L. Carlin of California moved to Stanberry in 1952. Besides teaching at Midwest Bible College, he serves as town doctor.

Elder Floyd Merriam, as head of the Home Missions Department, in 1953 with the help of others prepared the *Searchlight Bible Correspondence Course* and the *Membership Instruction Course*. Elder Kiesz with his Committee prepared a *Personal Evangelism Handbook*.

In accordance with the 1949 Merger Constitution, property was secured in Denver, at 1510 Cook Street, to be used as church headquarters and conference building. The first General Conference and campmeeting held in Denver was at the Assembly of God Campmeeting Grounds in August of 1953 or 1954. It continued to be held there bi-annually for many years.

Shortly thereafter, a Church of God radio program was instituted, "Faith for our Time," and Elder K.H. Freeman of West Virginia became its speaker, serving for many years, until replaced by Ray L. Straub in 1972. In 1973 the program was going out on 32 stations in 18 states.

In 1953, Elder Clayton L. Faubion replaced Ray Benight as editor, serving until 1956.

Also in 1953, *Midwest Bible College* had its first graduating class, (It is basically a two-year institution for men, although a few women attend for Biblical Foundation courses.) the first graduates being Haskell Hawkins and Robert Harris, Elder Burt F. Marrs (died 1956) became its director.

In 1955 a young minister Carl Stacey was killed in an auto work while visiting in Bakersfield. He was a member of the Executive Board and pastor of the Los Angeles church at his death.

Church development, 1956-59

A new church building was completed in 1956 at Grand Junction, Colorado, where John Kiesz was pastor. Also that year, Max Morrow, Deloris Forkel, Lyle Schueler, ClarettaLing and Nelson

Caswell graduated from college. The following year Morrow became office editor of the *Advocate* while Charles E. Adams replaced Clatyon Faubion as editor of the **Advocate** and the Harvest Field Messenger.

In 1958, Elder K. C. Walker became Director of the college, and the Stockton, California church building was secured. Elder Ivan Harlan pastored Lodi and Stockton at the time.

Adams lasted only a year as editor, resigning in 1957 at the Denver campmeeting, with the idea of going to New Zealand and Australia.

Horace Munro became editor, K. C. Walker assistant editor and Max Morrow office editor. In 1959, Morrow became editor.

In 1959 there was launched a "Free Tract" program in which tract were given away free, instead of having a charge as in the past. Financing for this program came from a special fund for which offerings were taken by local churches. Men who died during these years were Elder Otto Haerber in 1958 at Hawthorne, California, and A.S. Christenson and Roy Davison in 1959.

"Facts of Our Faith" Split from Merger Group

Charles Adams the head of the Home Missions Department of the Merger Group headed a "Layman's Research Committee" of Seven Men in 1958 and 1959 which sought to reform the church from within. The object was to put the control of the church back in the hands of the laymembers, not the ministers. One of these members was Ed Blenis of McKenzie River, Oregon. Possibly others were Roy Marrs and Wilbur Domberger.

Apparently the movement affected about a third of the entire church, but the Ministerial Council got wind of the development and nixed the idea. At the 1959 Conference, the Laymen's petition was not even allowed to be read before the conference meeting, and of 475-500 delegates, they in the end received only 17 votes, and still later only 11.

Churches in Denver and Los Angeles separated from the Merger Group, but now only the church in Los Angeles is left. There Roy A. Marrs heads the "Church of God, Sabbatarian" at Torrance, California, which publishes, free of price, the *Facts of our Faith* magazine, and apparently has a radio program as well His associate is Elder Wilbur C. Oornberger of Huntington Beach.

Elder E. A. Straub was President of the General Conference at the time, and says there were no real issues for the split. The Layman's Group asked 20 why's, but these were based on false information of the condition of the church. They still believe in the Merger Group's principles, and do not fellowship with Meridian. Roy Marrs sent his

daughter to Stanberry for college, and Straub feels that they will eventually come back to the Merger Group, once the older generation passes on.

1960-1962: Church of God Continues

In 1960 anew church building was erected in Blbomington, California, where Elder Trinidad Padilla was pastor. He was a former Roman Catholic that had brought more than fifty of his relatives out of that church into the Church of God. Bloomington attendance at that time was over a hundred.

Youth Camps began to be held at this time, at campgrounds owned by other denominations. In 1961 one was held at North Silver Falls Creek, Oregon. Elder Ray Straub reports many young people "began to pray loudly and groaned for the filling of the Spirit of God," In a revival meeting. Some 26 youths were baptized on the last Sabbath of the meeting.

In 1961, K.H. Freeman was Conference chairman.

From 1949-1961, it was the practice of the Merger Group to hold the campmeeting and General Conference sessions in Denver every odd-numbered year. But in 1962, the Central States Districts held a meeting near Dover, Oklahoma instead of Stanberry, on some land that had been recently purchased by the Church.

At the Ministerial Council, held on October 30, 1962, there were 40 credentialed ministers and five licensed ministers from the United States, plus one credentialed minister from Canada and one from Mexico. Two doctrinal positions were approved.

Centennial Celebration — 1963

The *Hope of Israel* began in August of 1863, and thus in August of 1963, a special centennial issue of the Bible Advocate was published, which contained a number of historical items, excerpts from older issues, a list of editors from 1863 to 1963, some twenty-five in all, and an analysis of Church of God doctrine through the years.

Ministers in 1963 and their locations were as follows:

Augustine Adams, California
J. D. Bagwell, Alabama
Ray E. Benight, Idaho
Carl Bentz, Idaho

E. Bernal, Texas
Garland Branson, West Virginia
Hugh Butrick, Oklahoma
Julian Camero, Michigan
Noah Camero, Minnesota
Nelson Caswell, Michigan
L.L. Christenson, Missouri
T.U. Conner, New York
Robert Coulter, Michigan
Archie B. Craig, Colorado
Floyd Craig, Oklahoma
James Crane, California
Tieman DeWind, Michigan
A.F. Dugger, Colorado
E. Dugue, Texas
Burt Ford, Oklahoma
K.H. Freeman, West Virginia
Curn Gilchrist, Colorado
Israel Haeger, California
Rudolph Haffner, Oregon
Ivan Harlan, Arkansas
Ennis Hawkins, Oklahoma
C.J. Heywood, Michigan
Peter Hrenyk, Canada
Harry Johns, Washington
Ross Johnston, Oklahoma
S.J. Kauer, Missouri
Roy Keim, Michigan
Christ Kiesz, South Dakota
John Kiesz, Missouri
Fred Krumsick, Oklahoma
James Kuryluk, Iowa
A.E. Lidell, Michigan
Clyde Maher, Oklahoma
Eric Mathis, New York
William McCann, Michigan
Reuben Moldenhauer, Canada
Max Morrow, Missouri
R. C. Moldenhauer, Missouri
Deroy McGill, Oregon
W.W. McMicken, Florida

Horace Munro, Missouri
Delvin O'Banion, South Dakota
W.H. Olson, District of Columbia
Trinidad Padilla, California
Vernon Patchan, Wisconsin
Roland Peterson, Nebraska
Sam Poff, Oklahoma
Emmett Presler, Colorado
Jesse Rodgers, Arkansas
L.I. Rodgers, Arkansas
Louis Sanchez, Minnesota
Manuel Solis, Texas
Archie Stiede, Washington
Ray Straub, Oregon
Nathan Straub, Oregon
E.A. Straub, California
Heber Strickland, Maryland
Marion Strunk, Oregon
Belton Sweet, Texas
B. G. Sweet, Texas
Melvin Sweet, Texas
S.R. Tedrow, Ohio
Floyd Turner, Michigan
Clifford Turtle, Missouri
K.C. Walker, Texas
R.K. Walker, Oklahoma
Fred Walter, Oregon
O.T. Whitten, Oklahoma
C.W. Wilderson, Michigan
Victor Youngs, California

Extent of Work - 1963

The Executive Board in 1963 was composed of the following Twelve:

K.H. Freeman, W.H. Olson, Carlos Garcia, Reuben Moldenhauer, Nelson Caswell, K.C. Walker, Floyd Turner, E.A. Straub, Robert Coulter, Trinidad Padilla and Archie Craig.

The nine District Overseers were District 1, Robert Coulter; 2, Delvin O'Banion; 3, Ray Straub; 4, E.A. Straub; 5, K.C. Walker; 6, James Kuryluk; 7, John Kiesz; 8, Nelson Caswell; and 9, Floyd Turner.

General Conference officers in 1963 were Robert Coulter, Chairman; Ray Straub, Vice-Chairman; Larry Russell, Secretary—Treasurer.

Heads of Departments were: LeRoy Dais, Publishing; Elden Fischer, Young Peoples; S.J. Kauer, Sabbath School; Emmett Presler, Home Missions; Grover Davis, Foreign Missions; Delvin O'Banion, Ministerial; and Dr. A.L. Carlin, Education.

From Church of God "United Fund" receipts, 30% went to Publishing, 20% to Home Missions, 20% to Ministerial, 15% to Foreign Missions, 12% to Christian Education (half each to the college and the high school), 2% to Sabbath School and 1% to Young People.

In the Foreign Work, Mexico had over 200 ministers, led by brothers Alberto and Carlos Garcia in Mexico City.

Other foreign workers were Charles J. Ellis of Jamaica;

V. H. Gibbons of British Guiana;

John Raybourne, Wilfred Saunders, and Hubert Weekes, Trinidad;

Benjamin Dingal, E.Peniaredondo and H.C.Rosell, Philippines;

F. A. Tonge, New Zealand; F. Joseph, India; Helmut Strauss, Germany; and B.I. Tikili of Nigeria.

Extent of Work, Circa 1973

Robert Coulter continued to be the Chairman of the General Conference, and Floyd A. Turner the editor of the *Bible Advocate* and the *Harvest Field Messenger*. Robert Coulter and S.J. Kauer were the editor's advisors and Ray Straub, L.L. Christenson, K.H. Freeman and Bose Dickens were contributing Editors. Ray L. Straub was speaker of the radio program, "Faith for our Time."

Mead's Handbook of Denominations for 1970 listed the Merger Group

with 76 churches and 5000 members, and the Salem group with 67 churches and 2000 members.

The old "Church of God Publishing House," which served from 1908 to 1948 gave way to the newly constructed brick L-shaped building in 1948, which served the Stanberry church, the press and the college.

The General Conference offices moved to Denver in 1952. A new headquarters building near Denver was constructed in 1971-72 at a cost of about \$195,000. The press was moved into the new complex in March of 1972. In the 13 months since the publishing plant was moved, some half million tracts were printed for the "Free Tract Fund."

LeRoy Dais continued to be chairman of the Publishing Department, while Raymond C. Moldenhauer was head of Home Missions, Reuben Moldenhauer of Foreign Missions, Harvey Fischer of Sabbath Schools, Elden Fischer of Christian Education, Calvin Burrell of Young Peoples, and E. A. Straub of Ministerial. Max Morrow directed Midwest Bible College and S.J. Kauer remained the chief instructor.

XIV. Analysis at 1973

Publishing Developments

In July of 1970 the Bible Advocate was made free, the first time in its 107-year history this had been done. The reasons given for this were to expand the paper to nonmembers and reach more people. Also in July, Floyd Turner of Owosso, Michigan replaced Noah Camero as editor of the Advocate. Camero had served since 1967.

In October of 1970 the *Sabbath School Missionary* for youngsters was discontinued and replaced by *Footprints* magazine. The teen magazine title is *Aim*, and its volume numbers indicate it was established in 1936, but may have had a different titles earlier. A home course in Bible Study, the "Searchlight Bible Course" of 30 lessons was being offered free.

Foreign Work

The Church of God (Seventh Day) in Mexico has an estimated 20,000 plus members. On November 8-13, 1971 a ministers meeting was held at Acapulco, attending by over 150 Mexican ministers, and also Robert Coulter and Noah Camero from the United States.

From this meeting, Coulter and Camero went to Guatemala City, headquarters of the Central American work. There they attended the annual Church of God (Seventh Day) council of Central America, where 40-50 delegates from Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua met from November 17-20, 1971.

Elder Antonio Vega of Guatemala is the overseer of the Central American work. He raised up other churches in South America in 1970 when he visited Panama, Ecuador, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay.

At a meeting on his return it was agreed by the Central American headquarters to send Elder Manuel Soto Lopez on a return trip.

Vega reported that the Managua, Nicaragua Church of God was spared during the earthquake there, and the United States churches were sending relief supplies to their Latin brethren there.

The General Conference in the United States in 1971 agreed to sponsor Elder Andres Leiva, formerly the overseer in Honduras, to be missionary to Ecuador. He soon established the work in Ecuador, incorporating the Church of God (Seventh Day) there.

In Jamaica there are said to be 38 churches. Elder Thomas Madden is overseer there, replacing Elder Charles J. Ellis who died in 1972; Wilfred Saunders of Trinidad oversees four churches on that island,. Another group, in Nassau, Bahamas, is headed by Joseph S. Garvey.

In 1971, Elder E. A. Straub made a trip to Eastern Europe, where he contacted Sabbath keepers in Poland and elsewhere that are interested in working with the Church of God. They have only "minor differences" with the Church of God in the United States. Chorzow is the headquarters of the Polish work, led by Brothers Bujok and Wiecek. Straub reported seven to eight Polish churches (60 to 79 at Chorzow, 85 at Brenna, some in Gdansk, and 85-90 at Bielsko Beala) with 400 members. There are supposed to be 80 members in Czechoslovakia, and others in Romania and Hungary. Elder Helmut Strauss heads the German work.

There is a small work in Norway and in Belgium, where Elder F. C. Ardaen lives.

In England, there is reported to be rapid growth, currently some 500-600 members. Elder Erlo S. Hendricks of London appears to be the leader. He is black. Elder Reed of Manchester reports a church of 80 at Birmingham.

In Nigeria, overseer of the Church of God (Sabbatarian) was Bishop Benjamin I. Tikili of Port Hareourt, River State. Numerous other ministers are mentioned in Messenger reports.

In the Philippines, a Church of God radio program was going out in 1972 over DXMB Malaybalay and DXSYOzamis City. And in India, Elder P. Joseph resides in Bhinavaram, Godavari District.

Miscellaneous Developments

The 1973 biennial conference was held at St. Marys, Ohio, August 10-18. It was probably the first one held east of the Mississippi River.

XV. The "Church Depression Period," 1974-1987

Fifteen years seemed like a long time to me in 1972-1973 when I wrote History of the Seventh Day Church of God at age 25. In 1987, at age 40, my perspective had changed somewhat. What happened to the Seventh Day Church of God in these fifteen years?

The years 1973-1987 could be labeled the "Church Depression" period. The 1950's, and especially the early and mid 1960's, were periods of optimism and activity for the church. This began to wane in the late 1960s and early 1970s. By the mid-1970s, there was a definite lack of direction. By the late 1980's, optimism had virtually given way to the stark reality that things were not working out so well. The Seventh Day Church of God, as a whole, was not only unheard of by the world, but the church didn't know who they were, nor where they were going.

What Is the "Seventh Day Church of God"?

I use the term, "Seventh Day Church of God" to designate Sabbath-keepers originating from the Gilbert Cranmer, Hope of Israel, Messenger Party, Marion Iowa, and Stanberry, Missouri people of the Nineteenth Century. In 1987, there were at least four major segments of the Seventh Day Church of God:

- (1) Mainline Church of God Seventh Day groups, headquartered in Denver, Colorado; Meridian, Idaho; Caldwell, Idaho; Salem, West Virginia, and Jerusalem, Israel.
- (2) Worldwide Church of God, headquartered in Pasadena, California and its numerous splinter groups,
- (3) Sacred Name groups headquartered in Bethel, Pennsylvania; Rocheport, Missouri; Holt, Michigan; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, plus other groups and independents.
- (4) Other groups and independents.

The Appendix gives history trees for these segments. Our history has concentrated on the first segment, the mainline Church of God, Seventh Day groups. In analyzing the years of 1974-1987, more attention needs to be given to all four segments. It is not uncommon to find individuals who have been associated with several segments of the Seventh Day Church of God. We have seen that the different segments are affecting one another to a larger extent than has happened in the past.

The Denver Group

Mead's 1975 Handbook of Denominations showed that the Church of God, Seventh Day, Denver Group had 56 churches and 5,500 members. According to the Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches, in 1981 the group had 124 churches and 4,431 members and 111 ministers in North America. As reported previously, Canright said in the late 1800's that the Church of God had 30 ministers and 6,000 members. The 1986 Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups reported 120 congregations and 5,200 members in North America. The 1980 Directory had listed 126 congregations and 6,800 members. Calvin Burrell reported that the Bible Advocate circulation grew from 2,400 in 1970 to 21,000 in 1981. For financial reasons, circulation was drastically reduced to 9,000 in 1984. It grew back to 14,000 in 1987. From all these statistics, it appears that the group is barely holding its own. Total 1987 membership of the Denver Group, as reported by Calvin Burrell, was 5,200 in North America, 18,900 in Latin America, 575 in Europe and Australia/New Zealand, 9,500 in Africa, 1,800 in India, and 1,900 in the Philippines.

Midwest Bible College of Stanberry, Missouri was closed in the 1970s. In its place, the Summit School of Theology in Denver offers ministerial training courses.

Robert Coulter was President of the General Conference from the 1960s to 1987. An aggressive, personable man, Coulter gave stability and cohesiveness to the Church. Under his leadership, the goal of doubling the church organization's membership by 1990 was set. No doubt a key element in that goal was the reunification of the Denver and Meridian Church of God Seventh Day groups, which if successful, would have been a big boost to church morale.

In some areas of the United States, reunification was an accomplished fact. During the early 1980s, in the Portland, Oregon, area, Emmett Samson of the Milwaukee, Oregon Church of God Seventh Day (affiliated with Meridian) joined forces and congregations with Nelson Caswell and the Portland church affiliated with Denver.

Movement toward the Denver-Meridian reunification went through several years of meetings and discussion during the mid-1980s. However, a vote on the union was rejected in 1987 when the Meridians approved it by a simple majority, but short of the required two-thirds vote.

Coulter stepped down as Denver Group President and the Bylaws were amended to allow lay members for the first time on the body's twelve member executive board. The bylaws allow women to serve on district boards which are limited to seven members. Coulter went to minister a church in Texas. His job was divided between Calvin Burrell and Jerry Moldenhauer. Burrell became General Conference President and also continued to serve as pastor of the Denver congregation. Jerry Moldenhauer became General Conference Executive Director, which entailed managing the Denver General Conference offices and coordinating United Ministries programs.

Burrell's father, Lawrence Burrell, was in 1987 still the Treasurer of the Bible Sabbath Association. A native of Fairview, Oklahoma, Lawrence Burrell (b. 1909) held this post since the mid-1950's. Both he and his wife, Lottie (Davison) are descendants of pioneer Church of God (7th Day) ministers.

Calvin Burrell said the main reason for the merger failure was the Meridians' fear of being overpowered by the larger Denver group. Although a standing invitation to merge was extended, Burrell did not expect the merger to go through in the future.

In other significant events, an International Ministerial Congress was formed, composed of representation from nearly twenty national Conferences. Each was recognized as a sister, rather than a daughter, of the Church in the United States.

From 1970-1987, the following are some of the ministers deceased: Ennis Hawkins, Reuben Moldenhauer, K.H. Freeman, A.E. Lidell, Horace Munro, Julian Camero, Rudolph Haffner, W.W. McMicken, Floyd Craig, C.W. Wilkinson, Tiemen DeWind, A.N. Dugger and A.F. Dugger, Jr.

Floyd Turner served as Editor of the Bible Advocate from 1970 until 1981, when Jerry Griffin became Editor.

Ray Straub, son of the 1949 "Merger Engineer" E.A. Straub, developed into a very effective speaker and leader in the church during the latter 1970s. He might have succeeded Coulter. However, charges of immoral conduct resulted in the Marion, Oregon, church removing him from the pulpit. He retained membership.

Meridian, Idaho Group

The Meridian group continued to publish the Acts and Fellowship Herald magazines. The 1986 Directory states there were 26-30 affiliated congregations in North America and five in Latin America.

Caldwell, Idaho Group

Martin L. Ogren, a founder and long time leader of the group, died in 1982. Paul A. Woods assumed editorship of the monthly magazine, Herald of Truth.

Ten congregations were listed in the 1986 Directory: Watsonville, California; Caldwell, Idaho; Chicago, Illinois; St. Joseph, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; and Everett, Forks, Republic, Trout Lake and Wenatchee, Washington. The group published the Zion Faith College Bible Correspondence Course.

A close relationship existed between the Caldwell group and J.O. Nwakeafor of Nigeria, who was overseer of an organization there, formerly led by R.D. Orukuwu. There were dozens of Nigerian ministers and thousands of members. Like Caldwell, the Nigerians kept the Feast Days, but used the Jewish Calendar which Caldwell rejects. The Nigerians keep Pentecost on Sunday and look both to Caldwell and Jerusalem for leadership and assistance.

Salem, West Virginia Group

The last official census of the group was in 1960 when it reported seven churches and 2,000 members. Their numbers had apparently reduced considerably by 1987, as the 1986 Directory does not give statistics. The Advocate of Truth was still published in the 1980s.

Jerusalem, Israel Group

Andrew N. Dugger died about 1975. Leadership of the Jerusalem organization was assumed by his son-in-law, Gordon M. Fauth. A young peoples' singing group, the Jerusalem Sonbeams, traveled around Israel helping evangelize.

Numerous "Third World" Sabbath-keeping Churches of God in Africa (Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana), India, the Philippines and the West Indies looked to Jerusalem for leadership, Bibles and support. Independent Sabbath-keepers in America supported the Jerusalem work. Perhaps as the older generation dies out, men who knew Dugger, support from the United States may wane.

The group ceased to print the Bible Home Instructor and other Dugger books and tracts. The Mt. Zion Reporter magazine mainly dealt with news from Israel. An "Andrew N. Dugger Orphanage" in India received economic support from Jerusalem.

Worldwide Church of God and Related Groups

In early 1974, the roof caved in on the Worldwide Church of God. Dr. Ernest L. Martin, Al Portune, Ken Westby, George Kemnitz and a host of other leading ministers left the church, ostensibly over its failure to change its teachings on Divorce & Remarriage (D&R) and Pentecost, and church government. In an apparent effort to stem the tide, the Church's leader, Herbert W. Armstrong, at the behest of his son Garner Ted Armstrong, drastically liberalized the church's teachings on D&R, allowing divorce and remarriage for just about any reason, even when both were married in the church. Also, the date for the annual Pentecost observance was changed from Monday to Sunday. Many other doctrines were changed and/or liberalized. In 1977, Joseph Hopkins in Christianity Today listed 29 doctrinal changes or liberalizations, including a more relaxed approach to Sabbath observance.

While thousands had left because the church had refused to change doctrines, hundreds more left for opposite reasons when the church liberalized its doctrines. All these departures produced numerous splinter groups. Those who remained were largely composed of those who would follow Herbert W. Armstrong no matter what he said. The Ambassador Report newsletter became an organ for a growing anti-Armstrong movement.

In 1972, Garner Ted had been put out of the ministry and excommunicated from the church for marital infidelity, but was soon reinstated. In 1973, the elder Armstrong had turned over much of the reigns of church leadership to his son Garner Ted, yet still remained in top control. Conflict raged over the financial control of the church's vast assets and millions of dollars of annual income. Conflicts between Garner Ted Armstrong and Stanley Rader, the church's legal counsel and others led to Garner Ted's final ouster in 1978. He formed his own church organization, the Church of God International, headquartered in Tyler, Texas. In the latter 1980's it had several thousand members in the U.S. Garner Ted Armstrong continued to produce television sermons.

In 1979-1980, a conflict raged between the Worldwide Church of God and the State of California when dissident members convinced the State Attorney General to investigate alleged financial wrong doing and place control of the church under a court appointed receiver. Resistance from members plus a law passed by the California State Legislature put the quietus on the investigation.

Herbert W. Armstrong continued his world travels, meeting with heads of state in Japan, Germany, Israel and elsewhere. In 1986, Armstrong died and leadership of the church went to Armstrong's last-minute appointment, Joseph W. Tkach, a relative newcomer to the church's leadership. The church had entered a period of tranquility which even the death of Herbert Armstrong did not shake.

Former Worldwide Church of God minister Dr. Ernest L. Martin's Foundation of Biblical Research, later called Associates for Scriptural Knowledge, produced a stream of literature in the Protestant mold, purposely designed to tear down Worldwide Church of God theology such as the Sabbath, tithing, healing, Passover and Holy Days.

Some of the many ex-Worldwide Church splinter groups were: The United Church of God, led by Richard A. Wiedenheft and others, who kept the annual "Lord's Supper" but abandoned the Holy Days. The Biblical Church of God, originally led by Fred Coulter (ex-Worldwide Church of God minister, no relation to Robert Coulter of the Denver Group). In 1982, Fred Coulter parted and formed his own Christian Biblical Church of God. Another division is the Biblical Church of God in Canada, headed by Keith Hunt.

The Church of God, The Eternal, led by Raymond C. Cole, numbered about 500 members and had branches in Canada and Switzerland. Cole was one of the original graduates from Ambassador College and a former Worldwide Church evangelist and regional church director. This group originated with some of those who refused to go along with the 1974 Worldwide Church of God doctrinal changes, particularly Divorce and Remarriage and Pentecost. In 1976, Paul S. Royer broke off to form the Church of God, Sonoma.

The Church of God Evangelistic Association, led by David Smith, published News Watch magazine. The group emphasized prophecy, especially the association of the mark of the beast with the universal price code. The Hebrew Calendar was rejected.

One would think that the problems in the Worldwide Church of God and the creation of many ex-Worldwide splinter groups had created a golden opportunity for the Church of God Seventh Day mainline groups such as the Denver Group. Many ex-Seventh-Day Adventists became associated with the Church of God, Seventh Day

during the early 1900's. However, few who left the Worldwide Church of God, or its splinter groups, affiliated with the Denver, Meridian or Caldwell groups.

However, the 1974 doctrinal changes in the Worldwide Church of God and mass exodus of thousands of former members did affect the Church of God, Seventh Day, especially the Denver Group. For a while in the latter 1970s, Don Prunkard, former Worldwide Church minister, worked with the Denver Group. He wrote an article in the August, 1979 Advocate attacking the Feast Days, which he had kept while in the Worldwide Church but had by this time renounced. Prunkard later drifted away from the Church of God, Seventh Day.

It appears that not many ex-Worldwide Church members migrated to the Denver Group. It has been my personal experience that the response of Denver Group people to ex-WWC members is not overly friendly. Calvin Burrell stated in a personal letter to me: "Most of our members with whom I speak have made compassionate efforts to help ex-Worldwide members adjust to our Church. Generally, we have not been very successful. Reasons for this, it seems to me, are more psychological than doctrinal (mistrust of organizations, baggage of the true-church syndrome, liturgical shock, negative focus of people hurt by W.C.G., etc.)."

Many people were so badly hurt by the Worldwide Church experience that they rejected religion entirely. Many developed a total contempt for the ministry. As a result, some discarded all Truth they had. The average membership growth of the Worldwide Church of God, which had been +30% per year during the period of the 1950s and 1960's, suffered drastically and took a long time to reach its former level of about 100,000.

Sacred Name Groups

Sacred Name groups insist on using the Hebrew names for the deity. They often disagree among themselves just exactly how the Hebrew names YHVH or YHWH should be pronounced. Sacred Name group history is covered in Volume II of this history, part H. A few from the Worldwide Church of God and Church of God Seventh Day have joined Sacred Name groups, and vice versa.

Jacob O. Meyer, whose voice was heard on the Sacred Name Broadcaster broadcast, published a magazine by the same name, and led the prominent Bethel, Pennsylvania Assemblies of Yahweh. His dogmatic stance and leadership style has been compared by some Yahwehists to that of Herbert W. Armstrong.

In 1980, there was a division when Donald Mansager and others withdrew from Meyer to form Assemblies of Yahweh in Messiah in Missouri. Meyer launched a punitive lawsuit against the new group, claiming that Assemblies of Yahweh was a "service mark" and that nobody else could use this name or "any colorable imitation thereof", and that former members had stolen the address list. The two groups settled out of court when the Missouri group agreed to pay several thousands of dollars damages and change its name to Yahweh's Assembly in Messiah. The Missouri group continued to publish Master Key magazine.

Other Sacred Name groups were in Holt, Michigan and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Why Are They Declining?

The Worldwide Church of God North American membership in the latter 1980s was about the same in the early 1970s before its major internal problems. The Church of God Seventh Day and Sacred Name groups were holding their own, barely. Splits have been disastrous to all these Sabbath-keeping groups.

Splits, schisms and internal bickering seem to be the continual rule of the day. It is ironic that Herbert Armstrong said in 1927 when he was converted, that the Church of God, Seventh Day was small, unheard of, not proclaiming the gospel to the world with power. At that time, the church was undergoing its greatest period of growth, and was engaging in unprecedented evangelistic activity. Thousands of people were being baptized. Yet the church was small and unheard of by the bulk of the population.

But then, something happened. It appears that the economic depression of the 1930s contributed to a spiritual depression in the church. Unhappily, it has never recovered. They stopped spreading the faith. Some stopped keeping portions of the Truth that they once believed in, such as the Holy Days, because of economic difficulties. It is sad that in the late 1980's, when there was relative economic prosperity, that these groups of people nevertheless acted as if they were spiritually depressed. So little desire to work on overcoming the carnal self, and little enthusiasm to spread the Truth to others.

The men who lead the various groups, are, with some exceptions, seemingly dedicated individuals who are definitely not like Jim Bakker of the ill-famed PTL Club, who gained notoriety in 1987 for religious playboyism and financial corruption. Why have numbers been relatively declining in the Church of God, Seventh Day, while other

groups such as Mormons and Seventh-Day Adventists reported strong membership gains? Could it be a more conservative doctrinal stand plus just plain laziness?

Granted, the church would be a little flock, Luke 12:32, and not a large political institution. Yet all of these splits, schisms, bad feelings and finger pointing are depressing! Does it have to be like this? Isn't there a better way?

In the United States, religious enthusiasm increased during the 1980's, partly due to the influence of President Ronald Reagan. Yet at the same time, religious fervor and zeal in the Seventh Day Church of God declined. Why?

My 1973 analysis showed that the Church of God, Seventh Day grew up on dead soil historically. The legacy of the Millerite, "Burned Over District" of western New York, the Seventh Day Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists and Church of God "independent view" with so many splits and schisms prevented much unity and evangelizing zeal. This coupled with bad leadership rife with lies and hypocrisy precluded substantial growth. In 1973 the Church of God, Seventh Day was a dying or dead church. In 1987, more so.

Can We Recapture "the Good Old Days"?

The Church of God, Seventh Day rests on its laurels of prior periods of evangelism, the so-called "good old days." The Denver Group does this. The Worldwide and its splinter groups do this to a limited extent. Then, powerful evangelists started small churches scattered across the country in various areas.

The world of the 1970s and 1980s was centered on suburbs ringing the major cities. In 1950, some 44% of USA population was located in rural areas and 24% in suburbs. In 1984, these figures were reversed. The Church of God Seventh Day is NOT active in these growing suburb areas. For example, the Church of God, Seventh Day is still unheard of in the Saint Louis, Missouri, metropolitan area of 2.5 million people. Members in various American towns tithe to their local Church of God Seventh Day minister, to a headquarters organization, or get involved in some kind of vicarious missionary work in Jerusalem or elsewhere, and it stops there. Then there are numbers who just bank their tithes, waiting for Elijah to come.

Where are the evangelists, the religious writers, the hard working dedicated people who care enough about the Truth of God they know to share it with others? They are watching television or engaging in other frivolous pursuits, while continuing to show up for Sabbath services or annual religious meetings. These Sabbath-keepers

today are doing little to spread the gospel to the world. I am glad many people cared enough to help me come along the road to Truth with literature, fellowship and prayers. But so many today frankly don't care any more!

If the Church only realized the sad shape it is in, it might do something about it. But we are like a frog in a pan of lukewarm water. The frog doesn't notice as the temperature is gradually increased, degree by degree, until finally he is cooked to death.

A Great Spiritual Depression

In the late 1980s close to 50% of the U.S. population was Catholic. America had fallen from the world's largest creditor nation in 1981 to the world's largest debtor, owing other countries \$400 billion. These factors do not bode well for future growth of Sabbath-keeping groups in North America and the world.

Many felt that the October 1987 stock market crash signalled the beginning of a worldwide economic depression similar to 1929. But for the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, the period of 1974-1987 had already been a period of great spiritual depression.

As a student of history, the more I learn, the more questions I have. I am sure that God will answer them someday. When will we learn the lessons of history? There ought to be a better way, a way of love and compassion among the brethren, of respect and support for true ministers of the Almighty who will spread the true gospel to the world with power, and without splits, schisms, internal problems in the church. There is so much work for us to do. Is this a pipe dream or can it happen?

Are We Dead, Lukewarm, Or Full of the Holy Spirit?

The dead "Sardis" church mentioned in Revelation does nothing. The "Laodicean" church is lukewarm. It is difficult to distinguish between these two similar conditions. I don't want to be classified as either one!

And yet, if each one of us is truly honest with ourselves, we will all have to admit that each one of us is part of the problem. As the Pogo comic character stated: "We have met the enemy, and he is us!" We cannot look at the record of mankind in the Bible, and history of the New Testament Church from its foundation on 31 A.D. and say we are much better than they were. Paul's epistles are full of internal church problems that boggle the mind. We are no better than they. This history of recent day

Sabbath-keeping Churches of God further confirms the fact that history does repeat itself.

The record of the entire Bible is that we must learn to be submissive to God's authority. Obey God, and you will be blessed. Disobey God, and you will be cursed. The Bible is the historical record showing that NOTHING comes out right when you disobey God, and the ONLY way to blessings is to obey God, through the Messiah our Master.

The Eternal says to US, in OUR day:

Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found your works perfect before God I know your works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will [am about to] spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: . . . As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Revelation 3:2, 16-19.

Will we learn the lesson of history? (

XVI. The 1990s: Spiritual Abyss and Rays of Hope

The 1990s were generally not happy years for Sabbath-keepers. Many slipped into a spiritual doctrinal abyss by abandoning or watering down their former beliefs. And yet there were a few precious rays of hope.

Herbert W. Armstrong, the most famous Sabbath-keeping minister of the twentieth century, died in January of 1986. His successor, Joseph W. Tkach, instigated monumental doctrinal changes in the Worldwide Church of God. Scores of doctrinal teachings were changed, liberalized, and watered down. Among many other things, the Church accepted the Protestant doctrine of the Trinity, accepted "born again" theology, abandoned its former teaching of Anglo-Israel identity, and recognized the use of crosses as appropriate Christian symbols of worship. The Sabbath, Holy Days, and Abstaining from Unclean Meats were said to be optional, not mandated by Scripture. Those who insisted on observance of these former practices were excommunicated. Christmas and Easter celebrations were said to have value. These changes were vast, yet perhaps only 60-70% of the membership was motivated to leave the Worldwide Church. Tkach Senior died in 1995, and was succeeded by his son, Joe Tkach, Jr. Hank Hanegraff, of Christian Research Institute, led a helping hand to Tkach, Jr., and welcomed him into the Protestant fold. Both the Pasadena, California, headquarters and the empty Big Sandy, Texas, campus, were put up for sale.

The Worldwide Church of God, as we know it, ceased to exist, as it became thoroughly Protestant in doctrine. Some would say that Herbert W. Armstrong would turn over in his grave if he knew what the Tkachs' did to his Church. However, I was not alone in early spotting Joe Tkach, whom I knew well in 1973, as a supplanter who had no love for the Bible doctrines that the Church once taught. In 1972, Tkach told a friend of mine that he would replace Herbert Armstrong. Since he was a lowly local elder at the time, this seemed preposterous. Tkach was not a good speaker, not a good writer, but he was a personable man who knew how to utilize political power. Those who regret what Tkach did should not blame Tkach; they should blame other high-ranking ministers who did nothing.

Gerald Flurry in 1990s led a departure of "fake conservatives" from the Worldwide Church of God, who worshipped Herbert Armstrong's (liberalized) teachings as of his death in 1986, and continued aberrant prophetic speculation. He lambasted the Worldwide Church of God as the "Laodicean Church." To be a member of Flurry's Philadelphia Church of God, you had to believe that Herbert

Armstrong was the end time Elijah. It is shocking that any Worldwide Church of God people would leave a church gone doctrinally off track for the "frying pan" of Flurry. Yet several thousand desperate people did just that. Flurry unabashedly published Armstrong's last book, *Mystery of the Ages*, which caused a copyright infringement lawsuit from the Worldwide Church, who wanted to suppress this work. It appeared that Flurry won his case on the grounds of religious freedom. Flurry had a couple of drunk driving problems, but this weakness apparently had no significant effect on his Church. In the late 1990s, a number of Flurry's congregations and elders left his group to form independent ministries.

Former Plain Truth writer William F. Dankenbring's Triumph Prophetic Ministries had, in the late 1980s, created a stir in the Worldwide Church of God. His prophetic teachings, insistence on keeping Pentecost on Sivan 6 in line with Pharisaic Jews, plus keeping Passover on the 15th of Nisan, is still another departure and represents an extremist position among Worldwide Church of God splinter groups.

In early 1993, Roderick C. Meredith, one of the original Worldwide Church of God evangelists, broke with the Worldwide Church of God and established his own Global Church of God. Evangelists Raymond McNair, and later his brother Carl McNair, joined, along with numbers of former Worldwide Church ministers. Soon, there were dozens of congregations and thousands of members in the new group. Their *World Ahead* magazine, patterned after *The Plain Truth*, demonstrated the group's adherence to much of Worldwide Church teaching prior to Armstrong's death. However, Meredith and McNair continued to teach wide open divorce and remarriage, as Armstrong had from 1974 to his death in 1986. This prevented many doctrinal conservatives from joining the new group. But considering the alternatives, it appeared that Meredith would succeed in garnering many of those leaving the Worldwide Church of God because of its massive doctrinal liberalization. In late 1998, Raymond McNair, Larry Salyer, and others on the Global Board who did not like Meredith's leadership, decided to terminate their leader, Roderick Meredith. However, 85% or more of the Global membership followed Meredith to form the Living Church of God. Meredith, with Richard Ames, continued speaking on television, and publishing a *Tomorrow's World* magazine. David Pack, former Global minister, led some in another splinter group.

Meanwhile, in the spring of 1995, hundreds of ministers and thousands of members left the Worldwide Church of God en masse, as a result of Tkach's doctrinal changes, forming the United Church of God. It soon garnered 20,000 members and zoomed to the top among splinter groups. Although slow to define its doctrinal framework and launch out into media activities, the new group produced a classy

Good News magazine, a number of booklets, and seemed to be poised for further growth. In the spring of 1998, however, United's leader, David Hulme, led about 1,000 members out of United to form his own Church of God, Monrovia, California, group. Hulme felt United was too loosely organized, and needed more top down authority, rather than being governed by ministerial committees. Les McCullough, former Chancellor of the Big Sandy campus, succeeded Hulme as United's leader. Shortly thereafter, almost to demonstrate that United did have Church Government, Dave Havir, pastor of the largest United congregation, in Big Sandy, Texas, was thrown out of United because he was too independent. The Big Sandy Church has incorporated before United was formed, and many members there resented the rough treatment of Havir. There seemed to be a continual frittering away of congregations from United, and their numbers appeared to be somewhat down from their peak, but hopefully were settling down as the 1990s ended.

Less well-known were two other ex-Worldwide Church groups, who concentrated quietly on feeding the flock with spiritual food. John Ritenbaugh of Charlotte, North Carolina, began his Church of The Great God in 1992. Fred Coulter of Hollister, California continued with his Christian Biblical Church of God which stemmed from his 1982 ouster from the Biblical Church of God, a 1979 offshoot from the Worldwide Church. Both Ritenbaugh and Coulter produced excellent tapes and helpful literature. Coulter's excellent book, *The Christian Passover. What Does It Mean? When Should It Be Observed - the 14th or the 15th?* was published in 1993, and clearly presented arguments in favor of a 14th Passover.

Garner Ted Armstrong's Church of God International, begun in 1978 when GTA was ousted from the Worldwide by his father, had mixed results. Because of an extraordinary donation, a new building and ministerial training school was constructed on Lake Palestine, Texas. However, numbers became disenchanted and left the CGI to start other groups. There was a mass exodus of over half of CGI's membership in the mid-1990s due to renewed allegations of Garner Ted Armstrong's sexual improprieties. A video of Ted's escapades with a masseuse was widely circulated, and was said to be played on national television. Eventually, the CGI Board acted like men and asked GTA to resign. He withdrew and formed yet another group, the Intercontinental Church of God. It appeared that Church of God splinter groups were running out of names.

The Church of God, The Eternal, led by Raymond Cole (an original Worldwide evangelist who left in 1975) and Bryce Clark, appeared to be barely holding its own, after losing several ministers and members in the early 1990s. Although much more conservative and closer to the original Worldwide Church of God teachings than any

other splinter group, their presentation of doctrines lacked clarity and conviction. The group continued to have a number of members who were not enthusiastic about the church's leadership and activities. Allegations of improprieties against Raymond Cole, plus some insisting that Thanksgiving and Mother's Day were pagan and should not be observed, led to a split in 1999. Bryce Clark and a good number of COGTE members and elders formed the Bethel Church of God.

Sacred Name groups appeared to be holding their own, and perhaps growing a bit. Jacob O. Meyer, head of the largest group, the Assemblies of Yahweh of Bethel, Pennsylvania, was on television. There were sacred name groups in Poland and other places in Eastern Europe. Jewish beliefs and practices (such as wearing the tallith) were emphasized by the Hawkins Sacred Name groups in Texas. The question of when to observe the Passover, on the 14th or the 15th, plagued the Sacred Name groups as it did many other Sabbath-keeping groups. A bright spot in the Sacred Name groups was Donald Mansager's Yahweh's New Covenant Assembly, of Kingdom City, Missouri. The YNCA's quality magazine, *Light*, went to 5,200 subscribers. Some 160-180 attended the group's Feast of Tabernacles in Missouri, and the group had an aggressive overseas outreach to assemblies in the Philippines and the West Indies.

Paul Woods, son-in-law of Martin Ogren, continued to lead the Seventh Day Church of God of Caldwell, Idaho. In 1993, some 147 people attended the group's Feast of Tabernacles, which was held near Washougal, Washington. The group's magazine, *Herald of Truth*, went to less than 1,000 subscribers. The Caldwell Group continued to be associated with a black church group in the Chicago area. The 1993 death of J.O. Nwakafor, overseer in Nigeria, created a leadership vacuum, which the Caldwell Group sought to fill with an experienced native elder. Woods said that the church is struggling in America, as people do not want holiness in their lives. They rebel against a strong message against the sins of Sodom. The people are lax, and don't want to be told their sins. There is a general falling away from the Truth. On a recent trip delivering Bibles to Mexico, Woods noted that Mexicans, who previously had been very receptive to the gospel, more so than rich Americans, had cooled somewhat, as they now want to be like the Americans. Numbers of Sabbath-keepers in Hyderabad, India, and south India, appeared to be increasing.

In the Boise valley of Idaho, the Caldwell Group was still fellowshiping occasionally with the Meridian Group, but the Denver Group church in Nampa had pulled out of regular fellowship with the others. Mike Ahlborn, grandson of Clair Ahlborn, was editor of the Meridian Group's paper, *Acts*. Ron Burnham, son of Mark Burnham (now in his eighties), pastored the Meridian church. Although some

Meridian churches had joined with Denver, it appeared that the Meridian Group was still functioning, although with reduced numbers. When their leading evangelist, Richard Cress, moved over to the Denver group, it appeared to take the wind out of the sails of the Meridian group.

In 1993, the Bible Sabbath Association's magazine, *The Sabbath Sentinel*, underwent an improved format change under the leadership of its new editor, Sydney Cleveland. The BSA produced a 1994 and 1996 update to its *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups*. The BSA continued to be the most objective source of information for the searching Sabbath-keeper for information about different groups, although it suffered from a reduced membership list.

The Salem, West Virginia Group continued to exist, although its size was probably half or even less than half the 2,000 members claimed in 1960. The Jerusalem, Israel Group continued to publish *The Mt. Zion Reporter*. It appeared that its scope of operations was somewhat reduced from former years.

The Church of God (Seventh Day) Denver Group increased membership in the 1980s. This was augmented by six to eight of the leading ministers from the Meridian, Idaho group (including Roy Henderson, Larry Childers and the Palmer brothers) joining forces with Denver, along with about one hundred Meridian Group members. Calvin Burrell, President of the General Conference and leader of the Denver Group, was pleased that the Worldwide Church of God had made overtures to the Denver Group. After decades of rivalry and sometimes bitterness, Burrell reported that "the Cold War is over" between the two groups. He applauded most of the doctrinal changes in the Worldwide Church. Joseph Tkach, Jr., son of WWC leader Joseph Tkach (who died in 1995), attended the General Conference meeting of 1993, and forged friendly ties with the Denver ministry. Worldwide Church ministers were encouraged to develop cordial relationships with their respective local Church of God Seventh Day ministers, and some of them did just that.

As opposed to the 1980s, in the 1990s, the Church of God Denver Group was barely holding its own, still clinging to about 6,000 North American members. Like the Seventh Day Baptists, they are not a growing church. Although the Meridian Group continued, there was less partisanship between the groups, and more co-operation. The defunct Denver Group ministerial college at Stanberry formerly had up to twenty students. Its replacement, Summit School of Theology at Denver, usually had only five to ten students. Roy Marrs, nephew of Burt F. Marrs, became the editor of *The Bible Advocate*. Calvin Burrell moved to Houston, Texas, and later became editor. Whaid Rose, a Jamaican formerly from Brooklyn, an ex-SDA, became

President of the General Conference. Whaid and others press an agenda for the Church of God (7th Day) similar to that of Joseph Tkach of the Worldwide. Some were pressing for acceptance of the Trinity, and abandonment of traditional Church of God, Seventh Day, doctrines, although there was some opposition to this plan.

In the eastern United States and lower Canada, about a dozen black Churches of God Seventh Day, mainly comprised of transplanted Jamaican Sabbath-keepers, worked together in a "Joint Church of God Fellowship," led by Lael Tikili. Some of these churches were independent, and others were affiliated with Meridian. Their enthusiastic style of worship prevented them from fully integrating with any American group.

Katherine Kiesz, wife and evangelistic companion of John Kiesz, died in 1993. John Kiesz died in the spring of 1996, the last of his breed of pioneer Church of God, Seventh Day, ministers. In 1995, L.I. Rodgers, one of the old timers in the Church of God, formerly of Greybull, Wyoming, died at the age of almost 100. Rodgers believed in keeping the Feast Days, and also taught that one is not born again until the resurrection. Although these doctrines were more in line with classical teachings of the Worldwide Church of God than the majority of beliefs in the Church of God (Seventh Day), his esteem among the Denver Group shows that such ideas have long been extant.

Few former Worldwide Church of God members seemed interested in the Church of God (Seventh Day). Calvin Burrell summed up his feeling of the lack of religious commitment of Sabbath-keepers in the 1990s when he told me that "the appetite for doctrine" was not very strong. As the Seventh Day Church of God approached the Twenty-First Century, there were some rays of hope. But, so many Sabbath-keepers had slipped into a doctrinal abyss, that only a strong hand from somewhere could possibly regather the lost sheep of the House of Israel.

The one bright spot appeared to be the springing up of many independent ministries, and extensive cooperation among Sabbath-keeping groups. In 1995, several United Church of God members formed The Friends of the Sabbath, and began holding Sabbath seminars, attended by keynote speaker Dr. Samuel Bacchiocchi, noted Seventh-day Adventist scholar, and speakers from numerous groups and independents, including Seventh Day Baptists and the Church of God, Seventh Day. The effect of these seminars was to expose Sabbath-keepers to others of like beliefs. Doctrinal liberalization appeared to be a common problem faced by all groups. Increased networking via these seminars, and the computer Internet, broke down many barriers between Sabbath-keepers.

As the year 2000 approached, there were scattered Sabbatarians in lifeboats. Independent groups appeared to be the most likely to abandon former beliefs and join the Catholic/Protestant juggernaut, although larger groups had plenty of liberals in their leadership ranks. If the 1980s were a time of spiritual depression for the Church of God, the 1990s were scarcely any better. The Church is aging, as its appeal to the public, and youth in particular, is not strong. By concentrating on the scattered pockets of sanity in a crazy world, Sabbatarians can maintain their focus on Jesus Christ, who is, really (in spite of liberalizing tendencies espoused by many), the same yesterday, today, and forever.

- written by Richard C. Nickels (

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Conclusion

Why So Little Growth?

Seventh Day Adventists are quick to point out the steady growth and success of their movement as a strong indication that their work is that of God. Worldwide, they today number over 1, 000,000.

The Seventh Day Baptists have steadily declined since the early 1900's. The president of the Seventh Day Baptist Milton College, a former Seventh Day Baptist pastor, admits that Seventh Day Baptists are a dying church. This was even apparent in the early days of the Adventists, before 1860. O. P. Hull, a Seventh Day Baptist minister, attended an Adventist conference in Albion, Wisconsin and was greatly impressed by the fervor of the Adventists. He told Bates that Seventh Day Baptists could convince people of the legality of the Sabbath, but "they could not get them to move as the Sabbath Adventists did."

The splits and schisms of the Church of God, Seventh Day in the United States has, as its ministers admit, hindered growth. The largest (and most organized) group, headquartered out of Denver, reported only 5,500 members in 1964.

In 1971, a young ministerial student of Stanberry admitted that the member figure of the Merger Group was closer to 4,500. Other groups have far less. In November of 1969, the Bible Advocate went to only 2,225 paid subscribers.

Despite the free *Advocate* program instituted in 1970, the current figure is hardly up to 10, 000 copies. And this is monthly, when in the 1920's, the *Advocate* was a weekly. The 1000 new members added in 1923 has never been repeated.

Divisions have caused many to leave the church altogether. The town of Stanberry itself shows the decline. In 1914, it had 2, 200 inhabitants; in 1920, only 1, 864; and is currently about 1, 400.

Seventh Day Adventist historian Loughborough presented a challenge to the Church of God, that must be answered. He maintained that the opposition to Ellen G. White came mostly from "those who have been reprov'd for defects in character, for wrong habits, or for some wrong course in their manner of life." They left the ranks, protesting that they were not as bad as her testimony said. At his writing (1892), Loughborough stated

that the breakaway groups had made no success in spreading Sabbath truth. "If those opposing this gift are led by the Lord, why should they lose their spirituality, and backslide from God?... a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. "

Later (1909), Loughborough stated that the organized opposition to Ellen G. White's testimonies had met "utter failure." And "after years of battling they have given no more evidence of spreading the Sabbath truth before the world than those of their kindred did 49 years period of religious enthusiasm had lasted from about 1800 and was centered in western New York (Rochester being the home of James White's paper, the *Advent Review*). But after 1844, there was a noticeable decline of conversions, and the period of revival's came to an abrupt end. One historian notes that "For years [after 1844] the spiritual condition of some parts of the State of New York was not unlike that of a prairie after it has been swept by fire. All was blackness and desolation and death." It was, as Whitney Cross' book is entitled, a "Burned Over District." Western New York, and Ohio and Michigan, first on the westward road of migration, were the centers of this "Burned Over District," and were the birthplaces of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

Seventh Day Baptist Legacy

The Seventh Day Baptists, originally called the Church of God or the Church of Christ, were ancestors of the Church of God (Seventh Day). What were they like at the birth of *The Messenger of Truth*, and later, *The Hope of Israel*? As Dugger notes, "some among the oldest of these congregations... have, like Israel of old, departed, to some degree, from the old paths in which their forefathers trod. While they still hold to the true Sabbath and baptism these certain congregations have taken an unscriptural gospel, and several other important tenets of faith."

Further, they "were growing cold and indifferent toward the truth, drifting toward the world, and becoming like the Gentiles around them...." As a result, "some began gradually drifting away from the former piety and love for the Bible, and the Bible only, for their faith and practice, and took upon themselves another name besides the one divinely given of God."

Seventh Day Baptists forgot the annual Passover that the original London church had observed. They forgot the conditionalist beliefs of their forefathers, and came to believe in the immortal soul. And they neglected the Sabbath, the only sign demonstrating that they did keep the commandments of God. They began to compromise as to keeping the Sabbath. The President of the Seventh Day Baptist Conference, Dr. George W. Post, said in 1904: "For a man to starve his family in order to keep the Sabbath is unnatural under existing conditions. It is also unnecessary."

In matters such as smoking and drinking and the Old Testament dietary laws, the Seventh Day Baptist church in the later period failed to legislate, leaving the matter to "the judgment of the individual."

The trend of "watering down" of religion had already far advanced among Seventh Day Baptists by the 1840's. Yet Samuel Davison initiated an appeal for the church to stir itself up. He was instrumental in pushing through a Conference resolution setting aside November 1, 1843 as a day of fasting and prayer that God would "arise and plead for his holy Sabbath." Another day in January, 1845 was also set aside for fasting. Earnest editorials in the *Sabbath Recorder*, such as the one entitled, "O Lord, Revive Thy Works," in the August 7, 1845 issue, tried to stir up the church, but to no avail.

Davison, Cottrell, Sheffield and a few other Seventh Day Baptists were used to carry on the Church of God work, but there were few zealots during this time. The sleepy "small town syndrome," instead of big city evangelism, was a legacy the lethargic Seventh Day Baptists handed to the Church of God.

Seventh Day Adventist Legacy

Starting on the blackened soil of Millerism and the lethargy of Seventh Day Baptists, Sabbath Adventists were faced with a greater threat from within: the visions of Ellen G. White and the harsh dictatorship of her husband. Feigned or not in her power to control, the visions turned many against the Sabbath and religion altogether. As Canright laments, "The natural rebound from fanaticism and superstition is into infidelity and scepticism.... the ripe fruit of [Seventh Day] Adventism in the years to come will be a generation of infidels."

This was to hold true in too many cases. William Brinkerhoff, B.F. Snook, Moses Hull, H.S. Dille and other early leaders in the Church of God fell away. For many, even contact with the Whites often proved to be spiritual poison. The legacy of Seventh Day Adventists to the Church of God was to prove far more deadly than either Millerism or Seventh Day Baptists.

Joseph Marsh and the "Independent View"

Since the Seventh Day Adventists organized and changed their name from Church of God, those who would not go along with the White Party often were entirely against all forms of organization. Some Adventists could see that the name Church of God was scriptural, but could not come around to the Sabbath, probably because to do so would mean that there was only the vision-inspired White Party to ally with. Thus, the Age-

to-Come group, calling themselves the Church of God, came into being as a very loose and unorganized church that did not formally get together until the 1920's.

Joseph Marsh, the predecessor of the Age-to-Come Church of God, wrote in his paper, *The Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings* in May 21, 1845, that the name Church of God is the only name that the true body can be called. He wrote strongly against organizing with a statement of beliefs, which he felt was the first step towards religious persecution.

Marsh's view was apparently picked up by many of the *Hope of Israel* party, as it wasn't until 1884 when the Church of God General Conference was organized, and 1900 when the church became incorporated. Still, "Independent" views were allowed and in 1929 when some attempt to enforce unanimity was instituted, it was to no avail, and actually precipitated the 1933 division.

The "I'll let no man or organization tell me what to preach" syndrome was to insure a disunited Church of God and precipitate the recurrent splits which exemplify Church of God history.

A Dying Church?

The decline of the Church of God (Seventh Day) is not as apparent as the Seventh Day Baptists because there are so many groups to keep track of and membership figures are inaccurate or unobtainable. But certainly the widespread home and foreign missionary activity extant in the 1920's is no longer taking place. Few, if any, outside the Church of God (Seventh Day) or its Sabbath-keeping cousins have ever heard of the group.

An interesting article in a *Bible Advocate* sometime in the early 1920's is entitled "A Dying Church." Written by O.R. Osman, then Secretary of the General Missionary Department, it states: "A Church that is doing nothing for the public is on its way to the cemetery. All its members who are doing nothing are acting as pall bearers. All who are so busy with their own affairs that they've no time to devote to the Lord's cause are making the mourning wreath. The brother who says nothing at all is driving the hearse. The ones who are constantly drawing back when moves are to be made are throwing flowers on the grave....Brother, which of these acts are you performing?"

Leadership can often offset serious problems. The dead soil— Millerism, Seventh Day Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists and Age-to-Come "independents" — upon which the Church of God (Seventh Day) grew might have been overcome had the church produced firm leaders who would lead the people in the right direction. But when A.C. Long, Jacob Brinkerhoff, A.F. Dugger and others died, they had no dedicated replacements.

A. F. Dugger's son, Andrew N. Dugger, was a horse of a different color. He twice admitted (in 1912 and again in 1929) that a certain doctrine — Anglo Israelism — was true, but refused to preach it because he felt the church would not accept it. The question of whether this doctrine is true or not is irrelevant; the point is that Dugger was not an honest and sincere leader. Religious hypocrisy in the top leadership certainly led to the downfall and splintering of the church.

Individual hypocrisy had not been absent from the church either. Many continue to believe in Feast Days, Anglo-Israelism and other doctrines yet continue to be a part of a church which publishes articles against these beliefs. An article in the November-December, 1971 *Messenger* (Merger Group paper) states: "The Church of God (Seventh Day) has always been a church with 'an open creed.' By that we mean we are ready to accept new light on the Scriptures and that our doctrines are subject to change at any time when Biblical evidence proves the need for such change." It is ironic that some in the Seventh Day Church of God have admitted that such and such a doctrine is true, but do not live by it.

Call it personality conflict, call it doctrinal disputes, call it "independent spirit," the 1933 division marked a definite change, a downward thrust in the church, from which it has never recovered.

As Church of God historian Charles Monroe states, "The division [of 1933-1949] had hindered growth in the Church of God, and it was as if the Sardis church described in Revelation 3:1 could be describing the Church of God! It was alive, yet dead!"

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Appendix

Review: The Churches of God, Seventh Day: A Bibliography, by Joel Bjorling. Garland Publishing, Inc., New York: 1987. 296pp. \$48.00 retail.

A bibliography is a list, often with descriptive or critical notes, of writings relating to a particular subject, period or author. A bibliographical book exists to provide a listing of important and useful research materials for other students and researchers to further investigate a particular topic.

Joel Bjorling's *The Churches of God, Seventh Day: A Bibliography*, is a listing of over 1,600 books, articles and periodicals relating to Twentieth Century Church of God Seventh Day groups. Mr. Bjorling is not a Sabbath-keeper. As an outsider, he has done a remarkable job in pulling together a wide assortment of materials. His book is one of a series edited by J. Gordon Melton of the University of California at Santa Barbara of bibliographies on sects and cults. Bjorling has compiled another bibliography on the Baha'i Faith. Both Bjorling and Melton have long been recipients of literature from *Giving & Sharing*. Bjorling gives us credit for his work. He devotes a great deal of space to *Giving & Sharing's* role in the Church of God, Seventh Day literature scene. We appreciate his favorable mention.

Bjorling lists the literature of some thirty-one different groups. In addition, Bjorling briefly analyzes the history and teachings of each organization. I found his book interesting and objective in most instances. He has done a good job in compilation.

However, I find a number of faults and serious shortcomings with Bjorling's book.

(1) The book is overpriced. Although Mr. Bjorling assures me that a bibliography book such as his is properly priced at \$48, I feel the value received is far less than the investment. A writer of the current teachings of the Churches of God, Seventh Day would need a bibliography of at least as much material as Bjorling lists, plus he would have to analyze, research and evaluate all the material, and write original material, which Bjorling's listing with brief notes does not do. The price of a book on the current status and teachings of these churches would NOT sell for anywhere near \$48. Libraries and research institutions on the study of religion are clearly the target audience for Bjorling's book.

(2) The book has many typographical errors. Although attractively hardbound, there are a great many typo errors, misspelled words and haphazard justification of text. This discredits the author.

(3) The book has a number of factual errors. I feel this stems from lack of careful research, rather than deliberate misrepresentation. Bjorling has obviously not read all the material he has compiled. A serious writer carefully edits his material, and allows others to critique it, in an attempt to weed out all errors prior to publication. Typographical errors and lack of research skills are evident.

Here are a few factual errors we noticed: On page 14, the schism of the Church of God, Seventh Day led by A.N. Dugger actually occurred in 1933, not 1931 as stated. Pages 16 and 199 describe A.N. Dugger as a part of the Sacred Name Movement, when in fact he was not a Sacred Name exclusivist, and belongs firmly to the major Church of God Seventh Day branch. On page 25, it is an error to state that the reason why Herbert Armstrong was expelled from the Salem Church of God Seventh Day was because he taught Jewish Holy Days and British Israelism which were contrary to Salem's teachings. Armstrong was mainly expelled for failure to cooperate, not over doctrines. Others in the group held the same doctrines he did. Many today in the Church of God Seventh Day groups hold the same doctrines yet they are not expelled.

Bjorling's statement on page 71 that British Israelism and Holy Day teaching sets Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God apart from other Seventh Day Church of God groups is patently false. In discussing the Caldwell, Idaho Seventh Day Church of God group, Bjorling fails to realize that they keep the Holy Days. This is very poor research!

On page 26, the Denver group is misrepresented by the false statement that they consider fish and fowl unclean. The fact is, the Denver group considers only those fish and fowl clean and unclean that are prohibited in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. On page 55, Bjorling states that Armstrong was the only minister of his church up until 1947 and the foundation of Ambassador College. Not so! Armstrong ordained Wolverton, Heibel, Day, Ellis, Blake, Neff and others to work with him during the 1933-1946 period. On page 138, Bjorling errs when he states that Raymond Cole founded the Church of God, The Eternal in 1974. It was actually 1975, and Bryce Clark was not a founding minister of the group. All these and other errors point to sloppy scholarship.

(4) The book is decidedly biased. The Church of God, Seventh Day proper is not well covered. Bjorling fails to mention the major development in the 1980's of the proposed merger of the Denver and Meridian groups. He devotes more space to Giving & Sharing's literature than to the Denver Group, which has a much wider circulation. Bjorling is a student of religious cults and sects. He overemphasizes a few minor fringe groups, even some that don't keep the Sabbath, while neglecting some of the major groups. He correctly places the Worldwide Church of God and the Sacred Name Movement in the Church of God Seventh Day grouping of churches.

(5) Bjorling's book fails to fulfil its purpose. The average Sabbath-keeper won't spend \$48 for this book. Library and religion research centers who will buy this book are not served by a book riddled with typographical and factual errors. A religious researcher cannot use this bibliography for further research, because almost none of the material is available in the ordinary university or public research library, and no addresses are given for the different groups so the individual researcher cannot get copies of the material to evaluate.

(6) Bjorling promotes liberal theology. In the appendix section of his book, Bjorling attempts to briefly refute the Sabbath and Sacred Name. He gives superficial arguments against the Sabbath, and does not mention Samuele Bacchiocchi's book, *From Sabbath To Sunday*, which destroys Bjorling's anti-Sabbath ideas. Bjorling accepts Dr. Ernest Martin's Protestant anti-law teachings. Bjorling's anti-Sacred Name section is nauseating. He accepts the "higher criticism" belief that the Old Testament was written by different groups of conflicting sources, the so-called "J," "E," and "P" documents. These documents exist only in the minds of anti-Bible critics.

Conclusion

Bjorling threw his book together. This does a disservice to the Churches of God, Seventh Day groups.

If you are really interested in the various Sabbath keeping groups, you should get the *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups* from the Bible Sabbath Association, Route 1 Box 222, Fairview, Oklahoma, 73737. It is updated every five years or so. The Directory is a far more useful research source than Bjorling's bibliography. This comprehensive book lists hundreds of different groups, their major doctrines and literature, and addresses so you can do your own research. There is a bias here as well: each section is usually written by the group itself. In some cases, there may be exaggerations as to membership numbers,

and a misrepresentation as to real doctrinal beliefs. Use the Directory to obtain the address for literature listed in Bjorling's book. Do your own research.